

Kirkcaldy High School

English Department



National 5 'Critical Reading'

'Scottish Text'

Sailmaker

Alan Spence

Glasgow made the Clyde, the Clyde made Glasgow.



NAME: _____

TEACHER: _____

Introduction You are going to be studying the play ‘Sailmaker’ as part of the Scottish Text element of the National 5 English course. You will need to use your knowledge of the play in the final SQA Exam for the ‘Critical Reading’ Paper Section A. Here you will be given an extract from the play and answer questions about that extract but you will also be expected to show your understanding and appreciation of the play as a whole when answering, especially for the last question.

More will follow on the structure and expectations for this part of the exam once you have finished studying the play.

Contents of this booklet:

- 1) Background
- 2) Starting Point
- 3) Plot Summary and Character Introduction
- 4) Act One - Detailed Study of the play and note-making, theme and contrast observation
- 5) Act One - Character Analysis/Summary
- 6) Act Two – Detailed Study of the play and note-making, theme and contrast observation
- 7) Act Two - Character Analysis/Summary
- 8) Overall – Music and Symbolism
- 9) Overall – Theme Tracing
- 10) Structure
- 11) Exam Type Questions

Background

Alan Spence

Alan Spence, author of poetry, novels, short stories and plays, was born in Glasgow. He has received many awards for his writing. Alan Spence is based in Edinburgh where he and his wife run the Sri Chinmoy Meditation Centre. Alan is Professor in Creative Writing at the University of Aberdeen, where he is also the artistic director of the annual Word Festival.

He was brought up in Glasgow in a staunchly protestant culture, and *Sailmaker* certainly reflects this experience. Spence’s mother did die when he was eleven years old, and his father did struggle to successfully navigate them through the subsequent years of their lives, both financially and emotionally. *Sailmaker* is a largely autobiographical play.

Spence’s Glasgow

- *Glasgow’s cultural/religious divide; The Orange Order; Glasgow Rangers*
- *1960’s poverty*
- *A qualified affection for his Glasgow childhood*



Industrial decline

- *From 1870 until the start of the First World War Glasgow produced almost one fifth of the world's ocean-going ships.*
- *By the 1960’s only a few shipyards remained.*
-

Starting Point

That Ship Called Dignity

Have a listen to the Deacon Blue song 'That Ship Called Dignity'. You may have heard it before but this time listen very carefully to the lyrics. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-3ueYxrA-Zs>

The song raises some points that are relevant to the play. Discussion Points:

- 1) What is the song mainly about (the literal meaning)?
- 2) What is it more deeply about do you think? What does the character of the street-cleaner represent and, more importantly, what does the idea the ship represent?

Mini Research Projects To delve a little more into the background of the play and the setting undertake some research on the following areas:

- Glasgow's cultural / religious divide /sectarianism
- The history of the Clyde and ship-building
- Alan Spence – a biography
- What was a sailmaker's job like?
- Glasgow poverty of the 1960s

Plot Summary The play follows the lives of two main characters through approximately ten years of their lives. At the beginning of the drama we see the initial impact of the loss of Davie's wife and Alec's mother. Davie subsequently struggles to provide for his academically gifted son. A model ship becomes an important symbol in the play when Davie promises his son he will make sails for it. Despite promises to the contrary, he never does. As an implicit means of dealing with his mother's death Alec joins a number of religious organisations but they fail to fill the hole in his life. Eventually, learning seems to do this and Alec's rise as a student seems to correspond with Davie's decline as he loses his job largely through his own errors of judgement. At the end of the play Alec and Davie are in a state of poverty and they break up possessions in order to burn them to keep warm. The boat is symbolically and pathetically burned along with a number of other articles, and we are left with an ambiguous impression of completion, dissatisfaction, loss, acceptance and forgiveness.

Character Introduction

Alec Alan Spence, basically: he experiences the loss of his mother at an early age, an increasing awareness of the flaws of his father and separation from his roots (personally, socially, intellectually).

Davie Alec's father: he is incapable of adapting to change and loss; he is a sail-maker (and therefore is highly skilled) to trade and is self-educated to a certain extent (has read Dickens...); he does not meet his responsibilities effectively and is a procrastinator (symbolised by the model yacht for which he never does make sails).

Billy Davie's brother: he is a 'Big Orange head-banger' according to Davie. He emanates casual bigotry. Yet, he does get things done, and can adapt to change. The fact he moves to Aberdeen and that his son becomes an Aberdeen supporter would suggest either that the prejudice he evinces will disintegrate through generational, economic and cultural change or that it will continue in a different form.

Ian Billy's son: a simpler, less intellectual lad than Alec, he sees a 'chib' where Alec sees a 'marlinspike'; he associates the intellect and higher social status with a negative perception of homosexuality. He will follow in his father's trade - painting - and will move away from Glasgow.

Detailed Analysis and Note-Making

Act One

*Section to be studied pages 6-7:
ALEC: Sometimes I wake up...
ALEC: I looked up at the sky...*

1) a) Alec starts by describing the death of his mother in his opening soliloquy. Who is he speaking to at this point and why is he speaking in standard, formal English?

b) What is Alec's language like when he speaks?

2) Why is 'Ah've got a bit of bad news for ye son. Yer mammy's dead' repeated?



3) How does Alec now feel about the way he reacted to his mother's death?

4) What is Davie's reaction to her death like? How is this shown through sentence structure?

5) "Ah'm no really very hungry" Why does Alec now speak in Scots?

6) a) Alec reflects on what he did immediately after the news of the death was broken to him. What did he expect to see? How was the reality very different?

b) What point is the writer making about the nature of grief?

7) What is the mood and atmosphere in this opening section? How does he writer use techniques of drama to help create that mood and atmosphere (Think about lighting, music and setting.)

Themes observed so far	Contrasts observed so far

Act One

Section to be studied pages 7-16:

DAVIE: We better get this place tidied...

DAVIE: Marlin spikes

- 1) Here time has moved on to the day of Alec's mother's funeral. Read what Davie says at the start of this scene on the bottom of page 7.
 - a) Who do you think he is speaking to here and why?
 - b) What does he tell us about his grief?
- 2) Davie says "God, Ah'm shattered." These words have two possible meanings. Explain those two meanings.
- 3) What job does Alec tell Ian his father does and how does he hope this job will help him with his yacht? What does this reveal about Alec's attitude to his father?
- 4) What is Ian's response to Alec's attitude about his father?
- 5) How does the rest of the conversation between the boys on pages 8-9 develop the audience's understanding of the boys' feelings towards Davie? Write down examples of what they say and explain each one.
- 6) Why do you think Alan Spence includes the part about the boys' role-playing with the yacht and their conversation about comics on page 10? What does it show us about Alec and Ian?
- 7) At the top of page 11 Alec talks about his dad 'gettin fish suppers for the tea.' This is a subtle hint by Alan Spence about what is happening in Alec's household since his mother died. What is the situation in the household? What other clues are there that this is the case on the same page?

Alec's dad is not managing to cook meals at home. He may still be grieving. They can't really afford this, so it's clear that Davie is not keeping on top of running the house without his wife.
- 8) On pages 11-12 football references are made. Alec is clearly a Rangers supporter and protestant. However what does he have that contradicts his religion?

9) What does Ian say to him about this and how does Alec respond?



10) Why do we learn about the significance of religion and football at this time? Is this still the case in modern Glasgow/Scotland?

