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CONTENTS

Section A: Poetry

text	question numbers	page[s]
Thomas Hardy: from <i>Selected Poems</i>	1, 2	pages 5–7
from Jo Phillips ed: <i>Poems Deep & Dangerous</i>	3, 4	pages 8–9
<i>Songs of Ourselves Volume 2</i> : from Part 1	5, 6	pages 10–11

Section B: Prose

text	question numbers	page[s]
Chinua Achebe: <i>No Longer at Ease</i>	7, 8	pages 12–13
Jane Austen: <i>Northanger Abbey</i>	9, 10	pages 14–15
George Eliot: <i>Silas Marner</i>	11, 12	pages 16–17
Michael Frayn: <i>Spies</i>	13, 14	pages 18–19
Susan Hill: <i>I'm the King of the Castle</i>	15, 16	pages 20–21
R. K. Narayan: <i>The English Teacher</i>	17, 18	pages 22–23
Robert Louis Stevenson: <i>The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde</i>	19, 20	pages 24–25
from <i>Stories of Ourselves</i>	21, 22	pages 26–27

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SECTION A: POETRY

Answer **one** question from this section.

THOMAS HARDY: from *Selected Poems*

Remember to support your ideas with details from the writing.

Either 1 Read this poem, and then answer the question that follows it:

At the Word 'Farewell'

She looked like a bird from a cloud On the clammy lawn, Moving alone, bare-browed In the dim of dawn.	
The candles alight in the room For my parting meal Made all things withoutdoors loom Strange, ghostly, unreal.	5
The hour itself was a ghost, And it seemed to me then As of chances the chance furthest I should see her again.	10
I beheld not where all was so fleet That a Plan of the past Which had ruled us from birthtime to meet Was in working at last:	15
No prelude did I there perceive To a drama at all, Or foreshadow what fortune might weave From beginnings so small;	20
But I rose as if quickened by a spur I was bound to obey, And stepped through the casement to her Still alone in the gray.	
'I am leaving you ... Farewell!' I said As I followed her on By an alley bare boughs overspread; 'I soon must be gone!'	25
Even then the scale might have been turned Against love by a feather, – But crimson one cheek of hers burned When we came in together.	30

How does Hardy vividly convey powerful emotions in *At the Word 'Farewell'*?

- Or 2 Explore the ways in which Hardy uses language to create striking effects in *The Convergence of the Twain*.

The Convergence of the Twain

(Lines on the loss of the 'Titanic')

I	
In a solitude of the sea Deep from human vanity, And the Pride of Life that planned her, stilly couches she.	
II	
Steel chambers, late the pyres Of her salamandrine fires, Cold currents thrid, and turn to rhythmic tidal lyres.	5
III	
Over the mirrors meant To glass the opulent The sea-worm crawls – grotesque, slimed, dumb, indifferent.	
IV	
Jewels in joy designed To ravish the sensuous mind Lie lightless, all their sparkles bleared and black and blind.	10
V	
Dim moon-eyed fishes near Gaze at the gilded gear And query: 'What does this vaingloriousness down here?' ...	15
VI	
Well: while was fashioning This creature of cleaving wing, The Immanent Will that stirs and urges everything	
VII	
Prepared a sinister mate For her – so gaily great – A Shape of Ice, for the time far and dissociate.	20
VIII	
And as the smart ship grew In stature, grace, and hue, In shadowy silent distance grew the Iceberg too.	
IX	
Alien they seemed to be: No mortal eye could see The intimate welding of their later history,	25

7

X

Or sign that they were bent
By paths coincident
On being anon twin halves of one august event,

30

XI

Till the Spinner of the Years
Said 'Now!' And each one hears,
And consummation comes, and jars two hemispheres.

from JO PHILLIPS ed: *Poems Deep & Dangerous*

Remember to support your ideas with details from the writing.

Either 3 Read this poem, and then answer the question that follows it:

Shall I Compare Thee...?

Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?
Thou art more lovely and more temperate:
Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,
And summer's lease hath all too short a date:
Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines, 5
And often is his gold complexion dimm'd;
And every fair from fair sometime declines,
By chance, or Nature's changing course, untrimm'd;
But thy eternal summer shall not fade, 10
Nor lose possession of that fair thou owest;
Nor shall Death brag thou wander'st in his shade,
When in eternal lines to time thou growest;
So long as men can breathe, or eyes can see,
So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.

(*William Shakespeare*)

How does Shakespeare make the sonnet *Shall I Compare Thee...?* such a moving expression of love?

- Or 4 Explore the ways in which Clare vividly conveys the strength of the speaker's feelings in *First Love*.

