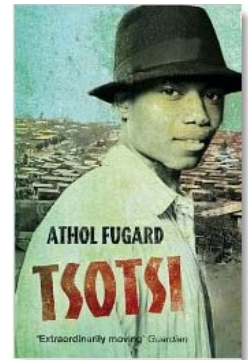


Background and introduction

Research the following terms. Write the definitions in your own words:

- Tsotsi
- district six
- apartheid
- Afrikaans
- pass laws
- townships.



As you read the introduction, answer the following questions:

- 1) How might Fugard's upbringing have shaped his perception of apartheid?
- 2) What makes Tsotsi a particularly menacing brand of gangster?
- 3) How does the description of black expulsion from Sophiatown help the reader understand the nature of life under apartheid?

Establishing character

Look back at pages 1-7 and, thinking about the characters Tsotsi, Die Aap, Boston and Butcher:

- 1) find two quotations that show what the character is like
- 2) explain what the reader learns from the quotation
- 3) identify the strategies the author uses to get his message(s) across to the reader.

Tension

Read back over pages 7-12 and answer the following questions:

- 1) Which point of this section is the most tense? How does Fugard use both plot and language to create this feeling?
- 2) Describe the path of the tension. Does it simply rise at a regular interval? How does this path effect the reader?
- 3) Overall, this robbery and murder takes a long time to describe. What fleshes out this section and why do you think Fugard decided to include it?
- 4) Now create a tension graph in which you add page numbers or quotations to illustrate the most and least tense moments.

Chapter 2

- 1) Why do you think Fugard decided to have the episode at Soekie's follow the murder?
- 2) Why do you think Tsotsi hates Boston? How is the reader supposed to interpret this?
- 3) Why do you think Soekie tries to get Rosie to go home?
- 4) What do you think Boston means by 'decency'?
- 5) Why do you think Tsotsi struggles to understand him?

Narrative shifts

The narration in this novel is generally categorized as third person omniscient. This omniscience is generally focused on Tsotsi because he is the protagonist but occasionally it alters. For each of the quotations below, try to work out the perspective (think of this as the character whose eyes the reader is looking through).

- 'You could drink with the men or you could drink with the girls'
- 'He suddenly seemed to have lost interest in the other three'
- 'He hated Boston'
- '... the one in disbelief, the other at the explosive moment of action ...'
- '... his feelings ... pushed him down into the seat beside Tsotsi ...'
- 'I will do exactly the same as I always do'

Select one quotation from the list above that represents a change in narrative style. Explain why the author chose to alter the style at this point in the story.

Chapter 3

- 1) Why do you think Tsotsi runs when he leaves Soekie's?
- 2) How does Tsotsi see himself, based on the inner thoughts shared as he sits beneath the trees?
- 3) Based on the spider anecdote, why do you think Tsotsi avoids thoughts of the past?
- 4) What do you think 'affirm his existence in the face of his nullity' means?

Chapter 4 and symbolism

1) Look at each of the symbols listed below:

- the name Tsotsi
- the ruins
- the baby
- Gumshoe
- Boston
- the yellow dog.

Try to find quotations to describe the symbols. Then work out what each of these things represents, especially for Tsotsi himself.

2) Review the extract beginning 'A yellow bitch ...' p.58 to '... to feed it again.' p.59. Answer the following question in essay form, using quotations from this extract:

How does Fugard portray the importance of this turning point for the main character?

Further essay practice / extension tasks

- Review the extract beginning 'When Tsotsi said ...' (p. 72) to '... taking him alone' (p.74).
- Plan out your response to the following essay question: How does Fugard's writing give the reader a sense of transition between the black and white world?
- Begin by writing your thesis (theory/view). Use specific words and phrases from the prompt.
- Now find three quotations from the extract that relate to your thesis and copy them down.
- Now, for each quotation, name the writing technique the author uses and what the reader's reaction is intended to be.