



# NON FICTION TEXTS

*Your link between the page and  
The world*

## **What is Non Fiction?**

Non-fiction texts are any text that is based upon real events that take place; they take a variety of forms, from newspapers to leaflets, reports to fact files, advertisements to biographies.

Non-fiction texts challenge your ideas in a different way to literature; they are often current, provide you with information about the world in which you live or challenge your opinion about certain ideas or events that happen in society.

As you work through the texts in this booklet, consider these questions:

- What is the purpose of this text- why was it written? Is it successful in achieving that purpose?
- Do I agree or disagree with the ideas within the piece of writing? Can I find evidence of bias anywhere from the writer?
- How has the language or structure been crafted in a particular way? Which line of the text is the most powerful? Why is it included at that part of the text?
- How does this text make me ask questions or cause me to want to research around a particular topic to understand it further?
- What is the writer trying to get me to understand or be persuaded to believe?
- How does it help me to understand the world or society that I live in?
- Why did the writer think it essential to write this text?
- Can I link the individuals, ideas, vocabulary or structure of this text to other things that I have read? Why might they be similar?
- What have I learned from reading this? Has this text changed my views in any way?

If this booklet encourages you to read other non-fiction, please feel free to share these with your English teacher!

Write all notes and answers in your exercise books.

## IN PAKISTAN, A SELF-STYLED TEACHER HOLDS CLASS FOR 150 IN A COWSHED

By Philip Reeves 2014

The following article reports on the efforts of Aansoo Kohli, a 20-year-old Pakistani woman, to bring education to her rural village in Pakistan.

**As you read, take notes on the state of education among Kohli's community in Pakistan and the ways she is making change.**

Every day, shortly after breakfast, more than 150 noisy and eager-eyed kids, coated in dust from top to toe, troop into a mud cowshed in a sun-baked village among the cotton fields of southern Pakistan. The shed is no larger than the average American garage; the boys and girls squeeze together, knee-to-knee, on the dirt floor.



Words scrawled on a wooden plank hanging outside proudly proclaim this hovel to be a “school,” although the pupils have no tables, chairs, shelves, maps or wall charts—let alone laptops, water coolers or lunch boxes.

Nor are there any teachers, except for one very young woman who is sitting serenely in front of this boisterous throng, occasionally issuing instructions, watched by a cow and a couple of goats tethered a few feet away. Her name is Aansoo Kohli. Aansoo is a 20-year-old student in the final stages of a bachelor’s

degree. She is the only person in this village with more than a smattering of education. Her mission is to change that: “I’ll make these children doctors,” she says. “I’ll make them teachers and engineers.”

The kids in Aansoo’s cattle shed are from Pakistan’s Hindu community—a marginalized, sometimes victimized, minority in an overwhelmingly Muslim nation. Their village has for centuries subsisted on the tiny income produced by picking cotton and green chilies for feudal landlords.

The mass exodus of Hindus to India—50 miles to the east—during the 1947 partition of the Subcontinent seems to have passed by this remote community.

The village, Minah Ji Dhani, lies deep in the countryside of Pakistan’s Sindh province; you have to drive across fields to reach it. There is no road. Nor is there electricity or running water. Its inhabitants are among the poorest of Pakistan’s roughly 200 million population.

A crude wooden crutch lies at Aansoo’s side. She needs this because she lost the use of a leg as an infant due to a botched medical procedure. Her father, an illiterate farm worker, realized she would be unable to work in the fields, so he packed her off every day to a government-run school miles away.

As an impoverished and disabled Hindu girl in a highly conservative and patriarchal rural society, Aansoo says her school years were difficult. “People would laugh at me when I went to school,” she recalls. “They’d say, ‘What’s she going to do once she’s educated?’”

Aansoo’s cowshed “school” is her answer to that question. She has no teaching qualifications and works without pay. This hasn’t deterred her from pushing ahead with a personal campaign to give her village’s children—girls as well as boys—the chance to get educated.

“I love these kids,” she says. “I’m urging them to study.”

You only have to watch Aansoo at work for a short while to realize that to describe her cattle shed as a school, or her as a teacher, really is a stretch.

Overwhelmed by numbers, she teaches some of the older children, who then squat on the ground and impart what they have just learned to the smaller kids, some as young as three. Somehow the village whipped up enough money to buy some dog-eared government textbooks and hand-held blackboards.

But there is another goal here. Talk to Aansoo, and it soon becomes clear she has assembled these kids in part to draw attention to a chronic problem blighting her country's young, especially the poor. Over the years, government teaching jobs in Pakistan have routinely been handed out as political favours. Thousands of so-called "teachers" pocket wages but do not go to work. There's a girls' school less than a mile from Aansoo's village that has long been closed because the teachers never showed up.

Aansoo's aim is to generate the kind of publicity that will send a message to people far beyond the confines of her village: "I want to tell Pakistan's teachers that you have a duty to the nation's children. Please come to school and teach!"

"Aansoo is posing a question for all of Pakistan," says Janib Dalwani, a Muslim social activist from a nearby village who's playing a central role in Aansoo's seven-month-old campaign, publicizing her efforts and rallying villagers to the cause. "If someone with her disadvantages can teach, then why can't teachers who're sitting at home drawing salaries go out and teach?"

The task of persuading parents to allow their kids to go along to Aansoo's cattle shed fell to Dalwani. He says they were initially reluctant to release their children from working in the fields and doubtful about the benefits of education.

"I told them God's on their side," says Dalwani. "He'll help them."

This seems to have worked. Ram Chand, a farm worker, has allowed three of his daughters to go to the cattle shed: "I am very happy," he says. "We don't want the children to lead the life we've led."

Aansoo's message is being heard beyond her village. Liaquat Ali Mirani, a principal in the Sindhi city of Larkana, runs a website that publishes the names and photos of absentee teachers in the hope this will shame them into doing their jobs.

"I fully support Aansoo and have a lot of sympathy for her. May God help her," says Mirani.

He estimates four out of 10 teachers in the province never set foot in a school: "Some of them run shops, some work in the media, some for feudal landlords."

In 2010, Pakistan's federal constitution was amended to make education compulsory and free for all children age 5 to 16. But education is run by provincial governments; they haven't yet turned this amendment into law and it seems unlikely they will. This helps explain why, according to estimates, nearly half of Pakistan's 58 million kids of school age are not in school.

"The state of education is very bad in Pakistan," says Farhatullah Babar, a leading figure in the Pakistan People's Party (PPP), the late Benazir Bhutto's party that governs Sindh. "In fact, we have what we call education emergency."

Babar says that although the PPP bears much responsibility for the education crisis in Sindh, it plans to fire absentee teachers and make government teachers take a proficiency test.

“I think these measures indicate a very strong realization on the part of the PPP that if it was responsible for the mess, it is also determined to clean the mess,” says Babar.

For now, though, the kids in the cattle shed are on their own. Their chief hope is Aansoo’s determination—and their own enthusiasm.

**Create a glossary for the following words:**

1. ovel
2. Serenely
3. Boisterous (adjective):
4. Hinduism is a religion and/or lifestyle practiced mainly in South Asia, most notably in India. It consists of a broad range of philosophies, but is linked across cultures and forms through shared concepts, rituals, cosmology, texts, beliefs, and practices.
5. Marginalized
6. Feudal (adjective):
7. Exodus (noun):
8. Patriarchal (adjective):
9. Chronic (adjective):

**Which of the following best describes a central idea of the text?**

- A. The state of education in Pakistan is severely inadequate.
- B. It is up to the individual to educate themselves and not rely on government to provide it.
- C. Circumstances such as poverty and absent teachers prevent a good education.
- D. The efforts of Aansoo Kohli are helping to bring attention to and correct the flaws of the Pakistani educational system.

**Reread the following quotation from paragraph 9: “They’d say, ‘What’s she going to do once she’s educated?’” How does this quote show the attitude towards educating the children of this Pakistan village?**

**In your opinion, whose responsibility is it to make sure children and other individuals are educated? What happens when those resources are not available?**

## PUTTING GOOD DEEDS IN HEADLINES MAY NOT BE SO GOOD by Tovia Smith 2013

When Glen James, a homeless man from Boston, found a backpack filled with \$42,000 in cash and turned it in, the media immediately picked up the story. Before long, the story of his good deed had gone viral. But as Tovia Smith reports, James' story is just one of many examples of people making moral decisions—but is publicizing these good deeds making people better or worse?

**As you read, take notes about what tools the author uses to support her argument.**



An online collection has raised more than \$145,000 for a man who stumbled onto a pile of money and turned it over to police.

Glen James' story of a good deed is just one of many making headlines. It may not be exactly brand new, but public interest does seem to be piqued these days by ordinary folks making what are seen as extraordinary ethical decisions.

Some, however, question if airing this kind of "good" news is actually good.

### A SERIES OF GOOD DEEDS

James' story — he's the homeless man in Boston who turned in a backpack filled with \$42,000 — went viral. So did another recent story about a Dairy Queen Manager from Minnesota who stood up for a blind man who didn't know he'd been robbed.

The blind man dropped a \$20 bill, and a woman picked it up and pocketed it. The manager threw her out of the restaurant and then handed the man \$20 from his own pocket.

Just a few weeks before that, stories swirled about four college football players who found themselves inside a store that was accidentally left unlocked.

Instead of just taking what they wanted, they left every penny they owed at the checkout. One television report called it "a story of honesty that's become a shining beacon of righteousness."

