

A LEVEL

Exemplar Candidate Responses

ENGLISH LITERATURE

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Comparative and Contextual Study: American Literature

Version 1



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American Literature

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American Literature Question 1

Script 1: Borderline Level 6

- Write a critical appreciation of [the] passage, relating your discussion to your reading of American Literature 1880-1940. [30]

America English

Much of American literature written in the 1920's explores the common themes that came as a consequence to the end of the first world war. The war's end is seen as the turning point of a new generation, which was later referred to as 'the lost generation' - coined by Gertrude Stein. This new era was filled with themes of prosperity, hedonism & a society on the move, the American dream epitomised all of this recognising the common ~~desire~~ drive to make something of yourself. Thomas Wolfe captures the American dream through the eyes of Eugene. However while the passage highlights the ~~then~~ even flamboyant exuberance of the age through vivid imagery such as "the air was charged with ... nothing & corrupt extravagance" & lights, the passage is notably written in 1929. 1929 saw the catastrophic effect of the Wall St Crash which resulted in an international depression, the 'Ziegler' spirit of the hedonistic world came to an abrupt end which many American novelists used to explore the theme of disillusionment of the time.

The excess of wealth & consumerism is immediately made clear by the word phrase "until his money was gone" a sense of carelessness & lack of appreciation for money is a similar theme that resonates in F. Scott Fitzgerald's novel 'The Great Gatsby' - Tom & Daisy

epitaphs rest careens people who are never satisfied. In contrast Steinbeck's 'The Grapes of Wrath' offer the contrasting lines of the Joad family who represent the family who were affected by 'The Dust Bowl' that corresponded with the Great Depression.

Wolfe offers words that give connotations of speed and time such as; "quickening", "pulses" "burnings of his life", notably this suggests a society on the move, the emphasis on speed and restlessness enables the reader to understand the vivid movement of the lost generation; moreover his is emphasised further with the simile "life pulsed like a hidden dynamo," not only does the word pulsed evoke imagery of a cat representing a form of life and perhaps a black cat which one recognised to be lucky, the word dynamo suggests the idea of an explosion. Wolfe vividly indicates the explosion of the hedonistic world. Fitzgerald similarly shows this in *Catsy* through the use of *Catsy's* parties, the vivid descriptions and use of colour assist the bounteous wealth and extreme prosperity. For example *Catsy* refers to his orange machine thus indicating to the huge boom of mechanisation and industrialisation that assisted the demand for desired things. In contrast, Steinbeck shows the destruction of the boom of mechanisation through the trucker. The trucker represents the corruption of the bank manipulating the poor people, the truck it also symbolises the search on the move and the obstruction of that movement. Moreover Wolfe's second paragraph epitomises this monotonous movement with the use of water and the ship in the second paragraph. Again he creates uses the stylistic feature of lists to create a semantic field of moving words; "walked", "lapping" "loading", "slowly", "rumbling" and "rattle" all of these words assist the fluid movement of the "water. through the dark". Prominently Wolfe uses the word colour "green" to describe the "wet slap" of the water, Fitzgerald also shows huge emphasis on the colour green as a colour indicating prosperity, the word go i.e. doubly on the move and

wealth as it represents the green dollar bill. This colour of green is often linked associated with Gatsby's American dream signalled through the green light: "Gatsby believed in the green light that year by year recedes before us." Similarly Fitzgerald also uses water imagery to show how the American dream & hedonistic world is something of an intangible essence, "so we beat on boats against the current borne back ceaselessly into the past."

The theme of a new world & mechanisation is emphasised by the "huge cranes" working at night like the "loose rattle," & "ones off the overcoats" suggesting the idea that "the night was loud", Wolfe uses onomatopoeic language to suggest a society that never sleeps, constantly in search & developing to reach the American ideals. Appropriately this leads on to the common theme of ¹⁹²⁰ American literature of the American Dream. 'The Grapes of Wrath' offers the reality of the American Dream, the feeling that anyone can get anywhere is paramount through Ma's prosperity & perseverance, however the death along her journey symbolises the corruption of the dream much like Gatsby's death. However unlike Gatsby, Grapes offers a sense of prosperity symbolised through the richness of the harvest & loss of Sharon & offering new life. The repetition of the word "all" to describe George's prospectives "he might do all, dare all, become all" suggests a sense of greed & desire for everything he holds the idealistic view that the transport docks "may bear him west - west, love - west, home - west," the repetitive list of prospecting contrasts to the previous line of "hunger, loneliness & obscurity," Wolfe offers an insight to the disillusionment of the American dream by prominently placing the reality of the dream next to the illusion of ideals. Myrtle - represents the reality of the dream as she dies hit by a car ironically her instrument of death also symbolises the society in a rather more. Gatsby's death also highlights his disillusion of Daisy & his dream. However both Gatsby & the passage explore the illusion

of anyone achieving anything.

