

# English B



# Candidate Marks Report

*Series : M18 2018*

This candidate's script has been assessed using On-Screen Marking. The marks are therefore not shown on the script itself, but are summarised in the table below.

Centre No :	Assessment Code :	ENGLISH B EE EXTENDED ESSAY in ENGLISH
Candidate No :	Component Code :	EE(ENG)TZ0
Candidate Name :		

In the table below 'Total Mark' records the mark scored by this candidate.  
'Max Mark' records the Maximum Mark available for the question.

<b>Examiner:</b>	
<b>Paper:</b>	<b>M18abengEEEE0XXXX</b>
<b>Paper Total:</b>	<b>32 / 34</b>
<b>Question</b>	<b>Total / Max Mark Mark</b>
Criterion A	6 / 6
Criterion B	5 / 6
Criterion C	11 / 12
Criterion D	4 / 4
Criterion E	6 / 6

Coursework confirmation

Yes

Hours supervisor spent with candidate

5

Declaration

Yes

**EXTENDED ESSAY – ENGLISH B HL**

**Category 3**


**Topic: First person narrative in Kazuo Ishiguro's *An Artist of the Floating World* and *The Remains of the Day*** ✓

**Research question: How does Kazuo Ishiguro use unreliable first person narrative to reveal the protagonists' difficulties in facing their past in *An Artist of the Floating World* and *The Remains of the Day*?** ✓

**Word count: 4000** ✓

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Clear indication of structure

## Introduction

Kazuo Ishiguro is one of the most prominent British writers of the last century. His widely acknowledged immaculate prose and absolute control over the stream of words<sup>1</sup> deliver to his readers pleasure as well as philosophical ambience convenient for reflecting upon choices and mistakes one can make over years.

While reading the collection of Kazuo Ishiguro's novels from the 1980s one cannot abandon the feeling of an accelerating mechanism setting itself in motion. Since a subplot of *A Pale View of Hills* (1982) served the author as a basis for both his second and the third novel, *An Artist of the Floating World* (1986) and *The Remains of the Day* (1989) build together a study of two men lost in the current of history.

In the last 30 years literary critics have investigated Ishiguro's first person narrative and the theme of memory present in his novels. In my essay I would like to highlight means, by which the author exhibits inner struggles of *An Artist of the Floating World* and *The Remains of the Day's* main characters, using first person narrative. Thus, how they try to deceive themselves and "you" (a narratee), to whom they are directing their story and in whom they seek understanding of their past mistakes, while simultaneously keeping visible distance. I am also going to reflect on the impact the first person narrative has when it comes to presenting the narrators' final attitude towards their past and whether their mind-set has changed. Therefore my research question is: how does Kazuo Ishiguro use unreliable first person narrative to reveal the protagonists' difficulties in facing their past in *An Artist of The Floating World* and *The Remains of the Day*?

REF

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<sup>1</sup> Mason, G. and Ishiguro, K. (1989). An Interview with Kazuo Ishiguro. *Contemporary Literature*, [online] 30(3). Available at: [https://www.jstor.org/stable/1208408?seq=1#page\\_scan\\_tab\\_contents](https://www.jstor.org/stable/1208408?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents) [Accessed 1 Oct. 2017].

## The Narrators

We meet the narrators in their fifties or sixties, with their best years apparently behind them in the pre-Second World War era. Masuji Ono, the protagonist of *An Artist of the Floating World*, is a retired Japanese painter, at the moment primarily concerned with marriage prospects of his younger daughter, Noriko. The narrator of *The Remains of the Day*, Stevens, works as a butler at Darlington Hall, just like before the war, but nowadays serves a new employer instead of late Lord Darlington. Noriko's marriage peripetia and Stevens' journey to his former colleague, Miss Kenton, open old wounds and lead to narrators' journey to the past and self-evaluation.

Although they try to hide it, both the artist and the butler are continuously troubling themselves with their past. They are not able to ease their minds due to the society's pressure to admit the erroneousness of their earlier deeds and to acknowledge their inability to move forward. As memories and digressions flow, we get to know a variety of issues with which the main characters have been concerned for a longer time due to their feeling of responsibility, guilt or loss. The author explains his interest in this theme by confessing:

*"What I'm interested in is not the actual fact that my characters have done things they later regret. I'm interested in how they come to terms with it."*<sup>2</sup>

Therefore, I am going to compare techniques and mechanisms Ono and Stevens use to face their deep-rooted problems.

