

2017 PT3 EXAM TIPS

ENGLISH NOVEL

Question 1

Based on one of the novels above, write about one of the themes in the story. Provide evidence from the text to support your response.

Moby Dick

One of the themes in the novel 'Moby Dick' is revenge. This theme is clear through the actions of the main character, Captain Ahab. He is obsessed with killing Moby Dick, a great white sperm whale. His need for revenge intensifies as the story progresses. Moby Dick bit off his leg and Captain Ahab wants to kill it for revenge. He shows no concern for the lives of his crew members. He takes them on a whaling expedition which ends with them fighting for their lives against Moby Dick. The captain shows no sympathy for others. He does not want to help Captain Gardiner look for his missing son because he wants to keep on the trail of Moby Dick. His desire for revenge makes him act unreasonably. He throws his maps into the ocean and even threatens to throw a harpoon at any of his men who tries to turn the *Pequod* around so they can go home.

We Didn't Mean to Go to Sea

One of the themes in the novel 'We Didn't Mean to Go to Sea' is bravery. John Walker and his siblings show how brave they are in different ways. Titty and Roger are most certainly frightened but they do not show it. They put all their trust in their brother and support him. Susan worries more and keeps asking John to turn back the *Goblin* when they go out to the open sea. However, she listens to his instructions and helps him when he needs it. John shows courage in every decision he makes. Even though he makes mistakes in the beginning, he reacts quickly. He bravely deals with every situation and makes difficult decisions. He goes past the Beach End buoy, sails through the fog and then goes out to the open sea. He captains the *Goblin* across the open sea during a stormy night. It takes a lot of courage especially when you are sailing a big ship for the first time.

Question 2

Based on the novel, write about a character whom you find impressive. Give reasons for your answer and support your answer with close reference to the text.

Moby Dick

The story, Moby Dick tells of the adventures of the whaling crew of the whaling ship, *Pequod*, under the command of Captain Ahab. The story portrays a few characters and the character I find impressive is Captain Ahab, He may have the wrong notion that revenge on Moby Dick is sweet but he does show strong character traits.

Captain Ahab has been in the whaling business for more than forty years. This itself shows consistency of character, that is he can hold on to such a demanding job for such a long time. To control a crew of whalers also requires strength of character physically and mentally. Another character trait which I find impressive in Captain Ahab is his determination. On one of his trips, he has an unhappy brush with a white whale named Moby

Dick and this resulted in the captain losing one of his legs. From then onwards, Captain is determined to take revenge on Moby Dick either by hurting it or taking its life. This character trait is impressive if it is used for a good purpose. For Captain Ahab, this determination is to take revenge on Moby Dick. It is not an appropriate thing to do regardless the reasons for his situation.

Captain Ahab goes to the extent of insisting that the crew of Pequod think along the same line as him - to get rid of Moby Dick. He bribes them with offers of gold and also threatens to get rid of them in the middle of the sea if they do not listen to his orders. Unfortunately, in the battle with Moby Dick, the whole crew and Captain Ahab are destroyed by the whale.

The character traits if of determination is good as it shows strength of character but used in the wrong way, it can generate unhappy consequences. The character does show admirable character traits but they are not put to good use.

We Didn't Mean to Go to Sea

The story, We Didn't Mean to Go to Sea tells of the sailing trip of the Walker children across the North Sea. The character who shows admirable traits is John Walker, the eldest of the five Walker siblings.

He is observant and a good learner. He willingly learn the ropes of handling the yacht from Jim even though their trip in the ship is supposed to be a two-day fun trip only. This trail stands them in good stead when circumstances forced them to go out to sea. They had to break the promise made to Mother.

John has to manage the ship. HE shows a strong sense of responsibility by taking over as captain of the yacht and make decisions that keep them safe throughout the stormy trip. He accidentally drops the anchor but is not discouraged by his mistake. During the storm, he takes the risk of losing his life by adjusting the sails as and when it is necessary. He has learnt about the dangers of being near shoals and so guides the Goblin out of the danger of hitting shoals and be grounded.

I find John's character impressive and can be a good role model for teenagers. His character trait of being willing to shoulder responsibilities when the need arises is praiseworthy. Being open-minded and willing to learn new skills can keep us safe when the situation demands it.

Question 3

Based on the novel, write about two moral lessons you have learnt from the novel. Support your answer with close reference to the text.

Moby Dick

The novel, Moby Dick tells of the whaling ship, the Pequod trip in the Pacific Ocean to hunt for whales but specifically for Moby Dick, the white whale. Captain Ahab is determined to take his revenge on Moby Dick for the loss of one of his legs and destroy it. The story teaches a few moral lessons and one of the lessons I have learnt is that team spirit and mutual support are essentials for the success of group work. Another lesson I have learnt is that leadership must lead by example and put the interest of the group first before his own.

