

Improving Humanity	
<i>être humain et la nature</i> – Eugenics: The social movement to “improve” society by encouraging or discouraging people to have babies. Eugenics promoted reproduction by people or groups with “positive” qualities and discouraged or sometimes stopped reproduction by groups with “negative” qualities.	
	Should humans try to improve humanity?
At the end of the Unit, I will	
What vocabulary will I need ?	Genetics & Reproduction Human Enhancement & Technology Ethics & Society Eugenics & Social Control Expressing an Opinion
What grammatical structure will I need ?	- conditionnel - modaux - voie passive
What documents will be used ?	1- Imagining the Perfect Human 1a- Clones R us, Steamy Raymond, 15 April 2008 1b- Bokanovskification, Aldous Leonard Huxley, <i>Brave New World</i>, 1931, illustration 1c- Natural vs normalized conceptions, Movie script, Andrew Niccol, <i>Gattaca</i>, 1997 2- Conceived with a purpose 2a- Created to Save Lives Kazuo Ishiguro's famous sci-fi novel <i>Never Let Me Go</i>. 2b- A Child Donor, Jodi Picoult, <i>My sister's keeper</i>, 2004 3- Enhancing mankind 3a- Man given Musk's Neuralink brain chip in UK trial says it 'feels magical' and gives new hope Tom Clarke, <i>news.sky.com</i>, Thursday 29 January 2026 3b- How close are we to uploading our minds? - Michael S.A. Graziano 3c- Beyond human limits: the ethical, social, and regulatory implications of human enhancement - Chiara Gerardi , Christodoulos Xinaris, <i>frontiersin.org</i>, 09 July 2025 4- The dark history of Eugenics 4a- Born a Crime, Trevor Noah, <i>Born a Crime, chapter 2</i>, 4b- Half – castes, Doris Pilkington Garimar, <i>Rabbit Proof-Fence, chap 5</i>, 1996 4c- Creating the Perfect Caste System, Aldous Leonard Huxley, <i>Brave New World</i>, chap 1, 1931

What will I learn ?	How the idea of enhancing mankind is not new that has been triggered for some dark reasons How it could be done and what it could lead to
Final Task	Should humans try to improve humanity? Discuss the arguments for and against human enhancement.

Instructions for your Final Project :

1. You will have one full hour to answer the question.
2. You will be allowed to use bullet-point notes (maximum 10 points, handwritten only).
3. You will need to use at least three examples from the unit and justify your choices.
4. You will need to introduce at least one new argument to support your opinion.
5. You will need to present clear arguments both in favour of and against improving humanity.

1- eugenics

1a- Clones R us, Steamy Raymond, 15 April 2008

clones are us Steamy Raymond, 15 /04/2008 : travail sur l'image, ce que cela signifie, quel sont les attendus de la société // avec toys are Us
mettre en parallèle avec l'explication eugenics
purpose ? Perfect men

1b- Bokanovskification, Aldous Leonard Huxley, *Brave New World*, 1931, illustration
bokanovski eggs – brave new world : si pas déjà fait dans la dystopie
explication du concept de la multiplication des embryoes à partir du texte
ou image (rappel du concept)

1c- Natural vs normalized conceptions, [Movie script](#), Andrew Niccol, *Gattaca*, 1997

gattaca : conception : travail sur le texte :

difference between natural conception and conceived naturally => explain the title from what you understand of the text

position de la maman, du papa, du geneticist

why ? Do you understand the purpose ?

2- conceived with a purpose:

2a- Created to Save Lives Kazuo Ishiguro's famous sci-fi novel *Never Let Me Go*.

Travail sur l'extrait (abridged) du chapitre 7 : annonce de ce à quoi ils servent et travail sur le sens à partir des exercices suivants:

1- vocabulary : give a definition to the different words :

vital organs

created

purpose

set out (for you)

donation / to

donate

2- Exercise – Match the quotation with its meaning

Read the following quotations from the extract. Match each quotation (A–E) with the best explanation (1–5).

Quotations

A. *"None of you will go to America, none of you will be film stars."*

B. *"Your lives are set out for you."*

C. *"You were brought into this world for a purpose."*

D. *"It feels like I always knew about donations in some vague way."*

E. *"Nothing came as a complete surprise."*

Meanings

1. The children have slowly been prepared to accept their future.
2. The students cannot choose their own future.
3. The children have been created for a specific role.
4. The children's dreams are impossible.
5. The truth had already been suggested to them before.

3- What do the different quotations mean ?

"Your lives are set out for you."

"You were brought into this world for a purpose."

"You're not even like me."

"You'll start to donate your vital organs."

4- Give your conclusion about what the book is about.

Correction exercices :

vital organs	Organs that are essential for life.
created	Made or brought into existence for a particular reason.
purpose	The reason why something or someone exists.
set out (for you)	Planned or decided in advance.
donation / to donate	The act of giving something voluntarily. In the novel, it refers to giving organs.

A → 4 B → 2 C → 3 D → 5 E → 1

2b- A Child Donor, Jodi Picoult, *My sister's keeper*, 2004

My sister's keeper : Anna, age 13, was conceived through genetic engineering to be a donor for her sister Kate, who has leukemia. Kate now needs a kidney transplant and Anna's parents want her to donate one of her kidneys.