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<sup>2</sup> Chira, S. (1989). WHAT THE BUTLER SAW. [online] Available at: <http://www.nytimes.com/books/98/12/06/specials/ishiguro-remains.html> [Accessed 1 Oct. 2017].



## Credibility

First person narrative allows us to form an intimate relationship with the main character, as we see the events only from narrators' perspective, filtered through their thoughts and feelings. Owing to the autobiographical storytelling type of narrative, so characteristic of Ishiguro, readers get closer to narrators' compelling thoughts and perceive their struggles more intensely. We get an insight into their thinking processes, though the scope of our access to their mind may be freely manipulated by them. We may only estimate how much of what they say is true and how much they wish to conceal and hence question their credibility. ✓

In the case of *The Artist of the Floating World* and *The Remains of the Day* usage of unreliable first person narrative is doubtlessly consolidated by the nature of narrators and the effect they wish to achieve while deliberately or unwittingly withholding information. Unreliable reporting, underestimating, exaggeration, euphemisms – they are all used by main characters to achieve their goal of justifying their actions in their own and narratee's eyes. Through an analysis of their reliability we can get a clearer view on their characteristics and how they deal with past issues, without a feeling of **?** an imposed literary scheme. This concurs with the author's wish to keep his narrators not "*any more unreliable than the average person would be in a similar context*"<sup>3</sup>.

## Delusion

Although digressing becomes more natural and common when one is getting older, behind Ono and Stevens's drifting lies also different nature. They cannot accept that

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<sup>3</sup> Jordison, S. (2017). Kazuo Ishiguro webchat – as it happened. [online] the Guardian. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/books/live/2015/jan/16/kazuo-ishiguro-webchat-the-buried-giant-the-unconsoled> [Accessed 31 Oct. 2017].



they may have made mistakes so they recurrently digress from the present, deluding themselves and the narratee by a distorted, “mended” picture of their past and avoiding unpleasant details, which could be unfavourable in the context of their justification and absolution.

Ono is trying to evade the inevitable truth. He is perceived as one of many imperialist Japanese artists, who were not very significant, yet now, after war, they are in the same category as their whole generation with its pernicious activities. Nonetheless, he invokes a picture of a past himself as a widely appreciated and influential artist. With his back to the wall he discreetly assures his older daughter and his own conscience that his past will not get in the way of Noriko’s marriage, while doggedly reminiscing his career only in a good light.

Stevens uses the same method to comfort himself, however, in his case it is not really his own past, which he idealizes, but that of his former employer. Through his actions the butler wants to justify the loyalty to a man accused of being a Nazi collaborator after the war. As Katherine Harrell states, he “*seeks to convince his narratee of the righteousness of his employer, hoping to portray himself as righteous by extension*”<sup>4</sup>. Thus, recurrently, yet vaguely, Stevens romanticizes former employer in his reminiscences:

*“Let me say that Lord Darlington was a gentleman of great moral stature - a stature to dwarf most of these persons you will find talking this sort of nonsense about him – and I will readily vouch that he remained that to the last.”*<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Harrell, K. (2014). The Narrators and Narratees of Kazuo Ishiguro. [online] Electronic Theses and Dissertations. Available at: <http://digitalcommons.du.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1269&context=etd> [Accessed 31 Oct. 2017].

<sup>5</sup> Ishiguro, K. (1989). The Remains of The Day. Faber and Faber Limited, p.132.

Because he does not want the narratee to be prejudiced against Lord Darlington, he withholds the reason for his poor reputation, without specifying what kind of “nonsense” people talk about him, spending most of the time dwelling on features of a great butler and recalling his old professional triumphs, without calling himself great.

Ono as well tries to indirectly convey the message of his “*position of large influence*”<sup>6</sup>, starting from telling how he got into possession of famous Akira Sugimura’s house, namely thanks to a suggestion from one of his pupils and an extraordinary procedure of “*an auction of prestige*”<sup>7</sup>. Never does he state his influence directly, modestly affirming that the respect his students had for him was “*exaggerated*”<sup>8</sup>. In this way the narrators want to impose their own view of themselves on the reader, persuading them to understand their past actions, more than their contemporaries. ✓

In order to avoid trouble and unfavourable reference to their past both Ono and Stevens at some point of their stories resort to holding back their identities. However, Ono cannot hide his identity for long, while the butler uses his anonymity and, as long as he lies, he is free from any connection to Lord Darlington. He has created a defence mechanism of denying any connections with the gentleman so as not to be forced publicly to explain Lord’s actions and his own blind loyalty. At these times he is not even honest with himself, excusing his lies with professionalism, overlooking the fact that he is indeed ashamed of his employer. This behaviour stays in opposition to Ono who “*never deliberately denies his connection to Imperialism*”<sup>9</sup>, which may be linked to his lack of anonymity. Yet, it seems he is just better at

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<sup>6</sup> Ishiguro, K. (1986). *An Artist of the Floating World*. Faber and Faber Limited, p.139.

