



Collegedunia NCERT Solutions

Class 12 English NCERT Solutions Chapter 8: step-by-step answers, themes and exam tips for the 2026-27 NCERT (Latest Edition) keeping quiet ncert solution

Chapter 8: Flamingo Prose: Going Places

About this Chapter

A. R. Barton's **Going Places** is a short story set in a working-class English town and built around an adolescent girl, **Sophie**, whose head is full of glamorous futures, a boutique, a career as an actress, a fashion-designer life, and a private fantasy meeting with the Irish footballer **Danny Casey**. Through Sophie's conversations with her down-to-earth friend Jansie, her elder brother Geoff, her tired working-class father and the family's small home above the biscuit factory, Barton studies the gap between **adolescent daydreaming and adult reality**. By the end of the chapter the student will be able to describe Sophie's hero-worship of Danny Casey, contrast the family members who anchor or escape from the family's narrow economic world, read the canal scene as the moment when fantasy and hard fact collide, and place Barton's story in the wider theme of adolescent fantasising mapped onto film and sports icons.

Topics covered: Sophie's daydreams • The biscuit-factory town • Sophie vs Jansie • Brother Geoff: the silent escape route • The arcade "meeting" with Danny Casey • The Saturday United match • The canal scene under the solitary elm • Fantasy vs reality • Adolescent hero-worship

Quick Formula Sheet

Author:

A. R. Barton

Setting:

An English working-class town, Sophie's home, Royce's, the arcade, the canal

Form:

Short story, third-person narration that drifts into Sophie's voice

Central theme:

Adolescent hero-worship and fantasising vs working-class adult reality

Sub-theme:

Relationships within family and friendship

Comprehension type:

Inferential (much of the story is implied, not stated)

Also see for this chapter: [Revision Notes](#)

Think as you read (Set 1)

Q 8.1 Where was it most likely that the two girls would find work after school?

SOLUTION

Barton plants the answer almost casually in a single line: “Jansie, knowing they were both **earmarked for the biscuit factory**, became melancholy.” The biscuit factory is the town’s main local employer of school-leavers, and both Sophie and Jansie are expected to walk straight from the schoolroom into its assembly line.

- **The textual cue.** The story does not stage a careers conversation. Barton writes a half-sentence about Jansie’s mood and lets the reader pick up the social fact that lies underneath it. The phrase *earmarked for the biscuit factory* is doing the heavy lifting: in this town, working-class girls of Sophie and Jansie’s age are slotted into the local factory more or less automatically.
- **Why Jansie is melancholy.** Jansie has accepted this future. She is not happy about it, but she will not be embarrassed by it either. Her sadness is caused less by the prospect of the work and more by Sophie’s loud public fantasies, which Jansie knows will collapse and which will sting more, by contrast, once both of them are at the factory bench.
- **Why Sophie refuses it.** Sophie’s whole speech, the boutique, the manageress idea, Mary Quant, the actress, the fashion designer, is built to push the biscuit factory out of view. The factory is the un-named thing she will not say out loud. The reader is meant to feel that absence.

Read what is not said

Barton’s narration in this story works by implication: he tells the reader Jansie is “earmarked” and leaves the reader to picture the factory floor. Notice the technique. The questions in the chapter often ask about facts the narrator never states directly.

Final Answer: Both girls were most likely to be sent straight to the local **biscuit factory**, the town’s main employer of school-leavers; the text signals this through Jansie’s quiet melancholy at being “earmarked” for it, even as Sophie refuses to imagine it.

EXPERT’S SOLUTION : Aanya Iyer, M.A English Literature, Jadavpur University

Reading the social setting. Going Places is set in an unnamed English working-class neighbourhood where local children’s working futures are predictable enough to be talked about as “earmarked”. The biscuit factory is a stock feature of such 1970s-British

short-story settings: a large, low-skilled, low-paid employer that absorbs school-leavers en masse. Barton uses it as a piece of unspoken background rather than as a topic of discussion.

- **Track the contrast.** Sophie speaks; Jansie thinks. Sophie talks of boutiques, manageresses, Mary Quant, an actress's wages, a fashion-designer's life. Jansie's silent response ("melancholy") tells us how unlikely all of that is. The contrast between Sophie's vocabulary ("amazing", "natural", "most amazing shop") and Jansie's quiet sadness is the contrast between fantasy and probable future.
- **Sophie's father confirms it.** A few pages later he snaps that boutiques don't pay well for shop work and "your dad would never allow it". The family economy will not underwrite a shop on the high street. The biscuit factory line is therefore not just Jansie's anxiety; it is the family's settled assumption.
- **Exam framing.** If asked to answer this in 30 words, say: *both girls were expected to take jobs at the local biscuit factory after school, the standard working-class destination in their town.* If asked in 100 words, add Jansie's melancholy + the father's snap + Sophie's refusal to name the factory.

Final Answer: The two girls were most likely to be sent to work at **the local biscuit factory** after school: this is the town's standard destination for working-class school-leavers, it is what Jansie has quietly accepted, and it is the future Sophie's talk of boutiques and acting is built to push out of sight.

Q 8.2 What were the options that Sophie was dreaming of? Why does Jansie discourage her from having such dreams?

SOLUTION

Sophie's daydreaming runs through three or four separate futures, and Barton lays them out in quick succession on the very first page so the reader feels the speed at which her plans shift.

- **Option 1: a boutique.** Her opening line is, "When I leave, I'm going to have a boutique." She imagines being the owner of a small fashion shop, the kind a 1970s English teenager would have read about in glossy magazines.
- **Option 2: managing a fashion shop first.** When Jansie points out that buying a boutique needs money, Sophie shifts to managing one to begin with, "till I've got enough". She has already moved from owner to manager without changing the dream.
- **Option 3: becoming an actress.** When the manager idea gets brushed back too

(“They wouldn’t make you manager straight off, Soaf”), Sophie answers, “Or an actress. Now there’s real money in that.”

- **Option 4: a fashion designer.** She slips this in as the side note: “Actresses don’t work full time, do they? Anyway, that or a fashion designer, you know, something a bit sophisticated.” The word *sophisticated* is important: any of the four jobs would do, as long as it is not the biscuit factory.

Track Sophie’s verbs

Have a boutique. **Be** a manager. **Be** a natural at acting. **Be** a fashion designer. Sophie never uses the verb *work*. That absence is part of Barton’s characterisation: she is dreaming of identities, not of jobs.

Jansie discourages Sophie for two connected reasons. First, she has a sober grip on what is actually within reach: their families have no capital, no contacts and no track record in any of these glamorous fields. Boutiques need money; acting needs talent and breaks; fashion design needs training. Jansie has done the simple arithmetic Sophie refuses to do.

Second, Jansie is afraid Sophie will say all this out loud in their small neighbourhood, where everyone knows everyone, where her father is already irritated by such talk, and where loud public dreaming will be remembered and laughed at when she ends up at the biscuit factory anyway. Her line, “Soaf, you really should be sensible. They don’t pay well for shop work, you know that,” is half-warning, half-plea: keep these fantasies inside the house, don’t broadcast them.

Final Answer: Sophie was daydreaming about owning a **boutique**, managing a **fashion shop** until she had enough capital, becoming an **actress** (“real money in that”), or being a **fashion designer**, anything “a bit sophisticated”. Jansie discouraged her because the family had no money for shops, because manageresses are not appointed “straight off”, because Sophie’s father was openly opposed, and because loud public fantasising in their small neighbourhood would only invite mockery once both girls ended up at the biscuit factory.

EXPERT’S SOLUTION : Ishaan Mehta, M.A English, University of Hyderabad

Listing-plus-reasoning answer. The question has two halves and rewards a clear two-part structure: list the options first, then explain Jansie’s discouragement.

- **The four options, in order:** (i) own a boutique, (ii) manage a fashion shop, (iii) become an actress, (iv) be a fashion designer. They escalate from possible-but-unlikely (owning a small shop) to glamorous-and-unlikely (Hollywood-grade acting wages). Sophie steps up the ladder every time Jansie pushes back.
- **Jansie’s first reason: economic realism.** The girls belong to a family that cannot

fund a boutique. Sophie's own father confirms it within an hour. Capital is the invisible obstacle and Jansie has named it without saying the word.

- **Jansie's second reason: social embarrassment.** Their neighbourhood is small and gossip travels. If Sophie speaks publicly about acting and boutiques and then walks into the biscuit factory like everyone else, the contrast will not be forgotten. Jansie wants to spare her this.
- **Jansie's third reason: protection of friendship.** Loud daydreaming makes Jansie's own quiet acceptance of the biscuit factory look small. Sophie's fantasies are accidentally cruel to the friend listening to them.

Barton uses Jansie throughout as the realist counterweight to Sophie. She is the reader's reminder of what is actually likely. The skill of this paragraph is that Jansie is never preachy: her discouragement arrives as one melancholy face, one tug at Sophie's sleeve and one practical line about shop wages. The reader picks up the rest.

Final Answer: Sophie's options were (i) opening a boutique, (ii) managing one until she could afford to buy it, (iii) becoming an actress, and (iv) becoming a fashion designer. Jansie discouraged her on three grounds: the family had no money for shops, no one would appoint a teenager as a manageress, Sophie's father was opposed; loud public fantasising in their close neighbourhood would only invite mockery once Sophie joined her at the biscuit factory; and Jansie was trying to protect the friendship from the sting Sophie's dreams were unintentionally inflicting on her.

Think as you read (Set 2)

Q 8.3 Why did Sophie wriggle when Geoff told her father that she had met Danny Casey?

SOLUTION

Sophie's wriggle is a small physical detail, easy to miss, but Barton puts it in the scene to mark the precise moment her private fantasy becomes public property. She had told Geoff her "Danny Casey" story under the unspoken understanding that it would stay between brother and sister. Geoff's casual remark across the table breaks that pact.

- **What the secret was for.** Sophie's invented meeting with Danny Casey at the arcade was meant to be a piece of intimate confiding, the kind a younger sister offers an elder brother in the hope of being taken into his world. The currency of the moment was trust, not information.

- **What Geoff’s announcement does to it.** The minute he says, “Sophie met Danny Casey” in the father’s hearing, the story leaves the private register and enters the family-wide register. Sophie can no longer step back from it; the claim is now on the family table.
- **Why the father changes everything.** Sophie’s father is a man with a short fuse, no patience for “wild stories”, and a strong scepticism about his daughter’s flights of imagination. The moment the Danny Casey story is offered up to him, Sophie knows it will be questioned, ridiculed and, if the meeting is supposed to repeat “next week”, either policed or forbidden.
- **Why she wriggles, not protests.** A protest would confirm she had something to hide; silence is safer. The wriggle is the body’s compromise: discomfort that does not speak.

