

L E A R N E R S

LEARNING
WITH A
DIFFERENCE

READ and UNDERSTAND

Sharpens your reading comprehension
and vocabulary skills

- Reading texts deal with social and contemporary issues
- An accompanying audio CD records the reading texts
- Pre-reading questions for small group work and oral practice
- Ample exercises for practice in comprehension skills and summary writing
- Answer Key provided

4

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Rebecca Mok*

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LEARNERS
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Preface

Read and Understand is a series of four workbooks written for secondary or intermediate students who want to improve their reading comprehension skills. The 15 reading texts in each of the two lower-level books deal with social and contemporary issues of interest to teenagers. Each of the two upper-level books contains 20 reading passages covering a range of highly interesting topics written in different types of text, which include formal and informal letters, newspaper reports, speeches, recounts, conversations and information texts. Students can hear the reading of all the passages on an accompanying audio CD.

Every unit begins with three or four *Pre-Reading Questions* to encourage students to think about issues related to the topic. The questions are designed for students to work in pairs or small groups to develop their ability to make predictions and to understand information by drawing on their own knowledge and experience.

The *Vocabulary Study* section makes it convenient for students to look up the meanings of words and phrases highlighted in the passage.

The questions and activities in **Workbooks 3 and 4** are specially developed to help students sharpen specific reading comprehension and vocabulary skills. They are organized into the following three categories:

◆ **Recalling Information**

The questions in this category test students, at the knowledge level, their ability to pick out from the reading text what happened, to whom, where, when, how or why it happened. At this level, students will have a chance to:

- read and recall information from the text;
- note the relevance of dates, events and places; and
- trace the development of main ideas or points of view.

Students are given ample practice in these skills as they recall information and details in letters, conversations, descriptions, explanations, or give evidences/reasons that support a main idea or point of view.

◆ Understanding Information

In this category, students are required to practise answering a wide range of questions. They are asked to:

- compare and contrast information;
- order, group, and infer causes and effects;
- understand and organize information;
- grasp meaning;
- perceive thought patterns;
- recognize the features or components of different text types;
- generalize from given facts;
- use idioms or expressions;
- give meanings of words; and
- summarize information.

The exercises above are designed to help students develop their skills in:

- inferring and drawing conclusions by using contextual clues and prior knowledge;
- organizing, summarizing and synthesizing information using sequence, comparison, contrast and chronology;
- giving evidence or reasons to support a response or a point of view;
- using knowledge of text organization;
- understanding how the purpose of various text types is achieved;
- evaluating information for exaggeration or persuasive language; and
- inferring meanings of words in context.

◆ Writing Activity

With the aid of given notes, students are set writing tasks which require them to apply what they have learnt about features and organization of different text types. The tasks in each unit are linked to the reading text in its theme or in the text type, or both.

For the writing tasks at this level, students will have the opportunity to:

- plan and organize information;
- write in a variety of text types to suit different purposes;
- support and elaborate on ideas with relevant details; and
- use imagination.

All the writing activities aim to help students develop specific skills in:

- presenting and developing ideas in writing for a variety of purposes and audiences;
- exploring possible factors such as causes and effects, and reasons related to a topic or an issue;
- giving evidence or reasons to support a response, a point of view; and
- solving problems imaginatively and creatively.

SUGGESTIONS ON HOW TO USE WORKBOOKS 3 AND 4

◆ Use of Graphic Organizers

Graphic organizers provide visual 'images' for the organization of information. Where appropriate, graphic organizers are used in the exercises to guide students to a better understanding of the information, for example, by making comparisons and contrasts, showing causes and effects, outlining sequence of events, and so forth.

◆ Practice in Summary Writing

The skill of summarizing is one of the key skills in reading comprehension. Hence, a summary writing activity is given in every unit.

Here are five steps in ensuring effective summary writing:

1. Make sure you understand the requirement of the summary question.
2. Mark the parts of the reading text that answer the summary question.
3. Make a draft first, writing out all the main points only. Details and examples need be filled in only if the main points are well within the word length specified for the summary.
4. Check and double check your work, asking yourself:
 - Have I got all the main points down?
 - Have I used my own words as much as possible?
 - Have I repeated myself?
 - Have I skipped anything?
 - Are all the important information in the summary?
 - Is the summary within the required word length?
5. Edit or 'polish' your work to improve the overall accuracy, style and expressions. Improvements will include insertion of connectors like *and* and *because*, and correction of grammar, spelling and punctuation.

◆ Expression of Opinions

Where appropriate, the questions in the workbooks are set to elicit students' views and comments based on their own experience and cultural setting. One approach is for students to discuss these questions in small groups, confident in the knowledge that there are no right or wrong answers. Each student is encouraged to voice his/her views and to give reasons to support that point of view, which is a valuable life skill.

We acknowledge that developing language skills is a challenging and ongoing endeavour. It is hoped that this series of **Read and Understand 1-4** will serve its purpose in supplementing the materials that students need in order to be better thinkers and readers.



A Grim Discovery

A report in the local newspaper of the discovery of an unidentified corpse.

Pre-Reading Questions

1. From the title and subtitle above, what are your thoughts about what you are about to read?
2. What should a person do when he discovers an unidentified corpse?
3. Do you usually read such similar reports when they appear in the newspapers? Why or why not?

Reading Passage

Now read the passage below. You can look up the meanings of the words and idioms in bold in the Vocabulary Study section that follows.

The town of Springford woke to some shocking news yesterday. Police revealed that the body of a young woman had been found in a wooded area just outside the town. The person who made the grim discovery was 46-year-old Jim Bradley, who was walking his dog at the time.

He told our reporter earlier today, 'The dog's very well trained and usually he stays close to me, but on Thursday morning he went off **like the clappers** into the undergrowth. I could hear him, but I couldn't see him. I **wasn't best pleased** because I had intended staying on the path and wasn't wearing the right footwear for tramping through the undergrowth. When I eventually reached the dog I **couldn't believe my eyes**. He was scrabbling away at something buried in the ground and there was a human arm sticking out. I thought I was **seeing things**. I moved forward to take a closer look and saw that the dog was in the process of uncovering a dead body.

'I put the dog's leash on him and pulled him away before calling the police on my mobile. I wanted to get out of there right away, but the

police asked me to stay where I was until they arrived. I wasn't at all happy about staying there, I **can tell you**, but I had no choice but to **sweat it out** until the police arrived. The dog **had the wind up** as well and was whimpering and shivering at my feet. Fortunately, the police were **quick off the mark** and were with me very quickly.

'**My heart goes out to** the relatives of that poor young woman, but I just want to try and put the whole thing **to the back of my mind**, although I doubt if that will be possible. I'm sure that I'll be having nightmares about this for the rest of my life.'

Meanwhile Detective Inspector Tony Miles said that there was very little that he could tell us at this stage. '**It's early days** in the investigation, but we will be **pulling out all the stops** to find out who did this terrible thing to the young woman. As yet, we cannot reveal her identity, as her next of kin have not yet been informed. We will keep you informed of developments as they arise. Meanwhile, we would ask the public to try and stay calm.'

Vocabulary Study

clapper, like the clappers

(cliché)

extremely quickly; used in very informal contexts. In origin, the expression may refer to the clapper of a bell which moves very fast when the bell is being rung.

early, it's early days *(cliché)*

used to indicate that it is too soon to know how a situation or project will develop or how successful it is going to be.

eye, cannot believe your eyes *(cliché)*

used to indicate that you have seen something extremely surprising or shocking. The cliché **cannot believe your ears** is used to indicate that you have heard something extremely surprising or shocking.

heart, my heart goes out to someone *(cliché)*

used to indicate that you feel a great deal of sympathy or pity for someone. The cliché **my heart bleeds for you**

seems to have a similar meaning, but in fact it is used ironically to indicate that you do not feel any sympathy towards someone because you do not feel that they are in a particularly bad situation.

mark, be quick off the mark *(idiom/cliché)*

to be quick to take action.

mind, put something to the back of your mind *(cliché)*

to try to forget about something or not to think about something.

pleased, not to be best pleased (*cliché*)
used to indicate that someone is annoyed or upset about something.

stop, pull out all the stops (*idiom/cliché*)
to do everything you possibly can in order to achieve something. In origin, the expression refers to organ

playing. When all the stops of an organ are pulled out, the instrument is being played as loud as possible.

sweat it out (*cliché*)
to have to endure a difficult or unpleasant situation until it ends; used in informal contexts.

tell, I can tell you (*cliché*)
used to emphasize what has just been said.

thing, seeing things (*cliché*)
to imagine that you are seeing something that is not there.

wind, have (or get) the wind up (*idiom/cliché*)

to be nervous or afraid; used in informal contexts. The cliché

put the wind up someone means to make someone nervous or afraid; used in informal contexts.