11) On page 13 Alec mentions 'Blues' music. Look at the lyrics of the song the boys sing. Why do you think Alan Spence has included these details (Consider especially the words Alec sings?)



12) Why do you think Alec imagined seeing the Virgin Mary? How do you think seeing her made him feel?

13) When Alec takes out the marlinspikes Ian imagines them being used as a 'chib'. What does this suggest about Ian's character?

Themes observed/developed so far	Contrasts observed/developed so far
Religion Sectarianism	

Act One

*Section to be studied pages 16-27:
ALEC: You've been drinkin. Ah can
smell it.
BILLY: Nae bother.*

- 1) Consider what the atmosphere has just been like Before Davie enters and what Alec has seemed like when speaking with Ian. How do Alec's immediate words to his dad create a change in the atmosphere and mood?
- 2) How does Davie feel about his job as a tickman? What evidence is there of this?
- 3) What does Davie hope will happen so he can make a sail for the yacht? What does this information suggest about his character?
- 4) What signs are there from pages 16-21 that Davie isn't coping well with his situation?
- 5) On pages 21-22 there are several signs that Billy is more realistic than his brother Davie? What does he say/do to suggest he is more realistic?
- 6) Billy is, however, presented as being more aggressive. What signs are there of this?
- 7) How is Billy's response to Alec's yacht different from Davie's? What contrast does this present between Billy and Davie?
- 8) Davie jokes about them sailing away to 'Never Never Land!' What do you think he means by this and why do you think he say it?
- 9) What does the fact that Davie likes 'Dickens' as an author suggest about his character? Why is this such a sad realisation for the audience?
- 10) On pages 26-27 Billy talks a lot about colours. What does he mainly say and what do his comments tell us about his character?



11) On page 27 Billy reveals he has done something for Davie. What has he done? What does this suggest about their relationship?

Act One

Section to be studied pages 28-32:

ALEC: When ye gonnae fix it?

DAVIE: Ach aye: Not to worry. Never died a winter yet.

1) What does Davie tell Alec about what has happened to him on page 28?
Do you believe him? Why/why not?
Why might he have been treated like this?

2) On page 31 what do we learn has happened to Davie with regards to his job?

3) What is Davie's attitude to what has happened to him?

4) How does Billy respond to what Davie tells him and what does this reveal about his character?

5) The stage directions on page 32 reveal that Alec tries to make a sail with cellophane. Why is this sad for the audience to see? Does it tell us anything about the way Alec feels?

6) At the end of Act One Alec puts the yacht back in the Glory Hole. Why is this important and what does it tell us about his relationship with/knowledge of his father?

Themes observed/developed so far	Contrasts observed/developed so far
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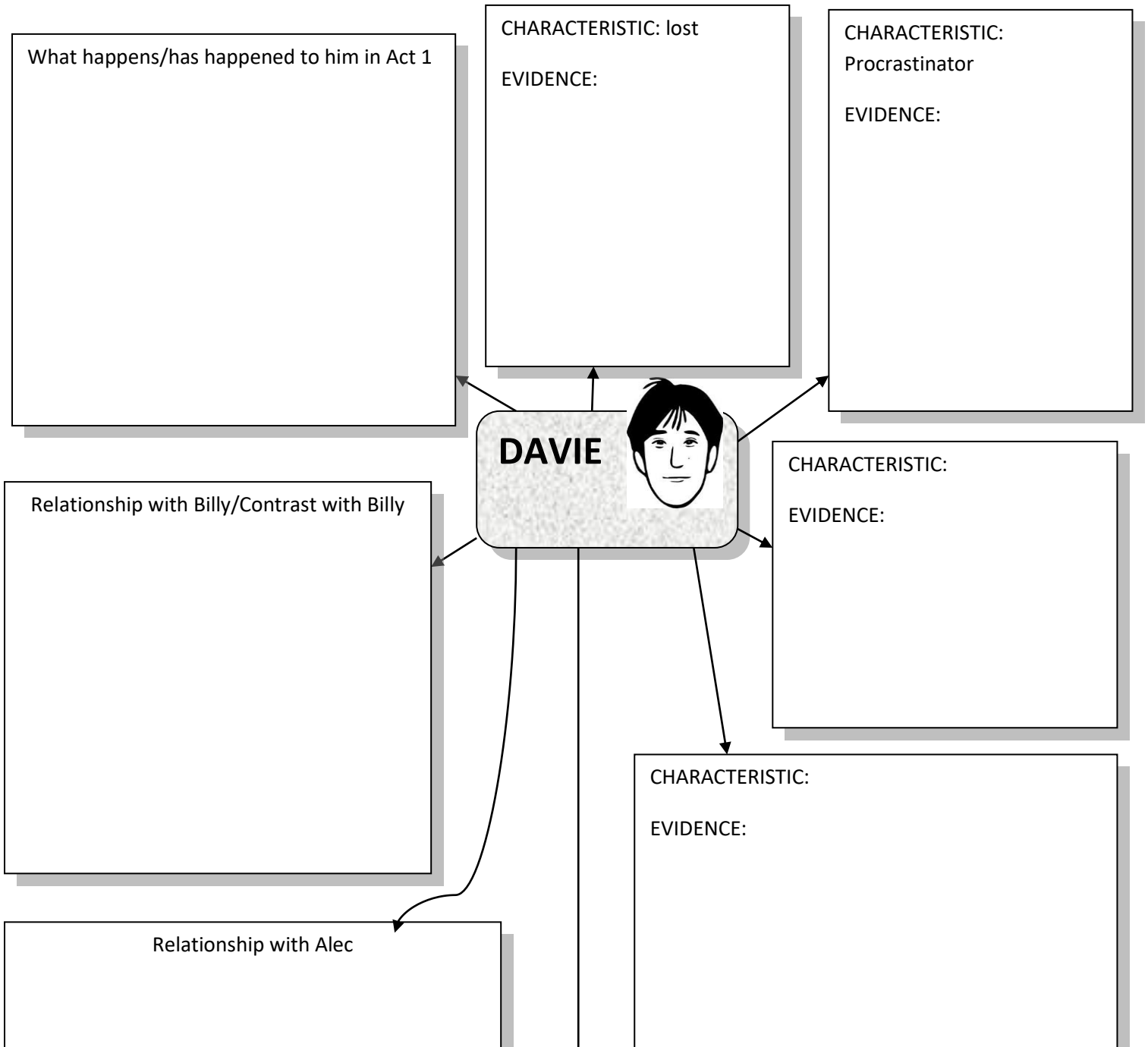


