

To what extent do you agree?

1-a-day practice

In this extract, Mary Maloney, a 1950s housewife, has just welcomed home her husband.

For her, this was always a blissful time of day. She knew he didn't want to speak much until the first drink was finished, and she, on her side, was content to sit quietly, enjoying his company after the long hours alone in the house. She loved to luxuriate in the presence of this man, and to feel – almost as a sunbather feels the sun – that warm male glow that came out of him to her when they were alone together. She loved him for the way he sat loosely in a chair, for the way he came in a door, or moved slowly across the room with long strides. She loved the intent, far look in his eyes when they rested on her, the funny shape of the mouth, and especially the way he remained silent about his tiredness, sitting still with himself until the whisky had taken some of it away.

'You can really see how much Mary truly loves her husband; she idolises him.' To what extent do you agree?

In this extract, the protagonist, Link, explains what life is like when you're homeless.

So, pick your spot. Wherever it is (unless you're in a squat or a derelict house or something) it's going to have a floor of stone, tile, concrete or brick. In other words it's going to be hard and cold. It might be cramped, too – shop doorways often are. And remember, if it's winter you're going to be half frozen before you even start. Anyway, you've got your place, and if you're lucky enough to have a sleeping-bag you unroll it and get in. Settled for the night? Well maybe, maybe not. Remember my first night? The Scouser? 'Course you do. He kicked me out of my bedroom and pinched my watch. Well, that sort of thing can happen any night, and there are worse things. You could be peed on by a drunk or a dog. Happens all the time – one man's bedroom is another man's lavatory. You might be spotted by a gang of lager louts on the look-out for someone to maim. That happens all the time too, and if they get carried away you can end up dead. There are the guys who like young boys, who think because you're a dosser you'll do anything for dosh, and there's the psycho who'll knife you for your pack.

'The protagonist really gives the reader an insight into the reality of life on the street.' To what extent do you agree?

In this extract, the protagonist, Dorian Gray is about to murder his friend Basil Hallward in cold blood.

Dorian Gray glanced at the picture, and suddenly an uncontrollable feeling of hatred for Basil Hallward came over him, as though it had been suggested to him by the image on the canvas, whispered into his ear by those grinning lips. The mad passions of a hunted animal stirred within him, and he loathed the man who was seated at the table, more than in his whole life he had ever loathed anything. He glanced wildly around. Something glimmered on the top of the painted chest that faced him. His eye fell on it. He knew what it was. It was a knife that he had brought up, some days before, to cut a piece of cord, and had forgotten to take away with him. He moved slowly towards it, passing Hallward as he did so. As soon as he got behind him, he seized it and turned round. Hallward stirred in his chair as if he was going to rise. He rushed at him and dug the knife into the great vein that is behind the ear, crushing the man's head down on the table and stabbing again and again.

There was a stifled groan and the horrible sound of some one choking with blood. Three times the outstretched arms shot up convulsively, waving grotesque, stiff-fingered hands in the air. He stabbed him twice more, but the man did not move.

'Dorian Gray is clearly presented as a disturbed character; the reader immediately feels antipathy towards him.' To what extent do you agree?

In this extract, Arthur Kipps notices a woman standing alone at the funeral of Alice Drablow.

A bonnet-type hat covered her head and shaded her face, but, although I did not stare, even the swift glance I took of the woman showed me enough to recognise that she was suffering from some terrible wasting disease, for not only was she extremely pale, even more than a contrast with the blackness of her garments could account for, but the skin and, it seemed, only the thinnest layer of flesh was tautly stretched and strained across her bones, so that it gleamed with a curious, blue-white sheen, and her eyes seemed sunken back into her head. Her hands that rested on the pew before her were in a similar state, as though she had been a victim of starvation. Though not any medical expert, I had heard of certain conditions which caused such terrible wasting, such ravages of the flesh, and knew that they were generally regarded as incurable, and it seemed poignant that a woman, who was perhaps only a short time away from her own death, should drag herself to the funeral of another.'

'It's obvious that Arthur feels intense pity for this woman; the reader is made to share his sympathy for her.' To what extent do you agree?

<p>In this extract, the protagonist, Thomas, has awoken with no recollection of where he is or how he got there.</p> <p>My name is Thomas, he thought.</p> <p>That... that was the only thing he could remember about his life.</p> <p>He didn't understand how this could be possible. His mind functioned without flaw, trying to calculate his surroundings and predicament. Knowledge flooded his thoughts, facts and images, memories and details of the world and how it works. He pictured snow on trees, running down a leaf-strewn road, eating a hamburger, the moon casting a pale glow on a grassy meadow, swimming in a lake, a busy city square with hundreds of people bustling about their business.</p> <p>And yet he didn't know where he came from, or how he'd gotten inside the dark lift, or who his parents were. He didn't even know his last name. Images of people flashed across his mind, but there was no recognition, their faces replaced with haunted smears of color. He couldn't think of one person he knew, or recall a single conversation.</p>	<p>The writer enables the reader to experience Thomas' confusion for themselves; they know as much about him as he does.' To what extent do you agree?</p>
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1. Extract taken from *Lamb to the Slaughter* by Roald Dahl (20th century)
2. Extract taken from *Stone Cold* by Robert Swindells (20th century)
3. Extract taken from *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (19th century)
4. Extract taken from *The Woman in Black* by Susan Hill (20th Century)
5. Extract taken from *The Maze Runner* by James Dashner (21st century)