

GCE English Language and Literature 2015 teacher pack

A level paper 2 - prose non-fiction texts

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Introduction

A level English Language and Literature includes the analysis of an unseen non-fiction text in paper 2, section A.

This document gathers together in one handy resource a range of non-fiction texts from the past papers of our Edexcel GCE English Language 2008 specification, which have been grouped according to the themes of the 2015 specification: Society and the Individual; Love and Loss; Crossing Boundaries and Encounters.

These texts can be used to support students in developing the analytical skills they will require to approach texts of this type within their final assessment. Although the texts have been grouped by theme, the skills of analysis will be the same across all four thematic options, and so all of the texts provided may be a useful source of data, irrespective of the studied theme. In fact, many of the texts could as easily have been placed within a different theme, and can be read with a variety of different perspectives.

We thought it would also be helpful for you to have guidance on the range of features that could be explored in each text. We have therefore also included extracts from the mark schemes that relate to each example. Although the indicative content would have been written with a particular question in mind, the details provided are a good starting point for the exploration of the material.

As these examples have been taken from 2008 specification past papers, there are some small presentational differences between these texts and those in the 2015 specification. Please make yourself familiar with the presentation of the 2015 sample assessment materials, which include slightly more introductory detail before each unseen text.

Please also refer to the [2015 sample assessment materials](#) to see examples of the question format (p.72) and the requirements of the mark schemes (p.101 onwards).

Texts

Society and the Individual

Text A (June 2014)

An extract from an obituary, published in The Economist magazine in August 2012.

Neil Armstrong

Astronauts do not like to be called heroes. Their standard riposte to such accusations is to point out that it requires the efforts of hundreds of thousands of backroom engineers, mathematicians and technicians to make space flight possible. They are right, too: at the height of its pomp, in 1966, NASA was spending about 4.4% of the American government's entire budget, employing something like 400,000 workers among the agency and its contractors. 5

But it never works. For Neil Armstrong, who commanded Apollo 11, the mission that landed men on the moon on July 20th 1969, the struggle against heroism seemed particularly futile. The achievement of his crew, relayed live on television, held the entire planet spellbound. On their return to Earth, the astronauts were mobbed. Presidents, prime ministers and kings jostled to be seen with them. Schools, buildings and roads were named after them. Medals were showered upon them. A whirlwind post-flight tour took them to 25 countries in 35 days. 10

As the first man to walk on another world, Armstrong received the lion's share of the adulation. All the while, he quietly insisted that the popular image of the hard-charging astronaut braving mortal danger the way other men might brave a trip to the dentist was exaggerated. "For heaven's sake, I loathe danger," he told one interviewer before his fateful flight. Done properly, he opined, spaceflight ought to be no more dangerous than mixing a milkshake. 15

Indeed, the popular image of the "right stuff" possessed by the astronaut corps—the bravery, the competitiveness, the swaggering machismo—was never the full story. The symbol of the test-pilot school at Edwards Air Force Base in the Mojave Desert, where Armstrong spent years testing military jets, is a slide rule over a stylised fighter jet. In an address to America's National Press Club in 2000, Armstrong offered the following self-portrait: "I am, and ever will be, a white-socks, pocket-protector, nerdy engineer, born under the second law of thermodynamics, steeped in steam tables, in love with free-body diagrams, transformed by Laplace and propelled by compressible flow." 20 25

He had an engineer's reserve, mixed with a natural shyness. Even among the other astronauts, not renowned for their excitability, Armstrong was known as the "Ice Commander". Mike Collins, one of Armstrong's crew-mates on the historic moon mission, liked his commander but mused that "Neil never transmits anything but the surface layer, and that only sparingly." In one famous incident, Armstrong lost control of an unwieldy contraption nicknamed the "Flying Bedstead" that was designed to help astronauts train for the lunar landing. Ejecting only seconds before his craft hit the ground and exploded, Armstrong dusted himself off and coolly went back to his office for the rest of the day, presumably to finish up some paperwork. 30

That unflappability served him well during the lunar landing. The original landing area turned out to be full of large boulders, and so Armstrong had to take control from his spacecraft's primitive computer and skim across the lunar surface by hand, looking for somewhere suitable to set down. By the time he found his spot, there was only 25 seconds of fuel left in the tanks. 35

It served him well back on Earth, too. The astronauts knew from the experiences of their predecessors on the Mercury and Gemini flights that their trip would transform them into celebrities. But theirs was the biggest achievement yet, and none were prepared for the 40

adulation that awaited them. Puzzlingly for the pragmatic spacemen, their trip to the moon seemed to have elevated them to the status of oracles, and people pressed them for their thoughts on everything from religion to the future of the human species and the chances for world peace.

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Unlike some of his fellow astronauts (two of whom became senators), Armstrong chose a comparatively quiet retirement, teaching engineering at the University of Cincinnati. He returned to NASA twice, both times to serve on boards of enquiry, the first into the near-disaster of Apollo 13, and the second into the disintegration of the space shuttle *Challenger* in 1986. He spent his final years on his farm in rural Ohio, flying gliders in his spare time (it was, said the supposedly emotionless engineer, the closest humans could come to being birds).

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Glossary: Laplace – a physics term used to explain the solving of certain equations.

Text B (June 2013)

An extract from a column written by the journalist Suzanne Moore, which appeared in The Guardian newspaper in 2011.

This coalition hasn't forgotten women. It's targeted them.

It's easy enough to do, I guess. You're rushing round trying to keep on top of everything, but you know you might have forgotten something. It'll come back to you later. Oh yes – women. Where did you put them? When did you last see them? Retrace your steps. From the superb leaked memo this week, we see this government has been so busy “messaging about deficit reduction” it has simply forgotten how to get its message through to women. Perhaps more specifically, to women who may vote for them. Please don't confuse these guys and tell them all women are not exactly the same. We don't want to blow their freaky-deaky minds. 5

If I was feeling forgiving I could think, well, it happens in every field – this “whoops, what woman?” deal – why should the government be any different? 10

You think to yourself, let's make a funny, topical show about the news. It will be such a laugh, and so you get something like Mock the Week, where two teams of three men compete, chaired by a man. This is not some deliberate gender apartheid. Relax, people. It's comedy! Or you could edit something like a satirical magazine, and occupy the higher moral ground of Ian Hislop, a place I can barely imagine, and just happen to think that describing all female journalists, whoever they are (Deborah Orr?), as Polly Filler or Glenda Slagg is hilarious. It's a scientific fact that men never write badly or fill up the back half of newspapers with drivel. Ever! 15

If you are really anti-establishment, you can have a blog named after Guy Fawkes with its regular Totty Watch and encourage your clientele to take part in a really creepy smutfest. That's really one in the face to the system, boys! Or how about selling crappy T-shirts with slogans such as “Nice new girlfriend, what breed is she?”, or ones that provide a list of excuses for domestic violence. Weirdly, just as a new campaign aimed at teenagers starts because, repulsively, many teenage girls are used to being kicked or punched within relationships. Anyone who complains about these things is probably some hairy, humourless ho. That's right, and here I am. 20 25

Because I am too long in the tooth to listen to the excuses any more. I have been in too many situations where someone at the last minute remembers the missing vital ingredient to their plan. And I get the token-woman phone call. TV people, radio people, people giving prizes, people discussing or campaigning often have a great lineup. It's just that they have forgotten the woman thing. By the time they phone someone like me, they are deranged by their newfound passion for the appearance of equality. “We think you'd be really good at it because ...” They cannot say, “Because you are a woman”, so twisted are they by now in their sudden antisexism they can't risk sounding ... sexist. So they just start begging. Perhaps any of us “token women” should be flattered by our exalted status. To be one of the boys. It's what we always wanted! 30 35

It isn't, actually. What we wanted a lot of the time was for it not to matter. For it not always to be an issue. That's the hopeless ideal. In grownup company and in grownup companies, in positions of power and positions of pleasure, some of us are men and some of us are women. Equality would mean the presence of women as simply normal – not abnormal, not tokenistic, not even snigger-worthy. 40

The vaguest notion of any kind of equality would mean you could not govern for a year with a load of policies that create higher unemployment for women, while further impoverishing women on benefits. You could not suggest the so-called work-life balance is simply a female issue, or assume we are all wives and mothers. This leaked, panicky memo shows these guys waking up to the fact that many women are not simply disappointed but bloody livid, that women are not an afterthought; nor are we an interchangeable, homogenous mass to be spun over with some "family-friendly policies".

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Text C (January 2013)

An extract from a biography of Rosa Parks whose stand against racial segregation in America in 1955 became a defining moment in the Civil Rights Movement.

Shortly after 5:00 p.m., Rosa Parks clocked out of work and walked the block to Court Square to wait for her bus home. It had been a hard day, and her body ached, from her feet swollen from the constant standing to her shoulders throbbing from the strain and her chronic bursitis. But the bus stand was packed, so Parks, disinclined to jockey for a rush-hour seat, crossed Dexter Avenue to do a little shopping at Lee's Cut-Rate Drug. She had decided to treat herself to a heating pad but found them too pricey. Instead, she bought some Christmas gifts, along with aspirin, toothpaste, and a few other sundries, and headed back to the bus stop wondering how her husband's day had been at the Maxwell Air Force Base Barber Shop and thinking about what her mother would cook for dinner. 5

It was in this late-day reverie that Rosa Parks dropped her dime in the box and boarded the yellow-olive city bus. She took an aisle seat in the racially neutral middle section, behind the movable sign which read 'colored.' She was not expecting any problems, as there were several empty spaces at the whites-only front of the bus. A black man was sitting next to her on her right and staring out the window; across the aisle sat two black women deep in conversation. At the next two stops enough white passengers got on to nearly fill up the front section. At the third stop, in front of the Empire Theater, a famous shrine to country-music fans as the stage where the legendary Hank Williams got his start, the last front seats were taken, with one man left standing. 10 15

The bus driver twisted around and locked his eyes on Rosa Parks. Her heart almost stopped when she saw it was James F. Blake, the bully who had put her off his bus twelve years earlier. She didn't know his name, but since that incident in 1943, she had never boarded a bus that Blake was driving. This day, however, she had absentmindedly stepped in. 'Move y'all, I want those two seats,' the driver barked on behalf of Jim Crow, which dictated that all four blacks in that row of the middle section would have to surrender their seats to accommodate the single white man, as no 'colored' could be allowed to sit parallel with him. A stony silence fell over the bus as nobody moved. 'Y'all better make it light on yourselves and let me have those seats,' Blake sputtered, more impatiently than before. Quietly and in unison, the two black women sitting across from Parks rose and moved to the back. Her seatmate quickly followed suit, and she swung her legs to the side to let him out. Then Parks slid over to the window and gazed out at the Empire Theater marquee promoting *A Man Alone*, a new Western starring Ray Milland. 20 25 30

The next ten seconds seemed like an eternity to Rosa Parks. As Blake made his way toward her, all she could think about were her forebears, who, as Maya Angelou would put it, took the lash, the branding iron, and untold humiliations while only praying that their children would someday 'flesh out' the dream of equality. But unlike the poet, it was not Africa in the days of the slave trade that Parks was thinking about; it was racist Alabama in the here and now. She shuddered with the memory of her grandfather back in Pine Level keeping watch for the KKK every night with a loaded shotgun in his lap, echoing abolitionist John Brown's exhortation: 'Talk! Talk! Talk! That didn't free the slaves ... What is needed is action! Action!' So when Parks looked up at Blake, his hard, thoughtless scowl filled her with pity. She felt fearless, bold, and serene. 'Are you going to stand up?' the driver demanded. Rosa Parks looked straight at him and said: 'No.' Flustered and not quite sure what to do, Blake retorted, 'Well, I'm going to have you arrested.' And Parks, still sitting next to the window, replied softly, 'You may do that.' 35 40

Her majestic use of 'may' rather than 'can' put Parks on the high ground, establishing her as a protester, not a victim. 'When I made that decision,' Parks stated later, 'I knew I had the strength of my ancestors with me,' and obviously their dignity as well. And her formal dignified 'No,' uttered on a supertime bus in the cradle of the Confederacy as darkness fell, ignited the collective 'no' of black history in America, a defiance as liberating as John Brown's on the gallows in Harpers Ferry. 45

The situation put Blake in a bind. This woman would, of course, have to be evicted from his bus. But should he do it himself, or should he call the police? Would it be better just to take her name and address and report her to the authorities later? Uncertain of what to do, he radioed his supervisor. 'I see it said as how I got up and swore at her and then went and called the police and told them to come get her,' Blake told *Washington Post* reporter Paul Hendrickson in 1989 after years of remaining silent about the incident. 'Well, I called the company first, just like I was supposed to do. Nobody ever wrote that. I got my supervisor on the line. He said, 'Did you warn her, Jim?' I said, 'I warned her.' And he said, and I remember it just like I'm standing here, 'Well, then, Jim, you do it. You got to exercise your powers and put her off, hear?' And that's just what I did.' 50 55

Within minutes, Montgomery police officers F. B. Day and D. W. Mixon arrived and listened to Blake's account of what had transpired. Parks just watched as the three white men conferred on her fate, and realized what it would be: she would be fingerprinted and put in jail. The other passengers, black and white alike, began getting off the bus quietly but nervously, some with the self-possession to ask for transfers, others too anxious in the volatile situation. The blacks who remained on the bus sat in stunned, silent recognition that this time the authorities had picked the wrong woman to mess with. 'It was like a mosque inside,' one passenger recalled. 'You could have heard a pin drop. It's as if we were all praying to Allah.' 60 65

Text D (June 2012)

This is an edited extract from the November 2005 edition of the magazine, The Word.

