

# Chanda's Secrets

## Teacher's Booklet

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# Introduction

## Synopsis

Chanda Kabelo is an astonishingly perceptive 16-year-old girl living in the small fictional city of Bonang in sub-Saharan Africa. Chanda is like any other teenager in many respects, worrying about her exams and her relationship with her rebellious friend, Esther. However, tragedy has struck her family in the past in the form of a mining accident. This is followed by the death of her young stepsister, Sara, and the departure of her stepfather, Jonah. Strong support from her mother and a schoolteacher keep Chanda going, but the news that Jonah had AIDS and suspicions that her mother has it too make for a searing and powerful narrative set against the pandemic sweeping the continent.

## Teaching *Chanda's Secrets* at Key Stage 3

*Chanda's Secrets* by Allan Stratton is particularly well suited to study in Year 9, and serves as an excellent bridge to GCSE texts, whilst being accessible to a wide range of abilities. The compelling narrative and strong central character, as well as the vivid evocation of place, are all likely to engage pupils' interest. The characters are well drawn and the cultural diversity offers a new perspective on African themes and lives. The content, although challenging and potentially sensitive, is movingly handled, and at no time does the novel feel issue-laden. Despite this, links with PSHE, most obviously in relation to AIDS, can readily be made. The novel naturally provides opportunities for a range of activities common to the English curriculum, not least through the other themes explored by the writer such as friendship, family relationships, conflicting loyalties and courage.

The author's website, [www.allanstratton.com](http://www.allanstratton.com)\*, might also be of interest to teachers using the book, especially the gallery of photographs, his biography and the covers of various editions.

[\* Pearson has no responsibility for the quality or content of the author's website and users must access it as they see fit and appropriate.]

## Structure of this resource

This resource provides suggestions for activities which can be easily slotted into a scheme of work around the novel. It consists of two parts: the **overview of teaching and learning** and the **resources**.

The **overview of teaching and learning** aims to secure progression in learning, rather than just progression through the pages. It has been divided into nine natural sections. The overview for each section indicates:

- the chapters to be read
- the features of the text to be explored
- the learning aims for the section (including Assessment focuses)
- brief descriptions of the approaches to teaching.

The **resources** comprise:

- Pupil worksheets (which can be photocopied)
- Teacher support sheets/OHTs etc.
- Assessment criteria, grids etc.

## Overview of teaching and learning

Section	Features to explore during reading	Learning targets	Activities
<b>Chapters 1–6</b> <i>Chanda's World</i>  <b>Resources</b> Resource Sheet 1 Resource Sheet 2 Resource Sheet 3 (support for lower attainers)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How the writer creates a convincing setting and situation at the opening of the novel.</li> </ul>	<b>Learning focuses</b> To be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>express their own opinions</li> <li>extract information to support their point of view.</li> </ul> <b>Assessment focuses and Framework objectives</b> Reading AF2: 9S&L10 Reading AF5: 9S4	<b>Activity 1: Places and predictions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In pairs, use <b>Resource Sheet 1</b> to discuss the opening chapter before sharing ideas with another pair.</li> <li>Groups then decide what they expect to happen in the rest of the novel and jot down predictions before sharing ideas with the rest of the class.</li> </ul> <b>Activity 2: Imagining Chanda's world</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Highlight key characters and places as reading progresses through Chapters 2–6.</li> <li>Tell pupils that their task is to create a group poster, which will be displayed on the classroom wall, and will help with understanding Chanda's world. The poster will focus on the people and places important to Chanda, using information from Chapters 1–6.</li> <li>Distribute <b>Resource Sheet 2</b> and take pupils through the process. Give lower-attaining pupils <b>Resource Sheet 3</b> for support.</li> </ul>

Section	Features to explore during reading	Learning targets	Activities
<b>Chapters 7–13</b> <i>Mama's Secrets</i>  <b>Resources</b> Resource Sheet 4 Resource Sheet 5 (Assessment)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of first person to create empathy.</li> <li>• Discussion of characters and relationships.</li> </ul>	<b>Learning focuses</b> To be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• write convincingly in role, selecting apt detail.</li> </ul> <b>Assessment focuses and Framework objectives</b> Reading AF2: 9S3 Reading AF3: 8R13 Reading AF6: 9R1, 9R6, 9R8	<b>Activity 1: Empathy</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish that the novel is written in the first person, from Chanda's point of view. What effect does this have? How would it be different if written from Mama's point of view?</li> <li>• Ask pupils to work on their own on <b>Resource Sheet 4</b>, noting down some ideas of what Mama would say in her voice.</li> <li>• Share these and model some initial sentences, in the present tense.</li> <li>• Discuss what is lost or gained by change of voice.</li> </ul> <b>Activity 2: Assessment</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pupils complete the full, longer account from Mama's point of view based on the notes made. Refer to the assessment criteria both before and after completion.</li> </ul> <b>Extension</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Write the same account in the third person (i.e. by a detached or omniscient narrator) and make brief notes about how this changes the way we read the story.</li> </ul>

