OXFORD
INTERNATIONAL
AQA EXAMINATIONS

INTERNATIONAL GCSE
ENGLISH LITERATURE
Paper 1 PROSE AND DRAMA

Tuesday 8 May 2018 07:00 GMT Time allowed: 1 hour 30 minutes

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

Instructions
- Answer **one** question from **Section A** and **one** question from **Section B**.
- Write the information required on the front of your answer book.
- Use black ink or black ball-point pen. Do **not** use pencil.

Information
- The marks for questions are shown in brackets.
- There are 30 marks available for each section. The maximum mark for this paper is 60.

stemup.co.uk

Section A: Prose

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

Either

Charles Dickens: *Great Expectations*

0 1 In this extract Pip meets Miss Havisham for the first time.

> She was dressed in rich materials – satins, and lace, and silks – all of white. Her shoes were white. And she had a long white veil dependent from her hair, and she had bridal flowers in her hair, but her hair was white. Some bright jewels sparkled on her neck and on her hands, and some other jewels lay sparkling on the table. Dresses, less splendid than the dress she wore, and half-packed trunks, were scattered about. She had not quite finished dressing, for she had but one shoe on – the other was on the table near her hand – her veil was but half arranged, her watch and chain were not put on, and some lace for her bosom lay with those trinkets, and with her handkerchief, and gloves, and some flowers, and a Prayer-book, all confusedly heaped about the looking-glass.
>
> It was not in the first few moments that I saw all these things, though I saw more of them in the first moments than might be supposed. But, I saw that everything within my view which ought to be white, had been white long ago, and had lost its lustre, and was faded and yellow. I saw that the bride within the bridal dress had withered like the dress, and like the flowers, and had no brightness left but the brightness of her sunken eyes. I saw that the dress had been put upon the rounded figure of a young woman, and that the figure upon which it now hung loose, had shrunk to skin and bone. Once, I had been taken to see some ghastly waxwork at the Fair, representing I know not what impossible personage lying in state. Once, I had been taken to one of our old marsh churches to see a skeleton in the ashes of a rich dress, that had been dug out of a vault under the church pavement. Now, waxwork and skeleton seemed to have dark eyes that moved and looked at me. I should have cried out, if I could.

Starting with this extract, explore how Dickens presents the character of Miss Havisham in *Great Expectations.*

[30 marks]

or

0 2 Write about how Dickens presents crime and punishment in *Great Expectations*.

[30 marks]

stemup.co.uk

or

Harper Lee: *To Kill a Mockingbird*

0 3 In this extract Scout meets Boo Radley for the first time.

> He was still leaning against the wall. He had been leaning against the wall when I came into the room, his arms folded across his chest. As I pointed he brought his arms down and pressed the palms of his hands against the wall. They were white hands, sickly white hands that had never seen the sun, so white they stood out garishly against the dull cream wall in the dim light of Jem's room.
>
> I looked from his hands to his sand-stained khaki pants; my eyes travelled up his thin frame to his torn denim shirt. His face was as white as his hands, but for a shadow on his jutting chin. His cheeks were thin to hollowness; his mouth was wide; there were shallow, almost delicate indentations at his temples, and his grey eyes were so colourless I thought he was blind. His hair was dead and thin, almost feathery on top of his head.
>
> When I pointed to him his palms slipped slightly, leaving greasy sweat streaks on the wall, and he hooked his thumbs in his belt. A strange small spasm shook him, as if he heard fingernails scrape slate, but as I gazed at him in wonder the tension slowly drained from his face. His lips parted into a timid smile and our neighbour's image blurred with my sudden tears.
>
> 'Hey, Boo,' I said.

Starting with this extract, explore how Lee presents the character of Boo Radley in *To Kill a Mockingbird*.

[30 marks]

or

0 4 How does Lee present different aspects of justice and the law in *To Kill a Mockingbird*?

[30 marks]

Turn over for the next question

stemup.co.uk

or

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie: *Purple Hibiscus*

0 5 In this extract Kambili and Jaja are staying with their Aunty Ifeoma. It is their first meal with the family.

> The dining table was made of wood that cracked in dry weather. The outermost layer was shedding, like a molting cricket, brown slices curling up from the surface. The dining chairs were mismatched. Four were made of plain wood, the kind of chairs in my classroom, and the other two were black and padded. Jaja and I sat side by side. Aunty Ifeoma said the grace, and after my cousins said "Amen," I still had my eyes closed.
>
> "*Nne*, we have finished praying. We do not say Mass in the name of grace like your father does," Aunty Ifeoma said with a chuckle.
>
> I opened my eyes, just in time to catch Amaka watching me.
>
> "I hope Kambili and Jaja come every day so we can eat like this. Chicken and soft drinks!" Obiora pushed at his glasses as he spoke.
>
> "Mommy! I want the chicken leg," Chima said.
>
> "I think these people have started to put less Coke in the bottles," Amaka said, holding her Coke bottle back to examine it.
>
> I looked down at the jollof rice, fried plantains, and half of a drumstick on my plate and tried to concentrate, tried to get the food down. The plates, too, were mismatched. Chima and Obiora used plastic ones while the rest of us had plain glass plates, bereft of dainty flowers or silver lines. Laughter floated over my head. Words spurted from everyone, often not seeking and not getting any response. We always spoke with a purpose back home, especially at the table, but my cousins seemed to simply speak and speak and speak.

Starting with this extract, explore how Adichie presents family life in *Purple Hibiscus*.

[30 marks]

or

0 6 Why do you think Adichie chose *Purple Hibiscus* as the title of the novel?

[30 marks]

stemup.co.uk

or

Kazuo Ishiguro: *Never Let Me Go*

0 7 This extract is the opening of the novel.

My name is Kathy H. I'm thirty-one years old, and I've been a carer now for over eleven years. That sounds long enough, I know, but actually they want me to go on for another eight months, until the end of this year. That'll make it almost exactly twelve years. Now I know my being a carer so long isn't necessarily because they think I'm fantastic at what I do. There are some really good carers who've been told to stop after just two or three years. And I can think of one carer at least who went on for all of fourteen years despite being a complete waste of space. So I'm not trying to boast. But then I do know for a fact they've been pleased with my work, and by and large, I have too. My donors have always tended to do much better than expected. Their recovery times have been impressive, and hardly any of them have been classified as 'agitated', even before fourth donation. Okay, maybe I *am* boasting now. But it means a lot to me, being able to do my work well, especially that bit about my donors staying 'calm'. I've developed a kind of instinct around donors. I know when to hang around and comfort them, when to leave them to themselves; when to listen to everything they have to say, and when just to shrug and tell them to snap out of it.

Anyway, I'm not making any big claims for myself. I know carers, working now, who are just as good and don't get half the credit. If you're one of them, I can understand how you might get resentful – about my bedsit, my car, above all, the way I get to pick and choose who I look after. And I'm a Hailsham student – which is enough by itself sometimes to get people's backs up.

Starting with this extract, write about how Ishiguro presents Kathy as the narrator of *Never Let Me Go*.

[30 marks]

or

0 8 What is the significance of Hailsham in *Never Let Me Go*?

[30 marks]

Turn over for the next question

stemup.co.uk

or

Markus Zusak: *The Book Thief*

0 9 In this extract Max has recently arrived at Hans and Rosa Hubermann's house. This is one of his early conversations with Liesel.

During the nights, both Liesel Meminger and Max Vandenburg would go about their other similarity. In their separate rooms, they would dream their nightmares and wake up, one with a scream in drowning sheets, the other with a gasp for air next to a smoking fire.

Sometimes, when Liesel was reading with Papa close to three o'clock, they would both hear the waking moment of Max. 'He dreams like you,' Papa would say, and on one occasion, stirred by the sound of Max's anxiety, Liesel decided to get out of bed. From listening to his history, she had a good idea what he saw in those dreams, if not the exact part of the story that paid him a visit each night.

She made her way quietly down the hallway and into the living and bedroom.

'Max?'

The whisper was soft, clouded in the throat of sleep.

At first there was no sound of reply, but he soon sat up and searched the darkness.

With Papa still in her bedroom, Liesel sat on the other side of the fireplace to Max. Behind them, Mama loudly slept. She gave the snorer on the train a good run for her money.

The fire was nothing now but a funeral of smoke, dead and dying, simultaneously. On this particular morning, there were also voices.

THE SWAPPING OF NIGHTMARES
***The Girl*: 'Tell me. What do you see**
when you dream like that?'
***The Jew*: '… I see myself turning**
round, and waving goodbye.'
***The Girl*: 'I also have nightmares.'**
***The Jew*: 'What do you see?'**
***The Girl*: 'A train, and my dead brother.'**
***The Jew*: 'Your brother?'**
***The Girl*: 'He died when I moved**
here, on the way.'
***The Girl and the Jew, together*: '*Ja* – Yes.'**

Starting with this extract, explore how Zusak presents the relationship between Liesel and Max in *The Book Thief*.

[30 marks]

or

1 0 How does Zusak present different types of conflict in *The Book Thief*?

[30 marks]

stemup.co.uk

or

Oxford AQA Short Stories Anthology

1 1 This is an extract from near the beginning of *Through the Tunnel*. Jerry and his mother have just arrived at the beach.

> Next morning, when it was time for the routine of swimming and sunbathing, his mother said, "Are you tired of the usual beach, Jerry? Would you like to go somewhere else?"
>
> "Oh, no!" he said quickly, smiling at her out of that unfailing impulse of contrition – a sort of chivalry. Yet, walking down the path with her, he blurted out, "I'd like to go and have a look at those rocks down there."
>
> She gave the idea her attention. It was a wild-looking place, and there was no one there; but she said, "Of course, Jerry. When you've had enough, come to the big beach. Or just go straight back to the villa, if you like." She walked away, that bare arm, now slightly reddened from yesterday's sun, swinging. And he almost ran after her again, feeling it unbearable that she should go by herself, but he did not.
>
> She was thinking. Of course he's old enough to be safe without me. Have I been keeping him too close? He mustn't feel he ought to be with me. I must be careful.
>
> He was an only child, eleven years old. She was a widow. She was determined to be neither possessive nor lacking in devotion. She went worrying off to her beach.

Starting with this extract, explore how writers present relationships between parents and children. Write about *Through the Tunnel* and **one** other story from the Oxford AQA Anthology.

[30 marks]

or

1 2 How do writers use settings to convey their ideas in *The Rain Horse* and in **one** other story from the Oxford AQA Anthology?

[30 marks]

Turn over for Section B

stemup.co.uk

Section B: Drama

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

Either

William Shakespeare: *Julius Caesar*

1 3 At this point in the play Caesar is deciding whether to go to The Capitol.

CAESAR
The cause is in my will: I will not come;
That is enough to satisfy the Senate.
But for your private satisfaction,
Because I love you, I will let you know:
Calphurnia here, my wife, stays me at home.
She dreamt tonight she saw my statue,
Which, like a fountain with an hundred spouts,
Did run pure blood; and many lusty Romans
Came smiling, and did bathe their hands in it.
And these does she apply for warnings and portents
And evils imminent; and on her knee
Hath begged that I will stay at home today.
DECIUS
This dream is all amiss interpreted;
It was a vision fair and fortunate:
Your statue spouting blood in many pipes,
In which so many smiling Romans bathed,
Signifies that from you great Rome shall suck
Reviving blood, and that great men shall press
For tinctures, stains, relics, and cognizance.
This by Calphurnia's dream is signified.

Starting with this extract, explore how Shakespeare presents dreams and the supernatural in *Julius Caesar*.

[30 marks]

or

1 4 Mark Antony describes Brutus as: 'the noblest Roman of them all.'
To what extent do you think that Shakespeare presents Brutus as noble in *Julius Caesar*?

[30 marks]

stemup.co.uk

or

William Shakespeare: *Macbeth*

1 5 At this point in the play Lady Macbeth is persuading Macbeth to kill Duncan.

MACBETH

We will proceed no further in this business.
He hath honoured me of late, and I have bought
Golden opinions from all sorts of people,
Which would be worn now in their newest gloss,
Not cast aside so soon.

LADY MACBETH Was the hope drunk
Wherein you dressed yourself? Hath it slept since?
And wakes it now to look so green and pale
At what it did so freely? From this time
Such I account thy love. Art thou afeard
To be the same in thine own act and valour
As thou art in desire? Wouldst thou have that
Which thou esteem'st the ornament of life,
And live a coward in thine own esteem,
Letting 'I dare not' wait upon 'I would',
Like the poor cat i'th' adage?