My Crazy Life in U2

With the roar of applause still filling the night air, the motorcade moves out. There's a howl of sirens, a metal gate springs open and eight black vehicles leap down a concrete ramp and onto the expressway. We barge through stop signs with our motorcycle escort, waved on by police with scarlet light-sabres. We speed over bridges and plunge through tunnels, the neon glow a smear on the windscreen, the sound amplified by the rain. It's completely absurd and really rather thrilling. U2 are "doing a runner" – Boston's basketball arena to the airport in just over six minutes. Is that a good runner as runners go? 5

"That's a fantastic runner," The Edge confirms. "I'd give it... ooh, nine point two. Better than Barcelona where they drive at a speed that's actually life-threatening. And better than Italy where the cops bang on your roof with batons." 10

The Edge wipes the condensation from the window and peers into the blur of blinking lights. He shrugs self-consciously in a manner that suggests the whole thing's preposterous but, at their level, it's the only practical way they can operate. "To some extent, you gauge the degree of affection within a city by the quality of the back-up you get," he adds, professionally. "And we've had an amazing connection with Boston over the years. They've always looked after us." 15

Dave Evans has lived like this for nearly 30 years, a cycle of songwriting, recording and performances that started when he was 17. He's known no other life. And for the past 20 years he's operated at this kind of level, travelling with a team of three technicians and 60 crew in order to replicate as faithfully as possible the music he creates in the studio. 20

He was born in Essex to Welsh parents, moved to north Dublin at the age of one – "massive identity crisis!" – and is now 44 with three daughters by his childhood sweetheart, and another daughter and son by his second wife, the band's former choreographer. He's helped sustain a formula that sells both records and tickets in every last reach of the world market. He's the unsung hero who orchestrates the sound of the greatest rock 'n' roll success story of our time, a band for which his old schoolfriend is largely the public face. 25

The convoy grinds to a halt in that remote outpost of Logan airport reserved only for the owners of private aircraft. Small and shiny Lear Jets are parked on the tarmac. New and sparkling Gulf-streams stand beside them. And there at the back, dwarfing them all, is a 60-seater Airbus 320 emblazoned with the violet and orange insignia of the Vertigo tour and the logo of the city's four adopted sons. 30

It was from Boston, famously, that the 9/11 terrorists departed – on flights originally heading for Los Angeles – so security is now unimaginably tight. But there is a special dispensation for the quartet who have just entranced the 20,000-seater Fleet centre. "Sir," the customs are reminded, "this gentleman walks right through." 35

America has adopted U2 and nowhere more so than in the city we're leaving. Boston has the highest concentration of Irish immigrants in the States, and a student population of nearly 400,000, and it was East Coast college radio, back in 1981, that first picked up on the music of U2. The Edge remembers playing a bar in Boston to just 300 souls, opening for a band called Malooga. When their support set finished, the entire audience left the venue. They were breaking America below the radar. 40

Twenty-five years later, those 300 were doubtless back to renew the acquaintance, but this time they'd brought 19,700 friends. The roar greeting U2 was deafening, especially from the Irish quarter. One person waved a banner announcing GOD'S COUNTRY. Another hurled his striped green football top over the barrier and The Edge put it on, while the singer stalked the outer limits of the catwalk. Bono looked back, astonished. "Nice shirt, The Edge." He turned to the crowd. "Great to be home with our tribe!" 45

Every night an entertaining drama is built around the band's inscrutable architect. As The Edge plays a note cycle like the call sign in *Close Encounters*, Bono leans into the microphone, "This," he points stage left, "is the same sound as The Edge's spaceship made when it arrived in the north of Dublin. Larry and myself and Adam just stood there and stared. A door opened and out came this astounding-looking man. Larry said: 'Who are you?' and he said: 'I am The Edge.' And Adam said: 'Where are you from?' and he said: 'The future.' And I said: 'What's it like?' and he said: 'It's better!'" 50

Half an hour later comes the supreme piece of theatre. Bono asks the crowd to hold up their mobile phones in a digital reconstruction of the Great Cigarette Lighter Scare of the 1970's – in fact, a cunning ruse to then flash them the number of the One campaign for the eradication of Third World debt so they can text their support. Around the amphitheatre, on all six levels, thousands of pale blue lamps twinkle in the heavens. Everyone, even the band, appears stunned by the spectacle. "The Edge," Bono wonders, "is this your Galaxy?" 60

Text E (January 2012)

This is a speech by the American educator and civil rights leader, Mary McLeod Bethune, broadcasting on US radio in November 1939.

WHAT DOES AMERICAN DEMOCRACY MEAN TO ME?

DEMOCRACY IS for me, and for 12 million black Americans, a goal towards which our nation is marching. It is a dream and an ideal in whose ultimate realization we have a deep and abiding faith. For me, it is based on Christianity, in which we confidently entrust our destiny as a people. Under God's guidance in this great democracy, we are rising out of the darkness of slavery into the light of freedom. Here my race has been afforded (the) opportunity to advance from a people 80 percent illiterate to a people 80 percent literate; from abject poverty to the ownership and operation of a million farms and 750,000 homes; from total disfranchisement to participation in government; from the status of ¹chattels to recognized contributors to the American culture. 5

As we have been extended a *measure* of democracy, we have brought to the nation rich gifts. We have helped to build America with our labour, strengthened it with our faith and enriched it with our song. We have given you Paul Lawrence Dunbar, Booker T. Washington, Marian Anderson and George Washington Carver. But even these are only the first fruits of a rich harvest, which will be reaped when new and wider fields are opened to us. 10

The democratic doors of equal opportunity have not been opened wide to Negroes. In the Deep South, Negro youth is offered only one-fifteenth of the educational opportunity of the average American child. The great masses of Negro workers are depressed and unprotected in the lowest levels of agriculture and domestic service, while the black workers in industry are barred from certain unions and generally assigned to the more laborious and poorly paid work. Their housing and living conditions are sordid and unhealthy. They live too often in terror of the lynch mob; are deprived too often of the Constitutional right of ²suffrage; and are humiliated too often by the denial of civil liberties. We do not believe that justice and common decency will allow these conditions to continue. 15 20

Our faith in visions of fundamental change as mutual respect and understanding between our races come in the path of spiritual awakening. Certainly there have been times when we may have delayed this mutual understanding by being slow to assume a fuller share of our national responsibility because of the denial of full equality. And yet, we have always been loyal when the ideals of American democracy have been attacked. We have given our *blood* in its defense ... We have fought for the democratic principles of equality under the law, equality of opportunity, equality at the ballot box, for the guarantees of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. We have fought to preserve one nation, conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that *all* men are created equal. Yes, we have fought for America with all her imperfections, not so much for what she is, but for what we *know* she can be. 25 30

Perhaps the greatest battle is before us, the fight for a new America: fearless, free, united, morally re-armed, in which 12 million Negroes, shoulder to shoulder with their fellow Americans, will strive that this nation under God will have a new birth of freedom and that government of the people, for the people and by the people shall not perish from the earth. This dream, this idea, this aspiration, *this* is what American democracy means to me. (Applause.)

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¹Chattels – Possessions

²Suffrage – Right to Vote

Love and Loss

Text A (June 2014)

A letter from the poet John Keats to his fiancée, Fanny Brawne: May (?)1820.

Tuesday Morn –

My dearest Girl,

I wrote a Letter for you yesterday expecting to have seen your mother. I shall be selfish enough to send it though I know it may give you a little pain, because I wish you to see how unhappy I am for love of you, and endeavour as much as I can to entice you to give up your whole heart to me whose whole existence hangs upon you. You could not step or move an eyelid but it would shoot to my heart – I am greedy of you – Do not think of any thing but me. Do not live as if I was not existing – Do not forget me – But have I any right to say you forget me? Perhaps you think of me all day. Have I any right to wish you to be unhappy for me? You would forgive me for wishing it, if you knew the extreme passion I have that you should love me – and for you to love me as I do you, you must think of no one but me, much less write that sentence. Yesterday and this morning I have been haunted with a sweet vision – I have seen you the whole time in your shepherdess dress. How my senses have ached at it! How my heart has been devoted to it! How my eyes have been full of Tears at it! I[n]deed I think a real Love is enough to occupy the widest heart – Your going to town alone, when I heard of it was a shock to me – yet I expected it – *promise me you will not for some time, till I get better.* Promise me this and fill the paper full of the most endearing mames [for names]. If you cannot do so with good will, do my Love tell me – say what you think – confess if your heart is too much fasten'd on the world. Perhaps then I may see you at a greater distance, I may not be able to appropriate you so closely to myself. Were you to loose a favorite bird from the cage, how would your eyes ache after it as long as it was in sight; when out of sight you would recover a little. Perhaps if you would, if so it is, confess to me how many things are necessary to you besides me, I might be happier, by being less tantaliz'd. Well may you exclaim, how selfish, how cruel, not to let me enjoy my youth! to wish me to be unhappy! You must be so if you love me – upon my Soul I can be contented with nothing else. If you could really what is call'd enjoy yourself at a Party – if you can smile in people's faces, and wish them to admire you now, you never have nor ever will love me – I see life in nothing but the certainty of your Love – convince me of it my sweetest. If I am not somehow convinc'd I shall die of agony. If we love we must not live as other men and women do – I cannot brook the wolfsbane of fashion and foppery and tattle. You must be mine to die upon the rack if I want you. I do not pretend to say I have more feeling than my fellows – but I wish you seriously to look over my letters kind and unkind and consider whether the Person who wrote them can be able to endure much longer the agonies and uncertainties which you are so peculiarly made to create – My recovery of bodily health will be of no benefit to me if you are not all mine when I am well. For god's sake save me – or tell me my passion is of too awful a nature for you. Again God bless you

J.K.

No – my sweet Fanny – I am wrong. I do not want you to be unhappy – and yet I do, I must while there is so sweet a Beauty – my loveliest my darling! Good bye! I kiss you – O the torments!

Glossary: wolfsbane – a type of plant used to create a deadly poison.

Text B (June 2013)

An extract taken from a feature in the Family section of The Guardian, published in 2011.

By the time we've reached the last two months of the season, any pretence at tolerance has long gone. All those weekday nights when I had insisted I had to watch a match on TV – "It's really important. Chelsea might get knocked out if Spartak Moscow beat Marseille"; all those nights when I had lost the battle for supremacy of the TV but had still flicked over to the football every time there was an ad break or she left the room; all those nights when I had woken her up at 3am as I scuttled off to Stansted for a godforsaken flight to Milan or Madrid; all those weekends spent in N17 have taken their toll. 5

At this time of year, football is just a constant source of irritation and difference, a symbol of something we don't share. In my defence, it isn't me who doesn't want to do the sharing. I'd be quite happy for Jill to watch loads of football with me on TV. On several occasions I've even suggested she might want to come to a game with me, but every time she's found a good reason – "I've got to feed the cat" – to not go. I'm not sure how I would have felt if she'd said yes, but that's beside the point. Jill can't accuse me of not showing willing. 10

Nor can she claim that football is my way of avoiding spending time with her; it would be tough to argue that I've been going out of my way to avoid spending time with her since I was nine. But football is undeniably my escape from myself, and for that reason it's probably healthier for both of us if she keeps her distance. To have your partner colluding in your madness does tend to normalise and excuse it. So it's for strictly therapeutic reasons, I'm sure, that Jill often makes a point of not asking me the score when I get back from a game. 15

But all therapy has its mental blocks, and neither of us can claim football isn't a source of friction between us. She thinks I'm being casually dismissive when I lose concentration halfway through a conversation; I think she's being deliberately provocative to try to talk to me when I'm checking a football result online. Mostly, though, we negotiate this minefield successfully. 20

Indeed, I've sometimes wondered if there isn't something in it for her, too. Would Jill really want a man who was physically present and emotionally there for her the whole time? I think not. I think she'd get fed up with me pestering to know how she feels every few minutes. She likes her own space, too, and it's convenient for me to be labelled the mentally more unstable partner. Given my history, it's hard to refute. 25

What gets to her as much as the attritional nature of the nine-month football season is the indecision it generates as I find it increasingly hard to commit to anything in case there's a fixture clash. Last season, it was particularly bad because Jill had switched jobs and was taking a break between finishing the old one and starting the new one in May. Her attempts to get us to take a holiday together, just the two of us, were met with stonewalling. "Be spontaneous," she said. 30 35

That was a bit rich, coming from her.

"I'll see what I can do."

Not very much as it turned out, apart from a great day out at the garden centre; it wasn't my fault I had a lot on at work and couldn't be certain Spurs weren't going to make it to the Champions League semi-final. And though Jill did later admit she had a much better time 40

walking in Andalucia with a couple of her women friends than she would have done with me, it still rankled.

"You owe me," she said later.

"Fair enough. What do you want?"

"You can book the summer holiday,"

45

"Where do you want to go?"

"Anywhere. You decide."

"When do you want to go?"

"End of July, beginning of August."

Great – the time of year when there's no football. Half an hour later, I had the holiday sorted. It's amazing what you can do when you are sure of your dates.

50

Text C (January 2013)

An extract from "Bad Blood – A Memoir", by the novelist Lorna Sage, published in 2000.

On the day itself we were allowed to go home in the afternoon to get ready. My mother and I had compromised over my new dress – her visions of me in floating white chiffon which anyway we couldn't afford, and mine of something cheap in all senses, off the shoulder and tight in the skirt, with a lot of dark red about it, which I'd seen in the catalogue, had converged on a princess-line calf-length frock 'that emphasises your pretty figure' mused the Shrewsbury saleswoman, looking over my shoulder, smoothing it down over my hips for just a little too long. It was Wedgwood blue, with a white pattern and a square nearly low neck, and I secretly liked it, although I complained it was babyish. Then back to school, to the hot, heaped-up 'cloakroom' and a confused smell of forbidden scent, bath salts, talc, hairspray and new-fangled, stinging deodorants, and familiar people transformed with shiny sandals and flushed faces jostling for the one full-length mirror. I thought I'd faint when we got into the gym, the ceiling seemed to have vanished, the room stretched upwards into space, and there were pools of solid-looking darkness on the floor and in the corners. 5 10

The awful business of beginning fell to the head boy and head girl, but at least they didn't have to choose, or be chosen. What if no one asked you? You'd gradually sink into oblivion and the dark would close over your head. Boys sidled across the hall, their temples glistening with sweat and Brylcreem, nudging and shoving each other, and suddenly here was one, saying 'May I ...' Well, yes, the relief was enormous and this was easy, a waltz. Once my first pang of gratitude had subsided, I noticed that my partner was preoccupied too. He seemed to be having trouble remembering the steps, for he was pumping my arm and counting under his breath (one, two, three), and his breath smelled like the open maws of the pub cellars that gaped on Whitchurch pavements on delivery day. Beer. He'd been drinking and, although in theory this was glamorous because forbidden (and he was anyway certainly under age), in fact he was distracted, disjointed and clammy. He stepped on my feet (one, two...) and groaned as if his pain was greater than mine, and then it was over and I was back in my corner, my white shoes a bit scuffed, still waiting for the evening's true, occult ritual to start. 15 20 25

Now one of the scatter of sixth-formers wearing dinner jackets would surely pick me out, someone older (teachers only danced with teachers, alas) whose casual touch would unlock the mysteries of the quickstep and A-level physics. But my next two partners seemed just as inept and nervous as me. I wasn't getting anywhere and, as if to rub it in, my first partner was back, more dishevelled than before, his collar unbuttoned, mopping his brow. This time, instead of counting, he talked as we jogged around the floor, into my ear, in a whispered shout over the music: his mother had broken her arm falling from a stepladder in the shop where she worked, where she wouldn't have to work if her sons and her husband looked after her properly, which they didn't, his own bad behaviour was adding to her troubles, no wonder he was pissed He snickered sarcastically and seemed about to burst into tears. This was awful. Each dance with him took me further from my imagined cavalier, he was leaving his messy mark on me – this time it wasn't just the bruised toes and the dirty shoes, there was definitely a damp patch on my dress in the small of my back where his hand had been and my hair felt sticky where he'd leaned on me to tell his story. Who was he? How could I get rid of him? 30 35 40

Back in the girls' corner, they knew who he was at least, he was a distant cousin of one of the fifth-formers, a gangling pariah called Sheila who had wildly protruding teeth and had once tried to befriend me when I was a pariah with braces. He was Victor Sage, his mother's pride but no one else's, well known for clowning, drinking and fighting after hours behind the Back 45

Street Vaults, and they lived in Whitchurch on the council estate and his mother worked in Dudleston's, the drapers on High Street. My head was starting to ache. I went and stared at myself in the mirror in the 'Ladies'. Of course. That was where my mother had worked before the war, with Gladys, who must be his mother. I recalled mutual boasting sessions, once in particular when I'd passed the Scholarship, and so had Victor, said his mother proudly to mine, 50 pretending to wrap up some lingerie to borrow time to talk. In fact, my mother had often stopped off on the way to Mrs Smith's to talk to Mrs Sage as she now was, while I kicked my heels and tugged at her sleeve. My tormentor was essence of Whitchurch, then, part of the familiar tangle I so yearned to slough off. And he wasn't handsome either, with that gap-toothed grimace, although that wouldn't have mattered if he'd been the magical mentor I'd 55 looked forward to, the prince of ennui.