Section	Features to explore during reading	Learning targets	Activities
<b>Chapters 14–18</b> <i>Rumours and Superstitions</i>  <b>Resources</b> Resource Sheet 6 Resource Sheet 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How the writer highlights the theme of rumour and superstition.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Learning focuses</b></p> <p>To be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>discuss beliefs from different cultures</li> <li>express their own ideas</li> <li>understand how the writer shows Chanda's gradual realisation about Dr Chilume, with no authorial voice intervening.</li> </ul> <p><b>Assessment focuses and Framework objectives</b></p> <p>Reading AF6: 9R6, 9S&amp;L10  Reading AF2: 9R4  Reading AF3: 9S4  Reading AF4: 9Wr17</p>	<p><b>Activity 1: Exploring ideas in discussion</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pupils work in groups using <b>Resource Sheet 6</b> to explore their own attitudes to superstition. Suggest that they may wish to consider celebrities' superstitions (e.g. footballers being last out of the changing room).</li> <li>Draw out relevant information from the text.</li> </ul> <p><b>Activity 2: Writer's revelations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Track through Chapter 18, highlighting key phrases which show how the writer gradually reveals information and provides insight. Use <b>Resource Sheet 7</b> to draw initial conclusions.</li> <li>Link these to the writer's craft by eliciting the techniques used to convey feelings and information, such as the use of the first person, questions, the contrasting reactions of Mrs Tafa and Chanda etc. Pupils feed back their ideas.</li> <li>Finish by discussing whether pupils feel this perspective on African medicine is fair. What are the dangers of presenting things in this way (in terms of stereotyping the 'heart of darkness'?)</li> </ul>

Section	Features to explore during reading	Learning targets	Activities
<p><b>Chapters 19–23</b>  <i>The Truth Starts to Emerge</i></p> <p><b>Resources</b>  Resource Sheet 8</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How the writer gradually suggests the truth about Esther, Jonah and Mama.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Learning focuses</b>  To be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>recognise layers of meaning.</li> </ul> <p><b>Assessment focuses and Framework objectives</b>  Reading AF2: 9R1  Reading AF3: 9R18  Reading AF5: 9W7</p>	<p><b>Activity 1: Tracking the writer’s craft</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chanda starts to piece together the clues about Esther, Jonah and Mama that readers may have already noticed. Distribute the cards of events from <b>Resource Sheet 8</b> and ask pupils to work in pairs to sequence them, thus providing a sense of how the writer reveals the information.</li> </ul> <p><b>Activity 2: Layers of meaning</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Distribute sheets of A3 to the same pairs, and ask pupils to sequence the events/cards on the sheet.</li> <li>Around the events, ask pupils to add textual evidence or references that show exactly how the writer reveals information. These can then be displayed or discussed to embed how the writer achieves his effects. For example, add details that give Chanda, and the reader, clues about the truth about Jonah on pages 130–134.</li> </ul>

Section	Features to explore during reading	Learning targets	Activities
<p><b>Comparison of <i>Chanda's Secrets</i> and <i>Dead Men's Path</i></b></p> <p><b>Resources</b>  <i>Dead Men's Path</i> (Appendix 1)  Resource Sheet 9 (OHT)  Resource Sheet 10</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How to collect evidence from texts in order to compare themes, characters and style.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Learning focuses</b>  To be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>compare presentation of ideas in related texts.</li> </ul> <p><b>Assessment focuses and Framework objectives</b>  Reading AF3: 9R8  Reading AF4: 9R7  Reading AF5: 9R9  Reading AF6: 9R6</p>	<p><b>Activity 1: Reading Achebe</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read Chinua Achebe's short story (<b>Appendix 1</b>) and elicit basic information about the tone, style and key events.</li> </ul> <p><b>Activity 2: Comparing and contrasting</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ask students to suggest similarities and differences between the texts and add them to <b>Resource Sheet 9 (OHT)</b>.</li> <li>Model how these could be turned into simple sentences comparing the features. Taking these three features only, students write up two paragraphs comparing the texts.</li> </ul> <p><b>Extension</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For higher-attaining students, distribute <b>Resource Sheet 10</b> and ask them to complete the grid on their own and then write a fuller account about the two texts.</li> </ul>

Section	Features to explore during reading	Learning targets	Activities
<b>Chapters 24–26</b> <i>Mama's Time to Leave</i>  <b>Resources</b> Resource Sheet 11 Resource Sheet 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How the character of Mrs Tafa is more significant than may have at first been apparent.</li> <li>Further discussion of role of superstition.</li> </ul>	<b>Learning focuses</b> To be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>extract information from the text to support their point of view</li> <li>use inference and deduction.</li> </ul> <b>Assessment focuses and Framework objectives</b> AF3: 9R1, 9R4	<b>Activity 1: Extracting information</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>After reading Chapter 24, use <b>Resource Sheet 11</b> to help pupils extract information from the text, to see how character is suggested. This could link back to previous discussions about superstitions.</li> </ul> <b>Activity 2: Making inferences</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mrs Tafa takes an increasingly important role in Chapters 25–26. Drawing on their selection of evidence from Chapters 24 and 25, pupils complete <b>Resource Sheet 12</b>.</li> <li>What do pupils think each statement tells us about her and her changing role?</li> </ul>