Body language as narration

Barton repeatedly uses small physical gestures, Sophie’s wriggle, her shake of the head, her glare at the ground later, in place of speech. When a reader can see the gesture, the writer does not need to spell out the emotion.

Final Answer: Sophie wriggled because Geoff’s announcement turned her private fantasy into a family-table claim. The story had been shared with him in confidence; once the father heard it, it would be cross-examined, ridiculed and possibly forbidden, all things Sophie wanted to avoid. The wriggle is her embarrassed, non-verbal admission that the secret had escaped before she was ready.

EXPERT’S SOLUTION : *Pranav Sharma, M.A English Literature, Delhi University*

Structural observation. The wriggle is a hinge moment. Before it, the Danny Casey story exists only in the private Sophie–Geoff space. After it, the story belongs to the father, Derek, eventually Jansie, and finally the whole neighbourhood. The single involuntary movement of Sophie’s body marks the door between two worlds.

- **Three discomforts collide.** The wriggle compresses (a) embarrassment at being exposed in front of her father, (b) anxiety at the cross-examination that is about to begin, and (c) a small thrill that the story is now being repeated out loud, which gives it a kind of unwelcome existence in the family record.
- **The father’s expression matters.** Barton notes that the father “turned his head on his thick neck to look at her. His expression was one of disdain”. That single sentence is what Sophie was wriggling away from. Disdain from her father is the worst possible reception for a fantasy she has not yet earned.
- **Setting matters too.** They are at a small kitchen table after the father’s working day. He is tired, suspicious of any new claim on his attention, and not in the mood to be charmed. Sophie’s instinct, that the moment is going to be bad, is correct.

Final Answer: Sophie wriggled because Geoff's blurted line broke the private contract she thought she had with him. The Danny Casey fantasy was meant for his ears alone; once her father heard it, she knew it would be sneered at as another wild story, dragged into the family argument, and possibly forbidden if she claimed to be meeting Casey again. The wriggle is her body's silent admission of being unwillingly exposed.

Q 8.4 Does Geoff believe what Sophie says about her meeting with Danny Casey?

SOLUTION

Geoff does not really believe Sophie, but he does not openly say so either. Barton arranges his responses in a careful order: surprise, short questioning, polite acceptance, then a dry verdict to the father. Each phase moves a little further from belief.

- **First reaction: surprise, not assent.** "Where?" is all he asks when Sophie says she met Danny Casey. The single word is alert and noncommittal: he wants more information before he decides whether to take her seriously.
- **Second reaction: the short test.** Once she answers "In the arcade, funnily enough", his quick reply is "It's never true." That line is not a casual exclamation; it is his honest first verdict, given quietly, between the two of them.
- **Third reaction: he humours her.** When Sophie insists, "I did too", he asks for a physical description of Casey ("All right, what does he look like?"). He is gently probing, half curious, half checking, but he stops short of accusing her of lying.
- **Fourth reaction: he reports the claim to the father.** "Sophie met Danny Casey," Geoff says across the room. His tone is light, almost a tease. He passes the claim along without endorsing it. The father reads it the way Geoff suspects it should be read.
- **The verdict line.** Later, in the bedroom, Sophie asks if her father believes her; Geoff replies, "He don't believe you, though he'd like to." That sentence is revealing in two ways: it explains the father, and by extension it explains Geoff himself: he too would like to believe it, but cannot.

📖 Read brothers carefully

Barton's Geoff is sympathetic without being credulous. He neither mocks Sophie nor confirms her. The tenderness of the brother relationship is that he protects her from the father's harshness while still privately keeping his own scepticism. That mixed posture is exactly what readers should pick up.

Final Answer: No: Geoff does not believe Sophie. His one-word “Where?”, his dry “It’s never true”, his fact-checking question about Casey’s appearance, his neutral reporting of the claim to the father, and his final verdict in the bedroom (“he’d like to” but “don’t believe you”) all point in the same direction. He humours her without endorsing the story, and his last sentence quietly admits he himself would have liked to believe it but cannot.

EXPERT’S SOLUTION : Vivaan Kapoor, M.A English Literature, JNU Delhi

Quick reading of Geoff’s responses. Barton spaces Geoff’s reactions across two scenes. A strong answer maps them onto a single arc: surprise, probe, humouring, neutral relay, dry verdict.

- **“Where?”** The one-word opener is a probe, not an endorsement. Geoff is asking the question of a man who has already smelled improbability.
- **“It’s never true.”** That line is the closest Geoff comes to direct disbelief. It is delivered in private, before anyone else hears the claim, which is the time and place a brother would speak honestly.
- **“All right, what does he look like?”** A cross-examination question disguised as casual interest. He is checking whether Sophie’s description matches the publicly known Casey she could have lifted from television and posters.
- **“Sophie met Danny Casey,” he tells the father.** He does not say *Sophie says she met Danny Casey*, which would mark his doubt openly; nor does he say *Sophie really met Danny Casey*, which would commit him. The bare statement allows the father to make up his own mind. That is a delicate piece of brotherly diplomacy.
- **“He don’t believe you, though he’d like to.”** Indirectly applied to the father, this is Geoff’s own position too. The line confesses, very gently, that Geoff would like to credit his sister, but cannot.

Final Answer: No, Geoff does not believe Sophie, although he handles his disbelief tactfully. His private “It’s never true” is the honest verdict; his probing about Casey’s appearance is a check; his neutral reporting of the claim to the father is delicate diplomacy that protects Sophie without endorsing the story; and his final line in the bedroom, “he’d like to” but “don’t believe you”, applies just as well to Geoff himself.

Q 8.5 Does her father believe her story?

SOLUTION

Sophie's father does not believe her. Barton makes this clear through a sequence of small responses rather than a single declaration. The father is a tired working-man with a low tolerance for "wild stories", and he reads Sophie's Danny Casey claim through the lens of years of similar fantasies.

- **The disdainful look.** When Geoff first says "Sophie met Danny Casey", the father "turned his head on his thick neck to look at her. His expression was one of disdain." Disdain, not curiosity, is his first reading of the claim.
- **The change of subject.** The father pivots away from Sophie's story almost immediately, into his own memories of having known a man who had known Tom Finney. He is not prepared to dwell on his daughter's claim long enough to examine it.
- **The warning.** When Sophie adds the detail that Casey is "going to buy a shop", her father grimaces and snaps, "This another of your wild stories?" That line, *another of your wild stories*, is the verdict. He is treating the Casey meeting as the latest in a long line of inventions.
- **The aggressive prophecy.** After hearing Geoff's retelling, the father warns, "One of these days you're going to talk yourself into a load of trouble." This is the warning a parent gives to a child whose stories he regards as a habit, not a one-off.
- **Geoff's diagnosis confirms it.** In the bedroom afterwards Geoff says of the father, "He don't believe you, though he'd like to." Geoff's reading is the narrator's confirmation: the father wishes the story were true but does not credit it.

🗨️ **"Wild stories" as a verdict**

The phrase "another of your wild stories" is one of the most important lines in the chapter. It tells the reader that Sophie has been daydreaming aloud for some time and that the family has collectively classified her stories as unreliable. The Danny Casey claim arrives into that frame.

Final Answer: No: Sophie's father does not believe her. His disdainful look, his quick change of subject to his own Tom-Finney memory, his grimace at the shop detail, his snap of "This another of your wild stories?", his aggressive warning that she will "talk yourself into a load of trouble", and Geoff's bedroom verdict that he "don't believe you, though he'd like to" together confirm that he reads the Danny Casey meeting as another of Sophie's daydreams.

EXPERT'S SOLUTION : Aanya Iyer, M.A English Literature, Jadavpur University

Picture-first reading. The father's body and tone do most of the disbelieving. Look at the gestures Barton chooses for him: turning his head on a "thick neck", sitting down "with a grunt", grimacing, dragging himself round in the chair, snapping. None of these is a small movement. The father is a heavy-bodied, tired man whose every gesture

carries the weight of a long working day.

- **The frame is set before the claim arrives.** The father has just washed off the day's grime, eaten his shepherd's pie, and switched on the television. He is in no mood for performance. The setting predisposes him against Sophie's story.
- **He retreats into his own past.** Rather than engage with the Casey claim, he tells a story about having known a man who knew Tom Finney. That move is a parent's way of taking the conversation back from the daughter. It also signals that he prefers his own modest brush-with-fame story to her grand new one.
- **He suspects a pattern.** The plural in "another of your wild stories" tells the reader that Sophie has a track record. The father is not judging this story alone; he is judging the pattern.
- **He fears the consequences.** His aggressive "you're going to talk yourself into a load of trouble" is protective in a rough working-class register: don't be seen talking nonsense in this neighbourhood, you will be laughed at. He is treating the story not as harmless but as risky.

Final Answer: The father does not believe Sophie. The disdainful look, the deflection into his own Tom-Finney memory, the grimace, the snap "this another of your wild stories?", the aggressive prophecy of trouble, and Geoff's bedroom verdict all line up to the same reading: he treats the Casey meeting as one more in Sophie's pattern of wild stories, and he is annoyed rather than amused by it.

Q 8.6 How does Sophie include her brother Geoff in her fantasy of her future?

SOLUTION

Sophie's fantasy is not only about herself. From the very first description of Geoff, Barton lets the reader see that Sophie wants her elder brother inside her dream future too, partly as guide, partly as companion, partly as audience.

- **She wants entry into his world first.** Sophie watches Geoff working on his motorcycle and reflects that he has "areas of his life about which she knew nothing". She is jealous of his silence. She longs to be "admitted more deeply into her brother's affections" and to be taken with him into the unknown places he travels to.
- **She imagines riding behind him.** The fantasy is cinematic: "She saw herself riding there behind Geoff. He wore new, shining black leathers and she a yellow dress with a kind of cape that flew out behind. There was the sound of applause as the world rose to greet them." She casts her brother as the romantic male lead and herself as the glamorous passenger, complete with applause from a watching crowd.

- **She uses him as the first audience for her Danny Casey story.** Within the same evening she chooses Geoff, not Jansie, not her parents, as the first person to be told about the arcade meeting. Geoff is the brother whose approval would validate the secret.
- **She wants him to keep the date detail private.** She begs him to promise silence about the planned second meeting (“Promise, Geoff: Dad’d murder me”). She is including him as a co-conspirator, not just a confidant. The fantasy needs an accomplice and Geoff is it.
- **She measures family loyalty by his secrecy.** When she later realises that Geoff did not tell Jansie about the date, she “believed in him after all. After all some things might be sacred.” Geoff’s silence is, for Sophie, proof that some part of her interior life is being respected. The fantasy survives one more day because he held it for her.

