



English

Key Stage 3

Your name:

Your tutor's name:



Module 3 – Reading and Understanding Unseen Extracts

Welcome to the Reading and Understanding Unseen Extracts booklet.

We'll read a range of non-fiction extracts and practise all of these key skills together, before you'll do some independent reading and analysis in a practice English language paper.

Learning how to read, understand and analyse unseen extracts is an important skill inside and outside of school. It's important to be able to understand news articles to know what's happening in the world, to read important documents, and to form an opinion about the texts you come across – are they reliable? Are they biased? How are they trying to influence you as a reader? This module will help you develop key skills needed to help you understand and analyse unseen extracts.

Tutorial	Topic
Tutorial 3.1	Reading and understanding non-fiction texts Understanding unfamiliar vocabulary
Tutorial 4.2	Identifying evidence to support a point Identifying techniques in non-fiction texts Analysing the effect of techniques on the audience
Tutorial 4.3	Comparing non-fiction texts Critically evaluating non-fiction texts
Tutorial 4.4	Extended writing: short comprehension questions and comparative analysis questions about non-fiction extracts

Learning objectives

In this module you will look at:

1. Reading and understanding unseen non-fiction texts
2. Selecting relevant evidence to support an argument
3. Identifying and analysing the effect of language and structural features
4. Comparing writers' ideas
5. Evaluating non-fiction texts critically

Knowledge Check 1

You will complete this at the start and end of each module. If you'd prefer to complete these questions in an online form, go to:

<https://forms.office.com/r/1bSpMA35Ap>



Read this extract from *Toast: The Story of a Boy's Hunger* – a memoir written by Nigel Slater, a famous chef – in which he discusses his memories of his mother and mealtimes from his childhood.

My mother was never much of a cook. Meals arrived on the table as much by happy accident as by domestic science. She was a chops-and-peas sort of a cook, occasionally going so far as to make a rice pudding, exasperated by the highs and lows of a temperamental cream-and-black Aga1 and a finicky little son. She found it all a bit of an ordeal, and wished she could have left the cooking, like the washing, ironing and dusting, to Mrs P., her 'woman what does'.

Once a year there were Christmas puddings and cakes to be made. They were made with neither love nor joy. They simply had to be done. 'I suppose I had better DO THE CAKE,' she would sigh. The food mixer – she was not the sort of woman to use her hands – was an ancient, heavy Kenwood that lived in a deep, secret hole in the kitchen work surface. My father had, in a rare moment of do-it-yourselfery, fitted a heavy industrial spring under the mixer so that when you lifted the lid to the cupboard the mixer slowly rose like a corpse from a coffin. All of which was slightly too much for my mother, my father's quaint craftsmanship taking her by surprise every year, the huge mixer bouncing up like a jack-in-the-box and making her clap her hands to her chest.

"Oh heck!" she would gasp. It was the nearest my mother ever got to swearing.

She never quite got the hang of the mixer. I can picture her now, desperately trying to harness her wayward Kenwood2, bits of cake mixture flying out of the bowl like something from an I Love Lucy sketch. The cake recipe was written in green biro on a piece of blue Basildon Bond and was kept, crisply folded in to four, in the spineless Aga Cookbook that lived for the rest of the year in the bowl of the mixer. The awkward, though ingenious, mixer cupboard was impossible to clean properly, and in among the layers of flour and icing sugar lived tiny black flour weevils. I was the only one who could see them darting around. None of which, I suppose, mattered if you were making Christmas pudding, with its gritty currants and hours of boiling. But this was cake.

Cooks know how to butter and line the cake tins before they start the creaming and beating. My mother would remember just before she put in the final spoonful of brandy into the cake mixture, then take half an hour to find them. They always turned up in a drawer, rusty and full of fluff. Then there was the annual scrabble to find the brown paper, the scissors, the string. However much she hated making the cake we both loved the sound of the raw cake mixture falling into the tin.

"Shhh, listen to the cake mixture," she would say, and the two of us would listen to the slow plop of the dollops of fruit and butter and sugar falling into the paper-lined tin. The kitchen

would be warmer than usual and my mother would have that I've-just-baked-a-cake glow.

"Oh, put the gram on, will you, dear? Put some carols on," she would say as she put the cake in the top oven of the Aga. Carols or not, it always sank in the middle. The embarrassingly hollow, sometimes as deep as your fist, having to be filled with marzipan. Forget scented candles and freshly brewed coffee. Every home should smell of baking Christmas cake. That, and warm freshly ironed tea towels hanging on the rail in front of the Aga.