The crew of the whaling ship, Pequod under Captain Ahab understands that whaling is their livelihood and the captain is duty bound to set his priorities right. They catch whales, extract the oil and then put for home. Under such circumstances the crew expect to work as a team with good team spirit and mutual support. Whaling is not an easy job and it is important for the whalers to have a common and mutual spirit for the benefit and safety of all. However, while the rest of the crew of Pequod have the same mutual spirit, Captain Ahab does not share the crew's feelings and spirit as a team.

Captain Ahab as captain of the Pequod should provide strong leadership and set good examples. First and foremost, he should give priority to the safety of his crew. Unfortunately, Captain Ahab falls short of good leadership from the aspect of the crew's safety. He is bent on taking revenge on Moby Dick and his whaling trips are clouded by his personal feelings so much so that he ignores the welfare of the crew members and forgets the reasons why they are whalers. In the ensuing battle between the captain and Moby Dick, the whole crew including the captain except the narrator are destroyed.

The crew and the captain approach the situation with different frames of mind. There is no mutual team spirit and support in addition to a selfish leadership. So, the lessons I have learnt is that team spirit, mutual support and strong leadership are essential ingredients for situations that involve groups of people or teams.

We Didn't Mean to Go to Sea

The story, We Didn't Mean to Go to Sea tells of the sailing trip of the Walker children across the North Sea. There are a few moral lessons to be learnt and the lesson I have learnt is we must be prepared to take control or provide leadership when situation warrants it.

The Walker children face the unexpected situation of being out at sea in a yacht that belongs to Jim and they have no experience of sailing or managing a yacht. John is taught the ropes of handling the mainsail just before they get caught in that unlikely situation. He faces the heavy responsibility of looking after the ship and also the safety of his siblings. But, John with his natural leadership and as the eldest sibling takes control of the situation. He rises to the occasion very well and makes all the necessary decisions. He takes the risk of falling into the sea when adjusting the sails and the anchor. He gets the Goblin out to sea safely and then through the North Sea to the coast of Holland.

Susan does her part and shows leadership by taking care of the needs like a head of a family, preparing meals for them and taking over the steering whenever necessary. She worries about hurting their mother as they have broken their promise of not going out to sea.

She does not like the idea of breaking the promise they have made to their mother. However, she puts aside her worries and allow her sense of leadership take over - she prepares the meals and mothers over them making sure they eat well. She takes care of the two younger siblings well. When John almost falls into the sea while fixing the mast, Susan worries about him. Even when she is seasick, she puts that feeling aside and does what John instructs her to do, showing her leadership qualities.

I have learnt that we should be prepared to take responsibility and provide leadership when a situation demands it.

Question 4

Based on the novel, explain what you like or dislike about the story. Would you recommend the story to your friends? Support your answer with close reference to the text.

Moby Dick

The story, Moby Dick tells of the whaling ship, Pequod's whaling trip in the Pacific Ocean. The Pequod is under Captain Ahab who leads the ship into a whaling trip but it is more for the purpose of catching Moby Dick than for commercial gains.

I like and dislike the story from different aspects. The story tells of the activities involved in whaling as a livelihood. I find that interesting and yet sad that people have to work so hard and at risk just to earn a livelihood. Another reason I do not like the story is because whaling is a threat to the whale population. It results in depletion of the whales which has now become an endangered species.

I like the story for the character traits the main character portrays. Captain Ahab is out for revenge on Moby Dick. He shows patience and determination and uses the whaling trips to try and catch Moby Dick. These are good character traits but to make them into an obsession distorts the traits and turn the person into an evil man. His determination knows no bounds and he goes all out including bribing and threatening the crew to get what he wants.

I would recommend the story to my friends as I would like them to understand how good character traits can be misapplied and can lead to bad consequences. Determination brings success but gaining it at the expense of others around you is not right.

We Didn't Mean to Go to Sea

The story, We Didn't Mean to Go to Sea tells of the sailing trip of the Walker children across the North Sea. Without meaning to, the Walker children find themselves going out to sea. This unintentional sea trip is a challenge right from the beginning to the conclusion of the story. This is the reason why I like the story.

The Walker children enjoy being out on the water and they are in a rowing boat along Orwell River. They find themselves in a yacht going out to sea. Jim Brading, captain of the yacht, Goblin plans a two-day sailing trip for the children in his yacht within the Harwich harbour area. When Jim goes ashore to get petrol, he is involved in an accident and the children have to fend for themselves when the Goblin is taken to the sea by bad inclement weather - fog, rain, strong winds during a stormy night.

I like how the story develops from here and the children shows their strength of character - strong sense of responsibility and leadership. John remembers Jim's advice about being out at sea as the best way to be safe from shoals, so he takes the yacht out to sea although he has not steered a yacht before. He accepts the challenge knowing that it is a situation of do or die. Susan does her best to face the challenge too although she does whine now and then by reminding them of their promise to mother not to go out to sea. The two younger siblings face up to the challenge by not giving any trouble although they are scared too.