<sup>7</sup> Ishiguro, K. (1986). *An Artist of the Floating World*. Faber and Faber Limited, p.9.

<sup>8</sup> Ishiguro, K. (1986). *An Artist of the Floating World*. Faber and Faber Limited, p.3.

<sup>9</sup> Harrell, K. (2014).

convincing himself and the narratee of his proper conduct *and* he is never put in a situation, when it would be more convenient for him to lie.

Since the narrators cannot come to term with their past, they produce superficial connotations to events of a great personal significance. Stevens, putting on his professional mask, recalls two events, which for other people would be painful and heart-wrenching, yet the butler connects them with a “*sense of triumph*”<sup>10</sup>, perhaps related to maintaining “*dignity in keeping with his position*”<sup>11</sup>. He is trying to fool himself into thinking a loss of two people dear to him– firstly his father, then Miss Kenton – is nothing to be sorry for, as long as he fulfilled his duties. ✓

At the same time Ono deals with a problem of his former student, whom he denounced to the police. He seeks justification for his action, although we never hear from his mouth that he actually betrayed Kuroda. Instead he only presents himself as a witness of Kuroda’s arrest:

*“I had no idea something like this would happen (...) I merely suggested to the committee someone come round (...)”*<sup>12</sup>.

It took him a long time to reveal this part of the story, which may be a culminating point, yet Ono ironically<sup>13</sup> sums this digression up as something of “*limited relevance here*”<sup>14</sup>, changing the subject. Despite this fact, we know, just like in Stevens’s case, that this event left a substantial impact on the artist and he remembers it vividly after years. The narrative’s tone, which is detached and contrasts with the situations ✓

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<sup>10</sup> Ishiguro, K. (1989). *The Remains of The Day*. Faber and Faber Limited, p.123.

<sup>11</sup> Ishiguro, K. (1989). *The Remains of The Day*. Faber and Faber Limited, p.238.

<sup>12</sup> Ishiguro, K. (1986). *An Artist of the Floating World*. Faber and Faber Limited, p.127.

<sup>13</sup> Harrell, K. (2014).

<sup>14</sup> Ishiguro, K. (1986). *An Artist of the Floating World*. Faber and Faber Limited, p.184.



*“reveals narrators’ sense of insecurity and ambivalence about their past commitments”<sup>15</sup>.*

Both Ono and Stevens avoid bringing up events, in which they could have hurt dear people as well as conveniently “forgetting” moments or conversations in their life which may have shaken them, hiding from themselves their perpetual presence in their lives, permeating their subconsciousness. As Wojciech Drag put it: *“their memories emerge as untrustworthy and [the narrators as] incapable of correctly and sincerely assessing the importance of past events”<sup>16</sup>.*

Throughout the novels, the narrators justify their past actions through words and example of other people<sup>17</sup>, thus indirectly implying that none of what they did was a mistake as they simply followed their principles - Ono the principle of following one’s beliefs and Stevens the principle of professionalism and dignity. Ono clumsily tries to portray himself as a *“likeable old man”<sup>18</sup>*, good father and a *“significant figure in his culture”<sup>19</sup>* concurrently emphasising his modesty. This technique reaches the peak of bizarreness, when the painter recalls his former colleague, Tortoise, for whom he once stood up. He cannot properly hide his real intention in bringing up this event, so he even explains himself to the narratee:

*“you may perhaps think I am taking too much credit in relating this small episode (...) But it is necessary to remember the climate of those days(...)”<sup>20</sup>*

before he goes on to Tortoise’s words presenting himself in an especially good light:

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<sup>15</sup> Drag, W. (2014). *Revisiting loss*. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Press.

<sup>16</sup> Drag, W. (2014).

<sup>17</sup> Harrell, K. (2014).

<sup>18</sup> Wong, C. (2005). Kazuo Ishiguro. Horndon, Tavistock, Devon: Northcote.

<sup>19</sup> Harrell, K. (2014).

