

UNIT-IV

SONS AND LOVERS

STRUCTURE

- Learning objectives
- Overview
- Introduction of the Novel
- Plot
- Biography of the Author
- Themes and Symbols and Motifs
- Characters
- Analysis of Main Characters
- Summary and Analysis of Chapters
- Quotes
- Summary
- Key words
- Review questions
- Further reading

• LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After reading this unit you will be able to

- ❖ Discuss the themes of the novel Sons and Lovers
- ❖ Write the summary of the chapters and novel.
- ❖ Explain the quotes from the novel Sons and Lovers.
- ❖ Write about the author D.H.Lawrence.
- ❖ Explain the symbols in the novel Sons and Lovers.
- ❖ Discuss the characters in the novel Sons and Lovers.

• OVERVIEW

Novel	:	sons and Lovers
Author	:	D.H.Lawrence
Published in	:	1913

• INTRODUCTION OF THE NOVEL

Sons and Lovers published in 1913 as David Hubert Richard Lawrence's 3rd novel. It was initially named as "Paul Morel," and afterward the name was changed. This novel has also been considered as Lawrence's autobiography because it has some striking similarities with the author's personal life.

Settings of the novel are in Nottingham Shire, England. The story opens with the description of Gertrude Morel and William Morel's married life who tied a knot because of love. Walter Morel is a miner and alcoholic. Within the few days of marriage, Gertrude comes to know that Walter has lied with her about his lifestyle. She gets to know that William doesn't own the house in which they live.

Her disappointment for her husband leads her to a stronger relationship with her son Paul Morel, who is an artist and leads the house after the sudden death of his Elder brother. Paul tries to get out of his mother's influence by making sexual relations with other girls which his mother dislikes a lot.

Novel's autobiographical nature becomes explicit when we have a glance over the author's own life. D.H Lawrence born in Nottingham Shire, England to a coal miner father and schoolteacher mother. Lawrence's father used to drink a lot and face financial instability due to his attitude. This makes his parents quarrel, and the environment became tensed at the house.

Mrs. Lawrence, finding no happiness with her husband, focused her attention on her son David and extraordinarily influenced his life. This relationship was so much stronger that after the death of his mother Lawrence lefts his job and quitted his relationship with his lover and adopted a bohemian lifestyle.

This novel is also a critique of industrialization in England and its effects on minor miners. The author talks about exploitation and humiliation that is inflicted on the working class of England by the industrialists. He puts the light that these mines are the ugly faces of the countryside.

• PLOT

Sons and Lovers follows two generations of the Morel family as they struggle to find their passions amid suffocating relationships, social expectations, and sexual awakenings. The novel opens in the coal-mining town of Bestwood, England, in the late 1800s. Mrs. Morel is in an unhappy marriage with her alcoholic, coal-miner husband and is unhappily pregnant

his mother is holding him back from finding his true passion, he cannot wait for her to die. Seeing her suffering, Paul and Annie, his sister, crush up her morphine pills and stir them into a glass of milk. They give her the overdose of medicine and wait for her to die. Paul visits Miriam and, out of loneliness, contemplates marrying her but ultimately decides not to. Miriam vows to wait for Paul until he's ready to commit to her. Paul returns home filled with emotion about his relationship with his mother, contemplating suicide; in the end he decides to start a new life without either woman.

Sons and Lovers Plot Description

1. Introduction

- Mr. and Mrs. Morel weather a violent, angry marriage.

2. Rising Action

- William dies, and Mrs. Morel showers all her love on Paul.
- Paul is torn between his love for his mother and for Miriam.
- Paul loves Miriam and Clara for different reasons.
- After sleeping with both women, Paul chooses Clara.
- Paul realizes he will not love well while his mother lives.

3. Climax

- Paul gives his ill mother an overdose of morphine.

4. Falling Action

- Baxter and Clara move away, leaving Paul alone.

5. Resolution

- After a visit with Miriam, Paul decides to live in the city.

• BIOGRAPHY OF THE AUTHOR

D.H. Lawrence was born as the fourth child of the Lawrence family on 11 September 1885 in Nottinghamshire, a minor mining town of Eastwood. His father, Arthur John Lawrence, was a coal miner who began working from a young age. His mother, Lydia Lawrence, was a teacher who was from South England and was an educated and refined lady.

With the family's weak financial conditions, Lydia joined a lace-making factory to help her family through difficult times. She was the motivation for Lawrence's love for literature and good prospects because she was herself a lover of literary education. However, the couple's weak marital relationship became the subject of most of Lawrence's works.

From 1891 to 1898, Lawrence attended Beauvale Board School. He was a frail and lone child and struggled to make friends in academic life.

However, he became the first local student in Eastwood's history to win a scholarship to the Nottingham High School in Nottingham. Three years later in 1901, he quitted the school and began working as a clerk in Haywood's surgical appliances factory.

When Lawrence's elder brother fell ill and died the preceding winter, he was also diagnosed with severe pneumonia due to the grief. Therefore, he left the job. Later on, he joined the British School in Eastwood as a teacher from 1902 to 1906. There he met Jessie Chambers, a young lady. In her companionship, Lawrence developed the love of writing and began to write poetry. He also began to write his first novel at that time, which was published as "The White Peacock".

Late in 1907, in Nottingham Guardian, Lawrence won a short story competition for "An Enjoyable Christmas: A Prelude". This was his first time to gain a notable position for his literary genius. He also earned a teaching certificate from University College Nottingham in 1908.

EARLY WRITING CAREER

In 1908, after completing his teacher's degree, he left for London to begin teaching in Croydon, Davidson Road School. At that time, Jessie Chambers submitted some of his poetry to Ford Madox Ford who was the editor of the English Review. His work was published in 1909. Then Ford Hueffer (Madox) published Lawrence's "Odour of Chrysanthemums" that grasped the interest of a London publisher, William Heinemann.

Hueffer also recommended Lawrence's "The White Peacock" to Heinemann who finally published it in 1911. The novel was based on mismatched marriages and class conflict. In this way, his writing career began, although he still taught for a year more. That year Lawrence's mother died that gave him lasting pain. Due to the incident, he remained in illness and depression.

FORMAL WRITING

The next year (1912), Lawrence wrote "The Trespasser". It foreshadows the relationship of one of his colleagues with a married man. She committed suicide later. It also depicts Lawrence's intimacy with an old school friend, Louie Burrows. Through this novel, he succeeded in gaining the attention of Edward Garnett, an influential editor.

BIOGRAPHICAL EFFECT

He helped Lawrence revise and edit "Paul Morel" that Garnett published as "Sons and Lovers" in 1913. It is one of the remarkable novels of the 20th-century. Due to his close relationship with his mother, Lawrence suffered great stress and sickness after her death. This depiction

of mother-son attachment can be seen in his novel “Sons and Lovers”, in which a son feels devastated at the death of his beloved mother.

In this novel with autobiographical instances, Lawrence reflects on his provincial life. He also depicts his brief intimate relationship with Jessie Chambers from 1909 (Christmas) to 1910. Then he got engaged to Louie Borrows but due to his illness (another attack of Pneumonia), he left her. Later, he went to meet Ernest Weekley, his former modern languages professor. He fell in love with his wife Frieda Weekley and eloped with her to Frieda’s home in Germany.

HIGH TIME OF WRITING

He left his teaching career and adopted the profession of a writer. With his newly found love by his side, Lawrence wrote the first edition of poetry “Love Poems and Others” and the play “Daughter-In-Law” (1912).

When Lawrence and Frieda returned to England and got married in 1914, Lawrence wrote at a considerable pace during that time. He published a notable collection of short stories “The Prussian Officer”. In 1915, he printed “The Rainbow”, a novel that was sexually too vulgar for the society of his time. It was banned for its sexually explicit nature in that era.

WARTIME TROUBLES

In his devastation and anger, Lawrence moved to the southwestern side of Great Britain, Cornwall. It is because he could not travel abroad due to World War-I. However, because of the sensitive situation, Lawrence was banished from the place in 1915 because he was a questioned writer with a German wife. Even in this situation, he published some editions of poetry *i.e.*, Amores (1916), New Poems (1918), Look! We Have Come Through! (1919), and Bay: A Book of Poems (1919).

After the war, he moved to Italy where he spent 2 years of productive writing and traveling. In 1920, Lawrence published “Women in Love”, a novel that was widely considered to be the second part of “The Rainbow”. In 1922, he published “My England and Other Stories” that he composed in wartime.

In his determination to travel America, he left Europe for the east and moved through Ceylon and Australia to New Mexico, US. There he worked on a highly appreciated American criticism book “Studies in Classic American Literature”. Later in his life, Lawrence traveled across the US, Mexico, and England and wrote several other notable works. These include “Boy in the Bush” a 1924 novel, “St Mawr” (1925), and “The Plumed Serpent” in 1926.

William and Paul have a strong relationship with their mother. This relationship doesn't let both of them achieve their love in other girls. Their physical bond with their mother urges them to make a relationship with girls, but they are unable to satisfy their thirst. Paul never liked his father, and he thinks of him to die. His loathe towards Walter shows his Oedipus complex.

Gertrude often tells her boys that she has been into an unhappy marriage and she makes her sons the center of her attention. She disapproves William's girlfriend Lily and hates Miriam having a reason that Miriam will drift Paul away from her. Paul's overly stronger bond with his mother is the reason why he was always confused about his love affairs. His relationship with Clara is also evidence of the Oedipus complex. He finds his company with a married, childless woman, whose husband he hates.

Paul's mother brings him back to life when he faces a pneumonia attack. When she happens to be diagnosed with a tumor, her kids try to console her. Paul overdoses his mother with morphine and pushes him into the face of death. It seems that he does this to get rid of his own complex because he found out that his mother was the only problem with his romantic relations. Like Oedipus, he tries to commit suicide, but then he chooses to live the memories of his mother.

2. Lack of free will

The novel deals with the theme of bondage and free will. Gertrude gets married to Walter due to her free will she remains in the bondage of an alcoholic husband and an unhappy life. Despite hating her relationship with her husband, she was unable to leave him. Then Gertrude develops this bondage for her sons. She influences every instance of their life. Her choice of disliking for their lovers leaves her sons in a constant perplexing thought.

Industrialization is another bondage in the characters' lives. Mrs. Morel was tired of the mining job of her husband the mines were thought to be places of alive burying. She tries to save her sons from this occupation, but she puts them into other jobs. The writer comments about this industrialization that "he was being taken into bondage".

The characters are unable to find their free will for their love life. Paul loves Miriam but he didn't dare to tell this to her, and he shares this with Clara. William despite liking Lily, he couldn't have her in life because his mother doesn't like her. So the boys are so much busy in pleasing their mother that they never get their love with other girls.

3. Social class

The writer has chosen to portray the binary of social class in the novel. The first protagonist Gertrude has been a former teacher and from the family of professionals. She loathes her husband's laboring work and thinks of herself as a sophisticated woman. She hates the pit mining jobs and tries hard not to let her sons do this job.

William's girlfriend from London thinks about the Morel family as they were clowns. William himself acts the way a non-laborer does in front of laborers. Sheer contrast of the two classes is painted with the help of the character of Thomas Jordan. He was the factory owner, and he uses his power when he fires Baxter and tries to make a bond with Paul.

4. Nature and flowers

Sons and Lovers has a great deal of description of the natural environment. Often, the weather and environment reflect the characters' emotions through the literary technique of pathetic fallacy. The description is frequently eroticized, both to indicate sexual energy and to slip past the censors in Lawrence's repressive time.

Lawrence's characters also experience moments of transcendence while alone in nature, much as the Romantics did. More frequently, characters bond deeply while in nature. Lawrence uses flowers throughout the novel to symbolize these deep connections. However, flowers are sometimes agents of division, as when Paul is repulsed by Miriam's fawning behavior towards the daffodil.

5. Contradictions and oppositions

Lawrence demonstrates how contradictions emerge so easily in human nature, especially with love and hate. Paul vacillates between hatred and love for all the women in his life, including his mother at times. Often he loves and hates at the same time, especially with Miriam. Mrs. Morel, too, has some reserve of love for her husband even when she hates him, although this love dissipates over time.

Lawrence also uses the opposition of the body and mind to expose the contradictory nature of desire; frequently, characters pair up with someone who is quite unlike them. Mrs. Morel initially likes the hearty, vigorous Morel because he is so far removed from her dainty, refined, intellectual nature. Paul's attraction to Miriam, his spiritual soul mate, is less intense than his desire for the sensual, physical Clara.

The decay of the body also influences the spiritual relationships. When Mrs. Morel dies, Morel grows more sensitive, though he still refuses to look at her body. Dawes's illness, too, removes his threat to Paul, who befriends his ailing rival.

SYMBOLS:

1. Flowers

Flowers symbolize femininity and female sexuality in *Sons and Lovers*. Women are referred to as flowers or compared with flowers throughout the novel. When William describes his many female admirers to Paul, he describes them as different flowers that live “like cut blooms in his heart.” Although this may seem flattering to the women, it reflects the idea that William does not view these women as people, but instead views them as decorations, which offset his own appearance and stature. This attitude is confirmed during his relationship with Louisa Lily Denys Western, whom William views more as an accessory than a partner. Elsewhere in the novel, flowers signify female sexuality and incidents with flowers come to represent the different women in the novel and their attitudes towards sex. When Miriam shows Paul a rosebush she has found, and later a patch of daffodils, she treats the flowers reverently and with devotion, the same way she approaches her physical relationship with Paul. Clara, in contrast, views flowers as “dead things” during the time when she is celibate after she has left Baxter Dawes. Later, when her sexuality is reawakened with Paul, he gives her a flower to wear on her coat and this symbolizes the rejuvenation of her physical life. When the flower is “smashed to pieces,” when they lie together on the ground, this suggests that Paul has broken through Clara’s external, decorative façade and formed a real connection with her through sex. The shattered flower also has connotations of spoiled virginity and this suggests that, although Paul thinks he is kind to Miriam and Clara, he is really shallow and careless with them, just as William was with the women that he collected like flowers without taking their feelings into account.