Wolfe offers a list of men making something of themselves, "Swedes", "Middle-west", "Irish", "Tennessee," this distinctly mirrors the list of ordinary individuals in Gatsby who migrate to achieve their dream, Gatsby (Jay Gatz) being one of them. The list of men emblem of corruption "Vagabonds", "Chicago Gunmen", "crooks", highlight men who took advantage of the corruption. Prohibition saw the greatest increase in drinking & there were 100,000 speakeasies in NYC alone. Indicating the immorality of the age, epitomised by Wolfshiem in Gatsby. Men of corruption are vividly portrayed in the GOW too the bank workers & car sales men, all of whom export their effects by the depression. Phrases such as "murderous exuberance" "corrupt extravagance" & "There was no thought or belief in any future" all not only accept the rise in gangster corruption such as Al Capone, yet they offer a foreboding sense of things coming to a corrupt end, the tone of the passage illustrates that the "gay, shopping spree" of the 1920's that Wolfe so vividly expresses will become bitter & corrupted as a result of the Wall St Crash.

The final paragraph emphasises the gap between the "haves" & "the have nots". The men of labour "carpenters, masons" create an illusion of themselves wearing "silk shirts" in order to get somewhere however these men are the ones who will be hit by the Crash only earning "ten, twelve, fourteen dollars a day". Then in reality they "work on pier, in camps, in shipyards," Wolfe offers the suggestion that the 'haves' & 'have nots' were able to pursue achieve their ideals; however Wilson portrayed in the Valley of ashes represents the 'have nots' who's dreams are untangible & ~~erect~~ unattainable. Similarly the Joad family relate to those who "revel from camp to camp, worked for a month," the hardship they faced ~~offer~~ demonstrates those who are hindered by the dream & crash yet are

determined & persevere, they are unstoppable & keep moving much like the vivid portrayal of a society in the movie presented by Wolf.

In conclusion, the 1920's saw an huge "insane flux & re-flux of getting & spending" the hedonistic consumer world was key to much of American literature. Wolfe demonstrates this whilst also offering a sense of impending doom corruption. The increased tones & lyrical imagery creates a climatic suspense which will inevitably lead to the depression of the crash. The repetitive references to life shall be mirrored & characterised by the description as Steinbeck runs through his seeds.

Examiner commentary

This is an interesting and promising answer which successfully characterises the passage's atmosphere of speed, restlessness and power and relates this convincingly to American history. The candidate assumes that the passage is set in the 1920s, missing brief references to World War I, but successfully identifies the period as preceding the Wall Street Crash and discusses the importance of economic activity and the availability of opportunities. There is rather too much reference to the set texts in the form of context; AO2 analysis of the passage should always lead discussion in this part of the exam. For this reason, the mark remains on the borderline of Level 6. 26/30.

Script 2: Borderline Level 6

1. Write a critical appreciation of [the] passage, relating your discussion to your reading of American Literature 1880-1940. [30]

1. Written in 1929, Wolfe's "Look Homeward, Angel", was published in one of the most influential years of modern history; the year of the Wall Street Crash. However, with the positive tone and sense of possibility running throughout the passage, it is most likely written before October, when the crash took place. The 1920s, coined "The Jazz Age" by Fitzgerald, were ~~the~~ ^a period of extraordinary prosperity and economic boom in America which facilitated the explosion of consumerism, as the passage conveys.

A theme of American literature is ~~the~~ ^{society on} the move, and the first paragraph of the passage captures this through the use of the semantic field, with diction such as "quicken", "throbbing" and "purred" all suggestive of life, anticipation and movement. This links to "The Great Gatsby", as we see the narrator, Nick, emigrating from West to East to pursue bonds and the stock market, of which was said "any man could make a fortune".

Furthermore, society on the move is a key theme in "The Grapes of Wrath", by Steinbeck, as we see the Joad family losing almost their entire society of sharecropping into a rickety "jalopy", as do many families on the "mother-road"; Route 66. We see this idea of society on the move reversed in "The Grapes of Wrath", as the poor, destitute sharecroppers are forced ^{East to California,} off their land by banks and corporate businesses as industrialisation

of farming takes place.

This industrialisation is evident in the passage as Wolfe talks of "incessant rumbling" and "the night was loud", using onomatopoeia to appeal to the sense of sound, using diction such as "rattle", "rumble" and "cries". This mechanisation of machinery contributed heavily to the wealth and prosperity of the 20s, of which the hyperbolic language in the passage refers to. Extracts of the passage such as "ten thousand glorious threats" and "fat enormous goose ruining its golden eggs" ~~are~~ create ^{a sense} of the zeitgeist of the period, as Fitzgerald himself called it, "the gaudiest shopping spree in history". In *The Great Gatsby*, similar cries such as "the lawn was blue" and "the stars twinkled like champagne" highlight the hedonistic attitude of the characters, ~~of Gatsby~~ and the excessive pouring of alcohol further represent the "corrupt extravagance" Wolfe talks of. Especially relevant to this is the fact that prohibition ^{was in place} ~~was~~ throughout the 20s, and Fitzgerald shows no notion of ^{trying to convey this} ~~holding back~~ this ^{utopian} ~~utopian~~ Wolfe's use of ~~antithesis~~ throughout the passage, such as "keen pleasure of his loneliness", and "glorious threats", also reflect this attitude of corruption, and create a sense of foreshadowing, with can only be the anticipation of the Wall Street Crash. This resonates strongly in *Gatsby* also, especially the ending, "like boats we drift on ceaselessly into the past" and Fitzgerald's anticipation of things coming to an end, or his awareness of time is remarkable.

