

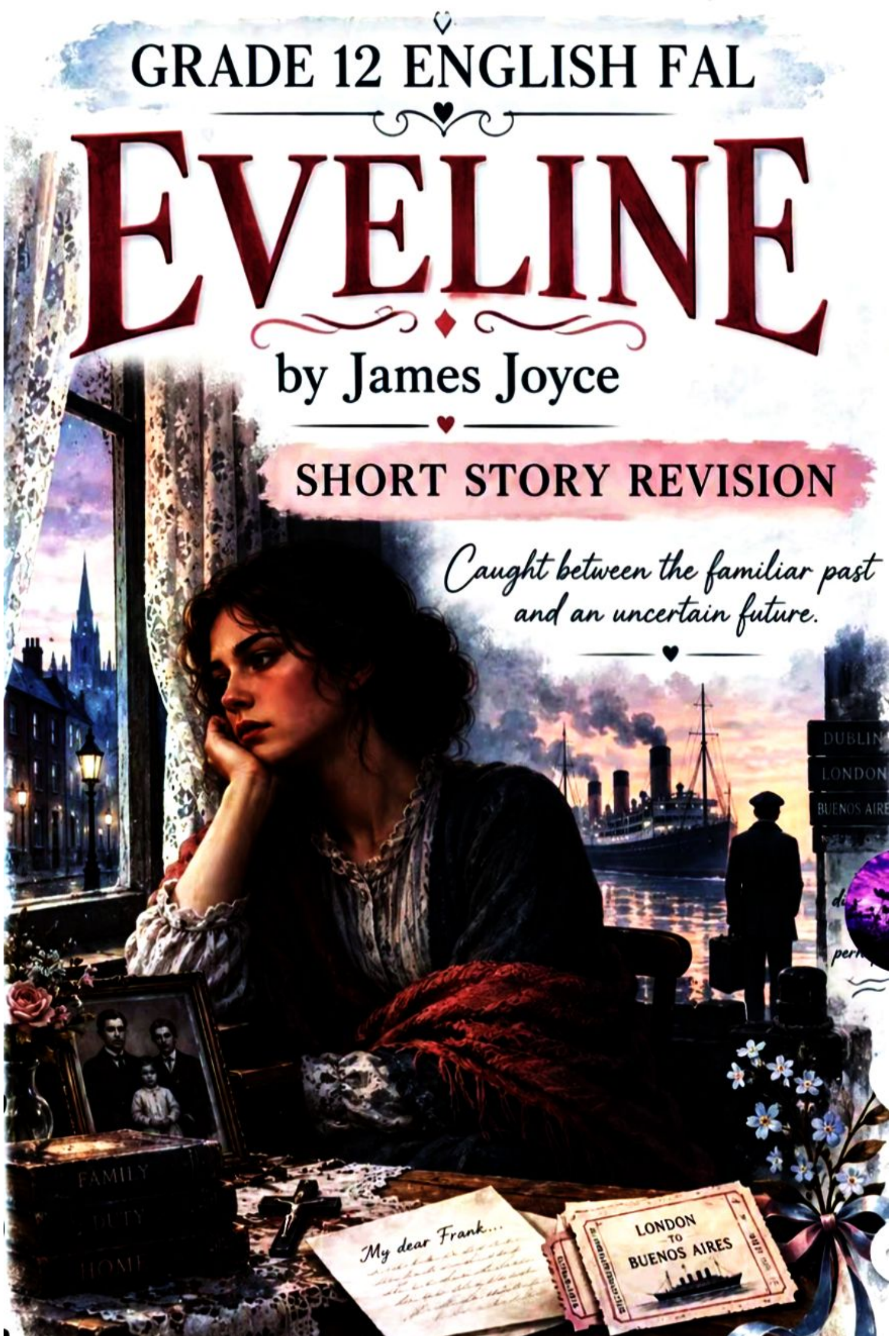
GRADE 12 ENGLISH FAL

EVELINE

by James Joyce

SHORT STORY REVISION

*Caught between the familiar past
and an uncertain future.*

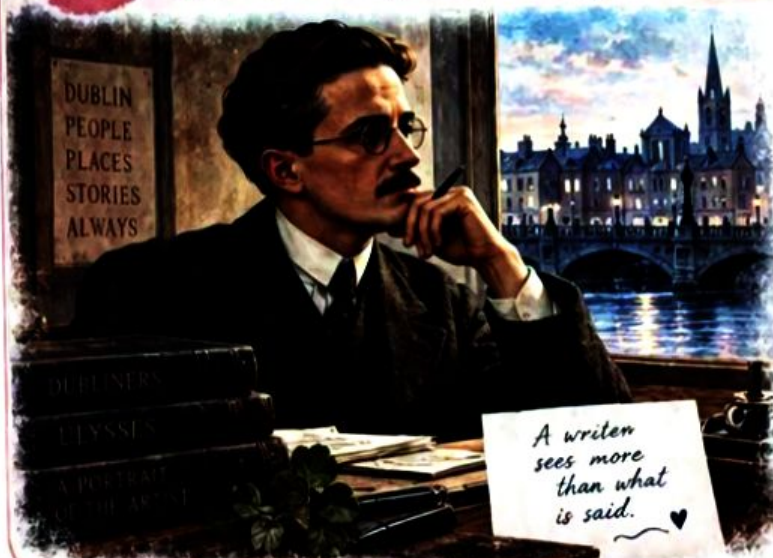


Ordinary
lives can hold
the deepest
drama.

EVELINE

AUTHOR & STORY OVERVIEW

1 ABOUT JAMES JOYCE



- Irish novelist and short-story writer, born in Dublin in 1882.
- Although he lived much of his adult life in continental Europe, Dublin remained central to his writing.
- He was an important figure in the development of twentieth-century modernist literature.
- “Eveline” appears in his short-story collection “Dubliners”.
- His best-known novel is “Ulysses”.
- He died in 1941.

2 STORY OVERVIEW



Eveline is a young Dublin woman who sits at a window remembering her childhood and considering a life-changing decision. She plans to leave her difficult home and sail to Buenos Aires with Frank, a kind sailor who promises marriage, love and a new life. At home she faces hard work, financial responsibility and fear of her violent father, yet she also feels bound by familiar memories and a promise made to her dying mother. At the harbour, fear and duty overwhelm her. Eveline freezes, cannot board the ship and allows Frank to leave without her.

KEY CONTEXT:

The story is set in early-twentieth-century Dublin, Ireland. Many Irish people emigrated to seek better opportunities, while young women often faced strong family, religious and social expectations.

POINT OF VIEW:

Third-person limited — the narrator tells the story through Eveline’s thoughts, memories and feelings.



Dublin
lives in
memory.

EVELINE

PLOT SUMMARY

Same streets.
Different
dreams.

3 / 11

DUBLIN
PEOPLE
PLACES
STORIES
ALWAYS

1



EXPOSITION

