

What do you get to know about Monique in the first three paragraphs? Fill in a chart.

Situation	• Part of an oppressed minority in England & Germany • Just unexpectedly moved into a very run-down environment • Looking to graduate in Germany
Outward appearance	• Attractive • Foreign • Black (duh) • Not much else
Attitudes	• Realist • Ambitious
Origin	• Born in North Africa • Adopted by a german family

While reading the following passage (up to p. 15, l. 87) note down all the nouns and adjectives that characterize Angie, Mick and the House they live in.

<u>Angie</u>	<u>Mick</u>	<u>The house</u>
• shaggy • woman • desperate	• shaggy • man • desperate	• house • empty

In this passage Monique describes Peter. What impression does he make on you (up to l. 100)?

A very average, athletic boy. Certainly not someone I would immediately trust. He seems to get a lot of exposure to the sun.

What kind of people are referred to with the help of the metaphor “[people] who were born with a silver spoon in their mouths...” (ll. 109f.)? Try to explain its meaning.

Such people are born with wealthy parents. Parents tend to feed their smaller children, hence the spoon, and they would only be able to afford something made out of silver if they were rich, claims the metaphor. This metaphor is commonly

used in a derogatory manner, attributing a certain spoiled upbringing and subsequent “posh” attitudes to the person in question.

What problems do Monique and her host family talk about in the passage above (ll. 118-137)?

Right-wingers tend to discriminate against foreigners as part of their ideology. Britain, due to its shoddy state, has no shortage of such people, although Britain is by far not the only region with staggering volumes of hateful people. Historically, black people in particular have been a target of this, which makes living in white-ish dominated societies a challenge for them.

The following passage describes Monique’s English lessons with Peter and a walk along the beach. While reading it try to find out about the relationship between the two (up to p. 18, l. 203).

They seem to be close enough to exchange jokes and personal anecdotes quite freely. It reminds me of the usual romance stories.

What does this flashback (up to l. 170) show about Monique? Compare it with Peter’s memories (p. 17, l. 182 up to p. 18, l. 193).

Peter talks about riches both in finance and time, citing vacations and power as giving him a “good feeling”, while Monique simply looks back to a relaxed, casual life with friends and family. Despite the objectively worse standards of living on Monique’s side, they both remember their childhood fondly. While this does not necessarily impact the attitude of Peter, it shows Monique’s positive outlook on life.

While reading this passage (ll. 208-235) mark all the words that show how dangerous those young men are.

- “She can’t be German. She’s black.”
- “Supposed to be sexy, these African birds [...]”
- “We might have a bit of fun ourselves, first.”
- “Gary and his friends [...] threw a couple of empty beer cans after them”

How do you think this story will continue?

Well, they’re certainly going to pull some forced romance. Other than that, we’re probably going to get at least one more display of the impact of racism on Monique, since that’s the societal failing this story is supposed to be tackling.

Why are Monique's adoptive parents not happy when they hear that she is in love with Peter?

And how do Peter's parents react? (up to l. 273.)

Monique's parents are worried that she might face significant danger for being part of a mixed-race partnership, which they sadly combat the wrong way, instead urging her to reconsider whether or not she should express her love *at all*.

Peter's parents, especially since they are faced with the plague that is young boys like Gary, react quite differently, instead warning her of the risks and being supportive of her inevitable struggle.

In the following passage the aggressive attitude of the young men (cf. pp. 19f.) towards foreigners shows clearly in what they say and how they behave. List examples from the text that reveals their true character as racists (up to p. 23, l. 358):

- words: ...
- actions: ...

- "This black girl [...]" instead of addressing Monique by her name
- "Well, we don't like it. And if you don't tell her to go home, there'll be trouble"
- "Why don't you send her back to where she belongs?"
- "Because you're foreign [...]. That's why [...]"

Explain the effect of the way Gary and his friends are described here.

It portrays them as predators. More specifically, as animals, which humans often deem primitive and "below human", which makes this portrayal a direct insult.

What does this comment show about Gary? Do you think that the community service which he had to do might have changed his attitude towards foreigners?

It shows that he does not take the situation seriously, or rather, tries to deliberately avoid it.

A bit of community service is unlikely to do much at all with stubborn people like this, so I don't expect much change. I think my above statement is confirmed by his casual way of addressing his history with Monique.

1. Do you think that Monique and Peter will stay together? Give reasons.
2. If Peter and Monique get married, what problems may they face as a “mixed couple”?

1)

I don't think Monique and Peter will stay together, because...

- ...what they're experiencing seems like a short affair to me, if anything
- ...the relationship would quickly develop into a long-distance one after Monique departs for home
- ...their parents might be against it
- ...they might face serious issues for the nature of their relationship

2)

- Discrimination by neighbors and strangers alike

1. How would you characterize Gary and his friends? Can you try to explain their hostile attitude towards foreigners? (for help see pp. 64 ff.)
2. Do you have any ideas of how to improve relationships between people of different color?

1

They're the average victim of the patriarchy. Young, full of testosterone, willing to take risks, un-calculated. They exert dominance where they see fit to retain/gain position in their social hierarchy.

The reason why they target specifically foreigners is the continued nationalism perpetuated by conservative ideals. Change is predominantly brought upon by external influences, which is an obvious reason to avoid contaminating the already brainwashed population with foreigners who might introduce new ideas to the conservative echo-chamber.

Hence, the youth is targeted with disinformation campaigns to make them believe that arbitrary issues are the fault of x minority that we wouldn't mind losing, as they see it.

2

Simply said: Less discrimination. Cultural shifts. Break up social stigma and racism with it. No less, no more.

Have you ever experienced or heard about events that are similar to the one in the story?

Yes, while working on these tasks. I was sitting in the cafeteria when a group of boys approached me, spotted my laptop and started making derogatory comments

about the stickers on its back. They tried to rile me up by speaking to me multiple times, although i managed to bounce them off by ignoring them.

Another event such as this occurred during a later period, where I was suddenly asked about intimate information by otherwise unknown strangers, which I can safely assume was related to assumptions made about my sexual orientation.

That said, none of the events I face end in a violent manner.

1. What type of figurative language do the following examples belong to?
2. Choose two of the examples given above and try to explain their meaning and effect on the reader.

1)

- “(Men can’t) wait to ride to the rescue on their white horses...” → symbolism
- “He had a chip on his shoulder about ‘posh people’” → symbolism
- “To blow the cobwebs away” → metaphor
- “...this fleet of new, shiny cars” → **not figurative**
- “They looked like black crows.” → simile
- “...she’s getting her hooks into your son” → metaphor
- “...the well-dressed couple (...) drove away (...) with a noise like tearing calico” → simile

2

“To blow the cobwebs away” →

Cobwebs are one of the many reaches of nature which propagate through human environments when they are unmaintained. As such, “removing the cobwebs” can be equated to “cleaning something off after a long time”, which in turn, in this context, relates to “doing something you haven’t in a long time.

“They looked like black crows.” →

Sadly, humans tend to see black crows as “dark, grim looking animals”, often perceiving their noises as “chilling”, which is compounded by media heavily emphasizing this by using crows as basically synonymous to “frightening” to create “scary” atmosphere.

Here, this “inherent” scare factor is related to the danger the boys are posing to their victims, comparing them to crows in how fear-inducing they are.

NOTE: Further tasks mentioned on the page would significantly exceed the scope of what two lessons provide time for. I am already working much longer than 2 hours on this.