First Love

I ne'er was struck before that hour
With love so sudden and so sweet.
Her face it bloomed like a sweet flower
And stole my heart away complete.
My face turned pale as deadly pale, 5
My legs refused to walk away,
And when she looked 'what could I ail?'
My life and all seemed turned to clay.

And then my blood rushed to my face
And took my sight away. 10
The trees and bushes round the place
Seemed midnight at noonday.
I could not see a single thing,
Words from my eyes did start;
They spoke as chords do from the string 15
And blood burnt round my heart.

Are flowers the winter's choice?
Is love's bed always snow?
She seemed to hear my silent voice
And love's appeal to know. 20
I never saw so sweet a face
As that I stood before:
My heart has left its dwelling-place
And can return no more.

(John Clare)

SONGS OF OURSELVES VOLUME 2: from Part 1

Remember to support your ideas with details from the writing.

Either 5 Read this poem, and then answer the question that follows it:

Lovers' Infiniteness

If yet I have not all thy love,
 Dear, I shall never have it all,
 I cannot breathe one other sigh, to move,
 Nor can entreat one other tear to fall.
 All my treasure, which should purchase thee, 5
 Sighs, tears, and oaths, and letters I have spent,
 Yet no more can be due to me,
 Than at the bargain made was meant.
 If then thy gift of love were partial, 10
 That some to me, some should to others fall,
 Dear, I shall never have thee all.

Or if then thou gavest me all,
 All was but all, which thou hadst then;
 But if in thy heart, since, there be or shall
 New love created be, by other men, 15
 Which have their stocks entire, and can in tears,
 In sighs, in oaths, and letters outbid me,
 This new love may beget new fears,
 For, this love was not vowed by thee.
 And yet it was, thy gift being general, 20
 The ground, thy heart is mine; whatever shall
 Grow there, dear, I should have it all.

Yet I would not have all yet,
 He that hath all can have no more,
 And since my love doth every day admit 25
 New growth, thou shouldst have new rewards in store;
 Thou canst not every day give me thy heart,
 If thou canst give it, then thou never gav'st it:
 Love's riddles are, that though thy heart depart,
 It stays at home, and thou with losing sav'st it: 30
 But we will have a way more liberal,
 Than changing hearts, to join them, so we shall
 Be one, and one another's all.

(John Donne)

How does Donne strikingly convey the thoughts and feelings of the speaker in *Lovers' Infiniteness*?

Or 6 How does Jones create a sense of menace in *Tiger in the Menagerie*?

Tiger in the Menagerie

No one could say how the tiger got into the menagerie.
It was too flash, too blue,
too much like the painting of a tiger.

At night the bars of the cage and the stripes of the tiger
looked into each other so long
that when it was time for those eyes to rock shut

5

the bars were the lashes of the stripes
the stripes were the lashes of the bars

and they walked together in their dreams so long
through the long colonnade
that shed its fretwork to the Indian main

10

that when the sun rose they'd gone and the tiger was
one clear orange eye that walked into the menagerie.

No one could say how the tiger got out in the menagerie.
It was too bright, too bare.
If the menagerie could, it would say 'tiger'.

15

If the aviary could, it would lock its door.
Its heart began to beat in rows of rising birds
when the tiger came inside to wait.

(*Emma Jones*)

SECTION B: PROSE

Answer **one** question from this section.

CHINUA ACHEBE: *No Longer at Ease*

Remember to support your ideas with details from the writing.

Either 7 Read this extract, and then answer the question that follows it:

If Obi had returned by mail-boat, the Umuofia Progressive Union (Lagos Branch) would have given him a royal welcome at the harbour. Anyhow, it was decided at their meeting that a big reception should be arranged to which press reporters and photographers should be invited.

An invitation was also sent to the Nigerian Broadcasting Service to cover the occasion and to record the Umuofia Ladies' Vocal Orchestra which had been learning a number of new songs.

5

The reception took place on Saturday afternoon at 4 p.m. on Moloney Street, where the President had two rooms.

Everybody was properly dressed in *agbada* or European suit except the guest of honour, who appeared in his shirtsleeves because of the heat. That was Obi's mistake Number One. Everybody expected a young man from England to be impressively turned out.

10

After prayers the Secretary of the Union read the Welcome Address. He rose, cleared his throat and began to intone from an enormous sheet of paper.

15

'Welcome Address presented to Michael Obi Okonkwo, B.A. (Hons), London, by the officers and members of the Umuofia Progressive Union on the occasion of his return from the United Kingdom in quest of the Golden Fleece.

20

'Sir, we the officers and members of the above-named Union present with humility and gratitude this token of our appreciation of your unprecedented academic brilliance ...'

He spoke of the great honour Obi had brought to the ancient town of Umuofia which could now join the comity of other towns in their march towards political irredentism, social equality and economic emancipation.