Repérage des éléments médicaux / éléments juridique

point de vue d'Anna,, point de vue de Campbell, point de vue d'Anna, faire faire

explication sur 5 questions et échange oral dans les groupes puis échange entre groupes

(groupe Campbell et groupe Anna)

ATTENTION : on s'appuie sur le texte entier, soit les deux points de vue et on lit entre les lignes

3- Enhancing mankind

3a- Man given Musk's Neuralink brain chip in UK trial says it 'feels magical' and gives new hope Tom Clarke, *news.sky.com*, Thursday 29 January 2026

lecture du texte, choix du meilleur résumé : justifier le choix.

Summary C

Sebastian Gomez-Pena became paralysed after an accident while he was studying medicine. He joined a UK trial of a Neuralink brain chip developed to help people with severe paralysis. The chip sends his brain signals wirelessly to a computer, where AI interprets his thoughts. By imagining moving his hand, he can control a computer cursor and click like a mouse. The device does not cure his paralysis, but it helps him become more independent. Doctors say the first results are promising, although the research is still at an early stage. Scientists also hope the technology could one day restore speech or even vision. However, more studies are needed because the results have not yet been fully confirmed. ✓

Correct

Summary B

Sebastian Gomez-Pena became paralysed after an accident while he was studying medicine. He joined a British trial of a Neuralink brain chip designed to help people with severe paralysis. The chip sends his brain signals to a computer, where AI interprets his thoughts. By imagining moving his hand, he can control a computer cursor and even move his fingers again. Doctors say the first results are promising, and the research is still continuing. Scientists also hope the technology could one day restore speech or even vision. The results have already been published in scientific journals and approved by regulators. Researchers believe the technology has great potential, but they are continuing to improve it.

*(False details: he **cannot move his fingers again**; the results have **not** been published or approved.)*

Summary A

Sebastian Gomez-Pena became paralysed after an accident while he was studying medicine. He joined a UK trial of a Neuralink brain chip developed to help people with severe paralysis. The chip sends his brain signals wirelessly to a phone, where AI interprets his thoughts. By imagining moving his hand, he can control a computer cursor and click like a mouse. The device does not cure his paralysis, but it helps him become more independent. Doctors say the first results are promising, although the research is still at an early stage. Scientists hope the technology could one day restore speech, but they have abandoned plans to study vision.

b- How close are we to uploading our minds? - Michael S.A. Graziano

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2DWnvx1NYUA>

The video explores the idea of mind uploading, a futuristic technology that could allow humans to transfer their memories, personality, and thoughts into a computer. Scientists believe that understanding and copying the human brain could one day create a digital version of a person. However, this remains a speculative idea because we still do not know exactly how consciousness works. The video raises an important question: if a digital copy of you existed, would it really be you or just a copy?

Liste de mot clé données en amont : définition donnée puis vidéo => proposition

explications suite à vidéo,

2nd écoute : vérification de la conformité de ses propositions

puis résumé en anglais et explication.

Argumentation pour et contre

conclusion personnelle après échange

- brain scan
- mind
- consciousness
- upload
- memories
- digital copy
- identity
- immortality

How close are we to uploading our minds? - Michael S.A. Grazian

3c- Beyond human limits: the ethical, social, and regulatory implications of human enhancement - Chiara Gerardi , Christodoulos Xinaris, *frontiersin.org*, 09 July 2025

proposer un seul mot pour résumé chaque paragraphe.

Justifier son choix

4a- The dark history of Eugenics

4a-Born a Crime, Trevor Noah, *Born a Crime, chapter 2*,

4b- Half – castes, Doris Pilkington Garimar, *Rabbit Proof-Fence, chap 5*, 1996

4c- Creating the Perfect Caste System, Aldous Leonard Huxley, *Brave New World*, chap 1, 1931

faire travailler les 3 textes en //: repérage thème, idée, principe

Anne-Charlotte Legrand- Lycée Alain, Académie de Versailles

discussion en groupe de 3 ou de 6 (3 textes représentés à chaque fois)

quels points commun? Quelle différence?

Quelle conclusion

donner sous forme de questions clés avec idées guidée :

- What are the similarities and the differences in each text?
- In which way may we say that each text illustrate the idea of Eugenics?
- How is this concept made reality in each situation?