2. Moon

The moon is associated with motherhood in the novel and represents the oppressive bond that exists between Mrs. Morel and Paul. When Mrs. Morel is pregnant with Paul, she has a fight with her husband and is thrown out of the house. She goes into her garden and is surprised to find herself bathed in light from a full moon overhead. The presence of the moon soothes her and calms the child, Paul, who is “boiling within her,” and this represents the love that Mrs. Morel will develop for Paul and her hopes for the future that she will invest in him. Later in the novel, this bond between Mrs. Morel and Paul becomes problematic because it infringes on Paul’s ability to form a romantic relationship; he is so close to his mother that they are almost like lovers and she possesses him in a way his lovers cannot. This is reflected again using the symbol of the moon in the scene in which Paul sees the large, orange moon above the beach when he is with Miriam and finds himself unable to understand or express the physical desire that

she arouses in him. The moon is traditionally associated with femininity and this connects the moon to the idea of motherhood. The moon, however, does not create light but takes light in and reflects it back. This represents the circular and destructive nature of the love between Paul and Mrs. Morel. Paul's bond with his mother does not help him create new life, through reproduction with a partner, but instead flows backwards into his mother, who dies at the end of the novel and with whom Paul can create no future.

3. Darkness

Darkness represents hidden or unconscious desire in the novel. When Miriam and Paul have sex for the first time, Paul leads Miriam into a dark place among some fir trees and says that he "wishes the darkness were thicker." This suggests that, although Paul wants to love Miriam, his true intentions and feelings towards her are unclear to him and he is ashamed of his attraction to her or is ashamed of the way he treats her (as he fails to commit to her on several occasions). Similarly, when Paul brings Clara home to meet his family, he walks her to the train in the dark and is suddenly overcome with rage when she tells him she wants to go home. This suggests that he privately wants to dominate Clara but is not comfortable with this side of himself and will not force her to stay with him. Baxter Dawes hides in the dark when he waits to attack Paul and the fight brings an element of relief to Paul and ends the tension between the two men. The fight, which takes place in the dark, suggests that the men secretly wanted to fight, even though they do not acknowledge this, because fighting allows them to express their emotions and feel release. Finally, at the end of the novel, Paul wishes to die himself after Mrs. Morel's death. Although he is aware of his destructive tendencies, he is not explicitly aware that he wants to kill himself and, instead, walks into the dark, unsure what he plans to do. He ultimately rejects darkness to follow the light back to the town, which suggests that he rejects death and chooses to live instead.

8. CHARACTERS

Paul Morel

Paul is the protagonist of the novel, and we follow his life from infancy to his early twenties. He is sensitive, temperamental, artistic (a painter), and unceasingly devoted to his mother. They are inseparable; he confides everything in her, works and paints to please her, and nurses her as she dies. Paul has ultimately unsuccessful romances with Miriam Leiver and Clara Dawes, always alternating between great love and hatred for each of them. His relationship fails with Miriam because she is too sacrificial and virginal to claim him as hers, whereas it fails with Clara because, it seems,

she has never given up on her estranged husband. However, the major reason behind Paul's break-ups is the long shadow of his mother; no woman can ever equal her in his eyes, and he can never free himself from her possession.

Gertrude Morel

Mrs. Morel is the wife of Mr. Morel and the mother of William, Paul, Annie and Arthur. She is born into a middle-class family and marries Mr. Morel after she meets him at a country dance. Mrs. Morel is reserved and religious, but she is also an extremely practical and determined woman.

Miriam Leiver

Miriam Leivers is Paul's best friend growing up. They share the same love of art and literature, although Miriam hasn't had much formal education.

Clara Dawes

Clara Dawes is the wife of Baxter Dawes, the daughter of Mrs. Radford, and Paul Morel's lover. Clara is estranged from her husband Baxter, whom she married young and found that she could not get on with. She is a friend of Miriam (who introduces her to Paul) and she lives with her mother.

Walter Morel

Morel, the coal-mining head of the family, was once a humorous, lively man, but over time he has become a cruel, selfish alcoholic. His family, especially Mrs. Morel, despises him, and Paul frequently entertains fantasies of his father's dying.

William Morel

William Morel is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Morel and the elder brother of Annie, Paul, and Arthur. He is a cheerful, popular, and athletic child and is his mother's favorite. William is extremely close to his mother as a child and cannot stand it if she is ill or hurt.

Annie Morel

Annie Morel is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Morel and the sister of William, Paul and Arthur. She is a practical girl and grows into a mature and sensible young woman. Annie takes a job as a schoolteacher and marries a good-natured young man called Leonard, who has a good position at work and of whom the family are fond.

Arthur Morel

Arthur Morel is the youngest child of Mr. and Mrs. Morel and the younger brother of William, Annie, and Paul. Arthur is a happy, lively child and, out of all the Morel children, he gets along best with Mr. Morel. He

grows into an energetic young man who is often careless in his pursuit of fun and is constantly getting into scrapes.

Baxter Dawes

Baxter Dawes is the husband of Clara Dawes and Paul Morel's rival when Paul becomes Clara's lover. Baxter and Clara are separated (she left him because he cheated on her) and Baxter is self-destructive and miserable in the wake of her departure, despite the fact that he now lives with his mistress.

Louisa Lily Denys Western

Louisa Lily Denys Western is a secretary in London and William's fiancée before his death. Louisa is a shallow, immature girl, who has been spoiled by her indulgent upbringing.

Mr. Leivers

Mr. Leivers is married to Mrs. Leivers and is the owner of Willey Farm. He is the father of Edgar, Miriam, Geoffrey, and Maurice and is a virile, handsome, and practical man. Mrs. Morel admires Mr. Leivers and thinks that, if she had a fine husband like him, it would be a pleasure to help him on the farm. She feels that Mrs. Leivers, who is a frail, delicate woman, is not suited to her husband, although the two women are friends.

Mrs. Leivers

Mrs. Leivers is the wife of Mr. Leivers and the mother of Edgar, Miriam, Geoffrey, and Maurice. Mrs. Leivers is a deeply religious and highly refined woman. She is gentle and kind-hearted, but very serious and intellectual. Physical activity tires her and she is frail. Mrs. Morel complains that, although Mrs. Leivers is poor, she does not make the best of it and takes no pride in her appearance. Mrs. Leivers, however, is not interested in worldly things and does not care about clothes or the way she looks. She gets on well with and is very kind to Paul.

Edgar Leivers

Edgar Leivers is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Leivers and the brother of Miriam, Maurice, and Geoffrey. He is a serious and intelligent young man and strikes up a deep friendship with Paul Morel. Edgar is very different from his sister, Miriam, who is very spiritual and interested in personal ideas. In contrast, Edgar is rational, scientifically minded, and practical.

Mr. Heaton

Mr. Heaton is the minister of the parish where Mr. and Mrs. Morel live. He is a widower and friends with Mrs. Morel, whom he often visits when Paul is a baby. Mr. Heaton is a gentle and spiritual man and Mrs. Morel helps him write his sermons so that they are down to earth and will not go over the heads of the congregation. Mrs. Morel feels sorry for Mr. Heaton

Jerry Purdy

Jerry Purdy is a miner and a friend of Mr. Morel's. He is a misogynist and believes that men should have supreme rights over their wives, who should live to serve and obey them. Mr. Morel is impressed with him for a time and, under his influence, tries to bully his wife. Mrs. Morel despises Jerry and hates that he is friends with her husband.

John Field

John Field is man with whom Mrs. Morel is friends as a young woman. She encourages him to follow his passion and go into the church, but John Field insists he must follow his father's wishes and go into business. He gives Mrs. Morel a Bible that she keeps her whole life.

MINOR CHARACTERS

Geoffrey Leivers

Geoffrey Leivers is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Leivers and the younger brother of Edgar, Miriam, and Maurice. Geoffrey is a serious and reserved boy and, like all the Leivers children, he struggles to make friends.

Maurice Leivers

Maurice Leivers is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Leivers and the brother of Edgar, Miriam, and Geoffrey. He is a quiet, somewhat sullen boy and finds it hard to interact with people outside of his family.

Polly

Polly is the secretary for Paul's department at Jordan's. She is a young woman but is kind and motherly towards Paul and heats up his lunch and dinner for him every day, which Mrs. Morel gives him to take from home.

Minnie

Minnie is Mr. and Mrs. Morel's maid.

Limb

Limb is a local farmer.

Hose

Hose is a man who employs the local women to mend stockings and other garments.

Beatrice Wyld

Beatrice Wyld is a friend of the Morel family and eventually marries Arthur Morel. She is a bright, quick, and witty young woman and a faithful wife to Arthur.

Agatha Leivers

Miriam's sister, and a teacher. Agatha has rejected the Leiver's family's general lack of concern about worldly affairs and, in protest, is deeply focused on status and appearance—ideas that seem trivial to Miriam.

Leonard

Annie Leivers's fiancé and, eventually, husband. He is good-natured and well-liked.

• ANALYSIS OF MAIN CHARACTERS

Paul Morel

The protagonist of the second half of the novel, Paul Morel struggles to discover his passion under the shadow of his mother's suffocating love. For most of his young adult years Paul loves his mother more than anyone else. They act like lovers, embrace and care for each other, take brief trips together, and, when Paul is seriously ill, sleep in the same bed, which helps him recover. Despite being a talented painter and easily finding factory work, Paul's greatest ambition is to grow old in a little cottage with his mother. When Paul matures and experiences a sexual awakening, he tries to find a lover who fulfills him in the same way his relationship with his mother once did. He experiments with Miriam Leivers and Clara Dawes, but ultimately ends up alone. Once he realizes that his relationship with his mother has been holding him back, Paul cannot wait for his ailing mother to finally die. Along with his sister Annie, Paul gives his mother an overdose of morphine that ends her life. Free from her suffocating love, Paul feels aimless and even considers suicide.

Gertrude Morel

Mrs. Morel is the wife of Mr. Morel and the mother of William, Paul, Annie and Arthur. She is born into a middle-class family and marries Mr. Morel after she meets him at a country dance. Mrs. Morel is reserved and religious, but she is also an extremely practical and determined woman. Although she dislikes drink and is generally ascetic in her lifestyle, she is capable of passion and sensuality and this leads her to marry Mr. Morel, to whom she is instantly attracted. Mrs. Morel strives to make the best of her poverty and is proud and prepared to defend herself when her husband is abusive to her. She is never broken down by his temper, although he makes her fiercely angry—throughout their marriage she tends to dominate and overshadow him, as she is really the stronger of the pair. Mrs. Morel loves her children deeply and is genuinely well meaning towards them. Unfortunately, the strength of her love for her sons leads her to become jealous and possessive and she inadvertently restricts them as they try to develop their own lives; they have such a strong relationship with her that

they feel guilty if they share their affection with another woman. Miriam, Paul's long-term girlfriend, often feels that she must compete with Mrs. Morel and that he is under his mother's influence. Overall, Mrs. Morel's life is hard and unhappy, and the reader gets the sense that she has not been given the opportunity to use her full potential. She is an intelligent, organized and industrious woman, but the restrictions of her class and gender mean that Mrs. Morel misses out on opportunities in work and education that later generations of women would benefit from.

Mr. Morel

Mr. Morel is the husband of Mrs. Morel and the father of William, Paul, Annie and Arthur. Mr. Morel is a coalminer and works in the mines from the age of thirteen onwards and for the rest of his adult life. He is a sensuous, physical man but he is not inclined towards conversation and is does not have the patience for serious ideas. He is uneducated, like most miners in this period, and does not know how to read or write well. He is extremely "handy" around the house and is at his most content when he is at work or engaged in some practical task. He finds, after a short period of marriage, that he is incompatible with Mrs. Morel and that he clashes with her severe, disciplined approach to life. In response to this, Mr. Morel takes to drink and spends much of his time in the pub. He is unable to communicate well or explain his emotions and takes out his frustration on his wife and children. He feels hurt and rejected when Mrs. Morel pays more attention to the children than to him and believes that he is not appreciated as the breadwinner of the family. From time to time, he flirts with misogynistic ideas, encouraged by his friend Jerry Purdy, and attempts to dominate Mrs. Morel. He finds, however, that he is a much weaker character than her and, though he is violent towards her and, on one occasion, threatens to leave, she always seems more in control of the situation than he does, although she is financially reliant on him and he is physically much stronger than her. Mr. Morel is a cowardly man and never takes responsibility for the wrongs he has done to his wife. Instead, after her death, he "dismisses" her by telling himself that he always "did his best by her," although this is not completely true.

Miriam Leivers

Miriam is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Leivers and the long-term girlfriend of Paul Morel. Paul meets Miriam when she is fourteen and continues to spend time with her into her early twenties. Miriam is a deeply self-conscious and spiritual girl. She is extremely religious, loves to feel pure, and is afraid of physical sensation and experience. Her emotions tend to be very extreme and close to the surface and she has trouble making light of situations and being friendly and familiar with people. She reads a lot and resents her life on the farm. She wants to have an education and

has an extremely romantic view of herself as a literary heroine who has been trapped in a life of manual labor. She and Paul have a deep intellectual connection and spend many hours together discussing books, art, and religion. Although she is in love with Paul, Miriam despises sexual contact and disapproves of physical love outside of marriage, which she is afraid of and feels too young for. She views sex as a “sacrifice” and is willing to sacrifice herself for Paul, in order to give him pleasure. Throughout her relationship with Paul, Miriam is convinced that Paul is the best and most soulful version of himself when he is with her. She feels confident that, in the end, Paul will choose her over the other women who compete for his affections: his mother and, later, Clara Dawes. At times, Miriam tries to manipulate Paul into staying with her, but generally she is confused by his erratic behavior towards her and is hurt by his frequent rejections. Despite this, Miriam is stronger than Paul and often dislikes him because he is so easily swayed by his mother’s opinion. Miriam, on the other hand, genuinely thinks for herself. She is hated by Mrs. Morel, who feels that she would “suck the soul” from her son, and by Annie and Clara, who find her insipid and needy.

Clara Dawes

Clara Dawes is the wife of Baxter Dawes, the daughter of Mrs. Radford, and Paul Morel’s lover. Clara is estranged from her husband Baxter, whom she married young and found that she could not get on with. She is a friend of Miriam (who introduces her to Paul) and she lives with her mother. Clara is a suffragette and is bitter and resentful about the way her marriage has worked out. Paul believes that she is a “man hater” but, as he gets to know her, feels that she is deeply sensuous and “needs a man” to feel loved and that her single life makes her depressed. Clara treats Paul’s claims contemptuously and insists that Baxter was cruel to her and that this is the reason she left him. Paul and Clara have an extremely passionate and physical relationship, although they do not have much in common intellectually. Clara is a strong, active woman, but is very reserved and finds it hard to fit in with the factory girls when Paul gets her a job at Jordan’s. She gets on well with Mrs. Morel, however, who prefers down to earth Clara to the saintly Miriam. She gains confidence through her affair with Paul, but will not divorce her husband, whom she still feels sorry for. Clara is independent and single minded because she is willing to live separately from her husband despite the social disapproval this causes. By the end of the novel, Clara is sick of Paul’s dithering between her and Miriam and feels that he is unmanly because he has played with her and failed to commit to their relationship. She gets her pride back after her failed marriage and, in her new confident, independent state, is able to

reconcile with Baxter, who has been humbled and who now intends to treat her with respect.

