Pearson Edexcel International GCSE (9–1)

Wednesday 17 May 2023

Morning (Time: 2 hours)

Paper reference **4ET1/01**

English Literature

PAPER 1: Poetry and Modern Prose

Question Booklet

Do not return this Booklet with your Answer Booklet.

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Answer THREE questions:

Answer the question in Section A,
ONE question from Section B
and ONE question from Section C.

The poems for use with Section B are included with this paper.

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SECTION A

Unseen Poetry

Answer the question in this section.

You should spend 35 minutes on this question.

Read the following poem.

Apartment Neighbours

I never see them
yet our lives are linked
by more than walls

the faceless melody
of snores of man or mate
the several callers
marked by urgent knock
or crisp sound of rejected foot-
falling on hard paths
grass has never known

tinkle of glass
and plates that settle into sinks
swishing the running kitchen water

hiss of the muted* phone
and late at night
too late
loud hoses washing
whining pet dogs
coaxing with tender tones
humaning* them
there in our common backyard space
I cannot see
without them seeing me
and forcing me to smile
make a connection
break from the learned restraint
I wear in foreign lands

They never see me
yet I long to ease
my constant frown
and say
'Evening Miss Evvy, Miss Maisie
Miss Maud …'

Velma Pollard (1993)

**muted* – muffled or hushed

**humaning* – treating like a human

1 Explore how the writer presents the speaker's thoughts about her neighbours in this poem.

In your answer, you should consider the writer's:

- descriptive skills
- choice of language
- use of form and structure.

Support your answer with examples from the poem.

(Total for Question 1 = 20 marks)

TOTAL FOR SECTION A = 20 MARKS

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SECTION B

Anthology Poetry

Answer ONE question from this section.

You should spend 40 minutes on your chosen question.

EITHER

2 Re-read *Search For My Tongue* and *Half-caste*.

Compare how the writers present concerns about language in *Search For My Tongue* and *Half-caste*.

You should make reference to language, form and structure.

Support your answer with examples from the poems.

(Total for Question 2 = 30 marks)

OR

3 Re-read *Poem at Thirty-Nine*.

Compare the ways the writers present family relationships in *Poem at Thirty-Nine* and **one other** poem from the anthology.

You should make reference to language, form and structure.

Support your answer with examples from the poems.

(Total for Question 3 = 30 marks)

TOTAL FOR SECTION B = 30 MARKS

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SECTION C

Modern Prose

Answer ONE question on ONE text from this section.

You should spend 45 minutes on this section.

***To Kill a Mockingbird*, Harper Lee**

EITHER

4 Explore the theme of growing up in *To Kill a Mockingbird*.

You must consider the context of the novel in your answer.

(Total for Question 4 = 40 marks)

OR

5 ' "Put my bag in the front bedroom, Calpurnia," was the first thing Aunt Alexandra said. "Jean Louise, stop scratching your head," was the second thing she said.'

Examine the character of Aunt Alexandra in the novel.

You must consider the context of the novel in your answer.

(Total for Question 5 = 40 marks)

***Of Mice and Men*, John Steinbeck**

EITHER

6 Discuss the theme of responsibility in *Of Mice and Men*.

You must consider the context of the novel in your answer.

(Total for Question 6 = 40 marks)

OR

7 Explore Candy's relationship with others, including his old dog, in the novel.

You must consider the context of the novel in your answer.

(Total for Question 7 = 40 marks)

***The Whale Rider*, Witi Ihimaera**

EITHER

8 Discuss the relationship between the brothers, Rawiri and Porourangi, in the novel.

You must consider the context of the novel in your answer.

(Total for Question 8 = 40 marks)

OR

9 Examine the role of women in *The Whale Rider*.

You must consider the context of the novel in your answer.

(Total for Question 9 = 40 marks)

***The Joy Luck Club*, Amy Tan**

EITHER

10 'The contrasting settings of China and America are central to our understanding of this novel.'

How far do you agree with this statement about *The Joy Luck Club*?

You must consider the context of the novel in your answer.

(Total for Question 10 = 40 marks)

OR

11 Explore the relationship between Jing-mei (June) Woo and her parents in the novel.

You must consider the context of the novel in your answer.

(Total for Question 11 = 40 marks)

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***Things Fall Apart*, Chinua Achebe**

EITHER

12 How is Nwoye presented in the novel?

You must consider the context of the novel in your answer.

(Total for Question 12 = 40 marks)

OR

13 Explore the theme of respect in *Things Fall Apart*.

You must consider the context of the novel in your answer.

(Total for Question 13 = 40 marks)

TOTAL FOR SECTION C = 40 MARKS
TOTAL FOR PAPER = 90 MARKS

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Acknowledgement:

'Apartment Neighbours' from 'Shame Trees Don't Grow Here', Velma Pollard, Peepal Tree Press 1993

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Poetry Booklet – Part 3 of the Edexcel Anthology

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If –

If you can keep your head when all about you
    Are losing theirs and blaming it on you,
If you can trust yourself when all men doubt you,
    But make allowance for their doubting too;
If you can wait and not be tired by waiting,
    Or being lied about, don't deal in lies,
Or being hated, don't give way to hating,
    And yet don't look too good, nor talk too wise:

If you can dream – and not make dreams your master;
    If you can think – and not make thoughts your aim;
If you can meet with Triumph and Disaster
    And treat those two impostors just the same;
If you can bear to hear the truth you've spoken
    Twisted by knaves to make a trap for fools,
Or watch the things you gave your life to, broken,
    And stoop and build 'em up with worn-out tools:

If you can make one heap of all your winnings
    And risk it on one turn of pitch-and-toss,
And lose, and start again at your beginnings
    And never breathe a word about your loss;
If you can force your heart and nerve and sinew
    To serve your turn long after they are gone,
And so hold on when there is nothing in you
    Except the Will which says to them: 'Hold on!'

If you can talk with crowds and keep your virtue,
    Or walk with Kings – nor lose the common touch,
If neither foes nor loving friends can hurt you,
    If all men count with you, but none too much;
If you can fill the unforgiving minute
    With sixty seconds' worth of distance run,
Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it,
    And – which is more – you'll be a Man, my son!

Rudyard Kipling

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Prayer Before Birth

I am not yet born; O hear me.
Let not the bloodsucking bat or the rat or the stoat or the
club-footed ghoul come near me.

I am not yet born, console me.
I fear that the human race may with tall walls wall me,
with strong drugs dope me, with wise lies lure me,
on black racks rack me, in blood-baths roll me.

I am not yet born; provide me
With water to dandle me, grass to grow for me, trees to talk
to me, sky to sing to me, birds and a white light
in the back of my mind to guide me.

I am not yet born; forgive me
For the sins that in me the world shall commit, my words
when they speak me, my thoughts when they think me,
my treason engendered by traitors beyond me,
my life when they murder by means of my
hands, my death when they live me.

I am not yet born; rehearse me
In the parts I must play and the cues I must take when
old men lecture me, bureaucrats hector me, mountains
frown at me, lovers laugh at me, the white
waves call me to folly and the desert calls
me to doom and the beggar refuses
my gift and my children curse me.

I am not yet born; O hear me,
Let not the man who is beast or who thinks he is God
come near me.

I am not yet born; O fill me
With strength against those who would freeze my
humanity, would dragoon me into a lethal automaton,
would make me a cog in a machine, a thing with
one face, a thing, and against all those
who would dissipate my entirety, would
blow me like thistledown hither and
thither or hither and thither
like water held in the
hands would spill me.

Let them not make me a stone and let them not spill me.
Otherwise kill me.

Louis MacNeice

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Turn over ▶

Blessing

The skin cracks like a pod.
There never is enough water.

Imagine the drip of it,
the small splash, echo
in a tin mug,
the voice of a kindly god.

Sometimes, the sudden rush
of fortune. The municipal pipe bursts,
silver crashes to the ground
and the flow has found
a roar of tongues. From the huts,
a congregation: every man woman
child for streets around
butts in, with pots,
brass, copper, aluminium,
plastic buckets,
frantic hands,

and naked children
screaming in the liquid sun,
their highlights polished to perfection,
flashing light,
as the blessing sings
over their small bones.

Imtiaz Dharker

Search For My Tongue

You ask me what I mean
by saying I have lost my tongue.
I ask you, what would you do
if you had two tongues in your mouth,
and lost the first one, the mother tongue,
and could not really know the other,
the foreign tongue.
You could not use them both together
even if you thought that way.
And if you lived in a place you had to
speak a foreign tongue,
your mother tongue would rot,
rot and die in your mouth
until you had to spit it out.
I thought I spit it out
but overnight while I dream,

મને હતું કે આબ્બી જીભ આખ્ખી ભાષા,

(munay hutoo kay aakhee jeebh aakhee bhasha)

મેં થૂંકી નાખી છે.

(may thoonky nakhi chay)

પરંતુ રાત્રે સ્વપ્નાંમાં મારી ભાષા પાછી આવે છે.

(parantoo rattray svupnama mari bhasha pachi aavay chay)

ફુલની જેમ મારી ભાષા મારી જીભ

(foolnee jaim mari bhasha mari jeebh)

મોઢામાં ખીલે છે.
(modhama kheelay chay)

ફુલની જેમ મારી ભાષા મારી જીભ

(fulllnee jaim mari bhasha mari jeebh)

મોઢામાં પાકે છે.
(modhama pakay chay)

it grows back, a stump of a shoot
grows longer, grows moist, grows strong veins,
it ties the other tongue in knots,
the bud opens, the bud opens in my mouth,
it pushes the other tongue aside.
Everytime I think I've forgotten,
I think I've lost the mother tongue,
it blossoms out of my mouth.

Sujata Bhatt

Half-past Two

Once upon a schooltime
He did Something Very Wrong
(I forget what it was).

And She said he'd done
Something Very Wrong, and must
Stay in the school-room till half-past two.

(Being cross, she'd forgotten
She hadn't taught him Time.
He was too scared of being wicked to remind her.)

