

# **TEACHER'S GUIDE**

## ***LUNTU MASIZA TELLS THE TRUTH***

**Compiled by Penny Lorimer**

## **Contents**

### **Story Outline**

### **Author Information**

### **Story Context**

## **SECTION A: HELPFUL INFORMATION AND REMINDERS**

### **1. What Is a Novel**

### **2. The Processes of Writing and Reading Fiction**

#### **Writers**

#### **Readers**

### **3. Reading Progression**

#### a) Suggested Questions for Learners

##### Five Basic Question Types

##### Literal

##### Reorganisation

##### Inference

##### Evaluation

##### Appreciation

#### b) Before Each Reading

#### c) During Reading

#### d) After Reading

### **4. The Features of a Novel**

#### Story and Plot

#### Setting

#### Narrator and Point of View

#### Structure

#### Conflict

#### Mood or Atmosphere

#### Tone

#### Characterisation

#### Style

#### Dialogue

#### Figurative Language and Imagery

#### Themes

## **SECTION B: EXPLORING THE BOOK, CHAPTER BY CHAPTER**

### **E-MAIL 1: (Saturday) Holiday Homework**

Outline

Story and Plot Development

Suggested Questions

Pre-reading

Post-reading

Themes

Character Development

### **E-MAIL 2: (Sunday) Sunday at the Containers**

Outline

Story and Plot Development

Suggested Questions

Pre-reading

Post-reading

Themes

Character Development

### **E-MAIL 3: (Monday) Luntu's Life at Walter Sisulu High School**

Outline

Story and Plot Development

Suggested Questions

Pre-reading

Post-reading

Themes

Character Development

### **E-MAIL 4: (Tuesday) First Class with a New Teacher**

Outline

Story and Plot Development

Suggested Questions

Pre-reading

Post-reading

Themes

Character Development

**E-MAIL 5: (Wednesday) Why Do We Study History?**

Outline

Story and Plot Development

Suggested Questions

Pre-reading

Post-reading

Themes

Character Development

**E-MAIL 6: (Thursday) The Teenage Game**

Outline

Story and Plot Development

Suggested Questions

Pre-reading

Post-reading

Themes

Character Development

**E-MAIL 7: (Friday) The Power of Hair (and an Apple Becomes Ripe)**

Outline

Story and Plot Development

Suggested Questions

Pre-reading

Post-reading

Themes

Character Development

**E-MAIL 8: (Saturday – Week 2) More About the New Teacher**

Outline

Story and Plot Development

Suggested Questions

Pre-reading

Post-reading

Themes

Character Development

**E-MAIL 9: (Sunday) Secrets of the Female Body, Revealed**

Outline

Story and Plot Development

Suggested Questions

Pre-reading

Post-reading

Themes

Character Development

**E-MAIL 10: (Monday) Matter Over Mind**

Outline

Story and Plot Development

Suggested Questions

Pre-reading

Post-reading

Themes

Character Development

**E-MAIL 11: (Tuesday) Hard Head, Hard Heart**

Outline

Story and Plot Development

Suggested Questions

Pre-reading

Post-reading

Themes

Character Development

**E-MAIL 12: (Wednesday) Tanya's Return**

Outline

Story and Plot Development

Suggested Questions

Pre-reading

Post-reading

Themes

Character Development

**E-MAIL 13: (Friday) Romance Is Dead**

Outline

Story and Plot Development

Suggested Questions

Pre-reading

Post-reading

Themes

Character Development

**E-MAIL 14: (Saturday – Week 3) The Story Spreads**

Outline

Story and Plot Development

Suggested Questions

Pre-reading

Post-reading

Themes

Character Development

**E-MAIL 15: (Sunday) Uniform Matters**

Outline

Story and Plot Development

Suggested Questions

Pre-reading

Post-reading

Themes

Character Development

**E-MAIL 16: (Monday) Mr Bali Loses His Cool**

Outline

Story and Plot Development

Suggested Questions

Pre-reading

Post-reading

Themes

Character Development

**E-MAIL 17: (Tuesday) The Snowball Exercise**

Outline

Story and Plot Development

Suggested Questions

Pre-reading

Post-reading

Themes

Character Development

**E-MAIL 18: (Wednesday) Luntu Cooks His Goose**

Outline

Story and Plot Development

Suggested Questions

Pre-reading

Post-reading

Themes

Character Development

**E-MAIL 19: (Thursday) Things Fall Apart**

Outline

Story and Plot Development

Suggested Questions

Pre-reading

Post-reading

Themes

Character Development

**E-MAIL 20: (Friday) Persona Non Grata**

Outline

Story and Plot Development

Suggested Questions

Pre-reading

Post-reading

Themes

Character Development

### **E-MAIL 21: (Saturday) True Confessions**

Outline

Story and Plot Development

Suggested Questions

Pre-reading

Post-reading

Themes

Character Development

### **E-MAIL 22: WHY, SIR, WHY???????**

Outline

Story and Plot Development

Suggested Questions

Pre-reading

Post-reading

Themes

Character Development

### **E-MAIL 23: (Saturday)**

Outline

Story and Plot Development

Suggested Questions

Pre-reading

Post-reading

Themes

Character Development

## **SECTION C: EXAMPLES OF FORMAL ASSESSMENT**

Mid-year

End-of-year

## **SECTION D: ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES**

1. Creative Writing
2. Dialogue
3. Monologue
4. Book Review
5. Newspaper Article

6. Notice

7. Debate

## **ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS**

Exploring the Novel, Chapter by Chapter

Mid-year Assessment

End-of-year Assessment

## **GLOSSARY**

## **Story Outline**

*Luntu Masiza Tells the Truth* is a story told through a number of e-mails written by a Grade 11 student, Luntu Masiza, about himself, to one of his teachers, Mr Bali. Mr Bali sets a June/July holiday assignment for Luntu to write something every day about himself and his life so far.

At first Luntu thinks the assignment is a boring one. He begins by describing a bit about his home, his childhood and his present situation and then writes about a particularly difficult year in his recent past – when everything which had seemed to be going right for him went wrong – especially anything to do with the new Grade 10 teacher, Mr Bali!

Luntu makes a commitment early on in his writing to telling the truth – and he does. The process of writing is sometimes painful, but it reinforces what he learned from his recent experiences: that, in order to build real and positive relationships, to overcome future problems, and to live a successful life; he must be honest with other people and above all, with himself.

## **Author Information**

Penny Lorimer grew up in Johannesburg and studied Drama and English at university in Cape Town. She was a professional actress for about five years during which she performed mostly in stage plays and had a few minor TV roles. In order to earn money in-between her acting jobs, she worked as a waitress, a librarian, a doctor's receptionist, a union secretary, a film production assistant, a production manager for a film editor, and a voice coach before she got married.

While bringing up her two children, she worked as a personal assistant and then as a knowledge manager for a group of independent township schools. Since then she has worked in a picture-framing shop, in a second hand bookshop, teaching English to foreign nationals and as a carer for old people in the UK.

She has always loved reading (TV only arrived in South Africa when she was in matric and computers even later). She still reads at least once a day, and often has

three different books on the go at a time so she can read whatever suits her mood. Her favourite modern young adult writers are John Green, Gary Paulson, Matthew Quick and Judy Blume who write realist fiction. She also reads crime novels, historical novels, general fiction and non-fiction. She enjoys books that contain humour. Penny believes that you cannot be a successful writer if you don't read because reading is the best way of developing your imagination and creativity. She tries to write every day, even if it's only for thirty minutes. She writes the kinds of stories that she would like to read.

Her first book was a crime novel written for Grade 8 students, published in 2013. Her crime novel for adults was published in 2014. *Luntu Masiza Tells the Truth* is her third published novel which she wrote during the COVID lockdown. It won a silver medal in the 2021 Sanlam Youth Literature competition and was based on her experiences and observations while working at a school in the Langa community in the Western Cape.

Penny likes observing different people in different environments and creating stories about them in her imagination. She also gets her writing ideas from the books, magazines and newspapers she reads, from plays, movies and TV, from parts of her own life, and from stories she hears from and about other people.

### **Story Context**

*Luntu Masiza Tells the Truth* reflects the lives of adolescents, one adolescent, Luntu, in particular. Many adolescents in South Africa live with only one parent, or sometimes with a grandparent (like Luntu) or a guardian who may be another family member. This is often because of divorce or the death of parents or one parent having to work far away from home.

Children who have grown up without one or both parents (or with parents who are physically or emotionally absent) may experience a deep sense of loss and insecurity, particularly during their high school years. These are the years when they are also coping with the physical development which comes during adolescence and emotional challenges around exploring their own identity. They often develop ways of coping with these challenges which may include:

- Pretending to be something they are not (such as pretending to be confident when really, they are unsure of themselves and feel emotionally exposed).
- Feeling angry and showing that anger in different ways (for example not performing well academically, bullying other students online or offline, or acting violently).
- Withdrawing emotionally and not interacting socially with their peers.
- Spreading gossip about others to feel a sense of power and importance.
- Getting sexually involved because they want to feel that they belong and are seen and loved, even if their sexual partner/s are simply using them for sex, getting sexually involved while still emotionally and physically immature and without taking proper responsibility for their sexual behaviour.
- Drinking alcohol, taking drugs, or joining gangs.
- Cutting themselves or developing eating problems or other self-destructive habits to provide outlets for their feelings.

Some of these behaviours are described in *Luntu Masiza Tells the Truth*. It is important for parents, schools and teachers to build relationships with the adolescents in their lives, to understand their challenges but also to emphasise continually important universal values such as honesty, kindness, generosity, loyalty, humility, courage, compassion and integrity; even though young adults sometimes face pressure (mostly from their peers) to ignore these values so that they can feel a sense of belonging.

## **SECTION A: Reminders and Information (To be shared with learners if and when appropriate)**

### **1. What is a Novel?**

- A novel is a work of fiction or semi-fiction (some novels are based on actual events).
- It tells a story about a particular person or group of people – or sometimes animals, or other beings such as wizards or beings from outer space, or personified objects such as robots or toys.
- A novel tells its story in prose (ordinary written language) rather than poetry.
- The main difference between a novel and a short story is its length. A short story can usually be read quite quickly and might be about one event or character, whereas a novel may focus on many events and characters and take many hours or days to read.
- When we read or talk about novels, while enjoying the story, we usually pay attention to the setting (where the events in the novel take place), the plot (the order in which things in the story happen), the sub-plots (the other less important stories that connect with the main story), the characters (the person or the people whom the novel is about), the point of view (who is writing or telling the story), and the themes (the topics or issues that are explored in the novel).

### **2. The Processes of Writing and Reading Fiction**

When we read fiction, we are reading about people, places and events that have been created by the writer.

**Writers** (or authors) of fiction invent stories about fictional (pretend) people and places, situations and events (sometimes events, places and situations in stories are real, for example, they may set them during World War II, or in South Africa during apartheid) which they find interesting.

- They include their own remembered feelings, thoughts, situations, and experiences in their stories.
- They borrow events from other people's lives which they have heard or read about or witnessed. They also sometimes borrow one or two interesting features of a real person's appearance or way of speaking to create a fictional character and will use their knowledge of how humans look and behave to invent the rest.

When they do these writers must be careful not to use too many recognisable details from one real person in order to protect that person and themselves.

- They often explore issues which are important to them (for example, universal values such as honesty, kindness, or generosity; war and peace or racism; or emotions such as anger, hate, or love).
- They generate new ideas, pictures and possibilities in their minds from the above and then turn them into stories. We call this process “imagination”.

**Readers** of fiction share a similar process of imagination. We might say that the act of reading is where the reader’s and writer’s imaginations meet.

- The reader recognises many of the experiences, situations, events, thoughts and feelings which the writer is describing and identifies with them in some way.
- They do this even if the story is about someone or something or somewhere very different from anyone or anything they really know.
- They are able to do this because both writers and readers already share an understanding of the ideas and emotions all human beings experience. Famous writer, Salman Rushdie, said: “If the story feels truthful about human beings, then it speaks to us [the readers]”.

*Luntu Masiza Tells the Truth* tells the story of an invented character, Luntu (and other characters) in an invented place, who experiences his own thoughts and feelings about his invented life. Readers of this novel may be different from Luntu. They might be a different race or gender; live in a different environment; find different things important, interesting, or funny; or have had different experiences than the ones Luntu describes. But they will almost certainly be able to imagine and understand something about him, and to identify with his thoughts, feelings and what happens to him on some level because they, like Luntu, are human. Through the reading process, readers may begin to understand themselves and other people better. They might even begin to imagine different ways of living their own lives while reading this story.

### 3. Reading Progression

Many novels are divided into chapters. *Luntu Masiza Tells the Truth* is written as a series of e-mails. These e-mails may sometimes be referred to as “chapters” in this guide.

- a) Suggested Questions for learners have been provided in order to check understanding of, and engagement with the story and to explore the elements of the novel reflected in each e-mail. Between eight and ten questions have been provided for each e-mail chapter. Teachers may use some or all of these questions for class or small-group discussion, self-reflection, revision, homework, assignments or exams. They incorporate the five basic question types to address the different cognitive levels.

#### *Five basic question types*

<b>COGNITIVE LEVEL</b>	<b>TYPES OF QUESTIONS</b>	<b>EXAMPLES</b>
Literal (Level 1)	Questions that deal explicitly with information stated in the text. Learners may be asked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Name things/people/places/elements</li> <li>• State facts/points/ideas</li> <li>• Identify reasons/persons/causes</li> <li>• List points/names/reasons</li> <li>• Describe characters/places/events/actions</li> <li>• Relate incidents/episodes/experiences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is the name of Luntu’s high school?</li> <li>• What disability does Luntu’s grandmother have?</li> <li>• Give the reason Luntu was sent out of class.</li> <li>• List the purposes of Luntu’s holiday assignment.</li> <li>• Describe what action Luntu took when Tanya did not return to school after the June-July holidays?</li> <li>• Relate the story Luntu makes up for himself about his missing father.</li> </ul>

<p>Reorganisation (Level 2)</p>	<p>Questions that require explanation, analysis, synthesis or reorganisation of information or language explicitly supplied in the text. Learners may be asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Summarise the main points/ideas/pros (advantages)/cons (disadvantages)</li> <li>• Group common elements/factors</li> <li>• State similarities/differences</li> <li>• Give an outline of events</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Briefly summarise how Luntu felt about Tanya after having sex with her and how Tanya's behaviour towards him changed.</li> <li>• State the similarities between Luntu and Tanya's attitudes and behaviours in Mr Bali's class.</li> <li>• In your own words, describe Luntu's <i>modus operandi</i> with Tanya.</li> <li>• Outline the events which Luntu describes following Milo's haircut.</li> </ul>
<p>Inference (Level 3)</p>	<p>Questions that require a learner's engagement with information explicitly stated in the text, in terms of their personal experience. They may be asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explain the main idea</li> <li>• Compare ideas, attitudes, and actions</li> <li>• Explain the author's (or character's) intention/attitude/motivation/reason ...</li> <li>• Explain the cause and effect of . . .</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explain the main idea behind the different structure and content of the LO classes at WSHS.</li> <li>• Compare the attitudes and actions of Luntu and Bandi when they first meet Mr Bali.</li> <li>• Explain the main motivation for Mr Bali's setting this holiday assignment for Luntu. Explain your answer.</li> <li>• Briefly explain the cause and effect of Luntu's grandmother not telling Luntu the truth about his father.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explain what an action/comment/ attitude (etc.) reveals about a narrator/writer/character</li> <li>• Explain how a metaphor/simile/image affects their understanding of ...</li> <li>• Predict what they think will be the outcome/effect (etc.) of an action/a situation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What does the description of Mr Van der Merwe’s hands tell you about him?</li> <li>• “Unathi stood up, her chair screeching along the floor like a kicked cat.” How does this simile add to your understanding of Luntu’s attitude to Unathi?</li> <li>• The title for the e-mail you are about to read is “Tanya’s Return”. Predict – from what you know so far – how Luntu and Tanya’s relationship will progress after she returns to school?</li> </ul>
<p>Evaluation (Level 4)</p>	<p>Questions that deal with value and worth. These include judgments regarding reality, credibility, facts and opinions, validity, logic and reasoning, and issues such as the desirability and acceptability of decisions and actions in terms of moral values. Learners may be asked:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To give their opinion about whether what happens is credible/realistic/possible</li> <li>• To give their opinion on whether the writer’s argument and views are valid/logical/conclusive</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do you believe that The Teenage Game is played at schools and elsewhere? Explain your answer.</li> <li>• Discuss whether you agree that the author’s belief about the importance of honesty presented as the main theme in this novel is correct. Explain your answer.</li> <li>• What do you think about the teacher’s decision to put Mr or Ms before his learners’ names?</li> <li>• Mr Bali says “planning is power”. What does he mean? Do you agree with him?</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To discuss/comment critically on the action/intention/motive/ attitude/ suggestion/implication</li> <li>• Whether they agree with a view/statement/observation/ interpretation</li> <li>• To give their opinion or whether the writer/narrator/character is justified in suggesting/advocating that ... and to substantiate their response (give reasons for their answer)</li> <li>• To decide whether a character's attitude/behaviour/action is justifiable or acceptable and to give reasons for their answer</li> <li>• What a character's actions/attitudes/motives show about them in the context of universal values</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do you think it is fair for teachers or parents to expect learners to work during the holidays? Give reasons for your answer.</li> <li>• Explain why Unathi was so angry with Luntu and his friends and immediately reports their action to Mrs Mitchell. Was her reaction justified and why/why not?</li> <li>• Luntu's grandmother says that WSHS "teaches good values". What is meant by "values"? Give some examples (other than those she mentions) of good values.</li> </ul>
<p>Appreciation (Level 5)</p>	<p>Questions intended to address psychological and aesthetic impact on the learners. They focus on emotional responses to the content, identification with characters or incidents, and understanding of, and reactions to the writer's use of language (such as word choice and imagery). Learners may be asked:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To discuss their response to an incident or a situation/conflict/ dilemma in the text</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have you ever felt angry, disappointed or humiliated after getting a bad mark? Discuss your response.</li> <li>• If you had been in Luntu's grandmother's situation, would you have kept the truth about his father from him as she did? Why/why not?</li> <li>• Explain the meaning of the idiom "turning over a new leaf".</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Whether they empathise with a character and what action/decision they would have taken if they had been in the same situation</li> <li>• To discuss/comment on the writer's use of language</li> <li>• To discuss the effectiveness of the writer's style/introduction/conclusion/imagery/metaphors/literary devices</li> </ul>	<p>Why does it work in this context?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Find examples of three different similes in this e-mail. Explain how they make the writing more effective.</li> </ul>
--	--	---

- b) Before each reading: Teachers may want to ask learners questions about what they have read so far in order to check their story recall and understanding of the story and their engagement with it. They might also ask learners to guess what will happen in the chapter they are about to read. To be able to do this, learners will need to combine what they already know about the book, the plot, the themes, the setting, and the story and the characters, as well as make guesses based on their own experiences.
- c) During reading: The most important thing is to allow students to enjoy the story as they are reading it, so the reading process should be interrupted as little as possible. However, teachers can encourage learners beforehand to be aware of experiences that they might have had which are similar or different to any of the characters' experiences. Learners can also be reminded to be conscious of the thoughts or feelings they may have that may be similar or different to any of the characters' thoughts or feelings. If questions or observations arise for learners while they are reading, they can make quick notes (just a word or two) to help them remember them afterwards.
- d) After reading: Questions and discussions after reading should help learners: remember the story and identify which part of the plot it represents; understand

and appreciate the language used; identify the themes that are being explored; remember the characters, their emotions, their motives for acting in the way that they do, their progress, and their changes; guess how characters' actions will affect what happens next; develop opinions about all aspects of the novel; and explore their own feelings and thoughts in response to the story.

**IMPORTANT:** Any questions or discussions around fiction (especially those on the levels of inference, evaluation, and appreciation) may result in more than one possible answer, but it is important that learners should – as much as possible – find and use the evidence in the text to support their answers. Sometimes the evidence is not obvious. They may have to find clues to meaning that is intended but which is not directly expressed.

#### 4. The Features of a Novel

##### Story and Plot

A plot is the arrangement of events within a story. It is a description of **what** happens (and how events are arranged), **where** it happens (the setting) and **to whom** it happens (the characters). Plot is part of the story, but a story includes character development, mood, conflict, themes, and other factors that fill out the plot. Plot could be described as the skeleton of a novel, whereas story is like the flesh.

- **Background** (sometimes called **back story**) is a set of events invented for a plot which are presented as leading up to that plot. It gives a narrative history which comes earlier than the main plot. Stories can start with background, but background can also be described at different points throughout the story.
- The start of the action is called the **inciting event**. In this novel it is when Luntu is given a holiday assignment by his teacher, Mr Bali, and commits to writing the truth about recent events affecting him and his life.
- The **key event** is when Mr Bali first arrives at Luntu's school to be his new class teacher and Luntu is almost immediately challenged and then disciplined by Mr Bali during his first lesson. The **development phase** is when Luntu gradually realises that his popularity with the other teachers and his verbal talents and confidence will not save him from being held accountable for his arrogance, his carelessness, and his wrong actions.

- The more mistakes Luntu makes, the more he denies the fact that he is in the wrong. The more he acts against the values of the school, and the more Mr Bali challenges him, the more his life spins out of control and the tension increases. This is known as **rising action**.
- The **climax** (the high point of the story) is reached when Tanya accuses Luntu of rape and he learns the truth about his father. This story has an unusual **double climax**. The **first climax** happens as part of the story of Luntu in the past. The **second climax** happens as part of the story of the present-day Luntu.
- After these two climaxes comes the **falling action**, firstly where Luntu begins, with the guidance of Mr Bali, to accept responsibility for himself and his actions and his life begins to get back on track; and secondly, where Luntu looks back at the relationship he eventually built with Mr Bali and realises how valuable it has been for him.
- The **resolution** (sometimes called the **denouement**) comes as something happens which enables Luntu to come to a final realisation of the importance of Mr Bali's role in his life and how his relationship with Mr Bali has changed him for the better. He has gained the necessary knowledge of himself that will enable him to act more honestly and wisely in future.

Subplots: Stories often contain subplots. These are side stories that run parallel to the main plot. They involve secondary stories of characters and events that add information to the main story. Subplots in this novel include:

- The story of Luntu's grandmother and her church priest
- The story of Lwazi and his abused girlfriend
- Unathi's personal story
- Tanya's personal story
- The story of Luntu's parents
- Mr Bali's personal story

## Setting

This is where the story takes place, that is, **where** everything happens. The main setting in this book is (the fictional) Walter Sisulu High School which Luntu attends. From being a place where Luntu has felt confident and clever, the school becomes a

place where he feels humiliated, angry, and unfairly treated. When Mr Bali arrives, Luntu begins to lose his sense of the school as a place where he is admired and successful. Another setting is Luntu's home where he lives with his blind grandmother. In the beginning of the story his home reminds him of all the losses in his life and the fact that he is poor. Additional settings are the township where Luntu and his classmates live, the church he attends with his grandmother, the street outside his house, the school bus, his girlfriend's house, and the school principal's office. Another central setting is the "containers" where Luntu uses computers provided by an NGO to do his homework and to complete his holiday e-mail assignment.

### **Narrator and Point of View**

Stories can be told (narrated) using different points of view. They include:

- **First person narrator.** This is where the main character tells the story from their own point of view – "I said" or "**we** did this". In this book Luntu is narrating his story through the e-mails he is writing to one imaginary person: his teacher, Mr Bali.

*Example (page 14):*

I am the kind of child known as a "Born Free". You informed us, Sir, that the first time this title was used was for a famous book about a lion cub that was an orphan.

- **Third person, single viewpoint narrator.** This is where the story is told by a narrator who is different from the main character, but from the viewpoint of the main character. Everything is experienced and commented on by the main character even though "**he**", "**she**", and "**they**" are the pronouns used to tell the story.

