Investigate!
*Tess of the d’Urbervilles: Volume I (chapters 1-20)*

**Hardy’s Wessex**
- What is the significance of horses in *Tess*?
  - What power do the people who own them have?
- Are *Tess*’s journeys on foot happy?
- When *Tess* uses a horse to travel, how often does she achieve her destination?
- Two places lie outside South Wessex in the story: Sandbourne and Stonehenge
  - What do they represent?

**Chapter 1**
- First chapters are always very important and need studying closely.
  - What are your first impressions of the characters in chapter 1?
  - What events might be anticipated?
- What is the effect of the Bible quotation?
- Hardy may be thinking of some of his own forbears as having done well here, for example, Captain Hardy who was with Lord Nelson at Nelson’s death
  - How does *Tess*’s father react to the news of his more famous ancestors?
- What does this chapter tell us about the English class system and nineteenth century class consciousness?
- How does the chapter lead us in to the story?
  - Think in terms of plot, setting and character.

**Chapter 2**
- From what perspectives does Hardy describe the Vale of Blackmoor?
  - What are the significant features of each perspective?
- What do you understand by fertility?
  - What seem to be the most significant features of the Vale?
- Is there any significance in Hardy mentioning the legend of the White Hart?
- What are your first impressions of *Tess*?
  - It would seem she is 16 or perhaps just 17 at this stage. Do you feel able to visualise her, or do you rather get an idea of her femininity?
  - Are the narrative descriptions more sensuous, psychological, or moral in their emphasis?
    - Are any parts of her body emphasised more than others?
- What is our first impression of Angel?
  - What associations do you have with his name?
- Why does Hardy introduce comments from Angel’s brothers?
- Angel and *Tess* almost meet
  - What do we anticipate from this?
- *Tess*’s father appears briefly in the chapter
  - What point does the narrative seem to be making?
- How does the chapter convey the idea of change in what could otherwise seem a timeless and ideal pastoral world?
- Hardy uses colour symbolism frequently:
  - List the colours described in this chapter, especially those applied to *Tess*. 
Investigate!  
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**Chapter 3**  
Hardy focuses on the social dimensions of Tess's family  
- List some examples of the family responsibility and organisation Tess undertakes.  
- Hardy stresses the use of dialect and received pronunciation in Tess's family  
  - What points do you think he is making?  
- How does the modern sit with the traditional in the chapter?  
- Compare the folk-song at the beginning of the chapter and Hardy's reference to Wordsworth's poem at the end  
  - With which does he seem more sympathetic, and why?  
- Think about the metaphor he uses of ‘the Durbeyfield ship’  
  - What is the force of the image?  
- What further do we learn about Tess in this chapter?  
  - How does it complement what we learned from the previous chapter?

**Chapter 4**  
- Colour symbolism plays an important part in the novel  
  - Begin to construct notes on the colours Hardy uses in his descriptions of people and episodes  
- Look at the description of Marlott  
  - What does its layout suggest about the sort of place it is?  
- In what ways is the thinking behind Joan’s ‘project’ naive?  
- Examine the conversation Abraham and Tess have together  
  - What does it show of Tess’s philosophy of life?  
- What perspective does it introduce?  
  - Do you think Hardy putting his own views into Tess’s mouth?  
- How else does Hardy show Tess’ spiritual side?  
- In many novels, certain episodes are used to prefigure significant happenings later on  
  - What does Prince’s death prefigure?  
- Mark the phrases that show Tess’ sense of responsibility  
  - How might this sense of responsibility influence her decisions?

**Chapter 5**  
- How does Hardy use geography to describe Tess’s awareness of the world?  
- What is Tess’s second journey a journey towards?  
- Hardy makes a great deal about layers of time  
  - Collect together the references to time and history in this chapter and arrange into:  
    - Pre historical time  
    - Historical time  
    - Modern time (modernity)  
  - In what ways does Hardy suggest modernity and falsity run together?  
- Compare the names Durbeyfield and d’Urberville  
  - Can you see anything significant in the differences?  
- What parts of Tess’s and Alec's bodies are described?  
  - What is the significance?  
- How does Hardy make us aware that Alec is a threat to Tess?
Investigate!
Tess of the d’Urbervilles: Volume I (chapters 1-20)

- Notice Tess went about ‘as in a dream’
  - What does this suggest to you about Tess’s state of mind?
- Look at Hardy’s comments in the last few paragraphs
  - Hardy often does stop to comment on his story, nearly always at the end of a chapter. Consider:
    - What the remarks say about Hardy’s method of plot construction
    - How they help readers to anticipate how the plot will develop
    - How this anticipation helps create a sense of impending doom or tragedy
  - From these remarks, does Hardy seem to believe in progress?
- Think about the phrase ‘not by a certain other man’
  - Who would be meant here?
  - Does he actually turn out to be the ‘exact and true one’?

- Chapter 6
  - What do you think is ‘prefigurative’ about the rose-thorns piercing Tess’s chin?
  - What is it that makes Tess so indecisive?
  - Why is Joan described as ‘witless’?
  - In what ways does Hardy continue to undermine the d’Urbervilles’ credibility?

- Chapter 7
  - List the references in this chapter to margins and borders
    - Which are symbolic?

- Pick out words and phrases that have to do with passivity
  - Does Hardy seem to suggest this is a dangerous attitude?
- A great deal is made about the clothes Tess and Alec are wearing
  - What do you think Hardy is trying to establish?
- What do you think are Tess’s ‘bitter sentiments’ that she does not utter?
- From whose perspective do we see much of the chapter?
  - What is the effect of Hardy shifting the perspective?
  - What would you say are the ultimate failures of Tess’s parents towards her?

