

The Street Detectives: Drugs are for Mugs

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School Edition

Please note that the answers should be used as guidelines. Essentially, the focus is not on ‘right’ answers, but on helping learners to understand the text. They aim to alert learners to the development of plot and characters and to the writer’s imaginative use of language. Throughout it is important to help learners make connections between what they know and what is in the text. As the National Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement: Senior Phase Grades 7-9 reminds us: “The teaching of literature . . . is impossible without the thoughtful and honest interpretations of the learners themselves”.

Chapter 1

Pre-reading

1. Consider the title of the series, *The Street Detectives*. Look at the sub-title of the book, too. What do you expect the story to be about?
I expect it to be about the foolishness of drug abuse and how this is discovered or revealed. (Accept any other reasonable personal response including that it is about illegal drug trafficking).

During reading

2. What are the names of the boys and what do you find out about them?
*The boys are all street children.
Mlibo is aware of the opinions of others and cares about what they think. He has not been to the shelter for two weeks. He is used to being on the streets and does not want to be in a home or shelter. Sizwe is the oldest and the strongest. He helps drivers to find parking spots at the car park. He also helps Thabo by looking out for street children who need help.
Vuyo is smaller than any of the other boys and finds it hard to keep up with them.
Victor is hot-tempered.
Tembile is always hungry and complains easily.*

Post reading

1. What clue is there that Mlibo is doing something wrong?
He does not want to be seen by any of the people who know him.
2. Why did Mlibo get into trouble in Umtata?
He’s mother found out that he didn’t bother to go to school for a long time.
3. Who is Thabo and what is his relationship to the boys?
Thabo is the person who runs the shelter, the one who has given the boys a home of sorts.
4. What are the backgrounds of Thabo and the other boys?

- Thabo had grown up in a township in Cape Town. He had studied hard and eventually decided to open a night shelter for the street kids.
- Tembile is from Zimbabwe.
- Sizwe is from Gauteng.
- Vuyo's family comes from the small Koi San people who lived in Cape Town long before Africa was discovered.
- Victor's great, great grandfather came to South Africa from Ireland hundreds of years ago.

5. What makes Mrs Misengana the right person to be running the kitchen?
She has a good heart and knows that the boys will be hungry so she makes plenty of good food. She also knows just how to keep them in check (prevents them from stealing food).
6. How do the boys make extra money?
They collect paper and cardboard for recycling, work as car guards and assist people with carrying their shopping.
7. What did they do in the past to get money?
They begged at traffic lights.
8. What does the shelter provide for them?
A place to stay, food and pocket money. It also provides a home environment.
9. The shelter has a caring and homely atmosphere. How do we know this?
The text says that the boys "gratefully approached the old house that had become their home." They also treat Thabo as a kind of older brother or father and Mrs Misengana as a kind of older sister or mother. The text says that she looks after them as if they were her own.

Chapter 2

Pre-reading

1. Think about gangs and gangsters. Why do new members have to prove themselves before they are accepted?
Gangs are almost families and trust is a vital part of the way they function. A lot of what they do is illegal, so they have to be able to trust that the new member will be loyal and not betray them to the police.

During reading

2. Mlibo behaves in a secretive way. Notice these details.
This would make a good whole class activity. Use leading questions to help the learners to notice the words that the writer uses to describe his secretive behaviour.

Post reading

1. What kind of person is Mlibo?
A. reckless B. rude C. timid D. lazy
C. timid
2. Why are the flower vendor's flowers wilting? Suggest two possible reasons.
They are old. It is a hot day. The flower containers do not have enough water in them. ANY TWO
3. Why does Mlibo wait in the sun and not in the shade?

He is afraid of the rats in the shade.

4. This is not the first time that Mlibo has delivered a similar parcel somewhere. What is different this time about the instructions he gets from the flower vendor?
This time the flower vendor gives him the address on a piece of paper and not verbally
5. In your own words explain Mlibo's problem at this point in the story.
He is illiterate. He is unable to read what is on the page and may not ask anyone to help him. NB: NOT "He couldn't read" as the instruction specifies "own words".
6. Think about your education and what it means to you at this stage in your life. List some of the ways in which it has empowered or enriched you so far.
Personal response. They should be able to give at least three ways. [You might like to turn this into a poster creation activity.]

