

Candidate 1 evidence

Texts used in dissertation	"Wuthering Heights" by Emily Brontë	
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9.	<p>In "Year of Wonders" by Geraldine Brooks and "The Plague" by Albert Camus</p> <p>Setting is a fundamental literary device used to explore the devastating impact of the plague on individuals and society. Eyam and Oran are not just physical locations but metaphors for suffering which shapes characters trajectories and explores individual responses to crisis.</p> <p>Both settings in these novels follow rigid structures that govern daily life. In "Year of Wonders", Eyam is a small rural village with governed by religious faith and hierarchical structures, with characters such as the rector Michael Mompellion having a much higher social status compared to the central character</p>	

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	<p>Anna Frith, who as a female widow has much fewer opportunities and falls into a lower social class. "I used to love this season. The wood stacked by the door. The tang of its sap still speaking of forest. The hay made, all golden in the low afternoon light" Brook's evocative uses evocative language to romanticise the village's peaceful, cyclical way of life. The natural imagery she uses to portray the setting creates a nostalgic tone, and sets up a friendly feel about the village. The title of the first chapter being "Apple picking time" reinforces this idea by portraying the sense of continuity in their everyday life in Eyam, and how the familiar aspects of life brings comfort. In "The plague" The opposite idea is portrayed through the setting. From the beginning, we get the sense that Oran is a typical city, concerned with</p>	

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	<p>commerce and economic gain. "our fellow citizens work a good deal but always in order to make money." From this we get the sense that Oran's citizens are self absorbed and care more about wealth and class than the nostalgic view of life. We get the idea that unlike the citizens of Eyam, they are absorbed in the simple, mindless pleasures that only result in money making. Furthermore, Camus introduces a unique narrative style by withholding the identity of the narrator who seems emotionally detached from the story they are telling. They describe Oran as "an ugly town." This suggests the town lacks natural beauty and that its real beauty lies in its soullessness and culture. The anonymous narrator leaves the reader questioning their identity and why they are so detached, giving the sense that they</p>	

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	are witnessing the plague unfold from the outside which allows a greater sense of connection to be created deeper between the reader and each individual character. Overall, each authors depiction of setting in their pre-plague states sets up the type of people who live there and foreshadows how each will react to suffering and crisis.
	As the initial outbreak of the plague unfolds, the psychological disintegration of each setting is shown in the initial reactions of the towns citizens. In "Year of Wonders" Anna sees this as an opportunity to step into new roles. Once previously an overlooked widow, Anna, alongside Eunor Mompellion takes on the role of village healer and midwife as many of the more figures pass on or step down from their roles. "our village was far from any important road and our men were valued

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	<p>more for the delving of lead rather than the firing of it." This shows how once a once already rural, narrow minded village must progress through the crisis on their own without external help. This setting reinforces the hierarchal structure which Brooker creates in Eyam, suggesting how it is a small, close knit community who follows the typical ideas followed in the 1660's, where women were mistreated. However, Anna ignores the expectations and uses the outbreak to show bravery in the face of crisis. In contrast, the citizens of the Oran in "The plague" take a different approach with the town becoming a metaphorical prison, stripping citizens of their agency. "Like a lifeless island" Dr Rieux describes the setting of Oran in this way after the first wave of the outbreak as the gates to Oran close, shutting themselves off from the rest of society. This shows the two contrasting reactions to the victims of</p>	

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<p>The plague. In "Year of Wonders" citizens such as Anna Frith spot the emerging opportunities and take on new roles in aim to help their fellow citizens push through crisis. Whereas in "The Plague" instead of coming together, the citizens push each other out, acting out in a state of fear. Both Camus and Brooks effectively use setting to explore the impact the plague has had on society.</p>	
<p>Both novels explore gender limitations though in different ways. In "Year of Wonders", Anys Gowdie, much like Anna pushes past the gender based expectations of women in that time period, claiming she does not need a man in order to survive and be successful, something which many women in this society fail to see. "Why would I marry? I'm not made to be any man's chattel. I have my work which I love, I have my home. It is not much, I grant, yet sufficient for my shelter. But more</p>	

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	<p> In "The Plague" Father Paneloux delivers a sermon in front of many people in a church to suggest his religious views that God has sent the plague to punish the citizens for their sins. "my brethren a calamity has befallen you, my brethren you deserved it." This shows the theological interpretation of the plague, introducing a third person narrative where the readers can hear the thoughts and beliefs from a priest himself. Paneloux delivers this sermon to portray his beliefs that there is no innocent real explanation for human suffering and that all victims deserved it. This sermon reinforces Camus philosophical ideas and exacerbates the thematic religious interpretation of exile and religious absolutism, and absurdism. The setting of the church amplifies the religious beliefs and ideas explored throughout the novel and suggest Paneloux sees himself as a higher power compared to the rest of Oran's citizens. </p>	

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	<p>Both novels also explore physical settings as well to show the profound impact of the plague. In "Year of wonders" places once associated with arbitrary represent peacefulness and community becomes a site of chaos. The village green for instance, somewhere tied with nature and reinforcing the friendliness of the village becomes the murder site of Anys Gowdie. "many had begun muttering of devilment and their eyes turned towards widow Gowdie, clamouring upon her as a witch". The impact of the plague on its citizens led to extreme cases of hysteria ^{and superstition} among the village causing it to become a common ground for scapegoating and leading to the brutal murder of Anys Gowdie accused of witchcraft. In "The Plague" similarly places once associated with education, innocence and future possibility becomes a place of death meaningless death, as a cure</p>	

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	<p>for the plague is tested on an innocent child. "they had seen many die for several months the plague had not discriminated in its victims, but never before had they followed the suffering of a child minute by minute." Ponceau and Rieux watch firsthand the death of the innocent Other child creating great trauma for them both. "his frail bones were bowing beneath the raging winds of the plague and cracking under the repeated blasts of fever." The pathetic fancy used of the winds portrays the harsh and powerful nature of the plague and the helplessness of the human kind against such an unk uncontrollable force. This leads to Ponceau's second sermon where we see a complete shift in his religious views after he witnesses the death of the innocent. His shift in language is subtle yet powerful as he no longer uses "you" but "we" to address the congregation. This suggests he</p>	

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	<p>now see himself as equal and no longer superior to everyone else. ★</p>	
	<p>The use of setting in both novels leads its citizens to question meaning and causes an overall shift in the ongoing exploration of religious views.</p>	
	<p>⊕ Furthermore, you can see the shift in the congregation as the first sermon presented a full church whereas the second sermon is 3/4 empty with only male guests. This shows the loss of hope in religion and equality amongst Orans citizens as they no longer believe the plague is there to punish only those who deserve it. This also links to near of Wonders and the thematic exploration of women's roles as no women attended the second sermon showing a loss in trust and hope.</p>	

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	<p>Both authors use natural imagery to bring an allegorical meaning into the contexts. In "Year of Wonders" the mines for instance represent the descent into suffering. With Anna and Elinor going down into the mine it emphasises hidden truths and entrapment, showing how Brooks uses setting to reinforce her central ideas of resilience and suffering amidst crisis.</p>
	<p>In "The Plague" Camus links the outbreak to World War II. The ^{analogy of} war is used as a microcosm for the plague to show the human ways of coping with morality, mortality and resistance. The outbreak of the plague and its impact on its citizens links to the ways of life in WWII under the French Nazi rule, and the closed off society links closely to a society under totalitarianism.</p>

