

## **Question 2: Seven Steps to Heaven**

The novel reveals the theme of multiple personalities. The extract shows that the most important components of life are ideas. This essay will demonstrate that Sizwe loses his identity as a result of his desire to be like Thulani.

The extract elucidates on the fact that the two characters, Sizwe and Thulani, are having multiple personalities. Sizwe originates with ideas for his short stories and then writes the short story. He then gives it to Thulani to proof-read it. However, Thulani makes changes that drive the plot of the short story in a different direction. What happens is significant because it sets the tone of the whole novel and foreshadows Sizwe's mistaken identity. What happens in the extract shows us the importance of ideas and the statement that says that 'His own ideas had been moved aside. Ideas. Aside' is powerful. It is noteworthy that the words 'ideas' and 'aside' makes up a sentence of their own. The narrator is emphasizing on the importance of their people's 'ideas'. In this case Sizwe is aware that his short stories that carried his own ideas have been manipulated by Thulani to the extent that they have lost originality and identity. It is crucial to note that Sizwe finds his short stories unrecognizable after Thulani has made some changes to them. This prepares us for the ultimate transformation of Sizwe. The short story is symbolic of a greater problem that has affected the new generation of black South Africans. They have experienced a culture shock as they got Westernized. They feel that they have become alienated from their African roots as a result of Western education. When they look at themselves in the mirror, they cannot recognize themselves anymore. They have become indoctrinated with Western ideas to the extent that they have lost their own identities.

The leitmotif: 'When I was young, if I made soup and I was chopping onions...' establishes the constantly recurring theme of multiple layers of people's personalities. The statement refers to Thulani, it is also referring to Sizwe himself. An onion has many layers to it and this makes it fascinating. Its use here is appropriate because it depicts Thulani's multiple transformation as a character. Thulani and Sizwe are, first and foremost, budding writers. However, Thulani is more talented than Sizwe and Sizwe recognizes this early on in their life. This drives Sizwe to envy Thulani's greater talent. When Thulani is young and promising writer, he is himself. He shows his innocence and purity of character as we see him accompanying his father on tours to other church branches. We also see him as a forceful preacher's child when he delivers a rousing sermon. This is one facet of Thulani's character as he grows up. As he grows up and develops his talent in this mould of a character, he produces

outstanding literacy short stories. One of the outstanding short story he writes is Ramu the Hermit. It is clear that Thulani is displaying multiple personalities.

Sizwe finds himself dwarfed by Thulani's greater artistic talent and becomes dependent on him for ideas. It starts with his giving Thulani short stories to approve and moderate. The fact that he seeks approval from Thulani shows that he is lacking self confidence. Sizwe is a critical stage where he is in search of his identity and being dominated by Thulani is out helping matters at all. Sizwe develops an inferiority complex and begins to lose his own identity. When Thulani runs away from home, he bequeaths all his literacy short stories to Sizwe. This becomes part of an indoctrination process that leads to mistaken identity. In a way, Sizwe adopts Thulani's ideas as his own and this causes him to morph into Thulani's character. For example, when he leaves for Zimbabwe to witness the execution of Freedom Cele (the other mane of for Thulani), sizwe confuses the C10 agent when he declares that he is Thulani. The C10 Agents are faced with the reality that they have two people with the same name. It is only after they investigated that they established that they are two friends who grew up together and went to the same school. The subtheme that the writer was presenting is that when we rid ourselves of our own ideas and adopted other people's ideas, we were likely to lose our identities and our minds. Sizwe break down at the end of the novel is a testament that indoctrination of a foreign system of belief may lead to our character assassination. By the end of the novel, Sizwe is hallucinating and starts seeing Thulani wherever he goes. Sizwe gets haunted by Thulani to the extent that he cannot even recognizes himself when he looks at himself in the mirror.

It can be tenably concluded that the aphorism of an onion depicts our multiple personalities as we grow up and try to find our self. This essay has demonstrated that both Thulani and Sizwe adopt different personalities as they go through life.

## **Question 2: Fred Khumalo**

Sizwe and Thulani are aspiring writers in a recently freed country. The setting of the novel ihs the period just after independence in 1998 and the 'born-frees' are in a state of confusion. This essay will evaluate the theme of mistaken identity as well as the theme of multiple personality.

