

Question number	Indicative content
4(a)	<p>સાત પગલાં આકાશમાં (કુન્દનિકા કાપડીઆ)</p> <p>Students may refer to all or some of the following points in their answers.</p> <p>The male characters in this book mostly perceive women as a commodity and expect women to obey their every demand.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vasudha is an intelligent and educated woman who lost her identity after becoming a full-time wife, mother and caretaker for her husband, Vyomesh. He views her only as a servant to fulfil his every need. He decides what she should do, wear and eat. He also makes the rules as to when she can have children. <li>• Another male character asks for a dowry from his wife's parents because 'my parents have spent a lot of money on my education'. He expects his wife to apologise and go back to him. <li>• Another husband suspects his wife's behaviour. He abuses her physically and emotionally, domestic violence is a daily occurrence. He has an affair with his secretary and meets her regularly but his wife is not allowed to leave the house without his permission. <li>• Not all male characters are the same, however, there are some exceptions as well. One such male character is Aditya. He is a liberal man and respects women as individuals. He believes in female empowerment and supports the main female character (Vasudha) in her journey to find her true identity and seek liberation.

Question number	Indicative content
4(b)	<p>સાત પગલાં આકાશમાં (કુન્દનિકા કાપડીઆ)</p> <p>Students may refer to all or some of the following points in their answers.</p> <p>Through different characters, the author tells the story of how widows have to suffer in Gujarati Indian society in the name of culture and tradition.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vasudha's aunt is one example of a widow who was forced to give up worldly comforts in the name of culture and tradition. She became extremely possessive and authoritarian. In this case, the victim became the perpetrator. <li>• Through another female character, Anna, the author shows how social norms are imposed on widows and how women are forced to change their lifestyle - whether they live in India or abroad. When living in London, Anna was told not to wear bright clothes, make-up, jewellery, a bindi on her forehead or a Mangala Sutra (a golden chain worn only by married women) because her husband had died. Choosing to defy these traditions, people start talking behind her back and rumours spread about her character. She is seen as someone challenging the age-old traditions laid down by patriarchal ancestors. As a result, she is socially isolated. She is no longer invited to social functions and people stop giving her work so she is subject to financial hardship. <li>• Anna's mother-in-law, Jayaben, is also widowed but when her son dies of a heart attack she initially blames Anna for this. This is typical of this common, outdated way of thinking.