there are 450 references to time in the novel. The antithesis of the words listed in Wolfe's passage "obscurity, hunger, loneliness" and "power, glory, love" and this foreshadowing narrative in Wolfe's passage, just as reference to age, "I was thirty, and a decade of loneliness stretched out before me", and time, such as the ~~knock~~^{knocking} of the clock on the mantelpiece in Nick's house by Gatsby, do in Fitzgerald's "The Great Gatsby".

Furthermore, the quote "murderous exuberance rioting and corrupt extravagance" almost completely epitomises the "Roaring 20s", and draws strong connotations of the night when Myrtle is killed in "The Great Gatsby". The Valley of Ashes is symbolic of this in Fitzgerald's novel, it is the "wasteland" of "broken dreams". Wolfe refers to the sense of grasped available opportunity as he says "He might do all, become all, have all.", which has a strong prophetic sense, encapsulating the principles of the American Dream.

However, the drive and strife that Americans put into the achievement of the American Dream became utilitarian and selfish. Wolfe says "There was no thought of belief ~~at~~ in any future.", referring to the "triumphant men". This selfish and intensely poetic language ~~refers~~^{foretells} ~~only~~ to the 30s, a period of Great Depression and poverty, ~~this~~ chronicled the "The Grapes of Wrath".

Steinbeck captured the result of the intense success which American society could not cope with, which the people of Oklahoma and the Texas

panhandle had to pay for.

Leading on from this, the derogative tone expressed by Wolfe in the list-like paragraph speaking of the immigrants, "german", "bad niggers", "bums" and "whores", introduces another key theme of American literature, which is the immigrant experience. This can be linked to the prejudice the "Okies" were subject to after migrating to California, which is a totally different attitude to that of America in the 20s, which allowed many immigrants to become apart of society. However, this prejudice can be seen in "The Great Gatsby", as despite the tolerant influx of immigrants, Gatsby himself feels inclined to change his name from "Gatz" to "Gatsby", suggesting of shame on account of his cultural background. This is to avoid "new money" sneers from established "old money" families, such as Tom Buchanan. Just as Wolfe is condescending in his attitude to the immigrants in the passage, Tom is about Gatsby, and the Californians are about the "Okies".

The descriptive phrase "lived opulently", is also highly characteristic of what Gertrude Stein called the "lost generation", the generation who were disillusioned by the war and came back to an America ^{lacking motivation} ~~and~~ and decline. Wolfe's phrase poignantly describes Nick, who lived from party to party in "The Great Gatsby", yet they were extremely glamorous, and it can be said that he had an opulent life. The "brief bright comets of girls" Wolfe speaks of

in almost a direct description of Nick and his relationship with a girl ~~was~~ he was supposedly engaged to, and even that of his relationship with Jordan, epitomising the "lost generation" of the twenties as people who were unable to see things through.

In conclusion, whilst Wolfe shifts styles throughout his passage, beginning in a poetic tone not dissimilar to that of Steinbeck's in his inter-calary chapters, moving on to mirror Fitzgerald's own life-like narrative, he conveys the similar resonance of "The Great Gatsby" in his tone of foreboding. ^{Furthermore,} ~~and also~~ his sense of culmination as is implied in the middle of the passage: "gather the huge thrust of her might", ~~which~~ is inevitably the foreshadowing of the Wall Street Crash. The depiction of both disillusionment and the lost generation, along with that of the immigrant experience allows Wolfe to capture the hedonistic and ~~the~~ utilitarian attitudes of the people of the 20s in a poignant light.

Examiner commentary

This is a detailed and responsive answer, consistently returning to the passage to support and expand its points. Although this candidate, like others, assumes that it must be set in 1929, sensible reading of the passage tells her that it cannot happen after the Wall Street Crash. Her close reading is often very good, especially where she picks up the contradictory character of expressions like 'pleasure of loneliness' and 'glorious threats', and notes how the quotation 'do all, dare all, become all' seems to encapsulate the American Dream. The main weakness of the answer is the candidate's determination to relate the passage in detail to her set texts, so that she seems to be employing them for the purposes of AO4 (comparison, not tested in this part of the exam) rather than AO3 (context, a secondary objective here). For its moments of excellence the answer attains Level 6, but the overreliance on set texts keeps it on the borderline. 26/30.