"There are lots of people who suffer from moral myopia, and so when you see this good happening, it renews some of your faith," says University of Texas professor Mimi Drumwright. She says these are the types of stories you hope will inspire copycats: "The reports of these good deeds probably are going to beget more good deeds, and that is a good thing."

Already, countless strangers have been paying it forward with \$20 tips to the Dairy Queen worker, and everything from jobs to gift cards for the other do-gooders — not to mention the small fortune for Glen James.

### MORAL GRADE INFLATION

But at the risk of twisting any of these precious good-news stories into more bad news, experts say there may be a downside to overplaying it.

"They did do the right thing, and that's commendable. But heroic? I think not," says Carnegie Mellon ethics professor Peter Madsen. He sees the high praise swirling around the stories as a kind of moral grade inflation.

"They had an obligation to do what they did. It was not above and beyond the call of duty. They really just did what we should have expected them to do," he says.

When you celebrate what should be ordinary behaviour as extraordinary, experts say, it sends a dangerous message.

"I do worry about a culture in which people are giving selves credit for not having done terrible things. It sets a really low bar for what it takes to be a good person," says London Business School professor Daniel Effron. Effron, who teaches behavioural ethics, says feting folks for what he calls "the immoral road not taken" could actually encourage bad behaviour.

When guys with integrity get put on a pedestal, he says, the implication is that they're exceptional — far greater than the rest of us.

"It suggests that most people in that situation would have done those bad things. So, it reinforces a norm that most people are selfish and self-serving, and therefore, it's OK if you're selfish and self-serving," Effron says.

## **THE BIG SURPRISE**

Others, however, suggest the reason these stories are seen as remarkable is not because we diminish ourselves, but because of the way we diminish these particular do-gooders.

"In this particular case — I'll just say it — the homeless man was an African-American guy, and most of the young football players who paid for their goods were African-American," says Candace Upton, who teaches moral psychology at the University of Denver. "I don't think it's beyond this culture at this time to say that we do have lower expectations, which is unfair. But that's what sets up the big surprise, and hence probably the big response."

Giving good Samaritans celebrity treatment may also have the unintended consequence of creating monster expectations, kind of like a kid expecting a prize every day that he's not late for school. You have to be careful not to go overboard, as one expert put it. But celebrating people for doing the right thing is still the right thing to do.

**Create a glossary for the following words:**

1. **Pique**
2. **Myopia**
3. **Beget**
4. **Samaritan**

**Which of the following best states the central idea of the article?**

- a) **Reporting on good deeds may make people less likely to perform them**
- b) **Reporting on good deeds may make people more likely to perform them**
- c) **Reporting on good deeds makes them less special**
- d) **Reporting on good deeds may change society's expectations about performing them**

**In Paragraph 11, what is meant by the phrase "moral grade inflation"?**

- a) **Performing good deeds improves your "moral grade"**
- b) **Good deeds that would have gotten a lower "moral grade" in the past are receiving higher praise now**
- c) **Good deeds that would have gotten a higher "moral grade" in the past are receiving lower praise now**
- d) **The tendency for people to do good deeds is increasing**

**Which sentence from the article best supports the answer for the last question?**

- a) **"The reports of these good deeds probably are going to beget more good deeds, and that is a good thing." (Paragraph 8)**
- b) **"They did do the right thing, and that's commendable." (Paragraph 11)**
- c) **"When you celebrate what should be ordinary behaviour as extraordinary ... it sends a dangerous message." (Paragraph 13)**
- d) **"Giving good Samaritans celebrity treatment may also have the unintended consequence of creating monster expectations..." (Paragraph 19)**

**Why do you think Glen James' story went viral? Explain your answer using evidence from the text.**

## THE DARK SIDE OF TRENDY ANIMAL PHOTOS

Think before you shoot

By Mary Bates

PUBLISHED FEBRUARY 22, 2016

**As you read, take notes about how animal photography is used by the public.**

Selfies, GIFs, and viral videos can be deadly for wildlife. Just last week, an [endangered baby dolphin died](#) after beachgoers in Argentina hauled it out of the water to pose with it for photos. Also this month [two peacocks](#) in a Chinese zoo died after being mishandled by visitors taking selfies.

The International Union for Conservation of Nature, which sets species' conservation status, lists the La Plata dolphin as [vulnerable to extinction](#), [protecting](#) it from hunting and capture in Argentina—but not from people passing one of them around until it died from dehydration.

“I don't think anyone intended to harm the animal, but the excitement and thrill drew people in,” says Neil D'Cruze, head of Wildlife Policy and Research at [World Animal Protection, UK](#). “It shows that interaction with a wild animal in its habitat can be just as terrible and deadly as having these animals in captivity.”

Thousands of species of wild animals suffer in the [exotic pet trade](#). The exact scale of the problem isn't known, but it's huge, with many animals traded illegally.

Social media has changed the landscape, making exotic animals seem adorable and acceptable, but what you don't see is the suffering that lies behind the images. These three animals are trending on the Internet, but they belong in the wild.

**Why do people take pictures of bad news as well as good news?**

**What are the consequences?**

**How might it be a good thing?**

## **THIS IS WHAT WOULD HAPPEN TO YOUR BODY IF YOU ONLY DRANK COKE (METRO, FEB 17TH 2016)**

As you read, take notes about the effect that drinking fizzy drinks has on the body.

What would happen if you substituted all the boring old water in your diet for glass after glass of delicious, fizzy Coke?

You may not be surprised to learn that it wouldn't be pretty – and it wouldn't just be your brown, rotting teeth that suffered.

After a week, you'd already be piling on the pounds – and ageing rapidly – and after a few years, if you really went for it, the effects might be so bad you'd be heading for hospital.

ASAP Science compiled data from studies from universities including Yale to come up with the full, scary lowdown on what a serious coke habit (or heavy use of any other kind of soft drink) will actually do to you.

ASAP science says, 'After a week of substituting your recommended eight glasses of water for cola instead, you would have consumed around 5432 extra calories.

'Yale researchers found that when people consume soft drinks, they also consume more calories, mainly because people don't accurately account for the added calories in their beverages.

And switching to Diet won't help.

ASAP Science says, 'Experiments have found that the sweet taste, whether from real or artificial sweetener, enhances our appetite. Many diet drinkers think, 'I'm having a diet drink, I'll have large fries with my meal.'

'Soft drinks can also age us. Telomeres are protective caps on the ends of our chromosomes which shorten over time, and it turns out that their rate of shortening is nearly the same in a person who drinks 600ml of soda in a day.

'So what if you drank 2 litres of pop every day? Well one woman did just that for 16 years straight, until she was hospitalised at age 31.

'With no family history of heart problems, she suffered from arrhythmia and fainting spells, and tests found her deficient in potassium, as both fructose and caffeine can lead to potassium loss, through urine and diarrhoea.

**Create a glossary for the following words:**

- 1. Substituted**
- 2. Compiled**
- 3. Consume**
- 4. Enhances**
- 5. deficient**

**What is the writer's opinion of drinking fizzy drinks on a regular basis? Use evidence to explain your ideas.**

**How might someone cut out caffeine or fructose (sugar) from their diet? Write a short piece that could be used in an advice column of a magazine. Consider your vocabulary choices and include instructional language.**

## **AN A\* LIFE BY ANDY COPE (BEINGBRILLIANT WEBSITE)**

As you read, take notes about Andy Cope's attitude towards happiness.

Most people get stuck in what I call a C+ life. In school report terms, you 'could do better' and, for many, life can become a bit mundane. The solution isn't to lower your sights. In fact, I'd argue the opposite!

Too many people settle for C+ in the hope that A\* will happen at the weekend or next year or when they retire. It's almost as though we set out to expect mediocrity in the hope that something good might happen and surprise us. Accepting mediocrity is a defence mechanism because you'll rarely be disappointed (but you'll also rarely be genuinely happy!).

The solution is what I call 'realistic optimism'. Not some rose-tinted Pollyanna approach that annoys people and papers over the cracks of reality, but a genuine expectation that today is going to be a fab day because you're going to choose to be upbeat, passionate and positive. In a spooky Matrix-style psychological shift of mind-set, you are more likely to have a fabulous day. The downside is that, despite your best efforts, the day might still conspire against you and you might be disappointed. But, hey, tomorrow you go for it again...

You see, happiness isn't actually real, at least not in the sense that you can cart it around in a wheelbarrow. Happiness is a mental construct that you've created in your head. And genuinely upbeat, happy folk have certain mental habits that allow them to create more of it.

So, the basic message is to stop waiting for the right person, job or moment (yikes, they might never come!) and learn the basics of how to create more happiness from within.

And, if you're going to have a happier life, you need to put some effort into being your best self – those A\*s don't happen by accident.

**According to the article, is happiness real? Why/why not?**

**Why does Andy Cope say, 'those A\*s don't happen by accident?'**

**Do you agree or disagree with Cope's ideas? Use evidence to explain your ideas.**

# CAPITALISM

By Jessica McBirney 2016



An economic system refers to the way the money, industry, and trade of a country or region are organized. People often disagree about how economic systems around the world should work. Capitalism, the system used in the United States, tends to involve fewer rules from the government. Many people support communism, but some critics say that it is unfair and can prevent poorer people from improving their lives.

**As you read, take notes on both the positive and negative traits of capitalism.**

Capitalism is an economic system in which individual people make most of the decisions and own most of the property in a country. This is the system used in the United States today.

