



**Western Cape  
Government**

Education

# **TELEMATICS**

## **2017**

**ENGLISH FIRST ADDITIONAL  
LANGUAGE**

**GRADE 12**

**LEARNER RESOURCE**

## FOREWORD

Dear Grade 12 Learner

Welcome to the Telematics teaching and learning programme of 2017. We want to encourage you to make full use of this additional learning programme by attending all broadcasts, working with the presenters and doing additional work on your own at home. The purpose of the programme is not to replace your teacher. The presenters are expert teachers and have been specially selected. The success of the project and your success will depend on your level of participation and commitment before, during and after each broadcast. A useful site to visit is the Moodle website. There are a number of interactive activities to help you. Ask your teacher to show you how to log in.

Refer to the programme for the broadcast schedule.

***Please bring the following to each broadcast:***

- A note book and pen / pencil
- This learner resource booklet
- Your literature study texts when needed: poetry / drama
- Your text book when needed for specific broadcasts

The lessons broadcasted from 2010-2014 have been recorded on DVD. These DVDs are available for learners and teachers from:

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I wish you well with your preparation for the end of year NSC examination. Success is within your grasp if you believe in yourself, apply your mind and work hard consistently.

F. Haffejee

SENIOR CURRICULUM PLANNER: ENGLISH

DATE: January 2017

## My Children My Africa – Athol fugard

### Characters and Synopsis

#### Characters

Anela Myalatya (Mr. M): A 57-year-old black South African teacher at Zolile High School, he believes that education is the most powerful tool in the struggle for freedom and equality.

Isabel Dyson: An 18-year-old white South African student from the all-white Camdeboo Girls High School, she is an aspiring writer, brought to Zolile for a student debate.

Thami Mbikwana: An 18-year-old black South African student in Mr M's class at Zolile High School, he is an intelligent student and a favourite of Mr M's with dreams of higher education. He is a part of the student movement against apartheid.

#### Setting

Thami and Mr M in the original production Number One Classroom, Zolile High School, Camdebo, South Africa, The Eastern Cape black township in Autumn, 1985

#### Synopsis

In a classroom of the black Zolile High, Mr M referees a student debate contesting that women should not receive the same education as men. In favour is Thami, one of Mr M's favorite and most promising students. In opposition is Isabel, a white student visiting from an all-girls school. Mr M sees potential in the intellectual pairing of Isabel and Thami, and brings them together as a team for the statewide English literature competition. As they prepare under Mr M's tutelage, Isabel gains immense respect and admiration for Mr M and forms a deep friendship with Thami. Outside the classroom Mr M's hopes for Thami are challenged by their generational divide and increasing political unrest under the South African government's policy of apartheid. Thami quits the competition when he joins a student movement to boycott the school until blacks are given an education equivalent to that of whites. The tradition-bound Mr M regards Thami's actions as destructive and cooperates with the white police by informing against the boycotting students. Thami's comrades retaliate; a mob approaches Zolile High School, intending to kill Mr. M for his betrayal. Thami tries to help Mr M escape by offering to vouch for Mr M's innocence, but Mr M refuses the protection of a lie and stands his ground. The mob kills him. Isabel struggles to comprehend why it seems the black community is tearing itself apart. She sees Thami one last time after Mr M's murder. Thami plans to flee the country to avoid arrest so that he can continue fighting against apartheid.

#### **Discussion Questions**

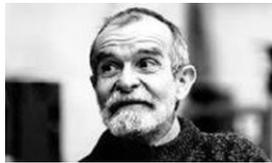
Based on these descriptions (and before seeing the play), with which character do you think you will most identify? Why?

What do you believe in so much that you would be willing to fight for it?

Do you think violence is ever justified? When and why?

**MY CHILDREN! MY AFRICA!**

**ATHOL FUGARD**



**EXAMINING THE PLOT**

**PLOT DRIVER**

- What is the issue which drives the plot/story?

Answer:

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Make notes here on the elements of the plot.

Exposition: Inter-school's debate

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Conflict: inciting incident, rising action

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Climax: \_\_\_\_\_

Final solution \_\_\_\_\_

Conclusion: \_\_\_\_\_

**SUMMARY OF PLOT**

- In 1984, Mr Anela Myalatya a very dedicated English Teacher and principal of Zolile High school in a small Karoo town, Camdeboo, does his utmost to educate and motivate his students.
- He is passionate about the value of education which is especially evident in the way he pushes his favourite student, Thami Mbikwana.