Text D (June 2012)

This is an extract from a book about popular television shows, written by the critic and newspaper feature writer, Stuart Jeffries.

Once in *thirtysomething*, Michael came home from work and found Hope in the kitchen banging the wall with his racketball shoe. It was a lovely evening, the sun streaming through the windows, little baby Janey – all seventeen inches of her – sitting in her chair bathed in a heavenly glow. Michael looked good in his braces, and Hope looked good too, her hair tied back and her bone structure on display. They had made some good choices with the kitchen décor, and the hardwood flooring was to die for. But there was trouble in this domestic paradise. There were bugs in the house, and they menaced the perfect family. 5

'I'll call the exterminators tomorrow,' said Michael. 'They'll spray the place.' 'They'll come back in different strains,' said Hope. 'So we'll re-spray again,' said Michael. 'Janey will grow up stunted,' said Hope. 'So we'll move,' said Michael. 'We can't afford to move,' said Hope. 'We can't afford to live here so what's the difference?' asked Michael. 'I hate everything except Janey because she's perfect,' said Hope. 'What's not perfect?' asked Michael. 10

It was a dialogue from a self-help manual, the kind of conversation deconstructed in books like *Men Are From Mars, Women Are From Just Outside West Bromwich*: the woman complaining and the man wanting to make things right quickly so that he doesn't have to listen to her moan. 15

But Michael had a good point. What wasn't perfect? To me, twenty-five and back from work, slumped on a foam-filled sofa bed, stressed and sweaty, this sunny corner of Philadelphia looked offensively perfect. I lived with Kay in a huge house in London that had been meanly converted into ten flats. Our flat was a little box that would have probably accommodated Michael's sports shoes at a pinch. The living room was so small that I didn't need a remote to change the channels without leaving my seat. I was wearing a suit I'd bought from Camden Market for £14 that pinched under the arms and flapped below the groin. If I had worn braces they would have probably pinged into my face. I had a bone structure, but not one you'd want to write poems about. 20 25

Outside, the Talbot Horizon was cooling its smug self after bunny-hopping me through the north London gridlock. The car was, I knew, preparing a whole new range of motoring miseries for tomorrow. Often, the Talbot Horizon made me think of the torture scene in *Elizabeth R*, BBC 1's historical drama starring Glenda Jackson, in which some bloke was dissected while still alive and presented with his heart for his screaming inspection. It was that kind of car. Nothing was perfect. 30

In *thirtysomething*, everything was perfect. Even the bugs had probably just come out of a grooming salon. If you looked through a microscope you could see that they had cheekbones every bit as good as Hope Steadman's. Some of them spoke Latin with very authentic accents and spent their summer at their Tuscan villa, one reading Nietzsche aloud and the others nodding sagely. Then they would come back to Philadelphia to play racketball with Hope in the kitchen. It wasn't a bad life by any means, and I would have swapped mine for theirs. 35

The only problem for the bugs and for Michael was Hope. She was a Canute, trying to stop the waves of real life from washing over everything she held dear. She would never be happy until she learned not to mind those waves of reality lapping over her ankles. 40

When I first watched *thirtysomething*, I thought that it showed a world of feelings from which a chilly, emotionally repressed Limey could learn. I thought this televised corner of Philadelphia could give me a sentimental education. From it I could learn how to behave with my partner. But it wasn't like that at all. Instead, it was a place where I would do better to keep my eyes on the interior décor and ignore the reactionary social message. At first, though, I was impressed by how seriously the show took itself, and I thought I ought to take it seriously too. 45

Back in her kitchen the following day, Hope said: 'Can we never fight, please?' 'We never do,' said Michael. 'We don't need to fight because we have a great thing here.' 'Do we have a happy marriage?' asked Hope. 'I think you're like not supposed to say it out loud,' said Michael, smiling sentimentally. Their happy marriage, their seeming perfection, was porcelain: they daren't raise their voices for shattering it. 50

Text E (January 2012)

This is an extract from a feature article which appeared in the Arts section of *The Independent Newspaper*, in February 2009.

WE'RE ALL HEROINE ADDICTS NOW ...

When times are tough, what better solace than an uplifting tale where love conquers all? Cheryl Cole has been signed up to write steamy novels, and even 'literary' works are being pressed into service. Katy Guest reports on the boom in romantic fiction.

Holly is a virgin waitress with unruly red hair and an upsettingly large bottom. Her life changes for ever after one searing glance from the playboy Prince Casper, which scorches her body like the hottest flame (in *The Prince's Waitress Wife*, the first in a new series of Mills & Boon rugby romances launched this month in association with the Rugby Football Union.) 5

Viva is an inexperienced chaperone, in search of the India of her childhood and ghosts from the past. This lovely heroine meets a gorgeous hero, with tragically increasing sight loss (in Julia Gregson's *East of the Sun*, which this week won the Romantic Novelists' Association prize). 10

Adam Kellas is on a journey from the mountains of Afghanistan to the elegant dinner-tables of north London, in search of that elusive thing called "love" (in the first capture by a male author of the Le Prince Maurice Prize for literary love stories, James Meek's *We Are Now Beginning Our Descent*). 15

Three literary lovers; three very different kinds of fiction. And apparently, we need stories like this more than ever.

The Romantic Novelists' Association (RNA) gave its 49th Romantic Novel of the year award on Tuesday to a book which, according to the chair-woman, Catherine Jones, "made me cry". The Judges praised the "three remarkable women at the centre (of the novel), each with different flaws, strengths and voices. The novel engages the reader from the first page and never lets go, following their various fortunes until it reaches its truly satisfying ending." 20

Gregson said she was "completely flabbergasted" by the win. She had no idea that she had written a romantic novel, she says, until she was shortlisted. "I had to analyse what my idea of romance was. Some of the things that happen to my girls are quite unromantic, really. But it's definitely a love story." 25

A "satisfying" ending, according to the RNA, is as fundamental a component of romantic fiction as a strong love story at its heart. Unlike Mills & Boon, the ending doesn't necessarily have to be happy. And, unlike the more literary Le Prince Maurice Prize, which distinguishes itself from "romantic fiction", the RNA revels in the definition. 30

But "satisfactory" is a good word to describe the health of the romantic fiction market now. According to the latest figures from Book Marketing Limited, it is worth £118m a year and climbing – an increase of 43 per cent from 2003 to 2007. Mills & Boon sells three books every second, bucking the trend in general fiction (and general everything) sales as the recession kicks in. 35

In a terrible piece of news for struggling authors, the Girls Aloud popstrel Cheryl Cole has signed a £5m deal to write romantic novels ("She hadn't previously thought of writing, but she's come around to the idea," said a source at the evidently stalkerish Harper-Collins), while Jane Austen's novels have been repackaged by Headline in girlie covers. Even Chris Ryan, the former SAS man and lad-lit hero, has had a nom de plume sex change and written *The Fisherman's Daughter* as Molly Jackson – a rare example of a man taking a female pseudonym in order to be taken more seriously as a novelist. 40

It's not the first time that an interest in escapist romantic fiction has coincided with depressing times – even more fundamentally depressing than the annual arrival of Valentine's Day, that is. Mills & Boon was a general publisher, specialising in sports and crafts, when it launched in 1908. It started to focus on romance when it became clear that the public needed a lift during the Depression of the 1930s. During the Second World War, when paper was rationed, it received a rare pardon; the Publishers Association intervened and the Ministry of Supplies made an exception for Mills & Boon, so important was it to maintain the morale of women who were working for the war effort. 45 50

Linda Blair, a clinical psychologist and the author of *Straight Talking*, believes all this is perfectly understandable. First of all, why do people read anything to escape?" she asks. "Everyone keeps predicting the end of books... but reading is a private thing. It engages the visual sense as well as the word sense and therefore both sides of the brain. It takes you over entirely in a way that television and other things don't." That's no bad thing when banks are crashing, the Government is prevaricating, and the price of a Mills & Boon book is only £2.99. 55

Encounters

Text A (June 2014)

An extract from a travel book, written by the comedian Sanjeev Bhaskar, published in 2007.

Looking for India

Where I grew up, my family home in a west London suburb was hardly salubrious. My parents, sister and I lived in a small terraced maisonette above a launderette. No, it wasn't my beautiful launderette. It was my father's, and it wasn't especially beautiful either.

We had no central heating, making do with a couple of gas fires and a paraffin heater to stave off those arctic winters of the 1960s. A water tank with the capacity of about a pint served our washing and bathing needs and our windows were the wrong size for that new fad, double-glazing. My Dad improvised by nailing thick polythene sheets to the inside of the windows to thwart the convectional currents of cold air that would pass through the windows like evil spectres. 5 10

Our flat had no garden and my summers were spent staring out of the window at the main road and devouring as many books as my dog-eared library card would allow. To top it all, we were directly under one of the main flight paths in to Heathrow Airport, which meant that even casual conversation contained a cliffhanger every few minutes: 'You know, Auntie Manju deserves a slap ... [Plane] ... up meal for giving Mr Ram a servicing ... [Plane] ... contract for all his shag ... [Plane] ... pile carpets, 'cos it's a right bugger ... [Plane] to clean.' 15

Was there a silver lining to living in this dark, dank cloud? Well, perhaps a couple. Next door was a fish 'n' chip shop run by Auntie Phyllis and Uncle Gordon, who were warm, funny and regularly provided me with my hourly fix of chips. When the weather turned nasty, our whole family would decamp to the living room for a couple of weeks, which was as close as we ever came to a camping holiday. And we were perfectly placed for getting to and from the airport, of course. 20

My mother filled much of my childhood with stories about her childhood. Tales of my relatives which all took place in exotic locations in India. I heard about floods and earthquakes, cobras and leopards. Trapping fire flies in jars and munching on raw sugar cane. Travelling by steam trains and riding in rickshaws. Maharajas and mahouts. A series of saturated, Kodachrome snapshots of my mother's past. 25

For all her lurid memories, in the background were the shadows of Partition. This was the violent and bloody separation of Old India which took place in 1947 – cleaving the British Empire's most precious jewel and marking the birth of the conjoined twins of Pakistan and modern India. 30

The stories always became sparse at this point, fading to a whisper and then finally to silent introspection.

My father worked shifts at a local factory. This meant he was on a constant cycle of changing work times: 6 a.m. till 2 p.m., 2 p.m. till 10 p.m. and 10 p.m. till 6 a.m. This was six days a week and, in between, he was running the launderette too. The fact that my father survived this occupational assault, and indeed prospered, is an achievement that I now hold in my highest regard, but as a child I viewed with naïve derision. 35

This was primarily because my sister and I had to learn to remain mute during different parts of the day when he was resting. This enforced semi-monastic existence ill-prepared me for the sensual onslaught that visiting India would bring. It also meant that I heard little from my father about his childhood, save for the hardship that came to him after his father died just before Partition – from what I understand were health problems brought about by an excessive work ethic. 40

Though my father's childhood stories were rare to my ears, even they subsided when the subject of Partition came up, at which point he would either go to work, bed or silently disappear behind a newspaper. All I know about Partition from both my parents was that it was horrendous, that the family somehow survived, and that my father's family lost everything and came to Delhi as refugees. 45

Saturday night in west London was the Indian social night. A merry band of my parents and their friends would congregate in someone's house on a rota basis. This was the surrogate extended family that all of these NRIs (Non Resident Indians) seemed to have hankered for. 50

Inevitably all of them had little family in the UK and so the weekend was the smash-and-grab opportunity for them to get their *desi* familial fix before returning to the not-altogether-warm welcome of daily English life. 55

Spices, herbs and fruit from Mother India were not readily available (a curry being something that came out of a packet to which you added boiling water – and, by enforcement of some diabolical by-law, had to contain sultanas) and so food from 'home' was understandably precious.

A guest always revealed a mango or some okra in a very dramatic fashion, like a Victorian illusionist, punctuated by the audience's 'Oohs' and 'Ahs', culminating in the gentle thud of someone fainting. To this day I still sense an endorphin rush around exotic fruit. 60

Glossary: *Maharaja*: a Hindu prince or king in India.
mahout: a person who tends an elephant.
desi: a slang term for the peoples and cultures of India.

Text B (June 2013)

An extract from Uncle Tungsten – Memories of a Boyhood, by Oliver Sacks.

We had meals in the breakfast room next to the kitchen; the dining room, with its long table, was reserved for shabbas meals, festivals, and special occasions. There was a similar distinction between the lounge and the drawing room – the lounge, with its sofa and dilapidated, comfy chairs, was for general use; the drawing room, with its elegant, uncomfortable Chinese chairs and lacquered cabinets, was for large family gatherings. Aunts, uncles, and cousins in the neighborhood would walk over on Saturday afternoons, and a special silver tea service would be pulled out and small crustless sandwiches of smoked salmon and cod's roe served in the drawing room – such dainties were not served at any other time. The chandeliers in the drawing room, originally gasoliers, had been converted to electric light sometime in the 1920s (but there were still odd gas jets and fittings all over the house so that, in a pinch, we could go back to gas lighting). The drawing room also contained a huge grand piano, covered with family photos, but I preferred the soft tones of the upright piano in the lounge.