*Example (page 28):*

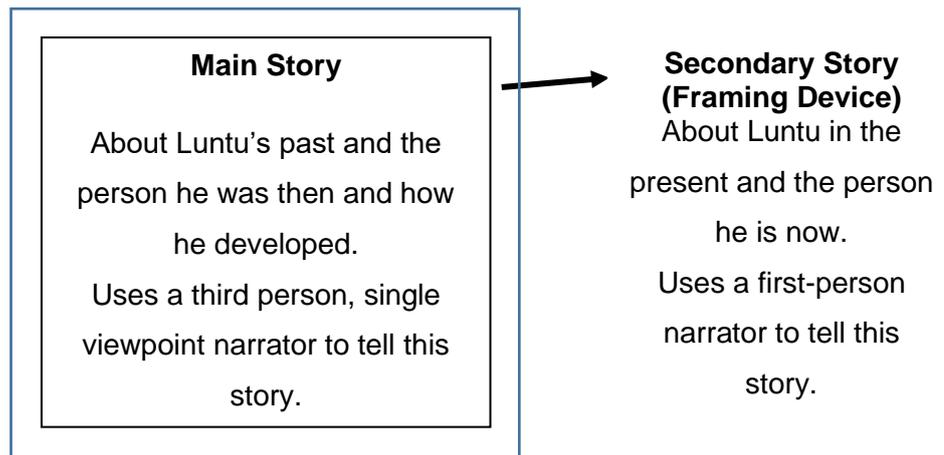
To tell the truth, Luntu also did not enjoy the LO classes at first because everyone was supposed to answer difficult questions and have "difficult conversations", but LO facilitators like students who speak up and that is Luntu's talent. So he began to say things that he knew the facilitators liked to hear even though they were not always true.

In *Luntu Masiza Tells the Truth* both **first person narrator** and **third person, single viewpoint narrator** are used. This is because of the particular structure of this book (see under "**Structure**" below).

- **Third person, multiple viewpoint narrators.** The reader is told the story from the viewpoint of different characters in turn. The pronouns “**he**”, “**she**”, and “**they**” are used but from a particular character’s perspective.
- **Omniscient narrator.** This is a story in which the writer writes about all the characters in the story. Like God (omniscient means all-knowing) this narrator can see into the minds of all the characters and tell the reader what they are doing, thinking, and feeling. Omniscient narrators know every detail of the story, no matter which character is involved. They can explain, interpret and analyse every action and behaviour. They represent the author’s voice and show that they have control over the story.
- **Second person narrator** (using the pronoun “**you**” throughout the story – almost as if the narrators are writing to themselves) and **multiple person narrator** (using the pronoun “**we**” as if many people together are telling the story) are also sometimes used in fiction, but not very often.

## Structure

Most novels are divided into chapters. This novel is structured into 23 parts. Each part takes the form of a different e-mail written on a different day by the main character, Luntu, to his teacher, Mr Bali. In each e-mail, Luntu reveals part of his story. The e-mail structure can also be called a **framing device**. A framing device is a story-telling technique in which the main story (the picture) is surrounded by a secondary story (the picture frame). This creates a story within a story. In this book, the present-day Luntu is writing a series of e-mails to his teacher which tell the story of himself in the past. Luntu’s character in the present writes about his past. He therefore sometimes talks about himself as he is now but mostly about what happened to his past self. This might be easier to explain visually:



**Note:** This Teacher's Guide sometimes refers to the e-mails as "chapters".

### **Conflict**

There is a famous piece of advice for writers which says:

"The writer's job is to get the main character up a tree, and then, once they are up there, throw rocks at them."

If there was no conflict (no rocks) in a story, it would probably be very boring to read. The excitement in a story comes from the problems faced by, and the conflict between characters. Conflict is what adds drama to a story and makes the reader want to keep reading.

Sometimes a character faces situations which produce **external (outer) conflict**, such as poverty, a parent's death, or a challenging teacher.

**Internal (inner) conflict** relates to how the character/s must decide on how they should deal with what happens to them, how they should act in response to the external challenges. At first, when Luntu is angry, he chooses to respond to the outer conflict he faces with anger and arrogance which affect his subsequent actions. Later, when many "rocks" have been thrown at him, he begins to choose a different response. His internal conflict comes from deciding how he should act.

## **Mood or Atmosphere**

A **mood** is a feeling that reflects the emotions of a character, and this gives the story its atmosphere (general feeling). Mood is always present in stories and can change at different points of the story. It can be communicated by the author subtly through the use of imagery e.g., descriptions of places such as this one:

*Example (page 10)*

...where I live, daylight is not always completely clear. Some days we wake to fog that hides even the houses next door, or summer dust that turns everything pale and makes us cough, or thick, brown smoke from winter cooking fires at the shacks, that lies over us like a blanket hiding from the sun.

Mood can also be communicated through dialogue:

*Example (page 42):*

“We study history because the teachers make us,” was Tanya’s only contribution to the brainstorming session as she looked at her nails, stretched and patted her weave.

Luntu and Bandi laughed.

“We learn from history,” said Unathi. She wrote it down and looked at the boys.

“We don’t learn from history,” Luntu contradicted her. “If we did, wars would stop happening because people would learn that they caused so much suffering.” He was as good at arguing as she was, because you learned how to argue from debating.”

“We learn to fight each other better each time.” Unathi spoke as she added this point to her page. She is also in the debating club.

“What about writing my point?” asked Luntu

“If you think it is important, then you write it,” said Unathi.

Tanya giggled.

Luntu felt his chest getting tight.

Mood is created by the way characters in a story respond to what they see, hear, touch, smell, taste, or sense in some other way. Characters then express what they are feeling and this often creates the mood of the scene or story.

In *Luntu Masiza Tells the Truth* the mood usually reflects what Luntu is feeling as he writes each e-mail. The mood ranges from sadness when Luntu reflects on his living situation and how he misses his parents, to indignation and anger as his world at school begins to change. There are some light-hearted moods such as in the e-mail when Luntu is telling Mr Bali about the importance of hair and hairstyles and tells a funny story about one of his friends. Sometimes the mood switches to a thoughtful and serious one when the reader can sense that Luntu might be questioning the meaning of life in general as well as his and his peers' past life choices and behaviour.

### **Tone**

In a story, tone refers to what sort of language narrators use to tell their story. For example, the language may be very polite and formal; or it could be friendly and informal; or a mixture of both. The tone expresses the narrator's attitude throughout the story. It might stay the same throughout a piece, or it might change to reflect a shift in the story or mood.

In this novel the tone is mostly friendly and informal, especially when Luntu is making a joke, using slang words or phrases, or describing humorous events. Readers can tell from this that his relationship with Mr Bali (his fictional reader) is relaxed and comfortable. However, Luntu calls Mr Bali "Sir" whenever he is addressing him directly. In addition, because Luntu is trying to improve his English, which is not his mother tongue, he writes quite carefully, mostly trying to use good grammar and punctuation. This reflects a more formal, respectful tone at times.

### **Characterisation**

Characterisation is the term for the methods a writer uses to reveal each characters' feelings, thoughts, values, goals etc. to readers. The author may reveal characters in a number of ways including:

- Describing what the character looks like physically (they may only refer to one feature of a character's appearance, for example, their eyes or their hands)
- Describing the way characters talk and what they say
- Describing the actions of a character (for example, how they walk)
- Describing the thoughts and feelings of a character

- Describing the reactions of a character to certain events
- Describing characters live, or their possessions
- Describing how a character experiences things through his senses (touch, taste, smell, sight, or hearing)

**Example of a question and possible answers around a characterisation (Remind learners to use the text to support their answers):**

*Example (page 31)*

Beside the desk sat a very thin, tall straight, brown man with round glasses and spiky grey hair, wearing grey pants and a short-sleeved white shirt with a tie. He got up as Luntu and Bandi came into the classroom and smiled and said to them:

“Welcome. Please find a seat with your name on it and take out your pens and notebooks. You will not need your English books today.”

Question

What does the above example tell the reader about this character?

Possible answer/s

- This character shows that he cares about his appearance. He wears long trousers but a short-sleeved shirt which shows he wants to be comfortable (not too hot) but also formally (he is wearing a tie). He is polite because he welcomes Luntu and Bandi into the classroom and also uses the word “please”.
- This character is an English teacher because he is sitting behind a desk in a classroom and gives the boys instructions and because he mentions “English books”.

**The main character/s (or protagonist/s)** in a novel must develop and change in some way in order to make the novel interesting. If a main character’s ideas thoughts and feelings stay the same throughout and they learn nothing about themselves and the world around them, then the novel will not satisfy its readers.

**The antagonist** in a novel is usually the second most important character and also the person who works against the main character’s intentions and thereby creates the main conflict in a story. There can be more than one antagonist. The antagonist is often called “the bad guy” but an antagonist does not have to be evil. He only has

conflicting actions, thoughts, motives etc. to the protagonist. The term does not signify anything about the actual personality of the character. It is often through conflict with antagonists, that protagonists are forced to change and develop as characters.

**Secondary characters** (also called supporting characters) can also experience some changes or development but they are often there mainly to support the protagonist and drive the story forward, for example acting as a sidekick (such as a best friend) or love interest (such as a romantic partner), or family member.

**Minor characters** in fiction do not undergo substantial change or growth in the course of a story. These characters often serve no purpose other than to move the story along. Their personalities are not very important in the story.

*Characters:*

**Luntu Masiza** is the main character (protagonist). He is writing his story while in Grade 11, but it begins from when he was much younger and progresses mainly over the course of his Grade 10 year. He is the first person narrator of his story but becomes a third person narrator some of the time because, as he explains to Mr Bali to whom he is addressing his daily e-mails:

*Example (page 21)*

“Sir, from now on I have decided to tell my story as a history. I am writing about the Luntu I used to be, not the Luntu I am now. To write in the first person and say *I* and *me* all the time feels strange. To say *he* and *him* and *his* will be more accurate.”

Luntu has a complex personality which includes both positive and negative characteristics. In the beginning of the story, he is a seemingly confident, clever young man who is popular with both students and teachers. With the arrival of a new teacher at Walter Sisulu High School, who does not seem impressed enough by his talents and who challenges Luntu to do better; Luntu’s arrogance, anger at some of his life circumstances, and insecurities become obvious and lead him into some poor choices and very difficult situations during his Grade 10 year. As he writes the e-mails that describe these situations, Luntu gradually starts to understand the importance of being honest with both him and others, and in building real and positive relationships. He begins (with help from people who care about him) to accept himself and his circumstances and to live in a more authentic way.

The table below gives an example of how learners can build up a profile of Luntu while reading the book and when working with it afterwards, using overt and more subtle examples from the text. It also gives a sense of how complex Luntu is and how his character changes and develops through the story. This exercise could also be done as a mind map.

In the beginning:

<b>Luntu's character</b>	<b>How do we know</b>
He appears confident	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• He is in the debating club.</li> <li>• The teachers often ask him to read at assembly or organise events.</li> <li>• He is often asked to show visitors and funders around the school.</li> <li>• Everybody knows that he loves talking and is a good talker.</li> </ul>
He is determined and ambitious	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• He imagines that his father is someone famous.</li> <li>• When he is not accepted at Walter Sisulu High School at first, he visits the school with his grandmother to persuade the principal to accept him.</li> <li>• He tries his best at school.</li> <li>• He wants to study to be a lawyer after school.</li> </ul>
He loves language, especially English, he enjoys using figurative speech, and has good powers of description.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In his e-mails it is obvious that he likes learning new words in a language which is not his mother tongue.</li> <li>• He is interested in learning Latin.</li> <li>• He enjoys using (and making up) metaphors.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• He writes well. He is able to describe his environment and the people in it accurately.</li> <li>• He admires and remembers “the beautiful way” Mr Bali speaks English.</li> </ul>
He is academically intelligent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• He is good at English and history, life science, and isiXhosa. He is successful in life orientation discussions (even though he sometimes lies)</li> <li>• He does well in the critical thinking test when he is applying to enter WSHS.</li> <li>• He enjoys intellectual debate and discussion.</li> <li>• From the way he writes his e-mails and the words he uses, one can tell that he is intelligent.</li> </ul>
He is popular	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• He is class representative in the Student Leadership Council.</li> <li>• He is respected in the school by teachers and learners.</li> <li>• He seems to have quite a few friends.</li> </ul>
He is judgmental	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• He judges Unathi for being too quiet and for being sarcastic and makes fun of her through her “rat-killer” nickname.</li> <li>• He sometimes judges and makes fun of Bandi and his friends.</li> </ul>
He is dishonest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• He says things that he knows the LO facilitators like to hear, even though they are not always true.</li> <li>• He is unfaithful to his girlfriends.</li> </ul>
He is sad	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• He misses his mother and does not know his father.</li> </ul>

<p>He is angry</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• He resents the fact that he has no parents and has to live with “an old, blind woman”.</li> <li>• He kicks the corner of his grandmother’s house. He bashes the classroom furniture.</li> <li>• He blames Unathi for getting him into trouble, even though it was his own misbehaviour that did so.</li> </ul>
<p>He can be lazy and irresponsible</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• His grandmother complains that he does not do his chores.</li> <li>• He does not take responsibility for his actions.</li> <li>• He blames Mr Bali and others when he gets into trouble.</li> </ul>
<p>He has a good sense of humour</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• He enjoys his grandmother’s story about the salt.</li> <li>• He tells Mr Bali about the importance of peoples’ hair and illustrates this with a funny story about his friend Milo.</li> <li>• He also describes his friend Bandi’s way of getting girls to like him in a very humorous way.</li> <li>• The way he tells the story around the priest at his grandmother’s church also shows that he sees the humour in the situation.</li> </ul>
<p>He is very observant</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• He notices teachers’ hands and can describe them in detail.</li> <li>• He notices the <i>modus operandi</i> of his friend Bandi when it comes to getting girls to like him.</li> <li>• He notices that Lwazi’s girlfriend (at the containers) has been hit in the face and is</li> </ul>

	<p>glad for her when she eventually leaves Lwazi.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• He is aware of Bandi's difficult life situation.</li> </ul>
He is romantic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• He imagines how his father will eventually come and claim him as his son.</li> <li>• He falls in love very quickly with Tanya and has dreams of marrying her and of supporting her and her baby.</li> </ul>

Towards the end:

He learns the value of honesty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• He manages to tell the truth <i>about</i> himself and his feelings <i>to</i> himself through Mr Bali's care for him and through the exercise of writing about them.</li> <li>• He no longer has to hide his doubts and insecurities from Mr Bali.</li> <li>• He has realised that if he faces difficult feelings, thoughts and situations with honesty, they are easier to accept and cope with.</li> </ul>
He is more able to name and express his own feelings. He copes better with his negative feelings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• He is able to cry when his grandmother tells him the truth about his father.</li> <li>• While he still sometimes feels angry with his father, he is able to admit his anger, calm himself down, and not act rashly.</li> </ul>
He is less judgmental	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• He realises from the John Donne poem, and other class discussions, that human beings belong together and do not always deserve to be criticised or seen as inferior.</li> <li>• He recognises that other people, e.g. Unathi, are also struggling with difficult life events and can feel compassion for them.</li> </ul>

He has compassion for others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• He understands why Unathi behaved the way she did before she told the truth about herself.</li> </ul>
He learns humility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• He no longer feels the need to show off his talents. He is considering becoming a teacher in order to follow Mr Bali's example.</li> <li>• He gives up debating and joins the choir instead. He no longer sees the need to be the class rep. on the SLC.</li> <li>• He realises that by serving other people, he can feel good about himself.</li> </ul>
He feels gratitude	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• He realises how many people believe in him and want to support him, including Mr Bali, Miss Raesa, Unathi, and his grandmother.</li> <li>• He thanks Mr Bali for being a 'warrior' for all his students.</li> </ul>
He takes advice and has learned from his mistakes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• He has many talks with Mr Bali and meets him every week. He values Mr Bali's opinion.</li> </ul>
His determination and discipline increases.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Even though he sometimes finds it difficult to write his daily e-mails, he makes himself do so on all except one day of the holidays. He is proving that he now has the perseverance and discipline to do what he has committed himself to doing.</li> </ul>
His capacity for respecting others increases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When he reads about the toilet cleaner in <i>National Geographic</i> magazine, he understands that no matter what you do in life, especially if you serve others, you are worthy of respect.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• His behaviour and his academic work improve.</li> </ul>
--	--

The above kind of table or a mind map could be created for the other characters too. This exercise might best be undertaken once learners have finished the book. Remind learners to support what they write about each character with examples from the text.

**Mr Bali Silal** is the second most important character in this story. He fills the role of the **main antagonist**. He is an English and History teacher who arrives at Walter Sisulu High School. He takes over from the previous teacher (who left to have a baby) in the 2<sup>nd</sup> term of Luntu's Grade 10 year. He is a good but unusual teacher in that he does not only care about the academic progress of his students, but also about their emotional development and their life choices. He demands discipline and hard work in his classes and does not allow carelessness or bad behaviour, but also prompts thought-provoking discussions and sets interesting assignments. He is the character who Luntu blames for many of the challenges that he faces. He sets Luntu's holiday assignment to write an e-mail about himself every day of the June/July holidays. He is the person to whom Luntu addresses his e-mails.

**Luntu's grandmother** is a **secondary character**. She has looked after Luntu since his mother died when he was very young. She lives in a small brick house in a township community which she was allowed to buy when apartheid ended. She is blind and receives a monthly state pension which she uses to support both herself and Luntu. She depends on Luntu to do chores for her and gets angry when he forgets or refuses to do them. She is a good cook. She believes in getting a good education and is determined that her grandson will get a university degree. She believes in discipline and in having strong values and often quotes the Bible. She is a regular churchgoer and even belongs to a church organisation, the Anglican Women's Federation. Towards the end of the story she realises that some of Luntu's problems come from the fact that she has avoided telling him the whole truth about his parents. She does this and apologises for not doing so earlier. She and Luntu reach a better understanding after this and their relationship improves.

**Unathi**, another secondary character, can also be seen as an **antagonist** in this story as her words and actions create conflict between her and Luntu. She is an intelligent young woman who, like Luntu, performs well academically but who, unlike Luntu, is not generally liked by her classmates due to her unfriendliness and often sarcastic way of speaking. She seems lonely. However, reasons for her behaviour are later revealed and she, like Luntu, realises that the truth has set her free.

**Bandile**, also known as Bandi, is Luntu's best friend and a **secondary character**. He and Luntu spend time in each other's company both at school and after school but Bandi is not as confident (or arrogant) as Luntu. They both want to study law after school. Bandi lives with his father (who is an alcoholic) and his older brother, an electrician who earns the money to support them. His mother lives in the Eastern Cape with his baby sister but wants Bandi to stay in the city because of his schooling. He is faithful to one girlfriend and mostly a loyal friend to Luntu. He agrees with teachers as much as possible because he wants them to like him and he wants to avoid trouble. We do not learn of any changes in Bandi's character in this story, however, we can guess that Mr Bali had some influence on most of the learners in his class and perhaps encouraged positive changes for them as well as Luntu.

**Tanya** is another of Luntu's classmates, who shares some of his character flaws. She is a vain, manipulative, and arrogant young woman who, like Luntu, often believes that the rules don't apply to her and doesn't like to be told that she is in the wrong. Although Luntu is very attracted to her and dumps his other girlfriends to be with her, she can also be called an **antagonist** because she is responsible for one of the major challenges that he has to face in this story. She also makes some negative decisions about her own life and is forced to face the consequences.

**Mihlali (Milo), Andisane, Zuko, Vuyo, Ziyanda, Lindiwe, Phumla, Emihle, Lolo,** and **Zonke** are Luntu's friends and/or classmates who Luntu writes about, but who are all **minor characters** in the story.

**Mrs Moyo** (the school principal) and **Miss Raesa** (an LO teacher) are **minor characters** whom Luntu admires and respects. The reader does not know much about them other than that they like Luntu and have his best interests at heart. They are both

disappointed by his bad behaviour and do not hesitate to introduce consequences for it. Their main role in the story is to move it along.

**Mrs Mitchell, Mr Van, Miss Zara, Miss Zara, Mr Randall, and Miss Benedicta** are teachers and staff members at Luntu's school. They are also **minor characters** who only appear when they are useful to the story.

**Mrs Pondo (Luntu's grandmother's neighbour), Tanya's neighbour, Tanya's mother, the priests, Lwazi and Lwazi's girlfriend (at the containers), the old knitting man and other old people, and the Angolan man (also at the containers),** are all members of the community where Luntu lives. They play small roles in the story and are also **minor characters**.

### **Style**

Luntu uses a mostly conversational style while telling his story, sometimes using slang, humour, and careless grammar. When he is addressing Mr Bali directly, his style is a bit more formal and explanatory. He calls Mr Bali "Sir" and is careful to clarify things that he believes Mr Bali may not know about. His style is sometimes a bit bombastic (pompous or pretentious) as he tries out new English words or terms but the effect of this is usually funny.

### **Dialogue**

Luntu uses dialogue in his story to help him describe what happened. He tries to report accurately what characters said at different times and during different incidents. One of the purposes of his holiday assignment is to improve his English and his teacher will be reading what he has written so he is making an effort to write correctly. He occasionally uses slang.

### **Figurative language and imagery**

Literal language means exactly what it says. It is the kind of language we use most of the time in everyday speech to express our thoughts and ideas clearly and specifically. Figurative language (often used in novels and poetry) uses words that allow us to visualise thoughts or ideas in richer ways. Figurative language uses similes,

metaphors, hyperbole, personification, alliteration, synecdoche, onomatopoeia, idioms, irony etc.

Luntu enjoys using figurative language in his writing. This helps readers imagine the setting or the people about whom he is writing in richer and more interesting detail. Through his use of imagery, the reader can tell that he enjoys speaking and writing in English and learning new words. He is especially fond of using metaphor which he often expresses through simile (a form of metaphor). See some examples of figurative language used in the text, below:

<p><b>Metaphor</b> Describes an object or action in a way that isn't actually true, but helps to explain an idea or make a comparison. A metaphor does not use "like" or "as".</p>	<p><i>Example: Page 53</i> "When he felt his fingers touch her head Luntu felt <u>lightning strike his stomach</u> again"</p>
<p><b>Simile (a type of metaphor)</b> A direct comparison is made between people or objects using "like" or "as".</p>	<p><i>Example: Page 33</i> "Unathi stood up, her chair screeching along the floor <u>like a kicked cat.</u>" <i>Example: Page 66</i> "He had planned to play it <u>cool and sweet as a can of Coke fresh from the tuckshop fridge.</u>"</p>
<p><b>Hyperbole</b> An exaggeration for effect.</p>	<p><i>Example: Page 11</i> "People sometimes say that Luntu Masiza was not born. Instead, <u>he fell from a passing comet to set the earth alight.</u>"</p>
<p><b>Idiom</b> A phrase that has a different meaning from what it says. That meaning is understood by most speakers of that language.</p>	<p><i>Example: Page 87</i> "Luntu decided to throw a <u>spanner in the works</u> and a <u>cat among the pigeons</u>..."</p>

<p>For example: Someone is “in something for the long haul” which means that someone is committed to doing a long and difficult task.</p>	
<p><b>Irony/sarcasm</b></p> <p>These two figures of speech are very similar. Irony is when what is said and what is meant are not the same things. Sarcasm is a form of irony that is directed at a person or a thing with the intent to criticise.</p>	<p><i>Example: Page 25</i></p> <p>“It is a school that teaches the whole child.” Luntu read her these words from the school brochure. [To be honest, Sir, I wondered how it would be possible to teach half a child.]</p>
<p><b>Synecdoche</b> (pronounced sin-NEC-docky)</p> <p>A synecdoche takes part of something and uses it to represent a whole. So my “wheels” are used instead of my “car” or the “blonde” is used instead of “a girl with blonde hair”.</p>	<p><i>Example: Page 121</i></p> <p>“... that you are most likely <i>not</i> the father of her child as she was careful to use <u>protection</u>.”</p> <p>(Protection is one word that is used for a number of terms for methods of preventing unwanted pregnancy or diseases during sexual activity.)</p> <p><i>Example: Page 41</i></p> <p>“Tanya’s hair on that day was a smooth, soft <u>weave</u>, tied back loosely with a twisted black piece of elastic”</p> <p>(A weave is one word used for a method of sewing additional pieces of synthetic or human hair into a person’s existing hair to change their appearance.)</p>
<p><b>Rhyming compounds</b></p> <p>These are not usually listed as examples of figurative language, but they are included here because they add colour</p>	<p><i>Example: Page 10</i></p> <p>“Enough of the argy-bargy Mr Luntu!”</p> <p>(Argy-bargy means more than just an argument, it means a noisy quarrel. Mr Bali’s use of the compound indicates</p>

<p>and fun to the language that Mr Bali, Luntu, and some other characters use.</p> <p>Rhyming compounds are where two root words (often nouns) which rhyme or sound similar are merged into a new and more descriptive word with a different feel and meaning.</p> <p>For example: blame game, pitter-patter, walkie-talkie.</p>	<p>that he sometimes likes to use English in playful and humorous ways.)</p>
--	--

## Themes

One of the reasons writers choose to write, is to explore ideas, values, issues, beliefs, and actions that are important to them. These are called the themes. Fiction writers do this through the story's events and its characters. The main theme is the most important idea a writer explores in a novel, short story, or poem. The main theme explored in *Luntu Masiza Tells the Truth* is honesty (a clue to this is in the title of the book) and this theme is linked to all the others:

- Self-knowledge
- Respect
- Relationships
- Leadership
- Responsibility
- Power
- Courage
- Emotional development
- Loss

Some of these will be more obvious to the learners than others and they may be difficult to identify separately since they are often closely connected with each other. During the process of exploring the book, chapter by chapter, some of the more obvious themes that occur will be identified.