Act One

CHARACTER ANALYSIS/SUMMARY

CHARACTER ANALYSIS/SUMMARY

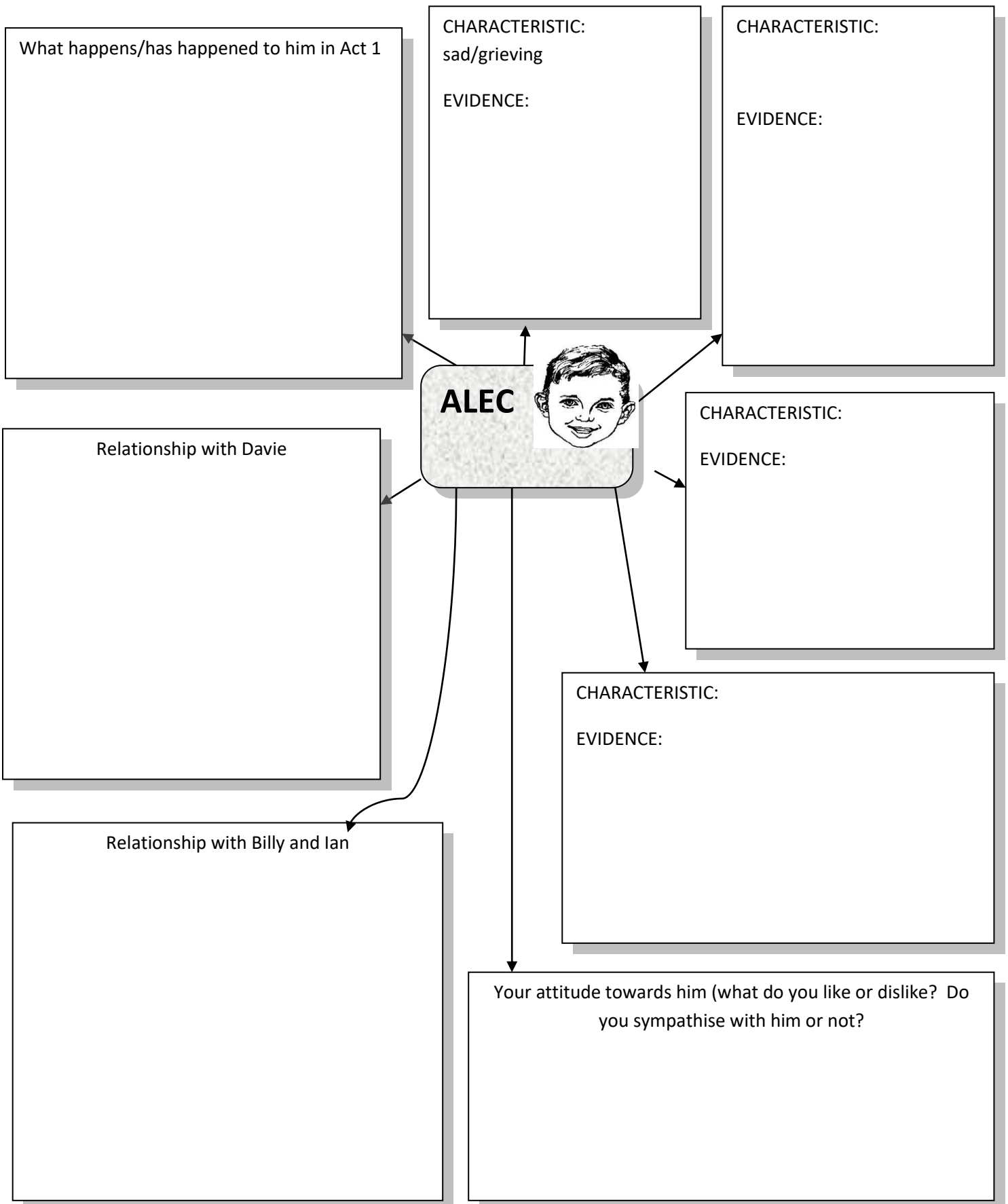
Now that we have read to the end of the first ACT you should be able to understand more about the CHARACTERISATION of the central characters. Your initial focus will be on Davie's character. Complete the chart below (which has been started for you.) Some aspects of his character have been included but there is also room for you to decide what other characteristics you feel Davie has though his character will be more fully developed in Act Two.



Act One

CHARACTER ANALYSIS/SUMMARY

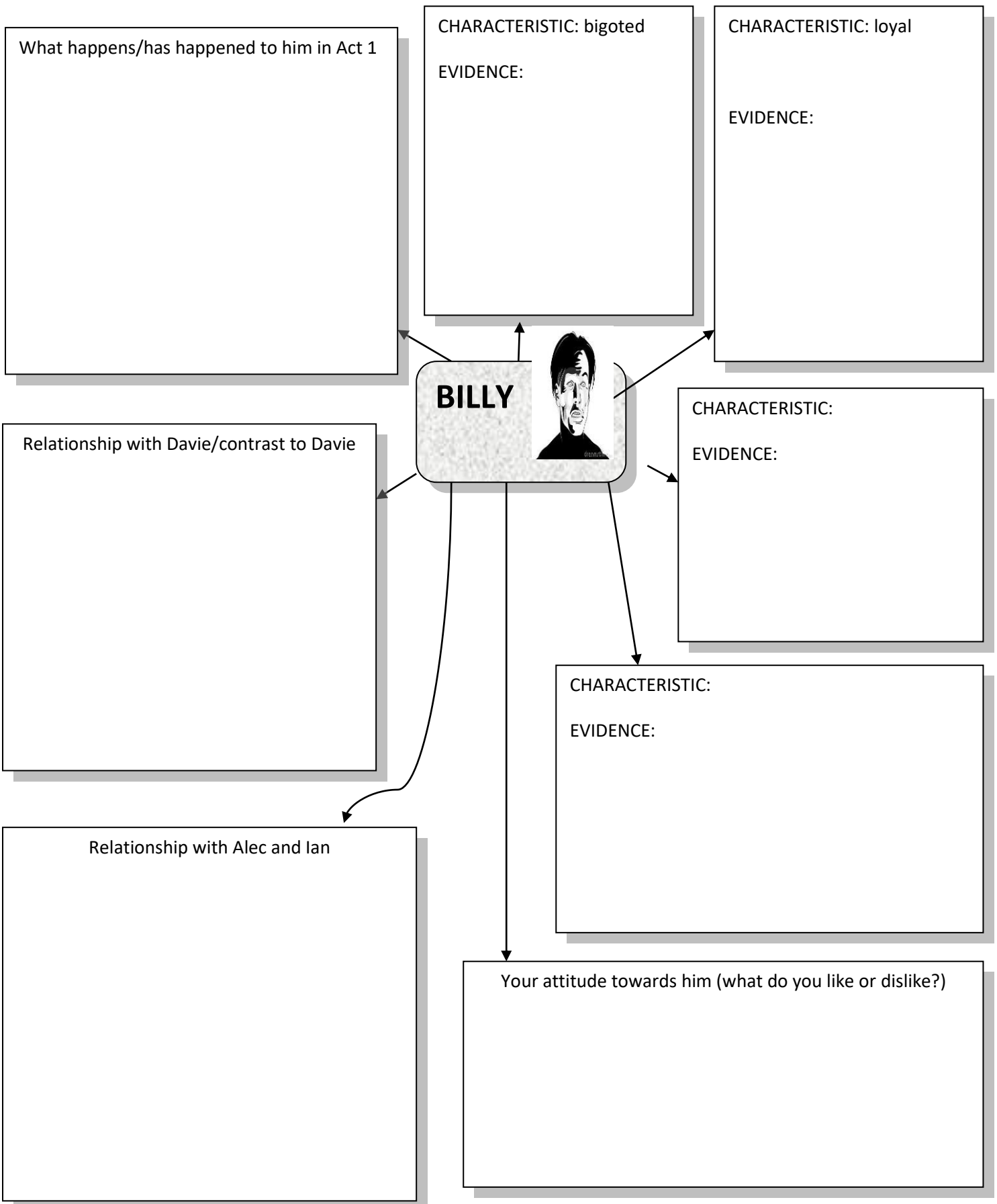
Your next focus will be on Alec's character. Complete the chart below (which has been started for you.) Some aspects of his character have been included but there is also room for you to decide what other characteristics you feel Alec has though his character will be more fully developed in Act Two.