Recalling Information

1. What shocking news was reported in the town of Springfield?

2. What led Jim Bradley to the discovery?

3. What action did Jim Bradley take when he made the discovery?

4. Describe Jim Bradley's feelings when he made the discovery.

5. What stopped the police from revealing the identity of the dead woman?

Understanding Information

1. Jim Bradley said he was not wearing suitable footwear for tramping through the undergrowth. Suggest what footwear would be suitable.

2. Why do you think Jim Bradley put the dog's leash on him?

3. Detective Inspector Tony Miles said, 'Meanwhile, we would ask the public to try and stay calm.' Suggest reasons why people would be alarmed by the news.

4. Match each of the situations stated in column A with the appropriate feeling given in column B. Write the letter of the feeling in the box that corresponds with the situation.

Column A

1. That tough-looking young man had the wind up and was shaking at the knees.

2. He couldn't believe his eyes when he saw what had happened to his car.

3. When he heard the tragic news, his heart went out to the family.

4. With the delay in getting the results, he would have to sweat it out another day.

5. To make this the best concert ever, he was pulling out all the stops.

Column B

A. He was determined.

B. He was sympathetic.

C. He was anxious.

D. He was shocked.

E. He was frightened.

5. In 80 words, write a summary of Jim Bradley's discovery, the action he took and what he felt. Use the information in paragraphs 2, 3 and 4.

Writing Activity

Read the passage below and the instructions that follow it carefully.

You were at the airport to see a relative off. There you noticed beside the waste bin a large brown parcel. You were alarmed as there were many announcements made at the airport that luggage should not be left unattended and there had been recent bomb scares. You alerted the airport official.

In about 200 words, explain in detail:

- what happened after you informed the airport official;
- what was in the parcel; and
- why was it left there.

(Use your own words and do not copy from the passage.)



A large rectangular area containing horizontal lines for writing. The lines are spaced evenly and cover most of the page's width and height.

A Sales Report

Information sent by a sales director to his staff.

Pre-Reading Questions

1. What kinds of report are you familiar with?
2. What do you think is the purpose of a report?
3. What do you expect would be in the sales report of a company?

Reading Passage

Now read the passage below. You can look up the meanings of the words and idioms in bold in the Vocabulary Study section that follows.

The end of the financial year is approaching and, with it, the AGM, when we will have to give an account of the year's proceedings to our shareholders. As usual, at this time of year, I am sending a copy of this informal end-of-the-year report to all members of the sales force. I hope that you will all find it useful and that you will let me know if you have any comments. I value your **input**.

We started this year with a major new product and we really **hit the ground running**. Our sales for the first quarter of the year were very impressive and, indeed, **broke all records**. This was particularly heartening as this occurred at a time when many of our competitors were **feeling the pinch**. Indeed, there was talk among economic experts of an impending recession and even of economic **meltdown**. Fortunately, this **gloom and doom** did not materialize.

It was good that we were able to **buck the trend**, but as I said, we had a major new product and one, indeed, that is popularly believed to have **broken the mould** of kitchen equipment. Therefore, it would have been extremely surprising, **not to say** distressing, if we had not achieved substantial sales with it.

What is rather distressing is that the rest of the year did **not live up to the promise** of the first quarter, this despite the fact that the financial state of the country improved in the course of the year. To some extent, of course, it would not have been realistic to expect that peak level sales could be sustained throughout the year. Some falling-off was to be expected after the initial impact of the new product had worn off.

However, the falling-off was worse than had been anticipated. This gave us all **food for thought** and, fortunately, we were able to learn from the experience. Indeed, I think we should regard the introduction of the new product as a useful **learning curve** from which all departments have benefited. The whole programme of product launching has been assessed and revised where appropriate. We shall all be better prepared next time.

On the whole, this was a successful year and we hope to build on that success in the coming year. Thank you all for your contribution to this success. Get ready to do even better next year!

Vocabulary Study

curve, learning curve

(jargon)

used to indicate the continuous process of acquiring knowledge or skill; used in rather formal contexts. The expression originally referred to a graph representing someone's progress in learning something.

food for thought *(cliché)*

something which needs careful thought. The cliché

something to think

about has the same meaning.

gloom and doom *(cliché)*

used to indicate a situation which is extremely depressing and lacking in any hope for the future; often used by journalists. The fact that the words rhyme and have similar meanings make this a popular expression.

ground, hit the ground

running *(idiom / cliché)*

to begin doing something as actively and energetically as possible. This expression is uncertain in origin, although it is thought likely that it refers to members of the armed forces being dropped by parachutes or from helicopters into a combat zone. The cliché **get off to a flying start**, to have a very successful beginning, is similar in meaning.

input *(jargon)*

a contribution of information, such as comments or suggestions. This word became involved with information because of its connection with computers, the noun 'input' meaning a terminal or connection where data is entered into a computer and the verb meaning to enter data into a computer. It then began to be used in its present meaning by people who thought it sounded impressive and is now used extremely commonly by a wide range of people so that it is ceasing to be jargon and becoming just part of the ordinary language.

meltdown *(jargon)*

a complete collapse, often used in connection with financial matters, commonly found in press reports. The expression has its origin in nuclear technology where it means the melting of the core of a nuclear reactor because of overheating.

mould, break the mould

(idiom / cliché)

to do something in a completely new and original way. The word 'mould' here refers to a container into which is poured a liquid, such as melted metal or plaster, so that it sets and becomes the shape of the mould when it is hard.

pinch, feel the pinch

(idiom / cliché)

to begin to have financial problems because of having less money than you used to have; used in informal contexts.

promise, not to live up to the promise of something

(cliché)

not to be as good or successful as something or someone seemed likely to be, judging from the early stages of something.

record, break all records

(cliché)

used to emphasize how good or large something is in comparison with previous things.

say, not to say *(cliché)*

seemingly a contradiction since the expression precedes the word which it claims is not said, used either for effect or emphasis, meaning that what is being talked about could almost be described as the word which follows the expression.

trend, buck the trend

(cliché)

not to be affected by a tendency, usually a bad tendency of some kind, which is affecting others; often used in connection with financial matters.

Recalling Information

Say whether the following sentences are true or false.

- | | |
|--|--------------|
| 1. The sales report was sent to the members of the sales force. | True / False |
| 2. The sales report was usually sent out in the middle of the financial year. | True / False |
| 3. The major new product had faced poor sales. | True / False |
| 4. The company was not affected by an economic downturn in the first quarter. | True / False |
| 5. The company gained large sales with the new product in the first quarter. | True / False |
| 6. Company sales continued to grow for the rest of the year. | True / False |
| 7. The company had expected sales to decline sharply after the first quarter. | True / False |
| 8. The company gained useful experience on how to launch and sell a new product. | True / False |

Understanding Information

- When you analyse the structure of the information sent by the sales director, you will find it has five main parts. The main parts are listed in the first column of the organizer below. Complete the second column using the sales director's statement that is related to each main part. The first one is done for you as an example.

Main parts of the information statement	Statements made by the sales director
(a) Introduction to state purpose of the statement.	The informal end-of-the-year report was given to members of the sales force for their input.
(b) Statement of the positive results and reasons for the results.	
(c) Statement of the unfavourable results and reasons for them.	
(d) Statement of the lesson learnt from the mistake.	
(e) Conclusion on a positive note.	

2. Replace the expression in bold print in each of the following sentences with an idiom that has the same meaning. Choose from the idioms found in the passage.
- (a) The professor gave a stimulating talk on biotechnology, giving us **much to mull over**. _____
- (b) After the disappointing first half of the match, the football team shook off its sense of **extreme hopelessness** and went on to victory. _____

- (c) Despite a weak property market, the new condominium **went against the tendency** and saw brisk sales. _____
- (d) The teacher asked for **comment** from the others on her fund-raising ideas. _____
- (e) The blockbuster movie **had the highest takings ever known** for the opening day. _____
3. Summarize in 100 words the main points of the information given by the sales director. Use the answers in question 1 to guide you.

Problems at Work

A letter giving news of office politics and events.

Pre-Reading Questions

1. Ask one question that you want answered after reading the passage.
2. Talk about a problem you have faced with in your studies.
3. Who would be responsible for the problem that you faced?