Script 3: Level 5

1. Write a critical appreciation of [the] passage, relating your discussion to your reading of American Literature 1880-1940. [30]

1) This extract from Thomas Wolfe's 'Look Homeward, Angel' was written in a time of great change in America as 1929 was the start of the wall street crash that crumbled the economic structure of America and halted the hedonistic, excessive nature that encapsulated the 'Roaring 20's' that came before. 1929 was at the center of literary modernism that spanned from 1914 to 1945 which was the postwar, lost generation writing that was so popular of writers at the time, most of whom had returned from war idel and disillusioned. We can see from this extract in the words 'his money was gone' combined with the '\$18.00... leathers' and '\$80.00 suits' that the wall street crash has influenced wolfe's work, having once expensive clothing sold at a drastically lower prices, emphasises the change in Americas economic structure and the key theme in American literature of the Rich verse's the poor as Eugene is clearly struggling for money as 'he watched it go without fear'.

Throughout this extract Wolfe uses his language to convey the popular themes of isolation and the lost generation that are so prominent in American literature, of the time, in the words 'keen pleasure of his loneliness' there is a clear sense of isolation and connects with Fitzgerald's

'The Great Gatsby' as Gatsby although surrounded by people at his parties was isolated by his dream for Daisy.* This theme of the 'lost generation' is highlighted in the words 'There was no thought or belief in any future' which echoes the thoughts of the men returning from war which caused this disillusionment in American society and postwar America as the 'lost generation' were no longer interested, ~~living life in the moment~~ ^{in the present}. 'There was no life beyond the moment' that is so key in the theme of the lost generation.

Despite this loss and disillusion that is seen in this extract Wolfe connects with literary Romanticism that was key in American literature before 1880's as we can see influence in this moments of hope, expressed in 'moment into power, glory, love' and 'bear him war-ward, love-ward, fame-ward' these powerful triplets emphasise an idea of going for something better and touches on the theme of the American dream as it puts emphasis on something that 'might' happen to better his life.

This Theme of the American dream that is so popular in the writing of American literature in the 1880-1940 due to the ideals of self-bettering and the belief that anyone is free to do and be anything they please, is also highlighted in Wolfe's language that echoes the ^{ideals of the} Jazz Age. The words 'life pulsed like a hidden dynamo', 'vast excitement' and 'glorious' all echo the hedonistic, consumeristic way of life in the 20's as seen in Fitzgerald's 'The Great Gatsby'.

in the vast excessiveness of Gatsby's parties as the rich went out of their way to enjoy themselves.

Another key theme in American literature highlighted in this extract is the immigrant experience;

Wolfe uses a large, descriptive list ~~to~~ to describe the vast melting pot of people that were now part of America from the war, they were ~~as~~ 'Chicago gunmen...pale Jews...whores, in shoals and doves' 'from everywhere' as he describes, emphasising the vastness of the immigrant experience.

He also ^{further} ~~uses~~ lists ~~with~~ with clear imagery, 'rumble of huge cranes', 'donkey-engines', and the 'incessant rumbling trucks' to highlight the industrialisation of America and express the key theme in American literature of mechanisation as the industrial revolution had boomed in the previous years, ~~as~~ this connects with Steinbeck's 'The Grapes of Wrath' as the ^{mechanisation in the} tractors described as 'the monster' have pushed the Oklahoma people off their land rendering them homeless and looking for work to survive.

In conclusion, this extract from Thomas Wolfe's 'Look homeward, Angel' does conform to the ideals of American literature of the time as many popular themes in American literature such as the American dream and the lost Generation were highlighted for example in the words 'enjoying brief bought loves' shows the restlessness of the new lost generation Americans.

Examiner commentary

This answer is rather short and leaves parts of the passage unexamined. The candidate starts with a general contextual introduction relying on an assumption that the extract is set in the year of publication, and she is inclined to read the extract in the light of her mistaken assumption, for example judging the dollar amounts to be low whereas in fact they are expensive for the time. She suggests that Eugene is 'struggling' for money but does not reflect why he watches it go 'without fear'. Once she gets closer to the text, the quality of the work improves, for example her recognition of the excitement and opportunity behind triplets like 'power, glory, love'. She uses her contextual knowledge more wisely when she touches on themes like immigration and technology, but is still inclined to allow context to lead rather than pursuing the more heavily-weighted AO2 and analysing the way these themes are presented in the passage. There are some moments of promise but the answer needs to be fuller and more detailed for secure Level 5 marks. 21/30.

American Literature Question 2

Script 4: Top Level 5

'The ideals of freedom and opportunity are central to American literature'. By comparing at least two texts prescribed for this topic, discuss how far you have found this to be the case. [30]

) America prospered highly from the end of the First World War. Joining late and only suffering a slight buffer to their economy, the war appeared a distant, heroic frivolidy, isolated in Europe. Europe itself was in a state of despair, suffering from inflation, lack of profit and trade, depending heavily on the USA to help them. However, the USA simply devised its policy of isolationism which led to the economic success and prosperity novels such as "The Great Gatsby" emulate. The retaliation of this isolationism led to trade with Europe decreasing as they put high tariffs on US goods. This, combined with overproduction and "keeping on the margin" led to the catastrophic disaster of the Wall Street Crash which was arguably responsible for the subsequent depression. Steinbeck chronicles so shockingly in "The Grapes of Wrath".