- He organises a debating competition with the neighbouring white girls' school which pits his favourite student, Thami, against Isabel Dyson from that school. This happens at a time when schools are racially segregated and contact across racial lines was unheard of.
- Mr M invites Isabel to join forces with Thami to take part in a literature contest to show that black and white learners can work together effectively. They start to prepare for the contest and the teacher and two students develop a close relationship.

- Mr M's dream for Thami is that he will become a great leader, who will help to end apartheid through his brilliance, once he has completed his education.
- Thami, however, sees Bantu education as a 'trap...carefully set to catch our minds, our souls' and goes against the wishes of Mr M by involving himself with the more radical elements (comrades) in the community who decides to call for a school boycott.
- Mr M refuses to adhere to the call for a boycott and is devastated by the effect it has on students' lives

Mr M is alarmed by the disruption of the students' education and decides to give the names of some activists to the police in an attempt to bring an end to the boycott. He is branded an informer.

- Thami comes to school to warn him about a plan to burn down the school and to kill him, but Mr M refuses to flee. Mr M goes out to confront the crowd and is killed while ringing the school bell.

- Thami decides to flee the country to get away from the police and 'to join the movement.'
- In her final conversation with Thami, Isabel expresses her outrage and disgust at Mr M's killing.
- On Thami's advice she goes to the top of the Wapadsberg Pass where Mr M was inspired to dedicate his life to teaching. She says her last farewell to him there.

## ACT 1 SCENE 1

### 'Order please' - L1

- Interestingly, these are the first words we hear from Mr M.
- As we discover later in the play 'order' is a very important aspect in Mr M's life. This eventually puts him in conflict with Thami and the comrades who choose options which represent 'disorder' e.g. violence & the school boycott which go against what he so firmly believes

In the opening scene, Thami and Isabel reveal aspects of their background and their character to us. Read the opening scene and try to find out as much as you can about each character. Now complete the table:

	THAMI	ISABEL
<b>Family</b> 3 marks x 2		
Attitude to school 2 marks x 2		
Future 2 marks x 2		

### ACT 1, SCENE 1 (CONT.)

Mr M's sense of order is accentuated by the use of the bell.

- A high premium is placed on sharpening the intellect. " ...Splendid! The intellect in action."
- In relation to the audience: "They had to listen...intelligently!"

### ACT 1, SCENE 1 (KEY MOMENTS)

Isabel is blown away by Mr M's enthusiasm: "I wish we had a teacher like..." (p.45) "Well I think he is wonderful." (p.46)

- Thami's reacts in a lukewarm manner to these observations, "He's okay" (p.46), which is an indication of his view of Mr M.
- This is a sign of the tension/conflict which sets the plot in motion.
- Thami's later response to Isabel's suggestion that Mr M has got his future mapped out, "I don't listen to what he says and I don't do what he says," is further evidence of this potential conflict. (p.50)

### ACT 1, SCENE 1 (KEY MOMENTS)

"I don't want to leave any part of me in this classroom." Thami does not carve his name out on his desk.

- He is disillusioned with the type of education provided to blacks. He sees Bantu education as a way of keeping blacks in subservient positions in SA society and as such should be destroyed.
- Mr M, however, also opposes Bantu Education but feels they should make use of it to escape poverty.

### ISABEL

Isabel enjoyed the almost 'riotous' nature of the debate with the audience getting involved which is in contrast to what she normally experiences at her school when debating. (p.46) "...lots of discipline but very little enthusiasm."

"

### Fugard explores the devastating impact of apartheid on human potential

ISABEL	THAMI
Hugely intelligent	Hugely intelligent
Lives with her parents Has a domestic and a gardener.	Parents are working in Cape Town. Lives with grandmother and sister.
Dad owns a chemist. Mom works there.	Dad works for the railways Mom – domestic worker
Lives in the centre of town	Brakwater location.
Clear about her future - writer; journalism; Rhodes	Not sure

### ACT 1 SC. 2: ISABEL'S FIRST MONOLOGUE

- She reflects on her experience at Zolile High school.
- It reveals much about white notions and attitudes to black townships and its inhabitants.
- Her visit to Zolile makes her question her perceptions about the location and the people who live there.