Chapter 3

Pre-reading

1. Do you find that you sometimes misunderstand what other people say? Is this because you do not always listen properly or because the explanations are not always clear? Explain.
Yes. (As this is a universal experience, do not accept a "no" answer.) This is a good class discussion opportunity and an unprepared oral mark opportunity.

During reading

2. What do you find out about Miss Collette in this chapter?
She likes chitchatting and likes Thabo
3. Look at the description of Mrs Misengana: "Mrs Misengana's ample frame shook like jelly . . ." What does this simile suggest about what happens to her body when she laughs?
It suggests that her body wobbles when she laughs.

Post reading

1. How well does Mrs Misengana know the boys?
She knows them very well.
2. Suggest possible reasons why she keeps a careful eye on the food in the kitchen.
She is very aware that the boys might take far more than their share.
3. Miss Collette says, "Oh! Did you watch it too?" What does Thabo think she means?
He thinks she means that she watched the soccer and loved it.
4. Do you think that Thabo has asked Miss Collette to go out with him before? Explain.
No. He is very awkward in the way in which he asks her this time.
5. Tembile comes looking for bread. Do you think he has not been fed today? Explain your answer.
I think he's been fed already – Mrs Misengana would not mind him having some bread if he hasn't already eaten. He also asks if there is any bread left over, which suggests that he has already had some.

Chapter 4

Pre-reading

1. Gangsters are often involved in violent crime. Can you think of some reasons for this?
People don't usually want to hand over their things without a fight./ Violent encounters are opportunities for bonding within the gang. / They enjoy the thrill of having power over others.

During reading

2. Notice the details that contribute to a scary atmosphere in this chapter. How is the suspense achieved?
The descent into a smelly, dirty hole, makes us feel that this is unsafe territory. Mbibo has been blindfolded so we know he will feel unsure of his footing and where he is. The fact that Lynch traces his scar suggests that there is more violence to come. In addition, the mention of the stories of extreme violence done to others makes the whole situation more and more tense.

Post reading

1. Describe Mlibo's feelings when he is brought into the cellar. Why does he feel this way?
He feels scared, vulnerable and uncertain.
2. Nicknames are given to people for different reasons. Suggest some likely reasons for the names "Lynch", "Blade", "Terro" and "Queen".
Personal response – accept feasible suggestions. [Lynch got his name from his part in violent killing; Blade's nickname comes from his work with a knife; Terro was given his nickname because he strikes fear into others, and Queen was given this nickname because she is in charge and is gorgeous.]
3. What do Lynch and Terro's actions contribute towards the atmosphere of suspense?
Lynch drags him to the table and Terro pulls his head back. We know something bad is going to happen.
4. What does Mlibo find amazing about the boss?
He finds her beauty amazing.
5. At first, Mlibo thinks he has been poisoned. What, in fact, has happened to him?
In fact he has been drugged.

Chapter 5

Pre-reading

1. Think of the thousands of people in South Africa who make a living out of picking up scrap and litter. They work hard to earn a mere pittance.
This is an opportunity for a class discussion. It provides an opportunity to raise awareness of social issues and of recycling, and perhaps even to start a recycling project.

During reading

2. Notice how the writer fills us in about different strands of the story in the same chapter. Humour and suspense are balanced in this way.
Using leading questions, encourage learners to notice how the writer balances humour and suspense.

Post reading

1. How much does Louis pay the boys?
R20.00
2. What advice does Louis give them?
He tells them to stay away from Mlibo.
3. What do you learn about Victor and Tembile from the way they react to Louis' advice?
*Victor is quite hard-hearted/ judgmental he sees only that Mlibo is being foolish –he is not at all concerned for Mlibo.
Tembile is kinder. He suggests that they should help Mlibo by warning Thabo.*
4. We know that Miss Collette has misunderstood Thabo's invitation. Describe some of the amusing results of this misunderstanding so far.
She thinks that he has invited her to the Baxter theatre and so has gone shopping for smart clothes. He has actually invited her to the soccer match so she doesn't need special clothes.
5. What kind of outfit do you think Miss Collette should choose?
Personal response (answer should fit going to soccer, though.)
6. Try playing the following game. Whisper a short message (between 12 and 15 words) to the person sitting next to you. He or she must pass the message on to someone nearby and so on. The tenth person must say the message aloud. What is the result and what does this exercise show?
Let the learners work in groups of ten, as far as possible. Adjust the numbers if necessary. It shows that you can never be certain of what someone said unless you hear it clearly. It also shows that you should speak clearly and slowly when whispering on a message. It is easy to get quite the wrong message otherwise.