He knew a lot of time: he knew
Gettinguptime, timeyouwereofftime,
Timetogohomenowtime, TVtime,

Timeformykisstime (that was Grantime).
All the important times he knew,
But not half-past two.

He knew the clockface, the little eyes
And two long legs for walking,
But he couldn't click its language,

So he waited, beyond onceupona,
Out of reach of all the timefors,
And knew he'd escaped for ever

Into the smell of old chrysanthemums on Her desk,
Into the silent noise his hangnail made,
Into the air outside the window, into ever.

And then, *My goodness*, she said,
Scuttling in, *I forgot all about you*.
Run along or you'll be late.

So she slotted him back into schooltime,
And he got home in time for teatime,
Nexttime, notimeforthatnowtime,

But he never forgot how once by not knowing time,
He escaped into the clockless land of ever,
Where time hides tick-less waiting to be born.

U A Fanthorpe

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Piano

Softly, in the dusk, a woman is singing to me;
Taking me back down the vista of years, till I see
A child sitting under the piano, in the boom of the tingling strings
And pressing the small, poised feet of a mother who smiles as she sings.

In spite of myself, the insidious mastery of song
Betrays me back, till the heart of me weeps to belong
To the old Sunday evenings at home, with winter outside
And hymns in the cosy parlour, the tinkling piano our guide.

So now it is vain for the singer to burst into clamour
With the great black piano appassionato. The glamour
Of childish days is upon me, my manhood is cast
Down in the flood of remembrance, I weep like a child for the past.

D H Lawrence

Hide and Seek

Call out. Call loud: 'I'm ready! Come and find me!'
The sacks in the toolshed smell like the seaside.
They'll never find you in this salty dark,
But be careful that your feet aren't sticking out.
Wiser not to risk another shout.
The floor is cold. They'll probably be searching
The bushes near the swing. Whatever happens
You mustn't sneeze when they come prowling in.
And here they are, whispering at the door;
You've never heard them sound so hushed before.
Don't breathe. Don't move. Stay dumb. Hide in your blindness.
They're moving closer, someone stumbles, mutters;
Their words and laughter scuffle, and they're gone.
But don't come out just yet; they'll try the lane
And then the greenhouse and back here again.
They must be thinking that you're very clever,
Getting more puzzled as they search all over.
It seems a long time since they went away.
Your legs are stiff, the cold bites through your coat;
The dark damp smell of sand moves in your throat.
It's time to let them know that you're the winner.
Push off the sacks. Uncurl and stretch. That's better!
Out of the shed and call to them: 'I've won!
Here I am! Come and own up I've caught you!'
The darkening garden watches. Nothing stirs.
The bushes hold their breath; the sun is gone.
Yes, here you are. But where are they who sought you?

Vernon Scannell

Sonnet 116 'Let me not to the marriage…'

Let me not to the marriage of true minds
Admit impediments; love is not love
Which alters when it alteration finds,
Or bends with the remover to remove.
O no, it is an ever-fixèd mark
That looks on tempests and is never shaken;
It is the star to every wandering bark,
Whose worth's unknown, although his height be taken.
Love's not Time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks
Within his bending sickle's compass come;
Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,
But bears it out even to the edge of doom.
If this be error and upon me proved,
I never writ, nor no man ever loved.

William Shakespeare

La Belle Dame sans Merci. A Ballad

I

O what can ail thee, knight-at-arms,
    Alone and palely loitering?
The sedge has withered from the lake,
    And no birds sing.

II

O what can ail thee, knight-at-arms,
    So haggard and so woe-begone?
The squirrel's granary is full,
    And the harvest's done.

III

I see a lily on thy brow,
    With anguish moist and fever-dew,
And on thy cheeks a fading rose
    Fast withereth too.

IV

I met a Lady in the meads,
    Full beautiful – a faery's child,
Her hair was long, her foot was light,
    And her eyes were wild.

V

I made a garland for her head,
    And bracelets too, and fragrant zone;
She looked at me as she did love,
    And made sweet moan.

VI

I set her on my pacing steed,
    And nothing else saw all day long,
For sidelong would she bend, and sing
    A faery's song.

VII

She found me roots of relish sweet,
    And honey wild, and manna*-dew,
And sure in language strange she said –
    'I love thee true'.

VIII

She took me to her elfin grot,
    And there she wept and sighed full sore,
And there I shut her wild wild eyes
    With kisses four.

IX

And there she lullèd me asleep
    And there I dreamed – Ah! woe betide! –
The latest dream I ever dreamt
    On the cold hill side.

X

I saw pale kings, and princes too,
    Pale warriors, death-pale were they all;
They cried – 'La Belle Dame sans Merci
    Thee hath in thrall!'

XI

I saw their starved lips in the gloam,
    With horrid warning gapèd wide,
And I awoke and found me here,
    On the cold hill's side.

XII

And this is why I sojourn here
    Alone and palely loitering,
Though the sedge is withered from the lake,
    And no birds sing.

John Keats

**manna* – Food from heaven

Poem at Thirty-Nine

How I miss my father.
I wish he had not been
so tired
when I was
born.

Writing deposit slips and checks
I think of him.
He taught me how.
This is the form,
he must have said:
the way it is done.
I learned to see
bits of paper
as a way
to escape
the life he knew
and even in high school
had a savings
account.

He taught me
that telling the truth
did not always mean
a beating;
though many of my truths
must have grieved him
before the end.

How I miss my father!
He cooked like a person
dancing
in a yoga meditation
and craved the voluptuous
sharing
of good food.

Now I look and cook just like him:
my brain light;
tossing this and that
into the pot;
seasoning none of my life
the same way twice; happy to feed
whoever strays my way.

He would have grown
to admire
the woman I've become:
cooking, writing, chopping wood,
staring into the fire.

Alice Walker

War Photographer

In his darkroom he is finally alone
with spools of suffering set out in ordered rows.
The only light is red and softly glows,
as though this were a church and he
a priest preparing to intone a Mass*.
Belfast. Beirut. Phnom Penh. All flesh is grass.

He has a job to do. Solutions slop in trays
beneath his hands, which did not tremble then
though seem to now. Rural England. Home again
to ordinary pain which simple weather can dispel,
to fields which don't explode beneath the feet
of running children in a nightmare heat.

Something is happening. A stranger's features
faintly start to twist before his eyes,
a half-formed ghost. He remembers the cries
of this man's wife, how he sought approval
without words to do what someone must
and how the blood stained into foreign dust.

A hundred agonies in black and white
from which his editor will pick out five or six
for Sunday's supplement**. The reader's eyeballs prick
with tears between the bath and pre-lunch beers.
From the aeroplane he stares impassively at where
he earns his living and they do not care.

Carol Ann Duffy

**Mass* – A religious service
***Sunday's supplement* – A regular additional section placed in a Sunday newspaper



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The Tyger

Tyger, Tyger, burning bright,
In the forests of the night:
What immortal hand or eye,
Could frame thy fearful symmetry?

In what distant deeps or skies
Burnt the fire of thine eyes?
On what wings dare he aspire?
What the hand dare seize the fire?

And what shoulder, & what art,
Could twist the sinews of thy heart?
And when thy heart began to beat,
What dread hand? & what dread feet?

What the hammer? what the chain?
In what furnace was thy brain?
What the anvil? what dread grasp
Dare its deadly terrors clasp!

When the stars threw down their spears
And water'd heaven with their tears:
Did he smile his work to see?
Did he who made the Lamb make thee?*

Tyger, Tyger burning bright,
In the forests of the night:
What immortal hand or eye,
Dare frame thy fearful symmetry?

William Blake

**Did he who made the Lamb make thee* – God*

My Last Duchess
Ferrara

That's my last Duchess painted on the wall,
Looking as if she were alive. I call
That piece a wonder, now: Frà Pandolf's hands
Worked busily a day, and there she stands.
Will't please you sit and look at her? I said
'Frà Pandolf' by design, for never read
Strangers like you that pictured countenance,
The depth and passion of its earnest glance,
But to myself they turned (since none puts by
The curtain I have drawn for you, but I)
And seemed as they would ask me, if they durst,
How such a glance came there; so, not the first
Are you to turn and ask thus. Sir, 'twas not
Her husband's presence only, called that spot
Of joy into the Duchess' cheek: perhaps
Frà Pandolf chanced to say, 'Her mantle laps
Over my lady's wrist too much,' or 'Paint
Must never hope to reproduce the faint
Half-flush that dies along her throat': such stuff
Was courtesy, she thought, and cause enough
For calling up that spot of joy. She had
A heart – how shall I say? – too soon made glad,
Too easily impressed; she liked whate'er
She looked on, and her looks went everywhere.
Sir, 'twas all one! My favour at her breast,
The dropping of the daylight in the West,
The bough of cherries some officious fool
Broke in the orchard for her, the white mule
She rode with round the terrace – all and each
Would draw from her alike the approving speech,
Or blush, at least. She thanked men, – good! but thanked
Somehow – I know not how – as if she ranked
My gift of a nine-hundred-years-old name
With anybody's gift. Who'd stoop to blame
This sort of trifling? Even had you skill
In speech – (which I have not) – to make your will
Quite clear to such an one, and say, 'Just this
Or that in you disgusts me; here you miss,
Or there exceed the mark' – and if she let
Herself be lessoned so, nor plainly set
Her wits to yours, forsooth, and made excuse,
– E'en then would be some stooping; and I choose
Never to stoop. Oh sir, she smiled, no doubt,
Whene'er I passed her; but who passed without
Much the same smile? This grew; I gave commands;
Then all smiles stopped together. There she stands
As if alive. Will't please you rise? We'll meet
The company below, then. I repeat,
The Count your master's known munificence
Is ample warrant that no just pretence
Of mine for dowry will be disallowed;
Though his fair daughter's self, as I avowed
At starting, is my object. Nay, we'll go
Together down, sir. Notice Neptune, though,
Taming a sea-horse, thought a rarity,
Which Claus of Innsbruck cast in bronze for me!