Act One

CHARACTER ANALYSIS/SUMMARY

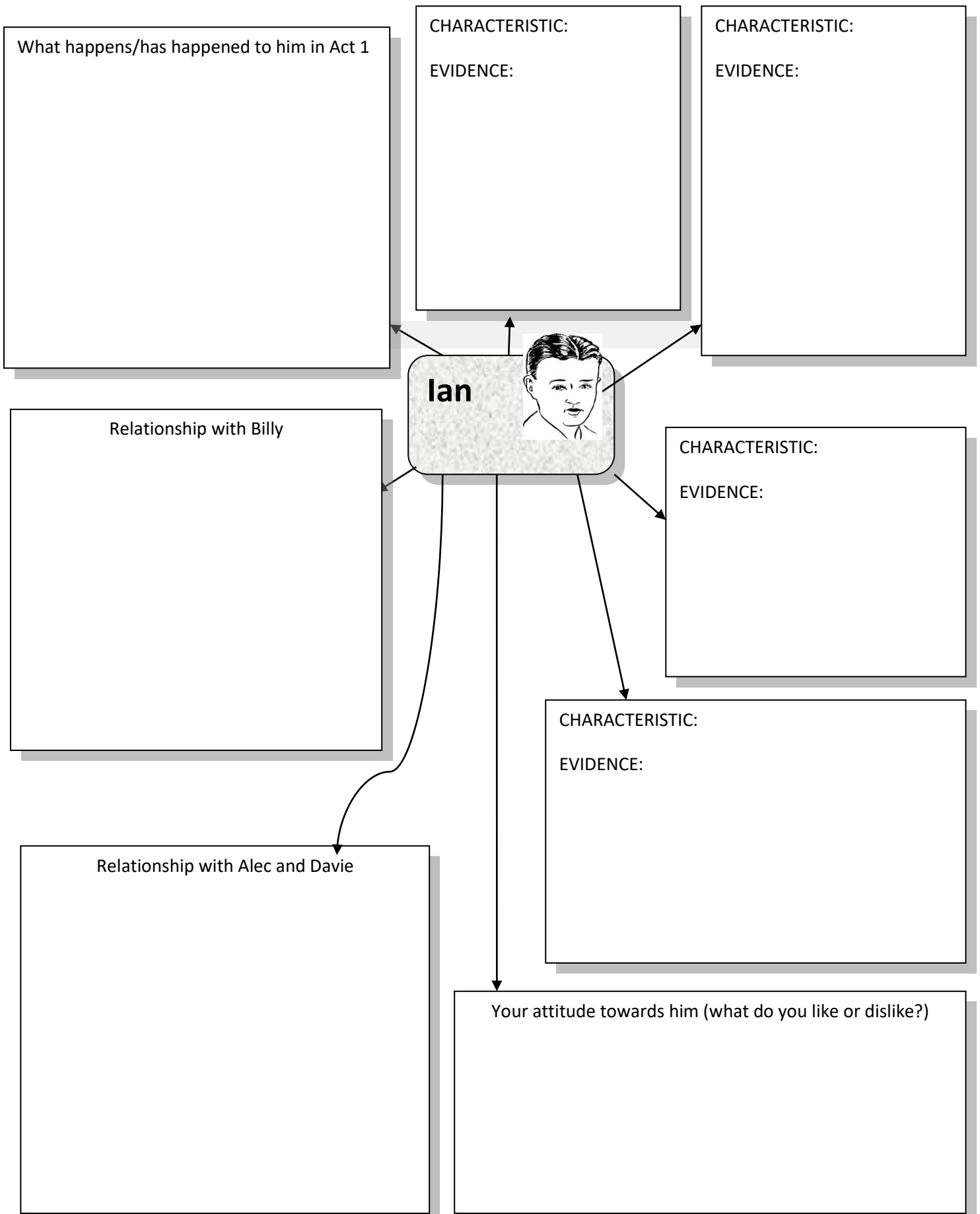
Your next focus will be on Billy's character. Complete the chart below (which has been started for you.) Some aspects of his character have been included but there is also room for you to decide what other characteristics you feel Billy has though his character will be more fully developed in Act Two.



Act One

CHARACTER ANALYSIS/SUMMARY

Your next focus will be on Ian's character. Complete the chart below (which has been started for you.) Some aspects of his character have been included but there is also room for you to decide what other characteristics you feel Ian has though his character will be more fully developed in Act Two.



Section to be studied pages 33-38

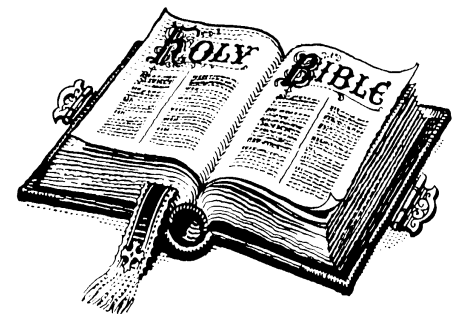
ALEC: Give me oil in my lamp...

ALEC: My father would ask...

Detailed Analysis and Note-Making

Act Two

- 1) At the start of Act Two we hear Alec singing a hymn and Davie also speaks to him about the 'Band of Hope' and 'Christian Endeavour.' Why do you think Alec is drawn to religion and religious groups like these?
- 2) What evidence is there in these pages that Davie was very much like Alec when he was younger?
- 3) What reason does Davie give for leaving the Boys' Brigade and what does this tell us about his attitude to life?
- 4) What advice does Davie give Alec regarding his future? Why do you think he does so?
- 5) Why has Alec decided to go to the Mission rather than socialising with his friends?
- 6) Alec gives another soliloquy on pages 36-38. Look closely at the second paragraph of it. What are we told about Alec's environment? In what ways may that have influenced his beliefs and behaviour?
- 7) Why do you think Alec feels so awkward in front of the African couple in the church?
- 8) Why do you think he finds Mrs Lutula's question so difficult to answer?
- 9) Why do you think Alec runs away from the mission? What has gotten to him to cause this reaction?



Section to be studied pages 38-48

DAVIE: What's the matter?

Alec smiles in spite of himself. They exit.)

Act Two

- 1) Why do you think Alec is so angry at Davie when he returns home from The Mission?

- 2) a) Look at how Alec speaks to his father on pages 38-39. How does he react to Davie's stories about the past?

b) Why does this irritate Davie?

c) What does their conversation tell us about their relationship at this stage?

- 3) How does Davie react when he discovers that Alec has passed the exam? Why does he react like this?

- 4) Alec's life is clearly starting to change – soon he will be attending private school. How do you think this change may affect the relationship between Alec and Davie? Give reasons for your answer.

- 5) Look at what Ian says about private school. What assumptions does he make about the people that go to private school and what do these reveal about his character?

- 6) Which details on pages 43-44 show us that Davie is short of money?

- 7) On pages 44-45 Spence makes 5 years of Alec's high school pass in 5 minutes by having him remember the details this is then quickly contrasted with Davie's news about the factory. Why do you think Spence uses this contrast?

8) What details on pages 46-47 show us that again Davie is struggling to cope?

9) What details from these pages show us that there is now a real contrast in the characters of Alec and Davie? What factors have led to this contrast?

10) Listen to the song 'My Generation'. What is Spence trying to tell us about Alec's feelings.

