

Resource 2: A03: introduction and integration of relevant A03

The extracts below illustrate essay extracts from a range of prose essays which can be used with students and teachers to consider effective use of relevant context.

Extract 1: Addressing literary context

Compare the ways in which the writers of your two chosen texts depict characters who investigate crime. You must relate your discussion to relevant contextual factors.

Robert Audley's character draws on established conventions of detective fiction. Like Dickens' Inspector Bucket, he is driven by a sense of duty. Braddon portrays Audley as similarly 'compelled to think of these things' compelled by 'a hand which is stronger than my own beckons me on'. His sense that this discovery of truth is not a choice but a necessity develops, until he declares it '[m]y duty' which is 'not the less clear because it leads me step by step, carrying ruin and desolation with me, to the home I love'. Audley presents himself as moral judge, an embodiment of Victorian morality. Braddon structures this as part of his own moral development from an idle to a person of Victorian respectability, discovering himself as well as Lady Audley's crimes. His investigation is both a necessary and a brave one, confirming his status as hero. The work that 'step by step' carries him nearer to discovery also reflects the narrative drive of every detective novel, especially one serialized to intensify the sensational readers' thrills at the discovery of each stage of the investigation. Both Audley's and Bucket's quest make them binary opposites of the criminal they pursue; they seek to restore order, to identify transgression then contain it, so that the trajectory of the detective novel moves towards restoration, and closure. The final scenes of the novel underline this closure, and see him married to Clara, a father to a 'pretty baby' and who is troubled by nothing more than being summoned from smoking to 'drink tea . . . eat strawberries and cream upon the lawn'.

Task

- Identify the phrases used by the candidate to reference genre context with relevance.
- Discuss the potential of genre context with relevance to your centre's taught texts.

Extract 2 Introducing context (1)

Compare the ways in which the writers of your two chosen texts present loss. You must relate your discussion to relevant contextual factors.

'In both 'Tess of the D'Urbervilles' and 'A Thousand Splendid Suns', the authors explore the loss of female agency and freedom in the patriarchal climate of their given contexts... Hardy achieves his purpose in portraying the "honest relations of the sexes" with his raw and direct portrayal of Tess's loss of agency and purity amid the Victorian conventions of gender and sexuality. While Hosseini's portrayal of Mariam and Laila's loss of freedom and identity accurately exposes what he has described as the "gender apartheid" in 20th century Afghanistan.'

Example taken from Examiners' report 2017

Extract 3 Introducing context (2)

Compare the ways in which the writers of your two chosen texts present loss. You must relate your discussion to relevant contextual factors.

In both Frankenstein and Never Let Me Go the idea of loss is addressed. This includes loss of life, loss of loved ones, and loss of innocence. In both of the novels, the narrators (Frankenstein and Kathy) have to deal with the loss of loved ones. However, neither of the two seem particularly affected by these losses for the most part. However, when the losses are accepted, they both show the narrators to be devastated by them. Kathy is seen as being desensitised to loss as a result of 'the system' perhaps affecting how Ishiguro may have felt after his experience in the system as a social worker. Furthermore Shelley lost many people during her life, which is maybe projected onto Frankenstein.

(Example taken from current Year 12 student essay'

Task: Compare the two introductions above. Extract 3 is written by a current Year 12.

- What has he done well?
- What tips would you give him about how to improve his introductions?
- How might teaching about genre improve clarity of A03.

Extract 4 Integrating context

Compare the ways in which the writers of your two chosen texts present madness. You must relate your discussion to relevant contextual factors

Madness and loss of reason in 'Dracula' are strongly linked to notions of passion and sexual depravity – concerns particularly rife in the moral climate of the late Victorian England of 1897. Dracula's influence over the innocent Lucy is conveyed early in the novel with her desire in her 'illness' to leave her room and 'get out...pointing at the window' even her sleep, as if the draw of Dracula is uncontrollable; this suggests both mental possession and, for the reader, induces fear of the strong power of such evil. The sexually ripe descriptions of her with 'her lips [were] parted' and 'long heavy gasps' offer a shocking contrast to 'the open-hearted girl' portrayed in her initial letters. In addition, the fact that Harker, the practical journal-writer of the opening of the novel, is not immune to this madness, heightens this sense of fear. Dracula recognises rationality but sneers at humans' ability to spa with him, mocking Dr Seward: 'And so you, like the others, would play your brains against mine'. Thus Harker, positioned as a rational journal-writing man of the post-Enlightenment period, moves from a period of distress confined in the castle, to one where he claims that even the sight of Dracula's face "seemed to drive me mad'. It is not long before he appears, like Dracula himself, to be driven by inner sexual passions rather than just the external problems he is faced with, perhaps reflective of the illicit desires within mankind, a well-established trope of the Gothic novel.

Task

- Work through the extract identifying each AO and how they work together
- Consider the structure of the paragraph in terms of AOs.
- How might this example be used to support students in the classroom?