Robert Browning

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Turn over ▶

Half-caste

Excuse me
standing on one leg
I'm half-caste

Explain yuself
wha yu mean
when yu say half-caste
yu mean when picasso
mix red an green
is a half-caste canvas/
explain yuself
wha yu mean
when yu say half-caste
yu mean when light an shadow
mix in de sky
is a half-caste weather/
well in dat case
england weather
nearly always half-caste
in fact some o dem cloud
half-caste till dem overcast
so spiteful dem dont want de sun pass
ah rass/
explain yuself
wha yu mean
when yu say half-caste
yu mean when tchaikovsky
sit down at dah piano
an mix a black key
wid a white key
is a half-caste symphony/

Explain yuself
wha yu mean
Ah listening to yu wid de keen
half of mih ear
Ah lookin at yu wid de keen
half of mih eye
and when I'm introduced to yu
I'm sure you'll understand
why I offer yu half-a-hand
an when I sleep at night
I close half-a-eye
consequently when I dream
I dream half-a-dream
an when moon begin to glow
I half-caste human being
cast half-a-shadow
but yu must come back tomorrow
wid de whole of yu eye
an de whole of yu ear
an de whole of yu mind
an I will tell yu
de other half
of my story

John Agard

Do not go gentle into that good night

Do not go gentle into that good night,
Old age should burn and rave at close of day;
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

Though wise men at their end know dark is right,
Because their words had forked no lightning they
Do not go gentle into that good night.

Good men, the last wave by, crying how bright
Their frail deeds might have danced in a green bay,
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

Wild men who caught and sang the sun in flight,
And learn, too late, they grieved it on its way,
Do not go gentle into that good night.

Grave men, near death, who see with blinding sight
Blind eyes could blaze like meteors and be gay,
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

And you, my father, there on the sad height,
Curse, bless, me now with your fierce tears, I pray.
Do not go gentle into that good night.
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

Dylan Thomas

Remember

Remember me when I am gone away,
    Gone far away into the silent land;
    When you can no more hold me by the hand,
Nor I half turn to go yet turning stay.
Remember me when no more day by day
    You tell me of our future that you planned:
    Only remember me; you understand
It will be late to counsel then or pray.
Yet if you should forget me for a while
    And afterwards remember, do not grieve:
    For if the darkness and corruption leave
    A vestige of the thoughts that once I had,
Better by far you should forget and smile
    Than that you should remember and be sad.

Christina Rossetti

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Search For My Tongue, Sujata Bhatt, Carcanet Books
Half-past Two © U A Fanthorpe. First published in Neck-Verse (Peterloo Poets, 1992)
Piano by D H Lawrence from *The Top 500 Poems,* ed William Harmon, Columbia University
Hide and Seek, Vernon Scannell, Faber and Faber 2011
Sonnet 116 – Shakespeare's Sonnets – 1999, © Shakespeare, Penguin Classic, William Shakespeare, 1609
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The Tyger – 2006, © William Blake, Penguin Classic, William Blake, 1794
My Last Duchess – 2000, © Robert Browning, Penguin Classic, Robert Browning, 1842
Half-caste by John Agard. Source: 'Half-caste', John Agard, Hodder Children's Books, 2005
Do not go gentle into that good night by Dylan Thomas from *Selected Poems: Dylan Thomas* (Penguin Classic, 2000), Dylan Thomas, 1951
Remember by Christina Rossetti from *Selected Poems: Rossetti* (Penguin Classic, 2008), Christina Rossetti, 1862

Please check the examination details below before entering your candidate information

Candidate surname	Other names

Centre Number | Candidate Number

Pearson Edexcel International GCSE (9–1)

Wednesday 17 May 2023

Morning (Time: 2 hours)

Paper reference **4ET1/01**

English Literature

PAPER 1: Poetry and Modern Prose
Answer Booklet

You must have:
Question Booklet and Poetry Booklet from Part 3 of the Pearson Edexcel International GCSE English Anthology (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 from Section A, **ONE** question from Section B and **ONE** question from Section C.
- Answer the questions in the spaces provided
  – *there may be more space than you need.*

Information

- The total mark for this paper is 90.
- The marks for **each** question are shown in brackets –
  use this as a guide as to how much time to spend on each question.
- Copies of the texts studied may **not** be brought into the examination.
- Dictionaries may **not** be used in this examination.

Advice

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

Turn over ▶

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SECTION A

Unseen Poetry

Question 1

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(Total for Question 1 = 20 marks)

TOTAL FOR SECTION A = 20 MARKS

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SECTION B

Anthology Poetry

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 2** ☒ **Question 3** ☒

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TOTAL FOR SECTION B = 30 MARKS

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SECTION C

Modern Prose

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

Question 7 ☒ **Question 8** ☒ **Question 9** ☒

Question 10 ☒ **Question 11** ☒ **Question 12** ☒

Question 13 ☒

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TOTAL FOR SECTION C = 40 MARKS
TOTAL FOR PAPER = 90 MARKS

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

Question number

1

Pollard presents the speaker's thoughts about her neighbours as a paradox: she knows them intimately through sound, yet never truly meets them. The poem moves from detached listening to a longing for connection, so that by the end the neighbours seem less like intruders and more like the community she secretly wants to join.

The opening, "I never see them / yet our lives are linked", establishes this tension at once. The conjunction "yet" pivots from distance to closeness, and the metaphor of lives "linked / by more than walls" suggests that the thin partitions of apartment living bind people together whether they choose it or not. The speaker's world is built almost entirely from hearing. Even snores become "the faceless melody", a striking phrase in which "faceless" stresses anonymity while "melody" makes the most unglamorous sound affectionate, almost musical. Her thoughts are therefore warmer than she admits.

Pollard's descriptive skill lies in her precise layering of sounds. Domestic noises are soft and soothing: the "tinkle of glass", plates "that settle into sinks", and the sibilance of "settle into sinks / swishing" imitates running water, lulling the reader as it seems to lull the speaker. These are contrasted with the harsher sounds of visitors "marked by urgent knock". The onomatopoeic "knock" and the enjambed "rejected foot- / falling" split the word across lines, so the reader stumbles just as the unwanted caller retreats along "hard paths / grass has never known". This bleak, grassless urban landscape hints that the setting itself is unnurturing, which may explain the speaker's isolation.

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Her thoughts are not wholly tolerant. The isolated line "too late", repeating "late", sounds like a sigh of irritation, and the present participles "washing / whining" make the noise seem endless. Yet even here her annoyance softens: the alliterative "tender tones" and the invented verb "humaning" show the neighbours' gentleness towards their dogs. Pollard's coinage is witty and revealing, because the neighbours give their pets the very warmth that the speaker is denied.

The volta comes in the "common backyard space", where hearing turns into the threat of being seen. She "cannot see / without them seeing me", and the reciprocal structure mirrors the unavoidable exchange of looks. Being seen would force her "to smile / make a connection / break from the learned restraint". The verb "forcing" suggests reluctance, but "learned restraint" reveals that her coldness is not natural: it is a habit acquired "in foreign lands", worn like clothing. The metaphor "wear" implies it could be taken off.

Structurally, the unpunctuated free verse creates a continuous stream of overheard sounds and private thought. The opening line returns transformed as "They never see me", and this cyclical echo now carries loneliness rather than relief. The shift from "I" to "They" suggests she realises that invisibility works both ways. Finally, the verb "long" introduces open desire to "ease / my constant frown", and the poem closes on imagined speech: "Evening Miss Evvy, Miss Maisie / Miss Maud". The gentle, regular rhythm and polite, familiar titles sound rehearsed and tender, while the ellipsis leaves the greeting unfinished, suggesting both that the list of neighbours could go on and that the words remain unsaid. Pollard ends not with connection but with the hope of it, which makes the speaker's thoughts poignant.

2 Both Bhatt and Agard treat language as inseparable from identity, but their

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concerns face in opposite directions. Bhatt's fear is internal and private: that living in English will make her lose her Gujarati "mother tongue". Agard's anger is external and public: that the label "half-caste", used carelessly by others, reduces him to half a person. Bhatt worries about the language she might lose; Agard attacks the language he is forced to hear. Yet both poems end with the speaker's own language triumphing over the threat.

Each poem opens as one side of a conversation, which immediately makes language the battleground. Bhatt begins "You ask me what I mean / by saying I have lost my tongue", responding calmly to a question, and then turns it back: "I ask you, what would you do". The second person draws the reader into her dilemma and invites empathy. Agard also addresses a "yu", but his tone is confrontational: the mock politeness of "Excuse me / standing on one leg" sets up the absurd literal image of being half a person, before the repeated imperative "Explain yuself" and question "wha yu mean" put the listener on trial. Where Bhatt explains herself, Agard demands that others explain themselves, which shows how differently the poets locate the problem.

Both poets build their concerns through extended metaphor, but in contrasting ways. Bhatt plays on "tongue" as both organ and language, so that losing a language becomes physical and grotesque. The repetition of "rot, / rot and die in your mouth" and the harsh plosive of "spit it out" present the mother tongue as something decaying that must be expelled, conveying her fear that an unused language dies. Agard instead uses a series of analogies to expose the illogic of the word: if "picasso / mix red an green", is that "a half-caste canvas"? If "tchaikovsky" mixes "a black key / wid a white key", is that "a half-caste symphony"? Choosing celebrated artists shows that mixing creates beauty and genius, not inferiority. His witty pun on English clouds being "half-caste till dem

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overcast" mocks the term, and the expletive "ah rass" breaks through the humour to reveal genuine frustration. Bhatt's imagery is anxious and bodily; Agard's is satirical and argumentative.

