

Assessment highlights insights

from Claire Stevens, Principal Education Officer for English

Q Why was this student response selected for Assessment highlights?

A This assessment provides an opportunity for students to engage deeply with two texts, and to relate their interpretation of those texts to the world around them. While this is an analytical response, Lucy's writing reveals consideration of creative, reflective, and persuasive elements that may also characterise writing for a public audience. This article engages the reader in Lucy's interpretation of the texts, and a lively and contemporary conversation about literary texts, prompting them to reflect on their own critical reaction to both *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and *V for Vendetta*.

Q How has the student effectively responded to the school's assessment instrument and demonstrated the qualities of the top performance-level descriptors (PLDs) of the instrument-specific marking guide?

A This response offers a perspective about the representation of systemic power across the two texts, focusing on a particular aspect: the ways authorities rely on the suppression of the individual to maintain control. This point of view is offered through discerning analysis of perspectives and representations of concepts, characters and settings in the texts, and examination of the ways these representations are underpinned by implicit cultural information. The article examines the creators' stylistic and aesthetic choices in both texts to elucidate and validate the perspective it conveys.

Q What were the qualities or features of the student's response that made it stand out from other student responses?

A This article clearly addresses a particular aspect of the concept Lucy was asked to examine representations of systemic power. It suggests that the attempt to dehumanise individuals for the sake of systemic control is flawed, as 'you and I both know that it is impossible to entirely quash our instincts'. In deciding on a clear focus for the response, Lucy interpreted the texts and provided perceptive analysis to support and develop the interpretation offered. This focus and the relationship established with the reader are sustained. Lucy's response draws hope from its interpretation of dystopian texts, despite the stark warnings they offer, suggesting that 'the essential qualities of the individual — thought, creativity and memory ... can never be completely stifled.'

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