Though the house was full of music and books, it was virtually empty of paintings, engravings, or artwork of any sort; and similarly, while my parents went to theaters and concerts frequently, they never, as far as I can remember, visited an art gallery. Our synagogue had stained glass windows depicting biblical scenes, which I often gazed at in the more excruciating parts of the service. There had been, apparently, a dispute over whether such pictures were appropriate, given the interdiction of graven images, and I wondered whether this was a reason we had no art in the house. But it was rather, I soon realized, that my parents were completely indifferent to the decor of the house or its furnishings. Indeed, I later learned that when they had bought the place, in 1930, they had given my father's older sister Lina their checkbook, carte blanche, saying, "Do what you want, get what you want."

Lina's choices – fairly conventional, except for the chinoiserie in the drawing room – were neither approved nor contested; my parents accepted them without really noticing or caring. My friend Jonathan Miller, visiting the house for the first time – this was soon after the war – said it seemed like a rented house to him, there was so little evidence of personal taste or decision. I was as indifferent as my parents to the decor of the house, though I was angered and bewildered by Jonathan's comment. For, to me, 37 was full of mysteries and wonders – the stage, the mythic background, on which my life was lived.

There were coal fires in almost every room, including a porcelain coal stove, flanked by fish tiles, in the bathroom. The fire in the lounge had large copper coal scuttles to either side, bellows, and fire irons, including a slightly bent poker of steel (my eldest brother, Marcus, who was very strong, had managed to bend it, when it was almost white-hot). If an aunt or two visited, we would all gather in the lounge, and they would hitch up their skirts and stand with their backs to the fire. All of them, like my mother, were heavy smokers, and after warming themselves by the fire, they would sit on the sofa and smoke, lobbing their wet fag ends into the fire. They were, by and large, terrible shots, and the damp butts would hit the brick wall surrounding the fire-place and adhere there, disgustingly, until they finally burned away.

I have only fragmentary, brief memories of my youngest years, the years before the war, but I remember being frightened, as a child, by observing that many of my aunts and uncles had coal black tongues – would my own, I wondered, turn black when I grew up? I was greatly relieved when Auntie Len, divining my fears, told me that her tongue was not really black, that its black-ness came from chewing charcoal biscuits, and that they all ate these because they had gas.

Of my Auntie Dora (who died when I was very young), I remember nothing except for the color orange – whether this was the color of her complexion or hair, or of her clothes, or whether it was the reflected color of the firelight, I have no idea. All that remains is a warm, nostalgic feeling and a peculiar fondness for orange.

Text C (January 2013)

An extract from In Cold Blood, Truman Capote's documentary account of a murder case in America in 1959.

The master of the River Valley Farm, Herbert William Clutter, was forty-eight years old, and as a result of a recent examination for an insurance policy, knew himself to be in first-rate condition. Though he wore rimless glasses and was of but average height, standing just under five feet ten, Mr Clutter cut a man's-man figure. His shoulders were broad, his hair had held its dark colour, his square-jawed, confident face retained a healthy-hued youthfulness, and his teeth, unstained and strong enough to shatter walnuts, were still intact. He weighed a hundred and fifty-four – the same as he had the day he graduated from Kansas State University, where he had majored in agriculture. He was not as rich as the richest man in Holcomb – Mr Taylor Jones, a neighbouring rancher. He was, however, the community's most widely known citizen, prominent both there and in Garden City, the close-by county seat, where he had headed the building committee for the newly completed First Methodist Church, an eight-hundred-thousand-dollar edifice. He was currently chairman of the Kansas Conference of Farm Organizations, and his name was everywhere respectfully recognized among Midwestern agriculturists, as it was in certain Washington offices, where he had been a member of the Federal Farm Credit Board during the Eisenhower administration.

Always certain of what he wanted from the world, Mr Clutter had in large measure obtained it. On his left hand, on what remained of a finger once mangled by a piece of farm machinery, he wore a plain gold band, which was the symbol, a quarter-century old, of his marriage to the person he had wished to marry – the sister of a college classmate, a timid, pious, delicate girl named Bonnie Fox, who was three years younger than he. She had given him four children – a trio of daughters, then a son. The eldest daughter, Eveanna, married and the mother of a boy ten months old, lived in northern Illinois but visited Holcomb frequently. Indeed, she and her family were expected within the fortnight, for her parents planned a sizeable Thanksgiving reunion of the Clutter clan (which had its beginnings in Germany; the first immigrant Clutter – or Klotter, as the name was then spelled – arrived here in 1880); fifty-odd kinfolk had been asked, several of whom would be travelling from places as far away as Palatka, Florida. Nor did Beverly, the child next in age to Eveanna, any longer reside at River Valley Farm; she was engaged to a young biology student, of whom her father very much approved; invitations to the wedding, scheduled for Christmas Week, were already printed. Which left, still living at home, the boy Kenyon, who at fifteen was taller than Mr Clutter, and one sister, a year older – the town darling, Nancy.

In regard to his family, Mr Clutter had just one serious cause for disquiet – his wife's health. She was 'nervous', she suffered 'little spells' – such were the sheltering expressions used by those close to her. Not that the truth concerning 'poor Bonnie's afflictions' was in the least a secret; everyone knew she had been an on-and-off psychiatric patient the last half-dozen years. Yet even upon this shadowed terrain sunlight had very lately sparkled. The past Wednesday, returning from two weeks of treatment at the Wesley Medical Centre in Wichita, her customary place of retirement, Mrs Clutter had brought scarcely credible tidings to tell her husband; with joy she informed him that the source of her misery, so medical opinion had at last decreed, was not in her head but in her spine – it was *physical*, a matter of misplaced vertebrae. Of course, she must undergo an operation, and afterwards – well she would be her 'old self' again. Was it possible – the tension, the withdrawals, the pillow-muted sobbing behind locked doors, all due to an out-of-order backbone? If so, then Mr Clutter could, when addressing his Thanksgiving table, recite a blessing of unmarred gratitude.

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Text D (June 2012)

An extract from an account by the journalist, A. A. Gill, describing his visit to the African Continent.

Tanzania, January 1998

The Serengeti: under the lowering anvil nimbus, electric storms stutter on the horizon. The shimmering burnt-orange African sun plummets, a hot wind sways the social weavers' intricately constructed nests in the whistling thorn. The heavy air vibrates with the cooing of doves and the creaking-gate single note of the tropical boubou. High above, a pair of bateleur eagles catching a lazy late thermal precariously balance like their eponymous tightrope walkers. And over the undulating dry surf of grassland the game teems. 5

It teems and it teems. It teems from left to right and from right to left. It teems up and it teems down and it teems round and round until you are dizzy with teeming. Will this damn teeming never stop? The Serengeti game is divided into two teams: those that eat and those that are eaten. It is one enormous game of Kiss-chase with biting. If you only know Africa from the television, then this is the Africa you know. This is Attenborough country. The gnarly buzzcut acacias, the purple sky, the oily, pustulant sun that slides across the horizon, truncating the evening into twenty minutes of the most exotically beautiful light on earth. 10

The Serengeti stretches from northern Tanzania across the border into Kenya. This is where the annual migration of wildebeest takes place. Animals following the rains, pulling all the mint-sauce teams behind them. Wildebeest are God's extras. Individually, they are odd, humpy creatures with long, mournful faces that seem to be continually muttering "Nobody knows the trouble I seen" under their breaths; collectively on the move at a stiff-legged canter, they are one of the great wonders of the world. A Wildebeest's only defence against the cruel market forces of a carnivorous world is statistics. There are so many of us, chances are it won't be me. They even arrange to calve all at the same time in the same place, providing the lions and hyenas with the largest canapé smorgasbord in the world. Wildebeest are nature's proof that communism works, it's just not much fun. Their bones litter the plains. 15 20

The great gray-green greasy Grumeti river, all set about with fever trees, runs through the heart of the Serengeti. It is home to turgid pods of hippo and crocodile you could land small planes on. Hippos look and sound like the House of Commons. Fat, self-satisfied gents with patronising smirks and fierce pink short-sighted eyes in wrinkled gray suits going "haw-haw" and telling each other dirty jokes. They sit like backbenchers in their soupy tearooms and defecate copiously, lifting their vast buttocks out of the water and spinning their tails like Magimixes. At night you lie awake and listen to them chunter and canvass outside the tents. 25 30

The Ngorongoro crater is the other place you'll know if you've only been to Africa by armchair. Seven thousand feet up, it is a volcano crater with more microclimates than you can shake a meteorologist at. A perfect soup bowl of game. In fact, Ngorongoro is Africa's Mount Olympus of game. Purists with breath you could use for snakebite serum of the Outward Bound knit-your-own-bullet school tend to roll their malarial yellow eyes and harrumph like warthog farts at the mention of Ngorongoro, bellowing that it is Disneyland Soho on a Saturday night, St.Tropez in July. And they have a point. It is the beaten trail. But then, imagine a life lived never having seen Disneyland or Soho or St. Tropez and then double it and double it again. The Ngorongoro crater fair takes your breath away. It is a spectacle. It makes *The Lion King* look like a song and dance. This is the real thing. 35 40

Text E (January 2012)

This is an extract from an autobiography by the writer, J.G. Ballard, published in 2008.

My mother was born in West Bromwich, near Birmingham, in 1905, and died aged 93 in Claygate, Surrey, in 1999. Her parents, Archibald and Sarah Johnstone, were lifelong teachers of music. During the year that I lived with them, after my mother and sister returned to Shanghai in 1947, two practice pianos were going all day as a series of pupils came and went. When I first met them, in early 1946, after landing in Southampton, they were both in their late sixties, and seemed to be living relics of the Victorian world. With their rigid, intolerant minds, they never relaxed, hating the post-war Labour government, uninterested in my sister or myself, and barely interested in my mother and her wartime experiences in a Japanese camp. Life was intensely narrow for them, living in a large, three-storey house where the rooms were always dark, filled with heavy, uncomfortable furniture and interior doors with stained-glass panels. Food rationing was in force, but everything seemed to be rationed, the air we breathed, hope of a better world, and the brief glimpses of the sun. Even as a boy I wondered how my mother and her sister, both lively and strong-willed women, had ever managed to bloom as teenage girls. 5 10

Yet in later years my mother told me that her father had been something of a rebel in his younger days, and before his marriage had scandalised his family by giving up his musical training and forming a band, which played at dances and weddings. I met him at the worst time, when England was exhausted by the war. There had been heavy bombing in the Birmingham area, and I suspect that they felt my mother's years in 'Lunghua were a holiday by comparison. The war had made them mean, as it made a lot of the English mean. I think they distrusted me on sight. When my grandmother, a small ungenerous woman, first showed me the single bathroom in this large, gloomy house I blotted my copybook for ever by asking: 'Is this my bathroom?' 15 20

After her death my grandfather went through a remarkable transformation that seems to have begun as he walked away from the funeral. He immediately sold the house and its furniture, and set off with two suitcases for the south coast of England, where he lived in a series of hotels, entirely self-sufficient, moving on if he disliked the menu and facilities. He was living in a Bournemouth hotel when he died at 97. In his last years he would sometimes faint in supermarkets and shops. One manageress, assuming he was dead, rang my mother with the sad news, and was shocked out of her skin when my grandfather, his heart rested, suddenly lifted his head and spoke to her. 25 30

She and my father met at a holiday hotel in the Lake District, one of the hydros which were very popular with young people in the 1920's. After their marriage, in the later 1920's, when my father had joined the Calico Printers Association, they lived briefly in a rented house in the Manchester area, and sailed for Shanghai in 1929. 35

My parents never spoke about their reasons for leaving England, and it never occurred to me to ask them. Whether or not they were fully aware of what faced them, they were taking huge risks, not least with their health in a remote, poverty-stricken country long before the era of antibiotics. Cholera, smallpox and typhoid were rife in Shanghai. The piped water was boiled and then stored in the refrigerator in old gin bottles – but all dishes were washed in water straight from the tap. Both my sister and I caught amoebic dysentery and were severely ill. Shanghai was a large and violent city of criminal gangs and murderous political factions. My mother was a 25-year-old newly married woman who had never been out of England, except for a honeymoon trip to Paris. Shanghai was five weeks away by P&O boat. 40

There was no air link, and the only direct contact with England was by cable. I imagine that my father, always determined and optimistic, convinced my mother that England would take years to climb out of the recession, and that far more interesting possibilities waited for them on the other side of the world.

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¹Langhua – a Japanese internment camp.

Crossing Boundaries

Text A (June 2014)

A blog entry by Laura, an American writer, posted during her tour of Europe.

L’Americaine

A travel blog for late bloomers, lazy bones, and people who get distracted by butterflies.

Tuesday, April 28, 2009

To Climb Stuff

When a city has nothing to attract tourists but its beauty, its back roads and cafes, it will ask 5
that you do what its citizens have been doing since wooden-wheeled carts were the preferred
method of transport. It will recommend that you climb its bell tower. Or its triumphal arch. Or
its highest peak. Or to a little park that sits on a cliff. Or what little remains of its once-glorious
ramparts. Or the lantern of its cathedral.

Climbing stuff is the classic tourist activity. Google Maps has taken away some of the joy, 10
perhaps, has made it a little harder to fork over your 15 kuna to the guy at the ticket table. (“I
can look this up at home,” you think, a little more begrudging each time.) But you do it, maybe
to say you did it and maybe because you know that the climbing of a bell tower – all 400
steps; they usually tell you how many on a placard somewhere – has created an economy in a
town where there were once only farmers, soldiers, and a single nobleman who spent most of 15
the year at his vacation castle on the coast.

In Split, Croatia, the bell tower of St. Duje rises up out of the city center, poking a hole through
and rising high above a patchwork of red tile roofs. It is connected to the cathedral, of course,
but this cathedral began its life as the tomb of the emperor Diocletian, became a Christian
church, and then ended up as a tourist trap. Such is the cycle for many structures in Europe. 20

I wanted to climb it because I always climb things, because I am one of those people who
still likes a good vista view. And because sometimes, the view sparks something. A memory
of somewhere else. A somber meditation on the smallness and preciousness of us all. The
thoughts and feelings that, centuries earlier, were only experienced by a lone bell ringer, a
poorly-paid caretaker, or an abbot. And sometimes the view sparks something else. 25

The climb to the top of the bell tower at St. Duje requires that you navigate two flights of
steep stone steps on the bottom levels that give way to the basically hollow tower. From
there, the only thing supporting you is a rickety iron staircase that coils to the top. The tower
is perforated on every side by tall windows without glass, and you can see the open space
between each step. The Arc de Triomphe cradles you on the way up in dark, closed stairways, 30
so the height is imperceptible until you reach the top. You are whisked halfway up St. Peter’s
in an elevator. Other climbs offer stern warnings in four languages, railings with comfort grips.
But this?

