AQA

# GCSE
# ENGLISH LITERATURE

## Paper 2 Modern Texts and Poetry

Friday 25 May 2018 Morning Time allowed: 2 hours 15 minutes

**Materials**
For this paper you must have:
- an AQA 16-page answer book.

**Instructions**
- Use black ink or black ballpoint pen. Do **not** use pencil.
- Write the information required on the front of your answer book. The **Paper Reference** is 8702/2.
- Answer **one** question from **Section A**, **one** question from **Section B** and **both** questions in **Section C**.
- You must **not** use a dictionary.

**Information**
- The marks for questions are shown in brackets.
- The maximum mark for this paper is 96.
- AO4 will be assessed in **Section A**. There are 4 marks available for AO4 in Section A in addition to 30 marks for answering the question. AO4 assesses the following skills: Use a range of vocabulary and sentence structures for clarity, purpose and effect, with accurate spelling and punctuation.
- There are 30 marks for **Section B** and 32 marks for **Section C**.

stemup.co.uk

**There are no questions printed on this page**



stemup.co.uk

| SECTION A | | Questions | Page |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Modern prose or drama** | | | |
| JB Priestley | *An Inspector Calls* | 1–2 | 4 |
| Willy Russell | *Blood Brothers* | 3–4 | 5 |
| Alan Bennett | *The History Boys* | 5–6 | 6 |
| Dennis Kelly | *DNA* | 7–8 | 7 |
| Simon Stephens | *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* | 9–10 | 8 |
| Shelagh Delaney | *A Taste of Honey* | 11–12 | 9 |
| William Golding | *Lord of the Flies* | 13–14 | 10 |
| AQA Anthology | *Telling Tales* | 15–16 | 11 |
| George Orwell | *Animal Farm* | 17–18 | 12 |
| Kazuo Ishiguro | *Never Let Me Go* | 19–20 | 13 |
| Meera Syal | *Anita and Me* | 21–22 | 14 |
| Stephen Kelman | *Pigeon English* | 23–24 | 15 |
| **SECTION B** | | | |
| **Poetry** | | **Questions** | **Page** |
| AQA Anthology | *Poems Past and Present* | | |
| | Love and Relationships | 25 | 18–19 |
| | Power and Conflict | 26 | 21 |
| **SECTION C** | | | |
| **Unseen poetry** | | 27.1 | 22 |
| | | 27.2 | 23 |


**Turn over for Section A**



stemup.co.uk

## Section A: Modern prose or drama

Answer **one** question from this section on your chosen text.

### JB Priestley: *An Inspector Calls*

**Either**

**0 1** How far does Priestley present Eric as a character who changes his attitudes towards himself and others during the play?

Write about:

- what Eric says and does throughout the play
- how far Priestley presents Eric as a character who changes his attitudes.

**[30 marks]**
**AO4 [4 marks]**

**or**

**0 2** How does Priestley explore the importance of social class in *An Inspector Calls*?

Write about:

- some ideas about social class in the play
- how Priestley presents the importance of social class.

**[30 marks]**
**AO4 [4 marks]**


stemup.co.uk

**Willy Russell: *Blood Brothers***

**or**

**0 3** How does Russell present Linda as an important character in the play *Blood Brothers*?

Write about:

- what Linda says and does in the play
- how Russell presents Linda as an important character in the play *Blood Brothers*.

**[30 marks]**
**AO4 [4 marks]**

**or**

**0 4** How does Russell present the ways that Mickey and Edward are affected by their different experiences of family life?

Write about:

- what family life is like for Mickey and Edward
- how Russell presents the differences in their family lives.

**[30 marks]**
**AO4 [4 marks]**

**Turn over for the next question**



stemup.co.uk

**Alan Bennett: *The History Boys***

**or**

**0 5** How does Bennett present different attitudes to learning in *The History Boys*?

Write about:

- what some of these attitudes to learning are
- how Bennett presents these attitudes.

**[30 marks]**
**AO4 [4 marks]**

**or**

**0 6** Bennett has said that the boys in the play know more than any of their teachers.

How far do you agree that the boys "know more" than the staff?

Write about:

- what the boys say and do
- how far Bennett presents the boys as "knowing more" than the staff.

**[30 marks]**
**AO4 [4 marks]**


stemup.co.uk

**Dennis Kelly: *DNA***

**or**

**0 7** How does Kelly use the character of Cathy to explore ideas about leadership?

Write about:

- what Cathy says and does throughout the play
- how Kelly uses Cathy to explore these ideas about leadership.

**[30 marks]**
**AO4 [4 marks]**

**or**

**0 8** How does Kelly use the play *DNA* to explore ideas about gang membership?

Write about:

- what the gang members say and do
- how Kelly presents what being in a gang is like.

**[30 marks]**
**AO4 [4 marks]**

**Turn over for the next question**



stemup.co.uk

**Simon Stephens: *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time***

**or**

**0 9** How does Stephens use Christopher's book to explore Christopher's feelings and attitudes to life?

Write about:

- some of Christopher's feelings and attitudes to life
- how Stephens uses the book to explore these feelings and attitudes.

**[30 marks]**
**AO4 [4 marks]**

**or**

**1 0** How far does Stephens present Christopher's teacher, Siobhan, as an important character in the play?

Write about:

- what Siobhan says and does
- how far Stephens presents her as important in the play.

**[30 marks]**
**AO4 [4 marks]**


stemup.co.uk

**Shelagh Delaney: *A Taste of Honey***

**or**

**1 1** How does Delaney use the character of Peter to explore male attitudes to women in *A Taste of Honey*?

Write about:

- what Peter says and does in the play
- how Delaney uses the character of Peter to explore male attitudes to women.

**[30 marks]**
**AO4 [4 marks]**

**or**

**1 2** 'Some characters in *A Taste of Honey* suffer because they are different from most people in society at that time.'

How does Delaney present the effects of being different in this society?

Write about:

- what characters who are different say and do
- how Delaney presents the effects of being different.

**[30 marks]**
**AO4 [4 marks]**

**Turn over for the next question**



stemup.co.uk

**William Golding: *Lord of the Flies***

**or**

**1 3** How does Golding present Simon as different from the other boys on the island?

Write about:

- what Simon says and does that suggest he is different from the other boys
- how Golding presents him as different.

**[30 marks]**
**AO4 [4 marks]**

**or**

**1 4** 'The head is for the Beast. It's a gift.'

How does Golding present the importance of the Beast to different characters in *Lord of the Flies*?

Write about:

- the ways that some characters react to the Beast
- how Golding presents the importance of the Beast.

**[30 marks]**
**AO4 [4 marks]**


stemup.co.uk

**AQA Anthology: *'Telling Tales'***

**or**

**1 5** How do writers present the ways characters react to difficult situations in 'Invisible Mass of the Back Row' and in **one** other story from *Telling Tales*?

Write about:

- what characters say and do in their difficult situations in the **two** stories
- how the writers present the ways characters react to difficult situations.

**[30 marks]**
**AO4 [4 marks]**

**or**

**1 6** How do writers present different kinds of love in 'Odour of Chrysanthemums' and different kinds of love in **one** other story from *Telling Tales*?

Write about:

- the different kinds of love in the **two** stories
- how the writers present different kinds of love.

**[30 marks]**
**AO4 [4 marks]**

**Turn over for the next question**



stemup.co.uk

**George Orwell: *Animal Farm***

**or**

**1 7** How does Orwell use the character of Squealer to explore ideas about truth and lies in *Animal Farm*?

Write about:

- what Squealer says and does
- how Orwell uses the character of Squealer to explore ideas about truth and lies.

**[30 marks]**
**AO4 [4 marks]**

**or**

**1 8** How does Orwell use events in *Animal Farm* to explore ideas about revolution?

Write about:

- some of the events in the book
- how Orwell uses these events to explore ideas about revolution.

**[30 marks]**
**AO4 [4 marks]**


stemup.co.uk

**Kazuo Ishiguro: *Never Let Me Go***

**or**

**1 9** How does Ishiguro present the influence of life at Hailsham on the lives of Kathy, Tommy and Ruth?

Write about:

- what life is like at Hailsham
- how Ishiguro presents the influence of life at Hailsham.

**[30 marks]**
**AO4 [4 marks]**

**or**

**2 0** 'It is strange that none of the young people rebel against the system.'

How far do you agree with this view of *Never Let Me Go*?

Write about:

- how the young people behave
- how Ishiguro uses the young people to explore ideas about rebellion.

**[30 marks]**
**AO4 [4 marks]**

**Turn over for the next question**



stemup.co.uk

**Meera Syal: *Anita and Me***

**or**

**2 1** How does Syal present Meena's relationships with some of the male characters in *Anita and Me*?

Write about:

- Meena's relationships with some of the male characters in the novel
- how Syal presents these relationships.

**[30 marks]**
**AO4 [4 marks]**

**or**

**2 2** How does Syal present the importance of family life in *Anita and Me*?

Write about:

- some of the aspects of family life in the novel
- how Syal presents the importance of family life.

**[30 marks]**
**AO4 [4 marks]**


stemup.co.uk

**Stephen Kelman: *Pigeon English***

**or**

**2 3** How does Kelman present the importance to Harrison of his friendships with Dean and with Jordan in *Pigeon English*?

Write about:

- Harrison's friendships with Dean and with Jordan
- how Kelman presents the importance of these friendships to Harrison.

**[30 marks]**
**AO4 [4 marks]**

**or**

**2 4** How does Kelman present the experience of being an immigrant in *Pigeon English*?

Write about:

- Harrison's life as an immigrant in the novel
- how Kelman presents Harrison's experience of being an immigrant.

**[30 marks]**
**AO4 [4 marks]**

**Turn over for Section B**



stemup.co.uk

**There are no questions printed on this page**



stemup.co.uk

## Section B: Poetry

Answer **one** question from this section.

### AQA Anthology: *Poems Past and Present*

**Either**

**Love and relationships**

The poems you have studied are:

| | |
|---|---|
| Lord Byron | When We Two Parted |
| Percy Bysshe Shelley | Love's Philosophy |
| Robert Browning | Porphyria's Lover |
| Elizabeth Barrett Browning | Sonnet 29 – 'I think of thee!' |
| Thomas Hardy | Neutral Tones |
| Maura Dooley | Letters from Yorkshire |
| Charlotte Mew | The Farmer's Bride |
| Cecil Day-Lewis | Walking Away |
| Charles Causley | Eden Rock |
| Seamus Heaney | Follower |
| Simon Armitage | Mother, any distance |
| Carol Ann Duffy | Before You Were Mine |
| Owen Sheers | Winter Swans |
| Daljit Nagra | Singh Song! |
| Andrew Waterhouse | Climbing My Grandfather |



stemup.co.uk

**2 5** Compare how poets present romantic love in 'Singh Song!' and in **one** other poem from 'Love and relationships'.

I run just one ov my daddy's shops
from 9 o'clock to 9 o'clock
and he vunt me not to hav a break
but ven nobody in, I do di lock –

cos up di stairs is my newly bride
vee share in chapatti
vee share in di chutney
after vee hav made luv
like vee rowing through Putney –

Ven I return vid my pinnie untied
di shoppers always point and cry:
*Hey Singh, ver yoo bin?*
*Yor lemons are limes*
*yor bananas are plantain,*
*dis dirty little floor need a little bit of mop*
*in di worst Indian shop*
*on di whole Indian road –*

Above my head high heel tap di ground
as my vife on di web is playing wid di mouse
ven she netting two cat on her Sikh lover site
she book dem for di meat at di cheese ov her price –

my bride
    she effing at my mum
    in all di colours of Punjabi
    den stumble like a drunk
    making fun at my daddy

my bride
    tiny eyes ov a gun
    and di tummy ov a teddy

my bride
    she hav a red crew cut
    and she wear a Tartan sari
    a donkey jacket and some pumps
    on di squeak ov di girls dat are pinching my sweeties –

Ven I return from di tickle ov my bride
di shoppers always point and cry:
*Hey Singh, ver yoo bin?*
*Di milk is out ov date*
*and di bread is always stale,*
*di tings yoo hav on offer yoo hav never got in stock*
*in di worst Indian shop*
*on di whole Indian road –*


stemup.co.uk

Late in di midnight hour
ven yoo shoppers are wrap up quiet
ven di precinct is concrete-cool
vee cum down whispering stairs
and sit on my silver stool,
from behind di chocolate bars
vee stare past di half-price window signs
at di beaches ov di UK in di brightey moon –

from di stool each night she say,
*How much do yoo charge for dat moon baby?*

from di stool each night I say,
*Is half di cost ov yoo baby,*

from di stool each night she say,
*How much does dat come to baby?*

from di stool each night I say,
*Is priceless baby –*

Daljit Nagra

**[30 marks]**

**Turn over for the question on the Power and conflict cluster**



stemup.co.uk

**or**

**Power and conflict**

The poems you have studied are:

| | |
|---|---|
| Percy Bysshe Shelley | Ozymandias |
| William Blake | London |
| William Wordsworth | Extract from The Prelude |
| Robert Browning | My Last Duchess |
| Alfred Lord Tennyson | The Charge of the Light Brigade |
| Wilfred Owen | Exposure |
| Seamus Heaney | Storm on the Island |
| Ted Hughes | Bayonet Charge |
| Simon Armitage | Remains |
| Jane Weir | Poppies |
| Carol Ann Duffy | War Photographer |
| Imtiaz Dharker | Tissue |
| Carol Rumens | The Emigrée |
| John Agard | Checking Out Me History |
| Beatrice Garland | Kamikaze |


stemup.co.uk

**2 6** Compare how poets present ideas about power in 'Ozymandias' and in **one** other poem from 'Power and conflict'.

I met a traveller from an antique land
Who said: Two vast and trunkless legs of stone
Stand in the desert. Near them on the sand,
Half sunk, a shattered visage lies, whose frown
And wrinkled lip, and sneer of cold command
Tell that its sculptor well those passions read
Which yet survive, stamped on these lifeless things,
The hand that mocked them and the heart that fed;
And on the pedestal these words appear:
'My name is Ozymandias, king of kings:
Look on my works, ye Mighty, and despair!'
Nothing beside remains. Round the decay
Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare,
The lone and level sands stretch far away.

Percy Bysshe Shelley

**[30 marks]**

**Turn over for Section C**



stemup.co.uk

## Section C: Unseen poetry

Answer **both** questions in this section.