William Morel

William Morel is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Morel and the elder brother of Annie, Paul, and Arthur. He is a cheerful, popular, and athletic child and is his mother's favorite. William is extremely close to his mother as a child and cannot stand it if she is ill or hurt. He often spars with his father and, on one occasion, almost fights him when his father hits Mrs. Morel. Although William grows into a sociable and energetic young man, he has a fierce temper and is emotionally volatile. He is often unsure about his own opinions and relies on his mother to temper and inform his ideas. William is very ambitious and determined to get on in society. He takes a job in London and shows himself to be capable of a great deal, both intellectually and professionally. However, Mrs. Morel questions William's motivation as he pursues a materialistic and hedonistic lifestyle and it seems clear that William has little direction in life and does not understand his own behavior well. He is cruel and spiteful in his relationship with Louisa Lily Denys Western, whom he openly considers to be stupid and shallow. Despite this, he will not break up with her and seems to hold her responsible for the fact that he dislikes her. This shows that William has learned some of his father's abusive behaviors and this disappoints Mrs. Morel. William's reckless and self-destructive behavior eventually brings about his own demise, as he dies young after ruining his health for the sake of money and prestige.

Annie Morel

Annie Morel is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Morel and the sister of William, Paul and Arthur. She is a practical girl and grows into a mature and sensible young woman. Annie takes a job as a schoolteacher and marries a good-natured young man called Leonard, who has a good position at work and of whom the family are fond. Annie sides with Mrs. Morel against Miriam, Paul's girlfriend, whom both the women dislike. Annie, like Mrs. Morel, feels that Miriam is overly spiritual and refined and is a bad influence on Paul. Annie feels that Miriam takes all his attention away from the family, where his real loyalties should rest, and she blames Miriam for distracting Paul when Mrs. Morel first becomes ill. Annie helps Paul care for Mrs. Morel towards the end of the novel, when Mrs. Morel is dying. Annie is close to her mother and feels that, if she had been at home during the early stages of Mrs. Morel's illness, her mother would have confided in her and she could have helped her get proper treatment. However, Annie's relationship with Mrs. Morel does not have the intensity of the relationships between Mrs. Morel and William and Paul. By the time of Mrs. Morel's death, Annie is worn out with her care and the strain of

constantly seeing her mother in pain and is relieved when Paul decides to poison his mother to end her suffering.

Arthur Morel

Arthur Morel is the youngest child of Mr. and Mrs. Morel and the younger brother of William, Annie, and Paul. Arthur is a happy, lively child and, out of all the Morel children, he gets along best with Mr. Morel. He grows into an energetic young man who is often careless in his pursuit of fun and is constantly getting into scrapes. Mrs. Morel worries about Arthur and finds him tiring to be around because he is so active and extroverted. Arthur takes a job in a factory but is unhappy there. One day, on a whim, he and a friend join the army. Arthur regrets this decision immediately and asks his mother to pay his way out. This shows that Arthur is irresponsible and does not expect there to be consequences to his actions. His time in the army disciplines him, however, and brings the optimistic and determined side of his nature to the surface. He makes the best of his circumstances and, when he is at last discharged, he marries Beatrice Wyld and becomes a hard-working and responsible husband and father to their child. Arthur is very comfortable in his body in a way that Paul is not. It is insinuated that, unlike Paul, he is not ashamed of his physical and sexual prowess and, instead, shows his body off when he is with Beatrice, before they become lovers.

Baxter Dawes

Baxter Dawes is the husband of Clara Dawes and Paul Morel's rival when Paul becomes Clara's lover. Baxter and Clara are separated (she left him because he cheated on her) and Baxter is self-destructive and miserable in the wake of her departure, despite the fact that he now lives with his mistress. Paul and Baxter hate each other even before Paul goes out with Clara. Baxter is a manual laborer and Paul finds him rude and "common" and looks down on and despises him. Baxter, in turn, hates Paul for being snobbish and above himself. At the same time, Paul feels drawn towards Baxter and Baxter is reminiscent of Mr. Morel and mirrors the emotionally distant father figure in Paul's life. Paul and Baxter's rivalry reaches a crisis when Baxter attacks Paul one night and the pair have a brawl. After this, however, the two become friends when Paul visits Baxter in hospital, where he is sick and depressed. Baxter is a physical and proud man, but his pride and confidence are shattered by his failed relationship with Clara. He feels sorry for himself and regrets what has happened. After he recovers from his illness, he realizes that he does not want to die and is humbled by the experience. This experience also matures him, and he grows more responsible and emotionally communicative and is able to reconcile with Clara, with Paul's help, at the novel's close.

Louisa Lily Denys Western

Louisa Lily Denys Western is a secretary in London and William's fiancée before his death. Louisa is a shallow, immature girl, who has been spoiled by her indulgent upbringing. She comes from a wealthy family and, though she only has low-paid secretarial work, she feels superior to William's family and treats them like servants when she comes to visit. Louisa is an extremely careless woman who spends extravagantly and often loses expensive items that William provides for her. William treats Louisa badly because he finds her stupid and vain. He will not leave her, though (he feels sorry for her because her parents have recently died), and he believes that she cannot manage without him. At the same time, however, he believes that she would forget him immediately if he were to die. This suggests that Louisa is not hopeless without William, but that William enjoys controlling her and enjoys the fact that she relies on him because she is irresponsible and lazy and does not like being independent. Louisa gives the impression, however, of being harmless and oblivious; she does not mean to take advantage of William but does not seem to know how to act otherwise. Mrs. Morel even feels sorry for her because William is so unkind to her and calls her stupid to her face. After William's death, Louisa makes an effort to stay in touch with the family for a short period but, as William predicted, she quickly loses interest and marries another man.

• SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS OF CHAPTERS

Chapter I Summary:

"Hell Row" is a collection of cottages where colliers (coal-miners) live. They work nearby in the small gin-pits, as they have for years, and similar cottages dotting the countryside form the village of Bestwood. Roughly sixty years ago, large, financier-backed mines drove out the gin-pits. The company Carston, Waite and Co. appeared, and Hell Row was burned down. Carston, Waite and Co. expanded their operations and developed six pits. They built housing for the miners; on the site of Hell Row, they established the Bottoms, seventy-two houses on six square blocks at the bottom of a hill. While the houses were fairly substantial and pleasant on the outside, the kitchens, which were the dwelling-rooms, opened on to the ash-pits in back.

Gertrude Morel, thirty-one years old, married for eight years, and expecting her third baby in September, is not pleased to move to the Bottoms in July, even though she has a more expensive and desirable house at the end of the strip. Walter Morel, her husband, is a miner. Three weeks into their stay, the wakes (a fair) begin, and he troops off one Monday morning to attend. Their children are excited: William, seven, goes off after

breakfast, leaving behind Annie, five. Mrs. Morel promises to take her after dinner.

William returns for noontime dinner. After, he goes off on his own, and Mrs. Morel later takes Annie to the wakes. William has won two egg-cups from a game; Mrs. Morel knows he won them for her, and he gives them to her. He proudly shows her around the grounds. She leaves later with Annie, much to William's disappointment. William comes home later, unhappy from his mother's absence, and reports seeing his father working at a bar.

At night, Mrs. Morel goes to the side garden and watches families returning from the wakes. She feels dreary, as if nothing will happen to her in life. She cannot afford a third child, especially since her despised husband drinks away his wages. Her children are her only happiness. She later goes back into the house and laments her lost youth and feels powerless--only waiting--in life. Her husband returns late at night, and they get in an argument over whether he's been drinking. Mrs. Morel goes to bed.

Mrs. Morel comes from a good family. She has inherited her temper from her father, George Coppard, an engineer embittered by poverty. She hated her father's overbearing behavior toward her mother, whom she loved and favored. She thinks back on her youth, and remembers one afternoon spent behind her house with John Field, a well-educated young man who gave her a Bible that she still keeps. They discussed his reluctance to go into business; she had mistakenly believed that if one were a man, one could do anything.

She lost touch with Field. At twenty-three, she met twenty-seven-year-old Morel, a hearty, vigorous, humorous man, at a Christmas party. Her sensitive, quiet, intellectual nature was drawn to him, especially since he was completely opposite from her father. Morel, too, was fascinated by her refined qualities. They married the next Christmas, and she was very happy for several months. But it turned out they were not living in his own house, as Mrs. Morel believed, but overpaying rent to Morel's mother.

Morel's lie, his inability to communicate intimately, and his apparent increased drinking soured Mrs. Morel. She gave birth to William around their third Christmas together, and she turned her loneliness and disillusion into passionate love for him, much to Morel's jealousy. They fought constantly over Morel's irresponsibility. One day, he cut off William's beautiful curly hair. This event finalized their rift, and Mrs. Morel would always remember it. Morel's tendency to mock his superiors led to his lower wages, which he squandered on drink.

On the Tuesday morning after the first day of the wakes, Jerry Purdy, Morel's best friend, visits. Mrs. Morel hates his cold, manipulative, and domineering nature. The men leave for a ten-mile walk to Nottingham, where they play cards for money. At the Bottoms, Mrs. Morel takes Annie to a nearby brook for relief from the heat. Morel irritably and drunkenly returns late at night. He and Mrs. Morel fight viciously about his drunkenness. He locks her out of the house, then goes to sleep at the kitchen table. Outside, her rage grows. After she raps for a long time at the window, Morel wakes up, ashamedly opens the door, and runs upstairs before she can be angry with him. She cleans up the kitchen and goes to bed, where he is asleep.

Analysis:

Immediately apparent in the novel, especially to a reader in 1913, is its subject matter of miners. While Lawrence was certainly not the first English writer to depict the lower class, or even miners, he does so out of some personal experience (he maintained that the first part of *Sons and Lovers* was largely autobiographical) and with a keen ear for the rhythms of their speech, Morel's especially, and habits.

However, the first chapter is presented mostly from Mrs. Morel's point of view. Lawrence narrates in an omniscient voice that is at times detached, the opening description of the Bottoms reads almost like the beginning to a fairy tale, but more frequently zooms in on the interior emotions of each character.

Mrs. Morel's unhappy life is explored thoroughly. She represents intellect that has not been allowed to flourish because she is a woman; her shock that John Field could not do whatever he wanted as a man is a poignant projection of her own repressed ambitions. Her sense of being "buried alive" is a logical complaint for someone whose husband mines underground all day. However, she is just as repressed by their industrial life, a theme Lawrence will explore throughout the novel.

Though the sensual, passionate Morel seems an odd choice for Mrs. Morel, Lawrence demonstrates here, and elsewhere in the novel, how oppositions can attract as often as they repulse. Morel is also in attractive opposition to Mrs. Morel's loathed father. Still, the marriage is clearly a disaster, pitting mind against body, a conflict in which Lawrence was always interested. Morel is also irresponsible in regards to their children; he drinks away his wages, while Mrs. Morel lives only for William and Annie.

Sons and Lovers is informed by, and revises, Sigmund Freud's early psychoanalytic theories of sexuality. Freud's most famous theory, that of the Oedipus complex, in which the son unconsciously desires his mother

sexually while murderously hating his father, is given full treatment in the novel (the complex is named after the eponymous character in the Greek play *Oedipus Rex*). Here, the relationship between Mrs. Morel and William verges on romantic love; William wins her the egg-cups much as a lover proudly wins his girlfriend a prize at a fair, and he cannot enjoy himself once she leaves. Mrs. Morel, too, has projected the disappointment from her marriage into excessive love for her children, especially William. Lawrence uses several psychological symbols to demonstrate the complex relationships. Morel, threatened by his wife's love for their son, cuts off William's curly hair in a symbolic castration. Lawrence describes the act as "the spear through the side of her love for Morel." His metaphor suggests malevolent phallic imagery.

Tellingly, Mrs. Morel's first name, Gertrude, echoes that of the queen in Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, another work noted for its Oedipal themes.

Chapter II Summary:

Morel's physical presence seems to diminish around the house. He prefers to breakfast alone. Mrs. Morel gives birth to a boy while ill; Morel is indifferent. The Congressional clergyman, Mr. Heaton, visits her every day and becomes the child's godfather. Morel complains about the difficulty of his job in front of Heaton. One night, Mrs. Morel escapes to a meadow with Annie and the baby after Morel has kicked William. She watches the sky and feels peaceful in nature. The baby seems sad to her. Though it was brought into the world in an unloved state, she vows to compensate it with love from "all her soul." She calls him Paul.

On Friday night, Morel returns home late and drunk and, during a quarrel, throws a table drawer at his wife. It strikes her brow and draws blood. She pushes him away when he shows concern. When some of her blood drips on Paul, he helps her clean him up. The next day, Morel drinks to alleviate his guilt. However, he never apologizes and claims to himself that it was her fault. The family withdraws further from him.

With no money to drink more, Morel takes some from his wife's purse. Unable to pay for food the next day, she realizes her husband took her money. She confronts him and he denies doing it, then takes some belongings and leaves. The children are anxious he will not return, but their mother assures them he will be back that night. She is nervous, too, knowing that the family is dependent on him. She sees his bundle of belongings outside and knows he has not gone far. He returns later, and she mocks him for leaving his belongings nearby.

Analysis:

Just as Mrs. Morel previously transferred her dissatisfaction with her life to her love for William, here we see her redouble those efforts with

Paul. For every cruel turn Morel makes toward her, she reacts with overflowing love for her newborn child. This continues the Oedipal theme hinted at in Chapter I, and also bolsters the idea of oppositions playing off each other.

Another feature of oppositions explored here is how contradictory human nature is. Morel is usually heartless and detached, but he sometimes shows flashes of concern and love for his family. A greater contradiction emerges when he leaves, when Mrs. Morel realizes that "her heart was bitter, because she had loved him." In her anxiety over her husband's presumed departure, she has understood that she has some fund of love for him (they even share a somewhat romantic moment when he brings her tea in the morning). However, it is possible if she is confusing dependence with love, a mixture she seems to inflict upon her children as well.