Starting with this extract, write about how Shakespeare presents the changing relationship between Macbeth and Lady Macbeth.

[30 marks]

or

1 6 How does Shakespeare present ideas about loyalty in *Macbeth*?

[30 marks]

Turn over for the next question

stemup.co.uk

or

J.B. Priestley: *An Inspector Calls*

1 7 In this extract, Gerald is giving Sheila an engagement ring.

SHEILA (*quiet and serious now*) All right then. I drink to you, Gerald.

For a moment they look at each other.

GERALD (*quietly*) Thank you. And I drink to you – and hope I can make you as happy as you deserve to be.

SHEILA (*trying to be light and easy*) You be careful – or I'll start weeping.

GERALD (*smiling*) Well, perhaps this will help to stop it.

(*He produces a ring case.*)

SHEILA (*excited*) Oh – Gerald – you've got it – is it the one you wanted me to have?

GERALD (*giving the case to her*) Yes – the very one.

SHEILA (*taking out the ring*) Oh – it's wonderful! Look – Mummy – isn't it a beauty? Oh – darling – (*She kisses* GERALD *hastily*.)

ERIC Steady the Buffs!

SHEILA (*who has put ring on, admiringly*) I think it's perfect. Now I really feel engaged.

MRS B. So you ought, darling. It's a lovely ring. Be careful with it.

SHEILA Careful! I'll never let it go out of my sight for an instant.

Starting with this extract, explore how Priestley presents the character of Sheila Birling in *An Inspector Calls*.

[30 marks]

or

1 8 How does Priestley present ideas about social class in *An Inspector Calls*?

[30 marks]

stemup.co.uk

or

Arthur Miller: *The Crucible*

1 9 This extract is taken from near the beginning of the play when some of the inhabitants of Salem have heard the news of Betty's 'illness'. They have gathered at the home of Reverend Parris.

PARRIS: Mr Corey, you will look far for a man of my kind at sixty pound a year! I am not used to this poverty; I left a thrifty business in the Barbados to serve the Lord. I do not fathom it, why am I persecuted here? I cannot offer one proposition but there be a howling riot of argument. I have often wondered if the Devil be in it somewhere; I cannot understand you people otherwise.
PROCTOR: Mr Parris, you are the first minister ever did demand the deed to this house –
PARRIS: Man! Don't a minister deserve a house to live in?
PROCTOR: To live in, yes. But to ask ownership is like you shall own the meeting house itself; the last meeting I were at you spoke so long on deeds and mortgages I thought it were an auction.
PARRIS: I want a mark of confidence, is all! I am your third preacher in seven years. I do not wish to be put out like the cat whenever some majority feels the whim. You people seem not to comprehend that a minister is the Lord's man in the parish; a minister is not to be so lightly crossed and contradicted –
PUTNAM: Aye!
PARRIS: There is either obedience or the church will burn like Hell is burning!
PROCTOR: Can you speak one minute without we land in Hell again? I am sick of Hell!
PARRIS: It is not for you to say what is good for you to hear!
PROCTOR: I may speak my heart, I think!
PARRIS [*in a fury*]**:** What, are we Quakers? We are not Quakers here yet, Mr Proctor. And you may tell that to your followers!
PROCTOR: My followers!
PARRIS [*now he's out with it*]**:** There is a party in this church. I am not blind; there is a faction and a party.
PROCTOR: Against you?
PUTNAM: Against him and all authority!
PROCTOR: Why, then I must find it and join it.

Starting with this extract, consider the ways Miller presents Salem as a divided and unhappy town.

[30 marks]

or

2 0 How does Miller present children and young people in *The Crucible*?

[30 marks]

stemup.co.uk

or

Lorraine Hansberry: *A Raisin in the Sun*

2 1 In this extract George arrives to take Beneatha to the theatre. Beneatha is wearing traditional Nigerian clothes.

This extract cannot be reproduced here due to third-party copyright restrictions.

Starting with this extract, explore how Hansberry presents Beneatha's struggle to find her identity.

[30 marks]

or

2 2 Why do you think Hansberry chose *A Raisin in the Sun* as the title of the play?

[30 marks]

END OF QUESTIONS

stemup.co.uk

There are no questions printed on this page

There are no questions printed on this page

stemup.co.uk

There are no questions printed on this page

stemup.co.uk

There are no questions printed on this page

Copyright information

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

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

Copyright © 2018 Oxford International AQA Examinations and its licensors. All rights reserved.

stemup.co.uk

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

Question number

01

Dickens presents Miss Havisham as a woman who has chosen to stop time at the moment of her humiliation, so that she becomes a living monument to grief and revenge. At first she is seen through the terrified eyes of a child as a gothic spectre, but as the older Pip reshapes his memories the reader learns to see her as both a victim of male cruelty and a perpetrator of cruelty herself, until she is finally redeemed through remorse and fire.

The extract opens with a deliberately overwhelming list: "satins, and lace, and silks". The polysyndeton piles up luxurious fabrics as if young Pip cannot take them in quickly enough, and the short, blunt sentence "Her shoes were white" reflects a child's simple, fixated way of looking. White, the colour of bridal purity, is repeated obsessively until the final twist: "but her hair was white". The conjunction "but" turns the bride into an old woman, and the reader senses that something has gone terribly wrong with time. The details of incompleteness, "but one shoe on" and the veil "but half arranged", reveal that she has frozen herself at a single instant, the moment she received Compeyson's letter, a fact Dickens withholds until much later. Structurally, the extract therefore plants a mystery that the whole novel will solve.

The second paragraph shifts from description to interpretation, signalled by the anaphora of "I saw that". Everything "which ought to be white" has become "faded and yellow", and the verb "withered" links the woman to the decaying flowers, as if she has rotted along with her wedding day. The phrase "no brightness left but the brightness of her sunken eyes" is unsettling: the only life remaining in her is intense and possibly obsessive. Dickens then draws on the gothic with the "ghastly

Question number

waxwork" and the "skeleton in the ashes of a rich dress". These images fuse death and wealth, implying that Miss Havisham's riches have not protected her from becoming a corpse in all but name. The word "ashes" may even foreshadow her death by fire. The final short sentence, "I should have cried out, if I could", conveys Pip's paralysed terror, but the adult narrator's measured syntax also suggests he now understands that she was more pitiful than monstrous.

Beyond the extract, Dickens shows how her grief has hardened into a plan for revenge. She has adopted Estella and raised her to break men's hearts, urging her to destroy Pip during their games of cards, and the stopped clocks and rotting wedding feast in Satis House show that she has made her private pain into a whole environment. Her passionate command to Pip later in the novel to "love her, love her, love her" reveals how distorted her idea of love has become: the repetition sounds less like a blessing than a curse, since she believes love means "blind devotion" and self-destruction. Dickens may be criticising the Victorian expectation that a woman's whole identity lay in marriage; once Compeyson jilts her, she has no role left except that of the abandoned bride.

Miss Havisham's power over Pip is also shaped by money. Because she is wealthy and eccentric, Pip assumes that she is his secret benefactor and that Estella is meant for him, and she allows him to believe it, partly to torment her greedy Pocket relatives. When Magwitch is revealed as the true source of Pip's fortune, the reader's view of her shifts again: she has used Pip as cruelly as she used Estella. Dickens uses the first person retrospective narrator so that the reader shares the young Pip's illusions and the older Pip's disillusionment, revising our impression of her alongside him.

Yet Dickens does not leave her as a villain. When Pip visits her for the last time,

Question number

she is horrified by what she has done, crying out "What have I done!" and begging him to write that he forgives her. Soon afterwards her old wedding dress catches fire and Pip burns his hands saving her. The image of the faded dress going up in flames completes the motif begun in the extract: the "rich dress" that already seemed like a shroud finally becomes one. Her death, after she has repented, suggests a kind of purification, and it fits Dickens's wider interest in the idea that people can change.

Overall, Dickens presents Miss Havisham as a figure of arrested time whose refusal to move on poisons everyone around her. The extract's gothic imagery makes her terrifying, but the novel's structure gradually reveals the wounded, regretful woman beneath the yellowed satin, encouraging the reader to move from fear to judgement and finally to pity.

02 Dickens presents crime and punishment as forces that shape the whole of Great Expectations, from its first scene on the marshes to Magwitch's death in prison. However, he is less interested in crime itself than in the unfairness of a system that punishes the poor harshly while gentlemen escape, and in the guilt that infects even innocent people like Pip. By the end, the novel suggests that true justice lies not in the courts but in compassion and forgiveness.

The novel opens with crime intruding on a child's world. Magwitch rises among the graves as "a fearful man, all in coarse grey, with a great iron on his leg", and the leg iron immediately marks him as an escaped convict. Seen through the eyes of a frightened boy, he seems monstrous, threatening that a young man will tear out Pip's heart and liver. Yet even here Dickens hints at Magwitch's suffering: he is cold, starving and limping. The adult narrator's description invites sympathy

Question number

alongside fear, and the reader begins to sense that the convict is himself a victim. Pip's theft of the pie and the file for him introduces the novel's central idea of guilt: he feels like a criminal for the rest of his childhood, and his terror at Christmas dinner that he will be discovered is both comic and painful.

Dickens also shows the brutality of the state's punishments. The prison ship, the Hulks, is described as like "a wicked Noah's ark", a simile which reverses the biblical image of salvation into one of damnation, as if the convicts have been cast out of humanity. Victorian readers would have recognised this world of hulks, transportation to Australia and public hanging. The punishment of the poor even reaches the domestic sphere: Mrs Joe's use of "Tickler" on Pip and her boast that she brought him up "by hand" suggest that violence is presented as normal discipline, so the novel's interest in punishment begins at home.

The contrast between Magwitch and Compeyson exposes the class bias of justice. When Magwitch later tells Pip his history, Dickens uses this delayed, non-chronological revelation to show that both men were tried together, but Compeyson's gentlemanly appearance and education earned him a much lighter sentence, while Magwitch, ragged and uneducated, was treated as the hardened villain. Compeyson is also the man who jilted Miss Havisham, so his crimes ripple outwards through several lives, while the law barely touches him. Dickens seems to argue that the legal system judges people by their class rather than their actions, a powerful criticism in an age when Victorians believed respectability meant virtue.

Pip's own attitude to crime reflects his snobbery. As he becomes a gentleman in London, he is repeatedly brushed by the criminal world, through Jaggers's office, Newgate prison and Wemmick's collection of "portable property" from condemned men. He feels contaminated by it, wanting to shake the prison dust off before

Question number

meeting Estella, not knowing that Estella is herself the daughter of Magwitch and Molly, Jaggers's housekeeper, who was tried for murder. The irony is that the gentility Pip prizes rests entirely on a convict's money. Jaggers, who obsessively washes his hands with scented soap after dealing with clients, symbolises a profession that profits from crime while trying to remain untouched by it.

Violence in the novel is not limited to official criminals. Orlick's attack on Mrs Joe, using a convict's leg iron, links him to the marshes, and his later ambush of Pip at the sluice house is described with savage intensity, as he gloats over his plan to kill Pip and burn his body in the kiln. Orlick is never truly reformed, perhaps suggesting that the novel separates genuine malice from the desperate crimes of poverty that Magwitch committed.

The ending makes Dickens's moral position clearest. Magwitch returns from Australia knowing it is a capital offence, is betrayed by Compeyson, and is sentenced to death in a scene where many prisoners are condemned at once, which emphasises how mechanical the law has become. Pip now holds his hand, tells him that his lost daughter lived and became a lady, and prays for him as a sinner. Magwitch dies before he can be hanged. In loving the convict he once found repulsive, Pip finally escapes his own snobbery.

In conclusion, Dickens presents crime and punishment as a lens for examining class, guilt and human worth. The law in the novel is harsh, biased and often blind, but through Pip's growth Dickens suggests that redemption comes from mercy, loyalty and the recognition that a convict can be the most generous man in the book.

Question number

03

Lee presents Boo Radley as a character who is created by rumour and only revealed by experience. For most of the novel he is a figure of the children's imagination, a gothic monster built from Maycomb's gossip, but in this extract the monster dissolves into a shy, fragile man. Lee uses him to show how prejudice distorts our view of others and to embody the novel's central symbol: the innocent "mockingbird" who should be protected rather than harmed.

