



IGCSE Anthology

Revision Guide

Part 1: Paper 1 Section A Non-fiction Texts

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The Danger of a Single Story by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie

Genre: Speech	Audience: Adults/young adults	Purpose: To inform and educate people about the ‘Dangers of a Single story’ and to raise awareness about how easy it is to stereotype groups of people.
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Linguistic Techniques

Metaphors

“They stirred my imagination.”
“They opened up new worlds for me.”

Adichie uses metaphors to highlight the influence that American and English literature

Short Paragraphs

“She assumed that I did not know how to use a stove.”

This one line paragraph has been used to shock the audience and to highlight how powerful stories can be influencing people's understanding. It also emphasises that we are all susceptible to being ignorant depending on the stories we are exposed to or chose to engage with.

Short sentences/Repetition

“I’m a storyteller.”
“Stories matter.”
“Many stories matter.”

Adichie uses short sentences throughout the extract, repeatedly using the word ‘story’ to emphasise the powerful impact stories can have on a reader and their understanding of a particular race or ethnic group.

Lists

“I wrote exactly the kinds of stories I was reading: all my characters were white and blue-eyed, they played in the snow, they ate apples, and they talked about the weather...”

Adichie uses lists to demonstrate the stereotyping of western culture she experienced through her engagement with English and American literature.

How does Adichie share her experiences, and present her ideas about ‘The Danger of a Single Story’?

Visit to Mexico

“I remember first feeling slight surprise. And then, I was overwhelmed with guilt. I realised that I had been so immersed in the media coverage of Mexicans that they had become one thing in my mind, the abject immigrant”

Adichie reflects on a visit to Mexico to highlight that we are all guilty of judging/labelling people or cultures. Adichie is intentionally encouraging the audience to make a conscious effort not to stereotype people based on what they have read/seen/heard.

Collective Pronoun

“We didn’t have snow, we ate mangoes, and we never talked about the weather”

Adichie uses the pronoun “we” to refer to her upbringing in Africa. Adichie contrasts the behaviour of Nigerians with that of those she read about in English/American literature. This demonstrates how little she could relate to the stories she was reading.

Juxtaposition

“His mother showed us a beautifully patterned basket ... that his brother had made. I was startled. It had not occurred to me that anybody in his family could actually make something. All I had heard about them was how poor they were.”

Adichie contrasts the ‘beautiful’ creation with their ‘assumed’ poverty to draw the reader’s attention to the ‘single story’ she had created of Fide and his family. Adichie was clearly surprised that anyone from a ‘poor’ background would possess the skills or be capable of creating anything ‘beautiful’.

Plosive Alliteration

“Her default position towards me, as an African, was a kind of patronizing, well-meaning pity,”

Adichie’s repetition of the ‘p’ sound suggests that she was angered by the stereotypical view held and ignorance of her roommate when she went to University in the USA

Anecdotes

American Room-mate

“My American roommate was shocked by me. She asked me where I had learned to speak English so well ... she asked if she could listen to what she called my “tribal music” and was disappointed when I produced my tape of Mariah Carey”

Adichie references her experiences of moving to the USA and her first encounter with her American roommate. The audience gets the impression that Adichie was surprised by her roommates initial perception of her as an African and that it enlightened her understanding of how African’s were perceived and understood by those on other continents.

Context: Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie is a Nigerian writer whose novels are inspired by Nigerian history. In this very powerful speech, delivered in Oxford in 2009, she warns that we risk serious cultural misunderstandings if we are aware of only a “single story” for each person and country and forget that everyone’s lives and identities are composed of many overlapping stories. She uses her personal experiences to warn, guide and advise us all.

Themes: Themes include: dangers of stereotyping; cultural identity; narrow-mindedness; ill-informed judgement; the power of stories.

Language: Key features include: generally very straightforward vocabulary choices, look for examples of listing, repetition, use of singular and plural personal pronouns.

Structure: The speech takes us chronologically through key times in the writer’s life. It starts with Adichie’s recollections of her early reading of western stories and how they influenced her own youthful writing. She then recalls her introduction to African literature and how she realised there was no “single story of what books are”. There is a narrative and reflective approach as we are taken through Adichie’s experiences in Nigeria, when she went to America as a student, where she faced her roommate’s stereotypical expectations of her, and then as a visitor to Mexico, where she herself was guilty of stereotyping. There is effective use of short, one-sentence paragraphing to emphasise key points, including her final powerful point.

Emotive Language

“What this demonstrates, I think, is how impressionable and vulnerable we are in the face of a story, particularly as children”

Adichie uses emotive language to create a more serious tone. This encourages the audience/reader to reflect on how harmful stories can potentially be when read in isolation. Adichie is encouraging her audience to question what they read and not fall into the common pitfall that is stereotyping.

A Passage to Africa by George Alagiah

Genre: Journalistic memoir/autobiography.

Audience: Adults/young adults in the western world.

Purpose: Retell his experiences and provoke thought about the industry he worked in and how it can affect our attitudes to suffering.

Linguistic Techniques

Ellipsis...

“Like a ghost village...” Short pause allowing the reader to use their

Similes

“The search for the most shocking is like the craving for a drug...”
Simile suggests that the search for the most shocking is addictive and can sometimes be dangerous. It also gives the reader an insight into the world of journalism and suggests that Journalists are selfish in their search for stories that will shock and distress their readers.

Rhetorical Questions

“How could it be?”
“What was it about that smile?” This poses questions for the reader to think about and also gives the reader an insight into what the writer was thinking at the time.

Lists of three

“Simple, frictionless, motionless”
“hungry, lean, scared” Very descriptive, paints a vivid picture of the peoples suffering.

Sensory Description

“The smell of decaying flesh” “You could see it in her sick yellow eyes and smell it in the putrid air she recycled” The sensory description adds to the shock and horror of the extract. Language such as ‘decaying’ and ‘putrid’ create a powerful and hopeless image for the reader.

Metaphors

“The ghoulish manner of journalists on the hunt for the most striking pictures” Compares the search for the pictures to a hunt. It implies that journalists can be callous and heartless in their search and have little empathy for their subjects.