Section	Features to explore during reading	Learning targets	Activities
<b>Chapters 27–31</b> <i>Facing the Facts</i>  <b>Resources</b> Resource Sheet 13 Resource Sheet 14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How Chanda's feelings are suggested by the writer's choice of language.</li> <li>Effectiveness of first person viewpoint.</li> </ul>	<b>Learning focuses</b> To be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>use inference and deduction</li> <li>appreciate and analyse the writer's technique</li> <li>empathise with characters.</li> </ul> <b>Assessment focuses and Framework objectives</b> Reading AF2: 9R1, 9S4, 9Wr17 Reading AF3: 9R18 Reading AF5: 9W7	<b>Activity 1: Making judgements</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Distribute <b>Resource Sheet 13</b> and explain to pupils that they are to give a score of 1–10 for each quotation as a representation of how Chanda is feeling. Scores are given according to how much inner strength she feels (1 = no confidence or inner strength; 10 = as if she could cope with anything).</li> <li>Pupils compare their conclusions with those of another pupil and discuss the similarities and differences in scorings.</li> </ul> <b>Extension</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More confident pupils work on <b>Resource Sheet 14</b> to compile ideas about how the writer reveals Esther's feelings. Their notes can be turned into a fuller account about how the writer conveys Esther's state of mind.</li> </ul>

Section	Features to explore during reading	Learning targets	Activities
<p><b>Chapters 32–36</b> <i>Chanda's Journey</i></p> <p><b>Resources</b> Resource Sheet 15</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How the text is organised into chapters.</li> <li>How the character of Chanda is gaining in strength.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Learning focuses</b> To be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>discuss the organisation of the text</li> <li>express their point of view.</li> </ul> <p><b>Assessment focuses and Framework objectives</b> Reading AF2: 9R17 Reading AF3: 9S&amp;L5, 9R18 Reading AF4: 9S&amp;L9, 9S&amp;L2</p>	<p><b>Activity 1: Title features</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Point out, if not already apparent, that the chapters in this novel do not have titles. Ask pupils as a whole class what titles add to novels. Do they change the way we read the text? Should they have any conventions? For example, not too long? not give away what happens?</li> </ul> <p><b>Activity 2: Title ideas</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ask pupils to create relevant titles for each chapter. This can be done as an individual task initially, then sharing ideas in groups of three or four. Final decisions can be written on <b>Resource Sheet 15</b> with a spokesperson for each group presenting titles and justifying choices.</li> </ul>

Section	Features to explore during reading	Learning targets	Activities
<b>Chapters 37–end</b> <i>No More Secrets</i>  <b>Resources</b> Resource Sheet 16 (one for each group with prompt cards cut out; one or more kept intact for interviewer(s) to refer to) Resource Sheet 17 (Assessment)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How the title is or is not suitable.</li> <li>The issues raised throughout the novel: does it have a happy ending? Why, or why not?</li> </ul>	<b>Learning focuses</b> To be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>review the whole text, considering character development and themes</li> <li>empathise with characters</li> <li>express their own ideas.</li> </ul> <b>Assessment focuses and Framework objectives</b> Reading AF2: 9R6 Reading AF3: 9S4 Reading AF6: 9S&L3, 9S&L12	<b>Activity 1: Brainstorm and evaluate</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In groups, ask pupils to brainstorm all the secrets in the novel and then discuss the effectiveness or otherwise of the title. Why was the novel specifically called <i>Chanda's secrets</i>? (elicit ideas about central narrative voice etc). Can pupils come up with an alternative (better?) title for the novel?</li> </ul> <b>Activity 2: Assessment Task</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explain to pupils that they are going to work in groups to prepare and present a local radio programme, interviewing characters from the novel. The aim of the programme is to raise awareness of AIDS, but evidence should be drawn solely, or chiefly, from the novel. If possible, the programme could be recorded.</li> <li>Start by distributing <b>Resource Sheet 16</b> to groups. They need to keep copies for the interviewer but give prompt cards to individuals taking on the roles so they can prepare what they will say in advance.</li> <li>Individuals prepare for their roles by thinking what they will say when spoken to. The group then run the role-play/radio presentation.</li> <li><b>Resource Sheet 17</b> is available for assessment purposes.</li> </ul>

# Pupil Resource Sheet 1

## Task

Working with a partner, read or re-read Chapter 1, jotting down your first impressions as you go. Use these guidelines to help you:

### Chanda and the main events

Note down 3–5 of the main events in this chapter

What do you think of the way Chanda speaks and behaves?

*I think Chanda is*

### Mr Bateman and his office

What impressions do you have of Mr Bateman's office?

*Mr Bateman's office seems*

What gives you these impressions?

What do you think of the way Mr Bateman speaks and behaves?