The extract is structured as a slow act of seeing. Scout's gaze moves deliberately from his hands to his "sand-stained khaki pants" and up "his thin frame", as if she is assembling a real person for the first time after years of fantasy. The repetition of "white hands, sickly white hands" emphasises his pallor, and the clause "that had never seen the sun" suggests years of confinement inside the Radley house. Interestingly, the details that might once have terrified Scout are now presented with tenderness: his temples have "almost delicate indentations" and his hair is "almost feathery". The adjective "feathery" quietly links him to birds, preparing for the mockingbird comparison which follows soon after. The hesitant "almost" shows Scout searching for the right words for someone she is genuinely seeing.

Lee also emphasises Boo's vulnerability. When Scout points, "his palms slipped slightly, leaving greasy sweat streaks on the wall", revealing intense nervousness in a man who has just saved two children by killing Bob Ewell. The simile "as if he heard fingernails scrape slate" captures how painful social contact is for him. Then "the tension slowly drained from his face" and he gives "a timid smile". The adjective "timid" is a striking reversal of the bloodthirsty phantom of the early chapters. Scout's "sudden tears" show her emotional recognition, and her simple greeting "Hey, Boo" is significant: she uses the nickname the children invented, but now in friendship rather than fear.

Question number

This scene gains its power from the contrast with the beginning of the novel. In the opening chapters Scout calls him "a malevolent phantom", and Jem describes him as a giant who eats "raw squirrels" and has bloodstained hands and rotten teeth. Lee uses Scout's retrospective narration to present this childish view with gentle irony: the adult narrator lets us see that the children have simply absorbed the town's stories. Their games, such as acting out the Radley family's history and trying to deliver a note on a fishing pole, show how Boo has been turned into entertainment, and Atticus's disapproval hints that the children are being unkind to a real person.

Lee also shows that Maycomb's gossip conceals a story of real cruelty. As a teenager Boo got into trouble with a group of boys, and rather than let him be sent to a state school, his strict father kept him locked up at home. The rumour that he stabbed his father's leg with scissors is passed around by Miss Stephanie Crawford, whose relish for scandal shows how prejudice spreads. The town's reasoning that he could not be put in jail alongside Black prisoners exposes, in passing, the casual racism of the community. Boo is therefore a victim of family oppression and social judgement, and his isolation mirrors the way Maycomb confines and misjudges Tom Robinson.

Throughout the middle of the novel, Lee gradually reveals Boo's kindness through objects rather than appearances. He leaves gifts in the knothole of the oak tree, including gum, pennies and two soap figures carved to look like Jem and Scout, and he places a blanket around Scout's shoulders during Miss Maudie's fire. When Nathan Radley fills the knothole with cement, Jem's silent tears suggest that he understands Boo's attempt at friendship has been cruelly blocked. These moments build a picture of a man who wants connection but cannot reach it.

Question number

At the end, Heck Tate decides to say that Bob Ewell fell on his knife, refusing to drag Boo into the spotlight. Scout understands, saying that exposing him would be "sort of like shootin' a mockingbird", which ties Boo to Atticus's earlier lesson that it is a sin to harm creatures that do nothing but good. Standing on the Radley porch, Scout finally sees the street from his perspective, fulfilling Atticus's advice about standing in someone else's shoes. When she says he was "real nice", Atticus replies that most people are "when you finally see them".

Lee therefore presents Boo Radley as a test of the reader's own prejudices. The extract is the climax of a long process in which fear gives way to understanding, and in which a white, frightened man in a dim room becomes the clearest example of the novel's belief in empathy.

04 Lee presents justice and the law as two things that ought to be the same but, in Maycomb, are often painfully different. The formal law, embodied in the courtroom, fails Tom Robinson because it is controlled by racial prejudice, while the novel's moments of real justice come from individual conscience, sometimes even through bending the law. Through Scout's growing understanding, Lee asks readers to judge a society that prides itself on fairness while denying it to Black citizens.

Lee prepares for the trial with smaller examples of how law is applied unequally. Atticus explains that the Ewells are allowed to hunt out of season and that the children need not attend school regularly, because the town has decided they are beyond help. This shows that the law is already flexible for some white people, foreshadowing how it will be bent against Tom. The night before the trial, the lynch mob at the jail shows the opposite threat: men who want to bypass the

Question number

courts altogether. Atticus sits alone under a light, reading, an image of quiet, civilised law confronting mob violence. Ironically, it is Scout's innocent conversation with Mr Cunningham about his son and his entailment that breaks up the mob, suggesting that justice depends on people being seen as individuals.

The trial itself is presented through Scout's child narration, which allows Lee to expose the truth simply and clearly. Bob Ewell is depicted as arrogant and crude, swaggering in the witness box and causing uproar with his language, while Tom is quiet, polite and honest. Lee uses this contrast deliberately. Atticus's methodical questioning reveals that Mayella's injuries were on the right side of her face, suggesting a left-handed attacker, and that Tom's left arm was crippled in a cotton gin. The evidence is overwhelming, and the reader, like Jem, believes acquittal is certain. Tom's fatal mistake is to say he felt sorry for Mayella, which the white audience treats as an outrageous claim for a Black man to make, showing that the social order matters more to them than the facts.

In his closing speech Atticus insists that "in our courts all men are created equal". The echo of the Declaration of Independence presents the courtroom as an ideal of American democracy, yet the guilty verdict instantly exposes the gap between that ideal and the reality of the segregated South. Lee wrote during the civil rights movement, and readers would have recognised cases like the Scottsboro trials, in which Black men were convicted on the word of white women despite weak evidence. Scout's description of the jury refusing to look at Tom, and of Atticus walking out while the Black community in the balcony stands, adds dignity to defeat. Reverend Sykes's quiet instruction "Miss Jean Louise, stand up. Your father's passin'" turns a legal loss into a moral victory.

The aftermath presents justice as a slow process. Jem is devastated, insisting that

Question number

the verdict is wrong, and Atticus explains that in courts, when it is a white man's word against a Black man's, the white man always wins. Miss Maudie offers a more hopeful view: the jury took hours to decide, which she sees as a small step forward. Tom's death, shot many times while trying to escape from prison, is condemned by Mr Underwood's editorial, which likens it to the senseless killing of songbirds. This links Tom to the mockingbird symbol and suggests that the law has destroyed an innocent man.

The ending complicates Lee's presentation further. After Bob Ewell attacks the children, Atticus at first believes Jem killed him and insists that the matter must go to court, refusing any special treatment for his own son. His principle is consistent: the law must apply to everyone. However, Heck Tate insists that Ewell fell on his knife and that Boo Radley must not be exposed. Here the sheriff, a representative of the law, deliberately bends it in the name of justice. Scout's comparison with "shootin' a mockingbird" shows that she accepts this decision. Lee seems to suggest that justice and law can conflict, and that true justice sometimes means protecting the vulnerable rather than following procedure.

Overall, Lee presents the law as a fragile human institution which is only as fair as the people who operate it. Through the contrast between the corrupted verdict on Tom Robinson and the merciful decision to protect Boo, she suggests that justice depends on empathy and courage, the qualities Atticus tries to teach his children.

05 Adichie presents family life in Purple Hibiscus through a powerful contrast between two households: Papa's wealthy home in Enugu, governed by fear, silence and religious control, and Aunty Ifeoma's poor but loving flat in Nsukka, filled with

Question number

laughter and argument. Through Kambili's narration, Adichie suggests that a family's wealth matters far less than its freedom, and that love which depends on obedience can become a form of violence.

The extract opens with a description of Ifeoma's dining table, made of wood "that cracked in dry weather". The simile "like a molting cricket" is revealing. On one level it shows the poverty of the household, but a cricket shedding its skin is also growing, which may hint that this home is where Kambili will begin her own transformation. The repeated adjective "mismatched", applied first to the chairs and then to the plates, emphasises imperfection, yet nothing about the meal suggests unhappiness. Adichie implies that the family is united by affection rather than by matching possessions.

Kambili's behaviour shows how deeply her own family life has shaped her. After grace she "still had my eyes closed", because in Papa's house prayers are long and rigidly enforced. Ifeoma's gentle teasing, "We do not say Mass in the name of grace like your father does", delivered "with a chuckle", reveals that faith in this family is warm rather than punitive. The affectionate address "Nne" contrasts with Papa's formal, controlling speech. Kambili's struggle to "get the food down", with the repetition of "tried to", conveys her physical anxiety: eating is not a pleasure but another test she fears failing. Meanwhile her cousins speak freely and carelessly, joking about chicken and complaining about the Coke. Obiora's excitement at "Chicken and soft drinks!" reminds the reader that this family is struggling financially, which makes their cheerfulness more striking.

The final lines make the contrast explicit. "Laughter floated over my head" suggests that joy is something Kambili can observe but not yet join, as if it passes above her. The verb "spurted" presents speech as spontaneous and

Question number

uncontrollable, unlike home, where "We always spoke with a purpose". The repetition in "speak and speak and speak" captures her bewilderment at a family where talk is not dangerous. Adichie uses Kambili's restrained, observant voice to show the reader what she herself cannot yet fully articulate.

Elsewhere, family life in Papa's house is presented as a regime. Kambili's daily schedule is fixed to the wall, and Papa's love is shown through rituals such as the "love sip" of his hot tea, a gesture both tender and controlling. His violence is shocking because it is framed as love: he beats Mama so badly that she miscarries, he pours boiling water on Kambili's feet for staying under the same roof as her "heathen" grandfather, and he beats her almost to death for keeping a painting of Papa-Nnukwu. Mama's silent polishing of the ceramic figurines after each beating becomes a symbol of how the family covers up its pain. The novel's opening, in which Papa flings his missal at Jaja and breaks the figurines, marks the moment this fragile order begins to collapse.

Adichie also explores family as a link between generations. Papa refuses to let his children spend more than a few minutes with his father, Papa-Nnukwu, because he follows traditional Igbo religion. At Ifeoma's flat, however, Kambili secretly watches her grandfather's morning prayer and is moved by its gentleness, realising that his faith is not evil. Ifeoma's family, which welcomes him, accepts difference, whereas Papa's family is defined by rejection. Ifeoma also encourages her children to question her, as when Amaka challenges ideas openly, showing a model of family life based on respect rather than fear.

Despite the oppression, Adichie shows real closeness between Kambili, Jaja and Mama. The siblings communicate through their eyes, a silent language born of fear. At the end, when Mama reveals that she poisoned Papa, Jaja takes the

Question number

blame and goes to prison to protect her, an act of sacrificial love. Kambili's narration, perhaps unreliable in its loyalty to Papa, still insists that she loves him, which makes the family's tragedy more complex: love and harm are tangled together. The setting of political unrest in Nigeria, where Papa is a public hero who funds a fearless newspaper, adds irony, since the man who resists tyranny in public is a tyrant at home.

Overall, Adichie presents family life as either a place of fear or a place of growth. The extract captures the moment when Kambili first encounters the second, and the noisy, imperfect meal becomes a quiet turning point in her journey towards speech and freedom.

06 I think Adichie chose Purple Hibiscus as the title because the flower is the novel's central symbol of freedom, growth and defiance. It is unusual, it has been carefully cultivated, and it can be transplanted from one home to another, and in all of these ways it mirrors the journey of Kambili and Jaja from silence towards self-expression. The title also invites the reader to look for contrast, because the purple hibiscus only means something in relation to the red hibiscus that grows in Papa's compound.

At the start of the novel, the hibiscus in Enugu are red, growing within the high walls of Papa's wealthy estate. They are beautiful but controlled, part of an orderly, tightly managed home. Red may suggest blood and violence, and it is significant that these flowers are associated with a house where Papa's beatings take place behind closed gates. Visitors to the house pluck them freely, almost as decorations, which might suggest that beauty in Papa's world exists for display rather than for life. Adichie gives the reader a garden that looks perfect from the

Question number

outside, just as Papa's public reputation as a generous, brave man conceals his cruelty.

The purple hibiscus is introduced in Aunty Ifeoma's small garden in Nsukka. It has been developed by a friend of Ifeoma's, and it is described as rare and experimental. Its unusual colour sets it apart, just as Ifeoma's household stands apart from the rigid conformity of Papa's. Jaja is fascinated by it, and he begins to help in the garden, which is the first sign that he is growing into his own person. Kambili later reflects that Jaja's defiance seemed like the purple hibiscus, with "undertones of freedom". This is perhaps the clearest explanation of the title: the flower represents a freedom to be and to do, a freedom which Kambili contrasts with the political freedom shouted by crowds after the coup. Adichie suggests that personal liberty begins in small, private acts.

