

**English A: Literature/Language and Literature – Standard and Higher Level –  
Predicted Paper 2 Model Answers**

**1 hour 45 minutes**

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**Instructions to candidates:**

- Do not open this examination paper until instructed to do so.
- Use the guiding question provided or propose an alternative technical or formal aspect of the text to focus your analysis.
- Answer one question. Compare and contrast two of the works you have studied.
- You are not permitted to bring copies of the works you have studied into the examination room.
- The maximum mark for this examination paper is **[30 marks]**.

Answer **one** question. Compare and contrast **two** of the works you have studied.

1. Compare the ways in which **two** of the works you have studied present the passage of time as a force that shapes or distorts memory.
2. Compare how **two** works you have studied depict individuals navigating systems of control or surveillance.
3. How is the idea of “home” or belonging challenged or redefined in **two** of the works you have studied?
4. In what ways do **two** of the works you have studied explore characters' desires to be seen or heard, and the impact of being ignored or misunderstood?

**Model Answer 1: Compare the ways in which *two* of the works you have studied present the passage of time as a force that shapes or distorts memory.**

## Essay Outline

### Introduction

- **Context:** Both *Hamlet* and *Persepolis* interrogate how memory is shaped not by objective truth, but by emotional, cultural, and psychological filters intensified over time.
  - **Focus:** Time is presented as a distorting force that fragments memory and makes it emotionally unreliable.
  - **Thesis:** In both *Hamlet* and *Persepolis*, the passage of time distorts memory by turning it into an emotionally charged, symbolically layered, and psychologically fragmented construct. Through non-linear structure, shifting narrative voice, and evolving symbols, both texts reveal that memory is not preserved by time—it is rewritten by it.
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### Body Paragraph 1: Form and Structure as Reflections of Fragmented Memory

**P – Point:** Both Shakespeare and Satrapi use fragmented or non-linear structures to show how memory becomes emotionally unstable over time.

#### **E – Evidence:**

- *Hamlet*: Soliloquies trap the character in emotional cycles, e.g., “O, that this too, too solid flesh would melt.”
- *Persepolis*: Flashbacks and juxtaposed scenes (e.g., prophet fantasies beside torture) fragment time and memory.

#### **E – Explanation:**

In *Hamlet*, soliloquies act as temporal loops—Hamlet remains psychologically in the past, revisiting memories that grow more obsessive with time. In *Persepolis*, Satrapi's graphic format and non-linear sequencing show how traumatic memories resurface

unexpectedly, unbounded by time. The juxtaposition of innocent and violent images reflects the sudden emotional dislocations of remembered experience.

**L – Link (Comparison):** While both authors show the fragmentation of memory, Shakespeare uses language and internal monologue to convey psychological entrapment in time, whereas Satrapi uses visual structure to illustrate how trauma disrupts narrative cohesion. Both techniques reveal time as a force that fractures, rather than clarifies, recollection.

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### **Body Paragraph 2: Narrative Voice and the Emotional Reframing of Memory**

**P – Point:** Both texts present narrative voice as a reflection of how time alters memory, emotionally reframing past experiences.

**E – Evidence:**

- *Hamlet*: Hamlet's voice becomes increasingly guilt-ridden—"Remember me," "time is out of joint."
- *Persepolis*: Adult Satrapi comments on and reframes childhood beliefs, creating a dual narrative.

**E – Explanation:**

Hamlet's introspective tone and regretful language reveal how his memories are distorted by guilt and emotional fixation. In contrast, Satrapi's memoir form includes both the child's and adult's perspectives, allowing her to reflect critically on earlier experiences. This double perspective reveals how time brings not only emotional distortion but intellectual reconsideration.

**L – Link (Comparison):** Both voices are shaped by emotional distance, but while *Hamlet* is consumed by memory's burdens, *Persepolis* demonstrates how memory evolves and can be interrogated. Shakespeare presents memory as paralyzing; Satrapi, as fluid and reframable.

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### Body Paragraph 3: Symbolism and the Emotional Weight of Remembered Objects

**P – Point:** In both texts, symbols become containers for distorted memory, accumulating emotional meaning over time.

**E – Evidence:**

- *Hamlet*: Yorick's skull → symbol of death, decay, and the futility of remembrance.
- *Persepolis*: The veil → evolves from confusion to repression to resistance.

**E – Explanation:**

Yorick's skull represents the inevitable decay of memory and identity, and Hamlet's existential despair in the face of time's destructiveness. In *Persepolis*, the veil transforms into a symbol of shifting identity—emotionally charged by personal and political experience. Its meaning changes depending on Marji's age, culture, and understanding.

