Please check the examination details below before entering your candidate information

Candidate surname	Other names

Centre Number | Candidate Number

Pearson Edexcel Level 1/Level 2 GCSE (9–1)

Monday 13 May 2024

Morning (Time: 1 hour 45 minutes)

Paper reference **1ET0/01**

English Literature

PAPER 1: Shakespeare and Post-1914 Literature

You must have:
Questions and Extracts Booklet (enclosed)

Total Marks

Instructions

- Use **black** ink or ball-point pen.
- **Fill in the boxes** at the top of this page with your name, centre number and candidate number.
- Answer the question on **one** text from Section **A** and **one** text from Section B.
- You should spend about 55 minutes on Section A.
- You should spend about 50 minutes on Section B.
- Answer the questions in the spaces provided
  – *there may be more space than you need.*

Information

- This is a closed book exam.
- The total mark for this paper is 80.
- The marks for **each** question are shown in brackets
  – *use this as a guide as to how much time to spend on each question.*
- The marks available for the accuracy of your writing are clearly indicated.

Advice

- Read each question carefully before you start to answer it.
- Check your answers if you have time at the end.

Turn over ▶

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SECTION A

Shakespeare

Indicate which question you are answering by marking a cross in the box ☒. If you change your mind, put a line through the box ☒ and then indicate your new question with a cross ☒.

Chosen question number: **Question 1** ☒ **Question 2** ☒ **Question 3** ☒

Question 4 ☒ **Question 5** ☒ **Question 6** ☒

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TOTAL FOR SECTION A = 40 MARKS

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SECTION B

Post-1914 Literature

Indicate which question you are answering by marking a cross in the box ☒. If you change your mind, put a line through the box ☒ and then indicate your new question with a cross ☒.

Chosen question number:

Question 7 ☒	**Question 8** ☒	**Question 9** ☒
Question 10 ☒	**Question 11** ☒	**Question 12** ☒
Question 13 ☒	**Question 14** ☒	**Question 15** ☒
Question 16 ☒	**Question 17** ☒	**Question 18** ☒
Question 19 ☒	**Question 20** ☒	**Question 21** ☒
Question 22 ☒	**Question 23** ☒	**Question 24** ☒
Question 25 ☒	**Question 26** ☒	**Question 27** ☒
Question 28 ☒	**Question 29** ☒	**Question 30** ☒

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TOTAL FOR SECTION B = 40 MARKS
TOTAL FOR PAPER = 80 MARKS

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Pearson Edexcel Level 1/Level 2 GCSE (9–1)

Monday 13 May 2024

Morning (Time: 1 hour 45 minutes)

Paper reference **1ET0/01**

English Literature

PAPER 1: Shakespeare and Post-1914 Literature

Questions and Extracts Booklet

Do not return this Booklet with the Answer Booklet.

Turn over ▶

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Answer the question on ONE text from Section A and ONE text from Section B.

The extracts for use with Section A are in this question paper.

SECTION A – Shakespeare	**Page**
1(a) and **1(b)** – *Macbeth*	4
2(a) and **2(b)** – *The Tempest*	6
3(a) and **3(b)** – *Romeo and Juliet*	8
4(a) and **4(b)** – *Much Ado About Nothing*	10
5(a) and **5(b)** – *Twelfth Night*	12
6(a) and **6(b)** – *The Merchant of Venice*	14

SECTION B – Post-1914 Literature	**Page**
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7 OR 8 – *An Inspector Calls*: J B Priestley	16
9 OR 10 – *Hobson's Choice*: Harold Brighouse	17
11 OR 12 – *Blood Brothers*: Willy Russell	18
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15 OR 16 – *The Empress*: Tanika Gupta	20
17 OR 18 – *Refugee Boy*: Benjamin Zephaniah (adapted by Lemn Sissay)	21
OR	
British Novel	
19 OR 20 – *Animal Farm*: George Orwell	22
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27 OR 28 – *Coram Boy*: Jamila Gavin	26
29 OR 30 – *Boys Don't Cry*: Malorie Blackman	27

SECTION A

Shakespeare

Answer the question on ONE text from this section.

You should spend about 55 minutes on this section.

You should divide your time equally between parts (a) and (b) of the question.

***Macbeth* – from Act 5 Scene 8, lines 3 to 34**

In this extract, Macbeth encounters Macduff on the battlefield.

***Enter* MACDUFF.**

MACDUFF Turn, hell-hound! Turn!

MACBETH
Of all men else I have avoided thee. –
But get thee back, my soul is too much charged
With blood of thine already.

MACDUFF
I have no words:
My voice is in my sword – thou bloodier villain
Than terms can give thee out!

***They fight*.**

MACBETH
Thou losest labour.
As easy may'st thou the intrenchant air
With thy keen sword impress, as make me bleed.
Let fall thy blade on vulnerable crests:
I bear a charmèd life, which must not yield
To one of woman born.

MACDUFF
Despair thy charm! –
And let the angel whom thou still hast served
Tell thee: Macduff was from his mother's womb
Untimely ripped.

MACBETH
Accursèd be that tongue that tells me so! –
For it hath cowed my better part of man.
And be these juggling fiends no more believed
That palter with us in a double sense –
That keep the word of promise to our ear,
And break it to our hope! – I'll not fight with thee.

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MACDUFF
Then yield thee, coward –
And live to be the show and gaze o' th' time.
We'll have thee, as our rarer monsters are,
Painted upon a pole, and underwrit,
'Here may you see the tyrant'.

MACBETH
I will not yield
To kiss the ground before young Malcolm's feet,
And to be baited with the rabble's curse.
Though Birnam wood be come to Dunsinane,
And thou opposed being of no woman born –
Yet I will try the last. Before my body
I throw my warlike shield. Lay on, Macduff! –
And damned be him that first cries 'Hold, enough!'

***Exeunt, fighting on. Noise of battle comes to a climax, then fades. They re-enter still fighting, and* MACBETH *is killed*.**

***Exit* MACDUFF*, dragging away the body*.**

1 (a) Explore how Shakespeare presents the relationship between Macduff and Macbeth in this extract.

Refer closely to the extract in your answer.

(20)

(b) In this extract, the meeting between Macduff and Macbeth becomes violent.

Explain the importance of violence **elsewhere** in the play.

In your answer, you **must** consider:

- where violence is shown
- the effects violence has within the play.

You **must** refer to the context of the play in your answer.

(20)

(Total for Question 1 = 40 marks)

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***The Tempest* – from Act 3 Scene 1, lines 1 to 31**

In this extract, Ferdinand is being held captive and forced to carry logs for Prospero.

FERDINAND
(*Putting down the log*) There be some sports are
painful, and their labour
Delight in them sets off. Some kinds of baseness
Are nobly undergone, and most poor matters
Point to rich ends. This my mean task
Would be as heavy to me as odious, but
The mistress which I serve quickens what's dead,
And makes my labours pleasures. O, she is
Ten times more gentle than her father's crabbed –
And he's composed of harshness! I must remove
Some thousands of these logs, and pile them up,
Upon a sore injunction. My sweet mistress
Weeps when she sees me work, and says such baseness
Had never like executor. I forget –
(*He picks up the log again*)
– But these sweet thoughts do even refresh my labours,
Most busiest, when I do it.

Enter* MIRANDA – *and* PROSPERO, *who watches from a distance, unseen.

MIRANDA
Alas now, pray you
Work not so hard! I would the lightning had
Burnt up those logs that you are enjoined to pile!
Pray, set it down, and rest you. When this burns,
'Twill weep for having wearied you. My father
Is hard at study. Pray, now, rest yourself.
He's safe for these three hours.

FERDINAND
O most dear mistress,
The sun will set before I shall discharge
What I must strive to do.

MIRANDA
If you'll sit down.
I'll bear your logs the while. Pray give me that:
I'll carry it to the pile.

FERDINAND
No, precious creature.
I had rather crack my sinews, break my back,
Than you should such dishonour undergo,
While I sit lazy by.

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MIRANDA

It would become me
As well as it does you – and I should do it
With much more ease, for my good will is to it,
And yours it is against.

2 (a) Explore how Shakespeare presents the relationship between Ferdinand and Miranda in this extract.

Refer closely to the extract in your answer.

(20)

(b) In this extract, Ferdinand is determined to be with Miranda and is prepared to suffer any hardship.

Explain the importance of determination **elsewhere** in the play.

In your answer, you **must** consider:

- how determination is presented
- the effects determination has within the play.

You **must** refer to the context of the play in your answer.

(20)

(Total for Question 2 = 40 marks)

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***Romeo and Juliet* – from Act 3 Scene 5, lines 136 to 167**

In this extract, Lord Capulet loses his temper with Juliet when she refuses to marry Paris.

CAPULET
How now, wife?
Have you delivered to her our decree?

LADY CAPULET
Ay, sir – but she will none, she gives you thanks.
I would the fool were married to her grave!

CAPULET
Soft! – take me with you, take me with you, wife.
How will she none? Doth she not give us thanks?
Is she not proud? Doth she not count her blest,
Unworthy as she is, that we have wrought
So worthy a gentleman to be her bride?

JULIET
Not proud you have, but thankful that you have.
Proud can I never be of what I hate –
But thankful, even for hate that is meant love.

CAPULET
How, now! How, now – chop-logic? What is this?
'Proud', and 'I thank you', and 'I thank you not' –
And yet 'Not proud'? – mistress minion, you!
Thank me no thankings, nor proud me no prouds! –
But fettle your fine joints 'gainst Thursday next,
To go with Paris to Saint Peter's Church –
Or I will drag thee on a hurdle thither.
Out, you green-sickness carrion! Out, you baggage!
You tallow-face!

LADY CAPULET
(*To her husband*) Fie, fie! What, are you mad?

JULIET
(*Kneeling*) Good father, I beseech you on my knees –
Hear me with patience but to speak a word.

CAPULET
Hang thee, young baggage! Disobedient wretch!
I tell thee what: get thee to church o' Thursday,
Or never after look me in the face!
Speak not, reply not, do not answer me!
My fingers itch. Wife, we scarce thought us blest
That God had lent us but this only child –
But now I see this one is one too much,
And that we have a curse in having her.
Out on her, hilding!

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3 (a) Explore how Shakespeare presents the character of Lord Capulet in this extract.

Refer closely to the extract in your answer.

(20)

(b) In this extract, Lord Capulet is angry with Juliet for refusing to marry Paris.

Explain the importance of anger **elsewhere** in the play.

In your answer, you **must** consider:

- how anger is presented
- the reasons for anger within the play.

You **must** refer to the context of the play in your answer.

(20)

(Total for Question 3 = 40 marks)

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***Much Ado About Nothing* – Act 2 Scene 3, lines 202 to 231**

In this extract, Benedick begins to reconsider his feelings for Beatrice after overhearing that she is in love with him.

BENEDICK
(*Coming forward*) This can be no trick. The conference was sadly borne. They have the truth of this from Hero. They seem to pity the lady: it seems her affections have their full bent. Love me? Why, it must be requited. I hear how I am censured: they say I will bear myself proudly, if I perceive the love come from her. They say, too, that she will rather die than give any sign of affection. I did never think to marry. I must not seem proud: happy are they that hear their detractions and can put them to mending. They say the lady is fair – 'tis a truth, I can bear them witness; and virtuous – 'tis so, I cannot reprove it; and wise – but for loving me. By my troth, it is no addition to her wit, nor no great argument of her folly – for I will be horribly in love with her. I may chance have some odd quirks and remnants of wit broken on me, because I have railed so long against marriage. But doth not the appetite alter? A man loves the meat in his youth that he cannot endure in his age. Shall quips and sentences and these paper bullets of the brain awe a man from the career of his humour? No: the world must be peopled. When I said I would die a bachelor, I did not think I should live till I were married. Here comes Beatrice. By this day, she's a fair lady! I do spy some marks of love in her.

***Enter* BEATRICE.**

BEATRICE
Against my will I am sent to bid you come in to dinner.

BENEDICK
Fair Beatrice, I thank you for your pains.

BEATRICE
I took no more pains for those thanks than you take pains to thank me. If it had been painful I would not have come.

BENEDICK
You take pleasure then in the message?

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4 (a) Explore how Shakespeare presents the character of Benedick in this extract.

Refer closely to the extract in your answer.

(20)

(b) In this extract, Benedick realises his feelings for Beatrice have changed.

Explain the importance of change **elsewhere** in the play.

In your answer you **must** consider:

- how change is presented
- the effects change has within the play.

You **must** refer to the context of the play in your answer.

(20)

(Total for Question 4 = 40 marks)

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***Twelfth Night* – from Act 2 Scene 4, lines 1 to 35**

In this extract, Duke Orsino is giving Viola/Cesario advice about relationships.

A room in the Duke's palace.

Enter* DUKE, VIOLA, CURIO *and others.

DUKE
Give me some music. Now, good morrow, friends.
Now, good Cesario, but that piece of song,
That old and antique song we heard last night;
Methought it did relieve my passion much,
More than light airs and recollected terms
Of these most brisk and giddy-pacéd times.
Come; but one verse.

CURIO
He is not here, so please your lordship, that
should sing it.

DUKE
Who was it?

CURIO
Feste, the jester, my lord; a fool that the lady
Olivia's father took much delight in. He is about
the house.

DUKE
Seek him out, and play the tune the while.

***Exit* CURIO**

Music

Come hither, boy: if ever thou shalt love,
In the sweet pangs of it remember me;
For such as I am all true lovers are,
Unstaid and skittish in all motions else
Save in the constant image of the creature
That is beloved. How dost thou like this tune?

VIOLA
It gives a very echo to the seat
Where Love is throned.

DUKE
Thou dost speak masterly.
My life upon 't, young though thou art, thine eye
Hath stayed upon some favour that it loves;
Hath it not, boy?

VIOLA
A little, by your favour.

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DUKE
What kind of woman is 't?

VIOLA
Of your complexion.

DUKE
She is not worth thee, then. What years, i' faith?

VIOLA
About your years, my lord.

DUKE
Too old, by heaven. Let still the woman take
An elder than herself, so wears she to him,
So sways she level in her husband's heart;
For, boy, however we do praise ourselves,
Our fancies are more giddy and unfirm,
More longing, wavering, sooner lost and worn,
Than women's are.

5 (a) Explore how Shakespeare presents Duke Orsino in this extract.

Refer closely to the extract in your answer.

(20)

(b) In this extract, Duke Orsino sends for Feste to sing him a song to relieve his sadness.

Explain the importance of sadness **elsewhere** in the play.

In your answer, you **must** consider:

- how sadness is presented
- the effects sadness has within the play.

You **must** refer to the context of the play in your answer.

(20)

(Total for Question 5 = 40 marks)

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***The Merchant of Venice* – from Act 2 Scene 6, lines 26 to 57**

In this extract, Jessica is talking to Lorenzo from a window at Shylock's home.

JESSICA
Who are you? Tell me, for more certainty –
Albeit I'll swear that I do know your tongue.

LORENZO
Lorenzo, and thy love.

JESSICA
Lorenzo, certain, and my love indeed –
For who love I so much? And now who knows
But you Lorenzo whether I am yours?

LORENZO
Heaven and thy thoughts are witness that thou art.

JESSICA
Here – catch this casket **(*throwing down a small box*)**
– it is worth the pains.
I am glad 'tis night – you do not look on me –
For I am much ashamed of my exchange.
But love is blind, and lovers cannot see
The pretty follies that themselves commit;
For if they could, Cupid himself would blush
To see me thus transformèd to a boy.

LORENZO
Descend, for you must be my torch-bearer.

JESSICA
What, must I hold a candle to my shames?
They in themselves, good sooth, are too too light.
Why – 'tis an office of discovery, love,
And I should be obscured.

LORENZO
So are you, sweet,
Even in the lovely garnish of a boy.
But come at once –
For the close night doth play the runaway,
And we are stayed for at Bassanio's feast.

JESSICA
I will make fast the doors, and gild myself
With some more ducats, and be with you straight.

Exit above.

GRATIANO
Now, by my hood, a gentle and no Jew!

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LORENZO
Beshrew me but I love her heartily.
For she is wise, if I can judge of her,
And fair she is, if that mine eyes be true –
And true she is, as she hath proved herself.
And therefore like herself, wise, fair, and true,
Shall she be placèd in my constant soul.

6 (a) Explore how Shakespeare presents the relationship between Jessica and Lorenzo in this extract.

Refer closely to the extract in your answer.

(20)

(b) In this extract, Jessica faces the challenge of running away with Lorenzo.

Explain the importance of challenges **elsewhere** in the play.

In your answer, you **must** consider:

- how challenges are presented
- the reasons for these challenges within the play.

You **must** refer to the context of the play in your answer.

(20)

(Total for Question 6 = 40 marks)

TOTAL FOR SECTION A = 40 MARKS

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SECTION B

Post-1914 Literature – British Play OR British Novel

Answer ONE question from this section, on EITHER a British Play OR a British Novel.

You should spend about 50 minutes on this section.

BRITISH PLAY

***An Inspector Calls*: J B Priestley**

Your response will be marked for the range of appropriate vocabulary and sentence structures, and accurate use of spelling and punctuation.

EITHER

7 **Inspector:** … *she'd used more than one name. But her original name – her real name – was Eva Smith.*

Explore how Eva Smith/Daisy Renton is significant in *An Inspector Calls*.

You **must** refer to the context of the play in your answer.

(includes 8 marks for the range of appropriate vocabulary and sentence structures, and accurate use of spelling and punctuation)

(Total for Question 7 = 40 marks)

OR

8 **Sheila:** *I got that girl sacked from Milwards. And now you've made up your mind I must obviously be a selfish, vindictive creature.*

In what ways is selfishness important in the play?

You **must** refer to the context of the play in your answer.

(includes 8 marks for the range of appropriate vocabulary and sentence structures, and accurate use of spelling and punctuation)

(Total for Question 8 = 40 marks)

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***Hobson's Choice*: Harold Brighouse**

Your response will be marked for the range of appropriate vocabulary and sentence structures, and accurate use of spelling and punctuation.

EITHER

9 **Hobson:** *Look here, Maggie, you're talking straight and I'll talk straight and all. When I'm set I'm set. You're coming here.*

How is conflict important in the play?

You **must** refer to the context of the play in your answer.

(includes 8 marks for the range of appropriate vocabulary and sentence structures, and accurate use of spelling and punctuation)

(Total for Question 9 = 40 marks)

OR

10 **Stage direction:** *He is a lanky fellow, about thirty, not naturally stupid but stunted mentally by a brutalized childhood.*

Explain the significance of Willie Mossop in *Hobson's Choice*.

You **must** refer to the context of the play in your answer.

(includes 8 marks for the range of appropriate vocabulary and sentence structures, and accurate use of spelling and punctuation)

(Total for Question 10 = 40 marks)

***Blood Brothers*: Willy Russell**

Your response will be marked for the range of appropriate vocabulary and sentence structures, and accurate use of spelling and punctuation.

EITHER

11 Edward: *If you loved me you'd let me go out with Mickey because he's my best friend. I like him more than you.*

Mrs Lyons: *Edward. Edward, don't say that. Don't ever say that.*

Explain how the relationship between Mrs Lyons and Edward/Eddie is significant in the play.

You **must** refer to the context of the play in your answer.

(includes 8 marks for the range of appropriate vocabulary and sentence structures, and accurate use of spelling and punctuation)

(Total for Question 11 = 40 marks)

OR

12 Kid Three: *'Ey, Mother, I'm starvin' an' there's nothin' in. There never bloody well is.*

In what ways are problems important in *Blood Brothers*?

You **must** refer to the context of the play in your answer.

(includes 8 marks for the range of appropriate vocabulary and sentence structures, and accurate use of spelling and punctuation)

(Total for Question 12 = 40 marks)

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***Journey's End*: R C Sherriff**

Your response will be marked for the range of appropriate vocabulary and sentence structures, and accurate use of spelling and punctuation.

EITHER

13 **Mason:** *You see, sir, I know the captain can't stand the sight of apricots. 'E said next time we 'ad them 'e'd wring my neck.*

In what ways is Mason significant in the play?

You **must** refer to the context of the play in your answer.

(includes 8 marks for the range of appropriate vocabulary and sentence structures, and accurate use of spelling and punctuation)

(Total for Question 13 = 40 marks)

OR

14 **Hardy:** *Oh, you each have an earwig, and start 'em in a line. On the word 'Go' you dig your earwig in the ribs and steer him with a match across the table.*

Explore the different ways of coping with life in the trenches in *Journey's End*.

