

# Eco Application: Mishima

*Social Studies 10 · The Seduction of Certainty*

## THE TASK

Analyse Yukio Mishima using Eco's 14 features of fascism. Your goal is not to prove Mishima was a fascist (he was), but to understand how fascism functioned in his life and thought.

## WHAT TO DEMONSTRATE

Structure your analysis using PEEL paragraphs (see the PEEL Guide). Each paragraph should:

1. **Identify features.** Which of Eco's features appear in Mishima's writing, life, or actions? Focus on the clearest ones.
2. **Provide evidence.** Use the primary sources we read. Quote directly. You may also reference his biography and final actions.
3. **Explain the connection.** Don't just match features to quotes. Explain HOW the evidence demonstrates the feature and WHY it matters for understanding fascism.
4. **Show patterns.** Link your paragraphs together. How do Eco's features function together in Mishima's case?
5. **Engage the paradox.** Mishima worshipped beauty, strength, and life—and then destroyed himself. What does this reveal about fascism's internal logic?
6. **Acknowledge complications.** Where doesn't Mishima fit Eco's framework neatly? What does he reveal about the model's limits?

## CHOOSE YOUR FORMAT

Select the format that lets you demonstrate your analysis most effectively. All formats are assessed using the same criteria.

<b>Option A</b> <b>Written Analysis</b>	A traditional essay-style analysis. <b>Length:</b> 500–800 words
<b>Option B</b> <b>Annotated Visual</b>	A diagram, concept map, or visual representation showing how Eco's features connect to Mishima, with annotations explaining your thinking. <b>Include:</b> Visual + 200–300 words of written explanation addressing the paradox and complications
<b>Option C</b> <b>Audio/Video</b>	A recorded analysis where you explain your thinking aloud. You may include visuals, slides, or screen-share of your notes. <b>Length:</b> 3–5 minutes
<b>Option D</b> <b>Structured Analysis</b>	Use the graphic organiser on the next page. Complete each section with evidence and explanation. <b>Best for:</b> Students who prefer clear structure and step-by-step guidance

## WHY MISHIMA?

Most fascists are easy to dismiss. Mishima is not. He was brilliant, sensitive, disciplined, and self-aware. He didn't stumble into fascism—he chose it with full literary consciousness.

*Analysing Mishima forces us to take fascism seriously as an aesthetic and psychological phenomenon, not just a political one. If we can understand what fascism offered him, we understand something about what it offers anyone.*

## ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

*Competencies: Evidence evaluation, perspective analysis*

Criterion	Emerging (0-4)	Developing (5-7)	Proficient (8-10)	Extending (11-12)
<b>Evidence Quality</b>	Uses general claims without specific sources. <i>Tip: Quote Mishima's own words from the primary sources.</i>	Includes some evidence but relies on paraphrase or biography alone. <i>Tip: Engage the writing itself.</i>	Uses specific, well-chosen quotes from Mishima's writing. Citations support the analysis effectively.	Evidence reveals patterns in Mishima's thought that aren't obvious on first reading.
<b>Framework Application</b>	Lists features without connecting to evidence. <i>Tip: Explain what makes each feature visible in Mishima.</i>	Connects some features to evidence but treats them as a checklist. <i>Tip: Show how features interact.</i>	Explains how features function together in Mishima's case. Analysis shows patterns, not just matches.	Uses Mishima to reveal something about fascism itself—how aesthetic and political dimensions connect.
<b>The Paradox</b>	Doesn't address the paradox or treats it superficially. <i>Tip: Why does worship of life lead to death?</i>	Notes the paradox but doesn't explore it. <i>Tip: What does Mishima's end reveal about fascism's logic?</i>	Engages seriously with the paradox. Connects Mishima's death to fascism's internal contradictions.	Uses the paradox to illuminate fascism's appeal and its self-destructive core.
<b>Nuance &amp; Honesty</b>	Forces all features to fit or ignores what doesn't. <i>Tip: Note complications.</i>	Acknowledges some complications but doesn't engage deeply. <i>Tip: Explain why something is uncertain.</i>	Honestly addresses where Mishima complicates or exceeds Eco's framework.	Uses complications to deepen analysis. Raises questions the framework can't answer.

## OPTION D: STRUCTURED ANALYSIS

Complete each section. Use this organiser if you chose Option D.

### 1. FEATURES I SEE IN MISHIMA

List 3–5 of Eco's features that appear in Mishima's writing or actions.

### 2. EVIDENCE FROM MISHIMA'S WRITING

For each feature, quote Mishima directly. Explain what the quote shows.

Feature	Quote from Mishima	What This Shows

### 3. PATTERNS: HOW DO THESE FEATURES CONNECT?

Don't just list—explain how the features reinforce each other in Mishima.

### 4. THE PARADOX

Mishima worshipped life, beauty, and strength—then destroyed himself. What does this reveal about fascism?

## **5. COMPLICATIONS**

*Where doesn't Mishima fit Eco's framework? What questions remain?*