**On Aging**

When you see me sitting quietly,
Like a sack left on the shelf,
Don't think I need your chattering.
I'm listening to myself.
Hold! Stop! Don't pity me!
Hold! Stop your sympathy!
Understanding if you got it,
Otherwise I'll do without it!
When my bones are stiff and aching,
And my feet won't climb the stair,
I will only ask one favor:
Don't bring me no rocking chair.
When you see me walking, stumbling,
Don't study and get it wrong.
'Cause tired don't mean lazy
And every goodbye ain't gone.
I'm the same person I was back then,
A little less hair, a little less chin,
A lot less lungs and much less wind.
But ain't I lucky I can still breathe in.

Maya Angelou

**2 7 . 1** In 'On Aging' how does the poet present the speaker's attitudes to growing old?

**[24 marks]**



stemup.co.uk

**Jessie Emily Schofield**

I used to wash my grandmother's hair,
When she was old and small
And walked with a frame
Like a learning child.
She would turn off her hearing aid
And bend into the water,
Holding the edge of the sink with long fingers;
I would pour warm cupfuls over her skull
And wonder what it could be like
In her deaf head with eighty years of life.
Hers was the softest hair I ever felt,
Wedding dress silk on a widow;
But there is a photo of her
Sitting swathed in hair
That I imagine chestnut from the black and white,
Long enough to sit on.
Her wet head felt delicate as a birdskull
Worn thin by waves of age,
As she stood bent.
My mother's mother under my hands.

Judy Williams

**2 7 . 2** In both 'Jessie Emily Schofield' and 'On Aging' the speakers describe their attitudes to the effects of growing old.

What are the similarities and/or differences between the ways the poets present these attitudes?

**[8 marks]**

**END OF QUESTIONS**



stemup.co.uk

**There are no questions printed on this page**

**Copyright information**

For confidentiality purposes, from the November 2015 examination series, acknowledgements of third party copyright material will be published in a separate booklet rather than including them on the examination paper or support materials. This booklet is published after each examination series and is available for free download from www.aqa.org.uk after the live examination series.

Permission to reproduce all copyright material has been applied for. In some cases, efforts to contact copyright-holders may have been unsuccessful and AQA will be happy to rectify any omissions of acknowledgements. If you have any queries please contact the Copyright Team, AQA, Stag Hill House, Guildford, GU2 7XJ.

Copyright © 2018 AQA and its licensors. All rights reserved.

| Surname | StemUp Model Solution |
|---|---|
| Answer booklet | Write the question number in the left-hand margin at the start of each answer. |

Question number

01

Priestley presents Eric as the character who changes most dramatically, moving from a drunken, irresponsible young man who uses others for his own pleasure to someone who accepts guilt and condemns his parents. However, his change is not presented as a sudden miracle. Priestley suggests that the seeds of it were there from the start, and that what the Inspector does is draw out a conscience that his privileged upbringing had smothered. Through Eric, Priestley shows his 1945 audience that the younger generation can learn, and that hope for a fairer society lies with them.

From his first appearance, Eric is presented as uneasy. The stage direction describes him as "not quite at ease, half shy, half assertive", which immediately suggests a divided character. He is assertive enough to challenge his father, yet shy and awkward within the family. When he "suddenly guffaws" during the engagement celebration and Sheila accuses him of being "squiffy", Priestley hints at his drinking problem, which the Birlings ignore because it does not fit their respectable image. His laughter also feels nervous, as if he is hiding something, and the dramatic tension it creates prepares the audience for later revelations.

Interestingly, Eric questions his father's values before the Inspector has pushed him at all. When Birling explains why he sacked Eva for leading a strike, Eric asks, "Why shouldn't they try for higher wages? We try for the highest possible prices." The balanced structure of the sentence exposes the hypocrisy of capitalist bosses who seek profit for themselves but deny it to workers. His verdict that he would "call it tough luck" on Eva suggests sympathy for the working class, so Priestley implies that Eric's attitudes towards others are not entirely fixed. Yet at this point

Question number

his sympathy costs him nothing, and he remains selfish in his own behaviour.

Eric's account of his relationship with Eva in Act Three reveals how much he has needed to change. He admits that he met her in the bar of the Palace, describes her as "pretty and a good sport", and confesses that he was "in that state when a chap easily turns nasty". The casual, euphemistic phrase "a good sport" reduces Eva to an object of entertainment, while "turns nasty" hints at sexual violence that he cannot bring himself to name. Priestley exposes the attitudes of young upper middle class men in 1912, who saw working class women as available for their use. Eric's admission that he stole money from his father's office to support her adds further guilt, and his shame is clear in his broken, hesitant speech. Even so, the fact that he tried to help her financially suggests some sense of responsibility, however misguided.

The turning point comes when he learns that his mother refused to help Eva. His accusation, "you killed her", and his reference to "my child" and "your own grandchild", show him beginning to see the connections between the family's actions. Priestley uses this moment to reverse the usual hierarchy: the son now judges the parents. Eric's bitter claim that his father is "not the kind of father a chap could go to when he's in trouble" exposes the emotional coldness of the Birling household and suggests that his earlier irresponsibility was partly caused by it. His change, then, is not simply about Eva; it is a change in how he sees himself and his family.

After the Inspector leaves, Priestley tests whether the change is real. When Gerald and Birling decide the Inspector was a hoax, Eric refuses to be comforted. He insists that "the girl's dead and we all helped to kill her", and the inclusive pronoun "we" shows that he now understands collective responsibility, echoing the

Question number

Inspector's message that "We are members of one body." Like Sheila, he is horrified that his parents are already relaxing, while they dismiss him as hysterical. The contrast between the generations is deliberate: the old are fixed, but the young can change.

However, it could be argued that Eric's change is incomplete. He never fully faces what he did to Eva on the night they met, and his anger towards his parents might be partly self-pity. Some audiences may also feel that his guilt is driven by the emotional shock of the night rather than real moral growth. Yet Priestley leaves the final judgement open. As the telephone rings and a real inspector is announced, Eric has already accepted his responsibility, while his parents must face it unwillingly. Priestley therefore presents Eric as a flawed but genuine example of change, embodying the hope of a post-war generation that could build a more caring society.

02 Priestley presents social class as the invisible structure that decides who is protected and who is destroyed in Edwardian society. Through the comfortable Birlings and the unseen, suffering Eva Smith, he shows that class privilege blinds the powerful to their responsibility for the powerless. Writing in 1945 but setting the play in 1912, Priestley wants his audience to see that a society divided by class was unjust and dangerous, and that post-war Britain must build something fairer.

Priestley establishes the importance of class from the opening stage directions. The Birlings' dining room is "substantial and heavily comfortable, but not cosy and homelike", which suggests a family that displays wealth but lacks warmth. The lighting is to be "pink and intimate" until the Inspector arrives, when it becomes

Question number

"brighter and harder". This shift symbolises the comfortable illusions of the wealthy being exposed to harsh scrutiny. Even within the family, class tensions exist: Mrs Birling is described as "her husband's social superior", and Birling nervously mentions that Lady Croft may feel Gerald "might have done better" for himself socially. Priestley shows that the obsession with status runs through every relationship in the house.

Mr Birling is the play's clearest voice of capitalist self-interest. He describes himself as "a hard-headed, practical man of business" and insists that "a man has to mind his own business and look after himself and his own". He mocks those who speak of "community and all that nonsense" and compares them to "bees in a hive". Priestley undermines him through dramatic irony: Birling also predicts that the Titanic is "unsinkable, absolutely unsinkable" and that war will not happen, so his 1945 audience, having lived through two world wars, knows that his judgement is worthless. If he is wrong about these things, Priestley implies, he is wrong about class too.

The way the Birlings treat Eva reveals how class determines a person's worth. Birling sacks her for asking for a rise of a few shillings and defends himself by saying that if you don't come down sharply on these people "they'd soon be asking for the earth". The Inspector's reply, "it's better to ask for the earth than to take it", carries a threat of revolution, reminding the audience of the strikes and labour unrest of the period. Sheila's protest, "But these girls aren't cheap labour", followed by the simple insistence that "they're people", marks the moment the younger generation recognises the humanity behind the label of a worker. Eva's decline, from factory worker to shop assistant to kept woman and finally to prostitution, shows how little protection the working class had once they lost their jobs.

Question number

Mrs Birling embodies class prejudice most fiercely. She refers to "girls of that class" and is outraged that Eva called herself Mrs Birling, as though the name itself were too good for her. Her charity committee, which should help the poor, instead judges them, and she refuses Eva because of her supposed "impertinence". Priestley uses this to show that Edwardian philanthropy was often controlled by people who despised those they claimed to help. Even the minor character Edna, the parlourmaid, shows class at work: she is ordered about and barely noticed, a quiet reminder that the Birlings' comfort depends on the labour of people they ignore.

The Inspector is Priestley's means of challenging all of this. He moves between the classes, refusing to be impressed by Birling's status as an alderman and former Lord Mayor, and he reminds him that "Public men, Mr Birling, have responsibilities as well as privileges." His final speech widens the play's focus to "millions and millions and millions of Eva Smiths and John Smiths", and the repetition insists that Eva represents an entire class. The warning that if people do not learn their responsibility they will be taught it "in fire and blood and anguish" would have resonated powerfully with an audience who had just experienced the Second World War.

By the end, Priestley shows that attitudes to class divide the generations. Sheila and Eric accept responsibility, while Birling and his wife return to their old certainties, and Gerald, as an aristocrat's son, joins them. Priestley seems to suggest that the upper and middle classes will not give up their privileges willingly, but that the young might. The final phone call, announcing a real inspector, implies that a reckoning is unavoidable. Writing as Britain voted in a Labour government that would create the welfare state, Priestley presents class not as a natural order but as a moral failure that society has the power and the duty to

Question number

change.

03 Russell presents Linda as far more than a love interest. She is the emotional link between Mickey and Edward, the one character who moves freely between their worlds, and in the end she becomes the unwitting trigger of the tragedy. Through her, Russell explores how loyalty and love are damaged by poverty, and how a bright, spirited working class girl is gradually trapped by the limited choices that society offered women in her position.

From her first appearance as a seven year old, Linda is presented as brave, loyal and independent. She stands up for Mickey when the other children mock and exclude him, which suggests that she is protective rather than passive. She is also part of the gang's games, joining in with toy guns and playground cruelty, so Russell shows that she belongs fully to the rough, energetic street culture of the Johnstones. Importantly, she is the one who accepts Edward into the group. Where Mickey's world could easily reject a "posh" boy, Linda's openness allows the friendship of the three to form. Structurally, Russell places her at the centre of the trio from the beginning, so the audience sees her as the emotional hinge on which the brothers' relationship turns.

In the childhood scenes, Linda also shows a maturity the boys lack. When they shoot at the statue in the park and later throw stones, she joins in as an equal, and is often bolder and more self-assured than either boy. Russell uses this light comedy to make the audience fond of her, but the playful violence with guns quietly foreshadows the ending, where a real gun will destroy all three lives.

As teenagers, Linda's importance grows. She is openly confident and teases Mickey,

Question number

who is too shy to admit his feelings. Russell creates dramatic irony as the audience can see what both characters feel while Mickey remains tongue-tied. It is Edward who encourages Mickey to ask her out, even though he secretly loves her himself. This triangle is crucial: Linda becomes the first thing the brothers both want, and Russell hints that their friendship cannot survive unchanged once adult desire enters it. The contrast between Edward, who could express himself but holds back out of loyalty, and Mickey, who struggles for words, also reflects the different educational opportunities shaped by their social class.

Linda's adult life shows how class and gender limit her. She becomes pregnant young and marries Mickey, and her early hopes are crushed when he loses his job in the factory. Russell presents unemployment in 1980s Liverpool as something that affects women as well as men: Linda becomes the one who holds the family together while Mickey is imprisoned and later depressed. Her plea for Mickey to stop taking his tablets shows her desperate attempt to recover the boy she loved, while his dependence on them reveals how completely his spirit has been broken. In this way, Linda functions as a measure of Mickey's decline. Her frustration is entirely sympathetic, and Russell makes the audience understand why she turns elsewhere for help.

It is significant that Linda's turning to Edward is motivated by care for Mickey. She contacts Edward, now a councillor, to find Mickey a job and a house, which shows her loyalty and practicality. Yet this act of love creates the final conflict. Her affection for Edward deepens, and their meetings are seen by Mrs Lyons, who reveals them to Mickey. Russell uses Linda here as the device that transforms the brothers' class rivalry into personal betrayal. Mickey's cry, "I could have been him!", is not only about money and education but about Linda, whom he fears he has lost to the brother who had everything.

Question number

Some might argue that Russell gives Linda limited independence, since she is largely defined by her relationships with the two men. However, this may be precisely Russell's point. As a working class woman, Linda has few routes to security other than marriage, and when that fails she must depend on the influence of a richer man. Her limited agency mirrors Mrs Johnstone's life, which also began with dancing and romance and ended in hardship. Russell suggests that the cycle of poverty repeats across generations.

At the climax, Linda's arrival at the Town Hall heightens the tension, and the brothers die together, leaving her as a survivor of a tragedy she never intended. The Narrator asks whether we should blame superstition "Or could it be what we, the English, have come to know as class?" Linda's story helps answer that question: she is presented as an important character because her love and loyalty, which should bring the brothers together, are destroyed by a society where class determines opportunity.

04 Russell uses the separated twins as a kind of social experiment: two boys with the same mother and the same nature are raised in two very different families, and their lives end in opposite places before they meet in death. Through this contrast, Russell argues that it is not character but environment, and above all social class, that shapes a person's destiny. Family life in the play is presented as the first place where the advantages or disadvantages of class are handed down.

Mickey's family life is crowded, chaotic and loving, but defined by poverty. Mrs Johnstone is a single mother deserted by her husband, already struggling with several children when she discovers she is expecting twins. Russell shows that her

Question number

decision to give one baby away is driven by economic desperation rather than lack of love, as she knows she cannot feed another two. Her song about buying on "the never never" and the threat of debt collectors present a household where everything is temporary and can be taken away. Yet Mrs Johnstone is warm, and her humour and dancing bring vitality to Mickey's childhood. Russell presents poverty, therefore, not as an absence of love but as a constant pressure that love alone cannot overcome.

