

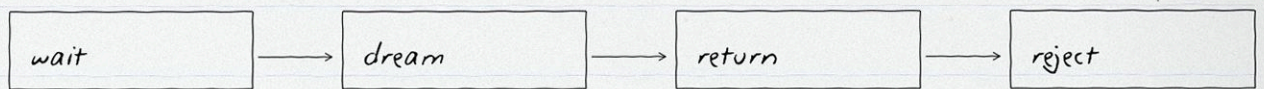
Tomorrow

Class 12 English Supplementary

Kaleidoscope Chapter 4, Joseph Conrad

fixed hope + real return = pain

<- title idea



One-line story

Captain Hagberd waits for his missing son Harry and keeps saying he will return tomorrow.

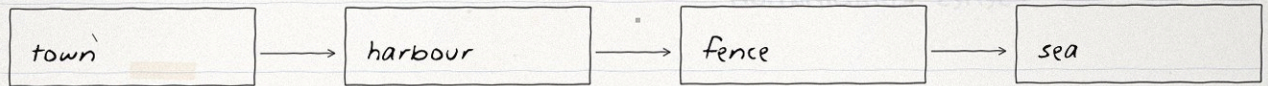
The actual Harry returns today, but he is not the obedient son his father has imagined.

Bessie Carvil sees both the dream and the truth, so the ending hurts her most.

Main exam cue

Write the answer as a conflict between dream and fact.

Setting and Mood



Colebrook

The story is set in a small seaport named Colebrook.

The sea matters because it pulls Harry outward and keeps Hagberd afraid.

The houses, harbour and sea-wall make the story feel narrow and trapped.

Atmosphere

Conrad builds mood through gossip, routine and repeated phrases.

Nothing loud happens at first, but every detail adds pressure.

The quiet setting makes the final meeting sharper.

Captain Hagberd

What he believes

He believes Harry will return tomorrow,
marry Bessie and settle in the cottage.

He has prepared clothes, rooms and plans
for a son who exists mostly in memory.

His hope looks comic, but it grows from
loneliness and fear.

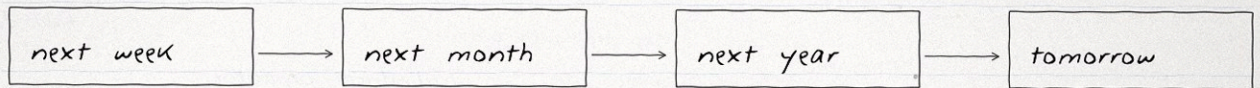
How to judge him

Do not call him only mad or funny.

He is also a grieving father who has turned
waiting into a way of living.

His pity becomes difficult because he
refuses the real Harry.

From Next Week to Tomorrow



Shrinking time

People ~~wrong~~ remember that Hagberd once said Harry ~~wrong~~ would return next week.

Then the promise moved to next month, next year and finally tomorrow.

The nearer word sounds hopeful, but it shows a deeper trap.

Answer line

Use this point to prove that his delusion is not random.

Every fact is bent toward one fixed belief.

Tomorrow becomes a wall between him and present reality.

*

Bessie Carvil

Her position

Bessie lives next door with her blind father, Mr Carvil.

She is poor, tired and almost locked inside daily care work.

Hagberd's dream gives her a small imagined escape.

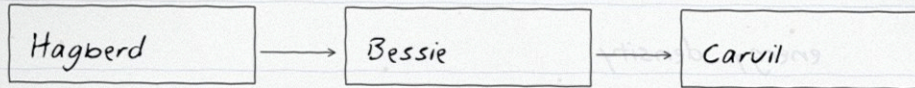
Her response

She humours Hagberd because direct contradiction frightens him.

She blushes when marriage to Harry is suggested.

She half believes because hope is easier than plain loneliness.

Old Mr Carvil



Role in the story

Old Carvil is blind, heavy, demanding and often cruel in speech.