Conclude on the 3 texts

interdiction conception

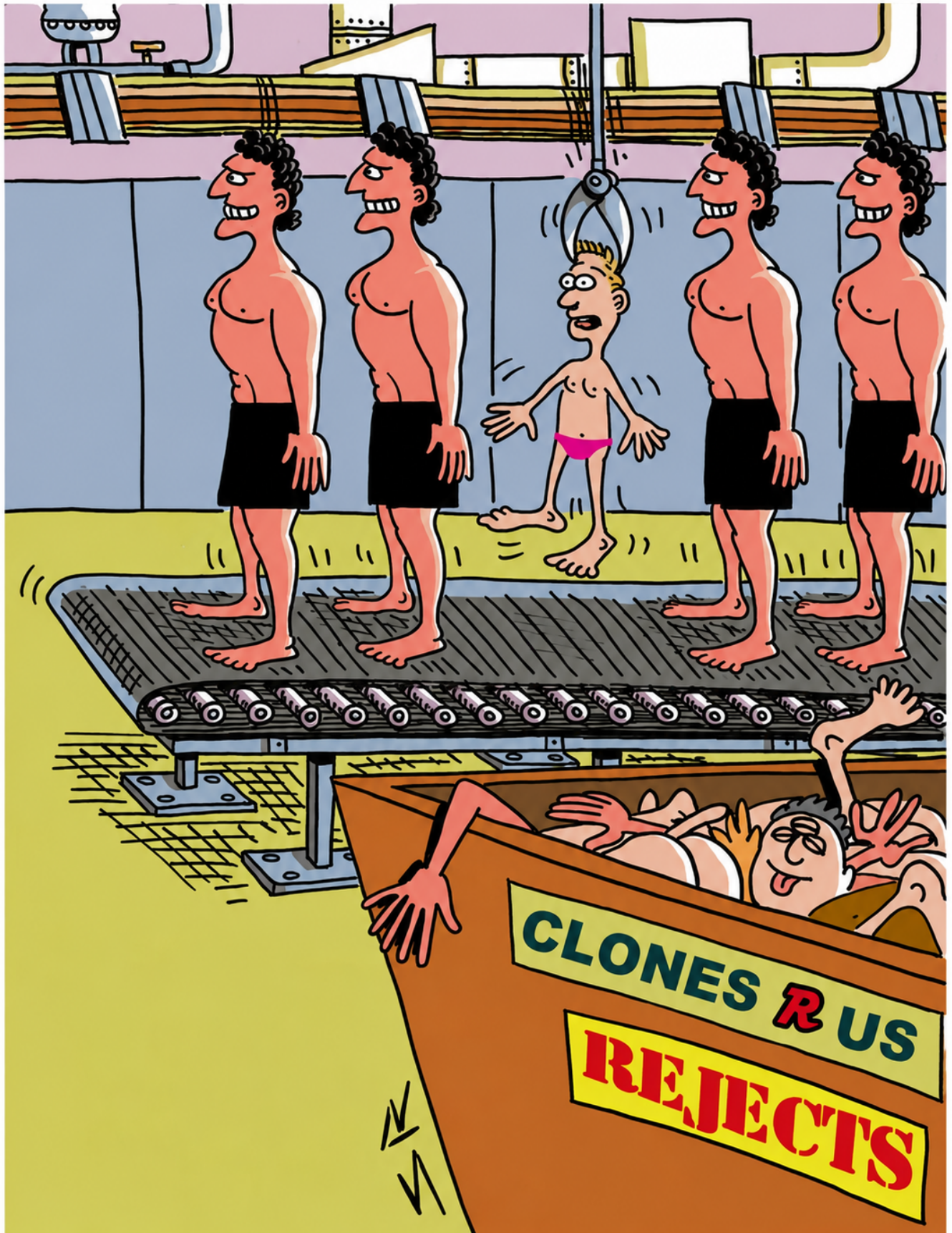
caste par éducation

science-fiction: la maitrise absolue de la société

gattaca

réalité : stérélisation forcée, racisme (USA, afrique du sud, australie

DST : brave new world



Natural vs normalized conceptions

JEROME (VOICE OVER): I was conceived in the Riviera. Not the French Riviera. The Detroit variety. They used to say that a child conceived in love has a greater chance of happiness. They don't say that any more. I'll never understand what possessed my mother to put her faith in God's hands rather than those of her local geneticist.

Ten fingers, ten toes, that's all that used to matter... Not now. Now, only seconds old, the exact time and cause of my death was already known.

MIDWIFE NURSE (reading the newborn Jerome's blood birth test): Neurological condition, 60% probability, manic depression, 42% probability. 00:09:55 Attention deficit disorder, 89% probability. Heart disorder.... 99% probability. Early fatal potential. - Life expectancy: 30.2 years.

JEROME (VOICE OVER): Like most other parents of their day they were determined that their next child would be brought into the world in what has become the natural way.

INT. GENETIC COUNSELLING OFFICE. DAY.

A GENETICIST stares into a high-powered microscope as ANTONIO, MARIA and 2-YEAR-OLD VINCENT are shown into the office by a NURSE. The Geneticist swings around in his chair to greet his clients. Four magnified clusters of cells - eight cells on each cluster - appear on the television screen.

GENETICIST: our extracted eggs...(noting the couple's names from data along the edge of the screen)...Maria, have been fertilized with... Antonio's sperm. After screening we're left as you see with two healthy boys and two very healthy girls. Naturally, no critical pre-dispositions to any of the major inheritable diseases. All that remains is to select the most compatible candidate.

Marla and Antonio exchange a nervous smile.

GENETICIST First, we may as well decide on gender. Have you given it any thought?

MARIA (referring to the toddler on her knee). We would like Vincent to have a brother... you know, to play with.

The Geneticist nods. He scans the data around the edge of the screen.

GENETICIST Of course you would. Hello Vincent. You have specified hazel eyes, dark hair and fair skin. I have taken the liberty of eradicating any potentially prejudicial conditions - premature baldness, myopia, alcoholism and addictive susceptibility, propensity for violence and obesity—etc

MARIA: --We didn't want--diseases, yes but...

ANTONIO (more diplomatic): We were wondering if we should leave a few things to chance.

GENETICIST (reassuring): You want to give your child the best possible start. Believe me, we have enough imperfection built-in already. Your child doesn't need any additional burdens. And keep in mind, this child is still you, simply the best of you. You could conceive naturally a thousand times and never get such a result.

Movie script, Andrew Niccol, Gattaca, 1997

**“The Dark Secrets of This Now-Empty Island in Maine” by Atlas Obscura,
adapted by NEWSELA, published on January 3, 2020**

article original : <https://www.atlasobscura.com/articles/the-dark-secrets-of-this-nowempty-island-in-maine>

july 14 2016 – Atlas Obscura

The cold waters of the Gulf of Maine lap against the shore of Malaga Island. There is an absence of life. One can find peacefulness on Malaga today, a striking contrast to its grim past. Sadly, history reveals that a destructive chain of events happened on this island. It was triggered by racism.

A small, poor fishing community once resided on Malaga Island. According to researchers, their lives were not that different from those who lived on the mainland, and, like many Mainers, they lived in shacks. Their homes were often no more than shelters with a roof and four walls.