25

'The importance of having one of our sons in the vanguard of this march of progress is nothing short of axiomatic. Our people have a saying: "Ours is ours, but mine is mine." Every town and village struggles at this momentous epoch in our political evolution to possess that of which it can say: "This is mine." We are happy that today we have such an invaluable possession in the person of our illustrious son and guest of honour.'

30

He traced the history of the Umuofia Scholarship Scheme which had made it possible for Obi to study overseas, and called it an investment which must yield heavy dividends. He then referred (quite obliquely, of course) to the arrangement whereby the beneficiary from this scheme was expected to repay his debt over four years so that 'an endless stream of students will be enabled to drink deep at the Pierian Spring of knowledge'.

35

Needless to say, this address was repeatedly interrupted by cheers and the clapping of hands. What a sharp young man their secretary was, all said. He deserved to go to England himself. He wrote the kind of English they admired if not understood: the kind that filled the mouth, like the proverbial dry meat. Obi's English, on the other hand, was most unimpressive.

40

<p>He spoke 'is' and 'was'. He told them about the value of education. 'Education for service, not for white-collar jobs and comfortable salaries. With our great country on the threshold of independence, we need men who are prepared to serve her well and truly.'</p>	45
<p>When he sat down the audience clapped from politeness. Mistake Number Two.</p>	50
<p>Cold beer, minerals, palm-wine and biscuits were then served, and the women began to sing about Umuofia and about Obi Okonkwo <i>nwa jelu oyibo</i> – Obi who had been to the land of the whites. The refrain said over and over again that the power of the leopard resided in its claws.</p>	55
<p>'Have they given you a job yet?' the chairman asked Obi over the music. In Nigeria the government was 'they'. It had nothing to do with you or me. It was an alien institution and people's business was to get as much from it as they could without getting into trouble.</p>	60
<p>'Not yet. I'm attending an interview on Monday.'</p>	60
<p>'Of course those of you who know book will not have any difficulty,' said the Vice-President on Obi's left. 'Otherwise I would have suggested seeing some of the men beforehand.'</p>	65
<p>'It would not be necessary,' said the President, 'since they would be mostly white men.'</p>	65
<p>'You think white men don't eat bribe? Come to our department. They eat more than black men nowadays.'</p>	65

[from Chapter 4]

How does Achebe make this moment in the novel so memorable?

Or **8** To what extent does Achebe's writing make you sympathise with Clara?

JANE AUSTEN: *Northanger Abbey*

Remember to support your ideas with details from the writing.

Either 9 Read this extract, and then answer the question that follows it:

The two dances were scarcely concluded before Catherine found her arm gently seized by her faithful Isabella, who in great spirits exclaimed—
 ‘At last I have got you. My dearest creature, I have been looking for you this hour. What could induce you to come into this set, when you knew I was in the other? I have been quite wretched without you.’ 5

‘My dear Isabella, how was it possible for me to get at you? I could not even see where you were.’

‘So I told your brother all the time—but he would not believe me. Do go and see for her, Mr. Morland, said I—but all in vain—he would not stir an inch. Was not it so, Mr. Morland? But you men are all so immoderately lazy! I have been scolding him to such a degree, my dear Catherine, you would be quite amazed.—You know I never stand upon ceremony with such people.’ 10

‘Look at that young lady with the white beads round her head,’ whispered Catherine, detaching her friend from James—‘It is Mr. Tilney’s sister.’ 15

‘Oh! heavens! You don’t say so! Let me look at her this moment. What a delightful girl! I never saw any thing half so beautiful! But where is her all-conquering brother? Is he in the room? Point him out to me this instant, if he is. I die to see him. Mr. Morland, you are not to listen. We are not talking about you.’ 20

‘But what is all this whispering about? What is going on?’

‘There now, I knew how it would be. You men have such restless curiosity! Talk of the curiosity of women, indeed!—’tis nothing. But be satisfied, for you are not to know any thing at all of the matter.’ 25

‘And is that likely to satisfy me, do you think?’

‘Well, I declare I never knew any thing like you. What can it signify to you, what we are talking of? Perhaps we are talking about you, therefore I would advise you not to listen, or you may happen to hear something not very agreeable.’ 30

In this common-place chatter, which lasted some time, the original subject seemed entirely forgotten; and though Catherine was very well pleased to have it dropped for a while, she could not avoid a little suspicion at the total suspension of all Isabella’s impatient desire to see Mr. Tilney. When the orchestra struck up a fresh dance, James would have led his fair partner away, but she resisted. ‘I tell you, Mr. Morland,’ she cried, 35
 ‘I would not do such a thing for all the world. How can you be so teasing; only conceive, my dear Catherine, what your brother wants me to do. He wants me to dance with him again, though I tell him that it is a most improper thing, and entirely against the rules. It would make us the talk of the place, if we were not to change partners.’ 40

‘Upon my honour,’ said James, ‘in these public assemblies, it is as often done as not.’

