

positives

The main passage about the Shulamite's brothers and the one by which their importance should be judged is in the final chapter rather than in the first one. How would chapter eight be different if they were omitted (B-7)?

The brothers appear in a flashback, speaking in 8:8-9 about what they would do in the future when their sister becomes a mature woman who is ready to marry. She already was such (8:6-7) and had in fact already married. Yet, they are overheard speaking about her to one another years before as if she was still a little girl with "no breasts." Why is there a flashback?

The flashback shows that there is a close connection between happiness in marriage and how one lives as a youth before marriage. The brothers were probably concerned about how their little sister would behave as a teenager.

The brothers helped their sister remain pure (8:9), but she herself was even more responsible (8:10). The conditional sentences in 8:9 show that they could only do so much. The Shulamite herself was the primary actor. Chapter eight does not show how important she or her brothers were as much as it shows how important sexual purity is.

Mark the points below as correct (C), incorrect (X), or partly correct (▲).

C	() They cared about their sister's future (8:8).
C-1	() They watched over her from an early age.
C-2	() They wanted her to get married someday.
C-3	() They probably believed in arranged marriages.
C-4	() They were probably able to pay a huge dowry (8:7-9).
D	() They cared about their sister's moral purity (8:8-9).
D-1	() They knew how powerful and painful romantic passion can be (8:6-7).
D-2	() They worried about what kind of young woman she would become.
D-3	() They wanted her to be careful and defensive with men, like a wall.
D-4	() They were afraid she might be open to immorality, like a door.
D-5	() She agreed with them about the importance of purity (8:10).
D-6	() Remaining pure is more important than finding love (8:10).
D-7	() They expressed concern that she might be raped (8:8-9).
D-8	() They set limits (8:9) and sometimes disciplined her (1:6).
D-9	() The context implies that they did a good job (8:10-14).