Chapter 6

Pre-reading

1. Drug addicts crave drugs more and more. They become addicted and cannot live without their "fix". What do you think the worst thing about being a drug addict is?
Personal response. E.g. The fact that you are never in control.

During reading

2. Notice how Mlibo is changing.
This an opportunity for a class discussion.

Post reading

1. Tembile goes to look at the hole in the canal wall "just for old times' sake". What do you think he means by this?
He is feeling nostalgic (remembering a happy time in his past), but he does not wish to return to that life.
2. Why does the crack seem so much smaller now?
Tembile has grown so much since then – he is now eating properly, and has also grown as a matter of course.
3. Why does Mlibo feel so ill?

He has taken a drug and is experiencing withdrawal symptoms./ He is feeling the effects of being without the drug.

4. Tembile takes the parcel that Mlibo has hidden. How is this going to affect the rest of the story?
It is likely to have dangerous outcomes for Mlibo as he must deliver this parcel or else he will be severely punished.
5. Queen's latest plan is really bad. What detail is most shocking?
She plans to kill the children as soon as they don't do the job she asks of them satisfactorily.
6. Drugs are often made, or grown, in another country. They eventually reach the drug-users (addicts) via a long chain of people. Make a simple chart to show the long journey that a drug could make from start to finish (end user).
This task could be done in partners. One doing the research and the other one presenting it neatly on a page. Personal response – the answers of learners will vary.
7. Can you guess what part Spider might play in the drug chain?
Personal response.

Chapter 7

Pre-reading

1. Think about the life that street children live. They are at the mercy of the weather, and of criminals and gangsters.
Class discussion point. This is an opportunity for an unprepared oral mark.

During reading

2. Notice how little value is placed on Mlibo's life by Queen and her team of gangsters.
Briefly discuss how this is revealed in the text (whole class or groups or pairs).

Post reading

1. What has happened to Mlibo's parcel?
Tembile has taken it.
2. What is Queen's callous order to Lynch? Use your own words.
She has told him to kill Mlibo. (The learner must not use the words "get rid of".)
3. They have got rid of street children in the same way six times before. What exactly does Terro figure out at last and what does this tell us about Terro?
He realises that the reason for the use of streetchildren is that they will never be missed, and that the gang always dumps the bodies in a hole up the mountain, because their bodies will never be found there. His slowness to work out what is happening shows he is not very clever.
4. Mlibo attempts to escape. What is his plan?
He will use the door to knock them over and then run.
5. Miss Collette spends money on clothes, shoes and a handbag.
 - a) Why does she do this?
She thinks that she is going to the theatre on a date.
 - b) In what way has she "saved so much money"?

A similar outfit could have (or might even usually have) cost her much more.

6. When we say something in an indirect and less obvious way it is called a euphemism. Can you find two euphemisms for “kill him”?

Erase him, give him cement boots, put him six feet under, send him to another dimension, take down, eliminate, send to greener pastures, put him to sleep, bump him off, send him to sleep with the fishes etc. ANY TWO (Accept valid alternatives).

Chapter 8

Pre-reading

1. Sometimes we do things that put other people’s lives at risk. Are we ever justified in getting involved in things that may hurt our families and friends?

Personal response and class discussion – you could simulate a talk show on which the audience was encouraged to phone in and contribute.

During reading

2. Notice all the questions that Thabo asks, most of them silently. Which one do you think is the most important?

Personal response – judge the explanation.

Post reading

1. Explain why Thabo, Sizwe, Victor and Vuyo are feeling light-hearted as they trudge up the road to the shelter.

They have just seen their soccer hero in the flesh.

2. Reread Thabo’s side of the phone call. What has Mlibo been forced to say?

That he is in trouble.

3. Explain why Thabo is unable to get police backup.

His phone battery is flat.

4. Thabo suspects that this might be a trap, and yet he goes up the mountain alone when he cannot get police backup. Would you have done the same in Thabo’s shoes? Explain.

Personal response.

5. Thabo wonders why Mlibo is so far away from the Cable Station. What do you think the answer is?

Personal response. E.g. The gangsters are closer to the cable car.

6. Skim through the chapter again and notice that it starts off quite happily, but the mood changes. When does the mood change?

It changes when Mlibo phones Thabo and tells him he needs his help.

