

a. Literature often portrays characters confronting a new environment, culture or set of beliefs. How are the dynamics of such confrontations explored in two works on your OIB syllabus?

Literature often portrays characters confronting a new environment, culture or set of beliefs. The dynamics of such confrontations can be explored in The Handmaid's Tale and in Stranger in the Village. In both works, the authors confront their protagonist into a parallel universe, different from what they are used to. Although they both represent a different world, Atwood portrays a dystopian patriarchal society to show the new world women are faced **with**, while Baldwin on the other hand writes an essay on how he and black men face the new world they live in.

Commenté [1]: solid introduction

Commenté [2]: can you be more specific about "new world"?

Commenté [3]: underline

Commenté [4]: Great mini-thesis with clear connection to essay question/mother thesis

First and foremost, in The Handmaid's Tale, Offred and the other women woke up into a new different world and culture without even having their words being counted. This is observable in the first sentence of the book "we slept in what had once been the gymnasium". By using the adverb "once" and the past tense Offred is referring to some period in the past. These period in the past are introduced by some flashbacks. We can take as example the flashback "Or in a park somewhere with my mother. How old was I? she said we were going to feed the ducks". By using this flashback, the narrator shows the deep-seated memories of motherhood and the olden days of Offred. This also shows that she's longing for the past and desire start over and never have to face the new reality she is living in. Another example could be when she remembers her daughter: "I'm running, with her holding hand pulling, dragging her through the bracken". She remembers a past where she still had her daughter with her. In the new regime, her daughter was taken away from her, her mom and her boyfriend too. Offred is facing a new type of culture, set belief and environment which is the Gilead Society. Aunt Lydia said to the handmaid's tale that "In the days of anarchy, it was freedom to. Now you are being given freedom from". By saying this, Aunt Lydia is clearly showing that the women are living in a different society, a society that took away the freedom they had before to replace it with another freedom. The Gilead regime made people believe that things such as the bodies hanged in the Wall are normal, ordinary. They made death look ordinary for the population. This was even taught by aunt Lydia who said "This may not seem ordinary to you now, but after a time it will. It will become ordinary". Women are faced into

Commenté [5]: Great explanation, good inclusion of a commentary on "style"

Commenté [6]: good link to the essay question/thesis

Commenté [7]: Good, clear, logical, sequenced analysis of your example

another "ordinary" point which is the fact that "there is no such things as a sterile man anymore, not officially. There are only women who are fruitful and women who are barren, that's the law". This shows the patriarchal regime which is the praising of men. Offred and the other women are living in another universe were men are in charge and women are just some object. This is the reality Offred is facing.

Secondly, we can see this confrontation of a new society in "Stranger in the village" by James Baldwin. In his essay, James Baldwin is himself the narrator. He recounts one of his journeys in a Swiss village where he is confronted to a new environment and culture. Unlike the Handmaid's Tale, this is a real story and not about a dystopian society but about racism and the White supremacy. He is first seen as a "sight" for the villagers and a "wind passed with [him] of astonishment, curiosity, amusement and outrage". This metaphor shows that the narrator is in a universe where black men is an "outrage" something unusual and scared of all. He is dehumanized just like in the women in The Handmaid's Tale. He is treated as an animal in a zoo who is seen by the spectators. He even has nickname if we can call it "Neger". He his living in a world where they buy "African Natives for the purpose of converting them to Christianity" they are bought just like object. This is observable in the Handmaid's Tale in which the women are treated like objects in the new Regime. He is living in the "White World" which "culture controls" him. The use of parallelism in the essay also shows how the narrator is confronting a new environment. The example "I am a stranger here. But I am not a stranger in America" shows that the narrator is living in a parallel world completely different from where he comes from. In the Handmaid's Tale, the women lived in a world where men were in power, the patriarchal regime. While in "a stranger the village", James Baldwin is living in a world were the Whites are in power, the white supremacy. He is confronted to a world in which "white men are the creators of civilization".

