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 12 May 2025

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.*
- Plan your answers in the spaces provided. Plans will not be marked unless no other response is provided.

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 ▶

P79574A

©2025 Pearson Education Ltd.
Y:1/1/1/

P 7 9 5 7 4 A 0 1 2 0

Pearson

stemup.co.uk

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** ☒

DO NOT WRITE IN THIS AREA

DO NOT WRITE IN THIS AREA

DO NOT WRITE IN THIS AREA

stemup.co.uk

(Section A continued)

DO NOT WRITE IN THIS AREA

DO NOT WRITE IN THIS AREA

DO NOT WRITE IN THIS AREA

(Section A continued)

DO NOT WRITE IN THIS AREA

DO NOT WRITE IN THIS AREA

DO NOT WRITE IN THIS AREA

stemup.co.uk

(Section A continued)

DO NOT WRITE IN THIS AREA

DO NOT WRITE IN THIS AREA

DO NOT WRITE IN THIS AREA

(Section A continued)

DO NOT WRITE IN THIS AREA

DO NOT WRITE IN THIS AREA

DO NOT WRITE IN THIS AREA

stemup.co.uk

DO NOT WRITE IN THIS AREA
DO NOT WRITE IN THIS AREA
DO NOT WRITE IN THIS AREA

(Section A continued)

(Section A continued)

DO NOT WRITE IN THIS AREA

DO NOT WRITE IN THIS AREA

DO NOT WRITE IN THIS AREA

stemup.co.uk

(Section A continued)

TOTAL FOR SECTION A = 40 MARKS

DO NOT WRITE IN THIS AREA
DO NOT WRITE IN THIS AREA
DO NOT WRITE IN THIS AREA

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** ☒

DO NOT WRITE IN THIS AREA

DO NOT WRITE IN THIS AREA

DO NOT WRITE IN THIS AREA

stemup.co.uk

(Section B continued)

DO NOT WRITE IN THIS AREA

DO NOT WRITE IN THIS AREA

DO NOT WRITE IN THIS AREA

(Section B continued)

DO NOT WRITE IN THIS AREA

DO NOT WRITE IN THIS AREA

DO NOT WRITE IN THIS AREA

stemup.co.uk

(Section B continued)

DO NOT WRITE IN THIS AREA

DO NOT WRITE IN THIS AREA

DO NOT WRITE IN THIS AREA

(Section B continued)

DO NOT WRITE IN THIS AREA

DO NOT WRITE IN THIS AREA

DO NOT WRITE IN THIS AREA

stemup.co.uk

(Section B continued)

DO NOT WRITE IN THIS AREA

DO NOT WRITE IN THIS AREA

DO NOT WRITE IN THIS AREA

(Section B continued)

DO NOT WRITE IN THIS AREA

DO NOT WRITE IN THIS AREA

DO NOT WRITE IN THIS AREA

stemup.co.uk

(Section B continued)

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

DO NOT WRITE IN THIS AREA
DO NOT WRITE IN THIS AREA
DO NOT WRITE IN THIS AREA

stemup.co.uk

BLANK PAGE

DO NOT WRITE IN THIS AREA
DO NOT WRITE IN THIS AREA
DO NOT WRITE IN THIS AREA

stemup.co.uk

DO NOT WRITE IN THIS AREA
DO NOT WRITE IN THIS AREA
DO NOT WRITE IN THIS AREA

BLANK PAGE

stemup.co.uk

BLANK PAGE

DO NOT WRITE IN THIS AREA
DO NOT WRITE IN THIS AREA
DO NOT WRITE IN THIS AREA

stemup.co.uk

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

Monday 12 May 2025

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 ▶

P79574A

©2025 Pearson Education Ltd.

Y:1/1/1/

P 7 9 5 7 4 A

Pearson

stemup.co.uk

BLANK PAGE

stemup.co.uk

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**
EITHER	
British Play	
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
13 OR 14 – *Journey's End*: R C Sherriff	19
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
21 OR 22 – *Lord of the Flies*: William Golding	23
23 OR 24 – *Anita and Me*: Meera Syal	24
25 OR 26 – *The Woman in Black*: Susan Hill	25
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 1 Scene 3, lines 1 to 38**

In this extract, the Witches are discussing a sailor's wife who has been rude to Witch 1.

A heath.

Thunder.

***Enter three* WITCHES.**

WITCH 1
Where hast thou been, sister?

WITCH 2
Killing swine.

WITCH 3
Sister, where thou?

WITCH 1
A sailor's wife had chestnuts in her lap,
And munched, and munched, and munched.
'Give me,' quoth I.
'Aroint thee, witch!' the rump-fed ronyon cries.
Her husband's to Aleppo gone, master o' the *Tiger* –
But in a sieve I'll thither sail,
And like a rat without a tail,
I'll do, I'll do, and I'll do!

WITCH 2
I'll give thee a wind.

WITCH 1
Th' art kind.

WITCH 3
And I another.

WITCH 1
I myself have all the other –
And the very ports they blow,
All the quarters that they know
I' the shipman's card.
I'll drain him dry as hay!
Sleep shall neither night nor day

stemup.co.uk

Hang upon his penthouse lid;
He shall live a man forbid.
Weary sev'n-nights nine times nine,
Shall he dwindle, peak and pine.
Though his bark cannot be lost,
Yet it shall be tempest-tossed!
Look what I have.

WITCH 2
Show me, show me.

WITCH 1
Here I have a pilot's thumb,
Wrecked, as homeward he did come.

Drum beats in the distance.

WITCH 3
A drum! A drum!
Macbeth doth come.

ALL
The weird sisters, hand in hand,
Posters of the sea and land,
Thus do go about, about –
Thrice to thine, and thrice to mine,
And thrice again, to make up nine.
Peace! – the charm's wound up.

1 (a) Explore how Shakespeare presents the Witches in this extract.

Refer closely to the extract in your answer.

(20)

(b) In this extract, the sound of thunder is used to symbolise the evil nature of the Witches.

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

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

- where symbols are used
- the effects symbols have within the play.

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

(20)

(Total for Question 1 = 40 marks)

stemup.co.uk

***The Tempest* – from Act 5 Scene 1, lines 1 to 32**

In this extract, Prospero and Ariel are discussing the King and his followers.

In front of Prospero's cave.

***Enter* PROSPERO *in his magic cloak, and* ARIEL.**

PROSPERO
Now does my project gather to a head.
My charms crack not, my spirits obey; and time
Goes upright with his carriage. How's the day?

ARIEL
On the sixth hour – at which time, my lord,
You said our work should cease.

PROSPERO
I did say so,
When first I raised the tempest. Say, my spirit,
How fares the King and's followers?

ARIEL
Confined together
In the same fashion as you gave in charge,
Just as you left them: all prisoners, sir,
In the lime-grove which weather-fends your cell.
They cannot budge till your release. The King,
His brother, and yours, abide all three distracted,
And the remainder mourning over them,
Brimful of sorrow and dismay – but chiefly
Him you termed, sir, 'The good old lord, Gonzalo'.
His tears run down his beard, like winter's drops
From eaves of reeds. Your charm so strongly works 'em,
That if you now beheld them, your affections
Would become tender.

PROSPERO
Dost thou think so, spirit?

ARIEL
Mine would, sir, were I human.

PROSPERO
And mine shall.
Hast thou, which art but air, a touch, a feeling
Of their afflictions, and shall not myself –
One of their kind, that relish all as sharply
Passion as they – be kindlier moved than thou art?
Though with their high wrongs I am struck to the quick,
Yet with my nobler reason 'gainst my fury
Do I take part. The rarer action is
In virtue than in vengeance. They being penitent,
The sole drift of my purpose doth extend
Not a frown further. Go release them, Ariel.

stemup.co.uk

My charms I'll break, their senses I'll restore,
And they shall be themselves.

ARIEL

I'll fetch them, sir.

Exit.

2 (a) Explore how Shakespeare presents the characters of Prospero and Ariel in this extract.

Refer closely to the extract in your answer.

(20)

(b) In this extract, Prospero is punishing the King and his subjects.

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

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

- how punishment is shown
- the effects punishment has within the play.

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

(20)

(Total for Question 2 = 40 marks)

***Romeo and Juliet* – from Act 3 Scene 1, lines 68 to 104**

In this extract, disgusted by Romeo's refusal to fight Tybalt, Mercutio challenges Tybalt himself.

ROMEO
And so, good Capulet – which name I tender
As dearly as mine own – be satisfied.

MERCUTIO
O calm, dishonourable, vile submission!
'Alla stoccata' carries it away! ***(Drawing his sword)***
Tybalt, you rat-catcher, will you walk?

TYBALT
What wouldst thou have with me?

MERCUTIO
Good King of Cats, nothing but one of your nine lives
that I mean to make bold withal – and, as you shall use
me hereafter, dry-beat the rest of the eight. Will you
pluck your sword out of his pilcher by the ears? Make
haste, lest mine be about your ears ere it be out.

TYBALT
(Drawing his sword) I am for you!

ROMEO
Gentle Mercutio, put thy rapier up.

MERCUTIO
(To Tybalt) Come, sir, your passado!

MERCUTIO *and* TYBALT *fight*.

ROMEO
Draw, Benvolio! Beat down their weapons!
Gentlemen, for shame, forbear this outrage!
Tybalt! Mercutio! The Prince expressly hath
Forbid this bandying in Verona streets.
Hold, Tybalt! Good Mercutio!

ROMEO *comes between them, obstructing the fight*. TYBALT *makes a hidden thrust past* ROMEO'S *body, and wounds* MERCUTIO.

Exit* TYBALT, *running, with his followers.

MERCUTIO
I am hurt.
A plague o' both your houses! I am sped.
Is he gone, and hath nothing?

BENVOLIO
What, art thou hurt?

stemup.co.uk

MERCUTIO
Ay, ay, a scratch, a scratch. Marry, 'tis enough.
Where is my page? Go, villain, fetch a surgeon.

Exit the page, running.

ROMEO
Courage, man: the hurt cannot be much.

MERCUTIO
No, 'tis not so deep as a well, nor so wide as a church door – but 'tis enough, 'twill serve. Ask for me tomorrow and you shall find me a grave man. I am peppered, I warrant, for this world. A plague, o' both your houses! Zounds! A dog, a rat, a mouse, a cat – to scratch a man to death! A braggart, a rogue, a villain that fights by the book of arithmetic! Why the devil came you between us? I was hurt under your arm.

ROMEO
I thought all for the best.

MERCUTIO
Help me into some house, Benvolio,
Or I shall faint. A plague o' both your houses!
They have made worms' meat of me. I have it,
And soundly too. – Your houses!

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

Refer closely to the extract in your answer.

(20)

(b) In this extract, Mercutio curses both families and demands revenge for his fatal wound.

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

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

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

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

(20)

(Total for Question 3 = 40 marks)

stemup.co.uk

***Much Ado About Nothing* – Act 1 Scene 1, lines 40 to 73**

In this extract, a messenger is telling Beatrice and Leonato about Benedick's success in the recent war.

MESSENGER
He hath done good service, lady, in these wars.

BEATRICE
You had musty victual, and he hath holp to eat it. He is a very valiant trencher-man; he hath an excellent stomach.

MESSENGER
And a good soldier too, lady.

BEATRICE
And a good soldier to a lady. But what is he to a lord?

MESSENGER
A lord to a lord, a man to a man, stuffed with all honourable virtues.

BEATRICE
It is so, indeed; he is no less than a stuffed man. But for the stuffing – well, we are all mortal.

LEONATO
You must not, sir, mistake my niece. There is a kind of merry war betwixt Signior Benedick and her. They never meet but there's a skirmish of wit between them.

BEATRICE
Alas, he gets nothing by that. In our last conflict four of his five wits went halting off, and now is the whole man governed with one: so that if he have wit enough to keep himself warm, let him bear it for a difference between himself and his horse; for it is all the wealth that he hath left, to be known a reasonable creature. Who is his companion now? He hath every month a new sworn brother.

MESSENGER
Is't possible?

BEATRICE
Very easily possible. He wears his faith but as the fashion of his hat: it ever changes with the next block.

MESSENGER
I see, lady, the gentleman is not in your books.

BEATRICE
No: an he were, I would burn my study. But, I pray you, who is his companion? Is there no young squarer now that will make a voyage with him to the devil?

stemup.co.uk

MESSENGER
He is most in the company of the right noble Claudio.

BEATRICE
O Lord, he will hang upon him like a disease. He is sooner caught than the pestilence, and the taker runs presently mad. God help the noble Claudio! If he have caught the Benedick, it will cost him a thousand pound ere 'a be cured.

4 (a) Explore how Shakespeare presents Beatrice's opinion of Benedick in this extract.

Refer closely to the extract in your answer.

(20)

(b) In this extract, Leonato describes how there is always conflict between Beatrice and Benedick.

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

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

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

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

(20)

(Total for Question 4 = 40 marks)

***Twelfth Night* – from Act 3 Scene 4, lines 222 to 256**

In this extract, Sir Toby Belch tells Viola/Cesario that Sir Andrew Aguecheek, a dangerous enemy, is waiting for him.

SIR TOBY
That defence thou hast, betake thee to 't; of what nature the wrongs are thou hast done him, I know not; but thy intercepter, full of despite, bloody as the hunter, attends thee at the orchard-end. Dismount thy tuck, be yare in thy preparation, for thy assailant is quick, skilful, and deadly.

VIOLA
You mistake, sir; I am sure no man hath any quarrel to me; my remembrance is very free and clear from any image of offence done to any man.

SIR TOBY
You'll find it otherwise, I assure you; therefore, if you hold your life at any price, betake you to your guard; for your opposite hath in him what youth, strength, skill, and wrath can furnish man withal.

VIOLA
I pray you, sir, what is he?

SIR TOBY
He is knight, dubbed with unhatched rapier, and on carpet consideration; but he is a devil in private brawl; souls and bodies hath he divorced three, and his incensement at this moment is so implacable that satisfaction can be none but by pangs of death and sepulchre. Hob, nob, is his word; give 't or take 't.

VIOLA
I will return again into the house, and desire some conduct of the lady, I am no fighter. I have heard of some kind of men that put quarrels purposely on others to taste their valour; belike this is a man of that quirk.

SIR TOBY
Sir, no; his indignation derives itself out of a very competent injury! Therefore get you on and give him his desire. Back you shall not to the house, unless you undertake that with me which with as much safety you might answer him; therefore on, or strip your sword stark naked; for meddle you must, that's certain, or forswear to wear iron about you.

stemup.co.uk

5 (a) Explore how Shakespeare presents Sir Toby Belch in this extract.

Refer closely to the extract in your answer.

(20)

(b) In this extract, Sir Toby Belch describes how Sir Andrew Aguecheek wants to challenge Viola/Cesario to a duel, to enable Sir Andrew Aguecheek to marry Olivia.

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

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

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

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

(20)

(Total for Question 5 = 40 marks)

stemup.co.uk

***The Merchant of Venice* – from Act 1 Scene 1, lines 73 to 104**

In this extract, Gratiano attempts to cheer up Antonio and give him advice.

GRATIANO
You look not well, Signior Antonio.
You have too much respect upon the world:
They lose it that do buy it with much care.
Believe me, you are marvellously changed.

ANTONIO
I hold the world but as the world, Gratiano –
A stage where every man must play a part,
And mine a sad one.

GRATIANO
Let me play the fool!
With mirth and laughter let old wrinkles come,
And let my liver rather heat with wine
Than my heart cool with mortifying groans,
Why should a man whose blood is warm within
Sit like his grandsire, cut in alabaster?
Sleep when he wakes? – And creep into the jaundice
By being peevish? I tell thee what, Antonio –
I love thee, and 'tis my love that speaks –
There are a sort of men whose visages
Do cream and mantle like a standing pond,
And do a wilful stillness entertain,
With purpose to be dressed in an opinion
Of wisdom, gravity, profound conceit –
As who should say, 'I am Sir Oracle,
And when I ope my lips, let no dog bark!'
O my Antonio, I do know of these
That therefore only are reputed wise
For saying nothing – when I am very sure,
If they should speak, would almost damn those ears
Which, hearing them, would call their brothers fools.
I'll tell thee more of this another time –
But fish not with this melancholy bait
For this fool gudgeon, this opinion.
Come, good Lorenzo. – Fare ye well a while.
I'll end my exhortation after dinner.

stemup.co.uk

6 (a) Explore how Shakespeare presents Gratiano in this extract.

Refer closely to the extract in your answer.

(20)

(b) In this extract, Gratiano demonstrates his loyalty to Antonio by offering to help him.