- Chapter 8
  - What could you see the bird’s eye view at the beginning of the chapter as symbolising?
  - ’It was my fate’:
    - Is it really ‘fate’ or is it Alec’s character?
      - What does the whole chapter show us of Alec’s character?
  - How does Hardy create a sense of danger for Tess?
  - Discuss the meaning of the sentence: ‘This dressing her up so prettily by her mother had been to lamentable purpose’?
  - Hardy writes that Tess was ‘hardly yet aware of her own modesty’:
    - How does his description stand in opposition to what Alec thinks of ‘cottage girls’?
  - How physically possible is it to undo a kiss?
    - How does this attempt anticipate other acts of Tess later on?
Investigate!
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• What is the implication behind Tess agreeing to ride with Alec, then refusing to?
  • Is there an inner conflict, and if so, what exactly is it?
    • How does this situation anticipate future events?

❖ Chapter 9
• Why does Tess have misgivings when she hears Mrs d’Urberville is blind?
• List the different ways in which Hardy shows Tess’s powerlessness?
• What adjectives would you use to describe Mrs d’Urberville’s relationship with her son?
• How would you characterise Tess and Alec’s relationship?

❖ Chapter 10
• Compare the description of the villagers at the beginning of the chapter with that at the end
  • Do you see any significant difference in Hardy’s attitude towards them in the two descriptions?
  • Can you account for any such difference?
• The poet Wordsworth had a great admiration for country people as being close to nature, a closeness which gave them a certain ‘sublimity’
  • How does Hardy depict them in terms of their sublimity?
• Why do you think Hardy uses so many classical mythological references in his descriptions of the barn dance and walk home?
  • N.B. Make sure you understand who Pan and Dionysius are
• Compare the barn dance here with the club walking dance in chapter 2.
  • What significant differences do you see?
• Examine Tess’s isolation
  • What causes it?
• Is there any significance in the nicknames given to the two Darch girls?
• What causes Tess to accept Alec’s help at the third offer?

❖ Chapter 11
• Gather up all the references to Tess’s powerlessness.
  • Are they balanced by anything that suggests she has any control?
• List the geographical features that act as symbols
  • What do they symbolise?
• Look at Tess’s behaviour towards Alec
  • Does Hardy suggest she is actively encouraging or discouraging him?
• How is Tess described physically?
  • Look at the colours and parts of the body described
• On this third journey, how is Tess’s vulnerability brought out and her danger?
• Look at Hardy’s comments at the end of the chapter
  • Collect words that have to do with higher powers
    • Do they suggest protection, enmity or indifference?
  • To what extent is Hardy suggesting some external force is to blame and to what extent Alec himself?
  • Does he ever suggest Tess must bear some blame?
Investigate!  
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- 'There lay the pity of it.'  
  - Do we know what is to be pitied?

**Chapter 12**
- Look at the journey home:  
  - Gather up words of ascent and descent  
  - How does Hardy characterise this journey?  
  - How does it compare with previous journeys?
- List the colours mentioned  
  - Can you see any significant patterns?
- Why is the landscape 'terribly' beautiful to Tess?
- How does Hardy describe Tess's behaviour and attitude when she meets Alec again?  
  - What are the biggest differences from her previous encounters?
- Do we get any clues to the sort of relationship Tess and Alec had over the past few weeks?
- Look at the condemnation and blame Tess is given  
  - How much is given by people and how much is self-condemnation?  
    - Which is worse for Tess?
- How does Tess defend herself from others' condemnation?  
  - Are we sympathetic to her reasons?
- What is the significance of her mother's final remark?

**Chapter 13**
- Go through the chapter and list words and phrases that show Tess's isolation  
  - How does Hardy show Tess is living on the margins or borders of her society?
- Is this isolation self-induced or the result of society ostracising her?
- What inner resources does Tess seem to have?  
  - What hinders her from drawing upon them?
- Explain the sentences beginning:  
  - 'She had no fear of the shadows...'  
  - 'A wet day was the expression....'
- Do we believe Hardy when he says Tess's feelings of guilt have come from social convention?  
  - If not, where else might they have come from?
- Should a novelist just tell us about important states of mind of his main characters, or should he actually show it?  
  - Does Hardy really show us that Tess is not a 'figure of Guilt', or just tell us?

**Chapter 14**
- Hardy delays introducing Tess in this chapter.  
  - What does he open the chapter with?
  - What is the effect of delaying Tess's appearance?
  - Is the introduction of Tess's baby surprising?
- Examine words and phrases that suggest mechanisation.  
  - To what extent is Tess included in this language?
- How does Hardy distinguish between the men and women labourers?  
  - How do the labourers relate to Tess?
  - How does she relate to them?
Investigate!

Tess of the d’Urbervilles: Volume I (chapters 1-20)

- Pick out the colour words
  - Do you notice any significance?
- Pick out words and phrases that suggest borders and marginalisation
  - In what way are these words connected with victimisation and entrapment?
- In ch. 10, Tess is described as 'on the momentary threshold of womanhood'. She is now 18, an age when many girls did get married and have babies.
  - Why do you think Hardy insists she is still a girl?
- How are Tess's younger siblings described?
- What does Hardy achieve in the baptism scene?
- In what way is formal religion characterised in the chapter?
- What qualities does Tess display in the chapter?
- Hardy suggests Tess has 'a slight incautiousness of character'
  - Is this fair?
- Is Hardy laughing a little at Tess when he mentions the marmalade jar at the end?

**Chapter 15**

- What is Hardy's attitude about learning through experience?
  - Does Hardy make it sound possible that Tess can recover from her bad experience?
  - In the phrase 'but for the world's opinion', which world is Hardy talking about?
    - Are you inclined to believe him?
- Weigh Tess's thoughts of death against her hope of something springing from working near to the d’Urbervilles
  - Does one outweigh the other?
  - Are they passing moods or real emotional attitudes?
- Hardy is very interested in Tess crossing various borders
  - What border does she finally cross here?
    - What has been the crucial factor to thrust her over?
  - Collect together references to memory and bygones.
    - What questions does Hardy shape from them?
    - What sort of answers can we anticipate?