*I think that Mr Bateman speaks*

What gives you these impressions?  
(Pay particular attention to the last words of the chapter)

# Pupil Resource Sheet 2

## Task

Design a poster which will visually represent the people and places in Chanda's world.

### Stage 1

Working in small groups of four or five, decide on the overall design for your poster: for example, you may decide to put Chanda in the middle with arrows pointing from her to particular people or places.

### Stage 2

Agree a list of all the people and places (both past and present) which are important to Chanda:

e.g.

*Mama*  
*Mrs Tafa*  
*School*  
etc.

### Stage 3

Choose a key quotation for each of the most important people and places – one that you feel sums up Chanda's feelings about them. Jot these down *before* adding them to your poster:

e.g.

*Mama*: 'Mama used to look like her laugh, but not any more.'

### Stage 4

Create your poster! Try to make it:

- visually stimulating – use colour, design, clear typefaces
- useful and helpful – does it really help us understand the novel?
- different – can you add any other, original information that might be of interest?

# Pupil Resource Sheet 3

## Useful references

You may find these references useful when looking for important people and places and relevant quotations.

**The Liberty Hotel**  
(page 12 )

**Mrs Tafa**  
(page 25)

**Mama Papa**  
(pages 15 & 16)

**Mr Dube (Soly)**  
(page 26)

**The shebeen**  
(page 29)

**Jonah (Sara)**  
(page 27)

**The school**  
(page 18)

**Isaac Pheto (Iris)**  
(page 22 )

**Mr Selalame**  
(page 19)

**Tiro**  
(pages 15 & 21)

**Mary**  
(page 30)

**Granny Kabelo**  
(page 21)

**Lily**  
(pages 16 & 21)

**The mine**  
(page 19)

**Granny and Grampa Thela**  
(page 21)

**The aunties**  
(page 15)

# Pupil Resource Sheet 4

## Task

Imagine that Mama was giving her point of view of the events in Chapters 7–13. What would she say?

- 1 Make notes in the boxes in Mama's words about her thoughts and about what has happened. Use the present tense: *I go to the school/I feel so sad ...* etc.

<p><b>Mrs Tafa and her relationship with your family</b></p> <p><i>Chanda can't understand how Mrs Tafa really means well, and they don't get on at all now. Chanda thinks she interferes and wants to stop calling her 'Auntie'.</i></p>	<p><b>The preparations for the funeral</b></p>
<p><b>Iris and Soly's reactions to Sara's 'absence' and Auntie Lizbet's visit</b></p>	<p><b>The 'laying over'</b></p>
<p><b>The funeral</b></p>	<p><b>The secrets you are keeping</b></p> <p><i>I have not shared my secrets with Chanda, but I need to protect her. I cannot tell her the real cause of Sara's death.</i></p>

- 2 Now combine these notes/thoughts into one longer account written from Mama's point of view.

# Pupil Resource Sheet 5

## Task

Imagine that Mama was giving her point of view of the events in Chapters 7–13. What would she say?

Write Mama's story. Use the present tense, as Chanda does.

Notes:

The task assesses reading through empathetic writing. Pupils should be assessed on:

- evidence of understanding of character through attitudes shown
- apt use of evidence from the text.

Higher attaining pupils will show evidence of deduction and inference through:

- the attitudes expressed by Mama
- appreciation of stylistic features
- creating a convincing voice.



## Guidelines for assessing reading task

### Mama's Secrets

	AF2 – understand, describe, select or retrieve information, events or ideas from texts and use quotation and reference to text.	AF3 – deduce, infer or interpret information, events or ideas from texts.
Level 3	<p><b>From some parts in the excerpt:</b></p> <p>Identifies simple, most obvious points</p> <p>May show some misunderstanding</p> <p>Uses some reference, but not always relevant e.g. <i>often paraphrasing or retelling the narrative rather than supporting comment</i></p>	<p><b>From some parts in the excerpt:</b></p> <p>Responses show meaning established at a literal level, but little sense of meanings beyond this</p> <p>Straightforward comment based on a single point of reference</p> <p>Responses based on personal speculation rather than reading of the text</p>
Level 4	<p><b>Across the whole excerpt:</b></p> <p>Identifies some relevant points</p> <p>Uses some generally relevant textual reference or quotation to support comments , e.g. <i>refers to most obvious details but is unselective or lacks focus</i></p>	<p><b>Across the whole excerpt:</b></p> <p>Comments make inferences based on evidence from different parts of the excerpt e.g. <i>explains that she comforted Iris and Soly.</i></p> <p>Inferences often correct, but comments not always rooted in the text, or retelling narrative</p>
Level 5	<p><b>Across the whole excerpt:</b></p> <p>Most relevant points clearly identified, including those from a range of places in the excerpt</p> <p>Comments generally supported by relevant textual reference or quotation, even when points made are not always accurate</p>	<p><b>Across the whole excerpt:</b></p> <p>Comments develop explanation of inferred meanings drawing on evidence from across the excerpt e.g. <i>explains how she tried to comfort Iris and Soly.</i></p> <p>Comments make inferences and deductions based on textual evidence</p>
Level 6	<p><b>Across the whole excerpt:</b></p> <p>Relevant points clearly identified including summary and synthesis of information from different places in the excerpt.</p> <p>Response incorporates apt textual reference and quotation to support main ideas</p>	<p><b>Across the whole excerpt:</b></p> <p>Comments securely based in textual evidence and identify different layers of meaning with some attempt at detailed exploration of them e.g. <i>explains how Chanda helped her cope with Iris and Soly.</i></p> <p>Comments consider the wider implications or significance of information, events or ideas e.g. <i>shows awareness of Mama's guilt and fear for her surviving children.</i></p>
Level 7	<p><b>Across the whole excerpt:</b></p> <p>Summarises and synthesises relevant points from across the excerpt, using evidence judiciously, often following a key reference with several linked examples</p> <p>Response incorporates apt and succinct reference, integrating support throughout explanation</p>	<p><b>Across the whole excerpt:</b></p> <p>Comments securely based in textual evidence and interpret different layers of meaning through detailed exploration e.g. <i>shows understanding of the complexity of Mama's emotions and her need to protect her surviving children.</i></p> <p>Comments show appreciation of the wider implications or significance of information, events or ideas e.g. <i>shows understanding of contrast between children's innocence and adults' knowledge.</i></p>