<sup>20</sup> Ishiguro, K. (1986). *An Artist of the Floating World*. Faber and Faber Limited, p.69.

*“if only I had a little spare money, I would buy something for Ono-san, some token of gratitude for his kindness to me. But for the moment I can only afford something cheap and that would be an insult (...)”<sup>21</sup>.*

At the same time he shows through his colleague’s words what a kind and significant man he is. He even goes as far as inventing Dr Saito’s words at their first meeting: *“A real honour to have someone of your stature here in our neighbourhood”<sup>22</sup>*. We later discover Dr Saito *“did not know anything about Ono’s career at the time and therefore could not utter these words”<sup>23</sup>* and due to this incoherence, we can visibly see how Ono deludes himself and tries do delude his narrate.

Meanwhile Stevens tells stories of great butlers, implicitly showing *“he cannot be held responsible for his continuous loyalty”<sup>24</sup>* and presents his own position through interpreting Miss Kenton’s letter:

*“At this very moment, no doubt, she is pondering with regret decisions made in the far-off past that have left her (...) so alone and desolate.”<sup>25</sup>*

Both Ono and Stevens pride themselves in always sticking to their principles and not regretting any actions they undertook in the past decades. Nonetheless, their words build up into portraits of men longing for reassurance and a peace of spirit, while continuing their inner struggle with doubts and a feeling of failure made along the way. First person narrative exposes their hopeless search for absolution<sup>26</sup>.

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<sup>21</sup> Ishiguro, K. (1986). *An Artist of the Floating World*. Faber and Faber Limited, p.70.

<sup>22</sup> Ishiguro, K. (1986). *An Artist of the Floating World*. Faber and Faber Limited, p.131.

<sup>23</sup> Karttunen, L. (2016). A Sad Monologist. *Literary Linguistics*, [online] 5(2). Available at: <http://www.ijll.uni-mainz.de/index.php/ijll/article/view/59> [Accessed 31 Oct. 2017].

<sup>24</sup> Harrell, K. (2014).

<sup>25</sup> Ishiguro, K. (1989). *The Remains of The Day*. Faber and Faber Limited, p.50.

<sup>26</sup> Harrell, K. (2014).

## Distance

We cannot take Ono and Stevens' accounts of stories as reliable for the distance they create between themselves and a strange narratee. As their stories proceed, we may spot more and more holes and a tendency of brachylogy. This lack of openness shows that main characters have always dealt with their problems individually, without any support from others and continue to do so while looking for understanding of their issues by somebody from outside.

This distance may be visible in no unnecessary explanations. Ono never really shares his plans with the reader. Instead he expresses himself in ambiguous phrases such as "*a lord must gather his men*"<sup>27</sup> and "*a short walk up a hill (...) brought me to Chishu Matsuda's house*"<sup>28</sup>, without explaining what determined his actions and creating an impression that some unknown power governs them and he is just following it. The narratee is forced to connect the dots (such as the fact that Ono lives in a house of Akira Sugimura, a figure he admires for "*aspiring to rise above the mediocre*"<sup>29</sup>) and thanks to a web of memories discover the reason for Ono's undying ambitions, which are the cause of painter's frustration.

In Stevens' case we know that he wants to meet with Miss Kenton for her letter triggered his journey in the first place. Nonetheless, the readers must find out themselves why exactly the butler decided to tell his story. He does not need to use ambiguous phrases as Ono since his professionalism excuses his cold, balanced coverage of what has determined the trip and thoughts troubling or uplifting him during it.

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<sup>27</sup> Ishiguro, K. (1986). *An Artist of the Floating World*. Faber and Faber Limited, p.77.

<sup>28</sup> Ishiguro, K. (1986). *An Artist of the Floating World*. Faber and Faber Limited, p.86.

<sup>29</sup> Ishiguro, K. (1986). *An Artist of the Floating World*. Faber and Faber Limited, p.134.