Structure of extract

Short Paragraphs

Provide the reader with snapshots of the writer’s experiences in Somalia.

Writer’s Hook

“I saw a thousand hungry, scared and betrayed faces...but there is one I will never forget”. The first paragraph grabs the reader’s attention by using powerful adjectives to describe the suffering and by alerting the reader to the unforgettable face.

Varied Sentence Structure

“Habiba had died,” Short sentence emphasises normality of death there and create more impact.
“Take the Badale road....”
Long sentences to enable writer to add detail and description where needed.

1st Person Narrative

Personal and possessive pronouns are used throughout the extract to describe his experience and personal feelings in detail. We get the impression the trip had a profound effect on the writer and he shares his true feelings in order to connect with his readers.

Anecdotes/Pathos (language used to evoke feelings of pity/sadness)

“There was Amina...”
“There was the old woman” The writer creates feeling of sadness, pity and shock by describing peoples suffering in graphic detail. He focuses specifically on the most vulnerable members of society, old people and children as he knows this will alarm the reader.

How does Alagiah present his views?

Oxymoron

“Quiet suffering...” This suggests that the suffering is ignored by the onlookers and the rest of the world as there is nothing that can be done.

Repetition

“It was rotting; she was rotting.”
Repetition of the word ‘rotting’ create a gruesome image for the reader. It suggests that the scene is nauseating.
“No rage, no whimpering, just a passing of life”
Repetition of ‘No’ emphasises the helplessness of the situation and normalises the suffering of the people in Somalia. It also suggests that nothing can be done about their suffering.

Context: George Alagiah is a television reporter who was born in Sri Lanka and moved to Britain at a young age. In this powerful and emotional article, he gives a brutally honest account of the famine in Somalia in the 1990s and the suffering of the people that he encountered there.

Themes: Themes include: poverty, starvation and suffering; the contrast between the lives of the starving Somalians and the readers at home; hopelessness; helplessness; guilt; loss of dignity; the role of the observer/journalist; desensitisation to suffering.

Language: Key features include: use of powerful adjectives (look at opening sentence); sensory imagery (smell); rhetorical questions; repetition (rotting); imagery of journalists as predators – all combine to create sadness, pity and shock in the reader.

Structure: There is a one-sentence introductory paragraph and then the writer zooms in on the tales of individuals. Several paragraphs begin with “There was...” and then there is a one-sentence fragment paragraph “And then there was the face I will never forget.” The focus of the text is the peoples suffering and the writer’s personal feelings about the horrors he witnesses whilst in Somalia.

Useful links:

- <http://mrhoyesgcsewebsite.com/Lang%20Exam/Tracked%20Anthology%20Extracts/Passage%20to%20Africa/Passage%20to%20Africa%20-%20Top.pdf>
- <http://igcsenglishlangaugenotes.blogspot.com/2015/05/a-passage-to-africa-this-text-is-very.html>

The Explorer's Daughter by Kari Herbert

Genre: autobiography

Audience: adults/young adults

Purpose: to entertain, inform and educate.

Linguistic Techniques

List of three

"My heart urged the narwhal to dive, to leave, to survive".

Herbert uses a list of three to share her inner thoughts with reader. She understands that the hunt is necessary but also hopes the narwhal can survive. The triplet emphasises Herbert's internal struggle with the morality of killing a living thing.

Metaphor

"In that split second my heart leapt for both hunter and narwhal" Again, Herbert shows her conflicting views about the hunt. By referring to her 'heart leaping' we get the impression that she cares about both the Inughuits and narwhals survival. This reinforces her uncertainty as to whether she believes hunting should be allowed or not.

Alliteration

"A warm wind blowing" "Full of foreboding..." "The chauffeur replied rudely" Alliteration is used to further foreshadow the events that are yet to unfold. It also highlights the uncertainty and apprehension Adeline felt when she was 'summoned' home.

Imagery

"Spectral play of colour" "Soft billows of smoke" "Glittering kingdom" Herbert uses a lot of imagery in the opening paragraph to set the scene and describe the beauty of the Arctic. The words and phrases create the impression of a magical fantasy land that is detached from the real world. This creates a sense of mystery and engages the reader.

Simile

"It was like watching a vast, waterborne game ... the hunter spread like a net around the sound." Herbert uses similes to help the reader visualise the scene. The similes used suggest that the scale of the hunt is 'vast' and that the hunters all work together to ensure that they are successful.

Structure of extract

Use of different viewpoints

Herbert describes the hunt from a number of different viewpoints; from hers, to the women's, to the hunters', to those of the wider world. This enables the reader to see how difficult this experience is for the writer to arrive at a moral conclusion. We can see how all these different viewpoints create a moral dilemma; creating tension throughout the passage.

Description of Narwhal

"Intelligent creatures" "Slowly, methodically passing" Herbert uses language to make the reader sympathise and relate to the Narwhal which is portrayed as a beautiful, elegant and intelligent.

Sympathy for Inughuits

"Flimsy kayak" "Easily capsized...drowned" "No rifle" Herbert uses several words and phrases to make the reader sympathise with the hunters. She emphasises the archaic equipment they are using and highlights the level of risk they have to take to provide for their families.

How does Herbert present her ideas and perspectives about her experiences?

The Necessity of Hunting

"Only one annual supply ship" "Much needed extra income" Herbert quickly provides the reader with several valid reasons why hunting is necessary. **"Rich source of vitamin C", "The mattak ... is rich in necessary minerals and vitamins"** Herbert uses facts to support the argument that without hunting the Eskimos would struggle to survive.

Idioms/Repetition

"My hearts not in it" "My heart was full of dread" "My heart gave a giant lurch" Adeline uses idioms to describe her feelings at various moments in the text. Initially the idioms relate to feelings of anxiety, fear and dread as she comes to the end of her schooling and is summoned home to see her father. **"My heart gave a giant lurch"** When she realises she has an opportunity to study in England her 'heart' metaphorically jumps for joy.

