**Extract on Brick Lane for Practice Homework 1 and 2**

**Brick Lane**

Outside, small patches of mist bearded the lamp-posts and a gang of pigeons turned weary circles on the grass like prisoners in an exercise yard. A woman hurried past with a small child in her arms. The child screamed and kicked its legs against the kidnapper. The woman produced a plastic rattle with which to gag her victim. Nazneen pulled the end of her sari over her hair. At the main road she looked both ways, and then went left. Two men were dragging furniture out of a junk shop to display on the pavement. One of them went inside and came out again with a wheelchair. He tied a chain around it and padlocked it to an armchair as if arranging a three-legged furniture race. Nazneen changed her mind and turned around. She walked until she reached the big crossroads and waited at the kerb while the traffic roared from one direction and then the next. Twice she stepped into the road and drew back again. To get to the other side of the street without being hit by a car was like walking out in the monsoon and hoping dodge the raindrops. A space opened up before her. God is great, said Nazneen under her breath. She ran.

A horn blared like an ancient muezzin, ululating painfully, stretching his vocal cords to the limit. She stopped and the car swerved. Another car skidded to a halt in front of her and the driver got out and began to shout. She ran again and turned into a side street, them off again to the right onto Brick Lane.

Then she turned off at random, began to run, limped for a while to save her ankle, and thought she had come in a circle. The buildings seemed familiar. She sensed rather than saw, because she had taken care not to notice. But now she slowed down and looked around her. She looked up at a building as she passed. It was constructed almost entirely of glass, with a few thin rivets of steel holding it together. The entrance was like a glass fan, rotating slowly, sucking people in, wafting others out. Inside, on a raised dais, a woman behind a glass desk crossed and uncrossed her thin legs. She wedged a telephone receiver between her ear and shoulder and chewed on a finger-nail. Nazneen craned her head back and saw that the glass above became dark as a night pond. The building was without end. Above, somewhere, it crushed the clouds.

***Note on the text: Nazneen is not the kidnapper, neither is the woman that Nazneen sees holding the baby. The baby screaming in the arms of a woman is a random person Nazneen passes. The woman adds to the cold unforgiving attitude of the alien world that is the London Nazneen has arrived in.***

A1 Style questions - Implicit and Explicit Meaning

* **List five impressions of the area (this mimics the style of the A1 question paper)**

The following questions ask for one short sentence answer per bulleted point question, where you get the opportunity to practice inference skills.

* **What are Nazneen’s first impressions of the area outside her new home?**
* **Why do you think Nazneen pulls her sari over her hair?**
* **How do you think Nazneen feels as she watched traffic?**
* **Why do you think Nazneen runs away from the stopped cars?**
* **Why had Nazneen ‘taken care not to notice’ the buildings she passed?**
* **What do you think Nazneen thinks of the modern glass building?**

A2 - Explain, comment on and analyse how writers use language and structure to achieve effects and influence readers

**What impressions do you get of Nazneen from this extract?** *(Complete 2 mini analysis paragraphs here as practice)*

A3 - Explain, comment on and analyse how writers use language and structure to achieve effects and influence readers, using relevant subject terminology to support their views.

**How does the writer show Nazneen’s experience of being in London?** *(Complete 2 mini analysis paragraphs here as practice)*

A4 - Explain, comment on and analyse how writers use language and structure to achieve effects and influence readers, using relevant subject terminology to support their views.

**How does the writer build tension and drama in this extract?** *(Complete 4 mini analysis paragraphs here as practice – these should be from across the text)*

A5 - Evaluate texts critically and support this with appropriate textual references

**“Some readers suggest that Nazneen is frightened and out of her comfort zone.” How far would you agree with this statement with close reference to the text?** *(Complete 4 evidence opinion paragraphs here as practice)*

**Extract on Brick Lane: Suggested mark scheme or answers that could be shared with the class as examples.**

**Question 1**

* Nazneen’s first impressions of the area outside her new home are could be from the following:

negative or its an intimidating area, she dislikes it, it seems alien to her, very strange

* Nazneen pulls her scarf over her sari as she is:

trying to hide her face, feels protected by the scarf, comforted by anonymity

* How do you think Nazneen feels as she watched traffic:

Intimidated, scared, surprised, frightened, out of her comfort zone

* Nazneen may have ran away from the stopped cars because:

Felt afraid, wasn’t sure how to react, wanted to escape this new and frightening experience

* Nazneen had perhaps taken care not to notice the buildings she passed:

The experience was too overwhelming, too out of her experience, too focused on finding her way to where she wanted to get to, she was in a hurry, she wasn’t comfortable with her surroundings so avoided taking notice of them

* Nazneen thinks the modern glass building is:

Monster like, unusual, alien, unnatural, out of the ordinary

**Question 2**

Explain, comment on and analyse how writers use language and structure to achieve effects and influence readers (AO2)

**What impressions do you get of Nazneen from this extract?**

The impressions I get of Nazneen from the extract is that she is from another country, where there isn’t as much traffic “Another car skidded to a halt in front of her” shows that she is unused to the amount of traffic on the road. The verb ‘skidded’ suggests the car had to halt suddenly, as she walked into the road without being aware of being run over.