### *Honesty*

Luntu describes himself in Grade 10 as a confident, academically successful student and a leader who is popular with most of the students and staff at Walter Sisulu High School. However, as the story progresses, we realise that he has been allowed to get away with a lot of carelessness and rule-bending because people admire his confident (or arrogant) attitude. Unfortunately, this attitude hides his real feelings. He resents that he is poor and has to live with “an old blind woman”, his grandmother. He still mourns the death of his mother and wishes that he knew his father, but he covers up all the resentment, sadness, and anger he feels in front of other people. Talking a lot is one way in which he hides his difficult feelings and pretends to the world that he does not feel inferior.

The new Grade 9 teacher, Mr Bali, recognises Luntu’s real feelings and begins to challenge his academic performance and his negative behaviours, his lack of respect and his arrogance. Luntu dislikes Mr Bali for confronting him and angrily blames his teacher and others for the consequences of his actions. He tries to punish Mr Bali by allowing his academic performance to deteriorate and by making damaging behavioural choices without realising that the person he is really punishing is himself. He gets involved in one predicament after another until everything comes to a head and he is forced to admit his mistakes honestly, and to take responsibility for his decisions and actions. He can finally begin to put his life back together with Mr Bali’s support when he realises the value of truth in all parts of his life.

### *Self-knowledge*

It is only when one knows oneself and is honest with oneself that one can tell the truth to others and take full responsibility for one’s own feelings, thoughts and actions. Mr Bali quotes the famous Ancient Greek philosopher “...knowing yourself is the beginning of all wisdom” (Page 10). The whole exercise of writing e-mails about himself allows Luntu to recall his mistakes through his telling and reliving of his story. What he learned (and is still learning) is reinforced in his heart and mind and his knowledge of himself is strengthened. This was probably Mr Bali’s intention when he sets the holiday assignment.

### *Respect*

As Luntu tells the story of himself when he first met Mr Bali, it becomes clear that, under his outwardly confident act, he actually felt very inferior. This was for a number of reasons: He is poor, lives in a township, and has no parents. There are many examples of his failure to respect others in his story. When he first met Mr Bali, Luntu was unable to be honest about his real thoughts and feelings and depended on the opinions of others to build his sense of self-respect. He may have pretended to respect (for example, his girlfriends or his grandmother) but, as Mr Bali says: “You have to *have* love and respect in order to *give* it” (Page 137).

### *Relationships*

Positive relationships are created through trust. Luntu cannot have proper relationships while he is not being honest with himself or with anyone else. The positive relationships he eventually builds with Mr Bali (and Unathi and his grandmother) only become possible when he tells the truth.

Luntu’s grandmother also eventually realises the damage she has done to her relationship with Luntu by not telling him the full truth about his father.

Mr Bali always tells Luntu the truth, even when it makes Luntu angry and resentful. He sets an example of honesty for Luntu, so that, at the end of the story, “... to tell the truth, he trusted Mr Bali more than anyone else” (Page 137).

### *Leadership*

In the beginning of Luntu’s story, he is seen as a leader by many people at his school, mostly because of his ability to talk. However, his talking actually hides his insecurity, his dishonesty about his thoughts and feelings, and his lack of self-awareness. The principal, Mrs Moyo, eventually recognises that many of the teachers reinforced Luntu’s belief that he could get away with not following the code of conduct properly and that his academic results and his apparent confidence were the only things that mattered. She reminds him (and herself) that “leading *your own life* is the first and most important part of leadership” (Page 123).

### *Responsibility*

Luntu has a problem taking responsibility for his own behaviour. Towards the beginning of the story, he gets sent out of class for bashing the furniture. Instead of

admitting his anger and realising that he was at fault, he puts the blame on other people. Even when he decides not to focus properly on his academic work, he blames someone else. As he learns that honesty is the best policy, he can begin to admit his mistakes and change his behaviour.

### *Power*

At first Luntu sees himself as powerful and superior because he is a successful and well-known member of the school community. However, he really feels inferior and powerless because of his life circumstances. Mr Bali uses an exercise called “The Snowball Exercise” and a John Donne poem to make his students aware of what makes them feel inferior or superior to others. He also encourages them to see that these feelings can be very damaging, not only for individuals but for the world too as they often lead to a lack of equality and an imbalance of power, which cause resentment, envy, and can result in damaging actions such as wars.

### *Courage*

People are often dishonest when they are afraid. They may be dishonest because they are afraid of being judged or belittled. This theme is explored through Luntu’s pretending to be someone he is not, by hiding his difficult emotions behind a false front of confidence and arrogance. When he learns to tell the truth about himself, he can be honest with others too, even though it is still sometimes difficult. Unathi shows courage when she is eventually honest with her classmates about her own circumstances. From being unpopular because of her sarcastic attitude, she becomes more accepted by them.

### *Emotional development*

Most schools place a lot of emphasis on academic work and sports. The results of these are easy to measure through projects, test, exams and competitions. Luntu’s school also stresses the importance of emotional learning. Walter Sisulu High School has a code of conduct which students are expected to follow. One of the rules of this is to be honest. The school uses Life Orientation classes to discuss and emphasise honesty and the other school values. Unfortunately, it is not always easy to monitor or measure learner’s emotional development. Sometimes teachers and schools tend to ignore the emotional progress or lack of progress in their students because it is so

hard to measure. Mr Bali is a teacher who believes that emotional progress is as important as academic progress and does all he can to encourage his students to be aware, not only of their thoughts, but of their feelings, so that they will develop into well-rounded human beings. He also tries to build proper relationships with them by being emotionally honest with them and challenging them to be emotionally honest with themselves.

### *Loss*

This theme is explored from the beginning of the novel as Luntu has lost both his parents and has not resolved this for himself – partly because he does not know the truth about his father. Luntu's grandmother is shown to feel deep pain at the loss of her daughter (Luntu's mother). Unathi speaks about the loss of her parents. Luntu experiences the loss of Tanya, the girl he thought he loved. His experience of a sudden death at the end of the story is another great loss which deeply affects Luntu's life but he is able to accept it and recognise that he is not the only person to experience loss. He remains hopeful, positive, and thankful to Mr Bali for his care and support, and for the lessons he taught.

## SECTION B: EXPLORING THE BOOK, CHAPTER BY CHAPTER

### E-MAIL 1: (Saturday) Holiday Homework

#### *Outline*

In his first e-mail to his teacher, Mr Bali, Luntu explains that he is writing it as part of a Grade 11 holiday assignment set by Mr Bali. He is not too keen on using his holiday time for work, but he accepts Mr Bali's reasons for setting it. He describes Mr Bali's and some of his other teachers' hands, which give clues to their personalities. He also gives a brief description of where he lives. He decides on a name for his assignment.

#### Story and Plot Development

This e-mail provides some background information for the story of Luntu's life which is to follow. The **inciting event**, that is, the reason for Luntu's writing his story is given (his teacher sets this as his holiday assignment). The setting for the story is established – the world of Walter Sisulu High School as well as the community which it serves. We meet the protagonist, Luntu: the main antagonist, Mr Bali, as well as some of the minor characters, Mrs Mitchell, Mr van der Merwe (Mr Van), Miss Raeesa and Mrs Moyo who are teachers and the principal at the school. We also get some sense of the community in which Luntu lives.

#### Suggested Questions

##### Pre-reading

1. Look at and read the front and back covers of this book. What is your initial response to it?
2. Read the first line of the first e-mail. Identify what kind of narrator is telling this story.
3. What do you think is the main theme of this story?

##### Post-reading

4. What is the tone of this first e-mail?
5. What do you think about the teacher's decision to put Mr or Ms before his learners' names?

6. What does “opposable thumb” mean?
7. List the purposes of Luntu’s holiday assignment.
8. What does the description of Mr Van der Merwe’s hands tell you about him?
9. What figure of speech does Luntu use to describe his first “exciting” idea for the title and start of his story?

## Themes

### *Honesty*

From the way Luntu addresses his teacher in this e-mail, the reader can tell that he feels able to reveal his true feelings. For example, he tells his teacher that he thinks the holiday assignment will be “b.o.r.i.n.g!” He also feels comfortable enough to describe Mr Bali’s (and other teachers’) hands honestly, as he observes them.

### *Respect*

Luntu addresses Mr Bali as “Sir” and signs his e-mail “Yours sincerely”. These formal greetings indicate his respect for his teacher. He also writes that Mr Bali insists on using the titles Ms and Mr before his students’ names, just like they do for him. This highlights the teacher’s belief that everyone – no matter their status – is worthy of being treated respectfully.

### *Self-knowledge*

Mr Bali quotes the famous ancient Greek philosopher, Aristotle who wrote “that knowing yourself is the beginning of all wisdom”. This lets the reader know his most important motive is in giving Luntu this holiday assignment.

### *Power*

Mr Bali tells Luntu that the Ancient Greeks believed that knowing yourself stops people from showing off and telling lies about themselves to exaggerate their own sense of power. When Luntu decides on his title, instead of making it something that makes him out to be superior, he makes it straightforward and honest. This indicates that, by now, he has already realised where his real power lies.

## Character Development

**Luntu Masiza:** This first e-mail shows Luntu in the present. Although he shows respect by addressing his e-mail to “Sir”, he also expresses his true feelings about the holiday assignment and shares some honest observations about his teachers’ hands. He initially wants to describe himself in an exaggerated way but then decides to be more truthful. It is obvious from some of his writing, which is descriptive and sometimes poetic, that he speaks English well and enjoys the language.

**Mr Bali Silal:** Mr Bali’s name is not actually mentioned in this first e-mail as Luntu only calls him “Sir”, but we can gather that he is Luntu’s teacher firstly because he is the person who hands out Luntu’s holiday assignment and then explains why he wants Luntu to do it. We can see that Luntu respects and trusts him from the way he addresses Mr Bali. We also learn something about Mr Bali’s physical appearance through Luntu’s description of his hands.

**Mrs Mitchell:** Through Luntu’s description of her hands, we can guess that she may be an older person who may be a little nervous because of the way she moves them. We know that she is married because of her name and her wedding ring and that she runs the school debating club. She is Luntu’s Life Science teacher.

**Mr Van:** He is obviously Luntu’s maths teacher who is probably overweight with red hair. He seems to be an impatient, quick tempered man.

**Miss Raeesa:** She is tidy and calm and that everything is tucked inside her clothes. This indicates that she might be a Muslim woman, who dresses modestly and wears a hijab (head scarf).

**Mrs Moyo:** From Luntu’s description of her hands we learn something about her physical appearance but also about Luntu’s feelings towards her which seem to be admiring and respectful but also, quite possibly, a little afraid.

### **E-MAIL 2: (Sunday) Sunday at the Containers**

#### *Outline*

Luntu describes what happened at his grandmother’s church that morning as well as a little about her. He describes some of his family history, his background, what he knows and feels about his absent parents, and his grandmother, and where he lives. We are given some information about his and his grandmother’s economic

circumstances. Luntu also describes the containers where the computers which he is using to write and send his e-mails are situated.

### Story and Plot Development

This chapter provides important **background** information of Luntu's family situation and tells us about some of his feelings about it. Some of the important settings for the story are described, such as Luntu's home and the containers where he is writing his assignment. This chapter also introduces two of the **subplots** of this novel. The first describes what is happening at Luntu's grandmother's church and her – and other churchgoers' – growing suspicion of the priest there. The second describes Lwazi and his girlfriend at the containers and something about their relationship.

### Suggested Questions for Learners

#### Pre-reading

1. After reading the first e-mail, sum up the relationship between Luntu and his teacher? Support your answer/s with examples from the text.
2. What did the first e-mail tell you about Luntu's home environment?
3. What did Aristotle say is "the beginning of all wisdom" according to "Sir"?

#### Post-reading

4. What disability does Luntu's grandmother have?
5. Think about your own family and background. Is it similar to Luntu's or very different, or a bit of both?
6. How would you describe Luntu's feelings about his grandmother's umngqusho? What is your favourite comfort food?
7. What does Luntu's wish for his father to reappear in his life and organise his initiation tell you about his culture?
8. Explain what kind of relationship Luntu has with his grandmother? How do you know this?
9. Identify one or more of the general feeling/s (mood or atmosphere) in this e-mail?

10. Why do you think that Luntu decides to tell his story in the third person? He tells Mr Bali it is because he is writing his story as a history but there might be another, hidden reason. What could it be?

## Themes

### *Relationships*

There are some important people missing in Luntu's life, namely his parents with whom he has no relationship. His mother is dead but he fantasises that his father is around and doing well and will reappear in his life and have a relationship with him one day. Luntu's relationship with his grandmother is ambiguous. He respects her background, notices her pain, agrees with her, and appreciates her stories some of the time, but sometimes feels "furious" that he is left alone to "look after an old blind woman".

### *Loss*

Luntu feels a deep sense of loss and pain (and sometimes anger) about his dead mother and absent father. He cannot accept that he will never see his father again but does not know the truth about him. Luntu's grandmother feels pain at the loss of her daughter.

## Character Development

**Luntu:** We learn about his family background and his difficult economic circumstances – now and in the past – and his feelings about being an orphan and having to live with his grandmother. He describes his feelings towards his father which are sometimes hopeful and sometimes angry.

**Luntu's grandmother:** A substantial amount about her character and circumstances is revealed: She owns her own house; she is blind; she is a regular churchgoer; she is "not stupid"; she believes in telling the truth no matter what; she is secretive about, and has negative feelings towards Luntu's absent father; like Luntu she also loves and feels pain about the death of her daughter (his mother); she supports Luntu financially; she is not rich; she has a sense of humour and can tell funny stories; and she is a good cook.

**Lwazi:** He is a minor character who only appears once in the story. He is the man who is in charge of looking after the containers and what they contain (computers, soup kitchen, etc.). The NGO who supplied them has also provided a wooden house for him to live in with his girlfriend and their baby. He drinks too much, is not very reliable when it comes to opening the containers on time. He also hits his girlfriend.

**Lwazi's girlfriend:** She lives with Lwazi, has his baby, and does not want to admit his abuse of her. She is also a minor character.

### **E-MAIL 3: (Monday) Luntu's Life at Walter Sisulu High School**

#### *Outline*

This e-mail describes more of Luntu's background. He introduces Walter Sisulu High School, how describes how he came to be there and what his life there was like. He explains how most of his marks were good but that, despite a good attitude to his work, he struggled with some subjects. He explains how different Life Orientation lessons are at WSHS, and how he dealt with them.

### **Story and Plot Development**

More of Luntu's **background** is revealed. More details of Walter Sisulu High School, which is the main setting for the novel, are described. Luntu writes an account of how his and his grandmother's persistence and determination won him a place at the school. Luntu's academic performance is described. A sense of the school's emphasis on emotional as well as academic learning is revealed through what is written on its website and Luntu's description of the unusual Life Orientation classes. We learn how Luntu avoids being honest in these classes. We are made aware of Luntu's popularity, apparent confidence, and initially successful school career.

### **Suggested Questions**

#### **Pre-reading**

1. What are "Born Frees"? Where does the name "Born Free" come from?
2. List the three activities that the containers in Luntu's community are used for?
3. What is your opinion about Lwazi and what he does to his girlfriend?

## Post-reading

4. Mr Bali says, “planning is power”. What do you think he means? Do you agree with him?
5. How did you get into the school you are in now? Did your parents choose it especially or does everyone in the community go to your school?
6. Think of which classes you do or do not enjoy. Give reasons for this.
7. Are people who talk a lot and are more outgoing always more popular and more likely to be “leaders” than quiet “types”? Justify your answer.
8. Luntu and his friend Bandi like American TV shows about the law and lawyers because they are planning on studying law. What is your favourite kind of TV show and why?
9. Luntu’s grandmother says that WSHS “teaches good values” What is meant by “values”? Give some examples (other than those she mentions) of good values.
10. Find an example of hyperbole or irony/sarcasm in this e-mail?

## Themes

### *Leadership*

The teachers at Luntu’s school see him as a leader because he appears confident and talks a lot. It was his ability with English and appearance of confidence that got him accepted into Walter Sisulu High School. They fail to notice what is going on underneath his confident exterior and allow his arrogant attitude to go unchallenged. This makes the point that the most important qualities of a real leader are not always obvious.

### *Honesty*

Luntu admits his dishonesty during Life Orientation classes. In the LO discussions, he says that he often said things that were not true in order to impress the facilitators and “get good marks for participation”.

### *Emotional development*

Luntu describes the differences in the Life Orientation classes at Walter Sisulu High School. These differences (as well as what is written of the school’s website) suggest that students’ emotional development is as important at this school as intellectual or academic development.

## Character Development

**Luntu** shows that when he wants something (admission into WSHS) he can be determined and work hard to achieve this. He appears to be popular at WSHS and capable of playing an important role in the school community. He is shown to have some leadership qualities, but this e-mail also shows that he is capable of dishonesty and avoids difficult discussions of any personal problems.

**Luntu's grandmother** is equally determined and ambitious for her grandson. She is supportive of Luntu in that she goes to the school with him to plead for his admittance. This shows that she cares about his future: she wants him to do well academically but she also wants him to have good values.

**Mrs Moyo, Mrs Mitchell, and Miss Raesa** and the other teachers allow Luntu to present his case for admission into the school. Readers therefore know that they are characters who are capable of compassion and open to giving learners a chance, even if they do not quite meet the school's admission criteria – in Luntu's case, he struggles with maths. They give Luntu a lot of responsibility when he proves that he is "good at talking" and some leadership roles. They may be a little short-sighted in seeing him as a leader just because of his confidence and verbal ability.

### **E-MAIL 4: FIRST CLASS WITH A NEW TEACHER (Tuesday)**

#### *Outline*

In this e-mail, Luntu describes his first English lesson with Mr Bali. He acts arrogantly when he first enters Mr Bali's classroom and is immediately corrected by the teacher. This takes him by surprise as he is not used to being criticised. Mr Bali introduces himself to the learners. Unathi is also introduced and the reason why she is not a popular student is explained. Mr Bali asks the learners to provide the meanings of their own names and, when he remarks on the meaning of Luntu's name, Luntu mistakenly thinks that Mr Bali is insulting him.

## Story and Plot Development

We learn that Luntu is in Grade 10. His arrogance and his belief that no member of staff will challenge anything he does is almost immediately confronted by his new

teacher. Luntu is taken aback by this as he is not used to being criticised for his actions or having to explain them. This e-mail includes the **key event** of this story – when the Luntu of the past first meets Mr Bali. It is when Luntu’s life began to change. Some important supporting characters (Bandi, Unathi, and Tanya) are introduced and readers learn something about each of them. The reader also learns more about Mr Bali. The setting of the classroom is one of the most often occurring in the story.

### Suggested Questions

#### Pre-reading

1. Describe briefly the process of learners being accepted into Walter Sisulu High School. What additional actions did Luntu take Luntu in order to be accepted?
2. Explain the main idea behind the different structure and content of the LO classes at WSHS.

#### Post-reading

3. How is your classroom arranged? Compare it to Mr Bali’s classroom?
4. Do you agree that learners should treat their school and school equipment with respect? Why?
5. Compare the attitudes and actions of Luntu and Bandile (Bandi) when they first meet Mr Bali.
6. “Unathi stood up, her chair screeching along the floor like a kicked cat.” How does this simile add to your understanding of Luntu’s attitude to Unathi?
7. What is the meaning of your name? Do you like it and think it suits you?
8. What words could you use to describe what you know about the character of Bandi so far? Give reasons for your answer/s.
9. What does it mean to be popular? In your experience, what makes a person popular?

## Themes

### *Respect*

We can see from the way Luntu and Bandi behave when first meeting their new teacher, that they do not have much respect for him. They also mistreat the classroom furniture (which belongs to the school). Mr Bali, on the other hand, insists on their treating the furniture carefully, speaking English so that everyone present can understand and not laughing at “in-jokes”. He does not respond to Luntu and Bandi’s lack of respect with rudeness or anger, but rather with patience, explaining why these kinds of respect are important. He also introduces two class rules which will ensure that everyone’s feelings will be respected. He introduces himself politely and invites the students to introduce themselves too, by explaining what their names mean. He addresses them in the same way as they address him, by using the titles Mr and Ms before their names.

### *Relationships*

Mr Bali uses much of the time in this first English lesson by telling his students something about himself and by finding out something about each of them. This shows that he is not only interested in their work, but also in them as people. By doing this, he is beginning to build relationships with his students.

### *Emotional Development*

Instead of simply ordering his students not to tell in-jokes in future, Mr Bali encourages his students to explore their feelings at being left out of one or of not being able to understand what someone is saying because they are speaking a different language. This reflects the importance of taking other people’s feelings into consideration.

## Character Development

**Luntu:** This e-mail shows how, from being a student who can do no wrong and who is respected and popular, Luntu is suddenly being challenged by his new teacher. At first, he is confused by this and then suspects that Mr Bali is insulting him. This is the beginning of his realisation that not everyone sees him as successful and superior, and it surprises and angers him.

**Mr Bali:** is an unusual teacher in that he uses his first English class to begin to get to know his students. He has very firm ideas about classroom behaviour. He reveals himself to be a person who values respect. He shows that he has a sense of humour when he laughs at himself and jokes that he does not look like a warrior. He is concerned about his students' ability to understand emotionally why respect for others is important. He is interested in them as individuals and tries to begin building relationships with them by learning about their names.

**Bandi:** We learn that Bandi is Luntu's good friend. Through Luntu's opinion of him we learn that he likes the teachers to like him and he wants them to think that he always agrees with them.

**Unathi:** The reason for her nickname of "Rat-killer" is explained. She has been given this name by people do not like her because she has a sarcastic tongue. She is quiet and does not make an effort to make friends with people and talk to them so, unlike Luntu, she is more of a loner. She is able to answer Mr Bali's questions intelligently. Like Luntu, she speaks well and is also on the debating team.