## PROPERTY

In a capitalist society, individual people and businesses can own property. Property can be a piece of land, a house, or something smaller, like a car or even a shirt. People can decide when to sell their property or buy more property, and they are free to buy or sell without asking for permission from the government. They can also decide what price they will charge for their property or how much money they will spend on a new piece of property. A big system of people buying and selling property is called a “market.”

## THE ROLE OF THE GOVERNMENT

Capitalists say the government should not make very many laws about the economy. They prefer “free markets,” which are markets with only a few laws and regulations. For example, the government could make a law telling people not to steal someone else’s property, because property is so important for everyone to succeed. However, the government should not make a law telling people a price they have to charge to sell something. Some capitalists say that the government should not use money collected from taxes to help people who are poor or sick. Instead, they believe that individual people should help each other without being forced to give away their money.

## INVESTMENT

Another important part of capitalism is investment. To invest in something is to buy a small piece of something because you believe it has value. For example, if Martha wanted to start a candy store, she might ask several of her friends to invest money in her idea. Once she had money from a few different people, she could buy a building for the store. She would recompense investors by giving them a percentage of the money she made from the store’s business. Investment helped everyone in this case, because Martha got the extra money she needed to buy her store, and all her investors got to share in her success. Very large companies can sometimes get thousands of investors.

## BENEFITS OF CAPITALISM

Capitalist proponents believe capitalism is the best system for the economy because it can help the most people. Because it is easy to own property, people can use their property to become richer. Many capitalists also like the freedom from government and laws. They also believe capitalism allows people to

make new inventions, like the car or the computer. Thanks to investors, people with good new ideas can succeed and turn their ideas into businesses that make money.

The features of capitalism may sound familiar to you, because capitalism is the type of economic system that exists in many countries today, including the United States, Canada, and Great Britain. However, some countries are not capitalist – such as China, Cuba, and North Korea. Their leaders do not believe that capitalism is the best economic system.

## **ANTI-CAPITALISTS**

Some people in the world – including some citizens of capitalist countries – do not think capitalism is a fair system for the economy. These people are usually called socialists or communists. They often want the government to make more decisions in the economy. They believe capitalism can be unfair because it causes too much competition between people, and prevents those with less wealth from having equal opportunities. They think capitalism divides people into two groups: workers and business owners. Instead of working together, these two groups compete against each other and hurt each other.

One writer named Karl Marx wrote a book called *The Communist Manifesto*, which told workers to rebel against business owners. The most famous real-world example of this was the revolution in Russia in 1917. The communist government lasted until 1991. Some historians say their country fell apart because they did not use capitalism in their economy, while others point to different reasons, such as attacks from other countries.

**Create a glossary for the following words:**

- a) **proponent**
- b) **capitalism**
- c) **investor**
- d) **rebel**
- e) **benefits**

**What is the author’s main purpose in writing this article? Use evidence from the text in your response.**

**One of the central topics of the article is about what capitalism is. What is another central topic of the article?**

- A. **Ownership of property**
- B. **How investing works for small businesses**
- C. **The pros and cons of capitalism**
- D. **Karl Marx**

**What does the word “recompense” most closely mean as it is used in paragraph 4?**

- E. **to pay back**
- F. **to apologize to**
- G. **to offer a bribe to**
- H. **to invest in**

**Based on the information in the article, do you believe you are more of a capitalist or a socialist/communist? Explain your reasons.**

# DIARY OF A TEENAGE REFUGEE

By Amira 2013



In the spring of 2011, nationwide protests against Bashar al-Assad's government in the Middle Eastern country of Syria were met with violent crackdowns. The conflict gradually morphed into an armed rebellion after months of military sieges. Now, Syria is experiencing a civil war that has already left hundreds of thousands of people dead, and more than 7.6 million refugees. Millions more have been left in poor living conditions with shortages of food and drinking water. The following account comes from a sixteen year-old Syrian girl named Amira detailing the past three years of her life in a refugee camp in the neighbouring country of Lebanon.

**As you read, take notes on the different ways Amira's life has changed since the outbreak of the Syrian civil war.**

Amira is a pretty normal 16 year-old. She's got the usual interests: pop music, boys and her mobile phone.

But, along with 30 million other children and young people around the world, she's a refugee. Amira lives in a camp with her family after fleeing the civil war in Syria. This is her story, in her own words.

## AMIRA'S STORY

One night the bombs were coming closer and closer. We were all sitting together downstairs because we couldn't sleep. As houses were being destroyed one by one in our village, neighbours were running from one house to the next. So some neighbours were gathered in our house too.

A rocket landed on the roof of our house, but no one was injured. We ran in fear to another house. We were so terrified we didn't even think about taking anything with us. Soon after, our house was totally destroyed. We left with no IDs, nothing.

Our dad took us out of the country through a smuggler. We escaped that night in a rented car. Whenever we passed a checkpoint, we hid under the seats of the car and the driver covered us up. We crossed the border illegally, through the mountains. We got out near the border and had to walk about 100 metres across the mountain. When we heard a plane, we started running. We were very scared.

## THE CAMP: LIFE ON HOLD

When we arrived at the refugee camp, there were already many tents. We bought some materials to make a tent—some wood and plastic sheeting. The men built it. Our tent has two rooms and a kitchen area. There are 13 of us living here.

The neighbours helped us by giving us things like bottled water, mattresses, blankets, cups and plates. We could pick up and leave at any time, as we don't have anything of value here. My most treasured things are my necklaces. I wear them all at the same time, because they have many memories. One was given to me by a boyfriend, but I don't want my mother to know about that!

We have so many needs that you can't count them. At home things were cheap. Everything is expensive here. We even have to pay for water. In winter there was snow halfway up the sides of our tent and we couldn't even see out of it. At home we had our own bedrooms, but here we all sleep together in the tent on the ground.

We can't go to school here, and there are no jobs available because too many people are looking for work. We don't even have any books. So we just help out with cooking and cleaning, or watch TV all day. We are really bored.

To pass the time we do each other's hair and draw pictures of each other, or listen to popular songs on the TV. We also make our own clothes.

We are afraid because the government doesn't know we are here. If they find out, we could be sent back to Syria. But the UN protects us.

Some of the people who are not registered go into the mountains and hide whenever the officials come to count people in the camp. Then they come back to the camp afterwards.

## **HOMESICK**

We hear from home mostly via WhatsApp and sometimes TV. Only a few old people are still living in our village. There are a few rooms still standing in the destroyed houses, and they live in those.

We have to pay for water to be brought in by truck, but it's very dirty. But now we have a water filter in our tent. We now have a latrine that was installed. We receive food distributions, so we have enough food. We make large amounts of simple meals that we can share out easily for all the children, like rice, beans and peas. There are shops, hairdressers and tailors here.

It helps to know that we are not alone, as there are many others here in the same situation as us.

We've been here for three years now. We miss everything about home. We would love to go back.

1. **What does the term "refugee" most closely mean as used in the passage?**
  - A. A term for war or a violent conflict survivors
  - B. One who lives in a tented community or camp
  - C. One who leaves a country to escape danger or persecution
  - D. A synonym for an immigrant
  
2. **Which of the following quotes best supports the answer to the previous question?**
  - A. "Amira lives in a camp with her family"
  - B. "fleeing the civil war in Syria"
  - C. "We crossed the border illegally"
  - D. "We miss everything about home"

**"My most treasured things are my necklaces. I wear them all at the same time, because they have many memories. One was given to me by a boyfriend, but I don't want my mother to know about that!"** How does this quote contribute to the reader's understanding of Amira?

**How is Amira similar to young girls in your country? How is she different?**

# JOAN OF ARC: FRANCE'S YOUNG TRAGIC HERO



By David White 2015

The following article is about the historical figure Joan of Arc, or Jeanne D'Arc (1412-1413), the teenage girl who led the French to victory against the English in the 1400s.

As you read, take notes on how Joan of Arc succeeded in gaining her command and winning in battle. How and why is she remembered today?

## PART 1: THE MAKINGS OF A HERO

Joan was born the youngest of a family of five. Her father was a peasant farmer who had little money. She never learned to read or write. Yet in her short lifetime, she became one of history's most famous people.

Joan was born in Domremy on January 6, 1412. She was the youngest of five children. As a child, Joan played with other children but also enjoyed being alone. Like other girls, she was good at sewing and spinning. Unlike other girls, she claimed to hear "voices." She said it was the voice of angels speaking to her, and she also claimed to have seen them. She had always been especially devoted to her religion, Christianity.

She began to hear these voices in 1425, when she was 13. Three years later, she was convinced that God had spoken to her and told her to go to the service of the king, Charles VII.

The French at this time were involved in another war against the English. (The two countries had fought many wars before that time, including the Hundred Years War.)

In the current struggle, things were going badly for France. In 1428, Joan travelled to the neighbouring town of Vaucouleurs to see the king's commander there, Robert Baudricourt. This man first turned Joan away with a laugh. But the next year, when Joan correctly predicted a great French defeat outside Orleans (the Battle of the Herrings), Baudricourt was willing to listen. In fact, he let Joan go to the king himself, who was at the French city of Chinon.

Joan convinced King Charles VII of her sincerity and of her calling to help France defend itself against the English invaders. Despite the advice of most of his commanders, King Charles agreed with Joan, offering her a sword. Joan, however, spoke of a vision that she had of a great sacred sword buried in a nearby chapel. No one knew about this sword, but the king was so convinced that Joan was right that he ordered the area under the altar dug up. There was an ancient sword, just as Joan described it. Astonished, King Charles agreed to let Joan go to Orleans, where French forces were under siege. She left on April 30, 1429.