Respect

"They use every part of the animal" Herbert tries to communicate the attitude and respect the hunters have for the whales. This makes them more humane and less barbaric. **"He was so close, so brave to do what he was about to do ... he was miles from land ... and could easily be capsized and drowned"** Herbert also wants the reader to understand the bravery of the hunters. This helps the reader to recognise the dangers. It also implies that if there was an alternative to hunting, then

Informative/Factual Language

"This rich source of vitamin C was the one reason that the Eskimos have never suffered from scurvy" Clear, factual detail of the benefits of hunting for the survival of the tribe. Resembles a science book in its tone. **"Pods", "mattak", "tupilaks"** Gives the writing a tone of expertise, showing the reader that she is knowledgeable about the area and topic. Raises her in our esteem and trust.

Context: Kari Herbert is a British travel writer, photographer and television presenter who, as a small child, lived among the Inughuit people in the harsh environment of the Arctic. In 2002 she revisited the area, staying near Thule, a remote settlement in the snowy wastes of north Greenland. In this passage she writes about her experience of watching a hunt for the narwhal, a toothed whale, and how she is torn between respect for the bravery of the hunters, and an understanding of the people's need for food, and admiration and awe for the narwhals.

Themes: Themes include: the ethics of hunting; respect for the natural world; hardships of life in the Arctic; the relationship between the hunter and the hunted.

Language: Key features include: there is a balance of language to engage, excite and inform; there are examples of technical vocabulary but also powerful and emotive words and some poetic imagery, often visual, with use of similes.

Structure: The passage begins as a narrative recount describing the Inughuit community as they hunt for a narwhal. Tension is created as the hunters take their positions. The description of the hunt is interrupted temporarily as Herbert provides important factual information about both the whales and the Inughuits, thus drawing the reader into the story. Eventually it ends with a consideration of the ethical issues of hunting. The viewpoint changes from that of the observers to that of the narwhals themselves; creating further tension for the reader. The final sentence with its use of a very strong qualifier, "absolute necessity" gives the writer's final thoughts.

Useful links:

- <http://igcsenglishlangaugenotes.blogspot.com/2015/05/the-explorers-daughter-purpose-of-this.html#more>
- <http://mrhoyescgcsewebsite.com/Lang%20Exam/Tracked%20Anthology%20Extracts/Explorers%20Daughter/Explorers%20Daughter%20-%20Jean.pdf>

Explorers or boys messing about? By Steven Morris

Genre: Newspaper article

Audience: Adults/young adults

Purpose: to entertain

Context: Steven Morris is a reporter for the broadsheet newspaper the Guardian and in this extract from an article published in 2003, he gives an account of two hapless “explorers”. It is clear in the derisive and indignant tone adopted that he feels that not only were they foolhardy but careless of the risks and costs involved in saving them.

Explorers

Previous Experience

“Expeditions to 70 countries”
“Twice flown around the globe”
“Experienced adventurers”
“Qualified mechanical engineer”

The article mentions some of the previous expeditions & qualifications the men had been on. This suggests the men were well prepared and ready for the challenge.

Well Equipped

“Satellite phone”
“Emergency watch”
“Survival suit”

The article mentions some of the emergency equipment the two men had with them during the expedition. This suggests that the men were taking it seriously and understood the dangers ahead.

Boys Messing About

Language used: comical words and phrases

“Farce”, “Bottoms kicked”, “Boys messing about with a helicopter”, “Q”
Some of the language used suggest that it was just a childish adventure that went wrong. The nickname ‘Q’ also implies slightly childish characteristics of one of the men as he sees himself as a James Bond character.

Themes: Themes include: social responsibility; nature of courage; consequences of reckless behaviour.

Language: Key features include: the language used is simple and straightforward but carefully selected to convey the writer’s opinion. The title with its alternative term of “boys” for the two men and the dismissal of their expedition as “boys messing about” sets the tone; other words are chosen to show disapproval, e.g. “farce” or doubt about the men’s “claimed” qualifications. There are also words such as “threatened” and “tragedy” that serve to show the serious implications of what was attempted.

Remoteness of area

“100 miles of Antarctica”
“Ice patrol ship”
“Surveying uncharted waters”

The article describes the surrounding area in a good amount of detail with some references to distance which gives perspective and understanding to the reader. This backs up the notion of them being in hostile and dangerous parts of the world.

How does the writer present the men?

Unclear purpose of mission

“There was confusion about what the men were trying to achieve”
The writer suggests there wasn’t a clear goal or purpose to the mission. This makes it appear that the expedition was not planned properly and just a ‘day out’

Badly equipped.

“I’m surprised they used the R44.....pushing it to the maximum”
“Trusty helicopter”
“Excellent flying conditions”

Using a quote from an expert on helicopters adds weight to the idea that the men did not have the right equipment. They also call their helicopter “trusty” on their website which suggests they weren’t entirely confident in its ability and therefore made light of it. The fact we know they had excellent flying conditions also tell us the cause was more than likely mechanical due to the unfit helicopter.

Structure: Like many newspaper articles, this is made up of a number of very short paragraphs. The first paragraph makes reference to a previous unsuccessful expedition but then the article quickly provides the 5 Ws (who, what, when, where, why) of the event. Some background information about the two men is then provided and, towards the end of the article, quotations from their spokesperson and some unimpressed experts are included.

Rescue difficulty

“Helicopter driven back by poor visibility”
“Royal Navy... Chilean naval vessel”
“Dispatched its two helicopters”
“Rescue coordination”

The article highlights the difficulty of the rescue mission and the number of countries and agencies involved in it. This adds more weight to the difficulties facing the two men and also makes it seem more like a real expedition which can often go wrong.

Previous failures

“Forced to call a halt...”
The writer mentions previous expedition failures which suggests the men were not very good as serious explorers.

Writer’s bias.

