

1a *White Teeth* tells the story of three families: the Bowdens, who are part-Jamaican; the Iqbals, who are from Bangladesh; and the Chalfens, who are white British. How do you think their lives are the same or different to each other's in London in the 1980s–90s?

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1b What do you know about these festivals? Who celebrates them, where, how and when?

1 Harvest Festival

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2 New Year's Day

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3 Eid-ul-Fitr

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4 Glastonbury

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1c Which festivals do you celebrate and how?

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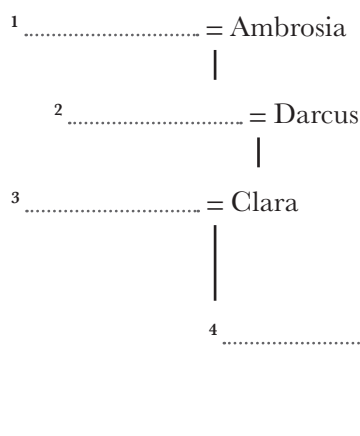
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2a Complete the family trees for the three families in the book, using the names in the box.

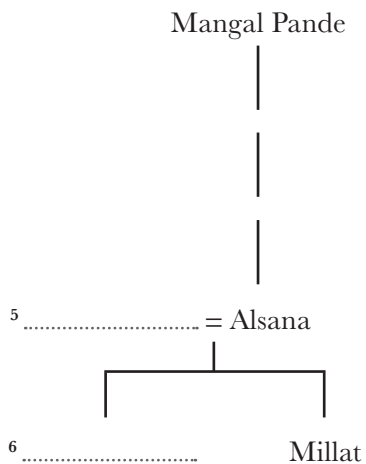
Joyce
Archie
Captain Charlie Durham

Joshua
Magid
Hortense
Irie
Samad

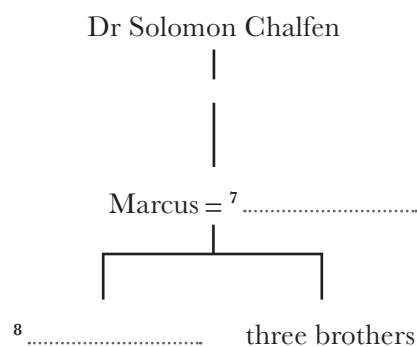
The Bowden family



The Iqbal family



The Chalfen family



2b Answer the questions about the characters in exercise 2a.

1 Who was Samad's great grandfather and what did he do?

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2 How did Ambrosia meet Hortense's father and what did he help her to do?

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3 What was the relationship between Archie and Samad and how did they meet?

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4 Who were Magid and Millat and what happened to them?

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5 Who was Dr Solomon Chalfen and what did he do?

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6 What was the relationship between Irie, Magid and Millat?

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3 Complete the table with information about the messages from the book.

	Where do these words appear?	Why is it important?
I AM NOT A WAITER. I HAVE BEEN A STUDENT AND A SOLDIER. MY WIFE IS CALLED ALSANA. SHE SEEMS QUIET BUT OFTEN SHOUTS AT ME AND SOMETIMES EVEN HITS ME. SHE IS EXPECTING A BABY. WE LIVE IN EAST LONDON BUT WE WANT TO MOVE TO NORTH LONDON. I AM A MUSLIM BUT ALLAH HAS FORGOTTEN ME, OR I HAVE FORGOTTEN ALLAH- I'M NOT SURE. LIFE HAS LET ME DOWN. I HAVE A FRIEND - ARCHIE- AND OTHERS. I AM FORTY- NINE BUT WOMEN STILL TURN AND LOOK AT ME IN THE STREET. SOMETIMES.		
<i>“This is the BBC World Service at 03:00 hours. Mrs Indira Gandhi, Prime Minister of India, was shot today as she walked in the garden of her New Delhi home . . .”</i>		
<i>8.30 p.m. Millat just walked in. He’s so handsome, but he annoys me. He’s wearing the usual tight jeans and doesn’t look at me (except as a friend). I’m in love with a fool (stupid me)! Why isn’t he clever like his brother? Oh well, I’m in love, and I’m fat. Storm still crazy. Got to go.</i>		
<i>Things around here are the same except my files are now very well ordered, thanks to Irie. You’ll like her: she’s an intelligent girl, and she has the most enormous breasts. But, sadly, I don’t think she will ever become a scientist, because she doesn’t understand the ideas. She could try medicine, maybe, but I don’t really think she’s good enough for it. I think she should study dentistry (she can fix her own teeth at least). It’s a good job, but not good enough for you.</i>		
<i>Meat is Murder. The Facts, from FATE.</i>		

6 Imagine you are a film writer. Write a film script for Chapter Fifteen, “The final bullet”, with stage directions for things people do and how they talk. Act it out with friends.

Chapter Fifteen: The final bullet

STAGE DIRECTIONS:

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CHARACTERS:

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SCRIPT:

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7 Prepare a speech for a debate on one of the following ideas from *White Teeth*. Decide what point of view you want to argue for and present your argument.

- An arranged marriage is easier than marrying for love.
- People do not want to think of themselves as racists, and they want to seem fair.
- Creating rabbits with strange skin, or mice with strange feet, is OK to help doctors fight the worst diseases, like cancer.
- You can justify things people do during war.