

Handmaid's Tale Knowledge Organiser (A Level English Literature A – AQA)					
Characters	Offred: Narrator and protagonist, Handmaid to the Commander. Mentally resilient character, finds many coping strategies to survive the regime. Ofglen: Offred's shopping partner and fellow Handmaid, member of the secret underground resistance movement 'Mayday'. She hangs herself when this is discovered. Offred's mother: Single mother and feminist activist.	The Commander: Named Fred, believed to be one of the founders of Gilead. Married to Serena Joy, has secret affairs with his Handmaids, secretly breaks the rules of Gilead. Serena Joy: Married to the Commander, former gospel singer and advocate for traditional values. Desperate for a baby but unable to have her own. Just as trapped as all the other women in Gilead, despite her elevated social position. Aunt Lydia: Aunt from Offred's experiences of re-education/ brainwashing at the Red Centre. Sadistic and religiously extreme, her biblical quotes and mis-quotes reinforce the male-dominated regime.	Ofwarren: Real name is Janine, a fellow Handmaid. Struggled with her mental health at the Red Centre, she's a conformist, is smug when she conceives but then has a deformed baby (an 'Unbaby'). Presented as a victim of the system and a generally weak character. Luke: Offred's husband from her past life. He was married before and had an affair with Offred before marrying her and having a child together. They all tried to escape to Canada but were captured. We're unsure of Luke's fate.	Moirra: Offred's best friend from the past. They also went the Red Centre together and were trained as Handmaids. After an escape attempt went wrong, Moira is incarcerated at Jezebel's where Offred bumps into her. Nick: A Guardian (a low ranking officer of the Gilead regime) who is assigned to the Commander's household as chauffeur and gardener, has sexual relations with Offred after Serena Joy plans to use them both for a baby, hints that he's also a secret member of the resistance movement or a member of Gilead's secret police called the Eyes. An ambiguous character, we're unsure if he can be trusted.	
Aspects of Genre					Cross Curricular Links
Speculative Fiction: Atwood is suggesting It could really happen; Bildungsroman: A novel in which the protagonist grows, learns and matures; a 'coming of age' narrative; Counter Discourse: Resistance that takes the form of written or spoken communication Écriture féminine: Feminine writing, a term borrowed from French feminist theory about signs of gender in writing; it refers to highly metaphorical, often unpunctuated flowing writing which represents female body processes and emotional rhythms Dystopia: patriarchal, totalitarianism, dictatorship, strict social hierarchies, erasure of individual differences in the interests of a 'collective good', censorship, Propaganda, state control of language A04 Gilead's invented biblical rhetoric and its new vocabulary for Handmaid's greetings and collectives can be compared with Orwell's Newspeak in 1984. In both cases language is changed into an instrument not for communication purposes but to smother dissenting voices, particularly those of women.					
Historical Context					Prior Knowledge
Atwood stated that she didn't allow any events to occur in Gilead without them happening at some point in history (e.g. mass hangings, the threat of nuclear war and the hierarchical system of Nazi Germany). Puritan: A member of a group of English Protestants of the late 16th and 17th centuries who regarded the Reformation of the Church under Elizabeth I as incomplete and sought to simplify and regulate forms of worship. Feminism: Atwood charts a brief history of North American Feminist Movement since 1960s: rise of second wave (Offred's mother) and anti-feminist backlash of New Right Christian Fundamentalism. Voices of women represent a range of different feminist traditions: Women's Liberation Movement – Offred's mum (single parent) belongs to early activist group with its campaigns for women's sexual freedom, pro-choice rallies, anti-pornography. Offred laments political apathy of younger women – believes this gives power to extreme right. Opponents to feminism – Commander's wife (perhaps based on Phyllis Schlafly). Younger women – (who grew up in 1970s/ 80s) have varying roles: Janine (accepting of role as victim) Moira (radical lesbian feminist) and Offred (not overtly political but her story highlights the paradoxes and dilemmas in contemporary feminism. The American New Right Heavily influenced by the rise of the right-wing fundamentalists in the 1980s. They warned against the 'Birth Dearth' and were vocal against the right to abortion, the rise of divorce and the growth of Gay Rights Movement. Gained backing from President Reagan and Republican Party. They sought to influence American politics and tighten public morals and government legislation on family issues. Support for the New Right was particularly strong in the South – the 'Bible Belt.' Phyllis Schlafly – travelled around making speeches about importance of traditional values – model for Serena Joy?					Students will be familiar with the following assessment objectives from GCSE AO1 – argument AO2 – Authorial Methods AO3 – Context. These foundations will be built upon and students will be required to pre-read the sections of the text prior to class.