**L – Link (Comparison):** Both authors use symbols to show how memory simplifies complex experiences into emotionally potent images. However, Shakespeare's symbols emphasise the erasure and futility of memory over time, whereas Satrapi's evolve, reflecting how memory can be redefined through reflection and growth.

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### Conclusion

- *Restate thesis*: Both *Hamlet* and *Persepolis* illustrate that memory is not a preserved truth but a mutable reflection of who we become as time passes.
- *Synthesis*: Through contrasting forms—Shakespeare's introspective soliloquies and Satrapi's fragmented visual memoir—both texts highlight how time distorts memory into something emotionally and symbolically charged.
- *Final Insight*: Memory, as presented in both works, is a negotiation between past and present, shaped not only by what was, but by who remembers and how long ago.

## Model Answer 1

In both *Persepolis* and *Hamlet*, the passage of time is not portrayed as a clarifying force but rather as a **distorting lens through** which memory is reshaped, intensified, or corrupted. Time in both works disrupts linearity, transforming past experiences into emotional burdens, political symbols, or psychological crises. Through the use of **fragmented structure, dual narrative perspectives, symbolism, and dramatic soliloquy**, both Marjane Satrapi and William Shakespeare explore how memory becomes emotionally charged and unreliable when viewed from the vantage point of time. **Ultimately, both authors reveal that memory is not a neutral record of the past but a dynamic force shaped by trauma, guilt, and personal evolution.**

**Firstly, both authors employ form and structure to reveal how time fractures memory, blurring the boundary between past and present.** In *Hamlet*, Shakespeare uses the **soliloquy form** to give voice to Hamlet's internalised recollections and grief. His early speech—“*O, that this too, too solid flesh would melt*”—reveals how the memory of his father becomes mythologised, while his perception of Gertrude's betrayal is exaggerated by emotion. Through **poetic diction, emphatic repetition, and contrasting imagery**, Hamlet's memories reflect personal anguish rather than historical truth. The dramatic structure reinforces this: time progresses, but Hamlet remains emotionally anchored in the past. In *Persepolis*, Satrapi mirrors this temporal fragmentation through her use of **non-linear narrative structure** and the **graphic novel form**. By interweaving past and present, she shows how memory is constantly reframed. A childlike Marji is shown fantasising about being a prophet, but adjacent panels, drawn with the same **monochromatic simplicity**, depict political violence and repression. This juxtaposition reflects how **memory collapses distinct time periods**, forcing innocence and trauma into uncomfortable proximity. Both works therefore use structural techniques to illustrate how time unsettles memory, making it fragmented and emotionally unstable.

**Secondly, Shakespeare and Satrapi both use voice to explore how memory becomes reshaped by emotional maturity and psychological distance.** In *Hamlet*, the protagonist speaks from a place of emotional turmoil, and his recollections are coloured by **regret, resentment, and increasing despair**. When he declares,

“Remember me,” echoing the Ghost’s plea, memory becomes both duty and curse. His later line— “*time is out of joint*”—reflects his growing awareness that memory is no longer tethered to truth but to obsession. In contrast, *Persepolis* features **dual narrative perspectives**: the young Marji, whose view is shaped by ideology and innocence, and the adult Satrapi, who reflects critically on these earlier memories. This layering of voice is achieved both narratively and visually: adult Marjane often comments on her past self’s experiences, adding emotional complexity and political nuance. In this way, Satrapi shows that **memory is not static but revised through the lens of time**. The adult voice questions what the child once accepted, transforming memory into a dialogue between past and present selves. In both texts, narrative voice becomes a medium through which memory is not just recalled—but interrogated and reshaped.

**Finally, symbolic imagery in both works demonstrates how time compresses emotional meaning into objects, reducing lived experience to memory markers.**

In *Hamlet*, **Yorick’s skull** becomes a powerful symbol of mortality and forgotten identity. When Hamlet exclaims, “*Alas, poor Yorick! I knew him,*” the skull is no longer a person but a relic—proof that **time erases individual history**, reducing memory to bone. The skull represents Hamlet’s realisation that memory cannot preserve life or meaning. In *Persepolis*, **the veil** operates as a similarly evolving symbol. As a child, Marji wears it with confusion; later, it becomes a representation of oppression, and eventually, resistance. Satrapi’s minimalist illustrations underscore the veil’s **shifting emotional weight**, depending on her stage of life. It is not one memory but many—distorted and reframed as time reshapes her relationship to culture, identity, and autonomy. Both authors therefore use symbolism to explore how memory is not only distorted by time but also **compressed into emotionally charged emblems**.