Mrs. Morel gains insight into her life while in the meadow. In Chapter I, she was at peace among the flowers in her garden (the flowers will become an important symbol). The Modernist literary movement borrowed the Romantic tradition of transcendence in nature and frequently transplanted it to a number of other settings, including urban ones. James Joyce and Virginia Woolf, especially, were fascinated with how the single moment, Joyce preferred the term "epiphany"; Woolf, "moments of being", could elevate a human beyond his normal mental and spiritual state into a transcendent vision of himself and the world. Lawrence continues to use nature as the setting for these epiphanies, and it seems a logical choice for Mrs. Morel, constrained by her house and the nearby dirty mines.

Lawrence is adept at planting small scenes within larger narrative sweeps to highlight general behavior. For instance, the scene in which Morel interrupts his wife and Heaton explains, without abstract commentary, Morel's jealousy over Heaton's relationship with his wife and even his child, his bitterness over his job in comparison with the clergyman's, and his growing irritation with his wife.

Chapter III Summary:

Morel is sick with inflammation of the brain, and Mrs. Morel nurses him in his ill mood. The neighbors help out with housework and money. Morel gets better and the relations between him and his wife are improved; he is dependent on her, and she can tolerate him now that she has a new baby. Mrs. Morel devotes her attention to William, who is growing into a smart, lively young man, while Morel feels left out. When Paul is seventeen months old, another boy is born, Arthur. Mrs. Morel is pleased that Arthur immediately loves his father, who often returns his affection.

Paul is small and reserved, follows his mother around, and sometimes cries without knowing why. William gets in trouble with a neighbor one day for ripping her son's collar. Morel wants to whip him for punishment, but Mrs. Morel threatens that he will regret it if he touches their son.

Mrs. Morel joins the Women's Guild, a club attached to the Bestwood Co-Operative Wholesale Society, where women meet weekly and discuss the social benefits of co-operation and other developments. Her children admire her membership in the intellectual community. When William is thirteen, his mother gets him a job at the Co-op office, though Morel wants him working in the mines. William attends night school and becomes an excellent clerk and book-keeper, and goes on to teach night school. He is an excellent athlete and dancer. He gives his money to his mother and befriends the middle-class young men of Bestwood. He also enjoys the company of many girls in town, none of whom his mother approves of.

William leaves the Co-op when he is nineteen and gets a job, with a raise, in Nottingham. Annie is studying to be a teacher, Paul is doing well in school, and Arthur is trying to get a scholarship for school in Nottingham. After a year, William receives an offer for an even higher-paying job in London. His mother despairs, knowing she will miss him. He reads aloud and burns his love-letters from girls in front of Paul and his mother.

Analysis :

The third chapter details the effects of the Oedipus complex that has been developing in the first two chapters, but with a twist, it appears that, with William, there is a reverse Oedipus complex at play. Mrs. Morel seems to be in love with her son, who desires her approval but is not nearly as dependent on her as she is on him. Her jealousy over the girls who visit him and have sent him love-letters is thinly veiled.

The effect William's departure will have on Paul, her more effeminate son, is unclear, but we have seen ample evidence so far that Mrs. Morel has a tendency to transfer dissatisfied feelings from one area of her life (such as her marriage) to another area (her children). We may assume that she will project her longing for William onto Paul, though how that love may mutate is unclear.

Complicating this Oedipal relationship is Morel, who acts in an infantile, dependent manner and becomes, in effect, an ignored middle child. While this temporarily enhances his relationship with his wife, whatever love they had (which she admitted to having in the last chapter) is gone, and he no longer has the power of being an imposing father figure.

Alongside Morel's growing dependence is Mrs. Morel's burgeoning independence (aside from her dependence on her children). She easily

defeats and bullies Morel in a fight and, more importantly, joins the Women's Guild and recalls her former intellectual skills that have been out of service for so long.

Chapter IV Summary:

Paul, small like his mother, is mature and sensitive. Annie is very attached to him. After he accidentally jumps on a doll of hers, he decides to burn the doll in a "sacrifice." The sacrifice disturbs Annie, who says nothing. Among the children, Paul hates Morel the most. One day, Paul watches with the rest of the family as Morel and William nearly engage in a fistfight. Mrs. Morel stops the fight, to William and the other children's dismay.

The family had moved to a house on the top of the hill while William was growing up. Morel liked the house, but the vast, windy space in front of the house terrified the children, especially at night. As a boy, Paul hated his father and would often pray for his death. The family would wait anxiously to eat dinner for Morel, who would stop to drink before coming home. Morel was completely locked out of family affairs. His bad temper was occasionally interrupted by periods of cheerfulness, often occurring when he did handiwork. Paul was susceptible to bronchitis, and his mother never expected him to live. While sick, he would sleep in bed with his mother and recuperate. Still, Mrs. Morel was preoccupied with William.

When William leaves for Nottingham, Mrs. Morel turns her attention to Paul; the two brothers are jealous of each other but remained close. On Fridays, Paul collects his father's earnings from the crowded offices on Greenhill Lane. Though it is a nerve-racking experience for him, his mother calms him down afterward. He loves reuniting with her after she has gone shopping, as he does one day when she buys a dish with cornflowers on it. The children play games with neighborhood friends.

William, Mrs. Morel's "knight," is returning from London for five days over Christmas. The family prepares with food and decorations. On Christmas Eve, his train is late, but William eventually arrives to a joyful homecoming. He gives them presents and delicacies. When he leaves, everyone is miserable. When he has the opportunity to go to the Mediterranean over the summer, even with his mother's blessing, he decides to go home for his vacation.

Analysis:

Paul's burning of the doll is similar to William's burning his love-letters, except that William had real girls he was sacrificing as he moved to London, whereas Paul sacrifices the doll out of guilt for jumping on it. However, Paul's action may shed some light on William's; perhaps William

felt guilty for dallying with women and making his mother jealous, and burning the letters was his way of assuaging his guilt.

Another similarity between Paul and William develops when Mrs. Morel buys the dish with cornflowers on it. The egg-cup William won for her at the wakes had "moss-roses" on it, and flowers are frequently depicted as calming agents which soothe Mrs. Morel in times of anxiety (she often goes into the garden for respite from her husband). Indeed, the cornflowers delight Paul, and flowers seem to bond other characters throughout the novel.

Previously, Mrs. Morel felt like she was being "buried alive," a logical complaint for someone married to a miner. Here, we learn that the children dislike the vast, open spaces around their new house. While not physically constricting, this space is still a "tight place of anxiety" to the children. No matter where they are, the characters always feel bound by their environment.

The characters are also bound to their love and dependence on William. While Mrs. Morel's dependent love was already well established, we see how his presence can temporarily revive the family, and how his absence can return it to misery.

Lawrence continues to use two forms of temporal shifts here: he laces small scenes into larger narrative sweeps, and uses a flashback for much of this chapter. The purpose is not to construct the temporal movement of the characters' lives, since episodic, achronological narratives are inferior to tight, chronological narratives in that regard. Rather, Lawrence constructs a sense of the characters' emotional movement; an event from years ago may have as much to do with their present feeling as one from last week.

Chapter V Summary:

A work accident lands Morel in the Nottingham hospital with a compound fracture in his leg. Mrs. Morel makes the trip to see him and relates the news to the children. She feels sorry for him, but is mostly indifferent to his pain. Morel soon gets better, and the family is relieved, though they were peaceful and happy in his absence. Paul, now fourteen, is not suited for manual labor, preferring more artistic pursuits like painting. His ambition is to share a cottage with his mother after his father dies. At his mother's request, he unhappily searches through the newspapers for a job.

Meanwhile, William easily climbs London's social ladder, studies Latin to accelerate his legal career, stops sending money home, and becomes taken with a lady. Paul receives an interview with Thomas Jordan, a manufacturer of surgical appliances in Nottingham. He and his mother take the train and arrive at the busy warehouse. He is nervous in his

interview with Jordan, a small, curt old man, but secures a job. After, he and his mother indulge in an expensive dinner out in Nottingham and browse several shops before returning home. William sends home a revealing photograph of his lady, Louisa Lily Denys Western. His mother disapproves of Lily's outfit, so he sends a different picture.

Paul starts work, and his mother is proud of him. He works in the "Spiral" corner of the dark, second-floor warehouse, under the supervision of Mr. Pappleworth, a thin, somewhat shrewd man. He starts Paul on copying work orders and other tasks. Paul soon learns to like work, especially Pappleworth, despite his supervisor's occasional irritability. He befriends the girls who work there, including Polly, an overseer with whom he starts having dinner; Connie, an attractive redhead whom he romanticizes; Louie, with whom he jokes; Emma, an old, condescending woman; and Fanny, a lively hunchback. Each night he gives his mother his earnings and tells her of his day.

Analysis:

Lawrence uses the words "prisoner" and "bondage" to describe industrialism's effect on Paul. Immediately contrasting these suffocating words are pastoral images of sunflowers, corn, and woods; flowers once again symbolize a peaceful world apart from the demands and responsibilities of work and family. Ironically, Paul loves work and feels free in the warehouse, showing the first signs of confidence and befriending not only his supervisor but various women.

Though we do not see evidence of Mrs. Morel's jealousy over Paul's relationships with these women yet, again she does not mask her disapproval of William's romantic relationships. Lily's youth, beauty, and wealth threaten her, and it seems doubtful she will ever bless any union of her eldest son.

Moreover, William is drifting further from the family. He is more devoted to his own career, and he uses his money for his personal life. It seems Paul has started working not only to compensate for this loss of income, but to take over William's position as the responsible son. Paul even gleefully announces that he is the "man in the house" when his father is in the hospital.

With this new status comes a more confused sexual identity. When Paul and his mother go to Nottingham together, Lawrence describes them as "feeling the excitement of lovers having an adventure together." Paul's Oedipus complex is sketched out in his ambition to share a cottage with his mother after his father dies. Although this does not include the Oedipal desire of murdering the father, the psychological implications are clear.

Chapter VI Summary:

Arthur grows up into an impulsive, selfish, athletic, attractive boy. He hates his father, whose body is decaying and who fights constantly with his children. Arthur wins a scholarship to a school in Nottingham and lives there during the week with an aunt, coming home on the weekends. Annie is a junior teacher, and will soon get a raise. Mrs. Morel and Paul are inseparable when he is home.

William is engaged to Lily, and he brings her home over Christmas. She dresses and acts almost as a "princess," though she has worked as a secretary for the last year. At Easter, he comes home alone, but discusses Lily with his mother. Paul receives a raise. He and his mother take a trip to a friend's farm. Paul compliments his mother's outfit. They walk through the countryside, and Paul picks her flowers. They reach the farmhouse of the Leivers. Paul talks to their fourteen-year-old daughter, Miriam, and meets the three Leiver boys. After they leave, Mrs. Morel says if she were Mr. Leiver's wife, the farm would be better run.

William and Lily make another visit, and Paul spends a good deal of time with them. Lily's materialism, lack of intellect, and queenly demeanor around the family irritates William. He confides in his mother, who suggests he might break off the engagement. He fights with her in front of his mother, who reprimands him. He later makes up with Lily, though he hates her. The three of them walk to the train station for their departure, and William insults Lily more, saying she would forget about him if he died.

William returns again in October, to Mrs. Morel's delight. William, who looks gaunt, repeats his idea that if he died, Lily would soon move on. Later, he shows his mother a rash on his throat he believes his collar made. When he is back in London, she receives a telegram saying he is ill. She rushes to London and finds William mumbling nonsense in bed, his face discolored. A doctor diagnoses it as pneumonia and erysipelas (a skin disease). Mrs. Morel stays with him as he raves madly, and he dies in the night. She wires home the news and tells Morel to come. Later in the week, he and Mrs. Morel return, and the family puts William's coffin in the house. They later bury him.

Mrs. Morel becomes more distant during the fall, even to Paul. Around Christmas, he gets a bad case of pneumonia. Mrs. Morel asks the doctor if he would not have gotten it had she not let him go to Nottingham. When the doctor says it is possible, she thinks she should have "watched the living, not the dead." She lovingly tends to Paul, whose condition worsens until one night he thinks he will die. He is bed-ridden for nearly two months, but his illness brings Mrs. Morel out of her mourning. Lily sends

Mrs. Morel a letter indicating her social life is back on track, and she never hears from her again. Morel avoids the cemetery in his daily walks.

Analysis:

William seems to foreshadow his death when he repeatedly mentions that Lily would forsake his love if he died. (Lawrence also says that William proves a "prophet" when Lily does, indeed, forget about William after his death.) Perhaps the one symbolic association we may make with William's death stems from his becoming aware of the erysipelas when he wears a collar. The lifestyle he has adopted in London, excessively ambitious in the social and working worlds, engaged to a materialistic lady, has collared and bound him as much as Morel's mining has imprisoned him.

Mrs. Morel, too, dislikes Lily largely because she has somehow escaped this prison. Though Lily, as a secretary, is not at a much higher station in life than Mrs. Morel, nor does she have much intellect, she acts far above Mrs. Morel. Mrs. Morel's jealousy comes out in deceptive, manipulative behavior. She suggests William break off his engagement, then reprimands him for fighting with Lily in front of her.

We again see flowers acting as a bonding agent for Paul and his mother, when he picks her forget-me-nots in the country. His exuberant appreciation of his mother's outfit, he claims that if he saw her on the street, he'd say "'Doesn't that little person fancy herself!'", exposes some complex psychological masking. He transfers his own "fancying" of his mother, a guilty, incestuous feeling if he admitted to it, onto her to assuage his conscience.

Mrs. Morel, however, shows the first glimmers of attraction to a male who is not one of her own sons when she critiques Mrs. Leiver to Paul and proposes that she herself would have made a better wife for Mr. Leiver. She does not fully own up to these desires, calling Mrs. Leiver "'lovable'" at the end, just as she never seems completely aware of how her maternal love borders on romantic love for her sons.

Mrs. Morel now has another emotion to deal with: guilt, for William's death. She compensates for his death, and her feeling that it should have been her, by heaping attention on Paul. That he becomes ill with pneumonia as well allows her to enact the maternal duties of nursing she wishes she could have used for William.

Chapter VII Summary:

Paul visits the Leivers' farm several times in the fall. Miriam, though a romantic, is distant with Paul, afraid he will scorn her as her brothers do. She is deeply religious, and wants to be educated and rise above her status as swine-girl. Paul visits one day and chats with Miriam as she prepares dinner. Miriam is distracted by Paul's watching her, and she burns the

potatoes. The family puts down Miriam while they eat. Paul, Miriam, and Mrs. Leivers spend a day exploring the countryside. As he convalesces, Paul develops his relationship with Mrs. Leivers and her children, including Edgar, the eldest.

