Contents

Comparative Study Explained

The comparative study question asks you to compare two texts under one of the following three modes of comparison. (In this case, 'compare' means point out similarities and differences.)

The comparative modes for 2009 are:

1. Theme
2. Relationships
3. Social Setting

You need to know your comparative text well, but not in the same level of detail as your single text. When you are reading through your text, it is a good idea to keep the modes of comparison in mind.

Concentrate on _____ in each text. (The word 'moment' here can be taken to mean an entire chapter or scene.) A key moment in your text is one which illustrates or helps in the development of one of the chosen modes.

A key moment may be:

A moment of conflict.

A moment of resolution.

A moment which shows the chosen theme very clearly.

An occurrence or description which gives us an insight into the social setting.

A pivotal moment in a relationship.

Key moments can overlap, one may be an illustration of both the theme and a pivotal moment in the central relationship, for example.

When you are reading your comparative text, as well as keeping the modes in mind, you should think about your personal response. The examiners will be looking to see how well you engaged with the text. As you read, ask yourself:

Did I like the characters?

Would I like to have lived in that time or in that place? Why? Why not?

Is the theme one I can relate to?

Do I like the way in which the author presents the theme?

Do I find certain parts of the text funny or poignant or disturbing?

Note:
The word 'text' refers to books, films and plays.
The word 'author' refers to novelists, playwrights and film directors.

Theme

The main theme is the main message of text, the issue or concern the writer is trying to explore. The theme is not the plot, don't confuse the two.

There can be several themes in a text besides the main one; it doesn't matter which one you pick as long as it is central to the texts you are studying.

When you are reading the text and thinking about this mode of comparison, ask yourself:

> How is the theme introduced? Is there a key moment that gives us an indication of the message the author is trying to explore? Does one of the central characters say or do something that sets us on the path of understanding the theme? Or is it conveyed by the minor characters or even the setting?
>
> How does the author develop this theme? Is it through a series of small events? Do we see situations developing that we know must lead to a crisis of some sort? How does the author interest us in the theme? Is it through a central character with whom we can empathise?
>
> Is there a moment of crisis or a turning point in the text? Does the central character have to make a difficult decision? Does the character do the right thing? How is this decision linked to the theme?
>
> How is the theme resolved? Are you very clear on the author's view of the ideas explored in the theme? Have we learned anything about human behaviour or society in general from the exploration of this theme?
>
> Does the author's use of setting, imagery, motifs, lighting, costumes, special effects or music (if it's a film) add to your understanding of the theme?

The theme we will be exploring in Jane Eyre is:

> Independence/Autonomy

Relationships

The vast majority of narrative texts centre on relationships. They can be relationships between lovers, friends, family or even enemies. In 'Jane Eyre' we will be concentrating on the central relationship between Jane and Mr. Rochester.

When you are reading the text and thinking about this mode of comparison, ask yourself:

> How is the relationship introduced?
>
> Does the relationship change or develop as the narrative progresses? Is it through a series of small events? Do we see situations developing that we know must lead to a crisis of some sort? How does the author interest us in the

theme? Is it through a central character with whom we can empathise?

Is there a crisis or complication in the relationship? Does the central character have to make a difficult decision? Does the character do the right thing? How is this decision linked to the theme?

Does the relationship end well?

Social Setting

The social setting is the kind of world in which the story takes place.

When you are reading the text and thinking about this mode of comparison, ask yourself:

In what century or decade is the story set? Does the time matter? Could the story take place now or are things in our society very different?

Where is the story set? Does the setting matter?

Do we learn a lot about the social life of that place or time by reading the text?

What are the protagonists' attitudes and values?

Are there class distinctions?

Are there race distinctions?

Are there gender distinctions?

Are children treated well?

What are the manners and customs of that place/time?

How does the daily life of the characters differ from life in 21st century Ireland?

What are their attitudes towards religion, money, love, family etc.?

Would you like to live in that time or place? Why? Why not?

Introduction to 'Jane Eyre'

It is not essential to delve too deeply into Charlotte Brontë's biography to understand the themes, relationships and social setting of 'Jane Eyre' but as each of these were partly modelled on Charlotte's own experiences, it can be helpful to briefly examine her tragically short life.

Charlotte Brontë (1816-1855) was the third of six children born to Patrick Brontë, a clergyman, and his wife. The family lived at Haworth Parsonage in Yorkshire. Charlotte's mother died of cancer in 1821 and three years later the young Charlotte and three of her sisters were sent to Cowan Bridge boarding school (the inspiration for Lowood) in a neighbouring county. Conditions at the school were very poor and the girls' health was badly affected; Charlotte believed their treatment at the school contributed to the early deaths of her sisters Maria and Elizabeth. Both died of tuberculosis in 1826, shortly after they were taken from the school.

Charlotte continued her education at a different school and was much happier, even returning to work there as a teacher for several years. When she left that job, she worked as a governess for a number of different families before travelling to Brussels with her sister Emily to work in a school run by Mr. Constantine Heger, a married man with whom Charlotte fell in love. She returned to England in 1844 and wrote several novels and some poetry under the androgynous pseudonym 'Currer Bell'.

Her earlier works were not well received by the critics but 'Jane Eyre', published in 1847, was an instant success. Readers were fascinated by Mr. Rochester, the dark, brooding, Byronic hero of the book and by Jane's determination to retain her sense of self and her moral courage in the face of overwhelming odds. 'Jane Eyre' was not just a typical Gothic novel (full of horror, mystery, melodrama and a tormented hero), it touched on a number of deeper issues including the treatment of women and children, religious hypocrisy and the coming of age of the central character. The heroine, Jane Eyre, was in many ways a mirror image of Charlotte herself. Unlike her sisters, Charlotte rejected the convention of the beautiful heroine. While writing , she told them, "I will show you a heroine as plain and as small as myself."

In 1848 Charlotte's brother Branwell died of bronchitis (made worse by his excessive drinking and drug use) and in December of the same year, her sister Emily died of tuberculosis. When Anne died of the same disease in May of the following year, Charlotte and her father were left alone.

Charlotte married a clergyman, Arthur Bell Nichols, in 1854 and soon afterwards became pregnant. However, her health, never good since her time at her first school, deteriorated quickly during the pregnancy and she and her unborn child died in March 1855.

The Major Characters

Jane Eyre: The narrator of the novel. She is ten when the story begins.

Mrs. Reed: Jane's aunt.

John Reed: Mrs. Reed's son, Jane's cousin. He is a cruel bully.

Eliza Reed: Mrs. Reed's daughter, Jane's religious but unkind cousin.

Georgiana Reed: Mrs. Reed's daughter, Jane's beautiful but self-centred cousin.

Bessie: The nurse at Gateshead who shows Jane some kindness.

Abbot: The lady's maid at Gateshead who dislikes Jane.

Mr. Reed: Mrs. Reed's late husband, and Jane's late uncle on her mother's side.

Mr. Lloyd: The kindly apothecary who visits Jane after the incident in the red-room.

Mr. Brocklehurst: A pompous, mean clergyman and the master of Lowood.

Miss Maria Temple: The kind and gentle superintendent of Lowood.

Miss Scatcherd: A teacher at Lowood who is cruel to Helen Burns.

Helen Burns: Jane's friend at Lowood.

Mrs. Fairfax: The housekeeper at Thornfield.

Miss Adèle Varens: Mr. Rochester's ward and possibly his child.

Sophie: Adèle Varens' nurse, a French woman.

Mr. Edward Fairfax Rochester: The master of Thornfield Hall.

Grace Poole: The woman who takes care of Bertha, Mr. Rochester's mad wife.

Miss Blanche Ingram: A haughty beauty.

Mr. Mason: Mr. Rochester's brother-in-law who lives in Jamaica.

John Eyre: Jane, St. John, Diana and Mary's uncle in Madeira.

Mr. Briggs: A lawyer.

Bertha Mason: Mr. Rochester's first wife, a madwoman.

St. John Rivers: (Pronounced 'Sinjin') Jane's cousin and suitor. He is a clergyman.

Diana Rivers: St.John's sister and Jane's cousin.

Mary Rivers: St.John's sister and Jane's cousin.

Hannah: The housekeeper at Moor House.

Jane Elliot: The pseudonym which Jane uses when she arrives at Moor House.

Miss Rosamond Oliver: A beautiful heiress with whom St. John is secretly in love.

Mary and John: They take care of Mr. Rochester at Ferndean.

Plot Overview

Jane Eyre is a young orphan girl being raised at Gateshead House by her cruel aunt, Mrs. Reed. Mrs. Reed's children, John, Eliza and Georgiana, bully and torment Jane and when she finally fights back, she is locked in a room she believes to be haunted. Jane collapses with fear and nervous exhaustion and wakes to find herself in her own bed. Mr. Lloyd, the apothecary, is sent for. He is a kind man and sees that Jane is very unhappy living with her aunt and cousins. He suggests that she go to boarding school and to everyone's relief, Mrs. Reed agrees. The only person who is sorry to see Jane go is Bessie, the nurse.

Life at Lowood School is not easy. It is a charity school run by the hypocritical, penny-pinching, cruel Mr. Brocklehurst. Fortunately, the school superintendent, Miss Temple, is a kind, generous woman who goes out of her way to help the girls in any way she can. Jane befriends Helen Burns, a slightly older pupil who is deeply religious and humbly accepts any punishments, no matter how unjust. Jane, who is more passionate, finds this attitude difficult to understand but admires Helen for her strength of character. As the girls at the school are weak and undernourished, they are easy victims for the typhus epidemic which sweeps through the school in the spring. While Jane is unaffected, many pupils die. Helen dies at the same time, though of consumption, not typhus. The deaths at the school provoke an investigation and a new board of management is set up. Mr. Brocklehurst retains his post of treasurer but has no real power. Conditions at the school improve greatly and Jane stays there for eight years in total, six as a pupil and two as a teacher.

Miss Temple leaves Lowood to get married and Jane grows restless. She applies for a new job and soon takes a position at Thronfield Hall, working as governess. Her pupil is the young ward of Mr. Rochester, the master of Thornfield. He is a moody, passionate man and Jane secretly falls in love with him. There are mysterious happenings at the house, eerie laughter at odd hours and an unknown hand setting fire to Mr. Rochester's bed. Jane saves him from the fire and he tells her that it was probably the work of Grace Poole, the servant who has also been blamed for the strange laughter that can be heard from the attic rooms.

Soon after the fire, Mr. Rochester organises a party at Thornfield, lasting several days. The guests include Miss Blanche Ingram, a beautiful but cold and cruel woman who treats Jane with contempt. During the party, an uninvited guest calls to see Mr. Rochester. They speak privately and the guest, Mr. Mason goes to bed. He is savagely attacked in the middle of the night and Jane is told that he was injured by Grace Poole. She is shocked when Grace is not fired. The guest is hurried away from the house first thing in the morning and the house party continues. Mr. Rochester leads everyone to believe he is going to marry Blanche and a heartbroken Jane braces

herself to leave his employment. Instead of proposing to Blanche, however, Mr. Rochester asks Jane to marry him. She joyfully accepts.

The day of the wedding arrives but in the middle of the ceremony, a man appears, claiming that Mr. Rochester is already married to his sister, Bertha. Jane recognises him as the man who was allegedly attacked by Grace Poole when he visited Thornfield. He says that Mr. Rochester is married to his sister, Bertha Mason, so cannot marry Jane. A furious Mr. Rochester leads the small wedding group to the attic rooms in Thornfield where they see Bertha, a madwoman in the care of Grace Poole. Bertha is dangerously insane and has to be kept locked up at all times. It transpires that she, not Grace Poole, was behind the fire and the attack on Mr. Mason. Mr. Rochester pleads with Jane to go away with him but she refuses, saying she does not want to be his mistress. She leaves the house secretly with only a small bag of possessions and a little money.

Jane takes a coach and goes as far from Thornfield as she can. She realises too late that she has left her belongings and money on the coach and she is forced to sleep outdoors and beg for food for a few days. Finally, in the last stages of exhaustion, she arrives on the doorstep of Moor House where she is taken in and cared for by St. John Rivers and his sisters, Diana and Mary. Jane becomes close friends with them, especially the two women. St. John is somewhat cold and serious and plans to leave for India soon to work as a missionary. He helps Jane by arranging for her to run the local charity school. Jane discovers that St. John is in love with a local heiress, a fact which he does not deny but he refuses to tell the young lady in question and so she marries someone else. One day St. John surprises Jane with the news that she has inherited twenty thousand pounds from her uncle, John Eyre. It turns out that John Eyre was also the Rivers' uncle and Jane immediately decides to divide the money equally between the four of them. St. John proposes to Jane and asks her to go to India with him as a missionary. Knowing he doesn't love her, she refuses. While they are talking, she thinks she hears the voice of Mr. Rochester calling to her and she decides to go back to Thornfield.

When she arrives, she finds the house has burnt down. She learns that Bertha set the fire and that she jumped from the roof and killed herself. Mr. Rochester tried to save her from the fire but lost a hand and was blinded in the attempt. He is now living in Ferndean, another house he owns and he is being cared for by his cook, Mary and her husband, John.

Jane travels to Ferndean and is reunited with Mr. Rochester. They marry and are blissfully happy together. Jane tells us that ten years have passed and that they have a son. Mr. Rochester has regained some of his sight after two years of blindness and was able to see his newborn son when he was placed in his arms.

CHAPTER ONE

The novel begins on a miserable winter's day at Gateshead. Jane Eyre, a ten year old orphan girl and the narrator of the story, is sitting alone in the drawing room while her cousins play in another room. She is not allowed to play with them as her aunt, Mrs. Reed, does not like her and considers her a bad influence. She was forced to take Jane in as a baby when her parents died and her late husband, Jane's uncle, made her promise to raise her as her own child. Jane's cousins, Eliza, Georgiana and John, are rude and spoilt, the fourteen year old John being particularly cruel. Mrs. Reed and her children are unpleasant to Jane and do not treat her like one of the family, looking down on her instead because her parents were poor.

John bullies Jane whenever he gets the chance and when he finds her sitting on the window seat, hidden from view by a curtain, he is delighted at the chance to torment her. He mocks her, tells her she should call him Master Reed as he will one day own the entire estate, including the book Jane is reading. He slaps her, then snatches the book and throws it at her, causing Jane to fall and cut her head on the door. The bleeding and frightened Jane is pushed beyond endurance and fights back. Mrs. Reed blames Jane for the fight and orders two servants, Bessie and Abbot, to lock Jane in the 'red-room' as a punishment for her behaviour. Jane is terrified as this is the room in which Mr. Reed died.