“Either way, the taxpayer gets rescue bill”, “Highly unlikely it would recover the money”, “Emergency watch was a wedding present”, “Adventure”

Even though the writer appears to be impartial by posing the question of whether they were ‘explorers’ or ‘boys messing about’ for the reader to decide. She goes on to mention the cost to the taxpayer as well as suggesting the two men are wealthy. She is indirectly implying that they should foot the rescue bill. She also refers to them as ‘adventurers’ rather than ‘explorers’ which somewhat belittles their accomplishments and credentials. There is a subtle but definite bias in the way the article has been written towards them being ‘boys messing around’

Useful links:

- <https://www.thestudentroom.co.uk/attachment.php?attachmentid=118795&d=1329054028>
- <https://www.thestudentroom.co.uk/attachment.php?attachmentid=118795&d=1329054028>

Language used: hyperbole, strong verbs, adjectives and phrases

“Tragedy”, “Plucked”, “Nothing short of a miracle”, “Hostile territory”
Some of the words/phrases and statements used suggest the men were in great peril and lucky to be alive which makes the trip sound more like an expedition which is usually associated with danger.

Wife’s quotes

“Boys messing about with a helicopter”
“...have their bottoms kicked and be sent home the long way”

Even one of their wives didn’t take them as serious explorers. She refers to them as boys. Given that she is close to them, she is in a good position to judge their overall approach to the adventure/expedition.

Between a Rock and Hard Place by Aron Ralston

Genre: Autobiography

Audience: Adults/young adults, climbers, mountaineers

Purpose: to entertain/inform

Linguistic Techniques

Metaphor

“Between a rock and hard place.”

The title of the text is a common metaphorical phrase that is used when you have a difficult decision to make. Ralston uses it ironically, as he is literally stuck between a rock and a hard place.

Direct Speech

“Get your hand out of there!”
“Come on...move!”

Ralston uses direct speech to show that he is talking to himself throughout his ordeal. This gives the reader an insight into Ralston’s state of mind and also emphasises his panic and isolation.

Personification

“Fear shoots my hand up over my head.”
“The backlit chockstone falling towards my head consumes the sky.”

Ralston personifies both his feelings and the boulder to highlight the feelings of shock and terror he experienced in the moment the boulder fell.

Experienced Climber

“Another refrigerator chockstone”
“I can move up or down the shoulder-width crevice fairly easily.”
“This technique is known as stemming or chimneying.”

Ralston uses specialist vocabulary such as ‘chockstone’ and ‘chimneying’ at the start of text to show that he is experienced in this field.

Aron’s Character

Fearless

“I come to another drop off. This one is maybe 11 or 12 feet high.”
“It gives the space below the drop-off the claustrophobic feel of a short tunnel”

Ralston presents himself as fearless in the opening of the passage as he uses language to highlight the potential dangers he faces in the canyon.

Determined/ Brave

“I do know that right now, while my body’s chemicals are raging at full flood, is the best chance I’ll have to free myself with brute force.”

Ralston describes the moment when he tries to pull his hand from under the boulder. Despite his dire circumstances he is still determined to free himself and is willing to cause himself further injury and pain to ensure that he escapes. This shows incredible bravery.

Confident

“I press my back against the south wall and lock my left knee”
“I’ll dangle off the chockstone, then take a short fall on to the rocks on the canyon floor.”

At the start of the extract Ralston presents himself as self-assured and confident climber. We get the impression he has been climbing a long time and knows exactly what he is doing.

How does Ralston present his experiences and character and create a sense of tension and drama?

Emotive Language

“The boulder then crushes my right hand and ensnares my right arm.”
“My flaring agony throws me into a panic”
“Tearing skin”

Ralston uses emotive language to emphasise the horror and pain of his situation. It creates a gruesome image of his injuries and adds further tension and drama.

Alliteration

“I grimace and growl”
“Good god, my hand.”

Alliteration is used to emphasise Ralston’s shock and the pain he feels as a result of the accident.

Varied sentence length to speed up/slow down the pace of the text

“In slow motion: the rock smashes my left hand....”

Ralston uses longer sentences to describe the moment the boulder trapped his arm. This creates tension for the reader and reflects his perception of time ‘slowing down’ at the time of the accident.

“Then silence.”

“But I’m stuck.”

“Nothing.”

Ralston uses shorter sentences to emphasise the hopelessness of his situation. It also reflects his limited movement and isolation.

Context: Aron Ralston is an American outdoorsman. Whilst hiking through a canyon in Colorado in 2003, his arm (which he eventually amputated with a blunt pocket knife) became trapped under a boulder. His experiences were made into the film ‘127 Hours’. In this account he describes the build up to the accident and the horrifying moments following it.

Themes: Themes include: survival; danger; pain; fear; determination.

Language: Key features include: initially the language is informative and a number of technical terms are employed. The language changes with the accident to become more emotive with references to fear, hope, disbelief and anxiety, and violent verbs such as “smashes” and “crushes”. There is repeated use of alliteration and references to time.

Structure: The extract takes the reader straight into the action of the canyon hike; the first four paragraphs explain, in a matter-of-fact manner, the techniques employed in manoeuvring through narrow passages with reference to the author’s current location, with a moment of tension as a chockstone “teeters” under his weight. In paragraph 5, as the boulder falls, the drama builds rapidly and the final three paragraphs describe the horror of the accident. Each of these paragraphs ends with a very short emphatic statement. There is repeated use of ellipsis, short sentences and listing.

Tension and Drama

Not in total control

“It supports me but teeters slightly”
“As I dangle, I feel the stone respond to my adjusting grip with a scraping quake.”

Ralston gives the reader the impression that he is not in total control on a number of occasions. This shows his vulnerability in his environment and helps to create tension and drama.

Use of Ellipsis (...)

Ralston uses ellipsis on a number of occasions to create suspense for the reader. It also reflects moments of uncertainty in the text where Ralston is considering what he can do to help his situation – showing his chaotic thought process and desperation.

Structure

The extract is structured in such a way that the tension and drama builds as you read. The opening four paragraphs are very matter of fact and give us the impression that it is an ordinary day/climb for Ralston. However, after the rock “teeters” in paragraph 5 the language becomes powerful and emotive.