With regards to this, it is arguable whether the ideals of "freedom" and "opportunity" are ~~not~~ central to American literature, as there is a strong argument for disillusionment being the central theme. This is evident in "The Great Gatsby", where his elegiac quest

for Daisy, as Trifone refers to it, is simply one of a fantastical holy grail. Nick, the narrator of "The Great Gatsby", even notices it himself. Gatsby places Daisy on an unattainable pedestal, which can only lead to disappointment. When ultimately, the "incarnation is complete", and Daisy performs for Gatsby, she symbolises his disappointment by crying at all his "beautiful, silk shirts". Furthermore, the fact Jay has her men cut the line "her voice was full of money", before the Plaza scene in the film adaptation demonstrates his want for the audience not to be disillusioned by his realisation of the shallow nature of his dream of Daisy.

A similar disillusion is set up in "The Grapes of Wrath", as California can be compared to Daisy as the dream of the Joads. Grampa calls it "the land of milk and honey", and it is referred to like the "promised land" of the Israelites. Yet, when the Joads arrive, after all the hardship and loss they suffer in an attempt to achieve it, they are faced only with the destitution and prejudice of the Californians. This again reiterates that it is disillusion, which is central to the novel, "The Grapes of Wrath", as opposed to the ideals of freedom and opportunity.

Furthermore, the corruption and inhonourable means that Gatsby goes to to achieve his American dream, purely and

the freedom and opportunity he had to achieve it. For example, his mansion is compared to a copy of a French "Hôtel de Ville", which is implicit of the illusion and falsity he creates surrounding his dream. The illegal network ~~and~~ of selling grain alcohol during the time of prohibition would surely suggest that disillusionment is central, as it was this dirty money that financed the enthralled parties, which saps any spectacle of freedom or opportunity from the novel.

However, the ability of Gatsby to create his fortune would surely suggest that there were elements of freedom and opportunity. For example, the American Dream, a term coined by James Truslow Adams, is defined as the possibility to anyone to achieve their dream via the means of freedom and opportunity. As we see aspects of this in both Fitzgerald and Steinbeck's novel, it is evidently and undeniably central. For example, a positive presentation of the dream in "The grapes of Wrath" is Casy's expressed desire for humanity to ~~be one~~ ~~be~~ ~~be~~ be a part of one "big soul". This is evidently linked to Ralph Waldo Emerson's philosophy of the over-soul, a characteristically communist philosophy, that all men and women belong to one overarching soul. Casy had the freedom, as a renegade fighter, to acknowledge that this was his true belief, and whilst

he was disillusioned with organised religion, ^{as Martin Shuckley stated} the move to California liberated his true purpose which was to devote his life to resistance of the Californian oppression of the Okies.

In this way, Casy epitomises the ideals of freedom and opportunity and even goes on to inspire Tom Joad, who becomes Casy's disciple. Tom emerged out of the cave, symbolic of Plato's own analogy of the cave, having achieved enlightenment, just as Plato's prisoner does after emerging from the cave. The oppression and hardship Casy and Tom endure in California enables them to discover freedom and liberation in their new socialist and marxist beliefs.

Similarly, Ma is liberated by the new found freedom of the oppressive California, because she is granted the opportunity to overrule Pa as the "citedal" of the family. She is seen taking on the authority and making the decisions, as Pa notices, "it just to be men who make the decisions around here". The role of women in "The Grapes of Wrath" is interesting as Ma holds the family together whenever Rose of Sharon, who is the carrier of new life, fails to give birth to a healthy child. Therefore, whilst Casy fulfills his mission as Jesus Christ, Rose of Sharon fails to fulfill her as the Virgin Mary. ~~However, the liberation~~

However, the liberation Ma achieves can be linked to the liberation of the "Grapes"

women of the 1920s, as women are generally seen as becoming more and more independent throughout the decade. Yet Fitzgerald disconnects Daisy from this, as while she appears to have the liberties of a modern woman, she truthfully is incarcerated by the fuel of two men; her husband, Tom, and Gatsby. Therefore, Fitzgerald's ~~disillusion~~ ~~of Daisy~~ depiction of Daisy as ~~the~~ a woman dependent on her husband does not correspond with the ideals of freedom and opportunity.

However, Jordan, described with short hair, and in trousers, giving her a masculine sense, is an esteemed golfer. She is more typical of the new woman and has parallels with Fitzgerald's friend Edith Cummings, who was herself a golfer and the first woman on the front of The Times magazine. Thus, Jordan is perhaps more of the typical picture of the modern woman, and does epitomise ~~Fitzgerald's~~ the ideals of freedom and opportunity.

