Reading

'The Bridge'

1. Read the extract below and highlight the important information:

This happened in America during the Civil War (1862 – 1865). People have talked about it ever since.

A woman lived with her husband in a town beside a river. One day her husband went away for three months. While her husband was away, the woman took a lover, who lived across the bridge on the other side of the river.

One day, while she was with her lover, the woman heard that her husband was coming home. She left her lover and tried to cross the bridge. But now there was a soldier on the bridge. The soldier said, "Stop! I have orders that no one must cross the bridge. If you try to cross the bridge, I will shoot you."

Near the bridge was a boat. The woman told the boatman she needed to cross the river. The boatman said he would take her across the river if she paid him $100. The woman didn't have $100, so she asked her lover to give her the money, but he refused.

The woman tried to cross the bridge. The soldier shot her dead.

2. Research the answers to these knowledge-based questions:

a). What is a civil war? How is it different from other wars?
b). Who was the American Civil War between, and what was it about?
c). What are some of the long-term consequences of this war?

3. Rank the characters' responsibility for the woman's death (1 = most to blame - 5 = least to blame). Write a sentence explaining your reasoning.

Characters to choose from: the woman, the husband, the lover, the soldier, the boatman.

1 (most to blame)
2
3
4
5 (least to blame)

4. Using the keywords and sentence starters, as well as your knowledge of the American Civil War, to what extent do you think **the lover** is responsible for the woman's death?

Keywords and Sentence Starters:
It is clear that...
It could be argued that…
The historical context suggests…

Writing

1a. Watch this video clip: https://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/43793769. What did British citizens in the rest of the world think Britain would be like?

1b. Now read the poem below.

This is a poem written by a musician called Lord Kitchener. He was a Jamaican migrant and one of 500 Caribbean travellers who boarded the Empire Windrush to come to the UK during December 1930.

Kitchener sang the first two verses on camera for reporters upon arrival at Tilbury Docks on the HMT Empire Windrush.

1.
London is the place for me
London this lovely city
You can go to France or America,
India, Asia or Australia
But you must come back to London city
Well believe me I am speaking broadmindedly
I am glad to know my Mother Country
I have been travelling to countries years ago
But this is the place I wanted to know
London that is the place for me

2.
To live in London you are really comfortable
Because the English people are very much sociable
They take you here and they take you there
And they make you feel like a millionaire
London that's the place for me

3.
At night when you have nothing to do
You can take a walk down Shaftesbury Avenue
There you will laugh and talk and enjoy the breeze
And admire the beautiful scenery
Of London that's the place for me

4.
Yes, I cannot complain of the time I have spent
I mean my life in London is really magnificent
I have every comfort and every sport
And my residence is Hampton Court
So London, that's the place for me.

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2. How is the imagined world of Kitchener's poem different to that of the real world emigrants met when they arrived in Britain?

3. Racism is still a very important topic to discuss and something that affects many people in their everyday lives. Take some time to research the **British Windrush Scandal**, as well as the murder of **George Floyd in Minneapolis** which has sparked protests across the world, and the toppling of the **Colston statue in Bristol**.

Then, choose one of the following forms in which to express your ideas:

- a speech discussing racism in the UK and how you think it should be dealt with
- a poem on racism written from a first-person perspective