- 1) Aga – a large, iron oven that keeps its heat
- 2) Kenwood – a type of food mixer

Now that you've read the overall extract, it's time to show your deeper understanding of the text by answering these questions.

The first questions are about **paragraph 1**:

- 1) Find a quotation that shows what Nigel thinks about his mother. (1 mark)

- 2) What does this quotation show about his mother's attitude towards making food? (1 mark)

The next question is about **paragraph 5**.

- 3) Nigel's mother does not bake very often. Find two quotations which show this. (2 marks)

- 4) How does Nigel convey his mother's attitude towards his baking? Make sure you include quotations from the extract to prove your point and explain any techniques the author uses to reveal how his mother feels about baking. (10 marks)

BTP Tutor Training

Tutorial 3.1 – Reading and Understanding Non-Fiction Texts

In this tutorial you will look at:

- developing strategies for understanding unfamiliar vocabulary
- developing strategies for approaching unseen texts
- beginning to read and understand unseen non-fiction texts

Learning Activities

When you read unseen texts, you may sometimes come across unfamiliar vocabulary words. You can try to work out the meaning of unfamiliar words using the strategies below.

Context Clues	Look at the surrounding words and the whole sentence to see if it gives you any hints about the word.
Breaking it down	Split the word up and see if you recognise any of the parts. For example, if you split “immaterial” into “im” and “material”, you might recognise “im” from words like “immature” and “impossible”, which could help you guess the meaning of “immaterial”.
Word roots	Lots of words have common roots that have similar meanings. For example, “auto” (meaning “self”) is a word root for words like “automatic” and “autobiography”.

Write down what you think the meaning of these words are:

malignancy	
immaterial	

2

Now that you've practised strategies for understanding unfamiliar words, have a go at using these strategies to interpret the following words:

languid	
shellacking	
interlude	

3

As part of your GCSE English Language exam, you'll be given unseen non-fiction extracts and have to answer questions to show how well you understand them. We're going to practise this skill by reading an extract from *Toast: The Story of a Boy's Hunger* – a memoir written by Nigel Slater, a famous chef – in which he discusses his memories of his mother and mealtimes from his childhood.

My mother was never much of a cook. Meals arrived on the table as much by happy accident as by domestic science. She was a chops-and-peas sort of a cook, occasionally going so far as to make a rice pudding, exasperated by the highs and lows of a temperamental cream-and-black Aga¹ and a finicky little son. She found it all a bit of an ordeal, and wished she could have left the cooking, like the washing, ironing and dusting, to Mrs P., her 'woman what does'.

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She never quite got the hang of the mixer. I can picture her now, desperately trying to harness her wayward Kenwood², bits of cake mixture flying out of the bowl like something from an I Love Lucy sketch. The cake recipe was written in green biro on a piece of blue Basildon Bond and was kept, crisply folded in to four, in the spineless Aga Cookbook that lived for the rest of the year in the bowl of the mixer. The awkward, though ingenious, mixer cupboard was impossible to clean properly, and in among the layers of flour and icing sugar lived tiny black flour weevils. I was the only one who could see them darting around. None of which, I suppose, mattered if you were making Christmas pudding, with its gritty currants and hours of boiling. But this was cake.

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Glossary

- 1) Aga – a large, iron oven that keeps its heat
 - 2) Kenwood – a type of food mixer

Notes

Plenary

BTP Tutor Training

Tutorial 3.2 – Selecting Relevant Evidence to Support a Point

In this tutorial you will look at:

- identifying relevant quotations to support an argument
- identifying language and structural features using accurate subject terminology
- analysing the effect of language and structural features

Learning Activities

1

Reread the extract from Nigel Slater's memoirs on p. X. As you read, label structural features in one colour, and label the language features you can find in a different colour. Look at the glossary at the start of your handbook if you need to remind yourself about different language and structural features.

Now fill in this table by identifying the techniques used in these quotations and explaining the effect they have on the reader.

