1) *Purple Hibiscus*

When the young girl was led out, the flame-of-the-forest swayed and flowers rained down. The girl was slight and solemn, dressed in white, and strong-looking men stood around her so she would not be trampled. She had hardly passed us when other trees nearby started to quiver with a frightening vigour, as if someone were shaking them. The ribbons that cordoned off the apparition area shook, too. Yet there was no wind. The sun turned white, the colour and shape of the host. And then I saw her, the Blessed Virgin: an image in the pale sun, a red glow on the back of my hand, a smile on the face of the rosary-bedecked man whose arm rubbed against mine. She was everywhere.

“I felt the Blessed Virgin there. I felt her,” I blurted out. How could anyone not believe after what we had seen? Or hadn’t they seen it and felt it, too?

Aunty Ifeoma glanced at me.

“Kambili is right,” she said. “Something from God was happening there.”

Carefully analyse the effects achieved in this passage, and thereafter discuss Adichie’s presentation of an African Virgin Mary as this relates to her concerns with religion and the aftermath of colonialism as expressed within the novel as a whole.
2) *Whale Rider*

The use of magic realism to tell this gender fable is a strategy that works to effect a decolonising of the screen. Magic realism interrogates western modernist knowledge systems, and activates a postcolonial awareness. The film blurs the boundaries between the supernatural, the mundane, past and present through its emphasis on the special connections between the Maori, the land, the sea and whales.

Marnina Gonick

Analyse at least three scenes which illustrate the effects referred to above. In your answer, pay special attention to concepts associated with the theory of postcolonialism.

3) *The Road*

He was just hungry, Papa. He’s going to die.
He’s going to die anyway.
He’s so scared, Papa.
The man squatted and looked at him. I’m scared, he said. Do you understand? I’m scared.
The boy didn’t answer. He just sat there with his head bowed, sobbing.
You’re not the one who has to worry about everything.
The boy said something but he couldn’t understand him. What? he said.
He looked up, his wet and grimy face. Yes I am, he said. I am the one.

Carefully explore the implications of this passage within the context of the novel as a whole. Examine Cormac McCarthy’s depiction of ethics, hospitality and the father/son relationship as seen through the lens of a grail myth.
4) Welcome to Our Hillbrow

At the heart of Welcome to Our Hillbrow’s innovative and original style is the use of second-person narration. The novel’s radical stance towards binary oppositions is also reflected in its narrative form. “You” narration challenges the traditional predominance of first- versus third-person narration and constructs a bridge between the two conventional discourses of narration which polarise character and narrator identities into “I” or “he/she/they” groups.

Hilary Dannenberg

Chart the effects achieved by Phaswane Mpe’s use of second-person narration in the novel, and show how these effects contribute to your final analysis of the significance of the text.

5) Cereus Blooms at Night

Home is not necessarily a settled place of comfort, but may be a site of displacement; it can become, according to Homi Bhabha, “unhomely” – symbolic of an event of disjuncture and crisis rather than cohesiveness and safety. Obviously, Cereus Blooms at Night contains several examples of homes that are not sites of cohesiveness and safety. By thoroughly deconstructing the romantic ideology of the happy family home, Mootoo also makes her childhood home, the Caribbean, “unhomely.” Hers is not, in other words, an exilic tale of longing based on rosy, romanticised memories. However, out of the pages of the novel emerge alternative visions of love and ethics as affiliated with multiplicity, interconnectedness and difference.

Vivian M. May

Discuss the types of homes represented as “unhomely” in the novel, and contrast these with examples of the “alternative visions” provided by Mootoo.