CHAPTER TWO

Bessie and Abbot drag the struggling Jane to the red-room and threaten to tie her to the chair if she doesn't stop trying to escape. Jane begs them not to and promises she will calm down. The servants scold her for being so badly behaved and tell her she should be grateful to Mrs. Reed for allowing her to live in Gateshead. They tell her she should be humble, that she has no money and is not even as good as a servant because she doesn't earn her keep. Abbot tells her God will punish her for her wickedness. Bessie, who has a kinder nature, tries to explain to Jane that what they are telling her is for her own good. They leave, locking Jane in the room.

Jane thinks bitterly of how badly she is treated when she only tries to be good and how her cousins are pampered and indulged even though they behave so badly. She imagines that if her uncle, who died nine years ago, were alive, things would be different. Suddenly she sees a light in the room, (which she later realises was probably just a lantern shining in from the garden) and she believes it is the ghost of her uncle returning to take revenge on his wife for not raising Jane like one of her own children. Terrified, she screams so loudly that Bessie, Abbot and Mrs. Reed come running into the room. Mrs. Reed is furious and orders that Jane be locked up for an hour longer. They leave and Jane falls into a faint.

CHAPTER THREE

Jane wakes to find herself in bed in her own room. Bessie, the nurse is there with Mr. Lloyd, the apothecary (more like a pharmacist than a doctor). Jane knows him, Mrs. Reed calls him if one of the servants is ill but she calls the physician (doctor) if she or her children need medical treatment. Mr. Lloyd instructs that Jane continue to rest in bed and says he will call again the next day. Bessie cares for Jane, treating her well and singing her a ballad to soothe her. Unfortunately, the ballad is a sad one about a poor orphan child and it only makes Jane more depressed.

The next day Mr. Lloyd returns and, sending Bessie from the room, begins to ask Jane why she is so sad. She tells him how she was locked in the red-room and how much she dislikes living with her aunt and cousins. The kindly Mr. Lloyd suggests that she might like to go to boarding school and Jane, on reflection, thinks that she would. Mr. Lloyd leaves to talk to Mrs. Reed about the possibility of sending Jane away to school.

That evening, Jane learns some more information about her parents from Bessie. Her mother, Mr. Reed's sister, ran away with a poor clergyman against her family's wishes. They were only married a year when they died of typhus, which Jane's father contracted while caring for poor.

CHAPTER FOUR

Time passes and still there is no mention of Jane being sent away to school. Mrs. Reed has ordered that she be kept away from Eliza, Georgiana and John. While her cousins spend all their time in the drawing room with their mother, Jane is forced to eat and sleep on her own, her only company being the servants. Once, overhearing John complain to his mother about that 'nasty Jane Eyre', she flies into a passion and shouts that Mr. Reed is in heaven and can see how badly his wife is behaving towards her. Mrs. Reed seems nervous for a moment but quickly rallies and beats Jane for her cheekiness.

Chrismas comes and goes and Jane is excluded from all the festivities. She spends most evenings alone in the nursery, sometimes with only the glow of the fire for light as Bessie takes the candle with her if she is going downstairs to socialise with the other servants. The lonely Jane takes her doll to bed with her each night and holds it close, she dotes on it and says that 'human beings must love something'. Bessie, though quick tempered, is kind enough to Jane and seems fond of her in her own way.

Two and a half months later, in mid-January, Jane is finally told she can attend Lowood boarding school for girls. She is called to the drawing room one day to meet Mr. Brocklehurst, the pompous, cruel, intolerant clergyman who runs Lowood. Mr. Brocklehurst questions Jane about religion and seems shocked when she declares that she finds psalms dull. Mrs. Reed tells Mr. Brocklehurst that Jane is a lying, deceitful child and advises him to warn all the teachers to keep a close eye on her. She also asks him to arrange for Jane to stay at the school for all her holidays so that she need

never come to Gateshead again.

When Mr. Brocklehust has gone, Jane tells her aunt that she hates her and will never come to visit her when she is grown up. She also says that if anyone asks how Mrs. Reed treated her, she will tell them the truth. Mrs. Reed is taken aback and tries to mollify Jane but Jane will have none of it. She returns to the nursery and spends the rest of her time at Gateshead with Bessie, who is affectionate to Jane and tells her that she likes her better than the Reed children.

CHAPTER FIVE

Four days later, Jane is sent off to school. The night before she leaves, Mrs. Reed comes into her bedroom and tells Jane to remember that she is her friend and to always speak well of her to others. Jane ignores her and Mrs. Reed finishes by saying that Jane need not disturb them in the morning to say goodbye.

Although she is only ten years old, Jane is made to travel alone on the coach. When she arrives at Lowood it is late and she is exhausted. She meets Miss Temple, the young headmistress and is impressed by her looks and manner. Jane is shown to the cold dormitory and soon falls asleep.

The next morning Jane meets the other girls and after assembly and prayers, goes in to breakfast with them. Jane is ravenous, having not eaten properly the day before and is horrified by the burnt porridge that is served to everyone. Later that morning, Miss. Temple announces that the girls are to be served bread and cheese to make up for the inedible breakfast.

After lunch the girls go out into the garden and Jane sees a girl of fourteen sitting quietly, reading a book. They start talking and Jane discovers that the girl, Helen Burns, has been at Lowood for two years. Helen is a quiet, mature girl with deep religious beliefs who humbly accepts any hardships that come her way. She tells Jane a little about Lowood, that it is a charity school and that Mr. Brocklehurst, although he does not live there, oversees the running of the school and keeps a very close eye on the finances.

CHAPTER SIX

The next day, Jane's second at Lowood, it is so cold that the water in the girls' basins is frozen and they are unable to wash. The food is barely better than the day before and there is not enough of it to satisfy Jane's hunger.

Helen Burns, Jane's new friend, endures all these hardships with equanimity. She never complains, even when she is beaten by Miss Scatcherd for having dirty hands and nails. Jane wonders why Helen does not explain that she was unable to wash because the water had turned to ice. When they talk together later, the self-critical Helen tells Jane that she believes she deserves to be punished as she is not a good person and often daydreams in class. She advises Jane to adopt the same Christian attitude and to love her enemies. Jane doubts she will be able to do this, she is too

passionate to meekly accept injustice.

CHAPTER SEVEN

When Jane has been three weeks at Lowood, Mr. Brocklehurst pays a visit to the school. He has come to check that no money is being wasted and speaks sternly to Miss Temple about allowing the girls to have bread and cheese twice when their breakfast porridge was burnt. He claims that they should offer such things up to the Lord, that it would do their souls good. Nothing is too trivial to escape Mr. Brocklehurst's notice, he states that the girls must keep their stockings in better repair, he has examined them while they were drying on the line and was annoyed that they were not darned properly. Miss Temple has no choice but to go along with him, he is in a position of authority over her. Noticing one girl's long, curly hair, Mr. Brocklehurst is shocked at this seeming vanity and states that all the girls must have their hair cut short if they cannot keep it in a more modest style.

At this moment Mrs. Brocklehurst and her daughters enter the room; they have been conducting their own inspection of the dormitories and the linen and are displeased. In direct contrast to everything Mr. Brocklehurst has said about suitable clothing and hairstyles, they are dressed in the latest fashion and in the most expensive silks, furs and ostrich feathers.

Distracted by all of this, Jane drops her writing slate and it crashes to the ground. She has been trying to escape Mr. Brocklehurst's notice but it is too late now. He sees her, and remembering his conversation with Mrs. Reed, forces Jane to stand on a stool in the centre of the room while he tells everyone what a deceitful, bad child she is. He praises Mrs. Reed for her kindness to Jane and finishes by ordering Jane to stand on the stool for an hour longer. He also forbids anyone to speak to her for the rest of the day.

Humiliated and upset, Jane's only consolation is Helen Burns, who smiles secretly at her whenever she passes by.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Some time later, the school day ends and everyone leaves the room to go into the refectory for tea. Jane climbs down from the stool and sits in the corner, crying. Helen arrives to comfort her and tells Jane that, far from believing Mr. Brocklehurst, the girls will like her more than ever now because they dislike him so much.

Miss Temple comes into the room and invites Helen and Jane to her room for tea. She produces a cake and the girls are delighted with this treat. Miss Temple says Jane should be given a fair chance to clear her name and asks her to tell her side of the story. Jane does so and when she mentions Mr. Llloyd, the apothecary, Miss Temple says she knows him slightly and will write to him to ask if he can confirm Jane's tale of her hard life at Gateshead.

Miss Temple then asks Helen how she is feeling, if her cough is any better and the

pain in her chest any less. Helen says it is a little better but Miss Temple does not seem happy with Helen's health.

After they have had their tea, Miss Temple and Helen begin to talk knowledgeably on many subjects and Jane is most impressed.

On leaving Miss Temple's room, the girls return to their dormitory to find Miss Scatcherd checking to see that everyone's clothes are neatly arranged in their drawers. She tells Helen that hers are a disgrace and the next morning, ties a sign onto Helen saying, 'Slattern' (an insulting word meaning an untidy, dirty woman). Helen accepts this punishment and says that she should be neater but Jane is enraged on her friend's behalf and, taking the sign off Helen, throws it in the fire.

CHAPTER NINE

Spring comes to Lowood but instead of making the girls healthier, it brings disease. The school lies in a foggy hollow and the warm, damp air is a breeding ground for typhus. Almost half of the eighty girls fall ill and many die. Those who have families to go to leave immediately, as do several of the teachers. Miss Temple bravely remains, spending most of her time caring for the sick pupils.

Jane and the other healthy girls are allowed to spend much of there time playing outdoors and even eating picnics in the woods. Helen is unable to share in this pleasure however as she has fallen gravely ill. She does not have typhus, but consumption (tuberculosis) and at first Jane does not realise how serious this is.

In Helen's absence, Jane befriends Mary Ann Wilson but knows in her heart that the other girl's gossipy nature, while fun, is no substitute for Helen's goodness and intelligence.

Seeing the doctor leaving one day, Jane asks a nurse if Helen is any better. She is told that Helen is dying but that she cannot have any visitors. That night, Jane sneaks into Miss Temple's room while she is out and visits Helen. The girls are delighted to see one another again but Helen knows she is dying. She is as accepting of this as she has been of every other hardship in her life and tells Jane that she is not afraid, that she is finally going home.

Jane falls asleep in her friend's arms and as the two little girls lie there together, Helen dies. Jane is carried, sleeping, back to her own bed when the pair are found and learns later of her friend's fate.

Helen is buried in Brocklebridge Churchyard. Her grave remains unmarked for fifteen years but then a marble headstone inscribed with the Latin word 'Resurgam' (I will rise again) is placed there, presumably by Jane.

CHAPTER TEN

When the typhus epidemic is over, things change for the better at Lowood. An

investigation is carried out and Mr. Brocklehurst's negligence comes to light. It is felt that if the girls had been better nourished then the disease would not have taken such a hold. A new board of management is set up. Mr. Brocklehurst is kept on as treasurer because of his position in the community but he has to share his inspection duties with more enlightened, reasonable men. Conditions at the school improve and Jane settles down to work. On finishing her studies six years later, Jane becomes a teacher at the school and works there for two more years.

Miss Temple leaves to get married and Jane becomes restless. She puts an ad in the newspaper applying for a post as a governess to a young child (being only eighteen herself, she thinks it would be unwise to teach anyone over the age of fourteen). Soon afterwards, she receives a letter from a Mrs. Fairfax, offering her the position of governess in Thornfield Hall.

Before she leaves Lowood, Jane is visited by Bessie. The pair are delighted to meet again and Bessie is very proud of all Jane has achieved, although she is as blunt as ever, saying Jane is still plain and that she was never a beauty as a child. Bessie, now married with a family, still lives at Gateshead and tells Jane all the news of the last eight years. Georgiana fell in love and tried to elope with Lord Edwin Vere but Eliza told Mrs. Reed and the plan was foiled. The two sisters are now quarrelling constantly as a result of this and Bessie feels that Eliza acted as she did out of jealousy. John has grown into a lazy, drunken man who uses his mother's money to support his debauched lifestyle.

Bessie also tells Jane that her uncle, Mr. John Eyre, came to Gateshead seven years ago, looking for Jane. On hearing that she was at school fifty miles away, he left disappointed. He had no time to travel to Lowood to visit her as he was sailing for Madeira on business very soon.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

It is late in the evening when Jane finally arrives at Thornfield Hall. She is delighted at her reception; Mrs. Fairfax is most kind and welcoming, sitting Jane by the fire and arranging for her to have a hot drink and some sandwiches. Jane is pleased, but a little puzzled, by this kindness from someone she assumes to be her employer. They chat for a while and then Jane goes to bed.

The next morning Jane awakes in her new bedroom. She is very pleased with her surroundings, the room is bright and attractively furnished. She dresses carefully for, although she knows she is not beautiful, she wants to be as neat and presentable as she can be.

As it is a lovely autumn morning, Jane decides to go outside and look around. She is impressed by the fine manor house and by the grounds around it. Mrs. Fairfax appears and greets her warmly. In the course of their conversation, Jane learns that Mrs. Fairfax is not the owner of Thornfield but the housekeeper. Mr. Rochester, the master of the house, is abroad. The little girl, Adèle Varens, is his ward. Adèle

appears and is introduced to her new governess. The fact that Jane can speak French is an advantage as Adèle's English is not yet perfect. Adèle tells Jane that she came to live with Mr. Rochester when her mother died.

Mrs. Fairfax takes Jane on a tour of the house, telling her all the time about Mr. Rochester. He is, she says, a good employer but a rather difficult man to make out. It is often hard to know what he is thinking. They walk through the large house, Jane admiring everything as they go. Mrs. Fairfax takes her to the flat roof that she might admire the view. Afterwards, as they descend the stairs to the attic rooms, Jane hears a peculiar laugh. Mrs. Fairfax dismisses it, saying it is probably Grace Poole, who often sews in the attic room nearby. A plain, rough looking woman aged between thirty and forty appears at a door and Mrs. Fairfax tells her to be quieter in future. This is Jane's first introduction to Grace Poole.

