

AFE 122 Assignment:

1. Attempt an Incisive interrogation of Solomon A. Edebor's Good morning Sodom, underscoring at least five underlying thematic thrusts the drama engages.
2. Attempt detailed character analyses of any three characters in Solomon A. Edebor's Good Morning, Sodom.

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MATRIC NUMBER: 22/MHS01/184

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The book Good Morning Sodom, written by Dr. Solomon A. Edebor, is a play about the dangers of social vices among students in a university setting and how choices made by individual characters in the book end up affecting them in the long run. The story is set at Mayflower University among students with two main characters, Keziah Richards and Demola Diran. They are both in the same year (200-level). Keziah is a fair-looking lady in her late teens who entered into a bad situation due to bad advice and not being careful enough. Demola is described as a character with weak resolve. We see this when he is easily swayed to drug Keziah to assault her when he was initially unwilling to do so, when he is pushed to take drugs even when he doesn't want to, and how he ends up in the cult of his friends towards the end of the book, which leads to his untimely death. The book highlights some of the vices people in tertiary institutions fall into and how they end up ruining their lives in the long run. Even for people who end up finding a way out of it, the fifteenth movement, through a conversation between Nonso and Zuwaira, shows how these things end up affecting the progress of people who indulge in vices.

The goal of the play in the book is to show some of the common vices in Nigerian tertiary institutions and, at the same time, the consequences of falling for them. I think the book succeeded in passing across its message because not only did it show how people slowly slip into these social vices while in tertiary institutions, but it also shows how it starts to affect their reasoning, decisions, and choices. The book also showed how victims are sometimes treated regardless of whether they were responsible for what happened to them or not. We see this in the fourteenth movement when Keziah's parents discovered she was pregnant, and though she claims to them that she was sexually assaulted by someone who posed as her friend, we see the reaction of her parents and how they victim-blamed their daughter. The book highlighted the stigma most sexual assault victims face today. The questions usually asked are, "Why were you there? What made you go there? Why didn't you go with a friend? What were you wearing?" whereas the perpetrator of the act is sometimes in the clear.

These and a lot of other themes in the book suggest issues in our present-day society that are hardly spoken about but hold significance in today's age. The first thing I would like to talk about is the issue of **consent**. We see illustrations of this in the fourth and sixth movements. In the fourth movement, we see Demola and Keziah having a conversation in the cafeteria while eating. Demola makes an advance towards Keziah, asking her out. She refuses his advances and says, "That is the last thing on my mind. And... I will appreciate it if you don't raise this issue again." She stated clearly that she wasn't interested in his advances because, according to her, what most boys are after is the thing between her legs. We see here that she's a focused lady who knows what she wants and stands by her values. She is convinced

by her friends Ovie and Bunmi that Demola isn't like most guys. But by the sixth movement, we realize that Keziah was right all along about the true motives of Demola. Though she finds out in the worst way possible.

The second theme of this play is **the influence of peer pressure**. There are three instances in the book where we see how pressure played a role in the character's choices. The first is in movement five, when Keziah shuns Demola, but her conversation with Bunmi and Ovie makes her change her decision. The second is when Demola was given cocaine by his friend K.K. to sniff, which he refuses. His friend convinces him that he'll need it if he wants to get over the sadness and guilt of what he did. The third instance is narrated by K.K. He is now in prison talking to Demola's parents, confessing how he encouraged Demola to rape a female student. We see how moving with the wrong set of people affected both of them. Although they were both adults, capable of rational reasoning and the ability to distinguish between what is wrong and right, they were not completely immune from the suggestions of their friends. The story also shows how relationships rub off between people in such relationships and proves the saying, "Show me your friend, and I'll tell you who you are."

The third theme of the play highlights **the importance of parental upbringing**. In the first movement, Keziah is having a conversation with her mother. When asked about her roommates, she praises one of them, whose name is Stella. We later discover Stella is Christian. The other roommates are "...something else." Indicating they possessed bad behavior. Her mother then reminded her that students all come from different homes. This reflects how they end up behaving when they leave home for the outside world. We also see the importance of good parental upbringing when K.K. tells Demola's parents how and why they left the school hostels to live off campus. We discover that Demola lied to his parents about the hostel being full to get them to pay for an apartment outside school. He got away with all these things because his parents never bothered to check on him, how he was doing in school, or the challenges he was facing. This shows that parents should play a more active role in their children's lives because it is very easy for them to be led astray, especially while they are in a tertiary institution.