Mickey's extended family also shapes his experience. He idolises his older brother Sammy, who bullies him, and wishes he could be like him. Sammy's progression from shooting toy guns as a child to burning down the school and finally committing armed robbery shows the limited and dangerous role models available in the Johnstone household. Russell suggests that without guidance or opportunity, Mickey is likely to follow the same path, and this is exactly what happens when Sammy drags him into the robbery that leads to his imprisonment.

By contrast, Edward grows up as an only child in the Lyons' comfortable home. He has toys, books and every material advantage, yet Russell suggests his life is lonely and controlled. Mrs Lyons becomes increasingly anxious and possessive, terrified that Edward will discover the truth or be drawn back to his real mother. Her command that he must not play with boys like Mickey, and her horror when he repeats the swear word Mickey has taught him, show her desire to protect Edward from the working class world. Ironically, it is this possessiveness, combined with the superstition she invents that twins who learn they were parted "shall both immediately die", that helps to bring about the ending. Mr Lyons, meanwhile, is largely absent, more concerned with business, which suggests that wealth does not guarantee emotional security.

Question number

Russell uses dialogue and staging to make the contrast vivid. When Mickey and Edward first meet at seven, Edward is fascinated by Mickey's confidence, his swearing and his freedom, while Mickey is amazed by Edward's sweets and politeness. The scene where the police officer visits both families after the boys are caught throwing stones is particularly striking. At the Johnstones' house, he threatens Mrs Johnstone with court, whereas at the Lyons' house he shares a drink with Mr Lyons and treats the incident as a harmless prank. Russell uses parallel scenes to show how institutions treat families differently according to class, and how a middle class child is forgiven where a working class one is condemned.

The effects of these differences become clearer as the boys grow older. Edward goes to boarding school and university, while Mickey leaves school and goes into factory work. When Mickey is made redundant, Edward cannot understand why he will not simply enjoy himself, since money has never been a problem for him. Mickey's bitter realisation, "I could have been him!", reveals that he now understands the role family background played in shaping their lives. Russell suggests that the boys' personalities are not fixed; Mickey was once lively and funny, but unemployment and prison crush him, while Edward's opportunities allow him to become a councillor.

The Narrator constantly reminds the audience that fate is watching. His warning that "the devil's got your number" creates a sense of inevitability, yet his final question, whether we blame superstition or "what we, the English, have come to know as class", invites the audience to reject the superstitious explanation. Writing in the 1980s, when unemployment devastated cities such as Liverpool, Russell wanted his audience to see that family circumstances, shaped by wealth and poverty, determine destinies. The twins' shared death becomes a powerful argument

Question number

that a society which divides children by class at birth is responsible for the tragedies that follow.

05 Bennett presents learning as a battleground between two visions of education: one that values knowledge for its own sake and for the way it enriches a life, and one that treats knowledge as a tool for passing exams and gaining status. Through the contrasting teachers Hector, Irwin and Mrs Lintott, and through the ambitious Headmaster, Bennett asks what learning is really for. Although he gives Irwin's methods some credit, his sympathy seems to lie with Hector's belief that the deepest learning cannot be measured.

Hector represents learning as love. His lessons are chaotic, full of poetry, songs, film scenes and role play, and much of what he teaches has no obvious use in an examination. He insists the boys learn poems by heart, believing that one day they will understand what they have memorised and it will comfort them. Bennett presents this most movingly in the scene where Hector and Posner discuss Hardy's "Drummer Hodge". Hector describes the best moments in reading as those when it feels "as if a hand has come out and taken yours". The image of reaching across time captures his belief that literature creates a connection between people, offering company to the lonely and understanding to the young. It is significant that this moment is shared with Posner, the boy who feels most isolated, as it shows learning as something personal and consoling rather than competitive.

Hector is openly scornful of exams and of the idea that knowledge should be useful. He regards the pressure of results as a threat to real education, and he dismisses the Oxbridge entrance process as a distraction from the true value of what the boys are learning. His summary of his philosophy, to take the knowledge,

Question number

feel it and "pass it on", presents teaching as a gift handed down between generations. However, Bennett does not idealise him completely. Hector's inappropriate touching of the boys on his motorbike complicates his authority, and his teaching is so unstructured that the Headmaster believes it cannot be justified in measurable terms.

Irwin represents a very different attitude. Brought in by the Headmaster to give the boys "polish", he teaches them that originality and surprise matter more than truth. He encourages them to argue against the obvious view, for example that the First World War was not entirely Germany's fault, and he teaches them to use "gobbets" of knowledge, small memorable pieces of information that can be dropped into any answer. His most cynical claim is that "truth is no more at issue in an examination than thirst at a wine-tasting". The analogy suggests that exams are about display and style, not substance. Bennett presents Irwin's attitude as effective, since the boys win places at Oxford and Cambridge, but also morally troubling. When Irwin applies his technique to the Holocaust, Posner objects, suggesting that some subjects should not be treated as debating games. Bennett may be criticising a culture of education, and media history, that values cleverness over conviction.

The Headmaster's attitude is driven by league tables and reputation. He is desperate for Oxbridge successes and sees Hector's eccentric lessons as a problem because their value cannot be quantified. Bennett uses him to satirise the target-driven education system of the 1980s, in which the play is set, where schools increasingly measured their worth through results. The Headmaster's attempt to remove Hector, using the motorbike incident, shows that learning in his view is a commodity to be managed.

Question number

Mrs Lintott offers a third attitude. She has taught the boys the solid facts that got them through their A Levels, and she is sceptical of both Hector's romanticism and Irwin's tricks. Her observation that "History is women following behind with the bucket" exposes how male-dominated the subject and the school both are. Bennett uses her dry, ironic voice to suggest that learning should also involve questioning who gets to tell the story.

The boys themselves show the effects of these attitudes. Dakin admires Irwin and adopts his style, Posner holds on to Hector's poetry, and Rudge, who has little time for either, gains his place partly through family connection. At the end, Mrs Lintott's account of their futures suggests that few of them carry Hector's love of learning into adult life. Yet Hector's final words, urging the boys to "pass it on", give the play its emotional centre. Bennett seems to conclude that while exam technique may win places, it is learning for its own sake that lasts, even if it is rarely rewarded.

06 To a large extent, Bennett does present the boys as knowing more than their teachers, but the kind of knowledge matters. The boys know more about how the adult world really works, how to manipulate it and how to see through the performances of the staff. Yet they know less about the deeper values that Hector tries to give them, and about what life will actually do to them. Bennett's claim is therefore partly playful: the boys are sharper and more knowing than the adults, but not necessarily wiser.

In the classroom, the boys often appear more in control than their teachers. Hector's lessons are driven by their contributions, as they perform scenes from old films, sing songs and recite poetry. When the Headmaster bursts in during a

Question number

French lesson set in a brothel, the boys instantly switch to pretending it is a scene in a First World War hospital. This improvisation is comic, but it reveals their confidence and quick wit, and shows that they understand far better than the Headmaster what is really going on in Hector's lessons. Bennett suggests that they are skilled performers who know exactly what adults want to see.

The boys also know more than the staff about the teachers themselves. They are fully aware of Hector's habit of touching them on the motorbike and treat it with a mixture of tolerance and amusement, seeing it as something sad rather than threatening. Similarly, Dakin quickly recognises that Irwin is attracted to him, and he uses this knowledge to unsettle and challenge his teacher. Dakin even discovers that Irwin has lied about his own time at Oxford, which reverses the usual relationship of authority: the pupil exposes the teacher's performance. Most strikingly, Dakin uses his knowledge of the Headmaster's harassment of his secretary, Fiona, to pressure him into keeping Hector. Here, a schoolboy holds power over the man who runs the school.

Rudge provides a different angle. Often underestimated as the least academic boy, he understands the class politics of Oxford better than anyone. He sees that his place may come through family connection and the college's wish to appear accessible, rather than through the clever arguments Irwin teaches. His blunt, unpretentious view of history as just one event after another mocks the elaborate theories of the teachers, and Bennett uses him to suggest that knowing how the world works can be more useful than knowing how to impress it.

However, there are also clear limits to what the boys know. Hector's learning is something they absorb without fully understanding. In the "Drummer Hodge" scene, Hector explains that the best moments in reading feel "as if a hand has

Question number

come out and taken yours", and Posner, the most sensitive boy, only begins to grasp how literature can speak to loneliness. Hector's teaching assumes that the boys will understand what they have learned only later in life, so Bennett suggests that their present knowledge is incomplete. Hector's knowledge, in this sense, is greater precisely because it comes from experience and suffering.

Mrs Lintott also knows things the boys do not. Her ironic observation that "History is women following behind with the bucket" shows an awareness of gender and power that none of the boys, all of them young men, seems to share. Her role as a narrator of the boys' futures at the end of the play gives her a perspective beyond theirs. She reveals that Posner becomes lonely and unfulfilled, Dakin becomes a tax lawyer and Irwin a television historian, while Hector is killed. These outcomes suggest that the boys' cleverness did not give them the understanding they needed to live richly.

Irwin, too, knows something the boys only half grasp: how to succeed in an examination system that rewards surprise. The boys need him in order to get into Oxford and Cambridge, and they accept his methods eagerly. Bennett implies that the staff hold the keys to institutions that the boys cannot yet open by themselves.

Ultimately, Bennett presents the boys as knowing more about the adults than the adults know about them, and their wit and confidence often expose the staff's weaknesses. But the play's structure, ending with Hector's death and Mrs Lintott's reflections, suggests that their knowledge is youthful and immediate. The true knowledge in the play is something that has to be passed on, as Hector insists, and that the boys will only understand once they are older.

Question number

07

Kelly uses Cathy to explore a disturbing idea about leadership: that in a group without a moral centre, power is seized not by the wisest or the kindest but by whoever is most willing to do what others will not. Cathy begins as an ordinary member of the gang, eager and excitable, but by the end she is running things through fear. Her rise suggests that leadership in a gang is less about ability than about appetite for cruelty, and Kelly invites his young audience to question who they follow and why.

At the start of the play, Cathy is presented as a follower. When John Tate demands loyalty and tries to hold the group together through threats, she is one of those who quickly agrees to stand with him. Kelly shows that her first instinct is to align herself with whoever has power. Yet even early on there are hints of something darker. When the gang recount the bullying of Adam, which led to him falling down the grille into the shaft, Cathy seems energised rather than horrified. Where Brian is reduced to tears and Jan and Mark speak in anxious fragments, Cathy responds to the crisis as though it were an adventure. Kelly uses this contrast to suggest that she is excited by transgression, a quality that will make her dangerous once she is given authority.

Cathy's role grows through Phil's plan. Phil, the true strategist, tells the gang to invent a story about a man who took Adam and to plant evidence, and Cathy is one of the members he trusts with the practical task. She takes it further than intended. Rather than choosing anyone, she finds a real postman who exactly matches the invented description, so that the police arrest an innocent man. When challenged, she seems unconcerned, defending herself on the grounds that she did what she had been told. Kelly presents this as a turning point: Cathy is no longer simply obeying orders but interpreting them with a ruthless literalism that shows her absence of conscience. Her lack of empathy for the postman, who faces a life

Question number

in prison, highlights how easily the gang dehumanises outsiders.

When Adam is discovered alive in the woods, Kelly makes Cathy the one who found him, and she later stands over him with apparent curiosity rather than pity. Phil decides Adam must be killed, and in a chilling moment he looks at Cathy and tells Brian to go with her. The fact that Phil does not need to explain himself suggests that he recognises Cathy as the one who will carry out the order. Leah's frantic attempt to stop them is ignored. Kelly keeps the murder offstage, and this structural choice makes it more disturbing, as the audience is left to imagine what Cathy is capable of. The use of a plastic bag, a mundane everyday object, emphasises how normalised violence has become.

Kelly also uses Cathy to explore how leadership feeds on attention. As the investigation develops, she appears on television repeatedly, enjoying the status of a celebrity. This detail suggests that her desire for power is linked to a desire to be seen, and Kelly perhaps critiques a media culture that rewards those who seek the spotlight regardless of their moral worth. Cathy's pleasure in the attention contrasts sharply with Leah's anxious monologues, which question whether humans are doomed to be violent, and with Phil's silence.

By the final scene, Richard reports to Phil that Cathy is now running things and that frightening rumours surround her, including that she has cut off a younger pupil's finger. Whether or not this is true, the rumour itself shows how her leadership works: through fear and reputation. Kelly creates a cyclical structure here. John Tate's leadership through intimidation at the start has been replaced by an even more brutal version, suggesting that groups which accept violence will keep producing worse leaders. Phil, who withdraws into silence, gives up power, and Cathy simply fills the vacuum.

Question number

Kelly wrote DNA for young performers in the National Theatre's Connections programme, and Cathy's story seems designed to make teenage audiences reflect on peer pressure and the psychology of groups. It echoes ideas from studies of obedience, such as Milgram's experiments, which showed how ordinary people will harm others when instructed by authority. Through Cathy, Kelly suggests that the worst leaders are not born monsters but ordinary people whose capacity for cruelty is released by a group that rewards it. Her rise is a warning that when nobody stands up to wrongdoing, the most ruthless person will end up in charge.

08 Kelly presents gang membership as a trap disguised as belonging. The teenagers in DNA stay together because they are afraid of being outside the group, but the price of membership is the gradual loss of their individual conscience. Through the gang's response to Adam's apparent death, Kelly explores how ordinary young people can be drawn into cruelty, lies and finally murder, and he asks his audience whether the group or the individual is responsible.

From the opening scene, Kelly shows that the gang's members are bound together by fear. Jan and Mark's fragmented exchange, beginning with "Dead?" and "Dead.", is made up of short, repetitive lines that reveal shock and confusion. Their dialogue mirrors the group's inability to think clearly, as each one relies on the other to finish the thought. Kelly does not identify a clear protagonist at this point, which reflects the way the gang functions as a collective, with individual responsibility blurred.

John Tate's early leadership presents the gang as a hierarchy maintained by intimidation. He tries to keep control by threatening anyone who speaks against

Question number

the group and even tries to dictate what the others are allowed to say, as if language itself can be controlled. Kelly makes him comic as well as threatening, since his authority depends entirely on others' fear. Kelly exposes how gang leaders justify their power by claiming to protect the group. Members such as Danny, who worries mainly about his future career as a dentist, show that self-interest rather than loyalty often keeps people silent.