Her presence there had a swift and great effect. The English forts built to encircle the city were taken and the siege ended in an astonishing eight days. A month later, the French won again, at Patay. The following month, the French regained Troyes and then Reims. In an astounding three months, Joan of Arc had helped the French do what seemed impossible. The English were on the run.

## PART 2: SUCCESS AND THE END

Though she was wounded twice in these many struggles, Joan fought on. She at first wanted to go home, especially after her first series of successes; but the army convinced her to stay.

The French progress bogged down as the English dug in. Joan and the French fought on, and so did the English. In May 1430, Joan was captured.

She was held in prison for many weeks and then brought to trial in Rouen, a French town in English possession. She was refused a lawyer and was treated cruelly in prison. At her trial, she insisted that the voices of angels had told her to help defend France against English invaders. This didn't go over too well with the English clergymen who were her judges. She was found guilty of heresy (largely because she claimed to have spoken with angels, which was against church law) and sentenced to be burned at the stake. She died on May 30, 1431.

Her story is still told for several reasons:

- She was but an inexperienced teenager, leading an army full of battle-hardened men.
- She was a woman. At that time, women were expected to stay in the homes and castles and let the men do the fighting.
- She had tremendous success. With her in the army, the French won victory after victory.
- She died a terrible death.

Her life and death have inspired many soldiers, in France and elsewhere, ever since.

**1. Which of the following best describes a central idea of the text?**

- A. Never underestimate teenage girls.**
- B. Faith and courage led Joan to victory.**
- C. Joan of Arc was one of the most influential women in history.**
- D. The history of French-English relationships was changed by a peasant girl.**

**Explain how Joan convinced the French of her mission in 3-5 complete sentences.**

**1. What does the term "heresy" most likely mean as used in paragraph 10?**

- A. Going against church rules**
- B. Insulting the church**
- C. Lying about spiritual experiences**
- D. Practicing witchcraft**

**In the context of this text, how do people create change? What are the qualities of a leader? Do you think Joan of Arc believed what she said? Use evidence from this text, your own experience, and other literature, art, or history in your answer.**

## THE DISTRACTED TEENAGE BRAIN

### Scientists discover that teens are easily distracted by behaviours that were once — but are no longer — rewarding

By Alison Pearce Stevens 2014



What happens when you challenge a group of teenagers and adults to a simple computer game testing their ability to stay focused on goals, with the distraction of a potential reward? That's what psychologist Zachary Roper and his team wanted to find out.

**As you read the article, look for information that helps explain young adult behaviour.**

Teens have a reputation for making some not-so-smart decisions. Researchers have blamed those poor decisions on the immaturity of a teen's prefrontal cortex. That is the part of the brain involved in making plans and decisions. But scientists now find the answer may be simpler: the allure<sup>1</sup> of rewards. Rewards, even small ones, entice teens more than they do adults.

And, perhaps surprisingly, teens tend to continue doing things they once found rewarding, even after the actual payoff is long gone. Both findings come from a new study by researchers at the University of Iowa in Iowa City.

Psychologist Zachary Roper and his team worked with two groups of volunteers: 13- to 16-year olds and 20- to 35-year-old adults. Each volunteer had to play a game of sorts. During a training phase, a computer displayed six circles, each a different colour. The players had to find the red or green circle. These targets had either a horizontal or vertical line inside. The remaining circles had lines at other angles. When the participant found the correct target, they had to press one of two keys on a keyboard. One key would report they had found the vertical line. The other reported finding a horizontal line.

When a volunteer hit the right key, the screen flashed the amount of the reward they had earned. For some volunteers, green circles provided a large (10-cent) reward and red circles provided a small (2-cent) reward. For other volunteers, the amounts were reversed, with red circles worth more. All other colours had no reward.

By the end of this training, volunteers had learned the value of each colour. But they weren't aware that they had, notes Iowa's Jatin Vaidya. When the scientists asked the players about the value of red versus green circles, both teens and adults had no awareness that a circle's colour had any effect on how much they had earned during any given trial.

After this training ended, it was time to begin testing in earnest. The scientists informed the volunteers they had a new target. Each had to report the orientation of the line inside a blue diamond. Again, groups of six symbols appeared on a computer screen. Only one was a diamond. The other five were still circles. In some trials, one of those circles was red or green. In other trials, there were no red or green circles.

The recruits were told to answer as quickly as possible. And for this phase of the experiment, no additional money would be earned.

The researchers now measured how long it took people to find the diamond and record their answers.

When no red or green circles were among the onscreen options, both adults and teens responded quickly. But when a red or green circle showed up, both groups initially took a bit longer. Adults, though, quickly stopped paying attention to the coloured circles. Their response times sped up.

Teens reacted differently. They took longer to respond whenever a red or green circle showed up. Their response times never sped up. Their attention still was drawn to the previously valued circles — even though the shapes no longer brought any reward. Clearly, the red and green circles were distracting teens from their objective.

Roper's team reported the findings September 10 in *Psychological Science*.

“The study demonstrates that the attention of adolescents is especially drawn to rewarding information,” says Brian Anderson. A psychologist at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, Md., he was not involved with the study. These data may help explain why teens engage in risky behaviour, he says. Some behaviours, such as texting or using social media, trigger the brain's reward system. Once the teenage brain has linked a behaviour to that reward, it continues to seek the reward again and again. That's why teens are likely to opt for the reward of social media when they should be studying. Or why they respond to texts while driving.

How can someone overcome their brain's attempts to distract? Vaidya suggests physically removing distractions whenever possible. Shut down the phone when driving or disconnect from Wi-Fi while doing homework. When distractions are not readily available, it will be easier to focus attention on the things that matter most. Like arriving home safely.

**Create a glossary for the following words:**

1. **Allure (noun):**
2. **Psychologist (noun):**
3. **Horizontal (adjective):**
4. **Vertical (adjective):**
5. **In earnest (phrase):**
6. **Orientation (noun):**
7. **Adolescent (noun):**
8. **Neurological (adjective):**

**Which detail from the paragraph provides the best clue to the meaning of the word “entice”?**

1. "not-so-smart decisions"
2. "allure of rewards"
3. "even small ones"
4. "more than they do adults"

**The title of this article is “The Distracted Teenage Brain.” Which paragraph from the article best explains why the author chose this title, and why?**

**Are you surprised by the findings of this study? Why or why not?**

## World peace? These are the only 11 countries in the world that are actually free from conflict

With the crisis in Gaza, the rise of Islamist militants in Iraq and Syria and the international stand-off ongoing in Ukraine, it can sometimes feel like the whole world is at war.

But experts believe this is actually almost universally the case, according to a think-tank which produces one of the world's leading measures of "global peacefulness" – and things are only going to get worse.

It may make for bleak reading, but of the 162 countries covered by the Institute for Economics and Peace's (IEP's) latest study, just 11 were not involved in conflict of one kind or another.

Worse still, the world as a whole has been getting incrementally less peaceful every year since 2007 – sharply bucking a trend that had seen a global move away from conflict since the end of the Second World War.

The UK, as an example, is relatively free from internal conflict, making it easy to fall to thinking it exists in a state of peace. But recent involvement in foreign fighting in the likes of Afghanistan, as well as a fairly high state of militarisation, means Britain actually scores quite poorly on the 2014 Global Peace Index, coming 47th overall.

Then there are countries which are involved in no actual foreign wars involving deaths whatsoever - like North Korea – but which are fraught by the most divisive and entrenched internal conflicts.

The IEP's findings mean that choices are slim if you want to live in a completely peaceful country. The only ones to achieve the lowest score for all forms of conflict were Switzerland, Japan, Qatar, Mauritius, Uruguay, Chile, Botswana, Costa Rica, Vietnam, Panama and Brazil.

1. Name the current conflicts mentioned in the article.
2. Which organisation completed the study?
3. How many countries did the study cover?
4. How many countries were peaceful?
5. Where did Britain come on the global peace index?
6. Britain has no internal conflict so why did it do so badly on the global peace index?
7. Why is North Korea not peaceful?
8. Which is the only European country to appear in the list of most peaceful countries?
9. What are the people that did the report concerned about?
10. Why do you think the article was written? Use evidence to explain your ideas.

# DALAI LAMA MARKS 80TH BIRTHDAY WITH COMPASSION-THEMED ANAHEIM SUMMIT



THE 14TH DALAI LAMA, TENZIN GYATSO, WILL CELEBRATE HIS 80TH BIRTHDAY SUNDAY, KICKING OFF A THREE-DAY GLOBAL COMPASSION SUMMIT IN ORANGE COUNTY. BY **MATT HAMILTON**

**A three-day jubilee commemorating the Dalai Lama's 80th birthday kicks off Sunday with the Nobel peace prize winner lecturing on creativity and compassion before a sold-out crowd at Anaheim's Honda Centre.**

The Dalai Lama's public talk, which will be streamed online, will close out the Global Compassion Summit's first day, packed with musical performances and well-wishes from a far-flung group of celebrities and global luminaries.

In lieu of gifts, organisers have asked supporters around the world to document acts of compassion using social media and share photos, videos and writings with the hashtag #withcompassion.

"The Dalai Lama does not want any physical gifts -- for him, this birthday is just like any other day. However if we can help to create a more compassionate, kind planet -- that would be the most beautiful gift of all," said Lama Tenzin Dhonden, the Dalai Lama's personal emissary for peace.