You **must** refer to the context of the play in your answer.

(includes 8 marks for the range of appropriate vocabulary and sentence structures, and accurate use of spelling and punctuation)

(Total for Question 14 = 40 marks)

***The Empress*: Tanika Gupta**

Your response will be marked for the range of appropriate vocabulary and sentence structures, and accurate use of spelling and punctuation.

EITHER

15 Hari: *I wish I was a wealthy man. Then we could be married and you wouldn't need to work as a servant for English families.* **(talking to Rani)**

Explain how Hari Sharma is significant in the play.

You **must** refer to the context of the play in your answer.

(includes 8 marks for the range of appropriate vocabulary and sentence structures, and accurate use of spelling and punctuation)

(Total for Question 15 = 40 marks)

OR

16 Gandhi: *So we need reform the system. And to get some representatives in the Imperial Parliament.*

How is ambition important in *The Empress*?

You **must** refer to the context of the play in your answer.

(includes 8 marks for the range of appropriate vocabulary and sentence structures, and accurate use of spelling and punctuation)

(Total for Question 16 = 40 marks)

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***Refugee Boy*: Benjamin Zephaniah (adapted for the stage by Lemn Sissay)**

Your response will be marked for the range of appropriate vocabulary and sentence structures, and accurate use of spelling and punctuation.

EITHER

17 Mr Kelo: *Blood sprays from her mouth in an arch and lands like fine dust on my face.*

In what ways is aggression significant in *Refugee Boy*?

You **must** refer to the context of the play in your answer.

(includes 8 marks for the range of appropriate vocabulary and sentence structures, and accurate use of spelling and punctuation)

(Total for Question 17 = 40 marks)

OR

18 Mustapha: *Father? 'Father' … yeah, all our dads'll be here soon, man.*

Explore how Mustapha is important in the play.

You **must** refer to the context of the play in your answer.

(includes 8 marks for the range of appropriate vocabulary and sentence structures, and accurate use of spelling and punctuation)

(Total for Question 18 = 40 marks)

BRITISH NOVEL

Animal Farm: George Orwell

Your response will be marked for the range of appropriate vocabulary and sentence structures, and accurate use of spelling and punctuation.

EITHER

19 *We pigs are brain-workers. The whole management and organization of this farm depend on us.* **(Squealer)**

In what ways is the pigs' control of the farm significant in the novel?

You **must** refer to the context of the novel in your answer.

(includes 8 marks for the range of appropriate vocabulary and sentence structures, and accurate use of spelling and punctuation)

(Total for Question 19 = 40 marks)

OR

20 *His answer to every problem, every setback, was 'I will work harder!' – which he had adopted as his personal motto.* **(Narrator describing Boxer)**

Explore how determination is important in *Animal Farm*.

You **must** refer to the context of the novel in your answer.

(includes 8 marks for the range of appropriate vocabulary and sentence structures, and accurate use of spelling and punctuation)

(Total for Question 20 = 40 marks)

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

Your response will be marked for the range of appropriate vocabulary and sentence structures, and accurate use of spelling and punctuation.

EITHER

21 *There had grown up tacitly among the biguns the opinion that Piggy was an outsider, not only by accent, which did not matter, but by fat, and ass-mar, and specs.*

In what ways is Piggy different from the rest of the boys in the novel?

You **must** refer to the context of the novel in your answer.

(includes 8 marks for the range of appropriate vocabulary and sentence structures, and accurate use of spelling and punctuation)

(Total for Question 21 = 40 marks)

OR

22 *'Nobody killed, I hope? Any dead bodies?'*

'Only two. And they've gone.' **(Naval officer and Ralph)**

Explain the significance of death in *Lord of the Flies*.

You **must** refer to the context of the novel in your answer.

(includes 8 marks for the range of appropriate vocabulary and sentence structures, and accurate use of spelling and punctuation)

(Total for Question 22 = 40 marks)

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

Your response will be marked for the range of appropriate vocabulary and sentence structures, and accurate use of spelling and punctuation.

EITHER

23 *Men in vests and braces, with rumpled hair who clutched half-read papers.*

How are the male characters important in the novel?

You **must** refer to the context of the novel in your answer.

(includes 8 marks for the range of appropriate vocabulary and sentence structures, and accurate use of spelling and punctuation)

(Total for Question 23 = 40 marks)

OR

24 *I could see children riding their bikes, screeching in and around the parked cars and lines of washing, practising noisy manoeuvres.*

Explain the significance of childhood in *Anita and Me*.

You **must** refer to the context of the novel in your answer.

(includes 8 marks for the range of appropriate vocabulary and sentence structures, and accurate use of spelling and punctuation)

(Total for Question 24 = 40 marks)

***The Woman in Black*: Susan Hill**

Your response will be marked for the range of appropriate vocabulary and sentence structures, and accurate use of spelling and punctuation.

EITHER

25 *I had seen the ghost of Jennet Humfrye and she had had her revenge.* **(Kipps)**

In what ways are people affected by Jennet Humfrye's revenge in the novel?

You **must** refer to the context of the novel in your answer.

(includes 8 marks for the range of appropriate vocabulary and sentence structures, and accurate use of spelling and punctuation)

(Total for Question 25 = 40 marks)

OR

26 *And above the whinnying and struggling of the pony, the child's cry, that rose and rose to a scream of terror and was then slowly choked and drowned.*

Explore the use of tension in *The Woman in Black*.

You **must** refer to the context of the novel in your answer.

(includes 8 marks for the range of appropriate vocabulary and sentence structures, and accurate use of spelling and punctuation)

(Total for Question 26 = 40 marks)

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***Coram Boy*: Jamila Gavin**

Your response will be marked for the range of appropriate vocabulary and sentence structures, and accurate use of spelling and punctuation.

EITHER

27 *'Once my voice has broken, that will be the end of my musical life,' he had said with anguish.* **(Alexander)**

Explore how Alexander is important in the novel.

You **must** refer to the context of the novel in your answer.

(includes 8 marks for the range of appropriate vocabulary and sentence structures, and accurate use of spelling and punctuation)

(Total for Question 27 = 40 marks)

OR

28 *'Get that lunatic out of here!' Mr Gaddarn's voice was deadly. 'Put him in the map room – the boy too. Lock the door and guard it.'*

How is anger significant in *Coram Boy*?

You **must** refer to the context of the novel in your answer.

(includes 8 marks for the range of appropriate vocabulary and sentence structures, and accurate use of spelling and punctuation)

(Total for Question 28 = 40 marks)

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***Boys Don't Cry*: Malorie Blackman**

Your response will be marked for the range of appropriate vocabulary and sentence structures, and accurate use of spelling and punctuation.

EITHER

29 *Mel wasn't even nineteen yet. How could she have been stupid enough to have a kid at our age?* **(Dante)**

Explain how teenage parenthood is important in *Boys Don't Cry*.

You **must** refer to the context of the novel in your answer.

(includes 8 marks for the range of appropriate vocabulary and sentence structures, and accurate use of spelling and punctuation)

(Total for Question 29 = 40 marks)

OR

30 *Josh and I had been mates since we'd both started secondary school, me at ten and Josh at eleven.* **(Dante)**

How is Josh significant in the novel?

You **must** refer to the context of the novel in your answer.

(includes 8 marks for the range of appropriate vocabulary and sentence structures, and accurate use of spelling and punctuation)

(Total for Question 30 = 40 marks)

TOTAL FOR SECTION B = 40 MARKS
TOTAL FOR PAPER = 80 MARKS

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Sources:

Macbeth, Shakespeare, Pearson Education Ltd Longman School
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Coram Boy, Jamila Gavin, Egmont, 2000
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Surname	StemUp Model Solution
Answer booklet	Write the question number in the left-hand margin at the start of each answer.

Question number

1a

Shakespeare presents the relationship between Macduff and Macbeth as a collision between righteous vengeance and doomed defiance. Macduff arrives as an avenging force who has nothing left to say, while Macbeth moves from weary superiority, through collapse, to a final reckless courage, so that the shifting balance of power in their dialogue mirrors the fall of the tyrant himself.

From the very first line Macduff dominates. The exclamatory imperative "Turn, hell-hound! Turn!" is a command, and the repetition of "Turn" forces Macbeth to face what he has done. The metaphor "hell-hound" reduces the king to a demonic beast, which suggests that Macduff no longer sees him as human at all. Macbeth's reply is strikingly different: "Of all men else I have avoided thee." The admission that he has avoided Macduff hints at guilt, and the verb "charged" in "my soul is too much charged / With blood of thine already" presents his soul as weighed down, as if the slaughter of Macduff's family is a burden he cannot add to.

Macduff's response, "I have no words: / My voice is in my sword", is a powerful metaphor in which grief has gone beyond language. The caesura after "I have no words" creates a pause that makes his fury feel controlled and certain, and the comparative "bloodier villain / Than terms can give thee out" shows that even insults are inadequate. Their relationship has moved from speech to action, signalled by the bare stage direction "They fight."

Yet Macbeth still believes he is untouchable. The alliterative "Thou losest labour" is dismissive, almost mocking, and his image of trying to wound "the intrenchant air" presents Macduff's sword as pointless. The confident first person in "I bear a

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charmèd life" shows his arrogance and total trust in the witches. Shakespeare builds this confidence only to destroy it. Macduff's revelation that he was "from his mother's womb / Untimely ripped" is brutally physical, and the enjambment pushes "Untimely ripped" to the start of the line so that it lands like a blow. The balance instantly reverses: the verb "cowed" shows Macbeth's courage collapsing, and the antithesis of "keep the word of promise to our ear, / And break it to our hope" exposes the equivocation of the "juggling fiends".

Macduff now becomes the mocker. The insult "coward" and his image of Macbeth "Painted upon a pole" as one of "our rarer monsters" humiliate him, turning the king into a freak at a fair labelled "the tyrant". Ironically, it is this threat of public shame that restores Macbeth's warrior spirit. The defiant "I will not yield", the scornful "kiss the ground before young Malcolm's feet", and the concessive "Though Birnam wood be come to Dunsinane" show him facing the truth yet refusing to bow. The final imperative "Lay on, Macduff!" invites his own death, so that the man who began by avoiding Macduff ends by demanding the fight.

The closing stage directions complete the reversal. Macbeth "is killed" in a passive construction, while the verb "dragging" shows Macduff's contempt for the body. The relationship ends with the victim of tyranny triumphant, and Shakespeare leaves the audience with a mixture of satisfaction at justice and reluctant admiration for Macbeth's last stand.

Ib

Violence is the engine of Macbeth. Shakespeare shows that the same brutality which is praised when it defends the rightful king becomes monstrous when it is turned against him, and the play traces how one act of regicide unleashes a chain of killing that can only be ended by further, lawful violence.

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The play opens with violence presented as heroic. The Captain describes Macbeth carving his way through the rebels until he "unseamed him from the nave to the chops", fixing Macdonwald's head on the battlements. The image is horrifically graphic, yet Duncan responds with "O valiant cousin! Worthy gentleman!" To a Jacobean audience this violence is admirable because it serves the king and the natural order.

Violence is then imagined before it is committed. Lady Macbeth calls on spirits to fill her "top-full / Of direst cruelty", and in persuading her husband she claims she would have "dashed the brains out" of her own nursing baby rather than break her word. This shocking image shows how violence in the play is tied to a warped idea of masculinity: she taunts Macbeth for being afraid and tells him that when he dared to do it "then you were a man". The effect is to push Macbeth towards Duncan's murder, which significantly happens offstage. Regicide was seen as a crime against God, since kings were believed to rule by divine right, and King James had survived the Gunpowder Plot of 1605, so Shakespeare perhaps keeps this act unseen to heighten its horror. Instead the audience sees its aftermath: Macbeth's bloody hands and his despairing question whether "all great Neptune's ocean" could wash them clean.

The most important effect of violence is that it multiplies. Macbeth hires murderers to kill Banquo, who is left with "twenty trenchèd gashes on his head", and Banquo's ghost returns to haunt the feast, showing that violence cannot be buried. As Macbeth himself says, "blood will have blood". His order to slaughter Macduff's wife and children marks his lowest point, because this is violence with no strategic purpose at all. Shakespeare shows it on stage, including the murder of Macduff's young son, so the audience witnesses the tyranny directly. Macduff's

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stunned response, "All my pretty ones?", makes the cost of violence human and personal.

Violence also disturbs nature itself. After Duncan's death, Ross and the Old Man describe how Duncan's horses "ate each other", a grotesque image that reflects the Jacobean belief in the Great Chain of Being: when a king is murdered, the whole of creation is thrown into chaos.

Finally, Shakespeare presents violence as the means of restoring order. Malcolm and Macduff lead an army against the "tyrant", and Macduff enters with Macbeth's severed head, mirroring the image of Macdonwald's head in Act 1. This circular structure is significant: Macbeth dies exactly as the traitor he once killed. Malcolm's description of "this dead butcher and his fiend-like queen" strips the couple of any glory. Violence, then, is neither simply good nor evil in the play. Its meaning depends on whether it upholds or destroys rightful authority, a message that would have reassured James I that usurpers are always destroyed in the end.

2a

In this extract Shakespeare presents the relationship between Ferdinand and Miranda as a tender, mutual love that transforms hardship into pleasure. Their exchange becomes a gentle contest of devotion in which each is desperate to suffer for the other, and the fact that Prospero "watches from a distance, unseen" turns the scene into a test that their love quietly passes.

Ferdinand's opening soliloquy is built on paradox. He sets painful "sports" against the "Delight" that sets them off, and "baseness" against being "nobly undergone", so that the antithesis mirrors his own situation: a prince forced to do a servant's work. The negative adjectives "mean", "heavy" and "odious" acknowledge how

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degrading the task is, but the conjunction "but" pivots the speech towards Miranda, who "quickens what's dead, / And makes my labours pleasures." The verb "quickens" means brings to life, suggesting that love has an almost resurrecting power over him.

His language divides the world sharply between father and daughter. Miranda is "Ten times more gentle" than Prospero, who is "crabbed" and "composed of harshness". The metaphor suggests Prospero is made of cruelty itself, while the hyperbole "Ten times" captures Ferdinand's infatuation. The possessive "My sweet mistress" shows his confidence that she already belongs to him, and the courtly noun "mistress" presents him as a devoted servant of love rather than of Prospero. The stage direction where he picks up the log again after "I forget" is a lovely moment of physical comedy, as if thoughts of Miranda have distracted him so much that he stopped working.

Miranda's entrance makes the relationship mutual. Her exclamation "Alas" and the repeated pleas of "pray" show anxious concern, and her wish that "the lightning had / Burnt up those logs" reveals a protective, even fierce side. The personification of the log that will "weep for having wearied you" is touching because it echoes her own tears mentioned earlier, as if the whole world feels sympathy for him. She also defies her father in small ways, revealing that he is "hard at study" and "safe for these three hours", which suggests a secret intimacy.

The climax of their exchange is a reversal of roles. Miranda offers "I'll bear your logs the while", and Ferdinand's response, "No, precious creature", is full of reverence. His violent verbs in "crack my sinews, break my back" form a parallel structure that exaggerates his willingness to suffer, and he frames her carrying the logs as "dishonour". Miranda's reply is simple and wise: the work would suit her as

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well as him, and she would do it "With much more ease, for my good will is to it, / And yours it is against." Her balanced syntax shows that love makes labour easy, which ironically repeats Ferdinand's own opening idea.

Overall, Shakespeare presents a pure, selfless relationship in which each lover places the other first. The shared verse lines, where one speaker completes another's line, create a sense of harmony, and their competition to carry the burden suggests a marriage of equals. For the watching Prospero, and for the audience, the scene confirms that this love is genuine.

2b

Determination drives almost every plot in The Tempest. Shakespeare shows characters determined to seize power, to win freedom, to protect those they love and, most importantly, to master their own desire for revenge, so that the play becomes a study of which kinds of determination lead to harmony and which lead only to chaos.

Prospero's determination shapes the whole play. Twelve years after being overthrown, he raises the storm with a fixed purpose: to bring his enemies within his power. His long account to Miranda in Act 1 Scene 2 shows how deeply the betrayal still burns, as he describes Antonio as "that a brother should / Be so perfidious". Yet he also insists "I have done nothing but in care of thee", suggesting his determination is partly protective. In Shakespeare's time the eldest son was expected to inherit power, so Antonio's usurpation of his elder brother would have seemed a deep violation of the natural order, which makes Prospero's resolve to recover his dukedom feel justified to a Jacobean audience.

Antonio, by contrast, embodies ruthless determination. Not satisfied with stealing

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Milan, he set Prospero and Miranda adrift in a "rotten carcass of a butt", and on the island he tempts Sebastian to murder the sleeping Alonso and seize Naples. Shakespeare uses this subplot to show that the hunger for power repeats itself: Antonio's determination is not changed by suffering.

Determination for freedom is shown through Prospero's servants. Ariel repeatedly reminds his master of the promised liberty, and his eagerness to perform every task shows a determination to earn release. Caliban's determination is more rebellious. His claim "This island's mine, by Sycorax my mother" challenges Prospero's right to rule, and he plots with Stephano and Trinculo to kill him. This would have resonated with an audience aware of the colonisation of the New World, where European settlers claimed lands already inhabited. Shakespeare allows Caliban's protest to be heard, even though his plot collapses into farce, which perhaps invites the audience to question Prospero's authority.

Ferdinand's determination is presented as romantic and honourable. He is willing to endure Prospero's harsh treatment and log carrying to win Miranda, and Prospero admits that he makes the courtship difficult deliberately, so that "too light winning / Make the prize light". This reflects the period's view that marriage, particularly for a royal heir, was a matter of status and alliance, and Prospero's determination to engineer this match is also political: it will unite Milan and Naples. Miranda shows determination too, defying her father's command not to tell Ferdinand her name and offering herself boldly: "I am your wife, if you will marry me."

The most significant effect of determination comes in Act 5, when Prospero chooses to redirect his own. Ariel's suggestion that he would pity the prisoners if he saw them prompts Prospero to declare that "The rarer action is / In virtue than

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in vengeance." Here determination becomes self-control: he resolves to forgive, to break his staff and to "drown my book".

Shakespeare therefore suggests that determination is only valuable when guided by morality. Antonio's and Caliban's drives for control lead to frustration, while Ferdinand's devotion and Prospero's eventual mercy create reconciliation and the promise of a new generation, which fits the restorative ending of a tragicomedy.

3a

In this extract Shakespeare presents Lord Capulet as a patriarch whose authority depends on obedience, and who, the moment that obedience is refused, turns from a proud father into a tyrant. His language deteriorates from confident questioning into a torrent of insults and threats, and the speed of this collapse exposes how fragile and possessive his love for Juliet really is.

At the start Capulet speaks with the assurance of a man used to being obeyed. The noun "decree" presents the marriage as a legal command rather than a request, and his rapid questions, "How will she none? Doth she not give us thanks?", reveal sheer disbelief that his daughter could refuse. The repeated imperative "take me with you, take me with you" suggests he is struggling to keep up, as if refusal is simply beyond his understanding. His rhetorical questions are revealing: he expects Juliet to "count her blest", and the contrast between Juliet "Unworthy as she is" and Paris as "So worthy a gentleman" shows that he values the match for its status.

Juliet's careful wordplay, balancing "proud" against "thankful", is met with contempt. Capulet dismisses her as "chop-logic" and mockingly repeats her words back to her, "'Proud', and 'I thank you', and 'I thank you not'". The repetition is

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almost a parody, showing how he refuses to engage with her argument. His polyptoton, "Thank me no thankings, nor proud me no prouds", turns her own words into verbs and nouns to throw back at her, a bitterly comic moment that shows his rhetorical power being used to silence her. The alliterative insult "mistress minion" combines mock respect with scorn.

His language then becomes violent and degrading. The command to "fettle your fine joints" treats Juliet like a horse being prepared, and the threat to "drag thee on a hurdle" refers to the frame on which traitors were dragged to execution, suggesting he sees her disobedience as treason. The cluster of insults that follows, "green-sickness carrion", "baggage" and "tallow-face", attacks her body and health; "carrion" in particular, meaning rotting flesh, is grotesque and ironically foreshadows her apparent death. Even Lady Capulet, who earlier wished her daughter "married to her grave", is shocked enough to ask "are you mad?", which shows how far beyond acceptable anger he has gone.