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

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

- how loyalty is presented
- the effects loyalty has 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

stemup.co.uk

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 **Mrs Birling: (*To* EDNA, *who is about to go, with tray.*)** *All right, Edna. I'll ring from the drawing-room when we want coffee. Probably in about half an hour.*

Edna: *(going)*: *Yes, Ma'am.*

Explore how the treatment of the working class 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 7 = 40 marks)

OR

8 **Sheila: *(half serious, half playful)*** *Yes – except for all last summer, when you never came near me, and I wondered what had happened to you.* **(speaking to Gerald)**

In what ways are secrets important 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 8 = 40 marks)

stemup.co.uk

***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 **Jim:** … *There's things called settlements.*
Hobson: *Settlements?*
Jim: *Aye. You've to bait your hook to catch fish, Henry.*

How is Victorian life presented 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 9 = 40 marks)

OR

10 **Maggie:** *I'll have my sisters there when I get wed. It's at one o'clock at St Philip's.*

Explain the significance of Maggie's relationship with her sisters 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 10 = 40 marks)

stemup.co.uk

***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 *The children rush on into the street playing cowboys and Indians; cops and robbers; goodies and baddies, etc.*

Explain how children are 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 **Narrator:** *And do we blame superstition for what came to pass? Or could it be what we, the English, have come to know as class?*

In what ways is fate 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)

stemup.co.uk

***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 **Stanhope:** *Hibbert can do from two till four, and I'll go on from then till stand-to. That'll be at six.*

In what ways is working as a team 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 13 = 40 marks)

OR

14 **Raleigh:** *Good God! Don't you understand? How can I sit down and eat that – when –* ***(his voice is nearly breaking)*** *– when Osborne's – lying – out there –*

Explore how Raleigh changes 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 *The lascars are from all different corners of the Asian sub-continent – Chinese, Indian and some black Africans too.*

Explain how the lascars are 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 Queen Victoria: *At last we have an Indian gentleman who will be able to enlighten us on the habits and customs of our subjects so far away.*

How are cultural differences 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)

stemup.co.uk

***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 Ruth: *Whatever happens, whatever, you can trust me. Like I'm your sister, right?*

In what ways is the relationship between Ruth and Alem 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 17 = 40 marks)

OR

18 Mrs Fitzgerald (talking to Ruth about Themba): *I can't talk about it. I can't think about him every day. Every God-forsaken day.*

Explore how suffering is important 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 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 *The others said of Squealer that he could turn black into white.*

In what ways is Squealer 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 19 = 40 marks)

OR

20 *Throughout the spring and summer they worked a sixty-hour week, and in August Napoleon announced that there would be work on Sunday afternoons as well.*

Explore how suffering is significant 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)

stemup.co.uk

***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 *Simon's head wobbled. His eyes were half-closed as though he were imitating the obscene thing on the stick. He knew that one of his times was coming on.*

How does Simon contrast with the other 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 *'And sooner or later a ship will put in here. It might even be daddy's ship. So you see, sooner or later, we shall be rescued.'* **(Ralph)**

Explore the importance of survival 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 *I noticed Anita often did this, played off one girlfriend against the other, so it was rare that all three girls walked together, in the same harmonious pace.*

How are Anita's relationships with others 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 knew it would not matter how many guests were still singing in the front room. I had sneaked out without telling ...*

Explain the significance of rebelling 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 *It was a yellow fog, a filthy, evil-smelling fog, a fog that choked and blinded, smeared and stained. Groping their way blindly across roads, men and women took their lives in their hands ...*

Explore the significance of horror 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 *'Love him, take care of him as your own. But he is mine, mine, he can never be yours. Oh, forgive me. I think my heart will break. J.'*

In what ways is love important 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)

***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 *And there was Toby, Aaron's friend, all bedecked in his full princely regalia.*

How is Toby 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 27 = 40 marks)

OR

28 *The boys, with eyes fixed on the choirmaster, opened wide their mouths and sang with piercing sweetness.*

Explore the importance of music 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)

stemup.co.uk

***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 *Aunt Jackie took my chin in her hand, scrutinizing my face. 'I am so proud of you.'* **(Aunt Jackie talking to Dante)**

Explain how women are 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 structure, and accurate use of spelling and punctuation)

(Total for Question 29 = 40 marks)

OR

30 *What do I know about bringing up a kid? It's not like my dad cared enough about me or my sister to stick around ...* **(Melanie)**

How is growing up 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

stemup.co.uk

BLANK PAGE

Sources:

Macbeth, Shakespeare, Pearson Education Ltd Longman School
The Tempest, Shakespeare, Pearson Education Ltd Longman School
Romeo and Juliet, Shakespeare, Pearson Education Ltd Longman School
Much Ado About Nothing, Shakespeare, Penguin Education Ltd
Twelfth Night, Shakespeare, Penguin Longman School
The Merchant of Venice, Shakespeare, Pearson Education Ltd Longman School
An Inspector Calls, JB Priestley, Pearson Education Ltd Heinemann
Hobson's Choice, Harold Brighouse, Samuel French Ltd
Blood Brothers, Willy Russell, Methuen Drama, 2001
Journey's End, RC Sherriff, Penguin Classics, 2000
The Empress, Tanika Gupta, Oberon Modern Plays, 2013
Refugee Boy, Benjamin Zephaniah, Bloomsbury, 2001
Animal Farm, George Orwell, Heinemann, 1972
Lord of the Flies, William Golding, Faber and Faber Edition, 2012
Anita and Me, Meera Syal, Harper Perennial, 2004
The Woman in Black, Susan Hill, Vintage 1998
Coram Boy, Jamila Gavin, Egmont, 2000
Boys Don't Cry, Malorie Blackman, Corgi, 2011

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

Question number

1a

In this extract Shakespeare presents the Witches as petty, spiteful and yet genuinely powerful, so that the audience is unsettled by the gap between the triviality of their quarrels and the scale of the harm they can do. The scene moves from gossip to cruelty to ritual, and this structure prepares us for the moment they turn their attention to Macbeth.

The stage directions "A heath" and "Thunder" place the Witches in a wild, barren space outside civilised order, and the sound effect makes their entrance threatening before a word is spoken. Their opening exchange is strikingly casual. Witch 2's blunt reply, "Killing swine", is delivered in two words as if destruction were an ordinary errand, which suggests that malice is simply part of their routine. The familial address "sister" presents them as a close, secretive group, and Witch 1's questioning makes her appear the leader.

Witch 1's anecdote reveals how small the provocation is. The sailor's wife merely refused to share her chestnuts, yet the repetition of "munched, and munched, and munched" mimics the woman's chewing with a kind of resentful relish, and the insult "rump-fed ronyon" uses harsh alliteration to make her contempt sound almost physical. The wife's dismissive "Aroint thee, witch!" is the only moment the Witches are named by an outsider, and it is telling that the punishment falls not on her but on her absent husband. Shakespeare shows revenge that is disproportionate and indirect, which makes the Witches more frightening.

The language of power then dominates. The tricolon "I'll do, I'll do, and I'll do!" is open-ended: the verb has no object, so the threat feels limitless. The image "like a

Question number

rat without a tail" is grotesque, and the shift into tetrameter couplets ("lost" and "tempest-tossed", "day" and "lid") creates the chanting rhythm of a spell, so that Witch 1's speech becomes an act of magic in itself. The simile "drain him dry as hay" and the threat that sleep shall not "Hang upon his penthouse lid" suggest psychological torture rather than quick death, and the alliterative "dwindle, peak and pine" slows the line to imitate his wasting body. Yet Shakespeare includes a limit: "his bark cannot be lost". The Witches can torment but not destroy, which raises the question of how far they control human fate, a question at the heart of Macbeth's tragedy.

The other Witches' offers, "I'll give thee a wind" and "And I another", present a co-operative evil, and the "pilot's thumb" is a gruesome trophy that hints at the body parts later thrown into their cauldron. The drum then breaks in, and Witch 3's rhyme "A drum! A drum! / Macbeth doth come" makes his arrival sound summoned. Their final chant, with "hand in hand" and the counting of "Thrice" to "make up nine", uses the magical number three to bind the scene into ritual, and the short exclamation "Peace!" followed by "the charm's wound up" suggests that something has been set in motion. The audience is left fearing that the trap is ready before Macbeth even enters.

1b

Symbols are central to Macbeth because they make invisible things visible on stage: guilt, evil and the disruption of God's order are turned into blood, darkness, sleeplessness and unnatural weather. For a Jacobean audience who believed in the Great Chain of Being and the divine right of kings, these symbols would have confirmed that killing Duncan was not only a crime but a sin against nature itself.

Light and darkness are among the earliest symbols. When Malcolm is named heir,

Question number

Macbeth asks the stars to "hide your fires" so that light may not see his "black and deep desires". Stars, linked to heaven and to Duncan's promise that signs of nobleness will shine on all who deserve them, are rejected by Macbeth, who chooses concealment. Lady Macbeth makes the same choice when she calls on "thick night" to hide the knife. Darkness therefore symbolises both evil and self-deception, as the Macbeths try to hide their actions from God. The symbol is reversed in Act 5, when Lady Macbeth "has light by her continually": the woman who once summoned darkness now fears it, and the candle becomes a sign of her terror of damnation.

Blood is the play's most powerful symbol of guilt. Immediately after the murder Macbeth looks at his hands and asks whether "all great Neptune's ocean" will wash them clean, answering that his hand would rather turn the seas red. The hyperbole suggests that his guilt is too great for the natural world to absorb. Lady Macbeth's dismissive "A little water clears us of this deed" seems confident, but Shakespeare uses dramatic irony to undo her: in the sleepwalking scene she desperately rubs at an imaginary stain, crying "Out, damned spot!" Water, which in Jacobean Christianity was associated with baptism and spiritual cleansing, cannot purify her, which suggests that her soul is beyond redemption.

Sleep symbolises innocence and a clear conscience. Macbeth hears a voice cry that he "does murder sleep", and the metaphor implies that by killing a sleeping king he has destroyed his own peace. This is fulfilled as both characters are tormented by sleeplessness and nightmares, and the Doctor's description of Lady Macbeth's state as a "great perturbation in nature" links private guilt to cosmic disorder.

Weather and animals symbolise the breakdown of the natural order. The thunder that accompanies the Witches presents evil as chaotic and violent, in contrast with

Question number

the gentle air at Inverness that Duncan says "nimbly and sweetly" welcomes him, a bitter irony given his fate. After the murder, Ross and the Old Man report that day has turned to darkness, that Duncan's horses turned wild and devoured each other, and that a mousing owl killed a falcon. A Jacobean audience, who believed that witches commanded storms and kept animal familiars such as the cat and toad mentioned in the opening scene, would read these signs as proof that regicide had unleashed the supernatural.

Symbols are important, then, because they give the play its moral structure. They chart Macbeth's descent from loyal hero to tyrant, expose the hollowness of Lady Macbeth's early confidence, and reassure King James's audience that the natural order will reassert itself when Malcolm restores rightful rule.

2a

In this extract Shakespeare presents a turning point in the relationship between master and servant: Prospero begins in total command, yet it is Ariel, a spirit who is "but air", who teaches him compassion. The scene therefore dramatises Prospero's movement from vengeance to forgiveness, and Ariel's quiet influence makes that change possible.

Prospero's opening lines present him at the height of his power. The metaphor "my project gather to a head" makes his plan sound like something ripening or reaching a crisis, and the confident declaratives "My charms crack not, my spirits obey" use the possessive "my" to emphasise ownership of both magic and servants. Even time is personified as moving "upright with his carriage", as though it too is under his control. His question "How's the day?" sounds brisk and managerial.

Ariel's reply is respectful but pointed. Addressing Prospero as "my lord", the spirit

Question number

reminds him that this was the hour when "our work should cease". The pronoun "our" claims a share in the work, and the reminder subtly presses Ariel's wish for freedom. Prospero's short, clipped response, "I did say so", acknowledges the promise but closes the topic, and he immediately redirects the conversation, which shows his authority.

Ariel's report shifts the tone. The captives are "all prisoners" who "cannot budge till your release", which shows the extent of Prospero's power over them, but the lexical field of grief in "mourning", "sorrow" and "dismay" invites sympathy. The simile of Gonzalo's tears running "like winter's drops / From eaves of reeds" is gentle and domestic, creating a vivid image of an old man's helpless weeping. Ariel chooses to quote Prospero's own phrase, "The good old lord, Gonzalo", reminding him of his former gratitude. This is a skilful act of persuasion, culminating in the conditional "your affections / Would become tender".

The shared line in which Prospero asks "Dost thou think so, spirit?" and Ariel answers "Mine would, sir, were I human" is the emotional centre of the extract. The question shows Prospero genuinely listening, while Ariel's reply is poignant: a spirit without human feeling imagines compassion more readily than the man. Prospero's firm "And mine shall" completes the verse line, suggesting that he is moved almost instantly.

His following speech is built on contrast. The rhetorical question asking whether he, "One of their kind", should not be "kindlier moved" than a creature of air plays on "kind" as both species and gentleness, implying that to be human is to be kind. He admits he is "struck to the quick" by their "high wrongs", but sets "nobler reason" against "fury". The antithesis "The rarer action is / In virtue than in vengeance", with its alliteration on "v", reads like a moral conclusion he has

Question number

reasoned his way towards. The extract ends with renunciation, "My charms I'll break", which inverts the earlier "My charms crack not", and with the generous promise that "they shall be themselves". Prospero, once the controlling magician, is presented as finally choosing humanity over power.

2b

Punishment drives almost every strand of The Tempest, yet Shakespeare seems more interested in its purpose than its pain. Prospero punishes his enemies, his servants and even his future son-in-law, but the play questions whether punishment is justice, control or revenge, and it finally suggests that its true aim should be repentance rather than suffering.

The whole plot grows from Prospero's desire to punish the "three men of sin" who wronged him. Antonio usurped his dukedom with Alonso's help and set Prospero and the infant Miranda adrift. Prospero's revenge begins with the storm itself, and he then separates the survivors around the island so that Alonso believes Ferdinand has drowned. This is a psychological punishment: Alonso's grief is so intense that he wishes himself dead in the "oozy" seabed. In Act 3 Ariel, disguised as a harpy, makes the vanished banquet a moment of judgement, telling them that only "heart-sorrow / And a clear life ensuing" can save them from "lingering perdition". The religious language suggests that punishment here is designed to provoke conscience. A Jacobean audience, familiar with Biblical storms such as Noah's flood as signs of God's judgement, might see Prospero acting almost as divine providence, which is why the decision in Act 5 to choose "virtue" over "vengeance" feels so significant.

Prospero's punishment of Caliban is harsher and more troubling. Caliban claims that "This island's mine, by Sycorax my mother", and he resents being enslaved

Question number

after first being treated kindly. Prospero justifies his treatment by Caliban's attempt to violate Miranda, and Caliban's unrepentant reply that he would have "peopled else / This isle with Calibans" seems to confirm his danger. Yet the punishments are physical and constant: Prospero threatens "cramps" and "side-stitches" and pinches "more stinging / Than bees". His insults, "Abhorrèd slave" and "hag-seed", dehumanise Caliban. Written in an age of European colonisation, when settlers in the New World justified seizing land from native peoples, the play invites a modern audience to ask whether Caliban's punishment is justice or oppression. When Caliban plots with Stephano and Trinculo to kill Prospero, the spirits in the shape of hounds chase them off, a comic punishment, but one that again presents Caliban as hunted.

Even Ariel is controlled through the threat of punishment. When Ariel asks for liberty in Act I, Prospero angrily reminds the spirit of being imprisoned in a pine by Sycorax and threatens to "rend an oak / And peg thee in his knotty entrails". The violent verbs show that Prospero's power rests on fear as much as gratitude.

Ferdinand's punishment is different, because it is a test. Prospero falsely accuses him of being a spy and forces him to carry logs, saying privately that too easy a winning would "make the prize light". In Jacobean society a father was expected to control his daughter's marriage, and Prospero uses punishment to make Ferdinand prove his worth.

By the end, punishment gives way to mercy. Prospero forgives even Antonio, who never repents, and asks the audience to set him free in the epilogue. Shakespeare seems to suggest that punishment is only justified when it leads to change, and that the greater power lies in forgiving.

Question number	
3a	In this extract Shakespeare presents Mercutio as a man whose wit and pride are inseparable: he fights with words as eagerly as with his sword, and even as he dies he cannot stop punning. Yet the extract also shows his comic voice turning bitter, as the character who has stood outside the feud becomes its first great victim and curses both families. Mercutio's opening line is an outburst of disgust. The exclamation "O calm, dishonourable, vile submission!" builds through a list of increasingly harsh adjectives, showing that he interprets Romeo's gentleness as cowardice. To Mercutio, honour demands a fight, and because Romeo will not defend it, he takes the quarrel on himself. The mocking use of the fencing term "Alla stoccata" ridicules Tybalt's fashionable, rule-bound style, and he draws immediately, which presents him as impulsive and reckless. His insults are inventive and theatrical. Calling Tybalt "rat-catcher" and "Good King of Cats" plays on Tybalt's name, a cat in popular stories, and the extended joke that he will take "one of your nine lives" and "dry-beat the rest of the eight" turns the threat of death into a comic performance. The prose, rather than verse, gives his speech a quick, conversational energy in contrast with Romeo's formal lines. The image of Tybalt's sword held in its "pilcher" by the ears belittles him further. Mercutio seems to enjoy the danger as a game. Romeo's attempts to stop him, "Gentle Mercutio, put thy rapier up", and his reminder that the Prince has forbidden this "bandying in Verona streets", make the tragedy more painful, because his intervention causes the wound. The stage direction shows Tybalt thrusting "past ROMEO'S body", so the fatal blow is delivered under the arm of the friend trying to make peace.

Question number

The moment Mercutio is struck, his language changes. The short declarative "I am hurt" is shocking in its plainness, and his question "Is he gone, and hath nothing?" shows outrage that Tybalt has escaped unharmed. Yet he still conceals his pain with irony, calling it "a scratch, a scratch". His comparison of the wound to "a well" and "a church door" uses images of depth and of the church, quietly hinting at burial, and his pun that tomorrow he will be "a grave man" is the darkest joke in the play, combining seriousness with the grave itself. Shakespeare makes his wit the means by which the audience realises he is dying.

The repeated curse "A plague o' both your houses!" is the extract's most important structural device. Said three times, it becomes almost like a prophecy, and in an age when plague was a real and terrifying threat, the curse would have sounded deadly serious. It also widens Mercutio's anger beyond Tybalt to both families, including the Montagues he fought for. His list "A dog, a rat, a mouse, a cat" reduces his killer to vermin, and his accusing question "Why the devil came you between us?" blames Romeo directly. His final image, that they have made "worms' meat" of him, is grotesque and physical. Mercutio's death strips away the comedy of the first half of the play, and his curse seems to set the tragedy in motion.

3b

Revenge is the engine of the tragedy in Romeo and Juliet. The "ancient grudge" of the Prologue is a cycle of retaliation in which every insult demands an answer, and Shakespeare shows how this code of honour pulls even the most peaceful characters into violence. The play presents revenge as both inherited and self-destroying, and only the deaths of the lovers finally break the cycle.

From the opening scene, revenge is presented as a habit that spreads through

Question number

every level of Verona. The servants' quarrel escalates over a thumb-bite, and soon the heads of both households are calling for swords, with Capulet demanding his "long sword" despite his age. The Prince's warning that further brawls will mean "Your lives shall pay the forfeit of the peace" shows the state trying to replace private revenge with public justice. Elizabethan audiences, living through a period when noble feuds and street violence threatened order, would have recognised the danger of families who place their honour above the law.

Tybalt embodies the revenge code. At the Capulet feast he recognises Romeo's voice and calls for his rapier, declaring that to strike him dead he holds it not a sin. When Capulet forbids him to act, he leaves vowing that the intrusion will later turn to "bitterest gall". This promise of delayed revenge creates dramatic tension, and it is fulfilled in Act 3 when he seeks Romeo out and calls him "villain". Revenge for Tybalt is about public reputation: he cannot bear the insult to his family's name.

The deaths in Act 3 Scene 1 show revenge as a chain reaction. Mercutio fights to defend the honour Romeo refuses to defend, and his dying curse on "both your houses" implies that the feud itself is the killer. Romeo, who moments before had spoken of loving the Capulet name, abandons his "respective lenity" and declares that "fire-eyed fury be my conduct now". The imagery of fire suggests that revenge consumes reason. His cry that either he or Tybalt, "or both", must join Mercutio shows how revenge pushes him into a choice that destroys his new marriage. His despairing "O, I am fortune's fool!" suggests he recognises too late that vengeance has trapped him.

Revenge then spreads to the women of the play. Lady Capulet demands that "Romeo must not live", and later plans to send someone to Mantua to give him a

Question number

poisoned drink. Juliet, deceiving her mother, pretends she wishes she alone could avenge her cousin, which creates dramatic irony because the audience knows she longs for Romeo. In Elizabethan society, although many believed vengeance belonged to God, the duty of a family to avenge its own was still deeply felt, and Shakespeare exposes how this expectation poisons every relationship.

Even at the tomb revenge persists, as Paris tries to arrest Romeo for the death of Tybalt and is killed. Only when Capulet offers his hand to "brother Montague" and both fathers promise golden statues of each other's child does revenge end. The Prince's judgement that "all are punished" suggests that the true cost of revenge is the loss of the next generation. Shakespeare presents revenge as a force that promises honour but delivers only grief.

4a

In this extract Shakespeare presents Beatrice's opinion of Benedick as fiercely scornful on the surface, yet the very energy of her mockery suggests a fascination she will not admit. Before Benedick even appears on stage, her wit has defined him for the audience, and the "merry war" between them is established as the comic heart of the play.