Commenté [8]: you could consider creating a mini transition paragraph between the two works -- kind of like an introduction to the next part of your essay

Commenté [9]: I think you could even say a "real life" dystopia

Commenté [10]: Great link + reference to style

Commenté [11]: underline title

Commenté [12]: Can you add another body paragraph here? I think you could say even more about Baldwin! You leave us wanting more!

In conclusion, Margaret Atwood and James Baldwin both write works which abords a completely different world which is confronted by the protagonist. They face a world that is different from what they use to live. They have to go through this parallel universe so that they could survive. And each of the two works, the Protagonists are being dominated by a bigger power who has control on both of them.

Commenté [13]: And both face "unjust"/dehumanizing worlds! Perhaps you could comment on that.

Commenté [14]: Good observations. Expand your conclusion further.

Very solid essay. Clear arguments and smooth prose/writing. Just see if you can expand your essay -- your conclusion, and perhaps add a body paragraph on Baldwin or anything else you think you could develop under the umbrella of your argument.

**ASSESSMENT RUBRIC FOR OIB AMERICAN OPTION WRITTEN EXAMINATION:
ESSAY**

N.B. A short response may require assessment to be lowered.

Category	Below Level -0.5 or more at the discretion of the examiner	Level 0	Level 1 + 0.5	Level 2 + 1.0	Level 3 +1.5	Level 4 +2.0
Knowledge & Understanding	No true understanding or first-hand knowledge shown. Factual inaccuracies void argument.	Some understanding but superficial. Learned response replaces first-hand knowledge. Factual inaccuracies affect argument.	Satisfactory understanding and knowledge. Development may be limited with some inadvertent or minor factual inaccuracies.	Good overall understanding. Knowledge is full and developed.	Very good and thorough understanding, including some subtlety. Levels of meaning are apparent.	Excellent understanding, including some subtlety. Levels of meaning are apparent. Detailed and pertinent knowledge.
Response to the Question	Off-subject or no clear response discernible. Observation, commentary or opinion may be present but no attempt to form an argument.	Response is partial or muddled. Argument is directed at the question but may be confused or superficial.	A satisfactory response to the main implications of the question. Some aspects of the question may be ignored.	A good response. Argument addresses the question but may need more development.	A very good response. Argument is complete and well-targeted, and the question is well-understood.	An excellent response. Argument demonstrates original thought and addresses the question with clarity and depth.
Analysis & Depth (Includes discussion of style at Level 2 and above)	Plot summary or generalizations dominate. No successful attempt at analysis.	Plot summary or generalizations frequent. Little or unsuccessful analysis.	Inconsistent analysis that does not always address important elements. Analysis may be uneven or lacking in depth.	Good analysis that appropriately addresses important elements. Generally appropriate analysis of style	Very good analysis. Thoughtful, pertinent analysis of style.	Excellent analysis and argumentation. Insightful, sophisticated and coherent analysis of style.

				illustrated by relevant examples.		
Organization of the Essay & Integration of Evidence	No logical sequence of ideas. Chronological confusion. Development is so inadequate that clarity is in danger of dissolving completely.	Weak or mechanical structure. Development is barely adequate and examples are either impertinent or lack clear connection to the argument.	Satisfactory structure and development. Sequence of ideas generally logical. Examples not always pertinent and integration may be awkward.	Good structure with some transitions. Sequence of ideas logical. Examples are generally pertinent and most often integrated appropriately.	Very good essay structure with solid transitions. Clear development throughout and good integration of supporting evidence.	Excellent essay structure with clear transitions. Carefully planned, persuasive development throughout. Sophisticated integration of supporting evidence.
Expression	Meaning often cannot be surmised. The essay is very difficult to read.	Prose can be read and its meaning surmised even if hampered by weak control (or French interference).	Prose conveys the writer's ideas adequately. Vocabulary is sufficient and notions of good English usage are evident if sometimes inconsistently applied.	Prose shows evidence of good writing skills. Lapses are minor and do not impede understanding. Some care is shown in word choice and register.	Prose is clear and coherent. A rare lapse does not mar ideas or flow. Effective use of vocabulary and register.	Prose is articulate, fluid, and displays an excellent command of written language. Sophisticated use of vocabulary and register.
Totals						

16,5/20