The gang's account of how they bullied Adam reveals how unacceptable behaviour becomes normalised. They describe making him perform humiliating tasks and hurting him in ways that escalate until he falls into the shaft. The casual way the events are recounted, with characters interrupting and correcting each other on details, suggests that they see the bullying as a game that went wrong rather than a crime. Kelly shows how peer pressure works: no single person feels fully responsible, because each act was shared. Adam, always on the fringes, is presented as a figure desperate to belong, and his willingness to do whatever they ask exposes how gang membership can rest on cruelty towards those on its edges.

Phil's takeover marks a shift in the gang's character. Silent for long periods and constantly eating, he suddenly speaks in calm, organised instructions when the crisis demands it. His plan to invent a suspect and plant evidence shows that the gang will now protect itself at any cost. Kelly uses Phil to suggest that the most effective gang leaders are not the loudest but the most cold-blooded. Members obey him without question; even Cathy's frightening initiative operates within his plan. When Adam is found alive, Phil decides that the boy must be killed, and the others, despite their discomfort, walk away and let it happen. Kelly presents this collective silence as the gang's darkest moment, showing how submission to authority can make ordinary people complicit in murder.

Question number

Leah offers a contrasting voice. Her long monologues to Phil, about bonobos, chimpanzees and whether humans are naturally violent, show her searching for meaning while the group drifts into barbarity. She is the only one who openly challenges Phil, but her inability to change his decision suggests that individual morality is powerless against the gang. Eventually she leaves the school altogether, and Kelly implies that the only escape from the gang is to remove oneself completely.

Kelly's use of settings reinforces this. The street, the wood and the field are all outdoor, anonymous spaces without adults or institutions. The absence of parents and teachers suggests that the gang creates its own rules and law. The wood, where Adam is first lost and finally killed, becomes a place where civilised behaviour breaks down, recalling Golding's Lord of the Flies, in which boys without adult authority also descend into violence.

By the final scene, the effects of membership are clear. Brian is medicated and disturbed, Cathy has become a feared leader, and Phil sits silently in the field, no longer eating. Richard's attempts to persuade Phil to return show that the group still needs a leader, even one who has led them into murder. Kelly, writing for teenagers in the National Theatre's Connections scheme, wants his young audience to recognise these dynamics in their own lives. He presents gang membership not as glamorous rebellion but as a slow surrender of conscience, in which the desire to belong destroys the very people it promises to protect.

09 Stephens uses Christopher's book as far more than a plot device: it is the lens through which the audience is allowed inside a mind that the other characters constantly misread. The book reveals Christopher's need for order, truth and

Question number

control, his fear of a chaotic world, and, by the end, his growing belief in his own abilities. By building the whole play around the act of writing and reading this book, Stephens invites a modern audience to see Christopher's perspective not as a deficit but as a different and valuable way of understanding life.

From the opening scene, Stephens makes the book the engine of the drama. Christopher finds Wellington dead on Mrs Shears's lawn, and his decision to investigate and record the murder in a detective story immediately shows his attitude to life: problems are puzzles that can be solved by logic and evidence. His admiration for Sherlock Holmes, and the title itself, borrowed from a Holmes story, suggest that he feels safest in a world where every clue leads to an answer. The murder mystery genre suits him perfectly, because it promises that disorder will be explained by the final page. Perhaps this is why he clings to the book so fiercely: it imposes a pattern on events that otherwise overwhelm him.

Crucially, Stephens has Siobhan read much of the book aloud. This structural choice turns Christopher's private writing into a public narration, so the audience hears his precise, literal voice spoken by the one adult who understands him. The effect is double: we are given access to his thoughts, which he struggles to express to others face to face, while Siobhan's calm reading models the patience and attention that Christopher needs. His writing is honest to the point of bluntness, because he cannot tell lies, and the book's refusal of metaphor and exaggeration reflects his attitude that truth matters above politeness. The audience laughs at some of his frank observations, but the laughter is warm rather than mocking, because the book lets us see the logic behind them.

The book also exposes Christopher's feelings at moments when his words and body fail him. He finds touch unbearable, and Stephens's stage directions show him

Question number

groaning or curling up when he is overwhelmed, yet in the book he can describe what he likes, such as prime numbers, space and the colour red, and what frightens him, such as crowds and strangers. Writing gives him a safe distance from his emotions. When his father forbids him to continue detecting, the conflict is really about who controls the story of the family. Ed's furious reaction on reading the book, and the physical fight that follows, show that the book threatens the lies the adults have built around Christopher.

Stephens makes this explicit through the structure of Act 1. Ed confiscates the book, and when Christopher searches for it he finds it hidden in a shirt box in his father's room, together with the letters from his mother. This is the turning point of the play: in looking for his own account of the truth, Christopher discovers the far greater truth that his mother is alive. The book therefore becomes a symbol of honesty set against the deception of the adult world, and Ed's confession that he killed Wellington follows soon after. Christopher's response, his terror that his father might kill him too, shows how completely his trust depends on truthfulness.

In Act 2 Stephens uses metatheatre to develop the book further. Siobhan suggests that Christopher's story could be turned into a play, and the second half is presented as his school's performance of it. This self-conscious device reminds the audience that we are watching Christopher's version of events, shaped by him, and it gives him an authorship and authority that the adults around him rarely grant. The physical theatre of the original National Theatre production, with its lights, grids and numbers projected around him, can be seen as a visual extension of the book, turning his inner world into the world of the stage.

By the end, the book has helped Christopher move from fear to confidence. Having travelled to London alone, solved the mystery and passed his A level Maths, he

Question number

asks Siobhan whether this means he can do anything. The question is left unanswered, which is both hopeful and honest. Stephens, writing in 2012 when public understanding of autism was growing, does not label Christopher's condition, but the book allows the audience to share his perspective and to value it. In this way, Christopher's book is not just his record of life but his method of surviving it.

10 Stephens presents Siobhan as extremely important in the play, arguably the most important adult in Christopher's life, because she is the one person who listens to him without trying to change him. She is important dramatically as well as personally: she narrates his book, guides him through his fears and helps to shape the play itself. However, Stephens also limits her role. She is a teacher, not a parent, and the central emotional drama belongs to Christopher's family, so her importance lies in enabling Christopher's independence rather than in driving the plot.

Siobhan's importance is clear from the structure of the play. From the opening scenes she reads aloud from Christopher's book, so much of what the audience learns about his thoughts is filtered through her voice. This gives her the function of an interpreter: she "explains" Christopher to the audience in a way that his frightened, literal speech in front of other characters cannot. Her calm, measured delivery contrasts sharply with the shouting of Mrs Shears, the policeman and Ed, and the audience comes to trust her as a stable presence in a noisy, confusing world. Stephens uses her interventions to break up and link scenes, so she becomes a kind of narrator who holds the episodic play together.

Siobhan's relationship with Christopher is presented as different from almost every other relationship he has. She does not touch him, she does not lie to him, and

Question number

she does not lose her temper. Where Ed swings between devotion and rage and Judy admits she could not cope with him, Siobhan offers patient, consistent support. She encourages his writing, praises his intelligence and answers his questions honestly. Through her, Stephens suggests what good teaching looks like: respect for a child's way of seeing the world. In the context of debates about how schools support children with special educational needs, Siobhan represents the ideal of an educator who adapts to the child rather than forcing the child to adapt.

In many ways Siobhan acts as a surrogate parent. When Christopher's world collapses after he discovers his mother's letters and his father's confession, she is the voice he relies on. In Act 2, as he travels alone to London, Stephens has Siobhan's voice guide him through the overwhelming station and the Underground, advising him to break the problem into steps and to focus on what he can control. This is a powerful dramatic device. She is not physically there, yet her teaching has become part of his mind, which shows how deeply she has influenced him. The audience realises that her importance lies in what she has given him to carry inside himself.

Siobhan is also important in the play's metatheatrical design. It is she who suggests that Christopher's book could be made into a play, and the second act is presented as that performance. At moments she steps outside the story to comment on it, reminding the audience that this is Christopher's version of events. This gives Siobhan a special status between the story and the theatre, and she becomes almost a co-author of the drama we are watching. Stephens perhaps uses her to show that Christopher's perspective deserves an audience.

However, there are limits to how far Siobhan drives the action. She does not

Question number

uncover the lie about Judy, she cannot stop Ed's violence, and she plays no part in the confrontation at Judy's flat in London. The major turning points, finding the letters, Ed's confession and the decision to go to London, are Christopher's own. Stephens arguably keeps Siobhan on the edge of the family drama to emphasise that Christopher must ultimately act for himself. Her importance is therefore that of a guide rather than a rescuer. The professional boundaries of her role mean that, at the end, it is Ed's patient rebuilding of trust through the gift of the puppy, Sandy, which resolves the family plot.

In the final scene, though, Stephens returns to Siobhan. Christopher tells her about his A level Maths result and asks whether it means he can do anything. It is significant that this question, the emotional climax of the whole play, is addressed to her, not to his parents. The question is left unanswered, which keeps the ending open, but the fact that Christopher turns to her shows that she is the person whose judgement he trusts most. Overall, Stephens presents Siobhan as essential: not the centre of the plot, but the steady voice that allows Christopher, and the audience, to make sense of his world.

11 Delaney uses Peter to expose a careless, possessive and ultimately exploitative male attitude to women, one in which women are valued for their looks and availability and discarded once they become inconvenient. Peter is brash, funny and confident, but beneath the jokes lies contempt, particularly for women who are ageing, poor or dependent. Through him, Delaney, writing at nineteen in 1958, shows how women like Helen were trapped by their reliance on men, and invites her audience to question a society that made marriage a woman's only route to security.

From his first appearance Peter treats Helen as a sexual prize rather than a

Question number

partner. He arrives in the shabby Salford flat chasing her, and his flirting is physical and teasing. His proposal, "Come on down to the church and I'll make an honest woman of you", is revealing. It sounds generous, but the idiom suggests that Helen is not "honest" or respectable without a husband, and that he has the power to grant her respectability. Delaney presents marriage as a transaction in which the man holds the advantage: Peter is younger, has money and offers a comfortable house, while Helen offers her body and her company. The comedy of their bickering hides a serious point about women's economic dependence in the 1950s.

Peter's attitude to Jo is equally telling. He is irritated by her presence and makes it clear that a teenage daughter does not fit into his plans. Jo, in turn, mocks him, and her sharp questions about his age and his eye puncture his vanity. Delaney uses Jo's wit to challenge Peter's masculinity, but it is significant that Jo has no real power. When Helen marries Peter, Jo is simply left behind at Christmas, alone in the flat. Peter's selfishness therefore has a direct effect on the next generation of women: his desire to possess Helen leads to Jo's abandonment, and her loneliness makes her vulnerable. Delaney arguably suggests that male selfishness is passed on as female suffering.

Peter's idiolect is crucial to how Delaney presents him. His speech is full of slang, jokes and innuendo, a cocky music-hall style that makes audiences laugh at first. However, his humour becomes cruel when he is drunk. His remark "isn't she a game old bird? Worn out on the beat" reduces Helen to an ageing prostitute. The animal metaphor "old bird" dehumanises her, while "worn out" focuses on her body as something used up. This is the logic of Peter's attitude: women are attractive only while they are young, and once they age they become objects of ridicule. The fact that he says this in front of Jo and Geof makes the humiliation public, and

Question number

Delaney shifts the mood from comedy to pathos.

Delaney also shows that Peter's charm disguises a desire for control. When Helen suggests the house belongs partly to her, he responds "Like hell it is. I could throw you out tomorrow". The blunt threat strips away any romance and shows that Helen's security depends entirely on his goodwill. Later Peter does exactly this, going off with another woman and leaving Helen with nowhere to go but back to Jo. Helen's sour comment that he "threw his money about like a man with no arms" uses a comic simile to admit what the audience has suspected all along: his generosity was never real. Peter's arc therefore exposes the false promise that a man would provide for a woman for life.

Peter also refuses to have anything to do with Jo's pregnancy, and his contempt for Geof, whom he mocks for his gentleness, shows that his attitudes to women are linked to a narrow idea of masculinity. Delaney sets him against Geof, who cooks, cleans and offers to care for Jo and the baby. The contrast suggests that male care and tenderness are possible, but that society treated such men as suspect. Similarly, the Boy, Jimmie, makes romantic promises to Jo and then sails away, so Peter is not an isolated villain but part of a pattern of men who take pleasure and avoid responsibility.

Ultimately, Delaney does not present Helen simply as a victim, since she chooses Peter for comfort and fun, but she does show the cost of a society where women had few options. In the context of the kitchen sink drama and Joan Littlewood's Theatre Workshop, which wanted to put working-class lives on stage, Peter represents the casual sexism of a whole culture. A modern audience, aware of debates about patriarchy, may find him even more troubling: a man whose jokes reveal that, to him, women are disposable.

Question number

12 Delaney presents the effects of being different as painful but also, perhaps surprisingly, liberating. Jo, Geof, the Boy and even Helen all live outside the norms of respectable 1950s society, and they suffer for it through poverty, prejudice, loneliness and insecurity. Yet Delaney also shows that these outsiders create a warmth and honesty among themselves that "respectable" society lacks. Writing in Salford in 1958, she puts on stage people who were usually ignored or condemned, and asks her audience to question who is really at fault: the characters, or the society that rejects them.

Jo is the play's central outsider. She is the daughter of a single mother who moves from one cheap lodging to another, and the opening, with Helen and Jo arriving in a cold, damp flat, shows that being different from the respectable family ideal means instability. Jo's sharp humour hides her vulnerability. Her relationship with the Boy, a black sailor, crosses the racial boundaries of the time, and her pregnancy outside marriage makes her an unmarried mother in an era when such women faced shame and were often pressured to give their babies up. The effect is isolation. When the Boy leaves and Helen marries Peter, Jo is left alone, and her struggle to earn money in a shoe shop and a bar shows the economic cost of being different.

Delaney uses Jo's dialogue to explore the inner effects of this pressure. Her confession "I don't want to be a mother. I don't want to be a woman" is one of the most striking lines in the play. The parallel structure and blunt negatives suggest that she rejects not just motherhood but the role society expects of every woman. Perhaps she sees in Helen what being a woman has meant: dependence on unreliable men. Jo's difference is therefore both something imposed on her and

Question number

something she chooses as a protest, and Delaney leaves the audience to sympathise with her confusion rather than judge it.