Colour symbolism adds further layers. Purple might be read as a blend of the red of violence and the cooler colours of calm and openness, as though freedom is born out of suffering. Purple is also the colour of royalty and, in the Catholic Church, of Lent and penitence, which is fitting in a novel structured around Palm Sunday. Another reading is darker: purple is the colour of bruises, reminding the reader that the children's freedom has come at a terrible physical cost. Adichie leaves these meanings open, so the title holds hope and pain together.

Jaja's decision to take purple hibiscus stalks back to Enugu and plant them in Papa's garden is a quietly rebellious act. The flowers do not bloom straight away, which suggests that freedom cannot be forced instantly into a hostile environment. When they do begin to bud, their growth coincides with Jaja's open defiance on Palm Sunday, when he refuses to take communion and Papa throws his missal. The opening sentence, "Things started to fall apart at home", ties this

Question number

rebellion to the novel's structure, since the first section is set on that Palm Sunday and the second goes back in time to explain how the hibiscus and the children's courage began to grow. The flower therefore unifies a non-chronological narrative, appearing at each key stage of change.

The title also matters because of how Kambili narrates. Her voice is quiet, hesitant and closely observant, and she lingers on natural details such as the plants, the rain and the colours of the garden. Through her eyes the hibiscus becomes more than a plant; it becomes a way for her to understand what is happening inside her and her brother. Her positive descriptions of it suggest that she, too, is beginning to imagine a different life.

At the end of the novel, Jaja is in prison after taking the blame for Mama's poisoning of Papa. Kambili, visiting him, plans for the future: she imagines planting orange trees in Abba and hopes Jaja will plant purple hibiscus when he is released. The novel closes with the hope of new rains. This ending makes the title forward-looking, because the purple hibiscus has not yet been planted again. Its absence reminds us that freedom has been gained but at great cost, and that recovery is still to come.

In conclusion, Adichie chose Purple Hibiscus as the title because the flower captures, in one unusual image, the novel's concern with growing up, rebellion and the possibility of a freer life. It stands for what Ifeoma's home offers and what Papa's home denies, and its uncertain blooming reflects a hope that is fragile but real.

07 Ishiguro presents Kathy as a narrator whose calm, chatty and modest voice

Question number

gradually reveals a horrifying world that she herself never fully questions. From the very first sentence she speaks as if to a friend who shares her experience, and the gap between her ordinary tone and the extraordinary facts she describes is the source of the novel's quiet devastation.

The opening line, "My name is Kathy H.", is deceptively simple. The missing surname immediately suggests that she lacks a full identity, as though she has no family or history beyond an initial. Her precise statement of her age and years as a carer creates a confessional tone, yet the vague pronoun "they", who "want me to go on for another eight months", hints at an unseen authority that controls her life. Kathy accepts this without resentment. The reader is unsettled from the start because she treats this control as normal.

Her voice is conversational and self-correcting. Phrases such as "That sounds long enough, I know" and "Okay, maybe I am boasting now" make her seem honest and likeable, as if she is anxious about how she will be judged. The direct address "If you're one of them" assumes that the reader is also a carer, which positions us inside her world and makes the reader complicit in its strange rules. This informal style also reveals her limited language: she uses everyday words like "a complete waste of space" and "snap out of it", so the horrors of her situation are expressed in the language of an office worker discussing a job.

Ishiguro uses euphemism to show how far Kathy has absorbed the system. Words like "donors", "fourth donation" and "recovery times" sound medical and reassuring, and the single quotation marks around "agitated" and "calm" suggest official categories that she has learnt to repeat. The reader only later realises that donors are clones whose organs are removed until they "complete", meaning die. Kathy's pride that her donors stay "calm" is therefore deeply disturbing: her skill lies in

Question number

helping people accept their own deaths quietly. The final reference to being "a Hailsham student" is presented almost as a boast, yet it introduces the mystery that drives the novel and hints at a hierarchy among clones that she takes for granted.

Across the novel, Ishiguro structures the narrative entirely around Kathy's memories, moving back from her present as a carer to her childhood at Hailsham, then the Cottages, and finally her time caring for Ruth and Tommy. Her recollections often drift and digress, and she frequently admits that she may be misremembering or that others recall events differently. This makes her a limited and possibly unreliable narrator. She seems to choose small incidents, such as the loss of her Judy Bridgewater tape or Tommy's tantrums on the sports field, and give them great importance, while the central facts about donation are only half explained. This reflects the way the Hailsham students were "told and not told", learning the truth gradually without ever fully confronting it.

Kathy's restraint is especially striking in emotional moments. When Madame watches her dancing alone to "Never Let Me Go", holding a pillow like a baby, Kathy describes the scene simply, and it is only later that we understand Madame was weeping for a world where such children would be lost. When Tommy screams in the field after learning that there are no deferrals, Kathy holds him but records her feelings with little elaboration. Ishiguro suggests that she has been conditioned to accept her fate, so that her grief comes through what she leaves unsaid.

Her relationships with Ruth and Tommy shape the narrative. Kathy is often a peacemaker, careful not to blame Ruth even when Ruth hurts her, and her longing for Tommy is mostly implied. Ruth's late confession that she kept them apart reveals how much Kathy has lost, yet Kathy's account remains measured and

Question number

forgiving. This makes her both sympathetic and frustrating: we long for her to rebel, but she never does.

The ending at Norfolk captures her role as narrator. Standing by a fence covered in rubbish, she imagines that it is the place where everything she had lost since childhood has washed up, but she does not let herself cry and then drives away to where she is supposed to be. The novel ends as it began, with Kathy obediently continuing.

Ishiguro therefore presents Kathy as a gentle, observant but deeply limited narrator. Her ordinary voice in the opening extract invites trust, but it gradually exposes a society that has taught her to see her own exploitation as a job she can be proud of doing well.

08 Hailsham is significant in Never Let Me Go because it is at once a paradise, a prison and a political experiment. For Kathy it is the lost home of her childhood, the place where her friendships with Ruth and Tommy were formed and the memory she clings to in adulthood. For the reader, however, Ishiguro gradually reveals that Hailsham's beauty was a carefully maintained illusion which hid the purpose for which its students were created. Its significance lies in this gap between how Kathy remembers it and what it really was.

Kathy presents Hailsham with deep nostalgia. Her descriptions of the sports pavilion, the duck pond, the woods and the long fields are affectionate and detailed, and she repeatedly returns to it in memory while working as a carer. Her donors, especially those from less privileged homes, ask her to describe Hailsham as if it were a special place, and one wants to hear about it so much that it

Question number

seems he is trying to replace his own memories with hers. Ishiguro shows that Hailsham has become a kind of myth among clones, representing a better life than the grim homes others grew up in. At the same time, the reader notices that Kathy's narration is limited: she sees Hailsham as a paradise, while we see a closed institution that she never leaves.

Within this apparently happy world, Ishiguro plants hints of something darker. The students are surrounded by fences and woods, and the stories they tell each other, about a boy who ran beyond the boundary and was found dead, or a girl whose ghost haunts the woods, reveal a fear of what lies outside. The weekly medicals, the strict rules about smoking and the guardians' insistence on keeping healthy suggest that the children's bodies matter in ways they do not yet understand. The Sales and Exchanges, where children trade their art and buy second-hand goods, show that they are taught to value possessions and creativity, yet these objects come from a world they will never really join.

The guardians embody Hailsham's contradictions. Miss Lucy is the only one who feels the students should know the truth. Her outburst at the pavilion, when she tells them that none of them will go to America or be film stars because their lives are already set out for them, is shocking because it breaks the gentle pattern of half-truths. The students, as Kathy later says, were "told and not told", learning just enough to accept their fate without fully understanding it. Miss Lucy's departure soon afterwards suggests that honesty threatened the system Hailsham depended upon.

Madame and her Gallery are central to the mystery. The students believe the best artwork is chosen for a special collection, and Tommy's inability to produce good art leads to him being mocked and to his tantrums. Later, at the Cottages, the

Question number

students hear a rumour that Hailsham couples truly in love can apply for a deferral, delaying their donations for a few years, and that the Gallery might be used to prove their love. This myth gives the students hope and shows how Hailsham shaped their dreams even after they left.

The novel's climax reveals Hailsham's real significance. When Kathy and Tommy visit Madame and Miss Emily, they learn that there were never any deferrals. Hailsham was a progressive project, designed to show that clones were fully human. Miss Emily explains that the Gallery was used to prove that the students "had souls at all". This reframes the whole of Kathy's childhood: Hailsham was a humane experiment within an inhumane system, and its kindness did nothing to change their fate. When public opinion turned, partly after a scientist's attempt to create enhanced children caused alarm, the funding disappeared and Hailsham closed. Ishiguro suggests that society preferred not to think about where its medical cures came from.

Hailsham's privileges also complicate our judgement. The students received art, literature and care that other clones were denied, and Kathy's success as a carer seems linked to that education. Yet the privilege perhaps made their fate more cruel, as they were given feelings, creativity and the capacity for love, only to have their lives cut short. Ishiguro may be asking whether a kinder cage is any less a cage.

By the end, Hailsham has gone, and Kathy says that she will keep it in her head, together with her memories of Tommy and Ruth. The school survives only as memory, which is fitting in a novel structured entirely around recollection. Its significance, then, is double: it is the source of Kathy's identity and happiness, and also the clearest symbol of a society that gave these children just enough

Question number

humanity to make their exploitation bearable to watch. Through Hailsham, Ishiguro forces the reader to confront how easily comfort and kindness can disguise injustice.

09 Zusak presents the relationship between Liesel and Max as a bond built not on what they share happily, but on what they have both lost. In this extract their friendship begins in darkness, through the exchange of nightmares, and across the novel it grows through words and stories into something that defies the ideology of Nazi Germany. Ultimately, Zusak suggests that the friendship between "the German and the Jew" is one of the few things in the novel that Death himself finds beautiful.

The extract opens by insisting on likeness. Death tells us that the two would "go about their other similarity", and the word "other" quietly reminds the reader that they already share something: both arrived at Himmel Street as outsiders, carried by loss. The parallel structure of "one with a scream in drowning sheets, the other with a gasp for air next to a smoking fire" balances them in a single sentence, as though they are mirror images. The imagery is of suffocation, "drowning" and "a gasp for air", which suggests that both are struggling to survive the weight of their pasts. Hans makes the connection explicit with the simple statement "He dreams like you", and it is significant that it is Papa, the man who sheltered both of them, who first names their kinship.

Liesel's decision to get out of bed shows the relationship being chosen rather than imposed. She is "stirred by the sound of Max's anxiety", and the verb "stirred" implies an instinctive compassion. At this early stage Liesel is still cautious about the stranger in the basement, so this tentative "Max?", a whisper "clouded in the

Question number

throat of sleep", is a quietly brave act. Zusak's setting reinforces the mood: the fire is "a funeral of smoke, dead and dying, simultaneously". This oxymoronic image of something both dead and still dying captures the half life that both characters are living, haunted by those they have lost, and Death's habit of seeing funerals everywhere reminds the reader of how close mortality always is in this novel. The comic aside about Mama's snoring, giving "the snorer on the train a good run for her money", lightens the tone, but it also recalls the train where Liesel's brother died, so even humour leads back to grief.

The most striking method is the shift into a script-like section titled "THE SWAPPING OF NIGHTMARES". Zusak strips the conversation down to labels, "The Girl" and "The Jew", which has two effects. It universalises them, so that they stand for any German child and any persecuted Jew, and it exposes how Nazi ideology reduces people to categories. Yet the content of the dialogue undoes that reduction, because what they exchange is intensely personal: Max sees himself "turning round, and waving goodbye", the guilt of leaving his family behind, while Liesel sees "A train, and my dead brother." The word "swapping" suggests a fair, equal trade, and the final line, spoken "together", unites them physically on the page. Their shared "Ja, Yes" moves between German and English, perhaps hinting that their bond crosses languages and borders.