Form is central to both concerns. Bhatt places the Gujarati script at the very heart of the poem, followed by a phonetic transliteration, so the English reader is suddenly the outsider who "could not really know the other" language. Structurally, the mother tongue literally interrupts the English, enacting what she describes: it returns "overnight while I dream". Agard writes the whole poem in Caribbean Creole with phonetic spellings such as "yuself" and "mih", and almost no conventional punctuation except the slashes that end each section. By refusing Standard English, he asserts that his voice is complete and valid, the very opposite of "half". Both poets therefore use non-standard language on the page as an act of pride, but Bhatt's is a moment of rediscovery within English, while Agard's rejects Standard English throughout.

The turning points of both poems involve dreaming, but with different effects. After the Gujarati section, Bhatt's extended metaphor shifts from decay to growth: "it grows back, a stump of a shoot / grows longer, grows moist, grows strong veins". The anaphora of "grows" builds momentum, and the language becomes stronger than the "foreign tongue", which it "ties" in "knots" and "pushes" aside. The final image, "it blossoms out of my mouth", is triumphant and natural. Agard's dreaming is ironic: if he is half-caste, he must "close half-a-eye" and "dream half-a-dream", even "cast half-a-shadow". The hyperbole pushes the label to absurdity, so the listener sees how ridiculous it is. Bhatt's dream heals; Agard's dream ridicules.

Finally, the endings reveal their different purposes. Bhatt's poem closes on personal

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reassurance: whenever she thinks she has "lost the mother tongue", it returns, so her concern is resolved within herself. Agard's ending turns outwards with a challenge: the listener "must come back tomorrow / wid de whole of yu eye / an de whole of yu ear / an de whole of yu mind". The tripled "whole" reverses the poem's repeated "half", implying that the person who uses the label is the incomplete one. The final lines, "de other half / of my story", leave the poem deliberately open. Both poets show that language shapes how we see ourselves and others, but Bhatt fears losing her language, whereas Agard insists that others must change theirs.

3 Walker's "Poem at Thirty-Nine" and Lawrence's "Piano" both present an adult looking back on a parent with love and longing, but they draw opposite conclusions. Walker's memories of her father lead her forward: she discovers him living on in the woman she has become. Lawrence's memories of his mother drag him backwards, so that the grown man is overwhelmed and weeps "like a child". One poem presents family as a legacy; the other as a loss that cannot be recovered.

Both poems open with a mood of yearning. Walker's first line, "How I miss my father.", is blunt and simple, a full stop of quiet grief. Lawrence instead begins in the present, "Softly, in the dusk, a woman is singing to me", and the soft sibilance and twilight setting create a dreamy atmosphere in which memory can slip in. The "dusk" hints at an ending, perhaps of childhood itself. Whereas Walker speaks directly about the relationship, Lawrence approaches it indirectly, through music, so the reader feels memory ambushing him.

The parents themselves are remembered through small, physical details. Walker's father is linked to practical lessons: "Writing deposit slips and checks / I think of

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him. / He taught me how." The short, declarative lines sound like the careful steps of a lesson, and the imagined voice, "This is the form, / he must have said", suggests she reconstructs him partly from imagination, because, as she admits, he was "so tired / when I was / born". The breaking of that phrase across three short lines slows the reader and makes his exhaustion felt. Lawrence's mother is presented through a single tender image: the child "pressing the small, poised feet of a mother who smiles as she sings". The child sits beneath the piano, in "the boom of the tingling strings", and the onomatopoeia captures how the music surrounded him. The intimacy of touching her feet suggests a closeness that Walker, whose father was tired and distant, seems never to have quite had.

The relationships are not equally idealised. Walker is honest about tension: her father "taught me / that telling the truth / did not always mean / a beating", implying that sometimes it did, and she admits that "many of my truths / must have grieved him". The relationship is presented as loving but complicated, and her refusal to sentimentalise makes the love more convincing. Lawrence, by contrast, romanticises the past: "the old Sunday evenings at home, with winter outside / And hymns in the cosy parlour". The contrast between cold outside and "cosy" warmth inside makes home a sanctuary, and the "tinkling piano our guide" suggests the family was united by music and faith. Yet Lawrence is aware that this nostalgia is dangerous. The phrase "the insidious mastery of song" and the verb "Betrays" present memory as a seductive force that overpowers him against his will, "In spite of myself".

Structure shapes the different outcomes. Walker's poem moves from past to present: after the repeated exclamation "How I miss my father!", the second half shifts to "Now I look and cook just like him". The simile of him cooking "like a person / dancing / in a yoga meditation" is joyful, and she inherits this freedom,

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"seasoning none of my life / the same way twice". Cooking becomes a metaphor for living generously, "happy to feed / whoever strays my way", so his values continue through her. The poem's free verse and very short lines suit this informal, conversational reflection. Lawrence's poem is far more formal: three quatrains of rhyming couplets with long, flowing lines, which may echo the regularity of the hymns themselves. The structure moves relentlessly backwards, from the present singer to the remembered child, until the final stanza. Here the adult singer bursting "into clamour" with the "great black piano appassionato" is dismissed as "vain", and the poem ends with the man defeated by the past: "my manhood is cast / Down in the flood of remembrance". The metaphor of a "flood" suggests helplessness, and the final simile "I weep like a child for the past" collapses adult and child together.

The endings therefore crystallise the contrast. Walker ends with confident self-knowledge: her father "would have grown / to admire / the woman I've become", and the list "cooking, writing, chopping wood" presents a capable, independent woman. "Staring into the fire" suggests calm reflection rather than grief. Lawrence ends in tears. Both poets show that a parent shapes the adult child, but Walker celebrates a relationship that continues inside her, while Lawrence mourns one that exists only in a past he cannot return to.

4 Harper Lee presents growing up not simply as getting older but as a painful moral education: the loss of innocent assumptions about Maycomb and the gaining of empathy. The novel is a bildungsroman narrated by an adult Scout looking back on three years of her childhood, so the reader sees both the child's misunderstanding and the adult's understanding at once. Lee, writing in the late 1950s as the Civil Rights Movement gathered force, uses the children's growth to suggest that the

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American South itself needed to grow up.

At the start of the novel, Scout's innocence is shown through superstition and comic misjudgement. The children turn Boo Radley into a monster of local legend, a "malevolent phantom" who supposedly eats raw squirrels, and their games of acting out his life reveal how readily children absorb gossip. Scout's first day at school, when she tries to explain the Cunninghams to Miss Caroline and is punished for it, shows a child who knows the codes of Maycomb but not how adults use them. Her rubbing Walter Cunningham's nose in the dirt and her outrage when he pours syrup on his food expose her early snobbery, and Calpurnia's rebuke that he is her "comp'ny" is one of her first lessons that social status does not excuse rudeness. Lee, whose own childhood in Monroeville in the 1930s closely mirrors Scout's, presents innocence affectionately, but makes clear that it is built on Maycomb's prejudices.

Atticus is the moral centre of the children's growth. Early on he gives Scout the principle that "You never really understand a person until you consider things from his point of view", until you "climb into his skin and walk around in it". This advice structures the whole novel, because each stage of growing up involves the children seeing from another person's perspective. When Jem destroys Mrs Dubose's camellias, Atticus makes him read to her, and only after her death reveals that she was fighting a morphine addiction. His definition of courage, that it is "when you know you're licked before you begin but you begin anyway", teaches Jem that bravery is moral endurance rather than "a man with a gun in his hand". This prepares both children, and the reader, for Atticus's own hopeless defence of Tom Robinson.

The trial is the climax of the children's loss of innocence. Jem, at nearly thirteen,

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is confident that the evidence will free Tom, and the guilty verdict shatters his faith in justice. His tears and his protest that "It ain't right" show how growing up means confronting the injustice of adult society. Lee bases Tom's case on the Scottsboro trials of 1931, in which young Black men were convicted on false accusations by white women, and on the reality of Jim Crow segregation, visible in the segregated balcony where the children sit. Dill, younger and more sensitive, is sickened by Mr Gilmer's contemptuous questioning, and Dolphus Raymond observes that Dill cries about "the simple hell people give other people" only because he is still a child. This is a disturbing idea: Lee suggests that growing up in Maycomb often means learning not to feel, and that adulthood is not always moral progress.

Lee shows that growing up is uneven and differs with age. Jem moves away from Scout as he enters adolescence, becoming "positively allergic" to her presence in public and moody in ways she cannot understand. Yet he also shows new compassion, refusing to let her squash a roly-poly bug because it does not bother her. His attempt to make sense of Maycomb's divisions into "four kinds of folks" shows a mind struggling with class and race, and his conclusion that Boo perhaps stays inside because he wants to suggests a mature recognition of how cruel the outside world can be. Scout, meanwhile, notices hypocrisy for herself, as when Miss Gates condemns Hitler's persecution of the Jews while having spoken contemptuously of Black people after the trial. Her growing awareness is shown by her questioning rather than accepting.

Aunt Alexandra represents another kind of growing up: conformity to Southern ideals of womanhood. She wants Scout to wear dresses and become a lady, and Scout resists. However, at the missionary tea, when the news of Tom's death arrives, Scout watches her aunt and Miss Maudie compose themselves and reflects that if Aunty could be a lady at a time like this, so could she. Here Scout

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redefines being a lady as quiet courage rather than dresses, showing that growing up involves understanding adults more generously. Lee, herself a tomboy, gently challenges the narrow roles available to girls in 1930s Alabama.

The novel's ending completes Scout's growth through Boo Radley. When Boo saves the children from Bob Ewell, the monster of childhood becomes a shy, pale man. Scout understands why Heck Tate will not expose him, telling Atticus it would be "sort of like shootin' a mockingbird", which echoes Atticus's earlier warning that it is "a sin to kill a mockingbird". Standing on the Radley porch, she sees the neighbourhood from Boo's perspective and finally applies her father's lesson literally. Lee's circular structure, returning to Boo, emphasises how far Scout has travelled. Her final words, repeating Atticus's view that most people are nice "when you finally see them", suggest that growing up means learning to see clearly. Lee's purpose seems to be to ask her readers in a divided America to do the same.