Beatrice's method is to take the Messenger's praise and twist it into insult. When he reports that Benedick has "done good service", she reduces his heroism to appetite: he helped to eat the "musty victual" and is a "valiant trencher-man" with "an excellent stomach". The adjective "valiant", normally reserved for battle, is applied to eating, a mock-heroic effect that deflates Benedick's military reputation. Her wordplay continues as she turns "a good soldier too, lady" into "a good soldier to a lady", implying that his only conquests are flirtations. Her rapid prose and quick repartee show a mind sharper than any of the men around her.

Question number

The pun on "stuffed" is especially cutting. The Messenger means that Benedick is full of "honourable virtues", but Beatrice turns him into "a stuffed man", like a tailor's dummy or a scarecrow, a figure with an impressive outside and nothing within. Her half-finished thought, "But for the stuffing, well, we are all mortal", leaves the insult hanging, which makes it funnier and more damning.

Leonato's explanation of a "merry war" and a "skirmish of wit" frames their relationship through military metaphor, and Beatrice adopts the same language. In their "last conflict" four of his "five wits went halting off", personifying his wits as wounded soldiers limping away from battle. The joke that he has just enough wit to "keep himself warm", the only difference "between himself and his horse", reduces him almost to an animal. These images present her opinion of him as contempt for his intelligence, while also showing her pride in having beaten him.

She also attacks his loyalty. The claim that he has "every month a new sworn brother" and the simile that he wears his faith "but as the fashion of his hat" suggest he is fickle and shallow. Ironically, this criticism of inconstancy will later be turned on its head when Claudio, not Benedick, proves faithless.

Yet Shakespeare lets the audience glimpse something beneath the insults. She refers to Benedick mostly by pronouns, as if refusing to dignify him with his name, but she asks twice "who is his companion?", which reveals curiosity she cannot hide. Her extended simile that he will "hang upon him like a disease" and that it will cost Claudio "a thousand pound" to be cured is comic hyperbole, ending in the mock-pious exclamation "God help the noble Claudio!" The sheer quantity of her talk about a man she claims to despise suggests that her disdain may protect a deeper interest, perhaps even an old hurt. The extract therefore invites the

Question number

audience to suspect, long before the gulling scenes, that Beatrice's scorn is a disguise for attraction.

4b

Conflict in Much Ado About Nothing takes two very different forms. There is the playful "merry war" of wit between Beatrice and Benedick, which hides love, and there is the malicious conflict engineered by Don John, which exposes how fragile honour and trust are in Messina. Shakespeare places them side by side so that the comedy almost becomes a tragedy, and the resolution of conflict becomes the means by which characters learn what really matters.

The play opens in the aftermath of real war. Don Pedro's soldiers return victorious, and the Messenger praises Claudio as having borne himself "beyond the promise of his age". The war has also produced a fragile peace between Don Pedro and his half-brother Don John, who has been newly "reconciled". This political truce is immediately undermined, because Don John declares he would rather be "a canker in a hedge than a rose in his grace". The image of a canker, a destructive grub or wild rose, presents him as a hidden sickness within the noble household. His resentment, rooted in his status as an illegitimate son in a society that valued birth and rank, makes his conflict with his brother the source of the play's darkest events.

The verbal conflict of Beatrice and Benedick is mostly comic. Their first exchange opens with her taunt "I wonder that you will still be talking, Signior Benedick: nobody marks you", and his retort "What, my dear Lady Disdain! Are you yet living?" The insults are delivered in quick prose and show two equals sparring. Yet the conflict is a defence: both claim to scorn marriage, and both are tricked into love in the gulling scenes. When Benedick finally confesses "I do love nothing in

Question number

the world so well as you", the conflict is revealed as a mask for affection, and its resolution is comic rather than painful.

Don John's conflict, by contrast, causes real suffering. By staging the deception at Hero's window, he persuades Claudio that "the lady is disloyal". Claudio's public rejection of Hero at the altar, calling her a "rotten orange", turns the wedding into a scene of humiliation. In a patriarchal society where a woman's worth rested on her chastity, the accusation destroys her completely, and even her father turns on her, wishing her dead because "Death is the fairest cover for her shame". This conflict between father and daughter shows how male honour could outweigh love in Shakespeare's England.

The crisis also tests friendship. Beatrice's demand "Kill Claudio" forces Benedick to choose between his loyalty to his comrades and his love for her. When he challenges Claudio, a man he once called his friend, the conflict marks his growth: he now trusts a woman's word above the opinion of soldiers. Leonato and old Antonio also challenge Claudio, which shows how far family honour demanded a duel.

Ironically, it is Dogberry and the Watch, the most foolish characters, who resolve the conflict by uncovering Borachio's confession. Shakespeare suggests that truth can emerge from unlikely places. The play ends with a double wedding and news that Don John has been captured, so order is restored. Conflict is therefore important because it drives the plot, reveals true character and allows the lovers, and the audience, to see through appearances.

Sa

In this extract Shakespeare presents Sir Toby Belch as a gleeful manipulator who

Question number

stage-manages a duel for his own amusement. The audience knows that Sir Andrew is a timid and hopeless fighter, so the comedy lies in the gap between Sir Toby's terrifying description and the truth, and in his enjoyment of Viola's fear.

Sir Toby opens with abrupt imperatives. "Betake thee to 't", "Dismount thy tuck" and "be yare in thy preparation" give Viola no space to think, creating urgency and pressure. He deliberately keeps the challenge vague, admitting that what the wrongs are he does "know not", even though he has engineered the quarrel himself. This feigned ignorance makes the threat seem mysterious and therefore more frightening, and it shows that Sir Toby is playing a part.

His description of Sir Andrew is wildly exaggerated. The simile "bloody as the hunter" turns Viola into hunted prey, and the tricolon "quick, skilful, and deadly" builds to a climax on its final word. A second list, of "youth, strength, skill, and wrath", piles up qualities that the audience knows Sir Andrew entirely lacks. The dramatic irony is central: we laugh at Sir Toby's inventiveness and at the thought of the cowardly knight being transformed into a warrior.

Shakespeare also lets Sir Toby slip in the truth beneath his hyperbole. Sir Andrew is a knight "dubbed with unhatched rapier, and on carpet consideration", meaning his sword has never been used and his title was earned at court rather than in battle. Sir Toby seems to enjoy hiding the joke in plain sight, before immediately covering it with the boast that he is "a devil in private brawl" who has divorced "souls and bodies" three times. The metaphor of divorcing soul from body is grimly comic, and the alliterative "pangs of death and sepulchre" inflates the quarrel into something epic. His motto "Hob, nob", meaning have or have not, makes the duel sound like a game of chance, which is exactly how he sees it.

Question number

Viola's calm, reasonable prose, insisting her "remembrance is very free and clear" and admitting "I am no fighter", contrasts with Sir Toby's swaggering rhetoric. When she perceptively guesses that Sir Andrew is the kind of man who picks quarrels "to taste their valour", Sir Toby quickly denies it with the short exclamation "Sir, no", and claims the injury is "very competent". The quickness of his denial suggests she is uncomfortably close to the truth.

The extract ends with Sir Toby tightening the trap. He blocks her retreat, "Back you shall not to the house", and offers a choice between fighting Sir Andrew or fighting him. The final images play on masculine honour: she must "strip your sword stark naked", with its harsh alliteration, or "forswear to wear iron about you", giving up the right to carry a sword at all. For a woman disguised as a man, this challenge to her manhood is especially threatening, and the audience enjoys the double irony. Sir Toby is presented as a festive Lord of Misrule, witty and energetic, but his pleasure in tormenting others also hints at the cruelty that surfaces in his treatment of Malvolio.

Sb

Marriage is the destination towards which Twelfth Night moves, as befits a romantic comedy, yet Shakespeare uses it to expose very different attitudes to love: self-indulgent fantasy, selfless devotion, social ambition and sudden good fortune. By the end the right couples are paired, but the route there reveals how marriage in Elizabethan society was bound up with status, wealth and power as much as feeling.

Orsino's desire to marry Olivia is presented as a romantic performance. His opening line, "If music be the food of love, play on", shows him more in love with the idea of love than with Olivia herself. He never woos her in person, instead sending

Question number

Cesario to plead for him, and he treats her rejection as a challenge to his pride. The suggestion is that he sees Olivia as a prize appropriate to his rank, a common view of noble marriage at the time.

Viola's love, by contrast, is constant and self-sacrificing. Disguised as Cesario because, without her brother, a woman alone in a strange land would have had no male protection, she agrees to woo Olivia for Orsino, while revealing in an aside "Whoe'er I woo, myself would be his wife". The dramatic irony makes her loyalty both painful and admirable. Her disguise means she cannot declare herself, and in the scene where she tells Orsino about an imagined sister who "never told her love", she expresses her longing indirectly. Shakespeare presents her as the play's model of true love, and her reward is marriage to the man she loves.

Olivia begins by rejecting marriage altogether, vowing to mourn her brother for seven years. Yet after meeting Cesario she falls rapidly in love, abandoning her pride to pursue a social inferior. As a wealthy countess without a father or husband, she has unusual freedom to choose. Her impulsive marriage to Sebastian, whom she mistakes for Cesario, creates the comic confusion of Act 5, when she calls Cesario "husband" and Viola denies it. Sebastian's willing acceptance, wondering if he is mad or dreaming, suggests that marriage can arrive as pure luck in the world of Illyria.

Marriage is also a route to social advancement. Malvolio fantasises about becoming "Count Malvolio", imagining himself married to Olivia and commanding her household. The forged letter exploits this ambition, and his public humiliation, ending in his bitter vow to be "revenged on the whole pack of you", punishes him for daring to rise above his station. In a hierarchical society, a steward marrying his mistress would have seemed absurd, yet Maria, a gentlewoman, does marry Sir

Question number

Toby, as a reward for her trick. Shakespeare seems to allow social mobility only to those who join in the festive spirit.

The setting of Twelfth Night, a festival when ordinary rules and hierarchies were temporarily overturned, explains why the play explores such unconventional desires, including Orsino's attraction to Cesario and Antonio's devotion to Sebastian. Marriage at the end restores order, re-establishing the expected roles of man and woman. However, Antonio and Malvolio are left outside the celebrations, which suggests that the neat pattern of marriages cannot fully contain the emotions the play has released.

6a

In this extract Shakespeare presents Gratiano as a lively, talkative and affectionate friend whose good intentions are undercut by his own excess. He sets out to cure Antonio's melancholy, but his speech becomes a long performance that seems as much about himself as about his friend, and Shakespeare invites us to smile at a man who mocks others for talking nonsense while talking a great deal himself.

His opening is direct and caring. The blunt declarative "You look not well, Signior Antonio" shows close friendship and concern, and the respectful title "Signior" keeps a note of courtesy. His proverb-like warning that men "lose it that do buy it with much care" suggests that worrying about the world destroys the enjoyment of it, and the exclamation "you are marvellously changed" implies that he notices a real shift in his friend.

Antonio's famous metaphor of the world as "A stage where every man must play a part, / And mine a sad one" gives Gratiano his cue. He seizes the shared line with "Let me play the fool!", accepting the theatrical image and casting himself as the

Question number

comic character. This tells the audience exactly how to see him: as the play's jester figure among the Venetian gentlemen.

Gratiano's philosophy is a celebration of pleasure. The abstract nouns "mirth and laughter" are set against "mortifying groans", and the antithesis between the "liver" heated "with wine" and the "heart" cooled by sighing draws on Elizabethan beliefs about the body, in which the liver was the seat of passion. He prefers indulgence to sorrow. His rhetorical question about a warm-blooded man who sits "like his grandsire, cut in alabaster" compares Antonio to a cold stone effigy on a tomb, a vivid image that is affectionate but also faintly insulting, as is the suggestion that sulking will make him "creep into the jaundice".

The parenthetical "I love thee, and 'tis my love that speaks" is an important moment of sincerity, as if Gratiano realises he risks offending. However, he then moves into a long satirical portrait of solemn men whose faces "cream and mantle like a standing pond". The simile of stagnant, scummy water suggests that their seriousness hides emptiness, and the tricolon "wisdom, gravity, profound conceit" mocks the reputation they seek. His imitation of "Sir Oracle", who commands "let no dog bark!", is a comic impersonation that shows his skill as a performer. The irony is that such men are thought wise only "For saying nothing", while Gratiano himself cannot stop speaking.

His closing fishing metaphor urges Antonio to "fish not with this melancholy bait" in pursuit of a false reputation, and dismisses such an opinion as a "fool gudgeon", a fish easily caught. Then he cheerfully breaks off: "I'll tell thee more of this another time", promising to "end my exhortation after dinner". The bathos of postponing his sermon until after a meal is comic, and it confirms his love of food, company and talk. Shakespeare presents Gratiano as warm-hearted and loyal, yet

Question number

loud and self-indulgent, a character whose outspoken nature later shows its uglier side in his taunting of Shylock at the trial.

6b

Loyalty binds together the Christian world of The Merchant of Venice, yet Shakespeare presents it as selective and costly. Antonio's devotion to Bassanio almost costs him his life, the lovers' loyalty is tested through the rings, and Jessica's betrayal of her father raises uncomfortable questions about whose loyalty the play rewards.

The most important loyalty is between Antonio and Bassanio. When Bassanio needs money to court Portia, Antonio, whose wealth is all at sea, tells him to see what his credit can do in Venice, offering his "purse" and his "person" to his friend's needs. This loyalty leads him to borrow three thousand ducats from Shylock, a man he has spat upon and called "dog", and to accept the bond of a "pound of flesh". In a mercantile city where a merchant's word was his bond, Antonio's agreement shows how far he will go for friendship. Later, his letter to Bassanio asks only to see him before he dies, and he insists that his debts are cleared if they meet, which reveals loyalty without resentment.

Bassanio's loyalty in return is passionate. At the trial he declares that life itself, his wife and all the world are not esteemed above Antonio's life, and he would sacrifice them all to save him. The irony is that Portia, disguised as Balthazar, hears this, and her wry comment that his wife would give him little thanks introduces the test that follows. Gratiano, who in Act I cheerfully offers to "play the fool" to lift Antonio's spirits, shows his own loyalty by travelling to Belmont with Bassanio and standing beside his friends in the courtroom, though his cruel taunts of Shylock suggest loyalty to friends can turn into hostility to outsiders.

Question number

The rings make loyalty a structural device. Portia gives Bassanio a ring which he promises never to part with, and Nerissa gives Gratiano one too. When the disguised women demand the rings as payment, both men give them away, choosing loyalty to Antonio over their vows to their wives. The comic quarrel in Act 5 allows Portia to test her husband and reassert her power, and Antonio, offering his soul as surety, again binds himself for Bassanio's sake. Loyalty is thus restored, but only after the women have proved their control.

Portia's own loyalty is to her dead father. Although she complains that the will of a living daughter is "curbed by the will of a dead father", she obeys the casket test rather than defying it. In Elizabethan society daughters were expected to obey their fathers absolutely, so Portia's obedience presents her as virtuous.

Jessica, by contrast, breaks this expectation. She elopes with Lorenzo, steals Shylock's ducats and jewels, and converts to Christianity. Shylock's anguish over his "daughter" and his "ducats", and his grief when he learns she traded his wife Leah's ring for a monkey, make her betrayal deeply painful to a modern audience. For an Elizabethan audience, in a society where anti-Jewish prejudice was widespread, her disloyalty to a Jewish father might have seemed justified by her new faith. Shylock's own loyalty to his religion is finally destroyed when he is forced to convert.

Loyalty is therefore important because it drives the plot and defines who belongs in the Christian community. Shakespeare shows its generosity, but also its limits.

7 The treatment of the working class is significant because it is the moral test on

Question number

which Priestley judges every character in An Inspector Calls. The Birlings' comfort is built on the labour of people they barely see, and the play forces both the family and the audience to confront what that invisibility costs. Writing in 1945 but setting the play in 1912, Priestley uses the gap between the two dates to argue that a society which treats workers as disposable is heading for catastrophe, and that post-war Britain must choose a fairer path.

The brief exchange with Edna captures this invisibility perfectly. Mrs Birling addresses her only to dismiss her, promising to "ring from the drawing-room when we want coffee", so that the maid exists purely to serve the family's timetable. Edna's reply, "Yes, Ma'am", is all she is permitted to say. It is telling that the one working-class character physically present on stage has almost no voice, while Eva Smith, the play's central figure, never appears at all. Priestley seems to suggest that, for families like the Birlings, the working class is only noticed when it is useful. Ironically, it is Edna who announces "an inspector's called", so the servant the family ignores becomes the doorway through which their judgement arrives.

Mr Birling's attitude reveals the economic logic behind this treatment. He boasts of "lower costs and higher prices" and sees it as his duty to keep labour costs down, which reduces his employees to figures on a balance sheet. When he explains that he sacked Eva for leading a strike for higher wages, he insists that if you don't come down sharply on such people "they'd soon be asking for the earth". The Inspector's calm reply, "it's better to ask for the earth than to take it", carries a threat that a 1945 audience would understand: workers denied justice may eventually seize it. Birling's contempt for "community and all that nonsense" reflects the laissez-faire capitalism of the Edwardian era, when there was little legal protection for workers and bosses could hire and fire at will. Priestley, a committed socialist, makes Birling pompous and repeatedly wrong, predicting that

Question number

war will never come and that the Titanic is "unsinkable", so that the audience distrusts his views on labour as much as his views on history.

Sheila's treatment of Eva shows that exploitation is not only economic but personal. Because she was in a furious temper and jealous of a pretty shop girl, she had Eva dismissed from Milwards, using her status as a valued customer as a weapon. The ease with which this happens highlights how powerless working-class women were: a single complaint from a wealthy girl could end someone's livelihood. However, Sheila is also the character who changes most. Her retort that "these girls aren't cheap labour, they're people" directly rejects her father's language, and Priestley uses her to show that the younger generation might learn to see workers as fellow human beings.

Mrs Birling's role on the Brumley Women's Charity Organisation is perhaps the bitterest example of the play's critique. A charity designed to help women like Eva becomes another instrument of class prejudice when Mrs Birling refuses her help because she used the name "Mrs Birling" and was, in her view, giving herself airs. Her phrase "Girls of that class" groups working-class women together as a type rather than individuals. Before the welfare state, a pregnant, unmarried woman with no income depended on the judgement of such committees, and Priestley shows how cruelly that judgement could be exercised. Her refusal to accept blame, insisting that she only did her duty, exposes how charity could flatter the giver while abandoning the needy.

Gerald and Eric exploit Eva in more intimate ways. Gerald rescues her from the Palace bar and keeps her as his mistress, which seems kind until he ends the affair when it becomes inconvenient. Eric, drunk, forces himself on her and then steals money from his father's firm to support her. Both men treat a

Question number

working-class woman as something they can take and discard, reflecting the sexual double standards of a patriarchal society. Yet Eric, like Sheila, eventually accepts responsibility, and his earlier question about why workers shouldn't try for higher wages shows a flicker of sympathy that his father lacks.

The Inspector gathers these individual stories into Priestley's central message. He reminds the family that there are "millions and millions and millions of Eva Smiths and John Smiths", turning one girl into a symbol of the entire working class. His final speech, "We are members of one body. We are responsible for each other", echoes Christian language to argue for collective responsibility, while his warning of "fire and blood and anguish" points to the two world wars that the 1945 audience had just lived through. In this sense, the treatment of the working class is significant not just morally but historically: Priestley implies that the selfishness of 1912 helped produce those disasters.