#### Questions:

1. Isabel uses the monologue to explain to the audience that she has discovered 'a whole new world'. What is the new world she has discovered?
2. What is ironic about the fact that she only discovers the world at this stage

### Act 1 Scene 2 cont.

- "... they had no intention of being grateful to me"
- Suddenly she is confronted by black people who come across as confident and self-assured. Not the subservient attitudes she encounters when black people are in the "white side" of town e.g "Miss Isabel, the baas's daughter" as Samuel their gardener would refer to her.

### ACT 1 SCENE 3

- Mr M visits Isabel at school to invite her to team up with Thami for a Literary quiz as part of the Grahamstown Schools festival.
- It is clear that Mr M is totally out of touch with how Thami feels. " No, I haven't asked him...and I won't. I teach, Thami learns." P58 – 59.
- Mr M maintains that in African culture there is 'respect for authority' which is 'deeply ingrained in the African soul.'
- "I expect Thami to trust my judgement of what is best for him, and he does." P59.

### ACT 1 SCENE 3 CONT.

- As the audience we know that this assumption of Mr M is setting him on a collision course with Thami as he has already indicated that 'I don't listen to what he says and I don't do what he says.' (Dramatic irony)
- Mr M furthermore dismisses the struggle leaders with whom Thami identifies as 'rabble-rousers.'

### ACT 1 SCENE 4

- Mr M's monologue contains a powerful metaphor in which he compares his emotions to 'a mad zoo of hungry animals.' In this zoo there are at least three animals: Despair, Hate and Hope. Hope is fed and kept alive by Mr M's learners.
- The metaphor is a powerful way of explaining how intensely Mr M hopes to educate and develop his learners to ensure a better future for them.

### Act 1 Scene 3

1. Why does Mr M feel that Isabel is part of his extended family?
2. What is the new scheme that Mr M has arranged?
3. What are your views on his plan?
4. Do you agree with Mr M's view of the traditional role of the different generations in African culture?
5. What are the similarities between Ozymandias's rule in Egypt and the rule of the apartheid government?

### ACT 1 SCENE 5: Practise for the quiz

- Thami: "There are quite a few Ozymandiases in this country waiting to be toppled. And...happen. We won't...down." (p.72)
- Indicates Thami's commitment to a course of radical action to bring about change.
- Mr M interprets his words literally and refers to it as 'inexcusable' 'gross vandalism'.

### ACT 1 SC 5 CONT.

- Thami: "He is out of touch with what is really happening to us blacks and the way we feel about things." "He doesn't open his eyes and ears and see what is happening around him to listen to what the people are saying." P.75
- The dramatic tension increases significantly in this scene. We have two confrontations. One between Thami and Mr M and the other between Thami and Isabel which raises the temperature considerably.

## Significance of the poems

### Byron's *Childe Harold* (P68)

- The image of freedom holding a torn banner against the wind is a powerful revolutionary struggle image, which resonates strongly with Thami.

### Shelly's *Ozymandias* (P71)

- Thami's response to the image of the mighty king's statue lying forgotten and half-buried in the sand awakens within him the belief that it is possible to topple the leaders of the apartheid regime as well.

## ACT 1 SCENE 6: Thami's monologue

- His monologue reflects on his initial love for school until he realises it is all a trap.
- He has given up his dream of becoming a doctor.
- Even this dream had a twist: "I will make black people better free of charge. The white people must pay for my medicine because they have got lots of money."
- It is never straightforward because of the impact of apartheid on black lives.

### Thami's monologue:

1. What is a monologue?
2. Why does the writer use a monologue at this stage in the play?
3. What did Thami want to become when he was in primary school?
4. What kind of medicine does he think his people need?
5. Why does he now think he does not need to go to university?
6. Why does the scene end with 'AMANDLA' written in capitals?

## Act 1 Sc. 6: What shaped Thami?

- "Little Thami, you'll go far...that little room of wonderful promises, where I used to feel safe has become a place I don't trust anymore." P.79
- "I see a generation of tired, defeated men and women crawling back to their miserable little pondoks at the end of a day's work for the white baas or madam. And those are the lucky ones." P. 80
- "Those men and women are our fathers and mothers. We have grown up watching their humiliation. We have to live ever day with the sight of them begging for food in this land of their birth..."

## Thami's political awareness

- These words reflect his political awareness and an understanding of how the system ensures that black people will remain trapped in poverty.
- He sees the only solution as throwing his weight behind the liberation movement to undo apartheid. His reference to Kliptown, Sharpeville, Soweto shows his endorsement of those initiatives.
- He has decided to give up on those earlier dreams to join the struggle for freedom.