**Create a glossary for the following words:**

**Jubilee**

**Compassion**

**Luminary**

**Emissary**

**What are the five Ws of this article?**

**How does the personification of 'kind planet' enhance the overall effect of the piece of writing?**

**Give an example of something you might write on social media to promote compassion. Explain your choice.**

## MALALA YOUSAFZAI: A NORMAL YET POWERFUL GIRL



By NPR Staff 2013

Malala Yousafzai (born 1997) is a Pakistani activist for female education and the youngest ever winner of the Nobel Peace Prize. Malala is from the Swat Valley in northwest Pakistan, where the local Taliban has banned girls from attending school. Malala, whose family ran a chain of local schools, publicly stood against the Taliban's actions and launched an international movement. On October 9th, 2012, a gunman from the Taliban boarded a school bus and shot her in the head. Malala remained in critical condition in the days following the attack, but survived. Since then, she has continued to advocate internationally for women's education.

**As you read, consider what drove Malala to overcome tremendous adversity.**

"I think Malala is an average girl," Ziauddin Yousafzai says about the 16-year-old Pakistani girl who captured the world's attention after being shot by the Taliban, "but there's something extraordinary about her."

A teacher himself, Yousafzai inspired his daughter's fight to be educated. At a special event with Malala in Washington, D.C., he tells NPR's Michel Martin that he is often asked what training he gave to his daughter. "I usually tell people, 'You should not ask me what I have done. Rather you ask me, what I did not do,'" he says. "I did not clip her wings to fly. I did not stop her from flying."

Yousafzai has this advice for parents of girls around the world: "Trust your daughters, they are faithful. Honour your daughters, they are honourable. And educate your daughters, they are amazing."

A year after being shot, Malala is clear about her goal. "I speak for education of every child, in every corner of the world," Malala says. "There has been discrimination in our society," which she believes must be defeated. "We women are going to bring change. We are speaking up for girls' rights, but we must not behave like men, like they have done in the past."

Perhaps she has learned from her father's experience. When asked what gave him a passion for girls' education, Yousafzai points out that he was "born in a society where girls are ignored." Living with five sisters, he was sensitive to discrimination from an early age. "In the morning, I was used to milk and cream, and my sisters were given only tea," he says.

Yousafzai felt the injustice even more when Malala was born. He later opened a school that Malala attended in the Swat Valley. At the time, the Taliban's influence was gaining power and both Yousafzais were firmly on their radar. "But we thought that even terrorists might have some ethics," Yousafzai says. "Because they destroyed some 1,500 schools but they never injured a child. And she was a child." Malala says that the shooting has taken away her fear. "I have already seen death and I know that death is supporting me in my cause of education. Death does not want to kill me," she says. "Before this attack, I might have been a little bit afraid how death would be. Now I'm not, because I have experienced it."

When asked if she is having any fun now with all her campaigning, Malala laughs, "It's a very nice question. I miss those days." But she also says that there is another side to her than what is shown in the

media. “Outside of my home, I look like a very obedient, very serious, very good kind of girl, but nobody knows what happens inside the house.” There, she says, she’s not naughty, but she has to stand up to her brothers. “It’s good to fight with your brothers and it’s good to tease them to give them advice.” She says her little brother doesn’t really understand why his sister has so much attention. “He said, ‘Malala ... I can’t understand why people are giving you prizes, and everywhere you go people say, ‘This is Malala’ and they give you awards, what have you done?’” she says.

Malala knows the Taliban would still like to kill her, but she says she hopes to return to Pakistan one day. “First, I need to empower myself with knowledge, with education. I need to work hard,” she says. “And when I [am] powerful, then I will go back to Pakistan, inshallah [God willing].”

**According to Malala, how did the shooting affect her? Use evidence in your answer.**

**Summarize Malala’s character using specific evidence from this article.**

**What does the word “ethics” most closely mean as it is used in paragraph 6?**

- A. An understanding between right and wrong
- B. A goodness and innocence at heart
- C. A system of beliefs
- D. A sense of cruelty or hatred

**Which phrase from the text provides the best clue to the meaning of the word “ethics” as it is used in paragraph 6?**

- A. “even terrorists”
- B. “destroyed some 1,500 schools”
- C. “they never injured a child”
- D. “she was a child”

**What is the effect of Malala’s father’s account in this news article?**

- A. It allows readers to see that Malala achieved so much due to her strict upbringing and disciplined education.
- B. It implies that Malala should not be treated as a hero because she is just an ordinary girl with the same problems and concerns as other young women.
- C. It suggests that Malala’s father deserves just as much credit as she does for raising her.
- D. It provides the perspective of someone who knows her well, helping readers to understand both the average and inspirational sides of her

**Why do you think Malala captured international attention?**

# PET ROCKS

By CommonLit Staff 2014



Would you pay for an ordinary rock? In 1975, over a million Americans did.

**As you read, take notes on how and why pet rocks get so popular.**

## BACKGROUND

A “pet rock” was a collectible item that became wildly popular in the United States in the 1970s. Gary Dahl was the inventor of the pet rock; he was sitting in a bar in California in 1975, listening to his friends discuss the needs and annoyances of their pets. In response, he conceived the idea of a pet rock, which the owner would not have to bathe, groom, walk, or feed; the pet rocks could never become sick or be disobedient. Dahl joked that this would make them “perfect pets.”

Although he was merely making a joke at first, Dahl eventually began to take the idea of the pet rock seriously. He actually packaged pet rocks and sold them for almost \$17 by today’s standards. He even wrote a 32-page instruction manual about caring for them, which spoke of the rock as if it was an actual pet. The manual described in detail how to discipline the rock, teach it simple commands, and potty train it. Obviously, the instructions were highly ironic and humorous in tone, like the product itself. The rocks were ordinary grey stones, but they were marketed and sold as if they were actual animals. They even came in boxes on a bed of straw, and there were breathing holes for their comfort.

In the span of about six months in 1975 and 1976, the popularity of pet rocks soared. Dahl sold 1.5 million of them and became a millionaire. The popularity of the pet rock eventually died down, but they remain collectors’ items for some people even today.

The pet rock remains an iconic example of a fad. A fad is a behaviour that rapidly grows in popularity, and which many people adopt very enthusiastically for a short period of time. Unlike a trend, which can have a lasting impact on culture, fads are more fleeting in nature; they come and go quickly, and are often seen as somewhat ridiculous in retrospect.

- 1. Which of the following best explains why Gary Dahl decided to create the pet rock?**
  - A. To train prospective pet owners on proper pet management**
  - B. To provide a serious alternative to pet ownership**
  - C. To create a funny, marketable item**
  - D. To prove a point about American culture.**

2. : In paragraph 2, the author says, “there were breathing holes for their comfort.” What does the author mean?
- A. The packaging contained breathing holes so the pet would be able to breathe
  - B. The packaging contained breathing holes—yet another humorous example of how this product was packaged and sold
  - C. The packaging contained breathing holes to conform to government standards for packing live objects
  - D. The packaging contained breathing holes because consumers believed they were necessary for the pet’s survival

What are some additional reasons you think Pet Rocks gained popularity so quickly?

Can you think of any other fads that you have taken part in?

## THE DANCING PLAGUE OF 1518

By CommonLit Staff 2014



The Dancing Plague of 1518 was a strange case of dancing mania in Strasbourg (present-day France). Hundreds of people in this tiny region were overcome by a sudden urge to dance! Even today, scholars haven't been able to figure out the reason behind the outbreak, or why so many joined in.

As you read, take notes on what made these people start dancing, and what prevented them from stopping.

### THE BEGINNING

The dancing plague began in July 1518, when a woman, Mrs. Troffea, began to dance wildly in the street. She danced for somewhere between four to six days straight. Within a week, 34 other people joined her unstoppable dance. Within a month, there were around 400 dancers.

### CAUSES & EFFECTS

Some dancers eventually died from dancing so much. Several died from sudden heart attacks or strokes. Others died from exhaustion, which means that dancing tired them out to the point of death. One report states that for a while the plague killed around fifteen people per day. It is not known why these people danced in the first place, or why some danced even to their deaths. What do you think?

As the dancing plague continued, the town's leaders were concerned. The leaders asked for the advice of local doctors, who ruled out astrological and supernatural causes. Instead, the doctors announced that the plague was a "natural disease" caused by "hot blood."

What was the doctors' cure for this plague? They encouraged the dancers to keep dancing! They opened two guildhalls and a grain market, and even constructed a wooden stage. They did this because they believed that the dancers would recover only if they danced continuously night and day. To increase the effectiveness of the cure, authorities even paid for musicians to keep the afflicted moving.

One by one, the remaining dancers did eventually stop. The plague ended altogether in September, two months after it began.

**Which of the following statements best describes the central idea of the text?**

- A. In the early 1500s, a strange illness caused many townspeople to experience muscle spasms that made them look like they were dancing.**
- B. In the early 1500s, a group of townspeople began dancing. While they didn't stop for many days, there seemed to be no real reason for them to have started at all.**
- C. In the early 1500s, a group of townspeople began dancing. At the time, it was believed to be the result of witchcraft.**
- D. In the early 1500s, it was customary in France for dancing festivals to last weeks, often leading to dancers dying of exhaustion.**

**In Paragraph 1, what is meant by the word “plague”?**

- E. A contagious condition that affects a great number of people**
- F. A contagious disease affecting an individual**
- G. A non-contagious illness acquired by multiple individuals**
- H. A non-scientific disease impossible to diagnose**

**In your own words, what is the Dancing Plague of 1518? Why do you think they called it a “plague”?**

## EXCERPT FROM TRAIL OF TEARS DIARY

By Jobe Alexander & Mary Hill 1938



The Trail of Tears is the name given to the forced relocation of Native American nations following the Indian Removal Act of 1830. The removal included many members of tribes who did not wish to assimilate. Many Native Americans suffered from disease and exposure, and somewhere between 2,000-6,000 Cherokee died on the trail. The Trail of Tears Diary includes interviews that reveal the extraordinary resilience of the Native American nations during the trail.