**Chapter 16**

- What does Hardy suggest about this new journey in terms of:
  - Previous journeys?
  - Tess's emotions and attitudes?
  - What she sees on the way?
- Collect Hardy's comments throughout the chapter that suggest Tess's absence or presence will not be noticed
  - How does this stand in contrast to our seeing this new landscape through Tess's eyes?
- Compare the two valleys that Hardy mentions
  - In what ways is the contrast symbolic?
- Compare the bird’s-eye and the worm’s-eye view of the Frome Valley
  - What significant differences are there?
- As if you were a film director, mark the chapter with the different types of camera shots
you would use to represent the different perspectives
Hardy conveys

- Look at Hardy’s comments about women. Discuss whether they are:
  - Sympathetic?
  - Patronising?
  - Chauvinistic?
    - Do you think Hardy’s attitudes are valid?
- Make notes on the colour symbolism in this chapter
- Note words that suggest fertility
  - Why should Hardy be stressing this?
- What to you are the most significant images in the chapter?
- Why does Hardy think that Tess is pagan at heart?

∆ Chapter 17

- What is the first impression Tess makes on the others?
  - How much of it is to do with her looks?
- What are the grounds for Tess’s optimism?
  - Do you think they are well-founded?
- Collect together the remarks about the past
  - Does Hardy seem to view the past positively?

∆ Chapter 18

- Look at Hardy’s description of Angel
  - How does the physical description give insight into Angel’s character?
- What changes in Angel’s character does Hardy suggest he has undergone?
- How does Hardy portray Angel as someone also on the margins of his society?
  - In what ways can he be compared to Alec and to Tess as outsiders to the farming community?
- What does Angel Clare’s name suggest symbolically?
- What is it about Tess that first draws Angel’s attention to her?
  - What, by contrast, does Alec first notice about her?
- What more do we learn about Tess’ spiritual experiences?
  - How is her ‘otherness’ highlighted?

∆ Chapter 19

- What do Tess and Angel notice about each other physically?
  - What attracts them to each other?
- Look carefully at the garden episode
  - How does Hardy present Angel to us?
  - How does Tess perceive him?
- What are Tess’ sensations at hearing and seeing him?
  - How does Hardy bring a double perspective to the scene?
- How does Angel undermine the authority of the dairy?
- What do these phrases mean:
  - ‘Tess's passing corporeal blight had been her mental harvest’?
  - ‘she little recked the strength of her own vitality’?
  - Does Hardy mean these ironically?
Investigate!  
*Tess of the d’Urbervilles: Volume I (chapters 1-20)*

- Give some illustrations of Tess's apparent pessimism
  - How deeply do you think she means them?
- Consider the views of history and the past that both Angel and Tess express
  - Can we anticipate future difficulty from them?

❖ **Chapter 20**
- How does Hardy continue to stress:
  - The fertility of the dairy and the surrounding countryside?
  - The dairy as ideal community?
- Examine again Hardy's use of borderline states of being. How does this apply to
  - The relationship of Angel and Tess?
  - The time of day when they are most together?
    - How does Hardy describe this early morning state?
    - What does he achieve by such detailed descriptions of the early light?
- Pick out words and phrases to show how Angel sees Tess.
  - How does Hardy produce tension for his readers regarding these perceptions of Angel?
- What are the implications for the novel of the phrase 'under an irresistible law'?
Chapter 21

- What purpose is served by introducing the butter-turning incident?
  - What does it show us about the community?
  - What does it show us about Tess?
- Look at the description of the sun and the bird song as examples of the pathetic fallacy
  - What does it show about Tess's emotional state?
  - How does this description compare to previous descriptions of sunrise and sunset?
- How does Hardy distinguish the three dairymaids?
  - In what ways are they all set apart from Tess?
  - What does the phrase 'more woman than either' mean?
  - What dilemma is Tess now faced with, having overheard the dairymaids' conversation?

Chapter 22

- What do you think is the point of this little episode?
  - Do you think the discovery of garlic is symbolic in any way?
- Compare Angel's attitude to the dairymaids with Alec's attitude to farm girls
  - Why is Tess so surprised at it?
  - How does it make her feel about Angel?
- Explain the term 'heroically' in this context.

Chapter 23

- With which earlier journey could the journey in chapter 23 be compared?
  - List the main similarities and differences
- Look at the various images of entrapment in the chapter
  - How do these images correlate with the clothes and social position of those concerned?
- Compare the way the four girls react to being carried by Angel
  - In what other ways is Hardy beginning to distinguish them?
- Explain the phrase 'there was an understanding between them'
- Hardy is building up a community of suffering within the larger dairy community
  - How does he set this smaller community apart from the larger?
  - What are the main features of the smaller community?
  - What words and phrases does Hardy use to characterise the girls' passion for Angel?
  - What is Tess's special 'thorny crown'?
  - Does she realise it?

Chapter 24

- Collect together words and phrases that suggest sexuality and sexual passion
  - What is Hardy seeking to emphasise with these terms?
- Do Angel and Tess have any control over their feelings or their behaviour at this stage?
• How does Hardy present the forces acting on them?
  ➢ How is the geography of place and time symbolic?
  ➢ What parts of Tess's body are emphasised?
    • How does this compare to similar attention given to her body previously?
    • Why does Hardy stress 'there was nothing ethereal about it'?
  ➢ Again, Hardy implicitly compares Angel's behaviour to Tess with Alec's
    • What are the differences?
  ➢ How serious is Angel about Tess?
    • What evidence do we have one way or the other?