In conclusion, whilst there are elements of American literature which have disillusionment as a theme, it would be wrong to claim that American literature does not ~~have~~ possess the ideals of freedom and opportunity. However, there is a strong case for "The Great Gatsby" having more of a central theme of disillusionment, especially in terms of the Valley of Ashes and the "waste land of dreams" collected there.

Furthermore, "The Grapes of Wrath" have the principle of disillusion at the heart of the novel, as the Joads are never even able to achieve their dream. However, in comparing the endings of the two novels, Steinbeck's presents one of deeper hope because of Rose of Sharon's "mysterious ~~and~~ smile", whereas Gatsby's is one of futile hopelessness of "boats drifting back ceaselessly into the past". Therefore, Steinbeck's is perhaps one of more which conveys the ideals of freedom and opportunity in a positive light.

Examiner commentary

This answer shows a very good grasp of its material, but gives at times the impression of relying a little too heavily on prepared material. Part of the answer seems to be drawn from a study of disillusionment and another part from the role of women; both of these sections have been adapted to the themes of freedom and opportunity, but a top level essay would have assimilated the material more thoroughly. There are also missed opportunities in relation to comparison. The candidate seems happier to consider the texts consecutively than to bring them into close contact with each other. Overall, there is potential for Level 6 achievement but this has not been realised here for the reasons given; the answer remains high in Level 5. 25/30.

Script 5: Level 5

'The ideals of freedom and opportunity are central to American literature.' By comparing at least two texts prescribed for this topic, discuss how far you have found this to be the case. [30]

C. Much of American literature explores the theme of freedom & opportunity, traditionally American has been dogmatised the 'land of the free' portraying the idea that anyone has the ability to be anyone. This stemmed from the 1776 Act of Declaration of Independence which drew up a list of American ideals which were key for a prosperous & developing Nation. However over the years certain events such as the 1929 Wall St Crash have rendered this freedom & opportunity causing a new theme of disillusionment. 'The Great Gatsby' By F. Scott Fitzgerald epitomises the freedom of the 1920's & the opportunity that came for the lost generation as a result of the end of world war I. Fitzgerald remarked himself that this "golden boom" was the "greatest stopping space of all time." This his narrator Nick he observes the 'zigzag spirit' of the jazz age exploring the opportunities that arose, especially for Gatsby. However Gatsby also ~~epitomises the~~ demonstrates that the American Dream coincided with the ideals of freedom & opportunity, "Gatsby believed in the green light, the organic future, that year by year recedes before us," however disillusionment of such ideals can lead to corruption. William Steinbeck explores the opportunities that come on account of the 'Dust Bowl' ~~crisis~~ which forced a huge surge of migration to California & the Texas pan-handle. Though he told family he explores how the rich exploited the freedom of the 'have-nots' & hindered their opportunities.

The 1920s saw a huge growth of ~~freedom & opportunity, there was an increase in~~ industrial ~~& mechanisation~~ & of prosperity the increase in industrialisation meant a production of cars which created the restless society on the move. There was an influx of migration and

an acute sense of awareness that anyone could achieve anything. Gatsby epitomises this through the theme of the American Dream. WWI enabled him the opportunity to study in Oxford, become a soldier & consequently meet Daisy from her on out "he had secured his dream in the a fairy's wing". His determination of his dream, "he had committed himself to the following goal," gained him huge wealth ~~and~~ creating an illusion of himself. His more replica's French chateaus in the time was that Myrtle ^{attempts to} creates a facade of herself. Myrtle represents a contrast to Daisy, Daisy being a 'bare' and portrayed as someone who is never satisfied & always desires more, "I have been everywhere seen everyone, done everything." Myrtle's city apartment ~~success~~ is expressed through vivid colour & lists, the 2013 Baz Luhrmann production portrays this with exuberant colours of reds & golds to ~~create~~ emphasise her lack of class in contrast to the "whites" & "golds" often used to describe Daisy. Both Myrtle & Gatsby demonstrate two people driven by an unkinable dream. Moreover his sense of prosperity is highlighted through ~~the use of~~ ^{the use of} words of novel, despite at Gatsby's parties, the fresh heritage of name such as "Jay Gatz" himself supports Nick's quote "I was within & without simultaneously enchanted & repelled at the inexhaustible variety of life." Wolfsheimer represents an Alca pure figure to symbolise the corruption of freedom & capitalism, who made money from "drug-stores" & speak easily, through a hint of prohibition law were 200,000 speak easily in NYC alone, Skively commented that anyone could pay to become anyone.