5 The two remarks in the question capture Aunt Alexandra perfectly on arrival: she gives orders to the servant and corrects her niece before she has even unpacked. Lee presents her at first as the embodiment of the Old South's obsession with class, family and ladylike behaviour, a figure of comedy and irritation through Scout's eyes. Yet as the novel develops, Lee allows us to see beneath the "starched" surface to a woman who loves her family and is capable of quiet courage. She is both a product of 1930s Maycomb and, at moments, more than that.

Through Scout's narration, Alexandra is introduced as a force of order. Her arrival makes Scout feel "the starched walls of a pink cotton penitentiary closing in", a metaphor that captures the restrictions of Southern girlhood: "pink" suggests

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femininity, "starched" stiffness and formality, and "penitentiary" imprisonment. Scout's humour is sharp: Alexandra is "formidable", "not fat, but solid", and wears a corset that makes her irritable on Sundays. Most memorably, Scout says she had "river-boat, boarding-school manners" and was "born in the objective case". This grammatical joke suggests that Alexandra is always the object of her own rigid moral code, never questioning it. Lee's comic tone makes her absurd, but also shows the gulf between the child who values freedom and the adult who values propriety.

Alexandra's central obsession is heredity and social rank. Scout explains that she believed "the longer a family had been squatting on one patch of land the finer it was", and the verb "squatting" undercuts the pride with mockery. She urges Atticus to teach the children that they are the product of "gentle breeding", and Atticus's half-hearted attempt to do so, which reduces Scout to tears, shows that he does not truly share his sister's values. Alexandra refuses to let Scout bring Walter Cunningham home, insisting that although the Cunninghams may be good folks, they are not the "sort of people" the Finches should mix with, and finally calling Walter "trash". This reveals a cruelty rooted in class snobbery. In the Depression South, poor white farmers like the Cunninghams were desperate, and Lee exposes how the old gentry clung to distinctions of birth that had little to do with real worth, as Atticus's respect for Mr Cunningham shows.

Her attitude to race reflects the wider prejudice of Jim Crow Alabama. Alexandra wants Atticus to dismiss Calpurnia now that she is there to provide "feminine influence", and is appalled that the children have attended Calpurnia's church, refusing to let Scout visit her house. Atticus's firm refusal to let Calpurnia go sets him against his sister and shows Lee contrasting two kinds of Southerner. Alexandra also disapproves of his defence of Tom Robinson, seeing it as a disgrace

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to the family name. However, Lee is careful not to make her a simple villain: her prejudice is conventional rather than vicious, the ordinary attitude of a woman of her class and time.

Lee uses Alexandra's missionary circle to satirise the hypocrisy of Maycomb's respectable women. The ladies pity the Mrunas in Africa while sneering at the Black people in their own town, and Alexandra presides over this world of refreshments and reputation. Yet it is in this very scene that she changes in the reader's eyes. When Atticus brings news of Tom's death, Alexandra's composure cracks, and she confides to Miss Maudie her anguish at what the trial is doing to her brother, and her anger that the town lets him do what it is too afraid to do itself. Miss Maudie's reply, that Maycomb is paying Atticus the highest tribute by trusting him to do right, seems to steady her. Then she returns to the ladies with perfect poise. Scout, watching, decides that if Aunty could be a lady at a time like this, so could she. Lee reveals that Alexandra's manners are not merely snobbery but a form of discipline and dignity under pressure, and Scout's admiration marks a turning point in their relationship.

By the end of the novel, Alexandra's love becomes visible. Before the pageant she has a sense of foreboding, and after Bob Ewell's attack she is shaken, blaming herself for having ignored the feeling. She helps Scout out of the wire of her ham costume and calls her "darling", and, most tellingly, she brings Scout her overalls to wear, the very garment she has spent the novel disapproving of. This small gesture shows that, in a crisis, love for her niece outweighs her rules about femininity.

Ultimately Lee presents Aunt Alexandra as a representative of the traditional Southern Belle ideal and the class and racial hierarchy that sustained it, a system

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Lee, writing in the 1950s, wanted her readers to question. But Lee also invites empathy, applying Atticus's lesson of seeing from another's point of view to Alexandra herself. She is narrow, proud and prejudiced, but she is also loyal, brave in her own way, and capable of growth, which makes her one of the novel's most human characters.

6 Steinbeck presents responsibility as both a burden and a form of love in a world that has largely abandoned it. Set among itinerant ranch workers in 1930s California, during the Great Depression and the Dust Bowl migration, the novel shows a society in which men travel alone, owe each other nothing and are discarded when they are no longer useful. Against this, George's responsibility for Lennie stands out as unusual and precious. Yet Steinbeck also asks who is responsible when things go wrong, and his tragic ending suggests that the heaviest responsibility of all may be to take a life out of mercy.

From the opening chapter, George's responsibility for Lennie is shown as exhausting. Steinbeck establishes their roles physically: George is "small and quick", Lennie huge and shapeless, walking behind him "the way a bear drags his paws". George constantly instructs him, taking away the dead mouse and warning him not to speak at the ranch. His outburst, "God a'mighty, if I was alone I could live so easy", reveals resentment, and he lists what he could have, a job, money, a cathouse, without "no trouble". He tells Lennie that he does "bad things" and George has to get him out of them, referring to the incident in Weed. Yet the anger quickly turns to guilt, and he comforts Lennie with the story of the farm. This pattern shows that responsibility is not simple duty but an emotional bond that both frustrates and sustains George.

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Steinbeck makes clear that this responsibility is rare. George explains to Slim that he took Lennie on after Lennie's Aunt Clara died, and confesses that he used to play cruel jokes on him until Lennie nearly drowned obeying an order to jump into the Sacramento River. From that point George chose to protect him. The dream speech captures what responsibility means to them: "Guys like us, that work on ranches, are the loneliest guys in the world", but "With us it ain't like that". Lennie's joyful "because I got you to look after me, and you got me to look after you" defines their friendship as mutual care. In context, this is significant: there was little state provision for people with learning disabilities, and without George, Lennie would likely have been locked in an institution, the "booby hatch". Even the boss is suspicious, asking what "stake" George has in Lennie, as if no one would take responsibility for another man without exploiting him.

Other characters show how the ranch lacks responsibility. Slim, the "prince of the ranch", has natural authority, and his word is final. Yet responsibility is not the same as power: Slim's decision about Candy's dog is decisive, but he takes no responsibility for Candy's grief. Carlson argues that the dog is no good to itself and offers to shoot it "right in the back of the head". Candy surrenders, and afterwards tells George, "I ought to of shot that dog myself, George. I shouldn't ought to of let no stranger shoot my dog." This moment is crucial. Candy realises that responsibility for someone you love includes responsibility for their death, and that handing it to a stranger was a betrayal. Steinbeck uses this as foreshadowing, and the old, useless dog reflects Candy's own fear of being "canned" and having nowhere to go, as there was no security for elderly workers.

Steinbeck also explores responsibility for harm. Curley, the boss's son, abuses his position, provoking Lennie until Lennie crushes his hand, and then, under pressure from Slim, agrees to claim it was caught in a machine to save face. Curley's wife

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blames her mother for stealing the letter that would have taken her into films, showing how characters shift responsibility for their disappointments onto others. When she encourages Lennie to stroke her hair, she is partly responsible for what follows, yet Steinbeck makes her death pitiful, describing her face as "sweet and young" in death. Lennie himself is both responsible and not responsible: he kills the puppy and Curley's wife, but without understanding or intention. His fearful repetition that he has "done another bad thing" shows that he senses guilt but cannot grasp consequences. Steinbeck seems to ask whether a society that offers no care to the vulnerable must share some of the blame.

The ending brings the theme to its painful climax. When Curley gathers a lynch mob, George knows that Lennie will be killed brutally or imprisoned. He takes Carlson's Luger and finds Lennie by the pool where the novel began. The circular structure brings us back to the place of safety, and George tells the dream one final time, letting Lennie see the farm in his mind. He shoots him in the back of the head, the same place Carlson described for Candy's dog. This deliberate echo shows that George has learned Candy's lesson: he takes responsibility himself instead of leaving Lennie to strangers. Slim, understanding, tells him "You hadda, George. I swear you hadda", while Carlson's baffled question about what is "eatin'" the two men shows the ranch's inability to understand love.

Ultimately, Steinbeck presents responsibility as the thing that makes George and Lennie human in a dehumanising economic system. The title, taken from Burns's line about the best laid schemes of mice and men going wrong, suggests that even the most loving responsibility cannot protect people from a harsh world. George's final act is both his greatest failure and his greatest act of care, and through it Steinbeck asks his Depression readers what we owe to those who cannot look after themselves.

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Candy is the first man George and Lennie meet at the ranch, and through his relationships Steinbeck explores what happens to workers who grow old in a system that values only usefulness. His closest bond is with his ancient dog; his relationships with the other men are shallow, built on gossip and wary respect; and only when he joins George and Lennie's dream does he find real companionship. Each of these relationships is finally taken from him, making Candy a figure of deep pathos and a symbol of the vulnerability of the elderly and disabled during the Great Depression.

Candy's relationship with his dog is the emotional heart of his story. The dog is introduced as old and lame, and Candy proudly remembers that it was a good sheep dog when it was younger. He has had it since it was a pup, and the two are mirror images: both are old, both are maimed, Candy having lost his hand in a ranch accident, and both now serve little practical purpose. When Carlson complains that the dog "stinks" and is "no good" to itself, he speaks with a brutal economic logic that reflects the ranch's values. Candy's resistance is weak and pleading, and he looks to Slim for support, but Slim's opinion is law and he agrees with Carlson. Steinbeck slows the narrative during the shooting, as the men sit in silence waiting for the shot, and Candy lies on his bunk before rolling over to face the wall. This gesture of withdrawal shows grief he cannot express in words. Afterwards he tells George, "I ought to of shot that dog myself", recognising that he failed in his responsibility to his companion. The scene foreshadows George's decision at the end of the novel.

