

NON-FICTION SHORTS

ANTHOLOGY AND RESOURCES FOR KS3



Acknowledgements

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Teachers' Notes

How to Use this Book

Each section contains a selection of texts linked thematically. You might choose to teach all the texts in a section, or only one. There are tasks at the end of the sections which range across the texts to build comparative skills.

Within a section, the texts are sequenced from least to most challenging. You might like to start with a more accessible text to build students' knowledge and vocabulary before tackling a more challenging one. An overview of the sections, which become progressively more difficult, is given below.

Kill or Cure

This section would be an excellent introduction to 19th-century non-fiction as the advertisements for quack cures are short and amusing, but will help students to understand important contextual information and get used to 19th-century language in ways which will be very helpful as they study more 19th-century texts.

Looking for Adventure

This section is accessible for younger or less able students as it starts with two texts written for children and although it includes a 19th-century text this takes the form of short diary entries. The comparative task in this section is very light touch.

My Story

Although all the texts in this section were written for adults, they are fairly short and accessible. The comparative task is light touch but requires students to read all the texts in the section, even if they have not completed all the activities.

Brain Waves

This section starts with a text written for teenagers which builds knowledge and vocabulary for a more sophisticated modern extract, and ends with a slightly longer and more challenging piece of 19th-century writing.

Sports Shorts

This section includes a mixture of 19th-century and modern texts, starting with short football reports and progressing to two longer 19th-century pieces. There are some more challenging comparative activities at the end of the section.

Holding Hands in the Dark

The issues in this section require some maturity. The first two texts are fairly accessible but both 'Holding Hands in the Dark' and 'A Watercress Girl' are at GCSE reading level. This section also includes comparative work of the type students might be asked to do at GCSE.



TEACHERS' NOTES

Tips for Teaching Challenging Texts

We have deliberately chosen some longer pieces to build reading stamina and maintain pupils' interest. Some of the texts, particularly the 19th-century ones, are challenging for pupils to read. Tips for helping pupils to tackle these texts include:

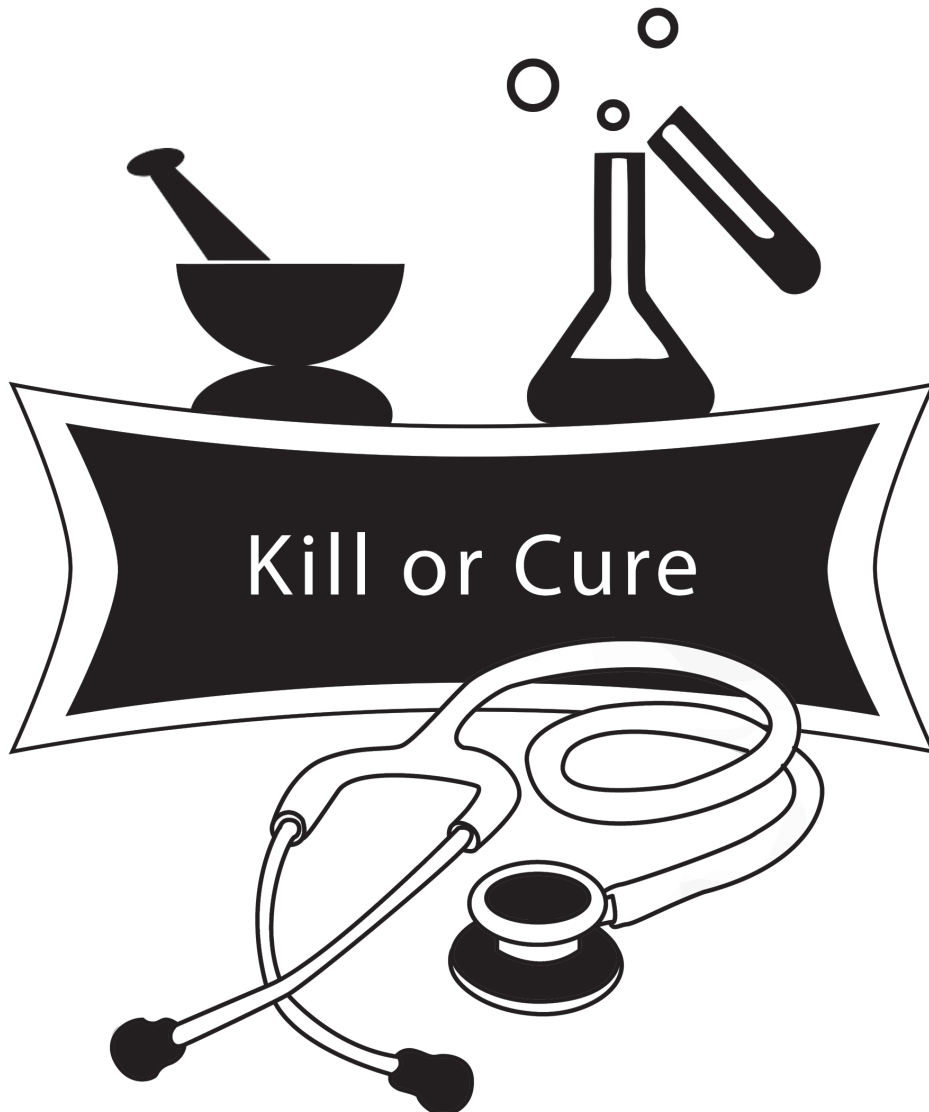
- Acknowledge the difficulty of the text, but also show your confidence that they are ready for it. Present the reading of the text as an interesting challenge and a joint venture that they will undertake with the support of both teacher and peers.
- Explicitly make space for pupils to make a personal connection between themselves and the text. This might include thinking about other things they have read or watched, a personal experience they have had like one described in the text, or simply a chance to think about what interests them in the text.
- Before tackling what they have not understood in a text, ask them what they *have* understood. This gets them into the habit of 'getting the gist' rather than panicking about what they don't understand, and will build confidence and resilience.
- Model what you do when approaching a challenging text by thinking aloud when you read it. For example, how you are monitoring your understanding as you read, what you do when you come to an unfamiliar word, reading backwards and forwards to help understanding, identifying the main clause in a sentence.
- Glossary: we have glossed only words that a teacher might be unfamiliar with.