The brother as escape route

For Sophie, Geoff is the family member who has already gone “somewhere else” (the apprentice mechanic crossing the city for work, the older one with private spaces). Including him in her fantasy is a way of telling herself she too could one day cross that threshold.

Final Answer: Sophie includes Geoff by (i) longing to be admitted into his silent inner world, (ii) imagining herself riding pillion behind him in shining black leathers and a flowing yellow cape, applauded by the crowd, (iii) choosing him as the first audience for her Danny Casey story, (iv) recruiting him as the co-conspirator who must keep the planned arcade meeting secret from their father, and (v) reading his eventual silence to Jansie as proof that “some things might be sacred”. Geoff is at once guide, companion, audience and accomplice in the fantasy.

EXPERT’S SOLUTION : *Ishaan Mehta, M.A English, University of Hyderabad*

Building the answer in two halves. The first half should list the textual moments where Geoff appears inside Sophie’s fantasy; the second should explain what each appearance is doing psychologically. Examiners reward both.

- **Moment 1: longing to be inside his silence.** “He said little at all, ever, voluntarily. Words had to be prized out of him.” Sophie envies that interior world and wants entry to it. That envy is the first sign that her fantasies are not solo dreams; they need Geoff as a portal.
- **Moment 2: the motorcycle pillion image.** The “shining black leathers” / “yellow dress with a kind of cape” / “sound of applause” image is the most concrete fantasy she allows herself. She places herself behind, not beside, Geoff, which is significant: she is willing to be the passenger if it means being taken out of the biscuit-factory

world.

- **Moment 3: confiding the Casey story to him first.** Geoff is chosen as the keeper of her best invention. To confide is to include.
- **Moment 4: asking him to keep the date secret.** The future appointment with Casey can survive only if Geoff does not tell. Recruiting him as accomplice extends the fantasy across the next week.
- **Moment 5: reading his loyalty as sacred.** Once she learns he kept the date detail from Jansie, she upgrades the brother–sister bond inside her own head: “some things might be sacred”. The fantasy now has a small confirmed alliance.

The pattern across the five moments is consistent. Sophie wants Geoff inside her fantasy because she cannot escape the family on her own; he is the elder, the silent one, the one with the world outside. Including him gives the fantasy plausibility, witness and continuity.

Final Answer: Sophie includes Geoff by (i) envying his silent inner world and longing to be admitted into it; (ii) casting him as the black-leather-clad rider in her motorcycle pillion vision while she wears a yellow caped dress to public applause; (iii) choosing him as the first listener for the Danny Casey story; (iv) recruiting him as the secret-keeper for the future “arcade” meeting; and (v) interpreting his loyalty (not telling Jansie) as sacred proof that the brother–sister bond can hold her fantasy together.

Q 8.7 Which country did Danny Casey play for?

SOLUTION

Danny Casey played for **Ireland**. Barton scatters several small markers across the chapter that make this unmissable.

- **Direct narrator label.** When Geoff’s bedroom poster is described, Casey is named explicitly as “the young Irish prodigy”. The narrator settles the question early and in plain English.
- **Sophie’s recognition of his accent.** In her imagined arcade meeting, Sophie “knew it must be him because he had the accent, you know, like when they interviewed him on the television.” The accent is one of the chapter’s quiet identifiers: Casey’s voice on TV is Irish.
- **Casey’s home region.** The same passage adds, “After all, it’s a long way from the west of Ireland.” That is the part of the country Casey is from, and it explains why Sophie feels he might be “lonely” in an English city.

- **Little Derek’s World Cup line.** After the United match, Derek tells his mother, “Ireland’ll win the World Cup.” He is talking about Casey’s national team. A child in the family knows that Casey plays for Ireland; the line is offered as casual proof.
- **The bus-line lament.** “I wish he was an Englishman,” someone says on the bus home. The wish makes sense only if Casey is not English. Barton uses the line as one more passing confirmation.

The Irish football context

In late-1960s and 1970s English football, several young Irish players were welcomed at top English clubs but played their international matches for Ireland. The narrator’s repeated stress on Casey’s “Irish” identity ties the story to that real-world context, and explains why Sophie’s English working-class town would treat him as both a local hero and a foreign one.

Final Answer: Danny Casey played for **Ireland**. The text labels him “the young Irish prodigy”, Sophie recognises his Irish television accent, Barton notes it is “a long way from the west of Ireland”, little Derek says “Ireland’ll win the World Cup”, and a fan on the bus wishes Casey “was an Englishman”, all pointing to the same national team.

EXPERT’S SOLUTION : Pranav Sharma, M.A English Literature, Delhi University

Quick-fact answer with textual evidence. For a one-mark exam question the answer is simply *Ireland*. For a 30–40 word answer, name the country and quote one supporting line. For an 80-word answer, give all five textual cues so the reader sees the chapter’s pattern.

- **Why Barton repeats the Irish marker.** The chapter is set in an English working-class town, but the chosen hero is foreign. That choice matters: Sophie is dreaming of someone who is local enough to be on her television every week, yet foreign enough to be exotic. “Irish” is the precise distance she wants.
- **The narrator’s word is final.** “The young Irish prodigy” is the narrator’s own description, not a character’s claim. That settles the question for any examiner.
- **Avoid two common errors.** Some students answer *England* (because the story is set there) or *United* (a club, not a country). Casey plays for an English club (United) but for the Ireland national team. The exam question asks about country.

Final Answer: Ireland. He is labelled by the narrator as “the young Irish prodigy”, Sophie identifies his Irish television accent, the text mentions “the west of Ireland” as a long way away, little Derek predicts “Ireland’ll win the World Cup”, and a bus-line fan wishes Casey were “an Englishman”. He plays his club football for United and his international football for Ireland.

Think as you read (Set 3)

Q 8.8 Why didn’t Sophie want Jansie to know about her story with Danny?

SOLUTION

Sophie keeps Jansie out of the Danny Casey story for several connected reasons. The text makes them visible in one short paragraph that begins “Sophie glared at the ground” and runs for half a page.

- **The story was meant to be a Sophie–Geoff thing.** Sophie thinks of it as “a Geoff thing not a Jansie thing at all”. The fantasy was built for an elder brother’s ear, with all the trust and confidentiality that implied. Letting Jansie in would change the register of the story and dilute the intimacy.
- **Jansie is gossipy.** The chapter makes Jansie affectionate but “nosey”. Sophie says, “Tell gawky Jansie something like that and the whole neighbourhood would get to know it. Damn that Geoff, was nothing sacred?” The neighbourhood, not Jansie alone, is the risk.
- **Public knowledge would reach her father.** If the story spreads in the neighbourhood, it will be repeated outside the front door and her father will hear it second-hand, which Sophie knows would mean a “right old row”. Her line “Dad’d murder me” is half-joking, half- real, and it is the line she uses with Geoff too.
- **The fantasy is fragile.** A story like this lives only as long as no one outside the family pokes at it. Jansie’s curiosity, her “what’s all this about Danny Casey?” opener, is the kind of poke that could collapse the story. Sophie wants to preserve the fantasy a little longer.
- **Sophie does not want pity.** If Jansie hears the full story (the planned meeting, the autograph, the hope), and Casey does not turn up at the canal, Jansie will know. Sophie protects herself from a future humiliation in front of her closest friend.

☞ “Some things might be sacred”

Sophie’s phrase later in the same paragraph (“some things might be sacred”) is doing two jobs. It tells the reader why she values Geoff’s discretion, and it tells the reader why Jansie is a wrong fit for the story: Jansie respects friendship, but she does not respect secrets.

Final Answer: Sophie did not want Jansie to know because the Danny Casey fantasy had been built as a private Sophie–Geoff secret; because Jansie is gossipy enough to spread it across the small neighbourhood; because spread news would reach her short-tempered father and trigger “a right old row”; because the fantasy is fragile and would collapse under outside questioning; and because Sophie did not want to risk being pitied by her closest friend if Casey failed to turn up at the canal.

EXPERT’S SOLUTION : *Vivaan Kapoor, M.A English Literature, JNU Delhi*

Reading the friendship. Sophie and Jansie are best friends of necessity rather than choice. They are classmates, neighbours, soon-to-be biscuit-factory workmates. They share the everyday register, but not the fantasy register. Sophie’s secrets need a different listener.

- **Two registers.** Jansie is the register of “sensible”. She uses words like “sensible”, “shop work”, “don’t pay well”. Sophie’s Danny Casey story belongs to the register of glamour: amber-glow bedroom walls, accents from the west of Ireland, autographs. The two registers don’t translate cleanly.
- **Jansie as carrier, not confidant.** Sophie’s instinct is correct. If Jansie hears the story, she will not keep it; she will carry it home to her brother Frank, and Frank will repeat it. The chapter has already shown the spread starting (“Your Geoff told our Frank you met Danny Casey”).
- **The father risk.** A neighbourhood that hears the story will repeat it outside Sophie’s front door. The father, already disposed to disdain, will treat the spread as further proof of his daughter’s wild-story habit. Sophie wants to spare herself that.
- **Self-protection from collapse.** The fantasy needs a quiet space to grow. Once Jansie pokes it (“you can trust me, Soaf”), Sophie has to start managing it. She downgrades the story to “a little thing” to deflect Jansie’s interest, then closes the conversation.

Final Answer: Sophie kept Jansie out because the Danny Casey story was meant to be a private Sophie–Geoff secret, because Jansie was a known gossip whose news would travel across the neighbourhood and reach Sophie’s father (already disposed to disdain), because the fantasy was fragile and would collapse under outside curiosity, and because Sophie did not want to be pitied by her closest friend if the planned meeting failed.

Q 8.9 Did Sophie really meet Danny Casey?

SOLUTION

No: Sophie did not really meet Danny Casey. Barton builds the question so that every adult reader can see this is a fantasy, while keeping the words sympathetic enough that Sophie’s interior life never collapses into mere lying. The evidence for “no” is layered across the chapter.