Candy's relationships with the other ranch hands are distant. As the swamper, he sweeps the bunkhouse while the others work in the fields, which isolates him

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further. When he shows George and Lennie around, he fills the silence with gossip about the boss, Curley and Curley's wife, telling them about Curley's glove "fulla vaseline" and calling his wife a "tart". This gossip suggests he gains a sense of belonging by passing on information, and Steinbeck notes how he becomes more confident once he has drawn a disparaging comment from George. Yet he is also careful: he fears Curley and warns George that the boss's son picks fights with big men. His relationship with Crooks reveals the casual racism of the time. He speaks of Crooks as a nice fellow but uses racist language about him, and recalls with relish the Christmas when Smitty fought him. It is telling that, after years on the ranch, Candy has never been inside Crooks's room, showing how segregation divided even the most powerless men.

The relationship that transforms Candy is with George and Lennie. Overhearing the dream of the "little place", he offers his savings and compensation money, around three hundred and fifty dollars in total, in return for a share. His desperate admission that when they "can" him he will have no place to go reveals his true motive: fear of being discarded like his dog. In a period with almost no welfare for old or injured workers, the dream offers him security and dignity. Steinbeck presents this moment as one of genuine hope: the three men sit together imagining it, and George admits that with Candy's money they could really do it. For the first time, Candy has friends and a future, and the American Dream seems within reach.

This new confidence is clear in Crooks's room, where Candy, Lennie and Crooks form an unlikely group of outcasts. When Curley's wife arrives and insults them, calling Candy a "lousy ol' sheep", he stands up to her, insisting that she is not wanted and that they have "fren's" and a place of their own. Steinbeck shows how friendship gives him courage. However, her contemptuous response exposes how

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little power these men have, and Candy's defiance quickly fades, showing that the dream is a fragile protection.

The death of Curley's wife destroys everything. Candy is the one who finds her body, and his first thought is for the dream. His bitter words to her corpse, calling her a "tramp" and saying that everybody knew she would mess things up, reveal both his misogyny and his desperation, as he blames her for the loss of his last hope. His question to George about whether they can still get the farm, and George's realisation that they never could, mark the collapse of the dream. Candy is left alone again, as isolated as when the novel began, lamenting to the dead woman that he could have worked in the garden and washed dishes for the others. He speaks to someone who cannot hear him, a final image of his loneliness.

Through Candy, Steinbeck explores the cruelty of a society in which, as George says, ranch workers have no family and belong nowhere. His relationship with his dog shows love and loyalty that the economic system ignores, and his brief friendship with George and Lennie shows how much these men needed one another. The loss of both relationships makes Candy one of the novel's most tragic figures, representing the countless old and disabled workers left behind by the Depression.

8 The relationship between Rawiri and Porourangi is one of deep, unquestioning loyalty, yet it is also shaped by the different burdens that Maori tradition places on an elder and a younger brother. Porourangi is the heir, the eldest grandson of Koro Apirana and the future chief of his generation; Rawiri is free to wander, to doubt and to observe. Ihimaera uses the bond between them to show how a family, and a whole people, can hold together across distance and change, and

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Rawiri's role as narrator means that we see Porourangi, and through him Kahu, with affection and respect.

From the opening of the novel, the brothers are bound together by family events. The story begins with Porourangi telephoning Nanny Flowers about the difficult birth of his first child, and Rawiri is immediately drawn into the crisis. Porourangi's wish, passed on from Rehua, that Kahu's birth cord should be buried on the marae shows that he respects the old customs even while living a modern life. It is Rawiri, appointed as one of Kahu's guardians, who helps Nanny place the cord in the earth of the marae despite Koro's disapproval. This early episode is important: Rawiri acts on his brother's behalf and supports his daughter when the patriarch refuses to. The burial of the birth cord connects Kahu to the land of Whangara, and in Maori belief this ties her permanently to her ancestors. The brothers are therefore united not just as siblings but as guardians of a custom that links the newest generation to the tribe.

The novel makes a clear distinction between their positions. Porourangi is a serious, responsible figure who is expected to inherit Koro's role, while Rawiri, as the younger brother, has more independence. This difference becomes visible when Rawiri leaves New Zealand for Australia and later Papua New Guinea. His travels allow Ihimaera to contrast the modern, Westernised world with Maori identity; Rawiri experiences prejudice and rootlessness abroad and slowly realises how much he belongs at home. Porourangi, by contrast, stays rooted in Whangara because his duty does not allow him to leave. It is possible to read Rawiri's freedom as a privilege that his brother can never have: the heir must stay with his people, while the younger brother is allowed to discover who he is. Yet the novel suggests that both paths lead back to the same place, as Rawiri's journey ends with his return to the family.

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Distance does not weaken the brothers' relationship; instead, it is sustained through letters and telephone calls. Porourangi is presented as a good letter writer, and his letters keep Rawiri informed about the family, about Koro's continued search for a boy to lead Kahu's generation, and about his own marriage to Ana and the birth of their daughter, Putiputi. The family's hope that this child "would be a son" is quietly ironic, because Kahu is already proving herself, and both brothers seem more open than Koro to what she might become. Most significantly, Porourangi writes about "the problems he feels are facing the Maori people" and the need to prepare them for "new challenges and the new technology". This reveals Porourangi as a thoughtful, modern leader in contrast to his traditionalist grandfather. The novel was published in 1987, during a period sometimes called the Maori renaissance, when Maori communities were reclaiming their language and land rights while adapting to a fast-changing New Zealand. Porourangi embodies this balance, and Rawiri's admiration for him suggests that Ihimaera saw this kind of adaptable leadership as the future.

The brothers' love for each other is also expressed through their shared love for Kahu. Rawiri is a devoted uncle who takes her to the cinema and to sheep-shearing contests, where she becomes a kind of mascot for him and his mates. When Porourangi's letters make Rawiri homesick, a letter from Kahu herself, telling him that the family are all lonesome for him, helps to bring him home. Kahu, in a sense, becomes the bridge that ties the brothers' lives together. At her school ceremony, Porourangi, Rawiri and Nanny attend together, and Porourangi's reluctance to tell his daughter that Koro will not come shows how protective the brothers are of her feelings. Their quiet unity here contrasts sharply with Koro's coldness.

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The climax of the novel shows the brothers working as one. When the herd of whales beaches itself, Rawiri telephones Porourangi and Koro, who are away on the South Island settling a land dispute, itself a reminder of the ongoing struggle of Maori tribes to protect their land. Once they return, the community fights to save the great bull whale, and the detail that "Porourangi gave the orders" shows him stepping into the leadership role that has always been expected of him, while Rawiri works alongside him. The brothers' teamwork is a symbol of the tribe's survival: they cannot save every whale, but together they keep faith with their ancestral connection to the sea and to Paikea, the whale rider.

Ultimately, Ihimaera presents the brothers' relationship as a model of the kinship that Maori culture values. Rawiri never resents his brother's status; instead, as narrator, he portrays Porourangi generously and is honest enough to admit, at the end, that "it was Kahu's intervention which perhaps saved us all". The word "perhaps" is typical of Rawiri's modest, reflective voice, and his recognition of Kahu suggests that both brothers have moved beyond Koro's belief that only a male can lead. Their bond is strong because it is not competitive: each has a different role, but both serve the family, the tribe and the next generation.

9 In The Whale Rider, women begin the novel on the margins of a patriarchal tribe and end it at its centre. Koro Apirana believes that leadership belongs to men alone, but Ihimaera challenges this through two strong female figures, Nanny Flowers and her great-granddaughter Kahu, who between them expose the limits of a tradition that has forgotten its own powerful women. The novel suggests that Maori culture can only survive if it honours all of its descendants, and the role of women becomes the key to that survival.

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The novel's starting point is Koro's rejection of Kahu simply because she is a girl. He is a deeply traditional chief who is searching for a male heir to lead the next generation, and he sees the birth of a daughter to his eldest grandson, Porourangi, as a disappointment. He even objects to the baby being given the name Kahu, which comes from the ancestor Kahutia Te Rangi, Paikea himself, because he feels the name of a male founder is wasted on a female. His repeated pushing away of the child, even when she crawls to him as a toddler, is painful to read. Ihimaera presents this attitude as rooted in custom: in many traditional Maori settings, men speak on the marae and take the leading ceremonial roles. However, the novel never lets this belief stand unchallenged, and Koro's stubbornness is shown to be blinding him to the gifts in front of him.

Nanny Flowers is the first and loudest voice against him. She is a strong-willed, witty woman who is proud of her descent from famous female ancestors. Through her, Ihimaera introduces Muriwai, who took the place of a man to save people from drowning, and Mihi, who asserted her seniority over a chief. These figures from Maori history show that women have always held power, so Nanny's defiance is not a modern invention but a return to an older truth. Her relationship with Koro is full of humour and affectionate conflict; she insists that he "isn't any chief. I'm his chief", and when asked whether they argue, she claims that "He argues, and I win". She even calls him "paka", which Kahu happily copies. This comedy is important because it undermines Koro's authority without making him a villain: we laugh at his pride while still feeling his love for his people. Nanny also compares Koro's treatment of Kahu to racism and tells him that "Girls can do anything these days", which links the struggle of women to the wider struggle of Maori people against prejudice in New Zealand.

Kahu herself is the most powerful challenge to the male-dominated world. She is

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devoted to her great-grandfather and longs for his approval, but she also shows natural leadership and a special relationship with the sea. She excels at Maori language and culture, and at her school ceremony she recites Koro's whakapapa, the genealogy that a future leader must know, even though he refuses to attend. When Koro takes the boys of the village out to sea and throws a carved stone into the water as a test, none of them can bring it back. It is Kahu who dives and returns with it, helped by dolphins, which proves her fitness to lead. Most dramatically, when the bull whale beaches itself and the men fail to move it, Kahu climbs onto its back and rides it out into the ocean, echoing her ancestor Paikea. Ihimaera thus places a girl at the heart of the founding myth of the tribe, suggesting that the whale, and the ancestors it represents, have chosen her.