‘Nonsense, how can you say so? But when you men have a point to carry, you never stick at any thing. My sweet Catherine, do support me, persuade your brother how impossible it is. Tell him, that it would quite shock you to see me do such a thing; now would not it?’ 45

‘No, not at all; but if you think it wrong, you had much better change.’

‘There,’ cried Isabella, ‘you hear what your sister says, and yet you

will not mind her. Well, remember that it is not my fault, if we set all the old ladies in Bath in a bustle. Come along, my dearest Catherine, for heaven's sake, and stand by me.' And off they went, to regain their former place.

50

[from Chapter 8]

How does Austen's writing give a vivid impression of Isabella at this moment in the novel?

Or **10** Does Austen portray John Thorpe as a bad man – or just as a fool?

GEORGE ELIOT: *Silas Marner*

Remember to support your ideas with details from the writing.

Either 11 Read this extract, and then answer the question that follows it:

But when Godfrey was lifting his eyes from one of those long glances, they encountered an object as startling to him at that moment as if it had been an apparition from the dead. It was an apparition from that hidden life which lies, like a dark by-street, behind the goodly ornamented façade that meets the sunlight and the gaze of respectable admirers. It was his own child carried in Silas Marner's arms. That was his instantaneous impression, unaccompanied by doubt, though he had not seen the child for months past; and when the hope was rising that he might possibly be mistaken, Mr Crackenthorp and Mr Lammeter had already advanced to Silas, in astonishment at this strange advent. Godfrey joined them immediately, unable to rest without hearing every word – trying to control himself, but conscious that if any one noticed him, they must see that he was white-lipped and trembling. 5

But now all eyes at that end of the room were bent on Silas Marner; the Squire himself had risen, and asked angrily, 'How's this? – what's this? – what do you do coming in here in this way?' 10

'I'm come for the doctor – I want the doctor,' Silas had said, in the first moment, to Mr Crackenthorp.

'Why, what's the matter, Marner?' said the rector. 'The doctor's here; but say quietly what you want him for.' 15

'It's a woman,' said Silas, speaking low, and half-breathlessly, just as Godfrey came up. 'She's dead, I think – dead in the snow at the Stone-pits – not far from my door.'

Godfrey felt a great throb: there was one terror in his mind at that moment: it was, that the woman might *not* be dead. That was an evil terror – an ugly inmate to have found a nestling-place in Godfrey's kindly disposition; but no disposition is a security from evil wishes to a man whose happiness hangs on duplicity. 25

'Hush, hush!' said Mr Crackenthorp. 'Go out into the hall there. I'll fetch the doctor to you. Found a woman in the snow – and thinks she's dead,' he added, speaking low, to the Squire. 'Better say as little about it as possible: it will shock the ladies. Just tell them a poor woman is ill from cold and hunger. I'll go and fetch Kimble.' 30

By this time, however, the ladies had pressed forward, curious to know what could have brought the solitary linen-weaver there under such strange circumstances, and interested in the pretty child, who, half alarmed and half attracted by the brightness and the numerous company, now frowned and hid her face, now lifted up her head again and looked round placably, until a touch or a coaxing word brought back the frown, and made her bury her face with new determination. 35

'What child is it?' said several ladies at once, and, among the rest, Nancy Lammeter, addressing Godfrey.

'I don't know – some poor woman's who has been found in the snow, I believe,' was the answer Godfrey wrung from himself with a terrible effort. ('After all, *am* I certain?' he hastened to add, in anticipation of his own conscience.) 40

'Why, you'd better leave the child here, then, Master Marner,' said good-natured Mrs Kimble, hesitating, however, to take those dingy clothes into 45

contact with her own ornamented satin boddice. 'I'll tell one o' the girls to fetch it.'

50

'No – no – I can't part with it, I can't let it go,' said Silas, abruptly. 'It's come to me – I've a right to keep it.'

The proposition to take the child from him had come to Silas quite unexpectedly, and his speech, uttered under a strong sudden impulse, was almost like a revelation to himself: a minute before, he had no distinct intention about the child.

55

'Did you ever hear the like?' said Mrs Kimble, in mild surprise, to her neighbour.

[from Chapter 13]

How does Eliot's writing make this moment in the novel so dramatic?

Or **12** How far does Eliot portray Silas as heroic?

MICHAEL FRAYN: *Spies*

Remember to support your ideas with details from the writing.

Either 13 Read this extract, and then answer the question that follows it:

Out of the trunk he takes our most secret and sacred possession – the bayonet with which his father killed the five Germans.