# Pupil Resource Sheet 6

## Task

- 1 In small groups discuss the following questions and make brief notes for feedback to the class.

  - What superstitions do you know about?
  - Are you superstitious? Why/why not?
  - Why do you think superstitions come about? What purpose do they serve?
- 2 Mr Selalame says on page 78:

*"People believe in superstitions to make sense of what they don't understand."*

He gives the example of magic numbers for the lottery.

In your group, list as many references to rumour and superstition as you can find in Chapters 14–18. For each, explain why it exists, appears to help etc.

Rumour/Superstition	Reasons for the rumour or superstition surviving
<i>Magic numbers in lottery, p78</i>	<i>Come to terms with losing – you haven't 'found' the magic numbers yet?</i>

# Pupil Resource Sheet 7

## Task

In Chapter 18 Chanda experiences many different moods. Write a sentence or two under each heading to sum up Chanda's mood in each part of the chapter.

- on the journey
- on first seeing Dr Chilume's place
- first impressions of Dr Chilume
- inside Dr Chilume's shed
- seeing Dr Chilume's 'degrees'
- the end of the chapter

## Pupil Resource Sheet 8

Esther's note	Nurse Viser's reactions <i>(How does she help Chanda face the truth?)</i>
The visit to Esther's	Aunt Ruth's visit
The way Esther speaks and behaves	Jonah's return
Chanda puts the clues together about Esther	Mary's treatment of Jonah
Mama's changed behaviour	Chanda puts the clues together about Jonah
Mama's collapse	Chanda's visit to the hospital <i>(Look particularly at how it's described )</i>

## Teacher Resource Sheet 9 (OHT)

<b>Feature</b>	<b><i>Chanda's Secrets</i></b>	<b><i>Dead Men's Path</i></b>
Setting		
When the story takes place		
Main characters		

# Pupil Resource Sheet 10

## Task

Complete the table to show similarities and differences between the two texts.

<b>Feature</b>	<b><i>Chanda's Secrets</i></b>	<b><i>Dead Men's Path</i></b>
Setting		
When the story takes place		
Main characters		
Significance of the schoolteacher		
Importance of shrines and rituals		
Superstition v. educational progress		
Use of language		
Authorial point of view		

# **Pupil Resource Sheet 11**

## **Task**

Draw and label an outline of Mrs Gulubane, including all her 'equipment', using only information from Chapter 24.

# Pupil Resource Sheet 12

## Task

Mrs Tafa takes an increasingly important role in Chapters 25–26.

What inferences can we make from the following pieces of information from Chapters 24–26? (Find them in the text and re-read the context around them before you complete the table.)

Details about Mrs Tafa	Inference (what this might mean)
She closes the shutter and sits down.	She wants whatever's going to happen to be secret.
She supplies information to Mrs Gulubane.	Is she helping Mrs Gulubane?
She pays Mrs Gulubane.	She is in control.
She says she'll give her chickens for sacrifice.	
She says to Mama: 'We have to talk.'	
Chanda notices that Mrs Tafa is doing all the talking.	
Mrs Tafa says she'll help the children.	
Chanda is aware that Mrs Tafa's shutters are closed, but she is 'watching from the darkness' when the wagon is set on fire.	
On the cemetery tour she talks privately with Mama.	
She gives Mama presents for her family and a dress to change into.	
She says: 'Your Auntie Rose will take care of you.'	
Chanda has mixed feelings about her now.	



# Pupil Resource Sheet 13

## Task

Chanda goes on an emotional journey in Chapters 27–31. She battles with fear and lack of confidence, but tries to hold things together.

For each of these statements she makes, write a score of 0–10 to show how she is feeling inside.