The extract gives us an insight into the minds of Sizwe. Sizwe symbolizes all the young artists who got disillusioned with Western education. They found themselves in an

antenable position of writing literacy books in a foreign language. They felt that they have been indoctrinated with Western ideas. Sizwe is demonstrating the dilemma that young writers found themselves faced with. In the extract Sizwe feels that he is losing his sharpness and originality by having his stories tailored by Thulani. He is starting to feel as though Thulani is usurping his persona and causing him to lose confidence in his own ability to write stories. The extract foreshadows what happens to Sizwe later in the novel. Although he was a remarkable literacy artist in his own right, we later find him fixated on Thulani's stack of short stories that Thulani bequeaths to him when he runs away from home. His fixation with Thulani's literacy work causes him to lose his identity and assume the identity and persona of Thulani. When Thulani Tembe, as Freedom Cele, get arrested in Zimbabwe for smuggling guns, Sizwe travels all the way to Zimbabwe to see him. His fascination with Thulani causes him to start believing that he is Thulani. Even C10 operative Chigumburi is perplexed when Sizwe keeps telling him that he is Thulani Tembe. This brings out the theme of multiple personality.

The aphorism 'When I was young, if I made soup and I chopping onion recurs in the novel more than once. This brings to light the theme of multiple personalities. An onion has multiple layers and the aphorism of an onion that Sizwe uses to describes the fact that people have many layers of personalities as a result of what they experience as they go through life. When Thulani is young and innocent, he is Thulani Tembe. He goes around with his father to visit other parishes and late Thulani demonstrate his Christian inclination when he stands before church congregation and preach in an impassioned way. This is the first layer of his personality. When Thulani start going to school and then discovers that he has a talent for writing stories, he transforms himself and become Vusi Mtungwa. Vusi Mtungwa is enlightened, creative and brilliant. His delivery of stories is superb. This is the persona that fascinates and entraps Sizwe. Sizwe aspires to be a literacy giant in a form expressed by Thulani Tembe as Vusi Mtungwa. Sizwe gets the shock of his life when he reads in the newspaper that a certain Freedom Cele has been arrested for violent rape of a string of women across the country. What shocks him the most is the fact that the man whom he grow up with and never suspected that he would ever end up being the most notorious rapist in the country. This drastic transformation shows Sizwe that people are like onion. They have many layers to their personalities. The aphorism of an onion fits Thulani Tembe like a glove.

The extract is talking about the stories that Sizwe drafted and Thulani changed. The final product was a combination of two perspective even though Thulani's perspective is more towering than that of Sizwe. The most significant thing is that the stories bore the opinions of both Sizwe and Thulani may feel that his ideas have been pushed aside by

Thulani, but the truth is that the stories contain two different perspectives. Both Sizwe and Thulani made contributions to the story depicted in the extract. The extract symbolizes the relationship between Sizwe and Thulani. There is a suggestion that the coalition between the blacks and whites is not naturally right. This symbol rears up its ugly head when the Sizwe and Thulani sleeps with the same girl, Nolitha, and contract a venereal disease. Their sperms are mixed up in Nolitha in the same way their ideas get mixed up in the short stories that Sizwe wrote and give to Thulani to modify. In both cases Thulani comes off as the most dominant figure. In the short stories, Thulani changes them and makes them his own stories. In the incidence with Nolitha, he is the one who initiates the sexual act and then commands Sizwe to follow suit. This causes Sizwe to develop dependency on Thulani that would last until the end of the novel.

It can be tenably concluded that characters in the novel have many layers of personalities as demonstrated by this essay. Sizwe morphs into the persona of Thulani while Thulani changes and becomes Freedom Cele.

### **Question 3: Nervous Conditions**

The novel depicts the plight of women in a patriarchal society. The other issue explored is the clash of Western and Shona culture. This essay will compare and contrast the upbringing of Tambudzai and Nyasha and then evaluate their attitudes towards Western and Shona culture.

