

GCSE ENGLISH LITERATURE 20TH CENTURY PROSE

DAZ 4 ZOE by Robert Swindells

This is a revision sheet designed for the NEAB syllabus and can also be used as part of the Wider Reading coursework assignment for the language syllabus. It could be compared to 'The Time Machine' by H. G. Wells or any other pre-20th century text portraying a divided society.

Context and Influences

In the introduction to the Longman Literature version of *Daz 4 Zoe* Robert Swindells discusses the adverse effects of school league tables on society. Local league tables are easily obtained from local papers and from the Ofstead web site.

Historical and Social

Swindells concerns can be compared to those of Wells and Dickens. Most students will be aware of Nelson Mandela and so, South Africa is an accessible example of a modern segregated society.

Structure

- Swindells writes short chapters that hold the attention and alternates between two narrators, the protagonists Daz and Zoe.
- Their story is told in flashback, both writing in the first person.
- By using two narrators, different parts of the story can be told in the first person emphasising different perspectives.
- Ends with hope for the future

Language

- ❑ Swindells portrays the differences between the lives of the Chippies and Subbies by making the two main characters represent the two classes. The reader is immediately aware of the difference in status, education and lifestyle of the two groups from the language used.
- ❑ Daz demonstrates his poverty by his lack of education. Swindells makes this obvious by his use of dialect and colloquial expression. Swindells writes Daz's words as he would say them - i.e. writing phonetically. He uses a Chippie dialect, using vocabulary and sentence structure that seem unsophisticated compared to Zoe.
- ❑ Zoe's chapters are also written as she would speak but, in contrast, are written conventionally. It is in Zoe's chapters that events are described in detail. Often invites reader to empathise with her feelings/situation.
- ❑ Both use Americanisms, perhaps to suggest the future, a suggestion that the Americanisation of British English as a developing trend.
- ❑ Pace and suspense are created and maintained by the use of short sentences.

Themes

Teenage love and rebellion

Isolation of poor and underprivileged Power and freedom

Breakdown of law and order

Intolerance and prejudice (e.g. Zoe's father's opinions of Chippies from media reports)

REPRESENTATION

Consider what the characters represent, for example:

<u>Daz</u>	integrity of working class
<u>Zoe</u>	moral justice
<u>Grandma</u>	the past, a better world
<u>The Wentworths</u>	middle class conscience
<u>Mr. James</u>	fairness
<u>Mrs. Askew</u>	middle class intolerance without thought
<u>Mrs. Barraclough</u>	Subjugated working class
<u>Mr. Askew</u>	prejudiced middle class
<u>Pete, Cal etc.</u>	violence, barbarism of working class
<u>Pohlman etc</u>	power and authority

The first five are presented in a positive light (the narrators and those who help them). Mrs. Barraclough and Mrs. Askew accept their situations and want to protect their children but the reader feels greater sympathy for Daz's mother because of her desperate situation. The reader feels no such sympathy for the figures of authority, the police and Miss Moncrief since they are a threat to Zoe.

Symbolism

Names are the most obvious symbols

- ❑ Rawhampton - the derelict city, raw suggesting uncooked, unfinished, naked and uncivilised and unprotected
- ❑ Silverdale and Peacedale - positive suggestion of affluence and security
- ❑ F.A.I.R. the organisation that wants a fair society
- ❑ Dred - suggestion of dread and fear

WHATEVER THE ESSAY QUESTION REMEMBER TO

- ❑ MAKE A POINT, REFER TO THE TEXT AND EXPLAIN
- ❑ MENTION THE WRITER AND HIS POINT OF VIEW
- ❑ COMMENT ON HOW READERS MIGHT RESPOND
- ❑ DON'T JUST WRITE ABOUT THE CHARACTERS - MAKE POINT ABOUT WHAT THE WRITER DOES (LANGUAGE, SETTING ETC.)
- ❑ COVER ALL PARTS OF THE QUESTION THOROUGHLY