The play also shows **the issue of victim blaming**. As stated earlier, this is a very common issue in Nigeria today, especially when the victims involved are victims of sexual assault. The wrong questions are asked, and hence the problem is never solved. This sometimes leads to self-harm by the victims because, in most cases, the perpetrator ends up free, and the cycle continues because they do not face repercussions for their crimes. Although this is not entirely the case here, as Demola ends up being shot dead by his friend, we see how Keziah's father treated her when he discovered she was pregnant. We agree she was unwise in the choices she made and ended up in the same room with someone she didn't trust before, but we also agree that there's nothing wrong with trusting a person. We know it was Demola who betrayed her trust. Her father hated her for what happened to her, and this shouldn't be so. We see he was more concerned with his name and the family name than the well-being of his daughter, and this led to her deciding to take her own life. I feel issues like these should be handled better by parents, especially when their children are involved. No one wishes for negative things to happen to them, but when they do, there should be better measures taken to ensure the victim can move on with their life and deal with whatever trauma they face as a result of the incident.

The final thematic thrust with which the drama engages is **cultism**. This is one of the most common social vices in Nigerian universities today. This is more prevalent among males. The

primal feeling of wanting to belong to a society that associates itself with power is what pushes a lot of young men to join cults. There are a lot of other reasons why young people join cults, even when it is widely known that it never ends well for cult members. In this book, we see that the reason why Demola decided to join the cult, Red Shadow, was due to the influence of his friends. In the Eighth Movement, we see that his friend K.K. was already part of the cult when he was being indoctrinated. The story didn't end well for Demola. He was accidentally shot by the friend who introduced him to the cult during a fight with Rival cult members.

In conclusion, the play passed along its message well and invoked some emotions while showing clearly how these issues relate to present-day life.

CHARACTER ANALYSIS

Demola Diran seems to be the stereotypical boy who comes from a rich family and ends up in the company of the wrong people. He seems to be well off since his parents could afford him to live a luxurious life outside of school. His room, as described in the book, seems to be colorful and well furnished, with shelves containing books and a 21-inch plasma TV. He was described as tall, dark, and handsome, meaning he was better-looking than the average person.

However, we see from the book that this character has a lot of flaws. This was later seen in the following pages of the book, showing that although he had chances to redeem himself, he was easily swayed into doing what he didn't want to do initially. This was shown the two times he was convinced to do what was wrong, and he still went ahead with them even when he knew what was right. He seems friendly, but we discover he has ulterior motives behind his seemingly innocent advances. He seems to lack the concept of consent. He forces himself on the female lead character without her consent. His final gesture of seeking forgiveness from his parents in his dying moments through K.K. shows that, in the end, he knew what he did was wrong. This shows us that Demola was a victim of so many bad decisions and choices that led us to his death and his awareness that they were all his fault.

Keziah Richards is the victim of this story. She too comes from a well-off family, with her father being a doctor and them being able to afford a driver and a housemaid. She seems to have strong moral convictions. She knows what she wants and why she is in school. I think she initially chose to align herself with only people with good morals, but along the way, she ended up with the people she was trying to avoid. This shows that no matter what good intentions they might seem to have, associating with people with bad morals will end up in a bad way for the good egg among the bad eggs. She had good intentions for the friendship, but alas, he couldn't replicate the feeling. This began the downward spiral that almost ended with her ending her own life if not for timely intervention by her father. Eventually, she gave birth to her baby girl, and judging by her countenance at the end of the play, she seems to have found a way to process her trauma and move on with life.

Stella, Keziah's roommate, is someone you would call a friend in times of trouble. She was willing to console Keziah and help her get past her trauma by sharing the Christian gospel with her. She narrated a similar situation that happened to her, how it affected her, and how, years later, she found peace with the gospel. She admitted that it was not easy, but she pushed

through. She also showed strong emotions when Keziah fainted and called her parents to let them know what happened to their daughter. Stella's actions show she cared about Keziah.

Points of divergence between the published version and the film version of Good Morning, Sodom – There were many slight differences between the book and the movie. For example, in the movie, Demola and Keziah headed to the library and had a relationship ‘topic’ conversation in the library, while according to the book, the conversation took place before she went to the library. In the third movement, an extra scene was added to the movie. It involved two students who came late for the class and whom the lecturer sent away. He also asked the students if they had any questions after the class.

There were also some things from other movements that weren’t included. Comparing the sixth movement with the movie, there was no question asked about whether Keziah’s phone was an Apple or an Android. The scene where she’s meant to raise her hands to her head quietly and leave the room wasn’t shown in the movie. In the twelfth movement, Stella waved at Keziah and her mom, but in the movie, she entered the car with them.

In the 13th movement, there were major changes in the movie. There were additional sets of instructions given by the Deputy Police Officer (DPO) to the inspector. The DPO was also male and not female. In the 14th and 15th movements, some parts of the dialogue were cut out of the movie. In the 16th movement, the extra dialogue was added. Keziah’s mom told her what her father was doing for her was out of the goodwill he had for her. In her own words, "It’s for your good." Parts of the dialogue in the 17th movement were also cut out, and only the judge’s verdict was shown. Mrs. Diran wasn’t shown in any of the scenes. The 19th movement dialogues were narrated by Demola’s father, and the 20th to 24th movement dialogues were cut out of the movie.