Ultimately, the play ends with a split between those who learn and those who refuse. Mr and Mrs Birling celebrate when the Inspector seems to be a hoax, while Sheila and Eric remain shaken. The final telephone call, announcing a girl's death on the way to the Infirmary, denies the older generation their escape. Priestley wrote the play in the year Labour won a landslide victory promising a welfare state, and the treatment of the working class becomes his challenge to the audience: to abandon the Birlings' indifference and build a society where no Eva Smith is ignored.

8 Secrets are the engine of An Inspector Calls. Priestley borrows the structure of a detective drama, in which hidden truths are gradually exposed, but uses it for a moral rather than a criminal investigation. Each secret that emerges reveals that

Question number

the Birlings' respectable surface conceals selfishness, hypocrisy and exploitation, and the way each character responds to exposure becomes Priestley's measure of whether they can change. For an audience in 1945, the uncovering of Edwardian secrets was also a way of exposing the rotten foundations of the society that had led Britain into two wars.

The play opens with a family that appears contented and secure. The lighting is initially "pink and intimate", a soft, flattering glow that suits a household celebrating an engagement, but the stage directions later call for it to become brighter and harder when the Inspector arrives, as if a lamp is being turned on their hidden lives. Even before he appears, however, cracks show. Sheila's teasing remark about "all last summer, when you never came near me" is described as "half serious, half playful", suggesting that she already suspects Gerald of something. Priestley plants this clue early so that the audience shares Sheila's unease, and the light-hearted tone makes the later revelation of his affair more painful. The secret is hidden in plain sight, much like the inequalities the family prefers not to notice.

The Inspector's method is crucial to how secrets are revealed. He insists on "one person and one line of inquiry at a time", and by showing the photograph to one character at a time he controls what each knows. This structure creates a chain of confessions, each building tension and preventing the family from uniting against him. His declaration that "each of you helped to kill her" turns individual secrets into a shared guilt. Priestley seems to suggest that the true secret is not any single act but the way these acts connect: a society in which everyone's small cruelty contributes to one person's ruin.

Mr Birling does not try to hide that he sacked Eva, insisting he was quite justified,

Question number

but his concern is to keep his reputation secret. He worries about scandal and his "very good chance of a knighthood", and late in the play he offers thousands of pounds to make things right, as though money can buy silence. For Birling, the danger of a secret is not that it reveals wrongdoing but that it might become public. This reflects the Edwardian upper-middle class obsession with status and respectability, which Priestley satirises by making Birling's anxieties so petty beside a young woman's death.

Sheila's response is the opposite. She admits that she had Eva sacked from Milwards out of jealousy and confesses "It was my own fault". Her willingness to expose herself marks her as the character most capable of moral growth. Once she understands the process, she becomes almost an ally of the Inspector, warning the others that he knows everything already and that hiding things will only make it worse. Priestley uses her to suggest that confession, however painful, is the first step towards responsibility.

Gerald's secret is the one most directly signalled by the opening extract. He initially pretends not to know the name Daisy Renton, and his attempt to have Sheila leave the room shows a desire to manage what she learns. When the affair is revealed, Sheila returns the engagement ring, symbolically breaking the alliance between the Birlings and the Crofts that the dinner was meant to celebrate. Gerald's affair reflects a common double standard of the period, in which wealthy men could keep working-class mistresses while maintaining a respectable public image. Yet at the end, when he discovers that there may be no Inspector Goole, he offers the ring back, believing everything's all right now. His relief shows that for him the secret only mattered while it threatened consequences.

Mrs Birling is the most determined to deny secrets, even those obvious to others.

Question number

She refuses to believe that Eric drinks heavily, although Sheila says he has been doing so for years, and her judgement that a girl "of that sort" would never refuse money exposes her prejudice. The dramatic irony of her demanding that the father of Eva's child be made an example of, before realising it is her own son, is one of the play's most powerful moments. Her secret ignorance about her family mirrors her wider ignorance of the lives of the poor.

Eric's secrets are the darkest and the last to be revealed. Described from the start as "not quite at ease", he seems to carry a burden the audience senses before it is named. The revelations that he got Eva pregnant and stole money from his father's office complete the picture of a family rotten beneath its polish. His accusation that his mother "killed her" turns the secrets against one another, and his comment that his father is not the kind of father a chap could go to when he's in trouble suggests that the family's secrecy was caused by a lack of genuine connection.

In the end, secrets matter because their exposure divides the generations. Sheila and Eric accept that the truth has changed them, while their parents are eager to return to pretence once the Inspector's identity is doubted. The final phone call brutally reopens what the older Birlings hoped to bury. Priestley's message for a post-war audience is clear: a society built on hidden exploitation cannot remain hidden forever, and only honesty and shared responsibility can prevent the "fire and blood and anguish" the Inspector predicts.

9 Brighouse presents Victorian life in Hobson's Choice as a world of rigid hierarchies, of class, gender and commerce, which is just beginning to crack. Set in Salford in 1880 but first performed in 1915, the play looks back on the period with

Question number

affectionate comedy while quietly questioning its values. Through Hobson's boot shop, his family and his drinking companions, Brighouse shows a society in which fathers rule, money decides marriages and the working class know their place, and then uses Maggie and Willie to show how that society could be overturned by talent and determination.

The extract about "settlements" reveals how far Victorian marriage was an economic transaction. Jim Heeler's metaphor that "You've to bait your hook to catch fish" turns daughters into a catch and the dowry into bait, a comic but revealing image of how middle-class families arranged matches. Hobson, who has been considering finding "temperance young men" for his younger daughters, abruptly changes his mind once he realises a father is expected to pay, declaring "I'll none go fishing". The humour depends on Hobson's meanness, but it also exposes a real Victorian convention: a woman's marriage prospects depended on what her father was willing to spend, and her own wishes were hardly considered.

Patriarchy is central to Brighouse's presentation of home life. Hobson regards himself as the unquestioned master of his household, lecturing his daughters on their "uppishness" and expecting obedience. He uses them as unpaid labour in the shop, asking incredulously whether he should pay wages to his own daughters. This reflects a period in which men were widely assumed to be heads of the home and women had few legal or economic rights; married women had only recently gained the right to own property through the Married Women's Property Acts. Yet Brighouse undercuts Hobson's authority from the start, since he is often late, often at the Moonraker's, and largely dependent on Maggie to run both shop and house. The comedy suggests that Victorian patriarchy was more of a performance than a reality.

Question number

Class divisions shape every relationship in the play. Hobson's shop serves the "high-class trade", represented by Mrs Hepworth, who sweeps in to praise the best-made pair of boots she has ever had and insists on meeting the man who made them. That man is Willie Mossop, who works in the cellar, literally beneath the respectable business upstairs. The staging reflects the social order: the skilled working man is hidden below while those who profit from his skill stand in the light. Willie's "brutalized childhood" and his inability to read and write reflect the reality for many Victorian working people before compulsory education was fully established, and his lodging with Mrs Figgins and engagement to Ada mark him as firmly working class. Alice and Vickey's horror at the idea of Maggie marrying their father's boot hand shows how fiercely the middle class guarded its status.

Victorian community life is also presented through institutions. The Moonraker's Inn is where Hobson and his fellow tradesmen drink, talk and assert their importance, and his pride in being a respected debater there shows how male social life revolved around the public house. Hobson's drinking, which eventually leads to his fall into Beenstock's cellar and his illness in the final act, reflects contemporary anxieties about alcohol that fuelled the temperance movement, an irony given his hope of finding temperance husbands for his daughters. Meanwhile his role at St Philip's and the wedding there show the importance of the Church in respectable Victorian life, even for a man whose behaviour is far from pious.

Against this backdrop, Maggie represents the forces of change. At thirty, she has been dismissed by her father as past the age for marriage, but instead of accepting this she chooses Willie herself and proposes to him, reversing the expected roles. Her vision of their partnership, "My brains and your hands", presents marriage as a business arrangement between equals in ability, if not yet in status. She buys furniture cheaply, uses a brass ring from the shop, and sets up

Question number

a rival business in a cellar on Oldfield Road, demonstrating a practical, entrepreneurial spirit that the Victorian ideal of the passive middle-class woman did not allow. When she engineers the trespass case against her father to secure settlements for her sisters, she turns his own meanness against him, showing that a woman could outwit the patriarchal system on its own terms.

Willie's transformation also suggests that Victorian class barriers could be crossed. Under Maggie's guidance he learns to read, write and speak with confidence, and by the final act he is dictating terms to Hobson and insisting that the new business be called Mossop and Hobson. For an audience in 1915, at a time of growing demands for women's suffrage and labour rights, this reversal would have resonated: the cellar hand becomes the master, and the master becomes dependent.

Brighouse therefore presents Victorian life with comic warmth but also gentle criticism. The rigid structures of class and gender are real, but they are shown as outdated, sustained by men like Hobson who are themselves weak. By ending with Maggie and Willie in control, the play suggests that the future belongs to those who value ability over rank, and it invites its Edwardian audience to recognise how far, and how much further, society had to change.

10 Maggie's relationship with her sisters is significant because it exposes the values of Victorian middle-class womanhood, and shows Maggie rejecting them. Alice and Vickey cling to gentility, appearances and the hope of a respectable marriage, while Maggie judges life by practical worth. Brighouse uses the tension between them for comedy, but also to show that Maggie, though the least valued of Hobson's daughters, is the one on whom everybody depends. By the end, the sisters' reliance

Question number

on her reveals who truly holds power in the family.

From the opening, Maggie acts less like a sister than a mother. With no mother in the household, she runs the home and the shop, and instructions such as "Dinner at half-past one, girls" show her managing the family's routine. Hobson asserts his authority loudly, but it is Maggie who keeps the household functioning. This reflects a Victorian expectation that domestic life was women's work, yet Maggie goes further, taking on both her absent mother's role and much of her father's business responsibility. Her sisters accept her care without gratitude, which suggests that her labour, like Willie's, is taken for granted.

The contrast between them is sharpest in their attitudes to marriage and class. Alice and Vickey are preoccupied with dress and status and see marriage as their natural destiny. When Maggie announces that she has told Willie he is to marry her, Alice is horrified, protesting that "what you do touches us". Her concern is entirely selfish: she fears that a sister married to the boot hand will damage her "hopes of Albert Prosser". The phrase reveals how Victorian middle-class reputation was shared across a family, so that one daughter's choice could affect another's prospects. Brighouse invites the audience to laugh at Alice's snobbery, but also to see how class prejudice shaped women's lives, since a good marriage was almost the only route to security for a woman of her position.

Maggie answers her sisters with brisk confidence rather than seeking their approval. She knows that she is thirty and has been dismissed by her father as past marrying, and that her sisters regard her as plain and practical. Yet she understands what they do not: that Willie's skill is worth more than Albert Prosser's polish. When she tells them she will have her sisters at her wedding at St Philip's, the line from the extract, she is not asking permission but announcing

Question number

a fact. Her determination to include them suggests both family loyalty and a wish to assert her new status in front of the sisters who looked down on her.

The wedding day shows the sisters' discomfort most clearly. Vickey worries that attending is "asking us to approve", and when Maggie insists that Vickey kiss Willie as her new brother-in-law, she does so only "under protest". Both sisters are appalled by Maggie's brass ring from the shop and furniture bought from the Flat Iron Market. Alice declares she would rather stay single, and Vickey insists she would only marry if she could start properly with a houseful of new furniture. These reactions expose the materialism of Victorian gentility, in which appearances mattered more than happiness. Maggie's thrift, by contrast, is a sign of her good sense, and Brighouse clearly sides with her.

Despite their snobbery, the sisters repeatedly need Maggie. After she leaves, the shop struggles, and the cry of "What would Miss Maggie have told you to do?" shows how lost they are without her. More importantly, it is Maggie who solves their marriage problem. Because Hobson refuses to pay settlements, Alice and Vickey cannot marry Albert Prosser and Fred Beenstock, so Maggie arranges the trespass case that forces Hobson to pay, providing their marriage portions. The sisters gladly accept the benefit of her cleverness, even though they disapproved of her choices. Brighouse shows that the sister they patronise is the one who secures their futures.

The final act provides the greatest test. When Hobson's drinking makes him seriously ill and the doctor insists one of his daughters must live with him, Alice and Vickey refuse, offering excuses linked to their husbands and their comfortable homes, and insist "it's your duty, Maggie". Their selfishness reveals how little their respectable marriages have taught them about responsibility. Maggie agrees to

Question number

return, but on her own terms, with Willie as the senior partner in the business. In this way, the duty her sisters push onto her becomes the means of her triumph.

In the context of a society in which women were expected to marry well and defer to men, Maggie's relationship with her sisters is significant because it contrasts two models of womanhood. Alice and Vickey conform to Victorian expectations and are left dependent and self-absorbed; Maggie breaks those expectations and emerges as the true head of the family. Writing in 1915, as the campaign for women's rights was gaining ground, Brighouse seems to suggest that a woman's value lies in her capability rather than her gentility, and the sisters' grudging dependence on Maggie proves the point.

11 Children are significant in Blood Brothers because they reveal, more clearly than any adult, how class shapes a life before a person is old enough to choose. Russell shows children at play as innocent, inventive and unaware of social divisions, yet he structures the play so that the audience watches those divisions close around them. By following Mickey and Edward from the age of seven to their deaths, he turns childhood into evidence for his argument that poverty and privilege, rather than individual choice, decide our futures.

The stage direction in the extract, with children rushing into the street playing "cowboys and Indians; cops and robbers; goodies and baddies", presents childhood as a world of energy and imagination. Yet the games themselves are revealing. They divide players into heroes and villains and revolve around guns and death, and the pretend shootings of the children's games foreshadow the real gunshots of the ending. Russell seems to suggest that the violence of the adult world is already present in children's play, waiting to become real. The song in which the children

Question number

insist that the whole thing's just a game is deeply ironic, since the audience has already heard the Narrator describe how the twins died, and knows that for Mickey and Edward the game will not end harmlessly.

Russell also uses children to show that prejudice is learned rather than natural. When Mickey and Edward first meet at seven, they are delighted by each other's differences. Edward freely offers sweets and tells Mickey to take as many as he wants, while Mickey is amazed by this generosity, having learned in a large family to fight for everything. Edward is fascinated by Mickey's swearing and admires the way he talks, saying "You say smashing things". Their blood brother oath shows a natural bond that ignores class entirely. It is the adults, especially Mrs Lyons, who forbid the friendship and teach the boys that they belong to different worlds. Russell, writing in the early 1980s, suggests that division is imposed on children by a society that values status.

The Johnstone children show the effects of poverty on childhood. Mrs Johnstone has "seven hungry mouths to feed", and her children complain of hunger and are mocked at school for receiving free dinners. Older children are left to look after younger ones, and Sammy's fall from a window, which leaves him with a plate in his head, shows the dangers of a household where a struggling single mother cannot supervise everyone. In the context of 1960s and 1970s Liverpool, with overcrowded housing and limited support, Russell presents these problems not as personal failures but as the predictable results of hardship.

Sammy is perhaps Russell's most disturbing child. Even at a young age he is aggressive, swears, smokes his mother's cigarettes and shoots with a toy gun, and Mickey's admiring wish to be like him shows how such behaviour can seem glamorous to a younger child. Sammy's progression from childish naughtiness to

Question number

burning down the school, and eventually to armed robbery and murder, suggests that a child failed by his environment can become dangerous. Russell does not excuse Sammy, but he invites the audience to ask whether a more secure childhood might have led him elsewhere.

Edward's childhood stands in deliberate contrast. Raised by the Lyons in a comfortable middle-class home, he has his own toys, a garden and the expectation of a private education. When the boys are older, Edward goes to boarding school while Mickey and Linda attend a secondary modern, and the scene in which both are suspended from their schools shows the different consequences: Edward's mother is angry, while Mickey is simply pushed further towards failure. Mickey's inability to explain what a dictionary is shows how unequal schooling limits working-class children. Russell's use of the same actors for the boys across different ages emphasises that they are identical by nature, so only their upbringing explains the gap between them.

The policeman scene reinforces this. When the children throw stones, the policeman threatens Mrs Johnstone with court, yet he treats Mr Lyons politely over a drink, dismissing Edward's behaviour as a prank. The same childish act is judged differently according to class, which shows the audience that injustice begins in childhood.

Ultimately, children are significant because they carry the play's tragedy. The playfulness of the opening scenes makes the later decline of Mickey, through unemployment, prison and depression, more painful, and the moment he asks his mother why she did not give him away, crying "I could have been him!", reflects on a childhood that decided his fate. Written during the recession and mass unemployment of the early 1980s, the play uses children to argue that a society

Question number

which allows such unequal beginnings cannot claim that people are free to choose their own endings.

12 Fate is important in Blood Brothers because Russell builds the whole play around the sense that the twins' deaths are inevitable, and then asks the audience to question what that inevitability really is. On the surface, superstition and destiny seem to drive the story; underneath, Russell suggests that the true "fate" of his characters is the class into which they are born. The Narrator's closing question, whether we should blame superstition or "what we, the English, have come to know as class", invites the audience to reject a supernatural explanation in favour of a social one.

The structure of the play makes fate unavoidable. It begins with the ending: the bodies of Mickey and Edward are revealed, and the Narrator tells the story of the Johnstone twins, born on the same day and dying on the same day. By revealing the outcome in the prologue, Russell borrows the technique of classical tragedy, so that the audience watches not to discover what happens but to understand why. Every innocent moment, from the boys' first meeting to their blood brother oath, is shadowed by the knowledge of where it leads. This dramatic irony turns the play into a countdown, and the audience's sense of helplessness mirrors that of the characters.

The Narrator is the main voice of fate. Functioning like a Greek chorus, he comments on the action, moves among the characters unseen and sings warnings that the devil's got your number. His recurring reminders of superstitions, such as shoes upon the table and a joker in the pack, create a menacing refrain that grows louder as the tragedy approaches. Russell often has him appear at moments of

Question number

apparent happiness, such as when Mrs Johnstone moves to the country, to remind the audience that escape is an illusion. He represents a force that the characters cannot see but cannot outrun.

Mrs Johnstone's belief in superstition makes her vulnerable to fate. She is genuinely frightened by new shoes on the table, and this belief is exploited by Mrs Lyons, who invents the warning that if either twin learns he once was a pair, "they shall both immediately die". The superstition is a lie created to keep Mrs Johnstone silent, yet it comes true at the end. Russell thus blurs the boundary between fate and human action: the prophecy is fulfilled not by magic but by the choices, fears and deceptions of the characters. It could be argued that Mrs Lyons, in trying to control fate, actually creates it.

However, Russell repeatedly suggests that what looks like fate is really economic circumstance. Mrs Johnstone's situation is sealed by poverty: deserted by her husband, with "seven hungry mouths to feed" and twins on the way, she faces having children taken into care, which is why she agrees to give one baby to Mrs Lyons. Her songs about living on the never never show a life shaped by debt. The decision that sets the tragedy in motion is therefore driven by money rather than destiny. For an audience in the early 1980s, facing recession, factory closures and mass unemployment in cities like Liverpool, this connection between poverty and powerlessness would have felt very real.

