

IB Language & Literature HL
Summer Assignment: [HANDMAID'S TALE](#), Margaret Atwood
Grade 11, 2020-2021

Dear Diploma Program Language and Literature Students:

What follows is a short quote from the IB Lang and Lit Guide.

“All DP language programme subject groups promote a vision of learning in which the development of language skills and conceptual understandings of language are complementary to each other, so that the total learning experience of the student is as robust as possible.

As a result, DP students become more accomplished communicators in the languages they study when their abilities to read, write and speak about course content are reinforced and extended by an understanding of why and how people use language to communicate.”

(Language and Literature guide, first examinations 2021)

As you enter your first year of the language and literature program, my goal is to provide you with a meaningful and “robust” experience of study.

Your summer assignment comes in 3 parts:

1. You will read [The Handmaid's Tale](#), by Margaret Atwood.
2. During or after reading, complete the following notes chart. Do not hesitate to annotate your own texts.
3. Choose ONE of the 7 Central Concepts (see list at bottom) and write a 300-500 word reflection on *Handmaid's Tale* and how this concept relates to the novel. (Reflections may be informal in style, first person point of view, YOUR opinion.) Charts and reflection writings may be on one document.

The chart and writing is due the first week of class, August 10th. Please be prepared to share these with me at our SECOND meeting.

I look forward to working with each of you! - Kristin Doherty

Part 2: Chart

| Aspect | <i>Handmaid's Tale</i> |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|
| Author's Context & Background (context of production) | |
| Context of the work itself, Historical Events and Relevance (events/movements/place of publication) | |
| <p>Religion</p> <p>Find & explain a specific link between context and a quote/fact in the novel. (This quote/fact evidences this contextual background) What are the background ideas that are being illustrated in the novel?</p> | |
| <p>Gender/ Women's Rights</p> <p>Find & explain a specific link between context and a quote/fact in the novel. (This quote/fact evidences this contextual background) What are the background ideas that are being illustrated in the novel?</p> | |
| <p>Sexuality</p> <p>Find & explain a specific link between context and a quote/fact in the novel.</p> | |
| <p>State/Government/Power Structures</p> <p>Find & explain a specific link between context and a quote/fact in the novel. (This quote/fact evidences this contextual background) What are the background ideas that are being illustrated</p> | |

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| <p>in the novel?</p> | |
| <p>Power of Language</p> <p>Find & explain a specific link between context and a quote/fact in the novel. (This quote/fact evidences this contextual background) What are the background ideas that are being illustrated in the novel?</p> | |
| <p>Critical Reception of the novel</p> <p>Was it well accepted? Was it criticized? Why?</p> | |
| <p>Social Criticism of the novel</p> <p>What contextual events/ideas is the author critiquing within the novel? What textual evidence is there to illustrate this?</p> | |
| <p>Setting (within the novel)</p> <p>Importance of setting?</p> | |
| <p>Genre</p> | |
| <p>More Interesting Themes</p> | |
| <p>Universality/Timelessness of the work</p> <p>Why is this novel relevant to readers 20 years ago, in 2020, and possibly 20 years in the future?</p> | |
| <p>Social Groups</p> <p>Are these reflections of the author's context? What do they reflect exactly?</p> | |
| <p>Narrative Structure</p> <p>What is unique about point of view? Perspectives</p> | |
| <p>Narrative Perspective / Voice</p> | |

| | |
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| (What is stream of consciousness?) | |
| Characterization Note all important characters and relationships | |
| Style & Technique Poetic Language | |
| Satire | |
| Intertextuality | |
| Symbols & Motifs | |
| Significant Quotations (at least 4) Why are they significant? (discuss for each one) | |

Part 3: Informal Writing

7 Central Concepts of IB Lang and Lit Course:

Choose ONE of the following Central Concepts and write a 300-500 word reflection on how this concept relates to the novel, *The Handmaid's Tale*.

This writing may be informal in style and you may include your own opinion statements.

- The point is to get familiar with the 7 Central Concepts (below).
- The next point is to be able to share **your honest and thoughtful opinion** with me about the novel.

Identity The student might be interested in an aspect of the representation of identity of a particular character or group of characters in the text, or on the way in which the text relates to the identity of the writer.

Culture The student might be interested in an aspect of the representation of the culture of a particular place, institution or group of people, or on the way in which the text itself relates to a particular culture.

Creativity The student might be interested in an aspect of the representation of individual or collective creativity, or lack of creativity, within the text, or on the way in which the text represents the creativity of the writer.

Communication The student might be interested in an aspect of the representation of acts of communication, or failures in communication, in the text, or on the way in which the text itself represents an act of communication.

Transformation The student might be interested in an aspect of the representation of transformation or transformative acts in the text, or on the way in which the text itself is a transformative act either of other texts through intertextual reference to them or of reality by means of a transformative effect on the reader's identity, relationships, goals, values, and beliefs.

Perspective The student might be interested in an aspect of the representation of a particular perspective or perspectives within the text, or on the way in which the text represents the writer's perspective.

Representation The student might be interested in an aspect of the way in which the text represents different themes, attitudes and concepts, or in the extent to which language and literature can actually represent reality