Themes observed/developed so far	Contrasts observed/developed so far

Section to be studied pages 48-55
BILLY enters, wearing overalls...
Darkness. Spotlight on Alec

Act Two

- 1) There is now also a big difference between the two cousins Alec and Ian as well as their relationships with their fathers. Summarise those differences.
- 2) What evidence do we see on pages 48-49 that suggests Davie used to have dreams and ambitions for his future?
- 3) How do we know that Billy and Ian have had to make compromises or sacrifices in order to keep themselves okay financially?

Section to be studied pages 56-64

ALEC: I keep going back.

Tape: Fats Domino, Red Sails in the Sunset.

Act Two

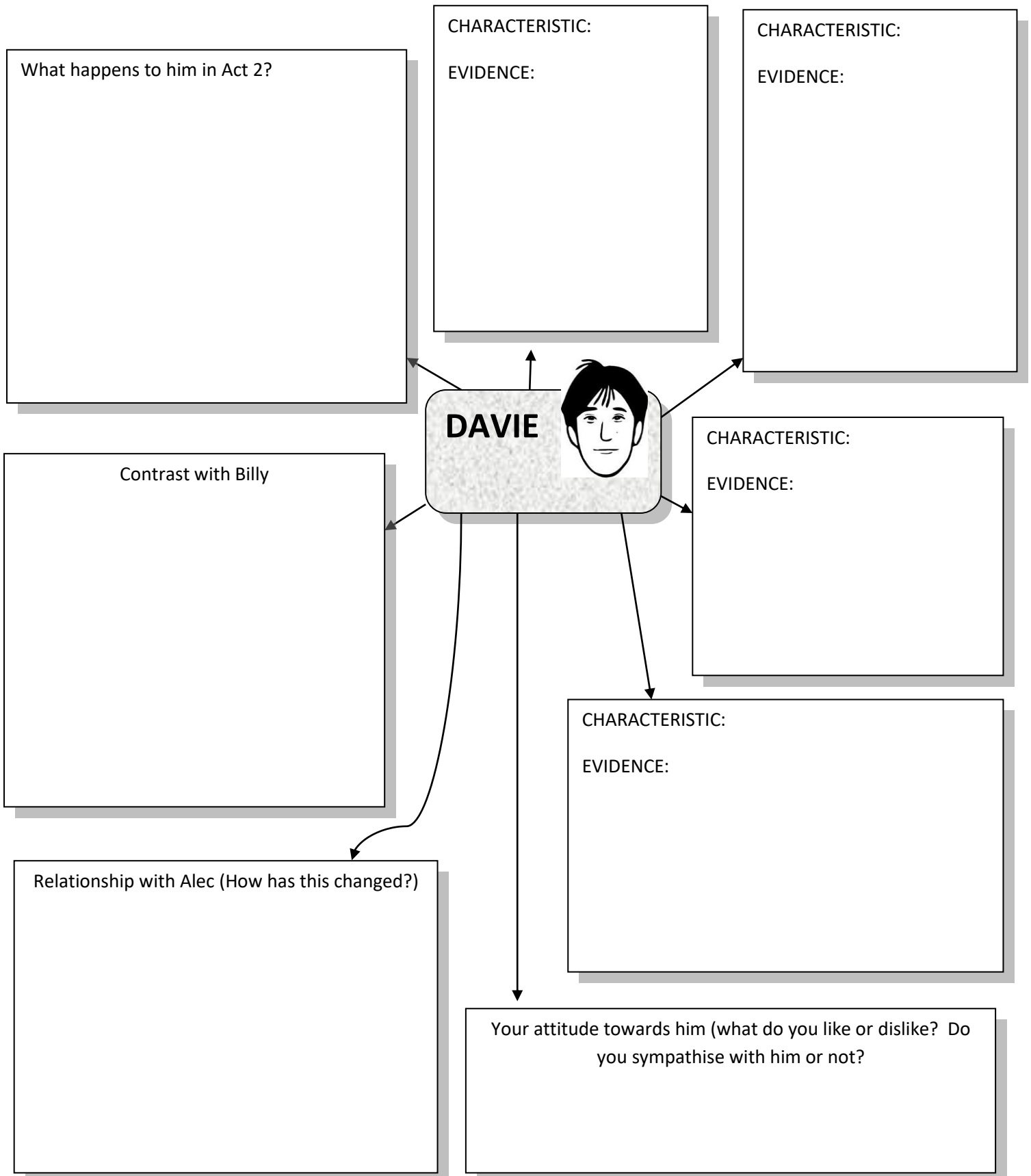
- 1) What do you think Alec has 'lost' or 'forgotten' that he refers to here?
- 2) What is Alec's and Davie's domestic situation like at this point?
- 3) What does the fact that Alec is prepared to burn his 'auld hymn book' tell us about his faith/beliefs now?
- 4) On page 58 Alec speaks about what he used to believe about the seashell. How has he changed from when he was younger at the start of the play?
- 5) What does Davie reveal about the bookie on page 58? Why is this significant?
- 6) On pages 59-60 Alec quotes from a book 'The British Working Man'. Not much of this book actually matches Davie's experiences. Pick out 3 things the book says and for each one explain how Davie's situation is very different from what the book describes.
- 7) On page 61 what details do we learn about Davie's talents? Why are these details somewhat sad?

- 8) Davie's job used to be vital and well respected. ('Reserved Occupation.') What has happened to this type of job now? What does this reveal about the changes in society and identity?
- 9) What does Alec reveal about his plans on page 62? How do you think this will affect Davie and Alec?
- 10) What has happened to Billy and Ian? Why is this detail important?
- 11) Davie places his tools and the furniture in the fire. This is a symbolic act. What do you think it represents about Davie's life and his thoughts/feelings?
- 12) On page 63-64 we find out that Davie never did fix the yacht for Alec. What does this tell us about Davie?
- 13) Read Alec's soliloquy about the burning of the yacht.
- a) What do you think the burning of the yacht symbolises?
- b) What do you think is significant about the reference to the Dead Viking Chief?