The diverging lives of the twins make this argument most powerful. Genetically identical, Mickey and Edward are given entirely different futures by their upbringing. Edward goes to private school and university, while Mickey leaves a secondary modern, works in a factory and is made redundant. His desperation leads him to join Sammy in a robbery that ends in prison, depression and dependency on

Question number

antidepressants. When Mickey cries "I could have been him!", he recognises that his fate was decided not by the stars but by which family took him home. Russell uses the twins almost as a controlled experiment, showing that the gap between their lives can only be explained by class.

The ending brings fate and class together. Mickey, convinced that Edward has taken everything from him, including Linda, confronts him with a gun. Mrs Johnstone's revelation that they are twins triggers the deaths, appearing to fulfil Mrs Lyons' superstition exactly. Yet Mickey's anguish at learning the truth is rooted in his sense of lost opportunity, and the police marksmen who shoot him represent the authority of a society that has failed him. The Narrator's final question therefore challenges the audience directly: if we blame superstition, we escape responsibility; if we blame class, we must recognise that the tragedy was made by people and could be prevented.

In conclusion, fate is important because it provides the play's tragic shape, its suspense and its haunting atmosphere, but Russell uses it to unsettle rather than reassure. Writing as Thatcher's Britain widened the divide between rich and poor, he suggests that the real "fate" of the working class is not written in the stars but in economic and social structures. Blood Brothers leaves the audience with the uncomfortable thought that what we call destiny may be another name for inequality.

13 In Journey's End, Sherriff presents teamwork as the only thing that keeps the men in the dugout functioning, and perhaps the only thing that keeps them sane. The war itself is shown as vast, impersonal and senseless, so the small, loyal team of officers becomes a substitute family and a moral code. Yet Sherriff also shows

Question number

the cost of this teamwork: it depends on duty, routine and sometimes coercion, and it cannot ultimately protect anyone from the German attack that ends the play. Written in 1928 by a former officer who had served on the Western Front, the play seems to honour the comradeship of the trenches while quietly questioning the system that demanded it.

Stanhope's line, "Hibbert can do from two till four, and I'll go on from then till stand-to", captures how teamwork works at its most basic level. The plain, practical rhythm of the sentence, made up of names and times, shows that survival in the front line depends on each man taking his share of duty so that the others can sleep. The repeated duty rotas throughout the play give the action a grinding, cyclical structure, which mirrors the real monotony of trench life. Sherriff seems to suggest that this routine is a form of protection: if every man trusts the others to keep watch, the team holds together. When Trotter complains that he is "always down for dooty" in the middle of a meal, the comedy of his accent and his grumbling does not undermine the system; it shows that even a man who dislikes his shift still turns up for it.

The opening scene establishes the team as something larger than any individual. Osborne and Hardy's handover, "Let's do this handing over", with its lists of bombs, gum boots and gun positions, presents war as an administrative chain in which one company passes responsibility to the next. Hardy's casual, joking tone contrasts with Osborne's careful attention to detail, and this suggests that Osborne, the older schoolmaster, is the steady centre of the team. He is the one who explains Stanhope to others, telling Hardy that "There isn't a man to touch him as a commander" and later admitting, "I'd go to hell with him." This hyperbole reveals that the team is held together by loyalty to its leader, not just by orders. In the context of the First World War, when officers were often drawn from the

Question number

public-school class, this loyalty echoes the school ideal of the house or sports team, with Stanhope as a former "skipper" figure whom younger men worship.

However, Sherriff makes clear that teamwork is also a burden. Stanhope can only keep leading because Osborne supports him, putting him to bed when he is drunk and acting as a calming, almost parental presence; the nickname "Uncle" captures this role. Their relationship suggests that the commander, too, depends on the team. When Osborne is killed in the raid, the emotional structure of the dugout begins to collapse, and Stanhope's grief turns to anger at Raleigh. Sherriff seems to be showing that the bonds formed in the trenches were intense precisely because they were so fragile.

Hibbert's storyline exposes the darker side of teamwork. Suffering from neuralgia, and quite possibly from shell shock, he tries to leave the line, insisting he will "die of this pain" if he stays. Stanhope first threatens to shoot him rather than let him desert, a moment that reflects the real threat of court martial and execution faced by soldiers who refused to fight. Yet Stanhope then changes tactic, confessing that he feels the same fear and persuading Hibbert that they must "stick together". Here teamwork is presented as a kind of shared lie that makes duty bearable: no one is unafraid, but each man stays so as not to let the others down. A modern audience might feel uneasy that a clearly ill man is pressured back into the line, and Sherriff, who knew the trenches first hand, may intend that discomfort.

Even the lowest ranks are vital to the team. Mason, the officers' servant, keeps the domestic routine running with his anxious questions, such as "Excuse me, sir. Can I lay supper?", and his comic struggles over the food. The humour lightens the tension, but it also shows that ordinary routines like meals give the officers a

Question number

sense of normality. Servants like Mason did real practical work in a company, and Sherriff gives him dignity: at the climax he loyally carries out orders even as the attack begins.

Finally, Sherriff shows the limits of teamwork. The raid is ordered from above by the Colonel and the staff, who are distant from the men who must carry it out, and its success is measured by one captured German boy while Osborne and six men die. The team inside the dugout is loyal and close, but the wider military "team" is shown to be careless with lives. The final scene, in which Stanhope stays with the dying Raleigh before going up to face the attack, suggests that comradeship survives to the very end, even as the shelling buries the dugout. Teamwork, then, is important not because it wins the war, but because it is the only humane thing left in it.

14 Raleigh's journey in Journey's End is from schoolboy hero-worship to bitter disillusionment, and Sherriff uses that change to dramatise what the war did to a whole generation of young men. Raleigh arrives believing in the glorious, adventurous war that propaganda and school had promised him; within a few days he has watched his friend die and learned that the older officers survive only by numbing themselves. Because Raleigh changes so quickly, he acts almost as the audience's representative, and his lost innocence becomes the emotional centre of the play.

At the start, Sherriff stresses Raleigh's youth. He has a "boyish voice" and has only just left school, and his conversation with Osborne is full of eager, excited enthusiasm. He regards it as an "amazing bit of luck" to be sent to Stanhope's company, revealing that he has pulled strings through his uncle, a general, to be

Question number

with his old school hero. His view of war is coloured by the public school, where Stanhope was a sporting champion, and the language he uses seems more suited to a rugby match than a battlefield. Sherriff, writing in 1928 with the knowledge of how such boys had died in their thousands, invites the audience to feel the dramatic irony: we already sense, through Osborne's careful warning that Raleigh will notice a "difference in Stanhope", that this innocence cannot last.

Raleigh's first meeting with Stanhope is the first crack in his illusions. Stanhope's greeting, "How did you", is broken off, and his coldness contrasts sharply with Raleigh's warmth. Yet Raleigh's loyalty survives even Stanhope's humiliating demand to read his letter home. Sherriff makes this a turning point for the audience rather than for Raleigh: the letter, read aloud by Osborne, praises Stanhope generously, revealing that Raleigh's hero-worship is genuine and that Stanhope's fear of being exposed was unfounded. Raleigh at this stage is still trusting, honest and uncomplicated, qualities that make his later change more painful.

Gradually, Raleigh begins to see the strangeness of the war. When Osborne describes how British and German soldiers helped each other to rescue a wounded man, only to blow up each other's trenches later, Raleigh agrees that the war seems "silly". This understated word is significant: it marks the first moment when Raleigh's romantic view gives way to a sense of absurdity. Context matters here, since such incidents of temporary truce, like the Christmas truce of 1914, became symbols of how ordinary soldiers on both sides had little personal hatred for each other.

The raid is the decisive turning point. Before it, Raleigh finds the prospect "most frightfully exciting!", and the exclamation and schoolboy adverb show he still sees it as an adventure. Osborne, by contrast, quietly prepares for death, leaving his

Question number

ring and watch with Stanhope, and tries to distract Raleigh by talking about home. The structure of this scene is deliberately painful: Sherriff lets us see Osborne protecting Raleigh's innocence just before it is destroyed. When Raleigh returns, the Colonel's cheerful promise, "I'll get you a Military Cross for this!", rings hollow, because Raleigh "sits with lowered head, looking at the palms of his hands." The stage direction is powerful precisely because it is silent. The boy who talked constantly now cannot speak, and his gaze at his own hands suggests guilt or disbelief at what they have been part of. The medal, a symbol of official glory, is set against the reality of Osborne's death.

After the raid, Raleigh becomes angry and alienated. He refuses to join the officers' meal and drinking, crying out, "How can I sit down and eat that", his voice "nearly breaking". The broken syntax of the full line, filled with pauses and hesitations, mirrors his emotional collapse. He accuses Stanhope of being able to "sit there and drink champagne" while Osborne lies dead outside. Raleigh's outrage is morally understandable, yet Sherriff complicates it. Stanhope's furious reply, "To forget, you little fool", reveals that the drinking and joking are not callousness but a desperate coping strategy. Raleigh has changed from innocent to angry, but he has not yet learned what the older officers know: that grief has to be buried if a man is to keep functioning. Alcohol was a common means of coping in the trenches, and Stanhope's dependence on whisky is the clearest example of this.

In the final scene, Raleigh changes again, almost back into a child. Fatally wounded, he is carried down into the dugout, and he and Stanhope speak with a new gentleness; Raleigh calls him by his first name, Dennis, as he did at school. His confusion and his complaint about the dark and the cold reduce him to a frightened boy, and Stanhope's tenderness suggests that Raleigh's death finally breaks through his defences. The guttering candle and the final shell that

Question number

collapses the dugout leave the audience with the image of a life extinguished at the very beginning.

Through Raleigh, Sherriff shows how the war consumed young men from the officer class as much as anyone else. His change is not a story of growing up but of being robbed of the chance to grow up, which is perhaps Sherriff's most damning comment on the war.

15 In The Empress, Tanika Gupta uses the lascars to show the hidden human cost of the British Empire. Queen Victoria's court, with its jubilee celebrations and its fascination with India, represents the glittering surface of empire; the lascars, scrubbing decks and sleeping in boarding houses at the docks, represent the people whose labour made that wealth possible. By opening the play on board ship among these men, Gupta immediately puts the marginalised at the centre of her drama, and she uses them to explore racism, exploitation, solidarity and, through Hari, the beginnings of resistance.

The lascars' significance is clear from the very first scene. The stage directions describe men who are "barefooted" and look "undernourished and dirty", and the visual impact of their bodies tells the audience at once how they are valued by the shipping companies. The variety of their origins, "Chinese, Indians and some black Africans", suggests that the Empire treated very different peoples as one interchangeable source of cheap labour. Historically, lascars were recruited to crew British merchant ships, usually on worse pay and conditions than white sailors, and Gupta's staging makes that inequality visible before a word is spoken.

Their work is shown as gruelling and degrading. They are seen "scrubbing the decks

Question number

with soap and water", performing menial tasks while wealthier passengers travel in comfort. The Serang, who acts as their overseer, treats them brutally, threatening to send Hari's "skinny little body down to hell to work in the boiler room". This hyperbolic image of the boiler room as hell conveys the inhumanity of the conditions below deck, and it is telling that violence comes not only from the British but from a man within the lascars' own world. Gupta seems to suggest that empire creates hierarchies of power that set colonised people against one another.

The lascars are also significant because they are kept firmly separate from the passengers. When Hari is seen talking to Rani, Abdul Karim orders him to "Get back to your work lascar", and warns Rani to choose her friends "more carefully in future". The use of "lascar" as a term of address, rather than Hari's name, reduces him to his job and his class. It is significant that this contempt comes from Abdul, an Indian himself, who is travelling to serve the Queen. Gupta shows how class and status divide Indians as much as race divides Indians from the British, and this prepares the audience for the later contrast between Abdul's rise at court and Hari's struggle at the docks.

Yet Gupta refuses to present the lascars only as victims. Their camaraderie is a source of resilience: they sing as they work, joke, gamble and drink together, and their banter is often bawdy and affectionate, as in the insult that something "has more holes in it than your brain". These moments of humour give them individuality and humanity that the shipping companies deny them. In the docks, Lascar Sally's boarding house becomes a kind of community for them. Sally, who speaks Hindi and keeps order among rowdy sailors, is a striking figure of cross-cultural survival, and her reminder that without her they would have to "sleep in the streets" reflects the real precariousness of lascars stranded in Britain

Question number

between voyages. Many lascars did end up destitute in London, which led to institutions such as the Strangers' Home in Limehouse being set up for them.

Hari is the most important lascar because he embodies change. Through his friendship with Rani, he learns to read and write, and her praise, "You're a quick learner Hari", shows how education opens up possibilities beyond the life he was born into. Their relationship crosses social lines that the ship's hierarchy tried to enforce. Gupta also shows the lascars' lack of control over their lives: they are bound by contracts with shipping lines such as the Clan Line and must sail wherever they are sent. Hari's demand for "equal pay with the white sailors", and to be "respected as members of the human race", gives voice to a political awakening. The phrase "members of the human race" is powerful because it shows how basic his demand is: he is asking not for privilege but for recognition as a person. The consequence, being thrown off the ship "beaten and bloodied", exposes how violently the system punished those who challenged it.

Hari's story connects to the wider political strand of the play, which includes Dadabhai Naoroji's campaign to become the first Indian MP in 1892. Together these characters suggest that resistance to imperial injustice began not only among educated men in Parliament but also among workers on the docks.

Ultimately, the lascars are significant because they give the play its moral perspective. Against the romanticised India of Victoria's court, with its curries, Urdu lessons and gifts, the lascars reveal the exploitation on which the Empire depended. Writing in 2013, Gupta recovers the forgotten history of Asian workers in Victorian Britain, reminding a modern audience that multicultural Britain has much older roots than many assume, and that those roots were often formed in hardship.

Question number

16

Cultural difference lies at the heart of The Empress, because the play is about what happens when the two halves of the British Empire, the rulers and the ruled, meet face to face in London. Tanika Gupta shows that cultural difference can be a source of curiosity, friendship and learning, as in Queen Victoria's relationship with Abdul Karim, but more often it is used as an excuse for prejudice, exploitation and control. By contrasting characters who embrace difference with those who fear or fetishise it, Gupta exposes the hypocrisy of an empire that claimed to rule India for its own good while knowing very little about it.

Queen Victoria's words, "At last we have an Indian gentleman who will be able to enlighten us", show her genuine curiosity about her Indian subjects. The verb "enlighten" is interesting, because it reverses the usual imperial idea that Britain was bringing civilisation to India; here it is the Indian who will educate the Queen. At the same time, the possessive "our subjects so far away" reminds the audience of the power imbalance: India is something she owns but has never seen. Victoria had been proclaimed Empress of India in 1876, and Gupta presents her as a ruler aware that she knows her empire only from a distance.

Victoria's response to cultural difference is to learn. She makes Abdul her Munshi, or teacher, and begins to study Urdu, asking him to tell her about his city, Agra. Their lessons are shown with warmth and humour, and even small comic moments, such as Victoria comparing Abdul's turban to her egg cup, reveal an affectionate, if slightly naive, fascination. Crucially, Abdul does not only offer her exotic stories; he describes the hardships of Indians under British rule and their "daily humiliation of abuse". Gupta uses this relationship to suggest that real cultural exchange requires listening to uncomfortable truths. Historically, Victoria's closeness to Abdul

Question number

Karim caused resentment among her household, and after her death he was sent back to India and much of their correspondence was destroyed, which gives this friendship a poignant, fragile quality.

Lady Sarah represents the opposite attitude. Her insistence that "he cannot stay" shows a court determined to keep Indians in their place as servants. Her prejudices are presented as absurd: she asks whether Abdul can speak English, claims that "Indian blood is thinner than the English", and suggests he lives in "some kind of a harem". The pseudo-scientific claim about blood reflects the racial theories that Victorians used to justify empire, while the reference to a harem shows how Indian life was reduced to orientalist fantasy. Gupta allows the audience to laugh at Lady Sarah's ignorance, but the laughter is uneasy, because her views were widely held and had real consequences.

Cultural difference also shapes Rani's experience, and here the consequences are harsher. When she arrives in England, the Matthews family abandon her, explaining they already have "an English nanny". The repetition of "nanny" with the added adjective "English" makes clear that Rani's Indianness is the reason she is discarded. Ayahs were frequently brought to Britain to care for children on the voyage and then dismissed on arrival, and Gupta uses Rani's fate to show how disposable colonial servants were.

Lord Oakham's attitude is perhaps the most disturbing, because it looks like appreciation. Having grown up in India, he claims to miss its food, saying it "brings back so many happy memories", and he wants Rani to cook curry and describe her village. Yet his interest is self-serving: he enjoys India as a memory and a fantasy, and he treats Rani as part of that fantasy rather than as a person. His later exploitation of her shows that fascination with another culture can coexist with

Question number

complete disregard for the humanity of the people who belong to it. Gupta seems to be warning against an exoticism that consumes difference without respecting it.

Gupta also uses visual and sensory details to make cultural difference vivid on stage: saris and uniforms, turbans, spices and the sound of Hindi and Urdu alongside English. Clothing is especially significant, as characters are made to dress according to other people's expectations, which reveals how identity is controlled by those with power. The lascars, drawn from many parts of Asia and Africa, show a different kind of cultural mixing, a working-class community that survives through shared songs and humour rather than official recognition.

Finally, Dadabhai Naoroji shows how cultural difference can become a political force. As an educated Indian who campaigns in British politics, and who became the first Indian MP in 1892, he uses the language and institutions of the British themselves to argue for Indian rights. He embodies the idea that difference need not mean inferiority.

Overall, cultural differences are important in The Empress because they reveal the moral divide at the centre of the play. Characters who learn from difference, like Victoria and Rani, grow; those who fear or exploit it, like Lady Sarah and Lord Oakham, are diminished. Writing for a twenty-first-century audience, Gupta suggests that Britain's multicultural identity began in these Victorian encounters, and that how a society treats cultural difference is a measure of its humanity.

17 The relationship between Ruth and Alem is significant in Refugee Boy because it charts the play's central movement from suspicion to solidarity. At first Ruth sees Alem as an intruder in her home; by the end she is fighting alongside him for his

Question number

right to stay in Britain. Through this relationship, Lemn Sissay, adapting Benjamin Zephaniah's novel, explores how young people in care and young people in foster families are both affected by loss, and he suggests that genuine human connection can cross the boundaries of nationality, race and experience that the asylum system tries to enforce.

At the start, the relationship is strained and sometimes hostile. When Alem comes to live with the Fitzgeralds, Ruth struggles to accept him, and her outbursts, such as "Shut up, I hate you" and "I hope they send you back", are shocking in their bluntness. The second insult is especially cruel, because being sent back is exactly what Alem fears most: it would mean returning to a war in which his family are in danger. Sissay seems to show that Ruth, as a teenager, lashes out without understanding the weight of her words, and the audience may feel both sympathy for Alem and some understanding of Ruth's anger.

Ruth's hostility, however, is not really about Alem. Her complaints, "You don't ask my opinion" and "It's always later, isn't it?", reveal a girl who feels neglected by her parents, whose attention is always given to the children they foster. The phrase "always later" suggests years of being told to wait. In this sense the play is significant for exploring a less obvious side of fostering: the impact on the carers' own children, who must share their home and their parents with a succession of strangers. Fostering is designed to give vulnerable children stability, but Sissay, who grew up in care himself, shows that it can create instability for everyone involved.