I have learnt good lessons from the children's circumstances and would definitely recommend the story to my friends. I would like them to realise that one should put forward one's best foot under all circumstances.

Question 5

Based on the novel, write about how the character or characters gained and faced new experiences. Support your answer with close reference to the text.

Moby Dick

The novel, Moby Dick tells of the whaling ship, the Pequod's trip in the Pacific Ocean to hunt for whales but specifically for Moby Dick, the white whale. Captain Ahab is determined to take his revenge on Moby Dick for the loss of one of his legs. He wants to destroy it.

The narrator, Ishmael is a sailor and he has worked on different ships. He loves the ocean which he knows is sometimes dangerous but never boring. He feels sad when he is not in a ship. So, he decides to become a whaler although he knows that it is a dangerous work. He does this because he wants to see exciting new places and the whales. This is his first new experience. He signs up with the Pequod under Captain Ahab. He meets Queequeg and becomes good friends with him. He meets some good and interesting crew members but not the captain until three weeks later. Captain Ahab offers gold to the first person who sights Moby Dick. Ishmael is attracted to the gold.

Ishmael's first meeting with a whale comes one night when Fedallah sights it. Ishmael goes into a small boat with Starbuck as the captain. He is excited and hopes they can catch it. However, the whale gets away. Later, Ishmael experiences catching whales and extracting fat for oil from them. Finally, they sight Moby Dick or rather Moby Dick turns up and tempts Captain Ahab to capture it. They lose the fight with Moby Dick and the captain and the crew except Ishmael are destroyed in the fight. Ishmael loses a friend for the first time but he is lucky that Queequeg's coffin saves his life.

The narrator has an interesting first whaling trip with the Pequod. He reflects on his time here and realises he is very lucky to be alive. They had fought with Moby Dick and many lost their lives because of one man's hatred for a whale. The Rachel, another whaling ship looked for a lost boy because of the man's love for his son. This is the narrator's first time experience of how man can be so revengeful or loving and caring.

We Didn't Mean to Go to Sea

The story, We Didn't Mean to Go to Sea tells of the sailing trip of the Walker children across the North Sea. The Walker children with no experience of sailing in any other boat except for a rowing boat gaining first time experience of serious sailing.

The Walker children are in a yacht, a sailing vessel they can live in, is eat and sleep in for a period of time. This first time experience of such a vessel is further enhanced by the fact that they have not sailed in the open sea before. They are used to sailing on rivers only. For the first time, they have to steer a yacht and in a storm at sea. With no experience of such extreme weather in the open sea, they have Jim, the owner of the yacht before the latter went ashore. John also relied on whatever he can remember of Commander Walker's lessons in sailing.

John's first lesson is to learn the ropes of handling the yacht and so John spends an hour or so putting up the mainsail and bringing it down. He begins to understand how everything works. Thus John is able to handle the Goblin later in the storm knowing when to

use the mainsail. Jim has experience avoiding the shoals during his trip from Dover to Harwich harbour. So he shows John the locations of the shoals and how to avoid them. Hitting one of them could result in the ship running aground. Jim also warns John that when it gets dark or foggy, the only safe place is to get out to sea and stay there. John puts his knowledge to good use when the yacht goes out to sea in the storm. For the first time, John has full responsibility of his siblings' safety.

The other children behave well and adapt to the fearful situation so as not to add to John's worries. This is their first bad sailing experience but they obediently take their cue from John. So, the story is definitely an account of the Walker children's first time experience of sailing in the open sea in inclement weather.

Question 6

Based on the novel, do you like the ending of the story? Why? Provide evidence from the text to support your response.

Moby Dick

I like the ending of the novel Moby Dick because the moral of the story teaches us that vengeance does not pay. This is the case of Captain Ahab who spends 'three years' hunting the whale, Moby Dick. The whale had taken his leg and he is now hunting it 'to the end of this world'. Finally, after three days, he has an encounter with the 'most dangerous animal' in the Pacific Ocean where he lost his leg years ago. In the ensuing battle, Moby Dick outmanoeuvres Captain Ahab, a man with 'forty years of hard work', and drags him down to his watery grave still entangled in the ropes. I like the ending because it also gives me a sense of justice for Captain Ahab's men who no longer have to endure the tyrannical ways of their captain.

We Didn't Mean to Go to Sea

I like the ending of the novel We Didn't Mean to Go to Sea because the Walker siblings find their way home after drifting to Holland and back again. The ending is also exciting because they run into their father unexpectedly in Flushing and together, they sail back to Harwich in the Goblin. John, Susan, Titty and Roger 'didn't mean to go sea' but thanks to an interesting turn of events, they find themselves drifting on the open sea. The children 'love ships and the sea' and the spirit of adventure. Soon, they find themselves embarking on one when they drift past 'the Beach End buoy' and head far 'out at sea'. When they eventually return to Harwich, they find their mother and Bridget waiting for them. Now who is going to tell her about their adventure? 'Daddy'll tell her that we didn't mean to go sea,' said Susan confidently to the others.