Owing to the first person narrative, readers cannot really know much, besides what the narrator tells them. Therefore, dialogues play a huge role in understanding narrators' actions and feelings. Even though the narrators are rather fabricating dialogues, based on imagined attitudes<sup>30</sup> of the speaker or faulty memory, they are still secondary sources, providing us with hindsight. Only from the dialogues can we discover what was the true reason of Ono's visit to Matsuda, that conversation with Dr Saito was invented, and narrators' appearance and feelings at certain situations. ✓

The greatest ellipses appear in connection to narrators emotions and here dialogues may be helpful. Stevens is definitely a man of few words, when it comes to expressing his emotions, maybe besides these rare moments of "triumph". We can only know from words of Lord Darlington "*you look as though you're crying*"<sup>31</sup> that the death of Stevens' father was indeed a painful experience for the butler. The same applies to the end of the novel when stranger offers Stevens a tissue: "*Oh dear, mate. Here, you want a hankie?*"<sup>32</sup> Stevens' professionalism does not allow him to admit his weakness but he hopes that the narratee will miss the information about his emotional condition implied by others in dialogues. ✓

Ono's case is perfectly similar. Grandson's "*Oji is not to worry*"<sup>33</sup> and Matsuda's "*you look deathly pale. You looked so healthy when you first arrived*"<sup>34</sup> after mentioning Ono's former pupil, Kuroda, show us that the narrator is trying to hide behind a mask. Thus, we cannot trust them, as they try to project an improved version of themselves and their redesigned story. ✓

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<sup>30</sup> Karttunen, L. (2016).

<sup>31</sup> Ishiguro, K. (1989). *The Remains of The Day*. Faber and Faber Limited, p.110.


<sup>32</sup> Ishiguro, K. (1989). *The Remains of The Day*. Faber and Faber Limited, p.255.

<sup>33</sup> Ishiguro, K. (1986). *An Artist of the Floating World*. Faber and Faber Limited, p.188.


<sup>34</sup> Ishiguro, K. (1986). *An Artist of the Floating World*. Faber and Faber Limited, p.95.



As Ono tells his story with a few months breaks, it is impossible for the reader to estimate, when the narrator felt particularly bad and this time lap makes it easier for Ono to tell his story in calm, calculated words. Stevens' story is denser as he tells it in six days. In his case one particular ellipse can be observed since he describes every day of his journey apart from Day Five. This is of a very special meaning, since this is the day after the meeting with Miss Kenton, during which Stevens had to confront himself with, perhaps silly, delusions and hope of a new start. It shows Stevens' weaker point in his professional armour of a butler, as he must have been devastated. Nonetheless, he does not even hint at what he did that day or his current state during Day Six, which highlights the barrier between the butler and his narratee, as Stevens would never allow himself to "*remove his clothes in public*"<sup>35</sup>.



Disrupted chronology is also one of the means, by which Ishiguro shows how protagonists deal with their past. Stevens freely recalls positive memories of Lord Darlington and his past career as a butler, juggling between topics, which are safe and ensure that his actions can be justified. Trying to explain the improper actions of his late employer endangers the absolution he desires.




The painter also scrupulously chooses the order in which he presents the events, focusing narratee's attention on what he wants. He "*avoids attributing blame to himself or casting shame on his own actions*"<sup>36</sup>, bringing other characters, such as his former student Shintaro, into limelight. After he admits his mistakes and responsibility for all the harm and suffering of people during the war<sup>37</sup> at his daughter's *miai*, he goes back to a meeting with Shintaro, which took place sometime before and during which he blamed his student for not being able to find

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<sup>35</sup> Ishiguro, K. (1989). *The Remains of The Day*. Faber and Faber Limited, p.221.


<sup>36</sup> Harrell, K. (2014).

<sup>37</sup> Ishiguro, K. (1986). *An Artist of the Floating World*. Faber and Faber Limited, p.123.

*“the courage and honesty to accept what he did in the past”*<sup>38</sup>, without explaining further his own actions, his own long-term inability to confront the past and the contemporary society with its changed mindset. 

### **And it all ends with a... resolution?**

As the novel proceeds, the narrators further portray the confrontation between their desire and reality, tragic conflict between hanging onto their past and moving on. After all the suffering, they want to finally ease their minds and find salvation. Thanks to the first person narrative we experience their struggle and specific “catharsis” first-hand, while the question whether they achieved their aim in telling their stories and found peace is left open.

Both protagonists finish their narrative while sitting on a bench, at pleasant circumstances of the day, observing a group of people, who laugh cheerfully. We can observe these people through protagonists’ eyes, with a mild feeling of anticipation, what the next day will bring. We can feel the mood, their sentiments, hear their inward reflections, but till the very end they stay detached from their own current situation, focusing on other people. Ono ponders the new nation, stepping aside with his old values and letting the young win over, while Stevens devotes himself to professional development and satisfying his new employer. Thus, leaving the most important unsaid, narrators give away their inability to face the past and the reader never gets close enough to discover the truth to what extent their situation has really changed throughout the story. It can be interpreted that self-denial has been such a huge part of their lives for such a long time that they cannot change it 

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<sup>38</sup> Ishiguro, K. (1986). *An Artist of the Floating World*. Faber and Faber Limited, p.125.

and that this *is* their life. They do not in fact, as Deyan Guo states, “*reach a new understanding of life and values and reconstruct their identities*”<sup>39</sup>. On the contrary, Ono “*continues to define himself by his past (...) unable to reconcile his desire for significance with his desire for absolution*”<sup>40</sup> and both of them are “*determined to hold on to the notion that all of their actions have been “worthwhile*”<sup>41</sup>.