The deeper reason for Ruth's coldness is Themba, the previous foster child, whose suicide still haunts the family. Ruth admits that Alem reminds her of him: "I swear it could have been Themba". This explains her fear of getting close to Alem,

Question number

since attachment has already led to devastating grief. It is significant that Alem notices her distress before she can speak about it, telling her "I hear you every night". The simple statement shows his sensitivity, and it reverses the expected roles: the refugee boy, who has lost so much, becomes the one who comforts the British girl in her own home. Sissay suggests that suffering is not confined to war zones.

The turning point comes when Ruth sees how upset Alem is at being separated from his family. Seeing his "tears on his face" allows her to recognise that he too is grieving, and she begins to confide in him, asking "Can I tell you something?" The tentative question marks a shift from defensiveness to trust. When she later tells him Themba was the "one I fell for" and that "He killed himself", the short, blunt sentences convey how hard these words are for her to say. Her relationship with Alem therefore becomes significant for Ruth's own healing: by helping him, she begins to come to terms with her loss.

The line "Whatever happens, whatever, you can trust me. Like I'm your sister, right?" is the clearest sign of how far their relationship has developed. The repetition of "whatever" shows Ruth's determination and perhaps her awareness that terrible things may still happen to Alem. The simile "Like I'm your sister" is particularly moving, because Alem has been cut off from his own family, and Ruth offers him a new kind of kinship. The tag question "right?" adds a note of uncertainty, as though she is asking for permission to be that sister. Sissay suggests that family can be created through choice and loyalty, not just through blood.

Finally, the relationship is significant because it becomes political. When Alem and his father face the asylum courts and are refused, Ruth, together with Mustapha,

Question number

helps launch the "KELOS MUST STAY" campaign. The capitalised slogan turns their private friendship into public protest. Alem's call for a "new generation of peacemakers" suggests that young people like Ruth and Alem, who have learned to understand each other across difference, offer hope for a better future. The play was written at a time of intense debate in Britain about asylum, and the original novel drew on the Eritrean and Ethiopian conflict around the turn of the millennium, when many families were forced to flee. Sissay shows the complex and often harsh legal system through Alem's experience, but through Ruth he also shows ordinary British people choosing compassion.

In conclusion, the relationship between Ruth and Alem matters because it mirrors the message of the whole play. Initial fear and resentment give way to empathy when people listen to each other's stories. Ruth's journey from "I hate you" to "Like I'm your sister" invites the audience to make the same journey in their attitude towards refugees.

18 Suffering runs through every strand of Refugee Boy, and Lemn Sissay's adaptation uses it to make a powerful point: pain is not confined to the war zones Alem has escaped, but is also present in British homes, care institutions and courtrooms. By placing the violence of the Eritrean and Ethiopian conflict alongside the quieter grief of the Fitzgeralds and the damaged lives of the boys in the children's home, Sissay asks the audience to see what connects people rather than what divides them. Suffering is important because it creates empathy, and because the play shows how individuals and communities respond to it.

The play opens with Alem's suffering at its most raw. Abandoned by his father in a London hotel, he repeats "No No No No No No", a cry that is less a sentence

Question number

than an expression of pure panic. The repetition conveys a child's inability to process what has happened. Mr Kelo's motive is love: he believes Alem will be safer in England "Until the fighting stops and the persecution is over". The irony is that protecting Alem from physical danger causes him intense emotional suffering, as he is left alone in a foreign country. Sissay immediately shows that, for refugees, there are no painless choices.

The war itself is presented through flashbacks and remembered scenes that bring violence onto the stage. Alem's parents are abused because their marriage crosses national lines, his mother being Eritrean and his father Ethiopian. The insult "she is the enemy. And he is a mongrel" shows how war turns neighbours into enemies and reduces people to labels. The dehumanising word "mongrel" is especially brutal, since it treats a child of mixed heritage as less than human. The stage direction "Blood sprays from her mouth" makes physical suffering shockingly visible. During the border war between the two countries, many families like the Kelos were persecuted and forced to flee, and Sissay ensures that the audience cannot see Alem's story as abstract.

Suffering does not end when Alem reaches Britain. In the children's home he is bullied by Sweeney, who threatens "I'll cut you up. Refugee Boy". The use of "Refugee Boy" as a taunt turns Alem's identity into an insult, mirroring the way the soldiers used "mongrel". Yet Sissay complicates our view of Sweeney by revealing that he has himself suffered violence from his father. His aggression seems to be learned behaviour, a way of passing on the pain he has received. Similarly, Mustapha's obsessive talk about cars, which might seem comic, is linked to the loss of his father, and becomes a coping mechanism. Sissay, who grew up in care, presents these boys with sympathy rather than judgement, suggesting that suffering explains, even if it does not excuse, their behaviour.

Question number

The Fitzgeralds' suffering is quieter but just as significant. The quotation "I can't talk about it. I can't think about him every day. Every God-forsaken day" reveals Mrs Fitzgerald's grief for Themba, the foster child who killed himself. The repetition of "I can't" shows her desperation to block out her pain, while the minor sentence "Every God-forsaken day" emphasises how relentless her grief is. The adjective "God-forsaken" suggests that her suffering has shaken her faith or her sense that the world is just. Ruth's insistence that the family must talk about Themba shows that silence has not healed them, and Mr Fitzgerald's gesture as he "hugs his wife" offers a moment of tenderness. Sissay seems to suggest that suffering left unspoken festers, and that families must share pain to survive it.

Ruth also suffers in a different way. She feels ignored by her parents, protesting "you didn't ask me if it was ok", as children she has no say over come and go in her home. Her suffering is less dramatic than Alem's, but the play treats it seriously, showing that the consequences of fostering affect the whole family.

The asylum process adds a further, institutional form of suffering. Alem must stand before a judge and introduce himself, "My name is Alem Kelo. My age is fourteen", and the simple, formal sentences show how a traumatised child is forced to present himself in the cold language of the legal system. The rejection of the Kelos' application, with its instruction to "make a life in your own country", seems cruelly blind to the danger they face. Sissay exposes how bureaucracy can deepen suffering instead of relieving it. The cruellest blow is the murder of Mr Kelo in London, in what is described as a "politically motivated" attack, after the news of his mother's death in Eritrea. Alem loses both parents, showing that persecution can follow refugees even to the country meant to protect them.

Question number

However, suffering also becomes the source of hope. Because Alem has suffered, he understands others' pain, and his friendship with Ruth helps both of them heal. The campaign to let the Kelos stay transforms individual suffering into collective action, and Alem's call for a "new generation of peacemakers" suggests that those who have suffered most may become the people most committed to preventing it.

Ultimately, suffering is important in Refugee Boy because it unites the characters across their differences. Sissay shows that refugees, foster families and children in care all carry pain, and he challenges the audience to respond to suffering, wherever it comes from, with compassion rather than hostility.

19

Squealer is arguably the most important pig on Animal Farm after Napoleon himself, because without him Napoleon's power would be nothing more than naked force. Where the dogs control the animals' bodies, Squealer controls their minds. Through him Orwell explores how a tyranny survives by rewriting language, memory and history, and the claim that he "could turn black into white" sums up his role perfectly: he is the propagandist who makes the unacceptable sound reasonable, and in doing so he becomes Orwell's warning about the power of words in the hands of the corrupt.

From his first description Orwell signals that Squealer is not to be trusted. He is a "small fat pig" with "very round cheeks, twinkling eyes, nimble movements and a shrill voice". His plumpness hints that he will grow fat on the labour of others, while the "twinkling eyes" suggest a sly amusement at the animals' gullibility. Most revealing is his habit of "skipping from side to side" when arguing a difficult point; his body moves as evasively as his reasoning, never meeting the truth head on. Even his name carries a double meaning, evoking both the squeal of a pig and

Question number

someone who "squeals", an informer. Orwell, writing in 1943 to 1944 and publishing in 1945, was deeply concerned with the way language could be bent to political ends, a concern he later set out in "Politics and the English Language", and Squealer is the living embodiment of that fear.

Squealer's importance first becomes clear when the pigs take the milk and apples for themselves. Rather than admitting greed, he presents the theft as a sacrifice, claiming that the pigs are "brainworkers" and that apples are necessary to their well-being. His masterstroke is the threat at the end of the argument: if the pigs failed in their duty, "Jones would come back". This rhetorical question is repeated throughout the novel, and it is so effective because it exploits the animals' genuine memories of suffering under Jones. Orwell shows that propaganda works best not through outright lies but by attaching fear to dissent, so that questioning the leaders feels like betraying the Rebellion itself. In this way Squealer suppresses opposition far more efficiently than violence alone could.

As the novel progresses, Squealer moves from justifying the present to rewriting the past. When Snowball is expelled, Squealer insists that Snowball's courage at the Battle of the Cowshed was exaggerated and later that he was in league with Jones all along, even claiming that Snowball "has sold himself" to Frederick. When the animals faintly remember a resolution never to engage in trade, he asks, "Are you certain that this is not something that you have dreamed, comrades?" This gentle question is sinister, because it teaches the animals to doubt their own minds. Orwell here mirrors the Soviet regime's systematic falsification of history, in which Trotsky was erased from photographs and records and blamed for every failure of Stalin's policies. Squealer is commonly read as an allegory for Molotov and, more broadly, for the Soviet propaganda machine and newspapers such as Pravda, which announced every change of line as if it had always been the truth.

Question number

The alteration of the Seven Commandments shows how literally Squealer rewrites reality. One night the animals hear a crash and find Squealer sprawled beside a broken ladder with a pot of white paint, yet only Benjamin understands what this means. Soon after, the commandment about alcohol has acquired the words "to excess". Similarly, when the pigs move into the farmhouse, Squealer explains that the rule was against sheets, not beds. Orwell uses dramatic irony here: the reader sees the manipulation clearly while the animals, many of whom cannot read, accept it. This exposes how a lack of education leaves ordinary people defenceless against propaganda, a point reinforced by Squealer's endless "lists of figures" proving that food production has risen even as the animals go hungry. The vocabulary of "readjustment" rather than reduction of rations is a perfect example of political euphemism.

Squealer's most shocking achievement comes after Boxer is taken away. Although the van clearly belongs to a horse slaughterer, Squealer persuades the animals that it had been bought by the veterinary surgeon and the old name not yet painted out. He even supplies Boxer's supposed last words, which conveniently end with praise of Napoleon. Orwell makes the reader feel the full horror of this moment: the most loyal worker on the farm is sold for whisky money, and the animals are made grateful for it. Squealer's lies have become so complete that grief itself is controlled.

By the final chapter Squealer is the first pig to walk on his hind legs and has trained the sheep to bleat "Four legs good, two legs better", reversing the founding slogan of Animalism. This reversal shows that he has no principles at all, only loyalty to power. Ultimately, Squealer is important because he reveals Orwell's central argument: that revolutions are betrayed not only by force but by the

Question number

corruption of language, and that a people who cannot remember or question the truth cannot be free.

20 Suffering is at the heart of Animal Farm: it is the reason the Rebellion begins, and its return under the pigs is the clearest sign that the Rebellion has failed. Orwell structures the novella as a cycle in which the animals' misery under Jones is replaced by an even greater misery under Napoleon, and by doing so he exposes how the Russian Revolution, which promised to free the workers, instead delivered them into a new form of slavery under Stalin.

At the start of the novel suffering is presented as the natural condition of the animals, accepted without question until old Major names it. In his speech he declares that "our lives are miserable, laborious, and short" and that "the life of an animal is misery and slavery". The tricolon of adjectives makes their suffering sound relentless, while the blunt noun "slavery" reframes their ordinary lives as a political injustice. Major identifies the cause precisely: "Man is the only creature that consumes without producing." Orwell based Major on Karl Marx and, to some extent, Lenin, and his speech echoes Marx's argument that the working class suffers because the owners of property take the fruits of its labour. Suffering is therefore significant because it gives the animals a shared grievance and a vision of a better future.

Jones's cruelty and neglect make this vision urgent. When he falls on hard times and leaves the animals unfed, their hunger finally drives them to break into the store-shed, and when the men attack them with whips they turn on their "tormentors". The Rebellion happens almost by accident, born of physical need rather than ideology. This mirrors the Russian Revolution of 1917, which erupted

Question number

amid food shortages and the misery of the First World War under the neglectful rule of Tsar Nicholas II. Orwell suggests that suffering is a powerful force for change, but not necessarily a guide to what comes next.

The tragedy of the novel is that the animals' suffering returns, slowly at first and then brutally. Orwell's quotation in the question, that the animals "worked a sixty-hour week" and were then asked to work on Sunday afternoons as well, is presented with heavy irony, since the extra work is technically "voluntary" but any animal who refuses has its rations reduced. The language of choice disguises compulsion. As the windmill is built and rebuilt, rations are repeatedly cut while Squealer reads out figures proving that everyone is better fed than before. During the hard winter the animals face famine, and Napoleon has the bins filled with sand and topped with grain to deceive Whymper. These events allude to Stalin's Five Year Plans and the forced collectivisation of agriculture, which caused famine across the Soviet Union, most devastatingly in Ukraine, while the regime insisted to the outside world that all was well.

Suffering becomes most horrifying when it is inflicted by the pigs directly. When the hens resist having their eggs sold, Napoleon stops their rations and nine hens die, recalling the kulaks who were starved for resisting collectivisation. Worse still are the executions in Chapter 7, where animals confess to absurd crimes and "the dogs promptly tore their throats out". The adverb "promptly" is chilling in its efficiency, suggesting that violence has become routine. Orwell then shifts to Clover's perspective as she looks down over the farm, reflecting that these scenes of terror and slaughter were not what they had looked forward to on the night of Major's speech. Her inability to put her feelings into words is deeply moving: the animals suffer not only physically but in their sense of betrayal. This scene clearly allegorises Stalin's show trials and the Great Purge of 1936 to 1938, which Orwell,

Question number

having witnessed Stalinist persecution of fellow left-wingers in the Spanish Civil War, understood at first hand.

Boxer embodies the suffering of the loyal working class. His mottoes, "I will work harder" and "Napoleon is always right", show both his strength and his fatal trust. He works on despite his split hoof and failing health until his lung gives way, and he is then sold to the knacker. Boxer resembles the Stakhanovite workers celebrated in Soviet propaganda, and his fate shows that the regime values workers only while they are useful. His suffering is significant because it is the novel's emotional climax, forcing the reader to feel the cost of blind obedience.

Orwell also shows how suffering is managed and made bearable by those in power. The return of Moses the raven, who tells of Sugarcandy Mountain, offers the animals the promise of reward after death, and the pigs tolerate him because hope of heaven makes present misery easier to endure. This reflects the Soviet regime's eventual accommodation with the Church and Marx's view of religion as a consolation that keeps the oppressed passive.

By the end, Benjamin's cynical view that hunger, hardship and disappointment are the unalterable law of life seems to have been proved right. The animals look from pig to man and cannot tell the difference. Suffering is significant because it frames the whole novella: it inspires the Rebellion and then returns to condemn it, revealing Orwell's warning that when power is concentrated in the hands of a few, the suffering of the many will continue whatever name the regime gives itself.

21 Simon is the moral and spiritual centre of Lord of the Flies, and Golding defines him almost entirely through contrast. Where the other boys look outwards for the

Question number

source of their fear, Simon looks inwards; where they hunt, he helps; where they become a mob, he remains alone. Golding, who described Simon as a saint-like figure, uses him to show that goodness and insight do exist in human nature, but the boys' rejection and eventual murder of him suggest that such goodness is fragile and easily destroyed in a world governed by fear.

From the beginning Simon is physically set apart. When the choir first appear, he faints in the heat, and Jack dismisses him with the comment that "he's always throwing a faint". Jack's contempt shows how the other boys equate worth with strength and status, values that will later fuel Jack's tribe. Simon's fainting fits, which some readers see as epilepsy, are also linked to his visionary quality: in the extract, "his times" coming on precedes his encounter with the pig's head, as though his frailty opens him to truths the others cannot see. In the post-war world in which Golding wrote, a world that had just witnessed the Nazi persecution of the weak and the "unfit", there is something significant in making the most vulnerable boy the most morally clear-sighted.

Simon also contrasts with the others through his quiet acts of kindness. While most of the boys abandon Ralph's shelters to play or bathe, Simon is the one who continues to help build them, and Ralph complains that only Simon has been working with him. In one of the novel's tenderest moments, Simon picks fruit for the littluns, finding for them the fruit they could not reach. Many critics read this as an allusion to Christ feeding the multitude, and it establishes him as a nurturing presence in a society that is beginning to neglect its youngest members. Even his compassion for Piggy, when he returns Piggy's glasses or defends him, contrasts sharply with the casual cruelty of the biguns.

Golding further separates Simon through his relationship with nature. He retreats

Question number

to a secret place among the creepers, a natural "cabin" where the candle-buds open in the evening light. Unlike Jack, who sees the forest as a place to stalk and kill, Simon experiences it with stillness and reverence. The contrast is pointed: the same jungle that gives Jack a hunting ground gives Simon a place of peace, suggesting that how we see the world reveals who we are.

Most importantly, Simon contrasts with the other boys in his understanding of the beast. While they imagine a creature in the forest or on the mountain, Simon suggests at the assembly that "maybe it's only us". Golding tells us that Simon became inarticulate in his effort to express mankind's essential illness, and the boys respond by laughing and jeering. His inability to communicate his insight, and their refusal to listen, is a structural tragedy: the truth is spoken in Chapter 5, but the boys are too frightened to hear it. Jack's crude answer to Simon's question "What's the dirtiest thing there is?" reduces moral evil to a schoolboy joke, sharply contrasting Simon's seriousness with the others' immaturity.

The extract leads into Simon's confrontation with the Lord of the Flies, the sow's head that Jack's hunters have impaled as a gift for the beast. The head tells him, "Fancy thinking the Beast was something you could hunt and kill!" and insists that it is part of him. The title itself translates the Hebrew name Beelzebub, a name for the devil, and this scene presents Simon facing temptation in the wilderness, much like Christ. Crucially, he does not join the hunters but goes up the mountain alone and discovers the truth: the "beast" is a dead parachutist. His gentle act of freeing the figure's lines shows compassion even for the dead, and he sets off to tell the others the beast is harmless.

His death is the clearest contrast of all. Arriving at the frenzied dance, Simon is mistaken for the beast and killed amid "the tearing of teeth and claws". The chant

Question number

"Kill the beast! Cut his throat! Spill his blood!" shows the boys lost in the collective identity of the mob, the opposite of Simon's lonely individuality. Golding then describes his body being carried out to sea in luminous, almost sacred imagery, surrounded by bright creatures of the water. The contrast between the savagery of the killing and the beauty of this passage suggests that Simon belongs to a different moral order from the boys who murdered him. Even Piggy and Ralph, the "civilised" boys, take part and then try to deny it, showing that no one except Simon is innocent.

Golding, who had served in the Royal Navy in the Second World War and witnessed the extremes of human cruelty, famously argued that man produces evil as a bee produces honey. Simon is the exception that proves this rule. He contrasts with the others because he alone recognises that the beast is within, yet his fate suggests that a society driven by fear will always destroy its prophets. In this way Golding offers a deeply pessimistic view: goodness can see the truth, but it cannot save us from ourselves.

