

Write a guided analysis of **one** of the following texts.

The following text is an extract from the play *Anna in the Tropics* by Nilo Cruz and is set in a cigar factory. Juan Julian is a lector—a reader—employed to read to the cigar factory employees as they work.

(*Juan Julian closes the book.*)

That's all for today from *Anna Karenina*.

(*The workers applaud.*)

MARELA (*Still enraptured by the story*): Why does he always end when he gets to the good part?

5 OFELIA: To keep us in suspense.

CONCHITA: To keep us wanting more.

MARELA: He's really a fine lector.

OFELIA: That's why he's called the Persian Canary, because it's like hearing a bird sing when he reads.

10 MARELA: And can you smell the cologne from his handkerchief every time he dries his forehead? The fragrance wraps itself around the words like smoke.

CHECHÉ (*To Palomo*): Oh Lord! Exactly what I expected. Now they'll sigh and chat about the love story for hours.

MARELA: I heard that, Cheché.

15 CHECHÉ: Oh, but this is the part I like the most, when you start discussing things. For some reason I never hear the story the same way that you do.

PALOMO: Neither do I, but maybe that's because we're men.

MARELA: You're being cynical.

CONCHITA: Don't pay them any mind.

20 PALOMO: No. I'd like to hear what you have to say.

CONCHITA: Mamá, you did well in sending for him.

OFELIA: Only a fool can fail to understand the importance of having a lector read to us while we work.

MARELA: Well, Cheché is not very happy with him.

25 OFELIA: That's because Cheché is a fool.

CHECHÉ: Now I haven't said—

OFELIA: I heard what you told Palomo this morning and we're not going to do away with the lector.

CHECHÉ: All I said—

30 OFELIA: When I lived in Havana I don't remember ever seeing a tobacco factory without a lector.

As a child I remember sitting in the back and listening to the stories. That has always been our pride. Some of us cigar workers might not be able to read or write, but we can recite lines from *Don Quixote* or *Jane Eyre*.

CHECHÉ: All I said was that I'm afraid we're in for another tragic love story.

PALOMO: I like love stories.

35 MARELA: Me, too.

CHECHÉ: I would've preferred a detective story.

MARELA: They're not very literary, Chester.

CONCHITA: Well. I don't know about you, but ever since he started reading *Anna Karenina* my mind wanders to Russia.

40 MARELA: Me, too. I have dreams and they are full of white snow, and Anna Karenina is dancing waltzes with Vronsky. Then I see them in a little room, and all the snow melts from the heat of their bodies and their skin. And I just want to borrow a fur coat from my friend Cookie Salazar and go to Russia.

45 OFELIA: He chose the right book. There is nothing like reading a winter book in the middle of summer. It's like having a fan or an icebox by your side to relieve the heat and the caloric* nights.

CHECHÉ (*To Palomo*): Help me with the boxes.

(*The men exit.*)

* caloric: relating to heat

- How and to what effect is tension between the characters created in the extract?