❖ Chapter 25
  ➢ Explain 'feeling had smothered judgement that day'
  ➢ What does Angel feel it best to do now he has declared his love?
    • Does the reader get the sense that this will help the situation?
  ➢ Angel is shown as living between two worlds: that of the farm and that of his family
    • How do they contrast with each other?
    • Do we sense there is anything in common between them at all?
  ➢ Look at the paragraph beginning 'This consciousness...'
    • Is it Hardy or Angel who is commenting?
    • How does Angel's attitude to Tess differ from Alec's?

❖ Chapter 26
  ➢ What are Angel's main obstacles in persuading his parents that Tess would be a suitable wife?
  ➢ What does 'amid beliefs essentially demonistic' mean?
  ➢ Why does he not even mention Tess to his brothers?
  ➢ How does Angel explain how he and Tess have been brought together?
    • How clear is this explanation?
    • Is this explanation likely to appeal to his father?
  ➢ Look at the comments made about education and about women and class.
    • To what extent are they Angel's views and to what extent Hardy's?
    • How far do you think Angel is in danger of becoming Hardy's mouthpiece at times?
  ➢ What is Hardy's attitude to Mr. Clare?
Investigate!
*Tess of the d’Urbervilles: Volume II (chapters 21-39)*

- Why does Angel think he is more like his father than either of his brothers?
  - List the references in the chapter by which Hardy reminds us of Tess's past
  - What effect do these references have on the reader?

**Chapter 27**

- Collect together words and images to do with fertility
  - Compare these with similar words and phrases in chapter 20
    - What do you notice?
  - Compare Angel's approach to Talbothays with Tess's in chapter 16.
- What parts of Tess's body are emphasised?
  - What are the images Hardy uses of them?
  - What is their significance?
- Examine the sentence beginning 'It was a moment when a woman's soul....'
  - What does it mean?
  - Discuss whether you think there is a possibility of conflict between body and soul
  - What does the simile 'like a plant in too burning a sun' suggest of their relationship?
- Does Tess's inability to skim have any symbolic significance?
- What does the mention of Alec do to Tess?
  - Why do you think that Hardy introduces this note into the chapter?

**Chapter 28**

- Consider Angel. He has some experience and knowledge of women, but a little knowledge can be a dangerous thing
  - What is his experience 'great enough' for him to know?
  - What is his experience 'little enough' for him not to realise about Tess?
  - In what ways is this dangerous?
- Reflect on Tess. She is experiencing a conflict between natural instincts, the desire for a man, and her conscience
  - Trace the progress of this conflict through the chapter, perhaps as a graph
  - How does she try to resolve it?
  - Do we have any sense that she is in control of the outcome of the conflict?
    - Are there any significant words or phrases that are clues to this?
- In what way could it be said that nature is Fate here?
- In what other ways is it suggested Tess is changing as a result of her relationship with Angel?
- How is the landscape a projection of Tess's inner state?
  - What images do you find particularly powerful here?

**Chapter 29**

- Work out the parallels between the Jack Dollop story and Tess's situation
- Compare Alec and Angel in terms of their behaviour towards Tess, when Tess is forced to be always near them through her employment
• For all his sensitivities, is Angel being as predatory as Alec?
  ➢ How does Hardy handle the supposed 'day of truth' his readers were led to expect at the end of the previous chapter?
  ➢ Do we sense there will be a day of truth at all?
  ➢ Explain:
    • 'she coveted the recantation she feared'
    • 'our tremulous lives are so different from theirs'
  ➢ Trace the sequence of Tess's acquiescence to Angel.
  ➢ To what extent is Tess trapped?
  ➢ By what?
  ➢ Does Hardy really allow Tess any power over her own life at this stage?

**Chapter 30**

➢ Which previous journey would be the best one to compare this journey with?
  ➢ What would be the similarities and what the differences?
➢ List the images and symbols used by Hardy to describe the landscape and geographical features of the journey
  ➢ What sort of atmosphere do they produce?
  ➢ What can the reader discern in them?
➢ Look especially at the juxtaposition of the old house and the railway station
  ➢ What is Hardy saying about history and modernity, and how does this relate to Tess and Angel?
➢ Study the paragraph beginning 'Then there was a hissing of the train...'
  ➢ What different perspectives of Tess does the reader get?
➢ Examine the dialogue between Tess and Angel as she attempts to reveal her past.
  ➢ Can you trace the dynamics of it?
  ➢ Is there anything in these dynamics which prevents Tess from saying what she means to say?
➢ Look at how Hardy combines purity and passion in his heroine in this chapter
➢ List Hardy's examples of dramatic irony (irony of circumstances) in the section
➢ How does Hardy indicate to his readers that all will not be well for Tess?

**Chapter 31**

➢ In what ways does Joan's letter help Tess?
  ➢ Is it good advice, suited to her character?
➢ Look at the way Hardy portrays Tess and Angel in love
  ➢ Examine the descriptions, images and the language he gives to the lovers
  ➢ What are the main differences between their two approaches?
➢ Collect together images of light, shadow, and darkness
  ➢ What emerges from Hardy's use of them?
➢ What other symbols do you see in Hardy's landscape descriptions?
➢ What does Hardy mean to convey by his description of the dairymaids' 'thin white nightgowns'?
➢ 'which seemed a wrong to these'
• Why does Tess's silence seem a wrong to the dairymaids?
  ➢ By the end of the chapter, what has the reader been led to anticipate?