Structurally, Juliet's kneeling plea, "Good father, I beseech you on my knees", is a striking visual image of submission, yet it fails to soften him. His tricolon of imperatives, "Speak not, reply not, do not answer me!", denies her any voice at all. The phrase "My fingers itch" hints that he is close to striking her, making the threat physical. The ultimatum "never after look me in the face" shows he is willing to disown her.

The extract ends with a cruel inversion. Capulet recalls how blessed they felt to have "but this only child", but now declares "this one is one too much" and "a curse". The antithesis between "blest" and "curse" shows how quickly love has turned to hatred. Shakespeare presents a man whose pride and need for control blind him completely, and the audience, knowing Juliet is already married to

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Romeo, sees how his rage pushes her towards the desperate choices that end in tragedy.

3b

Anger in Romeo and Juliet is the fuel of tragedy. Shakespeare presents it as inherited, contagious and rooted in pride and honour, and he shows that, whether it erupts in the streets or in the family home, it consistently destroys the young while the old who started it survive.

The reason for anger is established before the action even begins. The Prologue speaks of an "ancient grudge" breaking "to new mutiny", and the adjective "ancient" suggests a hatred so old that no one remembers its cause. Its arbitrary nature is emphasised in the opening scene, where servants provoke each other with crude jokes and gestures until a brawl breaks out. The Prince warns that any further fighting will be punished with death, declaring "Your lives shall pay the forfeit of the peace." In the late Elizabethan period, public disorder was seen as a threat to the stability of the state, so this violent anger would have alarmed an audience.

Tybalt is the clearest embodiment of anger. He enters the first brawl declaring that he hates peace "As I hate hell, all Montagues, and thee". At the Capulet feast his fury at Romeo's presence is driven by a belief that the Montague has come to mock their celebration, which reflects the importance of family honour. Capulet's angry reply, "He shall be endured", and his patronising "Am I the master here, or you?" humiliate Tybalt, and the effect is that his rage is not extinguished but redirected into a challenge to Romeo.

The structural turning point of the play comes in Act 3 Scene I, when anger

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spreads from character to character. Romeo, secretly married to Juliet, refuses to fight, and Mercutio, angered by what he calls "calm, dishonourable, vile submission", draws on Tybalt himself. After Mercutio is fatally wounded under Romeo's arm, his curse "A plague o' both your houses" shows that he finally blames the feud itself. Romeo's peaceful love is then overwhelmed: "fire-eyed fury be my conduct now". The metaphor presents anger as a blazing guide that takes control of him, and he kills Tybalt. His cry "O, I am fortune's fool" recognises too late that anger has destroyed his future. Elizabethans believed in the four humours, and an excess of choler was thought to make men rash, so Romeo's sudden switch from love to rage would have seemed dangerous but believable.

Anger within the family is equally destructive. Lady Capulet demands that "Romeo must not live", and Capulet's rage at Juliet's refusal to marry Paris culminates in his threat that she may "hang, beg, starve, die in the streets". Here the reason for anger is patriarchal control: daughters were expected to marry as their fathers chose, and disobedience was seen as a challenge to the order of the household and of God. The effect is that Juliet, desperate, turns to Friar Lawrence with a knife and threatens to kill herself, which leads directly to the potion plan and the tragic ending.

Only after the deaths of their children do the families end their rage in what the Prince calls a "glooming peace". Shakespeare's message is bleak: anger, driven by pride and an obsession with honour, can only be ended by the sacrifice it causes, and the lovers become the price of their parents' hatred.

4a In this extract Shakespeare presents Benedick as a man talking himself into love. His soliloquy is comic because the sworn bachelor builds an elaborate argument to

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justify what he already wants, yet beneath the humour Shakespeare also shows a genuine openness to change and a vulnerability that the witty Benedick usually hides.

The opening is instantly comic because of dramatic irony. "This can be no trick" is a short, emphatic declarative, but the audience knows it is exactly a trick staged by Don Pedro, Claudio and Leonato. His reasoning is based on trust in appearances: the conference was "sadly borne", meaning serious, and they have the truth "from Hero". The confident logic makes him seem gullible, and the abrupt question "Love me?" captures his astonishment in two words.

Interestingly, Benedick reacts less to Beatrice's supposed love than to criticism of himself. "I hear how I am censured" shows his concern for reputation, and the repeated "they say" structures the speech around other people's judgement. Yet he responds maturely: "happy are they that hear their detractions and can put them to mending." This aphorism presents him as capable of self-reflection, a surprising quality in a man known for mockery, and suggests that the trick allows his better nature to emerge.

His list of Beatrice's virtues follows a tricolon, "fair", "virtuous" and "wise", and after each he concedes the point with "'tis a truth" or "'tis so". The pattern sounds like a lawyer accepting evidence, but the final item is undercut by vanity: she is wise "but for loving me". This self-deprecating joke keeps his comic persona alive, and the oxymoronic "I will be horribly in love with her" is both absurd and touching, as if love is a punishment he will embrace with enthusiasm. The adverb "horribly" captures his old cynicism colliding with new feeling.

Benedick anticipates being mocked for his change of heart, imagining "odd quirks

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and remnants of wit" broken on him. The metaphor "paper bullets of the brain" is clever: it diminishes the insults of his friends to harmless paper weapons, and so dismisses the very kind of wit he has always used against Beatrice. His rhetorical question "doth not the appetite alter?" and the homely analogy about loving meat in youth that one cannot stand in age justify his change through a comic image of taste. The grand declarative "the world must be peopled" is hilariously self-important, turning his personal desire into a public duty.

His final paradox, that when he said he would die a bachelor he "did not think I should live till I were married", is a typical piece of Benedick wit, using clever logic to escape his own earlier vows.

The arrival of Beatrice tests his new conviction. His exclamation "By this day, she's a fair lady!" and his claim to "spy some marks of love in her" are comically deluded, because her words are as sharp as ever. His courteous "Fair Beatrice, I thank you for your pains" contrasts with their usual insults, and he reads every rude reply as hidden affection. Shakespeare therefore presents Benedick as both foolish and endearing: a man whose pride is the obstacle to love, and who reveals his true feelings once he believes it is safe to do so.

4b

Change is at the heart of Much Ado About Nothing. Shakespeare presents it through deception, overheard conversations and disguise, and shows that while some changes reveal the truth and lead to love, others expose how quickly trust and honour can collapse in a society that judges by appearances.

The most celebrated change is Beatrice and Benedick's transformation from enemies to lovers. At the start they wage a "merry war" of insults: Beatrice

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declares she would rather hear "my dog bark at a crow than a man swear he loves me", and Benedick calls her "Lady Disdain". Their hostility seems fixed, yet Shakespeare hints that it hides deeper feelings, as Beatrice suggests Benedick once won her heart "with false dice". The gulling scenes are what bring about change, and it is significant that both are tricked in the same way. After overhearing Hero and Ursula, Beatrice abandons her pride in rhyming verse: "Contempt, farewell, and maiden pride, adieu!" The sudden shift from her usual prose to rhyme signals a change in her inner self.

Benedick's change is proven most powerfully after the wedding. His confession "I do love nothing in the world so well as you. Is not that strange?" shows his self-awareness about his own transformation, and when Beatrice demands that he "Kill Claudio", his eventual agreement to challenge his friend marks a profound shift in loyalty from the soldiers' brotherhood to the woman he loves.

Claudio's change is far darker. He falls for Hero on appearance alone and is quick to believe Don John's claim that "the Prince woos for himself". When Don John and Borachio stage the scene at Hero's window, Claudio's love changes instantly to cruelty. At the altar he rejects her as a "rotten orange", a metaphor suggesting she looks perfect outside but is corrupt within. This shows how easily he is manipulated, and how his feelings depend on reputation rather than knowledge of Hero. In Shakespeare's time a woman's value in marriage was bound to her chastity, so an accusation of infidelity would destroy her and shame her family. Claudio's public humiliation of Hero is therefore devastating.

Leonato's change is perhaps even more shocking. The proud, loving father of the opening scenes turns on his daughter in an instant, wishing she would not live and lamenting that he ever had her. His concern for family honour overrides his love,

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reflecting a patriarchal society in which daughters were seen as reflections of their fathers' reputations. Once Hero's innocence is revealed, he changes again, defending her and challenging Claudio, which shows how fragile and conditional his loyalty was.

Shakespeare also presents deliberate change as a means of healing. Friar Francis plans for Hero to appear dead so that slander will change to remorse, and his plan works. Claudio, believing he must marry Leonato's niece, agrees to accept a bride he cannot see, and when Hero unveils herself it is as if she is reborn.

Change, then, is presented as double-edged. Benedick and Beatrice are changed for the better by a kind deception, while Claudio and Leonato are changed for the worse by a cruel one. Shakespeare's comedy ends in reconciliation, but the ease with which honourable men turn against an innocent woman leaves an unsettling reminder of how vulnerable women were to the judgements of men.

Sa

In this extract Shakespeare presents Duke Orsino as a self-absorbed romantic who loves the idea of love more than any real person. He is commanding, moody and full of confident theories, yet the dramatic irony of his conversation with the disguised Viola exposes how little he understands either women or himself.

The opening line, "Give me some music", is an abrupt imperative that echoes the famous first line of the play and reminds the audience that Orsino's moods are indulged by everyone around him. His command is immediately softened into a gracious "good morrow, friends". He wants not just any music but "That old and antique song", and the adjectives contrast it with the "light airs" of these "brisk and giddy-pacéd times". The compound adjective "giddy-pacéd" dismisses modern

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music as frivolous, and presents Orsino as a man who sees himself as more serious and refined than his age. The verb "relieve" shows that he treats music as a medicine for his "passion", reinforcing the idea of love as a sickness he enjoys nursing.

When he turns to Viola, Orsino becomes a self-appointed teacher of love. The imperative "Come hither, boy" establishes his authority, and the oxymoron "sweet pangs" shows how he relishes the pain of longing. He presents himself as the model lover, declaring "For such as I am all true lovers are", which is revealingly self-centred: his idea of love is based entirely on his own experience. The adjectives "Unstaid and skittish" are honest about his restlessness, but he insists he is constant in the "image of the creature / That is beloved". The noun "image" is telling, because his love for Olivia exists mainly in his imagination; she has refused to see him.

His exchange with Viola is rich in dramatic irony. When she replies that the music gives "a very echo to the seat / Where Love is throned", he praises her for speaking "masterly", unaware that she is describing her own heart and her love for him. His string of curious questions, "What kind of woman is 't?" and "What years, i' faith?", show genuine warmth and intimacy, almost like an older brother. Viola's answers, "Of your complexion" and "About your years", are coded confessions, but Orsino is so blind that he dismisses her love, declaring "She is not worth thee" and "Too old, by heaven." The audience enjoys the joke, but it also highlights his limited perception.

Finally, Orsino delivers confident advice about marriage. The metaphor "so wears she to him" suggests a wife shaping herself to fit her husband like a garment, while "sways she level in her husband's heart" implies balance and stability. Then

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comes a surprising admission: men's "fancies are more giddy and unfirm, / More longing, wavering, sooner lost and worn, / Than women's are." The list of adjectives and the repeated comparative "More" build a vivid picture of male inconstancy. Ironically, it describes Orsino perfectly, yet he does not apply it to himself, and later in the same scene he contradicts it by claiming no woman could love as strongly as he does.

Shakespeare therefore presents Orsino as charming and eloquent but deeply self-deceived, a man in love with his own feelings, whose blindness to the woman standing in front of him creates both comedy and pathos.

5b

Although Twelfth Night is a festive comedy, sadness runs through it like a shadow. Shakespeare presents several kinds of sadness: the indulgent melancholy of Orsino, the genuine grief of Olivia and the twins, the hidden pain of Viola and the bitter humiliation of Malvolio. Its effect is to deepen the comedy, giving the happy ending weight while leaving some characters outside the celebration.

The play opens with sadness as a fashionable pose. Orsino's first words, "If music be the food of love, play on", ask for an excess of music so that his appetite for love may "sicken, and so die". He enjoys his suffering, and his self-indulgence would have been recognisable to an Elizabethan audience, for whom love melancholy was a known condition, thought to be caused by an imbalance of the humours. The effect of his sadness is inaction: rather than wooing Olivia himself, he sends messengers, which is what brings Viola into the plot.

Olivia's sadness is more serious, yet Shakespeare suggests it is also excessive. Mourning her father and brother, she vows to hide her face behind a veil for seven

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years. The effect is to isolate her and to give her an excuse to reject Orsino. Feste gently mocks this in proving her a fool for mourning a brother whose soul is in heaven, showing how comedy can puncture grief. Ironically, her sadness is quickly forgotten when she falls for Cesario, which suggests that, like Orsino's, it was partly a performance of feeling.

Viola's sadness is the most moving because it is concealed. Shipwrecked and believing her brother drowned, she must hide her identity and her love for Orsino. In Act 2 Scene 4 she describes an imaginary sister who "never told her love" but let concealment, "like a worm i' th' bud", feed on her cheek, pining in "a green and yellow melancholy". The metaphor of a worm destroying a flower from inside captures how silent suffering eats away at her, and the audience realises she is describing herself. Her sadness creates dramatic irony and sympathy, and its effect is to make her the emotional centre of the play.

Some sadness is left unresolved. Antonio, devoted to Sebastian, risks his life to follow him and is hurt when he thinks his friend has denied him. Most significantly, Malvolio's suffering after the letter trick turns comedy into cruelty. Locked in a dark room and told he is mad, he becomes a figure of pity, and his final exit, "I'll be revenged on the whole pack of you", breaks the harmony of the ending. The festival of Twelfth Night was a time of misrule, when ordinary social order was turned upside down; Malvolio, the enemy of "cakes and ale", is punished for opposing festivity, yet Shakespeare makes the audience question whether the joke went too far.

Feste's songs reinforce this mood. "Come away, come away, death" in Act 2 Scene 4 feeds Orsino's sadness, and the play ends with Feste alone, singing that "the rain it raineth every day". This melancholy closing image reminds the audience

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that the holiday is over and that sadness is part of ordinary life. Shakespeare therefore uses sadness to give the comedy its bittersweet quality: love and reunion triumph, but not for everyone.

6a

In this extract Shakespeare presents the relationship between Jessica and Lorenzo as a passionate and mutual love, but one shadowed by secrecy, shame and money. Jessica's playful anxiety contrasts with Lorenzo's confident praise, and the scene's imagery of night, light and disguise suggests that their love can only exist by hiding from the world.

The exchange opens with caution. Jessica's urgent question and command, "Who are you? Tell me", reflect the danger of her situation, yet she admits she already knows his "tongue", which suggests intimacy: she would recognise his voice anywhere. Lorenzo's reply, "Lorenzo, and thy love", is brief and assured, and the possessive "thy" shows his certainty that she is his. Jessica echoes him, "Lorenzo, certain, and my love indeed", and this repetition creates a sense of harmony between them. Her rhetorical question "For who love I so much?" shows the strength of her devotion.

Yet Jessica also reveals vulnerability. Her question "who knows / But you Lorenzo whether I am yours?" hints at insecurity, as if she needs reassurance, and Lorenzo answers with a grand romantic flourish: "Heaven and thy thoughts are witness that thou art." Calling on heaven as a witness elevates their love to something sacred, which is ironic given that she is defying her father to elope.

The relationship then becomes practical and financial. The imperative "catch this casket" and the remark that "it is worth the pains" introduce wealth into the

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romance. Jessica's love is entangled with theft from Shylock, and the casket image links her to the wider play, where caskets decide Portia's marriage. Her relief, "I am glad 'tis night", because Lorenzo cannot look on her, shows that she is "much ashamed" of her disguise. Jessica uses the proverb "love is blind" to make light of her situation, and the image of Cupid himself blushing to see her "transformèd to a boy" is both witty and self-conscious.

Wordplay dominates the next exchange. When Lorenzo asks her to be his "torch-bearer", Jessica puns on light: holding "a candle to my shames" would expose her, and her shames are "too too light", meaning both bright and immodest. The phrase "an office of discovery" plays on the idea that light would reveal her, when she "should be obscured". This shows a quick wit that matches Lorenzo, and suggests a lively, equal relationship. Lorenzo reassures her that she is already "obscured" in the "lovely garnish of a boy", a compliment that turns her shame into charm.

Jessica's final promise to "gild myself / With some more ducats" is telling. The verb "gild" suggests she is decorating herself with her father's gold, making herself more valuable as a bride.

The extract ends with Lorenzo's praise. Gratiano's pun on "gentle" and gentile in "a gentle and no Jew" reveals the casual prejudice of the Christian world she is joining. Lorenzo's anadiplosis, where "true" ends one line and begins the next, builds towards the tricolon "wise, fair, and true", and his promise to place her "in my constant soul" sounds sincere. However, the conditional phrases "if I can judge of her" and "if that mine eyes be true" introduce a faint note of doubt. Shakespeare therefore presents a loving, witty relationship, but one built on secrecy and stolen wealth, leaving the audience uncertain about its foundations.

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6b

Challenges shape every strand of The Merchant of Venice. Shakespeare presents financial, romantic, legal and religious challenges, and the reasons behind them reveal the pressures of a society governed by money, patriarchy and prejudice. Some characters rise to their challenges through wit and courage, but the play also shows that, for an outsider such as Shylock, the challenges are stacked against him from the start.

The first challenge is financial. Bassanio has lived beyond his means and is in debt, and his solution is to woo Portia, whom he describes as "a lady richly left". The reason for his challenge is therefore partly his own extravagance, and Shakespeare invites the audience to question whether his love is sincere or mercenary. To compete with Portia's other suitors he needs money, and this leads Antonio, whose wealth is tied up in ships at sea, to borrow from Shylock. The bond for "a pound of flesh" turns a financial challenge into a matter of life and death.

Portia faces a different challenge, created by her father's will. She cannot "choose" whom she would nor refuse whom she dislikes. The casket test, with its gold, silver and lead caskets, challenges the suitors to look beyond appearances. Bassanio succeeds by choosing lead, whose inscription warns that the chooser must "give and hazard all he hath". In a patriarchal society, where marriages were often arranged for wealth and status, the casket test reflects a father's control over his daughter even after death.

Jessica, like Portia, is constrained by her father, but she responds more boldly. She describes her home as "hell" and elopes with Lorenzo, taking Shylock's money and

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converting to Christianity. Her challenge is both personal and religious: to escape her father she must abandon her faith and identity, and in the scene at the window she admits her shame at her disguise.

Shylock's challenges are rooted in prejudice. He reminds Antonio that he has called him "misbeliever, cut-throat dog" and spat upon his "Jewish gaberdine", showing the abuse he endures daily. In Elizabethan England, Jewish people had been officially expelled for centuries and were often presented as villains on stage, so the audience would have shared these prejudices. Yet Shakespeare complicates this through the speech "Hath not a Jew eyes?", in which Shylock challenges the Christians to recognise his humanity and argues that his desire for revenge is learned from them. The reason for his challenge to Antonio is thus revealed as a response to persecution, which makes him a more human figure.

The greatest challenge comes in the trial scene. Portia must disguise herself as the young lawyer Balthazar, because a woman could not practise law, and she challenges Shylock first with an appeal to Christian values in "The quality of mercy is not strained". When he refuses, she defeats him with the letter of the law: he may take flesh but no blood. Shylock's final challenge is the harshest, as he is forced to convert, and his broken reply "I am content" is deeply ambiguous.

Shakespeare therefore presents challenges as tests of character, but he also shows that the reasons behind them often lie in inequality. Portia and Jessica overcome patriarchal limits through wit and disguise, while Shylock's challenges end in loss, leaving the comic resolution troubled by a sense of injustice.

7 Eva Smith never appears on stage, yet she is the most significant figure in An

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Inspector Calls. Priestley makes her absence the point: she is a young working-class woman whom the Birlings and Gerald have never had to look at properly, and the Inspector forces them, and the audience, to see her at last. Through her, Priestley exposes the selfishness of the Edwardian middle and upper classes, attacks the capitalist idea that each person should look after only themselves, and argues for the socialist belief that "We are responsible for each other". Eva is less a character than a test that every member of the family fails, or passes, and the result shows Priestley's 1945 audience the kind of society they should refuse to rebuild.