Paul and Miriam spend more time together. Paul hates it when Miriam lavishes love on her unaffectionate five-year-old brother. Miriam expresses to Paul her dissatisfaction with being a woman and her desire to learn. Paul tutors her in algebra, though her slow learning frustrates him. Paul often avoids her and spends more time with Edgar. Paul continues to paint at home, often with his mother nearby. He then shows his finished sketches to Miriam. He goes to art school one day a week.

Miriam shows Paul a favorite wild-rose bush of hers in the woods. The two share an intimate moment before parting. Paul does not understand why his mother, who believes Miriam is trying to reduce Paul's manhood, is angry over how late he stays out with Miriam. After a fight with her, Paul kisses his mother's forehead.

Neither Paul nor Miriam acknowledges their growing love for each other. On Good Friday, when Paul is nineteen and the family lives in a new home, Paul organizes a walk to nearby Hemlock Stone. Miriam comes along and, watching Paul, realizes she loves him. A few days later, they all make another trip to Wingfield Manor and other destinations.

Miriam has an older sister, Agatha, a school-teacher who competes with Miriam for Paul's attention. Miriam feels shameful for desiring Paul. She also stops visiting his house after receiving several insults from his family. Paul continues to tell himself and her that they are only friends. One evening, they pick flowers and Paul pins them on her dress. The family goes on a holiday at a cottage with some other friends, including Miriam. She and Paul walk along the beach and nearly kiss, but they are too afraid. Mrs. Morel criticizes him for staying out late. The Morels turn against Miriam, and even Paul hates her for spoiling his "ease and naturalness."

Analysis:

Paul dislikes it when Miriam smothers unreturned love on her youngest brother not only because Paul is not the recipient, but because it reminds him of how his mother loved and favored William. The old feelings of jealousy that must have been present when he observed his mother's closer relationship with William reemerge.

Miriam is also like Mrs. Morel in her desire to learn more and transcend her gender's societal limitations. Mrs. Morel's own jealousy of Miriam, therefore, is not only a product of her ever-present disdain for any girl who shows an interest in one of her sons. Mrs. Morel envies Miriam's independence which she herself has forsaken for a family.

Paul strengthens the connections between the two women when he fuses his mother and Miriam through his painting: his mother provides the artistic inspiration, and Miriam helps him shape the final product. But this blending confuses Paul's sexual desires, evident when the image of his mother, and not Miriam, presides in his head at night. Perhaps Miriam is simply a way for Paul to get to a younger version of his mother, before she was ruined by her husband and William's death.

It is possible to read Miriam's wild-rose bush as a symbol for the female vagina. She and Paul make their way "Down the middle path" through the dense undergrowth of the woods to "have a communion together," and they finally reach the bush, which Lawrence twice describes with the sexualized words "splashing" and "splashed." Moreover, the roses, some of which are "expanded in ecstasy," have a "white, virgin scent."

Again, nature and, more specifically, flowers intimately bond characters, as when Paul shows Miriam the celandines, and in their frequent nature walks.

Chapter VIII. Summary:

Arthur, wild and always in trouble, gets a job on an electrical plant. One day Mrs. Morel receives a letter from him reporting that he impulsively joined the army, but he wants her to get him out. Paul tries to convince her the army will do him some good, but she is opposed to the idea. She takes the train to Derby but cannot get Arthur out of the army.

Paul wins prizes for two paintings, which makes his mother proud.

One day, Miriam introduces Paul to a striking blonde woman, Clara Dawes. Mrs. Dawes, who appears to be poor, has separated from her husband and taken up Women's Rights, and her cleverness interests Paul. He knows and dislikes her burly, handsome husband, Baxter Dawes, a smith at Jordan's factory. Another night, Paul and Miriam discuss Mrs. Dawes, and then Paul expresses frustration that he is only "spiritual" with Miriam. He wants to kiss her but is somehow held back. The next day, Edgar and Miriam come for tea, and they all go to chapel later. Paul often criticizes her religious beliefs, which hurts her deeply. Mrs. Morel continues to believe Miriam is draining Paul of his individuality. Paul is still confused; he feels allegiance to his mother, but he cannot deny his tenderness toward Miriam. He is often cruel with Miriam. They have numerous close brushes with physical contact.

Paul becomes the overseer at Jordan's. Annie is engaged. On Friday nights, the miners split up their money at Morel's house. Before they arrive, Mrs. Morel and Morel discuss Morel's body and how it used to look. After they divvy up the money, Mrs. Morel is angry about how little her husband has left her. Paul tries to calm her down before she goes out.

Miriam comes over and Paul shows her a design he has made on a cloth for her. A friend of the Morel's, Beatrice, shows up and calls attention to Miriam's muddy boots. She playfully fights with Paul and sits between him and Miriam. The bread that Paul is supposed to watch for his mother burns. Beatrice soon leaves, and Paul helps Miriam with her French. Every week she writes a diary entry in French, and he reads this week's entry, essentially a love-letter to him. He tries to ignore the passion in the letter and corrects her grammar. They lock eyes and nearly kiss before he leaps up and turns the bread in the oven. He reads her some French poetry.

Later at night, Mrs. Morel is angry at having lugged home the groceries by herself. She and Annie criticize Paul for paying attention only to Miriam. Paul argues with his mother about Miriam; Paul tells her he has more in common with Miriam since she is young. Mrs. Morel is hurt. When he kisses her, she hugs him, cries, and expresses her animosity toward Miriam, who she believes will take Paul from her. Paul assures he does not love Miriam. Morel intrudes and takes a piece of pork-pie. When Mrs. Morel says she didn't buy it for him, he throws it into the fire. Paul reacts, and Morel purposely punches close to Paul's face. Paul is distracted by his mother, who has fainted. He lies her down on the couch. When she recovers, he begs her not to sleep with Morel, but she insists she will. Everyone tries to forget the fight.

Analysis:

The discussion of Morel's body is important, especially coming after various descriptions of the close calls Miriam and Paul have had in physical contact, Miriam even touches Paul once intimately on his sides. Lawrence shows the importance of the body in romantic relationships, and how that almost makes up for lack of spiritual communion; Mrs. Morel nearly remembers her long-abandoned passion for Morel when she examines his body.

The brief flirtation scene between Paul and Beatrice marks, for the first time, a love triangle of sorts that does not involve Mrs. Morel. Paul has a love/hate relationship with Miriam that affirms Lawrence's theme of oppositions, and he vacillates frequently with her in this chapter. Every time he sees a window open onto their love, he recalls something that instills some hatred in him. His burning the bread also recalls the time Miriam distractedly burnt the potatoes while Paul watched her.

Often, that something is his mother. Mrs. Morel returns to her rightful place in the novel's real love triangle when she openly admits to her reasons for hating Miriam. Her interaction with Paul is sexually charged, full of intimate physical contact. She says "I've never had a husband, not really" almost as a plea for authentic romance in her life, and Paul's desire that

she not sleep next to Morel sounds like more than merely a son's concerned view.

Paul's winning the art prizes is similar not only to William's "sporting trophies" for his mother, but to William's winning the egg-cup at the wakes long ago. In all three cases, the sons live for their mother, who lives through them.

Chapter IX Summary :

Conflict continues between Paul and Miriam. Paul visits her in a cold mood, and they look at the daffodils behind the house. Paul criticizes her for fondling all the daffodils as if she is fawning for their love. Paul tells her they should "break off," and that he cannot "physically" love her. She assumes his family has influenced his decision.

Paul remains more strongly with his mother, who devotes her full attention to him. He visits Miriam a week later and says he and his family think it is inappropriate for him to visit as much as he does without their begin engaged, and that he does not love her enough to become engaged. They decide to curtail their visits a little bit, and he soon leaves.

Still, Paul loves being at the Leivers' farm, and continues to visit, although he spends more time with Edgar. Miriam invites him to meet Clara Dawes again. Paul notices her body when he talks to her. She is aloof with him, and Paul leaves to meet Edgar, with whom he discusses Clara. He rejoins the women later. Later, Mrs. Leivers asks Clara if she is happier now, and Clara says she is, so long as she can remain "free and independent." Clara, Miriam, and Paul go for a walk. They see a neighbor's stallion, and Clara is fascinated by the horse. Paul's awareness of Clara heightens at the expense of his attention to Miriam. Paul and Miriam pick flowers, but Clara refuses to pick them. Absorbed in her body, Paul unthinkingly scatters some cowslips over Clara.

Paul treats his mother to a trip and an expensive dinner. They must keep stopping so Mrs. Morel can rest, which enrages him. He tells her he wishes he had a young mother. He relates his feelings about Clara; he likes her because she is "defiant." Mrs. Morel remains neutral.

Annie gets married. Paul promises his mother he will never marry, and vows to live with her. Mrs. Morel buys Arthur out of his obligation to the military. He courts Beatrice. Paul longs for something else out of his home, although he feels attached to it. He spends time with both Miriam and Clara; Miriam always suffers when they are all together, as Paul plays joyously with Clara more. He writes Miriam a letter in which he call her a nun, says that they can love each other only spiritually, not physically, and breaks off hope for a marriage between them. Though he remains friends with Miriam, his desire for sex grows, as does his interest in Clara.

Analysis:

Paul makes several differentiations between physical and spiritual love in this chapter. Sensual Clara epitomizes the physical, much as Paul's father does. She is fascinated by the great stallion's physique, roughhouses with Paul, and cuts a striking, full figure.

Miriam, clearly, opposes Clara, much as Mrs. Morel does. She is the far more spiritual figure, as Paul points out. Even Miriam's few instances of physicality are projected through another, purer medium. When she "caress[es] with her mouth and cheeks and brow" the "wildlooking daffodil," Lawrence hints at her repressed sexual desires; he explodes this when he writes "Rhythmically, Miriam was swaying and stroking the flower with her mouth, inhaling the scent which ever after made her shudder as it came to her nostrils." The numerous double entendres are easy to pick out, and Paul is the phallic "wildlooking daffodil" she so strongly desires.

Flowers otherwise continue to play an important role in the novel. When Clara refuses to pick them because she thinks they become like "corpses" when they are picked; this is indicative of her liveliness and sensuality. Paul picks them because "I like them, and want them." He, too, indirectly expresses his true desire for Clara through the flowers.

Paul says he likes Clara because she is "defiant" and "angry," but perhaps what really appeals to him is her own reference to her "free and independent" life. This alludes to her separation from her husband, and we see that Clara is the one woman in the novel who is unfettered by the men in her life. She is exactly what Mrs. Morel could never be, an independent woman who does not need her unloving husband.

Mrs. Morel is downplayed here as she seems to age well beyond her years, except when Paul takes her out to dinner and says "I'm a fellow taking his girl for an outing." He is still obsessed with his mother, wanting to live with her yet wanting something else out of life, and romantic confusion over her and Clara (seven years his senior) seems inevitable.

Chapter X Summary:

Paul, now twenty-three, wins first prize in an exhibition for a painting, which he also sells. Morel is jealous of his son's achievement. Mrs. Morel gives William's old evening suit to Paul. Paul tells his mother he does not want to belong to the middle-class, but prefers his status among the "common people." He continues his halfway relationship with Miriam, neither breaking it off nor committing to her. Mrs. Morel approves of neither her nor Clara, and urges him to meet a woman who will make him happy.

Arthur is married, has a child, and leaves the army and works. Paul becomes connected to the Socialist, Suffragette, Unitarian people in Nottingham through Clara. One day, Paul is sent to deliver a message to Clara. She seems ashamed of her mother, Mrs. Radford, with whom she lives. Later, Paul learns that the female overseer of the Spiral girls is leaving Jordan's. He asks Clara if she would want her job back there. She soon resumes working there, though the girls who remember her dislike her. Being educated, she considers herself "apart" from her class, and does not mingle with the other workers. Paul is intrigued by her sense of mystery. They often talk and argue at work.

On Paul's birthday, Fanny and the girls, except for Clara, get Paul premium paints. Clara tells Paul that she is aware of some secret the girls have been plotting without her. He tells her about the paints, but tells her they are jealous of his relationship with her. She later sends Paul a volume of verse. They discuss her unhappy marriage; her husband "degraded" her, and ultimately she left him because he was unfaithful to her. Paul believes if he ever marries, it will be to Miriam; he can only be friends with Clara, since she is still married. Clara's friendship with Miriam wanes. Paul tells Clara he thinks Miriam wants only a "soul union" with him, but Clara says Miriam wants him.

Analysis:

This chapter details various class tensions. Paul believes he doesn't want to belong to the middle-class although, as his mother points out, the people he prefers to associate with, especially Miriam, are middle-class.

Clara's superiority at work, and her reluctance to converse with the working-class women, on the other hand, suggests that Paul is much closer to the working-class than he might otherwise be. He is good friends with all the girls, and their gift to him of paints, a decidedly middle-class, artistic gift, indicates their hope that he will rise beyond the factory and someday paint for a living.

Paul's attraction to Clara's body continues. When he watches Clara at work, there are some similarities to when Miriam bent over the daffodils in Chapter IX : "She bent over her machine, grinding rhythmically, then stooping to see the stocking that hung beneath, He watched the handsome crouching of her back." Miriam's actions with the daffodils were nearly sexually explicit but, in the end, virginal and pure, whereas even Clara's manual labor is tinged with sexuality.

Paul calls Clara "Penelope," a direct reference to Penelope in Homer's *Odyssey*. While Paul makes the connection with Clara's habit of waiting and weaving, the name also recalls the theme of fidelity in the *Odyssey*. Penelope held off her suitors for twenty years as she waited for her

husband's return, while Clara is separated from her husband but not legally divorced. Exposition about the marriage complicates this allusion; Clara's husband was unfaithful to her, not the other way around. Though Paul vows to remain only friends with her, we sense that soon she and Paul will develop a sexual relationship.

Chapter XI Summary:

Paul's feelings are still conflicted over Miriam in the spring; he believes his shyness and virginity defeat whatever physical desire he might have toward her. He feels he should try to be physical with her, though it seems there is an "eternal maidenhood" about her. Mrs. Morel's hatred for Miriam increases as Paul visits her more, and she decides to give up her struggle.

Paul tells Miriam he must marry a woman and suggests that they have been too pure. They kiss and, when Paul walks home with her, he asks her to "have" him. She says she does not want to now, and admits she is afraid. They part, and Miriam worries Paul only wants his "satisfaction" from her.

Paul courts her more, though he never gives in to passion with Miriam. He picks some cherries at her farm and throws them at her; she hangs two over her ears. Paul watches the fiery sunset and rips his shirt coming down from the cherry tree. They walk into the darkness of the woods, where Miriam "relinquishes herself to Paul in a "sacrifice in which she felt something of horror." It rains on them as they lie on the ground for a while.

