**Year 12 English Literary Studies**

**Task Sheet**

**Assessment Type 3: Comparative Text Study**

**Purpose**

To assess your ability to closely analyse two texts (one from the shared texts studies; one selected independently), to draw comparisons between them, and develop a coherent argument in response to a self-formulated essay question.

**Description of assessment**

* After we have completed the study of our shared texts (prose, poetry, drama, and film) you choose an independent text with which to compare the original. If poetry is the choice for the initial text then the focus must be upon one poet and it will be likely that the study will need to be supplemented by additional poems by that poet. Connections between the texts could be made on the following basis:
	+ work by the same author
	+ a common theme, idea, or topic
	+ the same or a contrasting historical or literary period (either of text production or setting)
	+ work that is similar or different in form or medium
	+ work from similar or different cultural perspectives
	+ an interpretation from a particular critical perspective.
* It is often beneficial to choose texts of a different type so that variations in the stylistic features used may become a source of analysis. You are permitted to study novels, films, plays, collections of poetry (by a single poet) and short stories (by a single author), novellas and autobiographies.
* In consultation with the teacher you will then devise an essay question to which you draft and polish a response.
* The essay must be a comparison of the two texts.

**Assessment conditions**

A critical essay of up to a maximum of 1500 words that is word-processed, drafted and polished. This task is submitted to the SACE Board and marked externally.

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| *Assessment Design Criteria* |
| Knowledge and UnderstandingKU1 Knowledge and understanding of ways in which ideas, perspectives, and values are represented in texts.KU2 Knowledge and understanding of ways in which authors use stylistic features to communicate ideas.KU3 Knowledge and understanding of the stylistic features and conventions of different text types.AnalysisAn1 Analysis of ways in which texts represent ideas, perspectives, and values.An2 Analysis and evaluation of ways in which stylistic features are used to influence the interpretation of texts.An3 Analysis of similarities and differences between texts in comparative tasks.An4 Analysis of ways in which different critical perspectives inform interpretation.ApplicationAp1 Use of conventions, and stylistic features to create coherent texts that address the meaning and intention of the task.Ap2 Use of evidence from texts to develop, support and justify responses.Ap3 Use of accurate, clear, and fluent expression appropriate for purpose and audience. |