- **No one in the family believes her.** Geoff says “It’s never true” on first hearing. The father says “this another of your wild stories?” and warns her about “a load of trouble”. The mother is silent. The youngest, Derek, says “She thinks money grows on trees”. The whole family reads the claim the same way.
- **The pattern of “wild stories”.** The father’s plural is the clue. Sophie has a history of inventions. The Casey meeting fits that pattern.
- **The canal scene exposes the fantasy.** On the evening of the supposed second meeting, Sophie sits alone under the solitary elm and waits. Barton makes the prose slow and inner: “Here I sit, she said to herself, wishing Danny would come, wishing he would come and sensing the time passing.” The waiting is presented as the experience of someone who already half-knows the meeting will not happen. The line “I feel the pangs of doubt stirring inside me” is the writer telling us the fantasy is cracking.
- **The arrival is replayed in her head, not in fact.** After waiting, Sophie does not record Casey turning up. Instead, “Coming through the arcade she pictured him again outside Royce’s. He turns, reddening slightly. ‘Yes, that’s right.’” The scene she now re-runs is the *original* “meeting”, and Barton’s prose narrates it in the second person (“You realise you haven’t either”). This is interior re-enactment, not real encounter.
- **The closing image confirms it.** The chapter ends not with Casey appearing but with Sophie remembering Saturday’s stadium goal (“saw him ghost past the lumbering defenders”). She is back where her access to Casey actually lies: as a spectator in a crowd. The fantasy of personal meeting is allowed to remain inside her head.

🔍 Why the answer matters

The story's central theme, adolescent fantasising and hero-worship, depends on the meeting being imagined. If Sophie had really met Casey, the chapter would be an anecdote, not a study of the daydreaming mind. Barton's whole craft pushes the reader to the soft "no".

Final Answer: No, Sophie did not really meet Danny Casey. The family's unanimous disbelief, the father's verdict that it is "another of your wild stories", the slow inner monologue at the canal that already half-anticipates his not coming, the second-person re-enactment of the "original" arcade meeting that follows the failed wait, and the chapter's closing image of Casey as a distant stadium figure all together confirm that the meeting lives only inside Sophie's imagination.

EXPERT'S SOLUTION : Aanya Iyer, M.A English Literature, Jadavpur University

Picture-first reading of the canal scene. The clearest evidence is structural. Barton arranges the chapter so that the "meeting" is talked about in conversation; the second meeting is arranged in conversation; the canal scene is then a long interior monologue; and the supposed encounter is replayed in Sophie's head in the second person. That sequence is not how a real encounter is narrated.

- **Listen to the inner monologue.** The middle paragraphs at the canal are pure interiority. "Now I have become sad, she thought." "It is a hard thing to carry, this sadness." "I shall tell myself, 'Danny and me.'" A real meeting would not need this much self-talk. The interior monologue is doing the work the encounter cannot.
- **Notice the slip into second person.** "His eyes are on the same level as your own. His nose is freckled and turns upwards slightly..." Barton has switched out of third-person narration and into something closer to a guided fantasy. Real encounters are told in past tense; this is told in a tense and pronoun system that belongs to daydreaming.
- **The fan-text details.** "You let his eyes run over you a little. And then you come back to find them, slightly breathless." That is the cadence of an imagined romantic meeting, not the recall of a real one.
- **The closing return to the stadium.** The chapter does not end with Casey saying anything to Sophie. It ends with the stadium goal, the place where she actually saw him. Barton resets the reader to Sophie's real, public relationship with the player.

Final Answer: No: Sophie did not really meet Danny Casey. The family's collective disbelief, the father's "wild stories" verdict, the long interior monologue at the canal that already anticipates his not coming, the slip into a second-person dream-tense replay of the "original" arcade meeting, and the chapter's return to the stadium goal as her real access to Casey all confirm that the meeting exists only inside her head.

Q 8.10 Which was the only occasion when she got to see Danny Casey in person?

SOLUTION

The only occasion when Sophie actually saw Danny Casey in person was the **Saturday United match** at the stadium. Barton describes the match in one tightly written paragraph that comes after the family quarrel and before the canal scene.

- **The weekly ritual.** "On Saturday they made their weekly pilgrimage to watch United." The word *pilgrimage* is doing two jobs: it tells the reader that the family attends every week, and it elevates the match into the family's main shared occasion.
- **The seating arrangement.** "Sophie and her father and little Derek went down near the goal: Geoff, as always, went with his mates higher up." The whole family attends; Sophie watches from the goal-end with her father and brother.
- **The goal.** "United won two-nil and Casey drove in the second goal, a blend of innocence and Irish genius, going round the two big defenders on the edge of the penalty area, with her father screaming for him to pass, and beating the hesitant goalkeeper from a dozen yards." This is the only time in the chapter when Casey is physically present in the same space as Sophie.
- **Sophie's response.** "Sophie glowed with pride. Afterwards Geoff was ecstatic." Her experience of Casey in person is the experience of a stadium fan: distant, ecstatic, communal.
- **The closing line that recalls it.** At the very end of the chapter, the narration returns to this same goal: "She saw it all again, last Saturday, saw him ghost past the lumbering defenders, heard the fifty thousand catch their breath as he hovered momentarily over the ball, and then the explosion of sound as he struck it crisply into the goal." Barton uses this image as Sophie's true, physical access to Casey, the only one she has.

Distance vs intimacy

The story sets up two kinds of access to Casey. One is real and distant: the Saturday match, watched from the goal end with fifty thousand other people. The other is imagined and intimate: the arcade meeting, the proposed canal date. Barton's craft is to let the second feed off the first.

Final Answer: The only occasion when Sophie saw Danny Casey in person was the **Saturday United match**, where she sat near the goal with her father and little Derek (with Geoff higher up with his mates), and watched United win two-nil; Casey scored the second goal, going round two defenders and beating the goalkeeper from a dozen yards. The chapter returns to this stadium moment as Sophie's only real, physical access to her hero.

EXPERT'S SOLUTION : Ishaan Mehta, M.A English, University of Hyderabad

Strategic angle. Examiners often pair this question with “did she really meet Danny Casey?”. The two answers are designed to land together: *no, the personal meeting was imagined; yes, the stadium sighting was real*. A strong answer makes the contrast explicit.

- **Single textual moment.** The whole paragraph beginning “On Saturday they made their weekly pilgrimage to watch United” is the source. Quote one or two key phrases (“weekly pilgrimage”, “a blend of innocence and Irish genius”, “Sophie glowed with pride”) to anchor the answer.
- **Casey's role.** He scores the second goal of a two-nil United win. Barton's phrase “going round the two big defenders on the edge of the penalty area” captures the moment specifically.
- **Sophie's experience.** She does not speak to him. She does not get his autograph. She watches from the goal-end stand with her family. “Glowed with pride” is the chapter's exact description of her response.
- **The story's reuse of the moment.** The very last paragraph of the chapter is Sophie replaying this same goal in her head as she walks home from the failed canal meeting. Barton uses the real sighting as Sophie's consolation prize for the imagined meeting.

Final Answer: Sophie saw Danny Casey in person only once: at the **Saturday United match**, where the whole family went on their “weekly pilgrimage” (she and her father and Derek near the goal, Geoff with his mates higher up). United won two-nil; Casey scored the second goal by going round two defenders and beating the goalkeeper from a dozen yards. Sophie “glowed with pride” from the stand. The chapter’s closing paragraph replays this same goal as her only real, physical access to her hero.

Understanding the text

Q 8.11 Sophie and Jansie were class-mates and friends. What were the differences between them that show up in the story?

SOLUTION

Sophie and Jansie are written almost as opposites who share a postcode and a desk at school. Barton uses their differences as the chapter’s quietest engine: every dream Sophie launches lands on Jansie’s realism, and the difference between the two girls becomes a way of measuring how far Sophie’s daydreams travel from her town’s actual possibilities.

- **Imagination vs realism.** Sophie’s first response to the future is a boutique, then an actress’s career, then a fashion-designer life. Jansie’s first response is, “Soaf, you really should be sensible. They don’t pay well for shop work, you know that.” Sophie reaches; Jansie budgets.
- **Talker vs listener.** Sophie monopolises the opening conversation; Jansie “linking arms with her along the street, looked doubtful”. Jansie’s response is a face, not a sentence. The asymmetry persists through the chapter.
- **Acceptance vs refusal of the biscuit factory.** Jansie has accepted that both girls are “earmarked for the biscuit factory”. Sophie refuses to even name it. The same shared fate is read by the two friends in opposite ways.
- **Private vs public.** Sophie keeps her best material (the Danny Casey story) for her brother. Jansie’s instinct is the opposite: when she gets a fragment of the story, she comes asking for more (“Your Geoff told our Frank you met Danny Casey”). Jansie’s social world is leaky; Sophie wants to keep hers sealed.
- **Social class within the same class.** Both belong to the working-class neighbourhood, yet Sophie carries herself as if she were preparing to leave it (Mary Quant comparisons, “the most amazing shop this city’s ever seen”). Jansie carries herself as if she has already accepted that she will not. The same economic floor produces two

different aspirational ceilings.

- **Tone of friendship.** Sophie's affection for Jansie runs through irritation ("Damn that Geoff", "Tell gawky Jansie"). Jansie's affection for Sophie runs through worry (the melancholy face, the warning about shop wages). The friendship is real; the temperaments are not matched.

📖 Why Barton needs both

A story about Sophie alone would risk reading as silly. A story about Jansie alone would risk reading as flat. Putting the two side by side lets Barton hold his sympathy steady: he can be fond of Sophie's reach and respectful of Jansie's grip.

Final Answer: Sophie is imaginative, ambitious, articulate and secretive; Jansie is realistic, sensible, watchful and gossipy. Sophie refuses the biscuit factory and chases boutiques, acting and fashion design; Jansie has accepted the factory and worries about shop wages. Sophie keeps her best stories for Geoff; Jansie tries to chase them down. Sophie carries herself as if she will leave the neighbourhood; Jansie carries herself as if she will not. Their friendship survives on Jansie's patience and Sophie's tolerated fondness.

EXPERT'S SOLUTION : Vivaan Kapoor, M.A English Literature, JNU Delhi

Strategic angle. Treat this as a six-pair contrast question. The strongest answers list the contrasts on a labelled grid (one trait of Sophie, one trait of Jansie, one textual cue), then add a closing sentence about what the contrasts add up to.