Miriam's grandmother becomes ill and Miriam takes care of her. Around the holidays, her grandmother feels better and stays with her daughter in Derby; Miriam has the house to herself, and Paul visits her. She cooks him a great dinner. Paul makes love to her at night for the first time.

Paul worries that Miriam does not find sex pleasurable; she denies this, and says she will like it more when they are married. Paul's love for her diminishes, and his interest in Clara renews. He tells his mother he will break off his relationship with Miriam. He tells Miriam that since he does not want to marry her, they should break it off and live separate lives. She is bitter and wonders why he has such power over her. They part, and Paul goes to a bar, where he flirts with some girls and soon forgets about Miriam.

Analysis:

This chapter is the most explicit thus far in terms of sexuality, but Lawrence's descriptions are still a far cry from his later work. The preponderance of sexual euphemisms, "You will have me," "belong to each other," "his satisfaction," "relinquish," "sacrifice", reflect both what the prudish Paul and Miriam would say and what was permissible in literature in Lawrence's repressive time. He was instrumental in breaking literary

sexual boundaries, but *Sons and Lovers* seems to suffer in accuracy from its puritanical language; while Miriam "relinquishes" herself to Paul in the woods, they have intercourse for the first time in the cottage, so it is unclear exactly what "relinquish" means.

Lawrence also uses a number of other techniques to comment indirectly on the budding sexuality of his characters. The cherry is a symbol of virginity, specifically of the hymen, and Paul's throwing the cherries at Miriam is an aggressive act that releases his frustrations over their virginity. To break the hymen metaphor open even more, Lawrence has Paul accidentally rip his shirt-sleeve. Miriam, ever the pure virgin, promises to mend it, but not before exploring his warm skin underneath, an action indicative of her sexual curiosity.

The colors of the sunset while Paul picks the cherries also mirror the climax of orgasm: "Gold flamed to scarlet, like pain in its intense brightness. Then the scarlet sank to rose, and rose to crimson, and quickly the passion went out of the sky."

When Paul breaks up with her, Miriam frequently returns to the word "bondage." She feels enslaved to Paul, and is upset that he has so much power over her. This bondage, which we have seen in Mrs. Morel, is one of Lawrence's main concerns: how does a woman remain liberated yet still enjoy the romantic and sexual company of a man?

Chapter XII Summary:

Paul slowly rises in the art world, making some money and friends. On holiday with Paul, Mrs. Morel faints, which worries Paul. Immediately after his break with Miriam, he makes a pass at Clara, and kisses her a week later. He is anxious waiting to see her again, and during work they meet. They walk by a river, and Paul explains to Clara that he left Miriam because he did not want to marry, both to Miriam and in general. They kiss and hold each other's bodies. They go down the steep incline of the bank to the river and see two fishermen, then continue on. Paul finds a private spot. Later, they get off the ground, climb up the bank, and clean themselves up. Paul asks her if she feels like a "criminal" or a "sinner."

Paul comes home late and tells his mother he was with Clara. He says he does not care what people say. Since his mother does not approve, he offers to invite her to tea on Sunday. With Miriam one day, he talks about his day with Clara, excluding the part about the river, and she inquires about Clara's marriage. She says she may visit them on Sunday.

On Sunday, Paul meets Clara at the train station, worried that she will not show up. They walk to his home past the coal-pits, and Paul introduces Clara to his mother. He shows her around the house, and Clara and Mrs. Morel get along fairly well, and Morel is pleasant, as well. Later, she and

Paul walk through the garden, and Miriam arrives as promised. Miriam invites Clara to come up to her farm, but Clara says she does not know when she can come. Miriam leaves bitterly. Paul feels guilty, and feels worse when he later hears his mother and Clara discussing their hatred of Miriam.

They go to chapel and meet Miriam there. Later, Paul and Clara take another walk and discuss Miriam; Clara accuses Paul of still having feelings for her. He kisses her out of rage and they walk to a field. Paul holds her tight, but she says she must leave to catch her train. They run, and she makes the train. When Paul returns, his mother says he will tire of Clara. Paul goes to bed and cries. The next day, he is aloof with Clara, but soon warms up to her.

Paul and Clara go see the famous actress Sandra Bernhardt perform in Nottingham. They attend in fancy dress, and Paul admires Clara's body, frustrated he cannot touch her. He kisses her arm. After the play, he tells her he loves her. Since his last train has left, she invites him to sleep at her house, she can sleep with her mother. They go to her house, where Mrs. Radford is insulting to them. Clara gets Paul a pair of her husband's pajamas. He and Clara play cards as Mrs. Radford slowly prepares for bed and Paul's hatred for her mounts. Finally, they stop, and Paul goes to Clara's room. He cannot sleep, and he hears Clara and her mother outside. Mrs. Radford goes to bed, and Paul goes downstairs into the kitchen, where Clara sits by the fire. They kiss and touch each other, but she refuses to back to her room with him. Paul goes to bed.

Mrs. Radford wakes him in the morning. At breakfast, Paul invites the two of them to the seaside on his expense.

Analysis:

Lawrence again omits explicit sexual information when Clara and Paul go to the river. Their descent down the wet riverbank mimics the act they are about to perform, and to indicate intercourse, Lawrence merely starts a new paragraph with "When she aroseŠ" The coquettish conversation afterward also implies sex, with Paul's denial that Clara is a "criminal" or "sinner."

Lawrence again focuses on Paul's obsession with Clara's body. It seems that Paul spends as much thought on Clara's body as he did on Miriam's personality. We can see the reasoning behind this preoccupation; not only does her body arouse in him a new, sensual being, he is transformed, into her. He loses himself in her body, identifying with her specific parts: "He was Clara's white heavy arms, her throat, her moving bosom." Paul gains access to a femininity previously unknown to him.

Oddly, Mrs. Morel is not jealous of her son's relationship with Clara, at least at first. Perhaps this is because Clara does not want to compete with her, and though the girls at work think Clara is snobby, Clara does not threaten her in the same way Miriam did. Mrs. Morel sees that Paul desires Clara most for her body, and not his spiritual connection with her, as he did with Miriam. However, as Mrs. Morel's own body decays in old age, she returns to her jealous ways when she says Paul's attraction to Clara will not last. Clara represents a displacement of her as a maternal figure for Paul, but a far younger, healthier, and more beautiful maternal figure.

Another mother figure is presented in greater depth here, Mrs. Radford. Her hostility towards Paul seems to stem from her sadness over her husband's death, alluded to just once.

Chapter XIII Summary:

Baxter Dawes, Clara's husband, sees Paul drinking in a bar with some friends. Dawes has not been doing so well lately. Paul, though his enemy, wants to befriend Dawes. Dawes makes a reference to Paul's theater date the other night, though he doesn't reveal to the other men who Paul's date was. The men want to know who it was, and Dawes incites Paul, who throws his beer in Dawes's face. Dawes is thrown out.

Paul feels distanced from his mother, since he cannot speak to her about his sexual life. When Paul tells Clara about his altercation with her husband, she is angry that Paul does not want to fight him. Paul runs into him at the factory, and Dawes threatens and grabs him. Jordan intervenes and tells Dawes to leave. Dawes throws him on the floor before leaving. Jordan fires him and takes him to trial for assault, where Paul testifies. The case is dismissed after the magistrate insults Dawes, and Jordan believes Paul gave away the case. Clara is angry that Paul mentioned her name in the trial. Paul confides to his mother that he does not always love Clara, and he feels that he can never "belong" to any woman, at least while his mother is alive.

Clara remains passionately in love with Paul. Paul tells her he plans to leave Nottingham and go abroad soon, though he would not leave his mother behind for a long period of time. Clara remains unsatisfied, feeling she does not have Paul. Paul loses his passion for her, but her desire for him and his body rages on. They take a trip to the seaside, and Paul questions who Clara is, and what her appeal is to him. She is upset that he wants to spend time with her only at night, and not in the day. He admits that he sometimes wants to marry her and have children with her, but she confesses she does not want a divorce from Dawes, since he "belongs" to her. She knows that she and Paul will separate at some point.

Clara and Paul walk past Dawes on the road one night. Dawes tries to make himself unnoticeable. After, Clara compares Paul unfavorably with Dawes in regards to their intimacy together. During his love-making, Paul feels alive and passionate, but their sex life soon grows stale.

One night, while Paul is running to make his train, Dawes finds him and punches his face. After several more blows, Paul chokes Dawes. He lets go, but Dawes recovers and kicks Paul, who falls unconscious. A nearby train's whistle, and the fear that people are coming, sends Dawes scurrying off. Paul eventually recovers consciousness and gets home. In the morning, his mother sees evidence of the fight on his wounded face, and tends to him. He tells her about the fight, and after Clara and Miriam visit him on separate days, he confides to his mother that he does not care about them.

The official story is that Paul had a bicycle accident, and he returns to work. His relationship with Clara feels empty, and he and his mother seem to avoid each other. Mrs. Morel stays with Annie in Sheffield for a week, and Paul visits. Mrs. Morel is sick in bed, and reveals she has a tumor on her side. She has been in pain for months, though she never complained to Paul. Paul goes to a doctor for a consultation, and the doctor agrees to see Mrs. Morel the next day. He diagnoses it as possibly a tumor, and says an operation is impossible, though if it is a tumor he can swale (singe) it away. Paul promises his mother he will return next week. Clara tries to get Paul to forget about his mother's problems, but he cannot. Morel visits his wife the next week, though the visit is awkward. Mrs. Morel stays at Sheffield for two months, her condition worsening, until she goes home.

Analysis:

Another bearer of jealousy emerges in this chapter, Baxter Dawes. His brand of jealousy is a more conventional kind in literature, that of the jilted (in his eyes, at least) lover. Other conventional actions emerge from this: threats, insults, the humiliating encounter (when Dawes makes himself unnoticeable), the comparisons by the woman between the two men, and the fight.

Paul's pacifism, and his lack of knowledge of even how to fight, disappoints Clara, who seems to relish the idea of two men fighting for her. However, generally she is far more subdued now, no longer an elusive, mysterious figure to Paul. Now Paul is the more magnetic character. There is a great deal of description of Paul's body in this chapter as seen through her eyes, a contrast to previous chapters in which Paul's point of view focused on Clara's body.

Interestingly, the description of Paul's body coming alive in the fight is similar to the description of his body during love-making. Perhaps the fight releases his pent-up hatred for both Clara and Miriam as well as for Dawes.

Meanwhile, Mrs. Morel's body continues to decay, and death is now imminent.

There is also much discussion in this chapter of possessiveness and bondage. Clara is bound to Paul, who does not feel the same degree of bondage toward her, or any woman, except his mother. Clara also feels Dawes belongs to her, which is why she cannot divorce him.

Lawrence refers to Paul as "Morel" during his fight with Dawes. This change emphasizes that the battle is between two men, rather than a man (Dawes) and a boy (Paul).

Chapter XIV Summary:

Mrs. Morel's doctor tells Paul that Baxter Dawes is in his fever hospital. Paul asks him to tell Dawes he will visit. The doctor reports that he did, and Dawes seemed angry at first, then refused to say anything. Paul visits and the two men trade gruff, but not impolite, comments. Dawes looks very sick with typhoid. Paul leaves him some money before going.

Paul informs Clara about Dawes's illness. She is shocked, and grows distant from Paul. She feels guilty for having treated Dawes badly, and feels that he loved and respected her more than Paul does. She visits Dawes and tries to make up, but there is too great a distance between them. Paul visits Dawes a few more times, as well, though they do not mention Clara.

Mrs. Morel gets sicker, and her relationship with Paul grows more strained and fearful as they pretend she is not dying. Paul is deeply affected, at times unable to work. He spends less time with Clara. They go to the seaside for her birthday (which he initially forgets) and discuss his mother's indomitable will to live. Soon after, he visits Dawes and makes the first mention of Clara, revealing that their romance is fading. He says he plans to go abroad when his mother dies.

Paul sees Miriam, who kisses him repeatedly until he pulls away from her. During December, Paul stays home all the time to tend to his mother, along with Annie, and the task is torturous to both of them. He and Annie decide to give her an overdose of morphia to speed up her death. He puts it in her milk, she sleeps heavily through the night, and dies in the morning. Paul informs his father and takes care of other business relating to her death. Paul looks at her dead body at night; it seems youthful to him. He kisses her lips and strokes her hair, but sadly knows that she will never return. Morel avoids looking at his dead wife's body.

They have a funeral. Paul's relationship with Clara remains distanced. Dawes heals slowly and stays with Paul for a few days at the seaside, their friendship much stronger now. Paul suggests that Clara wants Dawes and belongs to him, and suggests they reunite. Clara comes the next day, and

Paul says he is leaving that afternoon. Clara says she will join him later. She does not, however, and begs Dawes to take her back, which he does.

Analysis:

The two illnesses in this chapter demonstrate how the sick body can either cripple or restore relationships that were, on some level, dependent on the body.

Mrs. Morel's illness and death has an adverse effect on both Morel and Paul. Morel is unable to deal with his wife's death, refusing to look at her in sickness and death. He wants only to remember her as his "young wife" with whom he shared a passionate, physical relationship, and not as the cancerous woman who loathed him.

Paul's physical relationship with his mother, on the other hand, has lasted longer than Morel's and is more deeply rooted. The effect of his mother's dying, therefore, has a more complicated effect. He is unable to stand seeing her waste away, and his overdosing her is as much for his and Annie's sake as their mother's. Moreover, his action reverses that of Oedipus; rather than kill his father, Paul kills his mother. Though he is still beholden to his mother, he is beginning to understand he must live without her.

Paul's reaction to his mother's death is intense, he repeats "My love, my love, oh, my love!", but Lawrence spends little time discussing the death at first. When Paul visits Mrs. Morel's body again at night, however, his near-necrophiliac kissing and stroking reveals his pent-up desires. He wants her to be "young again" not only so she can be a youthful mother but, one suspects, so she can be the perfect romantic object Paul has not found in Miriam or Clara. His relinquishing Clara to Dawes can be seen as Paul's understanding that Clara is not a substitute for his mother, and that he must move on in life. He tells Dawes that none of his women has ever wanted to "belong" to him, and though it seems that Miriam gladly would have wanted this, it is clear that no one ever wanted it as much as his mother.