From the outset, it is clear that Tambudzai harbours a grudge towards men in her life. She says that she was happy when Nhamo died. This is a strange comment because we expect siblings to love one another instead of hating each other. Tambudzai's situation is a prime example. She grows up in poverty and has a father who is lazy and on top of that she is deprived of an opportunity to go to school. Her mother is ineffectual and docile after years of subjugation. This compounds Tambudzai's situation: When Babamkuru sends money for school fees for Tambudzai and Nhamu, Jeremiah decides to pay fees for Nhamo while depriving Tambudzai of education because she is a woman. This indicates how oppressive and restrictive the Shona culture is towards women.

On the other hand, Nyasha spends five formative years in England. Her case is a little better because she has not been discriminated against when it comes to education. Chido and she enjoy equal opportunities and Nyasha does not feel as though she is less important than Chido and their relationship is good as compared to the relationship between Tambudzai and Nhamo. Nyasha gets exposed to a modern society that boast advanced social structure. Nyasha is awes by the liberty and power that women wield in the society. She is both fascinated and inspired by what she sees around her. What she sees is a far cry from what happens back home in Zimbabwe. Unlike Tambudzai who has to scratch and claw for a living, Nyasha is surrounded by glamour and wealth. She does not lack anything. This picture of a robust modern society gets indelibly printed on her's mind and that is why she does not find it patriarchal Shona culture when she goes back to Zimbabwe. Her experience in the modernized England makes her all the more appreciative of the Western education and civilization. Nyasha sees that Western culture is far better than Shona culture because it allows women to advance and express themselves. This makes Nyasha feel that she is empowered and encouraged to succeed.

Tambudzai tries to vault over the obstacles placed in front of her by growing maize meal and selling the cobs to passers-by in an attempt to make money. It does not get easy because Nhamo trashes her garden and steal her maize cobs. Nhamo's actions signify a long-standing view that women are less important. Despite her ordeal, Tambudzai plods along and achieve her dream of attending school. A white old woman sponsors her education but Tambudzai faces another hurdle. Jeremiah goes to school and demands to be given the money that Dolly, the old white woman, had given to Tambudzai. His failure to get the money from the school becomes Tambudzai's trials and tribulations mirror that one of the Nyasha when she sought to fight the patriarchal system single-handed. When Nyasha comes back late at night from a school party, Babamkuru punishes her. Nyasha does not understand why Babamkuru would punish her alone because Chido also came late. Tambudzai and Nyasha's struggles are the same although their up bringing are different.

When Nyasha comes back from England she got a culture shock. She confronted a Shona culture that had no place for women. What dismayed her more than anything else was the fact that Babamkuru supported it even though he was educated and enlightened. Nyasha found it hard to allow Babamkuru to subjugate her because she saw how backward the Shona culture was. She fight Babammkuru at every turn

because she thinks that he is hypocritical. Nyasha feels that Babamkuru supports the Shona culture because he would gain more power and influence. Tambudzai faces the same problem when she gets the scholarship to go and attend at the sacked heart school. Babamkuru is against the idea until Maigura persuades her otherwise. By the end of the novel, there is the feeling that Tambudzai would be an independent woman who would help her family escape poverty and degradation. However, Nyasha's spirited struggle against male dominance does not seem that it would take anywhere.

It can be concluded that both Tambudzai and Nyasha worked hard to escape the oppressive clutches of the Shona culture as this essay has demonstrated. Their upbringing may have been different but their struggles for independence are the same.

## **Question 4: The New Century of South African Poetry**

The poet pictures the city of Johannesburg during the apartheid era. The poem is severely critical of the apartheid government. This essay will evaluate the metaphors and images that the poet uses to show how depressing the situation was during apartheid.

The poet sets a mocking tone to the poem by mentioning the phrase 'I salute you' two times. Saluting something means that none is happy about it and would recommend it to anyone. However, the poet does not appear as though he is recommending the city of Johannesburg to anyone. He is, in fact, that the black people struggled and were discriminated against during the apartheid period. The government placed restrictive laws on all the black people. They had to carry passes at all times. The phrase 'my hand pulse to my back...' shows how automatic searching for a pass was in the Apartheid South African. A pulse is something that takes place all the time because our blood is pumped by the heart at all times. The imagery of a pulse is powerful because it shows us how regularly the apartheid security harassed the black people for a pass. It is ironic that the black people would need a pass in their own land.