❖ Chapter 32
  ➢ Look at the paragraph beginning 'The meads were changing now...'
    • What is the symbolism in the landscape?
    • How in particular is Tess symbolised in the gnats?
  ➢ Gather words and phrases that describe Tess's state of mind in this chapter.
    • What tensions or conflicts are evidenced?
    • What particular state seems predominant?
      ▪ Does this correspond to her emotions?
  ➢ To what extent does Tess seem a free agent?
    • What are her deepest fears?
      ▪ How are they expressed?
  ➢ Does Angel seem as ideal a lover to you as Tess thinks he is?
    • How practical is Angel being?
    • Angel seems to be making Tess an educational project. What does this say of his attitude to her?
  ➢ Explain the phrase: 'been made to miss his true destiny through the prejudices of his family'.
    • Is Angel being fair here?

❖ Chapter 33
  ➢ What questions does Hardy raise by the episode with the man from Trantridge?
  ➢ How would you interpret the letter-writing and the pushing under the carpet situation?
  ➢ Are Angel's reasons for not minding the absence of his family at the wedding justifiable?
    • The reader can understand Tess wanting a small and private wedding - can Angel's reasons be understood?
  ➢ Hardy spends more time on describing the coach and the old legend than on the wedding ceremony.
    • Why do you think that he considers it significant?
  ➢ Explain 'to call him her lord, her own - then, if necessary, to die'
    • Regarding the whole novel, in what way does this seem a piece of dramatic irony?
    • What other phrases and words suggest Tess's extreme emotional attitudes in this chapter?
  ➢ Look at the overall shape of the chapter
    • What is the effect on the reader of the chapter taken as a whole?
    • How does Hardy undermine any feelings of joy the reader may have for Tess?

❖ Chapter 34
  ➢ With which aspects concerning her ancestry is Tess confronted?
    • How do Tess and Angel differ in the way they see these ancestral manifestations?
  ➢ Tess is also presented with an heirloom. This is her first taste of being in another social class.
Why does she think immediately it should be sold?
• Does this heirloom do any more for her than the d’Urberville ‘heirlooms’?
• How do your observations tie up with what Hardy has previously said about the past and Tess’s family history?
  ➢ Collect together images and words Hardy uses to create atmosphere.
  • What is their overall impression?
  • Would you say Hardy is being rather too ‘Gothic’ or melodramatic here, or would you say the images mirror Tess’s state of mind exactly?
  • In what ways are both Angel and Tess marginalised, especially in terms of their class status?
  • In what ways is Angel still labouring under a sense of failure?
  • How does Hardy show this?
  • Why do you think Angel starts using learned words and quotations when he comes to confess?
  • How differently does Hardy present Tess’s confession?
  • Explain ‘had the effect upon her of a Providential interposition’.
  • Looking at this section as a whole, how far does Hardy really show what ‘the consequence’ is?

❖ Chapter 35
  • Hardy turns from gothic to grotesque. Study the second paragraph

How does Hardy express the grotesque here?
• What other parts of the chapter fit into the category of the grotesque?
  ➢ Explain ‘the perfunctory babble of the surface while the depths remained paralyzed’
  • What other words and phrases express this paralysis in the characters?
  • Look closely at Angel’s explanations for his rejection of Tess
  • Why does he have problems with her identity?
    • Are they his problem or are they caused by Tess, do you think?
  • What are the conflicts going on within him?
  • Look at the words, his choice of vocabulary:
    • Would Tess understand them?
    • What do you think the words show about him?
  • Explain ‘initiated into the proportions of social things’
    • What does the statement show about Angel?
  • Look closely at the way Tess tries to defend herself
    • Could she have said or done more?
      • Is she too passive?
    • Why do you think she is unable to persuade Angel to change his attitude?
  • Is Hardy pointing up a difference between men’s love and women’s love in general, or is this just a case of two individuals and their reaction to a crisis of trust?
  • Look at the paragraph beginning ‘The cow and gorse-tracks...’
• Look at the perspectives (bird's eye or worm's eye) gained here.
• What function do these perspectives have?
• Can you find another example of a shift of perspective?
  ➢ What other images or episodes in the chapter help to bring out the pathos of the situation?
  ➢ Analyse the symbolism of the walks taken by Tess and Angel
  ➢ List the descriptions of the lovers' faces and facial gestures
    • What do these descriptions reveal about their states of mind?
    • What effect do they have on the reader?
    • Where else has there been a reference to a 'little round hole'?
  ➢ In what ways does Hardy contrast the indifference or even hostility of natural forces to the intense personal emotions of his human characters?

❖ Chapter 36

➢ How does the opening paragraph incorporate devices used in the previous chapter?
➢ In what ways do the couple act out their marriage roles?
  • What effect does this have on the reader?
➢ How does Hardy seek to show that Tess is indeed 'a pure woman'?
➢ Where anger might be expected to predominate, there is a marked absence of it
  • What emotions does Hardy substitute between the couple?
➢ Do these other emotions make us feel the situation is more - or less - tragic?
  ➢ List the reasons Angel gives for discontinuing the marriage
  • Against which does Tess offer a defence?
  • Do you think any of the reasons hold water?
    • Give your reasons.
  • Do any of the reasons prefigure what will happen in the novel?
  ➢ List phrases that suggest Tess's state of mind
    • Are they associated with images or symbols in any way?
    • What aspects of Tess have you not seen before?
  ➢ In what way does Hardy link Angel's loss of faith in Tess with his loss of faith in Christianity?
  ➢ What is Angel's problem with her presence?
  ➢ Look at the last sentence.
    • What does it suggest might happen in the novel?
      • Does it?

❖ Chapter 37

➢ What does the sleepwalking incident reveal about Angel?
➢ How does Tess respond to the incident, and what does this show about her?
➢ Look particularly at references to death and dying
  • What, in fact, has really died?
➢ What does Hardy emphasize in the visit to the dairy?
➢ Look at Tess and Angel's farewell
  • What are the terms and conditions Angel lays down?
• Hardy seems to suggest that if Tess had tried harder, she may have been able to make Angel change his mind. Would you agree?
• What chances do you think exist for the marriage at this point?
• Is Angel's behaviour here any different from Alec's in chapter 12?
  ➢ Hardy also suggests there is a fatal family flaw
  • What is this?
  • Is Hardy being fair to Tess here?