Young and Dyslexic? You’ve got it going on by Benjamin Zephaniah

Genre: Newspaper article	Audience: Adults/educators/dyslexics	Purpose: to entertain/inform, to share his experiences
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Linguistic Techniques

List of Three

“No compassion, no understanding and no humanity.”

Zephaniah uses the rule of three to emphasise the problems with the education system when he was at school. It gives the impression that the teachers were uncaring and unapproachable.

Rhetorical Questions

“Young and Dyslexic?”

Zephaniah uses a rhetorical question in the title to hook the reader in. It is also used to appeal to his target audience.

“Do I need an operation?”

Rhetorical question is used to emphasise the lack of understanding people had of dyslexia when Zephaniah was growing up.

Metaphor

“The past is a different kind of country.”

Metaphor used to highlight how much the education system has changed since he was at school. Schools and teaching has developed and progressed so much that when he looks back at his experiences it is like a different country.

Repetition

“We are the architects. We are the designers.”

This phrase is used at the start of the text and at the end. Zephaniah uses repetition to stress that Dyslexic’s are often extremely creative and have to construct and design different ways of working. Zephaniah is presenting dyslexia in a positive way to encourage and inspire his target audience.

Direct Address

“You’ve got it going on” “If you’re dyslexic and you feel there is someone holding you back, just remember: it’s not you”

Zephaniah uses direct addresses and the personal pronoun ‘you’ throughout the extract to reassure the readers that dyslexia is not a negative characteristic and does not reflect an individual’s intelligence. He suggests that due to the difficulties dyslexics face they have no choice but to become more creative. This creates interest for the reader as he is challenging the stereotypical view of dyslexia.

Zephaniah’s relationships with teachers and education

Troublemaker

“I got thrown out of a lot of schools” “I was expelled partly because of arguing with them [teachers] ... and partly for being a rude boy and fighting.” Zephaniah explains that he was often labelled as a trouble maker as he was misunderstood and couldn’t access the learning. He describes the time he took revenge on a particular teacher by stealing his car and driving it into his front garden.

How does Zephaniah present his ideas and perspectives about his experiences?

Overcoming difficulties with reading and writing

“I had poems in my head ... when I was 11 or 10 my sister wrote some of them down for me.” “When I was 13 I could read very basically but it would be such hard work that I would give up.”

Zephaniah describes his struggles with reading and writing throughout the text giving examples of how he would overcome his problems. He uses these anecdotes to show that despite these difficulties he has managed to find solutions to the problems dyslexics face and has been successful.

Anecdotes

“I got thrown out of a lot of schools...” “At 21 I went to an adult education class in London to learn to read and write”

Zephaniah uses anecdotes to personalise the piece and share his experiences. In doing so he becomes relatable and we begin to understand his experience; sympathising with his struggles and sharing in his triumphs. This creates interest for the reader as we are intrigued about his journey from a struggling reader/writer to a well-respected poet, author and playwright.

List of Stereotypes

“I should be in prison: a black man bought up on the wrong side of town whose family fell apart, in trouble with the police when I was a kid, unable to read and write, no qualifications, and on top of that no qualifications.”

List to demonstrate the difficulties and stereotypes he has faced and overcame. It encourages and inspires people to challenge stereotypes and believe in themselves despite any problems they may have or face.

Stupid

“Shut up, stupid boy. Bad people would do one third more bad.”

“How dare you challenge me?”

He recalls a time a school when he challenged a teacher in a discussion and was called ‘stupid’ for thinking ‘outside the box’. This suggests that his time in school was a negative experience.

Also, shows that teachers were very naïve to dyslexia.

Context: Benjamin Zephaniah is a British-Jamaican author who has written novels and plays but is probably best known for his poetry. In this article, he gives an account of how he got into trouble in school, in part because of his dyslexia, but how he later learned to read and write and became a successful author. The piece is informative but also offers advice to others who may be dyslexic. The tone varies between calm, defiant, confident and reassuring.

Themes: Themes include: overcoming obstacles in life; respect; the education system; building confidence.

Language: Key features include: the piece begins with a strong verb (“suffered”) to describe how Zephaniah felt as a child and there are negative and positive adjectives listed in the first paragraph that reflect different teachers’ attitudes. There is extensive use of the singular personal pronoun “I” but at times there is use of “we” and “us” to show connection with the readers. Language is generally formal but there is use of colloquialisms such as “kids” and “don’t be heavy on yourself”.

Structure: Zephaniah starts with a negative statement but then turns it round into a positive, which sums up the piece as a whole. He then describes his struggles at school and how his dyslexia, a condition not recognised at the time, caused problems and there is use of direct speech to convey this forcibly. He moves on chronologically to talk of his time at borstal and then to learning to read and write at 21, when he discovered the nature of his difficulties. In relating his own experiences of living with dyslexia, he then talks of the upside and addresses dyslexic people directly, stressing how their issues with reading and writing can lead to enhanced creativity. The piece ends with a rhetorical question that leaves the non-dyslexic reader thinking.

Useful links:

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zYQrCkrYccA>
- <https://www.teachitenglish.co.uk/attachments/26399/language-features.pdf>

A Game of Polo with a Headless Goat by Emma Levine

Genre: Travel writing/autobiographical

Audience: Adults/young adults

Purpose: to entertain/inform

Context: Emma Levine is a British writer and photographer who also describes herself as “an adventurer specialising in sporting culture, from South Asian cricket to an obsession with traditional Asian sports”. In this extract, she gives a gently humorous account of a donkey race in Pakistan.

Linguistic Techniques

List of three

“Quick reflexes..., nerves of steel and ...effective horn”
“Voices raised, fists were out and tempers rising”
“Horns tooting, bells ringing and special rattles”

Lists of three are an effective technique to get a message across and make a strong clear point. In this case Emma Levine uses it to describe particular points in the race where the tension and action are building up.

Hyperbole (Exaggeration)

“Waiting for an eternity”
“Rush hour gone anarchic”

These exaggerations help the reader get a real sense of what it must have been like to be there. It gives the reader an insight into the writers mind.