The Boy, Jimmie, experiences difference through race. In 1958, the year of the Notting Hill race riots, a relationship between a white girl and a black man would have shocked many audience members. Delaney gives Jimmie wit and dignity. When Jo assumes he has an exotic African background, he replies that his family are from Cardiff and mocks her for hoping to marry a man "whose father beat the tom-tom all night". Delaney uses his irony to expose the stereotypes of the time. He also predicts that Helen "will see a coloured boy", showing that he expects to be judged by his skin. The effect of prejudice on him is perhaps why he never returns: there is no place for him and Jo in this society.

Geof's difference is his homosexuality, which was illegal in 1958, only a year after the Wolfenden Report recommended reform. Delaney presents the effects through hints rather than open statement, because the Lord Chamberlain still censored the stage. Geof has been thrown out of his lodgings, and Jo's teasing questions and Helen's insult "Bloody little pansy" show the casual contempt he faces. Yet Geof is the most caring character in the play. He cooks, cleans, worries about her health and tells Jo "Stop trying to be inhuman. It doesn't suit you". Delaney uses him to show that the outsider can embody the tenderness that conventional men like Peter lack.

Structurally, the play's shifts of mood mirror the instability of these lives. Scenes of comedy, jazz music and music-hall asides suddenly turn to arguments and loneliness. The relationship between Jo and Geof forms a kind of alternative family, and the scenes in which they play and sing together are among the happiest in the play. However, Delaney does not offer a neat solution. When Helen

Question number

returns after Peter has thrown her out, she drives Geof away, and the fragile household collapses. Society's pressure, in the form of the "respectable" mother, reasserts itself.

The ending reveals the lasting effects of difference. When Helen learns that the baby may be black, she leaves for a drink, and the audience cannot be sure she will return. Jo is left alone, singing a nursery rhyme to herself. The image is both bleak and hopeful: Jo is isolated, yet she is calm and facing the future. Delaney suggests that being different in this society brings real suffering, but she also celebrates the resilience of those who refuse to fit in, making a powerful case for compassion that still speaks to modern debates about prejudice and acceptance.

13 Golding presents Simon as different from the other boys because he is the only one who understands the true nature of the "beast": that evil lies not in the jungle but inside human beings. While the others are driven by fear, power or the desire for rescue, Simon is quiet, kind and spiritual, an almost saintly figure whom Golding himself described as Christ-like. His difference is presented as both a gift and a danger, and his murder suggests Golding's bleak view that a society gripped by fear will destroy the very person who could save it.

From his first appearance, Golding marks Simon out as physically and socially apart. He arrives as a member of Jack's choir and faints in the heat, and Jack dismisses him with the comment that he is always throwing a faint. Fainting was traditionally associated with mystics and visionaries, so Golding may be hinting at Simon's spiritual sensitivity from the start. Yet the other boys see only weakness. Throughout the novel they treat him as odd or even mad, which shows how a group that values toughness misreads gentleness as strangeness.

Question number

Simon's actions set him apart as the most selfless boy on the island. In Chapter 3, while the others swim or hunt, he is the one who helps Ralph build the shelters. He then helps the littluns reach the best fruit, passing it down to their "endless, outstretched hands", an image that recalls Christ feeding the multitude. Afterwards he goes alone to his secret place in the jungle, where Golding describes the candle-buds opening and the scent of the flowers spilling out into the evening. The lyrical, peaceful language contrasts sharply with Jack's hunting scenes, which are full of violence and frustration. Simon is in harmony with nature, while the other boys seek to dominate it.

His kindness also extends to Piggy. When Jack refuses to give Piggy any meat in Chapter 4, Simon quietly passes him his own share, and Jack angrily flings meat down at Simon's feet. This small moment shows Simon's moral courage: he supports the weak even when it puts him at risk. In a novel written in 1954, after Golding's experiences in the Second World War had shown him how ordinary people could become cruel, Simon embodies the decency that resists bullying.

Most importantly, Simon is different in what he understands. At the assembly in Chapter 5 he suggests "maybe it's only us". The simplicity of the line is significant: Simon speaks the truth plainly, but the boys mock him and the meeting breaks down. Golding comments that Simon "became inarticulate in his effort to express mankind's essential illness". The phrase "essential illness" captures the novel's central idea, that evil is part of human nature, and Simon's inability to explain it suggests that such truths are felt rather than argued. Later he tells Ralph, with quiet certainty, "You'll get back to where you came from", a moment of prophecy that sets him apart from the despair around him.

Question number

Golding develops Simon's difference most powerfully in Chapter 8, when he confronts the sow's head on the stick. In a dreamlike, hallucinatory scene, the Lord of the Flies, a translation of Beelzebub, speaks to him: "Fancy thinking the Beast was something you could hunt and kill!" and "I'm part of you". This encounter echoes Christ's temptation in the wilderness, and it confirms what Simon already suspects. Afterwards, unlike any other boy, he climbs the mountain to face the "beast" and discovers the dead parachutist. His gentle act of freeing the lines shows compassion even for a corpse, and he sets off to tell the others the truth.

Simon's death is the tragic climax of his difference. He crawls out of the forest into the frenzied dance, and the boys, chanting "Kill the beast! Cut his throat! Spill his blood!", fall on him and kill him. The terrible irony is that they murder the one boy who could free them from their fear, and they call him the beast. Golding then transforms his body into an image of peace: surrounded by glowing sea creatures, it becomes "a silver shape beneath the steadfast constellations" as it drifts out to sea. The almost sacred, luminous language suggests a kind of martyrdom.

Through Simon, Golding presents goodness as real but fragile. He is different because he sees clearly, acts kindly and faces the darkness within himself, and the other boys destroy him precisely because of that difference. Golding warns his post-war readers that societies which turn on their visionaries are doomed to violence.

14 Golding presents the Beast as the most important force on the island, not because it exists, but because each character gives it a different meaning. For the littluns

Question number

it is a nightmare; for Ralph and Piggy it is a dangerous rumour to be reasoned away; for Jack it is a tool of power; and for Simon it is the truth about human nature. Jack's words, "The head is for the Beast. It's a gift", sum up Golding's central idea: the boys worship and feed the very evil they fear, without realising that it lives inside themselves.

The Beast first appears as a child's fear. In Chapter 2 a littlun with a mulberry-coloured birthmark speaks of a "beastie", a snake-like thing in the woods. The diminutive "beastie" sounds almost comic, yet the fear spreads quickly through the group. Golding shows that the Beast grows out of darkness and imagination. Significantly, the boy with the birthmark disappears in the first fire, so the first death on the island is linked to the moment the Beast is named. Golding perhaps suggests that once fear enters the community, chaos follows.

For Ralph and Piggy, the Beast is important as a threat to order. Ralph insists that there is no beast, and Piggy, the voice of rationalism, declares "Life is scientific" and dismisses the idea. Their responses reflect a belief in reason and civilisation, the values of the adult world that Golding's 1950s readers would have trusted. However, Golding exposes the limits of reason. In Chapter 5, as darkness falls, the assembly descends into talk of ghosts and a beast from the water, and Ralph cannot control the boys' fear. Logic is shown to be powerless against the irrational.

For Jack, the Beast becomes a source of power. He promises to hunt it and offers the boys protection, and fear of the Beast is what pulls them away from Ralph and towards his tribe. Golding links the Beast directly to the boys' growing savagery. After the killing of the sow, which is described in violent, sexualised language, Jack places her head on a stick as an offering: "The head is for the

Question number

Beast. It's a gift." The word "gift" shows that the Beast has become a god to be appeased, and Jack, like a priest or dictator, uses this ritual to control his followers. This reflects Golding's experience of the Second World War, in which he saw how leaders could manipulate fear to justify violence. The parallels with fascism are clear: an external enemy is invented to unite the group under an absolute leader.

The arrival of the dead parachutist, in the chapter titled "Beast from Air", gives the Beast a physical form. The figure, rising and falling in the wind on the mountain, terrifies Samneric, Ralph and Jack. The irony is bitter: the "beast" is actually a victim of the adult war, a sign that the grown-up world is as violent as the island. Golding uses it to suggest that the evil the boys fear is the same evil that has driven the world beyond the island into war.

Simon alone understands the Beast's real importance. Earlier he suggests "maybe it's only us", and in Chapter 8 the sow's head, swarming with flies, seems to speak to him. The Lord of the Flies, a translation of Beelzebub, mocks him: "Fancy thinking the Beast was something you could hunt and kill!" and "I'm part of you". In this hallucinatory scene, Golding makes the Beast's meaning explicit. Evil is not an outside creature but part of human nature, an idea which echoes Freud's theory of the id and the Christian doctrine of original sin. Golding himself wrote that "man produces evil as a bee produces honey", and the Lord of the Flies is that idea given a voice.

The tragedy is that the boys kill Simon as the Beast. In the frenzy of the dance in Chapter 9, chanting "Kill the beast!", they turn the truth-teller into the monster. Their fear of the Beast has made them beasts themselves. Later Ralph smashes the skull, which grins at the sky, but the gesture changes nothing,

Question number

because the Beast cannot be destroyed by violence.

By the end of the novel, Ralph weeps "for the end of innocence, the darkness of man's heart". This line completes Golding's presentation of the Beast. It was always the darkness within the boys, and its importance to every character reveals Golding's warning to readers living in the shadow of world war and nuclear threat: the real danger lies not out there in the jungle, but inside us all.

15 Both Claudette Williams and D. H. Lawrence present characters whose difficult situations are shaped by forces beyond their control: colonial education, racism and migration in 'Invisible Mass of the Back Row', and the dangers of mining and an unhappy marriage in 'Odour of Chrysanthemums'. In both stories, characters react first with fear and anger, then with a kind of hard-won understanding. However, while Hortense's reactions move towards defiance and finding her voice, Elizabeth Bates's lead her to a painful recognition of her own part in her suffering.

Williams places Hortense in a difficult situation from the opening, in a hot, crowded Jamaican schoolroom where she sits in the back row. The title's image of an "invisible mass" suggests that the children at the back, poorer and darker-skinned, are unseen by teachers who favour children like the wealthy, light-skinned Lorna Phillips. Hortense reacts to this injustice with resentment, which is shown in her hostility towards Lorna and the children's chase after her. Williams uses Hortense's first-person narration, mixing Standard English with Jamaican dialect, to make her reactions immediate and vivid, and to suggest that her voice is itself a form of resistance against an education system that values only one kind of English.

Question number

Lawrence also introduces Elizabeth through a difficult, tense situation: waiting for her husband, Walter, to come home from the pit. She is described as "a tall woman of imperious mien", and her reaction to his lateness is anger rather than worry, because she assumes he is drinking in the pub. Lawrence's third-person narration allows the reader to see her bitterness in her sharp speech to her children and her angry thoughts. Unlike Hortense, whose voice dominates her story, Elizabeth is observed from outside as well as within, which creates a sense of distance that matches the emotional distance in her marriage.

Both writers use structure to build tension. In 'Invisible Mass of the Back Row', the visit of the Inspector creates fear in the classroom, and Hortense's frightened response, blurting out a question that challenges the official version of Columbus's "discovery", is met with a rap of Miss Henderson's ruler. This moment shows that a child who questions colonial history is punished, and Williams presents Hortense's reaction as instinctive rather than planned: anger at being taught that her island's history began with a European. In 'Odour of Chrysanthemums', Lawrence slows time as the evening darkens. Elizabeth's anger slowly becomes fear as she goes out to ask the neighbours, and the dialect of the miners' wives and their hushed hesitations hint at disaster before it is confirmed. In both stories, the reader senses what the character does not yet fully know.

The writers present the climax of the difficult situation through loss. Hortense must leave her home, Heartease, when her parents send for her to come to England, and before she goes, Cousy, the old woman who has cared for her, dies. Williams presents her grief quietly, which perhaps makes it more moving. In England she reacts with confusion to the cold and to parents who feel like strangers, and once again she is placed among other Caribbean pupils who are overlooked. Elizabeth's loss is more sudden: Walter has been suffocated by a fall of

Question number

coal. Her reaction is restrained. She does not collapse but practically prepares the parlour, and with Walter's mother she washes his body, a ritual that Lawrence describes in slow, tender detail.

It is here that the stories diverge most significantly. As she washes him, Elizabeth realises that she and Walter had never truly known each other, and that "She had refused him as himself". Lawrence presents her reaction as a moment of shame and self-knowledge rather than simple grief, and she ends by submitting to life, which is "her immediate master". Hortense's reaction, in contrast, moves outward. At the end the Caribbean pupils find the courage to challenge the teacher and the version of history they are taught, and Williams's final image of voices "learning the new language in dis here England" presents the back row becoming visible. The dialect phrase "dis here England" asserts that Hortense will adapt to England without giving up her identity.

Contextually, the reactions reflect very different worlds. Lawrence, the son of a miner, wrote about the dangers of mining in early twentieth-century Nottinghamshire, where women were economically dependent on husbands who could be killed at any moment. Williams writes about the Windrush generation and the children who followed their parents to Britain, facing racism and low expectations in schools. Both writers show that difficult situations reveal character. Elizabeth's reaction is inward and tragic, a recognition that comes too late, while Hortense's is defiant and hopeful, suggesting that the injustice she faces can be resisted.

16 In both 'Odour of Chrysanthemums' and Graham Swift's 'Chemistry', love is presented as powerful but rarely simple: it is tangled up with grief, possessiveness

Question number

and the failure of people to understand one another. Lawrence explores maternal love, a father's need for companionship and, above all, a marriage in which love has died long before the husband does. Swift explores a child's love for his grandfather and his jealous love for his mother. Both writers suggest that love can be most clearly understood only after loss, when it is too late to change anything.

Lawrence presents maternal love as Elizabeth's strongest bond. As she waits for Walter, she is protective of John and Annie, scolding John for tearing at the chrysanthemums yet clearly devoted to them. Her love is practical and stern rather than openly tender, which reflects the harsh conditions of a mining family where a mother's love meant keeping the household going. Similarly, the narrator's love for his mother in 'Chemistry' is intense but complicated. After his father's death, when a light aeroplane disappeared over the Irish Sea, the boy, his mother and his grandfather form a close family of three. Swift's first-person retrospective narration allows the adult narrator to look back on this childhood love with a mixture of tenderness and pain.

Both stories show how a new or failing romantic love disrupts family love. In 'Odour of Chrysanthemums', Elizabeth's father, an engine driver, tells her that he intends to remarry, and her disapproving reaction shows that she sees his new love as a betrayal of her dead mother. In 'Chemistry', the mother's relationship with Ralph creates a similar sense of betrayal. The boy and his grandfather feel pushed aside, and the boy's love turns into jealousy so strong that he takes acid from his grandfather's shed, intending to throw it at Ralph. Swift presents the darker side of love here: possessive love can be destructive, and a child's need to keep his mother to himself can lead him towards violence.