Eveline sits at a window as evening falls. Tired and surrounded by familiar objects, she remembers her childhood, her dead mother and the changes in her Dublin neighbourhood.

Familiar
streets.
familiar
memories.

2



HER DIFFICULT LIFE

She works at the Stores, gives her wages to her father, manages the home and cares for two younger children. She fears her father's threats and violence.

Duty
over
dreams.

3



HOPE OF ESCAPE

Frank, a kind sailor, promises to marry Eveline and take her to Buenos Aires. She imagines respect, love and a safer new life, but her father forbids the relationship.

A new
life
is possible.

4



INNER CONFLICT

Eveline weighs both sides: the suffering of home against its shelter, familiarity and memories. A street organ reminds her of her promise to keep the family together.

Two
lives
one heart.

5



CLIMAX AT THE HARBOUR

At the North Wall, the ship is ready to leave. Eveline prays for guidance, but the sea and unknown future fill her with terror. She grips the iron railing and cannot follow Frank.

So near
and yet
so far.

6



RESOLUTION

Frank boards the ship without her. Eveline remains motionless, and the face shows no love, farewell or recognition. Fear and duty have paralysed her.

The ship
leaves.
She stays.

PLOT MOVEMENT:

Memory → Hope → Doubt → Fear → Paralysis → Lost opportunity

TURNING POINT:

At the harbour, Eveline chooses the familiar suffering of home over the uncertain promise of escape.

SAME
STREETS
NEW
QUESTIONS

Choices shape our stories.

Dublin
lives in
memory.

EVELINE

People
shape our
choices.

4 / 11

CHARACTERS & CHARACTERISATION



So many
memories
hold her
here.

1 EVELINE

A young Dublin woman, over nineteen, who works and carries the responsibility of her home. She longs for escape with Frank but is bound by fear, memory and duty. At the harbour she becomes emotionally paralysed.

A life
between
dreams
and
duty.