**In conclusion**, both *Hamlet* and *Persepolis* present memory as a fluid, unstable construct, shaped and often distorted by the passage of time. Through **fragmented narrative structure, shifting voice, and layered symbolism**, Shakespeare and Satrapi show that memory is inseparable from the self and is forever coloured by regret, distance, and change. Rather than offering truth, memory—like the past—is an emotional reconstruction, filtered through the haze of trauma, identity, and time’s irreversible flow.

**Model Answer 2: Compare how *two* works you have studied depict individuals navigating systems of control or surveillance.**

## Essay Outline

### Introduction

- **Briefly introduce the two works and their contexts:**
    - *1984* → Dystopian novel depicting a totalitarian regime ruled by Big Brother.
    - *Persepolis* → Graphic memoir about growing up under the Islamic Republic in post-revolutionary Iran.
  - **Highlight the central theme:**
    - Both texts depict how individuals navigate surveillance, repression, and ideological control.
  - **Thesis:**

**Both Orwell and Satrapi reveal that systems of control extend beyond physical surveillance to manipulate thought, identity, and memory. Through contrasting forms and outcomes, they show that while some individuals are psychologically broken by these systems, others survive by asserting personal truth and narrative agency.**
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### Body Paragraph 1: Surveillance and the Internalisation of Control

#### **P – Point:**

Both authors show that surveillance becomes most powerful when it causes individuals to police their own thoughts and behaviours.

#### **E – Evidence:**

- *1984*: The telescreen, the phrase “you had to live—did live, from habit that became instinct—in the assumption that every sound you made was overheard,” third-person limited narration.



- *Persepolis*: Scene where Marji is stopped for wearing Western clothes; depiction of fear in domestic spaces; neighbours reporting on each other.

#### E – Explanation:

- Orwell explores **technological and linguistic control**.
- Satrapi presents **social and ideological control** using visual storytelling (e.g. exaggerated expressions, contrasting panel sequences).

#### L – Link:

While Orwell's regime is cold and mechanical, Satrapi presents surveillance as embedded in everyday social life. Both show how **internalised fear is the regime's greatest weapon**.

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### Body Paragraph 2: Forms of Resistance and Their Outcomes

#### P – Point:

Resistance is portrayed in both works, but it takes different forms and leads to very different consequences.

#### E – Evidence:

- *1984*: Winston's diary, affair with Julia, reading Goldstein's book; ending – “He loved Big Brother.”
- *Persepolis*: Marji's clothing, humour, satirical drawings, classroom defiance; exile as a survival strategy.

#### E – Explanation:

- Orwell uses **irony and stylistic flattening** to show the futility of resistance.
- Satrapi uses **first-person voice, humour, and visual irony** to show resilience and defiance.

#### L – Link:

*1984* presents resistance as ultimately futile, leading to psychological erasure.

*Persepolis* suggests resistance may not be triumphant, but it can be **personally meaningful and redemptive**.

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### Body Paragraph 3: Language, Narrative, and the Control of Truth

#### P – Point:

Both authors explore how authoritarian systems control not only present action but also memory, truth, and language.

#### E – Evidence:

- *1984*: Newspeak, Party slogans (“War is Peace”),  $2 + 2 = 5$ .
- *Persepolis*: Propaganda, revisionist history, the contrast between official discourse and lived experience, Satrapi’s memoir form as counter-narrative.

#### E – Explanation:

- Orwell’s concern is with **language shaping thought**.
- Satrapi reclaims language and image to tell **personal, subversive truths**.

#### L – Link:

Orwell shows language as a tool of oppression; Satrapi shows it as a tool of survival and resistance. Both texts highlight that **to control the narrative is to control the individual**.

### Conclusion

- Reaffirm thesis:  
**Both texts examine how authoritarian control invades not only the body but the mind, manipulating thought, memory, and identity.**
- Synthesis:
  - Orwell’s protagonist is destroyed by a perfected regime.
  - Satrapi’s protagonist survives by preserving her voice.