22 Survival is the problem that drives every event in Lord of the Flies, but Golding shows that the boys understand it in very different ways. For Ralph, survival means rescue and a return to civilisation; for Jack, it comes to mean meat, power and the destruction of rivals. As the novel progresses, the struggle to stay alive strips away the rules of society, and Golding, writing in the aftermath of the Second World War and at the start of the nuclear age, uses this to suggest that the instinct to survive can easily become an instinct to dominate and kill.

At the start, survival is linked to faith in the adult world. Ralph's confident words, "sooner or later we shall be rescued", reveal a boy who assumes that someone

Question number

powerful is coming to save him. The reference to "daddy's ship" is telling: his father is a naval officer, and Ralph believes that the order of the British establishment will extend even to this remote island. Piggy is more anxious and more realistic, pointing out that nobody knows where they are. When the boys realise there are no grown-ups, Ralph's reply that they will have to look after themselves marks the moment survival becomes their own responsibility. Golding's readers in 1954 would have been aware of the atomic war that has apparently brought the boys' plane down, which makes their hope of a safe adult world deeply ironic.

The boys' first response to the challenge of survival is to recreate society. They elect a leader, make rules and use the conch to decide who may speak. Jack himself declares that they must have rules and obey them because "we're not savages. We're English". This reflects the post-war confidence that British civilisation was inherently superior, an attitude also found in Ballantyne's The Coral Island, the Victorian adventure story Golding deliberately rewrites. Survival, at this stage, is cooperative and democratic, showing that order and fairness can help people endure.

Ralph quickly identifies the practical priorities. He wants shelters for protection and, above all, a signal fire, which he later insists is the most important thing on the island. The fire is Golding's central symbol of survival through rescue, since its smoke is the boys' only link with the outside world. Yet Ralph finds that most boys will not work steadily; only Simon helps him with the shelters. Golding suggests that long-term survival requires discipline and sacrifice, qualities that fade once the excitement of the island takes over.

Jack represents a competing idea of survival based on immediate need. He

Question number

promises to hunt and bring back meat, and hunting soon becomes his obsession. The turning point arrives when the hunters let the fire go out to chase a pig and a ship passes the island. Ralph's despairing cry that there was a ship shows that the choice between rescue and meat is really a choice between civilisation and savagery. The chant "Kill the pig! Cut her throat! Spill her blood!" reveals that hunting has become ritual rather than necessity. Jack's offer of meat in exchange for loyalty shows how basic needs can be used to buy power, and the boys flock to him because he satisfies their hunger and their fear. This reflects Maslow's idea that physical needs and safety come before higher needs; Golding suggests that when people are frightened and hungry, they will follow whoever seems to provide them.

As the novel darkens, survival turns into Darwinian competition. The phrase "survival of the fittest", popularly associated with Darwin's theory of natural selection, captures the violence of Jack's tribe, which raids Ralph's camp and steals Piggy's glasses, the only means of making fire. The glasses, like the conch and the signal fire, are tools of survival that become prizes in a power struggle. When Roger releases the boulder, "the conch exploded into a thousand white fragments" and Piggy is killed, destroying both reason and the last symbol of order. Golding presents the weak, like Piggy and the littluns, as those who cannot survive once civilisation collapses.

In the final chapters survival becomes literal and desperate, as Ralph is hunted across the island. He has been reduced to an animal, hiding in thickets, and Roger has sharpened a stick at both ends, implying that Ralph's head will be mounted like the sow's. Ralph's terror reminds us that the threat to survival is no longer the island but the other boys. The supreme irony is that the fire Jack lights to smoke Ralph out is what finally attracts the naval officer. The boys are saved by an act

Question number

of destruction, not by the careful signal fire Ralph had tended.

Even the rescue raises questions. The officer is embarrassed by the boys' behaviour and expected a better show from British boys, yet he himself is engaged in a war, and his cruiser will take them back into a world of violence. Ralph weeps "for the end of innocence, the darkness of man's heart", recognising that surviving the island has cost him his belief in human goodness. Golding, who served in the Royal Navy and saw the horrors of the war, uses the theme of survival to show that the threat to humanity comes from within. Survival is important because it tests the boys and reveals their true nature, and Golding's verdict is bleak: when civilisation is removed, the struggle to survive brings out the beast in us all.

23 Anita's relationships are important because they reveal both who she is and what she means to Meena. Syal presents Anita as a girl who treats people as possessions to be used, controlled and discarded, and the way she "played off one girlfriend against the other" captures a pattern that runs through all her friendships. Yet her relationships also expose the damage done by her chaotic home life, and by the end of the novel they become a lens through which Syal examines class, family breakdown and the racism of early 1970s Britain.

From her first appearance Anita is defined by power over others. Meena describes her as the undisputed "cock" of the yard, a striking choice of word that gives a young girl the swagger of a rooster ruling the farmyard. Her friends Sherrie and Fat Sally are less companions than followers, and the extract shows how Anita keeps them insecure by pairing off with one and leaving the other trailing behind. The image of three girls rarely walking "in the same harmonious pace" suggests that Anita deliberately prevents equality; her authority depends on others

Question number

competing for her favour. Syal shows that this is a form of control rather than friendship, and the reader begins to sense that Meena will be treated in the same way.

Anita's relationship with Meena is the emotional core of the novel. Meena, younger and desperate to belong, feels privileged simply to be chosen, and Syal's older narrating voice looks back on this infatuation with gentle irony. Anita offers Meena an escape from what she sees as the restrictions of her Punjabi family: Anita seems free, English and daring, and Meena copies her language, her attitude and even her contempt for authority. Yet the friendship is profoundly unequal. Anita takes things from Meena's house and treats her as a sidekick who can be dropped whenever someone more interesting appears. In this sense the relationship is important because it drives Meena's coming-of-age: the bildungsroman traces how she moves from worshipping Anita to seeing her clearly.

Anita's family relationships help explain her behaviour. Her mother, Deirdre, is unreliable and self-absorbed, moving between attention and neglect, and she eventually walks out on her daughters altogether. Her father is a distant figure about whom Anita invents heroic stories, suggesting that, like Meena, she uses fantasy to fill an emotional gap. Syal presents a dysfunctional household very different from Meena's close, if sometimes stifling, family. This reflects real changes in the 1960s and 1970s, as rising divorce and the decline of traditional industries in places like the Black Country put pressure on working-class families. Rather than simply condemning Anita, Syal invites some sympathy: a girl who has never experienced stable love learns to control others before they can abandon her.

This is especially clear in her treatment of her younger sister Tracey. Instead of protecting her, Anita bullies and humiliates her, sometimes joining in when other

Question number

children mock her. Tracey's vulnerability, and the way she trails after her sister in search of attention, makes Anita's cruelty more disturbing. It is significant that Meena, by contrast, grows to feel protective of Tracey, and the near drowning near the end of the novel becomes a moment when Meena's moral growth is tested. Anita's relationship with her sister therefore highlights the values Meena must reject.

The most damaging relationship is Anita's attachment to Sam Lowbridge. With Sam, Anita becomes submissive, attracted to his status as the local hard man. Sam's resentment surfaces at the Spring Fete, when he complains that the money raised will not help people like him, and his anger turns into racist violence. When Anita describes the gang's attack on an Asian man, the bank manager Mr Bhatra, as "dead funny", Meena is forced to recognise that her friend has aligned herself with the very people who threaten her family. Syal, who grew up in a mining village near Wolverhampton in the years after Enoch Powell's 1968 "Rivers of Blood" speech, captures the way casual prejudice could harden into organised hostility, with "Paki-bashing" an all too real threat for families like the Kumars. Anita's relationship with Sam therefore shows how impressionable young people could be drawn into racism through the need to belong.

The relationship also shapes Meena's identity in another way. While she is drifting away from Anita, the arrival of her grandmother, Nanima, introduces her to a Punjabi heritage she had been rejecting, and her hospital stay after breaking her leg gives her time to reflect. Syal contrasts the unconditional love of Meena's family with the conditional, transactional nature of Anita's friendship, suggesting that true belonging comes from understanding where you come from.

Ultimately, Anita's relationships with others are important because they reveal the

Question number

novel's central concerns. They show the cost of family breakdown, the dangers of seeking identity through others, and the seductive pull of a racist peer culture. Above all, they allow Meena to grow up: by recognising Anita's manipulation and choosing her own path, Meena moves from being one of the girls trailing behind Anita to being the author of her own story.

24 Rebelling is central to Anita and Me because the novel is a bildungsroman, and growing up for Meena means testing every boundary around her. Syal presents rebellion in several forms: Meena's rebellion against her parents and her heritage, Anita's rebellion against a home that has failed her, and Sam Lowbridge's angry rebellion against a society that seems to have left him behind. By contrasting these, Syal suggests that some rebellion is a healthy part of finding an identity, while other forms are destructive and dangerous.

The extract captures Meena's rebellion at its most thrilling. Sneaking out while the guests are "still singing in the front room", she slips away from the world of her parents' Punjabi gatherings into the world of Tollington. The phrase "I had sneaked out without telling" has a guilty, conspiratorial tone, as though Meena is both proud and nervous of her daring. The contrast between the warm, communal singing indoors and the freedom outside reflects the double life she leads, and the novel repeatedly shows her trying to escape the expectations of her family in search of excitement and belonging.

Meena's rebellion is closely linked to lying. The novel opens with her admission that she is "not really a liar", but that those deprived of history sometimes turn to mythology. This self-aware opening tells the reader that rebellion and storytelling are intertwined for her: she invents stories to make herself feel more interesting

Question number

and more like the other children. She steals money from her mother's purse to buy sweets, then lies to cover herself, and her desperate denials to her father show that she knows exactly how far she has crossed the line. Syal presents these acts with humour, but also with the regret of the adult narrator looking back, which encourages readers to see them as the ordinary mistakes of a child testing her parents' love.

Meena's most significant rebellion is against her own culture. She longs for English food such as fish fingers rather than the Indian meals her mother cooks, she adopts a broad Black Country accent outside the house, and she wishes she could be someone else in some other place. For a second-generation child in 1970s Britain, this rebellion reflects a painful pressure to assimilate. Syal, herself the daughter of Punjabi parents who settled in a mining village near Wolverhampton, presents Meena as caught between two worlds and belonging fully to neither. Her rebellion is significant because it is a search for identity, not simply defiance. It is only when Nanima arrives from India that Meena begins to see her heritage as a source of pride rather than embarrassment, suggesting that rebellion can eventually lead to self-understanding.

Anita's rebellion is different because it has no safe home to push against. Her mother is neglectful and eventually leaves, and Anita has little adult guidance. Her rebellion takes the form of cruelty, theft and a precocious interest in boys. She bullies her sister Tracey and manipulates her friends, and for a while Meena is dazzled by this apparent freedom. Syal suggests, however, that Anita's defiance is a symptom of damage rather than strength. This reflects broader changes in family life in the 1960s and 1970s, when the traditional nuclear family was becoming less stable, and it allows Syal to contrast Meena's rebellion, which happens within a secure, loving family, with Anita's, which happens in its absence.

Question number

Sam Lowbridge's rebellion is the most dangerous of all. At the Spring Fete, when the vicar announces that the money raised will go to the church, Sam challenges him in front of the village: "Wharra about us?" His dialect and his anger give voice to young working-class men who felt ignored as local industry declined and jobs disappeared. Syal gives Sam a genuine grievance, but she shows how this resentment is redirected towards immigrants as scapegoats. His rebellion turns into racist violence when his gang attacks Mr Bhatra, the bank manager. This mirrors the rise of skinhead culture and racist attacks in the years after Enoch Powell's 1968 "Rivers of Blood" speech, when families like the Kumars were made to feel unwelcome in the only country their children knew. Sam's rebellion is significant because it shows the difference between challenging authority and attacking the vulnerable.

These strands come together when Meena finally rebels against Anita and Sam themselves. Having learned about the attack, she distances herself from Anita and recognises what the gang's idea of fun really means, choosing her family and her own values over the approval of the group. This is the climax of her moral growth: the girl who once lied and stole to fit in now accepts the loss of a friendship rather than betray who she is. Her success in the eleven-plus and her family's move away from Tollington mark the end of her childhood and the beginning of a new life.

Ultimately, rebelling is significant because it is the means by which Meena grows up. Syal presents rebellion as natural and even necessary for a child forging an identity between cultures, but she warns that rebellion without love or direction, like Anita's, or rebellion fuelled by resentment, like Sam's, can become destructive. By the end of the novel Meena has learned to rebel wisely, rejecting both the

Question number

restrictions she resented and the prejudice she once mistook for freedom.

25 Horror in The Woman in Black is significant not simply because it frightens the reader, but because Susan Hill uses it to dismantle the confidence of a rational, modern man. Arthur Kipps begins the novel as a sceptic who believes ghost stories are entertainment for a Christmas fireside; by the end, horror has become the defining fact of his life, a grief so total that he can barely write it down. Writing in 1983, Hill deliberately revives the conventions of the Victorian and Edwardian ghost story, and horror becomes the means by which she tests whether reason and progress can ever protect us from the past.

From the very first chapter, Hill makes horror significant by placing it against safety. At Monk's Piece, the older Kipps is surrounded by the warmth of family, the "happy festive meals" of Christmas and a sky "pricked over with stars". His stepchildren tell ghost stories which become "more and more lurid, wilder", yet these tales are comic, a performance of fear. Kipps's distress at their game is the first hint of genuine horror, because it shows that he knows the difference between invented terror and real suffering. The frame narrative is important here: we know from the start that Kipps has survived, but we also know that something has scarred him so deeply that he must write his story to exorcise it. The custom of telling ghost stories at Christmas, so loved by the Victorians and rooted in the older winter festivals of Yule, when the boundary between the living and the dead was thought to be at its thinnest, gives this opening a sinister edge: Hill hints that the supernatural is never as distant as the family assumes.

The extract shows how the horror is anticipated before Kipps ever reaches Crythin Gifford. The relentless repetition of "a fog" in "a yellow fog, a filthy, evil-smelling

Question number

fog, a fog that choked and blinded" builds a sense of suffocation, while the adjective "evil-smelling" gives the weather a moral quality, as though corruption hangs in the air of London itself. This "London Particular" was a real feature of the industrial city, the smog of coal fires and factories, yet Hill turns it into a Gothic omen. The image of people "groping their way blindly" foreshadows Kipps's own blindness: he cannot yet see the danger he is walking into, and the fog anticipates the sea mists of the marsh that will later trap him.

As the novel moves north, horror is tied to isolation, a classic Gothic convention. The town is remote and difficult to reach, requiring a train from King's Cross and changes at Crewe and again at Homerby, which suggests a journey away from modern civilisation into a world that time has left behind. Eel Marsh House can only be reached across the Nine Lives Causeway, which is cut off by the tides, and Samuel Daily's warnings about "sea frets, sea mists" and "treacherous quicksand" make the landscape itself feel predatory. Here Hill reflects the gulf between the bustling Edwardian city and the poorer, inward-looking countryside communities, whose silence and superstition the confident London solicitor initially mocks. The horror is significant because it is something the townspeople already know and refuse to speak about, so Kipps is horrified not only by the ghost but by the conspiracy of silence around her.

Hill also exploits the iconography of death. Kipps's reason for travelling is Mrs Drablow's funeral, and his first sighting of the woman takes place in the church and graveyard, where she stands near the "open grave" with a face of wasted, desperate malevolence. The power of this moment lies in its restraint: she does nothing but look, yet Kipps feels "repulsion and fear". Later, horror becomes more physical, especially in the scene on the marsh when he hears the pony and trap sink into the quicksand and the cries of the drowning child. Because he hears but

Question number

cannot see, the reader is forced to imagine the worst, and this auditory horror is arguably more terrifying than any visible spectre. Similarly, the unexplained bumping noise from the locked nursery and the rocking chair that moves "with gradually decreasing speed" in an empty room create dread from domestic objects. Hill suggests that horror lies in the ordinary turned strange, an idea at the heart of the Gothic.

However, the deepest horror of the novel is human rather than supernatural. Jennet Humfrye, forced to give up her illegitimate son because of the shame attached to unmarried mothers, watches him drown on the marsh and dies "suffering from some terrible wasting disease". Her revenge is horrifying: whenever she is seen, a child dies in "some violent or dreadful circumstance". Yet a modern reader might feel some pity, since her monstrousness was created by a society that valued respectability over a mother's love. Hill blurs victim and villain, so horror becomes a consequence of cruelty and repression, not just an external evil.

Finally, the ending makes horror permanent. Kipps believes he has escaped; he marries Stella and has a son, and the narrative seems to restore normality. Then, in the park, he sees the woman again and is "paralysed" with horror moments before his son is killed in the "pony cart" accident, a cruel echo of Nathaniel's death. The brevity and finality of the closing lines leave no comfort or explanation. Hill denies the reader the reassuring resolution of many Victorian tales, and in doing so she shows that horror, once encountered, cannot be reasoned away. It is significant because it transforms both the genre and the narrator: what began as a fireside story ends as a tragedy that consumes an entire life.

26 Although The Woman in Black is a ghost story, love is the force that drives every

Question number

part of it. Susan Hill suggests that love, especially the love of a mother for her child, is so powerful that it can survive death itself; yet when that love is denied by a cruel and judgemental society, it curdles into grief, madness and revenge. Love is therefore important in two opposite ways: it is the source of the novel's tenderness and also the root of its horror.

The most important love in the novel is Jennet Humfrye's love for her son Nathaniel. Her words in the letter, "But he is mine, mine, he can never be yours", reveal the intensity of this bond. The repetition of "mine" sounds possessive and almost desperate, as though she is clinging to the one thing society cannot take from her, while the contrast between "take care of him as your own" and "he can never be yours" shows her torn between accepting the arrangement and rejecting it. The final line, "I think my heart will break", is simple and raw. Because these letters are in Jennet's own voice, they are the only moment in which the reader hears her as a human being rather than a spectre, and they force us to reconsider the ghost as a heartbroken mother.

This love matters because of the context in which Jennet lived. In the Victorian era, an unmarried woman who became pregnant brought disgrace upon her family, and Jennet is pressured into giving up her son "because she had no choice". It is implied that she loved Nathaniel's father, since she risked an intimate relationship outside marriage, yet he seems to have been removed from her life, "I think P was sent abroad", and she is sent away to Scotland to give birth. Hill shows a society in which respectability is valued more highly than love, and the reader may feel that the real cruelty of the novel lies here. Jennet's love is not allowed to exist openly, and this repression is what ultimately turns it into something destructive.

The novel also explores love that is offered in place of a mother's. The Drablows

Question number

raise Nathaniel as their own, and the nursery Kipps discovers suggests a child who was cherished. Its games of "ludo and halma, draughts and chess" and the carefully kept "day clothes, formal clothes, play clothes" show a wealthy household giving him every comfort, typical of middle-class families of the period who employed nursemaids. Yet the preserved nursery is also deeply eerie: love has been frozen in time, as if Alice Drablow could never let go of the boy either. Hill makes the reader see that two women loved the same child, and that this rivalry divided the sisters. When Jennet is finally allowed to see him, Nathaniel grows "more and more attached" to her, suggesting a "natural affinity" between mother and son that no legal arrangement could erase. Love here is instinctive and uncontrollable, which is precisely what makes it dangerous to the social order.