Reading Passage

Now read the letter below. You can look up the meanings of the words and idioms in bold in the Vocabulary Study section that follows.

4/6/01

Dear Sam,

I hope you're enjoying the course. You certainly chose a good time to be away from the office. I thought I'd better write and **put you in the picture** about what's been going on here in your absence. **Forewarned is forearmed** and you might decide not to bother coming back! Most of us are seriously thinking about leaving if things don't improve.

It all started when Mr Brown was taken ill suddenly. Apparently, he was **at death's door** for a while and everyone was very worried about him. However, the doctors eventually found out what was wrong. He's had an operation and he'll be **up and about** next week, although he won't be back **in harness** for a couple of months. And that's the problem.

Unfortunately for us in the office, Mr Brown's sister was visiting him from America when he was taken ill. She is now, as she puts it, **at the helm** while he's off work, and has installed herself in his office. When we first heard about it most of us weren't much bothered about it, although having someone brought in over him made the deputy manager **hopping mad**.

However, we had a swift change of attitude when we met Mrs Wiley, as she is called. She is 50 **if she's a day** and is definitely a case of **mutton dressed as lamb**. She must spend hours **putting on her slap** in the morning! Not that we care what age she is or what she looks like, but we care about how she treats us—and that is very badly.

She has her own business in New York and she's always telling us how much better her staff are than us. I bet they're all **having a ball** while she's away and hoping that she won't come back. It is impossible to please her and she criticizes everyone's work all the time. Mr Brown's secretary simply could not stand it any longer and is now off ill with stress. The rest of us are thinking of joining her!

When she arrived in the office her **opening gambit** was that we must all work very hard to ensure that the business did not suffer while the owner was away. It's suffering all right! No one likes her and we're losing both clients and suppliers.

See what I mean about staying away?

Best wishes

Billy

Vocabulary Study

ball, have a ball (*cliché*)
to enjoy yourself very much;
used in informal contexts. The
expression refers to ball in
the sense of formal dance.

day, if someone is a day
(*cliché*)

used to emphasize that
someone is a certain age,
older than they pretend to be
or older than their behaviour
or clothes suggest; used in
informal contexts.

death, at death's door
(*idiom/cliché*)

seriously ill and likely to die;
used in fairly informal contexts.

forewarned is forearmed
(*cliché*)

a saying which indicates that
having advance knowledge of
something which is going to
happen means that you can
be prepared for it.

gambit, opening gambit
(*cliché*)

someone's opening remark in a
discussion or conversation. The

word 'opening' is, in fact,
redundant since the word
'gambit' itself suggests an
opening, it being an opening in
chess designed to gain an
advantage for the player.

harness, in harness
(*idiom/cliché*)

working, at work. In origin, the
expression refers to the fact
that horses are harnessed
when they're working.

helm, at the helm
(*idiom/cliché*)

in charge. The expression is
nautical in origin, the helm
being the handle or wheel
which controls the direction in
which a ship or boat is
travelling.

mad, hopping mad
(*cliché*)

extremely angry; used in
informal contexts.

mutton dressed as lamb
(*idiom/cliché*)

used to describe someone,
usually a woman, who is

dressed in a style of clothes
much more suited to a
younger person. The origin
of the expression is the
practice of some butchers
of trying to make mutton,
the meat from older sheep,
look like the tender, and
more expensive, meat from
lambs, in order to deceive
customers.

**picture, put someone in
the picture** (*idiom/cliché*)

to give someone the
information which they need
in order to understand a
situation. An informal
expression which has the
same meaning is **fill
someone in**.

slap, put on your slap
(*colloquialism*)

to put on your make-up.

up and about (*cliché*)
out of bed, especially after
being in bed ill.

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Recalling Information

1. What was the relationship between Billy and Sam?

2. What had happened to Mr Brown?

3. Who had taken over Mr Brown's work in the office?

4. Pick out three things that Billy said about Mrs Wiley, which tell you how she treated her staff.

Understanding Information

1. What do you think was Mr Brown's position in the company? Use information in the passage to support your answer.

2. Write a character sketch of Mrs Wiley, using the information in the passage.

3. Although Billy did not directly tell us what Mr Brown was like, you can still **infer** what kind of boss he was. What can you say of Mr Brown? (*Hint*: He would be everything that Mrs Wiley was not.)

4. Choose an idiom from the box to replace the phrase in bold print in each of the sentences below. Write the appropriate idiom at the end of each sentence.

put him in the picture

mutton dressed as lamb

were having a ball

be up and about

hopping mad

- (a) Once the cast is removed, Ravish would be able to **get out of bed**.

- (b) The carnival was a success. Everyone from young to old **enjoyed themselves**.

- (c) Mrs Smith really looked odd. She was **middle-aged and dressed in the latest pop fashion**. _____
- (d) When the cars collided, the drivers stepped out, both **in a rage**.

- (e) A student who had chicken pox had just returned to school. His friend **told him** about the recent happenings in school. _____

5. Summarize in 80 words the main points in Billy's letter.

Writing Activity

The prefect in your class tends to be bossy and often tells off students who do not do exactly as he orders. Two days before the Mathematics teacher, Mr Tank, arrived in class, the prefect shouted at a student, Samuel, to stop talking. When Samuel did not do as he was told, the prefect threw a ruler at him.

You get together with a few other students to discuss a solution to the problem of the prefect's bossy ways. Write out the solution in 250 words to present to your teacher.

Health Scores

A commentary on the issue of health scares.

Pre-Reading Questions

1. Talk about a health scare that you know of.
2. What usually are the causes of health scares?
3. How do people react to health scares?

Reading Passage

Now read the passage below. You can look up the meanings of the words and idioms in bold in the Vocabulary Study section that follow.

It seems that hardly a week goes by without the publication of a new health scare. If we were to take all these scares seriously we would be afraid to eat anything at all. Yet, it is difficult for the lay person to decide which should be taken seriously and which should be **taken with a pinch of salt**. All of them seem so convincing when we read them and most of us do not have the specialized knowledge to **separate the wheat from the chaff**.

Should we be protected from such scares until they are at least completely scientifically substantiated? Is it once again the media, always a convenient **whipping boy** for everything, it seems, who are to blame? Not so long ago we would have been **kept in the dark** about health scares, as we were about so many things. But this is the age of communication and of communication technology. Shouldn't the media **take the wraps off** things that we should be concerned about?

The communication revolution has meant that we all have a great deal more information to absorb than was the case formerly. This is a time-consuming exercise and it is often difficult to **get one's head** round some of the more complex information. **To make matters worse**, much of the information is ever-changing. This is particularly

true of the food field. It seems that no sooner do we **take on board** what we should eat and what we should not than they **move the goalposts**.

Many of us thought that we had got the whole thing **sussed**. We should **avoid** red meat **like the plague** because it increased our cholesterol levels and was bad for our heart. Then it was chicken which was a **no-go area** because of the risk of salmonella. Still, at least fruit and vegetables were all right, positively bursting with goodness, we were told.

Not so now, apparently. Recently, we have been advised that a considerable amount of the fruit and vegetables which are on display in our supermarkets have unacceptably, and even dangerously, high levels of pesticide in them.

It appears that whenever we open our mouths and put something in it, we could be damaging our health. We just cannot avoid living dangerously if we are to eat. Probably the only thing to do is to stop worrying about it. Worry, after all, also endangers health.

Vocabulary Study

area, a no-go area (*cliché*)
something which should not be mentioned, taken, etc. Literally, 'a no-go area' is an area which is dangerous for people to enter or which they are forbidden to enter.

board, take something on board (*idiom/cliché*)
to listen to and understand or accept something. To take something on board' literally is to take it onto a ship or boat.

boy, a whipping boy (*idiom/cliché*)
someone who is punished in some way for mistakes made by someone else. The origin of the expression lies in the custom once practised in some royal households of punishing a boy who was educated with a prince for mistakes made by the prince, since it was not permitted for anyone, including tutors, to strike a member of the royal family.

dark, keep someone in the dark (*idiom/cliché*)
to keep something secret from someone.

goalpost, move the goalposts (*idiom/cliché*)
to change the rules, conditions or aims after something has already started in order to gain some advantage for yourself and to make things more difficult or confusing for other people.

head, get your head round something (*cliché*)

to succeed in understanding something, especially something difficult; used in informal contexts and most commonly found in negative constructions.

plague, avoid something like the plague (*cliché*)

used to emphasize how important it is to keep away from someone or something as much as possible. This is a much overused cliché and is best avoided.

salt, take something with a pinch of salt (*idiom/cliché*)

not to believe something

completely, as it might not be true or accurate. An alternative form of this cliché is **take something with a grain of salt**.

sussed, have something

sussed (*colloquialism*)
to understand all about something, sometimes after investigation or careful study. The word 'suss' is formed from 'suspect'.

wheat, separate the wheat from the chaff

(*idiom/cliché*)
to distinguish the good, clever or competent people in a group from the bad, stupid or incompetent. 'Chaff' refers to

the husks of corn which are not used in making flour. The cliché **separate the sheep from the goats**, has a similar meaning.

worse, to make matters worse (*cliché*)

to make an already difficult situation even more difficult.

wrap, take the wraps off something (*idiom/cliché*)

to stop keeping something secret. The opposite of this cliché is **keep something under wraps**.