As you read, take notes on how the perspectives of the two Native American interviewees differ.

### INTERVIEW WITH MARY HILL, AGE 47

*April 19, 1937*

*Billie Byrd, Research Field Worker S-149*

*Mary Hill, Muskogee Tribe*

*Okfuskee Town (tulwa), Okemah, Oklahoma*

#### ***The Migration to the West of the Muskogee***

Many years ago, my grandmother, Sallie Farney, who was among those that made the trip to the West from Alabama, often told of the trip as follows:

In every way we were abundantly blessed in our every day life in the old country. We had our hunting grounds and all the things that are dear to the heart or interest of an Indian.

A council meeting was mostly composed of men, but there were times when every member of a town (tulwa) was requested to attend the meetings.

Many of the leaders, when unrest was felt in the homes, visited the different homes and gave encouragement to believe that Alabama was to be the permanent home of the Muskogee tribe. But many different rumours of a removal to the far west was often heard.

The command for a removal came unexpectedly upon most of us. There was the time that we noticed that several overloaded wagons were passing our home, yet we did not grasp the meaning. However, it was not long until we found out the reason. Wagons stopped at our home and the men in charge commanded us to gather what few belongings could be crowded into the wagons. We were to be taken away and leave our homes never to return. This was just the beginning of much weeping and heartaches.

We were taken to a crudely built stockade and joined others of our tribe. We were kept penned up until everything was ready before we started on the march. Even here, there was the awful silence that showed the heartaches and sorrow at being taken from the homes and even separation from loved ones. Most of us had not foreseen such a move in this fashion or at this time. We were not prepared, but times became more horrible after the real journey was begun.

Many fell by the wayside, too faint with hunger or too weak to keep up with the rest. The aged, feeble, and sick were left to perish by the wayside. A crude bed was quickly prepared for these sick and weary people. Only a bowl of water was left within reach, thus they were left to suffer and die alone.

The little children piteously cried day after day from weariness, hunger, and illness. Many of the men, women, and even the children were forced to walk. They were once happy children; left without mother and father, crying could not bring consolation to those children.

The sick and the births required attention, yet there was no time or no one was prepared. Death stalked at all hours, but there was no time for proper burying of ceremonies. My grandfather died on this trip. A hastily cut piece of cotton wood contained his body. The open ends were closed up and this was placed along a creek. This was not the only time this manner of burying was held nor the only way. Some of the dead were placed between two logs and quickly covered with shrubs, some were shoved under the thickets, and some were not even buried but left by the wayside.

There were several men carrying reeds with eagle feathers attached to the end. These men continually circled around the wagon trains or during the night around the camps. These men said the reeds with feathers had been treated by the medicine men. Their purpose was to encourage the Indians not to be heavy hearted nor to think of the homes that had been left.

Some of the older women sang songs that meant, "We are going to our homes and land; there is One who is above and ever watches over us; He will care for us." This song was to encourage the ever downhearted Muskogees.

Many a family was forced to abandon their few possessions and necessities when their horses died or were too weary to pull the heavy wagons any further.

## **INTERVIEW WITH JOBE ALEXANDER**

*May 3, 1938*

*Jesse S. Bell, Investigator of Indian-Pioneer History, S-149*

*Jobe Alexander, Cherokee Tribe*

*Proctor, Oklahoma*

I am a full blood Cherokee Indian born in Going-Lake District, Indian Territory, Cherokee Nation, March 10, 1854, and raised there. My father, Dun-Ev-Nall Alexander was born in Georgia and was driven West during the immigration. All the Indians were gathered up or rounded up by soldiers and put in pens and guarded until ready for the move; they were gathered up by the "Clans" and left their gardens and crops, and some of the old homes of the Cherokee are still standing in Georgia.

The last group that was rounded up revolted; the leader gave the signal to revolt and all turned on the guards and took their guns away and murdered the guards and they made for hide aways in the mountains. That is why the Indians are back in North Carolina, Tennessee, and Georgia. They never were found or hunted much.

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### **Create a glossary of the following words:**

**Assimilate** (verb)

**Stockade** (noun)

**Piteously** (adjective)

**Consolation** (noun)

**Revolt** (verb)

1. In Paragraph 7, what does the word “foreseen” mean?
  - A. Implemented; put in motion
  - B. Predetermined; previously agreed upon
  - C. Predicted; to have been aware of
  - D. Have seen or experienced previously.
  
2. Which TWO statements best express the central idea of the text?
  - A. In the mid-1800s, thousands of Native Americans were forced to leave their family land behind and travel west
  - B. On the Trail of Tears, new traditions and customs arose that have since become part of Native American culture
  - C. After the Indian Removal Act of 1830, many Native American tribes revolted, and were allowed to keep their homelands
  - D. When the Native Americans were forced to leave their homelands, they had to leave their sick and dying behind as well
  - E. The Trail of Tears was a brutal event in Native American history, on which many individuals were exposed to disease and exhaustion
  - F. In the mid-1800s, thousands of Native Americans chose to move west, in the hopes of finding more fertile farming and hunting land.
  
3. Which statement best describes the relationship between Mary Hill and Jobe Alexander?
  - A. Both individuals are Native Americans who endured hardships on the Trail of Tears
  - B. Both individuals are the descendants of Native Americans who endured hardships on the Trail of Tears
  - C. Both individuals were officers who forced Native Americans into relocation on the Trail of tears
  - D. Both individuals have different opinions on the same historic event: the forced relocation of Native Americans on the Trail of Tears

What are some of the main differences and similarities between Mary Hill’s and Jobe Alexander’s interviews? Draw a Venn diagram to record your results and use evidence from the text in your response.

## ON REVENGE

By Sir Francis Bacon 1625



Sir Francis Bacon (1561-1626) was an English philosopher, statesman and author. This passage discusses the notion of revenge, why some seek it, and the consequences of this fixation.

**As you read, take notes on Bacon's argument, and the purpose behind his comments.**

Revenge is a kind of wild justice; which the more man's nature runs to, the more ought law to weed it out. For as for the first wrong, it doth but offend the law; but the revenge of that wrong pulleth the law out of office. Certainly, in taking revenge, a man is but even with his enemy; but in passing it over, he is superior; for it is a prince's part to pardon. And Salomon, I am sure, saith, It is the glory of a man to pass by an offence.

That which is past is gone, and irrevocable; and wise men have enough to do with things present and to come: therefore they do but trifle with themselves, that labour in past matters.

There is no man doth a wrong for the wrong's sake; but thereby to purchase himself profit, or pleasure, or honour, or the like. There why should I be angry with a man for loving himself better than me? And if any man should do wrong merely out of ill nature, why, yet it is but like the thorn or briar, which prick and scratch, because they can do no other.

The most tolerable sort of revenge is for those wrongs which there is no law or remedy; but then let a man take heed the revenge be such as there is no law to punish; else a man's enemy is still beforehand, and it is two for one.

Some, when they take revenge, are desirous the party should know whence it cometh: this is the more generous. For the delight seemeth to be not so much in doing the hurt as in making the party repent: but base and crafty cowards are like the arrow that flieth in the dark.

Cosmus, Duke of Florence, had a desperate saying against perfidious or neglecting friends, as if those wrongs were unpardonable: You shall read (saith he) that we are commanded to forgive our friends. But yet the spirit of Job was in a better tune: Shall we (saith he) take good at God's hands, and not be content to take evil also? And so of friends in a proportion.

This is certain, that a man that studieth revenge keeps his own wounds green, which otherwise would heal and do well.

Public revenges are for the most part fortunate; as that for the death of Caesar; for the death of Pertinax; for the death of Henry the Third of France; and many more. But in private revenges it is not so. Nay rather, vindictive persons live the life of witches; who as they are mischievous, so end they unfortunate.

On Revenge by Sir Francis Bacon is in the public domain.

### Notes:

Julius Caesar (100-44 BCE) was a Roman dictator, known for his assassination by approximately 60 or more conspirators. Publius Helvius Pertinax (126-193 CE) became emperor of Rome and was assassinated three months later. King Henry III of France (r.1574-1589) was assassinated during the Siege of Paris

Job is another character from the Judea-Christian Bible, the central figure in the Book of Job. A pious man, he suffers many trials as a test of his belief in and obedience towards God; in the end, he is rewarded for never losing his faith.

**Create a glossary for the following words:**

**Irrevocable** (adjective)

**Advocate** (verb)

**Dwell** (verb)

**Justice** (noun)

**Base** (adjective)

**Green** (adjective)

**Which of the following best describes a central idea of the text?**

- a) Revenge is a moral and legal crime.
- b) Revenge and justice are the same thing; what we call it depends on the situation.
- c) If the law cannot guarantee justice, then it is up to the injured party to seek reparation.
- d) To dwell on revenge is to dwell in the past, never moving forward, and therefore overall not worth the effort.