After Nathaniel drowns on the marsh, Jennet's love becomes the engine of the novel's horror. Her grief drives her to madness, and she dies of a wasting disease, as though love without its object has consumed her body. When "the hauntings began", her ghost targets the children of others, and each sighting is followed by a child's death. This is the dark logic of Gothic fiction, in which passionate love so often leads to tragedy and revenge. Hill seems to suggest that love and hatred are not opposites but two sides of one intense feeling: Jennet hates because she loved so much, and she wants other parents to feel the loss she felt. The horror is therefore deeply human, and a modern reader may view her with pity as well as fear.

Love is equally important for Arthur Kipps, and it is what makes his story a tragedy rather than simply a frightening experience. At the start of his journey he is engaged to Stella, and his thoughts of her represent the safe, comfortable world of London that he expects to return to. Love seems to rescue him: after his illness, Stella comes north to bring him home, and they later marry and have a

Question number

son, Joseph. Hill deliberately builds a sense of happiness and security so that the ending will be more devastating. When Kipps sees the woman in the park, his son is killed in the pony cart accident, and "Stella, too, died from her terrible injuries". Jennet takes from Kipps exactly what was taken from her, a child and a family. His love for them explains why the older Kipps, decades later, is still so haunted that he must write the story down. His narrative becomes an act of mourning.

There is also a quieter kind of love in the novel. Samuel Daily's kindness to Kipps and his bond with the loyal little dog Spider, whom he risks his own life to drag out of the marsh, show that companionship and care can offer protection, even if only temporarily. These moments of warmth contrast with the isolation of Eel Marsh House, reminding the reader of what Kipps stands to lose.

Ultimately, Hill presents love as the most powerful and most perilous emotion in the novel. It explains the haunting, gives the ghost her motive and gives Kipps his greatest pain. Through Jennet, Hill criticises a society that punished women for loving outside its rules, suggesting that when love is denied, its absence can be more terrifying than any ghost.

27

Toby is significant in Coram Boy because, through him, Jamila Gavin exposes a cruelty that the polite society of eighteenth-century London preferred not to see. On one level he is Aaron's loyal friend and the hero of the novel's climax; on another, he is a reminder that the wealth and elegance of Georgian England rested partly on the slave trade. Toby's story allows Gavin to show both the hope offered by the Coram Hospital and the limits of that hope for a black child in a world that sees him as property.

Question number

The image of Toby "all bedecked in his full princely regalia" captures his position perfectly. The word "bedecked" suggests decoration, as if Toby were an ornament rather than a boy, and "princely" is bitterly ironic: he is dressed as royalty precisely because he has no power at all. Mr Gaddarn, his benefactor and a patron of the Hospital, uses him as a server at his parties, an exotic "pet" who amuses the ladies and displays his master's wealth. This reflects a real fashion of the period, when black servants in wealthy households were treated as status symbols and often painted in portraits beside their owners like expensive possessions. Gavin makes the reader uncomfortable by showing the contradiction in how Toby is treated: he is either "picked up and stroked and cuddled" or "kicked", "punched" and "whipped". Both forms of treatment deny his humanity. Affection and violence come from the same assumption, that he exists for other people's use, and his own bleak conclusion, "I'm nothing but an animal", shows how deeply this has damaged his sense of self.

Toby is also significant because his background connects the novel to the transatlantic slave trade. He is the child of an enslaved woman, and all he has left of her is "a simple row of beads on a thin string". The modesty of this object, emphasised by "simple" and "thin", makes it poignant: it is a fragile thread linking him to an identity that slavery has tried to erase. His longing to find his mother in America, despite Benjamin's warning that he would be "put in irons", shows a child's love overriding fear. In the eighteenth century, the trade in human beings was enormously profitable, and London merchants and shipowners grew rich from it. By giving the reader a child's view of its consequences, Gavin transforms an abstract historical evil into personal suffering.

In contrast, Toby's life at the Coram Hospital reveals the value of Thomas Coram's institution, founded in 1739 for the care of "exposed and deserted young children".

Question number

Toby is raised alongside the other foundlings, the children "found by the wayside or in porches or doorways", and receives the same education, with "lessons all morning, learning their alphabet and numbers". Gavin emphasises that "No one ever beat them here at the Coram", which contrasts sharply with the beatings at Gaddarn's house. The Hospital therefore becomes a symbol of a more humane, enlightened attitude emerging in the period, where a child's worth does not depend on his colour or birth. Yet there is irony here too. Gaddarn arranges for Toby to be "trained as a manservant", so even the Hospital's charity places him on a path of service. Gavin seems to suggest that philanthropy could coexist with, and even disguise, exploitation, especially as Gaddarn's public generosity hides his secret crimes.

Toby's friendship with Aaron is one of the most moving relationships in the novel and is central to its themes of loyalty and belonging. Neither boy knows who his parents are, and this shared loss binds them. Their promise, "We go together or stay together", has the rhythm of a vow, and their mischief and dreams, such as Aaron's plan to buy "a big, big house" for them both, show childhood innocence surviving in a harsh world. Significantly, the friendship crosses racial lines at a time when society insisted on difference, so Gavin uses it to suggest that loyalty and love are stronger than the prejudices of the age.

Structurally, Toby becomes crucial in the second half of the novel, when Gaddarn's evil is revealed and he tries to sell Aaron and Mish into slavery: "Buckley! I have two more for you". Toby risks his life by escaping from Gaddarn's house to fetch Thomas and Alexander, pleading "Save 'im, sir, save Aaron". The broken, urgent dialogue shows his desperation and selflessness. When the boys are trapped in the ship's hold, Toby's terror, "They'll put me in chains; they'll make me a slave", is entirely realistic, because for him the threat is the fate of his own mother. Yet

Question number

fear does not paralyse him; it drives him to act, and the simple statement that "He heaved himself out and then helped Aaron" captures his courage in a single movement. It is because of Toby that Aaron survives to meet his father, Alexander, so the boy society treats as a possession becomes the person who makes the novel's happy resolution possible.

Overall, Toby is significant because he embodies both the darkest and most hopeful aspects of Coram Boy. He reveals the hypocrisy of a society that dressed black children in finery while trading their parents as cargo, but he also demonstrates courage, loyalty and love that far exceed those of the wealthy adults around him. Through Toby, Gavin asks her modern readers to recognise that the history of eighteenth-century Britain includes those whose voices were silenced, and she gives one of them the heroism he deserves.

28 Music in Coram Boy is far more than a backdrop to the action: it is the thread that ties the whole novel together. Jamila Gavin presents music as a source of identity, friendship and redemption, something so essential to her characters that they will sacrifice wealth and family to keep it. At the same time, the conflict over music exposes the rigid expectations of eighteenth-century society, so music becomes a way of exploring freedom against duty, and ultimately the means by which a broken family is restored.

The extract presents music as something pure and almost holy. The boys sing "with eyes fixed on the choirmaster", which suggests discipline and complete devotion, while "opened wide their mouths" conveys the physical effort and openness of singing. The phrase "piercing sweetness" is a striking contrast: "sweetness" implies beauty and innocence, yet "piercing" suggests something sharp

Question number

enough to wound, as if the music reaches straight into the listener's soul. This captures the intensity of Alexander's relationship with music. He is a gifted chorister said to have "the voice of an angel", and the religious imagery links music with goodness, a quality that sets him apart from the cruelty that runs through the novel's Gloucester chapters.

However, Alexander's passion brings him into conflict with his father. Sir William regards music as "a distraction" and rejects his son's ambitions with the emphatic "No, no, categorically no". The repetition and the formal adverb "categorically" convey a father who will not tolerate disobedience. Even Lady Ashbrook, who is gentler, is "adamantly against Alexander following a life of music". This reflects the patriarchal values of eighteenth-century England, where the eldest son of a landed family was expected to inherit and manage the estate. A career in music was seen as unsuitable for a gentleman, closer to a servant's trade than to the responsibilities of rank. Gavin uses music to show how individual talent was crushed by inherited duty, and the reader is encouraged to sympathise with Alexander's longing to be himself.

Music is equally significant in creating the friendship between Alexander and Thomas Ledbury. Gavin stresses their differences, "Alexander introverted and gloomy, Thomas popular and sociable", yet music unites them across class as well as temperament. Thomas comes from a poor background and earns pennies singing "in taverns and inns" for his family, so for him music is practical survival as well as joy. When he is bullied at school, Alexander encourages him to perform the "sea shanties, the mummers' and morris songs" he has learned from sailors, and his popular, earthy music wins over the other boys. Gavin seems to suggest that music belongs to everyone, whether it is sung in a cathedral or a tavern, and its power to bring people together contrasts with the social divisions of the period. Their shared

Question number

dream, "I hope to be a musician", shows music as a vision of a freer future.

The crisis comes when Alexander's voice breaks. Despite Lady Ashbrook's plea to "let him stay until August", he must leave the cathedral school, and this natural change becomes a symbol of the end of his childhood freedom. When he discovers that his father has removed "every single musical instrument" from Ashbrook House, the destruction feels like an attack on Alexander himself. His declaration that he "can't live without music" is not exaggeration but the truth of his character, and he runs away to London. Structurally, this decision is a turning point: by choosing music over inheritance, Alexander loses his family and also, unknowingly, the child he has fathered with Melissa. Music is therefore connected to both loss and the possibility of eventual reunion.

In the second half of the novel, set in 1750s London, music becomes a force for hope. Thomas becomes music master at the Coram Hospital and helps Aaron, who "has a splendid singing voice", gain an apprenticeship with Mr Burney, where he will "learn to copy music" and play the harpsichord. Here Gavin weaves in historical context: George Frideric Handel was a real supporter of the Foundling Hospital, giving benefit concerts, most famously performances of Messiah in its chapel, to raise funds, and he was made a governor in recognition of his generosity. By placing Handel in the novel, Gavin shows how art and charity worked together to rescue abandoned children. The practice of apprenticeship, in which a boy was formally bound to a master to learn a trade, gives Aaron something the foundlings rarely had, a future. Music literally lifts him out of poverty.

Finally, music resolves the plot. Through his work with Handel, Alexander is reunited with Thomas, and the moment when "they clasped each other's hands and embraced" shows the friendship surviving years of separation. It is through Mr

Question number

Burney that Alexander meets Aaron, and the recognition, "I think I'm your son", completes the restoration of the family that music once seemed to destroy. The circular structure is satisfying: music divided father and son at Ashbrook, and music brings a new father and son together.

Overall, music is important in Coram Boy because it represents everything the cruel adult world tries to suppress: individuality, love and creativity. Gavin contrasts its beauty with the darkness of child trafficking and the coldness of patriarchal authority, suggesting that art can survive even in the bleakest conditions. Music allows the characters, and the reader, to believe that harmony can be restored after terrible suffering.

29 Although Boys Don't Cry is told largely through the eyes of two brothers and centres on a teenage father, its women are vital to its meaning. Malorie Blackman uses female characters to challenge the assumption that childcare is "women's work", to show the pressures faced by young mothers, and to expose society's judgements about parenthood. Some women in the novel support Dante, some judge him and one abandons him, but each forces him, and the reader, to question what it means to be a man and a parent in modern Britain.

Aunt Jackie is arguably the most important woman in the novel because she holds the Bridgeman family together. Dante's first impression of her is unflattering: compared with his mother, who was like "honey", Jackie is "vinegar". The contrasting images of taste suggest that she is sharp and blunt, whereas his mother was soft and sweet. Yet Blackman gradually reveals that this sharpness is a form of love. When Dante is desperate, he turns to her, "Aunt Jackie, I ... I need your help", and the hesitation in his speech shows how difficult it is for him to

Question number

admit vulnerability. Jackie becomes a substitute mother, filling the absence left by the death of Dante's mum, and she represents the importance of the wider family network at a time when many families have become more isolated.

Jackie also becomes the voice of honesty in a household where men find it hard to talk. She challenges Dante's father directly, "why didn't you tell Dante the truth?", forcing him to confront the emotional silence that has damaged his relationship with his sons. In this way she disrupts the idea in the novel's title, that boys must suppress their feelings. The extract, "Aunt Jackie took my chin in her hand, scrutinizing my face", shows a gesture that is both tender and intense: holding his chin suggests a mother with a small child, while "scrutinizing" implies that she is looking for the truth in him. Her words "I am so proud of you" are simple, but they give Dante the approval his father has never offered. Later, when Dante loses his temper and nearly hits Emma, Jackie praises him because "You walked away", recognising that true strength lies in self-control rather than aggression. Jackie therefore guides Dante towards a kinder, more mature model of masculinity.

Melanie is equally significant, despite appearing only briefly at the start of the novel. Her abandonment of Emma triggers the whole plot, but Blackman avoids presenting her as a simple villain. Her confession, "I brought myself up, Dante. I don't know how to bring up anyone else", reveals a girl who has had no role model: her father left and her mother worked long hours. Her fear that "the thoughts in my head scare me" suggests that she leaves Emma out of desperation and perhaps to protect her. Through Melanie, Blackman highlights the real challenges facing young single mothers in twenty-first century Britain, who are often blamed without being supported. Dante's reaction is revealing. He insists "It's your daughter" and implies that Melanie has slept around, assuming that the responsibility is entirely hers. His attitude reflects a wider social double standard

Question number

in which mothers who leave their children are condemned far more harshly than the many fathers who do the same.

Collette represents the future Dante thought he would have. With top A Level grades and a place to study Computer Science, she embodies the traditional path to university and success. However, her reaction to Emma shows immaturity and intolerance, especially when she involves her sister Veronica, hoping to have Emma "taken into care". Collette's rejection forces Dante to accept that his old life is over, and it suggests that achievement does not guarantee compassion.

Veronica, a social worker, represents the power of the welfare state. Her warning that "There are a number of steps I can take" feels threatening to Dante, and her visits create genuine tension because the reader fears that Emma might be removed. Yet Blackman develops her into a more balanced figure: Dante comes to realise that "a lot of what Veronica said was actually useful and informative". Through her, Blackman presents the welfare system as both intrusive and supportive, part of the state provision of health, education and social security that is meant to protect vulnerable children.

The two women in the newspaper shop act almost like a chorus voicing public opinion about teenage parents. The blonde woman assumes Dante has had a child to claim "child benefit and Jobseekers Allowance", echoing the stereotypes of young parents found in parts of the media, while the brunette defends him because he has not "done a runner like a lot of men do". This contrast shows how divided society is, and it highlights the irony that Dante is judged both for being a young parent and, implicitly, as an exception among men.

Finally, Emma herself, though only a baby, is the female character who transforms

Question number

Dante the most. At first he sees her as a burden, but caring for her teaches him patience and love. In a society where the vast majority of single-parent families are still headed by women, Blackman deliberately reverses expectations by placing a teenage boy in this role. The women around him show that nurturing is not determined by gender, and that support, honesty and responsibility are what make a family. Women are important in Boys Don't Cry because they shape Dante's growth into a father and challenge the rigid ideas about masculinity that the title questions.

30

Growing up is at the heart of Boys Don't Cry, a coming-of-age novel in which Malorie Blackman shows that adulthood is not reached on a particular birthday or exam results day, but through responsibility, honesty and love. Her young characters are forced to grow up too quickly, and the novel explores the emotional, social and practical pressures on teenagers in modern Britain. Growing up is significant because it reveals who has been supported and who has been left alone, and because Dante's journey challenges the idea that becoming a man means hiding your feelings.

Melanie's words, "What do I know about bringing up a kid? It's not like my dad cared enough about me or my sister to stick around", show how a difficult childhood shapes the adult a person becomes. The rhetorical question sounds defensive and frightened, as though she is admitting her helplessness before anyone can accuse her. The phrase "cared enough" is especially painful, because it suggests that her father's departure taught her she was not worth staying for. With her mother working two jobs to put food on the table, Melanie effectively raised herself. Blackman suggests that a child without a role model struggles to become a parent, and this reflects the real situation of many young single mothers

Question number

in twenty-first century Britain, who lack the family networks that might help them.

For Melanie, having a baby at seventeen transforms her adolescence. She gives up her "life ... friends ... dreams for Emma", and the list, broken by pauses, sounds like a gradual stripping away of everything that made her young. She leaves school before finishing her A Levels, is thrown out by her mother and ends up in a tiny room in her aunt's "cupboard-under-the-stairs-sized flat". This exaggerated, hyphenated description is almost darkly comic, but it emphasises how cramped and trapped her life has become. Her decision to abandon Emma is shocking, yet the reader may see it as the result of a girl who never had the chance to grow up safely herself.

Dante's growth is the central arc of the novel. At the opening, he is waiting for his A Level results and dreaming of university to study history, the conventional route into adulthood. Emma's sudden arrival destroys that plan. His description of her as "a strait jacket of anxiety" is powerful: a strait jacket restrains a person completely, so he feels that fatherhood has taken away his freedom and even his sanity. His new vocabulary of "Immunizations, work, a place at a state nursery" is a list of adult responsibilities that replace the carefree concerns of a teenager. Blackman shows how physically and emotionally demanding it is for a young person to give up education and career to raise a child.

Dante's growing up is also shaped by loss and by his relationship with his father. The death of his mother still affects him deeply, "not a day goes by when I don't think of her", and he feels that "nothing I ever did was good enough" for his dad. This suggests that part of growing up is coming to terms with the people who raised us, and Dante must learn to forgive his father's emotional distance.

Question number

Importantly, he matures not by becoming harder but by becoming more open. At first he even considers putting Emma "up for adoption or to be fostered", but gradually he learns to love her, until he can say "She's my world". This short, absolute statement marks his transformation from reluctant teenager to devoted parent. His recognition that "we were a family and we were together" shows that he could only grow up with support, and the Bridgemans become a model of a modern single-parent family coping through mutual care.

Adam's story offers a darker side of growing up. Like Dante, he has suffered the loss of their mother, and watching her "waste away" in hospital has left him terrified of doctors and medical treatment. Losing her was like having "a hole shot through" his heart, a violent image suggesting a wound that has never healed. As a gay teenager, Adam faces homophobic hostility and a brutal attack, showing that growing up can be dangerous for those who do not fit society's expectations of masculinity. His loneliness becomes overwhelming when his relationship with Josh ends, and he admits that he is jealous of Dante because Dante has Emma while he is "alone again". His suicide attempt is the most shocking moment of the novel, and Blackman uses it to show how isolation can devastate young people. Adolescence is often a vulnerable time for loneliness, as teenagers navigate academic and social pressure and the transition from childhood to adulthood, and Adam's crisis makes that vulnerability painfully real.

The title, Boys Don't Cry, is significant here. It refers to the old belief that boys must suppress emotion in order to grow into men. Blackman deliberately undermines this idea: Dante grows up by learning to care for a baby, Adam's crisis forces the family to face what they have left unsaid, and the men of the household learn that admitting pain is not weakness. Growing up, in this novel, means rejecting the stereotype rather than living up to it.

Question number

Ultimately, growing up is significant in Boys Don't Cry because it is presented as a shared, painful but hopeful process. Melanie's story shows what happens when a young person is left to grow up alone, while Dante and Adam reveal that maturity comes through vulnerability, honesty and family. Blackman suggests that the true mark of adulthood is not freedom from responsibility, but the willingness to accept it and to support others along the way.