### ACT TWO SCENE 1

- Thami withdraws from the quiz team. In the township the comrades have decided on a general stayaway and school boycott.
- He can't continue to spend time in Isabel's company since it could be misinterpreted by the comrades.
- TENSIONS COME TO A HEAD IN THIS SCENE. Thami & Mr M articulate their opposing points of view. (P.87 – 88)

### ACT TWO SCENE 1 CONT.

- He shares with Thami that the Dept. instructed him to make a list of all those who take part in the boycott.
- Thami informs him that community members called him a government stooge and collaborator at a meeting.

#### Questions:

1. Why Does Thami pull out of the literature quiz? (2)
2. Isabel calls the school boycott 'unrest' and Thami calls it "Isiqalo", which means 'beginning' How do the connotations of the two words differ? (2)
3. Thami says: ' Yours were lessons in whispering. There are men now who are teaching is to shout.' Explain this sentence in your own words. (2)

### ACT 2 SCENE 2

- Mr M describes the school boycott from his perspective as a passionate principal and teacher.
- He is deeply disturbed by the violent scenes he witnesses.
- He recalls Sipho Fondini asking whether his slogan on the wall is spelt correctly as well as the children desperately calling for help from a police van.

### ACT 2 SCENE 3

- This scene is the climax of the play. The conflict hits its high point – Mr M's death
- The crowd throw stones through the window. They regards Mr M's presence at school as an act of defiance against the stayaway/boycott.
- He holds the stone (thrown through the window) in his one hand and his personal dictionary in his other while explaining to Thami the power and the impact of words.

### ACT 2 SCENE 3 CONT

- Thami offers to tell the crowd that Mr M is innocent if he joins the boycott.
- Mr M confesses to having given names ('strangers to the north') to the police. (P.93)
- Mr M delivers an emotional speech on how he decided to become a teacher.
- Thami makes a last desperate attempt to convince Mr M not to go out to the angry crowd.
- Mr M goes outside, ringing the school bell and gets killed by the mob.

### ACT 2 SCENE 4

- Thami and Isabel express their two opposing views on the circumstances of Mr M's killing. Murder vs Self – defence.
- It explores the notion of justice in a society where people do not enjoy equal rights and suffer under an unjust political system.
- Thami leaves to flee the police, join the movement and become a fighter.
- He advises Isabel to take her leave of Mr M at the top of the Wapadsberg pass.

Questions: Re-read the ending scene of Act 2 Scene 3

1. What does Mr M mean when he says that every African soul is either carrying the bundle or in it? (2)
2. Do you agree with this view? Write at least three sentences in which you support your opinion. (3)
3. Why is this scene the climax of the play? Your answer should show that you understand what the dramatic term "climax" means. (2)

### ACT 2 SCENE 5: Isabel's monologue

- She decides to say goodbye, not with flowers but with a promise: not to lead a wasted life, but to make her life useful in the way that Mr M did.
- "The future is still ours, Mr M." How should we interpret these final words??

### FUGARD'S MOTIVATION FOR WRITING THE PLAY

"Quite simply my play is about a school teacher, who has invested all of his dreams in terms of a better world, a better society, a better South Africa, in one of his pupils, who is a brilliant young man. My story is about how the school teacher and this young man come into conflict with each other about the best way to react to the appalling events in SA, the SA of the time."

“ I wrote the play under the pressure of my own response to...that debate. What is the correct way to respond to a situation like that? Should violence be met with violence, or is there an alternative? At that time I was debating that issue with myself very, very passionately.”

### FUGARD'S MOTIVATION

“I found myself believing...that putting words on paper is a valid form of action...Words can get inside those armoured cars. Words can get inside the heads of the people inside those armoured cars.”

- Introduction , P11.

### FUGARD'S MOTIVATION

- In a 2011 *New York Times* interview, Fugard recalled: “That play came out of the darkest period of apartheid years, a period when my faith in writing as a response to the situation was really being challenged. Do you use bombs or bullets, or do you use words when you are living with the most appalling brutality and violence against the majority of the people?”

### HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- set in 1984 – turbulent period in sa history
- Tri-cameral elections took place in 1983  
Which once again denied blacks  
Meaningful political participation
- New constitution: 3 sept 1984 which  
excluded 80% of the population  
fromparliamentary representation
- 3 separate parliamentary chambers based on  
race: white, coloured , indian
- in line with the divide and rule policy

- Separate 'independent' homelands for blacks were being established e.g. Transkei, Ciskei, Venda, Bophutatswana.
- Really functioned as labour reserves from which cheap black labour could be drawn and their movement could be controlled.

- The tri-cameral elections triggered the formation of the UDF in August 1983.
- It became the umbrella body for extra-parliamentary opposition.
- The resistance to the np government became far more organised and intense and also violent
- people in townships who were perceived to be siding with state structures were openly attacked and hounded out of communities, and in some instances, killed.

- Black people who for example were policemen were marginalised together with their families.
- Teachers in black townships also found themselves in a very difficult position.
- They were considered to be generally conservative and part of the problem. They feared losing their jobs if they were seen to be allying with radical organisations such as the udf.
- A very small number became involved in radical politics and started to organise teachers under a different banner.

- This was the context in which the play is set in 1984.
- Townships burning, and the youth especially, highly politicised.
- People having to choose sides.
- Acts of resistance.
- School boycotts; consumer boycotts; protest marches.

## THE EDUCATION CRISIS OF THE 80s

- The spending on education for the different races was hugely unequal.
- The uprising among students in 1984 and the subsequent years caused greater polarisation between radical students and their more conservative teachers.
- With the long drawn-out school boycotts the older generation became concerned about their children's future.

In the 1970s and 1980s student and general uprisings continued, and international sanctions increased. Due to this external pressure, the South African government began repealing many segregation laws in the 1980s, and in 1991 the remaining apartheid laws were repealed. In 1994, the first full free democratic elections were held in South Africa, and Nelson Mandela was elected president.

### Discussion Questions

Do you think uprising is a good way to change social situations or injustices?

Is violence ever justified?

**THEMES to explore:** friendship, education, tradition and culture, the generation clash, gender differences, power of word vs violence, justice town vs location/ privilege vs poverty

### Setting

## BANTU EDUCATION UNDER APARTHEID

- The apartheid system created educational inequalities through overt racist policies. The Bantu Education Act of 1952 ensured that blacks [would] receive **an education that would limit educational potential and remain in the working class**. This policy directly affected the content of learning to further racial inequalities by preventing access to further education.

*-A Brief History of Educational Inequality from Apartheid to the Present By Maria Lizet Ocampo*

**SETTING**

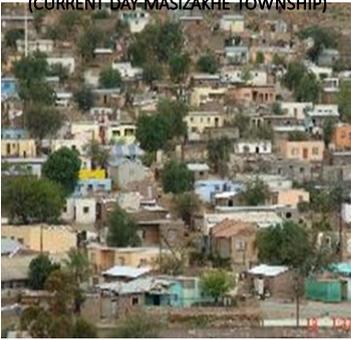
- Camdeboo – a fictional Karoo town in rural Eastern Cape



**CAMDEBOO**  
(CURRENT DAY GRAAFF-REINET)



**BRAKWATER**  
(CURRENT DAY MASIZAKHE TOWNSHIP)



COMPARISON

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>BRAKWATER</b></p> <p>Meaning brackish water</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leaves a bitter taste in the mouth</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>CAMDEBOO</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Khoena (Khoi) word for green hollow</li> <li>• Pleasant connotation</li> </ul>
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**CAMDEBOO GIRLS HIGH**



**ZOLILE HIGH SCHOOL**



## THE WAPADSBERG PASS



## THE WAPADSBERG PASS (2)

- Moment of epiphany for Mr Myalatya
- The setting for Isabel where she commits herself to a better world

After the Play

What most moved you?

What surprised you?

After having seen the play, with which character do you most identify? Did your answer change as a result of having seen the performance? Why or why not?

Do you see any similarities to education equality in the play compared to the education equality in your school? If so, what are they and why do they exist? If not, why not?

How might the mob justify their actions? How might Mr M justify his actions?

Read through the extract of Isabel's last speech of the play:

"You gave me a little lecture once about wasted lives ... how much of it you'd seen, how much you hated it, how much you didn't want that to happen to Thami and me. I sort of understood what you meant at the time. Now, I most certainly do. Your death has seen to that.