❖ Chapter 38
  ➢ List references to Tess's loss of identity and place
    • Why does she sense she has no place at Marlott any more?
    • At the end of the chapter, do we have any indication where Tess is going and where she belongs?
      ➢ Has she become a wanderer?
  ➢ Compare Tess's return with her previous return from Trantridge (chapter 12)
    • How does her mother come to accept the new situation so quickly?
    • Does Tess's family benefit from the gifts provided for them, either from Alec or Angel?
  ➢ List some of the ironies Hardy creates in the chapter
    • Which seems to you the most poignant?
  ➢ How does Hardy continue to stress Tess's purity?

❖ Chapter 39
  ➢ Compare the present visit with Angel's previous one to his parents
  • What do you notice about how Hardy has structured each visit?
  ➢ Tess's ancestry keeps coming up in Angel's thoughts as well as in Hardy's comments
    • Connect ancestral references to themes of:
      • The purity of Tess's character
      • The past and the destiny of history
      • Class consciousness
  ➢ For the first time, there is a full description of what Tess looks like physically
    • Why do you think Hardy has delayed so long in giving a complete picture of her, instead of just partial references to face or figure?
  ➢ What effect do the Clares' naivety and piety have on Angel?
  ➢ Look at the last paragraph
    • Do Hardy's comments add anything to what we have already realised?
    • Is Hardy being overanxious to establish Tess's purity, do you think?
Chapter 40
- What does Angel mean by 'snaps the continuity of existence'?
  - What particular 'snapping' has he been guilty of?
- Hardy creates two encounters with women in the chapter
  - What is Hardy's purpose?
  - How does he portray Angel's emotional state?
  - Does Angel treat the two women well and in character?
    - How is it that Angel manages to do so much harm to the women with whom he comes into contact?
- Look at Angel's 'if only' ('If you had only told me sooner')
  - Does this stand up to close examination?
  - In what ways is Angel trying to make himself a victim?
  - Are you convinced by these efforts?
- What positive thing emerges for Angel out of the temptation to take Izz with him?
  - What does the encounter fail to do?

Chapter 41
- 'whatever it may be called': Hardy is not usually so lost for a precise meaning when it comes to describing Tess and her motives
  - What do you think it is that prevents Tess from contacting Angel's parents?
  - Would you say this is a character defect?
  - Why does Tess not seek work:
    - As a domestic servant?
    - At Talbothays?
      - What do these reasons show about her character?
  - Tess's journeys continue to expose her to danger
    - What point is Hardy making about her chance encounter with the man from Trantridge?
    - Compare this with the chance encounter with Alec in chapter 45
  - What is the symbolic significance of the pheasant incident?

Chapter 42
- In what ways has Tess become 'a figure which is part of the landscape'?
  - What is the significance of Hardy's phrase?
- Make sure you understand the symbolism of the landscape
  - What are the main features of the landscape, and how do they match up to Tess's inner state of being?
  - A sort of destination has been reached at the end of this journey
    - How would you characterise it?

Chapter 43
- List the main difficulties or tests that Tess faces in the chapter
  - How does she cope with them?
    - Which one affects her most deeply?
  - Do you think Hardy designed this chapter to describe a place of testing or not?
Investigate!  
_Tess of the d’Urbervilles: Volume III (chapters 40-59)_

**Volume III (chapters 40-59)**

- If not, what other reason do you feel the chapter serves in the novel?
- If you do, what sort of testing is it?
  - What does it achieve for Tess?
- What qualities emerge in Tess?
- **Look at the paragraph beginning ‘The swede field...’**
  - What are the images that strike you most forcibly?
  - Compare it with the description of the valley in chapter 16.
  - Compare the image of flies in both
  - What else forms a contrast and what else is similar?
- **Look at the paragraph beginning ‘After this season...’**
  - How does this compare with the previous paragraph studied in terms of Hardy's use of the bird's-eye perspective?
  - What is the point Hardy is making about grandeur and awareness?
  - Do you see the birds as symbolic of Tess?
    - If so, in what way?
  - Who else are ‘temporary sojourners’?
  - What images does Hardy use to describe entrapment in this chapter?
  - Has he used similar images previously?

**Chapter 44**

- How does the first paragraph establish Tess's independence?

- Why does she decide to visit Angel's parents?
- Does she herself think she will succeed?
  - What does Hardy suggest are her chances of success?
- What does Hardy suggest would work in her favour?
  - Does she realise this?
- List all the things that prevent Tess's mission from succeeding.
  - Looking at the list, is there a bias towards either of:
    - A particular character flaw?
    - A malevolent fate, working against Tess?
  - Would you say Hardy is manipulating the plot too arbitrarily against Tess, or has he carefully prepared us to expect the outcomes?
  - Do you feel Tess has still some control over her fate, or that whatever she does is bound to turn out badly?
    - What gives you your impression?
  - Do you get a sense of 'if only' in this chapter?
    - If so, where exactly is this focused?
  - Discuss whether you think Tess is a pilgrim or a victim?
  - Explain the sentence beginning 'Then she wept for...'
    - What exactly does this sentence show the reader?
  - What plot elements does Hardy tie together in the last two paragraphs?
    - In what ways is there a reversal of Alec and Angel?
  - Looking over the Phase the Fifth chapters, list the ways in which Tess has 'paid.'
Investigate!