Performance Standards for Assessment Type 3: Comparative Text Study

|  | **Knowledge and Understanding** | **Analysis** | **Application** |
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| **A** | Detailed knowledge and understanding of ways in which ideas, perspectives, and values are represented in texts.Thorough knowledge and understanding of a range of ways in which authors use stylistic features to communicate ideas.Detailed knowledge and understanding of a range of stylistic features and conventions of different text types. | Perceptive analysis of the ways in which texts represent ideas, perspectives, and values.Perceptive analysis and evaluation of the complex ways in which stylistic features are used to influence the interpretation of texts.Perceptive analysis of similarities and differences between texts in comparative tasks.Perceptive analysis of ways in which different critical perspectives inform critical interpretation. | Sophisticated use of a wide range of conventions, and/or stylistic features to create coherent texts that address the meaning and intention of the task.Detailed and appropriate use of evidence from texts develop, support, and justify responses, with textual references incorporated fluently in discussion.Use of precise and fluent expression, which is appropriate for audience and purpose.  |
| **B** | Knowledge and understanding of a range of ways in which ideas, perspectives, and values are represented in most texts.Knowledge and understanding of a range of ways in which authors use stylistic features to communicate ideas.Knowledge and understanding of a range of stylistic features and conventions of different text types. | Clear analysis of the ways in which texts represent ideas, perspectives, and values.Clear analysis and evaluation of the complex ways in which stylistic features are used to influence the reading of texts.Clear analysis of similarities and differences between texts in comparative tasks.Clear analysis of ways in which different critical perspectives inform critical interpretation. | Use of a range of conventions, and/or stylistic features to create coherent texts that address the meaning and intention of the task.Appropriate use of evidence from texts to develop, support, and justify responses, with textual references incorporated in discussion.Mostly accurate and fluent expression, which is appropriate for audience and purpose. |
| **C** | Knowledge and understanding of some ways in which ideas, perspectives, and values are represented in texts.Knowledge and understanding of some ways in which authors use stylistic features to communicate ideas.Knowledge and understanding of some of the stylistic features and conventions of different text types. | Some analysis of ways in which texts represent ideas, perspectives, and values.Description, with some analysis and evaluation, of ways in which stylistic features are used to influence the reading of texts.Description, with some analysis, of similarities and differences between texts in comparative tasks.Some analysis of ways in which different critical perspectives inform critical interpretation. | Competent use of conventions, and/or stylistic features to create texts that address the meaning and intention of the task.Competent use of evidence from texts to develop, support, and justify responses, with some use of textual references in discussion.Generally fluent and clear expression, which is mostly appropriate for audience and purpose. |
| **D** | Some knowledge and restricted understanding of a narrow range of ways in which ideas and values are represented in texts.Some knowledge and restricted understanding of a narrow range of ways in which authors use stylistic features to communicate ideas.Some knowledge and restricted understanding of a few of the stylistic features and conventions of different text types. | Description of the ideas and values represented in texts.Description of some ways in which stylistic features are used to influence the reading of texts.Some description of similarities and differences between texts in comparative tasks.Recognition of some ways in which different critical perspectives inform critical interpretation. | Use of some language features to create texts that address the meaning and intention of the task in a limited way.Some use of evidence from texts to develop, support , and attempt to justify responses, with use of a narrow range of textual references.Occasionally clear expression, which is appropriate for some audiences and purposes. |
| **E** | Simplistic knowledge and very restricted understanding of the way in which an idea or a value is represented in a text.Limited knowledge and restricted understanding of a restricted range of stylistic features used by authors. Limited knowledge and restricted understanding of different text types and conventions. | Reference to an idea or value represented in a text.Limited description of a way in which a stylistic feature is used to influence the reading of a text.Simplistic description of a connection between texts in a comparative task.Reference to a critical perspective. | Attempted use of some language features to create texts that attempt to address the meaning and intention of the task in a limited way.Restricted use of evidence from texts to develop and support a simple response, with minimal textual references.Emerging development of control of expression. |

*'How do Anthony Burgess, author of'A Clockwork Orange' and Kenneth Branagh, director of 'Frankenstein' challenge us to consider the rights of the individual versus the progress of society?'*

Both the 1962 dystopian novella, 'A *Clockwork Orange'* by Anthony Burgess, and the 1994 horror movie adaptation of Mary Shelley's *'Frankenstein’* directed by Kenneth Branagh, challenge audiences to confront the conflict between individual rights and the progress of society. Burgess and Branagh focus on protagonists with inflated desires, and scant regard for the consequences. Burgess challenges the reader to examine this conflict by the use of literary techniques to focus on the subversion of an individual's rights by a government pursuing social cohesion. Branagh conversely, through film techniques that incorporate the views of multiple characters, challenges the viewer to consider how an individual, through their desire for scientific and social advancement, can cause harm to others.

The authors examine the contest between the desires of an individual against societal expectations, and the motives that lead to this. In *A Clockwork Orange,* Burgess explores the motivation of psychopathic adolescent, Alex, who rails against the '*big machine'* of society, choosing instead to indulge his propensity for violence through night-crimes. Burgess constructs neologisms of anglicised Russian slang, called 'Nadsat', to draw the reader into Alex's world. This creates empathy for his position and neutralises some of the disgust normally attributed to such violence. In this context,

