

Compare the ways in which the writers of your two chosen texts use settings. You must relate your discussion to relevant contextual factors. (40 marks)

The authors of 'Frankenstein' and 'Never Let Me Go' present a variety of locations in the novels and utilize a range of devices to reflect important themes and ideas through the environment. The setting is used symbolically to create an atmosphere or suggest a message; in addition to this, the analogical function of the setting reveals the state of mind of the characters and draws a parallel between the setting and the character. Finally, the setting is used as a structural device to present the story and clearly demonstrate the progression of the novel.

Shelley uses the setting of the Arctic to symbolise the isolation experienced by Walton and Frankenstein on their expeditions. The ship is described as "surrounded by ice which closed in the ship on all sides", conveying a sense of passive resistance from nature to prevent the defiance of boundaries which occurs in the creation of the creature. The intolerable conditions of the Arctic driven by harsh weather and extreme winds mirror the creature's struggle for survival in the world as he finds himself cast out by the human population and finds the conditions within society insufferable. The weather embodies the fury of God as Victor violates nature by taking on the role of the creator as Shelley creates a significant image, that holds great relevance during the time of writing and in modern day society, of a shift towards a more secular world as power and values are passed down (or taken) from God to man. The recurring setting of the Arctic at the start and end of the novel is notable as it creates a sense of circularity and offers a satisfying sense of resolution. During the romantic period, escaping to isolated places such as the Arctic was thought to be a spiritual reunion; Shelley makes amends with God as Victor ceases to exist in the final chapter as he dies on Walton's boat symbolising that nature's vengeance and punishment for Victor for working against the heavens and aligning himself with God. Similarly, Ishiguro applies a symbolic function to the setting of Hailsham which is used to separate the clones from society and detain them within a controlled environment. Hailsham is presented as a safe environment and the clones attach many positive memories of their childhood with it, however it is a tool used to marginalise the clones and keep the inhumane operation behind closed doors away from the public eye, therefore Hailsham's true purpose is more of a prison than a school. Ishiguro hints at this through his eerie description of the grounds: "The woods were at the top of the hill that rose behind Hailsham house. All we could see really was a dark fringe of trees but I certainly wasn't the only one of my age to feel their presence day and night." The idea of physical boundaries and containment is explored through the threatening woodland that bordered the grounds, and the repeated lexical references of darkness associated with death, destruction and captivity which are directly associated with the underlying purpose of Hailsham to harvest the clones' organs. Never Let Me Go was written in the 1990's which unlike many scientific fiction novels is in the recent past, increasing its relevance and application to society today, and is suggestive of the direction scientific advancement could take as breakthroughs in the cloning industry had been made such as Dolly the Sheep. The novel gestures towards where these advancements may lead us and increases their validity through the setting of an England identical to the one the reader is familiar with, serving a verisimilitudinal function as it imitates the real world outside the novel and mirrors society, the only twist being a number of discordant features faced within.

Shelley presents nature as powerful and healing through its large presence in Frankenstein, equalling the importance of Victor and other significant characters. When Victor hears about the death of his brother William he swiftly returns to Geneva where he

portrayed
represented

A01
nearly
explained

careful

A02
perceptive
analysis is

could be seen to

A02/A01
interesting
take -
fluently
explained

quote?

include -
see
previous
comment #

A03 -
integrated
context

A01 -
terminology

is it?
throughout
(not sure
this is
true)
lexis of
surveillance
etc.

visits his brother's place of death; "vivid flashes of lightning dazzles my eyes, illuminating the lake making it appear like a vast sheet of fire". The dark description of nature following the loss of an innocent life and destruction of family bliss and tranquility reflects Victor's troubled psyche and anxious state of mind. The "lightning" symbolizes his realisation that nature is incomprehensible and is repeated to reveal the creature and expose Victor's weakness; "A flash of lightning illuminated the object and discovered its shape plainly to me, its gigantic and the deformity of its aspect, more hideous than blings to humanity, instantly informed me it was the wretch". Nature's power and omnipotence is revealed through knowledge as the light reveals the creature, causing Victor to be punished as the sight of his own creation causes him distress. In addition to nature's power to punish, Shelley also highlights the power of nature to heal as Victor repeatedly finds solace in nature, this is exemplified as he says the "noble war in the sky elevated my spirits." This divine imagery presents nature as restorative and suggests its life giving power and maternal force.