**What does the term “perfidious” most closely mean as used in paragraph 6?**

- a) Impatient
- b) Faithful
- c) Snobbish
- d) Disloyal

**Which phrase from the paragraph best supports the answer to Part A?**

- e) “desperate saying”
- f) “unpardonable
- g) “commanded to forgive”
- h) “content to take evil”

**What is the author’s likely purpose in this passage?**

- A. To advocate for revenge under most circumstances
- B. To advocate against all forms of revenge
- C. To examine the nature and consequences of revenge
- D. To examine the legal limits of justice and revenge

**In the context of this passage, why do people do bad things? According to this text, are these things done purposefully or as a consequence of another motivation? Cite evidence from this text, your own experience, and other literature, art, or history in your answer.**

## THOUSANDS OF YEARS FROM NOW

By Hans Christian Andersen 1853



Hans Christian Andersen (1805-1875) was a Danish writer who is best known for his fairy tales including “The Little Mermaid” and “The Snow Queen.” “Thousands of Years from Now” published in 1853 is an essay in which the author imagines what the future might be like.

**As you read, take notes on Andersen’s predictions about the future and the role of technology.**

Yes, thousands of years from now men will fly on wings of steam through the air, across the ocean. The young inhabitants of America will visit old Europe. They will come to see the monuments and the great cities, which will then lie in ruins, just as we in our time make pilgrimages to the ruined splendours of southern Asia. Thousands of years from now they will come!

The Thames, the Danube, and the Rhine still roll in their valleys, Mont Blanc still stands firm with its snowy summit, the northern lights still glitter over the lands of the North, but generation after generation has become dust. Mighty names of today are forgotten-as forgotten as those who already slumber under the hill where the rich corn merchant sits and gazes out across his flat and waving cornfields.

"To Europe!" cry the young sons of America. "To the land of our ancestors, that glorious land of memory and legends! To Europe!"

The ship of the air comes. It is crowded with passengers, for this is a much faster crossing than by sea. The electromagnetic wire under the ocean has already cabled the number of the aerial travellers. Already Europe is in sight--the coast of Ireland. But the passengers are still asleep and will not be called until they are over England. It is there that they still take their first step onto the soil of Europe, in the land of Shakespeare, as the intellectual call it, or the land of politics and land of machines, as it is called by others.

Here they stay a whole day! That is all the time this busy generation can give to the whole of England and Scotland. Then they rush on, through the tunnel under the English Channel, to France, the country of Charlemagne and Napoleon. The learned among them speak of Molière and the classic and romantic school of remote antiquity; others applaud the names of heroes, poets, and scientists whom our time does not yet know, but who will in after days be born in that crater of Europe, Paris.

Now the steamboat of the air crosses the country whence Columbus set sail, where Cortez was born, and where Calderó sang his dramas in resounding verse. Beautiful, black-eyed women still live in those blooming valleys, and the ancient songs tell of the Cid and the Alhambra.

Then through the air, across the sea, to Italy, where once stood old, eternal Rome. It has vanished! The Campagna is a desert; a solitary ruined wall is shown as the remains of St. Peter's, and there is even doubt that this ruin is authentic.

On to Greece, to spend a night in the hotel at the top of Mount Olympus, just so they can say that they have been there. Then to the Bosphorus, for a few hours' rest and to see the spot where Byzantium stood; and where legends tell of the harems of the Turks, poor fishermen are now spreading their nets.

Over the ruins of the mighty cities of the Danube, cities that we in our days know not yet; and on the rich sites of some of those which time shall yet bring forth, the air travellers sometimes descend, only to depart again quickly.

Down below lies Germany, which was once covered with a massive network of railways and canals. Germany, where Luther spoke, and Goethe sang, and Mozart once held the sceptre of music! Great names of science and art now shine there – names still unknown to us. One day's stopover for Germany, and one for the other – the country of Oersted and Linnaeus, and for Norway, land of old heroes and young Norwegians. Iceland is visited on the journey home; the geysers burst forth no more, the volcano Hecla is extinct, but that great island is still fixed in the foaming sea, mighty monument of legend and poetry. "There is really a great deal to be seen in Europe," says the young American proudly. "And we've seen it in eight days; and it is quite possible, as the great traveller" (and here he names one of his contemporaries) "tells us in his famous book, *How to See All Europe in Eight Days*."

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**How does the author describe the future?**

**Which of the author's predictions are accurate and which ones are not?**

**What is the tone of this short story? Use evidence in your answer.**

**Do you think Andersen's description of future descendants as a "busy generation" (in paragraph 5) is a reasonable prediction?**

**What does the narrator believe the future should look like? Use evidence from the text in your answer.**

**What do you believe the future should look like? Use evidence from your own experience, current events, art, literature, or history.**

## The Blue-Eyed, Brown-Eyed Exercise

By CommonLit Staff 2014

After the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr. in April of 1968, a third-grade teacher named Jane Elliott decided to try a social experiment to help her students understand prejudice.



**As you read, take notes on how the teacher performed the experiment, and what its results meant for her students.**

On April 4, 1968, Martin Luther King, Jr., was assassinated. On April 5, Steven Armstrong was the first child to arrive in Jane Elliott's third-grade classroom in Riceville, Iowa. He immediately asked why "that King" (referring to Martin Luther King, Jr.) was murdered. After the rest of the class arrived, Elliott asked what they knew about black people. She then asked the children if they would like to try an exercise to feel what it would be like to be treated the way a person of colour is treated in America. Jane Elliott decided to make the exercise based on eye colour instead of skin colour to see what segregation would be like. The children agreed to try the exercise.

On that first day of the exercise, she designated the blue-eyed children as the superior group. Elliott provided brown fabric collars and asked the blue-eyed students to wrap them around the necks of their brown-eyed peers as a method to easily identify the minority group. She gave the blue-eyed children extra privileges, such as second helpings at lunch, access to the new jungle gym, and five extra minutes at recess. The blue-eyed children sat in the front of the classroom, and the brown-eyed children were sent to sit in the back rows. The blue-eyed children were encouraged to play only with other blue-eyed children and to ignore those with brown eyes. Elliott would not allow brown-eyed and blue-eyed children to drink from the same water fountain, and often chastised the brown-eyed students when they did not follow the exercise's rules or made mistakes. She often exemplified the differences between the two groups by singling out students and would use negative aspects of brown-eyed children to emphasize a point.

At first, there was resistance among the students in the minority group to the idea that blue-eyed children were better than brown-eyed children. To counter this, Elliott lied to the children by stating that the melanin, responsible for making children blue-eyed, was also linked to their higher intelligence and learning ability. Shortly thereafter, this initial resistance fell away. Those who were deemed "superior" became arrogant, bossy and otherwise unpleasant to their "inferior" classmates. Their grades also improved, doing mathematical and reading tasks that seemed outside their ability before. The "inferior" classmates also transformed – into timid and subservient children who even during recess isolated themselves, including those who had previously been dominant in the class. These children's academic performance suffered, even with tasks that had been simple before.

The next Monday, Elliott reversed the exercise, making the brown-eyed children superior. While the brown-eyed children did taunt the blue-eyed in ways similar to what had occurred the previous day, Elliott reports it was much less intense. At 2:30 on that Wednesday, Elliott told the blue-eyed children to take off their collars. To reflect on the experience, she asked the children to write down what they had learned.

**In paragraph 3, what does the word “subservient” mean?**

- A. More important; high-class
- B. Overriding; loud
- C. Equal to; balanced
- D. Less important; subordinate

Which of the following best explains why the “superior” group of students performed better academically than the “inferior” group?

- A. Melanin, which determines eye colour, also determines intelligence and learning ability.
- B. The “superior” group was praised and told they were more gifted, which increased their self-confidence.
- C. The teacher, Jane Elliot, inflated the “superior” students’ grades as part of her experiment.
- D. The “superior” students were given easier tasks to complete than the “inferior” students.

How do the results of the experiment contribute to Jane Elliott’s lesson to her students?

- E. After being treated like a member of the “inferior” group, students were less inclined to treat their peers that way.
- F. Students preferred being part of the “superior” group over the “inferior” group.
- G. After being part of both the “superior” and “inferior” groups, students understood why African Americans were treated differently.
- H. After becoming aware of their differences, students became more likely to self-segregate into their own groups.

What are your reactions to this experiment? Use evidence to explain your ideas.

**Mission: Impossible – Ghost Protocol – review**

### 3 / 5 stars

The fourth in Tom Cruise's international-spy series is an efficient and effective thriller – and is given an extra comic dimension by a scene-stealing Simon Pegg

As you read, take notes about the writer's opinion of the film.

Cinema's most respectable hoodie [Tom Cruise](#) is back, slouching moodily out of the poster for the latest enjoyable Mission Impossible caper, directed by Brad "Incredibles" Bird. He is Ethan Hunt, leader of the International Missions Force or IMF – wiry, taut, fiercely focused, unfeasibly buff for a man of any age, never mind 49. He must now lead his crew in disguise, in disgrace, in the shadows, because an event repeatedly forewarned in his mission briefing has come to pass. His team has been disowned by the US government who have invoked something solemnly called "ghost protocol". They have been stitched up for a bombing at the Kremlin and are now on their own, needing to restore their good name in the action-adventure community and, unaided, recapture a nuclear activation device invented by a crazy terrorist (Michael Nyqvist) intent on Armageddon.