Burgess explains his rebellion by creating a setting where Alex

and his gang are in a dark alley, symbolising they’re part of a subversive subculture, looking with disdain at the *'blue dancing light'* of the televisions, a metaphor for acceptable night-time entertainment for the *'middle-aged, middle classed lewdies'.* Similarly, Branagh establishes empathy for the powerful ambition of Dr Frankenstein. He presents the viewer with a juxtaposition of scenes showing Frankenstein's loving relationship with his mother followed by the anguish of her death, creating empathy for his amoral attempts to *'cheat* *death'.* He further establishes this when presenting the imagery of Frankenstein's father, a renowned surgeon, descending a staircase as if bestowed with great power, and contrasts this with his bewildered expression and bloodied hands held apart in a 'helpless' pose after he is unable to save his wife. In doing so, Branagh highlights the limitations of conventional medicine, and foreshadows Frankenstein's quest to dismiss convention and *'advance the boundaries of what is known'.* Both Branagh and Burgess caution us to consider how the power of gratification can seduce an individual to pursue myopic goals that lead to destruction.

Both authors explore society's failure to provide solutions to problems facing individuals, as a precursor to more radical solutions. In *A Clockwork Orange,* Burgess uses first person narration to examine Alex's incarceration. As the narrator, he gives insight into the lack of reform and prison guard violence in the *'grahzny hellhole and like human zoo.'* Through Alex's insights, Burgess invites us into the hellish environment that accelerates his violent tendencies to the point where he participates in the murder of a cellmate. Similarly, Branagh expresses society’s inability to protect individuals from *'suffering'.* Branagh's setting for Frankenstein's work is in the midst of a plague that leaves the village dwellers *'dead by the thousands'.* A panoramic camera shot of bodies strewn across the street and in horse carts, overlayed with audio of screaming, sets the scene for Frankenstein's efforts to end the anguish. Both Branagh and Burgess further emphasise these societal failures through the introduction of desperate solutions. Burgess illustrates this when the habitually recalcitrant Alex is offered hope through a radical *'reclamation treatment',* to ensure that he does not offend against the *'State's Peace'.* Similarly, Branagh insulates Frankenstein within his laboratory, where he alone seeks to atone for his profession’s failings. Both Branagh and Burgess construct institutions that fail to assist the individuals in their care, and in doing so nurture the conditions for radical solutions.

Burgess and Branagh construct pivotal moments where the protagonists are subjected to, or invent, progressive techniques that fail to consider the rights of individuals . In *A Clockwork Orange,* Burgess uses a peripheral religious character, *'the prison charlie'* to raise the question of whether *'goodness is something chosen'* or whether it can be instilled through aversion therapy . Burgess introduces the fictional *'Ludovico Technique',* a type of conditioning, designed to reform Alex as a citizen who will avoid violence. By removing Alex's free will, he shows how he becomes a pathetic figure, whose impulses are curbed and his penchant for violence subdued. Similarly, Branagh introduces progressive techniques by Frankenstein, aimed at preventing suffering, by having a *'recourse to death'.* This is highlighted by the symbolism of rebirth; the amniotic fluid Frankenstein uses to re­ animate the dead . Even though his invention appears well intentioned, Frankenstein's fails to consider the consequences. Branagh foreshadows Frankenstein's hubris and disregard for the rights of others in his dialogue between Frankenstein and another peripheral character, Doctor Waldman, who warns that *'science is not a realm for the reckless; it needs a conscience'.* Similarly, Burgess focusses on the consequences of innovation for Alex. After his release from prison, peripheral characters trigger impulses that lead him to *'razdraz'* anti-social responses. Through Alex' s thoughts, the reader understands the revulsion this therapy causes, and how it prevents him from acting in a *'natural'* way . Whereas Burgess cautions against government sanctioned scientific progress that leads to the suppression of individual rights, Branagh constructs a scenario where individuals, via clandestine activities, infringe on the rights of others.