Evidence	Technique	Explanation
"DO THE CAKE"	Capitalisation	Capitalisation emphasises the fact that Nigel's mother was not a keen baker. By drawing the reader's attention to the words "do the cake", you can picture his mother sighing in an exaggerated way, showing just how much she dreads baking the annual Christmas cake.
The "Kenwood that lived in a deep, secret hole"		
"the mixer slowly rose like a corpse"		
"Cooks know how to butter and line the cake tins before they start the creaming and beating. My mother would remember just before she put in the final spoonful of brandy"		

"Oh, put the gram on, will you, dear? Put some carols on"		
"sometimes as deep as your fist"		
"Every home should smell of baking Christmas cake"		

2

Let's explore how language and structure are used in **paragraphs 3-5** of the Nigel Slater extract in more detail.

How does Nigel Slater use **language and structure** to make his description of the process of baking the Christmas cake seem like a troublesome ordeal? Write a PETE paragraph to answer the question.

P:

E:

T:

E:

T:

E:

Tutorial 3.3 – Comparing and critically evaluating non-fiction texts

In this tutorial you will look at:

- selecting relevant evidence to support an argument
- comparing writers' ideas
- critically evaluating non-fiction texts

Learning activities

1

The following extract is from Roald Dahl's autobiography, *Boy: Tales of Childhood*. In this extract, he reminisces about the sweet shop he used to visit with his friends as a child growing up in Llandaff, Wales.

My second and only other memory of Llandaff Cathedral School is extremely bizarre. It happened a little over a year later, when I was just nine. By then I had made some friends and when I walked to school in the morning I would start off alone but would pick up four other boys of my own age along the way. After school was over, the same four boys and I would set out together across the village green and through the village itself, heading for home. On the way to school and on the way back we always passed the sweet-shop. No we didn't, we never passed it. We always stopped. We lingered outside its rather small window gazing in at the big glass jars full of Bull's Eyes and Old Fashioned Humbugs and Strawberry Bonbons and Glacier Mints and Acid Drops and Pear Drops and Lemon Drops and all the rest of them. Each of us received sixpence a week for pocket-money, and whenever there was any money in our pockets, we would all troop together to buy a pennyworth of this or that. My own favourites were Sherbet Suckers or Liquorice Bootlaces.

One of the other boys, whose name was Thwaites, told me I should never eat Liquorice Bootlaces. Thwaites's father, who was a doctor, had said they were made from rat's blood. The father had given his young son a lecture about Liquorice Bootlaces when he had caught him eating one in bed. 'Every rat-catcher in the country', the father had said, 'takes his rats to the Liquorice Bootlace Factory, and the manager pays tuppence for each rat. Many a rat-catcher has become a millionaire by selling his dead rats to the Factory.'

We all enjoyed Thwaites's story and we made him tell it to us many times on our walks to and from school. But it didn't stop any of us except Thwaites from buying Liquorice Bootlaces. At two for a penny, they were the best value in the shop. A Bootlace, in case you haven't had the pleasure of handling one, is not round. It's like a flat black tape about half-an-inch wide. You buy it rolled up in a coil, and in those days it used to be so long that when you unrolled it and held one end at arm's length above your head, the other end touched the ground.

Sherbet Suckers were also two a penny. Each sucker consisted of a yellow cardboard tube filled with sherbet powder, and there was a hollow liquorice straw sticking out of it. (Rat's blood again, young Thwaites would warn us, pointing at the liquorice straw.) You sucked the sherbet up through the straw and when it was finished you ate the liquorice. They were delicious, those Sherbet Suckers. The sherbet fizzed in your mouth, and if you knew how to do it, you could make white froth come out of your nostrils [...].

Gobstoppers, costing a penny each, were enormous hard round balls the size of small tomatoes. One Gobstopper would provide about an hour's worth of non-stop sucking and if you took it out of your mouth and inspected it every five minutes or so, you would find that it had changed colour. There was something fascinating about the way it went from pink to blue to green to yellow. We used to wonder how in the world the Gobstopper Factory managed to achieve this magic. 'How does it happen?' we would ask each other, 'How can they make it keep changing colour?'

Pear Drops were exciting because they had a dangerous taste. They smelled of nail-varnish and they froze the back of your throat. All of us were warned against eating them and the result was we ate them more than ever.

The sweet-shop in Llandaff in the year 1923 was the very centre of our lives. To us, it was what a bar is to a drunk, or a church is to a Bishop. Without it, there would have been little to live for.

Notes

2

You may have noticed that both of the extracts we've read are about childhood memories about food. Although there are lots of other similarities, there are also some differences between the two extracts. Fill in the following table with as many similarities and differences as you can identify between the two non-fiction extracts.

