



Wuthering Heights Charlotte Bronte (1847)



Assessment: Paper 2 Prose

Two prose texts from the chosen theme of Women and Society. One comparative essay worth 40 marks. The examination is one hour and fifteen minutes long.



AOs

AO1 Articulate informed, personal and creative responses to literary texts, using associated concepts and terminology, and coherent, accurate written expression

AO2 Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts

AO3 Demonstrate understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts in which literary texts are written and received

AO4 Explore connections across literary texts

Terminology

Allegory a symbolic representation, or expression by means of symbolic fictional figures and actions, of truths or generalizations about human existence.

Anagnorisis the startling discovery that produces a change from ignorance to knowledge

Antagonist the main character in a work of fiction who comes into conflict with the protagonist.

Byronic Character who is characterised by being dark, mysterious, moody and who fails to follow society's rules and expectations.

Convention a traditional or common style often used in literature, theater, or art to create a particular effect. Example: romantic conventions (characteristics of romantic literature) include the following: Imagination and emotion, A reliance on intuition, An emphasis on nature and primitivism, An idealization of life, An emphasis on sadness, melancholy, psychology, and introspection.

Connotations the associations that words have

Denouement the final resolution or clarification of the plot-the events following the climax of the action

Diction the choice of words, especially with regard to correctness, clearness, or effectiveness, in a literary work. Writers will use words to reveal character, imply certain attitudes, convey action, demonstrate themes, and indicate values.

Dramatic irony The audience possesses more information than some of the characters have

Flashback when a relevant past event is brought up in the current time of the story. Flashbacks create complications within the chronology of the plot to help enrich the experience of time.

Foil a character who clearly contrasts with another

Hamartia tragic flaw or error of judgement

Hyperbole exaggeration

Symbol something that stands for or suggests something else by reason of relationship, association, convention, or accidental resemblance, especially a visible sign of something invisible; an object or act representing something in the unconscious mind that has been repressed. Example: Birds are often used as symbols of freedom.

Metaphor/simile comparison between two things where one thing is said to be another/ comparison using like or as

Motif recurring image or idea

Pathos a deep feeling of sympathy or pity for a character

Peripeteia a character's tragic reversal of fortune

Characters (vocabulary)

Catherine	Isabella
Intimidated by social consciousness (marital decorum) Narcissist (I am H) Immature Repressed Wild & Defiant Romantic Child	Conventional Repressed Delicate Symbolic of how love can weaken Defiant
Heathcliff	Hindley
Byronic Usurper Barbarous Obsessive Passionate Unfortunate Demonic Sociopath	Jealous Weak Vengeful Abusive Calculating and manipulative Diminished by love
Nelly	Linton
Raconteur Inflated sense of self Flawed Identifies with the Lintons Pragmatic	Weak Foolish Petulant Self Absorbed Cruel
Edgar	Cathy
Heathcliff's antagonist/Binary opposite Well mannered Unmanly Quiet and introspective Unforgiving Country Gentleman Neglectful father due to grief – given his context and role	Sympathetic Peaceful love that transforms Entrapped Union of storm and calm Hope for the future
	Hareton
	Harbinger of positive mood shift at the end Illiterate Neglected Intelligent Kind

Wider Reading/Further Study

The online British Library has articles and interviews with a variety of critical writers on the text:

<https://www.bl.uk/works/wuthering-heights>

'A Literature of Their Own, British women writers from Charlotte Bronte to Doris Lessing' - Elaine Showalter.

'Emily Bronte: Wuthering Heights: A Selection of Critical Essays' (Casebooks Series) Miriam Allott

There are also many literary critical articles to be found on:

<https://www.questia.com/library/literature/fiction/novelists/emily-bronte>



Context

Wuthering Heights opens in 1801 and covers the thirty years or so prior to that date as well. At that time, in England, the Industrial Revolution was under way and British society was beginning to change. When Emily Brontë wrote the book, in 1847, the effects of this change were being seen in the rise of the upwardly-aspiring middle class and the beginning of the shift from "old money" to "new money." A man could now raise his social standing by acquiring wealth – as Heathcliff does in *Wuthering Heights* – whereas in the past, one had to be born into an upper-class family in order to be considered a gentleman.