Burgess and Branagh demonstrate the dangers inherent in the unbridled pursuit of scientific and social advancement. In *'A Clockwork Orange',* Burgess uses coincidence in storytelling to construct a situation where Alex is reunited with an unwitting victim of one of his previous crimes, a character foil, F.Alexander. Burgess employs an ironic twist in the story when, upon discovering Alex's identity, F. Alexander uses classical music to torture him. Branagh also demonstrates the unintended consequences of scientific progress, when the *'monster'* he has birthed embarks on a murderous rampage. Similar to Burgess, Branagh offers irony when Frankenstein's desire to *'create life to cheat death'* results in the murder of a girl playing near a lake, symbolic of the death of innocence unleashed by his creation on the public . This sense of agony is also emphasised by Burgess when Alex decides to *'snuff it'* by jumping from a window to escape F. Alexanders' torture. Alex is so deluded and overwhelmed by his radical conditioning and consequent quality of life that he convinces himself through the euphemism *'sleep for ever and ever'* that the relief he seeks can only be found in death. Branagh similarly highlights tragic consequences when the one dearest to Frankenstein, Elizabeth, dies at the hands of his own creation. After wreaking havoc on numerous victims, this sense of injustice is heightened when Frankenstein's monster wrenches Elizabeth's heart out. Branagh employs graphic imagery to shock viewers and emphasise the enormity of the injury inflicted on society by Frankenstein. Both Branagh and Burgess illustrate the damaging effects of imprudent scientific innovation that leads to suffering, because of misguided progress.

The consequences of compromising the rights of the individual and society through the pursuit of progress is rectified . In *'A Clockwork Orange',* the government makes amends by giving Alex a job to integrate him back into society, which is a factor that contributes to his reformed lifestyle. Burgess highlights the importance of peripheral characters in consolidating pivotal moments in character development when he introduces a situation where Alex recognises former *'droog',*Pete in the *'Korova Milkbar'.* Pete has a conventional life which spurs Alex to think of *'like groweth up'* and changing his lifestyle by noticing what he could have, which is described using florid imagery, *'tomorrow is all like sweet flowers'.* Similarly, in *'Frankenstein',* Branagh uses foreshadowing at the film’s beginning. Within a frame story, Frankenstein warns explorer Robert Walton against the perils of pushing the boundaries of scientific discovery. Walton desperately wants to be hailed as *'the benefactor of our species'* by discovering *'a passage to the North Pole'.* He is set on innovation at all costs, and the story of Frankenstein is portended when Frankenstein warns that it is not worth it *'I,of all men, know that'.* This frame narrative allows character parallels to be drawn between Frankenstein and Walton to show that mistakes can be rectified . Whereas Burgess presents redemption through the government correcting their mistakes, Branagh depicts the remedy for mistakes through the actions of the individual.

In these cautionary tales, the rights and responsibilities of the individual and society are not reconciled, and lead to tragic outcomes. While Burgess focuses on the damage done to the individual as a result of imprudent societal remedies, Branagh highlights the potential harm to society caused by the unfettered scientific aspirations of rogue individuals. Both act as a warning to temper the pursuit of progress with the need to safeguard the rights of each individual.

Words:1,465

**Task:** **Comparative Text Study (*A Clockwork Orange* and *Frankenstein*) (A grade)**

*Knowledge and Understanding*

* KU1: There is a clear argument about the conflict between individual rights and the progress of society. The student then compares both texts and makes some perceptive comments about how the authors interrogate this issue.
* KU2: There is a wide range of techniques mentioned for each text and they mostly add to the analysis of the central contention of the essay.
* KU3: There is evidence of a detailed knowledge of the conventions of different texts; relevant features of a prose text and a film are used to support the argument.

*Analysis*

* An1: This is a feature of the essay; the student moves beyond concept and then actively tries to analyses ideas and values.
* An2: The use of stylistic features and how they influence meaning is sustained throughout the essay.
* An3: The active comparison is a strong feature of the essay. (Perhaps some synonyms for *similarly* may have contributed to a more seamless sense of integration.)

*Application*

* Ap2: Evidence is well used and intelligently incorporated into sentences. The use of quotations help to add the argument and to highlight the differences between the authors’ aims.
* Ap3: The language is fluent and appropriate for the audience, although repetitive sentence beginnings somewhat influence the engagement of the reader.

*Overall*

The student demonstrates many successful features of an A grade response. Each paragraph has a focus that connects to the argument. Furthermore, the student intelligently grapples with ideas and makes important distinctions between what each author is subtly trying to achieve in the respective texts.