In contrast Steinbeck demonstrates the freedom of the people was taken from people such as the Joads, ~~the~~ the 'have-nots'. Unlike Entes such as ^{literary} ~~never~~ argue against capitalism that the Joads are flat characters, he states that their overall purpose is of great value. This can be seen in the way they ~~attain~~ suffer the hardships & seek opportunity, they represent the good side of the AD showing morality, whereas it is hard to justify a

single moral character in *Gatsby*. The rise of mechanization seen in the production of trucks, has had a huge impact on current farms & drove them west. Therefore while the assumption may be that their freedom is denied, this also gave the opportunity of migrating to California. Ma ~~demonstrates~~ epitomizes the opportunity as she acts "as the citadel of the femininity," the shift in dominance of her & Pa symbolizes these opportunities but were steadily increasing for women. In contrast through the *Gatsby* ~~was~~ illustrates

base of the new women through the flapper girls who show independence through things such as "bobbed hair styles", Daisy still seems wholly dependant on Tom & has no sense of freedom to follow her love for *Gatsby*. She is not free from her ideas of wealth, greed & ~~domino~~. Ma however represents this ideal of a strong independent woman, one who holds the family together. The reference to the "orange trees" & "~~the~~ *Gatsby* with white fences" demonstrates the ~~good~~ illusion of their opportunity, their dream is hindered by the exploiters such as the car sellers, banks & shennys of the camp, this is expressed through the new modernization that which rural areas failed to correspond to, "Man make the bank, but man can't control it." Therefore the control of the exploited & treatment such as the Hooverville camps suggests a paradoxical sense of their opportunity, this is further expressed by the death of Gatsby who symbolised everything of the old tradition.

The corruption of exploited can be compared to the disillusionment in the Great *Gatsby* & how it exploited *Gatsby*'s dream. *Gatsby*'s opportunity & dream is destroyed by Daisy's ~~unstable dependency on~~ *Tom*. Carelessness & restless character of the lost generation, "they were careless people Tom & Daisy, they smashed my & recreated him returned to their carelessness." Daisy's constantly dissatisfied nature "what will we do tomorrow & the next day & the day after next" makes *Gatsby*'s dream an unattainable illusion. However *Gatsby*'s determined nature makes "one will come" makes his ~~fatal~~ *fatal* inevitable. Fitzgerald shows the dark side of the dream not only through *Gatsby* but through Wilson. Wilson is similar to the Joads as he represents the have-nots from the values of work, "what girl does know"; however

"He best his a girl can in his world is a knowledge little foot."

Wilson shows little sign of progress & drive demonstrating that the idea of making something of yourself is not accessible to all. In this way Fitzgerald fails to recognise any prospect of freedom & opportunity, only disenfranchisement.

However, Steinbeck holds a more positive view suggesting that he may hope to reach these ideals of freedom & opportunity in his community. The bond of the family & Ma's reluctance to part Hughes contrasts to the emotionless characters of Cay. Cay best represents this rough and philosophical view of one soul, "maybe we're all got all sort of a soul, & we're all part of it." Steinbeck offers various images of prosperity to signal the hardships suffered will be rewarded. One critic (?) suggests that Cay is a Jesus figure leading the Jews to the promised land, these gestures of hope would suggest his to be true as seen in his time at the "Camp. The 1940 Tim Ford film keeps this sense of final prosperity in the wide Camp to signal his prosperity which contrasts to the previous Hoovervilles. However his very job is because he actual ending of Rose of Sharon feeds the men who are starving. However his images certainly evokes the idea of new life & re-birth, Steinbeck offers a shocking yet vividly prosperous image to end the novel. Though the death of her baby may symbolise a corruption to his freedom it notably resembles biblical imagery of Moses being sent down the river to free the people to the promised land, thus offering new ideas of freedom & hope.

The ~~symbolic~~ freedom in the book is illustrated through the symbolism of the car. This suggests the restoration of society on the move & the opportunity that came with this production, notably Fitzgerald refers to a white taxi driver, among black people, which would have shocked many readers. However it ironically acts as the instrument of death killing Myrtle ending her aspirations & dream. In contrast while the trucker attempts to destroy the Jews, it

In conclusion, the Great Gatsby demonstrates the central theme of the American Dream illustrating the opportunity not come with it. Fitzgerald celebrates & emphasizes the dream & pursuing it he open light in order to contrast to the inevitable corruption that come to Gatsby. While Fitzgerald focuses on the corruption of freedom & opportunity, Steinbeck shows that the possibility to the central theme through the antagonistic hopeful ending to Gatsby of Rose of Sharon & of Tom reading the paper. Overall the extent of it as a central theme seems more prevalent in the Gatsby of War as it illustrates real opportunity not hinders one of the hedonistic world.

This is a full and detailed response, but comparison is not very well developed and the line of argument is sometimes unclear. The candidate offers a great deal of material on *The Great Gatsby* and rather less on *The Grapes of Wrath*; ideally, the weighting of the texts should be similar. The texts are not very clearly placed in their relative historical/social contexts, and generally there seems to be more confidence in discussing *Gatsby*. The answer is substantial but not always well controlled; for example, there are slips in relation to names including 'Alca pone', 'William Steinbeck' and 'Baz lerman'. Credit is given for relevant substance and a good level of detail; more control and cogency would be needed for Level 6 marks. Level 5. 23/30.