Mainers' Moral Indignation

Malaga was different from other coastal villages, though. The residents were of mixed races, drawing the attention of racist people from Mainers, or people from Maine. Although many couples were not legally married, they still lived as families and their lifestyles struck moral indignation in the people of Maine.

The residents of Malaga were considered barbarians. They were described as being filthy and immoral. Mainers also accused the islanders of feeble-mindedness, and of passing on inferior genes.

In the early 1900s, eugenics grew popular in Maine. Eugenics is the science of trying to control the genes of the human population. The belief is that some people are less fit than others because of the genes they have. People who practice eugenics think these people should not be allowed to repopulate. People inherit traits such as skin color from their relatives' genes.

Eugenics

Eugenics split the world into good and bad genes. Professors even taught eugenics at universities at this time. One of the practices of eugenics was forced sterilizations. When a person is sterilized, they are not able to have children. The purpose of sterilization is to improve the population by only allowing people who are considered superior to have children. Historians have discovered 326 cases of sterilization in Maine between 1925 and 1963.

Kate McMahon is a student at Howard University who has been researching Malaga Island. According to McMahon, the racist belief system and practices of eugenics were very popular in Maine at this time in its history.

The residents of Malaga Island became the center of some of these social practices because people feared that the black faces of Malaga would affect Maine's ideal. They believed white people were the superior race.

At the turn of the century, the state took over Malaga Island. The government believed that the residents of the island were a disgrace to Maine. Many people from Maine also believed that people of different races should not marry and have children together. Today, such views are considered intolerant and even hateful. Their racist beliefs paved the way for the breaking apart of this island community.

No Longer Welcome

In the summer of 1911, Governor Frederick Plaisted promised the residents that they would not be forced to leave. Three weeks later the state informed the community that it was no longer welcome to live on the island. They must all leave or suffer the consequences.

It was put simply to the residents — leave and remove your homes, or forcibly be removed and your homes will be burned. On July 1, 1912, representatives of the state arrived on Malaga Island to find all residents and houses gone. Only the cemetery remained. The government did not help people to relocate.

Many residents floated their homes up and down the river. Few towns welcomed them. Some people did not survive. Other residents were institutionalized based on biased, or unfair, evaluations of their intelligence. They were asked to name things like what a telephone was. But because they were poor, they did not have telephones and had never seen them so they could not name them. They were also unable to name the current sitting president. Again, they were unable to read and lived on an isolated island, so they were not familiar with objects and facts commonplace to those who had money and education. Because they could not answer those questions, residents of Malaga Island were considered mentally challenged. They were placed in the Maine School for the Feeble-Minded. Some residents would never leave this facility.

State Removes Evidence of Community

The state removed evidence of the community. They destroyed the cemetery from the island and put 15 bodies into five caskets. These bodies were buried in unmarked plots at the Maine School for the Feeble-Minded.

Even though the state tried to erase the past, a reminder kept surfacing in the words used to refer to those who came from the island. They were called "Malaga-ites," which is an unfavorable term. Another hateful word people used was "malago." According to one Maine resident, this word refers to people of dark skin, or people

with low intelligence. Another Maine resident recalled that when she heard the term "Malago" she knew it was a bad term about people of color.

Trying to put together the lives of people using archaeological materials is never an easy task. It is like trying to put together a puzzle without the box-top picture to reference. Archaeologists still set out to learn about the history of the island. With few written records from the residents of Malaga, much of what we know about life on the island was pieced together from the materials discovered from archaeological excavations.

These excavations began on Malaga in the early 2000s, and the past of this island was soon brought into the spotlight. In 2010, the state of Maine passed a resolution expressing regret for the mistreatment of the residents of Malaga. Governor Baldacci visited the island to spread a message acknowledging and apologizing for past crimes. It doesn't make up for a century of pain and destruction, but it's a start.

Born to donate

We were fifteen by then, already into our last year at Hailsham. Miss Lucy was the only guardian present. I suddenly realised things had gone quiet around us, and that Miss Lucy was speaking.

"No, no, I'm sorry, I'm going to have to interrupt you," she was saying, and I could see she was talking to two boys sitting on the benches immediately in front of her. Her voice wasn't exactly strange, but she was speaking very loudly, in the sort of voice she'd use to announce something to the lot of us, and that was why we'd all gone quiet. "No, Peter, I'm going to have to stop you. I can't listen to you any more and keep silent."

Then she raised her gaze to include the rest of us and took a deep breath. "All right, you can hear this, it's for all of you. It's time someone spelt it out. Boys, you must forgive me for listening. But you were right behind me, so I couldn't help it. Peter, why don't you tell the others what you were saying to Gordon just now?"

Peter J. looked bewildered and I could see him getting ready his injured innocence face. But then Miss Lucy said again, this time much more gently:

"Peter, go on. Please tell the others what you were just saying."

Peter shrugged. "We were just talking about what it would feel like if we became actors. What sort of life it would be."

"Yes," Miss Lucy said, "and you were saying to Gordon you'd have to go to America to stand the best chance."

Peter J. shrugged again and muttered quietly: "Yes, Miss Lucy."