(0 = very low; 10 = she could cope with almost anything)

What Chanda says/does	Score
<i>My insides ache to bursting (page 159)</i>	
<i>The stars are clear ... Tonight they just look cold and far away (page 159)</i>	
<i>I wish the earth would swallow me up (pages 159–60)</i>	
<i>I realize I'm not alone. A stork is peering at me (page 160)</i>	
<i>'Are you a good-luck angel?' (page 160)</i>	
<i>I feel the world turn calm (page 160)</i>	
<i>The joy of my dream flickers inside me like fireflies (page 160)</i>	
<i>My babies – that's what they've become (page 160)</i>	
<i>My heart stops. Iris knows about Isaac Pheto, but she's never talked about him (page 161)</i>	
<i>...because of Iris's imaginary friend, I've decided to stay home to watch her (page 163)</i>	
<i>'...you'll never be alone ... I love you and I'm not going anywhere' (spoken to Soly) (page 163)</i>	
<i>I do nothing. I'm a coward (page 164)</i>	
<i>Skippping [missing lessons] shouldn't be a problem (page 164)</i>	
<i>I get a horrible feeling (page 165)</i>	
<i>Have I messed up? I barrel outside in a panic (page 166)</i>	
<i>My insides boil. But what makes it worse – Mrs Tafa laughs (page 166)</i>	
<i>Why is [Mrs Tafa] being so nice? It makes me nervous (page 167)</i>	
<i>I put on my cheeriest face (page 168)</i>	
<i>I don't believe me either (page 170)</i>	

# Pupil Resource Sheet 14

## Task

Read or re-read Chapters 29–31 and then make notes on how the writer suggests Esther's innermost feelings. The writer does this in two key ways – through what Esther does or what happens to her (actions) and through the language he chooses to use.

Make notes in response to these questions:

### What happens?

- What happens to Esther in these chapters?
- What events in this part of the story have an effect on Esther's innermost feelings?
- How is Esther affected physically?
- What does this show about Esther's innermost feelings?
- Find all the references to dreams and nightmares in this part of the novel. How are they effective in suggesting Esther's feelings?

### What language?

- The use of the first person – how is the use of Chanda's voice effective for the reader?
- The use of the present tense – how is this effective for the reader? What difference would it make if it was written in the past tense?
- The use of questions - what does this suggest about Esther's state of mind?
- The use of short sentences - how does this suggest the way Esther is feeling?
- How is imagery used by the writer to suggest Esther's innermost feelings?

# **Pupil Resource Sheet 15**

## **Task**

In your group, decide on effective titles for Chapters 32–36. Give reasons for your choices.

**Chapter 32 –**

**Chapter 33 –**

**Chapter 34 –**

**Chapter 35 –**

**Chapter 36 –**

# Pupil Resource Sheet 16

## Chanda

What was the most difficult time for you? Why?

Who would you say has provided the most support for you? How have they helped?

Why did you decide to be honest about how AIDS has affected your family?

## Esther

Why did you not tell Chanda about your secret life?

How do you feel about your life now?

Can you explain how the clinic and its staff are helping you?

## Mrs Tafa

Why did you keep so many secrets? Were there no times when you felt guilty?

Which of the secrets you kept do you regret the most, and why?

How do you feel you helped Chanda and her family?

Explain how and why your feelings about Esther have changed.

## Mr Bateman

Tell us about your work in Bonang.

How has AIDS affected your life and work?

What are your feelings about the poverty stricken families in your community affected by AIDS?

## Mr Selaleme

What are your feelings about Chanda and how she has coped with all that has happened?

How do you try to help your students and their families?

What difference do you think schools and education can make to people's awareness of AIDS here in Bonang?

How do you feel about the role of superstition and rumour in this society?

What are your thoughts and feelings about the future of families such as Chanda's?

## Nurse Viser

What were your thoughts and feelings when Chanda first came to you?

How does the Thabo Welcome Centre help people in your community?

What do you feel about the role of superstition and rumour in your community?

What would make your work in Bonang easier to carry out?

# Pupil Resource Sheet 17

## **Task**

Working as a group, prepare and present a local radio programme (for Radio Bonang) aimed at raising awareness of AIDS in the Bonang area. Include interviews with key characters.

## **Assessment**

This task assesses reading through Speaking and Listening. Pupils should show their understanding of the writer's intentions and attitudes through empathising with characters from the text.

**Higher attaining candidates** will show an understanding of key themes from the novel (e.g. the role of rumour and superstition in the society represented in the novel; courage; loyalty; the importance of education etc.). It may be advantageous to give these pupils the opportunity to act as interviewers.

