

SIVE	CASABLANCA
Tension between Nanna, Mena, Sive highlights characters' need to <u>escape</u> – poverty of surroundings adds to this impression – <u>interesting</u> on a domestic scale – no likely means of escape at this stage	Theme introduced on a more global scale – like Sive, <u>tension</u> created early on, but this time by means of newsreel, map, music etc. rather than the fate of individuals. War / exotic location <u>pique our interest</u> . Murder of couriers tells us people will go to almost any lengths to <u>escape</u> . <u>Dramatic</u> introduction of theme.
Hints of the inescapable past – Key Moment: Mena refers to Sive's mother, Nanna will tell her nothing – Nanna is uncomfortable and wants to change the subject. Interest held by mystery – what is it in the past that Nanna wishes to leave behind?	Hints of the inescapable past – This has already been alluded to. Ugarte hints Rick had a very different life before becoming a bartender. Like Nanna, Rick clearly wishes to avoid discussing the past. Renault asks Rick why he cannot return to America... mystery surrounding the past and Rick's obvious desire to escape his past life holds our interest. Key Moment: Ilsa's arrival (read this section again in notes on sequences)
Characters' willingness to sacrifice others to effect their own escape – Key moment – Thomasheen's arrival and proposed match. He lures Mena with promise of money (escape poverty) and tells her Sean Dota will take Sive (escape unhappy domestic situation) 'I will be clear and clane of the pair of them'. (Read this key moment in detail again.) Interest held as we see unscrupulous determination of Mena and Thomasheen. To escape their own unhappy situations, they are willing to trap Sive in an unsuitable marriage.	Characters' willingness to sacrifice others to effect their own escape – Rick has made it clear that he does not stick his neck out for anyone. However, unlike Thomasheen and Mena, he has also made it clear that he does not buy or sell human beings. He told Signor Ferrari as much. Key Moment – Rick's memories of his time with Ilsa. This is intriguing: will he help the woman he loves to escape with another man? Or will he refuse to get involved (Renault has already said that one of the reasons he allows Rick's to remain open is that he does not buy or sell exit visas... Yet we know Rick has the much-coveted letters of transit...

<p>Escaping the past - Mike has made the past a prison for some of his darkest thoughts and is oddly unwilling to free himself, even when presented with the means to do so. Key moment - Liam Scuab tries to persuade Mike that his intentions are honourable, as were his cousins. Mike reacts with anger and threats. He will not hear the truth, and thus appears likely to prevent both his own escape from the demons of his past and Sive's escape from Mena's control.</p>	<p>Escaping the past - Rick has also made the past a prison for his thoughts, and seems equally unwilling to allow himself to escape. Key moment - Ilsa tries to talk to Rick in the bar and tell him why she had to leave him. Like Mike, Rick's response is a very negative one. In his drunken state, he is bitter and sarcastic. He will not hear the truth, and thus seems likely to prevent his own escape from the demons of his past and Ilsa and Laszlo's escape from Casablanca. We know he has the letters of transit they are so desperately seeking... The more we learn of the theme, the more intriguing it becomes. It seems that the characters' interdependence in both texts means escape for all of them is next to impossible. We wonder who will succeed?</p>
<p>Identification with the characters - One of the main ways our interest is held is that we truly care about Sive's escape. She is a charming and innocent young girl and her love for Liam Scuab - and his for her - touches us. We hope she will succeed in her efforts. We have less sympathy with Mena, Mike and Thomasheen.</p>	<p>Identification with the characters - The principal difference here is that we identify with several of the characters and wish they could all escape. Ilsa, Rick and Laszlo are all appealing characters for different reasons (beauty, kindness, decency, nobility, bravery...) but we are very curious to see how they can all escape without compromising the others' chances of doing so. It does not seem possible...</p>

<p>Determination to escape at all cost - Our interest is held by our curiosity to see who is strong enough to overcome the obstacles to their escape. We fear Sive may not be.</p> <p>Key moment: Conversation between Mena and Sive in which Mena breaks Sive down. (Read this again - Act 1, Scene 3)</p>	<p>Determination to escape at all cost - All the characters seem strong, and all have shown courage and determination.</p> <p>Key moment: Ilsa goes to Rick's apartment and, like Mena, does all in her power to get what she wants. Key difference here is that Rick is not as easily intimidated as Sive. Nor is Ilsa as ruthless as Mena. Who will win?</p> <p>In this case, love wins and Rick's frank admission that he cannot escape that past and that she will be doing him a favour if she shoots him cause her to break down, He is at last willing to hear the truth and she tells him all about Paris and Laszlo's reappearance in her life.</p>
<p>Ending - Tragic in <u>Sive</u>. She does manage to escape, but only to her own death. Interest held by drama surrounding discovery of her absence.</p> <p>Key moment: Liam appearing at the door with the girl's limp body in his arms. Heartbreaking that the young man who should have been carrying his new bride over the threshold very soon is now carrying her dead body over the threshold</p>	<p>Ending - Much more positive in <u>Casablanca</u>. Key moment: airport scene. It is only now that we discover Rick's true intention. He will ensure Laszlo and Ilsa escape to America, and will take his chances in Casablanca. Noble self sacrifice contrasts with selfishness and greed in <u>Sive</u>. Even at this moment, our interest is held until the very last by the arrival of Strasser. Again, Rick succeeds in his aim.</p>

<p>Final impression - Heartbreaking. Nobody has succeeded in escaping. (Read the final paragraph on page 134 of my book for a detailed description of this.)</p> <p>The lessons we have learned from Sive are that any attempt to escape your fate is futile. We are all locked in our status quo and neither goodness and decency nor unscrupulous self-interest will serve anyone striving to break free from the confines of their unhappy lives.</p>	<p>Final impression - Optimistic. We are delighted that Laszlo has managed to escape, and even though we are saddened by the end of Rick and Ilsa's affair, we know that both have done the right thing. As Rick says, 'the problems of three little people don't amount to a hill of beans'</p>
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Introduction / thesis

You may wish to consider the following:

In both texts, we are presented with a number of characters who are determined to escape situations they find unbearable.

Despite the differences in setting: modern Ireland versus the exotic Moroccan city of Casablanca, both texts succeed in capturing and holding our interests from the outset, principally because of the increasing tension caused by the fact that escape for all seems impossible. In both texts, at least one character's successful escape seems dependent on another character's failure to do so.

Note: This plan is **far** more detailed than you would normally write for an essay of this sort, but I wanted to show you how it could be done, and what aspects of the texts were most relevant to the question. As you progress, and write more and more (and more!) comparative essays, you will get into the swing of it and require less help at each stage.

Remember that every paragraph must refer to the theme and the question, and should have comparative link words or phrases. Key moments from each text should be used for illustration.

Here are some synonyms of the word 'interesting': absorbing, affecting, amusing, arresting, captivating, charismatic, compelling, curious, engaging, engrossing, enthralling, entrancing, exotic, fascinating, gripping, impressive, intriguing, magnetic, provocative, readable, riveting, stimulating, stirring, striking, suspicious, thought-provoking.