Themes observed/developed so far	Contrasts observed/developed so far

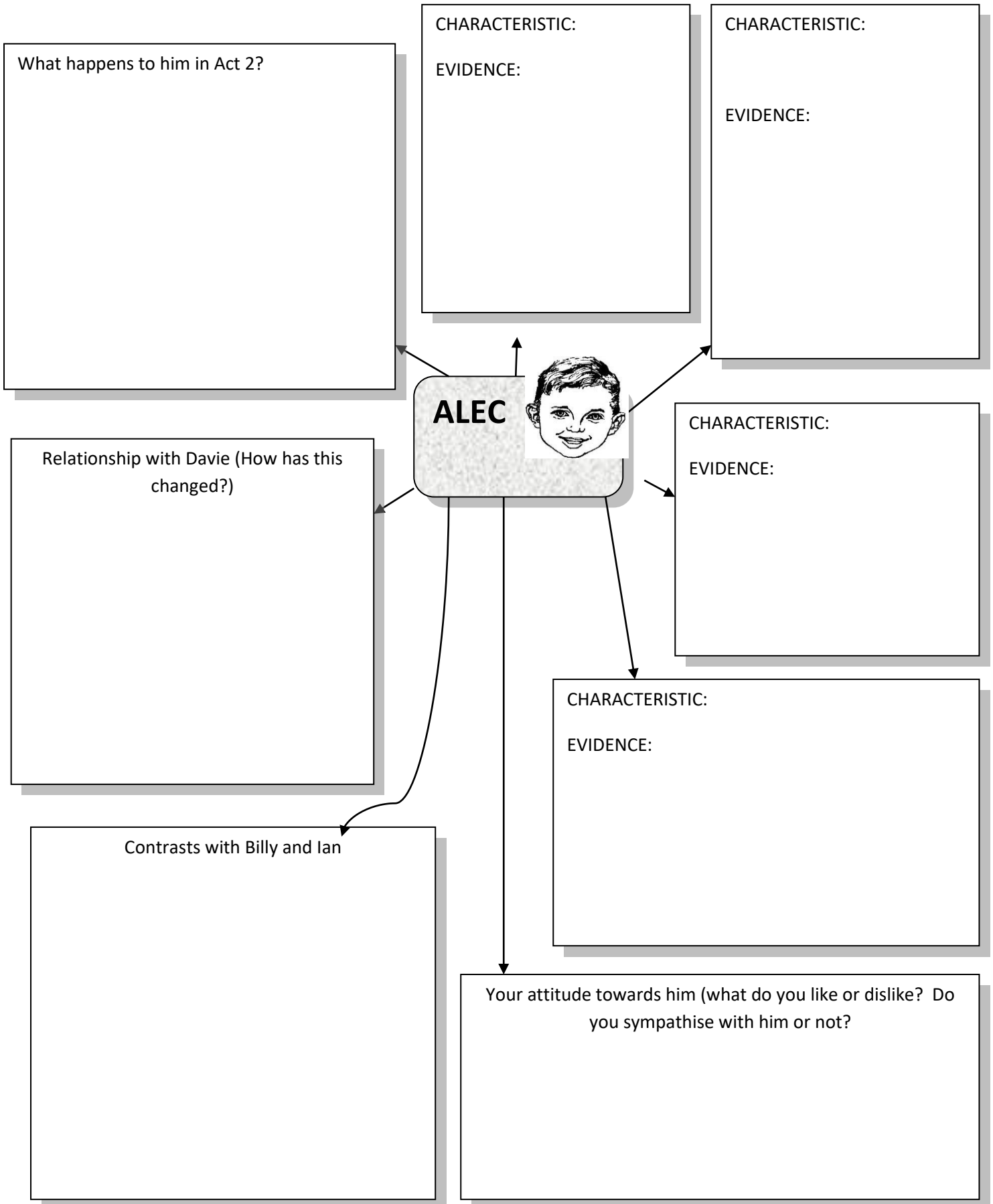
Act Two CHARACTER ANALYSIS/SUMMARY

Now that we have read to the end of the play you should be able to understand even more about the CHARACTERISATION of the central characters. Your initial focus will be on Davie's character. Complete the chart below. You may wish to look at what you said for Act One but also try to look at how his character changes/develops in Act Two.



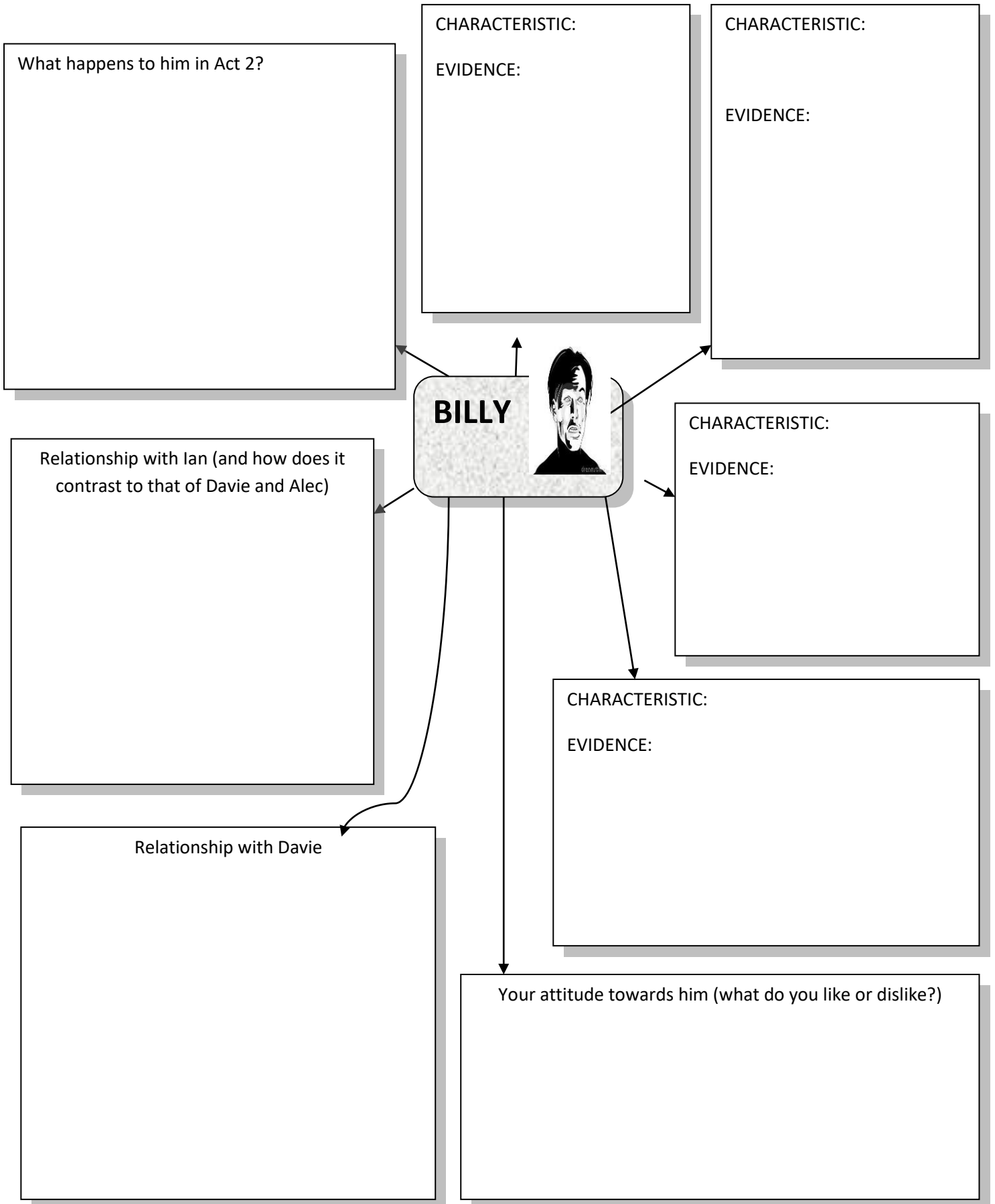
Act Two CHARACTER ANALYSIS/SUMMARY

Your next focus will be on Alec's character. Complete the chart below. You may wish to look at what you said for Act One but also try to look at how his character changes/develops in Act Two.