Eva is first significant as the reason the inquiry exists. Her death, after she swallows disinfectant, interrupts a celebration of Sheila's engagement, and the Inspector's blunt description of how it "burnt her inside out" shatters the smug comfort of the dining room. Priestley sets the play in 1912, a world of port, cigars and confident predictions, and Eva's suffering is the reality that this comfort is built on. Her name is symbolic: "Eva" recalls Eve, the first woman, while "Smith" is the most ordinary of surnames, so she becomes an everywoman who could stand for any exploited worker. The Inspector deliberately keeps her shadowy, showing a photograph to one person at a time, which allows Priestley to suggest she may be several different girls. Either way, her significance does not shrink: the cruelty was real, whoever received it.

Mr Birling's treatment of Eva reveals the ruthlessness of the industrial capitalist. He admits she was "a good worker" and that he had considered promoting her, but when she led a strike for higher wages he sacked her as a ringleader. To him, she simply had "a lot to say", and he defends himself by explaining that it is his duty to keep labour costs down. Context gives this weight: the years before the First World War saw serious industrial unrest, with strikes in mines, docks and railways,

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and a woman demanding fair pay would have been seen as a troublemaker. Priestley clearly admires her courage. Eva is significant because she stands up for others, and that integrity is exactly what Birling cannot tolerate. His dismissive phrase "community and all that nonsense" is answered by her life.

At Milwards, Eva exposes the casual power of the privileged young woman. Sheila, in "a bad temper", believes the shop assistant is laughing at her and uses her position as the daughter of a good customer to have her dismissed. The detail that Eva was pretty, and that the dress suited her better than Sheila, makes the act even pettier, rooted in jealousy rather than any real offence. Priestley contrasts the two women deliberately: both are young, but Sheila is protected by wealth and family, while Eva has nothing to fall back on. Sheila's later horror, "But these girls aren't cheap labour, they're people", shows Eva's significance as a catalyst for moral change in the younger generation.

Eva's relationships with Gerald and Eric reveal how vulnerable working-class women were to men of higher status. Gerald rescues her from the unwanted attentions of Alderman Meggarty at the Palace bar and installs her in rooms belonging to a friend, but he ends the affair when it suits him. His memory of her as "young and fresh and charming" sounds romantic, yet it treats her almost as an object he enjoyed. Eric's treatment is worse: drunk, he forces himself into her lodgings, and she becomes pregnant. Here Eva's moral superiority is clearest. She refuses the money Eric has stolen from his father's office and refuses to marry a man who does not love her. Priestley gives the poorest character in the play the strongest principles, overturning the assumption, voiced by Mrs Birling with the phrase "Girls of that class", that morality belongs to the respectable.

Mrs Birling's rejection of Eva's appeal to the Brumley Women's Charity Organisation

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is perhaps the cruellest moment because it disguises cruelty as virtue. Offended that the girl used the name "Mrs Birling", she decides Eva was "giving herself ridiculous airs" and refuses help. In an age before the welfare state, private charity was often the only support for an unmarried pregnant woman, so this decision leaves Eva with nowhere to go. Priestley's audience in 1945 was about to vote in a Labour government that promised the welfare state, and Eva's fate is a powerful argument for why such protection was needed rather than the judgement of people like Sybil Birling.

Finally, Eva becomes the foundation of the Inspector's message. In his last speech he widens her significance to the "millions and millions and millions of Eva Smiths and John Smiths", and the triple repetition turns one girl into the whole working class. His warning that if people do not learn, they will be taught "in fire and blood and anguish" would have chilled an audience who had lived through two world wars that the 1912 characters cannot imagine. The final telephone call, announcing that a girl has just died and an inspector is coming, suggests Eva cannot be dismissed as a hoax. Whether or not she was one person, she represents a truth the Birlings cannot escape.

Eva Smith is therefore significant as victim, mirror and message. She reveals each character's selfishness, separates those who can change, Sheila and Eric, from those who will not, and gives Priestley's call for collective responsibility its human face.

8 Selfishness is the central sin of An Inspector Calls. Priestley builds the whole play around the idea that a society in which people look after only themselves will destroy the weakest, and every member of the Birling household, together with

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Gerald, is shown to have put their own comfort, pride or pleasure before the life of Eva Smith. Writing in 1945 but setting the play in 1912, Priestley uses selfishness to attack the capitalist, class-ridden world of the Edwardian era and to persuade a post-war audience that a fairer, more collective society was both possible and necessary. Sheila's bitter remark that she must "obviously be a selfish, vindictive creature" shows that selfishness is not just a flaw the Inspector uncovers, but the label that the characters must either accept and learn from, or deny.

Mr Birling is Priestley's clearest portrait of selfishness as a philosophy. Before the Inspector arrives, he lectures Gerald and Eric that "a man has to mind his own business and look after himself and his own", mocking the "cranks" who think everyone should look after everyone else, "like bees in a hive". The dramatic irony that surrounds his speeches, such as his claim that the Titanic is "unsinkable" and that war will not come, makes his confidence absurd to an audience who knew what followed, and Priestley uses this to discredit his values as well as his predictions. Even the engagement is selfish to Birling: he sees it as a chance for Crofts and Birlings to work together for "lower costs and higher prices", and he hints at his hopes of a knighthood. Context strengthens this: Birling is a caricature of everything Priestley, a committed socialist, disliked about self-made industrialists who put profit above people.

Birling's selfishness is shown in action through his sacking of Eva. She was a good worker who led a strike for a small rise in wages, and he dismissed her to protect his profits. He sees nothing wrong in this and insists he cannot accept responsibility, because to him workers are simply costs. Before 1914 Britain saw widespread industrial unrest, and Priestley's audience would have recognised Birling's response as typical of employers who treated labour as disposable. His final concern, when the truth comes out, is not for the girl but for the "public

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scandal" and the damage to his reputation, which shows that his selfishness survives every revelation.

Sheila's selfishness is different: it is the thoughtless cruelty of privilege. In Milwards, in a bad temper, she imagined a shop girl was laughing at her and threatened to close her account unless Eva was dismissed. The pettiness of the cause, a dress that looked better on the assistant, shows how wealth allowed young women like Sheila to wield power without consequence. Yet Sheila is significant because she recognises her selfishness, admits she is ashamed and insists she will never do such a thing again. In a patriarchal society where middle-class girls were expected to be decorative and obedient, her growing moral independence suggests Priestley's hope for a new generation, particularly for women, whose roles had expanded during two world wars.

Gerald and Eric reveal selfishness in the way upper and middle-class men used working-class women. Gerald appears charming, but his affair with Daisy Renton was arranged entirely around his own needs, and he ended it when it became inconvenient. His first instinct when questioned is evasion: "All right, I knew her. Let's leave it at that." Eric's selfishness is cruder, driven by heavy drinking, and he takes advantage of Eva, then steals from his father's office to support her. However, Eric, like Sheila, comes to see what he has done, and his anger at his mother for her part in his child's death shows the shift from selfish indulgence to painful responsibility.

Mrs Birling's selfishness is perhaps the most disturbing because it is disguised as charity. As a leading member of the Brumley Women's Charity Organisation, she refused Eva help because the girl had used the name "Mrs Birling", which she took as impertinence. She insists that the father of the child should be found and held

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responsible, without realising she is condemning her own son. Her refusal to admit any fault, claiming she did nothing she is ashamed of, shows a woman whose sense of class superiority blinds her completely. Before the welfare state, such charities held real power over the poor, and Priestley exposes how easily that power could be used selfishly.

The Inspector exists to challenge all of this. His insistence that "We are responsible for each other" directly answers Birling's earlier speech, and his final warning that those who will not learn will be taught "in fire and blood and anguish" links selfishness to the catastrophes of the two world wars. The ending is crucial. When it seems the Inspector may be a hoax, Mr and Mrs Birling, and even Gerald, rush to return to how things were, and Sheila accuses them of pretending everything is just as it was before. Eric reminds them that the girl is still dead. Priestley divides the characters into those who cling to selfishness and those who reject it, and the final telephone call punishes the first group by making them face the inquiry again.

Selfishness is therefore important because it drives the plot, defines the characters and carries Priestley's message. In 1945, with Britain voting for a Labour government and the welfare state, his audience were being asked which side of that divide they would stand on.

9 Conflict is the engine of Hobson's Choice. Brighouse builds his comedy around a series of battles, between father and daughters, between rival women, and between master and workman, and almost every one of them is won by the character Victorian society expected to lose. Set in Salford in 1880 but written in 1915, when women's suffrage was fiercely debated and the old certainties of class

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and gender were weakening, the play uses conflict to show power shifting away from the bullying patriarch Henry Horatio Hobson and towards his clever eldest daughter Maggie and the humble bootmaker Willie Mossop. The comedy comes from watching a tyrant defeated, but the conflicts also carry a serious point about who truly deserves authority.

The most important conflict is between Hobson and Maggie. From the opening act Hobson insists on his rights as head of the household, demanding that what he says will be "listened to and heeded", yet Maggie refuses to be cowed. She runs the shop, manages the customers and keeps the accounts, and her sharp reply that if dinner is ruined it will be his own fault shows a daughter who treats her father as an equal, or even as a child. In late Victorian society the father was assumed to be master of the house and his daughters were expected to serve him until marriage. Hobson regards thirty-year-old Maggie as past the age for marriage and far too useful to lose, which makes his treatment of her deeply selfish: she is unpaid labour. When Maggie announces that she will marry Willie, the conflict becomes open war, and Hobson's contempt for Willie as a "come-by-chance" reveals both his class snobbery and his fear of losing control.

Hobson's conflict with Vickey and Alice is smaller but revealing. He complains about their fashionable clothes and their uppish manners, but they answer back and tell him to open his eyes to what other ladies wear. The comedy here exposes Hobson's hypocrisy: he lectures his daughters on respectability while spending his evenings drinking at the Moonraker's. When the subject of marriage arises and he learns he would have to pay "settlements", he declares there will be no weddings at all. Brighouse shows that Hobson's authority rests on money and stubbornness rather than wisdom, which makes his eventual defeat feel deserved.

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The conflict between Maggie and Ada Figgins is one of the play's most comic moments, but it is also important in showing Maggie's determination. Ada insists that she and Willie are "tokened", and threatens to set her mother on Maggie, but Maggie simply dismisses her. Maggie has assessed Willie's talent as a craftsman and decided he is the right husband, treating marriage like a business decision. In a period when women were usually expected to wait passively to be chosen, Maggie's willingness to fight for the man she wants would have seemed startling, and Brighouse makes it admirable rather than unwomanly.

Conflict between Hobson and Willie dramatises the clash of classes. In Act One Hobson threatens to beat Willie with a strap for courting Maggie, but the timid boot hand surprises everyone by standing up to him, declaring that if he is thrashed he will walk out and marry Maggie after all. This is the first sign of Willie's change. Later, when Willie returns as a successful shop owner, the conflict reverses completely: he tells Hobson that times have changed since Hobson used to order him about, and he insists that the new partnership must be called "Mossop and Hobson". The Salford setting, with its rigid divisions between working-class labourers and lower-middle-class shopkeepers, gives this reversal real weight. Brighouse, a writer of the Manchester School, celebrates the idea that ability, not birth, should decide a man's place.

Maggie also turns conflict into a weapon. After Hobson falls drunk into the cellar of Beenstock's warehouse, she arranges for Albert Prosser to serve him with papers for trespass. The settlement that Hobson pays to avoid scandal becomes the marriage money for Vickey and Alice. Hobson's furious outburst at the "blood-sucking" lawyer is comic, but the scene shows that Maggie understands law, money and her father's pride far better than he does. Conflict, in her hands, is a strategy for fairness: her sisters gain the dowries Hobson refused to give.

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The final conflict is over who will care for Hobson when his drinking makes him ill. Vickey and Alice, now married and respectable, refuse to have him, which exposes their selfishness and their concern for appearances. Hobson demands that Maggie return, and his line "When I'm set I'm set. You're coming here" shows that he still believes he can command her. Yet he is wrong. Maggie returns only on her own terms and Willie's, and Hobson has no choice but to accept. The parallel with King Lear, a father with three daughters who misjudges which one truly values him, adds an ironic depth: unlike Lear, Hobson is saved, but only by surrendering his power.

Conflict is therefore important because it drives the plot and carries Brighouse's message. Each battle chips away at the Victorian assumption that men rule and women obey, and that masters rule and workmen obey. By the end, the play's title has gained its full irony: Hobson's choice is no choice at all, because power has passed to those who earned it.

10

Willie Mossop is the most transformed character in Hobson's Choice, and his significance lies in that transformation. Brighouse first presents him as a man "stunted mentally by a brutalized childhood", hidden away in the cellar and barely able to speak for himself, yet by the final act he is a confident businessman who dictates terms to his former master. Through Willie, Brighouse explores how the working class were held back by poverty and lack of education in Victorian Salford, and suggests that talent, once given opportunity, can overturn the rigid hierarchies of class. Willie is also significant as Maggie's partner, because their relationship challenges the conventional expectations of marriage and gender in the 1880s, an issue that had become urgent by 1915, when the play was first performed.

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At the start, Willie is significant as a symbol of the exploited workman. The stage direction describes him as "a lanky fellow, about thirty, not naturally stupid", and the word "stunted" implies that his limitations are not natural but caused by his environment. Brighouse is careful to blame circumstance rather than Willie himself. He lives in the cellar of Hobson's shop, and his first appearance, popping his head up through the trap and then diving back down, is comic but also telling: he exists below the level of the family, literally and socially. His deference, constantly agreeing with whoever speaks to him, reflects the powerlessness of a labourer who could be dismissed at any moment. In Victorian England many working people had little or no schooling, and Willie's inability to read or write properly would have been a familiar reality.

However, Willie is significant because he possesses genuine skill. When the wealthy Mrs Hepworth comes into the shop and asks who made her boots, she praises them as the best she has ever had and gives Willie her card, telling him to let her know if he ever changes his job. This moment shows that Willie's real value has been hidden and unrewarded by Hobson, who profits from his labour while treating him as a nobody. Maggie, who is shrewd and practical, immediately recognises his worth, describing him as "a business idea in the shape of a man". The phrase is comic but revealing: Maggie sees Willie not romantically but as a partner whose hands can be combined with her brains.

Willie's significance in the marriage plot comes from his passivity at first. When Maggie announces that he will marry her, he protests that he is promised to Ada Figgins and that he is frightened of Ada's mother. Maggie overrides him completely, and he gives in. Here Willie reverses the usual gender roles of the period: in late Victorian society the man was expected to propose and lead, while

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the woman waited to be chosen. Brighouse makes the audience laugh at this reversal, but he also uses it to question whether those roles made any sense. Willie and Maggie's partnership is far more successful than the conventional marriages of Alice and Vickey, which suggests that a relationship based on mutual respect and ability is better than one based on status.

Willie also matters because of the conflict his engagement causes in the Hobson family. Hobson is horrified that his daughter should marry his own boot hand and fears becoming a laughing-stock. Vickey and Alice are equally snobbish, worrying that Willie will damage their marriage prospects, and Vickey refuses at first to accept him as a brother-in-law. These reactions expose the class prejudice of the lower-middle-class shopkeepers in Salford, who looked down on the labourers whose work actually produced their income. A significant turning point comes when Hobson threatens Willie with a strap and Willie, instead of submitting, stands up to him and chooses Maggie. This is the first sign that Willie has courage within him.

The middle of the play shows Willie's gradual growth. With Mrs Hepworth's loan, he and Maggie set up their own shop in a cellar in Oldfield Road under the name of William Mossop, and Maggie teaches him to write, setting him copybook phrases such as "There is always room at the top". The phrase sums up Willie's journey and reflects the Victorian belief in self-improvement. Their wedding night, when a nervous Willie hesitates before going to Maggie, is gentle and comic, yet it also shows his tenderness and growing affection.

By the final act, Willie's transformation is complete. When Hobson, ill from heavy drinking, asks Maggie to return home, Willie takes control of the negotiation. He reminds Hobson that times have changed since he used to order Willie about, and

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he insists that the new business must be called "Mossop and Hobson", with his own name first. Even Maggie seems surprised and proud of the man she has helped to create. This ending is deeply significant. The humble workman has become the master, and Hobson, who once controlled everyone around him, must accept Willie's terms.

Willie Mossop is therefore significant because he embodies Brighouse's optimism about social change. His rise shows how education, opportunity and a capable partner can release the potential that poverty buries, and his relationship with Maggie offers a model of marriage in which ability matters more than gender or class. For an Edwardian audience living through the women's suffrage campaign and growing working-class political power, Willie's journey from cellar to shopfront would have seemed both comic and quietly revolutionary.

11 The relationship between Mrs Lyons and Edward is significant because it is built on a secret, and that secret slowly poisons both of them. Mrs Lyons gives Edward every material advantage a middle-class mother could offer, yet her love is possessive, anxious and, finally, destructive. Russell uses their relationship to explore the emotional cost of the bargain at the heart of the play, to criticise the snobbery of a class that tries to wall itself off from the poor, and to show how Mrs Lyons' fear of losing her son helps bring about his death. Edward's childish cry that he likes Mickey "more than you" captures the tragedy precisely: the mother who took him in order to be loved is the person he most wants to escape.

The relationship begins with longing. Mrs Lyons is a wealthy woman in a large house who cannot have children, and her husband is often away on business. When she learns that her cleaner, Mrs Johnstone, is expecting twins she cannot

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afford, she persuades her to hand one over, swearing her to secrecy on the Bible. Russell presents her desperation with some sympathy: infertility in the 1950s and 1960s carried real stigma, and the play suggests that a woman of her class was expected to provide an heir. Yet the arrangement is also a transaction, since she uses her wealth and Mrs Johnstone's poverty to buy what she wants. From the start, Edward is something she has acquired as much as a son she has borne, and this shapes everything that follows.

Even in Edward's babyhood, Russell suggests that Mrs Lyons' love is uneasy. She dismisses Mrs Johnstone because the real mother's affection for the baby threatens her, and she invents the superstition that if either twin learns he was one of a pair, both will immediately die. This lie is significant because it shows how fear governs her relationship with Edward: she will manipulate anyone, even with a terrifying curse, to keep him. The Narrator's ominous presence and his warnings that the devil has got your number turn this superstition into a source of dramatic tension that hangs over the whole play.

As Edward grows, his mother's possessiveness becomes a cage. He is lonely and well-behaved, telling Mickey that his mummy does not allow him to play down there, and his delight in Mickey's freedom and swearing shows how much he lacks. When Mrs Lyons discovers that he has been playing with Mickey, she is horrified that he will learn filth from boys like that, and when Edward repeats a swear word he has picked up she hits him hard, then holds him in guilt. This moment is significant because it reveals the violence of her anxiety. Russell exposes middle-class snobbery here: Mrs Lyons fears the working class as if poverty were contagious, yet her real terror is that Edward will discover the truth about his birth. The irony is sharp: Mickey is, of course, his brother.

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Mrs Lyons' fear drives her to move the family to the country, a decision that briefly seems to improve their relationship. Edward goes away to boarding school and she can show him open affection, calling him "my love" and fussing over him when he comes home. The boarding school itself reflects the advantages of class in Britain: Edward is offered an education that leads towards university, while Mickey leaves school with nothing. Yet even this apparent happiness rests on a lie, and Russell keeps reminding the audience of the cost. When Mrs Lyons learns that the Johnstones have also moved nearby, her mental state begins to collapse. In a powerful scene she confronts Mrs Johnstone and attacks her with a knife, her sense of reality slipping as she sees her secret threatened from every side.

The relationship becomes most significant in the final act, where Mrs Lyons' obsession has fatal consequences. Unable to bear the closeness between Edward and the Johnstone family, she takes Mickey to see Edward with Linda. This act of malice, revealing the affair, pushes the already broken Mickey, who has been in prison and dependent on antidepressants, to take Sammy's gun to the council offices. The love Mrs Lyons meant to protect Edward with becomes the cause of his death, as Mickey's gun goes off and kills Edward before the police shoot Mickey. Russell's structure makes the outcome feel inevitable, as the prologue showed the bodies of the twins before the story began.

Context deepens the significance of this relationship. Written in 1983, when Thatcher's Britain was marked by mass unemployment in cities such as Liverpool, the play shows a society sharply divided by class. Mrs Lyons stands for a middle class that believes money can secure happiness and keep the poor at a distance, yet Russell suggests this belief is an illusion. Her attempt to own a child of the working class fails because human bonds, between Edward and Mickey, and between a real mother and her son, cannot be bought. The Narrator asks whether

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superstition or class is to blame, and the relationship between Mrs Lyons and Edward suggests both: a superstition she invented to protect her privilege.