#### **E-MAIL 5: (Wednesday) Why Do We Study History ?**

##### *Outline*

Luntu describes his first history lesson with Mr Bali. After dipping out of the subject of history to teach the class about rhyming compounds, Mr Bali asks them to brainstorm around the question of why history is important. Luntu and Unathi get into an argument about who will record the answers. Luntu again mistreats the furniture and is sent out of class. While he is standing in the passage feeling angry and humiliated, the school principal walks past and is shocked to see him there which makes Luntu feel even more embarrassed. He blames Mr Bali for his disgrace.

#### **Plot and Story Development**

The plot is now in its **development phase**. This is when both the internal and external conflicts in Luntu's life start to become obvious. Readers begin to recognise Luntu's arrogance, his exaggerated belief in his own abilities, and his inability to recognise his mistakes. Mr Bali is now identified as the story's antagonist – the cause (in Luntu's mind) of the conflicts which will follow.

## Suggested Questions

### Pre-reading

1. List what Luntu and other learners in his class said about how they felt when they didn't understand an in-joke.
2. What were the two agreements Mr Bali made with the learners about classroom behaviour?

### Post-reading

3. Mr Bali teaches his students about rhyming compounds. Can you think of other examples that are not given in this story? Explain their effectiveness.
4. What does the description of Tanya and her behaviour in this e-mail tell you about her character?
5. Identify two important moments of conflict described in this e-mail.
6. Discuss Luntu's response to being sent out of class? Compare it with any other responses to being disciplined which you have experienced or observed.
7. Luntu tells Mr Bali that when he is writing the e-mails "time seems to disappear". Describe any similar experience that you have had when reading or writing or doing anything else? What do you think Luntu feels about writing these e-mails?
8. Luntu writes that ". . . he knew his inner atom bomb was showing through his eyes" (Page 43). Discuss the effectiveness of this metaphor.

## Themes

### *Respect*

Luntu gets angry very quickly with Unathi when she challenges him, this is partly because Tanya laughs and his hidden insecurity makes him believe she is laughing at him. He believes that people should not challenge or laugh at him and his arrogance reveals his underlying insecurity. If he genuinely respected himself and his opinions, laughter and argument from others would not worry him or cause him to lose his temper. His own lack of self-respect means he has none to give, so he mistreats the school furniture again.

### *Responsibility*

Luntu cannot take responsibility for his own misbehaviour. He cannot admit it to Mrs Moyo when she sees that he has been sent out of class. In fact, he blames his punishment on Mr Bali being “totally unfair”. And he blames Unathi for getting him into trouble.

## **Character Development**

**Luntu:** The readers will get more of a sense of Luntu’s interest in the English as he obviously enjoys learning about rhyming compounds. It also shows that he has a good sense of fun. We learn that he does not enjoy being challenged – especially by Unathi (the unpopular Rat-Killer) and that it causes him to lose his temper. We see that he cannot take responsibility for his own actions but blames others for his feelings of humiliation and anger.

**Mr Bali:** He also demonstrates his love for language and a sense of fun and humour when he teaches his students about rhyming compounds. These are character quality that he actually shares with Luntu. He shows himself to be a no-nonsense teacher when he challenges Luntu again – this time more strongly – and introduces consequences for his bad behaviour. In this e-mail he begins to be identified as the antagonist in Luntu’s story.

**Tanya:** The reader is introduced to Tanya, a classmate to whom Luntu is very attracted and who he wants to impress. Her disobedience of the school uniform protocols shows her own arrogance. This e-mail indicates that she may be more worried about her looks than her academic work.

**Unathi:** She also shows herself to be an antagonist in this story. She shows self-respect by refusing to be the only student in the group who does any work. She is intelligent and argumentative and is not impressed by Luntu’s status in the school.

**Mrs Moyo:** Luntu looks up to her and does not want to be humiliated in front of her. She obviously likes and admires Luntu which is why she is disappointed by him being punished.

## **E-MAIL 6: (Thursday) The Teenage Game**

### *Outline*

In this e-mail, Luntu explains to Mr Bali about the workings of many teenage romantic relationships. He uses the example of his own Grade 10 relationships and reveals how he wanted another with Tanya. He describes the contrasting relationship Bandi has with his girlfriend.

### **Story and Plot Development**

This e-mail continues the **development phase** of the plot. Luntu explains The Teenage Game – which reveals the dishonest romantic life of many students – to Mr Bali. He reveals that, in the past, he was also dishonest in that he had two girlfriends but wanted more. Luntu describes more about the character of his friend Bandi who is – unusually – faithful to one girlfriend. He writes about his wish to experience sex and enlarges on his attraction to, and feelings for, Tanya. Since his run-in with Mr Bali, the relationship between Tanya and him has grown closer because of their mutual dislike for Mr Bali and his disciplinary methods.

### **Suggested Questions**

#### **Pre-reading**

1. In your own words, describe what happened between Luntu and Unathi.
2. Do you think Mr Bali will get into trouble for asking Luntu to leave his classroom?  
Give reasons for your answer.

#### **Post-reading**

3. Do you believe that The Teenage Game is played at schools and elsewhere?  
Explain your answer.
4. Luntu describes Tanya as being “on point”. What does he mean by that?
5. Discuss your own and/or other peoples’ *modus operandi* when they are with people of opposite genders?
6. Why does Tanya call rolling up her skirt “protest action”?
7. Find three examples of metaphor/simile in this e-mail.

## Themes

### *Honesty*

Luntu's friend Bandi is the only learner he knows who is faithful to one girlfriend. But maybe he also pretends to be something he is not: Luntu writes that he: "...does not act like he is strong and confident when he is with girls" so perhaps his relationship is not completely honest either. He acts in a particular way just to get the girlfriend he wants.

### *Relationships*

The Teenage Game is a good example of how relationships can be dishonest. These kinds of relationships often lead to people feeling betrayed and hurt that their partners have not been honest with them. These kinds of relationships can never grow.

### *Power*

Luntu refers to the fact that he doesn't want to give Tanya too much encouragement so that she "might let him do whatever he wanted with her" by which he means he wants her to have sex with him. Instead of trying to form a proper relationship with her, he is trying to manipulate her to get what he wants. He is trying to hold all the power in his relationship with Tanya.

### *Emotional Development*

During the teenage years (sometimes even earlier) adolescents start to develop a sense of their own sexuality. Hormonal and physical changes usually mean that they start noticing an increase in sexual feelings, like Luntu and others in his grade. Young people develop secondary sexual characteristics and become able to have children. However, there are problems if this happens too early in their lives. Teenagers are not emotionally ready to cope with bringing up children. Babies cost money and most teenagers are not yet capable of earning a living – most are still in school. In addition, there is the danger of sexually transmitted diseases, such as HIV/AIDS. It is difficult for teenagers to manage their sexual choices so that unwanted pregnancies and diseases do not result. This e-mail illustrates this adolescent challenge which Luntu has not properly confronted. He is simply following his urges without thought for the consequences.

## Character Development

**Luntu:** He describes his willingness to manipulate Tanya by being cool in order to make her like him so much that she will agree to have sex with him. He treats his other two girlfriends carelessly and does not take their feelings seriously. He keeps them secret from each other, in other words, he lies. It is obvious from his description of The Teenage Game that he is now, in the present, more aware of the dishonesty and lack of respect that exists in many relationships and realises its negative effects. When he writes about his past view of girls as “tyres” on a motorbike or BMW the reader can sense that he is only able to write about this because he no longer views girls or romantic relationships in this cynical and dehumanising way.

**Bandi:** In contrast to Luntu and the other students, Bandi and his girlfriend have been and still are faithful to each other. Luntu finds this “interesting” but finds Bandi’s method of getting Phumla (and other girls) to like him by making them feel sorry for him funny. Perhaps he senses that Bandi’s *modus operandi* is as manipulative as his own, just different. Bandi still flirts and pretends to be looking for other girlfriends but stays loyal to one.

**Tanya:** She is, in many ways, like Luntu, in that she believes that the rules that apply to everyone else should not apply to her because she is in some way superior. She gets angry when she is told to follow the school uniform protocols and also blames Mr Bali for drawing attention to her weave and short skirt. Because she and Luntu share feelings about Mr Bandi, they become more interested in each other.

### **E-MAIL 7: (Friday) The Power of Hair (and an Apple Becomes Ripe)**

#### *Outline*

Luntu describes the importance to people in his community and at school of how their hair looks and illustrates it with a funny story of a haircut that his friend Milo once received. He gives more information about Bandi’s background. Tanya sits next to him on the bus and begins to flirt with him.

## Story and Plot Development

More **background** is revealed in this e-mail as Luntu explains the importance of hairstyles to his peers and his community. A part of Bandi's **background** and living situation is also revealed. This first part of this e-mail serves as a bit of a humorous break from the **rising action** of the plot. However, the **rising action** continues as we learn more about the developing relationship between Luntu and Tanya and his intentions toward her.

## Suggested Questions

### Pre-reading

1. How did Miss Raeesa describe The Teenage Game?
2. What is Luntu trying to persuade his grandmother to get and what does he promise her in return?
3. What could be problematic about Luntu carrying condoms around for a long time?

### Post-reading

4. What figure of speech does Luntu's friend, Milo, use about his name?
5. Do you agree with Luntu's title for this e-mail: "The Power of Hair"? Does how people's hair looks really give them power? Give evidence to support your argument?
6. Outline the events which Luntu describes following Milo's haircut.
7. What does "immoderate laughter used to gain attention rather than express amusement" mean?
8. Luntu describes Bandi's family situation. How do you think Bandi feels about the different members of his family?
9. Do you think Luntu is going to get what he wants from Tanya i.e., sex?

## Themes

### *Power*

The title for this e-mail is “The Power of Hair” but hair itself does not really have power. However, people know that they are likely to be admired and given more importance and status because of the way they look. If a person is very good-looking and has fashionable hairstyle and expensive clothes, other people tend to see them as more powerful than if they look ordinary, have natural hair, and are more cheaply dressed. Luntu is reflecting this tendency – and showing that it is an inaccurate way of forming an opinion about someone’s status – through his humorous description of Milo’s haircut.

### *Respect and Relationships*

Luntu makes fun of vanity and questions whether a person should be respected (and seen as more powerful) based on how they look. Although he is attracted to Tanya and wants to start a romantic (and sexual) relationship with her he shows a lack of respect by talking about her to Bandi as if she is an object to be bitten (an apple) rather than a human being who has feelings.

### *Emotional Development*

Most teenagers identify with their peers and want to be accepted by them, even when they are wrong. Being laughed at or rejected by peers can be very painful and deciding to do things differently from their peers may lead to young people being excluded from their group. Luntu and Bandi talk about Tanya in a way that other boys like them might accept and encourage but it is wrong. A sign of real emotional maturity is when young people can make choices and act in ways that are best for them rather than following everyone else.

## Character Development

**Luntu:** It is apparent, from Luntu’s making fun of Milo’s “adventure” with hairstyles that he understands that the way someone looks is not that important. However, during the past he is writing about, he based his feelings about and judgement of people on how they appeared on the outside rather than on their inner natures. In the past, he was interested in Tanya because of her beauty and the admiration he

would get from others if she became his girlfriend. We get the sense that the present-day Luntu might look for qualities that are deeper than appearance in a romantic partner.

**Tanya:** She shows that she is interested in Luntu by allowing her leg to touch his in the bus and by flirting with him. It is possible that she is only interested in him because he agrees with her in disliking Mr Bali.

**Milo:** Some of Milo's character is revealed through the story of his failed haircut. Like his peers he values looks quite highly and believes a fashionable haircut will increase his influence with girls. Unfortunately, he pays a price for his vanity as his friends laugh at him and he must shave his head to remove all traces of it.

**Bandile:** We learn more about the poor environment in which Bandile lives as well as his difficult background and family situation.

## **E-MAIL 8: (Saturday – Week 2) More About the New Teacher**

### *Outline*

Luntu remembers that Mr Bali called him in after his first lesson and asked Luntu to tell him why he was angry. Luntu refuses the opportunity to explain and resolve the issue then and there. Luntu admits that Mr Bali set interesting assignments and describes his favourite one. However, he again feels angry and humiliated when he does not get the mark he was expecting. Luntu records how, after that experience, he began to lose interest and refuse to engage in Mr Bali's classes. This lack of interest spreads to his other subjects.

### **Story and Plot Development**

The **rising action** continues as Luntu's annoyance at being challenged grows. Instead of admitting honestly that he is angry, he acts out his anger by losing interest in Mr Bali's classes. This attitude soon spreads to his other academic work.

### **Suggested Questions**

#### **Pre-reading**

1. What was Milo's new hairstyle called and how did he plan to explain it to Mr Bali?

2. In your own words, describe Luntu's *modus operandi* with Tanya.
3. Which member of his family supports Bandi's household?

### **Post-reading**

4. How would you describe the part of the story in terms of plot?
5. Mr Bali quotes the Buddha to Luntu: "You will not be punished *for* your anger, you will be punished *by* your anger". What does this mean?
6. Did Luntu understand why his essay mark was lower than usual? Support your answer with information from the text.
7. Have you ever felt angry, disappointed or humiliated after getting a bad mark? Discuss your response.
8. What figure of speech is Luntu using when he writes the phrase "...zip his lips" (Page 57)? What does it mean?
9. Why is it a good thing in a story to "leave them in suspense"?

<b>Themes</b>
---------------

#### *Honesty*

Even when Luntu is offered the opportunity to be honest with Mr Bali, he refuses it and lies about his feelings. Although Mr Bali's criticism of his work is balanced, Luntu cannot be honest with himself and that he might have deserved a lower mark because of his carelessness. He and Tanya decide to punish Mr Bali by not participating properly in his classes any longer. They refuse to admit to themselves that their behaviour is more damaging to them than to Mr Bali.

#### *Responsibility*

Both Luntu and Tanya are unable to admit their mistakes and take responsibility for them. All their blame goes to Mr Bali.

#### *Emotional Development*

Mr Bali offers Luntu the opportunity to express his anger and clear the air. He also does not allow Luntu to get away with careless mistakes in his work. This shows that he cares about Luntu's emotional *and* academic development.

## Character Development

**Luntu:** He stubbornly refuses to be honest with his teacher and is blind to his own faults. He is so determined that he is without blame (he is too insecure to admit it) that he damages his own academic progress.

**Mr Bali:** By being open to Luntu's anger towards him and by giving Luntu an opportunity to speak honestly, Mr Bali shows that he is a caring teacher. Even though Luntu is angry with him, he still admits that Mr Bali's classes are so interesting, that he sometimes forgets his anger. This indicates that Mr Bali is a good teacher.

**Tanya:** Like Luntu, Tanya is refuses to be seen as wrong. She is still angry that she was made to follow the rules. Like Luntu, she is insecure and therefore must pretend to be better than anyone else all the time. She cannot admit any fault.

**Unathi:** Her top marks tell readers that she is academically talented. Luntu is especially jealous of her success because he dislikes her so much.

### **E-MAIL 9: (Sunday) Secrets of the Female Body, Revealed.**

#### *Outline*

Luntu is invited by Tanya to visit Tanya one Saturday. He finds her at home, alone, and after some conversation, they have sex. Luntu is so overwhelmed by this experience that he forgets about condoms, but Tanya supplies one. After this experience Tanya is all Luntu can think about. He forgets about his previous two girlfriends who are angry with him for ignoring them and talk about him and Tanya behind his back.

## Story and Plot Development

In this e-mail, which is still part of the plot's **development phase** and is also moving to the **rising action**, Luntu's life continues to spiral out of control. He again makes a choice that is likely to have negative consequences when he sleeps with Tanya (he is even too excited to remember to wear a condom). His mind is even less on his schoolwork. He expresses slight embarrassment about communicating this part of

his story to Mr Bali, but then remembers his story title. The setting of this e-mail is mostly at Tanya's home but also briefly includes Luntu's grandmother's church.

### Suggested Questions

#### Pre-reading

1. What image did Luntu use to describe his loss of interest in his work?
2. List what leadership roles and successes Luntu had been enjoying at school up to the point where he starts to lose interest?
3. Is Tanya's character similar to Luntu's? Give reasons for your answer.

#### Post-reading

4. Why do you think the priest at Luntu's grandmother's church is asking for people to give more money during the offertory? [Offertory: the part of a Christian church service during which money for the church is collected. A hymn is usually sung while this is happening.]
5. Do you think that Tanya was planning to have sex with Luntu when she invited him to visit her at her house? Why/why not?
6. Is what Luntu feels for Tanya real love? How do you know?
7. Luntu was manipulating Tanya when he first became interested in her. Can you remember how? How is Tanya manipulating Luntu now?
8. Do you think that Luntu and Tanya's relationship so far has been described by the writer in a believable way? Give reasons for your answer.

### Themes

#### *Honesty*

Luntu's grandmother does not believe her priest is telling the truth about the money he is collecting. Tanya manipulates Luntu after they have had sex by acting as if she is not that interested in him anymore, even though he now feels committed to her (he drops his two other girlfriends) and that he is in love with her.

#### *Relationships*

Tanya manipulates Luntu's feelings by having sex with him and then pretending not to be as interested in him after they have had sex. This is the same strategy he used

on her before they slept together. This manipulative behaviour from both does not provide a foundation for a good relationship.

### *Emotional Development*

One of the challenges of adolescence is making responsible decisions around having sex. Luntu shows that he lacks this by forgetting to wear a condom because he is so overwhelmed by the experience that he cannot think properly. Often, young people are not ready for the strong emotions that may result from being physically intimate.

## **Character Development**

**Luntu:** This e-mail explores more of Luntu's story and describes his obsessive feelings for Tanya. From feeling that he was in control before they had sex, he switched to believing that he really loved her. After they had slept together, he felt that having sex made him a real man who could do anything he wanted. He recognises now that she was the one in control.

**Luntu's grandmother:** She shows determination through her meeting with the other members of the Anglican Women's Federation to write to their bishop about concerns for the church roof repair. This demonstrates again the commitment she feels to her church.

**Tanya:** She is shown to be as manipulative as Luntu in this e-mail. It seems that she was always the person in control of their relationship since once she has slept with him, she ignores him.

**Mr Bali:** Although he is not involved in this incident, the fact that Luntu is able to describe what happened to his teacher indicates the depth and trust of their current relationship.

## **E-MAIL 10: (Monday) Matter Over Mind**

### *Outline*

Luntu's feelings for Tanya distract him from his work to the point where he does badly in his Grade 10 mid-year exams. Tanya goes to the Eastern Cape for the June-July holidays. She does not return at the start of term, so he goes to her house.

He discovers from a neighbour that some kind of trouble in her family is preventing them from returning.

### Story and Plot Development

The **development phase** continues with a breakdown in the relationship between Tanya and Luntu. She goes to the Eastern Cape, and he is not able to communicate with her. Luntu's grandmother expresses her unhappiness at his poor mid-year results and his lack of focus on his chores. Luntu ignores her and spends most of his holiday away from home out with his friends, trying to forget that he is in trouble. When Tanya does not return to school at the beginning of term, Luntu goes to her house. A neighbour tells him that there is a family problem which is why they have not returned home. She also hints that Tanya has other boyfriends which worries Luntu. He is advised by his friend Milo to act as if he doesn't care, but secretly he does.

### Suggested Questions

#### Pre-reading

1. In the previous e-mail, who did Luntu's grandmother meet after the church service and why?
2. In what setting did the main action described in the previous e-mail take place?
3. Briefly sum up how Luntu felt about Tanya after having sex with her and how Tanya's behaviour towards him changed.

#### Post-reading

4. What mark did Luntu get for maths in his mid-year exams?
5. Explain why Luntu's skin felt "itchy all the time" during the school holidays.
6. Give an example of conflict described by Luntu in this e-mail. Is it internal or external conflict?
7. Are there times when you want to stop thinking about certain things in your life? Are there certain things you do to stop yourself from thinking about them?
8. Find examples of three different similes in this e-mail. Explain how they make the writing more effective.

9. What kind of character is Tanya's neighbour (e.g., antagonist, supporting character, minor character)? Give a reason for your answer.

## Themes

### *Self-knowledge*

At the time in his life that Luntu is describing, he did not really know much about himself. For example, he could not see that Tanya was not serious about their relationship and that she was using him. He did not accept that his obsessive feelings for her which were distracting him from his studies and leading to bad results were damaging him. He did not realise that he was spending all his holiday time with his friends "talking loud and long with others", not doing anything useful, and only pretending to be okay because he was angry and sad about everything that was happening in his life but could not face the truth of his feelings.

### *Emotional Development*

Luntu's difficulties in his relationship with Tanya indicate one of the emotional challenges young people can have when managing relationships – especially romantic relationships which are also sexual – when they do not really know what a healthy relationship should be. His relationship with Tanya is more about power and playing games than love, it shows dishonesty and lack of respect towards each other from both at different times and makes Luntu forget his responsibilities to the other important things and people in his life.

## Character Development

**Luntu:** It is obvious, from Luntu's description of his bad academic marks and lack of concern for anything other than his feelings for Tanya, that he is not capable of dealing with a relationship at this stage of his life. He is not mature enough to make sensible choices and balance his different responsibilities. He is not aware enough to realise that his behaviour is not helping him in any way. However, from his notes directed at Mr Bali, we understand that his present self now realises what was really going on.

**Tanya:** From what Tanya’s neighbour says about her, we can guess that Luntu is not the only boyfriend she entertained at her house. This shows that she is playing a game with Luntu and does not truly care about him.

**Tanya’s neighbour:** She is an alert neighbour who investigates Luntu’s unanswered knocks. She is suspicious of, and not very friendly towards Luntu. She seems to disapprove of Tanya because of “her boyfriends”.

**Milo:** Luntu confides to his friend Milo that he “does not know what is going on with Tanya”. Milo is happy to give advice although his advice is not particularly helpful.

### **E-MAIL 11: (Tuesday) Hard Head, Hard Heart**

#### *Outline*

At the first parent meeting of term Miss Raeesa meets with Luntu and his grandmother and informs them that, because of Luntu’s poor academic performance of the previous term, his refusal to be honest about why, and his arrogant attitude, certain of his privileges will be removed. Luntu believes that this is unfair, and his angry and stubborn mind-set hardens.

### **Story and Plot Development**

The conflict increases as more consequences come about as a result of Luntu’s problematic behaviour. This is all still part of the **development phase** of the plot. The story’s mood becomes more serious as Luntu hardens his attitude and refuses to accept responsibility for the negative results of his actions.

### **Suggested Questions**

#### **Pre-reading**

1. How did Luntu spend most of his June-July holiday time?
2. Describe what action Luntu took when Tanya did not return to school after the June-July holidays?
3. Why did Luntu not let anyone know how he really felt about Tanya?
4. Bandi invented some new English idioms to mean the same as “plenty more fish in the sea” (Page 68). Invent another one to add to his collection.

## Post-reading

5. Do you agree with Luntu that the removal of all his privileges is unfair? Explain your answer.
6. What consequences does your school put in place for negative behaviour or negative academic performance? Would you change them if you could? How?
7. How does the title of this e-mail “Hard Head, Hard Heart” reflect what Luntu describes in the e-mail.
8. Explain in your own words the difference Miss Raeesa highlights between the shame which causes anger and the shame that should rather be called remorse.

## Themes

### *Responsibility*

This is the main theme explored in this e-mail. Luntu has certain responsibilities at school but chooses not to fulfil them. When he faces unpleasant consequences and disciplinary action for this, he cannot accept that he brought these on himself through his own decisions and actions, that he is the person responsible for losing his privileges.

### *Emotional Development*

When children become adolescents, they begin to move towards maturity. They become better at being able to think through problems and see the results of different points of view or actions, in other words to think before they act. Teenagers need to learn that their actions affect others. Such experiences can teach caring, empathy, leadership, respect, and various other positive qualities that will help them become fulfilled and responsible adults and citizens. The fact that Luntu is unable to do this shows that he has a long way to go before he matures. In many ways he is still acting like a child.

## Character Development

**Luntu:** He is unaware of how he is limiting his own progress and disappointing the adults who support him and want the best for him. When they introduce

consequences for his negative attitude and behaviour, he stubbornly refuses to acknowledge that he is the one who is in the wrong.