Chapter 9

Pre-reading

1. Sometimes the line between right and wrong is not quite clear. When might it be all right to steal, or to lie, for example?

Class discussion. This could be linked to Life Orientation (values). Care should be taken to steer

*this in the direction of desperate situations.***

During reading

2. Notice the different roles played by the three “detectives”. They behave according to their characters.
This would make a good whole class activity. Use leading questions to help the learners notice the ways each of the three “detectives” is true to his character.

Post reading

1. How do we know that Sizwe is more street-wise and practical than the other two boys?
He is able to open the safe.
2. Why do the boys need to break into the safe? Explain fully.
They need money to be able to go on the cable car so that they can go to Thabo’s rescue.
3. Who is the leader of the group?
Sizwe
4. Which of the boys enjoys a physical challenge (e.g. hiking)?
Victor
5. Which boy seems more nervous? Why is this?
Vuyo. He is scared of heights.
6. Test your knowledge about novel writing. At the end of the chapter there is a short paragraph about Tembile. Why are we reminded about him at this point? Why do you think the writer has decided to separate him from the others?
It helps the reader remember that Tembile is partly responsible for this situation as he took the parcel of drugs Mlibo had hidden.
Personal response. Suggestion: The three other boys are close friends. Tembile still tends to be a loner.

Chapter 10

Pre-reading

1. The weather plays an important part in this chapter. A dense cloud known as the “table cloth” can descend very quickly and cover the top of the mountain, causing people to lose their way and sometimes even fall to their deaths.
This allows learners to build background knowledge if they do not have it or to activate the knowledge of Table Mountain if they do have it. Allow learners to share what they know (e.g. about climbing accidents on the mountain).

During reading

2. Notice the “family” bond between the boys. They behave like brothers.
The class should be able to point out at least two ways in which this bond is shown. [E.g., they comfort each other/ they wait for the youngest to catch up – even if they are impatient/ they work together like a team.]

Post reading

1. Explain why the boys are in a hurry to return to the cable station.

They are scared that the cloud will cause them to lose their way – they are no longer on the paved paths and could not easily find their way back to the cable car.

2. “The boys stopped and waited impatiently for Vuyo to catch up.”
 - a) What does this sentence show about them as a group?
They care about each other and don’t want to get separated.
 - b) Why are they impatient with Vuyo at this point?
They are desperate to get to the cable car in time.
3. What stops them from phoning the shelter as they planned to do?
The cableway station is locked for the night and they have no access to a phone.
4. “The top of Table Mountain lay hushed in its cloud cocoon.” In this metaphor the mountain is compared with a creature inside a cocoon. How does this help us to imagine the mountain? (Mention two things.)
It is compared to a caterpillar that is asleep and will become a beautiful butterfly in the morning. It helps us to imagine the way in which the mountain is revealed when the cloud moves. It also helps us to imagine how well the clouds hide the mountain.
5. In the last section of the chapter, there are several hints that something illegal (criminal) is going on. See if you can spot some of these clues and write a short report as if you had been a witness. Begin “I saw . . .”
I saw a ship in the ocean that turned off its engines and lowered crayfish pots into the water. There were white floats marking the spot. It started up its engines again and eased away. Then the strangest thing happened – a trawler went to that spot and a wooden dingy was let over its side. It was rowed over to the spot and pulled up the crayfish pots. The wooden dingy was lifted back onto the trawler and went back to harbour.

Chapter 11

Pre-reading

1. Consider all the dangers that face the boys and Thabo. This is the result of Mlibo’s risky involvement with gangsters. What seemed a small thing to Mlibo at first has now grown into a monster.
This is an opportunity for a class discussion on the characters’ choices and perhaps some more innocent things that the learners might have done that caused unforeseen difficulties.

During reading

2. There is a continual interplay between light and darkness, noise and silence in this chapter. Be aware of how they add to the atmosphere of fear and tension.
This could be done in pairs or groups or as a whole class activity. The class could spend some time picking up on these moments and what light and darkness suggests in those moments in the text.

Post reading

1. Where did the boys take shelter in the night?
in the maintenance room behind the cableway station.
2. Who acts in a reckless manner when the helicopter appears?
Victor
3. Why do you think Sizwe follows Victor although he hesitates at first?

He is concerned that Victor might hurt himself.

