

3. What impact does setting have on your understanding of the central ideas or themes presented in the two works studied?

In literary works, setting plays an important role in situating the work. Writers generally make use of this by providing their work with a certain historical, ~~setting~~ geographical, and social setting. ~~At~~ Over and above these more general settings, writer's add an additional level of depth in their works by choosing particular settings and venues for certain episodes in their work to occur in. The purpose of this is to provide readers with a more clearer and deeper understanding of the themes and ideas the writer is ~~just~~ trying to bring across in his/her ~~work~~ work. The attempts are usually successful. ~~An example of~~ The works The Great Gatsby (1925) by F. Scott Fitzgerald and ~~#~~ The Outsider (1942) by Albert Camus are two examples in which setting aids greatly in the readers understanding of the central themes and ideas.

The Great Gatsby ~~was~~ is a timeless classic by F. Scott Fitzgerald on the lives of the American upper class in the era of unprecedented financial boom known as the roaring twenties. It was a period of time in America characterized by prosperity and optimism. There was a general feeling of discontinuity associated with modernity and a break with traditions. In the 1920s, due to the separation of the rich and the poor, there arose a sense of disparity between social classes in America. This idea of disparity is captured by the geographical setting in the novel. The three main social classes, the "old" rich, the "nouveau" rich and the poor, were separated distinctly through the description of their geographical settings. The old rich resided in the fictional "East Egg", they represented themselves with rich, opulent and luxurious surroundings. Their houses were ~~firstly~~ grand yet very classy, ~~&~~ "we walked through a high hallway into a bright rosy-coloured space, fragiley bound ~~by~~ into the house by french windows on either end." ~~They were~~ In comparison with the nouveau riche, the setting the "old" rich surrounded themselves with, gave them an image of being ~~more~~ dignified, and adopting a simply evolved level in showing off their wealth.

In comparison, the "nouveau" rich, resided in west Egg. ~~Having~~ Being ~~off~~ new to wealth, the nouveau rich did not spend their money in such elegance as the "old" rich, instead they represented themselves with ostentatious displays of wealth. This is particular brought about by the setting of the homes they

resided in. Their home were gaudy and tasteless, often times being representations of famous landmarks, as for the case of Gatsby's mansion which "was a factual imitation of some hotel de ville in Normandy, spanning new under a thin beard of raw ivy and a marble swimming pool, and more than forty acres of lawn and garden". Thus the setting of East and West Egg, showcases the ^{idea of} disparity between the "old" money and nouveau rich, which ~~was~~ ~~this~~ is a key theme in The Great Gatsby.

Another geographical setting "The valley of Ashes", not only brings across ~~the~~ idea of social disparity in the 1920s but also brings across the theme of the American Dream, rather the decay of it, which is central to The Great Gatsby. The Valley of Ashes ~~is~~ a midway dumping ground between New York and the Long Island Sound - is a symbol of the lower classes' futile struggle to achieve the American dream. Right between New York, where people from all over the world strive for their dreams, and the fictional East and West Egg, as mentioned previously, where the people who have succeeded reside, the valley of Ashes is the opposite of glamorous and inspiring. Unlike the setting of East Egg, the alluring and glamorous setting of East and West Egg, the atmosphere of the valley of Ashes ~~is~~ is painted to be oppressive and depressing, ^{evident} through the imagery of a "dumping ground". It symbolises that in the process of reaching out to the American dream, millions have their dreams dumped and buried here, suggesting a corruption of the ideal of the American dream. Thus through the setting, Fitzgerald describes the ~~setting of~~ American dream as "a dust floating in the wake of his dreams". Thus the setting helps readers understand the writer's central theme of the ~~American~~ decay of the American dream through the setting of the valley of Ashes. What about setting of New York?

On the other hand, The Outsider (1942) by Albert Camus, uses setting to better help readers understand his theory of the Absurd. Firstly the novel is set in Albert Camus' native French Algeria, where the French or the "Pied noir" saw themselves as the colonial masters. Problems plagued such a society, and brought about the theme of a flawed judicial system. The protagonist Mersault is tried for murdering an Arab on the beach. However the ~~accident~~ murder is depicted as an accident and that there was no rational order behind it. ~~the~~ Camus describes that "the sun was pushing against me [Mersault] from behind", suggesting that Mersault did not kill the Arab intentionally but is compelled to do so. This idea was reinforced by "the trigger gave". The passive voice used here ^{narrative} suggests ^{precise} the

killing was not an active action initiated by Mersault but an almost forced, spontaneous action by the gun. The ambiguity of the murder makes the subsequent trial seem like a travesty and farce. Due to the flawed judicial system, the court ^{builds} a case against Mersault on the fact that he did not cry at his mother's funeral, labelling him a "monster" whose heart "is so empty that it forms a drain which threatens to engulf society". Thus the flawed judicial system present due to the setting of the novel in French Algeria, links back to the philosophical idea of the Absurd, which Albert Camus describes as humanity's futile attempt to find rational order. By trying to impose rational explanations for Mersault's irrational actions, the entire trial of Mersault is ~~the~~ Absurd, as it is an instance of humankind's futile attempt to impose rationality on an irrational universe. The ~~idea that society is unable to accept~~ the idea that things happen for no reason, and that events sometimes have no meaning is disruptive and threatening to society. ~~Return to setting~~ → answer the Q2

The ~~entire second~~ Majority of the second part of The Outsider is set in the courtroom. The ~~courtroom~~ setting of the courtroom ~~the~~ links closely back to Albert Camus' theory of the Absurd. The court symbolises society as a whole. The law functions as the will of the people, and the jury sits in ~~the~~ judgement on behalf of the elite community. The court's attempt to construct a logical explanation for Mersault's crime symbolises humanity's attempts to find rational explanation for irrational events of the novel, and like the flawed judicial system it outlines Camus' philosophy of the absurd.

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Furthermore the courtroom adds to the idea of judgment and observation seen throughout the novel, where Mersault's watches and comments on ~~the~~ what he sees, making him an observer of society. However in the courtroom scene society is observing and judging him, the constant watching in the courtroom suggests humanity's endless search for purpose, and emphasises the importance of the tangible, visible details of the physical world ^{in a universe} where there is no grander meaning. This reflects humanity's endless search for meaning which Albert Camus found Absurd.

In conclusion to the The Great Gatsby and ~~the~~ The Outsider we setting to help readers understand certain ideas and themes better. For The Great Gatsby, geographical setting ~~has~~ brought about the idea of social disparity and the corruption of the American dream, while in The Outsider, Albert Camus' philosophy of the Absurd was conveyed more effectively by the ^{geographical} historical setting and the setting of the Courtroom.

A: 3 more textual references
B: 3 ~~less~~ not fully explained
C: 3 effects of hysteria feelings

D: 4

E: 4

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