The relationship is therefore significant because it shows how fear and possessiveness can masquerade as love. Mrs Lyons gives Edward comfort but not freedom, and her desperate attempts to keep him end by destroying him. Russell turns a private family tragedy into a warning about a divided society.

12 Problems are at the heart of Blood Brothers because Russell wants his audience to see that most of the characters' suffering is not personal bad luck but the result of poverty, class and inequality. Kid Three's complaint that there is "nothin' in" and that there never is captures the everyday problem of hunger in the Johnstone household, and from this small domestic grievance Russell builds a tragedy in which unemployment, crime, depression and finally death grow out of the conditions working-class people were forced to live in. Written in 1983, during a period of mass unemployment in Liverpool and other northern cities, the play uses its characters' problems to argue that society, not fate, decides who thrives and who is destroyed.

Mrs Johnstone's problems open the play and shape everything that follows. Married young, she has a husband who leaves her for a younger woman, and she is left with seven hungry mouths to feed and debts she cannot pay. The song in which she describes buying everything on the never never, with the milkman and catalogue man demanding payment, presents poverty as a constant, draining pressure. Yet Russell makes her resilient: when she gets a cleaning job with Mrs Lyons she imagines that they will "live like kings". Her optimism is touching but also ironic, because the audience can already sense that hope alone will not

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overcome her circumstances. In the 1960s, the setting of the early scenes, a single mother with a large family had little support, and her fear that the welfare will take her children into care was a real threat.

Her problems become desperate when she discovers she is pregnant with twins. Mrs Lyons, whose own problem is that she cannot have children, offers a solution: give one of them to her. Russell sets the two women's problems side by side to show how class determines how each is resolved. Mrs Lyons uses her wealth to solve her problem, while Mrs Johnstone must sacrifice a child to solve hers. The secret pact, sworn on the Bible, creates the central problem of the play, because it divides the twins from birth and plants the superstition that will haunt them.

The separated twins face very different problems, and Russell uses their contrasting lives to explore the nature versus nurture debate. Edward's problem is loneliness: he has every material comfort, but his mother's anxiety stops him mixing with children she thinks will corrupt him. Mickey's problems are more serious. He grows up in a poor family, is moved to an overspill estate, does badly at school and is suspended, and leaves with no qualifications. The scene in which the boys are caught throwing stones shows how class shapes the response to their problems. The policeman threatens Mrs Johnstone and treats Mickey as a criminal, but in the Lyons household the same behaviour is treated as harmless mischief over a drink with Mr Lyons. Russell exposes the double standard of a society that criminalises poverty.

As adults, Mickey's problems become overwhelming. He works in a factory making up boxes, marries Linda when she becomes pregnant, and then loses his job when Mr Lyons, as head of the firm, makes workers redundant. The song about Miss Jones, the secretary who is suddenly sacked, links Mickey's fate to the economic

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decline of the time, blaming a shrinking pound and a global slump. This reflects the reality of Britain in the late 1970s and early 1980s, when manufacturing collapsed and Liverpool suffered some of the highest unemployment in the country. Desperate for money, Mickey agrees to act as lookout while his brother Sammy robs a petrol station, and when Sammy shoots a man Mickey is sent to prison.

Prison deepens his problems. He becomes dependent on antidepressants, explaining that he takes them so he can be invisible, and his relationship with Linda breaks down. Russell presents depression not as weakness but as the natural consequence of a life with no hope. By contrast, Edward has gone to university and become a councillor, and his problems seem trivial beside Mickey's. When Edward tries to offer money and cheer, Mickey bitterly suggests that Edward never had to grow up because he never needed to. The widening gap between the brothers dramatises how class divides opportunity.

The final problems lead directly to tragedy. Linda, lonely and neglected, turns to Edward, and when Mrs Lyons reveals the affair to Mickey, he takes Sammy's gun to confront his brother. Mrs Johnstone's revelation that they are twins comes too late, and Mickey's anguished words "I could have been him!" express the injustice at the centre of the play: the difference between them was never ability but upbringing. Both brothers die, fulfilling the superstition and the opening tableau.

The Narrator asks whether we should blame superstition or "what we, the English, have come to know as class", and this question shows why problems are so important. Russell suggests that superstition is merely a mask for something real. The problems in Blood Brothers are created by inequality, and they grow worse as the economy decays. By showing them building scene by scene, Russell makes the audience feel that the deaths of Mickey and Edward were preventable, and leaves

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them questioning the society that caused them.

13 At first glance Mason seems a minor, comic figure, the officers' cook who apologises for apricots and serves up mysterious cutlets. However, Sherriff makes him far more significant than his stage time suggests. Mason is the only private soldier we see regularly in the dugout, so through him the audience glimpses the ordinary "Tommy" whose loyalty held the war together. He brings humour into the gloom, he exposes the class divide between officers and men, he reveals the strain on Stanhope, and in the final scene his quiet courage reminds us that the men of every rank faced the same fate.

Mason's most obvious role is to relieve tension. The play is set in a cramped dugout near St Quentin in March 1918, days before the great German offensive, and the mood of dread could easily become unbearable. Mason's dry, deadpan explanations of the food work as a release valve. When something dark appears in the tea he insists it is only "a bit o' rust off the pan", and his description of the meal as "Ordinary ration meat, but a noo shape" turns the monotony of army rations into a joke. I think Sherriff, who served as an officer with the East Surrey Regiment and was wounded at Passchendaele, wanted to show that humour was a genuine survival strategy at the front, not a sign that men failed to grasp their danger. The laughter Mason provokes is never far from despair: his struggle to make anything edible from the limited supplies, "a bit oniony, but that's only because of the saucepan", quietly reveals how basic and repetitive life in the trenches really was.

Mason also allows Sherriff to explore the class hierarchy of the British Army. Officers were largely drawn from the public schools, as Stanhope and Raleigh were,

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while privates like Mason came from the working class. Sherriff marks this difference through Mason's dialect, the dropped aitches in "'E said next time we 'ad them 'e'd wring my neck", and through his constant, deferential use of "sir". A batman was a private assigned as a personal servant to an officer, cooking, carrying messages and looking after kit, and Mason fulfils this role faithfully, always on hand when someone shouts for coffee or demands, as Trotter does, that he "take the lumps out o' mine". Yet the relationship is not simply one of master and servant. Mason is relaxed enough to joke with the officers, and they tease him in return about his hygiene, wondering in mock amazement whether he has really "washed his dish-cloth". The trenches forced men of different classes to live and work side by side, and perhaps Sherriff suggests a kind of rough comradeship emerging across the class line. At the same time, the officers' remark that "that man's getting familiar" shows that the boundary never fully disappears. An audience in 1928, living in a society still deeply divided by class, would have recognised both the warmth and the distance.

Significantly, Mason acts as a barometer of Stanhope's state of mind. The apricot episode, from which the extract comes, is comic on the surface, but Mason's fear that the captain "can't stand the sight of apricots" and might "wring my neck" tells the audience, before Stanhope even appears, that the company commander is volatile. Mason asks Osborne to warn Stanhope in advance, which suggests that the men have learned to manage their captain's temper. Later, Stanhope's explosive reaction to small domestic failures over the food and the running of the dugout shows a man whose nerves have been stretched by years at the front and by heavy drinking. By directing Stanhope's irritation at trivial matters and at a harmless servant, Sherriff reveals how close he is to breaking. Mason's patient, unruffled responses make Stanhope's outbursts seem even more disproportionate, and we sense the psychological damage that the war has done to a once brilliant

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young officer.

Mason's role in providing for the officers also gains a darker irony as the play progresses. After the disastrous raid in which Osborne is killed, Mason serves a celebratory dinner of chicken and champagne. His efforts to produce something special contrast painfully with the grief of Raleigh, who cannot bring himself to join in. Here the ordinary rituals of food, which Mason has maintained throughout, become a way for some of the men to blot out what has happened, while for others they seem almost obscene. Mason's presence keeps the domestic routine going even when the human cost of the war has become impossible to ignore.

Finally, Mason's significance is sealed at the end of the play. As the German attack begins, Mason prepares to go up into the trench, telling Stanhope "I'd like to come along of you if you don't mind, sir". This simple, dignified line shows a courage that is never boastful. Sherriff deliberately contrasts Mason with Hibbert, an officer who is "just wasting as much time as [he] can" before going up. The private shows more readiness to do his duty than the officer who outranks him, which subtly undermines the assumption that bravery belonged to the officer class. Historically, the offensive of 21 March 1918 overwhelmed much of the British line, and the audience knows that Mason, like the others, is very likely walking to his death.

In conclusion, Mason is significant because he embodies the ordinary soldier whose voice is often missing from accounts of the war. Through his humour Sherriff shows how men coped with fear and monotony; through his speech and status he exposes the class structure of the army; through his nervous dealings with Stanhope he reveals the captain's fragile state; and through his final quiet bravery he suggests that, whatever their rank, all the men in the dugout share the same

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doomed fate. Mason may be a servant, but Sherriff gives him a dignity that makes him one of the most quietly moving characters in the play.

14 In Journey's End, Sherriff shows that the greatest enemy in the trenches is often not the Germans but the waiting, the boredom and the fear of what is to come. The play is set in a dugout near St Quentin in March 1918, during the tense days before the German spring offensive, and each officer develops his own way of coping with this pressure. Some ways, such as humour, routine and friendship, are presented sympathetically; others, such as heavy drinking or pretending to be ill, show men close to breaking. Through this range, Sherriff, who had himself served as an officer on the Western Front, suggests that coping was a constant, exhausting struggle rather than a sign of strength or weakness.

The play opens with Hardy describing how the officers pass the evenings with earwig races, explaining that "you each have an earwig, and start 'em in a line". The detail is comic, but it also reveals the squalor of a dugout crawling with insects and the desperate need to fill empty hours. Sherriff stresses that most of trench life was not fighting but "just waiting for something" to happen, and the men's games are a way of keeping their minds occupied. Hardy's cheerful singing of popular songs, such as "One and Two, it's with Maud and Lou", has the same function. Sherriff deliberately includes songs and poems that were popular during the war, and I think this would have reminded a 1928 audience, many of them veterans, of the cheerful bravado that soldiers used to keep morale up.

Humour is perhaps the most widespread coping mechanism. Mason's deadpan descriptions of the food, such as "Ordinary ration meat, but a noo shape", turn the monotony of rations into a shared joke, and the officers tease each other

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constantly. Trotter in particular is presented as the comic, ordinary man who finds comfort in food and gardening, talking about his "'olly'ocks". Yet Sherriff hints that this cheerful surface hides real suffering. Trotter's chart of "A hundred and forty-four circles", which he fills in to count down the hours until they leave the line, shows how much he dreads every moment. When he tells Stanhope "Always the same, am I? Little you know", the audience realises that even the most apparently untroubled man is only coping by an effort of will. Trotter, promoted from the ranks rather than from a public school, reflects the way the war drew officers from a wider social range, but his fear is the same as everyone else's.

For Stanhope, the burden of command is so great that he relies on whisky. He has been at the front for three years, far longer than most young officers survived, and he admits that there is a "limit to what a man can bear". Drinking was widespread in the trenches, encouraged by the rum ration, and many soldiers used alcohol to numb fear before going over the top. Sherriff presents Stanhope's drinking sympathetically: it is not weakness but the only way he can keep functioning as a leader. However, it also makes him irritable and unpredictable, and his terror that Raleigh will write home and reveal his drinking to his sister shows how desperately he needs to keep up the image of the hero. Coping, for Stanhope, means hiding the cost of coping.

Friendship and emotional support offer a gentler way through. Osborne, nicknamed "Uncle", is the moral centre of the dugout. Older, calm and kind, he mentors Raleigh when he first arrives, explaining the practical realities such as "We never undress when we're in the line", and he is the one person Stanhope trusts completely, calling him his "best friend". Before the raid, in one of the most moving scenes, Osborne and Raleigh keep their fear at bay by talking about home and walks in the countryside, and Osborne describes his garden in "A little place

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called Allum Green". He also reads from Alice in Wonderland. These retreats into memory and childhood stories allow the men to escape, briefly, into a world of order and innocence that contrasts painfully with the danger above them. Sherriff makes the audience feel the value of this tenderness all the more when Osborne is killed in the raid, leaving Stanhope without his chief support.

Hibbert represents the man who cannot cope. He claims to suffer from "neuralgia" and tries to get himself sent home, and he distracts himself with crude stories about women, such as "the girl I met in Soho". Trotter recognises that these stories are simply a way for Hibbert "to keep cheerful". In the powerful scene where Stanhope threatens to shoot him rather than let him desert, Stanhope then confesses that he feels the same fear, and the two agree to stick together. Here Sherriff touches on a sensitive context: shell shock was poorly understood, and over three hundred British soldiers were executed for cowardice or desertion during the war. By showing Stanhope's compassion, Sherriff suggests that fear is universal and that coping depends on mutual support rather than on punishment.

The ending reveals the limits of every coping strategy. Raleigh's idealism, his hero worship of Stanhope, is shattered by what he sees, and he dies in the dugout as the offensive begins. Stanhope, who has struggled to keep going through drink, duty and his bond with Osborne, climbs the steps to face the attack alone. Ultimately, Sherriff suggests that the men's games, jokes, friendships and drinking can help them endure, but none of them can protect them from the war itself. The play honours these small acts of survival, while reminding the audience of the generation of young men for whom coping was all they could do.

15 Hari Sharma is significant in The Empress because he gives a human face to the

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lascars, the Indian sailors whose labour kept the trade of the British Empire moving but who were treated as almost invisible. Through Hari, Gupta exposes the racism and exploitation at the heart of Victorian imperialism, while also creating a flawed, complex character whose journey from powerless sailor to independent craftsman mirrors the play's wider interest in self-improvement and dignity. His relationship with Rani is central to this, since it reveals both his tenderness and his capacity to do harm.

From the opening scenes on board ship in 1887, Hari is presented as one of the lowest of the low. The stage direction describing the lascars, "All of them are barefooted and look undernourished and dirty", immediately establishes the conditions these men endured. Hari is kicked by the Serang and threatened with being sent "down to hell to work in the boiler room", which suggests a brutal chain of command in which even the Indian overseer passes the violence downwards. Historically, lascars were recruited cheaply by British shipping companies, paid far less than white sailors and often left stranded in British ports. Gupta uses Hari to dramatise this neglected history, and a modern British audience, perhaps unaware that Indian sailors were present in London in the nineteenth century, is made to confront the hidden human cost of empire.

Hari's poverty also shapes his hopes. In the quoted line, "I wish I was a wealthy man", he links money directly to love: he cannot marry Rani because he has nothing to offer, and she must "work as a servant for English families". His words reveal how the colonial economy traps both of them. Rani is an ayah, a nanny employed by a British family returning from India, and wealthy families connected with the Raj often employed ayahs for the voyage and then abandoned them on arrival in favour of English governesses. Hari's wish therefore expresses a longing not simply for riches but for the freedom to choose his own life. His friendship

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with Rani, who helps him to read and recite poetry, gives him a glimpse of a different, more dignified future, and education becomes a symbol of hope in the play.

Hari is also significant as a character who refuses to accept injustice silently. When Abdul Karim warns Rani to choose her friends carefully, Hari angrily dismisses him as "still a lackee to the white man". This moment introduces one of the play's key debates: whether Indians should rise by serving the British Empire, as Abdul does at Queen Victoria's court, or by challenging it. Later, Hari's courage leads to suffering. When he demands that the lascars be "respected as members of the human race", the captain brands him a "poisonous influence", and he is thrown off the ship "beaten and bloodied" and left at the Cape without money or work. Gupta presents him as an early, ordinary voice of resistance, anticipating the more organised political struggle represented elsewhere in the play by Dadabhai Naoroji and the young Gandhi.

However, Gupta does not idealise Hari. When the Matthews family abandon Rani at Tilbury, declaring they "have no further use" for her, Hari shows compassion by taking her to Lascar Sally's boarding house and asking Sally to look after her. Yet he also tries to take advantage of Rani when he is drunk, a betrayal that shocks the audience and complicates our sympathy. I think this is significant because Gupta refuses to present the colonised simply as victims or heroes; Hari is damaged by a brutal world and capable of damaging others. The play's treatment of Rani's vulnerability as a young woman alone in London also suggests that women suffered a double oppression, from both racism and male power, even at the hands of men from their own community.

Hari's eventual redemption gives the play much of its emotional resolution. Driven

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by shame and by his love for Rani, he returns to England, and, inspired by the education she encouraged, he establishes his own furniture business in Whitechapel, proudly declaring "I make furniture". The East End was home to many of London's migrant communities, and Hari's success there represents the beginnings of a settled British Asian presence. His wish to be "a wealthy man" is not exactly fulfilled, but he gains something more valuable: independence, skill and the chance to offer Rani and Asha a better life. His story moves from servitude to self-respect, echoing Rani's own rise from abandoned ayah to teacher.

In conclusion, Hari Sharma is significant because he reveals the exploitation of the lascars and the human cost of the British Empire, he voices resistance to racial injustice, and he shows that the colonised could build new lives on their own terms. At the same time, his flaws make him believable rather than symbolic, and his journey from violence and shame to responsibility and love allows Gupta to suggest that dignity is earned through change. Through Hari, Gupta recovers a forgotten part of Britain's past and reminds a modern audience that the history of Indians in Britain began long before the twentieth century.

16 Ambition is central to The Empress because almost every major character is driven by a desire to rise above the position that the British Empire has assigned to them. Gupta presents ambition not as selfish greed, as it is in many earlier plays, but as a form of resistance and hope: the ambition to be educated, to earn a living, to be heard and to win justice for others. However, she also shows how racism, class and gender place limits on what these ambitions can achieve, so that success is often partial and hard won. Set between Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee in 1887 and the end of her reign, the play suggests that the ambitions of individual Indians in Britain helped to sow the seeds of the struggle for

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independence.

Rani's ambition gives the play its emotional spine. At the start, she travels to England as an ayah with the Matthews family, hoping to earn money to support her family in India and pay for her little brother's schooling. Her ambition is modest and selfless, yet it is crushed almost immediately when the family abandon her at the docks, saying they "have no further use" for her. This reflects a real historical practice: many ayahs were dismissed on arrival and left destitute in London. Rather than giving up, Rani rebuilds her life, attending evening classes and eventually working as Dadabhai's assistant. By the end, she is a qualified teacher "hoping to set up a school". For an Indian girl of this period, when many were expected to remain at home and marry young, this access to education is remarkable, and Gupta presents Rani's determination as quietly heroic. Her ambition turns outwards, into a wish to educate others.

Hari's ambition develops in a similar direction. As a lascar, his only aim at first is to keep his poorly paid work at sea, and he is constantly reminded that he "must report for work now". His wish, in his early conversation with Rani, to be "a wealthy man" so that they could marry shows how poverty restricts even his dreams. Encouraged by Rani, who helps him to read, Hari's ambitions grow, and by the end he has his own furniture business in Whitechapel, proudly stating "I make furniture". Gupta suggests that education and love can transform ambition from mere survival into independence and self-respect.

Political ambition is embodied most clearly by Dadabhai Naoroji. In 1892 Naoroji was elected for Finsbury Central and became the first Indian Member of Parliament, and in the play his ambition is to use this position to improve the lives of Indians, who are "treated as beneath the white man's concern". His "belief in

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British fairness" is significant, because it shows that he initially hopes to change the Empire from within. However, his constant battle with the British political system eventually forces him to return to India to campaign for self-government. Gupta uses his story to show the limits of working within the system, and perhaps to suggest that the Empire's refusal to reward moderate ambition pushed Indians towards demanding independence.

Gandhi's ambition continues this political thread. The quotation, "So we need reform the system. And to get some representatives in the Imperial Parliament", comes from the young Gandhi, whose imperfect English shows him at the beginning of his journey. He arrives in England to qualify as a lawyer, with Dadabhai acting as his mentor. A modern audience knows that Gandhi would later lead India's non-violent campaign for independence, so his early ambition gains a powerful dramatic irony. At the end of the play, Gandhi's ambition to help the disadvantaged leads him to leave England for South Africa, where he sets up an ambulance corps to help the injured and dying. Gupta presents ambition here as moral rather than personal: it is about serving others.