**Luntu's grandmother:** She strongly believes that Luntu's academic marks are extremely important for his future. This is made obvious through her action of making sure that she and Luntu are first in line to talk to his teachers about his bad marks. She also expresses her disappointment at his lack of responsibility for his chores and his lack of respect.

**Miss Raeesa:** She conveys her own concern, and that of the other teachers, about Luntu's arrogant attitude. She speaks in an unusually "strict" way to Luntu (he usually sees her as "gentle and caring") which shows her disappointment in him. She outlines the reason for the removal of his privileges clearly and firmly. The fact that she and the other teachers are doing this shows that they care about Luntu.

#### **E-MAIL 12: (Wednesday) Tanya's Return**

##### *Outline*

The students see Tanya returning to school with her mother. Luntu is relieved and tries to find out why she is late. He tries to eavesdrop on a meeting taking place in Mrs Moyo's office but can get no further information. He cannot concentrate on his lessons. Later, when he manages to catch Tanya's attention as she is leaving, she does not acknowledge him.

<b>Story and Plot Development</b>
-----------------------------------

After a long absence, Tanya is spotted at the school with her mother, but she does not return to class and Luntu is unable to speak to her. He tries unsuccessfully to find out what is happening to her by spying outside Mrs Moyo's office where a meeting with her and her mother is taking place. He decides that, if she is in trouble, he is the man to save her. The tension is increasing as the **development phase** of the story moves gradually towards the **rising action**.

## Suggested Questions

### Pre-reading

1. At what time of the school year did Luntu learn of the consequences of his poor results and behaviour?
2. List Luntu's privileges that were removed.
3. The title for the e-mail you are about to read is "Tanya's Return". Predict – from what you know so far – how Luntu's and Tanya's relationship will progress after she returns to school?

### Post-reading

4. What more can you tell about Mr Van's character from the way he talks to his students?
5. Do all classrooms have "a secret messaging system"? Have you ever experienced this? If you have, describe how it works/worked.
6. Do you think it is good to spy or eavesdrop on people when you really want to know something? Why/why not?
7. What do you think of Luntu when you learn that he wants to "save" Tanya? Does it change your opinion of him from what it was before? Explain how.
8. What is the meaning of the Latin phrase *tempus fugit*? There are clues in the text.

## Themes

### *Relationships*

Luntu ignores Mr Van calling him and attempts to overhear what is happening in Mrs Moyo's office. If he wasn't so infatuated with Tanya, he might behave more logically when he is trying to find out what is happening with her. Romantic relationships, especially during adolescence, can be unhealthy when they are addictive and obsessive. This is an indication that Luntu's feelings for Tanya are based on what he imagines their relationship to be rather than on the true situation.

## Character Development

**Luntu:** In spite of not knowing Tanya that well and having had no contact with her for some time, Luntu still believes he is in love with her. This indicates obsession rather than real love, but Luntu shows his responsible, caring side by believing that he is “the man to save her” from whatever trouble she is facing. It is rather innocent aspect of his character, but it also demonstrates his lack of maturity.

**Mr Van:** He is a minor character, a teacher who is fairly relaxed but who does not allow his students to be too distracted from their work.

**Mr Bali and Miss Raeesa:** They are mentioned briefly but their function here is only to move the story along.

### **E-MAIL 13: (Friday) Romance is Dead**

#### *Outline*

Luntu apologises to his teacher for missing a day of writing and explains his reason. Rumours of Tanya’s pregnancy and speculation about how it happened circulate around Luntu’s school. He convinces himself that he is the father of her baby, probably because of a faulty condom. After initially panicking, he realises that he is happy about the baby and imagines a future life together with Tanya and the child. He plans how he will support them. He goes to her house to tell her of his plans, much against Bandile’s advice. She laughs at him and tells him that she has a ‘real boyfriend’ who is a businessman. Luntu is devastated by this information.

## Story and Plot Development

Conflict and drama are building steadily during this part of the **rising action** as Luntu gets himself into one difficulty after another. His present self – the self which is writing these e-mails – seems to be finding it harder and harder to relate what happened to the past self he is writing about, and this e-mail begins with an apology to Mr Bali for missing a day of writing.

Gossip spreads around the school that Tanya is pregnant and although there are many rumours about how it happened, Luntu believes that he is the father of Tanya’s baby and realises that he must not leave her to cope on her own. After some

moments of panic about how he will deal with this, and some advice from Bandile to run away, Luntu realises that he is happy about the baby and begins to plan how he will support it and Tanya while still working his way through school and university. He decides to tell Tanya his plans and visits her at home. Tanya informs him that she was only having fun with him while her real boyfriend – an adult man – was busy with his business. She laughs at him and rejects him. Luntu is totally shocked at her reaction.

### Suggested Questions

#### Pre-reading

1. When did Tanya arrive back at Walter Sisulu High School?
2. Why do you think Tanya's face showed nothing when Luntu got her attention?
3. Summarise the events described in this e-mail.

#### Post-reading

4. Explain in your own words what rumours are and how they usually work. Are they positive or negative and why do you think so?
5. Does Bandi's reaction to Luntu's predicament show that he is a good friend? Justify your answer.
6. Why does Luntu almost forget what he is going to say to Tanya when she opens the door?
7. Luntu uses metaphors to describe his emotions after Tanya mocks him and sends him away. What are some words that might be used instead of the metaphors?
8. Have you ever experienced a night where you couldn't sleep? Describe what it was like. What methods did you use to try and make yourself sleep?

### Themes

#### *Relationships*

This e-mail gives some insight into how unexpected and painful emotions can be part of romantic relationships. Often, adolescent relationships cannot survive because the young people involved in them are still working out who they are and

what they want in life. It is easy for them to mistake physical attraction and the excitement and mystery of something new for real love. Luntu believes he has a relationship with Tanya and that he is in love with her, but it turns out that she does not return his feelings. Their relationship was a fantasy he created alone in his own mind while she was only pretending.

### *Responsibility*

Although he has shown his lack of responsibility in most parts of his life so far, Luntu decides that he should support Tanya and the baby. He is actually capable of acting responsibly when it comes to something that is important to him. His plans are impractical and unlikely to work but, for once, he is not avoiding what he believes is his accountability.

## **Character Development**

**Luntu:** When Tanya is rumoured to be pregnant, Luntu almost immediately starts to believe that he is her baby's father. Instead of refusing to take responsibility as has often happened in the past, he accepts it and imagines supporting his "family" in the future. This shows a more gentle and romantic side of Luntu which has not been obvious before. Because he himself lacks parents, he may be expressing his longing for a proper family. This is the first hint that Luntu may be showing maturity. He is devastated when Tanya mocks him about his dreams.

**Bandile:** Luntu has already described his friend as someone who does not like getting into trouble. This view of Bandile is reinforced by his urging Luntu to disguise himself and run away from Tanya and her family. He shows himself to be lacking in honesty and a sense of responsibility, although he does show concern for his friend's situation.

**Tanya:** She has acted cruelly and dishonestly towards Luntu. She has used him for "fun" and has not taken his feelings seriously. Her behaviour shows dishonesty, a lack of maturity, and a lack of compassion in that she has no concern for Luntu's feelings.

## **E-MAIL 14: (Saturday – Week 3) The Story Spreads**

### *Outline*

Back at school after Tanya’s rejection of him, Luntu realises that Bandi has spread the story that he is the father of Tanya’s baby. He denies this and claims to have always worn a condom (which is true). He pretends not to care about her or what happened between them or the gossip of his peers, although he is really feeling upset and humiliated.

### **Story and Plot Development**

The plot is still in its **rising action** phase. Tanya’s rejection of him provides a new challenge for Luntu to try and avoid public humiliation by pretending a lack of concern about her or the rumours circulating about his being the father of her baby. Another challenge is Bandi’s betrayal of his secret.

### **Suggested Questions**

#### **Pre-reading**

1. List four of the rumours about Tanya’s pregnancy which circulated through the school? Which rumour did Luntu believe was closest to the truth?
2. What can we tell about Luntu’s present-day character from what he wrote to Mr Bali about missing a day of writing at the beginning of this e-mail.
3. What is the meaning of used “face the music” (Page 78). Explain it in your own words. What figure of speech is it?

#### **Post-reading**

4. Explain what Luntu means when he quotes Mr Bali (and Ernest Hemingway) describing writing being like “cutting a vein” (Page 82).
5. Do you agree with Luntu about gossip being a way over having power over other people? Justify your answer using your own experience/observation.
6. Does Luntu trust his best friend, Bandi, completely?
7. What word would you use to describe the main mood of this e-mail.
8. What is “an Oscar” (Page 84)? Why is this an effective description?

## Themes

### *Honesty*

Luntu cannot be honest about his real feelings about Tanya's betrayal because it would make him feel powerless and vulnerable (unsafe). He cannot risk others seeing him like Tanya sees him: "a little boy", because he believes showing his true emotions would make him weak. As usual, he performs and pretends in order to hide the truth.

### *Power*

Luntu's present self now understands that most people like to feel power over others. They like to know and tell other people's secrets because they think this means they have power. Having power means people feel strong, safe, and not able to be hurt. However, his past self (the person he is writing about) did not know this and therefore tried to "take back his own power" by pretending to feel fine and in control.

## Character Development

**Luntu:** His present self explains how difficult this writing assignment sometimes feels to him. As he writes about more challenging incidents in his past, he feels as if his body is being "split open, like an empty carcass hanging in a butcher's shop". He has even missed a day of writing due to his painful feelings. This shows the reader that his progress of learning to be honest with himself is still not that easy.

Two opposite sides of Luntu's character are contrasted in this chapter: his present self who understands that people gossip and reveal other people's secrets because they believe it is a way to feel powerful, safe, and superior and his past self who believed that revealing his hurt and vulnerable feelings would make him weak and humiliate him. It is very hard for Luntu to hide his real feelings of shock and hurt after Tanya's rejection of him, but he forces himself to do this by using his typical "thought-prevention technique of laughing and joking and speaking loudly" (Page 84) in an effort to convince his school peers (and himself) that he is strong because he has no feelings about her.

**Bandi:** He is like Luntu's other peers in that he likes the power of knowing other people's secrets and gossiping about them. He is Luntu's best friend but was not

able to be loyal to him by keeping the secret about Tanya. Luntu learns from this that he sometimes has to be careful about who he shares his private thoughts and feelings with, although he now understands why Bandi spilled the beans.

### **E-MAIL 15: (Sunday) Uniform Matters**

#### *Outline*

After his experience with Tanya, Luntu is not in a hurry to look for another girlfriend. After explaining his school's uniform protocol, Luntu describes an incident which involves Mr Bali correcting learners in his class for ignoring it. This leads to a class discussion about uniforms during which Luntu and the learners argue with Mr Bali about the necessity for a uniform protocol.

### **Story and Plot Development**

This chapter provides more **background** to Walter Sisulu High School. Additional information is given about the school's history, the uniform protocols, and the Code of Conduct. This chapter creates a hiatus (pause) in the story's **rising action**. The mood has quietened down after the incident with Tanya, and Luntu is not quite as distracted from his schoolwork as he was before. Mr Bali reveals his belief in the importance of following the Code of Conduct, but also his openness to discussing this with, or explaining it to, his students, even if it means interrupting his English literature class.

### **Suggested Questions**

#### **Pre-reading**

1. What did Luntu think of doing in order to avoid attending school on the day after his confrontation with Tanya? Explain the meaning of the slang words "hang out" and "bunk".
2. Discuss whether you agree with Luntu that boys and men are just as likely to spread gossip as girls and women? Give reasons for your answer/s.
3. How did Luntu overcome his tiredness after his night of no sleep?

## Post-reading

4. Are nicknames such as “Bra Bals” always disrespectful? Explain your answer.
5. How does the idiom Luntu uses on page 85, “once bitten, twice shy”, as well as his metaphor about wearing “fire-resistant protective gloves” with girls help you understand his feelings about relationships?
6. List the idioms Luntu uses to describe his interruption of Mr Bali’s class. Which are the original idioms and which is the one he has invented?
7. Summarise the reasons why Luntu argues with Mr Bali about him making Lolo and Andisane remove the parts of their uniforms that are not allowed and questions the importance of the school uniform.
8. Does your school have a uniform protocol? How do you feel about it? Do all students stick to it?

## Themes

### *Honesty*

This theme is illustrated by Lolo and Andisane’s attempts to lie about why they are not wearing the correct uniform. Mr Bali reminds them of their promise to be honest when they signed the school’s code of conduct. Luntu disrupts the English lesson by only pretending to care about Andisane and by asking Mr Bali why it is so important to wear correct uniform. Mr Bali guesses his real motives but chooses to continue the discussion around uniforms because he feels it is important.

### *Respect*

Luntu illustrates his lack of respect for Mr Bali by calling him “Bra Bals” behind his back.

Mr Bali explains to the students how wearing the correct school uniform shows the respect students have for themselves, their school’s history and the importance of the equality of all people.

### *Emotional Development*

Mr Bali is willing to divert his English lesson into a discussion about something which is not academic but which he feels is important for his students to understand. This illustrates his desire to educate his students in ideas that are not necessarily part of

their curriculum but that have more to do with their personal and emotional development.

### Character Development/Characterisation

**Luntu:** He has settled down for a while and is less distracted by girlfriends. However, his anger at Mr Bali is still simmering just below the surface and he is still trying to manipulate his teacher by trying to distract him from his lesson.

**Mr Bali:** He is concerned about his student's understanding of the commitment they made to the school code of conduct and that they understand why it is important. He allows his English lesson to be interrupted for this discussion and his students to express their opinions. He seems (like Luntu) to enjoy the opportunity to debate. He is clear and concise in expressing his reasons why following the uniform protocol is important.

**Andisane and Lolo:** They are minor characters whose dishonesty shows that they may be struggling with similar issues as Luntu.

### E-MAIL 16: (Monday) Mr Bali Loses His Cool

#### *Outline*

The class discussion about uniforms continues, with the learners expressing their dislike of their own because it is similar to the uniforms of security guards. Mr Bali loses his temper at their lack of respect and for other people who may be struggling in difficult circumstances. He sets them a homework assignment: to write an essay about a poem by John Donne. After struggling for many hours, Luntu finally understands the poem and manages to complete his assignment. He arrives at home late which causes an argument with his grandmother.

### Plot Development

The **rising action** continues. Mr Bali's angry reaction to his students' dismissive opinion of security guards describes an external challenge. It gives more information about his beliefs and world view and initially prompts more anger from Luntu.

However, after struggling with the poetry assignment Mr Bali sets, Luntu begins to understand the reasons for his teacher's outburst and his views better.

### Suggested Questions

#### Pre-reading

1. In the last e-mails, what disrespectful name did Luntu admit to calling Mr Bali?
2. What did Luntu decide about girlfriends after his experience with Tanya?
3. Why were boys not allowed to wear earrings at Walter Sisulu High School?
4. In your own words, sum up the real reason students did not wear the correct uniform.

#### Post-reading

5. How would you describe the feelings Luntu and some of his classmates have about security guards? Support your answer with examples from the text.
6. What physical signs does Mr Bali give that alert Luntu (and his fellow learners) to his anger?
7. Explain in your own words why Mr Bali feels ashamed of his students.
8. What do you think Luntu means when he describes *No Man Is an Island* on page 95 as a "white man's poem"?
9. On page 96, Luntu describes his grandmother as letting "the sun go down on her wrath". What does this mean? Explain why Luntu quoting this to his grandmother is irony.

### Themes

#### *Respect*

Mr Bali "loses his cool" with his students because of their lack of respect for people around them because they see them as inferior, and their perception of some people's dress and work as "not serious". He sets them a homework assignment which is designed to educate them about and illustrate the value of *ubuntu*.

Luntu's grandmother accuses him of not respecting her when he argues with her about getting home late.

### *Power*

It is obvious that Luntu and many of his classmates feel superior to people (even adults) who have not been educated and do not have what they view as important jobs. They feel they are more powerful in society than these “inferior” people.

### *Emotional Development*

Mr Bali again shows his strong commitment to the emotional – and not just the intellectual – education of his students by trying to get them to understand how inadequate their judgment of their fellow human beings is through what he says to them and the homework assignment he sets.

<b>Character Development/Characterisation</b>
---

**Luntu:** He begins to understand the important lesson that Mr Bali is trying to teach his students, that “no man is an island”, that he is only a person through other people (*ubuntu*) and that no person is superior or inferior to another, despite their economic circumstances or apparent status in society and in the community.

**Mr Bali:** He shows his passionate belief in the uniqueness and incomparability of all people and his rejection of his students’ idea that some people are superior to others. He also shows his determination to teach them differently.

**Unathi:** She shows her intelligence and understanding of the feelings of superiority of her and her classmates and is courageous enough to explain it honestly.

### **E-MAIL 17: (Tuesday) The Snowball Exercise**

#### *Outline*

The learners’ hand in their assignments. Mr Bali announces an exercise that involves the learners identifying what makes them feel superior and inferior to others. Luntu struggles with his answers to these questions. A class discussion about superiority and inferiority and their relationship to power follows. Mr Bali then links the discussion to history and draws a parallel between people’s personal superior and inferior feelings and the happenings in the world that become part of history.

## Plot Development

The plot is still in its **development phase** and there is another slight lull in the action. This e-mail illustrates more interior than exterior conflict because it concentrates mostly on Luntu's (and his classmates') thoughts and feelings as they take part in "The Snowball Exercise". The mood is fairly serious as Mr Bali and his class are focussing on a discussion of a serious and thought-provoking issue.

## Suggested Questions

### Pre-reading

1. In your own words, explain why the learners in Luntu's class want to wear blazers instead of tracksuit tops?
2. Luntu described several sounds in the previous e-mail. Find these descriptions in the text.
3. Give two different meanings for the word "tolls".
4. What word does Luntu use to sum up the meaning of the John Donne poem?
5. Explain what you understand by that word.

### Post-reading

6. Why is Mr Bali's exercise called "The Snowball Exercise"?
7. Which of Luntu's answers to the question about feeling inferior does he not write down and why?
8. Think about what makes you feel superior or inferior. Are any of your answers to yourself similar to those of Luntu's and his classmates?
9. Do you agree with Unathi's and Luntu's explanation of the reason for their community's service delivery protests? Is that the only reason for such protests or can you name other possible reasons?
10. Discuss and explain how a person feeling inferior or superior is linked to power.

## Themes

### *Power*

This is the main theme explored in this chapter. Mr Bali introduces The Snowball Exercise which helps his students explore their own feelings and how they link to the wider concept of power, both in personal relationships and in the wider world.

### *Relationships*

Mr Bali's exercise helps Luntu and his classmates to see how their feelings of superiority and inferiority affect their own relationships as well as relationships between groups of people.

### *Leadership*

This is an underlying theme which could be explored in terms of what makes leaders powerful.

### *Emotional Development*

Mr Bali encourages the learners to explore their own feelings and then relate them to the academic subject of history.

## Character Development

**Luntu:** We are reminded of Luntu's inability to be honest, his insecurity, and feelings of inferiority through his difficulty with The Snowball Exercise and his suspicion of Mr Bali's compliment. A positive aspect of Luntu's character emerges again, that is his love of discussion and ideas and his ability to engage with them.

**Mr Bali:** His commitment to both emotional and academic development in his students is again demonstrated through his introduction of The Snowball Exercise. He, like Luntu enjoys discussion and debate and is skilful in asking questions that encourage his students to think for themselves while being aware of their feelings.

**Unathi:** She also shows her similarity to Luntu through her intelligent participation in, and obvious enjoyment of, the discussion.

**Bandi:** Luntu's inclusion of Bandi's comment and use of a rhyming compound shows both his fondness for his best friend and his recognition of Bandi's desire to score points with teachers. Bandi is able to offer intelligent input to the class discussion.

**Lolo, Zonke, and classmates:** These minor characters also indicate their abilities and engagement in the lesson through their contributions.

### **E-MAIL 18: (Wednesday) Luntu Cooks His Goose**

#### *Outline*

Luntu receives good marks for his homework assignment and things seem to be returning to normal. His old arrogance begins to re-emerge. Then he and four friends steal some drawing pins and hide them in their hands in order to prick other students while pretending to high five them. Unathi reports them. Mrs Moyo, Mr Bali, Miss Raeesa, and other staff members are called into class and Luntu and his friends are horrified when they are reminded of the dangers of HIV. HIV testing must now be arranged for the whole class. Unathi admits that she is HIV-positive, having been infected through her mother during her birth.

#### **Plot Development**

The story is now moving towards its **climax**. Luntu once again acts in a way that brings about conflict for himself. His misguided belief in his own superiority and his thoughtlessness have led him into making a really serious mistake – one that does not only damage him, but potentially his classmates. Contrasted with his dishonesty and lack of responsibility is Unathi's honesty and courage in revealing her HIV status.

#### **Suggested Questions**

##### **Pre-reading**

1. Explain how The Snowball Exercise described in the previous e-mail worked.
2. What was the rhyming compound used by Bandi to impress Mr Bali in the previous e-mail? What does it mean?
3. What was the simile Luntu used when answering Mr Bali's question about how students' personal feelings relate to history? At the end of The Snowball Exercise lesson, Mr Bali talked about seeing "the world in ourselves". What did he mean?

4. The title of the chapter you are about to read is “Luntu Cooks His Goose”. What does the idiom to cook your goose mean? What is another way of saying the same thing?

### **Post-reading**

5. Luntu has believed for some time that Mr Bali does not like him and deliberately tries to get him into trouble. What clue does Mr Bali’s response to Luntu’s essay give you about his real opinion of Luntu?
6. Luntu describes the reason for his and his friends’ decision to use the drawing pins as “as clear as mud”. Why do *you* think the boys used them as they did?
7. Why do you think Miss Raeesa tries to stop Unathi from revealing her HIV status?
8. What is more important: earning your peers’ approval in order to feel as if you belong, or staying true to yourself even if this makes you feel like you don’t fit in?

<b>Themes</b>
---------------

#### *Emotional Development*

Teenagers (and some adults) often act without considering the consequences of their actions. This is one indication of a lack of maturity. Emotional immaturity appears to be a key indication of whether a person can have healthy relationships with their peers and families, to reach their academic potential at school, and have a well-balanced outlook on life. It is obvious from Luntu’s (and his friends’) thoughtless action with the drawing pins that he has not yet managed this and that he continues to make ill-judged decisions which land him (and potentially other people) in trouble.

#### *Responsibility*

Responsibility means doing the things you are supposed to do and accepting the results of your actions. It also involves thinking about whether what you are about to do before you do it, so that you can weigh up the possible positive or negative outcomes of your actions. It is obvious that Luntu and his friends have not done this at all. By admitting that she is HIV positive, Unathi is being responsible to her classmates.

## Character Development

**Luntu:** Although Luntu is taking more care with his academic work, as proved by Mr Bali's complimenting him on his essay, he continues to demonstrate his carelessness by behaving thoughtlessly and recklessly. Now, however, he is not only damaging himself but potentially injuring other people.

**Zuko, Vuvu, Bandile, and Milo:** Luntu's friends (and minor characters) appear to be struggling with many of the same challenges as Luntu in that they act as irresponsibly and thoughtlessly as he does.

**Unathi:** She understands the negative consequences of the boys' stupid action immediately because she has had to live with HIV all her life and is therefore very aware of the dangers of the virus. She immediately takes sensible action by informing the teacher about what they have done even though she is insulted and criticised by other learners. She shows both courage and maturity by making the decision to inform her classmates about her HIV-positive status.

**Miss Raeesa:** She immediately takes control of the situation and shows her concern for the students by making them immediately wash their hands. She is very clear and honest in informing the learners about the possible consequences of the boys' stupid actions. She is protective of Unathi's right to privacy regarding her HIV status.