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Chapter 45

- Look at the description of Alec
  - Pick out words and phrases that emphasise contrast or contradiction.
    - What is the main thrust of such contrasts?
  - Is the reader meant to trust Alec any more now than before?
    - Does Tess?
    - What are her reasons?
- What do words like ‘her seducer’ (end of chapter 44) and ‘her old lover’ tell us about their previous relationship?
  - Why does he now say he is afraid of her?
- Look at the use of ‘paralysing’, ‘paralysis’, ‘atrophy’ to describe both Tess and Alec.
  - Has Hardy used similar terminology before?
  - What does his usage say about their relationship and behaviour?
- What are Tess’s first feelings when she confronts Alec again?
  - Do you notice any significant change in her behaviour or words when she talks to Alec compared to the early part of the novel?
  - What is Tess particularly bitter about in speaking of Alec’s conversion?
    - Do you think she is justified?
- Look at the sentence ‘And there was revived in her...’
  - What does it say about Tess’s feelings of guilt?
  - How does Alec try to blame her?
- Is he justified?
- Is Tess’s loyalty to Angel something to be commended in her?
  - Is it part of her purity?
- Look at Hardy’s use of the Cross-in-Hand
  - What purposes does it serve?
  - Is it in any way a sign of the future?
- Compare the two journeys which occur in chapter 12 and this chapter
  - What would be the biggest similarity and the biggest difference?

Chapter 46

- Look at the paragraph beginning ‘For hours nothing relieved...’
  - What characterises agricultural labour here?
  - How does this work compare to that at Talbothays?
  - Are such differences symbolic in any way?
- How is Alec’s approach described?
  - What effect does such a description achieve?
- In what ways does Alec’s proposal of marriage seem incongruous? (If you have read Charlotte Brontë’s Jane Eyre, you may like to compare St.John River’s proposal to Jane.)
  - What is the nature of Tess’s ‘faith’?
    - Would you say the naivety of her belief in Angel is a strength or a weakness?
  - How does Hardy present Tess as being pure at this stage?
  - How much of her situation is down to her naivety?
Investigate! 
*Tess of the d’Urbervilles: Volume III (chapters 40-59)*

**Volume III (chapters 40-59)**

- List the words and phrases by which Alec seeks to excuse his behaviour.
  - In what ways could it be said that he is victimising Tess?
- Are you convinced by Hardy's explanation at the end of the chapter concerning the shallowness of Alec's conversion?
  - Give your reasons
- What seem to you the main ironies of the chapter?

**Chapter 47**

- Go through the chapter picking out images or references to hell or the underworld.
  - How does this tie up with chapter 43 and its discussion of 'places of testing'?
  - In what ways could Alec be seen as devilish?
- List Alec's arguments that he is indeed Tess's first husband.
  - How valid do you consider them?
  - How do the arguments add to Tess's torment?
- Look closely at the way Tess is made to take the blame by Alec.
  - What does this show about him?
  - In general, how has Alec deteriorated from the previous chapters of this phase?
- In what ways does the chapter promote the view of Tess as a victim?
  - Consider particularly Tess's vulnerability, her lack of protection, and her exposure.
  - Collect images of entrapment.

**Chapter 48**

- Select the images Hardy uses to describe the machine.
  - What seems to be the main picture that emerges of it?
  - To what extent does the machine symbolise Fate?
- List words and images relating to colour.
  - In what way do they fit with previous patterns of colour images and descriptions?
- Investigate the interplay of power and powerlessness in this chapter and the previous one.
  - To what extent is Tess trapped into the situation?
  - Where does her letter fit into this interplay?
- Is Alec now a better or worse man than in the first chapters?
  - Do Jesus' words of Luke 11:24-26 refer to him rather than to Tess?
  - How genuine do you think his offer of help is?
- Look closely at Tess's letter.
  - She often uses religious language. In what does she place her faith?
• If the letter arouses pathos, what does this centre on?
  ▪ What other responses do you think Hardy is trying to create in the reader?

❖ Chapter 49
  ➢ What more does the chapter tell us about the relationship of Angel's parents with him?
  ➢ In what ways does Angel go through a purgatorial experience whilst in Brazil?
    ▪ Is his suffering and re-education in any way comparable to Tess's?
    ▪ Does the reader at any time get the experience of this change being too late?
  ➢ Explain 'not among things done but among things willed'
  ➢ Look at the paragraph beginning 'But the reasoning is somewhat musty....'
    ▪ Is this Hardy's commentary or Angel's thinking?
      ▪ Whose voice is it?
      ▪ If it is Hardy's, what does it say about Hardy's philosophy of life?
      ▪ What would this suggest about the outcome of the novel?
  ➢ Explain the distinction Angel makes between the 'political value' and the 'imaginative value' of Tess's family line
  ➢ Hardy is fond of personifying time
    ▪ How would you explain 'So does Time ruthlessly destroy his own romances'?
  ➢ In what ways does Tess rehearsing the folk-songs evoke pathos?

❖ Chapter 50
  ➢ Examine the description of Tess's night journey
    ▪ What seem to you to be the most striking images?
    ▪ Do you see any clusters of images or diction that could have symbolic significance?
  ➢ Collect references to Tess helping her family both earlier in the novel and here.
    ▪ What benefit has been derived from her help?
    ▪ What benefit will Tess's preparation of the ground for planting be to them?
      ▪ What do your answers suggest about the family and any future efforts to help them?
  ➢ In what way are future efforts likely to be dangerous for Tess?
    ▪ Do you see anything ironical in all this?
  ➢ Does Hardy set up any parallels in this chapter between Alec, his words and his actions, and Angel, his words and his actions?
  ➢ Were you expecting Alec to re-appear?
    ▪ What is your reaction to his re-appearance and the form it takes?
  ➢ What does Hardy lead us to expect to happen at this juncture?