- Final insight:  
**Even under surveillance, the act of remembering and speaking one's truth becomes the first step toward resistance.**

## Model Answer 2

In both *1984* by George Orwell and *Persepolis* by Marjane Satrapi, individuals live under authoritarian regimes that extend their control beyond physical boundaries to reshape inner life. Orwell constructs a **speculative dystopia** where the state monitors every thought, while Satrapi offers an **autobiographical account** of growing up in revolutionary Iran, where religious ideology dictates everyday behaviour. Despite differing in genre and tone, both authors explore how individuals **internalise control, attempt to resist**, and how **language and narrative are manipulated or reclaimed**. Ultimately, **both texts expose the psychological cost of repression and the fragile yet vital possibility of preserving truth**.

Firstly, both Orwell and Satrapi portray surveillance as a force that invades not only public behaviour but also the private self. In *1984*, Orwell imagines a world of **technological surveillance**, symbolised by the **telescreen**, which allows the Party to constantly monitor citizens. The statement “*There was of course no way of knowing whether you were being watched at any given moment*” reveals the climate of fear and self-monitoring. Orwell’s use of **third-person limited narration immerses** readers in Winston’s mental state, showing how control operates through **internalised anxiety**. The regime’s use of **Newspeak** further reinforces this, as language itself is stripped of the vocabulary needed for rebellion, highlighting how **thought becomes regulated through linguistic control**.

In comparison, Satrapi presents surveillance in *Persepolis* as **interpersonal and ideological**, enforced through **social institutions and community pressure**. Marji’s daily life is shaped by the presence of **morality police, religious teachers, and watchful neighbours**. In one panel, she is stopped by the Guardians of the Revolution for wearing **Nike sneakers and a denim jacket**—symbols of personal expression and Western influence. Through the **visual medium of the graphic novel**, Satrapi uses **stark black-and-white contrast** and **exaggerated facial expressions**

to convey both fear and resistance. While Orwell's regime is mechanical and omnipresent, Satrapi shows how surveillance can also be **intimate, cultural, and emotionally destabilising**. Both texts reveal that **surveillance is most effective when it leads individuals to police themselves**.

**Secondly, both authors depict resistance to control, yet they diverge in how they represent its form and outcome.** In *1984*, Winston's rebellion is **intellectual, private, and ultimately crushed**. His acts of resistance—writing in a diary, pursuing a secret relationship with Julia, reading banned literature—briefly suggest the possibility of autonomy. Orwell builds moments of hope only to dismantle them with **bleak irony**. The novel ends with the chilling sentence: "*He loved Big Brother.*" This moment, written in **stylistically flat and emotionally detached prose**, signifies Winston's **total psychological defeat**. Orwell uses this to show how authoritarian regimes destroy resistance not only through force, but by **rewriting thought and identity**.

In contrast, resistance in *Persepolis* is portrayed as **partial, personal, and ongoing**. Marji defies authority in subtle ways—wearing punk clothing, listening to forbidden music, speaking out in class. These acts, though limited in political impact, serve as assertions of **selfhood and individuality**. Satrapi's use of **first-person narration** and **humorous, satirical visuals** allows her to critique the regime while protecting her sense of agency. Her eventual decision to leave Iran is framed not as escape, but as an **act of survival and self-preservation**. Unlike Winston, Marji is not erased—she continues to tell her story. This contrast reveals a key divergence in tone: while Orwell presents a world where **resistance is futile**, Satrapi suggests that **resistance can persist, even in small and imperfect forms**.

**Thirdly, both texts explore how authoritarian systems manipulate language and narrative to control reality—yet the authors take this idea in distinct directions.** In *1984*, Orwell's regime uses **language as a tool of oppression**. Through the creation of **Newspeak**, the Party systematically narrows the range of thought. Slogans such as "*War is Peace. Freedom is Slavery. Ignorance is Strength*" exemplify **semantic inversion**—language designed to confuse, control, and subdue. Orwell's portrayal of **2 + 2 = 5** as a forced truth underscores the terrifying idea that **reality itself can be redefined by power**.

Conversely, Satrapi focuses not on a fictional language, but on the **distortion of truth through propaganda and historical revisionism**. The Iranian regime glorifies martyrs, censors dissent, and dictates how children should view their country and themselves. Satrapi resists this through her choice of form: the **graphic memoir** becomes a vehicle for **personal testimony**. She uses **visual juxtaposition**—such as cheerful state slogans beside images of death—to challenge official narratives. Her memoir is not only a story of survival, but an **act of narrative reclamation**. While Orwell shows how language can erase truth, Satrapi shows how storytelling can **preserve it against erasure**.