"I know you don't mean any harm. But there's just too much talk like this. I hear it all the time, it's been allowed to go on, and it's not right. If no one else will talk to you then I will. If you're going to have decent lives, then you've got to know and know properly. None of you will go to America, none of you will be film stars. And none of you will be working in supermarkets as I heard some of you planning the other day. Your lives are set out for you. You'll become adults, then before you're old, before you're even middle-aged, you'll start to donate your vital organs. That's what each of you was created to do. You're not like the actors you watch on your videos, you're not even like me. You were brought into this world for a purpose, and your futures, all of them, have been decided. So you're not to talk that way any more. You'll be leaving Hailsham before long, and it's not so far off, the day you'll be preparing for your first donations. You need to remember that. If you're to have decent lives, you have to know who you are and what lies ahead of you, every one of you."

Then she went silent, but my impression was that she was continuing to say things inside her head, because for some time her gaze kept roving over us, going from face to face just as if she were still speaking to us. We were all pretty relieved when she turned to look out over the playing field again.

"It's not so bad now," she said, even though the rain was as steady as ever. "Let's just go out there. Then maybe the sun will come out too."

I think that was all she said. A few years ago, when Tommy and I were going over it all again, and I reminded him of Miss Lucy's "told and not told" idea, he came up with a theory.

Tommy thought it possible the guardians had, throughout all our years at Hailsham, timed very carefully and deliberately everything they told us, so that we were always just too young to understand properly the latest piece of information. But of course we'd take it in at some level, so that before long all this stuff was there in our heads without us ever having examined it properly.

It's a bit too much like a conspiracy theory for me—I don't think our guardians were that crafty—but there's probably something in it. Certainly, it feels like I always knew about donations in some vague way, even as early as six or seven. And it's curious, when we were older and the guardians were giving us those talks, nothing came as a complete surprise. It was like we'd heard everything somewhere before.

One thing that occurs to me now is that when the guardians first started giving us proper lectures about sex, they tended to run them together with talk about the donations. At that age it's possible the guardians managed to smuggle into our heads a lot of the basic facts about our futures.

Now to be fair, it was probably natural to run these two subjects together. If, say, they were telling us how we'd have to be very careful to avoid diseases when we had sex, it would have been odd not to mention how much more important this was for us than for normal people outside. And that, of course, would bring us onto the donations.

Abridged from Kazuo Ishiguro, *Never let me go*, Chap seven, 2010

EXERCICE :

1- vocabulary : give a definition to the different words :

vital organs

created

purpose

set out (for you)

donation / to

donate

2- Exercise – Match the quotation with its meaning

Read the following quotations from the extract. Match each quotation (A–E) with the best explanation (1–5).

Quotations

A. *"None of you will go to America, none of you will be film stars."*

B. *"Your lives are set out for you."*

C. *"You were brought into this world for a purpose."*

D. *"It feels like I always knew about donations in some vague way."*

E. *"Nothing came as a complete surprise."*

Meanings

6. The children have slowly been prepared to accept their future.
7. The students cannot choose their own future.
8. The children have been created for a specific

role.

9. The children's dreams are impossible.
10. The truth had already been suggested to them before.

3- What do the different quotations mean ?

"Your lives are set out for you."

"You were brought into this world for a purpose."

"You're not even like me."

"You'll start to donate your vital organs."

4- Give your conclusion about what the book is about.

Correction exercises :

vital organs	Organs that are essential for life.
created	Made or brought into existence for a particular reason.
purpose	The reason why something or someone exists.
set out (for you)	Planned or decided in advance.
donation / to donate	The act of giving something voluntarily. In the novel, it refers to giving organs.

A → 4 B → 2 C → 3 D → 5 E → 1

Man given Musk's Neuralink brain chip in UK trial says it 'feels magical' and gives new hope

One of the first people in the UK to use Elon Musk's brain chip says it "feels magical" and believes it could transform the lives of those with severe paralysis.

"It is a massive change in your life where you can suddenly no longer move any of your limbs," said Sebastian Gomez-Pena, a volunteer in the first UK trial of the device developed by Mr Musk's company Neuralink.

Seb had just completed his first term at medical school when an accident left him paralysed from the neck down. He's one of seven people fitted with the chip in the UK trial, designed to assess the safety and reliability of the device. The Neuralink chip, which is linked to 1,024 electrodes implanted in his brain, was fitted in a five-hour operation and inserted about 4mm into the surface of Seb's brain, in the region that controls hand movements.

Data from the chip is sent wirelessly to a computer in which AI software "learns" to interpret his brain's electrical signals. So when Seb "thinks" about moving his hand or tapping his finger, it appears on his screen as cursor movement or the "click" of a mouse, effectively restoring the hand control his accident destroyed.

"Everyone in my position tries to move some bit of their body to see if there is any form of recovery, but now when I think about moving my hand it's cool to see that... something actually happens," he said. "You just think it and it does it."

We meet Seb on the day his doctors are seeing him for the first time since he's learned to use the device.

They're brain surgeons, but seem as impressed as I am.

"It's mindblowing - you can see the level of control that he has," said Mr Harith Akram, a neurosurgeon and lead investigator of the UK trial.

It is still early days. It's taken Neuralink nearly a decade to develop the chip and electrode technology. The first device was implanted in a US volunteer two years ago; now 21 people in the US, Canada, UK and the UAE have one. All have severe paralysis - either due to spinal injury, stroke, or neurodegenerative conditions such as ALS. Results from the **trials** have yet to be published in peer-reviewed scientific journals or submitted to regulators. Neuralink agreed to give us access to the trial but declined to be interviewed.

However, in Mr Akram's opinion, the early results are promising.

"This technology is going to be a game-changer for patients with severe neurological disability," he said.

"Those patients have very little really to improve their independence. Especially now that we live in a world where we are so dependent on technology."

Neuralink says its mission is to "restore autonomy to those with unmet medical needs and unlock new dimensions of human potential".