My friend Ola stops after the second set of stairs. We have reached the bells, a fat half-dozen of
them rigged up on posts, wheels, and wires. 35

"I think I'm going to wait here," she says.

"I think... I'm going to keep going."

I am not afraid of heights. One of my favorite places on earth is the plain but peaceful cafe at the top of the Tour Montparnasse with its streaming sun, its best-in-the-city view of the Eiffel Tower. But I have a creeping issue or two with open spaces, and I've known it since I was a teenager. I was in the front row of the top balcony at Radio City Music Hall and I intermittently felt like I was dying for the better part of three hours while the Rockettes high-kicked away.

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The bell tower doesn't trigger my heights thing. But it sure triggers my open space thing. But I go. I don't know why I go, because no one gives you prizes, stamps your Passport of Life Experience, for defying your own fear. But mostly I think, "Eh. It can't be that bad."

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It's that bad.

The view at the top is breathtaking, the red patches of roof against the blue Adriatic against the green offshore islands against the white stone city walls. It reels around me in a blur. I tip my head up once to see the beams in the lantern, just once, and its weirdly grounding. There is a roof. You will not fly off the surface. You will not fall into the abyss. The roof will stop you.

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I snap a few pictures, hoping that my camera will remember what my brain won't. I descend, quickly, one foot in front of the other. By the time I reach the pavement below, Ola is smiling and I'm shaking like a leaf.

And maybe it's a lesson, the things that cities whisper to you when you've gotten too smart, ascended too many stairs. Just because you can look it up doesn't mean it's ordinary. Others have gone before you, have paid the price of admission, but your terror could be wholly new, wholly different. And you never know until to [sic] you climb.

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Text B (June 2013)

An extract from an article published in the Arts section of *The Times* in September 2011.

'Is the frisson that runs through the audience thanks to Shakespeare, or fear that the actor might be shot?'

A radical version of *The Tempest* is touring the West Bank and Israel.

Lucy Powell went to Bethlehem to See the results.

Site-specific theatre doesn't get much edgier than this, the English company Jericho House is about to open its adaptation of *The Tempest* in Aida: a Palestinian refugee camp in Bethlehem. We are a mile north, but a world away from the tidy streets and twee markets that surround the Church of the Nativity, which is all that most bus-loads of Christian tourists ever see of Bethlehem. 5

The open-air theatre sits immediately next to the 8m country-wide wall that divides the Palestinian territories from neighbouring Israel. Instead of a changing room there's an army watch-tower behind the stage. 10

In lieu of a set, there's a swath of angry street art decorating every contentious inch of wall. And if the production needs lighting, normal procedure at this venue is to back into the domestic supply of neighbouring houses and pay the owners in cash for the privilege. 15

"To make theatre here is a form of beautiful resistance," explains Abdelfattah Abusrour, the ebullient general manager of the theatre. Abusrour, who is also the president of the Palestinian Theatre Association, has rebuilt Aida's theatre twice in the past five years, after it was demolished at the behest of the Israeli Army.

When the dividing wall was erected in 2005, Abusrour painted a section of it white and projected the first Palestinian film festival on to it. Since then he's been devising shows with mothers and local children about their lives, which have toured the West Bank and beyond. 20

"Theatre is one of the most powerful means of self-expression," he says. "It's a way for us to narrate our own version of our stories. I wanted to show this other side of being Palestinian, that we are not only blowing ourselves up. We are also human. We do not want to walk at our children's funerals. We need these children alive, creating, happy, in love. That's what this theatre is about. We're in the business here of building hope." 25

This is fine theatrical fighting talk. But how, exactly, might the Bard weigh in? Jonathan Holmes, the 35-year-old director of Jericho House and an erstwhile academic, explains that "*The Tempest* is full of ideas of exile and power, territorialism and resistance." Shakespeare's enigmatic, ambiguous story of Prospero, the autocratic, exiled Duke of Milan, brewing magical storms and shipwrecking his enemies on his island is, says Holmes, "laden with tropes that resonate massively in this place". 30

Holmes's initial contact in the West Bank was Juliano Mer-Khamis, the Arah-Israeli theatre director and founder of the Freedom Theatre in Jenin. "Until one day in April," Holmes recalls, "Juliano walked out of his theatre with his kids, got in his car and was shot dead, we think by fundamentalists. Since then the Freedom has been attacked on all sides and it became impossible for us to play there." But Holmes didn't contemplate abandoning the tour, which will have visited East Jerusalem and Nablus in the West Bank, as well as the Israeli city of Haifa, before pitching its politicised tent in the church of St Giles, Cripplegate, in the City of London, tonight for a month. 35 40

It was important to Holmes that both Palestinians and Israelis could see the production because, he says, "to me, theatre is all about communication, trying to have the most vital, complete and inclusive conversation you can have in any given time and place." His previous productions include the verbatim plays *Fallujah* in 2007, about the Allied troop's seige of the Iraqi city, performed in a disused brewery, and *Katrina*, in 2009, about the aftermath of the New Orleans hurricane, in a warehouse in Southwark, South London. 45

For *The Tempest* Holmes also wanted that conversation to happen between the cast. His production boasts actors of international Muslim, Jewish and Catholic descent, though the production doesn't draw its race lines cleanly. Prospero's servant, the ethereal sprite Ariel, for example, is played by the Jewish actor Ruth Lass, who lived in Israel when she was 19. 50

Standing on the stage in Bethlehem, Lass feels, she says, "extremely privileged to be on this side of the wall because so few Israelis can come here. And of course I also feel terribly sad and frustrated to see what's happening here, as many Jews are."

Rachel Lynes, who plays Prospero's daughter Miranda, is also part Jewish. She was determined to remain "firmly on the fence" in her judgment of the Israeli/Palestinian conflict but, she says, squinting up at the lowering wall abutting the stage, "it's been almost impossible to stay there because, so far, we haven't met a single Israeli outside the airport". 55

Text C (January 2013)

An extract from a feature article which appeared in the Travel supplement of The Guardian newspaper in 2011.

In a field outside Epping on a grey summer's day an expectant crowd has gathered. The Duke of Essex Polo Cup is billed as the "highlight of the Essex social season", but the polo is just a sideshow to the main event – the arrival of the celebrity guests, most of whom seem to have either been married to Katie Price or appeared in Big Brother, or both. As Peter Andre, Alex Reid and Dane Bowers make their way along the red carpet to the VIP marquee (not together, that would be awkward), the onlookers murmur excitedly. 5

Suddenly, there comes a deafening roar from above and all eyes turn skywards. A helicopter lands in the middle of the polo pitch and disgorges its brightly-coloured cargo. There are a couple of tense moments as the draught from the helicopter blades sends hair extensions and lace skirts billowing upwards. Then there's the difficult matter of negotiating a muddy field in eight-inch stilettos. But after a couple of wobbles, the safety of the red carpet is reached and the waiting paparazzi stand to attention: the cast of The Only Way Is Essex has arrived. 10

Britain's first "structured reality" show, The Only Way Is Essex (TOWIE to its fans) has been something of a surprise hit. The series, which follows the lives of a group of spray-tanned young men and women as they flit between beauty salon, wine bar and nightclub, returns to our screens for a third series next weekend, having picked up a Bafta award and spawned a succession of imitators. The photogenic cast, meanwhile, seem intent on world domination, appearing at premieres and on chat shows, launching beauty products, fashion labels and fitness DVDs (the Essexercise Workout, since you ask). 15

But even more improbable than the show's success is the fact that it has sparked a mini tourism boom as TOWIE fans travel to Essex to see the locations where it is filmed. I grew up in Essex and while it does indeed have many lovely and underrated corners, the suburban extremities of the Central Line and the commuter towns of the M25 corridor are not among them. 20

But what do I know? At the polo match I get talking to a group of bubbly young women from Glasgow. They tell me they are in Essex to celebrate their friend Rowan's hen weekend, and that the whole itinerary is a carefully planned homage to TOWIE. 25

"We've had the best time," says Alana, who admits that she doesn't even like the show. "We've been to London before and it's so unfriendly, but everyone here has been so lovely and welcoming. Essex people like to have fun. They're like Glaswegians: they don't take themselves too seriously." 30

I am a rubbish Essex girl. Despite having been raised in Romford, the spiritual home of the white stiletto and the boy racer, I've never had a fake tan or a manicure, let alone a boob job, and I can't walk in high heels. But if I'm going to immerse myself in the TOWIE experience, some personal grooming is going to be necessary. 35

My first stop is on Queens Road in the well-heeled suburb of Buckhurst Hill, which must have more hair, beauty and tanning salons per capita than any town on the planet. I pass an interiors shop whose USP seems to be that every single item, from picture frames to table lamps, is encrusted in diamante, and a boutique specialising in "pet couture" including a pink leotard for your lapdog emblazoned with the motto "This Is What Spoiled Looks Like".

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Heaven knows where you go if you want to buy a pork chop or a loaf of bread. In Posh Frocks I spot a pile of flyers by the door inviting local people to audition for the next series of TOWIE. My destination is Belles & Beaus, a beauty salon where some of the girls from the show get their spray tans and nails done. I'm terrified of looking like an oompah loompah so I shun the Fake Bake and go for a manicure instead.

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Text D (June 2012)

This is an extract from a newspaper feature, by Jonathan Freedland, marking the election of Barack Obama to the US presidency.

America's next president is the son of a man who once herded goats in a remote village in Africa. He is the grandson of a man who grew up among people who wore animal skins, in a village where no white man had ever set foot. That grandfather went on to become a cook for the British army and later a domestic servant, while his son finished secondary school by correspondence course, had four wives and eight children and died an early death, caused by drink and depression. 5

The grandfather, Hussein Onyango Obama, is the source of the new president's middle name – the one that gave him so much trouble in the campaign. Though he is said to have been born in 1870, one of his three wives still lives. They call her "Mama Sarah" and she is now, aged 86, the step-grandmother of the most powerful man in the world. 10

You find her by taking the 90-minute drive north of Lake Victoria to the remote Kenyan village of Kogelo. At the end of the tarmac, a sign for the Senator Obama Secondary School points the way along a red dirt road. You find a small house, three rooms under a pale-blue corrugated iron roof. There is a water pump in the front garden and a huge mango tree, and it's here you can stop and chat to Mama Sarah. 15

She's happy to talk, over the noise of the chickens that come running when she calls. She still works, rising at dawn on a typical day and heading barefoot into her vegetable garden, where she grows maize, sweet potatoes, beans and cassava. At nine, she makes breakfast, returning to the fields until noon.

She has a TV set now, a gift from a local airline executive, but she always used to follow the news on the radio in Swahili or Luo. And she has met her step-grandson only a few times. The first encounter came when he visited Kenya in the 1980's: they had no language in common but she can't forget his voice. So much like his father's she says: "It made me think that his father had come back from the dead." 20

Her living room is decorated with family pictures, including a shot of Barack on the visit, carrying a sack of vegetables. She is proud of Barack, though she doesn't consider what he has achieved anything too special. When asked about the prospect of him becoming president, she described it as "just a job". But she plans to keep her promise to fly to Washington in January, to see her boy inaugurated. It won't be her first trip to the US. She saw Barack sworn in as senator. She said that the US was "very interesting" – but "very cold". 25 30

Obama's father – also called Barack Hussein Obama – had once caused her pride too, but just as much consternation. He was bright, yet easily bored. He won a place in secondary school, but was expelled for behaving badly. He eventually finished his schooling by correspondence course, but not before he had married a young woman called Kezia and had a son and daughter. 35

Once the course was complete, he met two American women in Nairobi who told him he should apply for a scholarship to study in the US. He wrote to dozens of US universities and one eventually replied: the University of Hawaii.

He had no idea where Hawaii was – but snapped up the offer of a place. Leaving his son and pregnant wife with Mama Sarah, he flew to Honolulu. And it was there he would meet a woman who was the product of the same urge he himself had felt – the urge to move westward and start over. 40

Stanley Ann Dunham was named after a father who had yearned for his first child to be a boy – and for much else. Dunham – the new president’s other grandfather – had been born into a small-town depression-era Kansas, but he dreamed bigger. Wild in youth, “dabbling in moon-shine, cards and women”, according to Obama’s memoirs, Dunham would not be contained by Wichita. He eloped with his sweetheart, Madelyn, enlisted after Pearl Harbour and fought in General Patton’s army in France before hopping westward, always hoping for something better, from Texas to California and finally, when offered a job as a furniture salesman in America’s newest state, to Hawaii. These then, were the backstories of the young African man and the 18-year-old girl who would meet on a Russian language course in Honolulu. They could not have been more different. He was a son of the Luo tribe who, when not in school, had herded his father’s goats; she was the daughter of white protestant prairie folk from the American heartland. And yet they fell in love. They married and in 1961 they had a child, who would also be called Barack Hussein Obama. 55

Text E (January 2012)

An extract taken from Bill Bryson's childhood memoir, *The Life and Times of The Thunderbolt Kid*, published in 2007.