Telling their stories in first person was definitely of a “*therapeutic value*”<sup>42</sup> for them, yet Ono and Stevens could not really come to terms with their past. As the titles suggest<sup>43</sup>, the protagonists live in what remained from their past, not being able to farewell the floating world. “*Though each narrator brushes against a moment of anagnorisis, not one actually chooses to change*”<sup>44</sup>, as they find temporary comfort but no freedom from the past. They fail to admit to themselves that their meaning of what was right is not right anymore for most of the people, whom they call hypocrites. The optimistic ending notes are deceptive and stay in contrast with the sad truth - as Ishiguro pointed out in one of interviews, they suffer from “*Socrates complex*”<sup>45</sup>. They did not find a Socrates who would constructively explain to them, why their past values are no longer accepted, why they are wrong. They have to be “*their own Socrates*”<sup>46</sup> and do not fulfil this role.

At the end Stevens has a chance to talk to a stranger about Lord Darlington’s mistakes, but just like everybody in Ono’s surroundings, the stranger does not

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<sup>39</sup> Guo, D. (2012). Trauma, Memory and History in Kazuo Ishiguro’s Fiction. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, [online] 2(12). Available at: <http://www.academypublication.com/issues/past/tpIs/vol02/12/08.pdf> [Accessed 31 Oct. 2017].

<sup>40</sup> Harrell, K. (2014).

<sup>41</sup> Drag, W. (2014).

<sup>42</sup> Drag, W. (2014).

<sup>43</sup> Drag, W. (2014).

<sup>44</sup> Harrell, K. (2014).

<sup>45</sup> Hunnewell, S. (2008). Kazuo Ishiguro, *The Art of Fiction* No. 196. [online] *The Paris Review*. Available at: <https://www.theparisreview.org/interviews/5829/kazuo-ishiguro-the-art-of-fiction-no-196-kazuo-ishiguro> [Accessed 31 Oct. 2017].

<sup>46</sup> Hunnewell, S. (2008).



understand Stevens' issues and fails to help him solve them and give Stevens long awaited absolution. Ono receives support from Matsuda, who should know how Ono feels, yet it is not the kind of support he desires, as they have different characters. At the end it seems the painter and the butler gave up searching for the answer, as they cannot deal with their problems themselves and nobody in their surroundings can comprehend their pain.

It may be argued that Ono eventually faced his past at the *miai*, while confessing that he is aware of the fact that his past activities were wrong, and as later he finally reveals what happened to his former student Kuroda. However, he still portrays himself in a good light in all these examples, as somebody who brought benefit to Kuroda through denouncing him<sup>47</sup> and takes credit for the success of *miai*<sup>48</sup> since he made sure his past would not tarnish the positive opinion Miyake's family had on Noriko and her relatives. He is confident in his righteousness, afraid of negative opinions and of losing his alleged significance as well as influence in the eyes of the people. Shaffer put forward a hypothesis that "*Ono moves closer than any of other Ishiguro protagonists to admitting past mistakes and false ideas*"<sup>49</sup>, but that does not mean that at the end he is any more mature than Stevens who admits he should have been more reflective in the past but at the same time justifies himself: "*I trusted in his lordship's wisdom (...) I can't even say I made my own mistakes*"<sup>50</sup>. None of them is able to obediently follow collective truth, which stays in opposition to theirs.

Although the author made his narrators tell their stories in different lengths of time, their journey of re-evaluation comes in a full circle. Possible development of protagonists throughout the novel is futile, as after the period of time they needed for

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<sup>47</sup> Harrell, K. (2014).

<sup>48</sup> Harrell, K. (2014).

<sup>49</sup> Shaffer, B. (1998). *Understanding Kazuo Ishiguro*. University of South Carolina Press.

<sup>50</sup> Ishiguro, K. (1989). *The Remains of The Day*. Faber and Faber Limited, p.256.

feeding their inflexibility in the new world and reassurance, they both stop the process of building their self-awareness and bury this period behind them, looking for peace.