Beyond the extract, Zusak develops the relationship through books. Max arrives carrying Mein Kampf, the text that justifies his persecution, yet he later paints over its pages to create "The Standover Man", a gift for Liesel that compares the men who have stood over them both. In "The Word Shaker" he presents the Führer as a man who conquers through words, and Liesel as a girl who uses words to grow something good. Zusak's symbolism here is powerful: the same weapon that fuels hatred can, in the right hands, sustain love. When Max falls ill, Liesel reads

Question number

to him and brings him small gifts, and her descriptions of the weather show her becoming his window onto the world he cannot see.

The relationship is tested most painfully when Max is marched through Molching towards Dachau. Liesel pushes through the crowd to walk beside him, and both are whipped by a soldier. Here the friendship becomes a public act of defiance, reflecting the real danger faced by Germans who helped Jews. Zusak withholds their reunion until the very end, when Max returns after the war and the two embrace. This understated, hopeful ending contrasts with the deaths of Hans, Rosa and Rudy, suggesting that their friendship, born from shared nightmares, is what allows Liesel to survive. Death's admission that he is "haunted by humans" seems, in this relationship at least, to be an expression of wonder rather than despair.

10 Zusak presents conflict on three levels that constantly press against one another: the global conflict of the Second World War, the conflict between individuals and the society of Nazi Germany, and the private conflicts that take place inside characters' minds. By filtering all of them through Death as narrator, he suggests that the grand violence of war is ultimately made of small human struggles, and that the most meaningful battles in the novel are fought with words rather than weapons.

The war itself is presented largely through its consequences. Death is a narrator who is overworked by conflict, and his weary voice gives the war a strange intimacy: he describes collecting souls rather than describing battles, so the reader sees war as an accumulation of individual losses. His frequent use of spoilers, such as revealing early that Rudy will die, creates tragic irony, so that the reader watches ordinary moments of childhood in Molching already knowing they will be

Question number

destroyed. The bombing of Himmel Street at the end makes the external conflict horrifyingly literal, as the street where the whole novel has taken place is erased in a single night. Zusak's choice to have Liesel survive only because she was writing in the basement suggests that words, quite literally, protect her from war.

Conflict between individuals and society is embodied most clearly in Hans Hubermann. He is presented as gentle and thoughtful, a painter and accordion player, yet he quietly resists the regime around him. He paints over the abuse daubed on a Jewish shop, he keeps the promise he made to Erik Vandenburg by hiding Max, and in his most dangerous act he offers bread to an old Jewish man being marched through the town. He is whipped for it, and the gesture costs him peace of mind as he waits for the consequences. Zusak presents this not as heroism in a grand sense but as decency in conflict with fear, which makes Hans more believable and more admirable. Even his slap when Liesel says she hates the Führer is an expression of this conflict: he protects her by teaching her to hide her true feelings in public, showing how society forces even good people into silence.

Liesel herself enters into conflict with society through her stealing of books. Her theft of a book from the smouldering bonfire on Hitler's birthday is symbolically charged, since the Nazis burn books to control ideas, and Liesel rescues one. Her growing anger at the Führer, once she realises his connection to the disappearance of her mother, turns her book theft into a quiet act of rebellion. At the same time, Zusak includes conflicts on a childish scale, such as Liesel beating Ludwig Schmeikl after he mocks her reading at school. These scenes are partly comic, but they mirror the larger violence of the war and suggest that aggression is a human instinct which the Nazis exploit.

Question number

Internal conflict is explored most deeply through Max. His guilt at leaving his family haunts him, and his survival feels to him almost like a betrayal. In the basement he imagines himself boxing the Führer, a fantasy that dramatises his inner struggle: the fight is symbolic, a Jew standing up to the man who wants him destroyed, yet it takes place only in his mind, which highlights his powerlessness. Zusak connects this to Max's childhood, when he fought in the streets as a boy, so the boxing imagery suggests a lifelong resistance. Through "The Word Shaker", Max transforms this into a story about conflict over language itself, in which the Führer plants hateful words like seeds and a girl grows a tree of her own words that his followers struggle to destroy. Zusak seems to suggest that the real war is fought over what people believe, and that words can be used to resist as well as to oppress.

Finally, Death's own conflict frames the whole novel. He is torn between his duty and his fascination with humanity, and his closing admission, "I am haunted by humans", captures the contradiction at the heart of the book. Humans are capable of both the cruelty of the camps and the kindness of Hans and Liesel. Zusak presents conflict not as something that can be neatly resolved, but as the condition of human life, where love and hatred exist side by side. In the end, the novel suggests that while individuals cannot stop a war, they can still choose which side of the inner conflict they will stand on.

11 In both Through the Tunnel and A Fly in the Ointment, the relationship between parent and child is defined by a gap: between what each feels and what each is able to say. Lessing presents a loving relationship in which mother and son must learn to separate, while Pritchett presents an adult son who discovers that the father he thought he understood is a stranger. In both stories, growing up means

Question number

seeing a parent clearly, and accepting the distance that brings.

The extract presents Jerry and his mother as acutely sensitive to each other's feelings, perhaps too sensitive. When she offers to go elsewhere, Jerry replies "Oh, no!" "quickly", and Lessing describes his smile as coming from "that unfailing impulse of contrition", "a sort of chivalry". The word "contrition" suggests that Jerry feels guilty for even wanting something different, while "chivalry" casts him, at eleven, as a little knight protecting his mother. Because she is "a widow", Lessing implies that Jerry has taken on an adult role in their small family. Yet the conjunction "Yet" signals his inner conflict: the request "blurted out" shows the desire for independence bursting through his politeness.

Lessing's shifting narrative viewpoint is the key method here. We first see the mother's arm, "slightly reddened from yesterday's sun, swinging", an image filtered through Jerry's eyes which makes her seem vulnerable and alone, so that he finds it "unbearable that she should go by herself". Then the narrative moves into her mind with free indirect thought: "Have I been keeping him too close? He mustn't feel he ought to be with me." The short, anxious sentences reveal her self-questioning, and the modal "must" shows her disciplining her own love. Lessing's balanced sentence, that she was determined to be "neither possessive nor lacking in devotion", captures the tightrope every parent walks. The final line, "She went worrying off to her beach", is gently ironic: in trying not to cling, she has simply carried her worry with her.

As the story develops, this delicate balance is tested. Jerry's longing to join the older local boys and his obsession with swimming through the tunnel become a rite of passage that he keeps secret from his mother. When he asks for goggles, she gives in, and Lessing shows that her trust allows him to take a dangerous

Question number

step towards adulthood. After he emerges, bleeding, from the tunnel, he does not tell her about the tunnel, and Lessing ends by noting that going to the bay no longer matters to him at all. The structure of the story is circular, returning to mother and son at the villa, but the relationship has changed: Jerry now carries a private achievement, and the reader recognises that his independence has been won through a secret. Lessing seems to suggest that loving parents must allow children to face danger alone.

Pritchett's A Fly in the Ointment presents a harsher version of this gap. Harold visits his father on the day the family business has failed, and is struck by the empty, abandoned factory, a setting that mirrors the emotional emptiness between them. Pritchett tells the story through Harold's thoughts, so we feel his embarrassment and his uneasy mixture of pity and irritation towards a father whose grand manner has always made him uncomfortable. At first the father seems serene, almost saintly in failure, speaking as though he has risen above money, and Harold softens towards him.

The central symbol of the fly disrupts this. The father's fixation on a fly buzzing around the bare office hints at a restlessness and irritation beneath his calm. When Harold impulsively offers to raise money to help, the father's manner changes at once and he becomes eager to know how much. Pritchett's structural twist reveals that the father's detachment was a performance, and Harold realises he is the fly in the ointment of his father's self-image, or perhaps that his father is the fly in his. The title itself, with its idea of one small flaw spoiling something good, captures how a single moment can sour a relationship.

Comparing the two, Lessing ends with a relationship that survives because of mutual restraint, whereas Pritchett ends with disillusionment. Yet both writers use

Question number

a child's perspective to show that love between parents and children is complicated by pride, guilt and the need to protect. Jerry protects his mother by hiding his danger; Harold's father protects his pride by hiding his greed. In both stories, the most important feelings remain unspoken.

12 In both The Rain Horse and The Destructors, setting is never simply a backdrop. Ted Hughes uses a hostile rural landscape to expose the distance between a modern man and the natural world he has left behind, while Graham Greene uses the ruins of post-war London to explore a generation shaped by destruction. In each story the setting seems almost to become a character, testing or reflecting the people who move through it, and in each the writer uses place to unsettle the reader's sense of order.

Hughes opens The Rain Horse with a young man returning to the countryside of his childhood after twelve years away. He expects to feel something on seeing the familiar valley again, but the landscape offers him nothing, and Hughes conveys his disappointment through the dreary, sodden scene below him. The setting immediately suggests a broken relationship: the place has not waited for him, and his memory of it no longer fits the reality. His new suit and town shoes, wholly unsuited to the mud and wet grass, become a visual symbol of how far he has drifted from the land.

The weather is the most important element of the setting. The relentless rain functions as a kind of pathetic fallacy, but not in the conventional sense of matching the man's mood. Instead it seems to belong to a larger, indifferent power, soaking him, weighing down his clothes and turning the ground to clinging clay. Hughes's descriptions are physical and oppressive, making the reader feel the

Question number

cold and the heaviness, and this sensory focus pulls the man, and the reader, out of the comfortable world of thought and into the body. The rain is also what gives the horse its name in the title, linking the two: the horse appears to emerge from the weather itself, as though nature has taken animal form to confront him.

The wood and the open fields create a pattern of exposure and hiding. Each time the man retreats into cover or believes he has escaped, the horse appears again, and Hughes uses this repeated structure to build tension and a sense of being hunted. The landscape that once might have been a playground becomes a trap. Some readers interpret the horse as the man's repressed guilt or his lost childhood returning to punish him; others see it as the raw energy of nature, which Hughes so often celebrates and fears in his poetry. Either way, the setting allows Hughes to suggest that the natural world is not a nostalgic picture to be admired, but a powerful, unknowable force that modern people underestimate. By the end, filthy and exhausted, the man seems defeated by the place he thought he owned through memory.

Greene's The Destructors also uses setting to convey ideas, but here the landscape is man-made and wounded. The story is set on Wormsley Common in London shortly after the Second World War, among bomb sites where the gang gathers in a makeshift car park. The ruins surrounding them suggest that destruction has become normal, the backdrop to the boys' childhood. Against this, Old Misery's house stands alone, propped up by wooden struts because the neighbouring buildings have been bombed away. Greene makes the house a symbol of the past: it was built by Wren, and T's knowledge of its beautiful staircase and panelling shows that it represents history, craftsmanship and the old social order.

The gang's methodical demolition of the house from the inside reverses the logic

Question number

of building. Greene describes their work with a disturbing precision, as they strip floors, smash the staircase and wreck the interior while leaving the outer walls standing. The setting becomes a stage for T's idea that "destruction after all is a form of creation", a chilling statement that suggests the war has taught the young that tearing down is a kind of achievement. Greene's choice of a bank holiday weekend, when the street is empty, adds to the sense that normal adult authority has disappeared.

The ending brings the setting to its climax. When the lorry driver pulls away in the morning, the house collapses entirely, leaving only rubble among the other bomb sites. The driver's laughter, and his insistence that there is nothing personal in it, is darkly comic but deeply unsettling: the destruction of the house is absorbed into a world already full of ruins. Both writers, then, use setting to question modern life. Hughes shows a man cut off from nature, overwhelmed by a landscape he can no longer read, while Greene shows children who have grown up amid ruins and recreate them. In both stories, setting reveals that the safe, orderly world people take for granted is far more fragile than it seems.

13 Shakespeare presents dreams and the supernatural in Julius Caesar as signs that are always present but rarely understood. The heavens seem to warn of disaster, yet characters interpret omens according to their own pride, fear or political interest. In this extract Calphurnia's dream is a clear warning of Caesar's death, but it is reshaped by Decius into flattery, and Shakespeare uses this moment to show that in Rome the supernatural is less powerful than the human ability to twist its meaning.

Caesar begins with an assertion of absolute will: "The cause is in my will: I will

Question number

not come". The repetition of "will" presents him as a man who wants to appear above all other forces, human or divine. Yet the admission that follows undercuts this, because the real reason is that Calphurnia "stays me at home". Shakespeare suggests that Caesar is privately more troubled by the supernatural than he will publicly admit, which adds to the dramatic tension, as the audience knows the Ides of March has already been foretold.