HARDWORKING • DUTIFUL • FEARFUL • INDECISIVE



TO
BUENOS AIRES
A BRIGHTER
TOMORROW

2 FRANK

A kind, manly and open-hearted sailor. He entertains Eveline with stories of distant places and offers marriage and a new life in Buenos Aires.

Different
seas.
a kinder
tomorrow.

KIND • ADVENTUROUS • HOPEFUL



MY
HOUSE
MY RULES

3 EVELINE'S FATHER

A controlling and threatening man who takes Eveline's wages and quarrels about money. He forbids her relationship with Frank, although he occasionally shows kindness.

A harder
side of
home.

VIOLENT • CONTROLLING • UNPREDICTABLE



A LIFE
OF SACRIFICE
LIVES ON

4 EVELINE'S MOTHER

She is dead before the story begins. Her life of sacrifice and suffering becomes a warning to Eveline, yet Eveline's promise to keep the family together also prevents her escape.

Her
memory
still
speaks.

SACRIFICING • SUFFERING • INFLUENTIAL

SUPPORTING CHARACTERS



Harry

Eveline's surviving brother; works away from home and sends money when he can.



Ernest

Eveline's favourite brother; his death leaves her without protection.



Miss Gavan

Eveline's unpleasant supervisor at the Stores.



The two younger children

Depend on Eveline for meals, schooling and care.



CHARACTER CONTRAST:

Frank represents movement and a new future; Eveline's father and her mother's memory pull her back toward home and duty.

CHARACTER ARC: EVELINE

Hopeful
dreamer

→ anxious
decision-maker

→ paralysed
observer

The same girl. A different tomorrow?



Characters bring her world to life.

Dublin
lives in
memory.

EVELINE

SETTING & CONFLICT

Same streets.
Different
dreams.

5 / 11

DUBLIN
PEOPLE
PLACES
STORIES
ALWAYS

A city
of familiar
streets...

SETTING

Places shape people...
and
unfulfilled
dreams.



1 DUBLIN, IRELAND

The story is set in early-twentieth-century Dublin. The familiar streets are linked to Eveline's childhood memories, family history and limited opportunities.



2 THE FAMILY HOME

The dusty room offers shelter and familiarity, but it also represents hard work, fear, responsibility and the unhappy life of Eveline's mother.



3 THE STORES

Eveline works under the unpleasant Miss Gavan. Her job adds to her exhaustion and makes escape seem attractive.



4 NORTH WALL HARBOUR

The harbour is the final boundary between staying in Dublin and sailing to Buenos Aires. Here Eveline's fear becomes paralysis.

Different
forces pull
her apart.

CONFLICT

Hope...
but fear
holds her.

1 PERSON vs SELF



Eveline is torn between her desire for freedom and her fear of the unknown. This is the story's central conflict.

2 PERSON vs PERSON



Eveline fears her threatening father, who controls money and forbids her relationship with Frank.

3 PERSON vs DUTY



Her promise to her dying mother and her responsibility for the younger children make her feel guilty about leaving.

4 PAST vs FUTURE



Memories and familiar objects pull Eveline toward home, while Frank and Buenos Aires represent change and possibility.



THE WINDOW:

Eveline can see the world outside, but she remains inside — observing life instead of acting.

CENTRAL CONFLICT:

Eveline's hope for a new life struggles against fear, memory and duty.

Choices shape our stories.

Dublin
lives in
memory.

EVELINE

Same streets.
Different
dreams.

6 / 11

DUBLIN
PEOPLE
PLACES
STORIES
ALWAYS

TITLE ANALYSIS & SYMBOLISM

WHY IS THE TITLE SUITABLE?

1 FOCUS ON THE PROTAGONIST

The story is named after Eveline because every event is filtered through her thoughts, memories, fears and final decision.



2 AN INNER JOURNEY

The main action happens inside Eveline's mind as she weighs the familiar past against an uncertain future.

3 IDENTITY & CHOICE

The title makes us focus on Eveline as an individual, yet family duty and fear prevent her from choosing a life for herself.

4 AN ORDINARY LIFE

Using only her name suggests that Eveline represents many ordinary people who dream of change but feel unable to act.

The simple title places Eveline — and her struggle to control her own life — at the centre of the story.

IMPORTANT SYMBOLS

1 THE WINDOW



She watches the outside world while remaining inside. It symbolises separation, passivity and her inability to act.

2 DUST & DUSTY CRETONNE



The dust suggests neglect, stagnation and a life that has remained unchanged for too long.