Recalling Information

1. Pick out a statement in paragraph 1 that tells you the author did not believe all the health scares that she read about.

2. What change in modern times has made it possible for people to find out about health scares?

3. What are the two problems with trying to understand health scares?

4. Give two examples of health scares that are mentioned in the passage.

Understanding Information

1. Why do you think a lay person would find it difficult to decide whether a health scare should be taken seriously or not?

2. In the second paragraph, the writer asked three questions but did not expect an answer. These are called rhetorical questions. Rewrite the questions as statements which will make clear what the writer meant. The first one is done for you.

Question 1: Should we be protected from such scares until they are at least completely scientifically substantiated?

Statement: We should be protected from such scares until they are at least completely scientifically substantiated.

Question 2: _____

Statement: _____

Question 3: _____

Statement: _____

- . The writer intended to exaggerate the health scares in order to put across the point forcefully. Pick out the three exaggerated statements that were made.

(a) _____

(b) _____

(c) _____

- . Write the meaning of each of the idioms presented in bold print in the sentences below.

(a) Not so long ago we would **have been kept in the dark** about health scares.

(b) To **make matters worse**, much of the information is ever-changing.

(c) Many of us thought that we **had got** the whole thing **sussed**.

5. Summarize in 80 words these main points in the passage:

- The reason for so much information about health scares.
- The problems in understanding the health scare reports.
- Some examples of health scares.

Writing Activity

Recently in your neighbourhood, a number of people have been ill with severe food poisoning. You represent your neighbourhood to write a letter to the people in authority to make some suggestions.

Use some or all of the notes below, which are in random order. Rearrange them and add your own details.

- Public advised to eat at least five servings of vegetables and fruit daily.
- Government to monitor acceptable level of pesticides.
- Scrub root vegetables.
- You may want to consider buying organic fruit and vegetables.
- Laboratory studies show that pesticides can cause health problems.
- Examples are birth defects, nerve damage, cancer, and other effects that might occur over a long period of time.
- Peeling fruit and vegetables for children is a sensible precaution.

- Most vegetables and fruit grown with the use of pesticides.
- Pesticide residues may be present inside or on these foods.
- Discard any outer leaves on leafy crops.

Write the letter in 250 words. You may begin as follows:

Dear Sir,

Recently there has been concern among the public about the level of pesticides in fruit and vegetables.



Desperate Immigrants

An exposition of the situation of asylum seekers.

Pre-Reading Questions

1. What do you think of when you hear the word 'immigrants'?
2. Why do you think some immigrants would be desperate?
3. Ask one question that you want answered after reading the passage.

Reading Passage

Now read the passage below. You can look up the meanings of the words and idioms in bold in the Vocabulary Study section that follow.

There is growing concern about the number of immigrants who are seeking asylum. Then there is the question of their safety. Many of them are so desperate to leave their own countries and start a new life in another that they will grasp at any opportunity which they believe will enable them to do this. Sadly, many of them **risk life and limb** and still do not fulfil their dream.

Unscrupulous people are taking advantage of asylum seekers by promising to get them into the country of their choice **by fair means or foul**, provided they give them money. The desperate asylum seekers are parting with money which they have **scrimped and saved** for all their lives and are even taking the money which ageing parents had set aside for **a rainy day** and giving it to these people. They **have high hopes of** a safer, better life and the money seems well worth it.

Most of them **do not have the ghost of a chance** of being granted asylum in the country in which they wish to settle, especially if they try to enter it illegally, but they are often ignorant of this fact. There are some who do **know the score**, but are prepared to take the risk anyhow, particularly if their lives are in danger in their own countries or if they face imprisonment by staying there.

A great many asylum seekers who try to leave their countries with the help of profiteers are **putting their lives in the hands of** these charlatans. Various dangerous methods are attempted to get asylum seekers into their preferred destination and many asylum seekers are injured, or even killed, in the process. Some are hidden in container lorries for long periods of time with not enough food and drink and not enough air to breathe properly. Some have even been found hanging on **for dear life's sake** to the bottom of trains. Always, they are under threat of discovery as well as danger.

Even those who, **against all the odds**, do succeed in reaching their **promised land** often face disappointment and heartache. Frequently, they find they are not allowed to stay in what they regard as a **safe haven**. They end up by being deported, frequently spending several uncomfortable and frustrating months before finding this out. The dream which was within their grasp has been snatched from them.

Vocabulary Study

chance, not to have the ghost of a chance

(*idiom/cliché*)

to have no possibility of success; used in fairly informal contexts. Another cliché, only used in informal contexts, which has the same meaning is **not to have an earthly chance**.

fair, by fair means or foul

(*cliché*)

in any possible way, whether this is honest and just or not; used to indicate someone's determination to do something. 'Foul' as an adjective now usually means dirty, disgusting

or very unpleasant but in this context its meaning is similar to that of the noun, an action which is against the rules of a game or sport. Another cliché which has the same meaning is **by hook or by crook**.

haven, a safe haven

(*cliché*)

a place where you will be free from harm or danger. This expression is an example of tautology since the same idea is given twice using different words. The noun 'haven' means a place of safety and does not need the addition of the adjective 'safe'.

hope, have high hopes of something (*cliché*)

to be confident about your chances of success.

land, the promised land (*cliché*)

a place or situation where great happiness or success is expected to be found and looked forward to eagerly. This expression is a biblical reference. The Promised Land was Canaan, the land which God promised to the Jews. Another cliché which has a biblical origin, and which has a similar meaning, is **a land of milk and honey**.

life, for dear life's sake*(cliché)*

used to indicate the great speed or effort and urgency with which someone is doing something. The suggestion is that someone is acting as though their life were in danger.

life, put your life in the hands of someone*(idiom / cliché)*

to trust someone not to harm you. The cliché **take your life in your hands** means to take the risk of being killed or harmed, but it is often used humorously.

life, risk life and limb*(cliché)*

to run the risk of death or serious injury; often used

in journalese or as an exaggeration in informal or humorous contexts.

odds, against all the odds*(cliché)*

in spite of very great difficulties or problems. The word 'odds' refers to the degree to which something is likely to happen.

rainy, a rainy day*(idiom / cliché)*

a time of financial difficulties in the future. The cliché is mostly found as part of the expression **save** (or **keep**) **something for a rainy day**. The origin of the expression lies in the fact that agricultural workers could not work on wet days and so did not earn any money.

score, know the score*(idiom / cliché)*

to be well aware of the facts of a situation, including the possible risks or disadvantages; used in fairly informal contexts. The expression refers to the score in a game or match.

scrimp and save *(cliché)*

to be very careful about how one spends money in order to be able to save some, often for a particular purpose. 'Scrimp' means to be very thrifty and careful with money and so the two words in the expression have similar meanings.

Recalling Information

1. What are the two concerns about immigrants seeking asylum?

2. How did asylum seekers pay for their passage into the country of their choice?

3. Why are some asylum seekers so desperate to leave their own countries even at the risk of not getting asylum?

4. Name the methods used to get asylum seekers to their destination.

5. After entering the country, what is likely to happen to the asylum seekers?

Understanding Information

1. Complete each of the sentences below to show cause and effect.

(a) Asylum seekers risk their lives to get to another country because _____

(b) Some people would take the life savings from asylum seekers as _____

(c) The consequence of the dangerous methods used to transport the asylum seekers is _____

(d) When asylum seekers are not granted a safe haven, it means that they _____

2. Why do you think ageing parents are willing to give their savings to their sons and daughters who are seeking asylum?

3. Identify some characteristics of the profiteers.

4. Match the first part of a sentence in column A with its second part in column B by joining the dots.

Column A	Column B
(a) The youth was hailed a hero	• is to save for a rainy day.
(b) The football team whom no one expected to go beyond the first round	• after he risked life and limb to save the drowning child.
(c) You knew the score when you helped your friend	• in times of economic crisis.
(d) One of the best lessons to teach the young	• and so don't expect repayment.
(e) Gold is regarded as a safe haven	• went on to win against all the odds.