Metaphors

“Wacky races”
“Fired up with enthusiasm”
“Formula 1 without rules”

These metaphors help the reader to associate the events taking place with something more familiar to them so they can understand it better. She compares the donkey race to the wacky races which suggests a chaotic free-for-all with lots of different types of vehicles and people looking out for themselves and using slightly underhand methods to win. Comparing it to Formula 1 also helps the reader get a sense of the speeds they were travelling.

Personification

“Vehicles jostled”
“Traffic...had to dive into the ditch”
“Swallowed up by the crowd”

Using personification in this article helps the writer brings objects such as the cars and the size of the crowds to life which again helps the writer add a sense of drama and visualisation for the reader. We are all familiar with the words jostled, dived and swallowed which help the reader picture the scene clearly.

Structure

Writing in 1st Person/ using quotes

“We drove off”
“I really enjoyed that”
“Coming, coming”

Writing in the 1st person makes it more personal, draws the reader in and makes them feel like they are part of the story. Emma Levine also makes reference to and quotes parts of the conversations she had with the boys in the car. This makes the reader feel like they are at the race in person and gives an insight into what Emma and the boys were thinking as it happened. This helps the reader make a connection and build a relationship with the characters involved. The story has a good balance between anecdotal and factual.

How does Levine present her ideas and perspectives about her experience?

Overall tone and pace of article

The article is written in a fairly informal and relaxed manner which is in keeping with the event being described, namely a donkey race. The language used is very descriptive and should appeal to a broad audience from teenagers to adults as the text can be followed and understood by both. The pace of the article picks up as the race unfolds in order to help get across the speed at which things were happening.

Layout

The article is set out in several short paragraphs which allows Emma Levine to write about a number of different parts of the race. She manages to cover a period of time before the race, the actual race and a short period of time after the race in one and a half pages. This has allowed her to be descriptive about certain aspects of the race without it being too long winded and boring for the reader. The relatively short sections are also in keeping with the chaotic, fast moving race which jumps from scene to scene.

Unusual Title

“A Game of Polo with a Headless Goat”

This title is unusual and stands out. It grabs the reader’s attention with the image of a headless goat. It juxtaposes a game of Polo, which is sophisticated and aristocratic, and a headless goat which is barbaric and savage. The reader is left wondering how the two images are linked together.

Themes: Themes include: the seriousness with which sport can be viewed; cultural traditions.

Language: Key features include: hyperbole is used to emphasise the waiting time, “eternity”; there is use of repetition to build anticipation, “Coming, coming” and a complex sentence further builds tension. There is use of language relating to sight and sound.

Structure: The passage is essentially chronological in that we enter before the race and follow it through to its conclusion. It begins with immediacy as the writer is already driving off to film the race without any preamble. The slow pace of the opening is contrasted later with the speed of the donkeys. There is use of ellipsis to indicate the editing of parts of the race from the account and excitement builds as the speed increases further towards the end of the race. An abrupt short sentence, following a complex sentence, indicates the end of the race. The passage comes full circle and ends with humour. Structurally the passage entwines three races: the donkey race; the race to get the pictures taken and the spectators who race.

Useful links:

- <https://www.thestudentroom.co.uk/attachment.php?attachmentid=118795&d=1329054028>
- <https://www.thestudentroom.co.uk/attachment.php?attachmentid=118795&d=1329054028>

Beyond the Sky and Earth: A Journey into Bhutan by Jamie Zeppa

Genre: Autobiography/memoir	Audience: Adults/travel enthusiasts	Purpose: to retell her experiences in Bhutan
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Context: Jamie Zeppa is a Canadian writer and college professor. In 1999 she published this memoir of her experiences working as a lecturer in English in Bhutan, a Buddhist country in South Asia bordered by China and India. The title of the book is derived from an expression of thankfulness in the Bhutanese language, which means "I am thankful to you beyond the earth and sky".

Linguistic Techniques

Alliteration

“Mountains rise to meet the moon.”

Zeppa uses alliteration to emphasise the beauty of the setting. It also creates an image in the readers mind of the colossal size of the mountains as they “meet the moon.”

Metaphors

“It is easier to picture a giant child gathering earth in great armfuls, piling up rock...”

Zeppa uses the metaphor of a child creating a magical land to help the reader create a vivid image of the magnificent setting. It creates imagery of a child building a sandcastle that is otherworldly.

Repetition

“On the other side of the mountains are mountains, more mountains and more mountains again.”

The word ‘mountains’ is repeated throughout the extract to remind the reader of the isolated setting. It also creates a feeling of wonderment and relates to the title ‘Beyond the Sky...’

List of three

“from Toronto to Montreal, to Amsterdam to New Delhi, to Calcutta to Paro”

List of three used to emphasise how far she has travelled. It gives a feeling of isolation and remoteness.

“The winter air is thin, dry and very cold.”

The list of three is used to communicate the conditions at such a high altitude. In contrast with the beautiful setting, the conditions are harsh and unforgiving.

Imagery

“The entire earth below us was a convulsion of crests, gorges and wnd-sharpened pinnacles”

Zeppa creates a dream-like atmosphere through her vivid use of imagery to describe the landscape.

Zeppa’s thoughts and feeling

Nervous/Anxious

“They are both ecstatic about Bhutan so far, and I stay close to them, hoping to pick up some of their enthusiasm.”

Zeppa describes the moment she meets some of the other volunteers for breakfast. Both the other girls are experienced travellers and the reader get the impression that Zeppa is feeling very uneasy in her new environment. Zeppa contrasts her own uncertainty and doubts with the other volunteers enthusiasm and excitement.

How does Zeppa present her experience in Bhutan?

Facts

“A froze desert 4,500 metres above sea level” “Thimpu’s official population is 20,000”

Zeppa provides the reader with factual information. This gives her writing credibility and shows that she is knowledgeable about Bhutan and its cultural history.

Surprised

“There are more signs of the outside world than I had expected: teenagers in acid washed jeans, Willie Nelson’s greatest hits ... a Rambo poster in a bar.”