3 THE STREET ORGAN



Its music recalls her mother's suffering and Eveline's promise to keep the family together.

4 THE SEA



It first suggests freedom and travel, but at the harbour it becomes frightening and seems likely to 'drown' her.

5 THE SHIP



It symbolises movement, escape and the new life Eveline loses when she fails to board.

6 THE IRON RAILING



Eveline grips it at the harbour. It represents the emotional prison of fear, memory and duty.

TITLE MESSAGE:

Eveline's greatest obstacle is not the distance to Buenos Aires — it is the fear within her.

Choices shape our stories.

Dublin
lives in
memory.

EVELINE

LITERARY DEVICES

Same streets.
Different
dreams.

7 / 11

DUBLIN
PEOPLE
PLACES
STORIES
ALWAYS

1 PERSONIFICATION

EXAMPLE:

"She sat at the window watching the evening invade the avenue."

EFFECT:

Evening is given the human ability to invade. This creates a dark, threatening atmosphere and suggests that time is closing in on Eveline.



2 SENSORY IMAGERY

EXAMPLE:

"The odour of dusty cretonne" and footsteps "clacking" and "crunching".

EFFECT:

The smells and sounds make the Dublin setting vivid and show how strongly Eveline is attached to familiar details.



3 METAPHOR

EXAMPLE:

"A bell clanged upon her heart."

EFFECT:

The imagined bell represents a sudden shock of fear and emotional alarm as Eveline faces the final decision.



4 REPETITION

EXAMPLE:

"No! No! No!"

EFFECT:

The repeated exclamation emphasises Eveline's panic, desperation and complete refusal to board the ship.



5 SIMILE

EXAMPLE:

"Her eyes gave him no sign of love or farewell or recognition" and she is described as "passive, like a helpless animal".

EFFECT:

The comparison shows that fear has removed her ability to act or communicate, leaving her powerless.



6 FORESHADOWING

EXAMPLE:

"Her time was running out but she continued to sit by the window."

EFFECT:

Her delay predicts that she will fail to act and lose the opportunity to leave with Frank.



BONUS DEVICE — CONTRAST

The familiar, restrictive Dublin home is contrasted with the unknown but hopeful life in Buenos Aires. This sharpens Eveline's inner conflict.

DUBLIN
BUENOS AIRES

EXAM FORMULA: Identify the device + quote the example + explain its effect in context.

Choices shape our stories.

Dublin
lives in
memory.

EVELINE

tone & mood

Same streets.
Different
dreams.

8 / 11

DUBLIN
PEOPLE
PLACES
STORIES
ALWAYS

♥ **tone** = the writer's attitude

♥ **mood** = the feeling created in the reader

♥ tone ♥

1 REFLECTIVE

The narration follows Eveline as she looks back on childhood, family life, Frank and the choices before her.



2 SYMPATHETIC

Joyce presents Eveline as a tired young woman carrying adult responsibilities and living under her father's control.



3 MELANCHOLIC

Memories of death, change, lost happiness and her mother's suffering create a deeply sad tone.



4 TENSE & URGENT

As departure approaches, references to time, bells, crowds, the ship and Frank's calls increase the pressure.



♥ mood ♥

1 NOSTALGIC & SOMBRE

Eveline remembers childhood games, her dead mother and a neighbourhood that has changed.



2 HOPEFUL & ROMANTIC

Frank's kindness and the imagined life in Buenos Aires offer love, respect and escape.



3 ANXIOUS & FRIGHTENING

At the harbour, the crowd sways, the ship whistles and the sea seems ready to drown her.



4 BLEAK & DISTURBING

Eveline remains frozen as Frank leaves. Her expression shows no love, farewell or recognition.



♥ mood movement ♥

Nostalgia → Hope → Doubt → Panic → Paralysis → Emptiness

Some
dreams
never leave.

♥ **EXAM TIP:** Name the tone or mood, then support it with Eveline's memories, thoughts, actions or the setting.

♥ Choices shape our stories. ♥



EVELINE

IMPORTANT QUOTATIONS

A Small Girl / 11
A Big World

"Dublin still lives in her."

1

QUOTATION

"Everything changes. Now she was going to go away like the others, to leave her home."

VOICE: Narrator through Eveline's thoughts

MEANING: Eveline recognises that change is unavoidable and initially believes she will also move forward.



2

QUOTATION

"She had consented to go away, to leave her home. Was that wise?"

VOICE: Narrator through Eveline's thoughts

MEANING: The rhetorical question reveals her uncertainty and begins the struggle between escape and security.