5. Summarize in 100 words the main points in the passage. Use the following notes to guide you:
- Why do asylum seekers leave their countries?
 - What do asylum seekers pay to leave their countries?
 - How are asylum seekers transported?
 - What happens after asylum seekers reach their destinations?

Writing Activity

Your overseas pen-pal recently wrote to say that his cousin would like to seek employment as a foreign worker in your country. He would like to know what it is like to live and work in your city.

In about 250 words, write a reply using the headings below and add details of your own. Rearrange the material if necessary.

- Housing – size and cost of accommodation
- Transport – whether public transport system is in place
- Climate – seasons, minimum and maximum temperatures, humidity level
- People and Work – main ethnic groups, languages spoken, what kinds of jobs are available
- Entertainment – popular leisure activities, interesting sights
- General – food, postal services, medical services, banks, schools, libraries

Miraculous Rescue

A report of a near-fatal fire in a local newspaper.

Pre-Reading Questions

1. From the title and subtitle above, say what you think the passage is about.
2. Recall a fire that you heard or read about.
3. Can fires be prevented? Why or why not?

Reading Passage

Now read the passage below. You can look up the meanings of the words and idioms in bold in the Vocabulary Study section that follows.

A city fire nearly ended in terrible tragedy for a city family last night. A woman and her three young children were asleep upstairs in their home at 5 Woodview Terrace when a fire broke out in the kitchen and **spread like wildfire**. According to firefighters, the family would all have perished, had it not been for the quick action of their next-door neighbour, 53-year-old Martin Giles, who climbed up a ladder to rescue the children and their mother, 36-year-old Margaret Redwood.

One of the children, five-year-old Becky, was suffering from severe smoke inhalation and had to be taken to hospital. At first, there were fears for her safety but doctors have declared that she is now **out of the woods** and will be able to leave hospital tomorrow. Miraculously, the other two children escaped **without a scratch**. Mrs Redwood sustained minor burns and is still in a state of shock.

The children and their mother owe their lives to Mr Giles, who **threw caution to the winds** and risked his life to save the family. 'I didn't stop to think. I was **on automatic pilot**. I just saw the flames, heard the children scream and raced to get my ladder. Anyone else would have done the same. I got them out just **in the nick of time**. The whole house **went up like a light** just as Mrs Redwood got out.'

Mrs Giles called the fire brigade as soon as they saw the flames, but despite responding instantly to the call, the firefighters arrived too late. The house was a **blazing inferno** when they arrived and there was little they could do. Said fireman Jack Lauder, 'Usually we

advise members of the public to leave rescue work to the professional, but those children would have died if it had not been for Mr Giles. He is being too modest. He really **laid his own life on the line** to save the kids. For us, that kind of rescue **goes with the territory** and we're trained and equipped for it. It's **all in a day's work**. But Martin Giles is a real hero. He deserves a medal.'

The cause of the fire appears to have been faulty electric wiring. Said fire investigator Paul Jennings, 'From what I can see the wiring was in a terrible state. The whole house was a **death trap**. It's amazing that no lives were lost.'

Vocabulary Study

inferno, a blazing inferno
(*cliché*)

literally a brightly burning dangerous fire which is out of control, but often used in journalese, particularly in headlines, as an exaggerated way of describing any fire in a building, as well as being used to describe a large and dangerous fire.

light, go up like a light
(*cliché*)

to catch fire very quickly and strongly. The cliché **go out like a light** means to fall asleep very quickly and very soundly.

line, lay your life on the line
(*idiom/cliché*)

to put your life at risk.

pilot, on automatic pilot
(*cliché*)

to act without thinking about what you are doing, often when doing something which you have done many times before.

scratch, without a scratch
(*cliché*)

without being damaged or hurt in any way. The word 'unscathed' has a similar meaning.

territory, go with the territory (*cliché*)

used to describe something that often occurs in a particular situation and so has to be accepted and dealt with; used in fairly informal contexts.

time, in the nick of time
(*cliché*)

just in time; at the last moment.

trap, a death trap (*cliché*)

a dangerous place; used in rather informal contexts or in journalese.

wildfire, spread like wildfire
(*cliché*)

to spread extremely quickly. The origin of this expression is uncertain, but it has been suggested that 'wildfire' might

originally have been used of a fiercely burning fire caused by lightning.

wind, throw caution to the winds (*cliché*)

to act in an impulsive, reckless way.

wood, out of the woods
(*idiom/cliché*)

no longer in danger or serious trouble. The word 'woods' here is used as a metaphor for danger or difficulty because a wood or forest is full of obstacles, unlike clear, unwooded ground.

work, all in a day's work
(*cliché*)

used to describe something that is not considered unusual or difficult for someone, because it is something which they often experience, frequently as part of their job; used in fairly informal contexts.

Recalling Information

1. Who did Martin Giles rescue from the fire?

2. Where and when did the fire start?

3. How did Mr Giles save the family?

4. Describe the injuries of Mrs Redwood and her children.

5. What alerted Mr Giles to the fire?

6. What appeared to have caused the fire?

Understanding Information

1. If you were Mrs Margaret Redwood, how would you thank Mr Martin Giles?

2. Think of at least five adjectives to describe Mr Martin Giles.

3. Explain, in your own words, what fireman Jack Lauder said.

4. Match each of the sentences in column A with a follow-up comment in column B. Write the letter of the correct follow-up comment in the box that corresponds with the sentence.

Column A

1. John threw caution to the winds.
2. The news spread like wildfire.
3. In the nick of time, the driver swerved left.
4. It was miraculous that the toddler didn't even have a scratch.
5. The undergrowth became a blazing inferno.

Column B

- A. The awning broke her fall.
- B. The heat wave was the cause.
- C. The whole neighbourhood heard of his heroic act.
- D. He recklessly plunged into the water.
- E. A second later, the cars would have collided.

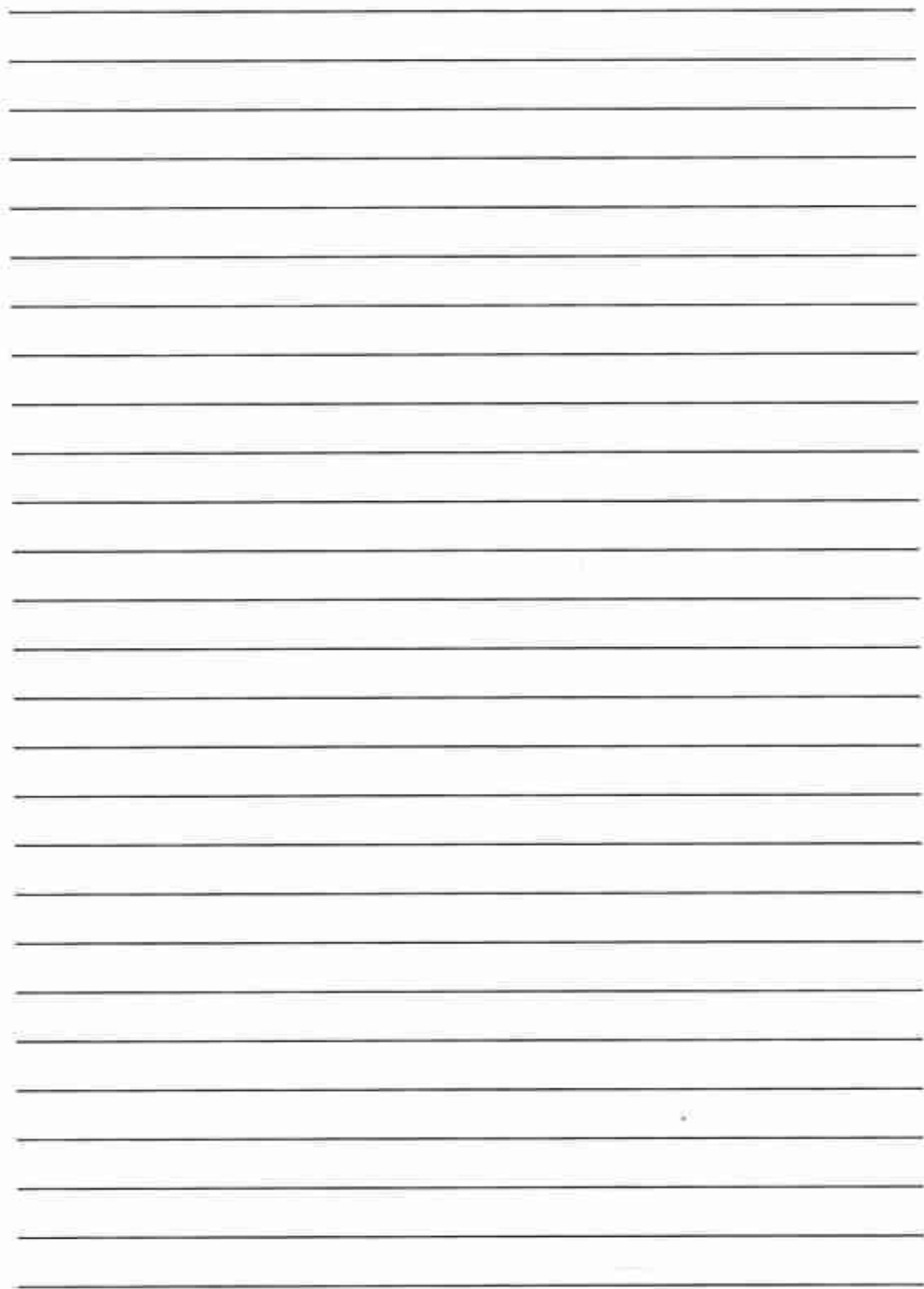
5. Summarize the account of the rescue in 80 words. To guide you, think of these words: where, when, who, how, what and why.