**In conclusion**, both *1984* and *Persepolis* examine how individuals navigate authoritarian systems that aim to dominate both the external world and the private self. Through distinct forms—**Orwell's dystopian novel and Satrapi's autobiographical graphic memoir**—both authors reveal how **surveillance, repression, and language manipulation work** to destabilise identity and truth. Yet their portrayals of resistance diverge sharply. Winston's defeat reflects Orwell's warning about the totalising power of ideological control, while Marji's survival offers a more hopeful vision of resilience through memory and voice. Together, these works suggest that even in the most oppressive conditions, the **human impulse to remember, resist, and narrate one's truth endures**.

### Model Answer 3: How is the idea of “home” or belonging challenged or redefined in *two* of the works you have studied?

#### Essay Outline

##### Introduction

- Introduce the central theme of “home” and “belonging” as complex, unstable concepts.
  - **Briefly introduce both texts:**
    - *Pachinko*: explores home as a diasporic negotiation shaped by race, culture, and politics.
    - *The Catcher in the Rye*: explores belonging as an emotional and psychological challenge in a modern, disenchanted world.
  - **Thesis:**

**In both *Pachinko* and *The Catcher in the Rye*, the idea of home is not tied to geography or comfort, but to emotional and social connection. Through narrative voice, symbolism, and structural choices, both Lee and Salinger challenge conventional notions of belonging, presenting it as fragile, conflicted, and constantly evolving.**
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##### Body Paragraph 1: Instability and Exclusion in the Physical Home

###### P – Point:

Both authors portray the physical home as unstable or inaccessible due to external or internal forces.

###### E – Evidence:

- *Pachinko*: Sunja’s family lives in Japan but is denied citizenship and dignity; Noa hides his Korean identity.
- *Catcher*: Holden’s family apartment is not a refuge; he avoids going home and drifts between hotels, bars, and train stations.

### E – Explanation:

- Lee uses **omniscient narration** and **restrained prose** to underscore the quiet alienation of her characters, especially in Japan where home is a place of surveillance and exclusion.
- Salinger uses **first-person stream-of-consciousness** to reflect Holden's emotional detachment and instability. His constant movement reflects a deeper **emotional homelessness**.

### L – Link:

Both authors depict physical spaces not as homes but as settings of tension, underscoring how external systems (in *Pachinko*) and internal disillusionment (in *Catcher*) erode the possibility of feeling at home.

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## Body Paragraph 2: Symbolism of Movement and Emotional Displacement

### P – Point:

Symbols of movement and impermanence are used to reflect emotional displacement and the search for belonging.

### E – Evidence:

- *Pachinko*: **Pachinko parlours** symbolise survival in a society that marginalises Koreans.
- *Catcher*: Recurring symbols—**carousel, trains, taxis**—emphasise Holden's rootlessness and fleeting desire for connection.

### E – Explanation:

- Lee uses the **pachinko parlour's bright chaos** as an ironic symbol: it offers financial stability but reinforces social shame. Belonging is transactional and conditional.

- Salinger's final carousel scene offers a moment of stillness; Holden's shift in tone becomes **lyrical and sincere**, suggesting a brief sense of emotional grounding.

#### L – Link:

In both texts, symbols of motion highlight the characters' ongoing search for a place—or a person—that can offer them a sense of home.

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### Body Paragraph 3: Redefining Home Through Emotional Connection

#### P – Point:

Both authors redefine home not as a physical space but as a fragile emotional bond or state of being.

#### E – Evidence:

- *Pachinko*: Sunja's connection to family, particularly in the final cemetery scene, evokes a **spiritual homecoming**.
- *Catcher*: Holden's bond with Phoebe and his final reflection—"I miss everybody I told you about"—suggest a desire to reconnect.

#### E – Explanation:

- Lee's **emotionally controlled prose** in the final scene reflects quiet acceptance; Sunja's sense of home exists in memory and relationship, not society.
- Salinger's subtle shift from sarcasm to sincerity indicates that **belonging is not location-based**, but formed through **empathy and memory**.

#### L – Link:

Both texts ultimately suggest that home is not inherited or guaranteed—it is **constructed through relationships, memory, and emotional survival**.

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## Conclusion

- Reaffirm the thesis:  
**Both texts challenge traditional notions of home by presenting it as emotionally unstable and culturally constructed.**
- Synthesis:
  - In *Pachinko*, belonging is denied by external systems—racism, displacement, national exclusion.
  - In *Catcher*, belonging is obstructed by internal factors—alienation, grief, and distrust.
- Final insight:  
**Through narrative structure, voice, and symbolism, Lee and Salinger reveal that home is not a destination, but a fragile, evolving condition of the heart and mind.**

## Model Answer 3

In both *Pachinko* by Min Jin Lee and *The Catcher in the Rye* by J.D. Salinger, the idea of “home” or belonging is presented as deeply unstable and constantly under threat. Far from being a space of comfort or identity, “home” is repeatedly shown as a site of tension, exclusion, or loss. Through their use of **narrative perspective, symbolism, and structure**, both authors redefine home not as a physical place, but as an emotional condition—one that is often inaccessible for those caught in systems of displacement or disillusionment.