3

QUOTATION

"She wanted to live. Why should she be unhappy? She had a right to happiness."

VOICE: Narrator through Eveline's thoughts

MEANING: Eveline briefly claims her right to love, freedom and a better future.



4

QUOTATION

"Escape! She must escape! Frank would save her."

VOICE: Narrator through Eveline's thoughts

MEANING: The exclamations show desperation and her belief that Frank offers rescue from her mother's fate.



5

QUOTATION

"All the seas of the world tumbled about her heart. He would drown her."

VOICE: Narrator through Eveline's thoughts

MEANING: The sea changes from a symbol of freedom into a terrifying unknown that overwhelms her.



6

QUOTATION

"Her eyes gave him no sign of love or farewell or recognition."

VOICE: Narrator

MEANING: The final image shows complete emotional paralysis. Eveline cannot act, speak or connect with Frank.



QUOTES TO REMEMBER: CHANGE • DOUBT • HAPPINESS • ESCAPE • FEAR • PARALYSIS



EXAM TIP:

Introduce the quote, place it in context and explain what it reveals about Eveline or a theme.



Stories Inspire Change



EVELINE

VOCABULARY BUILDER

A Small
10 / 11
A Big
World

"Dublin
still lives
in her."

1

CRETONNE

A strong, heavy cotton fabric often used for curtains or furniture.



2

CINDER

A small piece of partly burnt coal or wood.



3

HARMONIUM

A small keyboard instrument that produces sound when air is pumped through it.



4

PALPITATIONS

A noticeably fast, strong or irregular heartbeat, often caused by fear or anxiety.



5

SQUABBLE

A noisy argument about something unimportant or minor.



6

ELATED

Extremely happy, excited or proud.



7

UNACCUSTOMED

Not familiar or not usual for a person.



8

COURTING

Having a romantic relationship with the intention of marriage.



9

FERVENT

Showing strong, sincere and passionate feeling.



10

ANGUISH

Severe emotional pain, fear or distress.



USEFUL STORY TERMS:

QUAY — a strong platform beside water where ships load and unload.



EMIGRATION — leaving one's country to settle in another country.



CAN YOU USE IT?

At the quay, Eveline feels intense anguish and cannot board the ship.



Stories Inspire Change



EVELINE

NSC-STYLE REVISION ACTIVITY



Read the short extract and answer ALL the questions.
Number your answers correctly and use full sentences where required.

**TOTAL:
18 MARKS**

“ Frank seized her hand.
‘Come!’
All the seas of the world tumbled about her heart. He would drown her. Her hands
clutched the iron in frenzy.
‘No! No! No!’
Her eyes gave him no sign of love or farewell or recognition. ”



1.1 Where does this scene take place? (1)

1.2 Where does Frank plan to take Eveline?

- A Melbourne
- B London
- C Buenos Aires
- D Canada

(1)

1.3 Identify the man who calls Eveline to board the ship. (1)

1.4 Give TWO reasons why Eveline originally wanted to leave home. (2)

1.5 State ONE character trait shown by Eveline when she clutches the iron railing.
Support your answer. (2)

1.6 Explain the meaning and effect of the metaphor, “All the seas of the world tumbled about her heart.” (2)

1.7 What does the iron railing symbolise in the story? (2)

1.8 Explain the irony in the ending of the story. (2)

1.9 Discuss why the title “Eveline” is suitable. Refer to the story in your answer. (3)

1.10 Eveline is responsible for losing her opportunity for a new life. Do you agree?
Substantiate your answer. (2)

REMEMBER: One mark usually requires one clear fact. Support longer answers with evidence from the story.



Time
Changes...

TOTAL: 18



Stories
Inspire

1. FORBIDDEN LOVE – Can Themba

- ♥ **WHAT?** The story focuses on love that is restricted by society. The characters' feelings clash with the expectations, prejudices and rules of society.
- ★ **THEMES:** Forbidden love; prejudice; discrimination; love vs society; sacrifice; human dignity.
- ⚡ **CONFLICT:** Individual vs society. Their love is not accepted because of social divisions.
- 🔑 **TITLE SIGNIFICANCE:** "Forbidden" means not allowed. The love is considered unacceptable or prohibited by society.
- 💡 **EXAM TIP:** Don't just say "their love is forbidden". Explain WHY and by WHOM it is forbidden.