4. Think back over the plot of the story so far, and then try to guess what the crate contains.
Personal response. Accept feasible answers. [It contains packets of drugs.]
5. The boys' actions are exactly what we would expect from them. Give an example for **each boy** that shows how his behaviour matches his character. Don't forget Vuyo.
Victor is athletic and adventurous so he runs towards the helicopter. Sizwe is older and responsible, so he runs after Victor. Vuyo is timid and more logical, so he holds back and waits for a safer option.
6. How do you know that the gangsters have complete power over Mlibo at this stage?
He can think only of his next fix even when he knows that taking drugs means giving up his life, so he is ready to do anything the gangsters tell him.

Chapter 12

Pre-reading

1. Think about stories you have read in the past where an unlikely person breaks a bad spell or finds the treasure (the smallest or youngest or poorest, for example). The hero is not always the person you expect him to be.
Good discussion point. The class should mention a few examples of such stories. You could also use this as an opportunity for oral mark.

During reading

2. Notice that the **viewpoint** (perspective) keeps shifting from Vuyo, on the mountain, to the helicopter and then the trawler. This helps to keep the story moving at a fast pace.
This point alerts readers to the ways in which the writer manages the story and creates particular effects.

Post reading

1. What gives Vuyo the courage to leave the storeroom?
He knows that sunrise will come soon.
2. What tells him that all is not well with his friends?
They are not walking normally.
3. Why does Vuyo shove the plastic crayfish under his shirt?
Force of habit - he was used to scavenging in this way.
4. Why is Terro lowered to the trawler before any of the hostages (boys)?
He must make sure that they don't escape.
5. Think of the plot (storyline). Why is it important for Vuyo to see what happens to the helicopter from the telescope on the mountain?
He must know what happens so that he can know what to do.
6. Why does Sizwe say, "We are in a mess."?
The door has been sealed, but even if they could get out of the room, they are still in the middle of the ocean.

7. Skim through the last two chapters. Write a short summary of what has happened to Thabo since he received Mlibo's call for help.

He raced up Table Mountain and was taken prisoner by Lynch and the crew. They knocked him out and put him in the water tank. He was taken by helicopter from there to a sealed room on a trawler.

Chapter 13

Pre-reading

1. Think about **time** and how fast or slowly it can pass. When you are enjoying yourself time goes by very quickly. However, when you need to get somewhere in a hurry, everything seems to take an age to happen. Do you agree?

This is another opportunity for a class discussion.

During reading

2. Vuyo is finding this situation very difficult. List some of the ways the writer communicates this. *He uses words such as "miserably" and "lonely" and "helpless" to describe his mood. (There are so many ways in which the author does this – accept all valid answers.)*

Post reading

1. How does Vuyo manage to pick out the trawler even although it is misty?
Its yellow funnel makes it stand out.
2. There are people in the cable car when it arrives in the early morning.
 - a) Who are they?
Three chattering girls.
 - b) Why are they surprised to see Vuyo?
They thought they were the first ones up there as it was the car's first trip up that morning.
3. Why does Vuyo need to speak to the Customs people?
They are the ones who are in charge of the ships in the bay.
4. What does Vuyo do to show the bus driver that he has no money?
He patted his trouser pockets to show the bus driver that he has no money.
5. Do you think he paid for his bus-ride? Explain your answer.
No, he couldn't find any more money while he was desperate to continue looking through the telescope at what the ship was doing.

Chapter 14

Pre-reading

1. Why do people smuggle goods such as alcohol, drugs, ivory from elephant tusks, rhino horn, diamonds and caged animals?
They are greedy for money and these are ways of making money fast.

During reading

2. What are some of the "Mlibos" likely to be?

They are likely to be other street children who are also easily persuaded and not very educated. They are also disposable in the sense that nobody is keeping track of them.

Post reading

1. What does Captain Ronnie instruct the gangsters to do with their hostages? Describe fully.
They are to be taken out into deep water. Then they will drop them over the side with crayfish pots tied to them so they will sink and drown.
2. What makes Blade look particularly frightening?
He has a white scar on his cheek that puffs out when he is tense.
3. What do you dislike most about Captain Ronnie?
Personal response, but must relate to the text. [Plenty of possibilities: the revolting way he eats/ his appearance (mangy beard), his bad temper, his ruthless behaviour (gets the crew to drop the boys over the side where they will drown because they have weights tied to them)]
4. Why does the customs official suggest that Vuyo should go to the police instead?
They deal with goods being smuggled in illegally. Vuyo's problem is that his friends have been kidnapped.
5. What makes Tom's answer to his own question unlikely? ("What on earth have you got up your shirt? Beef sandwiches?")
Vuyo is ravenous and will have eaten any food he had on him. He has also been on the mountain all night and not just come from home with a packed lunch.
6. What does the plastic crayfish contain?
Drugs.
7. Do you find Henry a kind person? Give an example that supports your answer.
Personal response, but explanation must make sense in terms of the text. E.g. Yes. He looks at Vuyo and decides to get him some food and something warm to drink.

