Name: Date:

*Born a Crime* During Reading Questions

**Directions:** Please answer the following questions in complete sentences on separate pieces of white-lined paper.

Part I

Chapter 1 – Run

1. What role did church play in Trevor’s upbringing?
2. What is Trevor’s mother like, based on his descriptions?
3. How did Trevor end up being thrown from a minibus?

Chapter 2 – Born a Crime

1. According to Noah, how did Apartheid come about?
2. How did Trevor’s mother, Patricia, find a place to live in Johannesburg?
3. What was life like for Trevor in Johannesburg and Soweto?

Chapter 3 – Trevor, Pray

1. Explain Trevor’s experience growing up in “a world run by women”?
2. What happened when Trevor decided to use the bathroom on the floor in his house instead of using the public outhouse?

Chapter 4 – Chameleon

1. After he injured his cousin Bulelwa’s ear, why did Bulelwa get punished while Trevor did not?
2. What are some perks that Trevor experienced for being “white”?
3. Describe Trevor’s experience at the Maryvale College School, and then at the H.A. Jack Primary School. How were these experiences different?

Chapter 5 – The Second Girl

1. Describe Patricia’s upbringing.
2. How did Trevor’s life change when he and his mother moved to Eden Park?
3. What kinds of things did Patricia do to fulfill her desire to give Trevor everything she never had?

Chapter 6 – Loopholes

1. Trevor describes himself as a hyperactive kid. Explain some things he does.
2. Trevor describes his relationship with his mom like “the relationship between a cop and a criminal in the movies”. What does he mean by this?
3. Describe the incident with the Catholic Eucharist.

Chapter 7 – Fifi

1. What happened to Trevor’s two black cats and why?
2. Describe the story of Fufi escaping in your own words.

Chapter 8 – Robert

1. What were some experiences Trevor had with his dad when he was a young boy?
2. What was it like for Trevor to see his dad later in life?

Part II

Chapter 9 – The Mulberry Tree

1. Trevor says, “I was the anomaly[[1]](#footnote-1) wherever we lived”? Explain what he means.
2. Describe the Mulberry tree story in your own words.

Chapter 10 – A Young Man’s Long, Awkward, Occasionally Tragic, and Frequently Humiliating Education in Affairs of the Heart, Part I: Valentine’s Day

1. Recount the story of what happened with Maylene on Valentine’s Day. What did Trevor learn through his experience?

Chapter 11 – Outsider

1. What was Trevor’s new school, Sandringham, like?
2. How did Trevor find his niche at Sandringham?

Chapter 12 – A Young Man’s Long, Awkward, Occasionally Tragic, and Frequently Humiliating Education in Affairs of the Heart, Part II: The Crush

1. Describe the situation Trevor found himself in with Zaheer.

Chapter 13 – Colorblind

1. What did Trevor and his friend Teddy do at the mall that caused Teddy to get arrested?
2. Why could none of the police recognize Trevor in the security footage?

Chapter 14 – A Young Man’s Long, Awkward, Occasionally Tragic, and Frequently Humiliating Education in Affairs of the Heart, Part III: The Dance

1. How was Trevor able to make friends at Highlands North?
2. How was the author able to pose as an American rapper for the talent show in Hammanskraal?
3. What was the problem between Trevor and his matric dance date?

Part III

Chapter 15 – Go Hitler!

1. What was the difference between German education around the Holocaust and South African education around Apartheid?
2. How does the author explain the abundance of South Africans with names for controversial historical figures like “Napolean,” “Mussolini,” and “Hitler”?
3. Why did Trevor and his crew get into trouble for chanting “Hitler” at an event?

Chapter 16 – The Cheese Boys

1. What conclusion did Trevor draw after his encounter with the police at the end of this chapter?

Chapter 17 – The World Doesn’t Love You

1. What did Patricia tell the security guard to do when he reported Trevor for shoplifting?

Chapter 18 – My Mother’s Life

1. What final disagreement convinced Trevor to spend less time around Abel and Patricia?
2. What was Patricia doing when Abel’s gun jammed?
3. Discuss the role of patriarchy[[2]](#footnote-2) and masculinity in South African culture. How does it affect your response to Patricia’s abuse at the hands of Abel? (Think about Patricia, Trevor, his younger brother Andrew, the police, and Patricia’s family when answering this question).

1. An anomaly is an odd, peculiar, or strange condition, situation, quality, etc. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Patriarchy is a form of social organization in which the father is the supreme authority in the family, clan, or tribe and descent is reckoned in the male line, with the children belonging to the father's clan or tribe. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)