

## EN210111-15\_Gender Roles – part II

### A Working with visuals

Take a look at this picture and analyze (= describe and interpret) it. Formulate a clear message.

(Keywords only.)

### B Working with texts

Read the text and do the tasks.

1. Summarize Martha's thoughts while she is drowsing. (Keywords are okay unless you want to write the summary.)

2. Write a character outline, paying special attention to:

- a) the relationship to her husband and her children.
- b) Martha's interior/inner monologue: What does the way she daydreams and talks to herself reveal about her?

Here is some help:



#### Introduction

- Briefly present the character (basic personal data and outward appearance).
- Say what his/her function/role in the story is and how he/she relates to the other characters.

#### Body

- Describe the character's traits, behaviour and development, providing details from your notes
- Do not forget to use examples and quotes to support your statements.

#### Conclusion

- Sum up the most important traits.

#### Personal data

The protagonist is a young/middle-aged/elderly/a 38-year-old single/married person/widow(er)/child of ... origin.

#### Outward appearance

He/She is described as being tall/small • good-looking/handsome/ugly • obese/stocky/slim • healthy/sickly.

He/She has a bony/wrinkled/square/round/oblong face • bright/dull eyes • long/flat/pointed nose • matted/straight/curly hair • ... is bald.

He/She has tattooed/weather-beaten/leathery/smooth/freckled/scarred skin • a loud/coarse/sonorous/soft voice.

#### Positive character traits

He/She is/seems to be amiable • cheerful • open-minded • modest • decent • good-natured • honest • trustworthy • generous • gentle optimistic • self-confident • sympathetic • considerate • sensitive • reasonable • ambitious • determined • brave • courageous.

#### Negative character traits

He/She is/seems bad-tempered • cheeky • showy • rude • violent • narrow-minded • gloomy • spiteful • deceitful • unfeeling • stingy • inconsiderate • ruthless • dishonest • unreliable • anxious • pessimistic • shy • lazy • conceited • insecure, because he/she ...

#### Drawing conclusions about a character

The body language/This action reveals that ...

X's statement "... (l. x) shows/proves that he/she ...

X appears to be/is portrayed as ...

#### Talking about relationships

to build up/continue/break off a relationship

Their relationship is characterised by deep affection/hostility/suspicion/feelings of ...

The difficult/poor/close/casual relationship changes in the course of the story/remains unchanged until the end.

3. Martha wants to be a “super woman” (l.24). Comment on her ambition to be a “super woman” and state if this ideal is attainable or desirable. (Keywords are okay unless you want to write a text.)
- 4 On the way back from the cottage on Sunday, it is Martha who drives and Martin who drowns. Write down Martin’s stream of thoughts. (ca. 250 words)

## Weekend

*Like every Friday evening, Martin and Martha (she is a market researcher in an advertising agency and he is a freelance designer) and their three children Jasper, Jenny and Jolyon are going to their cottage for the weekend.*

Martin drives. Martha, for once, drowns.

The right food, the right words, the right play. Doctors for the tonsils: dentists for the molars. Confiscate guns: censor television: encourage creativity. Paints and paper to hand: books on the shelves: meetings with teachers. Music teachers.

Dancing lessons. Parties. Friends to tea. School plays. Open days. Junior orchestra. Martha is jolted awake. Traffic lights. Martin doesn't like Martha to sleep while he drives.

Clothes. Oh, clothes! Can't wear this: must wear that. Dress shops. Piles of clothes in corners: duly washed, but waiting to be ironed, waiting to be put away.

Get the piles off the floor, into the laundry baskets. Martin doesn't like a mess.

Creativity arises out of order, not chaos. Five years off work while the children were small: back to work with seniority lost. What, did you think something was for nothing? If you have children, mother, that is your reward. It lies not in the world.

Have you taken enough food? Always hard to judge.

Food. Oh, food! Shop in the lunch-hour. Lug it home. Cook for the freezer on Wednesday evenings while Martin is at his car-maintenance evening class, and isn't there to notice you being unrestful. Martin likes you to sit down in the evenings. Fruit, meat, vegetables, flour for homemade bread. Well, shop bread is full of pollutants. Frozen food, even your own, loses flavour. Martin often remarks on it.

Condiments. Everyone loves mango chutney. But the expense!

London Airport to the left. Look, look, children! Concorde? No, idiot, of course it isn't Concorde.

Ah, to be all things to all people: children, husband, employer, friends! It can be done: yes, it can: super woman. [...]

Martin likes slim ladies. Diet. Martin rather likes his secretary. Diet; Martin admires slim legs and big bosoms. How to achieve them both? Impossible. But try, oh try, to be what you ought to be, not what you are. Inside and out.

[...] Salisbury Plain. Stonehenge. Look, children, look! Mother, we've seen Stonehenge a hundred times. Go back to sleep.

From: Fay Weldon, *Watching me watching you*, Harper Collins, 2010

12 seniority - the principle that those who have been in a company longer than others enjoy more rights

20 condiments – spices or sauces    21 Concorde – name of a supersonic aircraft    28 Stonehenge – famous prehistoric monument of stone circles near Salisbury, England