The dream itself is vivid and violent. Calphurnia saw his statue "like a fountain with an hundred spouts", running "pure blood". The simile turns Caesar into a monument, which reflects his near divine status in Rome, while the image of blood gushing from many openings foreshadows the multiple stab wounds he will receive in the Capitol. Most chillingly, "many lusty Romans / Came smiling, and did bathe their hands in it". For the audience this is direct dramatic irony, because after the murder Brutus will urge the conspirators to bathe their hands in Caesar's blood. The adjective "smiling" captures the conspirators' false friendship, and the dream therefore predicts not only the death but the hypocrisy of it. Calphurnia reads it correctly as "warnings and portents / And evils imminent", the list of nouns building a sense of looming catastrophe.

Decius's response shows how the supernatural can be manipulated. His opening, "This dream is all amiss interpreted", is a bold contradiction, and he immediately recasts it as "a vision fair and fortunate". He keeps every detail of the dream but changes its meaning, so that the blood becomes "Reviving blood" from which "great Rome shall suck". The image of Rome as a child feeding from Caesar appeals to his vanity and his wish to be seen as the father of the state. The reference to "tinctures, stains, relics, and cognizance" adds a religious, almost saintly quality, implying that men will treasure Caesar's blood as holy relics. The irony is that Decius's interpretation is horribly accurate in a way he does not

Question number

intend: Romans will indeed seek Caesar's blood, but as his murderers. Shakespeare shows that the danger lies not in the dream but in Caesar's willingness to believe whichever interpretation flatters him, especially once Decius adds that the Senate means to offer him a crown.

Elsewhere, Shakespeare fills the play with supernatural warnings. From the opening act the Soothsayer's "Beware the ides of March" is dismissed by Caesar as the words of "a dreamer", and the storm before the assassination is full of unnatural sights: Casca describes men who appear to be on fire, a lion near the Capitol, and an owl hooting at noon. An Elizabethan audience, who largely believed that disorder in the heavens reflected disorder in the state, would have recognised these as signs that the murder of a ruler is a crime against nature. Calphurnia makes this connection herself: "When beggars die there are no comets seen; / The heavens themselves blaze forth the death of princes." Yet Cassius reads the same storm as a sign against Caesar, showing again that omens are bent to suit personal agendas.

After the assassination, the supernatural becomes a force of retribution. Caesar's ghost appears to Brutus in his tent and calls itself "Thy evil spirit, Brutus", promising to meet him at Philippi. This turns the supernatural inward: the ghost may be a real spirit or a projection of Brutus's guilt, and Shakespeare leaves this ambiguous. At Philippi, Cassius notices that the eagles that followed the army have been replaced by ravens and kites, and he later dies after misreading what is happening to Titinius, another misinterpretation. Standing over Cassius's body, Brutus cries "O Julius Caesar, thou art mighty yet!", which confirms that Caesar's spirit has triumphed.

Shakespeare therefore presents dreams and the supernatural as truthful but

Question number

tragically misread. The extract is a turning point, because it is the last moment when Caesar might have been saved. By showing how easily Decius distorts the warning, Shakespeare suggests that the real cause of tragedy lies in human pride and ambition, not in the stars.

14 Antony's tribute to Brutus as "the noblest Roman of them all" is, I think, largely justified, but Shakespeare presents Brutus's nobility as a flawed and even dangerous quality. Brutus is noble in his motives and his principles, yet the same idealism that makes him admirable also makes him naive, rigid and easily manipulated. Shakespeare seems to suggest that nobility without political judgement can be as destructive as ambition, and Brutus becomes a tragic hero precisely because his virtues lead to his fall.

From the start, Brutus is presented as a man respected by everyone. Cassius knows that the conspiracy needs his reputation, and Casca later says that what would seem offensive in the others will, with Brutus's support, appear like virtue. This shows that Brutus's nobility is a public asset, but it also exposes his vulnerability: Cassius flatters him and arranges for forged letters to be thrown in at his window, appealing to his sense of duty to Rome. Cassius's soliloquy, in which he reflects that even noble minds can be seduced, warns the audience that Brutus's honour can be used against him. His famous argument, "The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars, / But in ourselves, that we are underlings", works because it appeals to Brutus's belief in personal responsibility.

Brutus's soliloquy in his orchard reveals the inner workings of his nobility. He admits he has no personal grievance against Caesar, and reaches the decision "It must be by his death" before he has even fully justified it. He then imagines

Question number

Caesar as "a serpent's egg" that must be killed "in the shell", condemning him not for what he has done but for what he might become. Shakespeare's use of soliloquy lets the audience see that his motive is genuinely for the "general" good, which is noble, yet the reasoning is speculative and troubling. His confession that since Cassius first stirred him against Caesar he has not slept shows a conscience in torment, which contrasts with the cooler calculation of Cassius.

Brutus's nobility shapes, and damages, the conspiracy. He refuses to let the conspirators swear an oath, believing that the honour of Romans should be enough, and he refuses to kill Antony, insisting "Let's be sacrificers, but not butchers, Caius." The metaphor shows his desire to present the murder as a solemn religious act rather than a political killing. Yet this idealism is a catastrophic misjudgement. Against Cassius's advice, he allows Antony to speak at Caesar's funeral, and even to speak last. His own speech, in measured prose, appeals to reason: "Not that I loved Caesar less, but that I loved Rome more." The balanced antithesis reflects his rational, principled mind, but Antony's emotional verse and his ironic repetition of "Brutus is an honourable man" quickly turn the crowd. Shakespeare shows that Brutus's nobility makes him assume others share his honesty, and this naivety destroys his cause.

In the quarrel scene with Cassius, Brutus's nobility appears more ambiguous. He accuses Cassius of having "an itching palm" and condemns him for taking bribes, yet he is also angry that Cassius refused to send him money to pay his own soldiers. Some readers see this as hypocrisy, a man who wants to keep his hands clean while relying on others to do the dirty work. However, when we learn that Portia has died, Brutus's stoical restraint presents him as a man who places public duty above private grief, which a Roman audience, and Shakespeare's audience familiar with Stoic ideals, might have regarded as truly noble, even if it seems cold

Question number

to us.

Brutus's end confirms his tragic status. Haunted by Caesar's ghost, and defeated at Philippi, he chooses to run on his own sword, held by Strato, rather than be captured, which in Roman terms was an honourable death. His final words, "Caesar, now be still; / I killed not thee with half so good a will", suggest that he dies more willingly than he killed, and imply some recognition of guilt. Antony's eulogy then elevates him above the other conspirators, claiming that they acted out of envy while Brutus alone acted for the common good, and that "the elements / So mixed in him" that Nature could proclaim "This was a man!"

To a great extent, then, Shakespeare presents Brutus as noble: he is honest, principled and genuinely devoted to Rome. Yet Shakespeare complicates Antony's praise by showing how this nobility is entangled with pride, self-righteousness and poor judgement. It is perhaps fitting that his enemy delivers the final tribute, because Antony benefited most from Brutus's honourable mistakes. Brutus is noble, but his story suggests that nobility alone cannot govern a state.

15 Shakespeare presents the relationship between Macbeth and Lady Macbeth as an intense partnership that is gradually emptied by the crime that was meant to bind them. In this extract, Lady Macbeth dominates her husband, using his love and his sense of manhood as weapons. Yet after Duncan's murder the balance of power shifts, until the couple who once shared every thought become isolated strangers. Shakespeare uses their changing relationship to show how guilt and ambition corrode even the closest human bond.

Macbeth opens the extract with a firm, almost formal decision: "We will proceed

Question number

no further in this business." The plural pronoun "We" shows that he still sees the murder as a joint enterprise, while the euphemism "business" reduces regicide to a practical matter, as if he cannot bear to name it. His reasons are revealing. Duncan "hath honoured me of late", and he has "bought / Golden opinions from all sorts of people". The clothing metaphor of opinions "worn now in their newest gloss" suggests that Macbeth values his reputation as a fine new garment that he does not want to "cast aside so soon". Interestingly, he offers his wife practical reasons rather than moral ones, perhaps because he knows these are the only arguments she might accept.

Lady Macbeth's reply turns his own imagery against him. She asks whether "the hope" was "drunk / Wherein you dressed yourself", mocking his metaphor of clothing and suggesting that his ambition was a drunken fantasy. The personification of hope waking "so green and pale" presents his courage as a hungover, sickly thing. Her rapid rhetorical questions give him no space to reply, and the shift from "you" to "thy" in "Such I account thy love" is crucial: she makes the murder a test of his love for her. Shakespeare shows that their relationship is a source of power that she is willing to exploit.

Her sharpest attack is on his masculinity. "Art thou afeard / To be the same in thine own act and valour / As thou art in desire?" exposes the gap between what he wants and what he dares, while the threat that he will "live a coward in thine own esteem" stings because it questions how he sees himself. The image of "the poor cat i'th' adage", the cat that wants fish but will not wet its paws, belittles him to something domestic and timid. For a Jacobean audience, a wife so commanding her husband would have seemed a disturbing inversion of the natural order, and Shakespeare's enjambment, with her lines running relentlessly on, enacts her dominance.

Question number

Early in the play, this domination exists alongside genuine closeness. Macbeth's letter calls her his "dearest partner of greatness", and after the murder their fragmented, shared lines, such as the quick exchange about whether she heard a noise, show them thinking and fearing as one. Yet even here the cracks appear. Macbeth is horrified by his "hangman's hands", while Lady Macbeth dismisses blood, saying that "A little water clears us of this deed".

After Duncan's murder the power shifts. Macbeth plans Banquo's death without her, telling her to "Be innocent of the knowledge, dearest chuck". The affectionate "dearest chuck" sounds tender, but it is also patronising, and the act of excluding her shows that he no longer needs her. Lady Macbeth now has to send a servant to ask for her husband, a striking reversal of her earlier control. At the banquet she still tries to protect him, covering for his outbursts at Banquo's ghost and using the same taunts about manhood, asking "Are you a man?", but the tactic no longer works and she can only dismiss the guests.

By the final act, Shakespeare keeps them apart on stage, and this physical separation reflects their emotional distance. Lady Macbeth's sleepwalking, in broken prose, shows her mind collapsing under the guilt she once mocked, as she cries "Out, damned spot!" Macbeth's reaction to her death is chillingly flat: "She should have died hereafter". His following soliloquy, which presents life as a tale "Signifying nothing", suggests that the loss of his wife has drained even grief of meaning.

The extract therefore marks the height of Lady Macbeth's influence. Shakespeare presents a relationship in which love is used as a lever to commit murder, and the murder in turn destroys the love. By the end, the "partner of greatness" has

Question number

become someone whose death barely registers, a tragic measure of how completely their shared ambition has isolated them.

16 Shakespeare presents loyalty in Macbeth as the bond that holds a kingdom together, and its betrayal as the crime from which every other disorder grows. The play opens with Macbeth celebrated as the most loyal of subjects and ends with him abandoned by everyone, a tyrant obeyed only through fear. By tracing this movement, and by setting Macbeth against loyal figures such as Banquo and Macduff, Shakespeare suggests that loyalty is not simply obedience, but a moral commitment to what is right, and that its loss leaves a ruler utterly alone.

At the start of the play loyalty is presented through violent heroism. The Captain's report describes Macbeth carving his way through rebels and unseaming the traitor Macdonwald "from the nave to th'chaps". The gory detail shows that in this warrior society loyalty to the king is proved in blood. Duncan rewards this with elevated, generous language, calling him "O valiant cousin! worthy gentleman!" and granting him the title of the disloyal Thane of Cawdor. Shakespeare's structure is pointedly ironic: the traitor's title passes to the man who will commit the greater treason. Duncan even admits that "There's no art / To find the mind's construction in the face", a line about the first Cawdor that is immediately followed by Macbeth's entrance, inviting the audience to see the pattern repeating.

Duncan's court is presented as a place of reciprocal loyalty. Macbeth declares that "The service and the loyalty I owe, / In doing it, pays itself", insisting that serving the king is its own reward. Yet only moments later, in an aside, he begs the stars to hide his "black and deep desires". Shakespeare's juxtaposition of public declaration and private ambition shows how fragile loyalty can be, and how easily

Question number

its language can become a mask. Duncan's warm images of planting and growing, telling Macbeth he has begun "to plant thee", present the king as a gardener nurturing his loyal subjects, which makes Macbeth's betrayal seem a violation of nature itself.