The poet raises up the subject of starvation and poor living conditions in the black communities. The metaphor in 'a starved snake' shows how deprived the black people were during the apartheid era. It is astounding that the poet would be starved because he works in Johannesburg and get paid at the designated time. In line 8 the remark

about 'stomach groans' black people were forced to work long hours without adequate remuneration. The poet also raises the issue of unhealthy conditions when he states that his stomach 'devours coppers and papers'. This shows that the black people were in the mines and factories. The poet's statement is an indictment against the white entrepreneurs who did not take proper steps to safe guard black workers from harm. In line 20 the poet makes a comment about the air pollution in Johannesburg. He describes it as 'thick iron breath'. The point the poet is making is that not only were the blacks had to deal with racial prejudice, they also had to deal with abominable living conditions. In line 15 the poet makes mention of the 'ever whirling dust'. This imagery of the dust shows how unhealthy the environment was for the blacks.

The poet also brings out the theme of crime in the black townships. The apartheid government placed a lot people in small areas and most of those black people were not working and as a result they resorted to crime. It was premeditated on the part of the apartheid government to fan crime like that so that they can have a firm grip on the black communities because they were starting to be reactionary. In line 16 the poet says 'my death'. This is a significant line because it shows that the poet does not only fear the criminals in the townships but also fear the apartheid security forces. Line 30 summarizes the fear that the poet feels about crime in the township of Johannesburg. The poet states that 'death lurks in the dark like a blade in the flesh'. This metaphor is explicit and gruesome. If the crime was in the black communities. The poet seems to suggest that the blame should be placed squarely on the shoulders of the apartheid government. They did not create more job opportunities for the blacks.

The poet raises the issue of hypocrisy and racism in the poem. The poet feels that the white government is masking the fact that the blacks are living in poor conditions. They festoon the streets with 'neon flowers' and 'cement trees'. The poet thinks that this is superficial and an attempt to deceive tourists. These 'neon flower' send out the message that the black communities are traumatized and are not happy with the present arrangement where white people with the present arrangement where white people dictate how black South African can behave.

It can be justifiably concluded that the poet is frustrated with the apartheid government and wants things to change for the better. This essay demonstrated the burning desire of the blacks to have freedom of action and speech.

### **Question 3: Nervous Conditions**

Tambudzai and Nyasha's lives are inextricably linked even though their upbringing was different. This essay will evaluate the different experiences that inform Tambudzai and Nyasha's attitudes towards Western and Shona cultures.

Tambudzai finds herself oppressed in a patriarchal environment where women are largely considered as second class citizens. Tambudzai is an intelligent and shrewd young lady and it does not escape her notice women are deprived of opportunities for advancement. If the Shona culture is a hindrance to women's liberty, Tambudzai rationalizes that she would rather renounce her Shona culture in favour of Western culture that offers women a multitude of opportunities. Tambudzai is dismayed that her father Jeremiah would elect that Nhamo should go to school while she stays back. What Tambudzai cannot wrap his head around is the fact that Jeremiah could find the money to pay for Nhamo's school fees while he cannot find the money to pay for Tambudzai. To Tambudzai, this is a travesty of justice and an indictment against the Shona culture. In her own quiet way, Tambudzai finds a solution to her dilemma. She starts growing up maize-meal to sell on the street in an effort to raise money to pay for her school fees. Tambudzai represents a new breed of independent women that Western education provides them with a route of escape. Tambudzai has no intention of ending up like her mother who has long been subjugated by the system. Tambudzai's initiative to grow maize crop and sell is a strong statement that she will stop at nothing in her bid to go to school. It is also noteworthy that it takes the compassion of an old white lady to send Tambudzai, she is advancing the cause of all disadvantaged women.