Script 6: Level 4

'The ideals of freedom and opportunity are central to American literature'. By comparing at least two texts prescribed for this topic, discuss how far you have found this to be the case. [30]

The idealisation of the ideals of freedom and opportunity are central to American literature however many interpretations of these ideals end in it only being an ideal. As we see the darkside to the dream, ~~despite the~~

The American dream's key philosophy emphasises the obtainability of freedom and opportunity, this key theme runs throughout American literature as Americans believe you can achieve anything you work for.

Throughout Fitzgerald's 'The Great Gatsby' this theme of the American dream is highlighted. It is shown through the character of Jay Gatsby as his dream to recreate his past love consumes him. Gatsby 'believed in the green light' his hope to achieve his dream highlighted in

2) Fitzgerald's use of the colour green is the driving force behind his success in fortune and materialism. Like Gatsby, in Steinbeck's 'The Grapes of Wrath' The Joads express the theme of the American dream and the ideals of freedom and opportunity; Their freedom and opportunities are taken away by the banks and landowners as they are driven off their land, making the Joads dream for work imperative to their survival. The move to Europe provides Isabelle

archer freedom and opportunity in Henry James' 'A portrait of a lady' as she expressing the new woman ideals receives a substantial inheritance that allows for her freedom to do as she wishes.

Gatsby believes his quest for happiness with Daisy will be fulfilled if he can show her his change in wealth, this newfound wealth gets the attention he desired but as critic Stephanie forward said 'no amount of fancy clothes, expensive cars or extravagant parties will get him accepted by east egg' as social status comes before Daisys feelings for Gatsby, highlighting however much opportunity Gatsby had with his use of money his dream was still unobtainable and ended in Tragedy, further highlighting the darkside to the American dream that runs through American literature. This idea is also shown in the character of Myrtle as she has very little freedom or opportunity however uses Tom Buchanan to attempt to fulfil her dream to climb the social ladder; This darkside ~~is~~ is emphasised in her unobtained dream as like Gatsby her's leads in death and disaster.

~~It is~~ like Gatsby, Isabelle Archer's ^{new found} wealth ~~to~~ does not stop her freedom from being snatched away infact it is the reason for it; it is what attracts Osmond to her, she is a prize to him and like all the other things he collects he wants to collect her. Her freedom ~~is~~ that she thought the immigrant experience and

exoticness of Europe would bring 'is taken out the end of the novel as she returns to Almond out of love for her ^{step} daughter.

Unlike, both 'Gatsby' and 'A portrait of a lady' there is slightly more hope at the end of 'The Grapes of Wrath', although their ~~the~~ opportunity's are constantly taken away by the rich banks and land owners, the Joads' perseverance continues as Steinbeck's voice within the language criticises the rich oppressors ^{through characterization and biblical language} and celebrates the act of community the Oklahoma people have that through the biblical language ^{and} describing people as 'making one big soul that everyone a part of' the echo of Emerson's ideals highlight the sense of community in which everything can thrive within. The biblical connotations to Rose of Sharon feeding the dying man provides hope that the Joads will achieve the freedom and opportunity's they deserve like in Weedpatch camp as they are treated 'like people'.

In conclusion, the ideals of freedom and opportunity are central to American literature, whether ~~if~~ they express the dark side to them as Sarah Churchill suggests as 'realising a dream is enough to kill it' highlighted in 'The Great Gatsby' or the hardships you must go through to even catch a glimpse of your freedom as seen in 'The Grapes of Wrath' and how the theme of Rich v's the poor is linked

to the ideals of freedom and opportunity as many can give you both however it can also destroy ~~you~~ them in the process. Whereas the poor come together ^{in the grapes of wrath} for the chance at both freedom and opportunity indicates a new sense of freedom being earned, as much of American literature suggests in the 'road novel' and other interpretations of the hardships of achieving your goals

* Fitzgeralds 'The Great Gatsby' set in the 1920's is a time of prosperity and consumerism, described as the 'Roaring 20's' it is in great contrast to Steinbecks 'The Grapes of Wrath' set in the 1930's described as the 'dirty 30's'; the prosperity of the 20's was lost by the wall street crash in 1929 which caused the banks to loose money when reclaiming ~~debt~~, causing ~~them~~ the need for them to take back land from farm owners like the Joads' to make more profit in mechanisation with the use of tractors.

Examiner commentary

This answer is a competent survey of three texts in relation to the themes of freedom and opportunity. Discussion of Gatsby offer some detail, but the other texts are handled in a more general manner; a detailed comparison of two of the texts would enable the candidate to fulfil the assessment objectives more effectively. Discussion of The Portrait of a Lady seems especially thin, and the misspelling of Isabelle(sic) Archer would be worrying for an examiner. The answer is somewhat deficient in AO4 since the texts are generally dealt with separately rather than brought into contact with each other. Good Level 4. 19/30.



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