Macbeth's soliloquy in Act 1 Scene 7 shows that he fully understands this. He reasons that he is Duncan's kinsman, his subject and his host, all bonds of loyalty that should make him protect the king rather than "bear the knife" himself. He imagines Duncan's virtues pleading "like angels, trumpet-tongued" against his murder. For a Jacobean audience, who believed in the divine right of kings, killing a king was not only treason but sacrilege, and James I, who had survived the Gunpowder Plot, would have been especially aware of the horror of such betrayal. Macbeth's doubts reveal that his loyalty is overcome not by reason but by ambition and his wife's persuasion.

Shakespeare uses Banquo as a foil. He hears the same prophecies but resists acting on them, telling Macbeth that he will follow him only if he can keep his "bosom franchised and allegiance clear". The word "allegiance" shows that Banquo's loyalty is tied to his conscience. Macduff provides a further model: he refuses to attend Macbeth's coronation and flees to England to support Malcolm. Yet Shakespeare complicates loyalty here, because his flight leaves his wife and children unprotected, and Lady Macduff bitterly calls him a traitor. In the England scene Malcolm tests Macduff's loyalty by pretending to be even worse than Macbeth, which suggests that, in a world poisoned by treachery, loyalty must be proven rather than assumed.

Clothing imagery reinforces the idea that Macbeth's position is borrowed rather than earned. Early on he asks why he is dressed "in borrowed robes", and by the

Question number

end Angus describes his title hanging loose upon him "like a giant's robe / Upon a dwarfish thief". The image suggests that a king who has betrayed loyalty can never fit the role he has stolen.

By the final act, Macbeth's betrayal returns upon him. His thanes desert to Malcolm, and Macbeth recognises that instead of "honour, love, obedience, troops of friends" he has only "mouth-honour", curses spoken quietly. The list of what he has lost poignantly captures the value of loyalty: it cannot be commanded, only earned. His isolation is complete when the news of his wife's death prompts only despair. Malcolm's final speech, with its promise to reward his loyal thanes by making them earls, restores the reciprocal loyalty with which the play began.

Shakespeare therefore presents loyalty as both personal and political. Its presence creates order and trust, while its betrayal spreads chaos through Scotland. Macbeth's tragedy is that he understood the value of loyalty perfectly, and destroyed it anyway.

17 Priestley presents Sheila Birling as the character who travels furthest in the play: she begins as a pampered, rather childish daughter of privilege, absorbed in her ring and her engagement, but she ends as the clearest voice of the Inspector's message. Through her, Priestley suggests that the young are not yet set in the selfish habits of their class, and so offer the hope of a more responsible society, a hope that mattered greatly to an audience in 1945 rebuilding after two world wars.

In the extract, Sheila's language reveals how sheltered she is. Her exclamations, "it's wonderful!" and "isn't it a beauty?", together with the repeated, breathless "Oh", show a girl swept away by an object, and Priestley's stage directions,

Question number

"excited" and "admiringly", make her delight almost theatrical. Her appeal to "Mummy" is especially telling. It is a nursery word for a woman in her twenties, and it places her firmly inside the family as a child who still seeks her mother's approval. When she declares "Now I really feel engaged", Priestley implies that, for Sheila at this point, love is confirmed by a possession rather than by trust. The ring is a symbol of the Birlings' world: expensive, beautiful, and a sign of the profitable union between Birling and Company and Crofts Limited.

Yet Priestley hints that Sheila is not entirely naive. The stage direction "trying to be light and easy" suggests she is masking something, and earlier in the scene she teases Gerald about "all last summer, when you never came near me", which shows she has noticed his absence and is not wholly convinced by his excuses. Her playful warning "You be careful" carries an edge of suspicion. Her vow, "I'll never let it go out of my sight for an instant", is deeply ironic, because by the end of Act Two she will hand the ring back to Gerald. Priestley uses this dramatic irony to suggest that the comfortable certainties of the opening are about to be shattered.

When the Inspector arrives, Sheila's response marks her out from her parents almost immediately. On hearing of Eva Smith's sacking from the works, she protests, "But these girls aren't cheap labour. They're people." The short, blunt sentence cuts through her father's language of profit and anticipates the Inspector's own values. However, Priestley does not make her innocent. Her confession about Milwards shows how vanity and jealousy, fed by privilege, could ruin a life. She admits she was in a bad temper, that the dress suited Eva better than it suited her, and that she used her mother's status as a valued customer to have the girl dismissed. Clothes here become a symbol of identity and class: Sheila could not bear to see a shop girl look prettier than her in the clothes she wanted.

Question number

Her anguished promise that she will "never, never do it again to anybody" shows genuine remorse, and the repetition sounds almost childlike, yet sincere.

Sheila's growing maturity is shown in her changing relationship with Gerald and her parents. She is quick to see that the Inspector knows everything, and she warns her mother not to "build up a kind of wall" between the family and the girl. This image captures the barrier of class and denial that the older Birlings hide behind. When she returns the ring, she does so calmly and without spite, recognising that she and Gerald "aren't the same people" who sat down to dinner. Priestley presents her as someone who can respect Gerald's honesty while knowing they must begin again, which is a far more adult understanding of love than the excitement of the extract.

By the final act, Sheila's language has changed completely. She no longer says "Mummy" but "Mother", a small but significant shift that signals her independence. While Mr and Mrs Birling and Gerald celebrate the possibility that the Inspector was a hoax, Sheila insists that it makes no difference, because they all still did what they did. She tells her parents that they are pretending everything is just as it was before, and when Gerald offers her the ring again, she refuses to take it, saying she must think. Priestley structures the ending so that Sheila and Eric stand against the older generation, and the contrast forces the audience to choose between them.

Ultimately, Priestley uses Sheila to show that social responsibility can be learned. Her journey from the giggling girl admiring her ring to the young woman who is frightened by her parents' refusal to change embodies Priestley's hope for post-war Britain. The final telephone call proves her right: the lesson must be faced again. Sheila is the character through whom an audience is invited to recognise its own

Question number

capacity for cruelty and, more importantly, for change.

18 Priestley presents social class as a structure of power that protects the comfortable and crushes the vulnerable, and he uses the play to expose how the middle and upper classes justify their privilege. By setting the play in 1912 but writing it for an audience in 1945, he invites people who had just voted for a fairer, post-war Britain to look back at the complacent attitudes of the Edwardian era and recognise that they must not return.

From the opening stage directions, class is made visible. The Birlings' dining room is described as "heavily comfortable, but not cosy and homelike", which suggests wealth without warmth, a home designed to display status rather than to nurture. The lighting is to be "pink and intimate" until the Inspector arrives, when it becomes "brighter and harder". Priestley uses this change to suggest that the rosy glow of privilege conceals harsh truths which the Inspector will expose. Birling himself is "a heavy-looking, rather portentous man", while his wife is "rather a cold woman and her husband's social superior". The phrase "social superior" reveals that even within the marriage class creates hierarchy, and that Birling, a self-made manufacturer, is anxious about his position.

This anxiety drives much of his behaviour. He is delighted by Sheila's engagement to Gerald because it unites his firm with Crofts Limited, and he hints to Gerald that he may be in line for a knighthood, partly to win over Lady Croft, who Priestley implies feels Gerald could have married higher. The absence of Gerald's parents from the engagement dinner is a quiet signal of upper-class snobbery towards the newly rich. Priestley shows class as a ladder that the Birlings are desperate to climb, and their desire to rise makes them indifferent to those below

Question number

them.

Birling's speeches present a capitalist philosophy rooted in class interest. He describes himself as "a hard-headed, practical man of business" and dismisses the idea that everyone should look after everyone else as "community and all that nonsense". Priestley undermines him through dramatic irony: Birling calls the Titanic "unsinkable" and insists there will be no war, so an audience who had lived through two world wars knows he is wrong. If he is foolish about these matters, the audience is invited to doubt his views on society too. His treatment of Eva Smith confirms this. When she leads a strike for a small rise in wages, he sacks her, explaining that he had to keep labour costs down. To Birling, the working class is a resource rather than a group of people, and his concern is "lower costs and higher prices".

Mrs Birling represents the most rigid form of class prejudice. When Eva, pregnant and desperate, appeals to her charity committee, Mrs Birling is offended that the girl used the name "Mrs Birling" and refuses help. Her dismissive phrase "Girls of that class" reduces Eva to a category, as though poverty were a moral failing. She also claims that a girl "of that sort" would never refuse money, assuming the poor have no principles. Priestley's irony is savage here, because Eva refused stolen money from Eric, showing a moral integrity that the wealthy Birlings lack. Mrs Birling's insistence that the father of the child should be made an example of becomes a trap, since the father is her own son. Priestley structures the revelation so that her class contempt rebounds on her own family.

Eva Smith herself, who never appears on stage, embodies the precarious life of the working class. Each Birling pushes her a step further down: from factory worker to shop assistant, to kept mistress, to unmarried mother refused charity, and finally

Question number

to suicide. Her surname, the most common in England, makes her representative, and the Inspector makes this explicit when he warns that there are "millions and millions of Eva Smiths and John Smiths" whose lives are bound up with ours. The Inspector functions as Priestley's mouthpiece. His insistence that "We are members of one body. We are responsible for each other" uses biblical language to argue that society is an organism, not a set of separate classes. His warning of "fire and blood and anguish" if this lesson is not learned looks forward to the wars the audience had endured. He is unmoved by Birling's social standing, reminding him that public men have responsibilities as well as privileges.

Finally, Priestley suggests that class attitudes can change, but only in the young. Sheila and Eric accept their guilt, while their parents and Gerald seize on the possibility of a hoax to restore their comfortable world. The final telephone call denies them that escape. Priestley leaves his audience with a clear challenge: a class system built on selfishness is not only unjust but dangerous, and the responsibility to change it belongs to everyone.

19 Miller presents Salem as a town whose unity is only a surface: beneath the strict religious order lie quarrels over money, land, authority and reputation, and these resentments make the community ready to turn on itself. In this extract, even before any accusation of witchcraft has been made, the people gathered around a sick child are arguing about salaries and deeds, which suggests that the hysteria to come will simply give old divisions a deadly new language.

Parris dominates the extract, and his speech reveals the unhappiness of a man who feels unloved and unrewarded. His opening complaint about "sixty pound a year" and his claim to have left "a thrifty business in the Barbados" show that he

Question number

measures his ministry in money. The question "why am I persecuted here?" is self-pitying, and the word "persecuted" is ironic, given that he will soon help to persecute others. His exaggerated phrase "a howling riot of argument" suggests a town in which every proposal provokes conflict, while his suspicion that "the Devil be in it somewhere" shows how quickly ordinary disagreement can be recast as evil. Miller seems to imply that in a theocracy, where religion and government are one, opposition to the minister becomes opposition to God.

Proctor's replies expose the material roots of the division. He objects that Parris is "the first minister ever did demand the deed to this house", and his sardonic joke that a sermon on "deeds and mortgages" felt like "an auction" mocks Parris's greed. Miller sets the two men up as dramatic opposites: Parris obsessed with status and control, Proctor blunt, practical and impatient with hypocrisy. Parris's revealing phrase "I want a mark of confidence" shows his insecurity, and his fear of being "put out like the cat" suggests that ministers in Salem are treated with contempt. The detail that he is the "third preacher in seven years" implies a long history of conflict in the church itself.

The extract then escalates into open hostility. Parris's threat that "the church will burn like Hell is burning" shows how he uses religious terror to enforce "obedience", while Proctor's exasperated "I am sick of Hell!" voices the frustration of those who resent this oppressive preaching. The sudden accusation, "There is a party in this church", is a crucial moment. Miller's stage direction "now he's out with it" shows that Parris has long suspected a faction against him, and Putnam's eager "Against him and all authority!" reveals how quickly the language of loyalty and treachery can be turned into weapons. Proctor's ironic response, "Why, then I must find it and join it", is witty but dangerous, as it foreshadows his later defiance and marks him as an enemy of the establishment.

