

Reading Journal

Name:

Task one:

Complete the essential reading for Autumn term:

Handmaid's Tale

Kite Runner

Keep a log of the text using the log below.

As you read consider:

AO3 - Context

Research the **writer's work** and style to establish their 'agenda'

- Why were they writing?
- What did their work tend to focus on?
- Who were their influences etc.?

Research the **literary context**

- What was happening in literature at the time? What themes were popular?
- What themes, issues and concepts were being written about? Why? By whom?
- What are the typical qualities of the theatre/prose/poetry of the time?
- How were texts published / performed at the time? For what size/type of audience?
- What censorship /publishing laws affected the way texts could be written?
- Was this text revolutionary or conventional?

Research the **social and historical context**

- What were the dominant beliefs about gender roles, religion, class, etc.?
- What events / issues might have influenced writers at the time?
- How might the writer have adapted the text to reflect contemporary society or consciously be critical of society in some way?

AO2 – Analysis

Research the author's choice of **form**

- In which forms did the author write? (prose, poetry, drama, tragedy, comedy, etc.)
- What **form** is this text?
- What is the **overall structure** of the text – how does the plot and characterisation develop? How is the text divided into acts, chapters etc. Are there any recurring motifs / symbols? Is there a resolution or an open ending? Which characters are most central to driving the narrative?
- What sort of **narrative voice** does the author use? What is the **narrative perspective**?
- What (different) types of **language** does the writer use?
- What is the **setting** of the narrative?
- How is **characterisation** achieved?

Select 2-3 quotations that best represent the key themes, issues or concepts in the text and annotate for techniques of language, structure and form. Remember to consider where in the text the quotations are from and who says them – does the writer want us to sympathise, agree, ridicule this perspective?

AO1 – Argument and Interpretation

How are the key issues, themes and concepts presented in the text?

What is championed, what is undermined?

How does the writer use characters to communicate this?

AO4/5 – Different Perspectives and Comparison

Research critical perspectives on the text:

- How was it received at the time?
- How is it perceived now?

Consider how different critics would interpret the text e.g.

- **Feminism:** How are gender roles presented? Is there equality for men and women? Is there a power struggle?
- **Marxism:** How are social class, wealth and power hierarchies presented?

Considering aspects of the text's form, style, themes and subject matter – which other texts could you draw similarities with? Try and find links with poetry, prose and drama texts across a range of historical periods.

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