The love between Elizabeth and Walter is the heart of Lawrence's story, and it is

Question number

presented largely through absence and symbolism. Elizabeth says it was "chrysanthemums when I married him", and the flowers that once marked the start of their marriage now mark his drunkenness and, finally, his death. The title's emphasis on smell suggests memories that linger and cannot be escaped. Lawrence uses dialect in the speech of Walter's mother, who weeps and remembers her son as a boy, to present a different kind of love: a mother's uncritical devotion, which contrasts with Elizabeth's cold judgement of her husband. While his mother grieves for the child he was, Elizabeth confronts the man she never knew.

The washing of Walter's body is the climax of Lawrence's exploration. Elizabeth sees him lying "utterly inviolable" and realises "She had refused him as himself". The narrative voice moves deep into her consciousness, and the shocking revelation is that her marriage was a failure of love on both sides. She is pregnant with his child, which makes the moment even more poignant: new life will come from a relationship that was, in truth, empty. Lawrence, writing from his own experience of a mining family and a difficult marriage between his parents, presents love between men and women as limited by rigid roles in which the man worked and drank and the woman kept house.

In 'Chemistry', the deepest love is between the boy and his grandfather. They share the ritual of sailing the model launch on the park pond and the grandfather's experiments in the shed, where he explains that chemistry is about change. Swift uses chemistry as an extended metaphor for relationships: elements combine and separate, just as the family is reshaped by death and by Ralph's arrival. The grandfather's love is quiet and patient, and when he dies by swallowing prussic acid, the boy's grief is complicated by guilt and confusion. His decision to throw the stolen acid into the pond, rather than at Ralph, suggests that love for his grandfather finally overcomes his hatred.

Question number

Both stories end with love surviving in a changed form. Elizabeth submits to life, her "immediate master", accepting her duty to her children while feeling shame towards her dead husband. Swift's narrator, at dusk, imagines his grandfather standing on the far side of the pond, with the lost launch still moving towards him. This image suggests that love endures in memory, even when the person has gone. While Lawrence's ending is bleak and honest, Swift's is more tender and haunting, but both writers suggest that love is shaped by loss, and that real understanding of those we love often comes only when they can no longer be reached.

17 Through Squealer, Orwell shows that tyranny does not survive on violence alone: it survives on the control of truth. Squealer is the voice of the regime, a propagandist who never needs to bite anyone because he can make the animals doubt their own memories. Orwell, writing in 1945 after watching Stalin's propaganda deceive even intelligent people in the West, uses Squealer to warn that whoever controls language controls reality, and that lies become most dangerous when the victims are too trusting, or too tired, to question them.

Orwell introduces Squealer with a telling description: he is "a brilliant talker", and the other animals say he "could turn black into white". The idiom is chillingly literal by the end of the book, because Squealer genuinely does persuade the animals that wrong is right and that their own suffering is prosperity. Even his name is significant. A "squeal" is a high, piercing noise rather than a reasoned argument, which suggests that his power lies in sound and persuasion rather than in truth. Physically he is described as small and fat with twinkling eyes, so there is something slippery and almost comic about him, yet Orwell makes the comedy

Question number

darker as the novella progresses.

His first great lie concerns the milk and apples. When the animals discover the pigs are keeping these for themselves, Squealer explains that they are eaten only for the good of everyone, because the pigs are brainworkers whose health is vital. His argument relies on two classic propaganda tools. First, a false appeal to authority: the claim has supposedly been "proved by Science, comrades". Second, fear. He repeats that if the pigs failed, "Jones would come back!" The repetition turns a threat into a refrain that ends all thought, and the animals, who have no wish to see Jones return, have no answer. Orwell shows that the lie works not because it is convincing but because questioning it is made to feel like disloyalty. Squealer's physical performance, skipping from side to side and whisking his tail, adds to the sense that this is theatre rather than reasoning.

As Napoleon's power grows, Squealer's role shifts from justifying privileges to rewriting history itself. After Snowball's expulsion, Squealer first reframes him as a dangerous influence and later insists that he was secretly in league with Jones all along, even though the animals remember him fighting bravely at the Battle of the Cowshed. When the windmill plan, once condemned, is adopted, Squealer calls the reversal "Tactics, comrades, tactics!", a phrase which uses repetition and the comforting word "comrades" to disguise a simple lie. Orwell here satirises the way Soviet propaganda erased Trotsky from photographs and history books, but the strongest readings see beyond the allegory: Squealer represents any political machine that edits the past to protect the present, a theme Orwell would return to in Nineteen Eighty-Four.

The most blatant example of this is the altering of the Seven Commandments. One night the animals find Squealer lying beside a broken ladder with a pot of

Question number

white paint, and soon afterwards the commandments have gained new words: no animal shall drink alcohol "to excess", or kill another animal "without cause". Orwell's structure here is clever, because the reader notices each tiny addition while the animals, who cannot read well, assume their memories are faulty. The final reduction of the commandments to "All animals are equal but some animals are more equal than others" is a paradox that exposes the death of meaning itself. Language has been emptied so completely that a sentence can contradict itself and still be obeyed.

Squealer's cruellest lie is told after Boxer's death. The animals have seen the knacker's van take him away, yet Squealer claims the van had recently been bought by the vet, who had not yet painted out the old name. He even invents Boxer's last words in praise of Napoleon. The reader's knowledge creates a bitter dramatic irony: the most loyal animal has been sold for whisky money, and his memory is used to strengthen the regime that betrayed him. Here Squealer seems to have no conscience at all.

Orwell also shows that lies depend on listeners. Boxer's motto "Napoleon is always right" and the sheep's bleating, which drowns out debate, show that a population that will not think does the propagandist's work for him. Perhaps this is why Orwell chose the simple form of a "fairy story": he wanted ordinary readers, not just intellectuals, to recognise these techniques. By the final chapter Squealer walks on two legs, and his transformation completes the argument. In Animal Farm, the liar does not simply serve power; he becomes indistinguishable from it.

18 Orwell uses the events of Animal Farm to argue that revolution is not doomed because its ideals are wrong, but because those ideals are so easily stolen. The

Question number

rebellion begins as a genuine liberation from cruelty and ends with the pigs feasting with humans, so the structure of the novella traces a full circle. Orwell, a socialist who had been shocked by the way Stalin betrayed the Russian Revolution, wants his readers to see that a revolution only stays true if ordinary people remain alert enough to hold their new leaders to account.

The first events establish why revolution is necessary. Mr Jones is a drunken, neglectful farmer, and Old Major's speech describes the animals' lives as "miserable, laborious, and short". The tricolon gives his argument the weight of a sermon, and his claim that "Man is the only creature that consumes without producing" echoes Marx's analysis of the worker and the capitalist. Orwell presents this idealism sympathetically. "Beasts of England" is a stirring, hopeful song of a golden future, and it unites the animals emotionally before any plan exists. The actual rebellion, however, is almost accidental: Jones forgets to feed the animals, they break into the store-shed, and the humans are driven out. Orwell suggests that revolutions often spring from desperation rather than design, which leaves a vacuum that the cleverest can fill.

The early chapters capture the joy of freedom. The animals roll in the dew and gaze at the farm that is now theirs, and the Seven Commandments are painted on the barn wall as a kind of constitution, ending with "All animals are equal". Yet Orwell plants the seeds of failure almost immediately. At the end of Chapter 2 the milk mysteriously disappears while the animals are harvesting, and in Chapter 3 the pigs take the apples too. These small events are structurally crucial, because they show inequality returning on the very first day. Orwell's narrative voice stays simple and calm, as in a fable, so the reader notices the injustice the animals miss.

Question number

The middle of the book shows the revolution being seized by force. During the debate over the windmill, Napoleon's nine dogs chase Snowball off the farm, an event that allegorises Trotsky's exile but more broadly shows how violence replaces discussion once one leader controls the means of force. Sunday meetings are abolished, and decisions are now made by a committee of pigs. The revolutionary language is kept, but its meaning is reversed: "comrade" now signals obedience rather than equality. Orwell's satire is sharpest when the pigs use the revolution's own words to justify betraying it.

The bloodiest events are the confessions and executions in Chapter 7, which mirror Stalin's show trials of the 1930s. Animals confess to absurd crimes and are torn apart by the dogs, and the pile of corpses at Napoleon's feet is a horrifying image of what the revolution has become. Orwell then gives us Clover's view over the farm, a moment of gentle pathos in which she reflects that these scenes of terror and slaughter were not what they had hoped for on the night of Old Major's speech. Her inability to put her feelings into words is the tragedy: the working animals sense that something has gone wrong, yet they lack the education and language to name it. Immediately afterwards "Beasts of England" is banned, because, as Squealer says, the rebellion is now complete. Orwell suggests that a regime which forbids its own founding song has abandoned the dream entirely.

Through individual characters Orwell explores who loses in such revolutions. Boxer, the strongest and most loyal worker, responds to every crisis with "I will work harder", and is rewarded by being sold to the knacker. Benjamin, the cynical donkey, sees the truth but refuses to act. Together they suggest that blind loyalty and passive cynicism both allow tyranny to grow, and Orwell perhaps blames the silent majority as much as the pigs.

Question number

The final event brings the structure full circle. The pigs walk on two legs, carry whips and play cards with the neighbouring farmers, and the farm's name is changed back to the Manor Farm. In the last sentence the animals look "from pig to man, and from man to pig" and find it impossible to say which is which. The cyclical structure suggests that one ruling class has simply replaced another. However, Orwell's message is not entirely hopeless. The book is a warning, and a warning implies that the outcome can be avoided. By writing a "fairy story" that anyone could read, Orwell gives ordinary readers the alertness the animals lacked, so that the next revolution need not end where it began.

19

Ishiguro presents Hailsham as both a gift and a trap. On the surface it is a privileged, almost idyllic English boarding school, and Kathy, Tommy and Ruth cling to its memory for the rest of their lives. Yet the novel gradually reveals that its kindness was a way of preparing them, gently and without protest, for their deaths as organ donors. Through Hailsham's influence, Ishiguro explores how an education can shape people so completely that they accept the purpose others have chosen for them, a question that reaches beyond cloning to all of us.

The influence of Hailsham is felt first in the narrative voice. Kathy introduces herself with calm precision: she is thirty-one and has been a carer for over eleven years. Her tone is polite, measured and conversational, and she repeatedly addresses the reader as if they too might have been at Hailsham. This seemingly easy-going style is itself a product of the school, which trained its students to be orderly, careful and uncomplaining. Ishiguro makes the reader feel the horror that Kathy herself never expresses, so the gap between what she describes and how she describes it is where the novel's meaning lies.

Question number

Daily life at Hailsham is presented through small, ordinary details: lessons, sports pavilions, the Sales, and above all the Exchanges, where the students trade their poems and paintings for tokens. Creativity becomes the currency of status, and Madame's mysterious collection of the best work for the Gallery makes it seem enormously important. This has a powerful influence on Tommy, who is bullied because he cannot draw and responds with violent tantrums, one of which ends with mud splattered on his polo shirt. Hailsham teaches him that his worth depends on artistic talent, and this belief follows him into adulthood when, at the Cottages and later, he secretly draws his strange, intricate animals in the hope that they will prove his love for Kathy and win a deferral.

The guardians shape the students' understanding of their futures in a deliberately vague way. Miss Lucy's later claim that they have been "told and not told" captures Hailsham's whole method: information about donations is introduced so early, and so gradually, that it never quite registers as a shock. When Miss Lucy breaks this pattern and tells them that their lives are set out for them, the moment is significant precisely because it is so rare, and she soon leaves Hailsham. Ishiguro suggests that the school's gentleness is a form of control, raising unsettling questions about what education is for: to free young people, or to make them fit the roles society needs.

Ruth's personality is perhaps shaped most clearly by Hailsham's culture of secrecy and belonging. As a child she invents the secret guard to protect Miss Geraldine and pretends that her pencil case was a gift from a guardian, using stories to gain power and status. At the Cottages she copies the gestures of the veterans and dreams of working in an open-plan office, and the trip to Norfolk to see her "possible" ends in bitter disappointment. Her cruel claim that their models are "trash" reveals how fragile the Hailsham sense of specialness really is. Outside its

Question number

walls, the students have no family, history or future, so they hold onto Hailsham as the only identity they have.

For Kathy, Hailsham's influence is emotional and lasting. The cassette with the song "Never Let Me Go", which she loses and later finds in Norfolk, the "lost corner" of England, becomes a symbol of the childhood she cannot let go of. When Madame watches her dancing with a pillow and weeps, the moment is dramatic irony: Kathy imagines a baby, while Madame sees a girl holding onto a world that will be taken from her. As a carer, Kathy notices that donors from other homes envy her Hailsham past, and she even shares her memories with a dying donor who wants to hear about it as if it were his own.

The final revelation by Miss Emily changes everything. The art was collected not to discover talent but to prove that the students had souls, and Hailsham was a humane experiment in a society that would rather not think about where its cures came from. Writing in 2005, after the cloning of Dolly the sheep, Ishiguro raises fears about science outpacing ethics. Yet his real focus is human. Tommy's furious screaming in the field after this meeting is the closest anyone comes to rage, while Kathy ends the novel standing by a fence in Norfolk, imagining Tommy, and then simply drives away to where she is supposed to be. Hailsham gave them love, friendship and memory, but it also taught them to accept. That double influence is the novel's quiet tragedy.

20 At first sight the statement seems undeniably true. Kathy, Tommy and Ruth know they will donate their organs until they "complete", yet none of them tries to escape, sabotage the system or even protest openly. However, I would argue that this absence of rebellion is not a flaw in the novel but its central point. Ishiguro

Question number

deliberately denies the reader the dramatic uprising that the science fiction genre leads us to expect, in order to show how conditioning, love and hope can make people accept the unacceptable. The strangeness the reader feels is exactly what Ishiguro wants us to examine, in the characters and perhaps in ourselves.

The flat, measured narrative voice is the first sign of this conformity. Kathy tells her story with polite calm, describing her work as a carer in the language of professional pride and treating "donations" and "completing" as ordinary terms. These euphemisms show how thoroughly the young people have absorbed the system's vocabulary. If you cannot name your death plainly, it is hard to rebel against it. Ishiguro's choice of a first-person narrator who never rages means that the reader must supply the outrage, and this makes the lack of rebellion disturbing rather than simply strange.