- **Imagination vs realism.** Sophie speaks of Mary Quant; Jansie of shop wages. The same conversation; two completely different vocabularies.
- **Talkative vs reticent.** Sophie controls the dialogue on the way home from school. Jansie's most eloquent contribution is a melancholy face.
- **Refusing vs accepting the biscuit factory.** Sophie's whole plan is built to push the factory out of view. Jansie sits inside the fact, eyes open.
- **Secretive vs gossipy.** Sophie protects the Casey story from Jansie because it would not stay protected; Jansie tracks gossip across the neighbourhood through her brother Frank.
- **Aspirational vs practical.** Sophie's ceiling is a "most amazing shop"; Jansie's is wages that "don't pay well".
- **Affection through irritation vs affection through worry.** Sophie tolerates Jansie's company even when it bores her; Jansie endures Sophie's flights even when they sting.

The cumulative effect is structural: Jansie is the chapter's gravitational counterweight.

Without her, Sophie's daydreams have nothing to push against. With her, the story has a steady internal contrast, the only contrast Sophie's town can offer her, between a future imagined out loud and a future quietly endured.

Final Answer: Sophie is imaginative, talkative, ambitious, secretive and aspirational; Jansie is realistic, reticent, accepting, gossipy and practical. Sophie chases boutiques, actress wages and Mary-Quant-style fashion; Jansie cites shop wages and the biscuit factory. Sophie keeps her Casey story from Jansie because Jansie would spread it; Jansie tracks the same story across the neighbourhood through her brother Frank. The friendship survives on Jansie's patience and Sophie's tolerated fondness.

Q 8.12 How would you describe the character and temperament of Sophie's father?

SOLUTION

Barton sketches Sophie's father quickly but precisely. The reader sees him for the first time scooping shepherd's pie into his mouth, "his plump face still grimy and sweat-marked from the day". Almost every later detail builds on that opening picture: a tired, heavy-bodied, short-tempered working-man whose patience for daydreams is thin.

- **A working-class breadwinner.** The first physical image of him, plump-faced, grimy, sweat-marked, eating fast at the end of his shift, places him on the manual-labour end of the town's economic ladder. His whole presence in the family kitchen is the presence of a man who has just put in a long day.
- **Heavy-bodied and physically dominant.** Barton repeatedly describes his body in solid, immobile terms: "his thick neck", "sat down with a grunt", "dragged himself round in his chair", "shiny and pink and he smelled of soap" after his evening wash. The body is always in view because it is also the family's anchor.
- **Sceptical and short-fused.** His instinctive responses are disdainful (the look across the table when Geoff mentions Casey), dismissive (the change of subject to his own Tom Finney memory), and abrupt ("This another of your wild stories?"). He is not given the patience to weigh Sophie's claim before reacting.
- **Protective in a rough register.** His warning, "one of these days you're going to talk yourself into a load of trouble", is delivered "aggressively", but the substance of it is parental: stop spreading stories the neighbourhood will hold against you. His protection arrives as scolding because that is the only register he has for it.
- **Football-loving and pub-going.** On Saturday he is "down near the goal" with Sophie and Derek, screaming for Casey to pass. Afterwards, when United have won, he is "gone to the pub to celebrate". Football is one of the few places his pleasure shows

freely.

- **Nostalgic but unsentimental.** He answers Casey with Tom Finney (“I once knew a man who had known Tom Finney. . . but that was a long time ago”). The memory is offered as casual, not boastful. It tells the reader his football affection has a long backstory but his emotional vocabulary is small.
- **Half-believing.** The most generous reading of him is Geoff’s bedroom line: “He don’t believe you, though he’d like to.” The father wishes the Casey meeting were true. He just cannot allow himself to believe it.

A father as a wall

For Sophie, her father is the wall her fantasies hit. Not a cruel wall, not a malicious one, just a wall: tired, immovable, made of the working day. The wall is also, in its way, what holds the family up.

Final Answer: Sophie’s father is a working-class manual labourer who arrives home tired, grimy and sweat-marked from a long day; heavy-bodied (“thick neck”, “sat down with a grunt”), short-tempered and disdainful of his daughter’s “wild stories”; protective in a rough scolding register that warns her she will “talk yourself into a load of trouble”; a Saturday-football devotee who shouts at the goal-end and celebrates United wins at the pub; nostalgically attached to old footballers like Tom Finney but without sentimental language; and, in Geoff’s verdict, a man who “don’t believe” Sophie’s Casey story “though he’d like to”.

EXPERT’S SOLUTION : *Pranav Sharma, M.A English Literature, Delhi University*

Strategic angle. The strongest character-sketch answers use one trait per paragraph or per bullet, each tied to a single specific moment in the text. Avoid abstract adjectives unattached to scenes.

- **Physically dominant.** Three specific moments (“thick neck”, “sat down with a grunt”, “dragged himself round in his chair”) give the reader a body that takes up space. Barton wants his physicality to feel immovable so Sophie’s daydreams can be measured against it.
- **Short-fused.** The grimace when Sophie mentions Casey’s shop, the snap of “This another of your wild stories?”, and the aggressive “you’re going to talk yourself into a load of trouble” are three separate flares of temper from the same dinner-table scene.
- **Sceptical from experience.** The plural in “wild stories” signals a long track record of Sophie’s inventions. He is not judging this story alone; he is judging a pattern.
- **Football-loving.** His Saturday match-going, goal-end screaming and post-win pub visit set out the narrow channel through which his pleasure flows.

- **Nostalgic.** The Tom Finney recollection is the chapter's one small window into his interior life. He is not without an inner world; he is without a vocabulary for it.
- **Quietly affectionate.** Geoff's "he'd like to" line is critical. The father is not cold; he is just unable to believe. The reader is meant to feel the latent tenderness even as the surface stays harsh.

The composite that emerges is a recognisably 1970s English working-class father: tired, physically dominant, sceptical of fancies, defensive about the family's good name in the neighbourhood, devoted to his football team, and unable to articulate the affection Geoff's line reveals he still feels.

Final Answer: The father is a tired, heavy-bodied, working-class breadwinner with grimy sweat-marked hands at the end of the shift; he is short-fused and dismissive of Sophie's fantasies ("this another of your wild stories?"), protective in a scolding register that warns her she will "talk yourself into a load of trouble", devoted to football (Saturday goal-end screaming, post-win pub visit), nostalgic about earlier players like Tom Finney, and, beneath the surface, a man Geoff describes as someone who "don't believe" the story "though he'd like to".

Q 8.13 Why did Sophie like her brother Geoff more than any other person? From her perspective, what did he symbolise?

SOLUTION

Geoff is the only family member Sophie idealises. Barton signals her preference quickly: she goes "to look for her brother Geoff" straight after her uncomfortable look at her mother's stooped back and the cluttered kitchen. The reader is meant to feel that Geoff is Sophie's refuge inside the house. From her perspective, he stands for several things at once.

- **The world outside the family.** Geoff is an apprentice mechanic "travelling to his work each day to the far side of the city". He is the family member who leaves the neighbourhood every morning and comes back at night with experiences Sophie does not share. He symbolises the world that lies beyond the small working-class town.
- **Silence with depth.** "He said little at all, ever, voluntarily. Words had to be prized out of him." For Sophie this silence is mysterious, not boring. She is "jealous of his silence" because she suspects it contains "areas of his life about which she knew nothing". He symbolises an interior life large enough to be worth envy.
- **Adulthood arriving.** Barton notes that "he was almost grown up now". Geoff stands at the threshold Sophie is still walking towards. He is what she imagines she will become if she escapes the biscuit-factory script.

- **Tenderness without judgement.** Geoff humours Sophie's Casey story when the father would have crushed it. He probes ("It's never true") but does not denounce. He keeps her date-detail secret. He is the safe listener, and in a household where the father is harsh, that safety is precious. He symbolises the protective masculinity she cannot get from her father.
- **A possible companion in escape.** The motorcycle fantasy ("She saw herself riding there behind Geoff") casts him as her vehicle out of the town. He symbolises, in her head, the route out.
- **Imagined access to "those places she had never been".** The narrator generalises Sophie's longing: "She wished she could be admitted more deeply into her brother's affections and that someday he might take her with him." He is the door, and behind the door is the wider world she has not seen.

Sibling as symbol

In adolescent fiction an elder sibling often carries the symbolic weight of the protagonist's possible future self. Barton uses Geoff in exactly this way: he is the brother in the next room, and the next room is also the next phase of life Sophie wants to reach.

Final Answer: Sophie liked Geoff most because he was tender without being judgemental, kept her secrets, and humoured her best inventions where her father would have crushed them. From her perspective, he symbolised the world outside the family and the town (his apprentice job took him "to the far side of the city"), a deep interior life worth envying (his silences with "areas of his life about which she knew nothing"), the adulthood she was reaching for, the protective masculinity her own father did not offer her, and, in her motorcycle pillion fantasy, the route out of the biscuit-factory neighbourhood.

EXPERT'S SOLUTION : *Aanya Iyer, M.A English Literature, Jadavpur University*

Strategic angle. The question asks both why she likes him and what he symbolises. A strong answer separates the two: preference first, symbolism second.

- **Preference: he is the only safe listener.** The father snaps; the mother sighs; Derek mocks ("She thinks money grows on trees"); Jansie would gossip. Only Geoff listens without denouncing. In a small noisy house that is a major resource.
- **Symbolism 1: the wider world.** His daily commute across the city marks him as the family's only regular traveller. For Sophie, who never crosses the neighbourhood, his journey is itself a piece of the outside world arriving at home each night.
- **Symbolism 2: depth behind silence.** His refusal to chatter is read by Sophie as proof of an inner life. The reader is invited to consider that the silence might actually be the silence of a tired young man at the end of a long day, but for Sophie it

functions as a sign of something rich.

- **Symbolism 3: adulthood.** “Almost grown up now.” Geoff is the version of life Sophie is rehearsing for.
- **Symbolism 4: the escape route.** The pillion motorcycle scene casts Geoff as her transport out of the town. The romance of the image (yellow dress, applause) is the romance of being taken away.
- **Symbolism 5: the protective male figure her father is not.** Geoff handles her stories with diplomacy instead of contempt. In doing so he supplies a kind of attention the household otherwise lacks.

Final Answer: Sophie liked Geoff most because he was the only family member who listened to her without denouncing: he humoured her Casey story, kept her secret about the planned canal meeting, and offered her the protective male attention her father did not. From her perspective he symbolised (i) the world outside the family and the town, (ii) an interior life worth envying, (iii) the adulthood she was reaching for, (iv) the protective masculinity her father did not give her, and (v) the route out of the biscuit-factory neighbourhood, embodied in the motorcycle pillion fantasy.

Q 8.14 What socio-economic background did Sophie belong to? What are the indicators of her family’s financial status?