My promise to you is that I am going to try as hard as I can, in every way that I can, to see that it doesn't happen to me. I am going to try my best to make my life useful in the way yours was. I want you to be proud of me. After all, I am one of your children you know. You did welcome me to your family. (A pause.) The future is still ours, Mr M. (The ACTRESS leaves the stage.)"

Isabel touches on Mr M's notion of "wasted lives" and making a life useful. How do Isabel's words represent a theme of the play? In your community, and in relation to education, what might a "wasted life" and/or "wasted lives" look like? How might that "wasted life" or those "wasting lives" become useful lives?

What can you do, personally, to make a difference wherever you see inequity or injustice?

Is this story more compelling as a play or would it have been just as (or more) interesting as a short story?

Consider how My Children! My Africa! would be different if it were to take place in your own classroom today. Who are Thami and Isabel, and what are their struggles? How would your version of the play end?

Activity: Student Debate

(Time: 40-60 min)

Mr M's dictionary defines a debate as "the orderly and regulated discussion of an issue with opposing viewpoints receiving equal time and consideration."

Motion: Mr M was wrong to inform the police about the intended student boycott.

## SECTION 2 – POETRY

### Spring by Gerard Manley Hopkins

Nothing is so beautiful as spring –  
 When weeds, in wheels, shoot long and lovely and lush;  
 Thrush's eggs look little low heavens, and thrush  
 Through the echoing timber does so rinse and wring  
 The ear, it strikes like lightnings to hear him sing;  
 The glassy peartree leaves and blooms, they brush  
 The descending blue; that blue is all in a rush  
 With richness; the racing lambs too have fair their fling.

What is all this juice and all this joy?  
 A strain of the earth's sweet being in the beginning  
 In Eden garden. – Have, get, before it cloy,

Before it cloud, Christ, lord, and sour with sinning,  
 Innocent mind and Mayday in girl and boy,  
 Most, O maid's child, thy choice and worthy the winning.

#### About the poet:

He became a priest. He struggled with being a poet, because he sometimes saw poetry to be in conflict with his religion. He mainly wrote about nature and likened it to God.

#### About the poem

This is one of Hopkins' bright sonnets, in which he celebrates the beauty of nature and the glory of God. This is a Petrarchan sonnet, consisting of an octave which is primarily descriptive, and a sestet which is more reflective. The octave describes nature and Hopkins' appreciation of it shines through in his descriptive language. The sestet reflects upon the meaning of this wonderful nature. For Hopkins, there is a spiritual dimension of this physical landscape, and this is explored in the last six lines.

Nothing is so beautiful as Spring —

When weeds in wheels, shoot long and lovely and lush;

#### Octave

Hopkins begins with a very bold statement of his philosophy. His contention that Spring is the most beautiful season is stated with absolute conviction, and allows for no debate.

He proceeds to give the evidence in support of this contention, by presenting the reader with a series of images, which try to capture both the beauty and vibrancy of Spring.

Hopkins believed that god was responsible for each unique thing. For him, inscape was the essence of each thing, that unique quality that set it apart from everything else.

Hopkins immediately confounds expectations by celebrating the beauty of weeds, a type of plant we traditionally frown upon. He uses alliteration and metre to capture both the essence and energy of these particular plants.

His focus turns to the thrushes in the next few lines. Ellipsis is used in describing the appearance of the birds' eggs. They are also compared to the heavens, as Hopkins subtly introduces a spiritual dimension to this poem. The eggs are pale blue in colour like the sky. There are examples of sensuous imagery in evidence also, while the onomatopoeic "wring" further captures that elusive inscape.

Further intense images follow, as Hopkins champions this particular season. We are told "that blue is all in a rush," as he tries to capture the energy that defines that season. The final line, with its rather quaint, colloquial (localised dialect) language, is also designed to produce a similar effect. By the end of the octet, the reader has been swept along by Hopkins in his description of nature. His use of rhythm and enjambment, coupled with the absence of any full-stops in the entire octet, ensure that the reader is made fully aware of the beauty and vitality associated with spring.

Sestet

The poem becomes much more reflective in the sestet. Hopkins begins by posing a question: What does all of this beauty of nature actually signify/mean? The reader is invited to slow down and contemplate the answer to this question. It is also a rhetorical question, however, and Hopkins presents his own answer to the reader.