Hailsham is where this acceptance is created. The guardians release information about the students' futures so gradually that, as Miss Lucy puts it, they have been "told and not told". The students are taught that smoking is terribly wrong for them in particular, and they joke uneasily about it, but they never ask why. Ishiguro also builds in the absence of any need for force. Although rumours about the woods and the fence circulate, there are no guards, chains or locked gates, which suggests that the most effective prison is the one inside a person's mind. A reader might see a satire of social conformity here: ordinary people, too, often accept the roles assigned to them without question.

Yet there are mini-rebellions, and these complicate the statement. Tommy is the most disruptive figure. His tantrums as a child, which the others mock, can be read as an instinctive, wordless protest against a system that judges him by his creativity. Miss Lucy, too, rebels when she breaks the rule of silence and tells the

Question number

students that their lives are set out for them. Her honesty is quickly punished, as she leaves Hailsham shortly afterwards, which perhaps shows why rebellion is rare: those who challenge the system are quietly removed.

Even when the characters act against the system, their rebellion takes the form of a request. The rumour of deferrals, which promises a few extra years to couples who can prove they are truly in love, gives Kathy and Tommy hope, and their response is to gather Tommy's drawings and visit Madame politely to ask. Ishiguro suggests that hope can be a tool of control, because it channels desire for freedom into obedience. Ruth's final act is similar. Rather than resisting her fate, she seeks forgiveness, apologising for keeping Kathy and Tommy apart and giving them Madame's address. Her rebellion is moral and personal, not political.

The visit to Miss Emily and Madame is the climax where rebellion might finally occur, and Ishiguro deliberately frustrates it. Miss Emily reveals that deferrals never existed and that Hailsham was an experiment to prove the students had souls. The guardians, who thought of themselves as reformers, still never challenged the donation programme itself, so even the adults' rebellion was limited. Afterwards Tommy gets out of the car and screams in the dark, and this is the novel's most powerful moment of protest. Yet it is directed at no one and changes nothing; Ishiguro turns rebellion into pure grief.

In the end, I largely agree that the lack of rebellion is strange, but I would argue that its strangeness is the purpose of the novel. Published in 2005, after the cloning of Dolly the sheep, Never Let Me Go raises fears about science that treats some lives as means to others' ends. More universally, the clones' acceptance mirrors the way all humans live alongside the knowledge of their mortality, making plans and loving each other without being able to change the ending. Kathy's final

Question number

decision to drive away from the fence in Norfolk to wherever she is supposed to be is quietly devastating. Ishiguro does not show us people who fail to rebel because they are weak, but people whose love, loyalty and conditioning have left them no language for rebellion at all.

21 Syal uses Meena's relationships with the male characters of Tollington to chart her journey from childhood to the edge of adulthood. Each man represents a different kind of influence: Papa offers love, culture and moral guidance; Sam Lowbridge offers the dangerous glamour of belonging; and figures such as Mr Ormerod and Robert reveal the prejudice and the tenderness of the wider world. Through these relationships Syal explores how a British Asian girl growing up in the Black Country of the 1960s learns what kind of woman, and what kind of person, she wants to be.

Meena's relationship with Papa is the most secure in the novel, and Syal presents it through Meena's affectionate, often humorous narration. Papa is a gentle, educated man whose singing at the family gatherings moves the aunties and uncles to tears, and Meena describes these moments with a mixture of embarrassment and pride. His songs connect her to an India she has never seen, filling the gap she describes in the famous opening, where she claims that "those of us deprived of history" sometimes need mythology "to feel complete". Papa's stories of Partition, which he tells only rarely, give Meena a glimpse of the violence and loss behind her parents' calm lives. Syal suggests that Papa represents a quieter form of masculinity than the swagger of the village boys: he protects through patience and principle rather than force.

However, Syal also shows Meena testing this relationship. Early in the novel she

Question number

steals money from Mama's purse to buy sweets and then lies about it, and Papa's disappointment hurts her more than any punishment. The episode establishes Meena as an unreliable child but a reliable narrator: the adult voice looks back honestly at her own lies. Papa's moral authority comes from love rather than fear, which contrasts sharply with the violence of some of the other fathers in Tollington, such as Tracey's, who frightens his family. Syal perhaps uses this contrast to challenge the stereotype, common in 1960s Britain, of the immigrant family as backward or oppressive; it is the Indian father who models tenderness.

Meena's relationship with Sam Lowbridge is the most complicated. At first Sam is the local rebel, older and exciting, and Meena admires him because he seems to belong to Tollington in a way she never can. Syal uses his Black Country dialect to root him firmly in the village. The turning point is the Spring Bank Holiday Fete, where Sam publicly disrupts the speeches with a racist outburst about outsiders taking what belongs to local people. Meena's admiration is shattered, and the tone of the narration shifts from comic to uneasy. Later Sam and his gang are involved in a violent attack on an Asian man, and Sam's claim that he did not mean Meena when he spoke of outsiders becomes deeply ironic. Syal exposes the way prejudice can coexist with personal fondness: Sam can like Meena as an individual while hating the community she comes from. Writing about the late 1960s, the era of Enoch Powell's "Rivers of Blood" speech in nearby Wolverhampton, Syal shows how national rhetoric seeps into the language of a bored teenage boy.

Mr Ormerod, who runs the village shop and collects for the church's missionary work in Africa, represents a gentler, more patronising form of prejudice. His charity towards distant African children sits uneasily beside his attitude towards the Indian family on his doorstep. Syal uses Meena's sharp, satirical eye to expose this hypocrisy, often with humour, so that the reader laughs while recognising the

Question number

casual racism of respectable society.

In contrast, Meena's friendship with Robert in hospital is presented as pure and tender. After breaking her leg, Meena meets Robert, a seriously ill boy in the room beside hers, and they communicate through the glass with notes and gestures. Their relationship is innocent and free of the prejudice and power games of Tollington, and Syal gives it a gentle, almost romantic tone. Robert's death is a moment of real grief, marking Meena's growing understanding of loss and helping to end her childhood.

Through these varied relationships, Syal shows Meena learning to judge men by their actions rather than their glamour. By the end of the novel, as she prepares to leave Tollington for the grammar school, she has rejected Sam's world and values the steady love of her father. Syal suggests that growing up, especially for a girl caught between two cultures, means learning which kinds of male approval are worth having, and which must be left behind.

22 In Anita and Me, Syal presents family life as the foundation of identity: the place where values, culture and a sense of belonging are formed. Meena spends much of the novel wishing she could escape her own family's watchful love and envying the freedom of Anita's household. Yet Syal structures the story so that Meena, and the reader, gradually recognise that her family's warmth is what allows her to survive the prejudice of Tollington, while Anita's broken home helps to explain her cruelty. Family is presented not as a cage but as a root.

Syal establishes Meena's family through the eyes of a narrator who is both inside and outside it. The adult Meena looks back with humour at her younger self's

Question number

embarrassment, describing her parents' hospitality, their crowded gatherings and Mama's cooking with a mixture of irritation and affection. The wider family of "aunties" and "uncles", who are friends rather than blood relatives, forms a community of Punjabi immigrants who meet to eat, sing and remember India. Syal presents these evenings vividly, with music, food and argument, and they show the importance of family as a support network for people who have lost their homeland. For Meena's parents, who lived through Partition and left everything to come to England, the extended family is a way of rebuilding what was broken.

At the same time, Syal shows the tensions within family life, especially between generations and cultures. Meena longs for English food, English clothes and English freedom, and she resents the rules her mother sets. Her lies and petty thefts early in the novel are partly a rebellion against these expectations, and the gap between how she behaves at home and how she behaves with Anita shows a girl trying to belong to two worlds at once. Syal's use of a maturing first-person voice allows the reader to see both Meena's frustration and her parents' perspective, so family conflict is presented with sympathy for everyone involved.

The birth of Meena's brother Sunil marks a turning point. Mama struggles to cope, and Meena feels pushed aside, but the crisis brings Nanima, her grandmother, from India. Nanima is one of the most important figures in the novel. She speaks little English, yet she communicates through warmth, humour and stories, and she gives Meena a living connection to the India she has only imagined. Through Nanima, Meena begins to speak Punjabi with pride rather than shame. Syal suggests that family is the means by which culture survives migration, passed on not through lessons but through love.

Syal contrasts the Kumars' family life with that of the Rutters. Anita's mother,

Question number

Deirdre, is presented as neglectful and self-absorbed, and she eventually leaves the family altogether. Anita's younger sister Tracey is ignored and often frightened, and the reader comes to see that Anita's bullying and her need to dominate others may come from this lack of care. Meena initially finds this household thrilling because there seem to be no rules, but Syal uses dramatic irony to show the reader its emptiness long before Meena understands it. The contrast is pointed: in a society where many white neighbours look down on the Indian family, it is the Kumars who offer stability and love.

The Worralls, Meena's elderly neighbours, add another perspective. Mrs Worrall cares devotedly for her husband, whose disability makes him frightening to the young Meena. As the novel progresses, Meena discovers the kindness behind his appearance, and the couple's quiet loyalty to each other offers a different model of family love, one based on endurance rather than excitement. Syal perhaps uses them to show that the values of care and commitment cross the boundaries of culture and class.

The social context deepens these contrasts. Tollington is a declining mining village in the late 1960s, where poverty and unemployment are rising, and Syal links the breakdown of some families to these economic pressures. The Kumars, educated and ambitious, value schooling highly, and the novel ends with Meena passing the eleven-plus and the family preparing to move to a new house near her grammar school. This departure suggests that her family's values have given her a future that Anita, left behind in Tollington, may not share.

By the end, Meena no longer wishes she belonged to another family. Syal presents family life as complicated, sometimes stifling and often comic, but ultimately as the source of the confidence Meena needs to define herself. In a novel so

Question number

concerned with being an outsider, family is the one place where Meena is never a stranger.

23 In Pigeon English, Kelman presents Harrison's friendships with Dean and with Jordan as two competing pulls on an eleven-year-old boy who is trying to find his place in a new and dangerous world. Dean represents the innocent, imaginative side of childhood: the world of detective games and loyal partnership. Jordan represents the tougher, gang-shaped masculinity of the estate, which Harri half fears and half admires. Through these friendships Kelman explores how badly a young immigrant needs to belong, and how that need can lead him towards both safety and danger.

Harri's friendship with Dean is closely tied to the novel's central event. After a boy is stabbed to death near Harri's estate, Harri and Dean decide to find the killer themselves. Their investigation is presented through comic, naïve detail: they collect "evidence", try to take fingerprints with Sellotape and use binoculars to spy on suspects, borrowing ideas from television crime dramas. Kelman uses Harri's enthusiastic first-person voice, full of exclamations and his own slang such as "asweh" and "hutious", to convey the excitement that this partnership gives him. For Harri, being Dean's detective partner is more than a game; it gives him a role and a purpose in a place where he is still learning the rules. The irony, however, is painful. The reader recognises that the boys' playful investigation is drawing them closer to real violence, and Harri's optimism becomes increasingly fragile.

The friendship with Dean is also important because it is the most equal relationship Harri has. Dean is British-born, and through him Harri learns the culture of his London school, from the playground hierarchies to the latest crazes.

Question number

Their conversations about Dean's theories and Harri's questions show a gentle mutual dependence, and Kelman presents them with warmth and humour. In a novel where adults are often absent or preoccupied, this friendship offers Harri a kind of family. Kelman perhaps suggests that childhood friendship is the place where innocence is protected longest.

Harri's relationship with Jordan is far more ambiguous. Jordan is tougher and more streetwise, and he is connected to the Dell Farm Crew, the gang that dominates the estate. Harri wants Jordan's respect because it seems to offer status and protection, and at times he is drawn into the gang's activities, feeling pressure to prove that he is not a coward. Kelman presents this pull through Harri's confused feelings: he knows the gang's behaviour is wrong, yet he is excited by their power and frightened of being excluded. This tension reflects ideas about how boys from marginalised backgrounds may turn to gangs not out of wickedness but out of a desperate need to belong.

The contrast between these two friendships is central to Kelman's presentation of Harri's identity. With Dean, Harri can be a child, playing and imagining; with Jordan, he is expected to be a man, hardened and aggressive. Kelman structures the novel so that Harri moves between these worlds, and the reader feels the danger of his position. His naïve goodness, shown in his kindness to the pigeon he feeds and his love for his family, sits uneasily with the code of the estate, where weakness is punished.

The pigeon's sections, written in a more reflective, poetic voice, offer a commentary on Harri's friendships and choices. The pigeon watches over him and seems to understand the dangers he cannot see, which creates a sense of dramatic irony and foreboding. This magical realist element reminds the reader

Question number

that Harri's innocence is precious and vulnerable, and that his friendships, however sincere, cannot fully protect him.

The ending of the novel, in which Harri is himself fatally stabbed after the investigation brings him too close to the killers, gives the friendships a tragic weight. His detective partnership with Dean, which began as a way to make sense of a death, ends with his own. Kelman was partly inspired by the 2000 killing of Damilola Taylor, a ten-year-old Nigerian boy in Peckham, and he uses Harri's story to explore how society fails vulnerable children. The friendships matter so much to Harri because they offer him what London often denies him: belonging, recognition and hope. Kelman's tragedy is that, in the world of the estate, the need for friendship can be as dangerous as it is beautiful.

24 Kelman presents the experience of being an immigrant as a mixture of wonder, vulnerability and division. Seen through the eyes of Harrison Opoku, an eleven-year-old boy newly arrived from Ghana, London is at once thrilling and threatening: a place of new trainers, sweets and friendships, but also of gangs, poverty and fear. By filtering everything through Harri's innocent, optimistic voice, Kelman allows the reader to see the hardships of immigrant life more clearly than Harri himself can, and he invites a British audience to look again at the city they think they know.

The most striking method is the narrative voice. Harri narrates in a lively, distinctive English that blends Ghanaian expressions such as "asweh" and "hutious" with London playground slang. This hybrid language is itself a picture of the immigrant experience: Harri is building a new identity out of two cultures, and he takes pleasure in mastering the words of his new home. Yet his voice also reveals

Question number

what he does not yet understand. His frequent surprise at ordinary British details, such as the brand-name products he admires, conveys the strangeness of a world that most readers take for granted. Kelman's realistic presentation of these concrete details gives the novel a vivid, documentary quality, as if Harri is reporting from a foreign country, which in a sense he is.

