

## Examiner's comments

Generally speaking the student's work is well structured and relevant to the question. The following comments give a good indication of how an examiner would assess this sample student response.

### Criterion A: Knowledge and understanding – 3 out of 5

The student puts his main ideas into the contexts of the reader and the writer, comparing the times in which they were written and the times in which they are read today. While the contexts of the composition are compared with the contexts of interpretation today, with parallels made between Iran and the Taliban, the gulag and Abu Ghraib, there is not much illustration of the effects of the works on readers then and now.

### Criterion B: Response to the question – 4 out of 5

The student rewords the question a little to change the focus away from *explaining the continued interest in a work* to *explaining what makes a work timeless*. Nevertheless, the candidate understands the implications of the question. The argument that a work is timeless because of timeless themes is a basic but important one. Focusing on two common themes, oppression and dignity, is also relevant and insightful.

### Criterion C: Understanding of the use and effects of stylistic features – 3 out of 5

There is clear evidence of critical thinking when the student makes a link between Solzhenitsyn's use of free indirect speech and his fear of imprisonment. When explaining the correlation between Atwood's style, the use of dystopian fiction and the historical context, the student is not as clear. It would have been nice to have an explanation of dystopian and historical fiction, along with examples of illustrations from the work.

### Criterion D: Organisation and development – 5 out of 5

This essay is well structured. The student makes good comparisons of the works within most paragraphs. Once a guiding question is asked, such as *How can you keep your dignity under extreme circumstances?*, the answer is related to both novels immediately. The student integrates examples into the essay, referring to careful details of the novels, such as the butter incident in *The Handmaid's Tale* or how Shukov refuses to lick his bowl or wear his hat at dinner. The student makes use of linking words such as

*nevertheless, while and even though*, which act as signposts for the reader. The opening idea about continued interest in Shakespeare returns in the conclusion as well, which gives the piece a sense of coherence.

#### Criterion E: Language – 4 out of 5

The student uses a good register that is characteristic of academic essays. The introduction is a good example of this, where the student writes a long but clear thesis statement. The student uses a wide range of vocabulary. The sentence structures follow parallel patterns. For example, the student starts one sentence with *While Offred's situation may sound unrealistic* and then another with *While the Soviet labour camps have been dismantled*. This creates a clear link between the ideas of these sentences. Well done.