The other women in the novel play more traditional roles. Rehua, Porourangi's first wife, dies soon after giving birth, though her wish that Kahu's birth cord be buried on the marae shows her quiet commitment to tradition. Ana, his second wife, is a loving stepmother who has a daughter of her own, Putiputi. These women are mainly supportive and maternal, which reminds the reader that Kahu and Nanny are exceptional. Yet even Porourangi, who is far more modern than his grandfather and worries about how the Maori people will face "new challenges", seems content for his wives to play these roles. Ihimaera does not present the whole society as transformed; instead, change comes through particular, determined women.

Context helps to explain why the role of women is so central. The novel was published in 1987, during the Maori renaissance, a period when Maori communities were reviving their language and traditions and asserting their rights over land. At the same time, feminist ideas were questioning inherited gender roles worldwide. Ihimaera, who is himself of Maori descent from the East Coast, is often said to have written the book partly because his daughters wanted a story with a heroine

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rather than a hero. The novel therefore fuses the revival of Maori culture with a demand that this culture make space for girls. The whale chapters, written in an elevated, mythic voice, show that the old world is also changing, and that the sea itself is suffering, partly through the history of whaling and the damage done to the oceans.

By the end of the novel, Koro accepts that he has been wrong. He apologises to Nanny and to Kahu and recognises her as a worthy leader. Rawiri, as narrator, reflects that it was Kahu's intervention which perhaps saved them all. This resolution suggests Ihimaera's purpose: tradition is not rejected but corrected. Women are shown to be not a threat to Maori identity but its strongest guardians, and the novel's final message is that a people who value all of their descendants are the ones most likely to survive.

10 I largely agree that the contrasting settings of China and America are central to our understanding of The Joy Luck Club, because the gap between the two places is the gap between mothers and daughters. However, Tan's settings matter less as physical places than as memories and imagined worlds: the China the mothers carry inside them is one the daughters have never seen, and the novel is really about whether stories can carry a person from one setting to the other. The most important settings may therefore be the spaces in between, such as the Joy Luck Club itself and the final journey to China.

The novel is built across four time frames: the mothers' childhoods in China in the 1920s and 1930s, their young adulthood and emigration around the time of the Second Sino-Japanese War, the daughters' childhoods in 1960s San Francisco, and the daughters' adult lives in the 1980s. This structure means that China is almost

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always the past and America the present. The mothers' Chinese stories are full of danger, hunger, arranged marriages and loss, while the daughters' American stories revolve around careers, divorces and arguments over money and status. Tan uses this contrast to explain why the two generations misunderstand each other: the mothers judge the present by a past their daughters cannot imagine.

The setting that frames the whole novel is the Joy Luck Club. Suyuan Woo first created it in Kweilin during the war, when she and three other women met to play mahjong, eat what they could and tell happy stories while refugees crowded the city and the threat of Japanese invasion grew. Her decision to hope rather than despair gives the club its name. In San Francisco, she restarts it with An-mei, Lindo and Ying-ying, whom she meets at the First Chinese Baptist Church. The club becomes a small piece of China in America, a place where the mothers can speak their own language and share food and memories. Yet for the young Jing-mei it seemed a shameful Chinese custom, and her embarrassment shows how the same setting can mean comfort to one generation and alienation to another.

The mothers' Chinese settings are vividly drawn and often terrifying. An-mei's mother lives in Wu Tsing's mansion in Tientsin as his fourth wife, controlled by the manipulative Second Wife, and eventually takes her own life so that her daughter will have a stronger position. Lindo is married as a child into the Huang household, where she must serve a spoiled husband and a demanding mother-in-law, until she cleverly frees herself. Ying-ying grows up in a wealthy family in Wushi and loses herself at the Moon Festival on Tai Lake. These settings show a society in which women had very little power, and they explain why the mothers are so determined that their daughters should have the strength they themselves lacked. Tan, whose own mother left a difficult first marriage in China,

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draws on real experiences of women's subordination in pre-war Chinese society.

America, by contrast, is a land of opportunity that also brings loss. The opening parable of the swan, bought in Shanghai and confiscated by immigration officials, so that the woman is left with only a single feather, captures the immigrant experience: the mothers bring hopes to America but cannot fully pass on what they meant. Jing-mei's mother believes that "you could be anything you wanted to be in America", which drives the painful piano lessons of "Two Kinds". Waverly Jong is even named after Waverly Place, the street in San Francisco's Chinatown where the family lives, showing how deeply American places shape the daughters' identities. Yet America also brings tragedy: An-mei loses her son Bing when he drowns at the beach, and her faith fails to bring him back. Neither setting is simply good or bad.

The contrast also affects the mothers themselves. Ying-ying marries the American Clifford St. Clair, who renames her and records the wrong birth year on her immigration papers, so that in America she seems to lose her spirit and becomes a ghost-like figure in her daughter Lena's home. Lindo, in "Double Face", reflects that she has two faces, Chinese and American, and that when she returned to China she was recognised as a foreigner. These details show how moving between settings divides a person's identity. Context is important here: many of the mothers emigrated during or after the war, when immigration restrictions had begun to ease after the repeal of the Chinese Exclusion Act in 1943, and after the Communist victory of 1949 contact with relatives in China became extremely difficult. This history of separation explains why the mothers' Chinese lives feel locked away from their daughters.

However, the final chapter, "A Pair of Tickets", suggests that the two settings can

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be reconciled. Jing-mei travels with her father to China to meet the twin half-sisters her mother was forced to abandon while fleeing Kweilin. As the train enters China, she feels that she is "becoming Chinese", fulfilling her mother's belief that Chineseness was in her blood. In Shanghai she meets her sisters, and they realise that together they look like their mother. This was published in 1989, when China had recently reopened to American visitors, and it mirrors Tan's own meeting with her half-sisters in 1987. The journey suggests that the divide between China and America is not permanent.

So, while the contrasting settings are central, I would argue they are central only because Tan uses them to explore something deeper: memory, loss and the possibility of understanding across generations. China and America represent the mothers' pasts and the daughters' futures, and the novel's purpose is to show that through storytelling the two can finally meet.

11 Jing-mei Woo's relationship with her parents is shaped by absence and misunderstanding. Her mother, Suyuan, dies before the novel begins, so Jing-mei must come to know her through memory, through the stories of the other mothers and, crucially, through her father, Canning. Tan presents the mother-daughter bond as loving but tense, full of expectations that neither can meet, while the father-daughter bond is gentler and becomes the means by which Jing-mei finally understands who her mother was. Through this family, Tan explores how immigrant parents and American-born children struggle to read each other.

At the start of the novel, Jing-mei's father asks her to take her mother's place at the Joy Luck Club, at the corner of the mahjong table where Suyuan used to sit. This is a symbolic setting: she is literally asked to fill her mother's seat, yet she

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feels she barely knew her. As a child she was embarrassed by her mother's Chinese heritage. She remembers the mothers' "funny Chinese dresses with stiff stand-up collars", and she saw the club itself as a shameful custom, comparing it to the secret gatherings of the Ku Klux Klan. This embarrassment is typical of second-generation immigrants growing up in 1960s America, when fitting in often meant rejecting the language and habits of one's parents. Tan, who has spoken about her own teenage rebellion against her mother, gives Jing-mei some of that same discomfort.

The central conflict is about expectations. Suyuan believes that "you could be anything you wanted to be in America", and in "Two Kinds" she pushes Jing-mei to become a prodigy, first by copying Shirley Temple and then through piano lessons with the deaf Mr Chong. Suyuan is partly motivated by competition with Lindo Jong, whose daughter Waverly is a chess champion. Jing-mei resists, deliberately not practising, and her disastrous performance at the talent show humiliates both of them. The argument that follows is the emotional climax of their relationship: Jing-mei cries that she wishes she were dead, "Like them", referring to the twin babies her mother lost in China. The cruelty of this moment shows how little the daughter understands of her mother's past, and how deeply Suyuan's hopes for her are rooted in grief. Many years later, Jing-mei plays the two pieces "Pleading Child" and "Perfectly Contented" and realises they are two halves of the same song, an image of how her childhood resistance and her adult acceptance belong together.

Tan also shows small moments of love within the tension. In "Best Quality", Jing-mei shops with her mother for crabs for the New Year dinner, and at the meal Jing-mei chooses the damaged crab with a missing leg so that others can have the best ones, a choice her mother notices and values. After the dinner,

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Suyuan gives her a jade pendant which she calls her "life's importance". At the time Jing-mei does not understand the gift, but it represents Suyuan's belief in her daughter's worth, a belief that the daughter had always assumed was absent. Suyuan's frustration with the noisy neighbours and their cat, which Jing-mei suspects her mother of harming, adds to the sense that she never fully knew her mother; later, the cat reappears and Jing-mei realises she had misjudged her.

Jing-mei's relationship with her father, Canning, is quieter but just as important. He is presented as a gentle, caring man who is lost without his wife. After Suyuan's death, Jing-mei cooks dinner for him because he has not been eating well, and in caring for him she begins to understand her mother's complaints about the neighbours from inside the same home. Canning is the keeper of Suyuan's story. In "A Pair of Tickets" he tells Jing-mei the full history of how Suyuan fled Kweilin during the Japanese invasion and was forced to leave her twin daughters by the roadside. He also explains that her mother's name can be written with two meanings, "Long-Cherished Wish" and "Long-Held Grudge", and that Jing-mei's own name means something pure and essential, the best quality, combined with younger sister. In this way her father gives her the language to understand herself. She also learns how close her parents were when he describes how they searched for the twins together after the war, before she was born.

Context shapes this relationship. Suyuan and Canning belong to a generation of Chinese immigrants who fled war and revolution, and after 1949 communication with family in China was almost impossible. Their silence about the past is therefore partly a product of history, not simply of personality. Tan draws on her own life: her mother, Daisy, revealed that she had left daughters from an earlier marriage in China, and Tan met her half-sisters in 1987. The novel's final chapter fictionalises that reunion, and its emotional force comes from real experience.