Kelman also presents immigrant life as a divided family experience. Harri lives in a flat high in a tower block with Mamma and his older sister Lydia, while Papa, his grandmother and his baby sister Agnes remain in Ghana. Harri's phone calls home and his longing for the family to be reunited create a constant sense of incompleteness. He measures his new life against the one he has left, and his hopes that Papa and Agnes will soon join them give the novel an undercurrent of sadness. Kelman shows that migration often splits families, with parents making painful sacrifices in the hope of a better life for their children.

The adults around Harri reveal darker sides of the immigrant experience. Mamma works long hours as a midwife, and her tiredness and worry suggest the pressures of building a life in a new country with little support. Aunty Sonia, who has burned her fingertips, and her frightening boyfriend Julius hint at a hidden world of illegal status, debt and exploitation. Harri only half understands these details, but the reader recognises the precariousness of the family's position. Kelman's use of a child narrator creates dramatic irony here: what Harri sees as mysterious adult behaviour, the reader sees as evidence of the fear and insecurity that many undocumented immigrants face.

Harri's daily life on the estate shows how immigrants can be drawn into the conflicts of their new environment. The killing of a local boy at the start of the novel introduces a world of knife crime and gang culture, dominated by the Dell

Question number

Farm Crew. Harri wants to belong, and the gang's power fascinates him, but he also clings to the values of his family and his faith. Lydia, too, experiences the pull of teenage culture, through her friendships and the pressure to fit in, which sometimes conflicts with Mamma's expectations. Kelman suggests that immigrant children face a double challenge: adapting to a new country while negotiating the dangers of a youth culture shaped by poverty and exclusion.

Yet Kelman does not present Harri as simply a victim. His curiosity, kindness and determination give him real dignity. He is proud of being the fastest runner in his year, he feeds the pigeon on his balcony, and he throws himself into the detective game with his friend Dean. The pigeon's sections, written in a lyrical, reflective voice, act as a guardian's commentary on Harri's life and remind the reader of the value of the innocence that London threatens.

The ending, in which Harri is fatally stabbed, is a devastating comment on how the city fails its most vulnerable newcomers. Kelman was partly inspired by the 2000 killing of Damilola Taylor, a young Nigerian boy in Peckham, and the novel suggests that immigrant children are often left unprotected in the gaps between family, community and state. Through Harri's voice, Kelman presents the immigrant experience as full of hope and energy, but also as profoundly exposed. The tragedy is that Harri's optimism, which makes him such a powerful narrator, is exactly what makes him so vulnerable.

25

Both Nagra in 'Singh Song!' and Mew in 'The Farmer's Bride' present romantic love through a husband who speaks about his new wife with intense admiration. However, the two poems reach opposite conclusions. Nagra celebrates a marriage built on shared pleasure, playfulness and mutual respect, suggesting that love can

Question number

flourish when a partner is allowed to be herself. Mew, by contrast, presents a marriage in which desire is not returned, and love becomes possession and frustration. Placed side by side, the poems suggest that romantic love depends on freedom: Nagra's bride is free, and Mew's is locked away.

The titles immediately establish this contrast in tone. 'Singh Song!' is a pun on "sing-song", and the exclamation mark suggests joy and exuberance, as if the speaker cannot help bursting into song about his bride. 'The Farmer's Bride', however, defines the woman only in relation to her husband, and the possessive apostrophe hints at the ownership that dominates the poem. Both poets use the dramatic monologue, so we hear love only from the husband's perspective, but while Nagra's speaker invites us to share his delight, Mew's speaker unintentionally reveals his own failure to understand his wife.

Both speakers admire their brides, and both use repetition to show how completely the women fill their thoughts. Nagra's refrain "my bride" is repeated three times in quick succession, each followed by a new, surprising detail: she has "a red crew cut" and wears "a Tartan sari", "a donkey jacket and some pumps". This collage of cultures presents her as rebellious and unconventional, mixing Punjabi and Scottish dress with working-class British clothing. The speaker does not want her to be a traditional, obedient wife; he is clearly charmed by her individuality, even when she is "effing at my mum" and "making fun at my daddy". Mew's farmer is similarly fixated on his wife, but his admiration turns into helpless longing. His description of her as "Shy as a leveret, swift as he, / Straight and slight as a young larch tree" uses natural similes to show her beauty, but they also present her as a wild creature, something to be hunted rather than understood.

This difference is clearest in how the poets present physical love. Nagra's lovers

Question number

share everything: the parallel lines "vee share in chapatti / vee share in di chutney" create a gentle, equal rhythm, and the comic simile "like vee rowing through Putney" makes their intimacy light-hearted and mutual. In 'The Farmer's Bride', however, the wife "turned afraid / Of love and me and all things human". She is "like a mouse" and happy only with "birds and rabbits", "So long as men-folk keep away". The final lines are among the most disturbing in the anthology: "'Tis but a stair / Betwixt us." The fragmented, exclamatory ending, "Oh! my God! the down, / The soft young down of her", and the frantic repetition of "her hair, her hair!" reveal a desire that is barely controlled. Both poems use the image of a staircase, but in Nagra's poem the lovers come down the "whispering stairs" together, while in Mew's the stair is a barrier the farmer is tempted to cross.

Context sharpens this contrast. Mew wrote in 1916 about a rural community where marriage could be a practical arrangement, and the farmer admits he chose a maid who was "Too young maybe". When she runs away, the villagers help to hunt her down, and they "turned the key upon her, fast". Mew arguably criticises a society that treated wives as property and ignored female consent. Nagra, writing about a British Sikh community, uses the speaker's Punjabi-English dialect, "vee", "vid", "di", to celebrate a voice often mocked or ignored. His bride's defiance of the expectation that she will be a dutiful daughter-in-law is presented positively, suggesting that love can thrive across, and even because of, cultural difference.

Structurally, the poems end in very different places. Nagra's final stanza moves from the noisy shop to the quiet romance of midnight, as the couple sit "on my silver stool" and gaze at "di beaches ov di UK in di brightey moon". The playful dialogue about the price of the moon ends with "Is priceless baby", a tender joke in which the shopkeeper, whose life is all about price, declares his bride beyond value. Because this happens "each night", their love becomes a ritual of shared

Question number

happiness. Mew's farmer, by contrast, ends alone. One love looks outward to the moon; the other is trapped in a dark farmhouse.

Ultimately, both poets present romantic love as overwhelming, but Nagra shows that it is joyful when it is shared and freely given, whereas Mew shows how love turns painful, and potentially dangerous, when one partner's feelings are ignored.

26

In both 'Ozymandias' and 'My Last Duchess', poets present powerful men who are proud, arrogant and controlling, and both poets expose that power as hollow. Shelley shows that the power of a tyrant is destroyed by time, while Browning shows how a Duke's power over others reveals his own cruelty and insecurity. In each poem, the powerful man tries to control how he is remembered through a work of art, a statue or a portrait, yet the art ends up condemning him. Both poets therefore suggest that human power is fragile, and that the arrogance of those who hold it is the very thing that undoes them.

Both poems present power through art. Shelley's statue, a "shattered visage" lying "half sunk" in the sand, was meant to be a monument to Ozymandias's greatness, but it now survives only as a broken ruin. Crucially, the sculptor has captured the king's "frown", "wrinkled lip" and "sneer of cold command". The sibilance of "sneer" and "cold command" creates a hissing, contemptuous sound that conveys the king's cruelty, and the sculptor's "hand that mocked them" suggests that the artist saw through the ruler and quietly ridiculed him. Browning's Duke also uses art to control. He displays his "last Duchess painted on the wall, / Looking as if she were alive", and he alone controls who sees her: "none puts by / The curtain I have drawn for you, but I". The rhyme and the emphatic final "I" show his need for control. Yet in both cases the art outlasts or exposes the man: the statue reveals

Question number

Ozymandias's tyranny, and the painting prompts the Duke to reveal his jealousy.

Both poets present the arrogance of power through the speaker's own words, creating dramatic irony. The inscription "My name is Ozymandias, king of kings: / Look on my works, ye Mighty, and despair!" uses the imperative "Look" and the superlative "king of kings" to demand fear and worship. However, it is immediately followed by the blunt caesura of "Nothing beside remains." The juxtaposition is devastating: the "works" he boasts about have vanished, so the command to "despair" now reads as a warning about the futility of his own pride. Browning's dramatic monologue works in a similar way. The Duke boasts of his "nine-hundred-years-old name" and his refusal to compromise, "I choose / Never to stoop", but the more he speaks, the more he reveals. His complaint that the Duchess smiled at everyone reveals a man obsessed with status. In both poems, the powerful man condemns himself without realising it.

However, the poems differ in the consequences of power. In 'My Last Duchess', power is terrifying because it works. The chilling line "I gave commands; / Then all smiles stopped together" implies that the Duke had his wife killed, yet he states it calmly in the middle of a conversation about a marriage deal. The enjambment and caesura make the moment almost casual, which is more frightening than any explicit description. Browning, writing in the Victorian era but setting the poem in Renaissance Italy, shows how aristocratic men could treat women as possessions to be collected, like the bronze statue of "Neptune... Taming a sea-horse" that he points out at the end. The final image of a god taming a creature reflects the Duke's desire to dominate. In 'Ozymandias', the tyrant's power has already been destroyed. Shelley presents nature and time as the ultimate power: the "lone and level sands stretch far away", and the alliteration and long vowel sounds create a sense of endless emptiness that swallows the "colossal wreck".

Question number

Form also shapes the presentation of power. Shelley uses the sonnet, a form associated with love and order, but he blends Petrarchan and Shakespearean patterns into an irregular rhyme scheme, and the most decisive shift, "Nothing beside remains", falls in the middle of a line, perhaps reflecting the breaking of the king's power. The narrative is also distanced: the poet hears the story from "a traveller from an antique land", so Ozymandias is reduced to a second-hand anecdote. Browning, in contrast, uses rhyming couplets, but heavy enjambment makes them feel like natural, rambling speech, mirroring the Duke's apparently polite but menacing control of the conversation.

Shelley, a Romantic poet and radical opponent of tyranny, may have intended 'Ozymandias' as a warning to the rulers of his own time, written in 1818 when he was hostile to the monarchy of George III. Browning's poem is less obviously political, but it is equally critical of men who use power to control others. Ultimately, both poets suggest that power built on pride is self-defeating: Ozymandias is reduced to rubble, and the Duke, however controlling, unwittingly reveals himself to be a murderer.

27.1 In 'On Aging', Angelou presents a speaker who accepts the physical decline of old age with honesty and humour, but who fiercely rejects the way other people view the elderly. Her real target is not growing old itself, but the pity and stereotypes that come with it. The poem becomes a defiant assertion of identity: the body may weaken, but the self remains.

From the opening stanza, the speaker anticipates and corrects other people's assumptions. The direct address, "When you see me sitting quietly", positions the

Question number

reader as the observer who might misjudge her. The simile "Like a sack left on the shelf" captures how the elderly can seem to others: shapeless, inactive and forgotten, like an object that has been put away and is no longer useful. However, the speaker immediately rejects this view, "Don't think I need your chattering", and the line "I'm listening to myself" suggests a rich inner life. Her quietness is reflection, not emptiness.

In the second stanza, the tone becomes more forceful. The exclamatory imperatives "Hold! Stop! Don't pity me!" are short and abrupt, almost like orders, and the repetition of "Hold! Stop!" in the next line emphasises her impatience. Yet the speaker draws a careful distinction: she will accept "Understanding", but "Otherwise I'll do without it!" She wants respect, not charity.

Angelou then acknowledges the physical realities of aging. The description of bones that are "stiff and aching" and feet that "won't climb the stair" is frank and unsentimental, showing that the speaker does not deny her decline. However, the stanza turns on her "one favor": "Don't bring me no rocking chair." The rocking chair is a symbol of the stereotypical elderly life of passivity and waiting. The double negative of non-standard English gives the line a colloquial, humorous energy, making her refusal sound lively and stubborn rather than frail.

The fourth stanza develops this resistance. "Don't study and get it wrong" warns the observer against assumptions, and the aphorism "'Cause tired don't mean lazy / And every goodbye ain't gone" uses a proverb-like rhythm to make her wisdom sound confident and memorable. The phrase "every goodbye ain't gone" is ambiguous: perhaps she means that slowing down is not the same as dying, or that she has not yet said her final goodbye.

Question number

The final stanza moves from defiance to a kind of celebration. "I'm the same person I was back then" is the poem's central claim, a firm statement of continuity. The list "A little less hair, a little less chin, / A lot less lungs and much less wind" uses repetition and the shift from "little" to "lot" and "much" to show her losses growing, but the playful rhythm and rhyme make light of them. The last line, "But ain't I lucky I can still breathe in", is open to interpretation. It could be sarcastic, mocking the idea that the elderly should be grateful just to be alive. More likely, it is genuinely joyful, finding gratitude in the simplest act of living.

Throughout, the regular quatrains and the mix of full and half rhymes give the poem a song-like, conversational confidence, as if the speaker is in complete control of her own story. Angelou presents a speaker who is not defeated by aging, but who demands to be seen as a whole person.

27.2

Both poets present the physical effects of growing old, but they use contrasting voices. Angelou writes in the first person from the perspective of the old person herself, using direct address and imperatives such as "Don't pity me!" to create a forthright, humorous tone. Williams, however, presents aging from the outside, through a granddaughter's memory, so her tone is gentle, tender and wistful.

Both poets use imagery of size and fragility. Angelou lists her losses, "A little less hair, a little less chin", but the jaunty rhythm makes them almost comic. Williams describes her grandmother as "old and small", and the simile "Like a learning child" suggests that age has brought her full circle. The image of her head as "delicate as a birdskull / Worn thin by waves of age" presents aging as a slow, natural erosion, and is far more melancholic than anything in Angelou's poem.

Question number

The poets also use structure differently. Angelou's regular, rhyming quatrains give her poem the confident rhythm of a song, matching her defiance. Williams uses a single unrhymed stanza, like a flowing memory, and contrasts the present with the past: the photograph of her grandmother "swathed in hair" reminds us of the young woman she once was. Both poems end on a short, powerful line, but where Angelou celebrates that she "can still breathe in", Williams ends quietly and lovingly with "My mother's mother under my hands", emphasising care and connection across generations.