### **E-MAIL 19: (Thursday) Things Fall Apart**

#### *Outline*

Luntu's classmates have a long discussion with Mr Bali and Miss Raeesa. Many of them give Luntu and his friends a hard time for what they did until Luntu shouts back. Unathi speaks openly about her difficult personal life which allows Luntu and his classmates to understand and sympathise with her and admit to the reasons for their own bullying behaviour towards her. Unathi apologises for her own past conduct towards the other students. Luntu recognises a hidden sadness in Mr Bali.

## Plot Development

The **rising action** is continuing, although some negative feelings Luntu and his classmates have towards Unathi seem to be resolved. We learn more about Unathi's own **background** and her current situation. This forms part of the **subplot** which is Unathi's personal story. There is also a hint of Mr Bali's personal story which forms part of a different **subplot**.

## Suggested Questions

### Pre-reading

1. Summarise Mr Bali's response to Luntu's assignment described in the last e-mail.
2. List three actions performed by Luntu and his four friends using the drawing pins they found.
3. Explain why Unathi was so angry with Luntu and his friends and immediately reports their action to Mrs Mitchell. Was her reaction justified and why/why not?
4. Why do you think this next e-mail is entitled "Things Fall Apart?" What do you imagine is going to happen next?

### Post-reading

5. What was Unathi's explanation for killing the rat?
6. Is there a subplot in this e-mail? If so, what is it? There may be more than one.
7. What does the idiom "jumped on the bandwagon" mean?
8. What adjectives might you use to describe Unathi's character when she reveals her story to her classmates and apologises to them for her past behaviour?
9. What is the main theme of this e-mail? Give reasons for your answer.

## Themes

### *Honesty*

Unathi's decision to tell her classmates about her HIV status and her life situation shows her as a person who is willing to be honest. It shows how being honest can take courage. Unathi's honesty and apology for her past sarcastic behaviour encourages reciprocal honesty from her classmates and admissions of their jealousy

and bullying. There is a sense that relationships among the learners will improve after this. Luntu, however, is still not ready to tell the truth and Unathi's willingness to tell the truth contrasts strongly with his continuing inability to face it.

#### *Emotional development*

By organising and facilitating a special LO class and giving the learners the time and opportunity to talk openly about their feelings, Mr Bali and Miss Raeesa prove that they consider their students' emotional development to be very important. They are also shown to be protective of students' feelings. By bravely admitting her struggles and mistakes to her classmates, Unathi demonstrates great emotional maturity which acts as a valuable lesson to her peers.

#### *Courage*

Unathi demonstrates courage by being honest about her HIV-positive status and her real feelings of inferiority. This is risky because it makes her more exposed to other people making fun of her or treating her badly by calling her names such as "Rat-Killer", but she is brave enough to do it anyway.

### **Character Development**

**Luntu:** He is still stuck, although his feelings to Unathi begin to change as he recognises the similarities between them (having no parents and hiding feelings of inferiority). He is still unable to talk honestly about himself. He feels some compassion for Unathi and for Mr Bali when he senses that his teacher has also experienced sadness. His shame at what he and his friends have done keeps him silent.

**Unathi:** Readers learn a lot more about her and her background and her reasons for acting the way she does. Her character shows great development in this e-mail in that she manages to open up about her circumstances and be honest about her mistakes. This proves her courage and emotional maturity.

**Mr Bali:** Once again Mr Bali, together with **Miss Raeesa**, demonstrate their care for their students. A hint is given about Mr Bali's personal story when Luntu notices him looking sad.

**Other students:** Luntu's classmates are very willing to name, blame, and shame Luntu and his friends for their stupid actions, however some are later able to admit

their feelings and behaviour and to apologise to Unathi. Luntu's friends appear to be struggling with the same shameful feelings as Luntu and are equally unable to tell the truth about them.

### **E-MAIL 20: (Friday) Persona Non Grata**

#### *Outline*

Luntu is called to Mrs Moyo, the principal's office. There she informs him that Tanya has reported that her pregnancy is a result of Luntu raping her. Luntu denies this and is sent to wait in the library while Mrs Moyo, Mr Bali, and Miss Raeesa meet with Tanya and her mother to find out the truth of the situation. Luntu feels confused and afraid. Even though he is isolated while he waits, Unathi manages to offer him some words of forgiveness and comfort and recommends a book for Luntu to read about a troubled young man who is contemplating suicide. This leads Luntu to begin considering suicide as a way out. Mr Bali collects him from the library and escorts him back to the principal's office.

#### **Plot Development**

Tanya's accusation of Luntu is **the climax** of the plot. It is where the story reaches its highest point of tension. This is often shown through a serious **conflict** between the protagonist and the antagonist. Following the climax, the main conflict of the story usually begins to resolve in some way. It is the most exciting part of the story and a point where it could move to either a positive or negative ending. Although Mr Bali has been identified as the main **antagonist** so far, it now seems that he may not be. Tanya has become the **antagonist** with her accusation and Mr Bali seems (at the end of this chapter) to be supportive of Luntu. Unathi, who was also a kind of antagonist earlier in the story is now also being sympathetic towards him. It seems as if Luntu's main antagonist might have actually been himself.

The **subplot** of Tanya's personal story is developed more in this chapter. We learn more about her and her misguided choices, decisions, and actions.

## Suggested Questions

### Pre-reading

1. What was the extra-long class Luntu and his classmates had to attend following the drawing pin incident?
2. Why was Luntu's and his friends' action with the drawing pins such a "big deal"?
3. List all the things Unathi revealed about herself to the rest of the learners.
4. Did you agree with Mr Bali that nobody has "a perfect life"? Explain your answer using examples from your own or another real person's life.

### Post-reading

5. Luntu loves using Latin phrases and uses one, *Persona Non Grata*, as his title for this e-mail. What does it mean?
6. Compare Luntu's experience in Mrs Moyo's office to the ones he had before?
7. What does Tanya's mother do to Luntu and why?
8. What is Unathi's motivation for being supportive of Luntu while he is waiting in the library?
9. List the methods of suicide Luntu considers.
10. Do you think suicide would be a positive and helpful step for Luntu to take? Give reasons for your answer.

## Themes

### *Honesty*

Tanya is dishonest when she lies about Luntu raping her. On the other hand, Luntu is now being forced to be honest with his teachers by admitting he had sex with Tanya although he did not rape her. She is obviously scared about being held responsible or judged for her actions (having sex with an adult boyfriend – who is married – and also with Luntu) which is why she lies.

### *Responsibility*

Teenage pregnancy, and rape are two serious challenges some teenagers have to face. Tanya is in a very difficult situation when she discovers she is pregnant while still at school and unable to support herself or a baby. She tries to avoid taking responsibility for her pregnancy by blaming Luntu. Luntu and Tanya may have been

responsible in that they used condoms, but Luntu was only 15 and knew that it was illegal. The choice they made to have sex (and risk a faulty condom) and an unwanted pregnancy proves their lack of ability to make responsible choices. Luntu is still not taking responsibility for his own choices when questions why so many bad things have been allowed to happen to “one boy”, blaming “everything” for being against him.

### **Character Development**

**Luntu:** His world has been turned upside down. He is finally being forced to admit his mistakes and bear the consequences of them. Previously he was sure that he was in the right and that people like Mr Bali and Unathi were out to get him. Gradually the realisation is dawning that they are people he can trust to support him and that Tanya, although she pretended to love him, is capable of making serious false accusations against him.

**Tanya:** Tanya has been behaving like Luntu in that she has been making careless choices for herself and is now lying to protect herself from the consequences of those choices. Parts of her personal story are revealed and form one of the subplots of this novel.

**Unathi:** She shows, when she meets Luntu in the library, that she does not hate him; forgives him for what he did; and has some compassion for the trouble he finds himself in now. She finds a book for him to read while he is waiting and makes a comforting remark about problems passing.

**Mr Bali:** He shows his real compassion and care for Luntu through his action of putting his hand on Luntu’s shoulder and telling him kindly not to despair. He (and the other teachers involved) also show their fairness and determination to get to the truth by not jumping to conclusions and getting Luntu’s side of the story before interviewing Tanya and her mother.

### **E-MAIL 21: (Saturday) *True Confessions***

#### *Outline*

Mrs Moyo informs Luntu that Tanya admitted her rape accusation was false  
However, Luntu will still face the consequences of his dishonest and negative

behaviour. He finally acknowledges the truth about himself to Mr Bali and Miss Raesa. Mr Bali reports what has happened to Luntu's grandmother. She is shocked and disappointed in him, but, after a private conversation with Mr Bali, she tells Luntu the truth about his parents' relationship and reveals that his father abandoned Luntu's mother when she became pregnant with Luntu. Luntu and his grandmother are able to reconcile, and he apologises for his past behaviour and promises to change his ways in future.

[**NOTE:** Tanya's exact age is not made clear in this story. If she was still 15 years old when she had sex with her adult boyfriend, he is guilty of rape as young adults of 15 are classified as children. If she was already 16 when she first *agreed* to have sex with him, it may not be strictly illegal but many people (like Mrs Moyo in this story) believe it is morally wrong, as sex is only appropriate between emotional equals. An adult is emotionally more developed than an adolescent and is more equipped to make decisions and take responsibility for those decisions and therefore has more power than the adolescent. Therefore, if an adult man or woman chooses to have sex with a 16-year-old learner they are almost certainly abusing this young person, even if they pretend to be in love or give the adolescent gifts or money in return. It is unlikely that such an adult will take any responsibility for any resulting pregnancy, sexually transmitted disease, emotional or any other difficulties which result from such an unequal relationship.]

### **Plot Development**

The plot has now reached the stage of **falling action**. After the **climax** of Tanya's rape accusation, Luntu finally begins, with the support of Mrs Moyo, Miss Raesa and, most importantly, Mr Bali to admit his real feelings honestly and to accept responsibility for his choices and his actions. His grandmother is also persuaded by Mr Bali to be honest with Luntu about his father and what happened between his parents. Knowing and admitting the truth starts to free Luntu from his problematic relationships and behaviour choices and to face up to his difficult feelings.

## Suggested Questions

### Pre-reading

1. In the previous e-mail, what simile did Luntu use to describe how he sat down in Mrs Moyo's office? What other word could be used to describe this feeling?
2. Luntu has titled this e-mail is "True Confessions". What clue does this give you about what might happen next?
3. Did you relate to Unathi's experience of reading fiction on page 118? Have you ever felt similar about a story you have read? Explain.

### Post-reading

4. Luntu describes his time in the library as some of the "worst few hours of his life". Think of some adjectives that might describe his emotions at this time.
5. Do you believe that teachers are sometimes able to admit their own mistakes in front of learners, as Mrs Moyo does in the meeting with Luntu? Give reasons for your answer.
6. Is Unathi the kind of person you would like and trust? Give reasons for your answer.
7. Why does Mrs Moyo say the word "man" "as if it was a piece of litter she had picked up off the school grounds..." (Page 122)? Discuss why you agree or disagree with her.
8. What does Mrs Moyo say is "the first and most important part of leadership"? Justify why you agree/disagree with her.
9. Relate briefly what happens from when Luntu and Mr Bali arrive at Luntu's grandmother's house until the end of this e-mail chapter.
10. Explain the meaning of the idiom "turning over a new leaf" (Page 126). Why does it work in this context?

## Themes

### *Honesty*

The real truth about Tanya's pregnancy comes out thanks to Mrs Moyo, Mr Bali, and Miss Raesa. Luntu has a long and difficult conversation with Mr Bali and Miss Raesa which helps him to stop pretending and admit "many things about himself to

himself.” He also tells the truth about his behaviour to his grandmother. Mr Bali persuades Luntu’s grandmother to tell him the truth about who and what his father is. All this results in an improvement in all Luntu’s relationships.

#### *Emotional Development*

Because Luntu is forced to be honest and admit his past mistakes he begins to know and understand himself better and to accept that Mr Bali, Mrs Moyo, Miss Raeesa, his grandmother, and Unathi have his best interests at heart and are willing to support him. This is a big step forward in his process of maturing emotionally. Mrs Moyo, Mr Bali, and Miss Raeesa again show that they care about their students’ emotional development and not only about their academic performance.

#### *Leadership*

Mrs Moyo admits that by deciding too early on that Luntu was “leadership material” because of his intelligence and apparent self-confidence and allowing him to get away with not following the Code of Conduct properly, she and the teachers were actually harming rather than helping him. She reminds him that “leading *your own life* is the first and most important part of leadership”.

### **Character Development**

**Luntu:** Tanya’s accusation of rape is proved false. Mr Bali and the other teachers show their support for Luntu by working with him to ensure that he stops pretending and honestly admits many things about himself to himself. After Luntu’s grandmother’s revelations about his father, Luntu is enabled to express his pain by crying and can apologise to his grandmother for his bad behaviour and commit himself to changing his ways for the better.

**Mr Bali:** He demonstrates his belief in and support of Luntu by working with him to help him to be honest with himself and others. He also accompanies Luntu to his grandmother’s house and wisely persuades her that it will be in Luntu’s best interests if she tells him the truth about his father.

**Mrs Moyo:** She shows herself to be a fair and honest person in that she admits her mistake in the way she treated Luntu and takes partial responsibility for allowing him to believe that he could get away with not following the rules properly. She reminds

herself (and Luntu) of the real meaning of leadership and enables Mr Bali and Miss Raesa to work with him and help him to change his ways for the better.

**Miss Raesa:** She proves her support by helping the other teachers find out the truth about Tanya's pregnancy so that Luntu is cleared of the rape accusation. She also spends time with Luntu (and Mr Bali) helping him to tell the truth about himself.

**Luntu's grandmother:** She is upset and disappointed by his behaviour but is willing to admit that she was wrong in keeping the truth about his father from him. She apologises and expresses her deep pain at the terrible way Luntu's mother (her daughter) was treated by his father and her past worries that Luntu was becoming like him. She is reassured by what Mr Bali tells her about Luntu being willing to take responsibility for Tanya's baby, that Luntu has goodness in him and that he is not a cruel and uncaring person. She still has faith in him and the problems between them are resolved.

#### **E-MAIL 22: (Sunday) WHY, SIR, WHY??????**

##### *Outline*

This is a very short e-mail of only three lines which suggest that something unexpected and terrible has happened.

<b>Plot Development</b>
-------------------------

This chapter is still part of the **falling action**, but it signals the shocking **second climax** of the story. This is where Luntu's **past** life (the story of his struggles when he was still a Grade 10 learner) intersects unexpectedly with his **present** life (the story of the Grade 11 learner who is writing daily e-mails about his history to Mr Bali as a holiday assignment).

This e-mail also reveals part of the subplot of Mr Bali's personal story.

## Suggested Questions

### Pre-reading

1. What four means of execution does Luntu name to describe his feelings in the previous e-mail as he waits to learn his fate in the meeting with Mrs Moyo, Mr Bali, and Miss Raeesa? How would you feel if you were in a similar situation?
2. Are the consequences that Mrs Moyo and the other two teachers put in place for Luntu after he's been cleared of the accusation of rape justified? Explain your answer.
3. If you had been in Luntu's grandmother's situation, would you have kept the truth about his father from him as she did? Why/why not?

### Post-reading

4. This e-mail is only three lines long. What does the length of the e-mail and the punctuation Luntu uses in the heading tell you about what might have happened?
5. What does it mean when Luntu says that he is "diminished"? What is he referring to by using that word? What clue does this give you to what has happened?
6. What effect do these three lines have on you as the reader of this story? What do they make you feel about continuing to read it and why?
7. How would you describe this chapter in terms of plot?

## Themes

### *Loss*

As this e-mail is so short and as it seems to indicate a death the main theme seems to be loss.

## Character Development

**Luntu:** It is obvious that he is so disturbed by whatever has happened that he is unable to write more than three lines. However, he remembers the John Donne poem about death which indicates that it must have made a strong impression on him.

## **E-MAIL 23: (Saturday)**

### *Outline*

This is the final e-mail Luntu writes to Mr Bali. It is obviously written after a delay of a couple of months. Although Luntu finds it hard to write and admits that this e-mail may now be “lost forever in cyberspace”, he is writing it to fulfil the commitment he made to Mr Bali at the beginning of the July holidays. Luntu relates how Mrs Moyo and Miss Raeesa delivered the news to him (at his grandmother’s house) that Mr Bali had died, suddenly and unexpectedly. He describes the difficulty and pain of this loss and expresses how valuable the relationship was to him.

### **Plot Development**

This e-mail reflects the **falling action** as well as the **resolution** of the both the plot about Luntu’s past and about his present. He also resolves a few of the subplots. Luntu describes the effects on him of Mr Bali’s death. He reflects on conversations with Mr Bali and the positive impact they had on his life. Luntu’s awareness of the value of the lessons learned from his teacher is obvious. Thanks to Mr Bali he is able to move forward with his life, to make healthier life-choices, and that to be honest with himself and others is the best policy. He has learned that “the truth shall set you free”. The subplots of Mr Bali’s personal story, Unathi’s personal story, the story of Luntu’s grandmother and her problems with the church priest, and the story of Lwazi and his abused girlfriend are all concluded. This e-mail demonstrates how Luntu is finally able to say goodbye to his teacher and move on feeling optimistic about his future.

### **Suggested Questions**

#### **Pre-reading**

1. Have you ever suffered a shock, whether negative or positive? How did it affect your actions? Compare them to Luntu’s in the previous short e-mail.

#### **Post-reading**

2. Comment on Luntu’s determination to write this final e-mail to Mr Bali, even though he is no longer around to read it.

3. Compare Luntu's description of his own hands to the description of the other people's hands in his very first e-mail.
4. What were Luntu and his grandmother doing when Miss Raeesa and Mrs Moyo arrived with their shocking news?
5. In your own words, explain why Luntu "digresses" (leaves the main topic of his e-mail) by writing about his grandmother's reasons for polishing her rubbish bin.
6. Mr Bali said that "life is messy and nobody is perfect"? Do you believe this is a good excuse to use when people make mistakes? Why/why not?
7. Luntu describes a *National Geographic* article about a man who cleans out pit toilets in Haiti. Explain why this story is important to Luntu.
8. What is the metaphor Mr Bali uses with Luntu to describe suffering and loss?
9. Name some moods reflected in this e-mail? Name the one you felt most at the end.
10. Identify one theme explored in this final e-mail. Give a reason for your answer.

## Themes

### *Loss*

Luntu describes in this chapter how he is coming to terms with the loss of Mr Bali and with the loss of his parents. Luntu finds out about the losses Mr Bali suffered in his life and realises that loss is experienced by everyone and that the way to deal with losses is to face them honestly and bravely.

### *Honesty*

Luntu is able to cope with the loss of Mr Bali partly through being honest about his own feelings and thoughts, both before and after Mr Bali's death.

### *Respect*

Through Luntu expressing his feelings about his father to Mr Bali, he begins to understand that his father's own lack of love and respect for himself meant that he could not show it to Luntu's mother which led him to his lying to, and betrayal of, her.

### *Emotional Development*

The fact that Luntu is coping with his sadness and the difficulty in his life shows that he has matured emotionally.

## *Relationships*

Through their honesty with each other Luntu and Mr Bali are finally able to build a good relationship, one in which Luntu trusts Mr Bali “more than anyone else”. Unathi and Luntu are able to become friends because they know the truth about each other. Luntu’s relationship with his grandmother improves after she tells him the truth about his father, and he notes that she has a “new feeling of trust” for him. Even the new priest that has taken over at his grandmother’s church has formed a relationship of trust with his congregation.

## **Character Development**

**Luntu:** By the end of the story Luntu has become an honest and more mature young man. He has recognised how much he owes Mr Bali for his continuous help and support. Thanks to the close relationship he developed with Mr Bali, he realised the critical importance of telling the truth to himself and others. He has faced the truth about his father and admitted his anger, sadness, and feelings of inferiority. He realises fully, after the loss of Mr Bali, the real meaning of *ubuntu* (that it is “I am because I belong” as Archbishop Desmond Tutu wrote) and this gives him hope. His relationship with his grandmother improves after her revelation about his father and he becomes good friends with Unathi. As he witnesses the abusive Lwazi’s girlfriend finally leaving Lwazi, he realises that, as it has with her, the truth has set him free.

**Mr Bali:** The reader learns, from what is said about Mr Bali at his memorial service, that Luntu’s life is not the only life he affected positively. Mr Bali admitted to having had similar struggles with tragedy and anger as Luntu which is why he understood his student so well. His younger sister died young, and he and his wife had tried without success to have children. His wife died eighteen months before he came to teach at WSHS. Luntu wonders if Mr Bali’s own suffering and loss eventually defeated him but the fact that he still cared enough to be a wise teacher, to believe in Luntu and be a “kind of warrior who fought for me and for all of us . . . with your brave and strong heart” shows that he overcame his losses.

**Unathi:** We learn of Unathi’s friendship with Luntu and her positive plans for her future.

**Lwazi's girlfriend:** We met her near the beginning of the story at the containers. Luntu noticed then that she had been hit. In this final chapter she has made up her mind to leave Lwazi because of his abuse of her. This makes Luntu feel better about the loss of Mr Bali because she is finally "telling the real truth to herself about herself" which emphasizes what he has learned about the freeing nature of truth.

## SECTION C: EXAMPLES OF FORMAL ASSESSMENTS

### Mid-year Formal Assessment (Total: $20 \div 2 = 10$ )

*Read the extracts then answer the questions that follow:*

1.

Mrs Moyo's hands are the most beautiful. Brown as chocolate, smooth and sweet-smelling, with thin fingers, like dancers, and flawless rectangular nails, painted a different colour every single week. They flash blood-red, gash-pink, flame-orange or bruise-purple as she talks, but sometimes sit quietly – as if posing for a photo – joined on the desk in front of her when she is talking to people in her office, or on her lap during school assemblies. This is how I imagine the hands of my mother. (Page 9)

1.1 Who is Mrs Moyo? (*Literal*)

**(1)**

1.2 What does the above description show about Luntu's opinion of, and feelings about Mrs Moyo? Use the text to support your answers (*Inference*)

**(3)**

2.

In *The Teenage Game*, it is a rule to have more than one girlfriend or boyfriend at once. That way, if a girlfriend is cheating on her boyfriend by being with another boy, then it isn't so bad because the boy is already cheating on her because he has another girlfriend himself. Everyone pretends they are faithful to each other but everyone kind of knows that hardly anyone is. Or maybe hardly any *boy* is. Girls sometimes only have one boyfriend but then they get really upset when they find out their boyfriend is cheating with other girls. To Luntu, at that time, to have four tyres – why limit yourself to a motorbike when you can have a BMW? – was one of the things that proved a boy was a man.

2.1 Do you think *The Teenage Game* is fun? Explain your answer. (*Evaluation*)

**(2)**

2.2 How might you feel and react if your romantic partner was secretly seeing someone else? What action would you take, if any? (*Appreciation*)

(2)

2.3 Does your partner cheating mean that you should also cheat? Why/why not? (*Evaluation*)

(1)

2.4 Explain Luntu's metaphor of the motorbike and BMW. (*Reorganisation*)

(1)

(10)

3.

During the June-July holidays Tanya went away to visit her family in the Eastern Cape and Luntu could not be with her. He could not even text her because: (a) his grandmother refused to give him more money for data; and (b) Tanya didn't have coverage in the rural area. It was like his skin felt itchy all the time. His grandmother was already unhappy with him because of his school report and she got impatient with him because he could never sit still and did not focus on his chores.

Yoh! Luntu's grandmother shouted at him a lot in those holidays, reminding him over and over that he had promised he would do his best at WSHS and asking him what would happen to him without a proper education. She also said that his mother would be ashamed of him if he did not study properly, and he must honour his mother like the commandment says. But Luntu closed his ears after she mentioned his mother and her voice became like an unnoticed car alarm in the middle of a parking area.

So instead of using the holidays to catch up on his studies, Luntu went out as much as he could. He mostly played soccer with his friends or hung around on street corners, talking and laughing with them and others in the community.