His disability is real, but he also uses Bessie without kindness.

He deepens the feeling that Bessie has no open road.

Contrast point

Hagberd is mentally blinded by hope.

Carvil is physically blind and tyrannical.

Both men shape Bessie's trapped life.

Harry Hagberd

The real son

Harry is restless, rough and sea-shaped.

He returns without becoming the settled son of his father's dream.

He wants money and movement, not home and marriage.

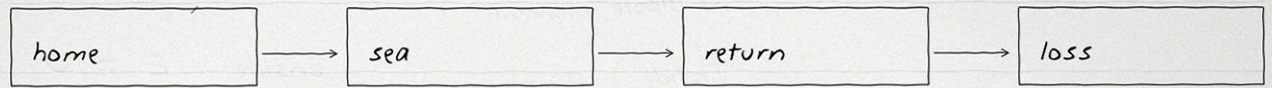
Why he disappoints

He is not exactly a villain, but he is selfish and unstable.

He exposes how false Hagberd's prepared future has become.

His return is the truth that no one can comfortably use.

Father and Son Contrast



Old Hagberd

Wants a cottage, marriage, savings and a fixed domestic future.

Thinks the sea has stolen Harry and must be defeated by home.

Needs a son who matches his plan, not the son before him.

Harry

Wants freedom, food, money and the road again.

Treats home as another stop, not as final rescue.

His presence proves that return is not the same as reunion.

Theme: Waiting

Waiting as comfort

Hagberd ~~wrong~~ waits because waiting protects him from ~~wrong~~ full grief.

Tomorrow keeps Harry safe, obedient and near in imagination.

The dream gives daily order to an otherwise empty life.

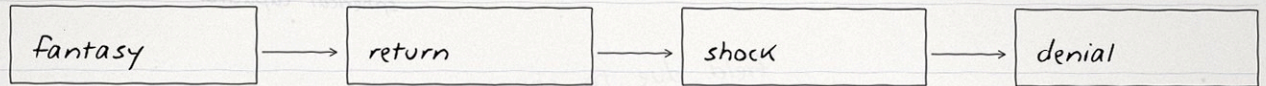
Waiting as prison

The same hope stops him from seeing the real present. *

Bessie also gets caught in the promise of a better tomorrow.

The title shows how hope can become imprisonment. *

Theme: Delusion and Reality



Delusion

Hagberd makes a private story and treats it as fact.

He rejects any detail that does not fit that story.

His phrase tomorrow is both shield and symptom. *

Reality

Harry's arrival is the direct test of the dream.

The dream fails because Harry is not marriage-ready or home-loving.

Truth arrives, but recognition does not.

Theme: Home and Sea

Home

Home means safety, savings, marriage and fixed identity for Hagberd.

The yellow brick cottages are his proof that tomorrow is prepared.

He tries to turn love into property and routine.

Sea

The sea stands for motion, appetite and escape for Harry.

It also stands for danger in Hagberd's imagination.

The story never lets home fully defeat the sea.

Theme: Pity

Why pity is complex

We pity Hagberd because grief has damaged his mind.

We pity Bessie because she is trapped and briefly hopeful.

We may even partly pity Harry because he cannot belong anywhere.

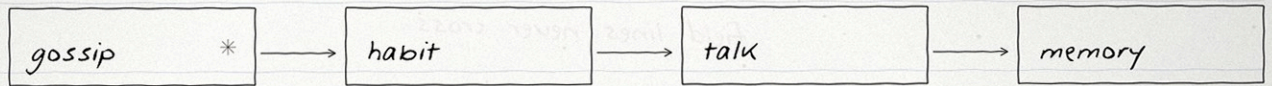
Exam cue

Avoid one-sided judgement in answers.

Conrad makes each person limited, wounded and difficult.

That is why the ending feels tragic, not only ironic.

Narrative Method



Indirect unfolding

Conrad does not explain the whole past at once.