Act Two CHARACTER ANALYSIS/SUMMARY

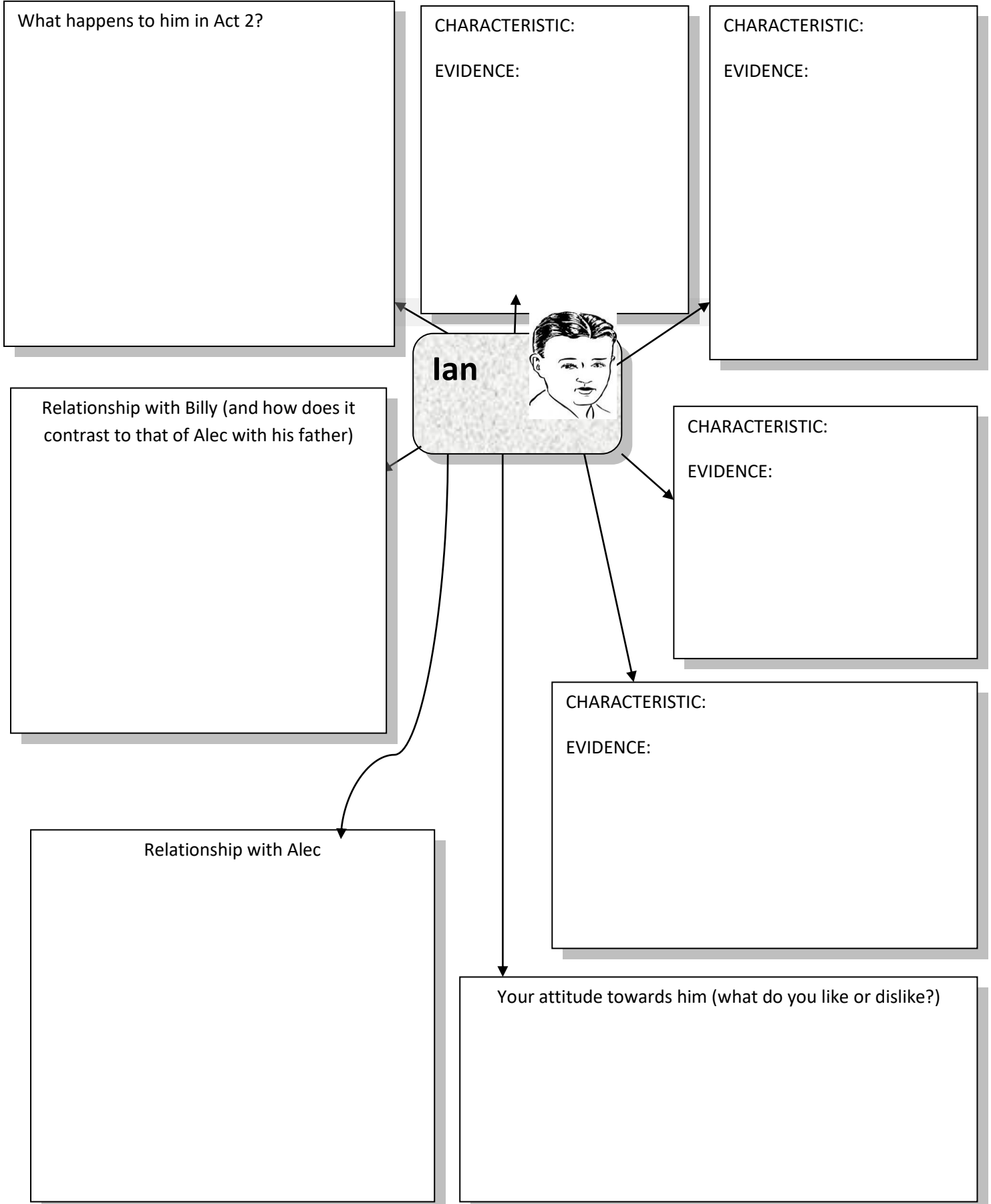
Your next focus will be on Billy's character. Complete the chart below. You may wish to look at what you said for Act One but also try to look at how his character changes/develops in Act Two.



Act Two

CHARACTER ANALYSIS/SUMMARY

Your next focus will be on Ian's character. Complete the chart below. You may wish to look at what you said for Act One but also try to look at how his character changes/develops in Act Two.



Music and Symbolism

In the play Alan Spence makes use of symbolism and also uses music as a form of symbolism too. For Alan Spence music is a good way of suggesting characters' emotions and reflecting their situations but it also gives a sense of the time period in which the play is set. You will be able to listen to the music referred to in the play on the Internet. This would be encouraged so you can get a sense of the atmosphere.

The Songs in 'Sailmaker'

Song Title	Version by	Page Reference
Red Sails in the Sunset	Fats Domino	9 and 64
Last Train to San Fernando	Johnny Duncan and the Bluegrass Boys	11
Singing the Blues	Tommy Steele	13
My Generation	The Who	47
Where the Blue of the Night Meets the Gold of the Day	Bing Crosby	51 and 52
Honky Tonk Angels	Buddy Holly	55
The Sash my Father Wore	The Broadsiders	28
Give me Oil in My Lamp	The Christian Choristers	33
Will your Anchor Hold?	Staithes Fishermen's Choir	34
Clementine	Paul Austin Kelly	39

Undertake research for each of these songs and take notes from that research in the tables below. You should try to consider the lyrics and be able to quote from these, the background/origins, the mood/atmosphere/feelings evoked by the song, the symbolism – what do the songs mean?

SONG:	DETAILS FROM RESEARCH

SONG:	DETAILS FROM RESEARCH

SONG:

DETAILS FROM RESEARCH

SONG:

DETAILS FROM RESEARCH

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DETAILS FROM RESEARCH

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DETAILS FROM RESEARCH

SONG:

DETAILS FROM RESEARCH

SONG:

DETAILS FROM RESEARCH

SYMBOLISM in the play. There are several symbols used in the play. The main ones are included in the table below. For each one, go through the play and note down page references where it is found then explain what you think it symbolises. You may need to research some:

SYMBOL	PAGE REFERENCE(S)	MEANING
The yacht		
The broken mirror		
The holy medal 'Star of the Sea'		
The shell		
Davie's sail-making tools		
Davie's Furniture		

Theme Tracing

As you have been studying the individual scenes of the play you have been taking notes about the themes you have observed. It is now time to look more closely at these themes and how Alan Spence develops them as well as considering what messages he wishes to convey through them. As you will have discovered there are numerous themes to this work but for the purpose of the SQA exam Critical Reading it is better to narrow these down to the following:

Grief and Loss

Religion

Family life and relationships

Social class and education

Escapism and imagination

Change

In groups you are going to take each of these themes and analyse how they are explored through the details and examples from the play. You should be able to make specific references to what the characters say and do and character relationships. You should also consider the symbolism and music used and the contrasts created. For each theme complete the diagrams on the following pages.

Characters

Character Relationships

Symbolism and Music

Contrasts

THEME: Grief and
Loss

Characters

Character Relationships

THEME: Religion

Symbolism and Music

Contrasts

Characters

Character Relationships

Symbolism and Music

Contrasts

THEME: Family Life
and Relationships

Characters

Character Relationships

Symbolism and Music

THEME: Social
Class/Education

Contrasts

Characters

Character Relationships

Symbolism and Music

Contrasts

THEME: Escapism
and Imagination

Characters

Character Relationships

THEME: Change

Symbolism and Music

Contrasts

Structure

The play has a regular dramatic structure:

EXPOSITION: introductions are done.

TURNING POINT: something very important happens to change the way the play is going, or the main character comes to an important decision or realisation.

CLIMAX: the point where the action and emotions of the play come to a head. This is the most exciting or dramatic point. It is usually near, but not at, the end.

RESOLUTION: This follows on from the climax and is where events and emotions are finally dealt with and the play feels finished off.

TASK: In groups/pairs identify decide what you think the **EXPOSITION, TURNING POINT, CLIMAX AND RESOLUTION** of Sailmaker are.

Exposition (also explain what aspects are introduced)	
Turning Point	
Climax	
Resolution	

Now consider the following questions:

- 1) How is dramatic impact created during the turning point of the play?
- 2) How is dramatic impact created in the climax of the play?
- 3) What examples of repetition did you spot during the play which enhance the structure of it?