Similarities	Differences

3

Use your table and your understanding of the two extracts to practise **evaluating**. When we evaluate texts, we make judgements or decisions about what we've read. You can make whatever decision or judgement you like, as long as you can back up your argument. Think about your own responses to these questions, and then discuss as a class.

1. Which author do you think creates the most pleasant image of their childhood food memories? Why?
2. Think about the food described in each extract. Which do you think would taste the nicest? Why?
3. Nigel Slater's extract describes how the Christmas cake was made. Roald Dahl's extract describes how his friend Thwaite thought liquorice bootlaces were made. Which sounds least appetising? Why?
4. Both authors talk about their fond childhood food memories. Which author do you think sounds most **nostalgic**? Why?

Tutorial 3.4 - Extended writing: short comprehension questions and comparative analysis questions about non-fiction extracts

In this tutorial you will look at:

- selecting relevant evidence to support an argument
- comparing writers' use of language and structure
- critically evaluating non-fiction texts

Learning activities

1

When we compare two texts, we use CPETE:

- Comparison Point
- Evidence
- Technique
- Explanation

Both Roald Dahl and Nigel Slater talk about their childhood food memories. This example CPETE paragraph talks about which author most successfully conveys how important memory is to them.

As you read it, highlight the different CPETE parts. Think about how they evaluate the two texts.

In Roald Dahl's *Boy: Tales of Childhood*, he talks about the sweetshop he visited as a child; in Nigel Slater's *Toast: The Story of a Boy's Hunger*, he talks about his memories of his mother making Christmas cake. Although both authors reminisce about their childhood food memories, Roald Dahl most successfully conveys the idea of how important his sweetshop memories are to him. For example, he describes the sweetshop as being to him as "a church is to a Bishop". This simile suggests that the sweetshop was so important to his life as a child, because a church is essential for a Bishop to do their job. In contrast, Nigel Slater describes that when his mother made Christmas cake, he "loved the sound of raw cake mixture falling into the tin". The verb "loved" is important because the fact that out of the whole process described in the extract, this was the only part that he enjoyed, could suggest that the overall memory is not as important to him as the sweetshop was to Roald Dahl.

Independently answer the following questions about the two extracts.

2

1. Look again at paragraph 5 of Roald Dahl's *Boy: Tales of Childhood*.
 - a. Find a phrase that conveys the boys' amazement about gobstoppers changing colour.
 - b. Why does this show how impressed they were that the sweets could change colour?

2. Look again at paragraph 1 or Roald Dahl's *Boy: Tales of Childhood*. The boys loved visiting the sweetshop in Llandaff. Give two examples from the text which show this.

3. This question is about Roald Dahl's *Boy: Tales of Childhood* and Nigel Slater's *Toast: The Story of a Boy's Hunger*. Which author do you think creates the most pleasant image of their childhood food memories? Use CPETE to answer this question.

Module 3 review

How do you feel now?

This module aimed to help you:

1. Read and understand unseen non-fiction texts
2. Select relevant evidence to support an argument
3. Identify and analyse the effect of language and structural features
4. Compare writers' ideas
5. Evaluate non-fiction texts critically



Knowledge Check 2

These questions will help you see what you've learnt over the course of this module. If you'd prefer to complete these questions via an online form, go to:

<https://forms.office.com/r/H0MzWztp4m>

Independently answer the following questions about the two extracts.

The first question is about Roald Dahl's Boy: Tales of Childhood. Look again at paragraph 4.

- 1) Find a phrase that conveys the boys' amazement about gobstoppers changing colour. (1 mark)
- 2) Why does this show how impressed they were that the sweets could change colour? (1 mark)
- 3) The next question is about Roald Dahl's Boy: Tales of Childhood. Look again at paragraph 1. The boys loved visiting the sweetshop in Llandaff. Give two examples from the text which show this. (2 marks)
- 4) The next question is about Roald Dahl's Boy: Tales of Childhood and Nigel Slater's Toast: The Story of a Boy's Hunger. Which author do you think creates the most pleasant image of their childhood food memories? Use CPETE to answer this question. (10 marks)

What next?

Reflection is important because it helps you review and improve the way you approach tasks, rather than just carrying on doing things as you have always done them.

Take a few minutes to think about where you think you did well during the last four tutorials, and what you think you could improve on. Write your thoughts in the boxes below.

What I did well...	What I could have improved on...
What I could do differently to make the most of my next tutorials...	



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