Another impression is that she is religious. The Noun in “God is great” sounds like a prayer and implies she is out of her comfort zone in the new town and needs the comfort of her religion as an anchor for her feelings.   
  
Further impressions are; she doesn’t know where she is the verb ‘turned off at random’, she is more used to countryside the metaphor “somewhere above it crushed the clouds”

**Question 3**

Explain, comment on and analyse how writers use language and structure to achieve effects and influence readers, using relevant subject terminology to support their views. (AO2)

**How does the writer show Nazneen’s experience of being in London?**

The writer shows Nazneen’s experience of being in London as chaotic with the verb “hurried past” which suggests she is in a hurry and trying to get somewhere.

She is intimidated and scared for the safety of her child in the metaphor “legs against its kidnapper” here the mother is suggested to be keeping the child close to her, but it appears this is because she is holding onto the screaming child tightly. Perhaps, both the mother and child are aware of how alien the area is to them.

The writer uses the unfamiliar surroundings to show Nazneen is feeling unsettled “entrance was like a glass fan” showing she is unaware of glass doors and the simile reinforces the strangeness of seeing a large glass door for the first time.

The experience is also uncanny or threatening as the building is personified as “sucking people in, wafting others out”. This implies she is not familiar with the vast number of people going to work in the same building. Here she may feel scared of this.

Nazneen also seems different in her presentation that Londoners when she says “chewed on a finger-nail” which makes the receptionist seem bored and unconcerned by the hustle and bustle that has worried Nazneen.

Structurally, the extract moves through a terrifying experience, with Nazneen almost being run over, to her running away, like a frightened animal and then finishing with her awe and misunderstanding of the sheer size and amount of buildings. Structuring it like this implies Nazneen is overwhelmed by everything that she sees, feels and experiences.

The pace of the piece is fast and use a lot of short sentences “The building was without end.” is perhaps being used as a metaphor for the feelings of uncertainty that Nazneen is feeling in the extract. We can feel sympathy for her as she is running scared in an unfamiliar place.

**Question 4**

Evaluate texts critically and support this with appropriate textual references (AO4)

**Evaluate the way Nazneen is presented in this passage.**

**Nazneen is presented in this passage as a stranger in a new place. This is evident in “**At the main road she looked both ways, and then went left” with the lack of a clear direction making me think she doesn’t know which way to go. I think she is trying to look confident despite not feeling this way.

Also, she notices little details, which may seem common place in a bustling city “He tied a chain around it and padlocked it to an armchair” which seems prudent and sensible as it will help to secure the second-hand furniture, but to someone like Nazneen, who seems to have come from a quieter place, this must seem absurd. I think she is noticing these details and they are making her feel uncomfortable and wary of her surroundings. Other readers, may suggest that this highlights her as a niave newcomer to London.

Another example where Nazneen is presented as fearful this time is while she tries to cross the road “drew back again” which suggests she is scared of getting hurt and the “roaring” cars are scaring her. I think she is trying to stay safe with the extreme traffic but is unaware of the general rules as she then says “like walking in a monsoon” which is not typical London weather. Therefore, I feel this combination of events related to the cars and driving show she is from another hotter, more tropical country as this is where you are likely to get a monsoon.

She is also presented in an animalistic way as she responds to the threat of being run over with a fight or fright emotion in “She ran again” showing that she is scared and trying to escape. I think the unfamiliarity is making her feel like a rabbit caught in headlights and her first response when the driver “got out and began to shout” she perhaps doesn’t understand what is being said, as she doesn’t listen to what is said she just runs. Again, I think she is presented this way as the writer is showing us her reactions as opposed to telling us that she speaks a different language.

My final inference about Nazneen and the way she is presented relates to her injury “limped for a while” as even though she has clearly hurt her ankle and is in pain, she doesn’t stop. This suggests again that she is uncertain and afraid.

Overall, I feel her presentation in this extract about Brick Lane shows effectively how a person: Nazneen would feel in a strange, new country and how they may react to the situation when it is not something they have any experience of. Traffic, selling things in shops and buildings being overpowering and crowded into small areas is normal to a person from London; however to a person out-with this country it would be a strange and alien way to live.