[Sometimes these were not actual street corners, Sir, but other places too, but you told us that this is a metaphor that means that a person is not doing anything useful and also may be planning something damaging to someone or something. As you know, Sir, I am very fond of metaphors.]

3.1 Explain why Luntu's skin feels itchy and why he cannot sit still and focus on his chores. (*Inference*)

(1)

3.2 List three reasons why Luntu’s grandmother was unhappy with him during the holidays. (*Reorganisation*)

(3)

3.3 Refer to lines 11 and 12: “But Luntu closed his ears after she mentioned his mother and her voice became like an unnoticed car alarm in the middle of a parking area.” Discuss the effectiveness of this simile. (*Appreciation*)

(2)

3.4 Do you think it is fair for teachers or parents to expect learners to work during the holidays? Give reasons for your answer. (*Evaluation*)

(2)

3.5 Identify one metaphor in this extract. Explain what makes a simile different from a metaphor.

(2)

(10)

**End-of-Year Formal Assessment** (Total:  $20 \div 2 = 10$ )

*Read the extracts then answer the questions that follow:*

1.

“I am your new English and history teacher and also your class teacher,” he said. “I have taken over this role from Ms Clare who, as you know, has left to have a baby. I’m sure she told you that she will not be returning to teaching for a few years. My name,” he wrote it on the board, “is Bali Silal. You may call me Mr Bali. The name Bali means warrior.”

Some people in the class laughed because it seemed ridiculous that this stringy man could be any sort of warrior. Then they stopped because they were worried that they were laughing at an in-joke.

But the new teacher smiled.

“I agree,” he said. “I look nothing like one expects a warrior to look. Ms Unathi, how would you expect a warrior to look?”

Unathi almost stood up again, but then she remembered not to.

“Um, Sir, I think he would look – she made fists and widened her shoulders, holding her arms away from her body – “very strong and . . . heavy.”

“There is a good word for what you are describing,” said Mr Bali. He wrote the word “muscular” on the board, and then said it. “What would the other qualities of a warrior be?”

“He is like a brave leader, or a hero,” said another girl called Lolo.

1.1 Summarise what you learn about Mr Bali from this passage and support your answer with evidence from this passage. (*Reorganisation*)

**(3)**

1.2 What makes a warrior a leader or a hero, in addition to physical strength? Give reasons for your answers. (*Appreciation*)

**(2)**

1.3 Why does Mr Bali call his students Mr or Ms together with their names? (*Inference*)

**(1)**

1.4 What is an in-joke? (*Reorganisation*)

**(1)**

1.5 Compare this dialogue to the kind of conversation you have been part of or heard taking place in a classroom in a classroom? Does it sound realistic? Give reasons for your answer.

**(2)**

1.6 At the beginning of this book, what was the general opinion of Unathi among her classmates.

**(1)**

**(10)**

2.

[I remember now, Sir, when you handed out old magazines for our English reporting assignment. I chose a *National Geographic* magazine even though geography is not one of my subjects. This magazine had a story about a man in Haiti whose job was to clean out pit toilets. I chose to report this story because I could not believe how anyone could do this job. Sometimes he even had to climb right into the toilet to remove what was there. And not only the shit, (sorry for using that word, Sir, but that

is what it is) but also sometimes finding human body parts, or snakes! But he was proud of what he did. He wanted to be photographed for *National Geographic* because he did not want to be unseen, even though people in his town would throw stones at him and his helpers because of their work. He was doing something that was necessary to keep people healthy.

So that taught me that if you are doing a good service for other people, no matter what it is, you can still feel good about yourself. Although, I really hope, Sir, that I will never have to serve people by cleaning out their toilets.]

2.1 Explain why this passage is written inside square brackets.

**(1)**

2.2 State where in the book this passage occurs (e.g., near the beginning/in the middle, near the end) and explain how you know this.

**(1)**

2.3 What is a pit toilet?

**(1)**

2.4 Luntu uses the swearword “shit” even though he respects his teacher. Discuss what this tells you about their relationship?

**(2)**

2.5 The toilet cleaner does not want to be “unseen”. What does he mean by that word? Have you ever felt unseen? Explain how you would respond to a feeling of being “unseen” and why?

**(3)**

2.6 Compare the idea of “good service” to that of leadership. How do those two ideas interconnect?

**(1)**

2.7 Explain why you agree/disagree with Luntu that you can feel good about yourself “if you are doing a good service for other people, no matter what it is.”

**(2)**

**(10)**

## SECTION D: ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES

### 1. CREATIVE WRITING

- a) If you were to write a story about yourself, what title would you give it to reflect your personality and your life, to that you “hook the reader firmly, like a small fish on a strong line, and wind him slowly in, so he is unable to break away”? Your title should also reflect the truth of you and your life.
  - b) In his first e-mail, Luntu describes some of his teachers’ hands. Look at your own hands. How would you describe them? Or how would you describe the hands of someone in your family?
  - c) Does Luntu’s grandmother remind you of anyone you know? If so, who and why?
- (b) and c) should be between 10 and 15 lines long each.)

### 2. DIALOGUE (once it has been written, learners may perform their dialogue for the class)

Dialogues should be between 20 – 30 lines (about 200 – 300 words)

In pairs, write a dialogue between Mr Bali /Tanya’s mother and Tanya during which they try to find out the truth about Tanya’s pregnancy.

**OR**

A dialogue between Luntu and Bandi or Luntu and Unathi (or all three) during which they discuss their hopes, dreams and fears for their futures.

### 3. MONOLOGUE

A monologue is one long speech from an actor usually performed in a play or movie.

Write a monologue for any of the supporting or minor characters in *Luntu Masiza Tells the Truth*. This monologue should tell the audience more about the character and their background. You can use any information that is provided about them in the book as well as information from your own imagination.

*Example: “My name is Phindi. I live with my boyfriend, Lwazi and our baby, Lira, in his nice wooden house next to the community containers. We live in this house because Lwazi’s job is to look after the containers – to make sure they are unlocked each morning and locked up each night, and that they are kept clean*

*and that any damage is reported to the people who provided them so that repairs can take place as soon as possible. This is a really good job with good money for Lwazi. I am unemployed so I help him with the cleaning . . .”* etc.

This monologue should be between 20 to 30 lines long (200 – 300 words).

#### **4. BOOK REVIEW**

Write a review of *Luntu Masiza Tells the Truth* for your local community newspaper. This should be between 20 and 30 lines (about 200 to 300 words). Remember to have a title for your review which reflects what you are going to say.

Whether your review is positive or negative, remember to give reasons for your opinion.

Look at online reviews (on Amazon.com or Goodreads for example) or in any newspaper or magazine to get an idea of how reviews are written.

#### **5. NEWSPAPER ARTICLE**

Write an article about the containers where Luntu writes his e-mails. You could write about when they were first provided, why the NGO which provides them for the use of the community decided to provide them, what they are made of and are used for, where they are situated, how they operate and who actually uses them and looks after them.

Include comments about them from different people, for example Lwazi (who runs them), the old people who benefit from having a community space where they can meet or be given a meal, students who use the study spaces, or students and community members who use the computers. Your article should be between 20 and 30 lines long.

#### **6. NOTICE**

Write an eye-catching notice for primary school students (and their parents/guardians) inviting them to apply to enter Walter Sisulu High School. Include some information about the school and its matric results, about its teachers, its values, its curriculum etc. Make sure parents know that transport is provided to learners who live in the community.

Remember you are painting the best picture possible of the school in order to attract new students. You may want to include information about the entrance tests and other requirements, as well as contact information. (Your notice should be full of information and should be at least 20 lines long, about 200 words)

## 7. DEBATE

As Luntu and Unathi belong to the school debating team, it might be interesting or fun for learners to experience their own debate.

*A debate is a formal discussion about a matter of general interest.*

Possible debate subjects:

*Motion:* *This house would make all school learners wear uniforms.*

**OR**

*Motion:* *This house would allow all school learners to wear any hairstyle they choose.*

*Debate participants:*

Each debate must have two teams of two speakers.

- The chairperson – introduces the motion and the participants, keeps time, and keeps order. (This could be the teacher)
- Team 1: Proposes or affirms (agrees with) the motion.
- Team 2: Opposes or (disagrees with) the motion.

Each speaker stands up and delivers a speech containing two to four key points they think will persuade the house to agree with their side of the argument.

- The house: This is the group of people or audience listening to the debate. They will decide at the end of the debate (by voting) which team wins.

*Debate structure:*

1. Chairman introduces the motion
2. First speaker (team proposing the motion) speaks:
  - Introduction: introduces themselves and what they are going to say AND the other speaker on their team and what they are going to say
  - Argument: 2 – 4 key points supporting the motion (*The other team can ask questions during this segment. They announce their question by putting up*

*their hand and saying: “Point of information: . . . and then ask their question which the speaker will answer.)*

- Sums up their argument
3. Second speaker (team opposing the motion) speaks:
    - Introduction: Introduces themselves and the other speaker on their team.
    - Responds to first speaker’s argument
    - Make their own argument: 2 – 4 key points opposing the motion (*The other team can ask questions during this segment. They announce their question by putting up their hand and saying: “Point of information:” . . . and then ask their question which the speaker will answer.)*
    - Sums up their argument
  4. Third speaker (team proposing the motion) speaks:
    - Responds to previous argument
    - Makes their own argument (*The other team can ask questions during this segment. They announce their question by putting up their hand and saying: “Point of information:” . . . and then ask their question which the speaker will answer.)*
    - Sums up their argument
  5. Fourth speaker (team opposing the motion) speaks:
    - Responds to previous argument
    - Makes their own argument (*The other team can ask questions during this segment. They announce their question by putting up their hand and saying: “Point of information:” . . . and then ask their question which the speaker will answer.)*
    - Sums up
  6. Questions from the house (the audience) to any of the speakers are allowed.
  7. One speaker from each team – starting with the speaker from the opposing team – gets three minutes to sum up their overall position to finish the debate.
  8. The audience votes on which team they think produced the most convincing argument.

**All participants to note:**

- Each speaker to take no more than five minutes – including answering questions.
- Speakers to keep everything you say brief and to the point. Do not ramble.
- Speak loudly and clearly, and not too fast, so that everyone can hear you.
- Audience to keep their questions/comments as brief as possible.
- Even though this is an argument, everyone involved must stay polite and respectful of everyone else.

## **SUGGESTED ANSWERS**

### **SECTION B: EXPLORING THE NOVEL, CHAPTER BY CHAPTER**

*Please remember that these answers do not cover all of the possibilities*

#### **E-MAIL 1: Holiday Homework (Saturday)**

##### **Pre-reading**

1. Any choice + justification.
2. First person narrator.
3. Honesty – *Luntu Masiza Tells the Truth*.

##### **Post-reading**

4. Respectful (uses “Sir” to address the teacher)/informal (sounds as if he’s talking to someone he knows and trusts) and uses slang (“a drag”).
5. Strange because teachers don’t usually do this/a good thing because it means the teacher is giving equal respect (or power) to the student/not a good thing, because teachers should show that they are in charge.
6. A thumb that can be moved freely and independently and to stretch further than most other species. (Some other primates such as gorillas, chimpanzees, also marsupials such as possums, and koalas and some frogs, for example, also have opposable thumbs.)
7. To improve his English (and isiXhosa), to improve his writing skills, to learn something about how history is recorded, to help him remember important life choices and changes, to encourage deeper self-exploration.
8. He smokes, he may be married, he is fat, he probably has red hair because the hair on his hands looks like “rusty metal”, he smokes but tries to hide it, he is a maths teacher, he is impatient with mistakes.
9. Hyperbole.

#### **E-MAIL 2: Sunday at the Containers (Sunday)**

##### **Pre-reading**

1. Friendly (+ text example), informal (+ text example), respectful (+ text example), honest/trusting (+ text example), respectful (+ text example), humorous (+ text example).

2. The air is sometimes dusty, foggy or smoky, so maybe a poor place (e.g., a township shack).
3. Knowing yourself.

### **Post-reading**

4. She is blind.
5. Any answer + justification/explanation.
6. It is good/he likes it/it is comforting/it reminds him of his family or where he comes from.  
Any comfort food + description.
7. He is a Xhosa boy because he describes part of initiation (also isiXhosa is mentioned in the previous e-mail as his other language).
8. He helps her/cares for her, he is proud of her cooking, she supports him, he is sometimes angry with her, he appreciates her cooking, he enjoys her humour, he recognises her pain, he resents her secrecy.
9. Different moods: sad/thoughtful/regretful/factual/longing/wishful/angry/insightful etc.
10. Any answer + justification. Example: He switches to third person to give him some distance from painful feelings he is writing about.

### **E-MAIL 3: (Monday) Luntu's Life at Walter Sisulu High School**

#### **Pre-reading**

1. The name of children born in South Africa after apartheid ended. The name comes from the book *Born Free* (by Joy Adamson) about an orphaned lion called Elsa.
2. Soup kitchen for the elderly, a study space for students, for community computers.
3. Opinion + justification.

#### **Post-reading**

4. If you plan things (essays) properly then you will do well with them. Opinion + justification.
5. Any + description.
6. Any + explanation.
7. Any + justification

8. Any + explanation
9. Values are individual beliefs that motivate the way people act in life. They are a guide for human behaviour. People usually adopt the values they are raised with. Examples: loyalty, spirituality, honesty, humility, compassion, kindness, selflessness, courage, empathy, tolerance etc.
10. Hyperbole: "These days he could take that broom handle from her and break it like it was a straw". Irony/sarcasm: "To be honest, Sir, I wondered how it would be possible to teach half a child."

#### **E-MAIL 4: (Tuesday) First Class with a New Teacher**

##### **Pre-reading**

1. You had to pass a maths test, a reading test, a critical thinking test, and an interview. Luntu also persuaded his grandmother to visit the school with him persuaded the principal and teachers to accept him by talking.
2. State similarities and differences. Examples: Possible similarities: following the LO curriculum. Possible differences: LO teachers call themselves "facilitators"/ all the LO teachers are also psychologists or counsellors/ learners sit in a circle instead of at desks/ breathing exercise before the class starts/ learners talk about real things that are happening in their lives and following the school's code of conduct as well as issues from the curriculum.

##### **Post-reading**

3. Learners to describe the arrangement of their classroom and give their opinions on the way Mr Bali's classroom is arranged.
4. Opinion and justification. Example: Yes, because you should respect other people's possessions/No, because students pay school fees so they should be able to do what they like/Yes, because furniture is expensive, and schools usually don't have a lot of money etc.
5. Luntu and Bandi react differently. Luntu is far more aggressive and arrogant, while Bandi is keen to have the teachers like him, so he is polite and humble.
6. A kicked cat makes an unpleasant sound, and this reflects Luntu's negative feelings towards Unathi.
7. Open-ended information sharing and discussion.
8. Bandi is Luntu's best friend (Page 30: "Luntu and his best friend, Bandi...") and likes the teachers to like him (Page 32: "Bandi likes the teachers to like him"). He

is more scared /respectful of teachers than Luntu (Page 37: “Luntu knew he was trying to prove his submission to the new teacher”).

9. Being popular depends on how much a person is liked or given importance by other people. It means having lots of friends and/or people who admire you. Open ended discussion. Examples of what makes someone popular: wealth, good looks, fame, special skills, sense of humour or fun, self-confidence, friendliness etc.

### **E-MAIL 5: (Wednesday) Why Do We Study History**

#### **Pre-reading**

1. Left out, uncomfortable, the joke was about me, like I didn't belong, disrespected, lonely.
2. No in-jokes. Everybody to stick to speaking English in class.
3. Some examples: ping-pong (table tennis), bric-a-brac (miscellaneous objects or ornaments with little value), slip-slop (a light sandal with a thong that passes between the big and second toes), flip-flop (a backward somersault of handspring/to change your opinion or policy), riff-raff (disreputable or undesirable people), sing-song (a repeated rising or falling rhythm/an informal gathering for singing) etc.
4. She is attractive (to Luntu), she doesn't follow the rules, she is confident and popular, she is not very intelligent, she is lazy, or she is vain.
5. Between Luntu and Unathi, when she refuses to write down his point; between Luntu and Mr Bali when Luntu is sent out of class.
6. Luntu is angry and feels humiliated at being sent out of class + individual learner comparisons to their own feelings in similar situations.
7. Learners' individual responses to the question. Possible answer: When you are doing something you really love, you are so involved with it that you don't notice the passing of time e.g., playing sport, dancing, working on maths or accounting problems, painting, cooking, singing, cleaning etc.
8. Effectively shows how angry Luntu is by comparing the rage he is feeling to an atom bomb.

## **E-MAIL 6: (Thursday) The Teenage Game**

### **Pre-reading**

1. Example: Mr Bali asks learners to brainstorm answers to the question “why do we study history” in their groups. Luntu and Unathi are in the same group. Both Luntu and Unathi suggest answers, but Unathi refuses to write Luntu’s answer down because she is tired of doing all the work while other people are lazy. Luntu gets angry with her saying this because he feels humiliated in front of Tanya (and the new teacher).
2. Opinion + justification. Examples: No, because teachers never get into trouble or take sides against their colleagues/Yes, because he is disciplining Luntu who is popular with everyone/Yes, because “it was not usual for students to be sent out of class at WSHS.

### **Post-reading**

3. Opinion + justification.
4. “On point” means extremely attractive and stylish or fashionable.
5. Own experiences and observations
6. Protest action is an act of showing or saying publicly that you object to something. Tanya is protesting against having to follow the uniform protocols.
7. Page 46: “To Luntu, at that time, to have four tyres – why limit yourself to a motorbike when you can have a BMW? – was one of the things that proved that a boy was a man.”/ Page 48: “Instead, he speaks in a soft, sad voice and looks like a man who has just lost all his money at gambling”/ Page 49: “Tanya came late to English class with a face that was shut like a strong, steel security gate,. . .”

## **E-MAIL 7: (Friday) The Power of Hair (and an Apple Becomes Ripe)**

### **Pre-reading**

1. Page 45: “. . . but also told us it was not a game just for fun, but something that was usually hurtful to ourselves and others.”
2. Luntu is trying to persuade his grandmother to get a TV. He promises her that he will watch the soap opera that she likes with her and explain to her what is happening if she cannot tell by listening (because she is blind).
3. The condoms might perish and not be effective any more in stopping unwanted pregnancies or sexually transmitted diseases.

## **Post-reading**

4. Milo – is “like the drink: hot, dark and delicious” (Page 51).
5. Opinion + justification.
6. Milo meets his friends at the bus-stop on a Monday morning showing his new haircut. He chose a style called “Long Walk to Freedom” but it does not look right, and his friends laugh at him and suggest that it should be called “Short Run to Prison” instead. Luntu and his friends fall about laughing, even when Luntu’s grandmother’s neighbour passes them in the street. Milo covers his faulty hairstyle with a beanie for the rest of the day pretending he is greeting flu. After school he gets all his hair shaved off.
7. They are laughing in an excessive and over-noisy way, not only because it is funny, but because they are showing off.
8. Learners’ inference based on what they know of Bandi’s family from the text. Examples: He misses his mother, he does not respect his father, he is grateful that his brother can support them and admires him for knowing how to get free electricity.
9. Yes, because she allows her bare leg to touch Luntu’s when they are on the bus, even Bandile notices that she is flirting with Luntu. And she watches him through the bus window after he gets off the bus.

## **E-MAIL 8: (Saturday – Week 2) More About the New Teacher**

### **Pre-reading**

1. “Long Walk to Freedom”. It “had historical significance and Mr Bali would be disrespecting Nelson Mandela if he told Milo to take it out.”
2. Luntu does not show how much he likes Tanya by pretending that he is not that impressed by her.
3. His brother.

### **Post-reading**

4. It is part of the rising action of the plot.
5. By being angry but pretending not to be, Luntu is the one who will suffer negative consequences. Feelings which are not admitted and dealt with can cause poor self-esteem, physical pain, relationship problems etc.
6. No, Luntu thought it was because Mr Bali disliked him, when his teacher did have something positive to say, i.e.: “This is an interesting story, Luntu, and you have a

good creative imagination and an ability with words. I like the parallel you have drawn between the French Revolution and the struggle against apartheid . . .” and only gave him low marks for his careless punctuation and spelling.

7. Learners to share their experiences and discuss whether their responses were reasonable or not.
8. It is an idiom meaning to say nothing or to stop talking.
9. Suspense involves withholding information in order to make readers curious about what will happen next. It is a way of keeping a reader’s attention and interest which is what writers want to do.

### **E-MAIL 9: (Sunday) Secrets of the Female Body, Revealed.**

#### **Pre-reading**

1. Luntu’s loss of interest in his two best subjects began to leak into his other subjects, like “water from a cracked jug onto a table.” This is a simile.
2. He had a reputation for scoring high marks in English and History. He was the class representative on the Student Leadership Council. He was in the debating club and had been awarded “Best Speaker” in the last junior debating competition. [Learners may remember earlier in the story Luntu wrote that the teachers often asked him to read something at assembly or help them organise events and show visitors and funders around the school (Page 29)]
3. Yes. Like Luntu, Tanya does not like to follow the rules. She also reacts with anger when Mr Bali disciplines her and, instead of admitting her anger and accepting responsibility for her wrong actions, she blames him and starts to behave badly and lose interest in learning.

#### **Post-reading**

4. The priest wants to steal more money to support his private lifestyle.
5. Yes, because she invited Luntu to her house when her mother and sisters were out, she made sure to sit close to him while they were listening to music on her phone, she took his hand and put it on her hair, she made sure her lips were close to his, she had a condom ready for him to use and knew how to use it. She acts like a movie star when saying goodbye to him.
6. Maybe. Luntu believes he feels real love for Tanya because “. . . all four chambers of his heart, his lungs, his stomach, liver, kidney, brain – every single part of him – was filled with love for one girl only” (Pages 61 & 62). And later,

when she is not showing much love for him, he feels as if “he really loved her and would do anything for her” (Page 62). But his first feelings of love might be because of the excitement of his first sexual experience. Later, when he is leaving her house, he seems to feel more excited about his life as a man beginning and being able to do or be anyone he wanted. He could be confused about his feelings.

7. Yes. Now that he thinks he is in love with her, she is acting as if she is not really interested.
8. Learners’ own opinions to be substantiated.

### **E-MAIL 10: (Monday) Matter Over Mind**

#### **Pre-reading**

1. The Anglican Women’s Federation.
2. At Tanya’s house.
3. Luntu believed he was in love with Tanya and Tanya started pretending that she wasn’t as interested in him as she had been before.

#### **Post-reading**

4. A “3”.
5. Because he was missing Tanya and believed he loved her/was obsessed with the physical side of their relationship.
6. The one between Luntu and his grandmother about his marks and lack of focus. External conflict.
7. Learners to share/discuss personal responses if they feel comfortable doing so.
8. Page 65: “. . . her voice became like an unnoticed car alarm in the middle of a parking area/Page 66: “. . . cool and sweet as a can of Coke from the tuckshop fridge”/Page 67: “Her eyes were hard like dark, shiny stones . . .”/Page 67: “. . . her words started to circle around and around in his head like a slow wheel from a moving bicycle dropped suddenly on the ground”/Page 68: “. . . cackling together like chickens”/Page 68: “. . . he felt as distant and alone as an undiscovered planet”.

They help the thing (emotion/thought/setting/situation etc.) that is being described to be understood or visualised more clearly by the reader and therefore help to engage the reader more effectively.