					Future Learning
					Feminism modules appear on most English university courses. Analytical skills will be useful for an Arts subject and careers such as Law. Cover activism and lobby groups; NGO's – link to 'mayday'; Nature of power/leadership; Gender roles in the workplace. Flipped model preparing them for university.
Ch	Plot	Methods	Quotations	Vocabulary	
Epigr	0 Dedications to Mary Webster and Perry Miller	Puritan: Ancestor who survived hanging and professor in the field.	"Give me children or else I die"	Epigraph: Quotation at the beginning of a book. Foregrounds key themes	
	0 Genesis 30:1-3; A Modest Proposal; Sufi Proverb	Biblical reference: Basis for theocracy and state sanctioned rape		Satire: exposes political vice or folly, and makes them appear ridiculous;	
		Survival: key theme foregrounded. Also reinforces satire – there are some things we should just know not to do			
Night	Old gymnasium. Whispers in the dark in a dormitory patrolled by Aunts and guarded by Angels .	Narrative voice - unreliable/self-conscious Names and namelessness: name defines identity prefix denotes belonging handmaid's have no identity. Setting – hints of old USA. Language of division – then and now.	"We learned to whisper without sound. / We learned to lip read. In this way we exchanged names from bed to bed: Alma, Janine. Dolores. Moira. June."	Dystopia: invented futuristic nightmare world based on current social, political, economic and environmental trends, warns against disastrous implications	
		Framged narrative structural significance of 'night' sections.			
Shopping	Single room. Offred meets other characters. Offred and Ofglen go shopping in Gilead . The Wall . Offred responds with resistance to Gilead.	Symbol: something that comes to represent something else; often an object that represents something abstract	"I intend to last"	Fictive autobiography: The life story of someone written by him or herself, which is an invention of the imagination and not fact	
		Motif of doubles	"She's a magic presence to us, an object of envy and desire, we covet her. She's a flag on a hilltop, showing us what can still be done: we too can be saved."		
		Ofglen/Offred Neologism language used to construct the world	"Modesty is invisibility, said Aunt Lydia. Never forget it. To be seen – to be seen – is to be – her voice trembled – penetrated. What you must be, girls, is impenetrable."	Didactic: Intended to teach, particularly moral values	
		'salvagings' Characterisation of 'Commander's Wife'			
		flashback/analepsis .			
		AO3 Feminism and Gender roles - Commander's Wife, Handmaid, Martha – oppressed. Lack of power. Totalitarian State – Patriarchy and religious influence.			
Night	Offred 'steps sideways' into private spaces of memory. Remembers Moirra , her mother and child.	Recurring 'night' section – fragmented narration, significance of night time – darkness: freedom or oppression? Structure recap of flashback	"Her speeches were about the sanctity of the home, about how women should stay at home/ She stays in her home, but it doesn't seem to agree with her. How furious she must be, now that she's been taken at her word."	Patriarchy: A social system in which the power of men and women is unequal, with men holding more power in terms of government, property and inheritance	
		Female narratives. Characterisation of Moira and how her story is told.			
		AO5 – Significance of storytelling			
Waiting	Ofglen uses word ' Mayday ' and Offred's Commander breaks the rules. Offred discovers her predecessor's secret message in the cupboard Offred visits the doctor, who offers to make her pregnant.	Power of language Language from the time before creates hope	"In the corner where the darkest shadow fell: Nolite te bastardes carborundorum/ It pleases me to know what her taboo message made it through."	Double: An alter ego who bears an uncanny partial resemblance to the self and reveals aspects of the self which have been repressed; in consequence, this 'double' seems both familiar and alien	
		Prison vs survival narrative, Danger of doctor's intervention – could lead to Offred being killed	"There is no such thing as a sterile man any more, not officially. There are only women who are fruitful and women who are barren, that's the law."		
		AO3 Motherhood vs Handmaid – just a vessel as opposed to a person, recap New Right values, Biblical references to Genesis – Rachel/Leah in construction of Gilead's state			
Nap	Offred slips away from the present into private spaces of her own body, into memory, dream and nightmare. She recalls her failed escape.	Why Nap not night? – anomalous section in the structure	"None of us wanted to look like [a new born mouse]... we despised her"	Institutionalised: Establish (something, typically a practice or activity) as a convention or norm in an organization or culture.	