2. REJECTION – Mariama Bâ

- ♥ **WHAT?** The story explores the emotional consequences of rejection in a relationship and its effect on a person's dignity, identity and self-worth.
- ★ **THEMES:** Rejection; women and society; gender inequality; self-respect; relationships; independence.
- ⚡ **CONFLICT:** Relationship conflict and the emotional pain of rejection. Also, internal conflict – the character must decide how to respond.
- 🔑 **TITLE SIGNIFICANCE:** The title captures the central experience – being unwanted or pushed aside.
- 💡 **MESSAGE:** Rejection can hurt deeply, but a person's worth should not depend on whether another person accepts them.



3. EVELINE – James Joyce

- 👤 **WHO?** Eveline, a young woman in Dublin, Ireland.
- ♥ **WHAT?** She has a chance to escape her difficult life with Frank and start a new life, but she cannot bring herself to leave.
- ★ **THEMES:** Fear of change; family responsibility; escape; freedom; duty; memory; paralysis; past vs future.
- ⚡ **CONFLICT:** Eveline vs herself. She wants change but is afraid to leave everything familiar behind.
- 🕒 **THE BIG MOMENT:** At the end, she should leave with Frank, but she becomes emotionally "paralysed" – she cannot go.
- 🔑 **TITLE:** The simple title "Eveline" focuses on her thoughts, memories, fears and decision.



4. A BAG OF SWEETS – Agnes Sam

- ♥ **WHAT?** The story focuses on childhood experiences while exposing issues of identity, race, belonging and discrimination. The "bag of sweets" has deeper meaning.
- ★ **THEMES:** Childhood; identity; belonging; racial prejudice; family; discrimination.
- 🔑 **SYMBOLISM:** The sweets represent more than just candy – they reveal relationships, society and the prejudice in it. An innocent childhood experience exposes discrimination.
- 💡 **EXAM TIP:** When asked about symbolism, use this formula: OBJECT → WHAT IT REPRESENTS → CONNECTION TO STORY.



5. CLASS ACT – Namhla Tshisana

- ♥ **WHAT?** The story deals with identity, social class, appearances and how people behave towards others. It challenges us to question how easily people judge others.
- ★ **THEMES:** Appearance vs reality; social class; identity; judgement; human relationships; personal growth.
- 🔑 **TITLE SIGNIFICANCE:** "Class" can mean: a school class / social class / behaving with dignity. "Act" can mean: pretending / behaviour / presenting yourself in a certain way.
- 💡 **EXAM TIP:** Discuss the DOUBLE MEANING of the title for full marks.



6. THE WIND AND THE BOY – Bessie Head

- ♥ **WHAT?** The story explores the life of a boy in an African community and the relationship between people, tradition, community and change.
- ★ **THEMES:** African community life; tradition; childhood/youth; nature; loss; change and its consequences; community relationships.
- 🔑 **SYMBOLISM OF THE WIND:** More than part of the setting. It creates mood, atmosphere, tension, foreshadowing and shows the relationship between humans and nature.
- 💡 **FORESHADOWING:** Clues in the story that suggest something may happen later.



7. TRIUMPH IN THE FACE OF ADVERSITY – Kedibone Seku

- 🔑 **TITLE MEANING:** Triumph = victory / success. Adversity = hardship, difficulty, suffering. Triumph in the face of adversity = Achieving success despite serious difficulties.
- ♥ **WHAT?** The story emphasises resilience and perseverance. The character experiences challenges but does not let them determine the outcome of their life.
- ★ **THEMES:** Perseverance; triumph; adversity; hope; determination; overcoming obstacles; courage.
- 🔑 **TITLE SIGNIFICANCE:** Adversity → Struggle → Response → Triumph (hardship → obstacles → perseverance → overcome → success).
- 💡 **MESSAGE:** Your circumstances may make your journey difficult, but perseverance can help you overcome.



8. THE GIRL WHO CAN – Ama Ata Aidoo

- 👤 **WHO?** Adjoo, a young girl in Ghana.
- ♥ **WHAT?** Adjoo's thin legs are criticised by her grandmother (Nana), who believes a woman's body should prepare her for childbirth and traditional roles.
- ➔ **BUT THEN...** Adjoo's thin legs become a source of strength and achievement through running.
- ★ **THEMES:** Female identity; gender expectations; empowerment; tradition vs modern thinking; stereotypes; growing up; ability and achievement.
- 🔑 **TITLE SIGNIFICANCE:** The title emphasises ability. People focus on what Adjoo cannot do, but she proves SHE CAN. Her abilities challenge assumptions about her.