Writing Activity

You witnessed a brave act on your way to school one morning. Below are some notes about the incident:

- Car engine on fire.
- Lady driver paralysed with fear.
- Two children in the back seat.
- Passerby tried to open car door, found it locked.
- Smashed glass of door and opened it.
- Pulled out children and driver.
- Called police on his mobile phone.

In about 200 words, write a letter to a friend describing the incident and your feelings. Refer to Unit 3 for an example of a friendly letter. Use those features of an informal salutation and a complimentary close, and take a friendly tone in your letter, using idioms to make it lively.



Flood Damage

A report in a local evening newspaper about the effect of flooding on the city theatre.

Pre-Reading Questions

1. Where do floods usually happen?
2. In what circumstances would floods occur in a building?
3. Ask one question that you want answered after reading the passage.

Reading Passage

Now read the passage below. You can look up the meanings of the words and idioms in bold in the Vocabulary Study section that follows.

Staff arriving for work this morning at the Carousel Theatre discovered that they were up to their knees in water. The water supply to the building was immediately cut off and the drying-out operation began.

There was no heavy rain in the city last night and, indeed, **it is one of life's little ironies** that this whole area has recently been experiencing drought conditions and people have been asked to conserve water supplies. The most likely explanation is that flooding was caused by a burst pipe.

However, it has been rumoured that a member of staff accidentally left a tap running in the theatre bar after a party at the theatre. The owner of the theatre, Mr Mark Burchill, who has been on holiday in France, has said that he is devastated by the damage to the building and that if any members of staff are found to have caused the flooding through negligence, then **heads will roll**.

Meanwhile, he says that he is more interested in getting on with clearing up the mess than with discussing **the whys and wherefores** of what happened. The flooding is **a double whammy** for Burchill since his flat is next door to the theatre and has also suffered a great deal of damage.

The extent of the damage has not yet been assessed, but the theatre manager, Bill Redpath, speaking on behalf of Mark Burchill, said today, 'I would like to say that it would be **business as usual**, but there is no possibility of this. The theatre, along with the bar and restaurant, is going to have to close down completely for extensive repairs. We have no idea how long the repairs will take. At this stage it is a case of **how long is a piece of string?** We hope that work will begin almost immediately and will progress **by leaps and bounds.**'

There has been speculation that Burchill will see the flood damage as **the last straw** and close down the theatre. It is known that he has been struggling financially to keep the theatre open and there have been rumours for some time that closure was imminent. However, Burchill has issued a **categorical denial** that he is considering the closure of the theatre and has said that such a thing would happen **over his dead body**.

Be that as it may, many people in the area regard the flooding as a **blessing in disguise**. Said one of them, 'The property is in a shocking state of repair and should either be pulled down or completely renovated.'

Vocabulary Study

blessing, a blessing in disguise (*cliché*)

something which at first seems unfortunate, but turns out to be fortunate.

business as usual (*cliché*)

used to indicate that the usual work routine of something will not be interrupted.

dead, over my dead body (*cliché*)

used to indicate strong opposition to something and a determination that it will not happen.

denial, a categorical denial (*cliché*)

used to emphasize how confident the speaker or writer is about denying something, although sometimes the expression has an effect opposite to the one intended and makes people feel the speaker is not telling the truth.

heads will roll (*idiom/cliché*)

used to indicate that someone will be punished or get into serious trouble; sometimes

used in humorous contexts. In origin, the cliché refers to a head rolling off after someone has been executed by having their head cut off.

irony, one of life's little ironies (*cliché*)

a humorous expression used to describe a situation that is opposite to, or different from, what you would expect.

leap, by leaps and bounds (*cliché*)

used to indicate that progress or increase is very fast.

may, be that as it may*(cliché)*

this expression means that something may be true, but it is often used rather meaninglessly, especially by people to whom it has become a habit.

straw, the last straw*(idiom/cliché)*

the latest in a series of difficult or unpleasant events which

makes you feel as though you cannot tolerate the situation. The expression comes from the proverb **it is the last straw which breaks the camel's back**.

string, how long is a piece of string? *(cliché)*

used to indicate that it is impossible to give an estimate of the amount or extent of something; used in informal contexts.

whammy, a double**whammy** *(cliché)*

used to describe a situation in which two bad things happen to someone at the same time; used in informal contexts and in journalese.

why, the whys and**wherefores** *(cliché)*

the details of the background to a situation.

Recalling Information

1. What were the possible explanations for the flooding of the Carousel Theatre?

2. Why was the flooding a double whammy for Mr Burchill?

3. Why did people speculate that Mr Burchill might close down the theatre?

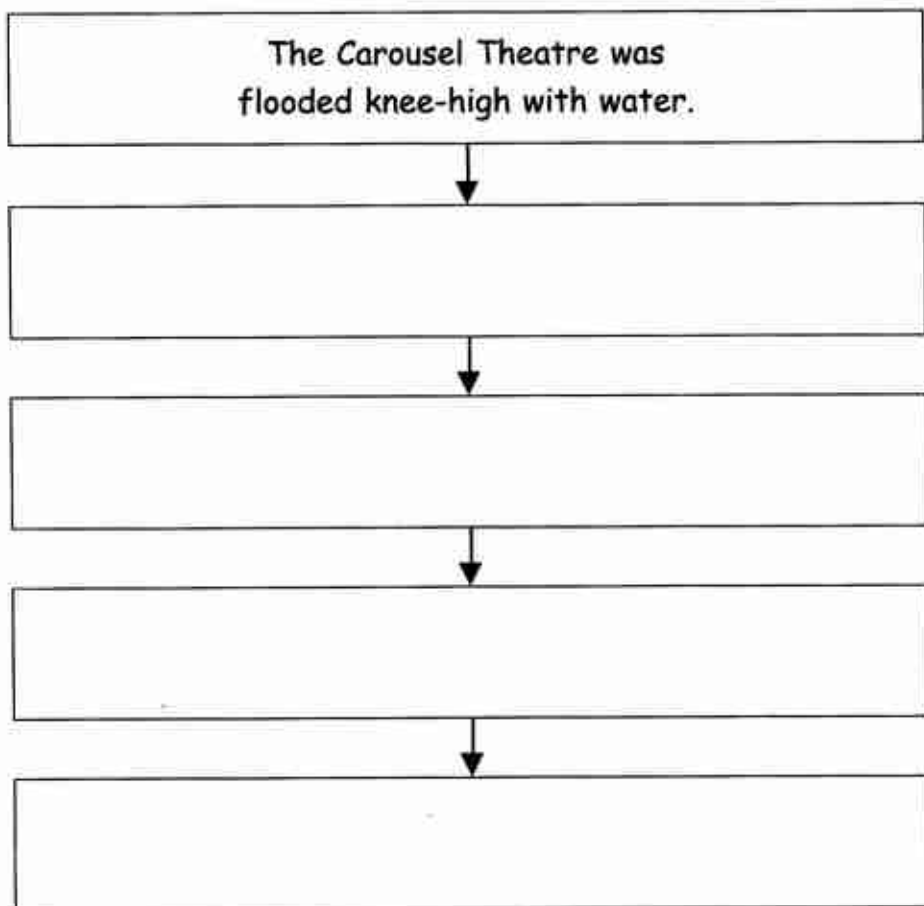
4. What was Mr Burchill's reply to the speculation?