This simple description, though, doesn't do justice to the metaphysical complexity of the object that Keith's now holding. It both is and is not the sacred bayonet, just as the wafer and the wine both are and are not the body and blood of a being who both is and is not a god. In its physical nature it's a long straight carving knife, which we found like so much else in the ruins of Miss Durrant's house. Its bone handle is missing, and Keith has sharpened the blade with the grindstone on his father's workbench so that it has an edge at the back as well as the front, and a point like a rapier. In its inward nature, though, it possesses the identity of the bayonet that goes off with his father to the Secret Service every weekend, with all its sacred attributes.

Keith holds it out towards me. I place my hand on the flat of the blade, tinglingly conscious of the sharpness on either side. He looks straight into my eyes.

'I swear,' he says.

'I swear,' I repeat.

'Never to reveal anything about all this to anyone, except as and when allowed.'

'Never to reveal anything about all this to anyone, except as and when allowed,' I intone solemnly. Not solemnly enough though, evidently, to set Keith's mind completely at rest. He goes on holding out the blade, looking me straight in the eye.

'Allowed by me, Keith Hayward.' – 'By you, Keith Hayward.'

'So help me God, or cut my throat and hope to die.' I recite the words back to him as best I can, my voice subdued by their seriousness.

'Stephen Wheatley,' he concludes. 'Stephen Wheatley,' I agree.

He puts the bayonet carefully down on top of the trunk.

'This will be our lookout,' he announces. 'We'll keep watch on the house from here, and when we see her go out we'll follow her. We'll make a map of everywhere she goes.'

We prepare for the task by clearing discreet windows in the greenery, through which we can see everything that goes on in the Close, and most particularly Keith's house, a little further up on the other side of the street.

A practical difficulty occurs to me. 'What about school?' I ask.

'We'll do it after school.'

'What about when it's tea or supper?'

'We can take turns.'

The time we really need to follow her, of course, is in the darkness at the end of the month, when she goes to her rendezvous.

'What if it's the night?' I ask him. 'We're not allowed to go out when it's night.'

'We'll hide knotted ropes in our rooms. We'll climb out of our bedroom windows and meet here. We'll get some more candles out of the air-raid shelter.'

I shiver. Already I can feel the rough knots of the rope under my hands and the eerie chill of the night air. I can see the candles flickering, and the

deep darkness of the night outside. I can hear her soft steps ahead of us as we follow her down towards the shops – past the station – through the bushes above the quarries – out on to the open fairway ... 50

‘But *then* what are we going to do?’ I ask. At some point, it seems to me, there will come a moment when this great programme has to lead to some action by the authorities in the grown-up world.

Keith silently picks up the bayonet and looks at me. 55

What does he mean? That we’re going to arrest her ourselves at bayonet point? Or that we’re going to follow his father’s example and stick it into the ribs of the courier she’s meeting?

Not, presumably, that we’re going to ...? Not his own *mother* ...!

Keith’s eyelids have come down. His face is set and pitiless. He looks like his father. He looks as his father must have looked one grey dawn in the Great War when he fixed his bayonet to the end of his revolver for the battle that lay ahead. 60

I shiver again. The dark of the moon ... I can feel it surrounding me, pressing against my eyes ... 65

Keith opens the trunk again. He takes out a plain white bathroom tile that we found in the rubble of the house, and the stub of the coloured pencil. With the red end he neatly prints a single word on the tile, and wedges it in the fork of a bush at the entrance to the passageway.

PRIVET, it says. 70

I don’t like to query this, now that he’s written it so neatly and authoritatively. In any case, the sense of it is plain enough – that we’re commencing a long journey on a lonely road where no one else can follow.

[from Chapter 3]

How does Frayn amusingly convey the way in which the children think and behave at this moment in the novel?

Or 14 How does Frayn make Keith’s mother such a memorable character?

SUSAN HILL: *I'm the King of the Castle*

Remember to support your ideas with details from the writing.

Either 15 Read this extract, and then answer the question that follows it:

Kingshaw held his breath. There was a continual soughing movement inside the wood, and the leaves rustled together like silk, directly overhead. They were very pale green, and almost transparent where the sun shone through, he could see all the veins. At his feet, in between the creeping foliage, were dead leaves, rusty-coloured and dry on top, but packed to a damp mould just below the surface. 5

Immediately ahead of him there was the trunk of a fallen tree. He sat down on it. The bark was covered with greenish-grey moss. It felt like moleskin under his fingers. There was fungus, too, issuing out of the cracks, and in the groin of a branch, in weird, spongy shapes. 10

He liked it here. He had never been anywhere like it, and it was not remotely what he had expected. He liked the smell, and the sense of being completely hidden. Everything around him seemed innocent, and he could see for some way ahead, it was all quite all right. The sun made even the dense holly and hawthorn bushes on the edge of the clearing look harmless. 15