CHAPTER TWELVE

Life at Thornfield is very pleasant but Jane becomes restless and bored after a few months. She likes Mrs. Fairfax but longs for more stimulating company sometimes. She has met Grace Poole in the corridors several times since their first encounter and has heard the eerie laugh and strange murmurings from time to time. It is clear that Grace Poole is a drinker, she often has a pot of porter in her hand.

One afternoon in January, Jane goes for a walk into the local village to post a letter for Mrs. Fairfax. She stops on the way to sit down on a stile and rest for a while. As she sits there in the dusk, she hears noise and sees a huge dog approaching, followed by a horse and rider. Jane is briefly reminded of a story Bessie told her of a spirit called the Gytrash but she realises quickly that she is just being foolish.

As they pass her, the horse slips on a patch of ice and falls, throwing his rider. Jane helps the man to his feet, noticing as she does so that he is a man of about thirty five, not handsome but rather stern looking. She thinks that if he had been a handsome young man she would have felt awkward in his presence as she would have been conscious of her own lack of beauty. The man has a sprained ankle and Jane refuses to leave him until she is sure he is safely back on his horse. He asks her where she lives and seems surprised when she points to Thornfield Hall. He asks what she does there and when she says she is the governess, he stares at her intently for a moment or two. Once he has remounted his horse, he rides off again and Jane continues on her journey.

When she arrives back at Thornfield, Jane sees the huge dog, Pilot, sitting by the fire. Leah, the maid, tells her it is Mr. Rochester's dog and that he has just arrived home, having fallen from his horse on an icy patch of road and sprained his ankle.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

The next day, Adèle is so excited about Mr. Rochester's arrival that she cannot concentrate on her work. Mrs. Fairfax says that Mr. Rochester wants Jane and Adèle to have tea with him at six.

When they join Mr. Rochester, he is aloof and rather abrupt, seeming to care little that they are there. Far from being offended by this treatment, Jane is intrigued. She believes she would feel uncomfortable in the presence of a man of polished, sophisticated manners and she is interested to know what kind of man Mr. Rochester is.

Adèle asks Mr. Rochester if he has brought her a 'cadeau' (present) and he asks Jane if she expects one too and if she likes presents. Jane replies that she has never really received any so isn't in a position to say whether or not she would like them. He brings up the fall he had the day before, asking her if she is a fairy who 'bewitched' his horse. While Mrs. Fairfax is puzzled by this turn in the conversation, Jane is simply amused and answers him with seeming seriousness, telling him that the fairies have all left England.

He questions her about her upbringing, her education and her accomplishments. He tells her to play the piano and is critical of her musical ability. At his request, Jane fetches her art portfolio and he looks closely at her work, seemingly surprised at her skill.

Suddenly, he notices the time and dismisses Jane and Adèle brusquely, saying it is past the child's bedtime.

When they are alone, Mrs. Fairfax tells Jane that if her employer seems moody and difficult, it is hardly surprising, given his family history. His older brother inherited the estate and there was some unpleasantness about Mr. Rochester being forced by his brother and father to do something against his will, (Mrs. Fairfax claims not to know what) in order to make his own fortune. When his brother died nine years ago, the present Mr. Rochester became the owner of Thornfield.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

Several days pass and Jane sees very little of Mr. Rochester. He is either engaged in business matters or dining with friends and when Jane does see him in passing, he is cold and haughty. One night, his friends having left to attend a meeting, Jane and Adèle are summoned to keep him company after dinner. Adèle is given her present and instructed to take it off to a quiet corner and open it. The little girl is delighted and Mr. Rochester sends for Mrs. Fairfax to sit with Adèle and admire her gifts while he talks to Jane.

Mr. Rochester is far more talkative than usual and Jane begins to suspect that he may be a little drunk from the wine at dinner. He asks her if she considers him handsome and when she, without thinking, says she does not, he is not offended but rather intrigued by her direct manner. He wants her to treat him an equal but to acknowledge his superiority in some matters because he is older and more experienced. Jane tells him that it is unusual for an employer to care what his employee thinks. The conversation continues and becomes quite deep and philosophical.

Mr. Rochester remembers Adèle and says they should expect her to appear any moment in the dress he brought her from his travels. Sure enough, she does and looks very pretty, very like her mother, according to Mr. Rochester. He promises to tell Jane about Adèle's mother some time.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

Mr. Rochester fulfils his promise to tell Jane about Adèle's past one afternoon when they are in the garden. While Adèle plays with Pilot nearby, they sit down on a bench and Jane hears the full story. Adèle's mother was a French singer and dancer named Céline Varens. Mr. Rochester believed himself truly in love with her and trusted her when she told him that the child she had was his. When he discovered that she was having an affair with another man, he left her. Several years later he heard that she had abandoned the child and run off to Italy with a musician. Adèle was living in poverty so Mr. Rochester brought her and her nurse, Sophie, to live at Thornfield. He doubts that Adèle is really his child, he sees no resemblance, but still wants to give her a good home. He asks Jane if she likes Adèle less now that she knows of her less than glorious heritage. Jane replies that it makes no difference to how she feels about her pupil, if anything she likes her even more now, and she points out that the sins of her parents have nothing to do with Adèle.

That night Jane finds it hard to get to sleep as she thinks over her what she just learnt about Mr. Rochester's past. She hears a noise outside her door and the eerie laugh echoes up the corridor. The sound of a door opening and closing convinces Jane that Grace Poole is up to some mischief and she resolves to go and get Mrs. Fairfax. When she steps into the passage, she sees smoke pouring from Mr. Rochester's room. Rushing in, she throws a jug of water over the bed, rousing the sleeping man and dousing the flames. Mr. Rochester takes control of the situation, bidding Jane to stay in his room, he rushes off to the top floor. He returns soon after, saying that it is as he thought. Jane doesn't understand him but tells him of her suspicions of Grace Poole. Mr. Rochester tells her she is probably right and that it must have been Grace who set his bed on fire. He asks Jane not to tell anyone what happened that night and taking both her hands in his, thanks her for saving his life.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

The next morning, Jane is disappointed not to meet Mr. Rochester but carries on with her lessons as normal. When she leaves the schoolroom at the end of the morning, she finds the servants busy sorting out Mr. Rochester's room. She is shocked to see Grace Poole in the room also, she cannot understand why such a dangerous person should still be in the house after what happened the night before. She asks Grace if she knows anything but Grace answers calmly that Mr. Rochester must have fallen asleep with a lit candle near his bed. She seems to feel no remorse whatsoever and Jane is astounded.

There is still no sign of Mr. Rochester and when Jane asks, she is told that he has

gone away for a week or so to attend a party. A beautiful young lady called Blanche Ingram will be at the party, she is told, and on hearing the news, Jane realises that the foolish hopes she had of a romantic involvement with Mr. Rochester were ridiculous. How could he ever love someone like her? She draws a picture of Blanche as she imagines her and one of herself so she can compare the two and see how ridiculous it was to ever think she could attract Mr. Rochester.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

It is a week since Mr. Rochester's sudden departure and nobody seems to know when, or if, he will return. Mrs. Fairfax tells Jane that he may well decide to go straight to London and from there to Europe and might not be home for a year or so. Jane reproaches herself for her foolishness in becoming attached to Mr. Rochester and wonders if she should leave Thornfield altogether.

One morning Mrs. Fairfax receives a letter from Mr. Rochester announcing that he will return in three days and that he will bring his group of friends, including Miss Ingram and her mother and sister. There is a great rush to get the house ready for the visitors and Jane helps as much as she can. While helping, she overhears the servants gossiping about Grace Poole and how much money she is paid by Mr. Rochester, far more than any of them. The servants see Jane and realise she is listening. They stop talking, one asking the other in a whisper if Jane knows. The other shakes her head and they fall silent. Jane is puzzled by what it is she doesn't know and wonders more and more what the mystery at Thornfield is.

Mr. Rochester arrives on Thursday evening with his large group of friends and Jane is impressed by their elegance. She and Adèle are invited to the drawing room after dinner on the second evening, Adèle is delighted but Jane is nervous. She stands at the back of the room, as much out of sight as possible. The young ladies in the group, with the exception of Blanche Ingram, make a fuss of Adèle and sit her on the couch between them. Blanche asks Mr. Rochester why he does not send her away to school and he replies that it is too expensive. Catching sight of Jane, Blanche makes insulting comments about governesses, asking her mother in a loud voice if what she says is not true. Lady Ingram agrees that governesses are dreadful and one of the other ladies whispers to her that Jane can hear. Lady Ingram says she does not care, that it may do Jane good.

The rest of the evening is most uncomfortable for Jane. She passes the time by admiring Mr. Rochester from a distance and comparing all the other men unfavourably to him. She admits to herself that she loves him still and cannot control her feelings. She watches in dismay as Blanche Ingram flirts with him and he responds in similar fashion.

As soon as she gets a chance, Jane slips away, apparently unnoticed but is followed by Mr. Rochester. He asks her why she did not come and talk to him in the drawing room and wants her to go back in, he says it is too early to go to bed. A distressed Jane says she is very tired and her eyes fill with tears. Mr. Rochester notices and says

that if he had more time alone with her, he would find out why she was so depressed. He tells her that he wants her to come to the drawing room every night while the guests are in the house. As they part, he almost lets some feeling for Jane slip, he says, 'Good-night, my -' and biting his lip, leaves abruptly.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

Several days pass and the guests are still at Thornfield. Mr. Rochester and Blanche seem to be together often, when the group plays a game of charades, they compete as a team. Mr. Rochester invites Jane to play to but she declines and to her relief he does not insist.

Jane is convinced that Mr. Rochester will marry Blanche but is sure that they do not love each other. Blanche is beautiful but shallow, she has no real intelligence or opinions of her own and is cruel to Adèle. She is most likely only drawn to Mr. Rochester because of his wealth.

One day Mr. Rochester has to go to Millcote on business for a few hours and leave his guests to their own devices. While he is gone, a man named Mr. Mason comes looking for him and on being told that he is not at home at present, says he will wait. Jane does not like Mr. Mason, she thinks his eyes are vacant and he appears dull. She listens to his conversation with the guests and learns that he knows Mr. Rochester from their time they both spent in the West Indies, where he still lives.

Some time later, the footman announces that an old gypsy lady has come to tell the fortunes of the young, unmarried girls in the house and will only do so in private in another room. The group are torn between interest and disgust; the men and Lady Ingram want to send her away but Blanche says she wants to hear her fortune and leaves the room. She returns fifteen minutes later looking most displeased and refuses to say what she learnt. The other young ladies take their turns and are highly excited afterwards, claiming that the gypsy knew all about them.

When all the young ladies have been seen, the footman comes in and says that the gypsy wants to speak to Jane. Surprised and sceptical, she agrees and goes to the room where the old gypsy is waiting.

CHAPTER NINETEEN

The old woman is sitting by the fire, her face mostly hidden by a large hat. She seems to know a lot about Jane's character but Jane is still sceptical, thinking she must have learnt it from the servants. The gypsy asks if Jane likes any of the men in the house and Jane replies that she is not attracted to any of them. Then the old woman says that Blanche was less interested in Mr. Rochester when she, the gypsy, told her that he was not as wealthy as everyone thought. This is why Blanche came back to the drawing room in such a bad mood.

As the gypsy woman talks, her voice deepens and 'she' is revealed to be Mr. Rochester in disguise. Jane tells him it was a mean trick but he says that she revealed nothing secret about herself anyway, which Jane realises is true.

When Jane tells Mr. Rochester that Mr. Mason is in the drawing room, he is visibly shocked and asks how he looks and what he has been saying to everybody. He asks Jane to bring Mr. Mason to him and she does so, leaving the two of them to talk privately.

CHAPTER TWENTY

Later that night, Jane is woken by a scream and a cry for help. She runs out to the corridor and finds all the guests milling about, confused and frightened, wondering where the noise came from. Mr. Rochester appears, coming down from the third floor, and assures the that it was only a servant having a nightmare. They go back to bed but Jane, when she reaches her room, gets dressed. She is sure it was not just a servant's nightmare and wants to be ready if her help is needed.

A short while later, Mr. Rochester knocks at her door and asks her to come with him to the third floor. He checks with her first that she does not faint at the sight of blood and Jane says she thinks she will be fine.

When they enter the third floor room, Mr. Mason is lying on the bed, his arm and shoulder bandaged. There is another door in the room and Mr. Rochester tells Jane to wait a moment while he goes into the room beyond. She hears a noise like a dog growling and then the unmistakable sound of Grace Poole's mad laughter. Mr. Rochester returns and asks Jane to wait with Mr. Mason while he fetches the doctor. He warns Mason not to say anything to Jane under any circumstances and he leaves, locking them in the room. Jane is most uneasy, left in the room with this injured man and having no idea what is really going on.

Hours later, Mr. Rochester and the doctor return and Mr. Mason is made ready to travel. He is very upset and talks of being bitten and stabbed. Mr. Rochester is angry with him and tells him it is his own fault. None of this makes any sense to Jane but she doesn't ask any questions. Mr. Rochester gives the patient a drink of some strengthening potion and he is placed in a coach with the doctor. As he leaves, he begs Mr. Rochester to take care of 'her' and Mr. Rochester says he always has done.

When the coach drives off, dawn is breaking and Mr. Rochester asks Jane to go for a walk with him in the orchard. He tells her a hypothetical story of a young man who made a huge mistake in his life and then tried to put it out of his mind by living a life of dissipation. It is clear that he is talking about himself but the facts of the case are still a mystery. He asks Jane if this man, when he has found a chance to be truly happy with a good wife, should be blamed if he does something unethical to ensure his future happiness. Jane tells him that the man should look to God for an answer to that question.

Mr. Rochester changes the subject and starts praising Miss Ingram. He asks Jane if marrying Miss Ingram would bring him salvation. He seems agitated and walks away from her for a few moments without giving her a chance to answer. When he returns, he says he is sorry for disturbing her night's sleep, that she looks pale. He seems cheerful again and has obviously decided to bury his fears and worries once more.

CHAPTER TWENTY ONE

Jane was told by Bessie when she was young that it was an omen of death to dream of babies and she has dreamt of them for the last seven nights in a row. One day, Robert, Bessie's husband, arrives to ask Jane to come with him to Gateshead. Her cousin John has committed suicide and Mrs. Reed is dying and asking for Jane. Jane agrees to go but Mr. Rochester is not pleased and makes her promise to return quickly. Before she goes, Jane advises him to arrange to have Adèle sent to boarding school before he marries. He tells her he knows Miss Ingram would not be kind to Adèle and agrees that school would be the best option. Jane says she will advertise in the paper for a new job and he is outraged, making her promise that she will not. He says he will find her a position himself. They part and Jane goes with Robert to Gateshead.