But then most things in Des Moines in the 1950s were the best of their type. We had the smoothest, most mouth-pleasing banana cream pie at the Toddle House and I'm told the same could be said of the cheesecake at Johnny and Kay's, though my father was much too ill-at-ease with quality, and far too careful with his money, ever to take us to that outpost of fine dining on Fleur Drive. We had the most vividly delicious neon-coloured ice creams at Reed's, a parlour cool opulence near Ashworth Swimming Pool (itself the handsomest, most elegant public swimming pool in the world, with the slimmest, tannest female lifeguards) in Greenwood Park (best tennis courts, most decorous lagoon, comeliest drives). Driving home from Ashworth Pool through Greenwood Park, under a flying canopy of green leaves, nicely basted in chlorine and knowing that you would shortly be plunging your face into three gooey scoops of Reed's ice cream is the finest feeling of well-being a person can have. 5 10

We had the tastiest baked goods at Barbara's Bake Shoppe, the meatiest, most face-smearing ribs and crispiest fried chicken at a restaurant called the Country Gentleman, the best junk food at a drive-in called George the Chilli King. (And the best farts afterwards; a George's chilli burger was gone in minutes, but the farts, it was said, went on for ever.) We had our own department stores, restaurants, clothing stores, supermarkets, drug stores, florists, hardware stores, movie theatres, hamburger joints, you name it – every one of them the best of its kind. 15

Well, actually, who could say if they were the best of their kind? To know that, you'd have to visit thousands of other towns and cities across the nation and taste all their ice cream and chocolate pie and so on because every place was different then. That was the glory of living in a world that was still largely free of global chains. Every community was special and nowhere was like everywhere else. If our commercial enterprises in Des Moines weren't the best, they were at least ours. At the very least, they all had things about them that made them interesting and different. (And they were the best.) 20

Dahl's, our neighbourhood supermarket, had a feature of inspired brilliance called the Kiddie Corral. This was a snug enclosure, built in the style of a cowboy corral and filled with comic books, where moms could park their kids while they shopped. Comics were produced in massive numbers in America in the 1950's – one billion of them in 1953 alone – and most of them ended up in the Kiddie Corral. It was *filled* with comic books. To enter the Kiddie Corral you climbed on to the top rail and dove in, then swam to the centre. You didn't care how long your mom took shopping because you had an infinite supply of comics to occupy you. I believe there were kids who lived in the Kiddie Corral. Sometimes when searching for the latest issue of *Rubber Man*, you would find a child buried under a foot or so of comics fast asleep or perhaps just enjoying their lovely papery smell. No institution has ever done a more thoughtful thing for children. Whoever dreamed up the Kiddie Corral is unquestionably in heaven now; he should have won a Nobel prize. 25 30 35

Dahl's had one other feature that was much admired. When your groceries were bagged (or 'sacked' in Iowa) and paid for, you didn't take them to your car with you, as in more mundane supermarkets, but rather you turned them over to a friendly man in a white apron who gave you a plastic card with a number on it and placed the groceries on a special sloping conveyor 40

belt that carried them into the bowels of the earth and through a flap into a mysterious dark tunnel. You then collected your car and drove to a small brick building at the edge of the parking lot, a hundred or so feet away, where your groceries, nicely shaken and looking positively refreshed from their subterranean adventure, reappeared a minute or two later and were placed in your car by another helpful man in a white apron who took back the plastic card and wished you a happy day. It wasn't a particularly efficient system – there was often a line of cars at the little brick building if truth be told, and the juddering tunnel ride didn't really do anything except dangerously overexcite all carbonated beverages for at least two hours afterwards – but everyone loved and admired it anyway.

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Mark Schemes

Society and the Individual

Text A – (June 2014) – Points of analysis

- the obituary genre, printed in The Economist magazine
- the purpose: to inform, describe, and commemorate a hugely-significant achievement
- audience: people interested in the lives of individuals who have achieved great things; people interested in space travel; people interested in momentous historical events
- the portrayal of Neil Armstrong – “He had an engineer’s reserve, mixed with a natural shyness”; “Armstrong was known as ‘The Ice Commander’
- the effects that Armstrong’s achievement had on the world – e.g. “Presidents, prime ministers and kings jostled to be seen with them”
- the way that the passage of time has affected attitudes and values: “in 1966, NASA was spending about 4.4% of the American government’s entire budget”
- the contrast between Armstrong’s preternatural self-control and elements beyond his control: “Armstrong dusted himself off and coolly went back to his office for the rest of the day, presumably to finish up some paperwork”; “the struggle against heroism seemed particularly futile”
- the writer’s comments on stereotypical views of astronauts – e.g. “the bravery, the competitiveness, the swaggering machismo—was never the full story”
- the writer’s aim of presenting different aspects of Armstrong’s character – e.g. “That unflappability served him well during the lunar landing”
- the sense of respect and admiration that runs throughout this text.
- lexis associated with a sense of wonder: e.g. “spellbound”, “magnificent contrast”
- lexis associated with heroism: e.g. “adulation”, “braving mortal danger”
- the semantic field of technology: e.g. “thermodynamics”, “steam tables”, “compressible flow”
- effects created by figurative language: e.g. “the way other men might brave a trip to the dentist”; “medals were showered upon them”
- use of direct speech to emphasise key characteristics – e.g. “For heaven’s sake, I loathe danger.”
- the assertive tone created by the use of declaratives: e.g. “Astronauts do not like to be called heroes”; “But it never works”
- varied sentence constructions (simple, complex and compound) and their different effects
- the use of parentheses to create a detailed, informative and fluent style of commentary: e.g. “For Neil Armstrong, who commanded Apollo 11, the mission that landed men on the moon on July 20th 1969, the struggle against heroism seemed particularly futile.”
- the use of modifiers to emphasise certain characteristics or attitudes: e.g. “the first man to walk on another world”

- triadic structures: e.g. "Schools, buildings and roads were named after them."
- effects created by fronted conjunctions: "But it never works"
- syntax and its effects: e.g. beginning a sentence with an adverbial phrase to emphasise contrasting features – "Puzzlingly for the pragmatic spacemen, their trip to the moon seemed to have elevated them to the status of oracles..."
- the use of comparative structure to create a sincere, respectful tone: e.g. "Unlike some of his fellow astronauts (two of whom became senators), Armstrong chose a comparatively quiet retirement, teaching engineering at the University of Cincinnati."
- the occasional use of humour: e.g. "Neil never transmits anything but the surface layer, and that only sparingly."

Text B – (June 2013) – Points of analysis

- the genre of the text: commentary written by a newspaper columnist
- the purpose: to argue and persuade
- audience: Guardian readers; "liberal-minded" people
- the writer's ironic tone: e.g. "This is not some deliberate gender apartheid. Relax, people. It's comedy!"
- the writer's belief that gender inequality is widespread in contemporary society
- the writer's angry tone: e.g. "Or how about selling crappy T-shirts...?"
- the writer's sense of weariness with current attitudes: e.g. "Because I am too long in the tooth to listen to the excuses any more."
- the writer's sense of humour: e.g. "Oh yes – women. Where did you put them? When did you last see them? Retrace your steps."
- the argument that equality for women is so obvious that it should not even be an issue: "Equality would mean the presence of women as simply normal – not abnormal, not tokenistic..."
- the way prejudiced attitudes are challenged by the writer.
- informal register: e.g. "It's easy enough to do, I guess."
- use of colloquialisms for ironic purposes: e.g. "humourless ho"
- effects created by figurative language: e.g. "occupy the higher moral ground..."; "I am too long in the tooth..."
- use of the first person to present a strong personal argument: e.g. "I have been in too many situations..."
- the use of the second person to address the reader directly: e.g. "You think to yourself..."
- the use of rhetorical questions as persuasive devices: e.g. "...why should the government be any different?"
- varied sentence types – declaratives, imperatives, interrogatives and exclamatives – and their different effects
- the use of direct speech for satirical effect: e.g. "We think you'd be really good at it because..."
- the use of pre-modifiers to challenge certain attitudes: e.g. "freaky-deaky minds ...", "token-woman phone call", "grownup company"

- triadic structures: e.g. “not abnormal, not tokenistic, not even snigger-worthy”
- effects created by varied sentence constructions (simple, minor, complex and compound).

Text C – (January 2013) – Points of analysis

- the biography genre
- the purpose: to inform; to describe a significant moment in American history
- audience: people interested in the lives of individuals who have “made a difference”; people interested in the Civil Rights movement
- the portrayal of Rosa Parks – “a protestor, not a victim”
- the portrayal of the bus driver – “bully”, “hard, thoughtless scowl”
- the way that the police are represented in relation to Rosa Parks
- the manipulation of time to create different effects – e.g. dramatic (“Her heart almost stopped...”), a sense of immediacy (“So when Parks looked up at Blake...”), reflective (“She shuddered with the memory of her grandfather back in Pine Level...”)
- the way racism is represented and challenged by the writer
- implied attitudes towards people who “take a stand”
- the serious tone of the text
- lexis associated with fear, menace: e.g. “bully”, “barked”, “loaded shotgun”, “scowl”
- lexis associated with courage: e.g. “bold”, “strength of my ancestors”
- effects created by figurative language: e.g. “A stony silence fell...”; “took the lash, the branding iron...”
- use of direct speech to create immediacy
- the use of free indirect speech to encourage the reader to view the incident from different perspectives: e.g. “Would it be better just to take her name ... and report her to the authorities later?”
- varied sentence types – declaratives, imperatives, interrogatives and exclamatives – and their different effects
- the symbolic significance of the reference to the film title, “*A Man Alone*”
- the use of pre-modifiers to emphasise certain characteristics or attitudes: e.g. “branding iron ... untold humiliations”, “majestic use”
- triadic structures: e.g. “She felt fearless, bold and serene.”
- effects created by varied sentence constructions (simple, complex and compound)
- effects created by fronted conjunctions: “And Parks, still sitting next to the window...”; “But should he do it himself...?”
- syntax and its effects: e.g. beginning a sentence with an adverbial phrase for dramatic effect – “Quietly and in unison...”
- varied register of the text, depending on who is narrating or speaking

Text D – (June 2012) – Points of analysis

- the genre of a rock music magazine article
- the purpose – to inform and entertain
- the audience – magazine readers, those interested in popular music
- the writer's admiration of The Edge's skills as a musician, his rapport with the audience and his campaign work
- the writer's portrayal of The Edge as an influential but unassuming figure
- the snapshot of the rock star lifestyle
- the shift in perspective from the on-stage performance in front of thousands of fans to the inside of a car, speeding away from the venue
- emphasis on scale: e.g. "Everyone, even the band appears stunned by the spectacle" - suggesting that, despite their fame, they are still mere mortals
- the contrasting views of the rock star: "ordinary" human being and world-famous icon – e.g. see fifth paragraph
- positive aspects of fame: e.g. the privileges enjoyed by the Edge - "'Sir' the customs are reminded, 'this gentleman walks right through'"
- implied drawbacks of being famous: e.g. "David Evans has lived like this for nearly thirty years, a cycle of songwriting, recording and performance..."
- the semantic field of space to emphasise the "other worldly" aspect of the rock star's lifestyle: "Close Encounters", "spaceship", "heavens", "galaxy"
- syntax for dramatic effect: e.g. subordinate clause at the beginning of the first sentence
- use of active verbs to create a sense of movement and urgency at the beginning: e.g. "springs", "leap", "barge"
- use of first person plural to encourage the reader to empathise
- use of noun phrases to provide fluent, compact description: e.g. "the unsung hero who orchestrates the sound of the greatest rock 'n' roll success story of our time"
- cinematic effect of the opening paragraph
- occasional use of colloquialisms to acknowledge the target audience: e.g. "doing a runner"
- use of direct speech to present a more varied portrayal of The Edge
- emphasis on sound and vision to bring the scene to life: e.g. "roar of applause", "thousands of pale blue lamps twinkle in the heavens"
- structure of the article: attention-grabbing description of the "escape" from the concert venue; interspersed with a potted biography and history of the band's career; followed by a description of the on-stage performance

Text E – (January 2012) – Points of analysis

- the genre: a speech as part of a panel presentation, broadcast on a US radio station
- the audience: US radio listeners; wide audience
- the purpose of this speech: to express an opinion; persuade an audience to share a view on race relations
- the speaker's assertive, controlled and rational delivery
- the speaker's knowledgeable and informed approach: e.g. "from a people 80 percent illiterate..."

- the speaker's optimism: e.g. "in whose ultimate realization we have deep and abiding faith"
- the speaker's determination to represent African Americans
- the speaker's religious faith as a driving force throughout the speech
- the speaker's desire and determination to help US society establish equality for all its citizens
- the speaker's pride in the contributions that African Americans have made to US society: e.g. "We have given you Paul Lawrence Dunbar..."
- relevant language techniques and literary devices, such as:
- the speaker's controlled, formal register
- effects created by figurative language: e.g. "we are rising out of the darkness of slavery into the light of freedom"
- the speaker's use of antithesis as a rhetorical device: e.g. "from abject poverty to the ownership of a million farms..."
- variety of sentence lengths and their persuasive effects:
- e.g. the way the third paragraph presents the social injustices suffered by African Americans
- semantic fields associated with cultivation and battle: e.g. "the first fruits of a rich harvest"; "towards which our nation is marching"
- use of prosodic features as rhetorical devices: e.g. "This dream, this idea, this aspiration, *this* is what American democracy means to me."
- speaker's use of tripling for emphasis: e.g. "They live too often in terror of the lynch mob; are deprived...of suffrage; and are humiliated ...by the denial of civil liberties"
- speaker's use of first person pronouns to emphasise the fact that she is arguing on behalf of a specific group of people: e.g. "Democracy is for me..."; "We have helped to build America with our labor"
- speaker's choice of syntax: e.g. fronting sentences with adverbials or conjunctions - "As we have been extended a measure of democracy, we have brought to the nation rich gifts"; "And yet, we have always been loyal..."
- speaker's use of parallelisms: e.g. "We have fought for the democratic principles...We have fought to preserve one nation...Yes, we have fought for America..."

Love and Loss

Text A - (June 2014) – Points of analysis

- the letter form
- the purpose: to describe and persuade
- the primary audience – Fanny Brawne – and the reader’s possible reaction to this; potential secondary audience
- the writer’s attitude towards his relationship with Fanny – e.g. “You must be mine to die upon the rack if I want you.”
- the ways in which the writer depicts his love – e.g. “because I wish you to see how unhappy I am for love of you”; “O the torments!”
- the writer’s sense of urgency – e.g. “Promise me this...”; “while there is so sweet a beauty...”
- the writer’s passionate obsession with his love – e.g. “You could not step or move an eyelid but it would shoot to my heart...”
- the writer’s references to suffering – e.g. “How my senses have ached at it!”
- the writer’s indirect references to the effect of time on the relationship – e.g. “whether the Person who wrote them can be able to endure much longer the agonies and uncertainties which you are so peculiarly made to create...”
- references to outside pressures on the relationship – e.g. “- if you can smile in people’s faces, and wish them to admire you now”
- the semantic field of pain and suffering – e.g. “full of Tears”, “agony”, “wolfsbane”
- lexis associated with passion – e.g. “greedy”, “extreme passion”
- the use of superlative (“dearest”) in the term of address
- the way the fragmented sentence structures reflect the writer’s feelings – e.g. “I do not want you to be unhappy - and yet I do, I must while there is so sweet a Beauty - my loveliest my darling! Good bye! I kiss you - O the torments!”
- the use of imperatives to create a sense of urgency and obsession – e.g. “Do not forget me”; “convince me of it my sweetest”
- the writer’s use of exclamatives to express the strength of his feelings – e.g. “How my senses have ached at it!”
- non-standard grammatical structures (sentences and paragraphing) and how they might reflect the writer’s feelings
- the use of figurative expressions for persuasive effect: e.g. “Were you to loose a favorite bird from the cage, how would your eyes ache after it as long as it was in sight...”
- the use of parallelisms as a persuasive device – e.g. “Do not think of any thing but me. Do not live as if I was not existing - Do not forget me”
- the writer’s use of hyperbole – e.g. “whose whole existence hangs upon you”; “Perhaps you think of me all day.”
- the use of capitalisation for effect – e.g. “Tears”, “Person”
- prosodic features and their effects – e.g. the sense of desperation conveyed by the italicised imperative, “*promise me you will not for some time, till I get better*”.