		– Blurred state between dreams and reality through narration .			
		- Memory as escapism – link to narration.			
		- Difference in presentation of female body in Ch 11-13			
Household	The Commander's household assembles for prayers. The Commander enters. Prayers. We learn of Offred's secret dissent from Gilead's orthodoxy The Ceremony . Offred shows her first acts of rebellion - she steals a flower and embraces Nick in the dark.	Repetition of language as power Ceremony – copulation – biblical imagery - reference Genesis Rachel and Leah, the parody of it.	"We can be read to from it (the Bible), by him, but we cannot read. Our heads turn towards him, we are expectant, here comes our bedtime story."	Theocracy: A system of government in which priests (Commanders in this case) rule in the name of God or a god.	
		- The dehumanised nature of the act of procreation.	"It was my own fault. I led them on. I deserved the pain"		
		- Ironic commentary of Commander's sexual prowess vs sexual tension between Handmaid and Nick.	"The Commander fucks, with a regular two-four marching stroke, on and on like a tap dripping"		
		- Characterisation of Nick so far. Vs Luke?			
		AO5 Opportunity to explore from narrative theory perspective in addition to feminism.			
Nig	In bed, Offred is tormented by hopes and fears for her missing husband, Luke .	Narrative Voice/Perspective showing power struggle/submissive behaviour of protagonist . Structural build-up of tension . Offred's Wordplay Rich imagery and detail in description	"Nobody dies from lack of sex. It's lack of love we die from."	Repressive: (Especially of a social or political system) inhibiting or restraining personal freedom.	
Birth Day	Offred dreams of her absent family and how times once were. The Handmaids go out in the Birthmobile to attend the birth of Ofwarren 's baby. Surrounded by other Handmaids and Wives, Offred remembers her mother, a feminist. Offred attends a natural childbirth. She muses on Gildeadean version of 'a woman's culture'. Offred returns to her room. She remembers Moira's first escape attempt from the Red Centre . Offred has her first secret meeting with the Commander, they play a forbidden game of Scrabble.	Language around 'pain and punishment' in line with biblical sin. Atwood's language is clear and avoids euphemism . Clearly highlighting the problematic treatment of women in 'the time before' (reality for contemporary reader) Listing used to reinforce this. The birth as a female celebration (all the females together) Simile A child as a reward – the crowning glory of female achievement. Return to role of storytelling in narrative. Offred creates listener. Atwood oscillates between creating sympathy and disdain for Janine. Here the simile is sympathetic, but the notion that 'she'd tell anything speaks of the danger of being mentally weak in Gilead, or associating with those who are. Moira's escape and how it makes Offred feel (jealous or inspired?) Metaphor of volcano used to highlight Moira's power and danger. Feminine narratives (Note significance first time the narrator is 'named Offred in the text') shanghaied – informal term meaning to coerce, force or trick someone in to doing something. Historically related to sailors. Metaphor reducing the Handmaid's to their 'valued' body part. Clear distinction between sex and breeding.	"Sometimes the movie she showed (Aunt Lydia) would be an old porno film from the seventies or eighties. Women kneeling, sucking penises or guns/ women being raped, beaten up, killed."	Propaganda: Literature, often polemical, designed to persuade a reader or audience to adopt a given cause	
		AO3 Attitudes towards childbirth/family in Puritan New England and values of New Right America	"What did she ever want but to lead her life as agreeably as possible?"	Ideology: A set of ideas and beliefs found in a particular culture and in the texts produced by that culture	
			"The Commander's Wife looks down at the baby as if it's a bouquet of flowers: something she's won, a tribute."	Flashback: Narrative technique which disrupts the time sequence by introducing an event or memory which happened in the past prior to the present action of the novel	
			"Janine was like a puppy that has been kicked too often by too many people... she'd tell anything"		
			"Moira was our fantasy/ she was lava beneath the crust of daily life. In the light of Moira, the Aunts were less fearsome and more absurd. Their power had a flaw in it. They could be shanghaied in toilets."		
			"We are for breeding purposes: we aren't concubines, geisha girls, courtesans. We are two-legged wombs, that's all."		