This publication is not photocopiable. However, the following pages may be photocopied.

- Page 11: The chopped-up advert
- Page 12: How language is used (Chart)
- Page 32: An anecdote with a message (Line graph)
- Page 117: What makes it funny? (Chart)
- Pages 125-127: Where do you draw the line? (Quiz)

You can also download these pages as PDFs from the English and Media Centre website: www.englishandmedia.co.uk/publications

Search for 'Non-fiction Shorts' to be taken to the correct page.



NON-FICTION SHORTS

Quack Cures

The matching game

- Look at the product names, slogans and images on page 9 which all come from four Victorian adverts. See if you can match the product, slogan and image for each one.

A first response

- Turn to a partner and share your first response to the images and slogans, for example:
 - What you think the products have in common
 - What you find strange or amusing about the adverts
 - How they seem similar to or different from what you might expect in a modern advert.
- As a class, read the paragraph, below, which explains the context for the adverts.

The 19th century was an age of ‘quack cures’. A ‘quack’ is someone who pretends to have medical skills, knowledge or qualifications, usually to make money from fake cures. Street vendors sold such medicines on a ‘no cure, no pay’ basis, but by the time a disappointed buyer got back to the street corner to complain and get their money back, the seller had long moved on to a new street corner or town. The quacks made grand claims for the ‘cures’ which were sold in elaborate and highly decorated bottles and jars to make them look convincing and expensive. Many contained alcohol, or drugs which are now illegal like cocaine and opium, to make the patient feel better... for a very short while.

NON-FICTION SHORTS

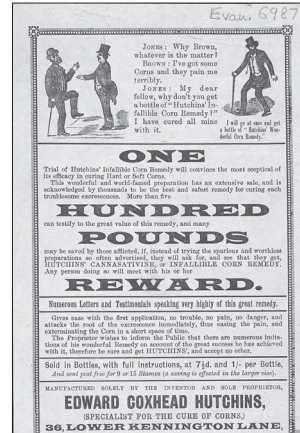
Historical context

- Look again at all the adverts. You will find full sized versions on pages 17-20.

1.



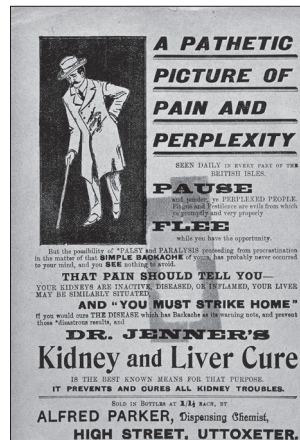
2.



3.



4.



- As a class, brainstorm some questions and issues that the adverts raise about Victorian times. For example:
 - Questions about the way people thought, what they knew, or how they lived
 - Things that you know about the 19th century which help you to understand the adverts
 - Things you can infer or deduce about Victorian times from the adverts.
- Working with a partner, read through the information about the 19th century, on page 15. Discuss which information particularly adds to your reading and understanding of the adverts.
- As a class, discuss how the advertisers are exploiting their poor customers, for example, the fact that they may have had only a very basic education, or their worries about their sick children.