Thrush's eggs look little low heavens, and thrush  
Through the echoing timber does so rinse and wring  
The ear, it strikes like lightnings to hear him sing;

The glassy peartree leaves and blooms, they brush  
The descending blue; that blue is all in a rush  
With richness; the racing lambs too have fair their  
fling.

What is all this juice and all this joy?

The poet asserts that springtime is an image of what the world would have been like in the beginning, before mankind's sinning corrupted it.

A strain of the earth's sweet being in the beginning  
In Eden garden. — Have, get, before it cloy,

Before it cloud, Christ, lord and sour with sinning,  
Innocent mind and Mayday in girl and boy,  
Most, O maid's child, thy choice and worthy the  
winning.

In a series of complex images, Hopkins manages to suggest what is wrong with the world, provides a vision of the type of world he would like to see, and longs for a return to that time of innocence. He suggests our loss of innocence. He uses the image of fruit becoming overripe and decaying to suggest our loss of innocence. He proceeds to use different images of innocence to present his image of the world he would like to see, and finally, he advocates a return to that world of innocence.

Questions:

1. Refer to the structure of the poem.
    - (a) What type of sonnet is this? (1)
    - (b) Discuss the structure of the sonnet. (2)
  2. Identify the figure of speech in line 3 ( 'Thrush's eggs look ....heavens') (1)
    - (a) Say what the literal part of the comparison is. (1)
    - (b) Identify the figurative part of the comparison. (1)
    - (c) Is the comparison effective? Substantiate your answer. (2)
  3. Give One word for the speaker's tone in the octave. (1)
  4. Identify and discuss the theme evident in this poem. (3)
  5. Refer to the sestet
    - (a) When the poet writes "Have. Get", who is he addressing? Say why you think this. (1)
    - (b) Discuss the speaker's message in the sestet (2)
  6. In your opinion, does the speaker convince the reader that spring is beautiful? ( 3)
- (18)

## Poem by Barolong Seboni

### About the poet:

Barolong Seboni was born in Botswana on the 27th of April 1957. He spent his early years of primary and secondary schooling in London, England (1966-1970), and was in the USA from 1984 to 1987, where he studied for his MA in English Literature at the University of Wisconsin, Madison. Seboni is also co-founder of the University of Botswana Writers' Workshop and the Writers' Association of Botswana. He has been a teacher and a university academic

## Poem by Barolong Seboni

We do not need  
these<sup>1</sup> jagged words  
that dig<sup>2</sup> a trench between us  
each time they are uttered

those epithets<sup>3</sup>  
sharp like spokes<sup>4</sup>  
that pierce the heart when spoken

there is no room in my cup  
for these acidic words of sarcasm<sup>5</sup>  
that corrode my sensitivity

these cold and icy terms tossed  
to deaden the heart  
venomous words  
from your serpentine tongue  
that infect the feeling ....

Let us speak, love  
in gentler tones  
timid as the lamb  
is soft  
wooly words  
worn<sup>6</sup> to stand strong against the  
cold-bitterness of the world  
Better still  
let us search in our speech  
for words deep as the soul is still  
that will spell<sup>7</sup> our thoughts  
in the silence of our smiles

### Key:

1. 'these' – the pronoun refers to something present. He is referring to an immediate argument.
2. 'dig a trench' – a metaphor suggesting that they create a barrier between the couple.
3. 'epithets' – words or phrases used to describe a person
4. 'sharp like spokes' – the simile compares the words to the spokes of a wheel used as a weapon stabbing the heart, symbol of emotions.
5. 'Sarcasm' – bitter or hurtful use of language

6. 'worn' – the poet's thoughts move from lamb, to wool, and then to a protective jersey made of wool. Note the alliteration.
7. 'spell' – the poem is about language, but it also suggests a magical spell to break the harshness of painful words.

Use the table below to analyse the following figures of speech

1. Metaphor: 'these jiggered words that dig a trench between us'

2. Simile: 'those epithets sharp like spokes'

3. Metaphor – stanza three

Literal part of the comparison	Figurative part of the comparison	Interpretation
'words'	A person digging a trench between two people A divide or barrier	
Epithets – words that are sharp		
	Cup of acid; Burns, eats away, is painful, can poison, can kill	

2x5 (10)

4. Do you think the imagery of the lamb is appropriate. Substantiate your answer providing 3 points. (3)
5. Identify the sound device used in stanza 5 (lines 20-21) and explain how the Image it creates, contributes to the message in the poem. (3)
6. What is the poet's wish? (1)