SOLUTION

Sophie belongs to a **working-class English household** of the 1970s in a small industrial town. Barton never states this in a single sentence; instead, he distributes the indicators across the chapter so that the social class emerges as a felt fact rather than as a label.

- **The school-leavers’ destination.** Both Sophie and Jansie are “earmarked for the biscuit factory” after school. The local large employer is a factory; the expected work is line-work or packing. That single sentence places the family on the wage-earning side of the town.
- **The father’s job and appearance.** He arrives home with his “plump face still grimy and sweat-marked from the day”. He bathes after work, wears a vest at the kitchen table, switches the television on with a grunt and goes to the pub on a Saturday after United wins. Manual labour during the week; football and pub at the weekend.
- **The mother’s domestic labour.** The mother is introduced through her “back stooped over the sink” and the “delicate-seeming bow which fastened her apron strings”. She is reduced to her domestic role; she sighs but does not speak. The household has no

second income.

- **The small, crowded kitchen.** “The evening had already blacked in the windows and the small room was steamy from the stove and cluttered with the heavy-breathing man in his vest at the table and the dirty washing piled up in the corner.” The room is small, steamy, crowded, with laundry piled up.
- **The cheap food.** The father is eating “shepherd’s pie” for dinner: a working-class English staple of mince and mashed potato.
- **No spare money for shops.** Sophie’s father snaps that “they don’t pay well for shop work, you know that, your dad would never allow it”. There is no spare capital to fund Sophie’s boutique idea; the father has already done the arithmetic.
- **Geoff’s apprenticeship.** The elder son is an apprentice mechanic. Apprenticeships are paid less than full wages; they signal that the family expects its sons to work with their hands.
- **Sophie’s clothes and Royce’s window-shopping.** She looks “at the clothes in Royce’s window” but does not enter; she has no money. Her relationship to fashion is aspirational, not consumer.
- **Public-transport pilgrimages.** “On the bus” on the way home from the United match, “someone said, I wish he was an Englishman.” Bus travel after football is the family’s standard transport pattern.
- **The mother’s irritated reply.** “If you ever come into money you’ll buy us a blessed decent house to live in, thank you very much.” The line says, in passing, that the present house is not regarded as decent enough.

Reading social class through detail

Barton’s technique is to never label the class directly. The biscuit factory, the shepherd’s pie, the grimy face, the dirty washing in the corner, the bus home, the father’s snap about shop wages: each is a small piece of social signage. The student is expected to add them up.

Final Answer: Sophie belongs to a **working-class English household** in a small industrial town in the 1970s. The indicators are the biscuit-factory destination for school-leavers, the father’s grimy sweat-marked hands at the end of his day, his vest, his shepherd-pie dinner and his pub habits; the stooped mother in an apron with no second income; the small steamy kitchen with dirty washing piled up; the explicit line that “they don’t pay well for shop work” and the father would not allow it; the elder brother’s apprenticeship; Sophie’s window-shopping (not purchasing) at Royce’s; the bus journeys after football; and the mother’s wish for “a blessed decent house” to live in.

EXPERT'S SOLUTION : Ishaan Mehta, M.A English, University of Hyderabad

Two-part answer. The question has a label part (“what background?”) and a list part (“what indicators?”). A strong answer answers the label in one sentence and then gives a clean, evidence-anchored list.

- **Label.** A 1970s English **working-class family** in a small industrial town with one principal wage-earner.
- **Indicator 1: factory employment for the next generation.** Both girls are “earmarked for the biscuit factory”.
- **Indicator 2: father’s manual-labour appearance and habits.** Grimy sweat-marked face at end of shift, vest at the kitchen table, shepherd’s pie, Saturday pub.
- **Indicator 3: mother’s domestic-only role.** No second income; her presence is the stooped back at the sink and the apron with its delicate-seeming bow.
- **Indicator 4: cramped, cluttered home.** Small steamy room, dirty washing piled in the corner.
- **Indicator 5: explicit financial cap on Sophie’s ambition.** “They don’t pay well for shop work. . . your dad would never allow it.”
- **Indicator 6: elder brother’s apprenticeship.** Geoff is paid an apprentice’s wage, not a tradesman’s.
- **Indicator 7: aspirational-only relationship to consumption.** Sophie window-shops at Royce’s; she does not enter.
- **Indicator 8: public-transport travel after football.** The bus, not a car.
- **Indicator 9: mother’s wish for “a blessed decent house”.** The current home is not regarded as decent.

Final Answer: Sophie belongs to a 1970s **English working-class family** in a small industrial town. The indicators are: both girls are earmarked for the local biscuit factory; the father is a manual labourer who returns home grimy and sweat-marked, eats shepherd’s pie and visits the pub on Saturdays; the mother works only at home and stays silent at the sink; the kitchen is small, steamy and crowded with piled-up washing; Sophie’s father snaps that “they don’t pay well for shop work”; Geoff is an apprentice mechanic; Sophie only window-shops at Royce’s; the family travels by bus after football; and the mother wishes for “a blessed decent house”.

Talking about the text

Q 8.15 Sophie’s dreams and disappointments are all in her mind.

SOLUTION

The line is a teacher's prompt for discussion, but it has a clear critical defence in the text. Barton's craft in *Going Places* is to keep almost all the major events inside Sophie's head and to let the outside world appear only as the small physical settings against which those interior events take place.

- **The dreams are interior.** The boutique, the actress's career, the fashion-designer life, the motorcycle pillion ride, the Mary-Quant comparison, the arcade meeting with Danny Casey, the planned canal rendezvous and even the family applauding her future shop, all of these are Sophie's projections. Barton never gives them external corroboration.
- **The dreams are tested only by reactions.** The father, Jansie, Geoff and Derek do not engage with Sophie's dreams on their own terms; they react to them with disdain, melancholy, dry questioning or mockery. The dreams themselves never leave Sophie's head; only the external reactions are real.
- **The disappointments are equally interior.** The chapter's chief disappointment is the failed canal meeting with Casey. Barton stages it as a long inner monologue: "Here I sit, she said to herself, wishing Danny would come. . ." Casey does not actually fail to turn up; he was never going to come because he was never invited. The disappointment is the disappointment of a fantasy refusing to keep faith with itself.
- **Even the consolation is interior.** The chapter's last paragraph is Sophie replaying the Saturday goal in her head: "She saw it all again, last Saturday, saw him ghost past the lumbering defenders. . ." The recovery from the canal failure happens inside the same head that produced the failure.
- **What is outside her mind.** The biscuit factory is outside her mind. Her father's tiredness is outside her mind. Jansie's gossip and the bus home are outside her mind. Casey himself, the real footballer scoring real goals at the real stadium, is outside her mind. Barton's chapter is built on the contrast between these few hard externals and the large interior life Sophie carries around them.

The internal economy of the chapter

Going Places is, in critical terms, a chapter about an interior economy: a girl's dreaming mind is the principal character and the family kitchen, the school walk, the canal bench, the stadium goal are the supporting cast. The teacher's prompt is asking the student to see this structure.

Final Answer: The statement is largely true and the textual case for it is strong. Sophie's dreams (boutique, actress, fashion designer, motorcycle ride behind Geoff, arcade meeting with Casey, planned canal date) all originate inside her mind; the outside world contributes only reactions (disdain, melancholy, dry questioning, mockery). The chief disappointment, the failed canal rendezvous, is also interior: Casey never agreed to come, so the failure is the failure of a fantasy to keep faith with itself. Even the consolation, the replayed Saturday goal, is internal. The chapter is built on the contrast between a small hard external world and a large interior dreaming one.

EXPERT'S SOLUTION : Vivaan Kapoor, M.A English Literature, JNU Delhi

Strategic angle. Discussion prompts reward students who take a position and defend it. The cleanest position here is “largely yes, with one important qualification”. The qualification is that some of Sophie's dreams have small external triggers (Royce's window, Casey's real goals, Mary Quant in the magazines) even though the dreams themselves run inside.

- **Yes, the dreams are interior.** The Casey arcade meeting, the canal date, the motorcycle pillion ride, the “most amazing shop this city's ever seen”, none of these has independent existence outside Sophie's head. The chapter never offers them external confirmation; the family unanimously reads them as inventions.
- **Yes, the disappointments are interior.** The canal scene is a long interior monologue; the disappointment is the disappointment of a self-imposed fantasy collapsing. The shame, the “pangs of doubt”, the sadness, the resignation are all Sophie's interior weather.
- **The qualification.** Sophie's dreams do borrow from real triggers: Casey's televised goals, Royce's window, Mary Quant's name in 1970s magazines. These triggers are outside her, but they are tiny relative to the elaborate interior structure she builds on top of them. So the prompt holds, with the rider that dreams rarely have nothing external to feed on.
- **What the prompt is testing.** It is asking the student to recognise that *Going Places* is a psychological study, not an event-driven story. A student who treats it as a plot of arcade meetings and canal dates has missed the chapter; a student who treats it as a study of an adolescent dreaming mind has caught it.

Final Answer: Largely true: Sophie's dreams (boutique, acting career, fashion-designer life, motorcycle pillion ride, arcade meeting with Casey, canal rendezvous) live inside her head and the chapter's chief disappointment, Casey's non-arrival at the canal, is the collapse of a fantasy she alone built. The qualification is that the dreams have small external triggers (Casey's televised goals, Royce's window, Mary Quant's name) which are real but slight relative to the interior structure Sophie builds on them. Barton's chapter is therefore best read as a study of an adolescent dreaming mind, not as an event-driven story.

Q 8.16 It is natural for teenagers to have unrealistic dreams. What would you say are the benefits and disadvantages of such fantasising?

SOLUTION

The chapter sits behind this prompt as the example case. Sophie's fantasising is treated by Barton with a steady sympathy, but he also shows its costs. A balanced answer therefore lists both sides and reaches a small concluding judgement.