A02/A01
Sustained
analysis,
with
flavour
embedded
quotes
lexical
analysis A02

Throughout the story, Victor maintains a relationship with nature despite his actions to defy boundaries and continues to draw peace and comfort from it. Walton recognises this towards the end of Victor's life, claiming that "even broken in spirit as he is, no one can feel more deeply than he does in the beauties of nature", showing nature's eternal presence and forgiving spirit as it still allows Victor to feel soothed and protected by it although he defied it. Edmund Burke's idea of 'The Sublime' has a crucial relevance to this Gothic text written during the Romantic period; Shelley's glorification of nature is typical of the romantic literacy movement devoted to exploring and celebrating nature. The analogical function of setting in Ishiguro's 'Never Let Me Go' conveys the naivety of the clones as they are vastly out of place and uncomfortable in everyday settings. The clones struggle to fit in in public places as although they physically appear the same, they have never learnt how to behave in simple scenarios such as cafes and are amazed by common objects. Kathy explains her own fascination with supermarkets, "I like places like that: a large store with lots of aisles displaying bright plastic toys, greeting cards, loads of cosmetics, maybe even a photo booth. Today, if I'm in town and find myself with some time to kill, I'll stroll into somewhere just like that, where you can hang around and enjoy yourself, not buying a thing and the assistants don't mind at all". Ishiguro draws a rigid dichotomy between the clones and normal people as the clones lack a sense of purpose and find excitement and mystery in places such as a supermarket which to most people would be a chore to visit. This reflects the clones' inexperience in normal human interaction and lack of exposure to the real world. Kathy expresses her lack of interest in purchasing goods like a normal person would in this situation, instead taking advantage of the opportunity to soak up the atmosphere and find solace in a place away from her hectic schedule of driving around the country and visiting patients. The clones' dream of a banal, unoriginal life – fantasising of leading mediocre, average lives as shown during the games they played at the cottage, dreaming of their ideal life where they don't dream of being a "moviestar or anything like that" but instead opt for "becoming a postman or working on a farm. Quite a few students wanted to be drivers of one sort or another." These common lives are the best they can dream up for themselves, occupying a distorted novelty as their situation causes them to desire a normal life instead of an exceptional one. The clones are essentially stuck in a science fiction novel so their escapist fantasy is a banal life and this is the dream they get lost in and momentarily forget who they are.

A03
nearly
integrated
context
hermeneutic

A01/A02
embedded
quotes +
analysis

A03
awareness of
context

The setting is employed as a structural device by both authors; Shelley engages the repeated use of the storm to foreground significant events in the novel, such as creation and death. Prior to the deaths of Elizabeth and Henry, violent storms occur and similarly the creation of the creature is accompanied by violent weather as the event occurs on a "dreary night of November". The pathetic fallacy of the stormy conditions clearly marks the

A02 -
awareness
of
structural
choices

occurrence of important events in the novel, as the appearance of the moon symbolises the presence of the creature. Following the creation Victor recalls the "yellow light of the moon, as it forced its way through the window shutters" so that he "beheld the wretch", portraying nature's power over knowledge. The "rain pattered dismally" as Victor infused life within the creature, showing a personified retrospective alteration of setting as Victor may exaggerate the conditions in his narration to reflect his emotions. The weather further embellishes the disapproval of the Gods for Victor's actions as he usurps God and exploits women; following the destruction of the female creature, Shelley conjures up a storm: "immeasurable waters that roared and buffeted around me". These violent, punishing conditions imply nature's reaction to Victor's murder of the female creature and is typical of Shelley's presentation of females as passive and able to be possessed by males - a viewpoint that was typical of society during the 19th century, especially in Genevan society where there was segregation and division between the sexes who occupied stereotypical gender roles. In Frankenstein, Shelley creates a society exclusively driven by men as Victor (the male scientist) acquires the ability to create life therefore undermining the role of women in procreation, installing a sense of horror within the readers of the time who possessed an active fear of practices such as galvanisation and the creation of a race of immortal beings superior to the human race. In Never Let Me Go, Ishiguro impliments a rigid structure divided into three parts: Hailsham, the Cottages and the Donor Recovery Centres. The segregation of the different settings of the novel offers a sense of progress aligned with the clones' advancement towards completion. The clones spend the first sixteen years of their life at Hailsham, an institution similar to boarding school in the countryside. The description of "narrow twisting paths" and "overgrown bracken" that would "still be blocking your way" suggests an element of secrecy and containment of the clones, relating to the way details of their fate are the least clear to Kathy and her friends at this point of their lives due to the sheltered nature of Hailsham in establishing safe haven. The clones are kept in dark for the majority of their time at Hailsham and the pleasant environment and "wonderful surroundings" they grew up in deceive the clones and cover up the inhumanity of the operation at the same time as keeping it out of the public eye and pushing them out of society. As time passes, the clones move on to the uninviting, remote location of the cottages. Despite the cottages being rougher than Hailsham, Kathy claims "none of us minded the discomforts one bit and it was all part of the excitement of being at the cottages". Ishiguro forges a contrast to the propriety of Hailsham as the clones' home gets more shabby as they grow older and nearer to completion, showing the increased reality of their fate and lack of attention from society as they are forced to the corners of society where they are not seen or heard. Finally, the clones go to donor recovery centres before completion, where they undergo operations and recover between donations. The euphemism of the name 'Donor Recovery Centre' makes these places sound more positive and alleviates the sadistic process that occur here. Kathy feels Kingsfield is "not somewhere I'd look forward to visiting" with "no sense of peace and quiet", bringing the severity of what the story has been building up to and stripping back the glorification of the experimentation to what it is. The harshness of the recovery centres offer a potential reality of what could be if scientific boundaries are crossed, bringing to light questions of the ethics and morality of the cloning industry which continues to be developed today.

In conclusion, both authors use the setting to carry out the symbolic and analogical function as well as using it as a structural device. The authors adopt a similar use of setting as they relate intertextually through Tommy's final rage, "The moon wasn't quite full, but it was bright enough, and I could make out in the mid-distance, near where the field began to fall away, Tommy's figure, raging, shouting, flinging his fists and kicking out" and the creature as he sets fire to the cottage as if he were freeing the "hell he bears within himself" and watches the "forked and destroying tongues" of the fire he created. The description of the

A01 - evaluate common

// new para.

good quote -
when analysing his...
the idea of the moon 'fencing' its way.
A01/A02 - embedded quotes + analysis
A03 - integration of context

A03 - integration of context

A02 - analysis of structure

A01/A02 - embedded, analysed quotes

A02 - close lexical analysis

A02 - percentage analysis

A03 - evaluate common on context.

A04 - detailed connection

can... for... use... any... e

evab... gre... one... is... which... ext

is