Text B – (June 2013) - Points of analysis

- genre: newspaper feature which employs a clear narrative structure and dialogue
- audience: broadsheet readers; people in relationships; sports fans
- the purpose: to describe and entertain
- the way the writer represents his relationship with his wife: e.g. "Jill did later admit she had a much better time walking in Andalucia with a couple of women friends than she would have done with me..."
- the writer's obsession with football: e.g. "but still flicked over to the football every time there was an ad break or she left the room..."
- the writer's representation of the conflict between his role as a husband and his football fanaticism
- the writer's ironic tone: e.g. "So it's for therapeutic reasons, I'm sure, that Jill often makes a point of not asking me the score when I get back from the game."
- the writer's use of understatement for comic effect: e.g. "neither of us can claim football isn't a source of friction between us."
- the writer's disingenuous comments which indirectly reveal his selfish motives through a rhetorical question: e.g. "Would Jill really want a man who was physically present and emotionally there for her all the time?"
- the writer's use of humour: e.g. "In my defence, it isn't me who doesn't want to do the sharing. I'd be quite happy for Jill to watch loads of football with me on TV."
- the writer's subjective view of the relationship
- the writer's focus on mundane details: e.g. TV viewing, trip to the garden centre.
- informal register to create a humorous tone: e.g. "It's amazing what you can do when you're sure of your dates."
- lexis associated with conflict: e.g. "tolerance has long gone", "battle for supremacy"
- the writer's use of direct speech for comic effect: see perfunctory dialogue near the end
- varied sentence constructions to create different effects: see second paragraph, for example
- the writer's use of the first person to present a subjective view of the relationship
- the way figurative expressions contribute to the humorous tone: e.g. "Mostly, though, we negotiate this minefield successfully."
- the use of parallelisms to emphasise the writer's obsession with football: "all those nights when I had lost the battle for supremacy... all those nights when I had woken her up at 3am...all those weekends spent in N17..."
- the writer's use of alliteration to emphasise his obsession with football: e.g. "scuttled off to Stansted for a godforsaken flight to Milan or Madrid..."
- the use of fronted conjunctions for effect: e.g. "But football is undeniably my escape from myself..."; "So it's for strictly therapeutic reasons..."
- juxtaposition of clauses for comic effect: e.g. "She thinks I'm being casually dismissive when I lose concentration halfway through a conversation; I think

she's being deliberately provocative to try to talk to me when I'm checking a football result online."

Text C – (January 2013) – Points of analysis

- the memoir genre
- the purpose: to inform, describe and entertain
- the writer's description of the build-up to the ball
- the way anticipation of the event is contrasted with its reality
- the way the writer establishes the setting
- the way the writer describes her thoughts and feelings about this occasion: eg. a sense of marginalisation when she mentions 'I was a pariah with braces.'
- the speaker's depiction of her dance partner: e.g. "He seemed to be having trouble remembering the steps..."; "He snickered sarcastically and seemed about to burst into tears."
- the writer's negative view of the whole experience
- the writer's focus on "unromantic" details: e.g. "his breath smelled like the open maws of the pub cellars that gaped on Whitchurch pavements..."
- the writer's implied attitudes towards teenage courting rituals
- the semantic field of clothing to help establish the build-up to the ball
- lexis associated with discomfort to reflect the writer's feelings about the occasion: e.g. "stinging deodorants", "my hair felt sticky"
- the writer's use of blunt declaratives to suggest her feelings about the occasion: e.g. "But my next two partners seemed just as inept and nervous as me."
- the writer's use of interrogatives to convey her sense of unease: e.g. "What if no one asked you?"
- varied sentence constructions to create different effects: e.g. the long complex sentences in the first paragraph (which help to create a sense of anticipation), contrasted with the sense of disappointment conveyed by simple sentences, such as "This was awful."
- the writer's use of alliteration and sibilance to create a vivid sense of unease: e.g. "Then back to school, to the hot, heaped-up 'cloakroom' and a confused smell of forbidden scent, bath salts, talc, hairspray and new-fangled, stinging deodorants..."
- the way figurative expressions contribute to the tone: e.g. "his breath smelled like the open maws of the pub cellars..."
- the use of discourse markers to show "narrative" development: e.g. "Now one of the scatter of sixth-formers..."; "This time, instead of counting..."
- the use of pre-modifiers to create a vivid picture: e.g. "stinging deodorant", "shiny sandals", "solid-looking darkness"

Text D – (June 2012) – Points of analysis

- the genre of a commentary on popular culture
- the purpose – to review, describe and entertain
- the audience – readers who are interested in British and American television programmes of the late 1980s
- the way relationships (fictional and autobiographical) are depicted in this extract

- the writer's attitude towards American television drama
- the writer's depiction of "real life" in the 1980s in contrast to the illusory images presented by television programmes: e.g. "Our flat was a little box..."
- the reader's views of American television
- the writer's ironic tone when describing the representation of family life in television programmes: e.g. "sitting in her chair bathed in a heavenly glow"
- the writer's subjective response to American television shows: e.g. "To me...this sunny corner of Philadelphia looked offensively perfect"
- implied references to the contrasting American and British cultures: e.g. "...it showed a world of feelings from which a chilly, emotionally repressed Limey could learn"
- the writer's tendency to digress: e.g. references to Elizabeth R and the surreal description of the house bugs in the sixth paragraph
- the writer's change in attitudes towards television drama: e.g. "When I first watched thirtysomething, I thought that it showed a world of feelings..."
- writer's deadpan, understated tone: e.g. "It was a dialogue from a self-help manual..."
- use of noun phrases for humorous effect: e.g. "a whole new range of motoring miseries for tomorrow" - here emphasising a sense of self pity
- writer's use of colloquialisms to create a conversational style: e.g. "in which some bloke was dissected..." "It wasn't a bad life by any means..."
- the writer's use of clichés to create irony: e.g. "the hardwood flooring was to die for"
- the humorous effect of reporting dialogue in a mechanical manner – see second paragraph
- humorous effect of listing (sounding like a stand-up comedian's routine): see fourth paragraph, for example
- comic effects created by alliteration: e.g. "slumped on a foam-filled sofa bed, stressed and sweaty"; "motoring miseries"; "probably pinged"
- use of figurative language to emphasise the gap between illusion and reality: e.g. "trying to stop the waves of real life from washing over everything she held dear"; "Their happy marriage, their seeming perfection was porcelain..."
- variety of sentence structures to entertain the reader: see fifth paragraph, for example
- humorous use of hyperbole: e.g. "Our flat was a little box that would have probably accommodated Michael's sports shoes at a pinch"
- use of bathos for comic effect: e.g. "I lived with Kay in a huge house in London that had been meanly converted into ten flats"
- the structure: synopsis of TV drama episode, interspersed with biographical details and surreal digressions

Text E – (January 2012) – Points of analysis

- the genre of a topical feature article from the arts section of *The Independent* newspaper
- the purpose – to inform and entertain
- the audience – readers of broadsheets, those interested in escapist romantic literature
- the writer's interest in the romantic fiction industry: its history, popularity and its methods
- the writer's apparently ironic tone, evident in the rather dismissive summaries of the three novels and the use of clichés (“searing glance”, “hottest flame”)
- the writer's implied admiration for the romantic fiction industry as a cultural phenomenon: e.g. “Mills and Boon sells three books every second, bucking the trend in general fiction...sales”
- the variety of attitudes towards romantic fiction: chairwoman's response to the award-winning title; the author's reaction to the award; the writer of the article's view of the romantic fiction industry; the psychologist's theory on why romantic fiction is so popular
- the link between the genre's popularity and the socio-economic context
- the reader's possible attitudes towards the ways in which the romantic fiction industry is portrayed
- accessible journalistic register: e.g. “It's not the first time that an interest in escapist fiction has coincided with depressing times”
- journalistic lexis: e.g. “girlie covers”, “lad-lit”
- varied sentence lengths to retain the reader's interest: e.g. paragraph 10 (beginning “It's not the first time that an interest in escapist romantic fiction...”)
- use of direct speech to portray a variety of views and attitudes
- writer's use of clichés to create an ironic tone: e.g. “in search of that elusive thing called 'love'”
- writer's use of witty phrases to create an apparently ironic tone: e.g. “nom de plume sex change”
- lexis associated with fire: “searing glance”, “hottest flame”
- use of tripling to emphasise generic features (“different flaws, strengths and voices”)
- use of parentheses to enable a fluent, detailed and informative style of expression (see first three paragraphs for examples)
- writer's use of pre-modifiers to create amusement: e.g. “upsettingly large bottom”
- the overall structure: introduction entices reader by offering synopses of three new titles; mention of the RNA award; increasing popularity of the genre; potted history of Mills and Boon; supposed merits of reading romantic fiction

Encounters

Text A – (June 2014) – Points of analysis

- the autobiographical nature of the text
- the way the writer contrasts British and Indian cultures: e.g. "so the weekend was the smash-and-grab opportunity for them to get their *desi* familial fix before returning to the not-altogether-warm welcome of daily English life."
- the writer's depiction of living conditions when he was younger: e.g. "A water tank with the capacity of about a pint served our washing and bathing needs..."
- the contrasting views of the writer's parents: e.g. "My mother filled much of my childhood with stories about her childhood"; "Though my father's childhood stories were rare to my ears..."
- the writer's sense of humour: e.g. the writer's depiction of a typical casual conversation in the family home, enhanced by the prosodic features here "...[Plane]..."
- the writer's evaluation of his childhood memories: e.g. "an achievement that I now hold in the highest regard, but as a child I viewed with naive derision."
- the writer's apparent sense of fondness as he recalls his childhood memories: e.g. "Auntie Phyllis and Uncle Gordon, who were warm, funny and regularly provided me with my hourly fix of chips."
- the effect that Partition seemed to have on older members of the family.
- the semantic field of domestic life: e.g. "central heating", "water tank", "paraffin heater"
- lexis associated with Indian culture: e.g. "maharaja", "mahout", "desi"
- the writer's use of hyperbole for humorous effect: e.g. "the weekend was the smash-and grab-opportunity for them to get their *desi* familial fix"
- the use of litotes for humorous effect: e.g. "was hardly salubrious"; "the not-altogether-warm welcome of daily English life"
- the writer's use of compound and complex sentences to describe family life in a detailed, fluent and efficient way
- the sense of nostalgia created by the minor sentences in the fifth paragraph
- the predominance of declaratives in this extract; and the effect of the rhetorical question at the beginning of the fourth paragraph
- the use of figurative language to create a vivid portrayal: e.g. "Kodachrome snapshots of my mother's past"; "like a Victorian illusionist".

Text B – (June 2013) – Points of analysis

- the autobiography genre
- the purpose of the text – to inform, describe and entertain
- the house as the central focus for family gatherings
- a sense of history associated with the house
- a variety of cultural references – e.g. "the dining room, with its long table, was reserved for shabbas meals, festivals, and special occasions."
- the narrator's subjective stance and his emphasis on childhood memories
- the narrator's apparently positive attitude towards this family home
- The outsider's (Jonathan Miller) perspective – "it seemed like a rented house..."

- the emphasis on appearances when describing family members and furnishings in the home
- the narrator's incomplete recollection of his early years – "I have only fragmentary, brief memories of my youngest years..."
- the element of humour when describing the smokers in the lounge.
- the semantic field of furnishings: e.g. "lacquered cabinets", "chandeliers", "chinoiserie"
- the semantic field of food
- the formal register of the extract
- the use of contrasts: e.g. "seemed like a rented house", "full of mysteries and wonders"; the narrator has a vivid memory of the furnishings of the house but his parents were "completely indifferent to the decor".
- the use of parenthetical devices (e.g. brackets and dashes) to add extra information
- the use of the passive voice – e.g. "a special silver tea service would be pulled out..."; "such dainties were not served at any other time."
- the use of syndetic listing (in the first paragraph) to establish a lively atmosphere
- the writer's use of compound and complex sentences to describe aspects of the home in a detailed, fluent way
- the way the writer makes syntactical choices to foreground significant values/attitudes: e.g. "Though the house was full of music and books, it was virtually empty of paintings..."; "Of my Auntie Dora..., I remember nothing..."
- the predominance of declaratives in this extract.

Text C – (January 2013) – Points of analysis

- the documentary style of the text
- the portrayal of Herbert Clutter as the 'main' character in this extract
- his role as "head" of the family
- his and his family's standing in the local community
- implied references to American social values of the 1950s: e.g. "Always certain of what he wanted from the world, Mr Clutter had in large measure obtained it."
- the ways in which gender issues are represented: e.g. "Mr Clutter cut a man's man figure..."; "a timid, pious, delicate girl named Bonnie Fox"
- the "just one serious cause for disquiet" as a form of foreshadowing
- the narrator's apparently objective stance
- lexis associated with physical features to establish Herbert Clutter as a significant figure: e.g. "his square-jawed, confident face retained a healthy-hued youthfulness..."
- use of American idiomatic phrases: e.g. "He weighed a hundred and fifty-four..."
- emphasis on factual detail: e.g. "the newly completed First Methodist Church, an eight-hundred-thousand-dollar edifice."
- effect created by the figurative expression, "Yet even upon this shadowed terrain sunlight had very lately sparkled."

- the use of asyndetic listing to describe character in a detailed, efficient way: e.g. "His shoulders were broad, his hair had held its dark colour, his square-jawed, confident face retained a healthy-hued youthfulness..."
- the writer's use of compound and complex sentences to introduce the family in a detailed, fluent and efficient way
- the way the writer makes syntactical choices to foreground significant values/attitudes: e.g. "Always certain of what he wanted from the world..."; "In regard to his family, Mr Clutter had just one serious cause for disquiet..."
- the predominance of declaratives in this extract; and the effect of the rhetorical question towards the end
- the use of free indirect speech to add variety to the narration: e.g. "Of course, she must undergo an operation, and afterwards – well she would be her 'old self' again."