On the other hand, Nyasha was brought up in an altogether different environment to Tambudzai's. Nyasha never experienced the deprivations that affected Tambudzai. She grew up in a household surrounded by wealth and supportive parents. She attended school in Britain and noticed how free and independent women were. She tasted independence and



espined to be like those women in England. Spending five formative years in England gave Nyasha the impetus to crusade for women's freedom back in Zimbabwe. Nyasha's father was educated and cosmopolitan and that led Nyasha to think that her father would shed his patriarchal attitude towards women. However Babamkuru changes when he comes back to Zimbabwe. The fact that he is now the head of the Sigauke clan has repercussions in the novel. Babamkuru is born between two cultures. There is no doubt that he has assimilated Western culture but he still has a duty to his cultural roots. Finding himself in such a dilemma, Babamkuru finds the easy way out. He decides to uphold the Shona culture with its patriarchal attitude towards women. This pits Babamkuru against Nyasha. Unlike Tambudzai who finds less devious ways of rebelling against the patriarchal system, Nyasha does not hold back anything. She confronts Babamkuru head on. Nyasha rationalizes that Babamkuru must know better than to restrict women. He has been in England for a number of years and he also exposed his children to Western civilization and to try and behave differently would, be deceptive.

Tambudzai and Nyasha are more alike than we realize. They realized early on in their lives that Western education is their viable route to freedom. When they attend at the missionary school, their determination to excel at school is unmatched and on full display. They understand that education empowers and they leave little to chance. Tambudzai, has a duty to uplift her family from poverty and investor education offers that.

## **Question 4: Poetry – City Johannesburg**

The poetry is ridiculing the apartheid government because they are encouraging rebellion from the black society. This essay will demonstrate through metaphors and images that life under apartheid regime was depressing.

The poetry comes off as praising the atmosphere under the apartheid regime but when we delve deeper, we realize that the poet is ridiculing the oppressive government. The word 'salute' denotes that the poet is respectful towards the apartheid government but when we delve deeper into the poem, it becomes clear that the poet is ridiculing and mocking the apartheid government. The writer's choice of word is apt because it brings the poem to life for example, the phrase 'my hand pulses...' denotes that the action that the poet is taking is habitual. He has to look for his pass at all times. The metaphor in 'my pass, my life' is informative because it shows how important and necessary having

a pass was to the poet. The poet is comparing the pass with his life. In as much as we guard our lives, the poet had to guard the pass with his life because if he happened to lose it, he would not survive. Moreover, the structure of the poem is uneven and this shows how uneven poem is uneven and this shows how uneven the life was for the blacks during the apartheid era especially in Johannesburg. The fact that 'Jo'burg City' occupies a line of its own and appears before full-stops shows us the poet's fascination with the city of Johannesburg.

The poet uses the metaphor of a 'starved snake' in line 6. This is a powerful imagery because it shows us the truth of the situation. Snakes are reptiles that move around unnoticed and are dangerous. They can strike at humans when they come into contact with them. In the same fashion, human's first instinct when they see a snake is to kill it. It appears that there is snow eremite between human and snakes. By using the imagery of a snake the poet is bringing to light the kind of relationship that existed between the blacks and whites. Snake are downtrodden as black people were during the apartheid era. It seems that danger licked everywhere in Johannesburg. In line 16 the poet mentions the word 'death'. This bring out the fact that death was a common thing in that place. In line 30 the poet says that 'death lurks in the dark like blade in the flesh'. The metaphor used is gruesome and explicit. The point that the poet is making is that not only were black people killed by the apartheid security force but were also vulnerable to attack by other black South Africans. This raises the issue of crime in the city of Johannesburg. Crime was running rampant.

The poet brings out a lot of details concerning the living conditions in Johannesburg. The city may be the hub of economic activity in South Africa but the living conditions tells another story. The greatest irony is that people would starve in a place as rich as Johannesburg. The phrases 'starve snake', 'my stomach groans' and 'smile to hunger' reinforces this theme of starvation. It is also ironic that the poet would feel such pangs of hunger when he is working. However, line 7 explains why the poet would feel hungry all the times. The line that says 'for my thin, ever lean wallet' shows that the salary he was getting was petty and it was not enough to even feed the poet. Instead of eating food that nourishes the body, the poet's stomach 'devours coppers and papers'. This image emphasizes the fact that the black people were in dire straits at the time. Not only were the black people starving but were also living in dingy houses and people' shows that the house were of a low standard. In line 26, the poet brings out the hypocrisy of the apartheid government. They make attempts to mask the ugly truth that the blacks live in dingy houses by festooning the artificial and superficial to the poet. Further down

in line 27, the mentions 'your cement trees' to show how hypocritical the apartheid government is.