- **Benefit 1: imagination as protection.** For a working-class school-leaver with little realistic prospect of leaving the biscuit-factory track, the imagination offers a kind of internal escape. Sophie's daydreams hold open the possibility that her life could be different. In the meantime they cost nothing.
- **Benefit 2: ambition is built out of fantasy.** Many real careers, in fashion, design, performance, the arts, begin with adolescent fantasies. The Mary Quant comparison is unrealistic for Sophie in the short term, but the kind of mind that makes such comparisons is also the kind of mind that might one day move toward a creative trade. Daydreams rehearse identities; some of those rehearsals become real.
- **Benefit 3: identity formation.** Adolescents try on selves in their imagination before they try them on in public. Sophie's pillion-passenger fantasy, her shop-owner fantasy, her actress fantasy are different draft selves. The trying-on is itself useful: it builds a clearer sense of what she wants and does not want.
- **Benefit 4: emotional companionship.** Sophie's hero-worship of Casey gives her a private companion. In a family where the father is gruff and the mother silent, an imaginary intimacy with a Saturday-stadium hero is real emotional company.
- **Disadvantage 1: collision with reality.** Fantasies that are not modulated by realism produce real pain when the world refuses to match them. Sophie's canal wait, her "pangs of doubt", her "resignation", her sense that "I'll never be able to show them they're wrong to doubt me", are all the cost of a fantasy that could not stay airtight.
- **Disadvantage 2: damage to relationships.** Loud public fantasising alienates the

people who would otherwise be Sophie's allies. Jansie has been gently pushed away; the father has hardened his disdain; even Geoff, the most patient listener, slips into "it's never true". The fantasies have a social cost.

- **Disadvantage 3: substitution of dreaming for doing.** Hours spent on the boutique fantasy are hours not spent looking at apprenticeships, courses or part-time work. There is no evidence in the chapter that Sophie has taken any concrete step toward any of the futures she names.
- **Disadvantage 4: reinforcing a poor self-image.** Every time a fantasy fails, the dreamer reads the failure as evidence that her real life will always be worse than her imagined one. That habit, repeated, narrows the dreamer's confidence in her actual choices.

A balanced judgement

The healthy version of adolescent fantasising is the one that gets translated, even partially, into action: the boutique dream becomes a shop-floor job at a fashion retailer; the acting dream becomes a school play. The unhealthy version is the one that stays inside the head and grows so dense that the outside world keeps disappointing it. Barton's Sophie sits closer to the second.

Final Answer: The benefits include offering an internal escape from a narrow economic future, rehearsing identities before trying them on in public, planting the seeds of a real ambition (many creative careers begin in adolescent fantasy), and providing private emotional company in households where it is otherwise scarce. The disadvantages include painful collisions when reality fails to match the fantasy, the social cost of alienating realistic friends and family, the substitution of dreaming for concrete steps, and the risk of building a habit that reads every real outcome as a disappointment. The healthy version of teenage fantasising is the one that gets converted, even partly, into action; Sophie's, in Barton's chapter, sits closer to the unhealthy end.

EXPERT'S SOLUTION : Aanya Iyer; M.A English Literature, Jadavpur University

Strategic angle. Treat this as a debate-style answer. List benefits first, disadvantages second, conclude with a one-sentence balance line that picks a side without erasing the other. Examiners reward structure.

- **Benefit 1: psychological cushion.** Fantasies make bearable a present that would otherwise feel claustrophobic. Sophie's daydreams cushion the biscuit-factory future.
- **Benefit 2: ambition rehearsal.** Adolescents try out future selves; some of those selves take root.
- **Benefit 3: creative engine.** Writers, designers, actors and inventors almost all begin as adolescent fantasists. The mental habit is genuinely useful for creative trades.

- **Benefit 4: emotional company.** Hero-worship can give a teenager a private inner companion when the family is emotionally bare.
- **Disadvantage 1: real pain when reality fails to comply.** Sophie's canal scene is the textbook example.
- **Disadvantage 2: social cost.** Loud fantasising alienates parents, friends and the people who would otherwise be allies.
- **Disadvantage 3: action substituted by dreaming.** No concrete steps toward any actual future are visible in Sophie.
- **Disadvantage 4: habit-formation.** Repeated unmodulated fantasising can entrench a self-image that treats every real outcome as second-best.

A reasonable judgement: *some* fantasising is necessary and useful for adolescents; *much* fantasising without any modulating action becomes self-harming. The skill of growing up, the skill Sophie has not yet acquired, is the ability to keep the dream alive while taking one small real step toward it.

Final Answer: Benefits: imagination offers a psychological cushion against a narrow future, rehearses possible selves, plants the seeds of real creative careers, and supplies emotional company when the family is bare. Disadvantages: painful collisions when reality refuses to comply, social costs as parents and friends are alienated, the substitution of dreaming for concrete action, and the entrenching of a self-image that always reads real outcomes as second-best. The mature balance is to keep dreaming while taking one small real step toward any of the dreams; that balance is what Sophie has not yet found.

Working with words

Notice the following expressions. The highlighted words are not used in a literal sense. Explain what they mean.

Q8.17 Words had to be prized out of him like stones out of a ground.

SOLUTION

The expression is a simile drawn from manual labour. "To prize" something out of the ground (the word is sometimes spelled *prise*) is to lever it out with effort; stones lodged in soil have to be worked free with a tool.

- **Literal source image.** Picture a labourer trying to lift a half-buried stone out of hard earth. The stone does not come willingly; it has to be levered, dug around, shifted by hand.

- **Applied to Geoff.** Sophie compares the effort of getting words out of her brother to that physical effort. Geoff is silent by nature; even ordinary conversation with him is a small piece of hard work.
- **Why the simile works.** The image transfers the physical resistance of an embedded stone to the psychological resistance of a reluctant speaker. The reader feels the difficulty in the muscles of the simile before it is named.

Final Answer: Words had to be coaxed or levered out of Geoff with real effort. He was so reluctant a speaker that getting him to talk felt as physically taxing as digging an embedded stone out of hard ground.

EXPERT'S SOLUTION : Pranav Sharma, M.A English Literature, Delhi University

Quick reading. The construction is comparative (*like*). The vehicle is the labour of prizing stones from the ground; the tenor is the labour of getting Geoff to talk. The simile renders speech as a kind of slow, resisted excavation.

Final Answer: The phrase means that speaking did not come easily to Geoff; words had to be worked out of him with the same patient effort needed to lever a stone out of hard ground.

Q 8.18 Sophie felt a tightening in her throat.

SOLUTION

The expression is one of Barton's small physical descriptions of emotion. A "tightening in the throat" is the physical sensation that goes with a strong, unspoken feeling, usually distress, restrained crying, anxiety, or a sudden wave of emotion.

- **Where the line sits.** It comes immediately after Sophie's description of the small, steamy, cluttered kitchen, with her mother stooped over the sink and the father heavy-breathing in his vest at the table. The accumulated atmosphere is depressing, and the "tightening in the throat" is the body's reaction to it.
- **The physiological fact.** When a person is on the edge of tears or under sudden emotional pressure, the muscles around the larynx tighten. The result is the familiar feeling of a closing throat.
- **Applied to Sophie.** The tightening signals that Sophie is briefly overwhelmed by the gap between the house she actually lives in and the futures she has been imagining. She does not cry; she does not speak; she leaves the kitchen to look for Geoff.

Final Answer: The phrase means Sophie felt an emotional choking sensation, the physical feeling that goes with sudden unspoken distress: in this case her quiet, overwhelmed response to the gap between the cluttered working-class kitchen in front of her and the glamorous futures she has been imagining.

EXPERT'S SOLUTION : Ishaan Mehta, M.A English, University of Hyderabad

Reading the image precisely. “A tightening in her throat” is not the same as “a lump in her throat” (which is specifically about restrained crying). Barton’s word is *tightening*, which keeps the emotion broader: it could be sadness, suppressed protest or sheer overwhelm.

Final Answer: Sophie felt the brief physical contraction at the throat that goes with sudden, unspoken emotion; it marked her quiet distress at the contrast between the cluttered home in front of her and the futures she had been imagining.

Q 8.19 If he keeps his head on his shoulders.

SOLUTION

The expression is a common English idiom. “To keep one’s head on one’s shoulders” is to remain sensible, steady and not be carried away by fame, flattery or excitement.

- **The literal image.** A head “on” the shoulders is a head that has not been lost. The phrase imagines losing one’s head as a metaphor for losing one’s mental balance.
- **The contrast it implies.** “If he keeps his head” implies “unless he loses his head”. The speaker suspects that the danger is real.
- **Why the father uses it about Casey.** Sophie’s father is talking about Danny Casey’s chances of becoming a top player. He says, “If he keeps his head on his shoulders. If they look after him properly. A lot of distractions for a youngster in the game these days.” He is naming the real risk for a young footballer: fame, money, parties and praise can pull a young man off his professional course.

Final Answer: The phrase means “if he stays sensible and steady and does not let fame, money or distractions throw him off course”. The father is saying that Casey’s natural ability is real but that his career will succeed only if he keeps a level head through the temptations of professional football.

EXPERT'S SOLUTION : Vivaan Kapoor, M.A English Literature, JNU Delhi

Quick reading. The idiom belongs to a small family of balance metaphors (*keep your feet on the ground, keep your wits about you, keep a level head*). All carry the same sense: stay grounded, do not be carried away.

Final Answer: To stay sensible and grounded; not to let fame, flattery or distractions go to one's head. Sophie's father is predicting that Casey will succeed only if he keeps that balance.

Q 8.20 On Saturday they made their weekly pilgrimage to the United.

SOLUTION

A "pilgrimage" is, literally, a religious journey to a sacred place. Barton uses the word for an entirely secular activity, attending a weekly football match, to give that activity a religious-grade seriousness.

- **Literal meaning.** A long journey, often on foot, to a holy site (Mecca, Lourdes, Varanasi, Jerusalem). The journey is regular, devout and important.
- **Figurative use here.** The family's Saturday trip to watch United is short and small in scale, but it is "weekly", communal, devoted, and treated as the most important event of the week. Barton borrows the word *pilgrimage* to mark that devotion.
- **What the word does for the chapter.** Calling the match a "pilgrimage" elevates Casey from footballer to figure-of-devotion. It also explains why Sophie's Casey-worship is taken seriously by the family: the family already worships the team. Sophie's hero-worship is the extreme version of the household's normal Saturday faith.

Final Answer: The expression means that the family's Saturday trip to watch United was a regular, devoted, almost religious journey: every week, treated as the most important event of the week. Barton's choice of the word *pilgrimage* lifts the match into a ritual and makes Casey a figure of household worship.

EXPERT'S SOLUTION : Aanya Iyer, M.A English Literature, Jadavpur University

Reading the word choice. *Pilgrimage* is a high-register religious word being applied to a low-register secular activity. The mismatch is the joke and the homage. Barton is gently amused, but not dismissive; he is honouring the family's devotion.

Final Answer: The phrase means the family’s weekly trip to the United match was carried out with the regularity and devotion of a religious pilgrimage: a ritual, communal journey to a “sacred” venue (the stadium), repeated faithfully every Saturday.

Q 8.21 She saw... him ghost past the lumbering defenders.