NON-FICTION SHORTS

The Rule of Threes

Before Reading

Who is this for? (1)

- As a class, read the first paragraph of the text you are going to work on in this section and then discuss the questions below.
 - What age and type of person is this text aimed at?
 - Why might they read it?

Explorers love stuff, like good boots or a nifty GPS tracker, but every good explorer knows that knowledge is way more important than stuff will ever be. The single most important thing an explorer should know is the rule of threes. You could be naked on a desert island in a hurricane, and if you knew the rule of threes you would still be better off than someone equipped with everything from gloves that heat up to a pen that writes in outer space.

Reading the Text



Read the whole text on pages 27-28.

After Reading

First response

- With a partner, share your response to the text, including any new thinking about what kind of reader it is aimed at.

Tone

- Working in a group of four, read through the pairs of adjectives on page 23 which could be used to describe different tones in writing.
- Allocate pairs of words to different people in your group. Find a quotation from the text for both words in the pair you have been allocated.
- Share your findings as a four. Discuss what you notice about the tone of different sections of the text and about the variety of tones used.
- Working on your own, write about tone in the text, drawing on your group discussion. Use at least one of the pairs of adjectives and use evidence from the text to support your comments.

THE RULE OF THREES

BY JOEL LEVY (LONELY PLANET)

Publisher 'Lonely Planet' specialises in travel books for adults but this extract comes from a book for children called *How to Be a World Explorer: Your All Terrain Training Manual*. Chapters include 'Desert Dangers', 'How to abseil into a volcano', and 'How to land a plane in an emergency'.

You can see how 'Rule of Threes' was presented in the *How to be a World Explorer* on page 28.

Explorers love stuff, like good boots or a nifty GPS tracker. But every good explorer knows that knowledge is way more important than stuff will ever be. The single most important thing an explorer should know is the 'rule of threes'. You could be naked on a desert island in a hurricane, and if you knew the rule of threes you would still be better off than someone equipped with everything from gloves that heat up to a pen that writes in outer space.

The Magic Number

The rule of threes goes like this:

- You can survive for three minutes without air
- You can survive for three hours without shelter
- You can survive for three days without water
- You can survive for three weeks without food

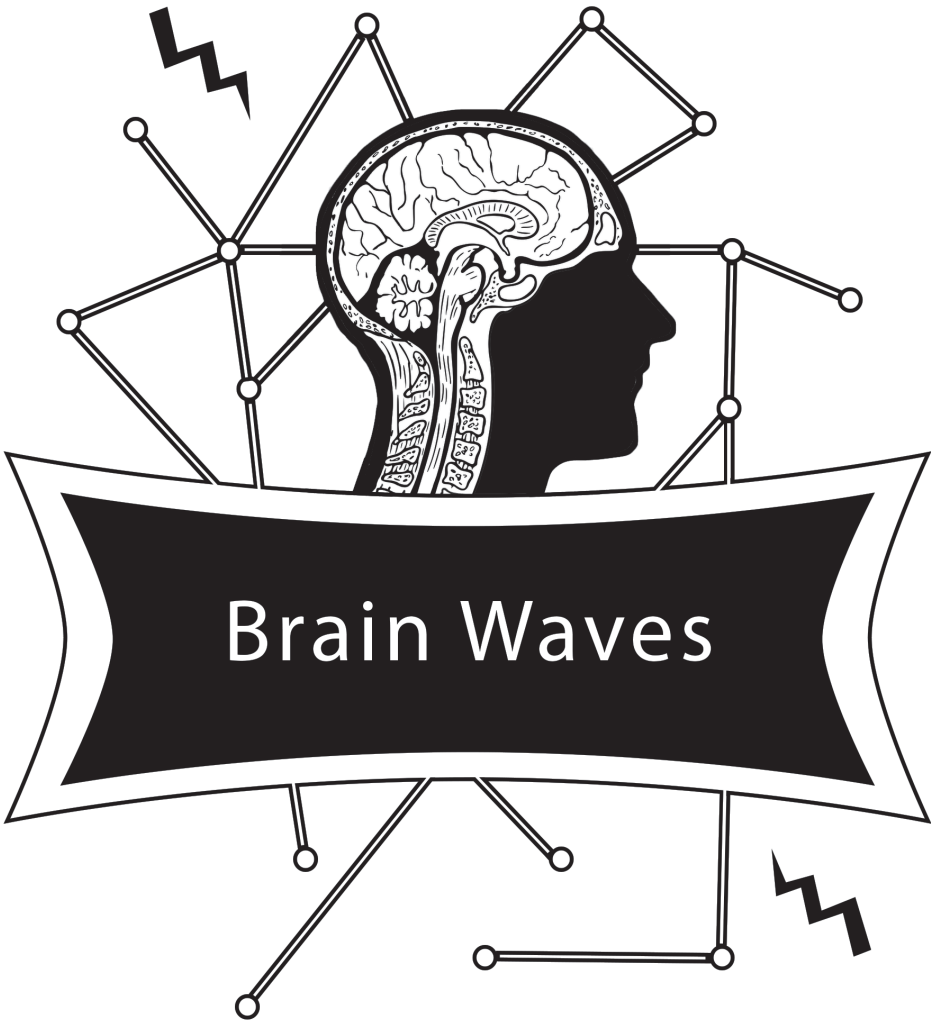
Why is this important? It tells you everything you need to know about your priorities in a survival situation. Priorities are things you should do first.