Abdul Karim's ambition is more ambiguous. Sent to England to serve at Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee, he rises to become her Munshi, or teacher. His ambition is partly personal advancement within the royal household, which makes him a target of resentment, but it is also a desire to teach the Queen about India and the "daily humiliation of abuse" her subjects suffer. Victoria herself is shown to have ambitions too, wishing to learn about the customs of her subjects "so far away" and declaring of Abdul, "I want him to talk to me". Historically, their close friendship caused great friction at court, and after Victoria's death Abdul was sent back to India and their letters were destroyed. This reveals how threatening an Indian's rise could seem to the British establishment.

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Finally, ambition is shown to be collective as well as individual. Mary and Charlotte campaign to create a home for abandoned ayahs, dedicated to the "welfare of Indian womanhood", and through their lobbying and the support of "concerned British women" they succeed. This shows that ambition can cross boundaries of race and class when it is driven by compassion.

In conclusion, ambition is important in The Empress because it drives the characters' journeys from powerlessness towards dignity, and because it links personal stories to the larger history of Indian resistance to British rule. Gupta celebrates ambition that serves others, while showing honestly that racism and imperial power repeatedly block it. By recovering the forgotten ambitions of Indians in Victorian Britain, she reminds a modern audience that British Asian history, and the fight for equality, began much earlier than many assume.

17 Aggression is significant in Refugee Boy because it is the force that drives Alem Kelo from his home and follows him, in different forms, to England. Sissay's adaptation of Zephaniah's novel moves between Ethiopia, Eritrea and London, and this structure allows the audience to see that violence is not confined to war zones. Aggression appears as military brutality, as the hostility that young people in care direct at each other, as the defensive anger of a frightened boy, and finally as the killing that ends the play. Through it, the writers explore how violence damages identity and how the systems meant to protect the vulnerable often fail them.

The play's backdrop is the war between Ethiopia and Eritrea, which killed tens of thousands and created many refugees. Alem's family embodies the conflict: his

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father is Ethiopian and his mother Eritrean, so in each country one of them is regarded as "the enemy". The quoted line, in which Mr Kelo recalls how "Blood sprays from her mouth in an arch", is shocking precisely because of its calm, almost poetic precision. The image of blood landing "like fine dust" on his face suggests a memory so traumatic that it is replayed in slow motion. Sissay places this aggression on stage directly rather than describing it from a distance, so that the audience, like Alem, cannot escape it. The stage direction "The door splits the soldier bursts in" captures the sudden violation of the family home, a space that should be safe.

The family's flight to Eritrea offers no protection, which is significant because it shows how war turns ordinary people into targets on both sides. There, the Kelos are condemned as "Dirty dog traitors", Mr Kelo is struck across the face and threatened with a gun, and his desperate repetition of "Don't shoot. Don't shoot. Don't shoot" conveys complete powerlessness. The soldier's accusation that he is linked to Mengistu, the former Ethiopian dictator whose regime was accused of causing the deaths of huge numbers of Ethiopians and Eritreans, shows how the memory of past violence feeds new hatred. The escalation reaches its climax with the news that Mrs Kelo has been "found hacked to death". This brutal phrase confirms that the family's fears were justified, yet when the killing is put forward to support their asylum claim, the application is still turned down. Here Zephaniah and Sissay criticise the British asylum system, suggesting that the reality of aggression abroad is ignored by bureaucrats who judge cases on paper.

Sound is used to make aggression a constant presence. The repeated "Bang! Bang! Bang!" represents gunfire in Africa but also the knocking on the Fitzgeralds' front door, so that an everyday sound in London becomes a trigger for terror. When Alem anxiously says "There's someone at the door", the audience understands that

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he carries the violence of his past inside him. This is significant because it presents trauma realistically: physical safety in England does not bring emotional safety.

In England, Alem meets a different kind of aggression in the children's home. Sweeney's insult "you're all poison" reflects the hostility often directed at asylum seekers in the late 1990s and early 2000s, when sections of the British press portrayed refugees as a threat. When Sweeney believes Alem is "talkin' bad" about his family, his fury erupts into the threat "I'll kill you!" However, the play encourages us to look beyond Sweeney's violence. We learn that his own father "Used to try and rearrange" his face, and that this abuse is why he is in care. Aggression is thus shown to be cyclical: violence suffered becomes violence passed on. Lemn Sissay, who grew up in children's homes himself, gives these scenes a particular authenticity, and the play suggests that the care system, like the asylum system, struggles to heal the young people it houses.

Even Alem, the gentle and thoughtful protagonist, is not immune. When a mugger tries to steal his bike, he uses a cheese knife to defend himself and challenges the attacker with "You want to fight?" This moment is significant because it shows how the anger of being abandoned by his father, and the strain of surviving in a strange country, can push even a peaceful boy towards violence. The play's concern with knife crime gives this scene a contemporary edge, and it raises uncomfortable questions about whether Alem could become what the world has tried to make him.

The final, devastating act of aggression is Mr Kelo's death in England, where it is suggested that "the killing may have been politically motivated". Mr Kelo has been working for peace between the two countries, so his murder is cruelly ironic. It

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shatters the idea that Britain is a safe haven and proves that the conflict has followed the family across borders. Structurally, the play ends with Alem having lost both parents to violence, a bleak outcome that forces the audience to recognise the human cost of war and of failed asylum systems.

In conclusion, aggression is significant because it shapes every stage of Alem's journey, from the soldiers who burst into his home to the bullies in the children's home and the killers of his father. Zephaniah and Sissay show that aggression grows out of hatred, fear and abuse, and that it spreads across generations and countries. Yet by giving Alem moments of kindness and friendship, the play also suggests that the cycle can be resisted, and it challenges the audience to treat refugees with the compassion that violence has denied them.

18 Mustapha is important in Refugee Boy because he shows that Alem is not the only young person in England who has been abandoned. Through him, Sissay's adaptation widens the play's focus from the asylum system to the care system, revealing that British children, too, can be lost, hurt and waiting for parents who never come. Mustapha begins as a tough, guarded figure, but his humour, his loneliness and his eventual loyalty make him a mirror for Alem and one of the play's most touching characters.

Mustapha is the first person Alem meets in the children's home, so he acts as the audience's guide to this new world. At first he appears confrontational, demanding "do you know who I am?", which suggests he needs to establish status in an environment where showing weakness is dangerous. Yet the moment a member of staff challenges him, his tone collapses into "Yeah, miss. No, miss. I was asking, miss". The repetition is comic, but it also exposes his aggression as bravado, a

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performance of toughness that he can switch off when an adult appears. Sissay, who spent his own childhood in foster care and children's homes, seems to understand that such posturing is a survival strategy rather than true cruelty.

The quoted line, "Father? 'Father' ... yeah, all our dads'll be here soon, man", is central to Mustapha's importance. His sarcastic echo of the word "Father" reveals the bitterness of a boy who has learned not to hope, and the phrase "all our dads" suggests that absent fathers are the shared experience of everyone in the home. Ironically, this comment links him directly to Alem, whose own father has left him in London. Although Mustapha usually avoids answering when Alem asks "What's your secret?", he eventually admits that his father "was driven away" and never returned. His reluctance to speak shows how deep the wound is, and the play suggests that the breakdown of family relationships can affect children's ability to trust others.

Mustapha's obsession with naming every car that passes, such as "That was a Cortina Mark 3", is one of the most poignant details in the play. On the surface it seems like a harmless hobby, but it reveals his secret hope that one day his father will be "driving his way back" to him. The precision of his knowledge contrasts with the emptiness of his situation: he can identify every car, yet the one he waits for never arrives. Like Alem, who clings to the hope of being reunited with his father, Mustapha keeps faith in a reunion that seems impossible, and the parallel encourages the audience to see the two boys as equals rather than as a native and a foreigner.

His humour is also important. His fixation on the number of chips, "Six chips. Right. Six chips", is funny, but it also suggests the strict rationing and regimented routines of institutional life, and his frustration at having so little control. Food

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becomes a site of power in the home, as when Sweeney bullies him with "Gimme your chips, Musty". Their relationship is complex: Sweeney intimidates him, yet also seeks his approval, asking "I'll teach him, won't I, Musty?" This suggests that even the bullies in the home need allies, and that Mustapha has a respect among the other boys that he rarely acknowledges. Through these dynamics, the play shows how difficult friendships can be for young people living without stable families. In England, a small but significant proportion of children are known to social services at any one time, and the play gives voice to this often overlooked group.

Mustapha's friendship with Alem is perhaps his most important function. He warns Alem to "Be careful in here, alright?", and his admission "I know about fear" creates a moment of genuine connection between two boys from very different backgrounds. Yet Mustapha is not idealised. His involvement in an incident at the home that leads to Alem's leaving shows that he can be easily influenced and can join in with bullying. His apology, "I'm sorry, man. I didn't mean for that to happen", is significant because it shows his capacity for guilt and change. Sissay presents him as a realistic teenager, shaped by his environment but not defined by it.

By the end, Mustapha's loyalty is confirmed when he joins Ruth in organising the campaign to stop Alem and Mr Kelo being deported, proudly calling himself "the Co-project Leader of the Free the Kelos". The phrase is comic in its self-importance, but it shows how far he has come: the guarded boy who trusted no one now fights for someone else's family. This development reflects Zephaniah's belief in solidarity and grassroots activism, and the way ordinary people can challenge an asylum system that treats refugees as cases rather than human beings.

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In conclusion, Mustapha is important because he exposes the struggles of children in care, he mirrors Alem's experience of abandonment, and he demonstrates the power of friendship to cross barriers of race and nationality. His sarcasm and bravado mask a deep longing for his father, and his growth from suspicious bully to loyal campaigner suggests that kindness can break the cycle of hurt. Through Mustapha, the play argues that the "refugee boy" and the British boy in care have more in common than society might assume.

19 The pigs' control of the farm is the central concern of Animal Farm, because it is through this control that Orwell shows how a revolution founded on equality can be quietly turned into a new tyranny. Squealer's claim that "We pigs are brain-workers" is significant precisely because it sounds so reasonable. The pigs do not seize power with violence at first; they gain it by persuading the other animals that their cleverness entitles them to lead. Orwell, writing in 1943 and 1944 as a disillusioned socialist, uses this gradual process to expose the way the Bolsheviks, and above all Stalin, betrayed the ideals of the Russian Revolution of 1917.

At the start of the novel, leadership seems natural and even benign. Old Major, who is respected by every animal, inspires the Rebellion with his vision of a world without Man, and after his death the pigs take on "the work of teaching and organising the others" because they are generally recognised as the cleverest of the animals. Snowball and Napoleon reduce Major's ideas to Animalism and paint the Seven Commandments on the barn wall, ending with "All animals are equal." Yet even in these early chapters, Orwell plants warning signs. The mysterious disappearance of the milk, and later the pigs' decision to keep the windfall apples for themselves, show that privilege has crept in almost immediately. Squealer's speech is significant because it disguises greed as self-sacrifice: the pigs claim

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they dislike milk and apples and consume them only for the good of the farm. His threat that otherwise "Jones would come back" is a powerful tool of control, since fear of the old oppressor silences any objection to the new one.

The pigs' control becomes more openly coercive once Napoleon expels Snowball. Napoleon has taken nine puppies from their mothers and reared them himself, and their sudden appearance as huge, fierce dogs that chase Snowball off the farm marks a turning point. From this moment, power rests on force rather than consent. Orwell clearly alludes here to Stalin's rivalry with Trotsky, who was forced into exile in 1929, and to the secret police who sustained Stalin's dictatorship. The dogs are a chilling reminder that propaganda alone is never enough for a tyrant; it is always backed by the threat of terror.

That terror reaches its climax in the confessions and executions in Chapter Seven, when animals who admit to imaginary crimes are slaughtered and "the dogs promptly tore their throats out". This scene is significant because it shows that the pigs' control now extends even to the animals' minds: the victims confess to things that never happened. Orwell is directly recreating Stalin's show trials of 1936 to 1938, in which loyal communists confessed to absurd charges before being shot. Afterwards, Clover senses that this is not what they had hoped for, yet she cannot find the words to express it. The pigs have controlled language so effectively that the other animals lack the means to resist.

Indeed, control of language and memory is perhaps the most significant form of power in the novel. Squealer, who could reportedly "turn black into white", rewrites history so that Snowball becomes a traitor who was in league with Jones from the beginning, while Napoleon becomes the hero of the Battle of the Cowshed. The Commandments are altered at night, so that the animals doubt their own

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memories. The pigs also deny the other animals education: although Snowball once ran reading classes, most of the animals never learn beyond a few letters, and the sheep are trained to bleat slogans that drown out debate. Like the Soviet practice of airbrushing purged officials out of photographs and rewriting history books, every change to the barn wall shows that whoever controls the past controls the present.

The most painful consequence of the pigs' control is the fate of Boxer. His loyalty, summed up in his mottoes "I will work harder" and "Napoleon is always right", makes him the perfect subject for a dictatorship. When his lung fails, the pigs sell him to the horse slaughterer and use the money to buy whisky. This is significant because it reveals the contempt the ruling class feels for the very workers on whom its power depends, just as millions of Soviet peasants and workers suffered and died under collectivisation and forced industrialisation.

By the final chapter, the pigs' control is complete, and its significance is made brutally clear. The pigs walk on two legs, carry whips and wear Jones's clothes, and the Commandments have been reduced to a single one: "ALL ANIMALS ARE EQUAL BUT SOME ANIMALS ARE MORE EQUAL THAN OTHERS." The paradox exposes the absurdity of the pigs' ideology, while the closing image, in which the animals look from pig to man and find it "impossible to say which was which", shows that the revolution has come full circle. Orwell may be alluding to the Tehran Conference of 1943, when Stalin sat down with Churchill and Roosevelt, suggesting that the new Soviet rulers were no different from the capitalist powers they had once condemned.

Ultimately, the pigs' control is significant because it embodies Orwell's warning that power concentrated in the hands of a self-appointed elite will always corrupt.

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Yet the novel also implies that the other animals share some responsibility: their trust, their ignorance and, in Benjamin's case, their cynical silence allow the pigs to rise. Orwell's purpose is not to reject equality but to insist that ordinary people must remain alert, educated and willing to question their leaders, or any revolution will simply replace one master with another.

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Determination is important in Animal Farm because it drives both the hope and the tragedy of the story. The animals' collective determination makes the Rebellion possible, but Orwell shows how that same determination can be exploited by those who are determined only to gain power. Boxer's motto, "I will work harder", lies at the heart of this paradox: it is admirable and moving, yet it is also the quality that allows the pigs to enslave him. Writing in the 1940s as a democratic socialist who had watched the Russian Revolution decay into Stalin's dictatorship, Orwell uses determination to explore why ordinary people so often sacrifice themselves for leaders who betray them.

At the beginning of the novel, determination is presented as a positive and liberating force. Old Major's speech awakens the animals to the injustice of their lives, telling them that their existence is "miserable, laborious, and short" and urging them to work for the overthrow of Man. Although Major dies soon afterwards, his vision gives the animals a sense of purpose. Ironically, the Rebellion itself happens suddenly when Jones forgets to feed them and the starving animals break into the store-shed, yet their success in driving out Jones and his men reflects a shared resolve that has been building for months. Orwell parallels this with the revolutions of 1917, when Russian workers and soldiers, inspired by the ideas of Marx and Lenin, rose against the Tsar. In these early chapters, the reader shares the animals' optimism; their first harvest is a triumph, because every

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animal works according to his capacity.

Boxer is the clearest embodiment of determination. His strength and his willingness to rise earlier than everyone else make him "the admiration of everybody", and his two mottoes, "I will work harder" and later "Napoleon is always right", show how dedication can become blind obedience. Orwell's presentation of Boxer is deeply sympathetic: his determination is selfless, and he even grieves when he thinks he has killed a stable-lad during the Battle of the Cowshed. However, his inability to question authority is his downfall. When the windmill is destroyed by the storm and again by Frederick's men, Boxer simply begins again, and the strain eventually breaks him. Boxer is often read as a symbol of the Russian working class, and in particular of figures like Alexei Stakhanov, the miner whose record-breaking output was celebrated by Soviet propaganda in the 1930s to push other workers harder. The image of the exhausted horse being driven away in the knacker's van, while the animals realise too late what is happening, is one of the most painful moments in the novel. His determination has been used up and then discarded, and the pigs spend the money on whisky.

By contrast, Napoleon's determination is entirely selfish, and this makes it far more dangerous. From the start he takes little part in debate, preferring to work in secret, and his private education of the puppies shows a cold, long-term determination to seize control. Once Snowball has been expelled, Napoleon's determination is directed at keeping power at any cost. He takes credit for the windmill that he once opposed, rewrites the history of the farm through Squealer, and organises the terrifying executions in which confessed traitors are killed by the dogs. Orwell clearly alludes to Stalin, whose ruthless determination to eliminate rivals such as Trotsky led to the Great Purge and the show trials of the late 1930s. The novel suggests that the determination of a tyrant thrives on the

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determination of the workers, because he channels their energy into serving himself.

Snowball's determination offers a different possibility. He studies Julius Caesar's campaigns to plan the defence of the farm, organises the animals into committees, and pours his energy into designing the windmill, which he believes will reduce the working week. His determination appears idealistic and constructive, like Trotsky's vision of continuing revolution. Yet Orwell does not idealise him: Snowball agrees that the pigs should have the milk and apples, which suggests that even the more principled leaders accepted privilege for themselves. It is unclear whether his determination would have produced a fairer farm.

Some animals show a determination to resist. The hens, led by three young Black Minorca pullets, refuse to give up their eggs for sale and smash them rather than surrender them, only to be starved into submission. This brief rebellion, which recalls the resistance of the kulaks and peasants to Stalin's collectivisation, shows that determination without power or unity is crushed. Meanwhile, Mollie's only determination is to keep her ribbons and sugar, and she abandons the farm, representing the middle classes who fled the Revolution. Benjamin's lack of determination is equally significant: he understands what is happening but refuses to act until it is too late to save Boxer.

By the end of the novel, the animals' determination has achieved nothing for themselves. Clover and the surviving animals still work hard and still feel proud to belong to Animal Farm, but they are hungry and powerless, and the pigs have become indistinguishable from men. Orwell's purpose is not to mock determination; Boxer's loyalty is perhaps the most admirable quality in the book. Rather, he warns that determination must be guided by knowledge and critical thought. A working

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class that is determined but uneducated, and that trusts its leaders without question, can be manipulated into building its own prison. Determination is therefore important as both the animals' greatest strength and the weakness that their rulers exploit.

21 Piggy is different from the rest of the boys in almost every way: in class, in body, in temperament and, most importantly, in his unwavering faith in reason. Golding uses these differences to make Piggy the voice of intellect and civilised order on the island, and his marginalisation, mockery and eventual murder suggest how fragile reason becomes once fear and the desire for power take hold. The quoted line, in which the biguns tacitly decide that Piggy is "an outsider", is significant because it shows that his exclusion is not argued or decided but simply felt, which hints at the irrational prejudice that will grow among the boys.

The most immediate difference is social class. Piggy's speech, with its double negatives and nonstandard grammar, marks him as working class or lower middle class, unlike Ralph, the son of a naval commander, or Jack, the head boy of a cathedral choir. He refers repeatedly to "my auntie", who keeps a sweet shop, and his asthma, which he insists on calling his "ass-mar", becomes a running joke. Ralph's careless response, "Sucks to your ass-mar!", reveals how easily even the most decent of the boys adopts the snobbery of the English public school. Golding, who taught at Bishop Wordsworth's School in Salisbury and came from a modest background himself, was acutely aware of the rigid class divisions of post-war Britain. Interestingly, the narrator states that his accent "did not matter", yet it is still listed among the reasons for exclusion, suggesting that class prejudice operates even when the boys pretend it does not.

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Piggy's body also sets him apart. He is overweight, short-sighted and unable to swim or run far, and these physical weaknesses make him vulnerable in a world that increasingly values strength and hunting. Even his nickname, which he begs Ralph to keep secret, ties him to the pigs that the boys will later hunt and kill. When Ralph betrays this confidence, the whole assembly bursts into laughter, and even the littluns join in, which shows how quickly the group learns to unite against a weaker figure. Golding foreshadows Piggy's fate here: his name links him to the hunted animals, and at his death his arms and legs twitch "like a pig's after it has been killed".