SOLUTION

“To ghost past” someone is to move past them so smoothly, silently and unobtrusively that they do not register the movement, the way a ghost moves through a room.

- **Literal image.** A ghost is silent, weightless, unseen. To do something “like a ghost” is to do it without disturbance and almost invisibly.
- **Applied to Casey.** The defenders are “lumbering”, heavy, slow, awkward. Casey moves past them with a quickness and grace that makes the defenders seem stationary by contrast. The defenders are made of weight; Casey, in this image, is made of air.
- **Why the phrase is so vivid.** Barton condenses a whole dribble into one verb. The reader sees the opposition trying to react and failing; Casey is on the other side of them before they have moved.

Final Answer: The phrase means Casey slipped past the slow, heavy defenders with so much silent grace and speed that they seemed to register his presence only after he had gone. He was moving like a ghost: visible, fluent and almost untouchable.

EXPERT’S SOLUTION : Pranav Sharma, M.A English Literature, Delhi University

Quick reading. A footballing cliché given fresh life by the verb *ghost*. The defenders are heavy bodies; Casey is a passing breath. Barton uses the contrast between “lumbering” and “ghost” to render the moment kinetic.

Final Answer: Casey moved past the heavy, slow defenders so quickly and silently that they could not react in time, as a ghost glides past a person who is unaware of it.

Noticing form

Notice the highlighted words in the following sentences. The present participle, ending in -ing, often expresses an action happening at the same time as the main verb.

Q 8.22 “When I leave,” Sophie said, coming home from school, “I’m going to have a boutique.”

SOLUTION

Main verb: *said* (past tense).

Present participle: *coming home from school*.

The participle clause describes what Sophie was doing *simultaneously* with the main verb *said*. The two actions happen at the same time: she was speaking the line as she walked home. The participle compresses what would otherwise be a two-clause construction (“She said this. She was walking home from school.”) into one tighter sentence.

Final Answer: *Coming* is a present participle telling the reader that Sophie was walking home from school at the very moment she made the boutique remark; the participle phrase shows the two actions happening simultaneously.

EXPERT’S SOLUTION : Ishaan Mehta, M.A English, University of Hyderabad

Grammar check. The pattern is: *main verb* (in past tense) + *present participle* clause describing the accompanying ongoing action. Barton uses it because it gives the sentence motion: we get the line and the walk at once.

Final Answer: *Coming home from school* is a present-participle phrase that runs in parallel with the main verb *said*; the two actions, speaking and walking, are happening together.

Q 8.23 Jansie, linking arms with her along the street, looked doubtful.

SOLUTION

Main verb: *looked* (past tense).

Present participle: *linking arms with her along the street*.

The participle phrase describes a continuing physical action Jansie is performing at the same time as the main verb *looked*. While she walked along the street with her arm

linked through Sophie's, her face was doubtful. The participle phrase paints the simultaneous picture: arms linked, doubtful face.

Final Answer: *Linking* is a present participle showing what Jansie was doing simultaneously with looking doubtful: walking along the street with her arm through Sophie's. The two actions share the same time-frame.

EXPERT'S SOLUTION : Vivaan Kapoor, M.A English Literature, JNU Delhi

Grammar check. Same pattern: main verb + participle clause that runs in parallel. The participle clause sits between the subject (Jansie) and the verb (looked), which is the most common position.

Final Answer: *Linking arms with her along the street* is a present-participle phrase modifying Jansie; it tells us what Jansie was doing at the moment she "looked doubtful".

Q 8.24 "I'll find it," Sophie said, staring far down the street.

SOLUTION

Main verb: *said* (past tense).

Present participle: *staring far down the street*.

The participle clause tells the reader where Sophie's gaze is at the moment she speaks. Speaking and staring happen together. The phrase also adds a small piece of characterisation: she is looking into the distance, away from Jansie's reasonable objection, into the imagined future of the boutique she has just named.

Final Answer: *Staring* is a present participle showing where Sophie's eyes were at the same moment she said "I'll find it"; the participle phrase pictures speech and gaze as one simultaneous action.

EXPERT'S SOLUTION : Aanya Iyer, M.A English Literature, Jadavpur University

Grammar check. Subject (Sophie) + main verb (said) + participle phrase (staring ...). The participle runs in parallel with the main verb and adds a visual gesture to the spoken line.

Final Answer: The participle phrase *staring far down the street* describes Sophie's simultaneous physical action while speaking; speech and stare are happening at the same instant.

Q 8.25 Jansie, knowing they were both earmarked for the biscuit factory, became melancholy.

SOLUTION

Main verb: *became* (past tense).

Present participle: *knowing they were both earmarked for the biscuit factory.*

The participle phrase here is causal rather than purely simultaneous. It explains *why* Jansie became melancholy. Her knowledge of their shared future at the biscuit factory is the cause of the melancholy; the two states (knowing, becoming melancholy) exist at the same moment, with the knowing producing the melancholy.

Final Answer: *Knowing* is a present participle whose phrase gives the reason for the main verb *became*: Jansie's awareness of the biscuit-factory destination produced her melancholy. The participle compresses cause and simultaneity into one short clause.

EXPERT'S SOLUTION : Pranav Sharma, M.A English Literature, Delhi University

Grammar check. This is the slightly richer use of the present participle: it carries a causal flavour. "Because she knew. . . , she became melancholy" is the long form; the participle clause compresses it into one tight sentence.

Final Answer: The participle phrase *knowing they were both earmarked for the biscuit factory* both runs in parallel with the main verb and supplies its cause; her knowledge of the shared future is what made her melancholy.

Q 8.26 And she turned in through the open street door leaving Jansie standing in the rain.

SOLUTION

Main verb: *turned in* (past tense).

Two present participles: *leaving* (modifying *she*) and *standing* (modifying *Jansie*).

This sentence uses two present participles at once. The first (*leaving*) describes what Sophie was doing as she turned in through the door: leaving Jansie behind. The second (*standing*) describes Jansie's posture at the same moment: standing in the rain.

The two participles together create one combined image: Sophie disappearing inside, Jansie stuck outside in the wet street. The sentence uses simultaneity to dramatise the social moment, one girl going home to her family's small kitchen and her own fantasies, the other left in the rain with the practical truth neither of them wants to discuss.

Final Answer: The two participles *leaving* and *standing* run in parallel with the main verb *turned in*: as Sophie went through the door (turned in), she was leaving Jansie behind, and Jansie was standing in the rain. Three simultaneous actions are packed into one sentence for dramatic effect.

EXPERT'S SOLUTION : Ishaan Mehta, M.A English, University of Hyderabad

Grammar check. Double participle construction. Each participle modifies a different noun: *leaving* attaches to the implied subject (*she*), *standing* attaches to the object (*Jansie*). The sentence builds a small tableau in one breath.

Final Answer: Both *leaving* and *standing* are present participles describing simultaneous actions: as Sophie turned in through the door, she was leaving Jansie behind, and Jansie was standing in the rain. Three actions happen in the same instant.

Thinking about language

Q 8.27 The story uses the words “chuffed” (delighted), “nosey” (inquisitive) and “gawky” (awkward, ungainly), all of which are informal, colloquial words. Make a list of ten other words of this kind that are used in everyday English speech.

SOLUTION

The chapter's three sample words belong to the broad category of **colloquial English**, words that everyday speakers use freely but that would feel out of place in a formal report or academic essay. They tend to have a vivid feel, an emotional charge and a regional accent.

- **Posh** (smart, upper-class)
- **Knackered** (extremely tired)
- **Cheesed off** (annoyed or fed up)
- **Skint** (out of money, broke)
- **Brainy** (intelligent)
- **Snazzy** (stylish or fashionable)
- **Naff** (in poor taste, tacky)
- **Dodgy** (suspicious, unreliable)
- **Pricey** (expensive)
- **Telly** (television)

How to use them

Colloquial words give writing a conversational texture. Use them in dialogue and personal narrative; avoid them in formal letters, exam essays on serious topics, and academic writing. A useful test: would you use the word in a job interview? If no, it probably belongs in the colloquial register.

Final Answer: Ten everyday colloquial English words include **posh, knackered, cheesed off, skint, brainy, snazzy, naff, dodgy, pricey** and **telly**. They share the same informal, vivid, emotionally charged feel as *chuffed, nosey* and *gawky*.

EXPERT'S SOLUTION : Vivaan Kapoor, M.A English Literature, JNU Delhi

Strategic angle. The exam wants ten words; do not stop at eight. Give the meaning in brackets after each word so the answer is self-explaining.

- Posh = smart, upper-class
- Knackered = exhausted
- Cheesed off = annoyed
- Skint = out of money
- Brainy = clever
- Snazzy = stylish
- Naff = tacky, in poor taste
- Dodgy = suspicious
- Pricey = expensive
- Telly = television

You can swap any of these for other colloquialisms you know yourself (gobsmacked, peckish, miffed, swot, dunno, gutted, flicks, gaffer, kip, mate). The exam reward is for

ten valid informal words, not for a particular set.

Final Answer: Ten colloquial English words: *posh, knackered, cheesed off, skint, brainy, snazzy, naff, dodgy, pricey, telly*. Each is everyday-speech English, used freely in casual conversation but avoided in formal writing.

Key Takeaways

- Barton's *Going Places* is a short story about **adolescent hero-worship and fantasising**, set in a 1970s English working-class town.
- Sophie is imaginative, ambitious and secretive; Jansie is the realistic, gossipy counterweight; Geoff is the silent elder brother who carries the story's symbolic weight as a possible route out of the family's narrow world.
- Sophie's dreams (boutique, actress, fashion designer, pillion-passenger fantasy with Geoff, meeting Danny Casey) all live inside her head; the outside world contributes only reactions.
- The Danny Casey "meeting" at the arcade is imagined; the only real sighting is the Saturday United match where Casey scores the second goal of a two-nil win.
- The canal scene is the chapter's climax of fantasy collapsing: Sophie waits under the solitary elm, the "pangs of doubt" arrive, and resignation is reached slowly rather than suddenly.
- Barton's craft is to use small physical gestures (Jansie's melancholy face, Sophie's wriggle, the father's thick neck and grunt) in place of speech: the reader is meant to read the body.
- Key colloquial words to learn: *chuffed* (pleased), *nosey* (inquisitive), *gawky* (awkward), plus the everyday set *posh, knackered, skint, brainy, snazzy, naff, dodgy, pricey, telly*.
- Present participles (*coming, linking, staring, knowing, leaving, standing*) are used by Barton to pack two simultaneous actions into one tight sentence.

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