Different birds kept on singing, though not very near to him, and he did not see any of them, except, now and again, a darting brown shape in the branches. There was a cooing from pigeons, right inside the wood. He saw a rabbit. It came out of the undergrowth, not far away from him, with an odd, bumping movement, and then sat down in a shaft of sunlight, and began to wash itself like a cat. Kingshaw held his breath. 20

They had rabbits at school, in cages, fat, and white, with pink, vacant eyes. But this was different, it quivered and twitched with life. He watched it for ages. But when he moved, to unhitch the satchel and get out some food, the rabbit bumped away. 25

Before leaving the house, he had gone down into the kitchen, and cut one thick slice of bread and butter, and he ate that, now, with one of the cheese triangles. As soon as he had finished, he wanted a drink. He had been stupid not to find some sort of bottle. Well, there was no drink, it would be better to try and not think about it. Instead, he got up and crossed to the other side of the clearing. There was a narrow path, but it was very overgrown. Low branches and bushes were spread out on either side, and he had to climb over and under them, lifting briars and brambles out of his way. There was a holly bush, too. He stuck the pad of his thumb accidentally on to a thorn. When he sucked up the great bead of blood, it tasted sweet, and metallic. Then a briar scratched his face. He found he was having to bend lower and lower. But eventually, there was another clearing. He stood upright again. 30 35 40

It was darker here, he could tell that he had come a good way into the wood. The leaves locked together more tightly overhead, and the sun could not get through. He could see birds flitting away in alarm, through the trees ahead of him. He wiped his arm across his nose and upper lip. 45

Then he heard the sound. At once, he knew that it had come before, seconds ago, but he had taken no notice, mistaking it for a part of the noise he was making himself. Now it came again. It was some distance back, on the edge of the wood. He heard himself breathing. That was all.

But the birds had gone quiet. He waited. Nothing. Still nothing. Then, a soft, slithering noise in the bracken. 50

There was a thick holly bush just beside the path. Kingshaw bent down low and began to creep towards it. He tried to move only on the balls of his feet, but the leaves made sounds. He had no idea what he was hiding from. It might be an animal. He didn't know what there was in here, except for the rabbit he had seen. And whatever it was had eaten away the corn. 55
He thought it could not be one of them from the house. They would have come shouting and shouting across the fields, plunging heavily into the wood. These sounds were stealthy. Perhaps people came shooting here, or else there was a gamekeeper. He supposed he might be trespassing.

He crouched low down behind the holly bush. A small, rust-coloured insect ran over his feet. The dark inside of the holly bush smelled bitter. 60
From deep in the wood, some bird made a screeching sound, and then again, after a pause. It was like a mad person laughing. Then, nothing, not even the crack of a twig.

Just as he was going to get up and come out from behind the bush, the tree branches parted, and there was Hooper. 65

[from Chapter 6]

How does Hill's writing create suspense at this moment in the novel?

Or **16** How far does Hill's portrayal of Mrs Kingshaw make you feel angry towards her?

R. K. NARAYAN: *The English Teacher*

Remember to support your ideas with details from the writing.

Either 17 Read this extract, and then answer the question that follows it:

I made my way into the common room, to put away the books in my locker, pick up my umbrella, and go out. As I was closing my locker, the servant came up and said: "There is someone asking for you, master." I looked out. He was a stranger, a young boy about fifteen years old. He was standing on the path below the veranda, a thin young man with a tuft behind, and wearing a small cap—a poor boy, I felt, by the look of him; out to ask for a donation for his school fee or something of the kind. "Father seriously ill, money for his medicines." One or other of the numerous sad excuses for begging. Of late they were on the increase.... Formerly I used to investigate and preach to them and so on, but now I felt too weary to exert myself and paid out change as far as possible. I saw his hand, bringing out an envelope, and I put my hand in my pocket for my purse. "The usual typewritten petition addressed to all whom it may concern," I said to myself. 5

"What is it?" I asked. 15

"Are you Krishna of the English section?"

"Yes."

"Here is a letter for you."

"From whom?"

"My father has sent it...." 20

"Who is your father?"

