

## Before-reading questions

1 *Reader's own answer.*

2 *Reader's own answer.*

**Model answer:** How people's pasts affect their lives, and how immigrants are treated, and the issues of mixing different religions together.

3 *Reader's own answer.*

4 *Reader's own answer.*

## During-reading questions

### CHAPTER ONE

- 1 Because his wife has just divorced him.
- 2 He feels happy and special. He feels that life has chosen him and he has chosen life.
- 3 He goes to a party in Queen's Park and meets Tim Westleigh (Merlin), Clive, Leo, Wan-Si and Clara.

### CHAPTER TWO

- 1 They believe that the end of the world will be on New Year's Day 1975 and that only 144,000 Witnesses of Jehovah will survive.
- 2 She is delivering a *Watchtower* magazine to his house.
- 3 Because he meets her mother and she turns him into a Jehovah's Witness.

### CHAPTER THREE

- 1 Because of the difference in the colour of their skins.
- 2 He is talking about Archie's last wife.
- 3 He is a waiter at a Bangladeshi (or Indian) restaurant and she sews for a shop in Soho.

### CHAPTER FOUR

- 1 Because they do not have enough money to feed themselves.
- 2 He does not want Archie to bring Clara to the company dinner because she is attractive and black. No, Archie is too excited about

being a father and the lunch vouchers, to realize this.

- 3 She thinks that they should talk to each other.

### CHAPTER FIVE

- 1 Samad does not like Archie because he keeps staring at him.
- 2 Because they are enjoying the medals and cigarettes.
- 3 Because they are defending his country (England). Samad is from Bangladesh.

### CHAPTER SIX

- 1 He wants to replace the Harvest Festival with a Muslim festival.
- 2 Alsana, Poppy Burt-Jones, the Chalfens, Archie and Clara.
- 3 Because he thinks that they have been corrupted.

### CHAPTER SEVEN

- 1 He sends Magid. Archie flips a coin to help Samad decide.
- 2 She stops giving him direct answers.
- 3 Because "chief" to Millat means something different. It is street language for someone who is a fool or stupid person. His father thinks he is agreeing that Magid will become a great leader.

### CHAPTER EIGHT

- 1 Because they are going to a protest.
- 2 Because she sees Millat on the news.
- 3 Because its first letters make the name KEVIN. "Kevin" is a very Western/English name and isn't considered to be very cool.
- 4 She tells them they must go to the Chalfens twice a week to study maths and biology.

### CHAPTER NINE

- 1 Marcus is a scientist and Joyce is a writer.
- 2 Because she is bored. Everything is too

perfect and there is no one to admire “Chalfenism”.

- 3 Because she prefers Millat to them.

## CHAPTER TEN

- 1 Because she wants to thank them for helping Irie to get good grades.
- 2 She says it came from her white grandfather, Captain Charlie Durham.
- 3 Because she knows that she and her mother were cleverer than Charlie Durham. Durham was not clever – he killed a thousand people to save a woman he did not really know.

## CHAPTER ELEVEN

- 1 She is jealous that Marcus is more interested in Magid than her. And Marcus writes that he does not believe she will ever become a scientist because she does not understand the ideas.
- 2 Because she is white and does not share their religion or beliefs.
- 3 Because she realizes that her mother’s teeth are not real and her mother has never told her this. It is one more secret her family have kept from her. She goes to Hortense’s house.

## CHAPTER TWELVE

- 1 She is worried that Hortense will turn her into a Jehovah’s Witness.
- 2 Ryan Topps is staying there. It is surprising because he used to be Clara’s boyfriend.
- 3 They believe the world is going to end on 1st January 2000. She is excited because she’s only got seven years to wait to see it.

## CHAPTER THIRTEEN

- 1 Because Magid has become very English and has lost his religion. He feels great shame and would like to hide him away.
- 2 She wants Magid and Millat to talk to

each other. She feels they are both damaged because they have grown up in different cultures and religions.

- 3 She has sex with both brothers. She has sex with Millat because she has always loved him. She has sex with Magid because she wants Millat to be first for once (he was born two minutes after Magid).

## CHAPTER FOURTEEN

- 1 KEVIN plans to read religious prayers (although Millat has brought a gun). The Jehovah’s Witnesses plan to sing, and FATE plans to use a gun.
- 2 Because he realizes that Archie had not killed Dr Perret in 1945.