**In *Pachinko*, Lee challenges the notion of home through the lens of diasporic identity and intergenerational displacement.** Set across four generations of a Korean family in Japan, the novel presents characters who are physically uprooted and culturally alienated. The omniscient third-person narration, shifting between characters and decades, mirrors the fluid and uncertain notion of belonging. Although many of the characters live in Japan for the majority of their lives, they are consistently denied the rights, recognition, and dignity that might allow them to call it home. For instance, Sunja’s son Noa is born and raised in Japan but is forced to live

under a Japanese name and hide his heritage in order to find work. The **lack of legal citizenship**, despite generations of residence, reflects how **state structures redefine and restrict the concept of home**. Lee's **plain, restrained prose style**—especially in moments of emotional trauma—intensifies the characters' quiet suffering, showing that home is not a place one claims, but a space one must be allowed into.

**The recurring motif of pachinko parlours functions as a potent symbol of impermanence and marginalisation.** Although the family becomes financially stable through these businesses, pachinko is viewed by Japanese society as a shameful, low-class industry. The parlours themselves—bright, chaotic, noisy—contrast with the emotional stillness and longing of the characters. Lee uses this **environmental symbolism** to illustrate the paradox of diaspora: a space that enables survival but never full inclusion. Sunja's physical home in Ikaino (a Korean ghetto in Osaka) offers some safety, but it is socially isolated. Thus, Lee redefines home not as shelter, but as **a continuous negotiation between safety, identity, and shame**.

**In contrast, Salinger's *The Catcher in the Rye* redefines belonging through the psychological alienation of its protagonist, Holden Caulfield.** Set in 1950s New York, the novel follows Holden's wandering journey after being expelled from yet another boarding school. Salinger's choice of **first-person confessional narration** gives readers direct access to Holden's fragmented thoughts and contradictions. This **stream-of-consciousness style**, with its repetition, digressions, and slang, reflects Holden's inability to anchor himself emotionally or socially. He drifts from place to place—schools, hotels, bars—none of which feel like home. Even his own family apartment becomes a space of anxiety and avoidance. The idea of belonging, for Holden, is not about location but about **authentic human connection**, which he rarely finds.

**Salinger also employs recurring imagery to symbolise Holden's search for home and belonging.** The **carousel in the final chapter**, where Holden watches his sister Phoebe ride in circles, represents a fleeting moment of peace and emotional rootedness. The imagery of movement—carousel, trains, taxis—recurs throughout the novel, often reinforcing Holden's **emotional displacement**. However, in this final

moment, the stillness of his gaze on Phoebe signals a fragile hope. Salinger's prose becomes briefly lyrical, stripped of sarcasm or irony, suggesting a redefinition of home as an emotional anchor rather than a physical space.

**Despite their vastly different cultural and historical contexts, both novels show how home becomes unattainable in a world shaped by exclusion and existential anxiety.** In *Pachinko*, the barrier is political and racial—characters are denied a sense of home by external systems. In *The Catcher in the Rye*, the barrier is internal—Holden's own disillusionment with the adult world renders him unable to find rest or trust. In both cases, the authors use **narrative structure** to mirror this instability. Lee's novel spans decades and generations, reflecting the long-term search for a place to belong. Salinger's novel unfolds over a few chaotic days, its **episodic structure** capturing the erratic rhythms of a mind in crisis.

**Furthermore, both authors redefine home as something that must be emotionally constructed rather than inherited or geographically fixed.** In *Pachinko*, despite lifelong rejection by Japanese society, Sunja builds a life rooted in familial loyalty, love, and endurance. The final scene—her quiet visit to her dead lover's grave—underscores a sense of spiritual homecoming, even in the absence of social belonging. Lee's **understated, emotionally controlled prose** here reflects a weary kind of peace. Similarly, in *The Catcher in the Rye*, Holden's connection to Phoebe becomes a symbolic refuge. Though he ends the novel in a psychiatric facility, his admission that he misses the people he has told us about suggests a slow, reluctant desire to reconnect. Home, for both protagonists, is no longer a place—it is an emotional process of acceptance and survival.