Chapter 15

Pre-reading

1. Most people, and animals, too, will try to survive at all costs. Giving up is usually not an option. What stories about amazing escapes from possible death do you know?
Personal response. This is an opportunity for a creative writing activity or an unprepared oral.

During reading

2. Notice how Victor now takes the lead in their desperate attempt to survive.
He jams a spanner in the chain that helps the rudder to function.

Post reading

1. Quote from the text to show that Victor acts perfectly in character yet again. What is typical (to be expected) of his behaviour in jamming the chain that turns the trawler?
He is a very physical and practical boy and this is a very physical and practical action./ He loses no time in taking action.

2. Who figures out that this was not such a good idea? Explain his viewpoint.
Sizwe. He realises that the boat will head straight for Robben Island and they will crash into the rocks.
3. Tom and the two customs officials work out how the suppliers bring the drugs into the country. Briefly summarise the suppliers' cunning plan.
They realise that they fill the plastic crayfish and then drop them at a certain spot just out at sea. The trawler then goes out and fetches them as if it were fetching real crayfish.
4. What is the name of the trawler?
The Yellow Sun
5. Inspector Edwards receives what he considers "good news" about the trawler.
 - a) What is this news?
"Something" has gone wrong with its steering and it will soon run aground at Robben Island.
 - b) Do you think Vuyo would also consider it good news? Why or why not?
Personal response e.g. Yes. The ship will not be able to get away and they will be able to rescue his friends. Also no, because they might experience new dangers as the crooks become desperate.
6.
 - a) What do you think it means when a ship "runs aground"? What usually happens as a result?
The ship steers itself onto the beach/out of the water. The ship is usually damaged and even when it is not, it usually is difficult to get it back into the water.
 - b) What does jurisdiction mean in: "Unfortunately it's already outside our jurisdiction as it's outside the harbour walls. We'll have to apply for permission to board her."
Boundaries of authority/ outside the area where they have the right to take action. They can do nothing because their authority only stretches to the harbour wall.

Chapter 16

Pre-reading

1. This chapter contains the climax of the story. This is the most exciting and dramatic point in the plot. There is a lot of action and tension followed by a sense of relief. What do you think is going to happen in this chapter?
Personal response. This is an opportunity for creative writing.

During reading

2. At what point do you realise that the story is going to end happily for the boys?
When Captain Ronnie is overpowered by the dog.

Post reading

1. What is the name of Captain Ronnie's trawler?
The Yellow Sun
2. What is the name of the pilot of the customs launch?
Ian Pretorius.
3. When the ship begins to run aground, Sizwe and Victor realize the terrible danger they are in. Describe the situation in your own words.

The trawler is about to sink and they are trapped inside.

4. As the climax approaches, Captain Ronnie leaps onto the deck of the Customs launch and hi-jacks the ship. Where does he want to be taken and why?
He wants to be taken to the yacht on which Queen is, because he wants his money and he wants to escape.
5. Describe the part played by Vuyo, Rex and the pilot in the climax of the novel.
Vuyo sets Rex on Captain Ronnie and the pilot grabs his gun and aims it at the Captain.
6. Tom “sizes up the situation immediately” when he goes on board the launch. Explain what this means. What is the situation?
He realises what has happened. He recognises that Captain Ronnie has tried to take over the ship and that Vuyo and Rex have saved the day.
7. What does Tom mean when he says “you and your friends will be behind bars for a very long time”?
They will be in jail for many years. They have left enough evidence to convict them.

Chapter 17

Pre-reading

1. By the end of a novel everything must be explained in a satisfactory way. What still needs to be explained?
They need to explain everything that has happened including why they didn't come home that night.