When she arrives, she has tea with Bessie in the lodge and is amused to see that she is just as impatient with her own children as she was with Jane. Bessie is a kind person but does have a quick temper still.

Bessie brings her to the house and she meets her cousins for the first time since she was ten years old. Georgiana is beautiful but as shallow and self-centred as ever and Eliza is very religious but not at all kind. The two sisters are not welcoming to Jane, making it clear that they look down on her still. Jane is not upset by this, she sees them for what they are. The sisters eventually thaw towards Jane, they are keen to talk to someone as they don't get on at all since Eliza told her mother of Georgiana's plan to elope with Lord Edwin Vere.

Mrs. Reed, who has sent for Jane, is extremely ill and doesn't recognise Jane at first. When she does, she tells a bitter, vicious tale of how she felt on Jane's arrival at Gateshead. Mr. Reed has adored his sister, Jane's mother, and Mrs. Reed was jealous of the affection he lavished on her and then on her baby daughter. She hated Jane since the moment she arrived and wished she had been one of the girls who died of typhus at Lowood school.

Jane tells her aunt she forgives her and says all she ever wanted as a child was to be loved. Mrs. Reed cannot be kind to Jane, even now but before she dies, she shows Jane a letter from her uncle, John Eyre, dated three years previously. In it he says that as he is unmarried and has no family, he wishes to adopt Jane and leave everything to her in his will. He has been very successful in Madeira and could give Jane a life of comfort. Mrs. Reed tells Jane that she wrote back and said Jane had

died of typhus at Lowood as she couldn't bear the thought of her detested niece being happy and well-off. She tells Jane she can write and contradict her now if she likes, it doesn't matter as she is dying.

When Mrs. Reed does pass away, nobody cries.

CHAPTER TWENTY TWO

Although she had promised that she would only stay at Gateshead for a week, Jane stays for a month to help keep the peace between the two sisters. Eventually, Eliza leaves to join a convent in France and Georgiana goes to London to stay with her uncle. Jane mentions that they both achieved their goals in life, Goergiana married a wealthy man and Eliza became Mother Superior in her convent.

Jane hasn't told anyone when she would be coming back to Thornfield and she walks there from Millcote, looking forward to seeing everyone again. She meets Mr. Rochester on the way home and though she tries to pass by unseen, he spots her and calls her to him. He is clearly glad that she has returned and teases her that she stayed away too long. She asks if he has been to London and tells him that Mrs. Fairfax mentioned in a letter to her that he had gone there to order a new coach for his bride -to-be. He tells Jane that she must see the coach and tell him whether or not it is beautiful enough for Miss Ingram. He jokes that Jane might be able to make him a fairy potion or charm to make him handsome enough for Miss Ingram and she replies that it would be past the power of magic. Secretly, she believes that he is handsome when seen through the eyes of love. She blurts out that she is very happy to be back and that wherever he is she feels at home. Embarrassed, she walks away towards the house as fast as she can. The warm welcome she receives at the house gladdens her heart and she wishes she did not have to leave at all.

Jane is surprised that Mr. Rochester does not visit Blanche at all over the coming weeks and that the date for the wedding is not set. She begins to hope that maybe they won't marry after all and her secret love for Mr. Rochester deepens.

CHAPTER TWENTY THREE

One day, several weeks later, Jane meets Mr. Rochester in the garden and asks her to take a stroll with him. They sit on a bench at the base of an old horse chestnut tree at the bottom of the garden. Mr. Rochester tells Jane that she must leave and Adèle must go to school as he is about to marry Miss Ingram and bring her to live at Thornfield. He tells Jane that he has found a position for her in Ireland and that he will probably never see her again. He says he is sorry that they will live so far apart as he values Jane's friendship very much.

Jane can control herself no longer and breaks down in tears, confessing her love for Mr. Rochester. He embraces her and tells her that he is not going to marry Miss Ingram, it is Jane he loves and no-one else. He proposes to her and Jane joyfully accepts.

A storm breaks and the couple run into the house. Mrs. Fairfax comes upon them

kissing in the hallway and seems amazed and not altogether pleased. Jane decides that she will explain in the morning and goes to bed.

The next day Adèle tells Jane that a bolt of lightning hit the old horse chestnut tree during the night and split it in half.

CHAPTER TWENTY FOUR

Although Jane should be completely happy, she is not. Mr. Rochester wants to spoil her with jewels and fine clothes and he calls her 'Mrs. Rochester', much to her discomfort. She feels that she is losing her sense of self and begs him not to give her expensive gifts.

Mrs. Fairfax, when she learns of the engagement, is full of disapproval. She advises Jane to be careful and tells her Mr. Rochester is old enough to be her father and that he is of a different social class, one in which people do not usually marry their governesses. Jane is disappointed and slightly annoyed that Mrs. Fairfax seems to feel the marriage is a mistake.

Jane decides to write to her uncle, John Eyre, who had wanted to make her his heir. She feels that if she had her own inheritance, she might be more independent and on a more equal footing with Mr. Rochester.

Jane teases Mr. Rochester and refuses to become an adoring fiancée. He professes undying love for her but she says he will grow tired of her after they are married, as men so often do. He admits that he has had relationships in the past and become bored with the women but that was because they had only beauty to recommend them, they were stupid, shallow and coarse underneath it all. Nevertheless, Jane keeps him on his toes by being as independent and honest as ever and she believes that this is really what he prefers. Although she teases him and doesn't slavishly agree with everything he says or does, Jane's love for Mr. Rochester deepens every day, he is quickly becoming her whole world.

CHAPTER TWENTY FIVE

A month later, Jane stands in the grounds, waiting for Mr. Rochester to return from a business trip. When he arrives, he notices that Jane is feverish and appears distressed. They go into the house and she tells him that she had a nightmare the night before and when she awoke, saw someone standing at her dressing table, holding a candle. She claims it was not Grace Poole, it was a stranger, a horrifying, savage-looking woman who took Jane's wedding veil, ripped it in half, threw it on the floor and trampled on it. The creature (for Jane wonders if it was a vampire) approached the bed and stared into Jane's face for a moment before blowing out the candle. Jane fainted in her terror and when she woke in the morning, she was alone. Mr. Rochester tells Jane not to worry any more, that it was probably just a continuation of her nightmare. When she tells him that the veil was really torn up, he

says it must have been Grace Poole after all and that when they are married a year and a day, he will tell her why he keeps such a dangerous woman in his house. He seems worried about Jane and asks her to sleep in Adéle's bed in the nursery that night, which she does.

CHAPTER TWENTY SIX

The morning of the wedding arrives and Jane and Mr. Rochester walk alone to the church. As they reach the churchyard, Jane sees two strangers walking amongst the graves. She feels that they are there to witness the wedding and sees them going to the side of the church, presumably to enter by a different door to the bride and groom.

The ceremony begins but is interrupted by a man who says the marriage cannot take place as Mr. Rochester is already married. The man identifies himself as Mr. Briggs, a solicitor from London. He calls another man forward and Mr. Mason steps out of the shadows. They claim that Mr. Rochester married Mr. Mason's sister, Bertha, fifteen years ago in Jamaica. Mr. Rochester does not deny the claim and says that Bertha is mad and that madness runs in her family, a fact which was hidden from him until they were married. He furiously marches the group back to the Hall and leads them to the attic rooms to show them his wife, who lives there in the care of Grace Poole.

Bertha Mason runs back and forward in the shadows like an animal, clearly insane. Jane recognises her as the woman who tore her veil in half. When she sees Mr. Rochester, she attacks him and he subdues her as gently as he can, tying her to a chair to prevent her from doing any more harm.

Jane leaves the room and Mr. Briggs tells her how he came to hear of the intended wedding. Mr. Mason, his client, knows Jane's uncle and happened to be with him in Madeira when Jane's letter arrived, telling of her engagement. Jane's uncle told Mr. Mason of the contents of the letter, knowing that he was acquainted with a Mr. Rochester. Mr. Mason came to England to stop the wedding taking place. Mr. Briggs assures Jane that she has done nothing wrong as she did not know Mr. Rochester was married when she accepted his proposal.

Distraught, Jane goes to her room alone and reflects on the day's events. It seems strange that her life could be turned upside down in such a short space of time. She feels she must leave Thornfield and is sure that Mr. Rochester will not stop her, he cannot truly love her to have treated her the way he has.

CHAPTER TWENTY SEVEN

Jane wakes from a brief sleep and is grief-stricken again at the thought of having to leave Thornfield. She is heartbroken and feels she has been abandoned, nobody has come to check on her since she went to her room that morning.

On leaving her room, she stumbles and is caught by Mr. Rochester, who is sitting on a chair outside her door. He begs her to forgive him and says he never meant to hurt

her. She says nothing but in her heart forgives him immediately. Jane says she feels faint and Mr. Rochester carries her to the library, where he sits her by the fire and gives her a drink. He is deeply agitated and becomes so passionate, almost violent in his frustration when Jane says she will not stay with him that she begins to cry. Mr. Rochester is filled with remorse and becomes calm and gentle again. He asks her to go with him to France where they can live together in happiness. Jane refuses, saying she does not want to be his mistress.

Mr. Rochester decides to tell her why he does not consider himself married. His father planned to leave the entire estate to his other son, Rowland and arranged for the present Mr. Rochester to go to Jamaica and marry a beautiful heiress, Bertha Mason. Smitten by her beauty, the naïve young man agreed and didn't find out until after the marriage that she came from a family of lunatics. Her mother was not dead, as he had been told, but in an asylum. As if this wasn't bad enough, the beautiful Bertha proved to be a stupid, crude, vulgar woman with whom Mr. Rochester had no moment of happiness. Her vices precipitated her slide into total madness and four years later Mr. Rochester returned to Thornfield with an insane wife whom he put in the care of Grace Poole.

The unhappy man travelled as much as possible, staying away from Thornfield Hall and his mad wife. He sought true love everywhere he went but never found it and soon sank into a life of self indulgence and misery. He had mistresses but knew it was as bad as owning a slave, he could never live with them as equals.

When Mr. Rochester met Jane, he was captivated. He tells her how he admired her steadiness, her principles, her intelligence and her kindness since he first met her and he begs her again to stay with him. Jane is torn but knows she must leave. She avoids his embrace and goes to her room, heartbroken.

CHAPTER TWENTY EIGHT

Shortly after midnight, Jane takes her few belongings and her purse and slips out of the house without being seen. She walks to the road and catches a coach, asking the driver to take her as far as her twenty shillings will allow.

When she finally alights from the coach, Jane discovers that she is miles from any town or village. In her misery, she doesn't care and wanders off across the heath. She realises she has left her parcel on the coach and has no money.

Jane eventually reaches a town and is forced to beg for food or a job. Nobody can help her and all she gets is a little bread and some slops that were being fed to the pigs.

Having slept outdoors, the exhausted Jane sees the light from a house shining some distance away. Walking towards it, she finally reaches Moor House (some call it Marsh End), where she looks in the window and sees two graceful young women, Diana and Mary, and their servant, Hannah, sitting in a comfortable kitchen. She listens to their conversation for some time before she knocks at the door. Hannah

refuses to let her in and gives her a penny, thinking she is a beggar. She closes the door and Jane collapses on the step believing that this is the end, she will die here. Calling aloud, she commends her soul to God and hears a voice answering that she will not die this day. It is St. John (Sinjin) Rivers, Diana and Mary's brother, who has just come home. He carries Jane into the house and she is taken care of. When asked her name, she replies, 'Jane Elliot' as she does not want to reveal her true identity.

CHAPTER TWENTY NINE

Jane spends three days in bed, recovering. As she lies in bed, she is aware of the Rivers siblings checking on her regularly and discussing her. St. John thinks she does not need a doctor, that she is only exhausted and he supposes she is a young lady who has fallen out with friends or family and run away in a fit of impulse. He thinks she looks too genteel to be a servant and he hopes they will be able to reunite her with her loved ones.

On the fourth day, Jane feels well enough to go downstairs. Everybody is out except Hannah. Jane tells Hannah that she is not a beggar and Hannah apologises. She tells Jane the story of the Rivers, that St. John is a clergyman and Diana and Mary are governesses. They are only at Moor House together because they came home when their father died a few weeks ago. The family had money once but Mr. Rivers lost it all in a bad business deal.

St. John and his sisters return and the two women make a fuss of Jane. St. John is cooler and more detached and when Jane is left alone with him, he asks her direct questions about herself. She answers equally directly, admitting her name is not really Jane Elliot but refusing to tell him what it is or where she comes from. She tells him a little of her childhood and schooling and something of her life at Thornfield, without mentioning any names that might identify her. She tells the polite but aloof St. John that she wants to be useful and will do any work he can find for her. He says if that is true then he will find a job for her as soon as possible.

CHAPTER THIRTY

The next month is a pleasant one for Jane. She becomes very close to Diana and Mary, finding them intelligent, charming and well-read. St. John behaves perfectly at all times but he is a cold, distant person. He is rarely at home as he is almost always out tending to the poor and needy in the area.

Soon, the time comes for Diana and Mary to resume their jobs as governesses, something neither wish to do for they love living at Moor House. Jane goes to St. John in his study to ask if he has found a job for her yet; with Diana and Mary leaving she is anxious to start work and to earn her keep. St. John tells her that he has a job for her but warns it is quite a degrading one, she is to be schoolmistress of the village charity school that he has opened. A local heiress, Miss Rosamund Oliver, has kindly provided the money for the school. There is a small house nearby which has been set aside for the new schoolmistress. Jane readily accepts the job but St.

John doubts she will stay long, he feels that, like himself, she is too ambitious to stay long in such a dull and unchallenging job.

Before Diana and Mary leave, a letter arrives telling them their Uncle John has died but has left all his money to another relative. The three siblings are disappointed and explain the reason for this to Jane, lest she think them greedy and hard-hearted. Uncle John was the man who led their father into the disastrous business deal which cost him all his money and they had hoped that he would have made amends by leaving them something. The money would have enabled them to live together at Moor House once more and St. John could have used it to do good for the poor in the community. Diana and Mary leave for their jobs and St. John and Hannah return to live at his parsonage.