More significantly, Piggy is different because he thinks like an adult. He is the first to suggest that the boys make a list of names, that they build shelters and that they keep a signal fire. He understands the importance of the conch and uses it to insist on orderly debate, and his belief that "Life is scientific" shows his Enlightenment confidence that problems can be solved by logic. His glasses are the novel's most important symbol of this intellect: they are used to light the fire, the boys' only hope of rescue, so that reason quite literally makes survival possible. Yet Piggy's intelligence is never fully respected. Jack strikes him and breaks one lens, and later the hunters steal the glasses altogether, leaving Piggy nearly blind. Golding suggests that a society which values power above wisdom will first exploit reason and then destroy it.

Piggy is also different in that he never seems to feel the savage impulses that seize Jack and the hunters. He does not paint his face or enjoy the hunt, and he constantly asks what the grown-ups would think. His despairing question, "What are we? Humans? Or animals? Or savages?", expresses the central concern of the novel. However, Golding complicates this picture. On the night of Simon's death, Piggy is drawn into the dance and afterwards insists that it was "an accident",

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desperately denying what he has seen. Perhaps this is the moment when Piggy is most like the other boys: his reason is no protection against fear, and his refusal to confront the truth shows that even the rational mind can deceive itself. Golding, who served in the Royal Navy during the Second World War and witnessed its horrors, rejected the belief that education and civilisation would make humanity good. Piggy's denial suggests that science and reason may be powerless against what Golding called the darkness in man's heart.

Piggy's final speech on Castle Rock brings his difference into sharp focus. Clutching the conch, he asks whether it is better "to have rules and agree, or to hunt and kill". This rhetorical question summarises the conflict between civilisation and savagery, yet it is met with violence. Roger, who has been gradually freed from the restraints of school and parents, releases the rock that kills Piggy and shatters the conch, which "exploded into a thousand white fragments". The simultaneous destruction of the boy and the symbol of democratic order suggests that the rational, democratic values that Piggy represents cannot survive among the boys. His body is carried away by the sea, and nobody mourns him except Ralph.

Ultimately, Piggy's difference is what makes him so significant. At the end of the novel, Ralph weeps for "the true, wise friend called Piggy", and only then do we see that Piggy's outsider status was a sign not of weakness but of moral clarity. Writing in 1954, in the shadow of the atomic bomb and the early Cold War, Golding uses Piggy to ask whether intelligence and decency can survive in a world ruled by fear and force. The boys' rejection of Piggy, from casual mockery to murder, suggests a deeply pessimistic answer.

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Death is significant in Lord of the Flies because it charts the boys' descent from innocence into savagery and exposes Golding's central belief that the capacity for violence lies within every human being. The exchange between the naval officer and Ralph at the end of the novel is chilling precisely because of its casual tone. The officer jokes about "dead bodies", expecting a schoolboy adventure, and Ralph's reply, "Only two", reduces the murders of Simon and Piggy to a bare figure. Golding, who served in the Royal Navy during the Second World War and saw the reality of mass killing, uses death to destroy the comforting belief that British boys, or civilised people in general, are naturally good.

Death frames the whole novel. The boys arrive on the island because their plane has been shot down during a nuclear war, and Piggy's anxious reference to the atom bomb places the story in the shadow of Hiroshima and the early Cold War. The pilot is presumably killed and some children may have died in the burning wreck, yet the boys scarcely think about this. Their initial excitement at the "good island" reveals an innocence that has no real understanding of mortality. Golding, writing in 1954, deliberately sets a story of paradise against the background of global destruction, suggesting that the violence of the adult world has already followed the boys to the island.

The first death on the island is accidental but deeply revealing. When the boys rush to build a signal fire on the mountain, it spreads out of control, and the littlun with the mulberry-coloured birthmark, who had first spoken of the snake-thing, disappears. Piggy's anguished question about where the boy is goes unanswered, and the boys fall into an embarrassed silence. This moment is significant because it shows carelessness and impulsiveness, rather than malice, producing death. The boys' refusal to acknowledge what has happened also anticipates their later denial, as they find it easier to forget than to take

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responsibility.

The killing of animals marks a gradual hardening of the boys' attitude to death. At first Jack cannot bring himself to kill the piglet trapped in the creepers, because of "an enormity the downward stroke would mean", which shows that the rules of civilisation still restrain him. Soon, however, the hunters celebrate their first kill with the chant "Kill the pig. Cut her throat. Spill her blood." The repetition and rhythm turn killing into ritual, and the pleasure the boys take in it is disturbing. The later slaughter of the sow is described with sexual and violent imagery, and Roger's cruelty in this scene foreshadows the murder of Piggy. Golding suggests that death becomes a source of power and excitement, rather than horror, once the boys have discarded moral restraint.

Perhaps the most symbolic death is that of the parachutist, a dead airman who drifts down onto the mountain during an unseen battle in the sky. Golding presents him as "a sign" from the world of grown-ups, yet the sign is a corpse. The boys, terrified, mistake his body for the beast. This is significant because it confirms that adults offer no salvation: the very people the boys hope will rescue them are engaged in killing one another. When Simon discovers the truth and frees the lines, he alone understands that the beast is not a creature outside them.

Simon's death is the moral climax of the novel. Running down from the mountain to tell the others the truth, he stumbles into the frenzied dance during a thunderstorm and is killed by the whole group, chanting "Kill the beast! Cut his throat! Spill his blood!" The change of the chant from pig to beast shows how the boys now hunt their own kind. Golding describes the killing in animal terms, so that the boys become a mass of teeth and claws, losing their individual humanity entirely. Simon has often been read as a Christ-like figure, and the gentle, almost

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sacred description of his body being carried out to sea, surrounded by luminous creatures, contrasts painfully with the savagery of his death. His murder implicates even Ralph and Piggy, who join the dance; afterwards, Piggy's insistence that it was an accident shows how desperately people deny their part in collective violence.

Piggy's death is different again because it is deliberate. Roger, who once threw stones to miss the littluns because of the taboo of "parents and school and policemen and the law", now leans on the lever "with a sense of delirious abandonment" and sends the rock that kills Piggy and shatters the conch. The simultaneous loss of the voice of reason and the symbol of order marks the end of civilisation on the island. Soon afterwards, the hunters sharpen a stick at both ends for Ralph, implying that his head will be offered to the beast like the pig's.

The arrival of the naval officer reframes all of this. His remark about "a pack of British boys" and their failure to put up a better show exposes the arrogance of a culture that believes itself superior, while he himself commands a warship in an ongoing war. Ralph's tears for "the end of innocence, the darkness of man's heart" show that he alone has grasped the meaning of the deaths. In his essay "Fable", Golding wrote that "man produces evil as a bee produces honey", and death in the novel is the clearest evidence of this view. The boys are not corrupted by the island; the island simply reveals what was already there. Death is therefore significant not only as the culmination of the plot but as Golding's bleak verdict on human nature.

23 Although Anita and Me is dominated by girls and women, its male characters are important because they reveal, through Meena's eyes, the different paths open to

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men in a changing working-class community, and the attitudes to race, class and family that shape her childhood. The image of "Men in vests and braces, with rumpled hair who clutched half-read papers" captures the tired, slightly shabby ordinariness of the men of Tollington. The detail of the "half-read papers" suggests lives interrupted and unfulfilled, and it hints at a generation of working men who have lost their sense of purpose. Syal, who grew up in the mining village of Essington near Wolverhampton in the 1960s, uses these men to explore a society in transition, in which old certainties of work and identity are collapsing.

The decline of the mining industry is crucial to understanding the men of Tollington. The village was built around a pit which, Meena tells us, "once employed the whole village", but by the time of the novel it has closed, leaving many men without work and the women increasingly the earners. This is significant because the loss of male authority and status breeds frustration and resentment. In the Black Country of the late 1960s, the closure of pits and the decline of heavy industry coincided with immigration from the Commonwealth, and politicians such as Enoch Powell, whose "Rivers of Blood" speech was delivered in nearby Birmingham in 1968, encouraged the idea that immigrants were to blame. Syal shows how this economic insecurity can turn into racism.

Sam Lowbridge embodies this frustration most clearly. At first Meena is fascinated by him as "the wild boy of the yard", and his rebellious charisma appeals to her own desire to break rules. However, as he becomes a skinhead, his hostility hardens into open racism. His outburst at the Spring Fete, where he resents the money being collected for causes overseas, shows how a young man with few prospects channels his anger at outsiders. The most disturbing consequence is the attack on the Bank Manager, an Indian man who is left with "head injuries and broken ribs". Syal does not present Sam as simply evil; his racism seems to come

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from ignorance and a sense of being left behind. When he later tells Meena that he did not mean her, she realises the truth: "I am the others, Sam. You did mean me." This moment is important because it marks Meena's recognition that she cannot be an exception, and her rejection of the false belonging she once sought from the yard.

In contrast, Meena's father, Mr Kumar, represents a very different model of masculinity. He has a steady white-collar job, "doing something clerical for the government", and he is gentle, loving and principled. Meena's description of him as "My tender papa, my flying papa, the papa with hope and infinite variety" uses repetition and a rising, joyful rhythm to convey her admiration. Yet Syal also reveals his sadness. His singing at the gatherings of Indian families expresses a longing for the homeland he left behind, and the novel hints at the trauma of Partition in 1947, which scattered families like the Kumars. He is protective of Meena and wary of Anita's influence, which shows his determination that she will benefit from the education and opportunities for which he and her mother crossed the world. Through him, Syal challenges the stereotypes of immigrant men that were common in Britain at the time, presenting him as more cultured and more tender than many of his white neighbours.

Anita's father, Roberto Rutter, offers yet another contrast. He is a largely absent and troubling presence, and the "row of bruises" Meena notices on Tracey's thighs suggests that he may be violent towards his younger daughter. His failure as a father, together with Deirdre's neglect and eventual departure, helps to explain Anita's cruelty and need for control. Syal implies that Anita's behaviour is shaped by a home in which men offer neither stability nor care, reflecting the breakdown of the traditional nuclear family that was becoming more visible in the period.

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Other men represent the moral choices facing the community. Uncle Alan, the youth leader at the Methodist church, is progressive and outspoken, urging the young people to "Find out who the real enemies are, the rich, the privileged". His view that people should follow whatever religion they choose contrasts sharply with Mr Ormerod, who believes that foreigners need to be taught "culture as well, civilisation". Mr Ormerod's patronising, missionary attitude reveals a quieter, more respectable form of prejudice, rooted in assumptions of imperial superiority. Together, these two men show that racism and tolerance exist side by side in Tollington, and that decent individuals can challenge the prevailing mood.

Finally, Robert, the boy Meena meets in hospital after breaking her leg, is important because he teaches her what genuine friendship is. Their shared jokes and secret language across the hospital window are full of warmth and equality, in stark contrast with her relationship with Anita. His death is a painful turning point that forces Meena to grow up, and afterwards she can say, "My days as a yard member were over."

Ultimately, the male characters are important because they map the forces that shape Meena's growth: the anger of a declining working class, the dignity and loss of the immigrant father, the damage of dysfunctional homes and the possibility of kindness that crosses boundaries. Syal uses them to show that masculinity, like Tollington itself, is changing, and that Meena must learn to judge people by their actions rather than by the place they hold in the yard.

24 Childhood is the central subject of Anita and Me, a semi-autobiographical coming-of-age novel in which Meera Syal looks back through the adult Meena at the two years in which she grew from a mischievous nine-year-old into a girl

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ready to leave Tollington for grammar school. Childhood is significant because it is presented as both a time of freedom and a time of painful discovery, during which Meena learns about friendship, identity, racism and loss. The image of "children riding their bikes, screeching in and around the parked cars and lines of washing" captures the noisy, communal life of the yard, where children play together in the streets. Yet the detail of "practising noisy manoeuvres" also suggests rehearsal: childhood is where these children practise for the adult roles, and the adult prejudices, that are waiting for them.

At first, Tollington appears to be an idyllic place to grow up. The red-bricked school, the Sunday school and the playground with its "witch's hat of an ancient metal roundabout" create a nostalgic picture of a small community in which children roam freely and come home "sunburnt, scabbed and sated with stolen blackberries". The alliteration and the list of sensory details convey the pleasures of a childhood lived outdoors, and the word "stolen" hints playfully at the small rebellions that Meena enjoys. This freedom reflects the 1960s, when children in working-class villages were often left to play unsupervised. However, Syal's dual narrative voice, combining the child's excitement with the adult's hindsight, allows the reader to sense that this world is already changing: the pit has closed, and a motorway will soon cut through the village.

Meena's own childhood is shaped by her position between two cultures. Her home is filled with an extended network of aunties and uncles who interfere with her upbringing, yet who make her feel "safe and wanted". The family gatherings, with their food, music and stories of India, give her a connection to a heritage she only half understands. At the same time, she longs to belong in Tollington and to be like the white girls of the yard. Her opening admission that she is "not really a liar" but someone who turns to invention to feel complete shows how a child

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without a clear sense of history creates her own stories in order to belong. This tension reflects the experience of many second-generation British Asian children in the 1960s and 1970s, whose parents had come to Britain after Partition and the end of empire, and who were growing up in communities that did not always accept them. The arrival of Nanima, Meena's grandmother, is a turning point, because she helps Meena embrace her Punjabi identity with pride rather than embarrassment.

Anita's influence makes childhood a time of moral testing. Meena idolises Anita, the undisputed leader of the yard, and is thrilled to be chosen as her friend, yet she gradually realises how controlling and cruel Anita can be. Under her influence, Meena steals, lies and becomes, in her mother's eyes, a "rude sulky monster". This is significant because it shows how strongly friendships shape identity in childhood. Anita's own childhood, however, explains much of her behaviour. Her mother Deirdre neglects her and eventually walks out to live with another man, and her younger sister Tracey is a thin, sickly child who may be suffering abuse at home. Syal invites sympathy for Anita as well as judgement, suggesting that a damaged childhood produces damaged children. The contrast with Meena's secure, loving home is pointed.

Pinky and Baby offer a further contrast. Their upbringing is strict and traditional, with a mother who disciplines them physically and expects them to be obedient daughters. Meena initially finds them dull, preferring the excitement of Anita, but the comparison shows the range of childhoods within the Indian community, and the different expectations placed on girls in the period.

Childhood is also significant as the place where innocence is lost. Meena's friendship with Sam Lowbridge, once the exciting "wild boy of the yard", is

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shattered when she realises he was involved in the brutal attack on the Bank Manager, and that his racism includes her. Her accident and stay in hospital bring her together with Robert, whose kindness and honesty show her what true friendship is, and his death confronts her with mortality for the first time. These experiences are painful, but they help her to mature, and by the end she believes "utterly now in the possibilities of change". The novel's structure as a bildungsroman traces this growth from naive dependence on Anita to independent judgement.

Finally, education gives childhood a sense of purpose and escape. The Kumars have sacrificed comfort, living with damp and an outside toilet, so that Meena will have opportunities that they did not. When she passes her eleven plus, sitting it in the headmaster's office, she earns her place at the grammar school, which represents both her parents' hopes and her own departure from the narrow world of Tollington. In the context of 1960s Britain, when free state education and the grammar school system offered social mobility to clever children from modest backgrounds, this is a hopeful ending.

Ultimately, childhood is significant because it is the lens through which Syal explores the larger changes of the period: industrial decline, immigration, racism and the shifting shape of the family. Through Meena's vivid, funny and often painful memories, Syal suggests that childhood is never truly innocent, but it is the time in which we discover who we are and who we refuse to become.

25 Jennet Humfrye's revenge is the poison that runs through every life in The Woman in Black. Hill presents it as a curse that spreads outward from one woman's grief until it touches an entire community and, finally, an outsider who believed himself

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immune to it. What makes the revenge so disturbing is that it is indiscriminate: Jennet does not punish only those who wronged her, but anyone who sees her, so that her suffering is endlessly reproduced in the suffering of other parents. In this way Hill uses a classic Gothic ghost story to explore how unresolved grief and social cruelty can outlive the people who caused them.

The most obvious victims are the people of Crythin Gifford. Hill shows the town as a community held together by a shared, unspoken trauma. When Kipps arrives he is met with "half-hints and dark mutterings", and nobody will help him with Mrs Drablow's papers: "You will find no one suitable". At first this silence seems like rural superstition, and Kipps, a confident young Londoner, assumes the locals are simply more gullible than educated men like himself. Yet the reader gradually realises that the silence is a form of self-protection. The revenge has created a culture of fear in which naming Jennet feels dangerous. This reflects the late Victorian and Edwardian tension between modern rationalism and the superstitions that still survived in remote places: Hill sets the story in a world of telegrams and London offices, but shows that in isolated communities such as Crythin Gifford the old fears remained powerful, and perhaps justified.

Individual characters reveal how deeply the revenge has damaged them. Mr Jerome, the land agent, almost collapses at the funeral, looking as though he might "faint, or collapse with some kind of seizure", and his refusal to go near Eel Marsh House suggests a man who has learned through loss what Kipps has not. Later we learn that he too has lost a child. Keckwick, who drives the pony and trap across the causeway, carries an even older wound, as it was his father who drove the trap that sank into the marsh. Samuel Daily's comment that "Those who have suffered worst say least" is significant, because it suggests that Jennet's revenge does not only take lives but also takes away people's ability to speak. Hill presents a whole

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town of grieving parents who have been silenced, which mirrors Jennet's own silencing by her family and society.

Alice Drablow is affected in a more intimate way. She was Jennet's sister, and the one who adopted Nathaniel when Jennet, as an unmarried mother, was forced to give him up. The papers Kipps finds reveal that Jennet blamed her sister for the boy's death on the marsh. Alice's life as "something of a recluse" in Eel Marsh House, cut off by the tides, presents her as both a victim and a prisoner, haunted for decades in the very place where she lost the child. Context is central here. In the period, illegitimacy brought deep shame on a respectable family, and Jennet's loss of her son was not her choice but the result of social pressure. Hill therefore makes the reader feel some sympathy for Jennet even as we fear her: her revenge grows from an injustice that the society around her created.

The character most changed by the revenge is Kipps himself. At the start of his time in Crythin Gifford he is rational, slightly arrogant and eager to complete his job and impress Mr Bentley. His encounters with the woman in the graveyard and at Eel Marsh House strip this confidence away. The terrifying sounds of the pony and trap on the marsh, the rocking chair in the locked nursery and the woman's face, wasted and full of "evil and hatred", break him physically and mentally, so that he falls ill and must be rescued by Samuel Daily. Through Kipps, Hill shows how the revenge attacks reason itself: the modern, educated man is reduced to helpless fear.

Yet the cruellest effect comes at the end. Kipps believes he has escaped, marries Stella and has a son, Joseph. When he glimpses the woman in the park in London, Hill shows that the revenge is not confined to the marsh. The pony and trap accident kills Joseph instantly, and Stella dies of her injuries months later. The

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novel's structure, told in retrospect by an older Kipps, makes this ending even more painful, as we realise that his story has been building towards this loss all along. The quotation "I had seen the ghost of Jennet Humfrye and she had had her revenge" is flat and almost exhausted in tone, as if Kipps no longer has the energy for emotion. The repeated "had" places the revenge firmly in the past, yet it remains the defining event of his life.

The frame narrative shows that the revenge's effects are lifelong. When his stepchildren tell ghost stories at Christmas, the older Kipps cannot join in and leaves the room, because the experience is still raw after many years. His decision to write the story down, ending with "They asked for my story. I have told it. Enough.", suggests that he is trying to exorcise the memory rather than entertain. Writing in the 1980s, Hill deliberately revived the Victorian ghost story tradition, but she uses it to make a serious point: that pain inflicted by social judgement and loss can echo across generations. Jennet's revenge affects everyone because grief, once denied a voice, finds a way to make others feel it too.

26 Tension in The Woman in Black is not simply a matter of shocks. Hill builds it slowly and deliberately, delaying explanation, isolating her narrator and turning landscape, weather and sound into sources of dread. Because the story is told by an older Kipps who already knows how it ends, the reader feels tension from the first page: we sense that something terrible has happened, and the novel becomes a long, anxious wait to find out what. In this way Hill uses the conventions of the Victorian Gothic ghost story to create suspense that feels both old-fashioned and genuinely unsettling for a modern reader.

The opening chapter creates tension through contrast. Christmas Eve at Monk's

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Piece is warm and domestic, with a fire, decorations and a family gathered together, which is the kind of scene that traditionally framed ghost stories in Victorian households. Yet when his stepchildren begin telling ghost stories, Kipps is overwhelmed and leaves the room, describing the fear in his breast. Hill uses this moment to plant a question in the reader's mind: what could have happened to make a sensible older man so afraid of a children's game? The retrospective narrative voice hints repeatedly at horror without revealing it, and this withholding of information is the foundation of the novel's tension.