Conversely, Dawes's illness restores his relationship with Paul and, eventually, Clara. The friendship the two rivals form is curious but plausible; perhaps Paul feels he can befriend Dawes since he is no longer threatened by the older man's formerly strong body (the other reason, as Paul explains, is that the passion has died out in his romance with Clara).

Chapter XV Summary:

Clara goes with Dawes to Sheffield, and Paul hardly sees her after that. Paul and Morel cannot bear to be alone in the house together, so Paul moves to Nottingham, and Morel lives with another family in Bestwood. Paul loses the drive to paint and spends his time drinking in bars. One

night he comes home late and, while watching two mice nibble crumbs of food, urges himself to live for his mother's sake. However, it is a half-hearted attempt; he knows that he wants to die.

He sees Miriam at church one Sunday and feels comforted by her. She goes home with him to eat supper. She compliments him on his old sketches, and says she will soon become a teacher at the farming college in Broughton. She suggests they get married, but he does not want to. He gives her some flowers before he takes her to her cousin's house.

Paul, feeling lost, wonders where he will go next. He calls out to his mother, longing to touch her. He resolves not to "give inŠto the darkness," and he walks resolutely back to town.

Analysis:

The brief concluding chapter is despairing until the very end, when Paul finally releases himself from the hold of his mother and chooses to return to life.

A hold, indeed, for much of *Sons and Lovers* is about bondage to someone else. Here, Paul refuses to be bound, to belong, to Miriam, but not because he fears bondage. Miriam is too sacrificial and passive; he wants a woman who will claim him as strongly for herself as his mother did. For him, this is the only kind of relationship that can duplicate the intense love he had with his mother. Paul does not seem to understand until the final moments of the novel, however, that his mother's love was smothering, jealous, and ultimately destructive. His release from her feels like a victory; he may now be able to love someone else.

Flowers reappear here, but now they symbolize Paul's parting from Miriam, and not a bond. The other imagery that is important is the city's "gold phosphorescence" in the final paragraph. Frequently in the novel, Lawrence paints scenes of happiness and love with light colors of the sky. The return of these light colors here signifies Paul's choice of life over the "darkness" of death.

• 11. QUOTES

Quotes of family

1. Mrs. Morel came of an old burgher family, famous independents who had fought with Colonel Hutchinson, and who remained stout Congregationalists. Her grandfather had gone bankrupt in the lace-market at a time when so many lace-manufacturers were ruined in Nottingham. (1.62)

This early passage describes Mrs. Morel's family history, and provides some context for her self-pride. It's this pride that gives rise to her

frustrated ambitions, which she later forces onto her sons William and Paul. It's all related, see? And everything made sense forever.

2. While the baby was still tiny, the father's temper had become so irritable that it was not to be trusted. The child had only to give a little trouble when the man began to bully. A little more, and the hard hands of the collier hit the baby. (1.167)

Even this early on in the story, we can already see how Walter's anger and meanness will end up destroying him. Not to mention the rest of his family. The fact that the dude can't keep his patience with a crying baby suggests he's a bit babyish himself—he wants the world to do whatever he wants it to do. The end.

3. "You don't get as drunk as a lord on nothing," she replied. "And," she cried, flashing into sudden fury, "if you've been sponging on your beloved Jerry, why, let him look after his children, for they need it." (1.242)

For Walter to go out and spend his family's grocery money on booze is one thing. But for him to go out and spend some other family's grocery money on the sauce is another. In this scene, Mrs. Morel harps on Walter to stop sponging off his friend, and let the poor man's family have a little something to eat.

5. [William] was coming at Christmas for five days. There had never been such preparations. Paul and Arthur scoured the land for holly and evergreens. (4.316)

After William moves to London, his Christmas visits become a huge affair in the Morel house. The excitement surrounding his visits stems from the fact that William (the oldest brother) has basically replaced his father as the responsible male head of the household. Since Walter is such a never-do-good and all. So, William's arrival always gives the family a chance to gather around a positive male influence. Too bad William couldn't have lived longer...

6. When he went away again the children retired to various places to weep alone. Morel went to bed in misery, and Mrs. Morel felt as if she were numbed by some drug, as if her feelings were paralyzed. She loved him passionately.

Walter Morel's rampages through the Morel house leave everyone upset. Mrs. Morel, though, is the one who still has to crawl in bed with the guy when everything's said and done. The fact that she sometimes still loves Walter passionately shows just how complicated people's feelings can be for their family members—for their sons and lovers, if you will.

8. There was always this feeling of jangle and discord in the Leivers family. Although the boys resented so bitterly this eternal appeal to their deeper feelings of resignation and proud humility, yet it had its effect on them. They could not establish between themselves and an outsider just the ordinary human feeling and unexaggerated friendship; they were always restless for something deeper. Ordinary folk seemed shallow to them, trivial and inconsiderable. (7.68)

Here, Lawrence gives us insight into a family that's not the Morels. The Leivers are very different from the Morels because they are always talking to one another with emotional depth. Mrs. Morel and Walter are practical people, while the Leivers are religious and philosophical. This makes it tough for the Leivers to accept outsiders into their home, but Paul eventually breaks into their fold. Until he rejects Miriam like a zillion times, anyway.

9. It was not his art Mrs. Morel cared about; it was himself and his achievement. But Mrs. Leivers and her children were almost his disciples. They kindled him and made him quietly determined, patient, dogged, unwearied. (7.78)

Mrs. Morel isn't all that interested in how deep her son is. All she cares about is Paul winning first prize in art contests and "moving up in the world." The Leivers, on the other hand, appreciate Paul's intellectual and emotional intelligence and love him for it. You can see how they might give Paul something his own family can't provide.

Quotes on love

11. She was puritan, like her father, high-minded, and really stern. Therefore the dusky, golden softness of this man's sensuous flame of life, that flowed off his flesh like the flame from a candle, not baffled and gripped into incandescence by thought and spirit as her life was, seemed something wonderful, beyond her. (1.82)

When she first sees Walter Morel, Gertrude (Mrs. Morel) is totally swept off her feet. Walter is the total opposite of what she expects from a man. While her life has mostly been reserved and intellectual, Walter loves to dance and laugh without any kind of restraint. Unfortunately, this love of a good time will eventually be Walter's (and Gertrude's) undoing. Dun dundunnn.

12. Whereupon he got up and went out of the house, returning presently and crossing the kitchen with averted face, hurrying upstairs. As Mrs. Morel saw him slink quickly through the inner doorway, holding his bundle, she laughed to herself: but her heart was bitter, because she had loved him. (2.247)

After Walter makes an empty threat to leave Mrs. Morel forever, he comes back into the house and slinks shamefully upstairs. Mrs. Morel can only laugh at his clumsiness. But the moment is actually super sad, because Mrs. Morel realizes that she no longer loves her husband. She still has vivid memories of loving him, though, and it makes her bitter to think of how far their relationship has fallen.

13. Nevertheless, there was a state of peace in the house for some time. Mrs. Morel was more tolerant of him, and he, depending on her almost like a child, was rather happy. Neither knew that she was more tolerant of him because she loved him less. (3.14)

As time passes, Mrs. Morel builds up a friendly tolerance for her husband. Sadly, she can only tolerate him because she no longer expects much from him. And the fact that Walter doesn't notice her dwindling love for him spells doom for the relationship. The truly tragic part is that these two people will still live another couple of decades sleeping next to one another every night, and never say a word about their misery.

15. Again rose in her heart the old, almost weary feeling towards him. She had never expected him to live. And yet he had a great vitality in his young body. Perhaps it would have been a little relief to her if he had died. She always felt a mixture of anguish in her love for him. (4.114)

Mrs. Morel loves her son Paul very much, but she also experiences a slight regret at the fact that he survived his sickly childhood—if he hadn't, that'd have been one less mouth to feed in the Morel home. In this passage, then, Lawrence is showing us that even motherly love can be very complicated and contradictory... no matter how straightforward we think it's supposed to be.

16. "Pretty!" she said, in a curious tone, of a woman accepting a love-token. (4.149)

When Paul gives his mother a flower, Lawrence decides to compare the two of them to lovers. It might be easy to just glide by a little statement like this, but the truth is that Lawrence is getting at something very profound (and possibly creepy) here. He's asking every one of us: how deep does the love between a parent and child go? How deep should it go? We might think that there should be no limit to how much a parent can love their child, but lines like this suggest that there must, in fact, be some limits.

17. The mother and son walked down Station Street, feeling the excitement of lovers having an adventure together. (5.92)

If Lawrence only compared Paul and Mrs. Morel to lovers one time, we could write it off as a clumsy oversight. But when Lawrence does this sort of thing over and over, we have no choice as readers but to accept the fact that he is obviously trying to make a deeper point. We think the point is: maybe mothers and sons can sometimes be too close.

19. She felt she could bear anything for him; she would suffer for him. She put her hand on his knee as he leaned forward in his chair. He took it and kissed it; but it hurt to do so. He felt he was putting himself aside. He sat there sacrificed to her purity, which felt more like nullity. (11.2)

Paul and Miriam face the same basic conflict over and over again. Miriam wants to merge with Paul and form a single union, while Paul can't help but withdraw from this kind of intensity. He also hates the fact that Miriam wants to be so passive in their relationship. He wants her to show some sort of initiative, to step up and claim him as her own. But she'll never do this. She wants to sacrifice herself to him, because that feeling of sacrifice is what makes her feel like she's better than other people. This is a pretty sticky bind, folks. No wonder they never unravel it.

20. If she could rise, take him, put her arms round him, and say, "You are mine," then he would leave himself to her. But dare she? She could easily sacrifice herself. But dare she assert herself? She was aware of his dark-clothed, slender body, that seemed one stroke of life, sprawled in the chair close to her. But no; she dared not put her arms round it. (15.126)

At the end of the novel, Lawrence tells us in plain English what he's been dancing around throughout the entire text of *Sons and Lovers*. Paul wants Miriam to step up and claim him, but Miriam wants Paul to step up and claim her. Ultimately, it's these two characters' stubbornness that keeps them apart.

Quotes on drugs and alcohol

21. He had signed the pledge, and wore the blue ribbon of a teetotaler: he was nothing if not showy. (1.107)

When Mrs. Morel first falls in love with Walter, the dude won't touch a single drop of booze. His sobriety doesn't last long, though, because it's only six months into his marriage when he decides that he really, really likes to drink. As you might imagine, spending half his life drunk and the other half hungover makes Walter a pretty irritable guy.

22. "But Mr. Morel does not take any drink."

The woman dropped the clothes, looked at Mrs. Morel, then went on with the work, saying nothing. (1.161-1.162)

At this early stage in the novel, Mrs. Morel reveals her gullibility about her husband's newfound love for drinking. The moment is a sad one, because what follows is a painfully slow decline in Mrs. Morel's love and respect for her husband. Paul hated his father. As a boy he had a fervent private religion.

24. She saw the determined little collier buying in the week's groceries and meat on the Friday nights, and she admired him. "Barker's little, but he's ten times the man you are," she said to her husband. (8.330)

Gertrude's so fed up with Walter stealing all of her grocery money to buy booze that she never misses an opportunity to shame her husband. She specifically attacks his sense of masculine pride, saying that he's not a true man. Unfortunately, Walter doesn't respond to being shamed, and doesn't change his behavior one bit. Maybe if Gertrude had tried a different tactic on him, she might've found more success...?

25. He ran straight upstairs and kissed her. He was almost afraid to ask:

"Didn't you get up, pigeon?"

"No," she said. "It was that morphia; it made me tired"

"I think he gives you too much," he said.

"I think he does," she answered. (14.135-14.139)

In her final days, Mrs. Morel starts taking morphine to help her cope with the pain of her cancer. The only problem is that the morphine almost does her as much harm as good. It's possible to see a parallel here with Walter Morel's drinking. Walter seems to drink to help cope with the difficult life of being a miner, but the alcohol destroys him while making him feel better. The same goes for Mrs. Morel's morphine.

27. She had morphia every night, and her heart got fitful [...] His mother was wasted and almost ashen in the morning with the morphia. Darker and darker grew her eyes, all pupil, with the torture. (14.258)

As Mrs. Morel takes more morphine, her pupils grow so large that her eyes seem to turn completely black. This blackness could represent the life that's being squeezed out of her by death. It could also show that the morphine is taking complete possession of Mrs. Morel, like some sort of demon or zombie-virus.

29. So he was always in the town at one place or another, drinking, knocking about with the men he knew. It really wearied him. He talked to barmaids, to almost any woman, but there was

that dark, strained look in his eyes, as if he were hunting something. (15.3)

After his mother passes away, Paul becomes an alcoholic, just like his father. He spends most of his nights wandering from bar to bar and hitting on women he doesn't really care about. He's searching for some guiding force in his life, but he can't find one, so he keeps drinking to numb his loneliness.

30. "What am I doing?"

And out of the semi-intoxicated trance came the answer:

"Destroying myself."

Then a dull, live feeling, gone in an instant, told him that it was wrong. After a while, suddenly came the question:

"Why wrong?"

Again there was no answer, but a stroke of hot stubbornness inside his chest resisted his own annihilation. (15.10-15.15)

Here, Paul finally realizes the direct connection between hiding one's pain and killing oneself. Still, he can't think of any logical reason to keep on living, which is why he asks himself the question, "Why wrong?" In the end, it's a "stroke of hot stubbornness" that keeps him from killing himself. Just as he won't sacrifice his individuality to be with Miriam, he won't sacrifice his life to alcohol.

Quotes on Women and Femininity

31. He waited grimly, and watched. At last Miriam let the bird peck from her hand. She gave a little cry of fear, and pain because of fear—rather pathetic. But she had done it, and she did it again. (6.251)

Paul finds it pathetic that Miriam is so scared of feeding a chicken. But he still experiences a small sense of triumph when he helps her overcome this fear. No doubt, Miriam's scaredy-cat nature stems partially from her natural shyness and partially from her cultural training as a young girl.

32. "Yes," wrote Mrs. Morel to her son, "the photograph of Louie is very striking, and I can see she must be attractive. But do you think, my boy, it was very good taste of a girl to give her young man that photo to send to his mother—the first?" (5.216)

After her son William sends her a photo of his new girlfriend, Mrs. Morel expresses her distaste at the fact that the girl has bare shoulders. Mrs. Morel suggests that the pic is inappropriate, and that William has been inappropriate in giving it to her. We can't be certain at this point, but it definitely feels like Mrs. Morel would've found any excuse she could to

not like the photo—she'll never think any woman is good enough for her son(s).