## Conclusion

In *An Artist* and *The Remains* Kazuo Ishiguro uses a variety of ways to present how first person narrators face difficulties when dealing with their past; how they try to manipulate the chronology of their memories and synthesise them into a desirable image of themselves. Through direct confessions they also induce sympathy in their narratees and make them pity these “*men who have an extraordinary capacity to lie to themselves, while at the same time, presenting themselves as very precise and cautious truth tellers*”<sup>51</sup>.

As till the end they both stay “*prisoners of their ideals*”<sup>52</sup>, Ishiguro through unreliable first person narrative shows clearly their inability to deal with their past and evading direct confrontation with the present. He also shows how, after a period of battle for self-awareness, they ultimately withdraw from it, unfulfilling their initial goal in telling their stories to the narratee.

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<sup>51</sup> Vorda, A., Herzinger, K. and Ishiguro, K. (1991). An Interview with Kazuo Ishiguro. *Mississippi Review*, [online] 20(1/2). Available at: [https://www.jstor.org/stable/20134516?seq=1#page\\_scan\\_tab\\_contents](https://www.jstor.org/stable/20134516?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents) [Accessed 31 Oct. 2017].

<sup>52</sup> Harrell, K. (2014).

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All presented correctly.  
Layout is good.

Topic is presented effectively. RQ clear.  
Methodology is complete.  
Knowl and understanding of writer's purpose and of novels is excellent.  
Terminology used accurately; language good.

Research is v. good.  
Analysis is relevant and effective. Discussion of excellent, well-structured.  
Good balance of running the two novels concurrently.







For use from May/November 2018

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Candidate personal code:

## Extended essay - Reflections on planning and progress form

**Candidate:** This form is to be completed by the candidate during the course and completion of their EE. This document records reflections on your planning and progress, and the nature of your discussions with your supervisor. You must undertake three formal reflection sessions with your supervisor: The first formal reflection session should focus on your initial ideas and how you plan to undertake your research; the interim reflection session is once a significant amount of your research has been completed, and the final session will be in the form of a viva voce once you have completed and handed in your EE. This document acts as a record in supporting the authenticity of your work. The three reflections combined must amount to no more than 500 words.

**The completion of this form is a mandatory requirement of the EE for first assessment May 2018. It must be submitted together with the completed EE for assessment under Criterion E.**

**Supervisor:** You must have three reflection sessions with each candidate, one early on in the process, an interim meeting and then the final viva voce. Other check-in sessions are permitted but do not need to be recorded on this sheet. After each reflection session candidates must record their reflections and as the supervisor you must sign and date this form.

### First reflection session

Candidate comments:

I decided to take the challenge of an analysis of literature. Impressed once by Ishiguro's skillful play with the reader in "A Family Supper" I wished to acquaint myself with his other works. I read "A Pale View of Hills", "An Artist of the Floating World" and "The Remains of the Day". I decided to focus on the latter two owing to their artistic value and greater similarities. Secondary sources - interviews and reviews - showed me different perspectives on the present themes, which can be useful in the future but art lives its own life and my analysis may greatly differ from what e.g. the author says about the novels. It may be difficult to specify the research question due to a huge range of possibilities. As I will be reading the books again I plan to centre upon the theme of memory, perspective and the narrators' mindsets.

SEEN

Date: 29/05/2017

Supervisor initials:

## Interim reflection

Candidate comments:

After rereading the novels I decided to look at them from a different angle. My topic had developed from the theme of memory through role of the main characters in the new society before I formulated my final research question. Nonetheless, the whole time I kept the focus of my work on Ishiguro's narration. In my research I looked to more academic sources. They helped me to deepen my understanding of the relation narrator-narratee, which is essential for the novels, and possible explanations of narrators' unreliability. I have written basis for the first two parts of my work so now I need to reflect more on the detailed structure of the last parts so as to make everything a coherent whole. Now my biggest challenge is to achieve this aim.