The novel also deals with the shift away from the old farming culture and the strict, patriarchal family life and towards a more urban way of life with an increase in equality for all. As a result of the Industrial Revolution, people were abandoning the countryside in droves and flocking to the cities in search of work and opportunities. Emily Brontë lived in the last days of this ancient, traditional, conservative way of rural life. Men still ruled their families and female relatives were subject to their authority. A woman's place was in the home and they were expected to be gentle and dutiful. The Brontë sisters published their books under pseudonyms, as female authors were not readily accepted. Emily's chosen name was "Ellis Bell." The time in which *Wuthering Heights* is set does matter a great deal. If we look at the way in which women and children in particular are treated, we cannot imagine such things happening today or at least we cannot imagine them being condoned by society. However, though there may be some disapproval of Heathcliff or Hindley's behaviour towards the infant Hareton, for example, there is no attempt made to remove the young boy from their care.

The Cultural Context / Social Setting of *Wuthering Heights* shapes the lives of the characters to varying degrees. Heathcliff's arrival at Wuthering Heights and his adoption into the Earnshaw family is a sign of the times in which the novel was set. (It is worth noting that around the time Emily Brontë was writing the novel, her brother Branwell went to Liverpool on a visit and returned with tales of wretched, starving people crowding the streets and of orphaned children wandering unattended. The people were, in many cases, ill and dying and sometimes spoke a strange, unintelligible language. These were, of course, refugees from the Irish famine and it is likely that the stories of their suffering affected Emily Brontë and possibly gave her inspiration for the discovery of Heathcliff by Mr. Earnshaw.)

When Heathcliff is introduced into the Earnshaw household, Mr. Earnshaw seems neither to understand nor to care how this strange young boy might affect his family. He overrules their objections and insists that young Heathcliff is to be treated well. As far as Mr. Earnshaw is concerned, he is the head of the family and his is the only opinion which really matters. Such an attitude would be an anathema to us, today. Mr. Earnshaw's lack of comprehension of the resentment engendered by his pronouncement sets in motion a chain of events that will only end thirty one years later, when Heathcliff dies and Cathy and Hareton marry.

The entire story of *Wuthering Heights* takes place in a few square miles of Yorkshire moor. The setting is very important as the area's isolation, the forbidding countryside and the harsh climate all go to mould the characters in the novel. This is a wild country and the people are wild too. When *Wuthering Heights* was published, readers in the cities and in the south of England were shocked by the depiction of a world that seemed alien to them. The inhabitants of Wuthering Heights are hard, tough people. They are deeply suspicious of strangers and speak their minds. Mr Lockwood struggles to understand them and is shocked by what he perceives as rough language, brutality and a complete absence of the manners of polite society.

The setting shapes the characters in the novel. Heathcliff is a prime example of this. It is easy to regard him as a monster, particularly in his quest for vengeance and his determination to make the children of his enemies suffer, even though those children are innocent of any wrongdoing. We may ask ourselves if it is possible for such a villain to exist. Indeed, Emily's own sister, Charlotte, asked that very question in the preface to the book when she said "Whether it is right or advisable to create beings like Heathcliff, I do not know: I scarcely think it is." Yet other critics have said that a character like Heathcliff could most certainly have existed in a place as wild and rugged as the Yorkshire moors. It has been argued that such bitter, unending hatred was relatively commonplace and that desire for vengeance – often lasting many years – was a fairly typical feature of family feuds and disagreements between neighbours.

Past Paper Questions

SAMS

Compare the ways in which the writers of your two chosen texts make use of different voices. You must relate your discussion to relevant contextual factors.

Or

Compare the ways in which the writers of your two chosen texts portray women's relationships with men. You must relate your discussion to relevant contextual factors

2017

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

Or

Compare the ways in which the writers of your two chosen texts present women's attempts to find happiness. You must relate your discussion to relevant contextual factors.

2018

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

Or

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

2019

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

Or

Compare the ways in which the writers of your two chosen texts make use of narrative voice. You must relate your discussion to relevant contextual factors.

*2020 (Autumn)

Compare the ways in which the writers of your two chosen texts present the experience of characters who acquire knowledge. You must relate your discussion to relevant contextual factors.

Or

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

*2021 (Autumn)

Compare the ways in which the writers of your two chosen texts explore society's expectations of women. You must relate your discussion to relevant contextual factors.

Or

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

2022

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

Or

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

2023

Compare the ways in which the writers of your **two** chosen texts present characters who help others. You must relate your discussion to relevant contextual factors.

Or

Compare the ways in which the writers of your **two** chosen texts make use of settings. You must relate your discussion to relevant contextual factors.

2024

Compare the ways in which the writers of your **two** chosen texts present religious and spiritual beliefs. You must relate your discussion to relevant contextual factors.

OR

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

2025

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

OR

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