CHAPTER THIRTY ONE

As St. John had predicted, Jane finds her first day at the school degrading and depressing. She is sitting alone that evening when St. John visits to give her some art materials that his sisters had left for her. He notices the traces of tears on her face and despite her protestations to the contrary, suspects that she is disappointed with her life. He admits to Jane that a year ago he felt unhappy with his life as a clergyman but that he heard a call from God and now he has a clear sense of purpose.

As they are talking in the garden, a beautiful young woman comes up the path towards them. It is Miss Oliver, the school's benefactress. Jane realises from his expression that St. John is in love with this charming girl but he treats her with a distant politeness, refusing an invitation to join her at her father's house later on. She clearly cares for him but he offers her no encouragement and they both go their separate ways. Jane realises that St. John is indeed an incredibly self-controlled person who does nothing he does not believe is right and proper.

CHAPTER THIRTY TWO

Jane settles down in her new job and begins to enjoy it. She finds that many of the girls are keen to learn and she becomes very popular with them and their families. At night, however, she is troubled by disturbing dreams in which Mr. Rochester always appears. When she wakes and realises she is alone, she is filled with despair.

St. John continues to visit the school to teach catechism to the girls and Miss Rosamund Oliver often contrives to be there at the same time. Jane is fond of Rosamund, thinking her reasonably intelligent and good natured, though a little vain and not terribly interesting or impressive compared to the Rivers siblings. St. John refuses to give Rosamund the encouragement she desires although he is obviously very attracted her.

Rosamund likes Jane and invites her to her house to meet Mr. Oliver. He tells Jane that the Rivers family are highly thought of in the area and that, despite being poor, St. John would be regarded as an excellent match by anyone. It is clear, therefore, that he would not object to his daughter marrying St. John if he were to propose.

One evening, St. John calls to Jane to give her a book of poetry and notices the drawing she is doing of Rosamund. Jane bravely asks him why he does not marry Rosamund and he speaks openly of his love for the first time. He tells Jane that Rosamund would not be a suitable wife for a missionary and that if he married her he would regret it for the rest of his life. She is beautiful and sweet natured but too shallow and silly to be his partner and he will not ask her.

St. John takes one last look at the picture of Rosamund and when he is finished, draws a blank sheet of paper over it. As he does so, he gives a sudden start and tears a small piece of paper from the margin of the blank page, trying not to let Jane see what he is doing. He leaves quickly and Jane looks at the torn page, trying to work out what caught his attention.

CHAPTER THIRTY THREE

The following night, St. John visits Jane again. He tells Jane that he knows all about her and why she fled Thornfield, he has heard it all from Mr. Briggs, the solicitor. He made the connection when he saw her real name written on the scrap of paper he took the day before. Jane asks why Mr. Briggs should have been writing to him about her and he tries to pass it off, saying the clergy hear many things. Jane pushes the matter and he tells her that the Uncle John who died recently was John Eyre and that he and Jane are cousins, his mother was Jane's father's brother. As John Eyre's heiress, Jane has inherited twenty thousand pounds.

Jane is delighted that they are now cousins and determines to divide the inheritance equally between the four of them. It is difficult for her to persuade them to take the money initially but she succeeds and they each get five thousand pounds.

CHAPTER THIRTY FOUR

Jane closes the school for Christmas, giving the students gifts and assuring them that she shall visit them from time to time when the new schoolmistress arrives for she intends to give up her job. She spends a lot of time redecorating Moor House to St. John's faint disapproval, he considers such things a waste of time and intellect.

Diana and Mary come back to Moor House to live, now that they have money they no longer need to work as governesses. They, unlike St. John, are charmed by the improvements Jane has made to Moor House. While they are chatting one morning, Mary asks her brother about Miss Oliver and he tells her, without any sign of emotion, that she is engaged to be married to a wealthy man.

St. John is preparing himself to leave for his missionary work in India but finds the time to take a greater interest in Jane. He teaches her 'Hindustani' and begins to exert a strong influence over her. She is not happy with this but goes along with it; St. John has a powerful personality and is difficult to resist. He is colder and more distant than ever and Jane finds it almost impossible to please him.

One day Jane hears that there is a letter for her and she has a moment's wild hope that

it might be from Mr. Rochester. When she finds that it is only a business letter from Mr. Briggs, it is too much for her and she begins to cry. She is alone with St. John studying her Hindustani when this happens and he tells her to take some time to calm herself. He suggests that the two of them go for a walk outside and while they sit down to rest by a waterfall, he proposes to her. He never mentions love but says that she is naturally designed to be a missionary's wife.

Jane says she will only go with him to India but only if she does not have to marry him, she is quite willing to give up everything to go, but will not marry without love. St. John says that it would be scandalous for them to go together if they were not married and says she is denying God by refusing him. He says that that they would come to love one another enough once they were married. Jane becomes passionate and tells him she scorns him and his idea of love. She apologises but it is too late, St. John is even more cold and distant than before. Jane is saddened as she values his friendship but can do nothing to make him soften in his views.

CHAPTER THIRTY FIVE

A week later, St. John again mentions marriage to Jane, assuming that she will have come to her senses by now. Again she refuses and says it would kill her to go to India with him and that he is killing her now. He is shocked and coldly furious at this accusation and accuses her of using unfeminine, violent language. She apologises but the damage is done. He tells her that he cannot take her with him if she will not marry him but that he will arrange for her to go to India as a missionary with an older married couple. Jane says that she does not want to be a missionary, she would have gone to help him as he is her cousin but she has no intention of risking her health and her life in the Indian climate to assist a couple she does not know.

Diana asks Jane what is going on between herself and St. John as Jane is clearly not herself these days. Jane tells her that St. John has proposed and Diana is delighted, thinking that if they marry, he won't go to India after all. Jane says St. John wants her to go as his wife and Diana is shocked, saying that Jane would never survive India.

That evening, St. John chooses after-dinner prayers which tell of the dreadful torment in store for the unbelievers and Jane feels sure she means her. He is a powerful, hypnotic speaker and Jane is awed by his sincerity when he prays that stragglers may be returned to the fold. When they are alone later that evening, St. John is gentler with Jane than he has been and asks her to consider his offer again. She is almost tempted, he is so earnest and persuasive and he tells her to pray hard to God for the right answer. As she does so, she hears a voice calling her and realises it is Mr. Rochester's. She doesn't know if it is real or if she has imagined it but she knows then that she must go to him. She tells St. John to leave her, his hold over her is broken.

CHAPTER THIRTY SIX

The next morning, Jane finds a note from St. John saying he has gone to say goodbye

to friends in Cambridge and will be back in a fortnight. He feels that she nearly agreed to marry him the night before and urges her to consider it seriously. He says he will pray for her hourly.

Jane tells Diana and Mary that she must go away for a while and she takes the coach to Thornfield. She is shocked to find it a charred ruin and goes to the local inn to find out what has happened. She learns that Bertha Mason set fire to the Hall when Grace Poole was in a drunken stupor and jumped to her death from the roof. Mr. Rochester, who had already helped all the servants to safety, tried to save her also but she leapt before he could reach her. A beam fell on him and he was badly injured, one eye was knocked out and the other so badly inflamed that he went blind. His left hand was crushed and had to be amputated.

The innkeeper tells Jane that Mr. Rochester lives in Ferndean now, an isolated house thirty miles away, with only two servants, John and Mary, to take care of him.

CHAPTER THIRTY SEVEN

Jane travels to Ferndean and as she walks towards the door, she sees Mr. Rochester coming out. He looks as desperate and wretched as a caged animal but Jane is only moved to love him more deeply than ever. He goes in again and she follows. The door is closed so she knocks and is admitted by Mary, who is astonished to see her. Jane asks Mary to tell Mr. Rochester that someone has called to see him but not to say who it is. Mary doubts that he will agree to see anyone and returns with the message that Mr. Rochester wants to know who it is and what they want. Jane takes the tray that Mary was about to bring to Mr. Rochester and goes to see him.

When Jane speaks, Mr. Rochester thinks it is a ghost and when he realises it is really her, he is overcome with joy. They talk and she tells him of her inheritance. She notices his unkempt appearance and says he needs to be taken care of and that she will do it. She promises never to leave him again and is then a little taken aback and embarrassed when he does not ask her again to be his wife. He tells her she can't waste her life nursing him and hints gloomily that if he weren't so deformed he would marry her. Jane cheers up again, knowing that if this is the only obstacle to their marriage, she can easily overcome it.

The next day they walk together in the garden and Jane tells him what she has been doing since they parted. She allows him to become jealous of the handsome, accomplished St. John Rivers and when he says that he supposes she will go and marry this perfect man now, she tells him that although he did propose, they don't love each other at all. Mr. Rochester finally allows himself to believe that Jane really loves him still and he asks her to be his wife.

He tells her that four days ago, he was so sunk in despair that he called Jane's name aloud and she realises that that was when she thought she heard his voice. She does not tell Mr. Rochester this, not wishing to upset or excite him further.

Mr. Rochester offers a heartfelt prayer of thanks to God for Jane's return and vows to

lead a better life from now on.

CHAPTER THIRTY EIGHT

Jane and Mr. Rochester marry almost immediately in a simple ceremony with only the parson and the church clerk present.

She writes to Diana and Mary in Moor House and St. John in Cambridge to tell them the good news. The women write back with congratulations but she hears nothing from St. John.

Adéle has been at boarding school but when Jane visits she finds that the little girl is very unhappy. She takes the child away and finds her a place in a school which suits her better and is close enough for regular visits. Adéle grows into a pleasant and amiable young woman and she and Jane remain very close.

Jane tells the reader that it is ten years since she married Mr. Rochester and that they have been incredibly happy together. They love and respect each other equally and are never apart. Mr. Rochester regained some sight in his one eye and when their baby boy was born he was able to see him when the child was placed in his arms.

Diana and Mary have both married good men and are very happy too. St. John never married and is working in India as a missionary still. He writes to Jane from time to time, telling her of his work. He is not well and knows that he is dying but is not afraid, he believes he will be joining God in heaven and that he has done his duty on earth.

Jane ends the book with a quote from St. John in which he says, 'Amen; even so, come, Lord Jesus!'

Theme in 'Jane Eyre'

Note – **(K)** symbol means 'Key Moment' in the text. It is important to use key moments to illustrate the points you are making in your answer.

The theme we will be exploring in Jane Eyre is:

Autonomy/Independence

How is the theme introduced? Is there a key moment that gives us an indication of the message the author is trying to explore? Does one of the central characters say or do something that sets us on the path of understanding the theme? Or is it conveyed by the minor characters or even the setting?

How does the author develop this theme? Is it through a series of small events? Do we see situations developing that we know must lead to a crisis of some sort? How does the author interest us in the theme? Is it through a central character with whom we can empathise?

Is there a moment of crisis or a turning point in the text? Does the central character have to make a difficult decision? Does the character do the right thing? How is this decision linked to the theme?

How is the theme resolved? Are you very clear on the author's view of the ideas explored in the theme? Have we learned anything about human behaviour or society in general from the exploration of this theme?

Does the author's use of setting, imagery, motifs, lighting, costumes, special effects or music (if it's a film) add to your understanding of the theme?

How is the theme introduced?

From the outset, Jane struggles with her need for independence. She realises, and is constantly told, that if she were more biddable, less passionate, if she made a better effort to please others, she would be more readily accepted by her aunt and cousins.

(K) However, it is not in Jane's nature to bow down, to sacrifice her need for autonomy. Her defiance of Mrs. Reed is our first introduction to Jane's independent spirit. It leads to her being locked in the red-room, where she is lectured by Bessie and Abbot before being left alone:

'And you ought not to think yourself on an equality with the Misses Reed and Master Reed,.....it is your place to be humble and to try and make yourself agreeable to them.'

Jane's ability to stand up for herself is unusual for a child of ten. It might be expected that she would fight with her cousins, as she does with John when he throws the book at her, but her defiance of Mrs. Reed is our first hint that Jane is a person with a fiery spirit who will refuse to submit to others even if it would make her life easier.

How does the author develop this theme?

(K) At Lowood school, further attempts are made to crush Jane's spirit. Mr. Brocklehurst's cruel treatment of the pupils, the dull clothes they are forced to wear, the uniformly plain hairstyles; all of these are designed to make the girls conform to an ideal of humble, subservient recipients of a charity school education. It is interesting to note that Mr. Brocklehurst says, 'We are not to conform to nature' (Chapter 7) when he is talking about the girls' hair, he believes that the pupils must conform instead to idea of what is right and proper. His controlling nature and desire to stamp out all self-expression in his pupils is repulsive to Jane.

(K) Helen Burns, Jane's great friend at the school, readily accepts this treatment but Jane cannot. Helen is willing to sublimate her passion, her individuality and her self-esteem in the name of conformity; she believes it is all God's plan and that she must be meek and not fight injustice. Jane's inability to accept this is clearly shown when she takes the 'Slattern' sign that Helen has been forced to wear and throws it in the fire. (Chapter 8)

Jane wants to be loved for herself and to be allowed to express herself as an individual. She does not mind the idea of servitude, working as a governess for example, as long as it does not mean sacrificing her independent mind and spirit.

Her position as a governess does not affect Mr. Rochester's feelings about Jane, he falls in love with her because she is intellectual, loving and faithful; in other words, he loves her for herself. This is in direct contrast to the way she is viewed and treated by Blanche Ingram and her mother - they see only an inferior and talk about governesses in a most disparaging way, knowing that Jane can hear them. At one stage during their visit, Blanche finds herself looking out the same window as Jane and withdraws with an expression of distaste. Lady Ingram says Jane looks too stupid to play charades. In the face of this prejudice, Jane maintains her independence, she may be humiliated by their treatment but she does not think they are right. She realises indeed that Blanche is a shallow, stupid, cruel woman and has only good looks to recommend her. Jane may envy Blanche her social position but she does not envy her personality and finds it difficult to resign herself to the thought of Mr. Rochester marrying such a person.