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The relationship reaches its resolution when Jing-mei travels to China with her seventy-two-year-old father. On the journey she feels she is "becoming Chinese", and when she meets her half-sisters in Shanghai, they see that together they look like their mother. Jing-mei has become the bridge her mother wanted, carrying Suyuan's story to the daughters she lost. The Joy Luck aunties had told her that the sisters must know the mother they never knew, and in fulfilling this wish Jing-mei finally knows her mother too. Tan suggests that Jing-mei's relationship with her parents is not ended by death but completed by understanding, and that her father's patience makes this possible.

12 Achebe presents Nwoye as a sensitive, gentle boy who cannot fit the rigid ideal of masculinity that his father, Okonkwo, demands, and who eventually breaks away from his father, and from the traditions of Umuofia, by joining the Christian missionaries. Although Nwoye speaks little, he is one of the most important characters in the novel, because his quiet rebellion shows the cracks within Igbo society that allow colonialism to enter. Through him, Achebe explores generational conflict, the cost of Okonkwo's fear of weakness and the painful ways in which change came to Nigeria.

Nwoye is Okonkwo's eldest son by his first wife and is twelve years old when the story of Ikemefuna begins. From the start, he is presented through his father's anxious eyes. Okonkwo is haunted by the memory of his own father, Unoka, an idle, debt-ridden man who loved music and conversation but held no titles, and he fears that Nwoye has inherited this softness. As a result, he constantly nags and beats the boy, believing that harshness will make him a man. In this patriarchal society, a weak heir would shame the whole family. Achebe makes clear that these

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methods are driven by fear, not wisdom.

Ikemefuna's arrival transforms Nwoye. The boy from Mbaino, given to Umuofia as compensation for a killing, lives in Okonkwo's household for three years and becomes like an elder brother to Nwoye. Under his influence, Nwoye grows more confident and begins to behave in the way his father wants. He even pretends to dislike women's stories, and goes to his father's obi to listen to tales of tribal wars and violence, because he knows this pleases Okonkwo. Yet Achebe reveals that Nwoye still secretly prefers the stories his mother tells, such as the folk tales of the tortoise and of the quarrel between Earth and Sky. This detail suggests that Nwoye's true nature is imaginative and compassionate, close to Unoka's love of art, and that he is only performing masculinity to avoid his father's anger. It also hints at the importance of women's storytelling in a culture where Nwoye's mother is never even named, being known only as Nwoye's mother.

The turning point in Nwoye's life is the death of Ikemefuna. When the Oracle decrees that the boy must die, Okonkwo ignores Ezeudu's warning not to take part and kills him himself, because he is "afraid of being thought weak". When Nwoye realises what has happened, something seems to give way inside him, a feeling he had experienced once before when he heard the cries of twins abandoned in the Evil Forest. By linking these two moments, Achebe shows that Nwoye is troubled by the harsher customs of his society, the killing of an innocent boy and the casting away of twins. These are aspects of Igbo culture that Achebe does not hide, and they explain why the new religion will later appeal to someone like Nwoye. From this point, Nwoye drifts away from his father emotionally.

Nwoye's conversion during Okonkwo's exile in Mbanta is the climax of his story. When the missionaries arrive, he is captivated not by their theology but by the

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"poetry of the new religion", especially a hymn about brothers who sat in darkness and fear. The hymn seems to answer the questions that had haunted him about Ikemefuna and the twins, and Achebe describes it as bringing relief to his soul. When Okonkwo discovers that his son has been seen among the Christians, he seizes him by the neck, and only the intervention of Uchendu stops him. Nwoye simply walks away and leaves for Umuofia to attend the missionaries' school. When Obierika later asks after his father, Nwoye replies that he does not know, "He is not my father." This short, stark line marks a complete rejection of kinship, which in Igbo society is one of the deepest bonds of all. Nwoye even takes the Christian name Isaac, and Mr Brown later tells Okonkwo that his son is at a teacher training college.

Okonkwo's reaction reveals the depth of his loss. He wonders how he could have fathered such a son and thinks of him as cold, "impotent ash" born of living fire. Okonkwo sees Nwoye's conversion as a betrayal of the ancestors, and he disowns him, deciding that his son is not worth fighting for. Yet the reader may feel more sympathy for Nwoye than for his father. Nwoye's decision takes courage: he chooses his own beliefs in defiance of a powerful and violent man and of the community that surrounds him. Like the outcasts who are among the first converts, Nwoye has felt unwanted.

Context makes Nwoye's presentation especially significant. Things Fall Apart was published in 1958, shortly before Nigerian independence, and Achebe wrote it partly to counter European novels which portrayed Africans as primitive. Achebe's own father was an early Christian convert who became a catechist, so the novel's sympathy for Nwoye is perhaps personal. Achebe does not present Nwoye's conversion simply as progress or simply as loss; instead, it shows how colonialism exploited divisions that already existed within families and clans. Nwoye represents

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a new generation that would be educated in mission schools and go on to shape modern Nigeria, and in Achebe's later novel No Longer at Ease, Nwoye reappears as Isaac Okonkwo, a strict Christian father himself.

Ultimately, Achebe presents Nwoye as a gentle and quietly brave character whose break from his father symbolises the breaking of the old order. His story suggests that Okonkwo's tragedy is partly self-made: by refusing to accept any softness in his son, he drives Nwoye into the arms of the very forces that will destroy Umuofia.

13 Respect is the foundation of the society Achebe depicts in Things Fall Apart. In Umuofia, respect is earned through achievement, owed to the gods and ancestors, and shown through elaborate rituals, and the whole social order depends on people knowing whom and what to honour. Achebe's tragedy shows two kinds of failure of respect: Okonkwo's growing disregard for the wisdom of his own culture, and the colonisers' complete lack of respect for Igbo traditions. When respect collapses, things fall apart.

From the opening chapter, Achebe establishes that respect in Umuofia is earned rather than inherited. Okonkwo is famous across the nine villages because, as a young man of eighteen, he threw Amalinze the Cat in a wrestling match. He goes on to become a wealthy farmer with three wives, two titles and large barns of yams. Achebe's narrator explains that "Age was respected among his people, but achievement was revered", and that "if a child washed his hands he could eat with kings". This proverb captures a society that allows a man to rise through his own efforts, which is why Okonkwo can escape the shame of his father, Unoka, who died in debt with no titles. By writing this in 1958, Achebe was deliberately

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showing a sophisticated African society with its own system of values, challenging European novels such as Conrad's Heart of Darkness, which he later criticised for presenting Africa as a place without civilisation or meaning.

Respect for the gods and for sacred times is equally important. The Week of Peace before planting is a time when no one may speak harshly to a neighbour. When Okonkwo beats his youngest wife, Ojiugo, during this week, he is rebuked by Ezeani, the priest of the earth goddess Ani, and must offer a sacrifice. The incident shows that even the most powerful man must respect the gods, and it gives an early hint of Okonkwo's impatience with any rule that restrains him. Festivals such as the Feast of the New Yam show the community giving thanks to Ani for the fertility of the land, while the funeral of Ezeudu, with its drums, gunfire and clashing machetes, shows the respect paid to a great man as he joins the ancestors.

The egwugwu represent the highest form of respect in Umuofia. These masked figures, played by men including Okonkwo but believed to be the spirits of the ancestors, judge disputes in public. In the case of Uzowulu, who has beaten his wife, the egwugwu settle the matter with balance and dignity, although one elder wonders why "such a trifle" should come before them. This detail is revealing: the community respects the ancestors deeply, yet it does not always respect women, whose suffering is treated as minor. Achebe does not idealise his society; patriarchy and polygamy are accepted, and wives are expected to respect and obey their husbands. Yet there are also forms of respect for women, such as the power of Chielo, the priestess of Agbala, and Uchendu's lesson in Mbanta that "Mother is Supreme", because a man finds refuge in his motherland when he is in trouble.

Respect becomes tragic in Okonkwo's story because he confuses it with strength.

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When the Oracle of the Hills and the Caves decrees that Ikemefuna must die, the respected elder Ezeudu warns Okonkwo, "That boy calls you father. Do not bear a hand in his death." Okonkwo ignores this and kills the boy himself because he is "afraid of being thought weak". Obierika later says he would have stayed at home, and Okonkwo replies that the Earth cannot punish him for obeying her messenger. He respects the letter of tradition but not its spirit. The Oracle itself was based on real oracles, such as the Oracle of Awka, which held great authority in Igbo society. Later, when Okonkwo's gun accidentally kills Ezeudu's son at the funeral, he must go into exile for seven years. He loses his compound and his place in the clan.

The arrival of the colonisers brings the most serious threat to respect. Mr Brown, the first missionary, tries to understand Igbo culture and holds respectful conversations with Akunna about religion, so he is accepted and even admired. His successor, Mr Smith, sees everything in black and white and shows no respect for the clan's beliefs. Under his leadership, the zealous convert Enoch unmasks an egwugwu in public, one of the greatest crimes a man could commit, because it kills an ancestral spirit. The egwugwu respond by burning down the church, and the District Commissioner tricks the leaders of Umuofia, including Okonkwo, into a meeting where they are imprisoned, insulted and have their heads shaved.

The ending shows the final destruction of respect. Okonkwo kills a court messenger, but when the clan lets the others escape, he realises Umuofia will not go to war, and he hangs himself. Suicide is an abomination, so his own people cannot touch his body. Obierika's bitter accusation that the District Commissioner drove "one of the greatest men in Umuofia" to kill himself, and that he will now be buried "like a dog", restores Okonkwo's dignity in words even as it is lost in fact. The final irony is that the Commissioner plans to give Okonkwo only a

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paragraph in his book, The Pacification of the Primitive Tribes of the Lower Niger. The title reveals the colonisers' contempt, and Achebe's whole novel can be read as an answer to it: an attempt to give the Igbo people the respect that colonial history denied them. Through the theme of respect, Achebe suggests that a society survives only when it honours both its traditions and its people, and that the coming of empire destroyed this balance.