Hill then uses setting to make danger feel inescapable. London is introduced in a fog that "choked and blinded, smeared and stained", the run of harsh verbs suggesting something almost alive and hostile. People are described "Groping their way blindly", which foreshadows Kipps's own blindness to the danger ahead. This is significant in context because the novel is set in the early twentieth century, a time of growing confidence in cities, science and progress, yet Hill shows that even modern London is a place of murk and uncertainty. The journey north increases the tension further, as Kipps moves from the modern world of trains and offices to the remote world of Crythin Gifford, where the main transport is still a pony and trap.

People's silences also create unease. Mr Bentley falls "silent for a few moments" when Mrs Drablow is mentioned, and in the town Kipps meets "half hints" from locals who refuse to speak openly. Mr Jerome's obvious fear and his refusal to go to Eel Marsh House suggest that the locals know something Kipps does not. Hill uses dramatic irony here: the reader, alert to the conventions of the genre, recognises these warnings, while Kipps dismisses them as rural superstition. The tension comes from watching an over-confident narrator walk towards a danger that everyone else can see.

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Eel Marsh House itself is the centre of the novel's Gothic atmosphere. It is reached only by Nine Lives Causeway and is cut off "when the tide comes in", so Kipps is literally trapped by nature. The marshes are "eerie" and filled with "moaning winds", a personification that makes the landscape seem to grieve. Near the house stands a ruined graveyard, "all broken-down and crumbling", and even a bird is described as "ugly satanic-looking". Hill takes familiar Gothic features, an isolated mansion, a graveyard and a desolate landscape, and uses them to make the reader feel that death is always close.

The most intense tension comes from the supernatural events themselves. The first sighting of the woman at Mrs Drablow's funeral is quietly shocking because she seems so ordinary at first, then so wrong: she looks like "a victim of starvation" and is "gaunt with disease". Hill's restraint here is important. The woman does nothing dramatic, yet her stillness and her expression of hatred are more frightening than violence. When Kipps sees her again in the graveyard by the house, she vanishes, and the reader shares his panic. Later the sounds on the marsh, a pony and trap, then a child's scream "that rose and rose" before being "choked and drowned", create tension through what cannot be seen. Hill uses sound because it forces both Kipps and the reader to imagine the worst.

Night intensifies everything. The locked nursery door that is later found open, the rhythmic noise of the rocking chair and the bumping sound in the dark all occur at night, when Kipps's rational mind is at its weakest. Hill lengthens these scenes, slowing the pace with detailed descriptions of Kipps listening, hesitating and forcing himself to move. The short, broken sentences when he panics contrast with this slow build-up, so the reader experiences his fear physically. The presence of Spider, the dog, adds another layer, because her terror confirms that Kipps is

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not imagining things.

Finally, Hill releases the tension in the most devastating way. After Kipps has married and had a son, the reader may believe the danger is over, but the brief glimpse of the woman in a London park leads directly to the accident that kills Joseph and, later, Stella. Because Kipps has told us at the very start that the experience still haunts him, the ending feels both shocking and inevitable. His final words, "They asked for my story. I have told it. Enough.", end the tension abruptly, as though he cannot bear to say more.

Overall, tension is central to the novel's meaning. Writing in 1983, Hill deliberately revived the traditions of Victorian ghost stories, with their isolated houses and supernatural women, but she uses tension to explore deeper fears about loss, guilt and the limits of rational thinking. The reader is held in suspense not only by what Jennet Humfrye might do, but by the slow realisation that Kipps's modern confidence offers no protection at all.

27 Alexander Ashbrook is important in Coram Boy because his story holds together the novel's two worlds: the privileged world of the landed gentry and the hidden world of abandoned children. Through him, Gavin explores the conflict between duty and personal passion, and the cost of a rigid eighteenth-century society that valued inheritance and reputation above love and individual talent. His choice to follow music rather than his father's wishes sets off a chain of events that leads, unknowingly, to the birth of a son who will himself be saved by the Coram Hospital.

From the start, Alexander is defined by the expectations attached to his position.

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As the eldest son of Sir William Ashbrook, he is heir to the estate and is expected to become "familiar with the affairs of the estate". In the eighteenth century, primogeniture meant that the eldest son inherited the title and land, so his life was mapped out before he was born. Sir William wants him to follow tradition by going to "his old school, Eton" or being educated at home. When Alexander instead wins a place at the cathedral school in Gloucester, the reader sees immediately that he is drawn towards a different kind of life. Gavin uses this early conflict to show how an individual's gifts could be crushed by the demands of class and family.

His musical talent is central to his importance. Gavin makes clear that it is exceptional: "only the best voices were offered scholarships", and when he sings for his family his mother is "transfixed". Canon Maybury calls him the cathedral's "own little prodigy". Music in the novel represents beauty, spiritual feeling and freedom, a contrast to the cruelty of Otis Gardiner's trade in babies. Alexander's devotion to it makes him a romantic figure, yet Gavin also shows the fragility of his dream. His fear that "Once my voice has broken, that will be the end of my musical life" reveals his anguish about time and change. The phrase "with anguish" suggests that, for Alexander, music is not a hobby but his identity. This fear makes him sympathetic, as he is a boy facing the loss of the one thing that gives his life meaning.

Alexander is also important through his friendship with Thomas Ledbury. They are opposites: Alexander is described as "introverted and gloomy", while Thomas is cheerful and sociable. Their friendship gives Alexander a confidant, someone he can tell about his fears for his voice, and he in turn stands up for Thomas when the other boys bully him. Gavin uses this bond to show loyalty across differences of temperament and status, since Thomas does not share Alexander's aristocratic

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privileges. This friendship becomes essential to the plot, because Thomas is the one who later helps to restore Alexander to his family.

The clash with Sir William reveals the pressure placed on aristocratic sons. Sir William is disappointed that Alexander "wasn't interested in hunting and shooting, nor soldiering", the traditional pursuits of a gentleman. When he removes him from the cathedral school and even removes the musical instruments from Ashbrook House, he attempts to erase Alexander's identity. Alexander's response is to leave Ashbrook and give up his inheritance, insisting "Without music I cannot be a man". This line is powerful because it challenges his father's idea of manhood: for Sir William, being a man means land, sport and duty, but for Alexander it means being true to his art. In a period when sons were expected to obey their fathers absolutely, Alexander's rebellion would have been shocking.

His relationship with Melissa is equally significant, because it creates the next generation of the story. Their love is genuine, but Alexander's decision to leave and only return once he has succeeded has terrible consequences. Melissa is left pregnant and unprotected, and her baby falls into the hands of Otis Gardiner, the Coram man. The reader is made painfully aware of dramatic irony: Alexander, pursuing music in London, has no idea that he has a son. Gavin uses this to show how the actions of the privileged could leave vulnerable women and children exposed in a society where illegitimacy brought disgrace, and where unwanted babies were often abandoned or worse.

In the second part of the novel, Alexander's success as a composer links him to the real figure of George Frederic Handel, who was a famous patron of the Coram Foundling Hospital in London. By connecting Alexander to Handel, Gavin ties her fictional characters to genuine history: the Foundling Hospital was set up by

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Thomas Coram to rescue abandoned infants, and Handel's concerts helped to raise money for it. Alexander's music therefore becomes part of a wider movement towards compassion for children.

Finally, Alexander is important because he allows the novel to end with reconciliation. Through Thomas's letters and intervention, he and his father are reunited: "Alexander was back". He is also reunited with Melissa and learns the truth about their son, Aaron. However, Gavin does not allow this happiness to come without cost. When Mr Gaddarn lunges at Alexander with a sword, Thomas takes the blow and dies, sacrificing himself for his friend. This tragic moment reminds the reader that Alexander's journey has depended on the loyalty of others.

Overall, Alexander is far more than a romantic hero. He embodies the novel's central conflict between the rigid expectations of eighteenth-century society and the human need for love, art and freedom. His rebellion, his mistakes and his eventual return show that Gavin believes families and societies can heal, but only when they learn to value individuals for who they truly are.

28 Anger in Coram Boy is significant because it reveals power: who holds it, who abuses it and who dares to challenge it. Gavin shows two very different kinds of anger. The first is the cruel, controlling anger of men such as Otis Gardiner and, in a gentler form, Sir William Ashbrook, who use rage to protect their status. The second is the anger of the powerless, of Meshak, Alexander and Lady Ashbrook, which becomes a force for resistance and even justice. Through this contrast, Gavin exposes the brutality of an eighteenth-century society in which the poor, the young and the vulnerable had little protection.

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Otis Gardiner is the novel's clearest embodiment of destructive anger. Publicly he is a "charming, so sweetly spoken" man, trusted by desperate mothers to take their babies to the Coram Hospital in return for money. Privately he is violent and contemptuous. He calls his son Meshak a "lazy dolt" and a "fool of a boy", and Gavin shows him casually lashing out: "he flicked his whip across his back". The word "flicked" is chilling because it suggests how routine the cruelty has become. His anger is significant because it shows the gap between his respectable mask and his true nature. In context, Otis represents the real "Coram men" of the eighteenth century, who exploited the shame surrounding illegitimate births and often abandoned or killed the infants they were paid to deliver.

Otis's anger becomes even more significant after he reinvents himself in London as Mr Gaddarn. Society now sees him as a "good and generous" gentleman who supports the very hospital he once deceived. Yet his treatment of his servants shows that nothing has changed. Toby reports that he has horse-whipped Joseph, and he kicks Toby as if he "were a stray dog". The simile reduces a human child to an animal, revealing how Gaddarn views those beneath him. This also connects to the context of the slave trade, as Toby is a Black boy whose freedom is never secure. Gaddarn's anger is a weapon of control, keeping the powerless in fear.

When Gaddarn discovers that Meshak, now known as Mish, is still alive, his anger turns to panic. Gavin describes "a dizzy surge of fear and fury", and the alliteration links the two emotions, suggesting that his rage is rooted in terror of exposure, since Mish is a threat to his "position in society". His command in the printed extract, "Get that lunatic out of here!", is significant in several ways. Calling Mish a "lunatic" dismisses him as worthless, and the narrator's comment that his voice was "deadly" shows that his anger is now openly murderous. The urgent orders, "Lock the door and guard it", reveal a man who uses anger to imprison anyone who

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threatens his secrets.

By contrast, Meshak's anger is quiet but heroic. When his father orders him to get rid of Melissa's baby and bury it, Meshak cannot bear to harm "his angel's baby". Instead of obeying, he takes the child to London, to the safety of the Coram Hospital. This is significant because it is one of the few times Meshak acts against his father. Gavin shows that anger, when it grows out of love and moral outrage, can lead to courage. Meshak's refusal saves Aaron's life and ultimately makes the second half of the novel possible.

Anger also drives the conflict in the Ashbrook family. Sir William's fury at Alexander's love of music reflects the expectations of the eighteenth-century aristocracy, in which an eldest son was expected to inherit and manage the family estate. He threatens to beat Alexander with his cane to "get that music madness out of your system", and the alliterative "music madness" shows that he sees his son's passion as a kind of illness. Alexander's own anger erupts when he finds every musical instrument removed from Ashbrook House: "Why, why, why have you done this to me?" The repetition captures his desperation and sense of betrayal. Gavin makes this anger significant because it causes Alexander to leave home and lose his inheritance, while Lady Ashbrook becomes "ill with distress". Anger here tears a family apart.

Lady Ashbrook's anger is perhaps the most positive in the novel. When she sees the "filthy, bare, unheated rooms without beds or blankets" of the local orphanage, she is outraged and decides to act, even though her husband believes such involvement is not befitting for the lady of the house. Her anger becomes campaigning energy, as she sets up a charity to improve conditions. This reflects the real eighteenth-century context, in which orphanages and workhouses were

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often appalling and most abandoned babies did not survive. The Foundling Hospital, opened by Thomas Coram, was itself a response to public anger at children dying in the streets. Gavin therefore suggests that anger can be the beginning of social reform.

The climax shows the final consequences of destructive anger. When Alexander exposes Gaddarn's true identity, "or should I say Otis Gardiner?", Gaddarn's rage explodes into violence: "He lunged". Thomas throws himself in the way and is killed. This moment is significant because Otis's anger, which has destroyed so many children's lives, now claims the life of a loyal and good man.

Overall, anger is significant in Coram Boy because Gavin uses it to separate oppressors from those who fight back. Like many Gothic novels, the story is driven by extreme emotions, yet Gavin shows that the same emotion can either crush the vulnerable or give them the courage to protect others. The novel suggests that a just society depends on which kind of anger wins.

29

Teenage parenthood is the event that turns Dante's life upside down in Boys Don't Cry, and it is the engine of the whole novel. Blackman uses it to challenge stereotypes: the stereotype that young parents are feckless, that boys cannot care for babies and that "real men" do not show emotion. By dropping a baby into the life of an ambitious seventeen-year-old on the day he expects his A level results, she forces both Dante and the reader to reconsider what responsibility, love and masculinity really mean.

From the opening chapter, teenage parenthood is presented as a sudden and overwhelming shock. Dante is waiting for his results and dreaming of university,

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which will give him the chance to be "totally independent". When Melanie arrives with a baby and announces "Emma is your daughter", his future seems to collapse. His first reactions are selfish and defensive: he questions whether the baby is really his and accuses Melanie of sleeping around. Even his response to the idea of caring for Emma, "Well hell no", shows how unprepared he is. The quotation in the question, "How could she have been stupid enough to have a kid at our age?", is revealing because Dante blames Mel alone, as if he had no part in it. Blackman uses this to expose the double standard by which young mothers are judged far more harshly than young fathers.

Melanie's situation is important because it shows the pressures faced by teenage mothers. She has been "chucked" out by her mother and has been raising Emma on her own. When she leaves Emma with Dante, saying she needs "some time to get my head together", her decision seems shocking, yet Blackman encourages the reader to understand rather than condemn her. Mel shows real love for her daughter: "I love our daughter" and "I'd die for her". She also knows the practical side of parenting, as her casual instruction "you whip out the old nappy" shows. Mel is not a careless girl but an exhausted young mother without support. In the context of modern Britain, where single-parent families make up around a quarter of families with dependent children, Blackman reminds readers how isolating parenthood can be when the support of family is removed.

Dante's transformation is the heart of the novel's treatment of teenage parenthood. At first he holds Emma "like she was a ticking time bomb", a simile that captures his fear and incompetence: to him the baby is something dangerous that might destroy his life. He even considers that he "could put it up for adoption", and the pronoun "it" shows that he does not yet see Emma as a person. Gradually, however, he learns to cope. He reflects that there is "No manual, no

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briefing, no crash course", and the list of negatives conveys how frightening and lonely new parenthood feels. Yet by the later chapters he is thinking about "Immunizations, work, a place at a state nursery", a list that shows his priorities have completely changed. The boy who wanted independence now plans his life around his daughter.

Blackman does not present this change as simple or sentimental. Under pressure, Dante nearly loses control and finds his "fists slowly clenching" near Emma. This moment is significant because it shows how stress and exhaustion can push young parents to breaking point, and it makes his growth more realistic. He is not a perfect father but a struggling one who learns from his mistakes.

The role of Dante's dad is also important. Having raised his two sons alone after the death of their mother, he understands single parenthood himself. His blunt advice, "grow up, man up. You have a daughter", uses the language of traditional masculinity, but redirects it: being a man now means taking responsibility rather than hiding feelings. This links to the novel's title, which refers to the belief that boys should not cry. Through teenage parenthood, Dante learns that caring for a child requires the tenderness and emotional openness that this outdated idea of masculinity rejects.

Other characters' reactions show how society views teenage parents. Some of Dante's friends treat Emma as a joke, saying it shows he wasn't "firing blanks", while Logan is cruel, calling the baby ugly. Their immaturity highlights how far Dante has moved beyond them. Even more significant is the woman in the newspaper shop who accuses him of not working and living off benefits, part of a wider attitude of disapproval towards "kids having kids". In the context of the 2000s, when teenage pregnancy was widely discussed in the media and young

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parents were often stereotyped as scroungers, Blackman uses this moment to show how bigoted and ignorant such judgements can be. Dante, a bright student who has sacrificed his plans for his daughter, is the opposite of the stereotype.

Ultimately, teenage parenthood is important because it shapes Dante's identity. Blackman suggests that becoming a parent too young is genuinely hard, and she does not hide the sacrifices it demands, but she also shows that young parents can be loving and responsible. Through Dante's journey from horror to devotion, the novel challenges readers to replace judgement with understanding.

30 Josh is significant in Boys Don't Cry because he represents the damage that fear and prejudice can do, not only to their victims but to the people who hold them. On the surface he is Dante's easy-going best friend, but beneath this he is a young man terrified of his own sexuality, and his attempt to hide it leads to the most violent event in the novel. Through Josh, Blackman explores how homophobia and rigid ideas of masculinity can turn a person against himself, and against the people he loves.

At first, Josh appears to be a loyal friend. The line in the question, "Josh and I had been mates since we'd both started secondary school", suggests a long, comfortable friendship, and Dante remembers times when they "laughed ourselves hoarse" together. This shared history makes Josh's later actions all the more shocking. Blackman shows, however, that the friendship begins to change when Logan joins the group, having "latched on to us for some reason". The phrase hints that Logan is an unwelcome influence, and he is later described as a "malevolent puppet master" pulling everyone's strings. Josh's significance lies partly in how easily he is manipulated: he seems to be the leader of the group, yet he is

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constantly trying to prove himself to Logan.

Josh's treatment of Adam reveals how fear shapes his behaviour. Adam is openly gay, flamboyant and confident, while Josh hides who he is behind an aggressive, hyper-masculine persona. In front of others he insults Adam viciously, calling him "a filthy little queer" and saying he makes his "skin crawl". This language is deliberately repulsive, and its intensity suggests that Josh is trying to convince himself as much as anyone else. Blackman's dual narrative, which gives some chapters to Adam's voice, allows the reader to see the hurt behind Adam's apparent confidence, making Josh's cruelty more painful.

The revelation that Josh and Adam have been in a secret relationship transforms our understanding of him. Adam explains that "we started going out together", but Josh could never be open about it, fearing the reaction of his family and friends. Adam eventually ends things because he cannot be with "someone who was living a lie". This is significant because it shows Adam's integrity in contrast with Josh's self-denial. In the context of the early twenty-first century, when same-sex relationships were legally protected and same-sex marriage was being debated, many people still faced prejudice at school, at home and in their communities. Josh's fear reflects the reality that legal progress does not always change attitudes.

Josh's inability to accept himself becomes dangerous. After the meal at the Bar Belle to celebrate Dante's eighteenth birthday, Josh brutally attacks Adam, "punching Adam's face over and over", leaving him with life-changing injuries. The repetition of "over and over" conveys the uncontrolled nature of the violence, as if Josh is attacking the part of himself he cannot bear. This moment is the turning point of the novel. It shows that homophobia is not simply about words but can

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lead to serious physical harm, and it forces Dante to confront the prejudices that he and his friends had tolerated.

The attack also destroys Josh's friendship with Dante. Dante, enraged, vows that he will hunt Josh "through hell and back", and when he finds him the scene is full of violence. Only then does Josh reveal the truth: "You hate us queers just as much as I do". This line is extremely significant. The word "us" is Josh's first admission that he is gay, yet it is wrapped in self-hatred, and it also accuses Dante of sharing the same prejudice. Blackman uses this moment to make Dante, and the reader, recognise that homophobia is not limited to obvious bullies like Josh or Logan, but can exist more quietly in people who think of themselves as tolerant.

Finally, Josh is significant because he is not presented as a simple villain. His letter, in which he admits he has been "pretending to be something I wasn't" and says he is "really, really sorry", shows genuine remorse. The repeated "really" sounds childlike and sincere, suggesting that Josh is beginning to face the truth about himself. The letter does not excuse what he has done, and the damage to Adam cannot be undone, but it shows that he is capable of change. Blackman seems to want readers to understand how internalised homophobia develops, even while condemning its consequences.

Overall, Josh is central to the novel's exploration of masculinity, which is reflected in its title. Like Dante, he has grown up surrounded by the idea that boys must be tough and must hide their feelings. Whereas Dante learns through fatherhood to show love and vulnerability, Josh is crushed by the pressure to conform. Through him, Blackman warns that a society which teaches young men to fear difference, including their own, will produce tragedy.

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