SEEN

Date: 26/09/2017

Supervisor initials:

## Final reflection - Viva voce

Candidate comments:

When I finished my essay, I reflected on the process of writing as a whole. I was surprised to see, how long it actually was. The writing itself was not as much time-consuming as choosing my field of interest and the research, but I saw how these preparations were necessary before starting the most important part of work. My reflection space and mind maps proved irreplaceable in putting my thoughts and ideas in order and after many trials create one whole from them. In the future I will also need them while working on different essays, since, as I concluded, it is impossible just to sit and write such a long piece of work at once. While working out the structure of my essay, I discovered that a focused research question was really helpful for planning an essay with a limited word count. It was my first experience of producing such a detailed analysis of a literary text but as I enjoy reading, interpretation was a fun extrapolation to this. The satisfaction from the creative process and producing my own piece of work was doubled when, after drawing my own conclusions, I read academic secondary sources and some of them corroborated my critical remarks. I was proud of my own work as well as knowledge and skills I gained.

Reflections are evaluative and show consideration of actions and choices.  
 Good personal engagement.

Date: 16/12/2017

Supervisor initials:

## Supervisor comments:

**Supervisor:** By submitting this candidate work for assessment, you are taking responsibility for its authenticity. No piece of candidate work should be uploaded/submitted to the e-Coursework system if its authenticity is in doubt or if contradictory comments are added to this form. If your text in the box below raises any doubt on the authenticity of the work, this component will not be assessed.

The student was very engaged in the process of writing the EE from the very beginning till the very end. She had come up with the idea of writing about Ishiguro's work before the student's were 'formally' introduced to what the EE is all about. It was a result of her fascination with a first contact with the author and a compulsive need to explore him further. She read a few of the author's novels and explored them initially to choose the ones she could manage best for the EE in the context of what was of greatest interest to her - the narrative voice.

The student's work on EE was truly 'a process'. She searched for secondary sources, read them thoroughly, came for check-in sessions to discuss their relevance. At times it looked as though she had not come to me for guidance, but to 'think aloud'. Her RRS was very elaborate - secondary sources including academic analyses, interviews with the author, mind-maps, quotations, own ideas. She reread the novels once she had decided on the final topic and formulated her research question.

The greatest difficulty seemed to be organizing the essay in a way that would allow for a logical development of ideas but avoiding the repeating of ideas in different parts and at the same time displaying the nuances of the narrative technique. To overcome the difficulty, she wrote and rewrote outlines of her essay and started 'proper' writing once she reached a satisfying concept.

Working on the EE offered her an opportunity to explore works of literature in a new way, as she had never before done such extensive research into fiction. And never read with so much focus on the language itself of a work of literature. It was a challenge that she found very rewarding - a new perspective on reading, a task she had never performed before and found she enjoyed.

She learnt that writing/research is 'a process' and requires preparation, commitment, time. I must admit she managed it very well, spaced time very perfectly, met all deadlines.

During the viva voce, I had no doubts that writing the EE was not arduous work that had to be done for the diploma, but a true intellectual adventure.

It was also a great experience for me to witness involvement of a young mind into the intricacies of the world of literature.

SEEN



## Commentary to support marking

**Subject: ENGLISH B**

**Paper component: EXTENDED ESSAY**

**Language: ENGLISH**

**Exam session: MAY 2018**

**Essay Category: 3**

**Essay: 32 A**

Criterion	Mark	Out of	Justification
<b>A</b>	6	6	The topic is communicated accurately and effectively. The RQ is clearly worded and focused, and the purpose is explained. These are relevant and appropriate to English B. The methodology is complete and there is a good range of relevant sources. The cover page gives all the required information and the TOC sets out the structure of the essay.
<b>B</b>	5	6	Knowledge and understanding of the author’s purpose and of the novels is excellent. The resources are used effectively to support the points made. Literary terminology is generally accurate (“narratee?”), and the language is sophisticated and clear.
<b>C</b>	11	12	Research is very good. The structure of comparing the two novels concurrently makes the argument balanced. Analysis of the texts themselves, with original and independent arguments, shows good insights. This leads to effective discussion, well supported by evidence from the texts. Material from the secondary resources is integrated well. The conclusion sums up neatly.
<b>D</b>	4	4	All aspects of the presentation are very good.
<b>E</b>	6	6	Engagement is excellent – reflections are evaluative, showing the process of planning and selecting the topic and material to be investigated. The candidate made well-considered choices of texts

			and planning. This shows a high degree of intellectual and personal engagement, genuine intellectual initiative and independence of thought.
<b>Total:</b>	32	34	This is one of the best essays from this session. The topic shows a mature understanding of literature, techniques and themes, and an original approach to the novels. Research skills are very good; independent investigation adds value, and all points are convincingly supported by evidence. Language and terminology are used accurately. Presentation and structure are very good. The RPPF shows excellent engagement. In fact, in all criteria, this essay shows excellence of performance.