5. Why did many people regard the flooding as a blessing in disguise?

Understanding Information

1. Explain why the flooding of the theatre was described as ironic.

2. Trace the time line of events in this report. Use the organizer below.



3. In paragraph 2, Mr Burchill said that 'heads will roll'. What possible action could Mr Burchill take?

4. Often in newspaper reports, different points of view are given about an event. Write the different points of view of Mr Burchill and Mr Redpath on the one hand, and some of the people in the area, on the other hand.

5. Replace the phrase in bold print in each of the following sentences with one idiom from the box. Write the appropriate idiom after each sentence.

a double whammy	a blessing in disguise
have business as usual	the whys and wherefores
by leaps and bounds	

- (a) Referring to the loss of the digital video disks, the manager said he would find out **what happened**. _____
- (b) Under the new coach, the tennis team improved **very quickly**.

- (c) Tim said that cancelling the trip **though seemingly disappointing** was **actually fortunate** as he could spend more time with his family.

- (d) The businessman suffered **two blows**. He had to withdraw his product from the shops and to face being charged in court. _____
- (e) Though it was a public holiday, the reception desk will **function normally**.

6. Summarize in 80 words the flooding of the Carousel Theatre so that anyone reading it would be informed of the key points.

Writing Activity

The town of Mahpoor was badly affected by severe floods. You are a reporter of a local newspaper. The following are your notes of what you saw.

Flooding caused by heavy monsoon rain – heavy storms and thunder daily – overflowing of river water into the town despite sandbags along river banks – two thirds of town submerged – people evacuated from homes – risk of water-borne diseases – policemen use canoes to patrol town – hospitals overcrowded with patients suffering from foot and eye infections, diarrhoea and stress – 90 deaths from drowning – food shortage – heavy damage to livestock and crops – huge areas of farmland destroyed – construction activities stopped – people making the best of situation

Rearrange and expand the notes as necessary, to write a report for the newspaper in 200 words. You might start as follows:

SEVERE FLOODING AT MAHPOOR

The town of Mahpoor is stricken by massive floods.



Closure of a Local Bookshop

A report in a local newspaper.

Pre-Reading Questions

1. Give some reasons why a shop would close.
2. Given the title above, do you think the passage would be positive or negative?
3. Must closure of a shop always be seen in a negative way? Why or why not?

Reading Passage

Now read the passage below. You can look up the meanings of the words and idioms in bold in the Vocabulary Study section that follows.

Book-lovers will be sad to hear that the owners of Morton's, the well-known high street bookshop, have announced its closure. The family-owned bookshop has been selling its wares in the town for more than 50 years and it will be sorely missed.

Mr Robert Morton said last night, 'We are having to close because of financial circumstances. It is **Hobson's choice**. We have **fought tooth and nail** to keep the shop open, but our efforts have been unsuccessful. Now we have decided that **enough is enough**.

'Bankruptcy has been **staring us in the face** for some months and we wanted to act before we had to call in the receiver. It **goes against the grain** to accept defeat, but we must acknowledge that we have reached **the end of the road**.

'This is by no means the first time that we have been **in a tight corner**, but on previous occasions we were able to see some **light at the end of the tunnel** and managed to cope until things improved financially. This is not the case today. The future holds little hope of improvement.

'A few years ago we would have had no difficulty selling either the business or the building. Now, after many months, we have given up trying to find an owner for the business and the building is still on

the market. There is simply no demand for commercial property in the centre of town.

'I am afraid that this will be **the shape of things to come** for the town. People prefer to shop at the shopping complexes out of town where there is plenty of parking space and where they get a large selection of goods in a relatively small area. At the same time, the cost of maintaining property in the town centre is going up and up. Town centre shops are facing a very uncertain future and I fear that several of them will soon be in the same position as we are today.'

Jim Park, a representative of the local chamber of commerce, agrees wholeheartedly with what Robert Morton said. 'This is a sad day for the town,' he commented, 'and it could well be **the thin end of the wedge**. With parking facilities in the centre of the town becoming more and more limited, more and more people are choosing to go out of town to do their shopping. Sadly, it appears that high street shopping is in danger of becoming **past its sell-by date** and something must be done quickly to ensure that there is not a **general exodus** of shop-owners from the high street. It would be extremely bad for the town to be left with whole rows of empty shops on its main street.'

Vocabulary Study

choice, Hobson's choice (*cliché*)

no choice at all, since the only choice offered is taking what you are offered or getting nothing at all. 'Hobson' is said to be the name of the owner of a stable in Cambridge, England, in the seventeenth century who offered horses for hire, but the hirer could only have the horse which was nearest the door at that time.

corner, in a tight corner (*cliché*)

in a difficult situation from which it is not easy to escape; in serious trouble.

date, past its (or your) sell-by date (*cliché*)

no longer considered useful; used in informal, sometimes humorous, contexts. The expression refers to the date given on an article of food, after which it should not be sold. The cliché **beyond**

(or **past**) **your (or its) shelf life** has a similar meaning.

enough is enough (*cliché*)

used to emphasize that it is time something came to an end or that you are not prepared to tolerate it any more.

exodus, a general exodus (*cliché*)

used to refer to the movement of the majority of people from a room or building, the expression sounds rather literary, but it is widely used.

face, staring you in the face*(idiom/cliché)*

to seem very likely to happen.

grain, go against the grain*(idiom/cliché)*

to be against someone's usual ideas or feelings. In origin, the expression refers to the grain of wood. It is easier to cut or to smooth wood in the direction of the grain rather than across it.

road, the end of the road*(idiom/cliché)*

used to refer to the end of something.

shape, the shape of things*to come (cliché)*something which shows how things are likely to be, or likely to develop, in the future. The expression was made popular by a novel by HG Wells, entitled *The Shape of Things to Come* (1933).**tooth, fight tooth and nail***(idiom/cliché)*

to try very hard to achieve or keep something, despite difficulties or attempts to prevent you doing so.

tunnel, light at the end of the tunnel*(idiom/cliché)*
hope or optimism for the future

after a period of difficulty or trouble. The expression was made popular by the American president, John F Kennedy, who used it in a press conference with reference to the Vietnam War in 1962.

wedge, the thin end of the wedge*(idiom/cliché)*

something which is itself not very important, but which could be the beginning of an important development or change which is undesirable or harmful. A wedge is a solid block of wood or metal that is thin at one end but gradually gets thicker.

Recalling Information

1. Who would be saddened by the closure of Morton's?

2. What was the reason for the closure of Morton's?

3. How did Mr Morton fight tooth and nail to try and save the bookshop?

4. What were the two reasons for the poor sales faced by Morton's?

Understanding Information

1. Explain in your own words: 'It is Hobson's choice.'

2. Explain in your own words what Mr Robert Morton said in paragraph 3.

3. Pick out the two similar statements made by Mr Robert Morton and Mr Jim Park.

Mr R Morton: _____

Mr J Park: _____

4. You will notice that many of the idioms in the newspaper report are used to describe a difficult situation. They can also be used to express positive situations, as in the sentences below. Complete each of the sentences with an appropriate idiom provided in the box.

fought tooth and nail

end of the road

in a tight corner

past their sell-by date

a general exodus

- (a) The company is re-training staff members who are _____
 _____ so that they will have new, useful skills.

- (b) It was a pleasant surprise that though the shopping complex moved further away, _____ of customers did not happen.
- (c) Despite trailing behind in the first half, the players _____ in the second half and regained lost ground.
- (d) We have been _____ before and we can get round this new setback.
- (e) Take heart! One failure is not the _____.
5. Summarize in 80 words the key information in this report. You should have the following points:
- Reasons for the closure of the bookshop
 - Efforts made by the owner to save the business
 - Results of the efforts

Writing Activity

You are an employee in a bookshop that is facing poor sales. You have some ideas about how to improve sales. Write out a proposal in 200 words to be submitted to the owner. Use the notes below, adding details as necessary.