# Guidelines for assessing reading task

## Radio Bonang

	AF2 – understand, describe, select or retrieve information, events or ideas from texts and use quotation and reference to text.	AF3 – deduce, infer or interpret information, events or ideas from texts.	AF6 – identify and comment on writers' purposes and viewpoints, and the overall effect of the text on the reader.
Level 3	<p><b>From some parts of the novel:</b></p> <p>Identifies simple, most obvious points</p> <p>May show some misunderstanding</p> <p>Uses some reference, but not always relevant e.g. <i>often paraphrasing or retelling the narrative rather than supporting comment</i></p>	<p><b>From some of the novel:</b></p> <p>Responses show meaning established at a literal level, but little sense of meanings beyond this</p> <p>Straightforward comment based on a single point of reference</p> <p>Responses based on personal speculation rather than reading of the text</p>	<p><b>From some of the novel:</b></p> <p>Comments identify main purpose e.g. <i>AIDS is affecting many people in the area.</i></p> <p>Expresses personal response but with little awareness of the writer's viewpoint or effect on the reader e.g. <i>simple response to the sadness of so many deaths.</i></p>
Level 4	<p><b>Across the whole novel:</b></p> <p>Identifies some relevant points</p> <p>Uses some generally relevant textual reference or quotation to support comments , e.g. <i>refers to most obvious details but is unselective or lacks focus</i></p>	<p><b>Across the whole novel:</b></p> <p>Comments make inferences based on evidence from different parts of the novel e.g. <i>show an awareness of Mr Bateman's role.</i></p> <p>Inferences often correct, but comments not always rooted in the text, or retelling narrative</p>	<p><b>Across the whole novel:</b></p> <p>Main purpose identified</p> <p>Simple comments show some awareness of writer's viewpoint e.g. <i>whole communities are affected by AIDS.</i></p> <p>Simple comment on the overall effect on the reader e.g. <i>as long as people keep secrets about AIDS the situation will not get better.</i></p>
Level 5	<p><b>Across the whole novel:</b></p> <p>Most relevant points clearly identified, including those from a range of places in the excerpt</p> <p>Comments generally supported by relevant textual reference or quotation, even when points made are not always accurate</p>	<p><b>Across the whole novel:</b></p> <p>Comments develop explanation of inferred meanings drawing on evidence from across the excerpt e.g. <i>shows more awareness of Mr Bateman's profiting from the many deaths.</i></p> <p>Comments make inferences and deductions based on textual evidence</p>	<p><b>Across the whole novel:</b></p> <p>Main purpose clearly identified, often through general overview e.g. <i>will show some understanding of how representatives of the whole community have been affected by AIDS.</i></p> <p>Viewpoints clearly identified with some, often limited, explanation e.g. <i>will give examples of how specific members of the community (Mrs Tafa, teachers in the school, etc.) have been affected and begin to discuss why they have kept it secret.</i></p> <p>General awareness of effect on reader with some, often limited, explanation</p>

Level 6	<p><b>Across the whole novel:</b></p> <p>Relevant points clearly identified including summary and synthesis of information from different places in the excerpt.</p> <p>Response incorporates apt textual reference and quotation to support main ideas</p>	<p><b>Across the whole novel:</b></p> <p>Comments securely based in textual evidence and identify different layers of meaning with some attempt at detailed exploration of them e.g. <i>begin to discuss Mr Bateman's profiting from the many deaths.</i></p> <p>Comments consider the wider implications or significance of information, events or ideas e.g. <i>picks up on significance of Mr Bateman's 'Eternal Light Funeral Services' as described in Chapters 1 and 11.</i></p>	<p><b>Across the whole novel:</b></p> <p>Evidence for identifying main purpose precisely located at word/sentence level or traced through excerpt e.g. <i>will highlight importance of individuals 'coming out', such as Mrs Tafa's 'The curse has been broken.'</i></p> <p>Viewpoints clearly identified and explanation of it developed through close reference to the text</p> <p>The effect on the reader is clearly identified, with some explicit explanation as to how that effect has been created</p>
Level 7	<p><b>Across the whole novel:</b></p> <p>Summarises and synthesises relevant points from across the excerpt, using evidence judiciously, often following a key reference with several linked examples</p> <p>Response incorporates apt and succinct reference, integrating support throughout explanation</p>	<p><b>Across the whole novel:</b></p> <p>Comments securely based in textual evidence and interpret different layers of meaning through detailed exploration e.g. <i>uses author's description of Mr Bateman, his appearance, attitude and his premises to show how he could be accused of exploiting victims of AIDS.</i></p> <p>Comments show appreciation of the wider implications or significance of information, events or ideas e.g. <i>shows and understanding of how some members of the society exploit poverty stricken, frightened families.</i></p>	<p><b>Across the whole novel:</b></p> <p>Apt and judicious use of evidence for identifying main purpose precisely located at word/sentence level or traced through excerpt e.g. <i>will show understanding of the importance of openness: 'I know what's unjust. The ignorance about AIDS. The shame, the stigma, the silence.'</i></p> <p>Subtleties of viewpoint explored through developed explanation with close reference to the text</p> <p>A range of effects on the reader is explored, with explicit explanation as to how that effect has been created</p>

# Appendix 1

## ***Dead Men's Path* by Chinua Achebe**

Michael Obi's hopes were fulfilled much earlier than he had expected. He was appointed headmaster of Ndume Central School in January 1949. It had always been an unprogressive school, so the Mission authorities decided to send a young and energetic man to run it. Obi accepted this responsibility with enthusiasm. He had many wonderful ideas and this was an opportunity to put them into practice. He had had sound secondary school education, which designated him a 'pivotal teacher' in the official records and set him apart from the other headmasters in the mission field. He was outspoken in his condemnation of the narrow views of these older and often less-educated ones.