**In conclusion**, both *Pachinko* and *The Catcher in the Rye* destabilise traditional ideas of home and belonging. Lee uses **shifting narration, symbolism, and restrained prose** to explore the intergenerational toll of exile and marginalisation, while Salinger uses **confessional voice, fragmentation, and symbolism** to depict psychological alienation in modern society. In both texts, home is not a birthright—it is something fragile, elusive, and constantly redefined in the face of history, culture, and emotional trauma.

**Model Answer 4:** In what ways do *two* of the works you have studied explore characters' desires to be seen or heard, and the impact of being ignored or misunderstood?

## Essay Outline

### Introduction

- Introduce the universal human desire for recognition and understanding.
  - **Introduce the texts:**
    - *A Doll's House*: Ibsen explores a woman's search for voice in a patriarchal society.
    - *Of Mice and Men*: Steinbeck presents marginalised individuals whose desires to be heard are suppressed by social hierarchy and prejudice.
  - **Thesis:**

**Both Ibsen and Steinbeck explore the emotional and existential consequences of being misunderstood or silenced. Through dialogue, characterisation, and form, they depict the struggle for recognition in societies that deny voice and agency—though their characters meet very different fates.**
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### Body Paragraph 1: Silencing Through Social Roles and Power

#### **P – Point:**

Both texts show how societal roles and hierarchies prevent characters from being truly heard or seen.

#### **E – Evidence:**

- *A Doll's House*: Torvald's pet names ("little skylark," "my squirrel") reduce Nora to a role. He dominates their conversations.
- *Of Mice and Men*: Crooks is isolated due to his race; Curley's wife is never even given a name.

### E – Explanation:

- Ibsen uses **ironic, infantilising dialogue** to highlight how Nora's individuality is suppressed by domestic expectations.
- Steinbeck's use of **structural exclusion and symbolic namelessness** shows how social labels erase identity.

### L – Link:

In both texts, characters are not perceived as full individuals—they are reduced to roles, categories, or appearances, which blocks genuine connection.

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## Body Paragraph 2: Moments of Expressive Vulnerability and Their Consequences

### P – Point:

When characters try to express themselves honestly, their vulnerability is either dismissed, punished, or misunderstood.

### E – Evidence:

- *A Doll's House*: Nora's transformation culminates in her final declaration—"You never understood me."
- *Of Mice and Men*: Crooks says "A guy goes nuts if he ain't got nobody"; Curley's wife reveals "I coulda been in the movies."

### E – Explanation:

- Ibsen's **three-act structure** builds to Nora's assertive self-liberation; her final speech is marked by **declarative, emotionally charged language**.
- Steinbeck's use of **colloquial monologue** gives Crooks and Curley's wife rare interiority, but their openness is swiftly silenced—Crooks is threatened, and Curley's wife is killed.

### L – Link:

While Nora's voice is ultimately empowered, Steinbeck's characters are brutally

reminded of their marginal status, reinforcing the dangers of trying to be heard in an unforgiving world.

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### Body Paragraph 3: Structural and Stylistic Devices That Emphasise Silence and Suppression

#### P – Point:

Both authors use silence, stage directions, and subtext to show the emotional impact of being ignored or suppressed.

#### E – Evidence:

- *A Doll's House*: Stage directions like “a silence. A look passes between them” heighten emotional tension and miscommunication.
- *Of Mice and Men*: In George and Lennie’s final scene, unspoken emotion and dramatic irony dominate.

#### E – Explanation:

- Ibsen uses **pauses and fragmented dialogue** to reflect the psychological weight of Nora’s silencing.
- Steinbeck’s **short, sparse dialogue** in emotionally charged moments reveals the cost of what cannot be said—especially in the final scene, where George reassures Lennie just before killing him.

#### L – Link:

Both authors show that silence is not neutral—it is often a sign of unresolved tension, emotional repression, or systemic injustice.

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## Conclusion

- Reaffirm the thesis:  
**Ibsen and Steinbeck explore the human need to be recognised and the pain of being silenced.**
- Synthesis:
  - Nora ultimately asserts her voice, breaking free from patriarchal control.
  - Crooks and Curley's wife are punished for daring to speak out, revealing the inescapability of social marginalisation.
- Final insight:  
**To be heard is not simply a right—it is a struggle for dignity, and in these texts, that struggle shapes identity, relationships, and fate.**

## Model Answer 4

In *A Doll's House* and *Of Mice and Men*, characters yearn for recognition and understanding that transcends their social roles or physical appearances. Yet in both works, this need is frustrated by patriarchal, economic, or social systems that limit the characters' ability to express themselves fully. Henrik Ibsen and John Steinbeck use **dialogue, narrative structure, and dramatic/novelistic form** to depict the psychological consequences of being misjudged or silenced. For Nora and Crooks especially, the desire to be heard becomes a central, painful tension—one that ultimately reshapes their relationships, self-perception, and fates.