During reading

2. As things return to normal, the focus shifts from the drama of the previous day to everyday life concerns, such as eating and drinking, washing and sleeping. Find the touches of humour and good-natured teasing.
This is an opportunity for class discussion and could also be used as a stimulus for creative writing. The learners could use an example of this humour and build a different story around it.

Post reading

1. Mlibo is now in police custody. Why is he being held? Answer fully.
The police don't have any evidence that he was not a part of the gang – remember that he still has the gang tattoo.
2. What role does Mlibo claim that he played in the gang?
He claims that he was just a messenger.
3. What does Tembile suddenly understand with a shock?
That Mlibo was forced to take drugs because he, Tembile, had taken the parcel from the wall.
5. What other information about Mlibo does Tembile give Thabo? How important is this information?
That he had to ask Louis to help him read the instructions every time.
6. Why is Tembile reluctant to tell the truth about the parcel he took from the hole in the canal wall?
He feels bitter about the trouble Mlibo got his friends into and also feels guilty that he unintentionally caused some of it himself.

7. Thabo wants to organise something for the boys. What is it and what is the importance of this?
He wants to organise easy lessons for the boys to catch up on their school work. He says that with education they have a better chance to stand up to the gangs and get a proper job when they are older.

8 **Factual and figurative writing.** Read the following extracts:

- a) “. . . the other street kids **swarmed** out to greet them.”
- b) “And I’ve got **heaps** of last night’s stew left over!”
- c) “Tembile **wrestled** with his conscience.”
- d) “We could all have been as **high** as Table Mountain!”

These are all examples of **figurative** writing. “Swarmed”, for example, usually applies to insect behaviour, but it is used here to describe a lot of children rushing out to greet Thabo and the street detectives. They are like a swarm of bees.

Try to explain b) c) and d) in the same way. First ask yourself what each word printed in bold is usually associated with. Then try to explain what the figure of speech adds to the story.

- b) *The word “heaps” means a huge amount or a pile suggesting many helpings of stew.*
 - c) *The word “wrestled” suggests that Tembile’s conscience took on almost human form and he felt as if it could physically overpower him.*
 - d) *The word “high” suggests an altered state. And Table Mountain is the highest point in Cape Town, so it suggests that they would have been profoundly affected by the drugs.*
9. Mrs Misengana is her usual self. Explain the humour in the last paragraph. (Remember that “high” has another meaning.)
She suggests that she might’ve included the drugs in her stew and all of them would have consumed them – that they might have found each other on the top of Table Mountain!

Chapter 18

Pre-reading

1. The plot of a story contains many smaller sub-plots. The misunderstanding between Thabo and Miss Collette is one of these, a mini story-within-a-story that must be rounded off satisfactorily. What do you remember about it?
Thabo and Miss Collette both watch television at the same time but different programmes. They mistakenly think they have been watching the same programme. Miss Collette is talking about a symphony performance while he is talking about a soccer match. He invites her to Saturday’s game and she thinks he is inviting her to the Baxter Theatre!

During reading

2. Enjoy the humour, and the last surprise of the story!
This is an invitation to recognise that the story is meant to be enjoyed and to alert readers to the surprise.

Post reading

1. How do the boys know that there is a misunderstanding between Thabo and Miss Collette about their outing?

Mrs Misengana tells them.

2. What makes Thabo suspicious when he comes to fetch Miss Collette?
All the boys are smiling and Tembile's eyes sparkle mischievously.
3. What is surprising about the way she is dressed?
She is wearing black trousers, black running shoes, a black shirt and anorak and a black cap with "Bafana Bafana printed on the front.
4. What made Miss Collette realise that she had misunderstood the invitation?
The expression on Mrs Misengana's face when she (Miss Collette) showed off her outfit the day before.
5. How does she turn the tables on Thabo? Would you call this a gentle revenge?
*She tells him that she will go to the soccer match with him but then he will have to go to the Baxter with her. She explains that this kind of open-mindedness is the only way that people will ever learn to understand each other!
This is gentle revenge. There is nothing nasty about it – it is done affectionately.*
6. Miss Collette uses the expression, “. . . made me smell a rat”. What does it mean? Has she really (literally) smelled a rat?
No, it means to be suspicious. She suspects that Mrs Misengana is up to something – there is something she is not telling her.
7. What does Miss Collette mean when she says she has “come to realize how important it is to really understand other people”? Do you think that this is her only reason for going to the soccer match with Thabo?
No. She likes him and would like the chance to spend time with him away from the shelter.