Nig	Offred's situation changes, psychologically: still trapped, she begins to see its absurdity.	Evolving relationship between Offred and commander. The Commander as a hypocrite – architect of Gilead and views but unwilling to give up 'old ways' Patriarchal power.	"Time's a trap. I'm caught in it. I must forget about my secret name and all ways back. My name is Offred now, and here is where I live"	Motif: A recurrent element which is significant in the overall structure of meaning in the text	
Soul Scrolls	Offred meets Commander at night. Another Ceremony. Offred and Ofglen discuss their feelings of dissent. Offred discovers an underground resistance in Gilead. Offred recalls Gilead's right-wing takeover (women stripped of economic, political and legal rights) Offred asks the Commander the meaning of the Latin inscription in her room.	Connection made between natural imagery and the female reproductive system. Addition of semantic field of battle emphasises the life and death significance of fertility in Gilead. Natural imagery also used to wonder at Serena's feelings and motivations. Theme of dissent reinforced through plusive alliteration 'buried' and 'bursting'.	"The tulips have had their moment and are done, shedding their petals one by one, like teeth. Some blitzkrieg, some kamikaze, committed on the swelling genitalia of the flowers."	Discourse: Written and spoken communication; the French philosopher and social theorist Michel Foucault wrote extensively about the relationship between discourse and power	
		Characterisation of Offred Before and after Gilead. Authority figures. – Characterisation of The Commander and his role. Similarly, the aunts as proponents of Gilead. Biblical language used to name army 'angels' in the coup. Preventing women's freedom – tying fate to her husband.	"There is something subversive about this garden of Serena's, a sense of buried things bursting upwards, wordlessly, into the light, as if to point, to say: Whatever is silenced will clamour to be heard, though silently."	Pun: The often humorous use of a word or phrase to suggest more than one of its possible meanings	
		AO3 Role of women Religion– mockery of organised religion?	"Pen is Envy, Aunt Lydia would say, quoting another Centre Motto warning us away from such objects. And they were right, it is envy."		
Nig	Offred longs for love, and she pours out her desperation in her version of the Lord's Prayer.	Powerlessness and helplessness of protagonist . Losing her fight. Spoken vs Written word in Offred's prayer. oral narrative or written?	"I think about the chandelier too much, though it's gone now. I've considered the possibilities/"Oh God, It's no joke. How can I keep on living?"	Protagonist: The central character of the novel or narrative	
		AO3 - Puritan New England & Utopian Ideals in a Dystopia			

Jezebel's	We learn of Ofglen's underground resistance movement and Offred's pact with Serena Joy . Offred considers her relationships with the Commander, and her predecessor. She feels afraid. The women's Prayvaganza : in the midst of the mass marriage celebration. Offred sees Janine . Prayvaganza's celebrations are accompanied by irreverent comments from the Handmaids. Ofglen reveals that Offred's visits to the Commander are known. Offred feels nostalgia for the falling in love. Serena brings photograph of Offred's daughter. Surprise evening out with the Commander. Offred dresses up. Jezebel's turns out to be the state brothel, Gilead's sexual underground. Offred meets Moira again. Moira tells Offred her story. At Jezebel's, the Commander arranges a private sexual encounter with Offred - a dismal failure.	Motif of time running out? Waiting for something to change? Here the reference to lunar is another reference to the female reproductive system. 'Freedom from and freedom to' argument restated from the Commander's perspective here. Reminder perhaps of the Swift epigraph – an extreme solution to a problem that creates even greater cruelty than the initial problem. Imagery of loss and invisibility – Offred fears being forgotten by her daughter and while she is pleased to see the photograph of her daughter it reinforces this possibility. Simile indicates possession. Further dehumanising Offred. This is then expanded to all of the women in Jezebel's as they are characterised as 'a collection' Fragmented sentence 'Or was' reinforces the identities that have been stolen from these women, as does the array of professions listed. Pun, parody and biblical imagery . 'no white wings' identity and status – Offred dressing up as Commander's Wife. Jezebels – return to old ways. More Commander hypocrisy. Abuse of power – sex with Offred outside of ceremony. Self-conscious narrator . Atwood hints that our story may not have a happy ending. Offred wishes that it did, but even our powerful symbol of freedom Moira does not seem to have escaped the totalitarian regime. Even if we feel Offred escapes, there has not been a happy ending for everyone. Simile is dysphemism – deliberately negative image to create jarring effect for the reader. AO3 Jezebel – biblical context and hypocrisy. New right ideology in the Prayvaganza contrasting with Jezebel's, role of women in society Feminism/Female narrative – strong vs weak females e.g. Moira/Janine. Giving Voice to the voiceless – narrator role.	