**In *A Doll's House*, Ibsen presents Nora Helmer as a woman trapped within a marriage that denies her true voice.** In the early scenes, Nora appears cheerful, childlike, and submissive—an image reinforced by Torvald's diminutive nicknames like “little skylark” and “my squirrel.” These terms may seem affectionate, but Ibsen uses them ironically to underscore **how Torvald refuses to see Nora as an equal**. His language infantilises her, and his dialogue is structured to dominate conversations. Nora rarely finishes a full argument uninterrupted, revealing how she is habitually unheard in her own home.

**Ibsen's dramatic structure mirrors Nora's journey from silence to speech.** The play's **three-act structure** builds toward her final confrontation with Torvald, where she finally claims her voice. "You never understood me," she declares, "I've been greatly wronged, Torvald—first by papa and then by you." The repetition of personal pronouns and declarative tone contrasts sharply with her earlier fragmented speech. This shift in voice is more than rhetorical—it symbolises Nora's **awakening into selfhood**. Her decision to leave, radical for a 19th-century woman, is the ultimate assertion of a woman refusing to be misunderstood. Ibsen uses the act of walking out—*the door slam heard around the world*—as a symbolic break from a life of silence.

**By contrast, in *Of Mice and Men*, Steinbeck portrays characters on the margins of society—especially Crooks, Curley's wife, and Candy—as people whose voices are systematically suppressed.** Crooks, the Black stable hand, is isolated by both race and disability. In a rare moment of openness, he tells Lennie, "A guy goes nuts if he ain't got nobody." This line is stylistically simple, yet deeply poignant. The **colloquial tone** reflects the realism of Steinbeck's style, while the content reveals a **profound desire for recognition and connection**. However, when Crooks asserts his right to be heard, Curley's wife threatens him with lynching. The moment is brutal and abrupt—Steinbeck uses **sharp, terse dialogue** to show how quickly voices like Crooks's can be erased. His retreat into silence afterwards speaks volumes about the consequences of trying to assert personhood in a hostile world.

**Curley's wife similarly suffers from being misunderstood, seen only as a flirt or troublemaker.** Steinbeck deliberately leaves her nameless, a structural and symbolic decision that strips her of identity. Yet in one of the novel's few introspective moments, she opens up to Lennie: "I coulda been in the movies." Here, her **stream-of-consciousness monologue** reveals a lost dream and a desire to be recognised beyond her appearance. Like Nora, she is never truly listened to by the men around her. Her death at Lennie's hands—accidental, silent, and immediate—is the tragic culmination of a life lived on the margins, never truly heard.

**While both works depict the consequences of being misunderstood, they differ in tone and outcome.** Ibsen allows Nora to reclaim her voice, leaving the play on her own terms. The lighting shifts, the tone darkens, and Nora becomes both unsettling



and empowering. In contrast, Steinbeck's world is far more deterministic—those who try to be seen or heard outside their place are punished or erased. Crooks returns to his isolation. Curley's wife is dead before anyone hears her pain. Candy is left behind. Steinbeck's **circular narrative structure**, ending where it began, reinforces the futility of these characters' attempts to be heard.

**Stylistically, both authors use silence and interruption as powerful tools.** In *A Doll's House*, Ibsen's use of pauses and stage directions (e.g., "silence. A look passes between them") conveys emotional repression and miscommunication. In *Of Mice and Men*, silence is also charged: Lennie's final moments with George are filled with dramatic irony and unspoken emotion. George's voice is calm, even soothing, as he tells Lennie about the dream one last time—yet the meaning behind it is devastating. This **disjunction between what is said and what is felt** captures the tragedy of voices left unheard.

**In conclusion**, both *A Doll's House* and *Of Mice and Men* explore the emotional and existential consequences of being misunderstood or unheard. Through dramatic structure, characterisation, and linguistic choices, Ibsen and Steinbeck portray characters whose deepest need—to be recognised, to be known—is consistently denied. Whether through Nora's final declaration or Crooks's quiet retreat, these texts remind us that to be truly heard is not a given—it is a fragile and often radical act.