(K) It is Jane's passionate, independent spirit that Mr. Rochester finally harnesses to get her to confess her love for him. He tells her of his plan to marry Blanche and suggests Jane takes a position as a governess in Ireland. Jane, who has tried to conform to society's view of what is right and accept his choice of an aristocratic woman, is pushed beyond endurance and blurts out her true feelings:

'Do you think, because I am poor, obscure, plain, and little, I am soulless and heartless? You think wrong!- I have as much soul as you - and full as much heart! And if God had gifted me with some beauty and as much wealth, I should have made it as hard for you to leave me, as it is now for me to leave you. I am not talking to you now through the medium of custom, conventionalities, nor even of mortal flesh:

it is my spirit that addresses your spirit; just as if both had passed through the grave, and we are stood at God's feet - equal, as we are!' (Chapter 23)

(K) Jane accepts Mr. Rochester's proposal but wants to retain her independence. Thus, when Mr. Rochester tries to shower her with gifts after they are engaged, she refuses, saying she will take nothing and will continue to teach Adèle and to earn a wage. It is shortly after this conversation that she decides to write to her uncle in Madeira, saying, 'If I had but a prospect of of one day bringing Mr. Rochester an accession of fortune, I could better endure to be kept by him now.' (Chapter 24)

Not only does Jane resist all attempts by Mr. Rochester to give her expensive jewels and clothes, she makes a conscious effort to retain the independent spirit that attracted him so much when they first met.

Is there a moment of crisis or a turning point in the text?

(K) Jane's refusal to run away to the South of France with Mr. Rochester is partly prompted by her fear of losing her autonomy. If she goes with him, it will be as a mistress, the thing she has feared the most. Since his proposal, she has worried that they will not have a marriage of equals, something that is extremely important to Jane. This episode is a key moment in testing Jane's integrity. In the end, she makes the decision to leave Thornfield and Mr. Rochester and thus maintains her independence and her integrity.

(K) The time Jane spends with the Rivers family at Moor House also puts her independence to the test, but in a different way to her time at Thornfield. At Moor House, she is given an opportunity to make her own way in the world, to be judged for herself and not for her position in society. She has a job and friends, (the fact that the Rivers siblings are actually her cousins completes the picture) and yet she is not happy, she longs for the emotional connection she had with Mr. Rochester.

St. John Rivers poses another threat to Jane's search for true autonomy. He becomes interested in her as a potential wife and decides to mould her to suit his purposes. He teaches her 'Hindustani' and begins to control more and more aspects of her daily life. Jane finds this oppressive and she becomes miserable:

'By degrees, he acquired a certain influence over me that took away my liberty of mind: his praise and notice were more restraining than his indifference.' (Chapter 34)

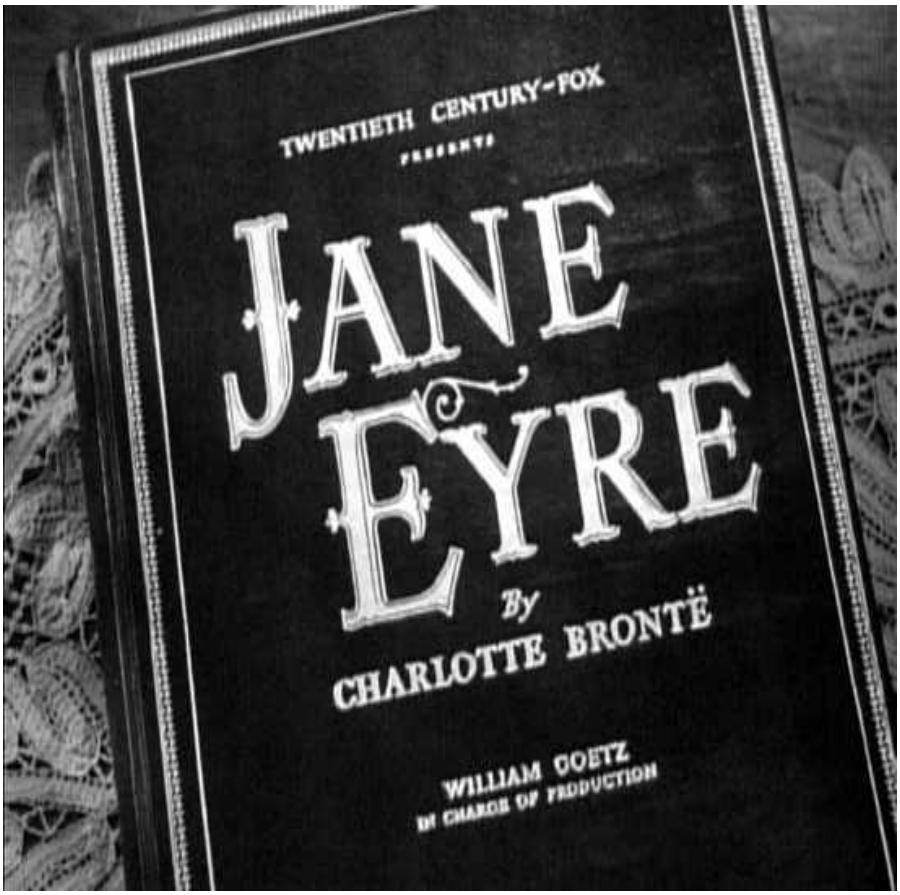
When St. John proposes marriage to her, Jane resists. He tries to force the issue but Jane's passionate and independent nature rises again and she refuses each time. She knows he does not see her as an individual but rather as a tool that may be useful in his missionary work.

(K) However difficult her separation from Mr. Rochester may have been, it ultimately allows Jane to return to him as a truly independent, self-sufficient person. She has gained the autonomy she sought since early childhood and she marries him as his social, intellectual and emotional equal.

'I am my husband's life as fully as he is mine.....We are precisely suited in character—perfect concord is the result.' (Chapter 38).

Does the author's use of setting, imagery or motifs add to your understanding of the theme?

Shortly after Jane accepts Mr. Rochester's proposal, under the old chestnut tree in the garden, a bolt of lightning splits the tree in half. This is symbolic of the fact that the lovers are both soon to be separated but may also be viewed in another way. Jane says, when she sees the tree, 'The cloven halves were not broken from each other, for the strong roots and firm base kept them unsundered below'. Jane hopes that the tree will live as each part shares a root. This is clearly a symbol of her love for Mr. Rochester, though they may be leading separate lives, she hopes that they will survive and be together again in the fullness of time.



Relationships in 'Jane Eyre'

Note – **(K)** symbol means 'Key Moment' in the text. It is important to use key moments to illustrate the points you are making in your answer.

We will be studying the relationship between Jane and Mr. Rochester.

How is the relationship introduced?

Does the relationship change or develop as the narrative progresses? Is it through a series of small events? Do we see situations developing that we know must lead to a crisis of some sort? How does the author interest us in the relationship? Is it through a central character with whom we can empathise?

Is there a crisis or complication in the relationship? Does the central character have to make a difficult decision? Does the character do the right thing? How does this decision affect the relatiosnship?

Does the relationship end well?

How is the relationship introduced?

(K) Jane first meets Mr. Rochester when his horse falls on the ice as they pass the spot in which she is sitting. (Chapter 12) He is dependent on her to help him to his feet, a foreshadowing of what is to come, perhaps? Although he is a strong man and she is a small young woman, he leans on her, literally. This is significant as he comes to lean on her more and more, metaphorically, as the story progresses. Their relationship begins and ends with him leaning on her for support.

(K) Jane is drawn to this strange, gruff, seemingly charmless man from the start. No beauty herself, she is reassured by his plain looks and lack of polished manners. She says that she would have felt self-conscious in his presence if he had been a good-looking young man. When he invites her to the drawing room the next night, she is intrigued by his eccentricities and quite relaxed in his company, peculiar though it may be at times. (Chapter 13) Jane has never been fully at her ease in aristocratic society, her time at Gateshead was miserable, and she is curious about her new employer, who seems so different from what she might have expected of the master of Thornfield.

Their conversation in the drawing room that first night shows us clearly what it is about each that attracts the other. Jane shows herself to be honest and plain spoken, though polite. She is not in the least taken aback by Mr. Rochester's seeming rudeness, his criticism of her piano playing, his questions about her upbringing and her education. Yet at the same time, she is not simply a meek little girl with no opinions of her own. She is indignant when Mr. Rochester says someone must have helped her with her paintings; she has her pride too. The conversation strays into unusual territory during the evening, with Mr. Rochester referring to fairies at one

stage and accusing Jane of being one. She shows her sense of humour, replying in seeming seriousness that the fairies all left England one hundred years ago and thus proving that she is more than equal to dealing with such a capricious (unpredictable, fanciful) man. This is in contrast to Mrs. Fairfax, for example, who merely looks bewildered at the turns in the conversation.

It is obvious also, that Mr. Rochester is intrigued by this quiet, self-composed governess: so different, as we later learn, from the women he is used to. He stares at her paintings for some time and asks her if she was happy when she painted them. This is not the polite small talk an employer might be expected to have with a new governess, already we see that the protagonists are interested in one another on a deeper level than just employer and employee.

Does the relationship change or develop as the narrative progresses?

As time passes, Jane becomes more and more drawn to Mr. Rochester. Her regard for him deepens into love, he becomes the 'object I best liked to see'. Jane is not blind to his faults, indeed she lists them for the reader, but she secretly loves him nonetheless.

As the story is narrated by the central character, we do not get quite the same insight into Mr. Rochester's feelings for Jane, we must infer them from his behaviour and comments to her. **(K)** His openness, telling her all about his relationship with Cèline Varens, for example; his fondness for Jane's company and his hints that he is looking for love lead the reader to hope that Jane's feelings may in some way be reciprocated.

Charlotte Brontë allows Jane to become happy and even physically improved by her relationship with Mr. Rochester:

(K) 'So happy, so gratified did I become with this new interest added to life, that I ceased to pine after kindred: my thin-crescent destiny seemed to enlarge: the blanks of existence were filled up; my bodily health improved; I gathered flesh and strength.' (Chapter 15)

Mr. Rochester is quickly becoming the centre of Jane's life, she no longer pines for family, even, so content is she. Yet we are still given no real idea if Mr. Rochester cares for her in the same way, which leads to a mounting tension as we read on. We empathise with Jane and her modest ambitions, she has been through so much and we begin to hope that she may at last find love and a permanent home.

Is there a crisis or a complication in the relationship?

The relationship between Jane and Mr. Rochester does not run smoothly. **(K)** It is ironic that the event which first draws them closer together is the fire started by Bertha Mason, the woman whose existence prevents their marriage later on. When Jane saves Mr. Rochester's life, he comes close to declaring his love for her 'words almost visible trembled on his lips - but his voice was checked'. He is clearly struggling with some emotion, he wants Jane to stay and cannot let go of her hands, but he is incapable of telling her why. When we later learn of his mad wife in the attic, we understand his reluctance to begin a romantic relationship with Jane.

(K) Mr. Rochester's seemingly cruel treatment of Jane after the fire – leaving Thornfield without a word to her and returning two weeks later with Miss Ingram and the other guests is inexplicable to Jane. She is heartbroken and feels that she was a fool to think he could love her. Victorian society is partly to blame for Jane's self-doubt, she compares herself, a poor, plain governess, with the beautiful, aristocratic Blanche Ingram and says bitterly, 'Mr. Rochester might probably win that noble lady's love, if he chose to strive for it; is it likely he would waste a serious thought on this indigent and insignificant plebeian?' (Chapter 16)

Mr. Rochester's method of forcing Jane to admit her feelings for him is a harsh one. **(K)** When he plays the part of the gypsy fortune teller, (Chapter 19) he does his best to get her to admit she cares for her master but Jane gives nothing away. Her natural reticence and wariness keep her from revealing her true feelings to anyone except the reader, whom she often addresses directly with confessions of her misery and heartbreak.

(K) Leading her to believe that he will marry Blanche Ingram, Mr. Rochester finally wrests a declaration of love from the distraught, jealous Jane and he proposes to her there and then. (Chapter 23) It is worth noting that Jane uses exactly the same technique on Mr. Rochester at the end of the book, using St. John Rivers as he used Blanche Ingram in order to provoke a passionate response. These incidents prove how similar and how well-suited the lovers are, they are both able to use their knowledge of the other's personality to achieve a desired result.

Yet society still places barriers in the path of their love; Jane worries that they are not social equals and that she will be a kept woman, something which Mrs. Fairfax also hints at, saying men in Mr. Rochester's position do not usually marry their governesses.

(K) Undoubtedly, the biggest crisis in Jane and Mr. Rochester's relationship occurs on their wedding day in Thornfield church. Mr. Briggs and Mr. Mason's declaration that the marriage would be a bigamous one and Jane's discovery of the truth about Bertha Mason is an insurmountable obstacle to the couple's happiness. Jane shows her moral courage at this time; she refuses to run away with Mr. Rochester and become his mistress even though she is sorely tempted:

'Laws and principles are not for times when there is no temptation: they are for moments such as this; when the body and soul rise in mutiny against their rigour; stringent they are; inviolate they shall be.' (Chapter 27)

Jane is the stronger of the pair in the relationship; she may be small and poor but she has a strength of character that sustains her in this time of hardship. Even in the midst of her anguish, she sees shrewdly that Mr. Rochester is on the verge of violently losing his temper at her refusal to go with him and she deftly defuses his anger by taking his hand and speaking soothingly to him. She knows how to handle him in his rage:

'I saw that in another moment..... I should be able to do nothing with him.....But I was not afraid: not in the least. I felt an inward power; a sense of influence, which supported me.'

It is Jane who takes control and Jane who makes the difficult decision to end the relationship at this point by leaving Thornfield, no matter how hard it may be.

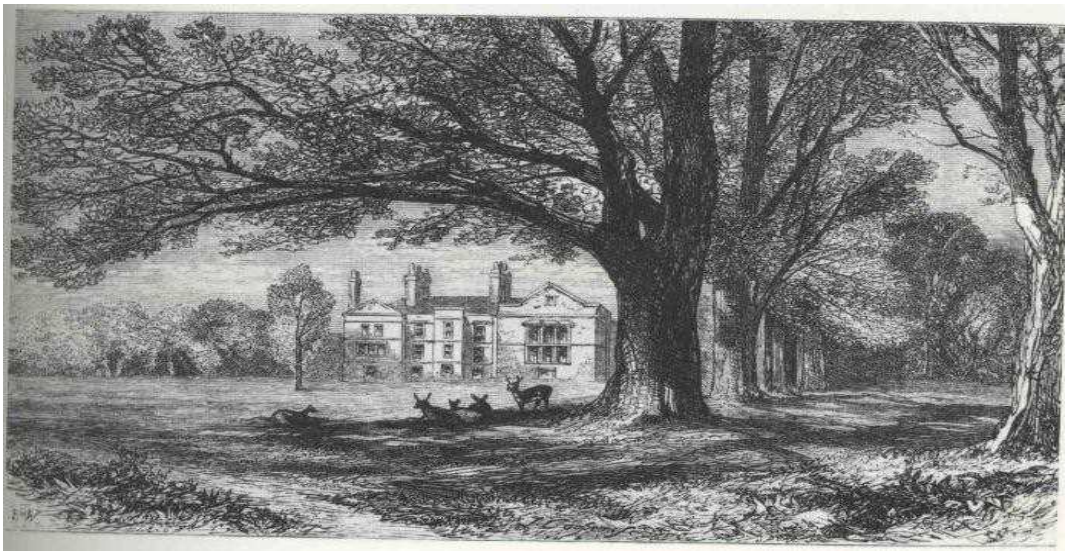
Does the relationship end well? Do any of the characters' lives change as a result of the relationship?