Explorers often find themselves in dangerous situations, and if they want to survive, they need to get their priorities straight. The rule of threes tells you what to do and in what order.

Three at Sea

1. Imagine you are sailing single-handed across the ocean when a strong wind blows up out of nowhere. Your boat hits a submerged reef, and water floods into the cabin.
2. As you struggle to get out from under a pile of stuff, the water closes over your head. You are now underwater. It will take you a minute and a half to get free, and two minutes to get out of the cabin into the open water. Should you try to grab your survival bag first, or get out now?
3. The rule of threes tells you that you can't afford the time you need to grab your survival bag. Get out now or drown!





Feeding the Body and Feeding the Mind

Before Reading

Feeding the body and feeding the mind

- As a class, brainstorm everything you know about the best way to feed your body to keep it healthy.
- Now brainstorm what you think might be meant by 'feeding the mind' to keep it healthy.

Reading a Tricky Text (1)



Listen as your teacher reads the whole text on pages 92-93.

Although the text you are going to read is short, the vocabulary is challenging in places. Rather than worrying about all the words you don't understand, let these wash over you and pick up the gist of what the writer is saying.

After Reading

Reading a tricky text (2)

- On your own, complete the sentence below. Share some of your sentences around the class and discuss similarities and differences.

'This text is about...'

- On your own, add to your sentence as suggested, below. Share some of your sentences around the class and discuss similarities and differences.

'This text is about...and...'

- On your own, add to your sentence again as suggested, below. Again, share some of your sentences around the class and discuss similarities and differences.

'This text is about...and...but...'



FEEDING THE BODY AND FEEDING THE MIND

BY LEWIS CARROLL

This text comes from *On Corpulence*, a book about dieting published in the 1860s. Most of the book is about feeding the body, but the extract you are going to read is from a short piece at the end of the book on ‘feeding the mind’ by the writer of *Alice in Wonderland*, Lewis Carroll.

Breakfast, dinner, tea; in extreme cases, breakfast, luncheon, dinner, tea, supper, and a glass of something hot at bedtime. What care we take about feeding the lucky body! Which of us does as much for his mind? And what causes the difference? Is the body so much the more important of the two?

By no means: but life depends on the body being fed, whereas we can continue to exist as animals (scarcely as men) though the mind be utterly starved and neglected. Therefore Nature provides that, in case of serious neglect of the body, such terrible consequences of discomfort and pain shall ensue, as will soon bring us back to a sense of our duty: and some of the functions necessary to life she does for us altogether, leaving us no choice in the matter. It would fare but ill with many of us if we were left to superintend¹ our own digestion and circulation. ‘Bless me!’ one would cry, ‘I forgot to wind up my heart this morning! To think that it had been standing still for the last three hours!’ ‘I can’t walk with you this afternoon,’ a friend would say, ‘as I have no less than eleven dinners to digest. I had to let them stand over from last week, being so busy, and my doctor says he will not answer for the consequences if I wait any longer!’

Well, it is, I say, for us that the consequences of neglecting the body can be clearly seen and felt; and it might be well for some if the mind were equally visible and tangible – if we could take it, say, to the doctor, and have its pulse felt.

‘Why, what have you been doing with this mind lately? How have you fed it? It looks pale, and the pulse is very slow.’

‘Well, doctor, it has not had much regular food lately. I gave it a lot of sugar-plums² yesterday.’

‘Sugar-plums! What kind?’

‘Well, they were a parcel of conundrums, sir.’

‘Ah, I thought so. Now just mind this: if you go on playing tricks like that, you’ll spoil all its teeth, and get laid up with mental indigestion. You must have nothing but the plainest reading for

¹ Superintend: supervise

² Sugar-plums: crystallised plums