"You'll find it all in that letter," he replied. It was a bulky envelope. I tore it open. There was a long sheet of paper, wrapped around which was a small note on which was written:

"Dear Sir, 25

"I received this message last evening, while I was busy writing something else. I didn't understand what it meant. But the directions, address and name given in it are clear and so I have sent my son to find out if the address and name are of a real person, and to deliver it. If this letter reaches you, (that is, if you are a real person) please read it, and if it means anything to you keep it. Otherwise you may just tear it up and throw it away; and forgive this intrusion." He had given his name and address. I opened the other large sheet. The handwriting on it seemed to be different. It began: "This is a message for Krishna from his wife Susila who recently passed over.... She has been seeking all these months some means of expressing herself to her husband, but the opportunity has occurred only to-day, when she found the present gentleman a very suitable medium of expression. Through him she is happy to communicate. She wants her husband to know that she is quite happy in another region, and wants him also to eradicate the grief in his mind. We are nearer each other than you understand. And I'm always watching him and the child...." 30

It was very baffling. I stared at the boy. I made nothing of it. "Boy, what is this?" "I don't know, sir. My father has been trying to send that for a week and could do it only to-day. I was searching everywhere; and I couldn't get away from my class,..." 35

"Oh, stop, stop all that, boy. Why has your father sent this letter to me?" 40

45

“I don’t know, sir.” I stood there and read it again and again and as my head cooled I was seized with elation.

“Take me to your house,” I cried.

50

“It’s far off, sir. In the village Tayur...” It was on the other side of the river, a couple of miles off.

“No matter, I will come with you. What is your father?”

“He looks after his garden and lands in the village, sir. I read in the Board High School. I had leave to-day in the last period and so could bring you this letter.”

55

“Good boy, good boy, take me to your father.” I walked beside him. The child would be waiting at home. “One minute, will you come with me to my house? I will give you coffee and sweets. We will go...”

[from Chapter 5]

How does Narayan’s writing movingly convey Krishna’s thoughts and feelings at this moment in the novel?

- Or** **18** In what ways does Narayan’s portrayal of Leela contribute to your enjoyment of the novel?

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON: *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*

Remember to support your ideas with details from the writing.

Either 19 Read this extract, and then answer the question that follows it:

There at least he was not denied admittance; but when he came in, he was shocked at the change which had taken place in the doctor's appearance. He had his death-warrant written legibly upon his face. The rosy man had grown pale; his flesh had fallen away; he was visibly balder and older; and yet it was not so much these tokens of a swift physical decay that arrested the lawyer's notice, as a look in the eye and quality of manner that seemed to testify to some deep-seated terror of the mind. It was unlikely that the doctor should fear death; and yet that was what Utterson was tempted to suspect. 'Yes,' he thought; 'he is a doctor, he must know his own state and that his days are counted; and the knowledge is more than he can bear.' And yet when Utterson remarked on his ill looks, it was with an air of great firmness that Lanyon declared himself a doomed man. 5

'I have had a shock,' he said, 'and I shall never recover. It is a question of weeks. Well, life has been pleasant; I liked it; yes, sir, I used to like it. I sometimes think if we knew all, we should be more glad to get away.' 10

'Jekyll is ill, too,' observed Utterson. 'Have you seen him?'

But Lanyon's face changed, and he held up a trembling hand. 'I wish to see or hear no more of Dr Jekyll,' he said, in a loud, unsteady voice. 'I am quite done with that person; and I beg that you will spare me any allusion to one whom I regard as dead.' 15

'Tut, tut!' said Mr Utterson; and then, after a considerable pause, 'Can't I do anything?' he inquired. 'We are three very old friends, Lanyon; we shall not live to make others.'

'Nothing can be done,' returned Lanyon; 'ask himself.' 20

'He will not see me,' said the lawyer.

'I am not surprised at that,' was the reply. 'Some day, Utterson, after I am dead, you may perhaps come to learn the right and wrong of this. I cannot tell you. And in the meantime, if you can sit and talk with me of other things, for God's sake, stay and do so; but if you cannot keep clear of this accursed topic, then, in God's name, go, for I cannot bear it.' 25

As soon as he got home, Utterson sat down and wrote to Jekyll, complaining of his exclusion from the house, and asking the cause of this unhappy break with Lanyon; and the next day brought him a long answer, often very pathetically worded, and sometimes darkly mysterious in drift. The quarrel with Lanyon was incurable. 'I do not blame our old friend,' Jekyll wrote, 'but I share his view that we must never meet. I mean from henceforth to lead a life of extreme seclusion; you must not be surprised, nor must you doubt my friendship, if my door is often shut even to you. You must suffer me to go my own dark way. I have brought on myself a punishment and a danger that I cannot name. If I am the chief of sinners, I am the chief of sufferers also. I could not think that this earth contained a place for sufferings and terrors so unmanly; and you can do but one thing, Utterson, to lighten this destiny, and that is to respect my silence.' 30

Utterson was amazed; the dark influence of Hyde had been withdrawn, the doctor had returned to his old tasks and amities; a week ago, the prospect had smiled with every promise of a cheerful and an honoured age; and now in a moment, friendship and peace of mind and the whole 35

40

45

tenor of his life were wrecked. So great and unprepared a change pointed to madness; but in view of Lanyon's manner and words, there must lie for it some deeper ground.