9. She is a minor character because not much is told about her, and her role is only to move the story along.

### **E-MAIL 11: (Tuesday) Hard Head, Hard Heart**

#### **Pre-reading**

1. Playing soccer with his friends or hanging out “on street corners talking and laughing with them and others in the community” (Page 65).
2. He went to Tanya’s house.
3. Because he thought it would make him look weak.
4. Any that work, even if they are silly. Example: thousands more trees in the forest/ many more blades of grass on the lawn (You can have fun with this one).  
(*Appreciation*)

#### **Post-reading**

5. Yes/No + reasons. Examples: Yes, because he has a stubborn attitude/is not admitting his mistakes/taking responsibility for his behaviour/the teachers are trying to help him. No, because it is too harsh to remove all of them at once/the teachers should only remove one or two and say they will remove the rest if he doesn’t improve/No, it is the teachers’ fault for letting him get away with so much so they shouldn’t punish him etc.
6. Explanation + any opinion + justification.
7. It reflects his stubbornness and refusal to care about anything.
8. Miss Raeesa means that shame is a negative feeling of humiliation and self-blame, whereas remorse means a feeling of regret for a mistaken word or action. A feeling of shame is often not expressed and can last a long time, whereas remorse can be admitted and expressed honestly and forgiven and forgotten.

### **E-MAIL 12: (Wednesday) Tanya’s Return**

#### **Pre-reading**

1. At the beginning of Term 3.
2. His position as class representative on the SLC, being a member of the debating team and taking part in competitions, no longer escorting visitors around the school.

3. Any opinion + reasons. Examples: Tanya will drop Luntu because she has already shown she is not that interested/Luntu will drop Tanya because he will get sick of her uninterested attitude.

### **Post-reading**

4. Mr Van is relaxed/indulgent with his students since he does not get angry with the whispers and lack of attention, however he is still disciplined because he makes sure that they focus on the lesson again without delay.
5. Any + descriptions of experiences/observations.
6. Any opinion + justification.
7. Opinion + justification. Examples: Yes, because it shows that he cares about her and feels compassion for her situation/Yes, because it shows that he is capable of being responsible/No, because it shows that he is still not thinking clearly about his actions etc.
8. The actual translation is “time flies” but any explanation close to that is acceptable.

## **E-MAIL 13: (Friday) Romance is Dead**

### **Pre-reading**

1. Three weeks after the beginning of Term 3.
2. Any + justification. Example: Because she is no longer interested in him/because she is too worried about what is happening to her.
3. Luntu is in a maths class when he hears that Tanya has arrived at school with her mother. He rushes from the class and hides near Mrs Moyo’s office to try and find out what is going on. Miss Raesa sends him to excuse her from the class she is supposed to be teaching because she has an “emergency meeting”. After his next class with Mr Bali (during which he cannot concentrate), he returns to Mrs Moyo’s office and sees Tanya and her mother leaving. He tries to catch Tanya’s attention, but she looks right through him. He realises that she is in some sort of trouble and decides to “save” her.

### **Post-reading**

4. It is very often partially or not at all true. Rumours are negative because they usually turn out not to be true and can cause harm to the people involved.

5. Bandi shows he wants Luntu to protect himself from trouble, but he does not advise Luntu in a way that supports honesty and responsibility. He does not appreciate the importance of these values.
6. Any opinion + justification. Example: Because she no longer looks attractive and “on point” and he fell “in love” with her mostly because of her looks.
7. Examples:  
shocked/devastated/hurt/humiliated/sad/unbelieving/stunned/offended/  
traumatised/upset/shaken/dazed/grief-stricken etc.
8. Any + description/explanation.

### **E-MAIL 14: (Saturday – Week 3) The Story Spreads**

#### **Pre-reading**

1. Any four of the rumours listed on page 77. The rumour Luntu believed was that “the father was some boy at Walter Sisulu High School” (i.e., himself).
2. That he still finds the memory of Tanya’s rejection of him very painful and/or humiliating.
3. To face the consequences of something you have done and to take responsibility for it. It is an idiom.

#### **Post-reading**

4. It is very painful and difficult.
5. Opinion + justification. Example: Yes, because gossip feels like a kind of knowledge (even if it is not true) and having knowledge that nobody else has about another person or situation makes people feel as if they have an advantage – i.e., power over others + experience/observation.
6. No, because he has evidence that Bandi may betray his secrets in order to feel powerful.
7. Painful/Regret (Luntu is feeling the pain of Tanya’s rejection and his feelings of humiliation and the regret of Bandi’s betrayal).
8. An award given for artistic and technical achievement in the American and international film industries. It is effective because it reflects the strength and credibility of Luntu’s performance of not caring.

## **E-MAIL 15: (Sunday) Uniform Matters**

### **Pre-reading**

1. Hang out near the community centre and bunk. Hang out means to spend a lot of time in one place or with someone. Bunk means to not go somewhere where you are meant to go.
2. Any opinion + justification.
3. By “. . . laughing, joking and speaking loudly.”

### **Post-reading**

4. Opinion + justification + personal examples. Example: Not always. You can call a famous sports achiever a “GOAT”, which stands for “Greatest of All Time” (like Cristiano Ronaldo or Venus Williams), or you may use a personal nickname that shows that you like a person.
5. Once bitten, twice shy means that you had a bad experience the first time you did something, so you will not try it a second time. The hot stove/ fireproof gloves metaphor indicates that Luntu will be very careful when deciding whether to get close to any girl again. His feelings about future relationships are therefore extremely cautious if not negative.
6. A spanner in the works, a cat among the pigeons (original idioms) and a roadblock into the traffic (Luntu’s invented idiom).
7. Because he wants to get back at Mr Bali for all the bad things that have happened to him recently by disrupting his class, because he enjoys debating and is missing it, and because he wants to know the answer.
8. Yes/No + experience/observations, opinions + justifications.

## **E-MAIL 16: (Monday) Mr Bali Loses His Cool**

### **Pre-reading**

1. Bra Bals.
2. Not to have one.
3. “. . . because that was a sign you were in a gang and you were not allowed to be in a gang and at WSHS at the same time.”
4. Because they were too lazy or distracted to bother.

### **Post-reading**

5. They feel they are better than security guards/proud/arrogant/superior/self-important/over-confident/bigheaded/vain/self-satisfied/egotistical etc.

Luntu describes a “chorus of voices” agreeing that “tracksuit tops were not smart like blazers” and that if the students wanted to look good, “they should have blazers instead”. Some students say that they don’t “want to look like security guards” (Page 92). Unathi explains that “when people are doing important work, like doctors or lawyers or accountants, they wear suits and look very serious and smart, like they are doing well with their lives. But with security guards it looks like the work they do is not serious . . .” etc.

6. His face gets darker, his lips look thinner, his body is stiff, and his voice sounds “as loud and deep and tight as the skin on a drum”.
7. Because they are judging adult security guards on the clothes they wear, not on their characters or values or hard work or the difficulties they may be facing. They are not showing kindness and understanding to other human beings. They are not appreciating their own privilege. They are arrogant and believe themselves to be extra-special and better than others who may not be lucky enough to have their advantages.
8. Because it is written by a white, European man. There is a sense that, before he really understands the poem, Luntu dismisses it because it is written by someone who represents a colonial power and therefore cannot have anything of value to say to him.
9. Luntu is quoting the Bible (Ephesians 4:26). It means that you should not hold onto your anger for more than one day. Luntu has held onto his anger at Mr Bali for much longer than a day. This is ironic because Luntu is criticising his grandmother for doing the same thing that he himself is doing, but worse.

### **E-MAIL 17: (Tuesday) The Snowball Exercise**

#### **Pre-reading**

1. Because they believe it will make them look smarter and more important so they can be taken seriously.
2. “. . . the traffic on the nearby road, the scratching of the birds or squirrels on the tin roof, the soft voices from other classrooms”. Also, Mr Bali’s loud voice.
3. The ringing of a bell, usually a church bell or a bell in a clock tower OR taxes or charges or payments – often paid in order to use roads.
4. Ubuntu. Meanings: You are only a person through other people/humanity towards others/togetherness/we are because we belong together etc.

### **Post-reading**

5. The pieces of paper used during the exercise to write the answers are scrunched up into balls that look a bit like snowballs.
6. "I feel inferior to people who have parents".
7. Any. [Students can share one or two if they feel comfortable doing so.]
8. Yes. Examples of other reasons: they are poor/struggling/necessary basic services such as water and electricity are not being provided/they are bored and feel like having some fun/they are envious of people that have more than them/they enjoy violence/they think everyone should have equal services no matter where they live etc.
9. If a person feels inferior, they feel they have no power and are victims of the people who have power and do not have respect. If they feel superior, they think they are better than others and have control and must be given respect.

### **E-MAIL 18: (Wednesday) Luntu Cooks His Goose**

#### **Pre-reading**

1. Students were each handed two pieces of blank paper. On the first piece they wrote answers to the question: "Who or what makes you feel superior?". Then they crumpled up their papers and threw them into a box. On a second piece of paper, they wrote answers to the question: "Who or what makes me feel inferior?". Again, they crumpled up their paper and threw it into a second box. They had five minutes to respond to each question and they did not identify themselves on either paper. The anonymous answers were then read out.
2. "Mumbo-jumbo" (Page 102). It means nonsense or rubbish.
3. "It is kind of like a dog that growls because it is really scared of you" (Page 102).
4. We are all human; so our human experiences, thoughts, and feelings reflect those of the rest of the people in the world.
5. To cause someone's downfall.

#### **Post-reading**

6. It shows that Mr Bali has no problem with Luntu when he is working to his potential. He has no negative feelings toward Luntu, only to his bad attitude and behaviour.
7. Because they weren't thinking of the consequences/they were being stupid/they were bored and wanted to cause a commotion or liven things up.

8. Any + justification.

### **E-MAIL 19: (Thursday) Things Fall Apart**

#### **Pre-reading**

1. Positive and complimentary.
2. They put them at the bottom of their shoes to make them tap on the floor; they use them to scratch some words on the walls; they hide them between their fingers with the sharp end sticking out and then use them to prick other people's hands by high fiving them.
3. Unathi was angry because she knew that she was HIV-positive, and the boys were putting their other classmates in danger of becoming HIV positive too. Yes, her reaction was justified.
4. It usually means that things are breaking into pieces because they are old or badly made. In this case, it hints that Luntu's life is about to break apart.

#### **Post-reading**

5. Her parents died of AIDS, and she was left alone with her younger sister. Rats would come and steal their food and one night a rat bit her sister's ear while they were sleeping. She learned how to catch the rats.
6. Unathi's personal story is one sub-plot. There is a small clue to Mr Bali's personal story (another sub-plot) when Luntu notices that he looks sad about nobody's life being perfect.
7. To join others in supporting an idea or opinion (or thing) that is likely to be fashionable or popular.
8. Brave/courageous/honest/truthful/sad/lonely/misunderstood etc.
9. Honesty, because Unathi reveals the truth of herself and her history./Courage, because she admits that her sarcasm was used as protection against her own feelings of inferiority./Emotional maturity which Unathi shows by being honest and brave.

### **E-MAIL 20: (Friday) Persona Non Grata**

#### **Pre-reading**

1. Life Orientation.
2. Because Unathi was HIV-positive and their actions could have spread the virus to other classmates.

3. Her parent's deaths, her living situation, why she killed rats, her feelings of inferiority, the reason for her sarcastic behaviour in the past.
4. Agree + examples to justify.

### **Post-reading**

5. Someone who nobody wants to know/an unacceptable person (see page 119).
6. Previous experiences had been good because Luntu was popular with her and the teachers. This experience is frightening and humiliating because he is in her office for doing something seriously wrong.
7. She attacks him/hits his back and shouts "bad words and insults" at him.
8. Any + justification. Examples: Unathi has forgiven Luntu; her own difficult experiences have made her feel sorry for others who are struggling; telling the truth about herself has enabled her to forgive Luntu and her classmates; she is emotionally mature etc.
9. Shoot himself; jump off a high building; cut his wrists; drown himself.
10. Any + justification. Example: No, because it would not really solve anything. Luntu would be destroying his life and hurting or traumatising others (his grandmother, his teachers, his classmates)/No, because suicide is a cop-out. You should face and solve your problems, admit your mistakes and be honest about yourself)/Yes, because then Luntu does not have to feel pain anymore/No, because it is against his religion etc.

## **E-MAIL 21: (Saturday) *True Confessions***

### **Pre-reading**

1. "He felt as if he was trying not to break a box of eggs underneath him."  
Careful/scared/nervous/tentative/unsure/hesitant/cautious/uncertain etc.
2. That he might begin to be honest (to confess means to admit to doing or saying something wrong or embarrassing).
3. Any + explanation + example/s.

### **Post-reading**

4. Scared/terrified/despairing/desperate/angry/shocked/traumatised/worried/hopeless/deva-stated/disturbed/horrified/petrified etc.
5. Any + justification/examples.

6. Yes, because she has proved that she can be mature, honest, compassionate, and brave. She is sympathetic to Luntu and tries to make him feel more positive and by suggesting a book for him to read.
7. Because she sees him (and his actions) as she would see a piece of rubbish. Agree or disagree + justification. Example: Because he used Tanya, a young schoolgirl for sex even though he was married and refuses to take responsibility for her baby.
8. “. . . leading your *own* life.” Any + justification.
9. Luntu asks his grandmother whether Mr Bali can come in; they discussed what happened with the drawing pins and Tanya; Luntu’s grandmother was upset; Mr Bali explained about the planned HIV testing and Tanya’s lie; they talk privately while Luntu makes tea; they drink their tea without speaking; Mr Bali leaves; Luntu’s grandmpother expressed her disappointment in him; she told him the truth about his father and apologised for not telling him before; Luntu apologises for his behaviour and promises to do better.
10. To change one’s ways for the better. It describes exactly what Luntu has done at the end of the story.

## **E-MAIL 22: (Sunday) WHY, SIR, WHY?**

### **Pre-reading**

1. The guillotine, lethal injection, bullet, and hanging.
2. Any + clarification.
3. Any + justification. Examples: I would not have told Luntu about his father because I would be trying to protect him from the knowledge that his father didn’t care about him or his mother./Yes, because it is always better for people to know the truth about themselves and their families because secrets and lies can be more damaging than telling the truth./No, because she might have believed that he was too young. Maybe she was intending telling him when he was older.

### **Post-reading**

4. That something unexpected and shocking has happened. The six question marks show that Luntu cannot understand it or is questioning why it has happened.
5. Reduced/lessened/weakened/made smaller. Luntu is quoting the John Donne poem about which he wrote his recent assignment where the poet wrote “Any man’s death diminishes me” (Page 97) meaning that, to quote Luntu earlier: “. . .

when other people die . . . part of us dies with them” (Page 96). Someone has died.

6. Any + reason. Example: I want to keep reading to find out what has happened.
7. Falling action in terms of the plot or story of Luntu’s past life. Climax of the story of Luntu’s present life.

### **E-MAIL 23: (Saturday)**

#### **Pre-reading**

1. Any + description.

#### **Post-reading**

2. It is a positive act. It shows that Luntu is aware of the promise he made to Mr Bali when he first committed to writing this assignment. He is fulfilling his commitment which shows that he is being responsible. Mr Bali is no longer alive, but Luntu realises that he is also fulfilling a commitment to himself by finishing the story. His determination to do this shows that his attitude has changed for the better.
3. The hand descriptions at the beginning gave clues to the teachers’ appearance and personalities. The description of his own hands gives a clue to his feelings.
4. Luntu was washing the concrete floor of the back yard of his house, his grandmother was polishing her rubbish bin in the front yard.
5. He is avoiding writing about the painful feelings he had when he learned about Mr Bali’s death, because he still feels them.
6. Yes/No + justification. Examples: Yes, because nobody can ever be perfect in everything/No, because everyone should aim to be the best they can be, even if they are imperfect and make mistakes.
7. It confirms an important lesson he learned from Mr Bali: that everybody is different and lives differently, does different jobs etc., but that does not make them better or worse than anyone else.
8. A jungle.
9. Any. Examples: sad/depressed/regretful/painful/satisfied/happy/contented/hopeful/amused/confident/optimistic/positive/encouraging etc.
10. Any of the themes represented: Loss/honesty/respect/relationships/emotional maturity.

## SECTION C: FORMAL ASSESSMENT

### ***Mid-year formal assessment - possible answers:***

- 1.1 Mrs Moyo is Luntu's school principal.
- 1.2 The description shows that Luntu admires and respects Mrs Moyo because he describes her hands as "beautiful" and "sweet-smelling", and they make him imagine "the hands of my mother". Luntu writes that her nails are painted a different colour each week. This shows that Luntu sees Mrs Moyo as a woman who takes good care of her appearance because she repaints her nails regularly. The colours Luntu uses to describe her nails are quite violent so this indicates that he might be a bit scared of her.
- 2.1 No, The Teenage Game is not fun because it results in people being dishonest and people being hurt.
- 2.2 *Examples:* I would react by feeling hurt/angry/sad/humiliated/betrayed/as if I will never trust anyone again/like I want to get them back by seeing someone else/I would want to hurt them/I wouldn't care because I know you can never trust anyone etc.
- 2.3 *Examples:* No, you shouldn't cheat because two wrongs don't make a right/you are letting them make you lie and betray your own values/people will see that you are also a cheat and they won't trust you etc.
- 2.4 Luntu is comparing girls to wheels on a motorbike or on a car. He says it is better to have four girlfriends (a BMW) rather than only two (a motorbike).
- 3.1 Luntu is missing Tanya/missing having sex with Tanya because he has become obsessed with her, so he cannot act calmly and he cannot concentrate properly.
- 3.2 This simile is effective because it is comparing Luntu's grandmother's complaining voice with a car alarm which is usually very loud. However, car alarms are often ignored and Luntu is ignoring her, so it is unnoticed.
- 3.3 Luntu's grandmother was unhappy and impatient with him because he could not sit still, because he did not focus on his chores and because of his bad school report.
- 3.4 *Examples:* No, it is not fair because learners need a break from their studies./No, it is not fair because teachers have a break so learners should too./No, because it is unhealthy if learners don't get a chance to rest./It depends. If a learner is doing badly then they should study in the holidays to improve their

results./Yes, learners should do some revision in the holidays so that they get good marks etc.

- 3.5 The difference between a metaphor and a simile is that a simile compares something to something else using the words “like” or “as”. A metaphor describes something in a way that isn’t actually true but helps to explain an idea or make a comparison.

***End-of-year formal assessment – possible answers:***

- 1.1 Mr Bali: He is thin (“stringy”), respectful (calls students using title Ms or Mr as they do him), teaches English and History (“I am your new English and History teacher), engages with his students (asks questions, involves them in conversation), has a sense of humour (he smiles when they laugh at the idea of him as a warrior).
- 1.2 A leader or hero must have integrity (i.e., he must live in accordance with his values); he must be honest (Mr Bali shows deals with Luntu honestly throughout the story); compassionate (Mr Bali cares about Luntu and his other students); determined (he is determined that Luntu should fulfil his potential which is why he challenges him).
- 1.3 Because he believes he should show respect for his students in the same way he expects them to respect him. He does not believe in unbalanced relationships where one person holds all the power and status.
- 1.4 A joke that is understood and appreciated by only a small group of people (short for “inside joke”).
- 1.5 Yes/No + justification.
- 1.6 That she was unpopular because of her reputation as a “rat-killer” and because of her sarcasm and unsociableness.
- 2.1 Luntu has broken away from telling his story and is addressing Mr Bali directly.
- 2.2 It occurs near the end. The character of Luntu shows maturity, understanding, and a lack of arrogance.
- 2.3 A type of toilet that collects human waste in a hole in the ground.

- 2.4 Luntu feels he can use the swearword because he knows that his teacher will understand that it is an appropriate description. It shows the high level of honesty and trust between them.
- 2.5 In this context “unseen” means unnoticed or invisible. Any + any response = justification.
- 2.6 In order to be a good leader you must serve people. You are not a leader because of the status and importance (or money) but because you care about the people you are leading.
- 2.7 Agree/disagree + justification.

## **GLOSSARY – DIFFICULT WORDS/PHRASES**

**power** (p. 7) – possession of influence, authority or control over someone or something

**emphasising** (p. 8) – giving special importance or value to something

**flawless** (p. 9) – without any imperfections, perfect

**by extension** (p. 9) – taking the same line of argument further

**self-exploration** (p. 10) – exploring and questioning your own thoughts, feelings, behaviours and motives

**argy-bargy** (p. 10) – noisy arguing

**for the duration** (p. 10) – until the end of something (the holiday)

**disability grant** (p. 13) – a sum of money given by the government to someone who is disabled in some way

**cervical cancer** (p. 15) – cancer of the lower passage at the end of a woman's uterus

**jabbing** (p. 17) – poking roughly or quickly

**contraceptive pill** (p. 18) – a pill that women take regularly to prevent pregnancy

**cerebral hemispheres** (p. 19) – both sides of the brain

**sidebar** (p. 22) – a short piece in a newspaper or magazine placed alongside the main article in order to explain or expand on the main article/a short private discussion held between lawyers and the judge in a courtroom

**reputation** (p. 24) – widespread beliefs and opinions that are held about someone or something

**capacities** (p. 27) – the ability or power to do or understand something

**sarcastic** (p. 34) – using irony to mock or show contempt towards someone or something

**higgledy-piggledy** (p. 39) – mess, confusion, or disorder

**contribution** (p. 41) – a part played by a person or thing to bring a result

**contradicted** (p. 41) – stated the opposite of what someone else said

**detested** (p.43) – hated or despised

**digress** (p. 47) – leave the main subject briefly when writing or speaking

**historical significance** (p.52) – importance of someone or something in history

**immoderate** (p. 53) – uncontrolled and more than necessary

**guillotine** (p.57) – a machine with a heavy blade which drops down in order to behead someone

**concentrate** (p. 64) – focus all attention on a particular person, object, or activity

**undiscovered** (p. 68) – not found

**invention** (p. 70) – the creation of something new

**privileges** (p. 71) – special rights or honours given to one particular person or group

**polygons** (p. 73) – a plane figure with at least three straight sides and angles in geometry

**helter-skelter** (p. 73) – in disorderly haste

**instructed** (p. 74) – told or ordered someone to do something

***tempus fugit*** (p. 75) – time flies (Latin)

**indicated** (p. 78) – showed or pointed out

**scooped** (p. 81) – created a hollow or hole

vow (p. 83) – solemn promise

**epidermis** (P. 83) – the outermost layer of human skin

**impermeable** (p. 83) – not allowing anything to pass through

**prevention** (p. 84) – an act of stopping something from happening

**regulation** (p. 86) - rule

**objections** (p. 88) – disagreements

**constitution** (P. 88) – a written set of basic rules for a system of belief or behaviour

**disrupt** (p. 89) – interrupt by causing a disturbance

**unique** (p. 91) – the only one of its kind

**incomparable** (p. 91) – without an equal, unable to be compared

**mystic** (p. 91) – an extremely spiritual person

**philosopher** (p. 91) – a person who studies systems of belief or behaviour

**guru** (p. 91) – a spiritual teacher

**fortunate** (p. 94) – lucky

**compassion** (p. 94) – understanding and sympathy for the misfortunes and sufferings of others

**mumbo-jumbo** (p. 102) – nonsense

**individual** (P. 103) – single or separate

**gravity** (p. 104) – the force that attracts a body towards the centre of the earth

**complimented** (p. 105) – praised or congratulated

**haughty** (P. 105) – arrogantly superior

**receptionist** (p. 105) – a person who greets visitors to a school or business or medical facility

**medication** (p. 110) – medical drug used to treat an illness or condition

**escort** (p. 113) – go with, accompany

**compute** (p. 118) – make sense of something

**massive** (p. 118) – enormous

**culpability** (p. 121) – responsibility for a wrongdoing

**intellect** (p. 122) – logical or academic intelligence

**fuddy-duddy** (p. 124) – old-fashioned

**exposed** (p. 125) – unprotected

**devastated** (p. 126) – shocked, overwhelmed, distressed

**priorities** (p. 131) – things that are more important than others

**penetrate** (p. 132) – to go into or through something with force or effort

**hanky-panky** (p. 133) – improper behaviour

**overbearing** (p. 133) – overpowering, bossy

**bursaries** (p. 134) – a loan or grant for study at university or college

**ambition/ambitious** (p. 134) – a strong wish to achieve something/someone who strongly wants to achieve something

**discarded** (p. 137) – get rid of someone or something that is no longer useful