❖ Chapter 51
  ➢ What is the full significance of Old Lady-Day for the Durbeyfields?
• Consider their past and their future. How are these changing?
• Consider their security and support network. What will happen to these?
  ➢ Why does Joan choose to relocate to Kingsbere?
    • Do you think it is a wise choice?
    • Make a list all the repercussions arising out of Parson Tringham’s discovery in chapter 1.
  ➢ There seems to be some discrepancy about whether the family has to move out at once or whether they could have been allowed to stay on a while longer.
    • Can you explain the discrepancy?
  ➢ For what does Tess still blame herself?
    • Is she justified?
    • For what does she now refuse to take any further blame?
  ➢ In what way is the spider symbolic?
  ➢ How is the coach story prophetic or anticipatory?
  ➢ Look at the paragraph beginning ‘To her and her like...’
    • What does it mean?
    • Is it true to the story?
      ▪ Is this really what Hardy has shown us about Tess?
    • What seems to be at the heart of Hardy’s protest?

❖ Chapter 52

• Look at the two letters mentioned in the chapter.
• In what way do they fit into the pattern of previous letters?
• The family has returned to their ancestral home, completing a process that began in chapter 1.
  • What do they find when they get there?
  • In what way is this fall in circumstance centered on Tess?
• What does Tess mean when she cries, ‘Why am I on the wrong side of this door!’
• If Alec represents the new and the modern, what does Hardy seem to be saying about that?
• What to you seems the most tragic element or episode of the whole chapter?
• The name of this phase, ‘The Convert’, suggests it has been largely about Alec
  • Summarise the main features of his progress (or regress)
  • How has this affected Tess?
  • Would you say Alec is on a pilgrimage, or are his actions more like those of a raiding party?

❖ Chapter 53

• How does Hardy further demonstrate that Angel’s experiences have been a form of purgatory?
• What is the irony in Angel’s mother saying ‘It is not my son...’?
• Examine the order of the letters Angel receives:
  • How does it determine his actions?
  • Do you think Hardy means the reader to feel it is all going to be too late?
• What is the effect of Hardy shifting the perspective over to Angel and the Clare family?
Investigate!  
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**Chapter 54**

- What does Angel learn about Tess on his journey?
  - When Angel claims to Joan ‘I know her better than you do’, would you agree with him?
- The family in the old Durbeyfield cottage ‘had never known her’.
  - What point is Hardy making here?
- It appears the Durbeyfields never make it to Kingsbere, either dead or alive.
  - Again, what point is Hardy making here?
- What do we know about Tess that Angel still has not discovered by the end of the chapter?
  - What clues are we given that Alec has had his way and that Angel is too late?
  - Find examples of how Hardy uses dramatic irony in the chapter.

**Chapter 55**

- Examine the detailed contrast between the modern city and the ancient heathland surrounding it.
  - What points is Hardy trying to make through this contrast?
  - How do Hardy’s comments on modernity tie in with previous comments on this subject?

**Chapter 56**

- Make notes on the colour symbolism in the chapter.
  - Comment particularly on the shape of the patch of blood on the ceiling.
- ‘The wound was quite small’: where else in the novel has this been the case?
- Can you anticipate exactly why Tess has killed Alec?
  - Why did she not just walk out on him?
- Do you feel horrified by the murder?
  - How does Hardy lessen its immediate impact?

**Chapter 57**

- ‘of something seemed to impel him to the act’: what is being suggested by the ‘something’?
- Discuss the use of coincidence in the chapter, and the forces working in Angel and Tess’ favour
How is this chapter different from the last number of chapters?
- Do you feel this is the tide turning in Tess's favour, or is it only a temporary reprieve?
- What, in Hardy's writing, gives you the feeling?
- 'a moving spot, 'a white vacuity': where else have you come across these phrases?
- What is the significance of perspective here?
- Examine Hardy's references to purity in the chapter
  - How do they add to the ideas you have already gained from Hardy?
- How does Hardy create an other-worldly feeling, a removal from everyday reality, within the chapter?
- In what ways is the first night at the house a redemption of their abortive wedding-night?

Chapter 58
- Hardy sets up a strong contrast between outside and inside as Tess speaks
  - List phrases that convey this
    - What seems to you the most striking feature about how Tess speaks?
    - How does her 'inside' language relate to time?
- In what way does the mention of the stone coffin episode anticipate future events?
- The reader sees the lovers from an outside perspective just once
  - Why do you think Hardy chooses to use this perspective?
- What is particularly significant about Stonehenge, that Hardy should climax his story there?
  - What do you see as symbolic in the landscape and their journey to Stonehenge?
- What do you make of Tess's request for Angel to marry Liza-Lu?
- Notice the perspective of the officers' approach
  - In which other situations has Hardy employed this perspective?
- What is Tess's consolation in dying?
  - And what is she denied?
- Do you think that the climax of the novel is marked more by a sense of fulfilment or by a sense of loss?

Chapter 59
- Compare the beginning of chapter 1 with this chapter in terms of perspective and the direction of the pedestrians.
  - What are the cinematographic qualities of Hardy's description here?
- In what sense are the two pedestrians 'pilgrims'?
  - Are they returning from a holy place or are they still seeking for some destination?
- How does Liza-Lu differ from Tess, and in what ways is she the same?
  - In the previous chapter, Tess claimed she had, 'All the best of me without the bad of me'
    - What 'bad' qualities has she not got, do you think?
- What does Hardy not tell the reader about Tess and Angel?
Investigate!
Tess of the d’Urbervilles: Volume III (chapters 40-59)

➤ Why does Hardy put quotation marks round ‘Justice’?
  • Do you think Hardy meant to connect this phrase with that about ‘ended his sport’?
➤ What is the impact on you of words ‘not knowing’ and ‘speechless’ at the end?
➤ What is the effect of ‘and went on’ right at the end?
➤ Discuss whether you find the ending convincing and satisfactory
➤ In what sense is the Phase a ‘Fulfilment’?