50

A week afterwards Dr Lanyon took to his bed, and in something less than a fortnight he was dead.

[from Chapter 6, 'Remarkable Incident of Dr Lanyon']

In what ways does Stevenson make you sympathise with both Dr Lanyon and Mr Utterson at this moment in the novel?

Or **20** Explore **two** moments in the novel which Stevenson makes particularly shocking for you.

from *Stories of Ourselves*

Remember to support your ideas with details from the writing.

- Either 21 Read this extract from *Bilennium* (by J. G. Ballard), and then answer the question that follows it:

All day long, and often into the early hours of the morning, the tramp of feet sounded up and down the stairs outside Ward's cubicle. Built into a narrow alcove in a bend of the staircase between the fourth and fifth floors, its plywood walls flexed and creaked with every footstep like the timbers of a rotting windmill. Over a hundred people lived in the top three floors of the old rooming house, and sometimes Ward would lie awake on his narrow bunk until 2 or 3 a.m., mechanically counting the last residents returning from the all-night movies in the stadium half a mile away. Through the window he could hear giant fragments of the amplified dialogue booming among the rooftops. The stadium was never empty. During the day the huge four-sided screen was raised on its davit and athletics meetings or football matches ran continuously. For the people in the houses abutting the stadium the noise must have been unbearable. 5

Ward, at least, had a certain degree of privacy. Two months earlier, before he came to live on the staircase, he had shared a room with seven others on the ground floor of a house in 755th Street, and the ceaseless press of people jostling past the window had reduced him to a state of exhaustion. The street was always full, an endless clamour of voices and shuffling feet. By 6.30, when he woke, hurrying to take his place in the bathroom queue, the crowds already jammed it from sidewalk to sidewalk, the din punctuated every half minute by the roar of the elevated trains running over the shops on the opposite side of the road. As soon as he saw the advertisement describing the staircase cubicle he had left (like everyone else, he spent most of his spare time scanning the classifieds in the newspapers, moving his lodgings an average of once every two months) despite the higher rental. A cubicle on a staircase would almost certainly be on its own. 10 15 20 25

However, this had its drawbacks. Most evenings his friends from the library would call in, eager to rest their elbows after the bruising crush of the public reading room. The cubicle was slightly more than four and a half square metres in floor area, half a square metre over the statutory maximum for a single person, the carpenters having taken advantage, illegally, of a recess beside a nearby chimney breast. Consequently Ward had been able to fit a small straight-backed chair into the interval between the bed and the door, so that only one person at a time needed to sit on the bed – in most single cubicles host and guest had to sit side by side on the bed, conversing over their shoulders and changing places periodically to avoid neck-strain. 30 35

'You were lucky to find this place,' Rossiter, the most regular visitor, never tired of telling him. He reclined back on the bed, gesturing at the cubicle. 'It's enormous, the perspectives really zoom. I'd be surprised if you haven't got at least five metres here, perhaps six.' 40

Ward shook his head categorically. Rossiter was his closest friend, but the quest for living space had forged powerful reflexes. 'Just over four and a half, I've measured it carefully. There's no doubt about it.' 45

Rossiter lifted one eyebrow. 'I'm amazed. It must be the ceiling then.'

Manipulating the ceiling was a favourite trick of unscrupulous landlords – most assessments of area were made upon the ceiling, out of convenience, and by tilting back the plywood partitions the rated area of a cubicle could be either increased, for the benefit of a prospective tenant (many married couples were thus bamboozled into taking a single cubicle), or decreased temporarily on the visits of the housing inspectors. Ceilings were criss-crossed with pencil marks staking out the rival claims of tenants on opposite sides of a party wall. Someone timid of his rights could be literally squeezed out of existence – in fact, the advertisement ‘quiet clientele’ was usually a tacit invitation to this sort of piracy. 50

‘The wall does tilt a little,’ Ward admitted. ‘Actually, it’s about four degrees out – I used a plumb-line. But there’s still plenty of room on the stairs for people to get by.’ 55

Rossiter grinned. ‘Of course, John. I’m just envious, that’s all. My room is driving me crazy.’ Like everyone, he used the term ‘room’ to describe his tiny cubicle, a hangover from the days fifty years earlier when people had indeed lived one to a room, sometimes, unbelievably, one to an apartment or house. The microfilms in the architecture catalogues at the library showed scenes of museums, concert halls and other public buildings in what appeared to be everyday settings, often virtually empty, two or three people wandering down an enormous gallery or staircase. Traffic moved freely along the centre of streets, and in the quieter districts sections of sidewalk would be deserted for fifty yards or more. 60 65

In what ways does Ballard make this such a depressing opening to the story?

- Or 22 How does Mistry vividly portray the relationships between fathers and sons in *Of White Hairs and Cricket*?

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