**Stage 2 English Assessment Type 3: Comparative analysis – Report**

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John Green's, looking for Alaska involves a quirky boy Miles (Pudge) going into high school searching for 'the great perhaps'. He makes friends with the unconventional and Alaska Young who change his whole world. Paper towns also by John Green, involves Quintin Jacobsen who is persuaded to go out mischief making with Margo Spielberg in the middle of the night, the next day she disappears and while her family and everyone else shrugs it off he is determined to find her. Green explores similar themes in both books though brought about in different and unique ways such as, obsession and death. This report aims to compare and contrast language features in Looking for Alaska and Paper Towns like foreshadowing, metaphors and imagery.

**Ideas and perspectives**

**Obsession**

In both of John greens books Pudge and Quentin are infatuated with a girl, they have false perceptions of they want them to be rather that how they really are. They both must come to terms with that their perfect girl isn't so perfect after all. "I was gawky and she was gorgeous and I was hopelessly boring and she was endlessly fascinating. After her death he makes up his own version of her where she is faultless only remembering the good in her. "Do you even remember how she could be a selfish b----? ... It's like now you only care about the Alaska you made up” he doesn't want to remember the faults of her because it makes him a bad person, he wants to believe he lost his flawless love who tragically died. Through investigating her death and the Cornell, he has come to realize she was broken and just as damaged as everyone else. "when I only cared if she loved me... And I didn't like what answers I had: she hadn't even cared. 'Quentin is obsessed with the idea that Margo is the perfect girl, he is infatuated with her looks, flawless and beautiful and romanticizes aspect of her personality. He holds on to the memories of their childhood, which really are just memories, "you're p---- at this Idea of me you keep inside your brain from when we were little!" Margo has changed and become a different person to her she once was. Although while searching for her, he comes to realize that she is really a deeply unhappy person, who is selfish, he comes to understand who she really is rather than who he wants her to be or who he thought she was. When he eventually finds her and the reunion is so different than what he expected suggests that maybe he was more obsessed with the search rather than Margo herself.

Death

Looking for Alaska is centred around Alaska's death, it is observable by the form of the book, each chapter is titled the amount of days before or after her death, counting down to the moment she dies. This creates suspense in the book, each chapter getting closer to a specific event unknown to the reader, making it a more stimulating read. Alaska's death its self is a very momentous event changing the whole book in creating a plot twist, starting from pudge making friends and enjoying schooling he becomes obsessed with finding more about Alaska's death and dealing with the loss. The theme of death impacts Paper towns in a similar way. Still in search of Margo, Quentin comes upon a pseudovision "subdivision abandoned before it could be completed” he believes that Margo is dead behind a tree, but when he gets closer he realizes she not there at all ensued of this he breaks down and starts crying while punching the ground. Death plays a big role in the character development of Quentin, even when he was younger the death of Joyner is a big event in his life and now searching for Margo who is believed to be dead has made him understand and unravel things about himself. Death is a plot device in each book, though illustrated differently.

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Context

John green wrote looking for Alaska from experience he talks about how he has been obsessed with last word from when he was twelve years old when he came across the dying words of former US president John Adams, 'Thomas Jefferson still survives' from then he was hooked. Green writes from experience in both books, basing the books from childhood memories that he thought were memorable. Green attended a boarding school during his high school years similar to Miles, where a friend had died at the time. This obviously impacted green and influenced his ideas for his first novel. Green also studied similar subjects to miles which also influenced the novel. In college green came across a paper town which were places on a map that only existed on the map to protect against infringement and copyright. Someone built a store in Agloe to make it a real place though it does not exist now. Paper towns is set in Orlando which is where green spent most of his childhood. Green tries to relate as much as he can to the main character and setting to make as realistic and factual as possible.

Audience

Looking for Alaska and Paper towns are directed at young adults or mature adolescent, both books are from the perspectives of teenagers in high school, Pudge starting his first year and Quentin in his last about to graduate. Young adults would find them the most entertaining relating in some ways to the main characters and story line, both books explore coming of age and new adventures which many young adults would relate to. Though Looking for Alaska is from the perspective of a relatively young boy it more so challenges the readers perspectives and ideas, it has some inappropriate language and sexual references, which is why it is aimed at more mature readers. Paper towns is a clever read Green uses more sophisticated language to describe events. Looking for Alaska and Paper towns are written in first person, which is common among young adult books because it creates a connection between the character telling the story and the reader. Both books focus on character development and first person allows Green to harness the thoughts and feeling of the main character to evolve them through each event.

Language features

Metaphor

"How will I ever get out of this labyrinth" Alaska's favourite last words from Simon Bolivar, Alaska believes it is suffering and the only way to escape is straight and fast. The labyrinth is a symbol of suffering in life, always trying to escape from suffering and find happiness but no one can ever be truly happy forever. Obstacles and suffering always come and go in life; no one can really escape the labyrinth or suffering until you die like Alaska did, where you neither feel happiness or suffering. The metaphor of the labyrinth becomes a centre piece in the book in a similar way to the metaphor of paper towns, they are both introduced early in the book and questioned through out of their meaning. The female characters have ideas of these metaphors and try to explain what they mean but they can mean different things to the other characters in the book. "It's a paper town. I mean look at it...AII the things paper-thin and paper-frail. And all the people, too." Green uses imagery and metaphors, by paper Margo means they're one dimensional, she thinks their mindset is meaningless and narrow minded.

Black and white or bland, she wants to go and explore the world, find meaning, while the people in the town, stand still, living their mediocre lives. Green uses metaphors in such a clever way, making the reader question their own lives, he not only uses them to a deeper meaning for the characters but also for the reader.

