The opening of the novel **‘The Graveyard Book’ –** Neil Gaiman

There was a hand in the darkness, and it held a knife. The knife had a handle of polished black bone, and a blade finer and sharper than any razor. If it sliced you, you might not even know you had been cut, not immediately.

The knife had done almost everything it was brought to that house to do, and both the blade and the handle were wet.

The street door was still open, just a little, where the knife and the man who held it had slipped in, and wisps of night-time mist slithered and twined into the house through the open door.

The man Jack paused on the landing. With his left hand he pulled a large white handkerchief from the pocket of his black coat, and with it he wiped off the knife and his gloved right hand which had been holding it; then he put the handkerchief away. The hunt was almost over. He had left the woman in her bed, the man on the bedroom floor, the older child in her brightly coloured bedroom, surrounded by toys and half-finished models. That only left the little one, a baby barely a toddler, to take care of. One more and his task would be done.

He flexed his fingers. The man Jack was, above all things, a professional, or so he told himself, and he would not allow himself to smile until the job was completed.

His hair was dark and his eyes were dark and he wore black leather gloves of the thinnest lambskin.

The toddler's room was at the very top of the house. The man Jack walked up the stairs, his feet silent on the carpeting. Then he pushed open the attic door, and he walked in. His shoes were black leather, and they were polished to such a shine that they looked like dark mirrors: you could see the moon reflected in them, tiny and half full.

The real moon shone through the casement window. Its light was not bright, and it was diffused by the mist, but the man Jack would not need much light. The moonlight was enough. It would do.

He could make out the shape of the child in the cot, head and limbs and torso.

The cot had high, slatted sides, to prevent the child the getting out. Jack leaned over, raised his right hand, one holding the knife, and he aimed for the chest…

… and then he lowered his hand. The shape in the cot was a teddy bear. There was no child.

**COMPLETE ALL QUESTIONS**

Q1: Re-read the first **two paragraphs**. List **four things** we learn about the knife from this part of the text.

Q2: Use the **full extract** for this question. How does the writer use language to create an impression of the man Jack?

Q3: Use the **full extract** for this question. How does the writer structure the text to interest you as a reader?