"I tell the time by Lunar, not Solar." "Your time's running out/ Maybe you should try it another way." "We've given them more than we've taken away, said The Commander. Think of the trouble they had before. The meat market. Some of them were desperate. The husband might just get fed up and take off, disappear, they have to go on welfare. Or else he'd stay around and beat them up." "Time has not stood still. It has washed over me, washed me away, as if I'm nothing more than a woman of sand, left by a careless child too near the water. A shadow of a shadow, as dead mothers become." "He slips around my wrist a tag, purple, on an elastic band, like the tags for airport luggage. If anyone asks you, you're an evening rental, he says." "Well, we have quite a collection. That one there, the one in green, she's a sociologist. Or was. That one was a lawyer, that one in businesses, an executive position." "Here is what I'd like to tell. I'd like to tell a story about how Moira escaped, for good this time. Or if I couldn't tell that I'd like to say she blew up Jezebel's, with fifty Commanders inside it/ something that would befit her. I don't know how she ended, or even if she did, because I never saw her again." "I lie there like a dead bird. / Fake it, I scream at myself in my head, you must remember how. Let's get this over with or you'll be here all night."	
Night	Offred has her first sexual encounter with Nick.	Self-conscious narrative perspective – Offred is a rebellious narrator Love through Offred's consciousness and wordplay. Relationship with Nick goes beyond duty of producing child. Debate: Is their romance a parody? Or real? Love forbidden in Gilead – replaced by duty to produce children	"I made that up. It didn't happen that way"	Self-Conscious Narrator : Narrator who reveals to the reader that the story is a fabrication, and who comments within the text in the storytelling process
Salvaging	Offred's love affair with Nick defies Gileadean tyranny. For the first time, she wants to stay in Gilead. At the Salvaging two Handmaids and one Wife are publicly hanged. At a Participation , a man accused of rape is torn to pieces by the mob of outraged Handmaids. Disappearance of Ofglen. Offred is told that Ofglen hanged herself Offred - crisis of despair. Serena Joy reveals that she knows about evening at Jezebel's.	Semantic field of warfare reemerges here, simile applied to the narrative itself. Atwood emphasises Offred's lack of power. Offred is apologising that we have to hear the story – when she is the one having to live it. 'Time after time' could be a reference to a love song. Is Offred chasing love with Nick? Prior to this Offred was very careful in order 'to survive'. Is life worth living without romantic emotional connection? Offred's motivation lost with disappearance of Ofglen. Her acts of rebellion seem to subside and her fate lost. Language of Salvaging and animalistic/ironic nature of Handmaid's involvement with punishment of 'rapist' Unquestioning group mentality – Janine specific example of this with the childlike 'giggle' juxtaposing the horrific image of holding a clump of torn out hair. Freefall image highlights a loss of control. What is she withdrawing from? Characterisation of Ofglen – taking her own life as an act of heroism, protecting others and ending her life on her own terms, after having put the Mayday member out of their misery earlier in the day – strong woman like Moira and Offred's mother. Ofglen 2 – the person changes but the name is the same highlighting lack of identity.	"I'm sorry there is so much pain in this story. I'm sorry it's in fragments, like a body caught in crossfire or pulled apart by force. But there is nothing I can do to change it." "I went back to Nick. Time after time, on my own, without Serena knowing. In order to do this, I became reckless, I took stupid chances." "This man," says Aunt Lydia, "has been convicted of rape. The penalty for rape, as you know, is death." "She's holding something in her right hand. It's a clump of blond hair. She gives a small giggle. / She's in free fall, she's in withdrawal." "From behind me there's a sound of retching... Janine most likely" "She hanged herself," she says. "After the salvaging. She saw the van coming for her. It was better."	Oppression : Tyranny : Cruel and oppressive government or rule. Dissident : A person who opposes official policy, especially that of an authoritarian state. Neologism : The name for a new word or phrase that may be in the process of becoming accepted into mainstream language