Alongside this trial targeting areas of the brain controlling movement, another is targeting brain regions involved in speech in the hope it can be restored in people who've lost the ability to talk following stroke or other brain injury. The company also has plans to investigate reversing blindness by sending data from a cameras, via the chip, into the brain's vision-processing centres.

Accessing other brain areas involves implanting electrodes deeper into the brain safely and reliably, a challenge the company admits it has yet to overcome.

Tom Clarke, *news.sky.com*, Thursday 29 January 2026

Beyond human limits: the ethical, social, and regulatory implications of human enhancement

A critical ethical concern surrounding human enhancement technologies is their potential to exacerbate social inequality. If enhancements, whether genetic, cognitive, or physical—become widely available, will they be accessible to all, or only to those who can afford them? This question is particularly pressing given the current disparities in access to healthcare and medical services globally. If access to enhancements is limited by socioeconomic status, we risk creating a new form of social stratification, where individuals who are genetically or cognitively enhanced hold significant advantages in health, intelligence, and physical abilities.

Historically (from the agriculture revolution to the present day), social status has been based on wealth and resources, but selective genetic improvements could lead to the formation of biological castes, where one's genetic identity becomes a new marker of privilege or disadvantage. This scenario poses a grave threat to social cohesion and even to the sustainability of our species. If some individuals are biologically engineered

to possess superior traits—such as higher intelligence, increased strength, or disease resistance—it could widen existing social divides, creating a class of “genetically elite” who dominate others not just economically, but biologically.

Furthermore, germline editing, could have long-lasting societal consequences. As these modifications are passed down through generations, we may see the emergence of classes of individuals defined by the quality of their engineered genome. More critically, such interventions may limit evolutionary adaptability and reduce the genetic diversity necessary for resilience against environmental changes, emerging diseases and overall unpredictable future challenges. This possibility raises concerns about long-term societal impacts, as the creation of biologically distinct classes could perpetuate inequality across generations, threatening both the ethical foundations of equal opportunity and the broader stability of human society.

Chiara Gerardi , Christodoulos Xinaris, *frontiersin.org*, 09 July 2025

Born a Crime

Apartheid was perfect racism It took centuries to develop, starting all the way back in 1652 when the Dutch East India Company landed at the Cape of Good Hope and established a trading colony, Kaapstad, later known as Cape Town, a rest stop for ships traveling between Europe and India. To impose white rule, the Dutch colonists went to war with the natives, ultimately developing a set of laws to subjugate and enslave them. When the British took over the Cape Colony, the descendants of the original Dutch settlers trekked inland and developed their own language, culture, and customs, eventually becoming their own people, the Afrikaners—the white tribe of Africa.

The British abolished slavery in name but kept it in practice. As the British Empire fell, the Afrikaner rose up to claim South Africa as his rightful inheritance. To maintain power in the face of the country's rising and restless black majority, the government realized they needed a newer and more robust set of tools. They build the most advanced system of racial oppression known to man.

Apartheid was a police state, a system of surveillance and laws designed to keep black people under total control. In America you had the forced removal of the native onto reservations coupled with slavery followed by segregation. Imagine all three of those things happening to the same group of people at the same time. That was apartheid.

I grew up in South Africa during apartheid, which was awkward because I was raised in a mixed family, with me being the mixed one in the family. (...) During apartheid, one of the worst crimes you could commit was having sexual relations with a person of another race. Needless to say, my parents committed that crime.

In any society built on institutionalized racism, race-mixing doesn't merely challenge the system as unjust, it reveals the system as unsustainable and incoherent. Race-mixing proves that races can mix— and in a lot of cases, want to mix. Because a mixed person embodies that rebuke to the logic of the system, race-mixing becomes a crime worse than treason.

Humans being humans and sex being sex, that prohibition never stopped anyone. There were mixed kids in South Africa nine months after the first Dutch boats hit the beach in Table Bay. Just like in America, the colonists here had their way with the native women, as colonists so often do. Unlike in America, where anyone with one drop of black blood automatically became black, in South Africa mixed people came to be classified as their own separate group, neither black nor white but what we call “colored.” Colored people, black people, white people, and Indian people were forced to register their race with the government. Based on those classifications, millions of people were uprooted and relocated. Indian areas were segregated from colored areas, which were segregated from black areas—all of them segregated from white areas and separated from one another by buffer zones of empty land. Laws were passed prohibiting sex between

Europeans and natives, laws that were later amended to prohibit sex between whites and all nonwhites.

The government went to insane lengths to try to enforce these new laws. The penalty for breaking them was five years in prison. There were whole police squads whose only job was to go around peeking through windows—clearly an assignment for only the finest law enforcement officers. And if an interracial couple got caught, God help them. The police would kick down the door, drag the people out, beat them, arrest them. At least that's what they did to the black person. With the white person it was more like, "Look, I'll just say you were drunk, but don't do it again, eh? Cheers." That's how it was with a white man and a black woman. If a black man was caught having sex with a white woman, he'd be lucky if he wasn't charged with rape.

If you ask my mother whether she ever considered the ramifications of having a mixed child under apartheid, she will say no. She wanted to do something, figured out a way to do it, and then she did it. She had a level of fearlessness that you have to possess to take on something like she did. If you stop to consider the ramifications, you'll never do anything. Still, it was a crazy, reckless thing to do. A million things had to go right for us to slip through the cracks the way we did for as long as we did.

