

EXERCISES

Vocabulary Work

Look back at the 'Dictionary Words' in this book. Make sure that you know the meaning of all the words.

1 Look at these words:

assistant treated malaria earrings desire candles

Which word means the same as:

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| a jewellery a person wears in their ears? | d burning sticks of wax? |
| b sexual feelings for another person? | e a helper, often in a shop? |
| c disease common in hot countries? | f behaved towards? |

2 Write two sentences

a about Moses. Use these words: *houseboy/hut/the bush*

b about Mary and Dick. Use these words: *bees/beehives/turkeys/tobacco*.

3 Write five more sentences with these words, showing their meaning clearly:

a *sergeant* **b** *missus* **c** *frost* **d** *weapon* **e** *knowledge*

Comprehension

Chapters 1-2

- 1 Who killed Mary Turner?
- 2 How old was Mary when she decided to find someone to marry?

Chapters 3-4

- 3 What does Dick's farmhouse remind her of?
- 4 Describe the way Mary treats the servants.

Chapters 5-6

- 5 Why does Mary hate the native women?

6 Why does she whip the farm worker?

Chapters 7-8

7 What makes Mary depressed?

8 How does Moses behave towards Mary?

Chapters 9-10

9 What surprises Charlie about Mary and Moses?

10 Why is Tony afraid of Moses?

11 Explain:

a why Mary married Dick Turner,

b why Dick Turner married Mary.

12 When Mary first took charge of the workers, they were not in the fields so she went to look for them. Describe what she saw and how she felt as she entered their village.

13 On her last night at the farm, Mary could not sleep. 'She knew she would have to go out and meet him.' Who did she meet? Describe in your own words what happened.

14 Describe and comment on the relationship between Dick Turner and Charlie Slatter.

Discussion

1 The newspaper reported that Mary was killed during a robbery. What does this tell us about white society? What other facts support your view?

2 Why do *you* think Moses killed Mary? Why did he not run away?

Writing

1 Describe the house in which the Turners lived. What changes did Mary make to it over the years?

2 Compare the life Mary led in the town with her life-style on the farm.

3 Which of the characters did you feel most sympathetic towards? Explain why.

Review

- 1 The reader is told the end of the story first. Is this a good way to begin a book? What did you think about while you were reading the book?
- 2 'Doris Lessing paints a picture of life in Africa that can only be understood by white people who have lived there.' How true do you think this is?