The bond between Jane and Mr. Rochester is never broken, she returns to his side when she believes she hears his voice calling her one evening at Moor House. Their love is a passionate one and this hint of the supernatural (a convention common in Gothic novels) only makes clearer the strength of their connection. This is no mild affection; this is a love and a relationship that can survive even this lengthy separation.

When they meet again, Jane's love is undiminished by Mr. Rochester's injuries. She vows to stay with him forever and is a little disconcerted when he does not ask her again to be his wife. Yet soon, with the same shrewdness she showed when she managed his anger in Chapter 27, she quickly discovers that he is ashamed to propose to her, thinking himself a pathetic figure. She tells him of St. John Rivers and successfully provokes his passion and jealousy; he proposes and she accepts. The final chapter begins with the words, 'Reader, I married him'.

Equal in every way (Jane now has her fortune) the couple live in married bliss:

'I have now been married ten years. I know what it is to live entirely for and with what I love best on earth. I hold myself supremely blest - blest beyond what language can express; because I am my husband's life as fully as he is mine.'



Social Setting in 'Jane Eyre'

Note – **(K)** symbol means 'Key Moment' in the text. It is important to use key moments to illustrate the points you are making in your answer.

Social Setting

The social setting is the kind of world in which the story takes place.

When you are reading the text and thinking about this mode of comparison, ask yourself:

In what century or decade is the story set?

Where is the story set?

Are there class distinctions?

Are there race distinctions?

Are there gender distinctions?

What is the attitude towards family and children?

What are the protagonists' attitudes, religious beliefs and values?

In what century or decade is the story set?

Although we are never told so directly, we can safely assume that 'Jane Eyre' is set in the early to mid 1800s. We can tell this by references to clothes, the cost of living and certain attitudes and habits of the characters.

Where is the story set?

The story is set in England, we are not certain in exactly which counties though, as Charlotte Brontë deliberately avoids using the full names of places. Instead, she puts a blank before the 'Shire' part of the name. The only names we do hear are fictitious or so vaguely referred to (Diana and Mary are governesses in London for example) that we cannot place any of the houses or schools mentioned with any degree of certainty.

The plot itself takes place in five different locations:

1. Gateshead Hall – a large mansion in which the Reeds live. The Reed children are spoilt and pampered within this environment, while Jane is treated with cruelty and deprived of the benefits of such an opulent lifestyle. Jane does not fit in, she is an outsider in this world because she is so different to her cousins and because the vengeful Mrs. Reed demands that she is excluded.
2. **(K)** Gateshead also contains the red-room, where the terrified Jane is locked up

and becomes convinced she is being visited by the ghost of her late uncle.

Confined to the nursery and left out of all the family gatherings, Jane derives no benefits from living in such a fine house, as she tells Mr. Lloyd, the apothecary. 'It is not my house, sir; and Abbot says I have less right to be here than a servant'. (Chapter 3)

3. Lowood School – the charity school to which Jane is sent. Life here is very harsh and Jane is miserable. It is only when Mr. Brocklehurst is stripped of most of his power, after the typhus epidemic, that conditions improve.

   It is worth noting that Lowood school itself is rebuilt on a different site. Interestingly, Jane never finds true happiness in a setting in which she was once miserable. Lowood school moves to a new site and she is happy in the new building; Thornfield Hall burns down and she and Mr. Rochester settle down together in Ferndean.

4. Thornfield Hall – the home of Mr. Rochester. Jane finds happiness of a sort here but is aware always that she does not fit in.

   (K) Jane is happy there because it is where Mr. Rochester lives; as she tells him when she returns from Gateshead, 'I am strangely glad to get back again to you; and wherever you are is my home – my only home'. (Chapter 22)

   There are elements in the setting at Thornfield that foreshadow the tragedy to come; for example, the large chestnut tree, under which Mr. Rochester proposed to Jane, splits in half during the storm.

5. Moor House – The home of Diana, Mary and St. John Rivers. This is not a grand house, the siblings live a simple life which is enriched by literature and the enjoyment of one another's company.

   (K) When Jane sees the sisters first, 'Two young, graceful women – ladies in every point', they are sitting in the kitchen, with the servant, Hannah. Jane is astonished: she says, 'A strange place was this humble kitchen for such occupants!

   (K) Jane spends many happy days at Moor House; it is only when St. John proposes to her that she becomes uncomfortable and soon afterwards, leaves for Thornfield again.

Are there class distinctions?

(K) 'Do you think, because I am poor, obscure, plain, and little, I am soulless and heartless? You think wrong!—I have as much soul as you—and full as much heart! And if God had gifted me with some beauty and much wealth, I should have made it as hard for you to leave me, as it is now for me to leave you.' (Chapter 12)

Jane speaks these words to Mr. Rochester with her customary passion, highlighting the class distinctions that separate her from him. She feels constrained by her lack of

wealth and realises that she is not in a position of power, like Blanche Ingram, for example. Jane does not fit exactly into either class and is a source of tension when in the company of others. At Gateshead, she is despised by her relations and the servants alike, being too poor to fit in with the former group and too well-bred to mix freely with the latter. As a governess, she is well educated and has to be capable of teaching etiquette and ladylike behaviour to her young pupil but she is still only a paid employee.

(K) Nowhere is this ambiguity more clearly demonstrated than when Blanche Ingram and her mother speak disparagingly of governesses in general, knowing perfectly well that Jane can hear them. (Chapter 17) She is in the uncomfortable position of being between classes, she is allowed into the drawing room but cannot mingle with the aristocratic guests.

One of the reasons Jane loves Mr. Rochester is that he does not condescend to her because she is a governess. He tells her that he is superior to her only because he is older and more experienced in the ways of the world and she is touched that he should care what a 'paid subordinate' thinks. (Chapter 14) He is surprised, he had forgotten she was an employee. This again highlights the ambiguity of a governess's position.

(K) A key moment for Jane in terms of social setting is the time from Mr. Rochester's first proposal to her fleeing Thornfield in distress. From the moment she agrees to marry Mr. Rochester, Jane is plagued with doubts. Mr. Rochester wants to cover her in jewels, she resists. She reminds him that she is his 'plain, Quakerish governess' and begs him not to use his wealth to try to make her somebody she is not. As a governess, Jane is neither one thing nor the other: a poor girl with the manners and sophistication of a lady. She worries that Mr. Rochester will tire of her soon after their marriage and dreads the thought of being a kept woman. This is why she resolves to write to her uncle in Madeira in the hope that he will put her in his will. It is significant that Charlotte Brontë refers to Jane's fears of being 'dressed like a doll' and being 'kept' by Mr. Rochester; it reminds us of the mistresses he had in Europe, Jane does not want to be like them in any way. She is adamant that she does not want to become an English Cèline Varens.

Mrs. Fairfax adds to Jane's doubts, telling her that people of Mr. Rochester's standing in society do not marry their governesses. She asks Jane if he wants to marry her for love, hinting that Jane is young and inexperienced.

When the awful truth about the mad woman in the attic is revealed, Mr. Rochester asks Jane to go away with him to the South of France. Jane realises that this means she would become his mistress and she refuses. Her social standing would be irredeemably damaged by such an action and she would be compromising her morals.

Jane's decision to flee Thornfield is the right one, difficult though it may be.

When Jane flees Thornfield and finds sanctuary at Moor House, she meets people

with whom she can truly be herself. Although she arrives with nothing, (Hannah thinks she is a beggar) the Rivers siblings realise instantly that she is too sophisticated and too well-educated to be of a low social class. (Chapter 29) Penniless, nameless and friendless, Jane has to be judged on her own merits alone when the Rivers family takes her in; it is significant that they mark her out as a lady straight away.

Diana and Mary Rivers are also governesses but clearly dislike having to work as such, they leave their positions as soon as Jane shares her inheritance with them.

It would be over-simplistic to say that 'Jane Eyre' criticises the Victorian class system. Jane is powerless because she is poor, but at the end of the book she comes into her inheritance and is able to marry Mr. Rochester as his equal.

Are there race distinctions?

'Jane Eyre' is principally concerned with life in Victorian England and makes few references to other races. It is assumed, however, that to be English is to be all that is best in the world. Foreigners are generally seen as inferior, as we can see in the following **(K)** examples:

> Adèle Varens – any faults in her are attributed to her being French. Mr. Rochester tells Jane that he 'took the poor thing out of the slime and mud of Paris, and transplanted it here, to grow up clean in the wholesome soil of an English country garden'. (Chapter 15) At the end of the book, Jane tells us that, 'As she grew up, a sound English education corrected in a great measure her French defects.'
>
> Bertha Mason – half Creole, a coarse, vulgar woman with a 'pigmy intellect' even before her descent into insanity. (Chapter 27)
>
> Rochester's various mistresses – the Italian Giacanta, 'unprincipled and violent', the German, Clara, 'honest and quiet; but heavy, mindless and unimpressible', Cèline Varens – deceitful and unfaithful. (Chapter 27) All of these descriptions are clear examples of racial stereotypes.

The Irish, however, escape relatively lightly! We may be stereotyped, but it is in a reasonably positive way. Mr. Rochester tells Jane he has found a new position for her in Connaught and while he says he is unlikely to visit her there, 'not having myself much of a fancy for the country' he does praise the Irish as being 'such a warm-hearted people'. (Chapter 23)

Are there gender distinctions?

(K) 'Women are supposed to be very calm generally: but women feel just as men feel; they need exercise for their faculties, and a field for their efforts as much as their brothers do; they suffer from too rigid a restraint, too absolute a stagnation, precisely as men would suffer; and it is narrow-minded in their more privileged fellow-

creatures to say that they ought to confine themselves to making puddings and knitting stockings, to playing on the piano and embroidering bags. It is thoughtless to condemn them, or laugh at them, if they seek to do more or learn more than custom has pronounced necessary for their sex.' (Chapter 12)

When Jane says this, she is becoming restless at Thornfield. Mr. Rochester has not yet made an appearance in the story and Jane's inquisitive mind is not finding sufficient stimulation in the company of Mrs. Fairfax, Adèle and Sophie.

'Jane Eyre' was ahead of its time in terms of gender equality. Charlotte Brontë, who had to write under a pseudonym herself, believed that women had the same right to independence and self-expression as men.

In the book, Jane has to overcome the domination of three men, Mr. Brocklehurst, Mr. Rochester and St. John Rivers.

(K) Mr. Brocklehurst is clearly misogynistic and does his best to stamp out any sign of independence or overt femininity in the girls at Lowood. He orders them to wear plain clothes and have their hair cut short if it cannot be worn in a modest style.

(K) Mr. Rochester is kinder but still tries to exert his authority over Jane, even if he clumsily asks her forgiveness for doing so. It is only when she achieves financial independence at the end of the story that Jane can marry Mr. Rochester and be his equal. The fact that he is blind places her in an even stronger position, now he needs her and turns to her for everything.

(K) St. John Rivers proposes marriage to Jane while at the same time coolly admitting that he does not love her. He is quite prepared to bring her with him to India as an unpaid missionary and his attempts to teach her Hindustani and his obvious disapproval of any light-heartedness make Jane miserable. He does not want a woman as an equal, he wants an obedient servant. When Jane says that he is killing her with his cold, almost hate-filled attitude, he is furious, saying, 'Your words are such as ought not to be used: violent, unfeminine, and untrue.'

Jane's passionate, independent spirit often brings her into conflict with the men in her life. She refuses to adopt the traditional female role of meek submission and instead strives at all times to express her own thoughts and feelings. When she finally marries Mr. Rochester, she is in a very strong position, financially, emotionally and even physically. She has made her own choice of her own free will and is blissfully happy as a result.

What is the attitude towards family and children?

Family is important to Jane, she is an orphan and longs to be part of a normal family. She is very much excluded from life at Gateshead; her aunt made a promise to raise her as her own child but clearly does not do so at all.

(K) Later, when Jane discovers that she is related to Diana, Mary and St. John Rivers, she is delighted. This news means more to her than the money she has just inherited:

'Glorious discovery to a lonely wretch! This was wealth indeed! - wealth to the heart! – a mine of pure, genial affections.' (Chapter 33)

The old adage that children should be seen and not heard very much applied to Victorian England. The only instance in which they could be tolerated in company was when they were entertaining, beautiful or amusing. Young Jane was none of these things and in the second chapter, **(K)** she mentions bitterly that if she had been a 'handsome, romping child' she would have been liked more by her aunt, her cousins and even the servants.

(K) In the first page of the text, we hear that her aunt has forbidden her to play with her cousins, saying she that until she had learnt to 'acquire a more sociable and childlike disposition, a more attractive and sprightly manner – something lighter, franker, more natural as it were – she really must exclude me from privileges intended only for happy, contented little children.'

Later, after the incident in the red-room, Bessie and Abbot, compare Jane most unfavourably to the spoilt Gerogiana:

'"Yes," responded Abbot; if she were a nice, pretty child, one might be compassionate for her forlornness; but one really cannot care for such a little toad as that."

"Not a great deal, to be sure," agreed Bessie: "at any rate, a beauty like Miss Georgiana would be more moving in the same condition."

"Yes, I dote on Miss Georgiana!" cried the fervent Abbot. "Little darling! - with her long curls and her blue eyes, and such a sweet colour as she has: just as if she were painted!" (Chapter 3)

While children may not have been afforded all the rights they are nowadays, even Victorian society would have frowned on the type of cruel treatment that Mr. Brocklehurst deals out at Lowood. Once he is removed from his position of authority, conditions at the school improve enormously.