Trevor Noah, *Born a Crime*, chapter 2,

Half - castes

The white man called these children half-castes, children of Aboriginal mothers and white fathers. All over the country more and more half-caste children were being born, and the government was worried. Where did these children belong? To their black Aboriginal families? Or to the white man's world? The government decided that these children should go to school, where they would learn how to become domestic servants and farm workers. Two schools were started, one in the south-west, and one near Perth, called the Moore River Native Settlement. Aboriginal children all over Western Australia were taken away from their families and sent to these schools, to learn how to live like the white man.

The years passed, and the seasons came and went. Jigalong was a long way from anywhere, but government officers rode all over the country, looking for part-Aboriginal children. The arm of the law was long, and reached even to Jigalong. Notes were kept at the depots and the stations, reports and letters were written, orders were given...

To Mr A. O. Neville

Chief Protector of Aborigines, Perth

The half-caste girls at Jigalong have a hard time with the other Aboriginal children here, who say unkind things about them. The girls need a better chance in life than they can get out here in the bush.

Arthur T. Hungerford

Superintendent, Jigalong Depot

To Mr A. O. Neville

Chief Protector of Aborigines, Perth

There are three half-caste girls at Jigalong - Molly 14 years, Grade 10 years, and Daisy, about 8 years. I think you should do something about them as they are running wild at Jigalong Depot.

Mrs Chellow

Manager, Murra Munda Station

To Constable Riggs

Marble Bar Station

Find the three half-caste girls, Molly, Gracie, and Daisy, at Jigalong and bring them in. They will be sent to the Moore River Native Settlement. Send them down by ship to Fremantle, and an officer will meet them there.

Mr A. O. Neville

Chief Protector of Aborigines, Perth

Early one morning everybody was having a breakfast of damper and tea when the dogs began to bark.

'Shut up!' shouted Maude, throwing a stick at one of them

. The dogs went quiet, but soon began to bark again. All eyes turned to look through the trees, and there, on a low hill behind them, stood a tall white man, looking down at them. He wore a uniform, with a wide brown hat.

'Who's that?' said Granny Frinda, the girls' grandmother.

'It's that policeman from Marble Bar,' said Maude, staring at him. 'Riggs... Constable Riggs.'

The policeman began to walk down the hill towards them. He was holding a piece of paper in his hand.

Maude stood up, suddenly afraid. She knew what was going to happen. The last time she was at Jigalong Depot, Mr Hungerford the superintendent had warned her that the police were looking for the half- caste girls.

'I've come to take Molly, Grade, and Daisy, the half-caste girls,' Riggs called out. He held the piece of paper higher in his hand, to show them. 'They have to go to school, at the Moore River Native Settlement. The law says so.'

Doris Pilkington Garimar, Rabbit Proof-Fence, chap 5, 1996

Creating the Perfect Caste System

"Come along with us, and give these boys the benefit of your expert knowledge."

Mr. Foster smiled modestly. "With pleasure."

Mr. Foster duly told them of the growing embryo on its bed of peritoneum. Made them taste the rich blood surrogate on which it fed . Explained the system of labelling-a T for the males, a circle for the females and for those who were destined to become **freemartins** a question mark, black on a white ground.

"For of course," said Mr. Foster, "in the vast majority of cases, fertility is merely a nuisance. One fertile ovary in twelve hundred-that would really be quite sufficient for our purposes. But we want to have a good choice. And of course one must always have an enormous margin of safety. So we allow as many as thirty per cent of the female embryos to develop normally. The others get a dose of male sex-hormone. Result: they're decanted as freemartins-structurally quite normal but sterile. Guaranteed sterile. Which brings us at last," continued Mr. Foster, "out of the realm of mere **slavish** imitation of nature into the much more interesting world of human invention."

He rubbed his hands. For of course, they didn't content themselves with merely hatching out embryos: any cow could do that.

"We also predestine and condition. We decant our babies as socialized human beings, as Alphas or Epsilons, as future sewage workers or future Directors of Hatcheries"

They were passing Metre 320 on Rack 11. A young Beta-Minus mechanic was busy with screw-driver and spanner on the blood-surrogate pump of a passing bottle. The hum of the electric motor deepened by fractions of a tone as he turned the nuts. Down, down. A final twist, a glance at the revolution counter, and he was done. He moved two paces down the line and began the same process on the next pump.

"Reducing the number of revolutions per minute," Mr. Foster explained. "The surrogate goes round slower; therefore gives the embryo less oxygen. Nothing like oxygen- shortage for keeping an embryo **below par**." Again he rubbed his hands.

"But why do you want to keep the embryo below par?" asked an ingenuous student.

"Ass!" said the Director, breaking a long silence. "Hasn't it occurred to you that an Epsilon embryo must have an Epsilon environment as well as an Epsilon heredity?"

It evidently hadn't occurred to him. He was covered with confusion.
"The lower the caste," said Mr. Foster, "the shorter the oxygen." The first organ affected was the brain. "But in Epsilons," said Mr. Foster very justly, "we don't need human intelligence."
Didn't need and didn't get it. But though the Epsilon mind was mature at ten, the Epsilon body was not fit to work till eighteen. Long years of superfluous and wasted immaturity. If the physical development could be speeded up till it was as quick, say, as a cow's, what an enormous saving to the Community!
"Enormous!" murmured the students. Mr. Foster's enthusiasm was infectious.
That was the problem. And it was all but solved.

Aldous Leonard Huxley, *Brave New World*, chap 1, 1931

Freemartins : *Génisse jumelle d'un mâle sexuellement normal, présentant une anomalie ovarienne qui la rend stérile.*

Slavish : *servile*

below par : *en dessous de la moyenne*

A Child Donor

ANNA

The secretary has perfect skin and perfect eyebrows and honeybee lips "Can I help you?"