Night	Offred's last crisis. Twist in the plot, and her exit.	Stars typical image of beauty and hope but here they are crumpled – ruined. Doubling motif reemerges as Offred feels her fate mirroring that of the previous Offred. Here rather than a comforting presence she believes the other Offred would be disappointed in her, sick of her, perhaps perceives her to be weak. The suggestion is that this is how Offred is feeling about herself. Surprising language from Serena which feels more reminiscent of 'the time before' and seems out of place in Gilead. Irony of Serena Joy feeling that Offred ought to be grateful to the Commander. What has he done for her? What has he done for himself? Brutal climax of the novel, violent imagery, colour imagery throughout novel. Cliff-hanger ending Do not know what happens to Offred explicitly	"In my lap is a handful of crumpled stars." "Behind me I feel her presence, my ancestress, my double, turning in mid-air under the chandelier, in her costume of stars and feathers, a bird stopped in flight, a woman made into an angel, waiting to be found. By me this time. How could I have believed I was alone in here? There were always two of us. Get it over, she says. I'm tired of this melodrama, I'm tired of keeping silent. There's no one you can protect, your life has value to no one. I want it finished." "Bitch, she says. "After all he did for you." "So I step up, into the darkness within, or else the light."	Denouement : The final part of the story, the drawing together of plot strands at the end of a work of literature, a final resolution or revelation
Historical Notes	AD2195 at an academic conference Offred's tale is presented as historical curiosity. Her fate remains a mystery and Gilead has long since disappeared.	Palimpsest: significance of the past - novel starts with Jonathan Swift and Bible quotes. Ends with a male professor recounting Offred's tale – however he focuses on two 'Fred's one obviously the commander. Illustrates despite historical 'reflection' much has not changed. Patronising tone AO4 - Genre Debate: a feminist tale? A tale of warning against dropping birth rates? - Atwood states in the introduction' nothing in this story is made up – it all is happening somewhere now' – a damning indictment of society.	"It has a whiff of emotion recollected" "As the architects of Gilead knew, to institute an effective totalitarian system at all you must offer some benefits and freedoms, at least to a privileged few." "What would we not give, now, for even twenty pages or so of printout from Waterford's private computer!" "We must be grateful for any crumbs the Goddess of History has designed to vouchsafe us."	Postmodern : As literary practice, refers to contemporary writing which self-consciously draws attention to its own rhetorical techniques and narrative artifice, so disrupting conventions of realism, commenting 'metafictively' on writing as process, challenging the borderlines between fact and fictions, and problematising the relation between creative writing and critical commentary
Big ideas				
Palimpsest o It shows the significance of the past. Although the past seems obliterated it is still significant and cannot be erased. For example, the existence of the black market (Serena Joy's cigarettes and the Commander's magazines) shows that what is not obvious (the old ways) is as important as the obvious (Gilead's rules) o AO5 : 'Palimpsests influence historians. Although what is clearly visible is important in any historical document, the part that is erased often plays a bigger role.'		Significance of storytelling o The Handmaid's Tale is a woman's autobiographical narrative that challenges the absolute authority of Gilead. o Her story highlights importance of storytelling as act of resistance against oppression - story becomes individual political statement. o Atwood's own words (she is a member of Amnesty International) are channelled through Offred's story: o 'I'm an artist...and in any monolithic (large and powerful) regime I would be shot. They always do that to artist. Why? Because the artists are messy. They don't fit. They make squawking noises. They protest.' o Offred voices her opinion when regime demands total silence but she has to do it when she has escaped. Her narrative is a transcript found on archaeological site. We have a later reconstruction of Offred's own account; her words are historical artefact and her story a voice of protest against oppression.		
Analytical Language				
AO1- Argument, Expression, Terminology AO2 – Analysis of writer's methods AO3 – Context of production and reception AO4 – Typicality AO5 – Critical debate	An early example of could be seen as might be important as... At no other point in the play is the idea of displayed than when... There is some importance to... A more significant that reflects the idea of... is that of...	... most significant... Of greatest relevance is... The use of X, unlike Y, suggests... X is typically associated with Y When one thinks of X one imagines This seems almost to capture... This creates an overall impression of... Of greater significance is...	 is far more vital to the play in that... The audience is caught between... By the close of the play, the once....has developed into...is motivated not only by...but also by On the exterior..., yet on the interior, we can infer.... One of the most important aspects of the play is...	REMEMBER! The novel is a construct. Atwood has crafted the characters; they are not real, nor are their actions etc. Her name is the one that should be used most frequently in your essay. What choices has she made? Why might this be? What effect does this have on you, the audience? Do you think that was the intention?