Question number

Beyond the extract, Miller makes clear that Salem's divisions are long-standing. In his narrative notes he explains that land disputes were common and that neighbours fought over boundaries, and in Act One Putnam's quarrel with Proctor and Giles Corey over who owns certain woodland reveals this greed. Giles later claims in court that Putnam is prompting his daughter to cry out against men so that their land will be forfeited and he can buy it. The Putnams' resentment of the Nurses, partly because Rebecca's family once blocked Putnam's brother-in-law from becoming minister, shows how grudges are nursed for years. Mrs Putnam's grief for her seven dead babies is twisted into suspicion of Rebecca, the town's most respected woman, which shows how private unhappiness becomes public accusation.

Salem is also divided by age, gender and race. The girls, kept silent and powerless in a rigid Puritan society, discover in the accusations a sudden authority over adults. Tituba, the enslaved woman from Barbados, is the first to be blamed, and her vulnerability exposes the racial hierarchy beneath Salem's piety. Abigail, a servant girl dismissed by Elizabeth Proctor, uses the trials to pursue a personal grudge. Miller suggests that those excluded from power use the hysteria to seize it.

As the play develops, these divisions destroy the town. Proctor's bitter judgement in Act Two that "vengeance is walking Salem" captures how accusation has become a means of settling scores. By Act Four, Hale describes orphans wandering from house to house and abandoned cattle on the roads, an image of a community that has literally fallen apart. Miller, writing during the McCarthy hearings of the 1950s, uses Salem to show how fear and suspicion can tear apart any society.

Ultimately, Miller presents Salem as unhappy because it is ruled by fear rather

Question number

than love. The extract's arguments over money and authority may seem petty, but they reveal a community in which every disagreement is a potential sin, and where the craving for power and property will soon be satisfied through the gallows.

20 Miller presents the children and young people of Salem as both victims and agents of the tragedy. Repressed by a harsh Puritan society that expects them to be silent and obedient, they discover in the witch hunt a terrifying power over the adults who have controlled them. Miller seems to suggest that a community which denies its young any freedom or voice should not be surprised when that suppressed energy erupts destructively.

The play opens with a child. Betty Parris, aged ten, lies motionless in bed, and her mysterious "illness" is the spark for the entire hysteria. Miller's stage directions describe Parris weeping and praying beside her, yet his concern seems more for his reputation than for his daughter. In his narrative notes Miller explains that Puritan children were expected to walk with their heads bowed and hands at their sides, and to speak only when spoken to. Against this background, the girls' dancing in the forest is presented less as devil worship than as an act of rebellion, a rare escape into play and secrecy. Betty's sudden screaming when she hears a psalm sung, and her later attempt to fly out of the window, show how fear of punishment turns a child's mischief into a public crisis.

Abigail Williams is the most powerful of the young people. Miller introduces her as "a strikingly beautiful girl, an orphan, with an endless capacity for dissembling." The word "dissembling" immediately marks her as a performer, and her status as an orphan hints at a damaged past. When she reveals that she saw Indians kill her parents, Miller offers a possible explanation for her ruthlessness, while her

Question number

threat to the other girls of "a pointy reckoning that will shudder you" shows how she uses violent, vivid language to dominate them. Her relationship with Proctor reveals another side of youth in Salem: she has been awakened by the affair and resents being cast aside, accusing him of putting "knowledge" in her heart. Her hatred of Elizabeth becomes a key motive in the accusations.

The moment when Abigail first names others is dramatically striking. Seeing that Tituba has escaped punishment by confessing and blaming others, Abigail seizes the chance, claiming that she wants "the light of God" and crying out names. Betty joins her, and the two girls' rising, ecstatic accusations end Act One. Miller structures the scene so that the children's chant overwhelms the adults, who are swept along because the girls appear to be saved souls. The irony is clear: Salem's ministers and magistrates, who once silenced children, now treat their words as sacred evidence.

Mary Warren shows the vulnerability of the young. Described as "a subservient, naive, lonely girl", she is torn between fear of Proctor, who threatens to whip her, and fear of Abigail. In Act Two she tells the Proctors with new importance that she is now an official of the court, showing how the trials give a servant girl status she has never known. She even defends Elizabeth, claiming she saved her life, yet she cannot resist the pressure of the group. In Act Three, when she tries to tell the truth, the girls mimic her every word and pretend to see a yellow bird. Miller's stage directions present them acting in unison, a frightening chorus that turns her honesty into apparent witchcraft. Broken, Mary accuses Proctor, showing how easily a weak individual is absorbed by a mob.

Other young characters reinforce this picture. Mercy Lewis is described as "a fat, sly, merciless girl", and the irony of her name points to the cruelty the girls are

Question number

capable of. Ruth Putnam, the only surviving child of Ann Putnam's many pregnancies, is also afflicted, and her mother's grief is channelled into accusation through her. These children become instruments of the adults' resentments as well as of their own desires.

By the end, Miller suggests that the young have destroyed far more than they intended, yet they too are losers. Abigail flees Salem with Mercy, stealing her uncle's savings, which reveals that her religious fervour was always self-interest. Hale's description in Act Four of orphans wandering from house to house shows that the children of the accused are the ultimate victims of the hysteria, abandoned in a town that no longer functions.

Through these young people, Miller exposes the dangers of a society that denies its children both joy and voice. Their behaviour is shocking, yet the play invites us to see it as a product of repression, fear and adult hypocrisy. Writing during the McCarthy era, Miller warns that when authority treats any accusation as truth, even the youngest and least powerful can bring a whole community to ruin.

21 Hansberry presents Beneatha as a young woman searching for a self that belongs neither to the narrow expectations of her family nor to the white, middle-class America that surrounds her. Her struggle is often comic, since she tries on identities like costumes, yet Hansberry treats it seriously, because Beneatha's questions about race, gender and faith are the questions that a new generation of Black Americans was beginning to ask in the late 1950s.

In this extract, costume is Hansberry's central dramatic method. Beneatha's appearance in the Nigerian robes that Asagai has given her is both a joke and a

Question number

statement. She sweeps into the cramped apartment and turns away from the blues and the everyday sounds of Chicago towards what she imagines to be the music and dance of Africa. Ruth's bemused reaction emphasises how strange this seems within the Younger household, and the audience may laugh at the theatricality of Beneatha's performance. Yet Hansberry suggests that beneath the play-acting lies a genuine hunger for a heritage that slavery and segregation have taken away. When Walter, drunk, joins in with a warrior's chant, the scene becomes briefly joyous, as if the family is reaching for a pride that their daily life denies them.

The arrival of George Murchison breaks the spell, and the contrast is deliberate. George, well-dressed, wealthy and dismissive, represents the path of assimilation, success by imitating white society. The moment when Beneatha removes her headdress to reveal her natural, cropped hair is the dramatic climax of the extract. Ruth's shock and George's disapproval show how radical this choice was at a time when straightened hair was the norm for respectable Black women. Beneatha's hair becomes a symbol of her refusal to conform. Her accusation that George is an "assimilationist" uses the language of the college lecture hall, and Hansberry gently mocks how she flaunts her education, yet the word also exposes a real division within Black America over whether to blend in or to assert difference. George's sneering dismissal of African heritage, and Beneatha's spirited reply that African civilisations were advanced while the English were still painting themselves, show that the argument is about history and pride, not only fashion.

Beyond the extract, Hansberry presents Beneatha's search through her many passing enthusiasms. Walter and Ruth tease her about her hobbies, from guitar lessons to horse riding to play-acting, and Mama is bewildered. These suggest a girl trying desperately to "express" herself but not yet sure what that self is. Her

Question number

ambition to become a doctor, however, is constant and serious, and is itself a challenge to expectations. Walter tells her to be a nurse like other women or simply to get married, which shows the sexism she faces even within her own family.

Her two suitors embody the two futures available to her. George offers comfort, money and conventional respectability, but he wants a simple girl, not one who thinks. Asagai, by contrast, takes her ideas seriously, though he also teases her that her straightened hair is a form of mutilation. He gives her the Yoruba name "Alaiyo", which he translates as one for whom bread is not enough, a name that perfectly captures her refusal to settle for material security alone. Through this contrast Hansberry suggests that Beneatha's identity is bound up with whether she chooses assimilation or a connection to Africa.

Beneatha's struggle also involves faith. In Act One she declares that she does not believe in God, and Mama slaps her and makes her repeat "In my mother's house there is still God." Hansberry presents a painful generational clash: Mama's faith has sustained her through hardship, but Beneatha, educated and questioning, wants to believe in human effort. The slap shows that her independence comes at a cost.

When Walter loses the insurance money, Beneatha's dream of medical school seems lost, and in Act Three she tells Asagai that she once wanted to cure people but now doubts the point of it all. Asagai's proposal that she come to Nigeria and practise medicine there reopens the future. Hansberry leaves Beneatha's decision unresolved, which suggests that her search is ongoing.

Ultimately, Hansberry presents Beneatha's struggle as both personal and political.

Question number

Her costumes and hobbies may seem naive, but her questions are sincere, and by the end she has begun to see that identity is something to be chosen and fought for, not simply inherited or bought.

22 I think Hansberry chose A Raisin in the Sun as her title because it places the idea of the dream, and what happens when a dream is delayed, at the centre of the play. Taken from Langston Hughes's poem "Harlem", the phrase asks the audience to consider whether the frustrated hopes of Black Americans will shrivel, rot or explode. Each member of the Younger family carries a dream that has been held back by poverty and racism, and the title invites us to watch what becomes of those dreams over the course of the play.

The poem, printed at the start of the play, opens with the question "What happens to a dream deferred?" and offers a series of possibilities, the first of which is that it might "dry up / like a raisin in the sun". By borrowing this simile, Hansberry establishes an intertextual link with a key voice of Black American writing and signals that her play is not only about one family but about a whole people. The image is ambiguous. A raisin is a grape that has been left too long, wrinkled and diminished, which suggests dreams that wither. Yet a raisin is also sweet and preserved, so the image may hint that dreams can survive in altered form. The poem's final question, whether the dream might "explode", hangs over the play as a warning about the anger that frustration can produce, especially at a time, in 1959, when the civil rights movement was gathering force.

Hansberry's setting makes the idea of the deferred dream concrete. The opening stage directions describe a tired, overcrowded apartment in Chicago's South Side, where furniture has been worn down by too many people living there for too many

Question number

years. Travis sleeps on the sofa, the family shares a bathroom with neighbours, and there is only one small window. The apartment is itself a kind of raisin in the sun, a place where hopes have slowly dried out. The cramped home reflects the segregated housing that trapped many Black families in Chicago.

The insurance money from Big Walter's death sets the dreams in motion. Walter Lee's dream is to invest in a liquor store and escape his job as a chauffeur. His frustration is the clearest example of the dream threatening to "explode": he lashes out at Ruth, mocks Beneatha and feels that life is passing him by. Hansberry shows how a deferred dream damages a man's sense of himself and his relationships. When he entrusts the money to Willy Harris, who runs off with it, his dream collapses, and the family's hopes seem to shrivel.

Mama's dream is more modest and more rooted: a house with a garden. Her plant, which she tends carefully on the windowsill despite the lack of sunlight, is Hansberry's most important symbol. It represents her dream, kept alive in difficult conditions, and it also stands for her family, whom she has nurtured despite hardship. Mama recalls her late husband saying that God seemed to give the Black man nothing but dreams, but gave him children to make those dreams worthwhile. This suggests that dreams are passed between generations, and that the struggle to fulfil them is a family inheritance. When she buys the house in Clybourne Park, she seems to fulfil her dream, though it brings the family into conflict with a white neighbourhood that does not want them.

Beneatha's dream of becoming a doctor is also endangered by the lost money, and in Act Three she confesses to Asagai that she has lost her faith in curing people. Ruth, worn out and pregnant, dreams simply of space and a better life for her children, and her desperation is shown when she considers ending her pregnancy.

Question number

Through these varied dreams, Hansberry shows that the title applies to every member of the family.

The climax of the play suggests that dreams need not dry up completely. When Karl Lindner of the Clybourne Park Improvement Association offers to buy the family out, Walter at first plans to accept, but in the end he refuses, in front of his son, and declares the family's pride. Mama remarks that he has finally come into his manhood. The family moves, and Mama returns for her plant, a final image that shows the dream surviving, small but alive.

In conclusion, the title is fitting because it captures both the danger and the endurance of dreams. Hansberry shows dreams wrinkled by delay and almost destroyed, but she also suggests that, like a raisin, they can keep their sweetness. The ending is hopeful but uncertain, since the family faces hostility in their new home, and the title reminds us that the question in Hughes's poem has not yet been fully answered.