## CHAPTER FIFTEEN

- 1 Because Dr Perret tricked him. Archie dropped his coin and while he was picking it up, Dr Perret shot him in the leg.
- 2 He imagines Irie and Joshua become boyfriend and girlfriend and go to Jamaica with Hortense in the year 2000, and that Irie has a daughter who writes to both her uncles (one of whom is actually her father). Then he imagines that O’Connell’s finally let women in and he and Samad take Clara and Alsana there to play cards.
- 3 *Reader’s own answer.*  
**Model answer:** That the past is always complicated, and while we often imagine a perfect future, it never is. It is also a “play” on the names of the tenses: simple past and future perfect.

## After-reading questions

- 1 *Reader’s own answer.*
- 2 *Reader’s own answer.*
- 3 *Reader’s own answer.* **Model answer:** She will be unlike the other characters because she

will not know who her father is and therefore will not know her past – this means that she will be free of the past.

4 *Reader's own answer.*

5 *Reader's own answer.*

6 *Reader's own answer.*

7 *Reader's own answer. Model answer:*

Changing the body is against many religions. Alsana says it is “so wrong in our religion” and Ryan says that it is “playing with the Lord’s creations”. FATE believes Marcus is being cruel to animals.

## Exercises

### CHAPTERS ONE AND TWO

- 1 1 flip
- 2 leaflet
- 3 exhaust pipe
- 4 shrug
- 5 scooter
- 6 sin
- 7 frustrated
- 8 pat

### CHAPTERS THREE AND FOUR

- 2 1 “Me and Sam? We **have** known each other for years.”
- 2 They **had** met before she was born.
- 3 They **had** spent all their money on it, and now they could not afford any food.
- 4 And now he **had** married one of them and had not said anything about her colour before he brought her to the company dinner last month.
- 5 “Mr Hero wants to see you,” she said. “**Have** you been a naughty boy or something?”
- 6 “Now this is quite difficult ... and I **have** never thought of myself as a racist,” said Kelvin.

### CHAPTERS FIVE AND SIX

- 3 1 false
- 2 true
- 3 false
- 4 false
- 5 false
- 6 false
- 7 true
- 8 true

### CHAPTERS SEVEN AND EIGHT

- 4 1 **So** Samad began stealing Magid’s clothes away and got him a different passport (he would be travelling with Auntie Zinat on 4th November).
- 2 She punched him hard in the stomach **before** running out into the garden, where Samad caught her.
- 3 **Around this time** the twins appeared, half awake from their beds.
- 4 **After** she woke up to find Magid had gone, Alsana stopped giving her husband direct answers.
- 5 **When** I grow up, I think vases should be put in safe places.
- 6 **As** Samad and Archie began shouting at each other, Millat and Irie quietly left the house and walked into Willesden Park.
- 7 “**Or** you could stop here *before* you get to the jewellery store.”
- 8 She tried everything to be smaller **so that** Millat would *notice* her.

### CHAPTERS NINE AND TEN

- 5 1 Marcus worked with animals because he wanted to help doctors fight **diseases like cancer**.
- 2 Joyce was bored because there was no one to admire “Chalfenism”, but then **Irie and Millat appeared / came into her life**.
- 3 Millat went into the garden because **he was smoking a cigarette**.

- 4 Joshua was pissed off because **Joyce seemed to love Millat more than him.**
- 5 Samad was angry with Millat because **Millat was not one definite thing. He was not a Muslim, an Englishman or Bengali.**
- 6 Ambrosia began to change because **her education lifted her and made her feel better than others.**
- 7 The British were embarrassed because **the Americans sent ships after the earthquake.**
- 8 The Governor ordered **the boats to return to Cuba.**

- 4 Archie's end was not real, was it?
- 5 O'Connell's did not really let women in, did it?
- 6 The future wasn't always perfect, was it?

## Project work

*Reader's own answers.*

## Essay questions

*Reader's own answers.*

### CHAPTER ELEVEN

- 6 1 What did Irie write on the files?
- 2 Why did Marcus want Magid to return to England?
- 3 Why was Millat pissed off with / did Millat finish his relationship with Karina Cain?
- 4 Why was Clara angry with Irie?
- 5 Why did Irie leave home / Clara's house?
- 6 Why didn't Irie go to the Chalfens' house?

### CHAPTERS TWELVE, THIRTEEN AND FOURTEEN

- 7 1 Ryan Topps
- 2 Clara
- 3 Magid
- 4 Alsana
- 5 Millat
- 6 Irie
- 7 Samad
- 8 Archie

### CHAPTER FIFTEEN

- 8 1 Archie did not kill the doctor in 1945, did he?
- 2 Perret should not have shot Archie then, should he?
- 3 The coin did not land on heads, did it?