34. Then he was so ill, and she felt he would be weak. Then she would be stronger than he. Then she could love him. If she could be mistress of him in his weakness, take care of him, if he could depend on her, if she could, as it were, have him in her arms, how she would love him! (7.5)

In this moment, Miriam seems to reverse her earlier desire to be a passive object for a man to manipulate. She now wants Paul to be weak so she can take care of him and be like a (dare we say it?) mother to him. There's consistency with Miriam's earlier views here, though, because whether she's a caregiver or a passive object, Miriam wants to sacrifice herself to a man.

35. "Let me take the rug," said Miriam over-gently.

"I can carry it," he answered, rather injured. But he yielded it to her. (7.13-7.14)

When Paul is still recovering his health, Miriam offers to carry a heavy rug for him into the Leivers' house. Paul feels shame at letting a delicate girl take over a physical task for him; but in this case, good sense trumps wounded pride, and he gives Miriam the rug. Way to go, buddy.

36. "You go," she pleaded.

Almost for the first time in her life she had the pleasure of giving up to a man, of spoiling him. (7.99)

When Paul and Miriam go inside the Leivers' barn and find a swing, Paul does the "manly" thing and offers to let Miriam go first. Miriam, however, has spent her entire young life dreaming of sacrificing herself to a man. So she takes more pleasure in forgetting her own desires than in fulfilling them. Here, you can see the extent to which Miriam's training as a girl has warped her relationship to her own desires. It's pretty icky, really.

37. "Paul's come!" she exclaimed.

"Aren't you glad?" said Agatha cuttingly.

Miriam stood still in amazement and bewilderment.

"Well aren't you?" she asked.

"Yes, but I'm not going to let him see it, and think I wanted him." (7.386-7.372)

Miriam doesn't think much of it when she shows her sister how excited she is about Paul's arrival. But Agatha never misses an opportunity to knock Miriam down a peg. And in her view, women are never supposed to

take an active role in their relationship with a man... It's this exact view that will later keep Miriam from a "happily ever after" with Paul.

38. "I think she's a lovable old woman," said Paul.

"Margaret Bonford!" exclaimed Clara. "She's a great deal cleverer than most men."

"Well, I didn't say she wasn't," he said, deprecating. "She's lovable for all that."

"And, of course, that is all that matters," said Clara witheringly. (9.188-9.191)

When Paul refers to a local woman as loveable, Clara Dawes takes exception and informs Paul that the woman in question is cleverer than most men. She's trying to make a point about women being just as good as men. But this wasn't the discussion Paul planned on having, so he tries to diffuse things by saying he never implied anything bad about Margaret Bonford. Clara doesn't relent. She expresses frustration over the types of adjectives that get applied to women (i.e., "lovely"), who deserve to be thought of as just as strong and intelligent as men. You go, girl.

39. "You think she's a man-hater?"

"She thinks she is," replied Paul.

"But you don't think so?"

"No," replied Paul. (9.215-9.218)

In this conversation with Edgar, Paul claims that he doesn't buy into Clara Dawes' whole down-with-men façade. He thinks Clara is all talk; deep down, she must want a man (like every other woman does). This is an extremely sexist perspective, but Lawrence seems to suggest it's correct, because Clara eventually does give in to Paul's advances.

40. If she could rise, take him, put her arms round him, and say, "You are mine," then he would leave himself to her. But dare she? She could easily sacrifice herself. But dare she assert herself? She was aware of his dark-clothed, slender body, that seemed one stroke of life, sprawled in the chair close to her. But no; she dared not put her arms round it. (15.126)

When Paul is utterly defeated, all Miriam needs to do is step up and tell him that he belongs to her. But she doesn't have it in her to do this. A combination of personal pride, fear, and feminine training has paralyzed the poor girl. This inability to take any initiative in the relationship (in combination with Paul's own commitment issues) is ultimately what keeps the two of them apart.

Men and Masculinity

41. "Let me take the rug," said Miriam over-gently.

"I can carry it," he answered, rather injured. But he yielded it to her. (7.13-7.14)

It's not easy for Paul to let Miriam carry something for him. After all, he figures he's supposed to be stronger than Miriam because he's a man. But he's recovering from an illness, so he gets smart and humbles himself here.

42. She looked at him, startled. This was a new tract of life suddenly opened before her. She realized the life of the miners, hundreds of them toiling below and coming up at evening. He seemed to her noble. He risked his life daily, and with gaiety. She looked at him, with a touch of appeal in her pure humility. (1.103)

When Gertrude first meets Walter Morel, she loves him because she thinks he's really manly—he's a miner who spends all his time underground smashing rocks. Come on. It's understandable that she would find this awesome. But, like many women who fall in love with "manly" young men, Gertrude eventually learns that there's a dark side to this kind of masculinity. Walter Morel turns out to be an abusive alcoholic. And he has no interest in ever talking about his feelings, or apologizing for anything he does.

44. Meanwhile William grew bigger and stronger and more active, while Paul, always rather delicate and quiet, got slimmer, and trotted after his mother like her shadow. He was usually active and interested, but sometimes he would have fits of depression. Then the mother would find the boy of three or four crying on the sofa. (3.27)

Paul and William Morel are two very different models of masculinity. Paul's delicate and quiet, following his mother around all the time. William, on the other hand, is a much more "typical" male; he only gets stronger and more active as he ages.

46. "I wonder if you would run, my boy," his mother wrote to him, "unless you saw all the other men chasing her too. You feel safe enough and vain enough in a crowd. But take care, and see how you feel when you find yourself alone, and in triumph." (5.80)

Mrs. Morel accuses her son William of only wanting a girl because a bunch of other men want her, too. This is pretty much Intro to Masculinity 101: compete with other men; turn a woman into a prize instead of a person; sit back and realize you don't actually like the woman once she's chosen you. Sure enough, this is exactly what happens to William.

47. His bicycle seemed to fall beneath him, and he loved it. Recklessness is almost a man's revenge on a woman. He feels he is not valued, so he will risk destroying himself to deprive her altogether. (8.210)

It's very rare for Lawrence's narrator to make an omniscient statement about male behavior in this novel, but that's exactly what happens here. On a total whim, Paul decides that he wants to punish Miriam for not doing or saying exactly what he wanted. So he hops on his broken bike and goes flying off down a hill just to make her worry. Clearly, he's willing to risk significant harm just for the sake of showing Miriam that she can't control him in any way. What a dummy.

48. Why did she make him feel as if he were uncertain of himself, insecure, an indefinite thing, as if he had not sufficient sheathing to prevent the night and the space breaking into him? How he hated her! And then, what a rush of tenderness and humility! (8.237)

Paul can't stand the way that Miriam always holds him to a certain moral code. Like all men in this book, Paul seeks the freedom to do whatever he wants, whenever he wants. As a man, he thinks he was born to be wild.

49. "What do you make such a fuss for?" cried Paul, all in suffering because of her extreme emotion. "Why can't you be ordinary with him?" (7.151)

Here, Paul reacts strongly against Miriam's need to rob her little brother of his independence. But it's clear that he's actually playing out his own anxieties about Miriam's clinginess. She's really needy when it comes to this love business.

50. He felt, in leaving her, he was defrauding her of life. But he knew that, in staying, stifling the inner, desperate man, he was denying his own life. And he did not hope to give life to her by denying his own. (15.136)

Because of his masculine pride and stubborn sense of individuality, Paul thinks of his relationship with Miriam in black and white terms. To be with her would mean to lose himself; to not be with her would be to destroy her. Neither result is all that appealing to our dude Paul. But, in the end, Paul would much rather hold on to his own life than ruin himself just to make Miriam happy. You see, in his view, it's only girls who are supposed to ruin themselves to make other people happy. Ouch, our feminist hearts.

52. To console his mother, Paul did not go much to Willey Farm at this time. And in the autumn exhibition of students' work in the Castle he had two studies, a landscape in water-colour and a still life in oil, both of which had first-prize awards. He was highly excited. (8.83)

When he wins his first couple of art prizes, Paul is ecstatic. It's no coincidence that these successes in painting come at the same time that Paul stops visiting Miriam at Willey Farm. We get it, Lawrence, we get it—love really can stand between you and your own accomplishments.

53. "Name—Paul Morel—First Prize."

It looked so strange, there in public, on the walls of the Castle gallery, where in her lifetime she had seen so many pictures. And she glanced around to see if anyone had noticed her again in front of the same sketch. (8.100-8.101)

At first, Mrs. Morel doesn't quite know how to react to seeing her son's paintings exhibited in a public place. Actually, she doesn't even realize that the paintings she's staring at are her sons' paintings. The fact that she can't find any faults with them as an objective observer tells us that Paul's paintings are probably pretty good.

54. "Read a book! Why she's never read a book in her life."

"Oh, go along!" said Mrs. Morel, cross with exaggeration.

"It's true, mother—she hasn't," he cried, jumping up and taking his old position on the hearth-rug. "She's never read a book in her life." (6.293-6.295)

William is generally very embarrassed by the superficiality of his fiancée Lily. But he gets downright angry whenever she tries to appear more cultured than she actually is. William hates posers, and his fiancée is no exception. Clearly, these two are not a good match for a healthy marriage.

55. "He thinks I'm only a common girl," she thought, and she wanted to prove she was a grand person like the "Lady of the Lake." (6.256)

Miriam's view of herself as a great woman has been informed by the fantasy and adventure novels she read growing up. There's absolutely nothing in her day-to-day life that would suggest Miriam's as great as she thinks she is, and this unfounded pride is what people seem to hate about her. Nonetheless, the impact of these books on her ego demonstrates just

how much the arts can shape a person's self-image. Literature is powerful stuff, man.

• SUMMARY

The novel opens with the description of settings. Gertrude Morel was pregnant with her third and unwanted child. While she was sleeping, Walter cut off his eldest son's hair like shorn sheep. They both have an argument over this. Later her husband comes home drunk, and they fight leads to locking Gertrude out of the house.

A flashback scene also occurs, and Gertrude remembers how she and Walter met at a Christmas party, and she loved him not knowing that he was lying about himself. They both get married, and eventually, Gertrude gets to know about the betrayal of her husband and his poverty. They often have argued over his alcoholic nature.

The novel progresses with the birth of Paul, an unwanted child. The parents keep on quarreling, and the father steals money from his wife's purse. The confrontation by the wife leads Walter to leave him, but he comes back home at night. Walter pays no attention to his family, and the environment of the house gets more tensed.

Gertrude gives birth to another child, Arthur, who has noticeable similarities with his father and receives more love from him by becoming his favorite child. When the eldest son, William, reaches the age of nineteen the father suggested that he should be working as a miner, but the mother fights for the son and sends him to London for work.

Paul and the family remain alienated from their father. Paul finds work at a surgical instruments' company as a junior clerk. William in London starts dating with a girl, Lily Weston, whose photograph he sends home. Gertrude doesn't like the girl. William suddenly falls ill and dies of a skin disease. This leads the mother into grief. She nurses her other son, Paul, to her fullest, when he catches pneumonia. Paul recovers from the disease.

Paul and Gertrude develop a deep relationship with each other after the death of William. Paul starts liking a girl, Miriam, who took care of him while he was ill. She is an ambitious girl who tries to change the lot by educating herself. Gertrude dislikes Miriam because she thinks that she will take Paul away from her. Paul shares his feeling towards Miriam with her friend Clara, whom he starts seeing.

Paul leaves Miriam when he decides to be more devoted to his mother who is now an old woman. Paul then develops a strange relationship with Clara. He is not sure whether he is attracted or repelled for Clara. While in confusion he still visits him and develops a relationship with her. Paul

diverts most of his attention with Clara, and she tells him about her shattered married life. Paul's painting is sold to Major Moreton, and it makes his mother happy. She advises him that he should get married now.

Paul patches up with Miriam and tells her that they could not survive the relationship because it didn't have sex in it. They both sleep with each other, but Miriam holds an opinion that she and Paul are too young for marriage. Paul walks out of her, and it makes both of them irritated with each other. Meanwhile, Paul's sister and younger brother get married.

After breaking up with Miriam Paul again finds solace with Clara and invites her to meet his mother on the seaside trip. Clara and Paul develop a passionate relationship. Paul happens to meet Clara's husband Baxter Dawes, with whom he fights and gets injured eventually. Paul finds himself perplexed and divided between his love for his mother and his passion towards other women.

Gertrude Morel gets diagnosed with a tumor and suffers a lot. Paul and his sister give her an overdose of morphine to set her free from the pain. After the death of his mother, Paul finds his life shattered. He wants to finish his life for the sake of his mother, but he doesn't attempt this. Miriam proposes him for marriage, but he doesn't accept the offer.

Clara settles down the things between her and Baxter Dawes, and they live happily in Sheffield. Paul becomes a friend of Baxter and Walter, and he sells their house and starts living in rooms in the town. Paul chooses a single life for himself and discovers that he can love only with his mother. There is no place for another woman in his life.

• KEY WORDS

1. Episodic

The novel is arranged in a series of episodes, not necessarily in chronological order. This type of narrative is called episodic.

2. David Herbert Richards Lawrence

David Herbert Richards Lawrence (11 September 1885 – 2 March 1930) was an English novelist, poet, playwright, essayist and literary critic.

3. Savage Pilgrimage

Lawrence's opinions earned him many enemies and he endured official persecution, censorship, and misrepresentation of his creative work throughout the second half of his life, much of which he spent in a voluntary exile he called his "savage pilgrimage".

4. Arthur Morel

Arthur, the youngest Morel son, is exceptionally handsome, but also immature. He rashly enters the military, and it takes a while until he gets out. He marries Beatrice.

5. Louisa Lily Denys Western

Lily, William's girlfriend, is materialistic and vain. Her condescending behaviour around the Morels irritates William, and she soon forgets about him after his death.

• REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What are the advantages and disadvantages of episodic type of narration ?
2. What role do the shifting narrative perspectives play in the novel ?
3. Write Miriam's notions of sacrifice and of "baptism of fire in passion".
4. Why might Lawrence have chosen to make Morel use a dialect? Does it set him apart from the other characters ?
5. Write down the summary of the novel, "Sons and Lovers".
6. Describe the major themes used in the novel, "Sons and Lovers".
7. Write about the schooling of D.H. Lawrence.
8. Name some short stories of D.H. Lawrence.
9. Who is the favourite and oldest son of Mrs. Morel?
10. Explain the title of novel, "Sons and Lovers".

• FURTHER READINGS

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Sons and Lovers | — David Herbert Lawrence |
| 2. D.H. Lawrence : The Early Fiction | — Michael Black |
| 3. Sons and Lovers | — Michael Black |