"I have an appointment with Mr. Alexander. At four o'clock."

Campbell Alexander comes in, too. He glances at me curiously.

"I'm here to retain you," I say. "Mr. Alexander, my sister has leukemia."

"I'm sorry to hear that. But you can't bring a lawsuit on someone else's behalf."

There is way too much to explain—my own blood seeping into my sister's veins; the nurses holding me down to stick me for white cells Kate might borrow; the doctor saying they didn't get enough the first time around. The bruises and the deep bone ache after I gave up my marrow; the shots that sparked more stemcells in me, so that there'd be extra for my sister. The fact that I'm not sick, but I might as well be. The fact that the only reason I was born was as a harvest crop for Kate. The fact that even now, a major decision about me is being made, and no one's bothered to ask the one person who most deserves it to speak her opinion. There's way too much to explain, and so I do the best I can. "It's my parents," I say. "I want to sue them for the rights to my own body."

CAMPBELL

The girl sitting across from me waits for an answer. She says she wants to sue her parents, like every other teenager on the planet. But she wants to sue for the rights to her own body. With a sigh, I get up. "What did you say your name was?"

"I didn't." She sits a little straighter. "It's Anna Fitzgerald."

I open the door and bellow for my secretary. "Kerri! Can you get the **Planned Parenthood** number for Ms. Fitzgerald?"

"What?"

When I turn around, the kid is standing.

"Planned Parenthood?"

"Look, Anna, here's a little advice. Instigating a lawsuit because your parents won't let you get birth control pills or go to an abortion clinic is like using a sledgehammer to kill a mosquito. You can go to Planned Parenthood; they're far better equipped to deal with your problem."

Anger glows around this kid like electricity.

"My sister is dying, and my mother wants me to donate one of my kidneys to her," she says hotly.

"No one can make you donate an organ if you don't want to."

"Oh, really?" She leans forward, counting off on her fingers. "The first time I gave something to my sister,

it was **cord blood**, and I was a newborn. She has leukemia—APL—and my cells put her into **remission**. The next time she **relapsed**, I was five and I had lymphocytes drawn from me, three times over, because the doctors never seemed to get enough of them the first time around. When that stopped working, they took **bone marrow** for a transplant. When Kate got infections, I had to donate granulocytes. When she relapsed again, I had to donate peripheral blood **stemcells**.”

This girl's medical vocabulary would put some of my paid experts to shame. I pull a legal pad out of a drawer. “Obviously, you've agreed to be a donor for your sister before.”

She hesitates, then shakes her head. “Nobody ever asked.”

“Did you tell your parents you don't want to donate a kidney?”

“They don't listen to me.”

“They might, if you mentioned this.”

She looks down, so that her hair covers her face. “They don't really pay attention to me, except when they need my blood or something. I wouldn't even be alive, if it wasn't for Kate being sick.”

An heir and a spare: this was a custom that went back to my ancestors in England. It sounded callous—having a subsequent child just in case the first one happens to die—yet it had been eminently practical once.

“They had me so that I could save Kate,” the girl explains. “They went to special doctors and everything, and picked the embryo that would be a perfect genetic match.”

“What happens if you don't give your sister a kidney?”

“She'll die.”

“And you're okay with that?”

Anna's mouth sets in a thin line. “I'm here, aren't I?”

“Yes, you are. I'm just trying to figure out what made you want to put your foot down, after all this time.”

She looks over at the bookshelf. “Because,” she says simply, “it never stops.”

Jodi Picoult, *My sister's keeper*, 2004

IDEE DST :

musk et sa progéniture (13 enfants déclarés)

+

**my sister's keeper :*

WHEN I WAS LITTLE, the great mystery to me wasn't how babies were made, but why. The mechanics I understood—my older brother Jesse had filled me in—although at the time I was sure he'd heard half of it wrong. Other kids my age were busy looking up the words penis and vagina in the classroom dictionary when the teacher had her back turned, but I paid attention to different details. Like why some mothers only had one child, while other families seemed to multiply before your eyes. Or how the new girl in school, Sedona, told anyone who'd listen that she was named for the place where her parents were vacationing when they made her (“Good thing they weren't staying in Jersey City,” my father used to say).

Now that I am thirteen, these distinctions are only more complicated: the eighth-grader who dropped out of school because she got into trouble; a neighbor who got herself pregnant in the hopes it would keep her husband from filing for divorce. I'm telling you, if aliens landed on earth today and took a good hard look at why babies get born, they'd conclude that most people have children by accident, or because they drink too much on a certain night, or because birth control isn't one hundred percent, or for a thousand other reasons that really aren't very flattering.

On the other hand, I was born for a very specific purpose. I wasn't the result of a cheap bottle of wine or a full moon or the heat of the moment. I was born because a scientist managed to hook up my mother's eggs and my father's sperm to create a specific combination of precious genetic material. In fact, when Jesse told me how babies get made and I, the great disbeliever, decided to ask my parents the truth, I got more than I bargained for. They sat me down and told me all the usual stuff, of course—but they also explained that they

chose little embryonic me, specifically, because I could save my sister, Kate.

“We loved you even more,” my mother made sure to say, “because we knew what exactly we were getting.”

It made me wonder, though, what would have happened if Kate had been healthy. Chances are, I'd still be floating up in Heaven or wherever, waiting to be attached to a body to spend some time on Earth. Certainly I would not be part of this family. See, unlike the rest of the free world, I didn't get here by accident. And if your parents have you for a reason, then that reason better exist. Because once it's gone, so are you.