Zeppa is shocked to see so many western influences in the small city of Thimpu. She describes in detail the typical Bhutanese buildings and the goods being sold in the shops but is surprised to see Bhutanese and western cultures coming together in such a remote place.

Bhutanese People

**“The Bhutanese are very handsome people.”
“They have beautiful aristocratic faces.”
“I search for the right word to describe the people ... dignity, unselfconsciousness, good humour, grace.”**

The trip and her encounters with Bhutanese people had a lasting impression on Zeppa. The texts suggests that she was amazed that in such an isolated place the people would speak ‘impeccable’ English and be so well mannered and polite. This gives us the impressions that her experience challenged her preconceived stereotype of the Bhutanese people and culture.

Themes: Themes include: exploring different cultures and places, new beginnings, change.

Language: Key features include: there is much factual, informative language that is enlivened by lively description, full of repetition, listing, carefully-chosen adjectives and verbs that evoke a sense of place. The traditional names of Bhutan and its districts are poetic and suggestive of the beauty to be found there.

Structure: This personal travel narrative begins with a description of the country’s landscape and switches between the past tense, as the journey from Canada is recalled, and the present tense as Zeppa takes the reader into the immediacy of her first night and day in Thimpu. There are pithy character sketches of two fellow Canadian teachers, a detailed description of the city and a discussion of the qualities of the Bhutanese people. The final two paragraphs move back into the past tense as we are provided with a brief history of Bhutan. The passage ends with Zeppa’s statement of “admiration” for the country.

Admires the Country

“I am full of admiration for this small country that has managed to look after itself so well”

Zeppa found the history of Bhutan incredibly interesting an enjoyed learning about the various religions and rulers of the country. She particularly enjoyed learning that Bhutan had gone to war with the British and had managed to preserve its independence. This creates further interest for the reader as it provides factual historical information about Bhutan’s incredible past.

Structure

1st and 3rd person Narrative

Zeppa uses both first and third person narrative to structure her memoir. Her personal experiences are told in the first person to reflect her own experiences. However, factual information about Bhutan, the Bhutanese people and their culture is written in third person.

Chronological Paragraphs

**“In my first night...”
“The next morning...”**

Guides the reader through Zeppa’s experience in Bhutan from start to finish.

H is for Hawk by Helen Macdonald

Genre:
autobiography/memoir

Audience: adults/bird
lovers/nature enthusiasts

Purpose: to share her experiences/to entertain.

Context: Helen MacDonald is an English writer and naturalist. Her book *H is for Hawk*, which was published in 2014 and won several awards, is a memoir that describes the year she spent training a goshawk (Mabel) following the sudden death of her father. It shows how this experience with the hawk helped her to cope with her overwhelming grief. The extract deals with her first meeting with Mabel.

Linguistic Techniques

Foreshadowing

“Don’t want you going home with the wrong bird.”
Macdonald uses foreshadowing in the opening paragraph to suggest that there may be some problem with the bird later in the text. This creates a sense of excitement and suspense for the reader and is used a ‘hook’ to entice the reader to continue reading.

Short sentences

“Another hinge untied. Concentration, Infinite caution...Thump.”

Macdonald uses short sentences to describe the moments leading up to seeing the bird. This creates suspense for the reader as we wait for the moment the bird is reveal with anticipation and excitement.

The short sentences could also represent Macdonald’s heart beat at that moment in time and could be representative of the nerves and excitement she felt.

Metaphor

“My heart jumped sideways.”

Macdonald uses a metaphor to describe her initial reaction to the bird. This could be interpreted as shock at the beauty /enormity of the bird or love.

“She is a conjuring trick.”

Another metaphor suggests the bird magical appearance.

Macdonald’s thoughts and feelings

Admiration

“Through all this the man was perfectly calm. He gather up the bird in one practised movement.”

“This hawk had been hatched in an incubator ... and for the first few days of her life this man fed her.” “All at once I loved this man.”

Macdonald is full of admiration and respect for the man who bred this magnificent hawk. She admires his dedication and care for the animals and she loves him for his gentle and caring approach. We also get the impression that she views the man as a fatherly figure and her feelings towards him maybe exaggerated as a result of her father’s death.

Love

“My heart jumps sideways.”

“A reptile. A fallen angel. A griffon from the pages of an illuminated bestiary.”

Macdonald immediately has strong feelings towards the bird when the bird is released from the box. We are told about the beauty of the bird in short sharp sentences – this suggests that the hawk’s magnificence has taken her breath away.

Themes: Themes include: anticipation, hope, fear, desperation and panic, the wildness of nature, respect.

Language: Key features include: the language is dense, rich, precise and poetic with reference to sight, sound, touch and many examples of alliteration, assonance, similes and metaphors. Look for contrast between the actions of the hawk and the man and contrast between the two birds and reference to Greek tragedy at the end.

How does Macdonald present her ideas and perspectives about her experience?

Alliteration

“Chaotic clatter of wings.” “The hawks wings barred and beating.”

Macdonald uses alliteration to emphasise the wild, untamed nature of the bird. It gives the reader the impression that the bird is frightened and as a result the bird is portrayed in quite a violent and fierce way – this is in contrast with its magical/beautiful appearance.

Similes

“A sudden thump of feathered shoulders and the box shook as if someone had punched it hard from within”

Macdonald uses similes to describe the birds strength. This comparison with a ‘punch’ enables the reader to imagine the power of the bird

“Her feathers raised like the scattered quills of a fretful porpentine.”

Macdonald uses a simile here to create an image of the panicked and frightened bird. The comparison with a hedgehog like creature suggests the birds wings are sharp and gives an image of a dangerous bird.

Confusion

“This isn’t my hawk ... but this isn’t my hawk.”

“Slow panic.”

Macdonald italicised text to show her internal thoughts. She also uses repetition to emphasise her confusion and horror as she realises that the hawk she has purchased is not the one she has fallen in love with.

“White-faced woman with wind-wrecked hair and exhausted eyes.”