Text D – (June 2012) – Points of analysis

- the travel writing genre
- the purpose of the text: to inform, entertain and record personal impressions of places visited
- the audience – well-versed in Western culture: e.g. "*The Lion King*"
- the ways in which Tanzania is represented
- the writer's original impressions of natural features: e.g. "the lowering anvil nimbus", "the oily, pustulant sun"
- the narrator's subjective and judgemental responses to what he sees: e.g. "It is a spectacle...This is the real thing."
- the writer's satirical references to the detached nature of Western civilization: e.g. "...if you've only been to Africa by armchair"
- the writer's use of humour: e.g. the use of anthropomorphism when describing animals – Hippos as "Fat, self-satisfied gents with patronizing smirks..."
- the distinction between the genuine form of safari and the "tourist's" version: e.g. "the Outward Bound knit-your-own-bullet school" contrasted with the assertion that Ngorongoro is "Disneyland Soho on a Saturday night"
- varied lexis: for example, sophisticated expressions ("intricately constructed", "eponymous tightrope walkers") contrasted with colloquial language ("Will this damn teeming never stop?")
- variation of sentence types to create humour: see the third paragraph, for example
- figurative language which makes the account more vivid and entertaining: e.g. "They sit like backbenchers in their soupy tearooms ... spinning their tails like Magimixes"
- the contrast between formal register - e.g. "The Serengeti stretches from northern Tanzania across the border into Kenya" - and informal expression - e.g. "There are so many of us, chances are it won't be me" - which creates humour
- the way the reader is addressed directly: e.g. "The Ngorongoro is the other place you'll know if you've only been to Africa by armchair"
- the writer's use of noun phrases to create vivid, entertaining descriptions: e.g. "The shimmering burnt-orange African sun"

- the writer's use of hyperbole as a satirical device: e.g. "Purists with breath you could use for snakebite serum"
- the writer's adaptation of idioms to create humour: "more microclimates than you can shake a meteorologist at"
- the writer's conversational style to encourage the reader to share his views: e.g. the imperative "But then, imagine a life lived never having seen Disneyland..."
- the use of alliteration for amusing emphasis: e.g. "The great gray-green greasy Grumeti river"
- emphasis on sounds for amusing effect: e.g. "harrumph like warthog farts"

Text E – (January 2013) – Points of analysis

- the genre – autobiographical writing
- the purpose of autobiographical writing – here to inform, describe and entertain
- the writer's subjective view of members of his family
- recollections of austerity and its apparent effects on family relationships
- the writer's implied sympathy for his parents
- the writer's implied criticism of his grandparents
- the emotional distances between the generations: e.g. "...uninterested in my sister or myself, and barely interested in my mother and her wartime experiences..."
- the effects that the war had on family relationships
- the effects that geographical distances and different locations have on relationships: e.g. "There had been heavy bombing in the Birmingham area, and I suspect that they felt my mother's years in Lungha were a holiday by comparison"; "Shanghai was five weeks away by P&O boat..."
- the contrasting cultures of Britain and Shanghai
- the apparent lack of communication between members of the family: e.g. "My mother rarely talked about her life in West Bromwich..."; "My parents never spoke about their reasons for leaving England"
- the way that relationships are influenced by places: e.g. "Life was intensely narrow for them, living in a large, three-storey house where the rooms were always dark..."; "my father...convinced my mother that England would take years to climb out of the recession..."
- the writer's apparently neutral tone, inviting reader to infer: e.g. "She never gave me any idea if she was happy or unhappy."
- formal register overall (apart from the odd colloquialism - "two practice pianos were going all day..."; "I blotted my copybook")
- the retrospective style of the text: e.g. "Yet in later years my mother told me..."
- use of literal language to establish facts and provide background information: e.g. "My mother was born in west Bromwich... in 1905..."; "She and my father met at a holiday hotel in the Lake District..."
- use of figurative language to entertain: e.g. "seemed to be living relics of the Victorian world"; "and was shocked out of her skin..."
- use of tripling to emphasise certain features: e.g. "the air we breathed, hope of a better world, and the brief glimpses of the sun"

- the use of noun phrases, adjective phrases and adverbial phrases to provide information in a fluent, entertaining way: e.g. "With their rigid, intolerant minds..."; "a small and ungenerous woman..."
- varied sentence lengths to maintain reader's interest: see second paragraph
- narrator's ironic tone established by bathos: e.g. "After her death my grandfather went through a remarkable transformation that seems to have begun as he walked away from the funeral."
- the overall structure of the text: shifts from one time period to another; does not follow a chronological pattern – creates a conversational style (e.g. "Yet in later years my mother told me that her father had been something of a rebel in his younger days...")

Crossing Boundaries

Text A – (June 2014) – Points of analysis

- the purpose of the blog: to comment, describe, provoke thought, record experiences and entertain
- expectations associated with the blog form: electronic communication, ephemeral, easily accessible to a wide audience
- the audience for this text – those interested in travel; people who enjoy sight-seeing; those interested in history
- the writer's sense of admiration for the place: e.g. "The view at the top is breathtaking"
- the way the writer focuses on visual details to create a sense of place: e.g. "the red patches of roof against the blue Adriatic against the green offshore islands against the white stone city walls"
- the way the writer contextualises the tower by comparing it to other well-known monuments
- the writer's reference to the tourist experience – e.g. "Climbing stuff is the classic tourist activity."
- the writer's subjective viewpoint: e.g. "I wanted to climb it because I always climb things"
- the way the writer's personality emerges as the blog progresses: e.g. "By the time I reach the pavement below, Ola is smiling and I'm shaking like a leaf."
- the writer's references to historical detail: e.g. "a town where there were once only farmers, soldiers, and a single nobleman who spent most of the year at his vacation castle on the coast"; "this cathedral began its life as the tomb of the emperor Diocletian"
- the writer's philosophical musings: e.g. "A somber meditation on the smallness and preciousness of us all"; "...things that cities whisper to you when you've gotten too smart"
- the way the writer shares her fears with her audience: e.g. "But I have a creeping issue or two with open spaces"
- the way the writer directly addresses her audience: e.g. "And you never know until to you climb"
- the writer's sense of humour: e.g. "It's that bad."
- lexis associated with place and location: e.g. "Split, Croatia", "the blue Adriatic"
- lexis associated with history: e.g. "wooden-wheeled carts"; "single nobleman"
- lexis associated with modern life – e.g. "Google Maps", "elevator"
- informal register to entertain the audience – e.g. "doesn't trigger my heights thing"; "But mostly I think, 'Eh. It can't be that bad.'"
- the use of triadic structures – e.g. "farmers, soldiers, and a single nobleman"
- the use of the present tense to create a sense of immediacy – e.g. "The view at the top is breathtaking"; "I snap a few pictures..."
- use of antithesis for effect: e.g. "hoping that my camera will remember what my brain won't"
- use of figurative language to create a vivid impression: e.g. "poking a hole through and rising high above a patchwork of red tile roofs"

- the writer's use of the second person to invite the reader to empathise with her experience – e.g. "Others have gone before you,... but your terror could be wholly new."
- the writer's use of parallelisms to entertain the reader: e.g. "Or its triumphal arch. Or its highest peak. Or to a little park that sits on a cliff."
- varied sentence structures for effect: e.g. the minor interrogative, "But this?"

Text B – (June 2013) – Points of analysis

- the purpose of the newspaper feature: to inform and describe
- the intended audience: people who enjoy the theatre; those interested in the politics of the Middle East
- the writer's representation of Aida, where the production is being performed: e.g. "instead of a changing room there's an army watch-tower behind the stage."
- the effect created by different voices in the article, providing different points of view
- the sense of conflict that pervades the article: e.g. "Freedom has been attacked on all sides and it became impossible for us to play there."
- the writer's healthily sceptical view of the theatre company's aims: e.g. "This is fine theatrical fighting talk. But how, exactly, might the Bard weigh in?"
- the emphasis on contrasts
- the sense of hope and determination displayed by the theatre company
- the thematic links between the play and the place in which it is being performed
- references to people of different cultural backgrounds
- the writer's sincere tone: e.g. "It was important to Holmes that both Palestinians and Israelis could see the production..."
- lexis associated with place and location: e.g. "Bethlehem"
- lexis associated with conflict and division: e.g. "refugee camp", "country-wide wall"
- lexis associated with positivity: e.g. "ebullient", "powerful means of self-expression", "beautiful resistance"
- lexis associated with place: e.g. "site", "territories", "neighbouring houses"
- use of antithesis to emphasise the sense of conflict: e.g. "a mile north, but a world away from the tidy streets..."
- the use of parallel structures for emphasis: e.g. "Instead of a changing room there's an army watch-tower...In lieu of a set, there's a swath of angry street art..."
- use of pre-modifiers to help create a detailed, fluent commentary: e.g. "Site-specific theatre", "fine theatrical fighting talk"
- use of figurative language: e.g. "pitching its politicised tent in the church of St Giles, Cripplegate..."
- the use of direct speech to add variety and present a range of perspectives
- the use of emotive language: e.g. "We do not want to walk at our children's funerals...", "I also feel terribly sad and frustrated..."

- the predominance of declaratives.

Text C – (January 2013) – Points of analysis

- the purpose of the newspaper feature: to inform, describe and entertain
- the intended audience: people who enjoy travelling; fans of the television series
- the writer's treatment of stereotypical views of Essex
- the writer's subjective viewpoint: e.g. "I am a rubbish Essex girl."
- the writer's implied criticisms of certain aspects of Essex life
- the writer's comments on celebrity lifestyle
- the emphasis on appearances: e.g. "fake tan", "manicure", "pink leotard"
- outsiders' views of Essex
- emphasis on materialism
- the representation of popular culture
- the writer's humorous approach: e.g. "Then there's the difficult matter of negotiating a muddy field in eight-inch stilettos."
- lexis associated with place and location: e.g. "polo pitch", "Queens Road"
- lexis associated with appearances: e.g. "hair extensions", "fake tan"
- use of colloquialisms: e.g. "let alone a boob job..."
- the effect created by the rhetorical question, "But what do I know?"
- the effect created by antithesis: e.g. "the spiritual home of the white stiletto and the boy racer"
- use of hyperbole to create humour: e.g. "whose USP seems to be that every single item, from picture frames to table lamps, is encrusted in diamante"
- use of figurative language: e.g. "A helicopter lands in the middle of a polo pitch and disgorges its brightly-coloured cargo."
- the writer's use of discourse markers: see second paragraph, for example
- the writer's use of fronted conjunctions to create a less formal style
- the predominance of complex and compound sentences

Text D – (June 2012) – Points of analysis

- the genre – biographical newspaper feature to mark the election of Barack Obama as US president
- the purpose of biographical writing – here to inform, describe and explain
- addressing a range of audiences: those interested in current affairs, politics, family histories; readers of different ages and ethnic backgrounds
- the reader's response to the different ways in which Obama's ancestors are portrayed
- the implied contrast in American and African cultures
- the effect created by the description of an African setting: e.g. "You find her by taking the 90-minute drive north of Lake Victoria..."
- the writer's apparently neutral tone to establish facts and allow the reader to form his/her own interpretations: e.g. "Her living room is decorated with family decorations, including a shot of Barack on one visit, carrying a sack of vegetables."
- looking at world politics from a different perspective (challenging the view often presented by the media): e.g. "She is proud of Barack, though she doesn't consider what he has achieved anything too special."

- the effect created by looking at a family retrospectively: the writer's selection of details to explain how the decisions made by a variety of family members eventually resulted in the birth of Barack Obama
- writer's intrusion to sum up Barack's family background: see last paragraph
- simple, formal style of narration: e.g. "Once the course was complete, he met two American women in Nairobi who told him he should apply for a scholarship to study in the US. "
- use of antithesis in the first sentence to contrast African and American cultures
- concise listing in the first paragraph to emphasise the interesting diversity of Obama's family background
- the use of parallelism to establish setting: see third paragraph
- variation of sentence lengths to make a scene more vivid: see the tenth paragraph, for example; notice effect created by the simple sentence "They could not have been more different."
- use of second person pronouns to directly address the reader and take him/her on a journey: see third paragraph
- use of balanced clauses to Barack's father as a rounded character: e.g. "He was bright, yet easily bored..."
- use of noun phrases for emphasis: e.g. "...the step-grandmother of the most powerful man in the world"
- fronted conjunctions to emphasise key points: e.g. "And she has met her step-grandson only a few times"
- syndetic listing to provide a number of details in a fluent manner: see first paragraph
- syntax to foreground interesting details: e.g. "Though he is said to have been born in 1870..."
- structure of article: reference to a number of contrasts – e.g. parents' backgrounds, Mama Sarah's assessment of the US ("very interesting"/"very cold")
- semantic field of impulse: "snapped up", "Leaving his son and pregnant wife", "urge", "wild", "eloped"
- the dramatic tone of the final sentence

Text E – (January 2012) – Points of analysis

- the purpose of the autobiography: to inform, entertain and describe
- the intended audience: fans of Bill Bryson, those interested in American culture of the 1950s, readers interested in revisiting their childhoods
- the writer's representation of Des Moines in the 1950s – e.g. "But then most things in Des Moines in the 1950s were the best of their type"
- the writer's positive attitudes towards a wide range of features in his hometown – e.g. "We had the tastiest baked goods at Barbara's Bake Shoppe"
- the exclusive nature of the writer's hometown – e.g. "Every community was special and nowhere was like everywhere else"
- the writer's use of humour – e.g. "And the best farts afterwards..."
- the way the writer takes the reader on a tour around the town – e.g. "Driving home from Ashworth Pool through Greenwood Park..."

- the way the writer appeals to the senses – e.g. “you would shortly be plunging your face into three gooey scoops of Reed’s ice cream”
- references to a range of place names, as if the reader is familiar with them
- the way the writer addresses the reader directly – e.g. “To know that you’d have had to thousands of towns and cities across the nation...”
- the writer’s factual, informative approach – e.g. “one billion of them alone”
- the suggestion at the end of the extract that this place was not entirely perfect – “It wasn’t an entirely efficient system...”
- lexis associated with pleasure – e.g. “delicious”, “lovely”
- lexis associated with American culture – e.g. “drive-in”, “drug stores”, “moms”
- a wide range of words from the semantic field of food
- the writer’s use of asyndetic listing at the end of the second paragraph to emphasise abundance
- the writer’s use of a wide range of superlatives to convey a sense of pleasure and luxury – e.g. “tastiest”, “meatiest”, “crispiest”
- use of the first person plural to convey a sense of a shared experience – e.g. “We had our own department stores...”
- use of second person pronouns to invite the reader to share the writer’s experiences – e.g. “you didn’t take them to your car with you...”
- variety of sentence constructions to engage the reader’s interest – e.g. the fourth paragraph
- use of noun phrases to create interesting, detailed descriptions – e.g. “We had the most vividly delicious neon-coloured ice creams at Reed’s...”
- use of parallelism to emphasise the writer’s positive attitude – e.g. “We had the...We had the ...We had the...”
- the use of parentheses to create a conversational style – e.g. “(or ‘sacked’ in Iowa)”
- the use of emotive language: e.g. “We do not want to walk at our children’s funerals...”, “I also feel terribly sad and frustrated...”
- the writer’s use of figurative language – e.g. “under a flying canopy of green leaves”, “nicely basted in chlorine”
- the predominance of declaratives