'We shall make a good job of it, shan't we?' he asked his young wife when they first heard the joyful news of his promotion.

'We shall do our best,' she replied. 'We shall have such beautiful gardens and everything will be just modern and delightful...' In their two years of married life she had become completely infected by his passion for 'modern methods' and his denigration of 'these old and superannuated people in the teaching field who would be better employed as traders in the Onitsha market.' She began to see herself already as the admired wife of the young headmaster, the queen of the school.

The wives of the other teachers would envy her position. She would set the fashion in everything... Then, suddenly, it occurred to her that there might not be other wives. Wavering between hope and fear, she asked her husband, looking anxiously at him.

'All our colleagues are young and unmarried,' he said with enthusiasm which for once she did not share. 'Which is a good thing,' he continued.

'Why?'

'Why? They will give all their time and energy to the school.'

Nancy was downcast. For a few minutes she became sceptical about the new school; but it was only for a few minutes. Her little personal misfortune could not blind her to her husband's happy prospects. She looked at him as he sat folded up in a chair. He was stoop-shouldered and looked frail. But he sometimes surprised people with sudden bursts of physical energy. In his present posture, however, all his bodily strength seemed to have retired behind his deep-set eyes, giving them an extraordinary power of penetration. He was only twenty-six, but looked thirty or more. On the whole, he was not unhandsome.

'A penny for your thoughts, Mike,' said Nancy after a while, imitating the woman's magazine she read.

'I was thinking what a grand opportunity we've got at last to show these people how a school should be run.' Ndume School was backward in every sense of the



word. Mr Obi put his whole life into the work, and his wife hers too. He had two aims. A high standard of teaching was insisted upon, and the school compound was to be turned into a place of beauty. Nancy's dream-gardens came to life with the coming of the rains, and blossomed. Beautiful hibiscus and allamande hedges in brilliant red and yellow marked out the carefully tended school compound from the rank neighbourhood bushes.

One evening as Obi was admiring his work he was scandalized to see an old woman from the village hobble right across the compound, through a marigold flower-bed and the hedges. On going up there he found faint signs of an almost disused path from the village across the school compound to the bush on the other side.

'It amazes me,' said Obi to one of his teachers who had been three years in the school, 'that you people allowed the villagers to make use of this footpath. It is simply incredible.' He shook his head.

'The path,' said the teacher apologetically, 'appears to be very important to them. Although it is hardly used, it connects the village shrine with their place of burial.'

'And what has that got to do with the school?' asked the headmaster.

'Well, I don't know,' replied the other with a shrug of the shoulders. 'But I remember there was a big row some time ago when we attempted to close it.'

'That was some time ago. But it will not be used now,' said Obi as he walked away. 'What will the Government Education Officer think of this when he comes to inspect the school next week? The villagers might, for all I know, decide to use the schoolroom for a pagan ritual during the inspection.'

Heavy sticks were planted closely across the path at the two places where it entered and left the school premises. These were further strengthened with barbed wire.

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Three days later the village priest of Ani called on the headmaster. He was an old man and walked with a slight stoop. He carried a stout walking-stick which he usually tapped on the floor, by way of emphasis, each time he made a new point in his argument.

'I have heard,' he said after the usual exchange of cordialities, 'that our ancestral footpath has recently been closed...'

'Yes,' replied Mr Obi. 'We cannot allow people to make a highway of our school compound.'

'Look here, my son,' said the priest bringing down his walking-stick, 'this path was here before you were born and before your father was born. The whole life of this village depends on it. Our dead relatives depart by it and our ancestors

visit us by it. But most important, it is the path of children coming in to be born...'

Mr Obi listened with a satisfied smile on his face.

'The whole purpose of our school,' he said finally, 'is to eradicate just such beliefs as that. Dead men do not require footpaths. The whole idea is just fantastic. Our duty is to teach your children to laugh at such ideas.'

'What you say may be true,' replied the priest, 'but we follow the practices of our fathers. If you re-open the path we shall have nothing to quarrel about. What I always say is: let the hawk perch and let the eagle perch.' He rose to go.

'I am sorry,' said the young headmaster. 'But the school compound cannot be a thoroughfare. It is against our regulations. I would suggest your constructing another path, skirting our premises. We can even get our boys to help in building it. I don't suppose the ancestors will find the little detour too burdensome.'

'I have no more words to say,' said the old priest, already outside.

Two days later a young woman in the village died in childbed. A diviner was immediately consulted and he prescribed heavy sacrifices to propitiate ancestors insulted by the fence.

Obi woke up next morning among the ruins of his work. The beautiful hedges were torn up not just near the path but right round the school, the flowers trampled to death and one of the school buildings pulled down ... That day, the white Supervisor came to inspect the school and wrote a nasty report on the state of the premises but more seriously about the 'tribal-war situation developing between the school and the village, arising in part from the misguided zeal of the new headmaster.'