Macdonald uses alliteration to describe her dishevelled appearance as she pleads with the man to sell her the other hawk. This creates feelings of sympathy for the reader.

Respect

“They use every part of the animal” Herbert tries to communicate the attitude and respect the hunters have for the whales. This makes them more humane and less barbaric. **“He was so close, so brave to do what he was about to do ... he was miles from land ... and could easily be capsized and drowned”** Herbert also wants the reader to understand the bravery of the hunters. This helps the reader to recognise the dangers. It also implies that if there was an alternative to hunting, then the Eskimo’s would not take such huge risks.

Excitement

“Another hinge untied.”

“The air turned syrupy, slow, flecked with dust. The last few seconds before a battle. And with the last bow pulled free, he reached inside.”

Macdonald presents her excitement as the bird is revealed. She uses a combination of short sentences and alliteration to create suspense and tension for the reader. When the hawk is finally revealed the description of its wild and untamed nature ads further excitement to the extract.

Useful links:



<https://iwpblog.com/2017/04/19/h-is-for-hawk-for-edexcel-igcse/>



<https://quizlet.com/262201047/h-is-for-hawk-flash-cards/>

Chinese Cinderella by Adeline Yen Mah

Genre: autobiography

Audience: adults/young adults

Purpose: to entertain and share her experiences of life as a young girl in China.

Linguistic Techniques

Ellipsis...

“Eight weeks more and it would be the end of term...in my case perhaps the end of school forever” Creates tension in the opening paragraph suggesting the end of term is a bad thing.

Simile

“The thought of leaving school throbbed ... like a persistent toothache.” This comparison helps the reader to understand her state of mind at the thought of having to go home and potentially never return to school. It is clearly a distressing thought and creates intrigue for the reader. **“Going to England is like going to heaven”** This comparison helps the reader understand how much Adeline values the opportunity to study in England.

Pathetic Fallacy

“Possible typhoon the next day” The approaching typhoon is perhaps a sign of Adeline’s current state of mind and emotional well-being. It also foreshadows the events to follow.

Rhetorical Questions

“Why are you taking me home?” “See me in his room?” “Dare I let my guard down?” Adeline asks a lot of rhetorical questions which emphasises the level of mistrust, anxiety and confusion she feels about her relationship with her father.
“Am I dreaming? Is it possible? Me, the winner?” She also questions her own achievements which suggests that she lacks self-confidence and belief.

Alliteration

“A warm wind blowing” “Full of foreboding...” “The chauffeur replied rudely” Alliteration is used to further foreshadow the events that are yet to unfold. It also highlights the uncertainty and apprehension Adeline felt when she was ‘summoned’ home.

Structure of extract

Writer’s Hook

“Time went by relentlessly and it was Saturday again. Eight more weeks and it would be end of term ... in my case perhaps the end of school forever”. The first paragraph grabs the reader’s attention as we are left wondering what ‘the end of school forever’

Dialogue

Dialogue is used throughout the extract to provide a detailed recount of the events. Adeline is spoken to in a condescending manner by all the other characters. This suggests that Adeline is accepting of her lowly status as she is presented as compliant in each exchange.

1st Person Narrative

Personal and possessive pronouns are used throughout the extract to describe Adeline’s relationship with her father. We get the impression that she had a distant and removed relationship with her father and also learn that she was fearful and anxious in his presence.

Imperatives/Commands

“Sit down! Sit down!” “You will go to England ... You will go to medical school...You will specialise in obstetrics.” Adeline’s father speaks in a commanding and authoritative tone. He uses imperatives, commanding Adeline to do certain things and gives no opportunity for Adeline to respond or give her opinion. The reader gets the impression that Adeline is forced to accept her fate as she is too frightened to challenge her father’s wishes.

Idioms/Repetition

“My hearts not in it” “My heart was full of dread” “My heart gave a giant lurch” Adeline uses idioms to describe her feelings at various moments in the text. Initially the idioms relate to feelings of anxiety, fear and dread as she comes to the end of her schooling and is summoned home to see her father.
“My heart gave a giant lurch” When she realises she has an opportunity to study in England her ‘heart’ metaphorically jumps for joy.

Hyperbole

“My whole being vibrated with all the joy in the world. I only had to stretch out my hands and reach for the stars.” After impressing her father Adeline is ecstatic and uses hyperbole to express her delight and satisfaction in pleasing her father. Her happiness in this moment further illustrates her distant and fractured relationship with her father; this is compounded when Adeline has to justify her success in the competition.

Context: Adeline Yen Mah is a Chinese-American author and physician. She grew up in Tianjin, Shanghai and Hong Kong. Her mother died shortly after her birth and so she was considered bad luck. The sub-title of this autobiography is ‘The Secret Story of an Unwanted Daughter’ and the book tells of the harsh treatment she received from her father and stepmother. In this extract she receives some rare praise from her father but she clearly shows a difficult relationship.

Themes: Themes include: parent/child relationship, parental control, ambition, education, role of women.

Language: Key features include: consider use of rhetorical questions, repetition. Look for words that convey her nervous anticipation. Her father uses a number of words that indicate commands. There are a number of examples of alliteration, similes and the hyperbole of “the Holy of Holies” to describe her father’s room. Language generally is not complex (this version of her autobiography was adapted from the original for a younger audience).

Structure: The form is a straightforward first person narrative. At the start the author is distracted by thoughts that she will be made to leave school; the pace picks up with direct speech as Adeline, to her fear and surprise, is summoned home. There is tension as she anticipates the meeting with her father and relief as he is in a good mood. The newspaper article telling of her success is printed in full. The passage ends with the exchange between Adeline and her father, which clearly demonstrates their relative positions of power and submission and ends with her agreeing to study what he has chosen for her.

Useful links:

- <http://mrhoyesgcsewebsite.com/Lang%20Exam/Tracked%20Anthology%20Extracts/Chinese%20Cinderella/Chinese%20Cinderella%20-%20Me.pdf>
- <http://igcsenglishlanguagenotes.blogspot.com/2015/05/chinese-cinderella-notes.html>