It can be tenably concluded that the poet effectively used metaphors and solid images to picture the life and the living conditions in the apartheid era. This essay also brought the theme of death and crime.

## **Question 1. Raisin in the sun**

From the way Walter and Mama view life, it is clear that there are different. The two are separated by a general and this essay will evaluate how generational differences impact on the identities and aspirations of the characters in the play.

- (1) Mama is a product of bygone era and this comes through during the conversation she has with Beneatha and Walter Lee .as the play start the atmosphere is suspenseful. Every one including Travis is talking about the cheque that would be coming in the next few hours the issue at stake is how the insurance money would be used. Everyone is proposing how; the money must be spent and this gives us an insight into the characters of mama, Beneatha and Walter Lee .first and foremost, mama is not as expectant as Walter lee. Mama belongs to an era when money did not mean anything. Even in the extract she disagrees with Walter Lee that money is more important than freedom. Mama grew up during the times of civil rights movement and the only thing that preoccupied that generation was fighting the racial prejudice that existed at that time. However, the change that Walter Lee would be obsessed with money with this intensity . At the same , mama acknowledges that the world has change.
  
- (2) Walter Lee represents a new generation obsessed with upward mobility in society. His most important goal is to be wealthy and live lavishly. Unlike Mama who had accepted her lot in life, Walter is not satisfied and is ready to take radical steps to escape from the vicious cycle of poverty. The generational difference could not be more clear. Walter Lee feels that African American must not sit on their laurels and wait for someone to come and dig them out of poverty. Walter is adamant that he would invest the insurance money in a liquor business.

He thinks that making money is far better than wasting precious time by attending at Universities. This line of thinking makes him clash with Beneatha who is aspiring to be a doctor. The reason why Walter Lee is driven by ambition to be wealthy is that he feels as though the African American have been excluded from living the American dream. He is not a participant in this dream life but a bystander. He works as a chauffeur and drives posh cars but does not own a car. He feels that he is helping the white people amass more and more money by working as a chauffeur. However, Walter's aspiration to open a liquor shop does not augurs well because he has no business plan and does not have adequate education background to help him run a successful business.

- (3) Beneatha clashes with Mama over her use of derogation language when she talks about religious issues. Mama chides her for using such language and this is further evidence for Mama that the society is changing. It never used to be like this in the past generation. People were traditional, religious and respectful but the new generation is disrespectful and carefree. The other prime issue that the play is bringing out is the issue of gender roles. The African American society was conservative and patriarchal. Women were expected to be household managers and their aspirations never amounted to much. However, a big change is taking place in this new generation of African American. Beneatha's aspiration to become a doctor is groundbreaking. Not only is the medical field an exclusive preserve of man but also the most challenging. Beneatha's aspiration symbolizes the dawn of a new era where there is sexual equality in African American societies. Moreover, Beneatha and Walter would need to deal with culture shock as they try to assimilate into the Western culture. Walter is envious of the white culture speaks against it. We see him denigrating George Murchison for behaving like white people. What is contradictory is that he does not even value his own African American culture. On the other hand, Beneatha does seem to be searching for her African roots. She may be assimilating into the white culture, but she also wants to be in touch with her African roots.
- (4) Walter is angry that Mama has made a down payment for a house in Clybourne Park and he is also against Mama's suggestion that some of the insurance money must be set aside for Beneatha's education. Mama's bid for a house in Clybourne Park shows us her wish to maintain family bonds and keep her whole family comfortable and safe. Hers is a noble cause that would benefit everyone equally. However, Walter's aspiration to use the money from the insurance payout to run a liquor business is self-serving. His aspiration excludes and alienates his

own family members while Mama's aspiration to buy a house includes everyone. The change that Mama is seeing is that her children are getting more and more capitalistic and it was never like that during her time.

It can be justifiably concluded that there are generational differences between Mama and her children as this essay has demonstrated. Mama's worldview and aspiration is different from that of Walter Lee and Beneatha, and this essay has assessed those differences.