Imagery

Imagery is used extensively in both books and more so in Paper towns, Quentin describes each abandoned building or psuedovisions with such intent, even when there is nothing there. Green uses imagery to expand on not only the physical aspects but connecting metaphors and similes alongside it. Imagery is a technique that Green uses very well in Paper Towns, a reason the book is popular because green describes details, about thoughts and object well demonstrated in this quote. "And for the first, I had to picture it: Margo Roth Spiegelman, slumped up against the tree, her eyes silent, the black blood pouring out of her mouth, everything bloated and distorted because I had taken so long to find her this quote creates panic and mystery of what is to come. Green also uses imagery in Looking for Alaska in contrast to Paper Towns, it is not used to create mystery, it is more so used to describe events. Green uses imagery to create a connection between the reader and the book, making the reader feel engaged in and events, which is what makes a great author and book. "The way the sun is right now, with the long shadows and that kind of bright, soft light you get when the sun isn't quite setting? The light that makes everything feel better... today just seemed to be in that light." This quote captures imagery perfectly. Green uses imagery well in both books, although it is used for different purposes in each book, imagery creates emotion to enhance event events.

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Foreshadow

Margo foreshadows her own disappearance in the time she is with Quentin, "I. Will. Miss Hanging. Out. With You. She says to Quentin as they are about to part ways on their first night and refuses any invitation from Quentin to hang out with him and his friends. Quentin assumes and so does the reader that she does and says this because she doesn't want to be friends or have anything to do with Quentin after this moment, he filled his intended purpose to drive her around on that night. Though we later find out that she cannot hang out with his because she disappears, which is when Quentin is determined to find her. The foreshadowing builds mystery to the story and plot, unknowing whether she is dead or not adding anticipation. This is just one of the examples of foreshadowing, there are many more in fact, every clue Quentin finds is foreshadowing her next moments which is explained at the end of the book. On the other hand, Looking for Alaska does not share the same clues to Alaska's death, it is a surprise to the reader, although in the chapter headings it does count moment it is announced to the reader, there is foreshadowing to her death. Her unexpected death correlates to how death in real life can be unpredictable, it suits the story, if it was foreshadowed like in paper towns it would not have impacted the reader or the characters as much. Foreshadowing suits paper town because it builds the mystery and adds to the plot unlike in Looking for Alaska.

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The purpose of the report was to compare and contrast looking for Alaska and paper town in terms of themes, metaphors, foreshadowing and imagery.

**Performance Standards for Stage 2 English**

**Overall: C- (14/30)**

|  | **Knowledge and Understanding** | **Analysis** | **Application** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| A | Comprehensive knowledge and understanding of ideas and perspectives in a range of texts.Thorough knowledge and understanding of ways in which creators of texts use a range of language features, stylistic features, and conventions to make meaning.Extensive knowledge and understanding of a wide range of ways in which texts are created for different purposes, audiences, and contexts. | Complex analysis of ideas, perspectives, and/or aspects of culture represented in texts.Perceptive analysis of language features, stylistic features, and conventions used in texts, and thoughtful evaluation of how these influence audiences.Critical analysis of similarities and differences when comparing texts. | Versatile and precise use of language and stylistic features to create a wide range of coherent texts that address the purpose, audience, and context.Fluently integrated use of evidence from texts to develop and support a response.Sophisticated use of accurate, clear, and fluent expression. |
| B | Knowledge and understanding of ideas and perspectives in a range of texts.Knowledge and understanding of ways in which creators of texts use a range of language features, stylistic features, and conventions to make meaning.Knowledge and understanding of a range of ways in which texts are created for different purposes, contexts, and audiences. | Detailed analysis of ideas, perspectives, and/or aspects of culture represented in texts.Detailed analysis of language features, stylistic features, and conventions, and evaluation of how these influence audiences.Clear analysis of similarities and differences when comparing texts. | Accurate use of language and stylistic features to create a range of coherent texts that address the purpose, context, and audience.Appropriate use of evidence from texts to develop and support a response.Consistent use of accurate, clear, and fluent expression. |
| C | Knowledge and understanding of some ideas and perspectives in texts.Knowledge and understanding of ways in which creators of texts use some language features, stylistic features, and conventions to make meaning.Knowledge and understanding of ways in which everyday texts are created for different purposes, contexts, and audiences. | Analysis of some ideas and perspectives represented in texts.Description and some analysis of different language features, stylistic features, and conventions, and/or some evaluation of how these influence audiences.Analysis of some similarities and differences when comparing texts. | Generally accurate use of language and stylistic features to create texts that address the purpose, context, and audience.Selection of some evidence from texts to develop and support a response.Appropriate use of accurate, clear, and fluent expression. |
| D | Knowledge and understanding of some ideas in a narrow range texts.Some knowledge and understanding of ways in which creators of texts use language features and conventions to make meaning.Knowledge and understanding of ways in which some everyday texts are created for different purposes and audiences. | Description of some ideas in texts.Description of some language features, stylistic features, and/or conventions.Description of some similarities and differences in texts. | Use of some language and stylistic features to create a narrow range of texts.Partial use of basic evidence from texts to develop a response.Inconsistent use of expression. |
| E | Identification of an idea in a text.Identification of a limited range of ways in which creators of texts use language techniques.Recognition of one or more ways in which a familiar text is created. | Reference to an idea in a text.Recognition of language or stylistic features.Recognition of a simple connection between texts. | Restricted use of language or stylistic features to create a text.Limited use of evidence from a text in a response.Limited use of clear expression. |