(K) Jane, who suffered through an unhappy childhood herself, is keen to ensure that Adèle is shown as much kindness and affection as possible. This is in contrast to Miss Ingram who makes it very clear that if she marries Mr. Rochester, she will have no time for the child. Jane's fondness for Adèle makes leaving the little girl very difficult and when she returns to Mr. Rochester at the end of the book, she goes to some trouble to find a school which will suit her.

What are the protagonists' attitudes, religious beliefs and values?

There are three **(K)** models of Christianity throughout 'Jane Eyre, all very different but unpalatable to Jane.

1. Mr. Brocklehurst is a hypocritical Evangalist. He preaches humility, chastity and obedience whicle he uses the school's money to fund a luxurious lifelstlye

for himself and his family. There is no sign of Christian charity in the bullying, cruel way he treats the girls at the school. Charlotte Brontë utterly rejects this type of religious belief and even pokes fun at Mr. Brocklehurst for his pomposity.

2. Helen Burns offers a very different view of religion, constantly turning the other cheek and humbly accepting all the punishments she receives, however unjust they may be. Jane cannot reconcile herself to this meekness and although she admires Helen greatly and wishes to emulate her behaviour, she finds it impossible to agree with her completely on the topic of forgiveness and tolerance.
3. St. John Rivers is a cold, passionless man who suppresses all emotion in the name of Christianity. He denies himself true happiness and seems to take a grim pleasure in doing so. Love plays no part in his version of religion, he is consumed with doing God's work and is willing to sacrifice Jane's health and happiness as well as his own. He is dying at the end of the book, presumably from a disease caught in India. Jane admires his dedication and loves him as a cousin but cannot bring herself to go with him as a missionary wife.

Although Jane rejects all these religious extremes, she does not reject God. She prays for guidance and help at moments of crisis and tries to live a good life according to the precepts of Christianity. It is only man's take on God's word that she finds deplorable at times. Her cousin Eliza's self-righteousness when she announces to Jane that, having carefully studied the 'workings of their system', she is going to join the Catholic church and become a nun, is clearly held to ridicule. Jane rejects any form of Christianity which does not practice love, which seeks to exclude rather than to include and which turns its back on the world, on passion and on earthly happiness.

As well as conventional religious beliefs, there is also a strong Gothic element to 'Jane Eyre'. The Gothic novel, popular at the time 'Jane Eyre' was written, created an atmosphere of horror by its use of the supernatural, women in distress, omens and portents, storms, a setting in a castle or mansion and an overpowering, almost tyrannical hero. The constant mention of fairies, Bertha's imprisonment, Jane's torment, the chestnut tree split by the storm, Thornfield Hall itself and of course, Mr. Rochester, all combine to provide the perfect ingredients for a Gothic novel.

Life in Victorian England required adhering to very strict manners and customs. Its formality would seem strange to us and although Charlotte Brontë puts many aspects of this society under the microscope, she only bends, never breaks the rules.

Guidelines for Answering Exam Questions

This section is worth 70 marks and should take you around an hour to complete. You will be asked to answer **one** question, A or B.

The questions are generally divided into two parts, (a) and (b) which are worth 30 and 40 marks respectively. This is not written in stone, however, so check before you begin your answer.

You may be asked, in part of a question, to answer on one of your texts separately.

Points to note:

When you read the question, underline the key words: 'one of the texts', 'key moment', 'describe', 'explain' etc.

Plan your answer. It is well worth taking the time to do this.

Think in terms of key moments; this will ensure that you refer to the text and will help you to keep the sequence of events in the right order.

When you are planning your answer, try to think of approximately ___ key moments which illustrate the mode you have chosen.

In your introductory paragraph, name the ___, the _____ and the _____ you have chosen.

You must _____ your texts and answer _____ you have chosen.

Do not, under any circumstances, simply summarise the plot.

When you are comparing texts, do not write a separate paragraph for each text. Instead, you must constantly compare one with the other.

Use a selection of the link words and phrases below when comparing texts. The examiner will be looking for them.

Link words and phrases:

Likewise
Similarly
Also
In the same way
In the same manner
Just as
Both texts/characters
Each text

Conversely
On the contrary
Whereas
Differs from
However
In contrast
This is different to
While

Comparing the texts

The examiners' reports show that the two most common faults in the comparative study section of Paper 11 are:

1. Students simply summarising the plot.
2. Students treating each text separately and not comparing them.

Listed below are some sentence structures you could use when linking texts. In these sentences, T1 and T2 refer to the texts, C1 and C2 refer to the characters and A1 and A2 refer to the authors.

> We can see in both T1 and T2 that.....
>
> Like C1, C2 resists the pressure to conform.....
>
> I feel that there are many similarities between C1 and C2.
>
> Unlike C1, C2.....
>
> The same theme is handled completely differently in T2....
>
> A1 uses humour while A2 treats the theme more seriously....
>
> Both characters have to deal with....but C1 handles it very differently to C2....
>
> In both T1 and T2, the characters face a crisis.....but the outcome is very different.....

It cannot be stressed enough that simply retelling the story will not get you marks. The examiner knows the plot and it is assumed you do too. Avoid falling into the trap of simply describing the social setting, for example, without saying what effect it has on the characters' lives.

In order to get high marks, you need to:

1. Answer the question asked (30%)
2. Make sure every paragraph develops that answer (30%),
3. Use varied and appropriate language (30%)
4. Keep an eye on your spelling and grammar (10%). Think about the first two points when you are planning your answer.

2008
SECTION II
THE COMPARATIVE STUDY (70 MARKS)
Candidates must answer **ONE** question from **either A** – Relationships, **or B** – Social Setting.
In your answer you may not use the text you have answered on in **SECTION I** – The Single Text.

N.B. The questions use the word **text** to refer to all the different kinds of texts available for study on this course, i.e. novel, play, short story, autobiography, biography, travel writing, and film. The questions use the word **author** to refer to novelists, playwrights, writers in all genres, and film-directors.

A RELATIONSHIPS

1. "Relationships can be very complicated."
   Describe a relationship which you have studied in one of the texts on your comparative course, and explain why you found it to be complicated. (30)
   Choose a relationship from another text on your comparative course and explain why you found this relationship more **or** less complicated than the one you described in
   Remember to refer to both relationships in the course of your answer. (40)

OR

2. Briefly describe a relationship from each of **two** of the three texts you have studied on your comparative course. (30)
   Explain why you think one of the relationships you described in is more successful than the other.
   Remember to refer to both relationships in the course of your answer. (40)

B SOCIAL SETTING

1. "A person is often greatly influenced by his or her social setting."
   Show how the social setting greatly influences a character in one of the texts on your comparative study. (30)
   From one of the other texts studied on your comparative course, choose a character and show how, in your opinion, this character is influenced to a greater or lesser degree by his/her social setting than the one dealt with in above.
   Remember to refer to both social settings in the course of your answer. (40)

OR

2. Briefly describe the social setting of **two** of the three texts you have studied on your comparative course. (30)

Write a piece in which you compare and/or contrast the two social settings described in explaining why you found one social setting more appealing than the other.
Remember to refer to both social settings in the course of your answer. (40)

2007
SECTION II
THE COMPARATIVE STUDY (70 MARKS)
B THEME

Before beginning your answer to either of the two questions on THEME, you should
- name the texts studied for your comparative course and
- name a theme that you are going to discuss.

1. Describe how your chosen theme is presented in **one** of the texts. (30)
Compare the way in which the same theme is presented in a second text with the way it has been presented in the text in above. To begin your answer use one of the following statements:

!
"#
$ "#

(40)

OR

2. Write a piece in which you attempt to persuade a reader that a theme is presented in a more interesting way in one text rather than in another.
Support your views with reference to the two texts chosen. (30)
Select one moment from each of **two** texts that you have studied that appeals to you in a special way. Say how, in your opinion, these moments have helped you to understand the theme involved.
Explain your answer with references to your chosen texts. (40)

B SOCIAL SETTING

1. Name the text from your comparative course which describes a world that you would either like to visit **or** avoid.
the features of that world explaining why you find it either attractive or not. (30)
Compare the world that you have just described with the world from another text you have studied on your comparative course. Explain what it is about this second world that you find **either more or less** attractive than the one already described in .
Refer to each text to support the points you are making. (40)

OR

2. "A key moment in a text can tell us how a social setting can influence a character in a text."
   Describe a key moment from **one** of the texts you studied on your comparative course that tells how a character was influenced by the social setting at an important time. (30)
   Describe a key moment from another one of the texts on your comparative course and show how the social setting influenced a character in the same or in a different way to the one you have already described in above.
   Refer to each text to support the points you make. (40)

2006
SECTION II
THE COMPARATIVE STUDY (70 MARKS)
B SOCIAL SETTING

1. Name the text from your comparative course which describes a world that you would either like to visit **or** avoid.
   Describe the features of that world explaining why you find it either attractive or not. (30)
   Compare the world that you have just described with the world from another text you have studied on your comparative course. Explain what it is about this second world that you find **either more or less** attractive than the one already described in .
   Refer to each text to support the points you are making. (40)

OR

2. "A key moment in a text can tell us how a social setting can influence a character in a text."
   Describe a key moment from **one** of the texts you studied on your comparative course that tells how a character was influenced by the social setting at an important time. (30)
   Describe a key moment from another one of the texts on your comparative course and show how the social setting influenced a character in the same or in a different way to the one you have already described in above.
   Refer to each text to support the points you make. (40)

2005
SECTION II
THE COMPARATIVE STUDY (70 MARKS)
A RELATIONSHIPS

1. Name a text that you have studied for your comparative course. Give a

brief description of **one** relationship in the text, that you feel is interesting. (30)
Compare the relationship that you have already described in part (a) above with a relationship from another text. Refer to each text to support the points that you are making. (40)

OR

2. "Relationships can fail as well as succeed."
From one of the texts that you studied for your comparative course, describe a relationship that, in your view, was either a success or a failure. Explain your answer. (30)
Compare a relationship from a second text you have studied in your comparative course with the relationship you have chosen in above. In the course of your answer, you must deal with **both** relationships.
Support your answer by references to the texts. (40)

B SOCIAL SETTING

1. The places we read about in texts can be places that we ourselves would like to live in or not like to live in."
Describe the social setting in one of the texts in your comparative course and show how it appeals or does not appeal to you. (30)
Compare the social setting in a second text from your comparative course with the social setting in the text you chose for your answer to part above.
Refer to each text to support the points you are making. (40)

OR

2. "A character in any text can be made happy or unhappy by his or her social setting."
Name one text you have studied for your comparative course and describe how the social setting caused one character to be happy or unhappy. (30)
Compare the social setting in a different text from your comparative course with the social setting of the text you have used in part above. Refer to each text to support the points you are making. (40)

2004

B THEME

1. Name a theme that you found in the texts that you studied for your comparative course. Choose one text and show how the theme plays an important part in the story. (30)
Compare the way in which **the same theme** plays an important part in the story of another text that you studied. (40)

OR

2. %

Describe what you find interesting about a theme in one text you studied. (30)
% &

Describe some interesting comparisons you found when you discovered **the same theme** in another text. (40)

2003

A THEME

1. Name a theme that was explored in a text you studied for your comparative course and show how important it was in the life of one of the characters from the text. (30)

Compare the way in which the **same theme** was important in the life of a character from another text on your comparative course. (40)

OR

2. Write down the theme that was common to two of the texts you have studied for your comparative course and then complete the following statements, and .

"" " " (30)

"(" " (40)

Sample Answer

"A key moment in a text can tell us how a social setting can influence a character in a text." Describe a key moment from **one** of the texts you studied on your comparative course that tells how a character was influenced by the social **setting at an important time.** **(30)**

Social setting plays an important role in Charlotte Brontë's 'Jane Eyre'. I believe Jane is influenced greatly by her lack of social standing, her lack of money and power and the problems these create in her relationship with others, particularly Mr. Rochester.

A key moment for Jane in terms of social setting is the time immediately following Mr. Rochester's first proposal. From the moment she agrees to marry Mr. Rochester, Jane is plagued with doubts. He is a wealthy man with a position of power in the area, she has no real social standing and no money, meaning she is virtually powerless in Victorian England. This inequality bothers Jane and influences her feelings about the proposed marriage. She cannot bring herself to be completely happy while she is not her future husband's social equal.

Jane's lack of money and social standing doesn't affect Mr. Rochester in the same way - he wants to cover Jane in jewels, she resists. She reminds him that she is his 'plain, Quakerish governess' and begs him not to use his wealth to try to make her somebody she is not. As a governess, Jane is neither one thing nor the other: a poor girl with the manners and sophistication of a lady. She worries that Mr. Rochester will tire of her soon after their marriage and dreads the thought of being a kept woman. This is why she resolves to write to her uncle in Madeira in the hope that he will put her in his will.

It is significant that Charlotte Brontë refers to Jane's fears of being 'dressed like a doll' and being 'kept' by Mr. Rochester; it reminds us of the mistresses he had in Europe. Jane does not want to be like them in any way. She is adamant that she does not want to become an English Céline Varens.

Mrs. Fairfax adds to Jane's doubts, telling her that people of Mr. Rochester's standing in society do not marry their governesses. She asks Jane if he wants to marry her for love, hinting that Jane is young and inexperienced. Although Jane is impatient with Mrs. Fairfax for suggesting this, it nevertheless feeds into her private fears and doubts and quite probably influences her feelings about her impending marriage.

Jane should be delighted that she is to marry the man she loves; and in many ways she is. Her love for Mr. Rochester is never in doubt, the only cloud on the horizon at this point in the text is the depressing realisation that her position in society is not all she could wish. We might find such a viewpoint ridiculous, but it is important to remember that in the context of Victorian England, such concerns were perfectly valid. Charlotte Brontë may bend the rules of society in this text, but she never breaks them. Ultimately, Jane adheres to the codes of her world and only finds true

happiness when all the worries I have outlined in this key moment are banished by her changed circumstances and can no longer influence her.

(618 words)

Note:

The title and the name of the author are given in the opening sentence.

The phrase 'key moment' is used early in the answer.

The answer deals with the issue raised in the question, namely, how is the character influenced by the social setting.

The words 'influence' and 'affect' are used repeatedly in the answer, linking it back to the question.

There is no simple retelling of the plot, any examples that are chosen serve to highlight the points the answer is making.

The answer is well structured.

The language is varied and interesting.

The spelling and grammar are correct throughout.

Student's Notes

Use this page to make any additional notes as we study the text. When you come to revise your work, it is best to have it all in one document if possible.