Town gossip, Bessie's talk, Hagberd's habit and Harry's memory. Fill the gaps.

This slow method keeps suspense and psychological depth.

Repetition

The repeated word tomorrow is the main verbal pattern.

Each repetition sounds more painful after Harry appears.

Use this in appreciation answers.

Symbols

Tomorrow

Tomorrow ~~wrong~~ is hope, delay, self-deception and emotional ~~wrong~~ survival.

It lets Hagberd avoid saying that Harry may never return as desired.

At the end it becomes a cry of defeat.

The fence

The fence separates Hagberd and Bessie but also lets them talk.

It shows closeness without real freedom.

Bessie hears hope across a boundary she cannot easily cross.

Important Character Lines

Captain Hagberd

Use words like waiting, delusion, fatherhood, refusal and fixed hope.

Mention his sailcloth suit and prepared cottage as signs of obsession.

Do not forget the sadness under the comic surface.

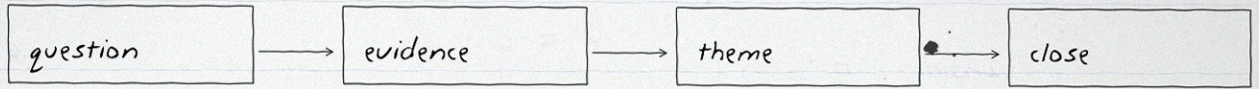
Bessie

Use words like sympathy, fatigue, care work, loneliness and faint hope.

She is not foolish. She is emotionally starved.

Her disappointment is one of the story's sharpest effects.

NCERT Answer Pointers



Technique question

Say the past is revealed through gossip, conversation and delayed recognition.

Mention that Conrad lets different voices build the story.

Add that this keeps Captain Hagberd partly comic and partly tragic.

Title question

Explain tomorrow as hope for Hagberd and possible escape for Bessie.

Then show that the present destroys the comfort of that word.

End with the old man's repeated cry.

Exam Paragraph Plans

Theme paragraph

Start with a topic sentence on hope and delusion.

Give Hagberd as the main example.

Add Bessie's temporary hope, then Harry's refusal of settlement.

Character paragraph

Name the character's central conflict first.

Use two story details as evidence.

Close with the effect on the ending.

Common Mistakes

Avoid these

Do ~~wrong~~ not write that Harry saves Bessie. He does ~~wrong~~ not.

Do not make Hagberd only a joke. His grief matters.

Do not treat tomorrow as only a calendar word.

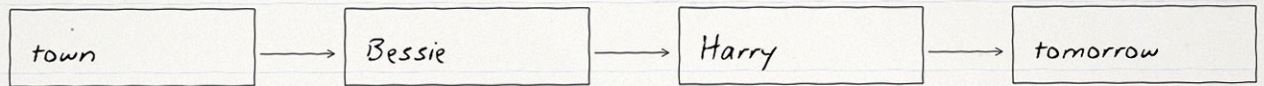
Better answer habit

Keep returning to the gap between imagined future and real present.

Use Conrad's delayed revelation as a technique point.

Write short, evidence-based paragraphs.

Quick Recall Page



Memory chain

Colebrook gossip introduces the odd old
* captain.

Bessie listens, hopes and stays trapped
beside her father.

Harry returns, refuses the cottage future
and leaves.

Hagberd goes back to tomorrow, and Bessie
loses the dream.

Final line

The tragedy is not that Harry never
returns.

The tragedy is that he returns as himself.

The imagined tomorrow cannot survive the
real today.

Last Minute Revision

Four keywords

Waiting: daily habit that protects and imprisons Hagar.

Recognition: the old man cannot recognise the son who stands near him.

Freedom: Harry chooses movement over settlement.

Pity: every main figure is damaged in a different way.

One sentence conclusion

Tomorrow is a story about the human need for hope and the pain caused when hope refuses fact.

In exam answers, balance sympathy with clear judgement.