In Hunt's team is the gorgeous Jane (Paula Patton), the beta-plus warrior male Brandt (Jeremy Renner), and the comedy one, Benji, played by [Simon Pegg](#), who really rather often manages to steal the movie. (Realising no one likes the ideas he's proposing in a tense strategy meeting, Benji blurts out: "I'm just spitballing here; it's not all going to be gold.") The best sequence is a gobsmacking vertigo nightmare: Ethan has to climb out of a high window of a tall tower in Dubai and inch along the side of the building. That's a very woozy experience on Imax. There's some great gadgetry: particularly a portable gauze camouflage screen that permits Ethan and Benji to creep up a Kremlin corridor invisibly – a very surreal moment. The film sags a little during later scenes in India, and Ethan has a slightly baffling kissing moment with Jane, leaving us unsure exactly how much sexual chemistry we are supposed to expect between Cruise and Patton, given that this tragic widower is still supposed to have tender memories of his departed wife. But it's solid entertainment.

- What genre of film is Mission Impossible?
- Identify the names of two of the actors/actresses in this film.
- What is the writer's favourite scene? Why?
- In your own words, explain why you think the writer feels the film sags?
- Re-read the review and note down the adjectives the writer uses.

Positive adjectives used to describe the film	More negative adjectives used to describe the film

- What can you deduce about the writer's standpoint on the film as a result?
- How are the ideas in the review built up? Think about the content of paragraph 1 and the content of paragraph 2. What are each of the paragraphs about?
- Why are the words 'ghost protocol' in inverted commas?
- What function does the semi-colon fulfil here? The best sequence is a gobsmacking vertigo nightmare: Ethan has to climb out of a window of a tall tower in Dubai and inch along the side of the building.



## SOMETIMES, HISTORY IS SADNESS

BY DAVID WHITE 2015

This text discusses the events of September 11, 2001, when a series of four terrorist attacks were carried out across the country.

**As you read, take notes on the different ways that people face tragedy and heal from it.**

History is full of beautiful and wonderful things. You can probably think of many, like your first birthday and the day you got your latest favourite thing. People in your family probably remember great days like the day men walked on the moon or the day the Berlin Wall came down. Everyone you know has favourite days, days that they remember happily.

September 11, 2001 was different. On September 11, a great many people died.

You probably already know the details. The big picture is that the World Trade Centre, one of the most famous symbols of New York and of the United States, was destroyed. One airplane hit each of the two towers of the World Trade Centre. Not long after those crashes, both towers collapsed. The Pentagon, the Centre of the U.S. Defence Department, was also hit by an airplane, and many people died there, too. Farther away, another airplane that had been hijacked crashed in Pennsylvania. Everyone aboard was killed.

In total, 2,996 people died and more than 6,000 others were injured.

This is very sad. It's horrible. It's terrifying. It makes us all wonder what's next.

Many people (children and adults) looked up in fear whenever they heard a noise. Was it another airplane? Was it coming for them?

This terrible tragedy affected everyone in different ways. Some people knew someone who was there. Many had family members who were visiting New York or Washington who couldn't get home. The sadness extended far beyond the city of New York or Washington, D.C.

Sometimes, history is sad. History is full of terrible things, like long wars and terrible natural disasters. History is full of people dying and people being injured. It's a part of life, just as much a part of life as happiness and great things.

Older people you know can probably remember the explosion of the Space Shuttle Challenger or the disaster at the Chernobyl nuclear plant or the assassination of President John F. Kennedy. Those were terrible, horrible things, and people were terribly afraid for many days after each of those things happened. Now, many years later, we can look back on them and learn from them. Security in the space shuttle program, in nuclear power plants, and around the U.S. president is greater today. When all is said and done, the attacks of September 11 was certainly one of the most terrible tragedies ever in history. But as people listened to the news and talked to their friends and family about this terrible day,

it became easier to remember that time can help ease the pain that people feel. People recover, and heal, and the grief of the survivors lessens.

Sometimes, only time lessens pain and grief.

1. **What is the central idea of this passage?**
  - A. It is important to make sure one's friends and family members are safe following a tragedy.
  - B. Tragic events will always be a part of history, but we can learn from them, and pain diminishes over time.
  - C. Increased security will prevent all potential disasters.
  - D. The World Trade Centre was a cultural icon and a symbol of New York City.
  
2. **Which phrase from the text best support the answers to Part A?**
  - A. "One airplane hit each of the two towers of the World Trade Centre." (Paragraph 3)
  - B. "Many people (children and adults) looked up in fear whenever they heard a noise. Was it another airplane? Was it coming for them?" (Paragraph 7)
  - C. "The sadness extended far beyond the city of New York or Washington, D.C." (Paragraph 8)
  - D. "As people listened to the news and talked to their friends and family about this terrible day, it became easier to remember that time can help ease the pain that people feel." (Paragraph 11)
  
3. **Why does the author include a discussion of happy events in paragraph 1?**
  - A. To show that good events will always outweigh the effects of disasters
  - B. To emphasize that both happy and sad events are a part of life
  - C. To encourage the reader to discuss them with his or her elders
  - D. To show that tragedies overshadow societal accomplishments
  
4. **How does the author support the idea that society can learn and grow from tragedies?**
  - A. By promising that time helps make pain go completely away
  - B. By explaining how many people became scared and nervous after the events of 9/11
  - C. By stating strongly how sad and difficult this tragedy was for so many people
  - D. By sharing facts about ways the government made society safer after other tragedies

The author suggests that certain disastrous historical events led to increased security in various places. In the context of this poem, what can we learn from tragedy? Use evidence from this text, your own experience, and other literature, art, or history in your answer.

## WOOLLY MAMMOTH SPARKS DEBATE OVER CLONING



By Joyce Grant 2014

The woolly mammoth is an extinct species of mammoth (a mammal related to the elephant) that lived during the ice ages. The animal is known from bones and frozen carcasses from northern North America and northern Eurasia. The species disappeared around 10,000 years ago, but modern technology has sparked a debate about whether or not extinct species like the woolly mammoth should be brought back.

**As you read, take note of the pros and cons of cloning extinct species.**

A woolly mammoth carcass that was frozen in ice for 40,000 years may make it possible for scientists to bring the extinct species back to life.

The mammoth was found embedded in ice on a remote island off northern Russia in May 2013. The ice had preserved the body so well, a liquid that looked like blood oozed out of it when it was first discovered. Scientists were very excited because fresh blood cells may contain DNA, or genetic information about the mammoth. If scientists can find the mammoth's complete DNA, they might be able to clone the animal.

(Cloning is a process that makes it possible to create an exact copy of an animal. Scientists take genetic information from the cell of one animal and insert it into the egg of another animal. The second animal then gives birth to an exact genetic copy of the first animal.)

After the mammoth carcass was dug up, scientists spent three days studying it and taking samples of its blood and tissues. Then they froze it again to prevent it from rotting.

Sooam, a biotechnology company from South Korea, is studying samples taken from the mammoth to see if they can find enough genetic information to try cloning it.

Woolly mammoths have been extinct for 10,000 years. Many scientists think they could learn a lot more about the species if they could study a living example. Other scientists think cloning an extinct species is a bad idea.

Dr. Tori Herridge, a scientist at the Natural History Museum in London, England, helped study the woolly mammoth's body. She doesn't think scientists should try to clone it.

She said that scientists would need an Asian elephant to be the clone's mother. This means they would have to keep several elephants in captivity while they experiment with the cloning process so that they could closely monitor them out of the wild. But Asian elephants are endangered, and don't do well in captivity.

Dr. Herridge said that giving birth to a woolly mammoth could be dangerous for the elephant mother. Once the baby was born, it would also have to live in captivity. In addition, it would be the only mammoth in the world, and woolly mammoths preferred to live in herds.

Dr. Herridge thinks scientists can learn a lot just by studying the remains of the woolly mammoth.

So far, scientists have found out that the woolly mammoth, who they nicknamed Buttercup, was 2.5 metres tall and about 50 years old when she died. By studying the growth rings in her tusks, they can tell that she gave birth to eight calves. Her teeth show that she had dental problems.

By examining the contents and bacteria found in her intestines, scientists can tell she ate grassland plants like dandelions and buttercups. They think she died after she became trapped in the peat bog and then was attacked by predators such as wolves.

Insung Hwang is one of the scientists at Sooam. He said they have not yet found complete DNA in any of the samples, but they have found pieces of DNA that could be pieced together.

He added that it will take scientists a long time to analyse the genetic information from the mammoth, and even longer before they actually try cloning the animal.

**What does the word “captivity” most closely mean as it is used in paragraph 9?**

- a) **Confinement**
- b) **Challenge**
- c) **Research**
- d) **Danger**

**Which phrase from the paragraph best supports the answer to Part A?**

- a) **“would need an Asian elephant to be the clone’s mother”**
- b) **“experiment with the cloning process”**
- c) **“so they could closely monitor them out of the wild”**
- d) **“Asian elephants are endangered”**

**Which of the following best states the purpose of paragraph 11?**

- a. **To introduce the fact that Dr. Herridge is against all instances of cloning.**
- b. **To explain a reason why Dr. Herridge believes the woolly mammoth should not be cloned.**
- c. **To point out that Dr. Herridge is uncertain of her position on whether or not the mammoth should be cloned.**
- d. **To note that while Dr. Herridge is against cloning the mammoth, she still believes its remains should be studied for scientific research.**

**What reason does the author provide for why some scientists believe the woolly mammoth should be cloned? Use a piece of evidence from the article.**

**In your opinion, should the scientists attempt to clone the woolly mammoth? Why or why not?**