Exam Style Questions

In the final SQA Exam for the 'Critical Reading' Paper Section A you will be given an extract from the play and answer questions about that extract. You should take about 45 minutes to do this part of the exam and it is worth 20 marks overall. You will have to answer about 4 or 5 questions on the extract and have to make sure your answers are detailed. These questions will test your ability to understand and summarise the main ideas and events in the play and to explain the writer's style and techniques. The last question will be worth 8 marks and you are expected to relate the extract to the wider play as a whole.

PRACTICE EXAMPLE ONE

DAVIE: What's the matter?

ALEC: Nothin

DAVIE: What d'ye mean nothing?

ALEC: Nothin Nothin Nothin!

DAVIE: Yer face is trippin ye. C'mon. Cheer up. It might never happen!

ALEC: Don't annoy me!

DAVIE: Oh ho! Fihtin talk!

(Squares up to him, sparring, flicks a few imaginary punches) C'mon! You an me doon the back wi the jackets aff. Three rounds.

ALEC: (Sparing, taking him up) Yes and here we go. Three rounds to decide the flyweight championship of this hoose. Me in the blue corner, the challenger, up-and-coming. The auld man in the red corner...

DAVIE: Never mind the auld...

ALEC: The aild man...the defending champion...once beat a man that knew a wumman that maulacated Benny Lynch's granny...

DAVIE: (Drops guard, offended) Ah knew Benny Lynch! Me and Benny were like that. (Crosses fingers)

ALEC: Aye ah know. Ye lent him a fiver ten minutes before he died. (Swings a punch)

DAVIE: (Guard up again) It was ten bob and t was a week! Terrible state he was in.

ALEC: Probably used the ten bob tae buy his last nottle of plonk. The one that laid him out for the count. (Pokes DAVIE in the stomach.)

DAVIE: Ya wee bugger!

(Rains a flurry of blows, just short of Alec's face)

ALEC: (Giving up) Awright! Awright! (DAVIE stops) You should teach me how tae box.

Ah could join a club.

DAVIE: Ach naw son. Boxin's a mug's game. Ye don't want tae waste your time. Ad didnae stick it. Chucked it when ah met yer mother. Can do yerself serious damage. Ah was lucky. Only got one broken nose.

ALEC: D'ye know that joke? He, you wi the broken nose, sing Clementine. Ah havnae got a broken nose an a canny sing. Wallop! (Holds nose, sings) Oh ma darling, Oh ma darling...

DAVIE: (Laughs) Definitely a mug's game.

ALEC: Ah was thinkin more jut for self-defence an that.

DAVIE: Aye, well. Could show ye the basics ah suppose. Nae harm in knowin how tae look after yerself. Specially in a place like this. Course the likes ae Benny Lynch an these blokes it was the only way tae get out. Fightin. (Looks at ALEC) You'll get out usin yer brains but.

ALEC: This exam's comin up.

DAVIE: You'll do it. Make a big difference. Goin tae a good school. Go on tae the University. Decent job.

ALEC: Never have tae take ma jacket off!

QUESTIONS

- 1) Summarise the key points of this exchange between Alec and Davie. Make at least 4 key points. (4)**

- 2) What does Alec's language from 'Yes and here we go' to 'maulicated Benny Lynch's granny' tell us about his relationship with his father at this point in the play? (4)**

- 3) What do the stage directions from DAVIE: *Oh h! Fightin talk! To (Rains down a flurry of blows, just short of Alec's face)* tell us about**
 - a) How Alec feels about Davie? (2)**

 - b) How Davie feels about Alec? (2)**

- 4) At the end of the extract, the characters discuss the exam Alec is about to take. With close reference to the rest of 'Sailmaker', explain how the theme of education is explored throughout the play. (8)**

PRACTICE EXAMPLE TWO

DAVIE: *God. Ma auld sailmakin tools. (Takes wooden marlinspike) Ah was an apprentice when ah was your age. Hard work it wis tae. Ah worked on the Queen Mary ye know.*

ALEC: *Aye*

DAVIE: *Worked on destroyers durin the War. Made gun-covers, awnings, tarpaulins. Made this wee bag!*

ALEC: *Did ye?*

DAVIE: *Oh aye. Used tae make leather wallets an things. Made a shopping nag for yer mother. Made you a swing! Wi a big sorta bucket seat. Used tae hang it in the doorway there. #*

ALEC: *Ah remember! You could still be makin things. Sellin them.*

(DAVIE nods, shrugs)

Could ye no go back tae yer trade?

DAVIE: *Nae demand. Was different durin the War. They needed us then awright. Reserved occupation nit was. Meant ah couldnae sign up. Been goin downhill since then but. Yards shuttin doon. Look at Harland's. Or where it was. Just a big empty space covered wi weeds. Yer Uncle Billy had the right idea. Took his redundancy money an moved tae Aberdeen. Doin all right.*

ALEC: *Ian's an Aberdeen supporter now.*

DAVIE: *Billy'll disown him for that!*

ALEC: *Did you ever think about movin?*

DAVIE: *Thought about it. (Shrugs) Thing is Billy bein a painter had more chance ae a job. Ah backed a loser right fae the start. Then it got even worse. They started bringin in aw the manmade fibres, usin machines. Got lassies daein hauf the work. Dead loss. So for God's sake you dae something wi your life! At least we'll be getting out ae this place when they pul it doon. Get rehoused. Fresh start.*

ALEC: *Ah've been thinkin da. When ah go tae the University ah might get a wee place ae ma own. Wee bedsit or something. Over near the Uni.*

DAVIE: *Oh aye. Will that no be dear?*

ALEC: *Shouldnae be too bad.*

DAVIE: *Whatever ye think.*

ALEC: *Ah'll see what happens.*

DAVIE: *Aye.*

(Silence between them. DAVIE takes up tools)

These are made fae lignum vitae.

ALEC: *That's Latin. Wod of life.*

DAVIE: *Hardest wood in the world. Should burn nice an slow. (Puts in fire) Thae other tools can go in the midden sometime. (Watches fire) Is there anything else?*

ALEC: *There's this (indicates chair)*

DAVIE: This is part of the furniture we got when we were married. Got it in Galpern's. That's him that was the Lord Provost. Solid stuff it is too. Nobody cares anymore. Nobody's interested in this auld stuff. (He is talking himself into being sad.)

Ah remember when we bought it. Seems a shame tae break it up. Still. It's a shame tae freeze as well, isn't it.

(Breaks up chair, hey watch it burn)

ALEC: (Picks up yacht) That just leaves this.

DAVIE: Yer Uncle Billy painted it.

ALEC: You were always gonnae fix it up for me. Ah could always imagine it. Like tat song. Red sails in the sunset.

DAVIE: Ah always meant to. Just...

ALEC: Just never did.

DAVIE: Story a ma life.

QUESTIONS

- 1) Summarise the key points of this exchange between Alec and Davie. Make at least 4 key points. (4)**
- 2) How do Davie's words in this extract develop the tone and mood in the scene (2)**
- 3) What do Alec's words and actions in the extract reveal about his feelings towards his father Davie and their situation? (2)**
- 4) With close reference to the extract, discuss the ways in which the burning of the following objects is significant.**
 - a) Davie's tools (2)**
 - b) The furniture (2)**
- 5) Symbolism is an important technique employed throughout the play. With reference to the yacht (and any other symbolic feature) discuss the ways it strengthens your understanding of the play's central themes. (8)**