Build a website to allow book sales online – hold book sales in schools and community centres – introduce reading rewards, e.g. buy any 10 books (no time limit) and get a free \$10 voucher – hold a monthly theme display, e.g. sports and adventure, or business and finance – write book reviews in the local newspapers.

Bills, Bills, Bills

An account of financial and other family problems.

Pre-Reading Questions

1. What does the title above tell you about the main point in the passage?
2. What would cause a person to say 'Bills, bills, bills'?
3. Are you sympathetic to those who are faced with this situation? Why or why not?

Reading Passage

Now read the passage below. You can look up the meanings of the words and idioms in bold in the Vocabulary Study section that follows.

Lucy looked through the letters which the postman had just delivered and said to Mike, 'Nothing but bills again. What are we going to do? We can't possibly pay them all this month.'

'We'll discuss them tonight,' said Mike. 'I'm late for work.' Where bills were concerned Mike was apt to **bury his head in the sand**.

Meanwhile Lucy sat at the breakfast table having another cup of coffee and remembering the **halcyon days** when she could go out and buy new clothes and make-up without **thinking twice**. It had been **yonks** since she had bought anything for herself. All the money seemed to go on household bills or the twins.

Lucy loved the twins dearly, as did Mike, but their arrival had undeniably **knocked** Lucy's plans **for six**. Her pregnancy had been planned and she had been looking forward to being a mother, but she had also planned to return to work, at least on a part-time basis, after the baby was a few months' old. She enjoyed working and they would need her salary even more when the baby was born,

However, it was very much a case of **the best-laid schemes**. A few months into her pregnancy Lucy was told by the doctor that she was expecting twins and, when the two **bundles of joy** arrived, it was

obvious that Lucy was going to have to postpone her plans to go back to work. Finding childcare for one baby was hard enough; finding childcare for two babies of exactly the same age proved impossible.

Lucy's mother had been prepared to look after one baby part-time, but she **drew the line at** looking after two. She was apologetic, but felt that she was too old and did not have enough energy to care for twins.

Then there was Mike's mother, but she had a part-time job and she and Lucy did not really get on. At one point they had had a major row and, although they had agreed to **let bygones be bygones**, things were never the same again. Lucy and Mike's mother would never **see eye to eye** on childcare and, in any case, Mike's mother did not offer to help with the twins.

As if things were not bad enough, Mike seemed to have forgotten about his assurances during Lucy's pregnancy that he would share the task of looking after the babies. He said that it was just not possible to **share and share alike** when he had to go to work and Lucy did not. His only contribution to childcare was to give his **sons and heirs** a cuddle when he came home from work.

Vocabulary Study

bygone, let bygones be bygones (*cliché*)
to forget about bad things which have happened in the past and try to make a new start. The cliché **forgive and forget** has a similar meaning.

day, halcyon days (*cliché*)
times which are remembered as being particularly happy.

'Halcyon' is the Greek name for kingfisher and the expression refers to an old belief that the kingfisher laid its eggs during a fourteen-day period of particularly calm weather.

eye, see eye to eye (*idiom/cliché*)
to agree with someone; usually used in negative constructions.

head, bury one's head in the sand (*idiom/cliché*)
to avoid dealing with a problem by ignoring it. The expression refers to an old belief that ostriches react to danger by burying their head in the sand, as though this action made them invisible.

joy, bundle of joy (*cliché*)
a baby; used in informal, often humorous, contexts and in journalism.

line, draw the line at something (*idiom/cliché*)
to refuse to do something because you find it unacceptable or because it goes over some kind of limit which you have set. In origin, the expression refers to the drawing of a line as a boundary, as in some games.

scheme, the best-laid schemes (*cliché*)
even plans which are worked out extremely carefully can go wrong. The expression is from a quotation from a poem by the Scottish poet Robert Burns. The quotation, which has

become almost a proverb, is 'The best-laid schemes o' mice and men gang aft a-gley', and is from the poem *To a Mouse* (1786). It means literally 'The best-laid schemes of mice and men often go wrong.'

share and share alike (*cliché*)
to divide something equally.

six, knock someone (or something) for six (*idiom/cliché*)
to destroy or weaken someone or something. The cliché also means to surprise or shock someone greatly. The expression has its origin in the game of cricket, referring to a situation in which a batsman hits the ball over the boundary without it touching the ground

before that and, thus, scores six runs or points.

son and heir (*cliché*)
a son, often a baby; often used in informal, and usually humorous contexts, since most families are not wealthy enough to think of an infant son in terms of what he will inherit from them.

think twice (*idiom/cliché*)
to consider something very carefully before acting; often used in negative constructions to emphasize that someone is not at all worried or careful about doing something.

yonks (*colloquialism*)
a very long time. The origin of this expression is not known.

Recalling Information

1. What was Lucy's concern when she received the bills?

2. In what way had Lucy's spending habits changed?

3. What was the reason that Lucy did not continue working after the twins were born?

4. Why did Lucy's mother draw the line at looking after the twins?

5. What were the reasons that Mike's mother could not help to look after the twins?

Understanding Information

1. Think of two adjectives that could describe each of the following characters.

Lucy: _____

Mike: _____

Lucy's mother: _____

Mike's mother: _____

2. In your own words, explain 'However, it was very much a case of the best-laid schemes.'

3. Lucy could not find childcare for the twins and so had to stop work. Could such a situation happen in your country? If so, how would young couples in your country handle the situation?

4. Fill in each of the blanks with one of the idioms given in the box.

let bygones be bygones
share and share alike

see eye to eye
think twice

halcyon days

- (a) Father sometimes recalls the _____
when he was a carefree undergraduate.
- (b) Growing up with two brothers and two sisters taught me to _____
_____.
- (c) Let's agree to _____ and forget our differences.
- (d) Though we may not _____
on everything, my friend and I share many common interests.
- (e) I strongly advise you to _____
before visiting a country that is on the brink of war.

5. Summarize in 80 words the difficulties that Lucy faced after the birth of her twins.

Writing Activity

You read an article in the newspaper that goes like this:

Dear Sir,

From recent press reports, I get the impression that teenage students expect to receive large amounts of pocket money. They spend this on large meals in the school canteen, on entertainment and on clothes that are the fad of the day.

This to me is an unhealthy trend. Whatever has happened to the enduring values of saving for what you want and even working for it, for example, by giving tuition or doing household chores. Young people are a pampered lot and if the present trend continues they will grow up without the virtues of discipline and hard work.

Yours faithfully
William Holt

You feel strongly about the points made in the above letter. Write your reply to the newspaper.

Footballers Required

An appeal from the PE Department to the students of a school.

Pre-Reading Questions

1. What do you think the PE Department would say?
2. Give your opinion on whether such appeals are effective.
3. Do you think that being active in sports is beneficial? Why or why not?

Reading Passage

Now read the passage below. You can look up the meanings of the words and idioms in bold in the Vocabulary Study section that follows.

Students are warned that we will almost certainly have to reduce the number of school teams from four to three, or even two, if more people do not turn up for training on Wednesdays after school and on Saturday mornings. We are extremely reluctant to do this and are appealing for your help.

Ideally, you should have at least some football talent or, at least, not **have two left feet**. **First and foremost**, however, you should have commitment. Our problem at the moment is that several potential members of the football teams seem to think that they can simply turn up for practice when they please or when they have nothing better to do.

This is not the right attitude. You cannot **pick and choose** which practice sessions you will attend and which you will not. You have to attend them all, **come rain or shine**, if you are going to be good enough to play for any of the school teams. Furthermore, while you

are at the practice session you should be prepared to **give it your all**. We need keen players who are willing to train hard in order to be **fighting fit** and **in top form**.

For your health's sake you should consider taking more physical exercise rather than be content to become a **couch potato**. There have been many medical reports recently which have stressed the importance of young people getting more exercise. Football is an excellent and enjoyable way of doing so.

The thoughts of some of you are already focused on post-school education and training and rightly so. **A word in your ear!** It is often not enough to have good academic results in order to impress people with your CV. Extracurricular activities are also of great importance.

You should bear in mind that many universities prefer to have students who have some prowess in some form of sport, not least because they wish to gain success on the sports field as well as in the exam room. Not only that, but many business firms give preference to those who can prove themselves to be **team players**. What better proof than actually to have been in a team?

Our first team is **going from strength to strength** at the moment. Indeed, it is **head and shoulders above** any other in the school league. The second team is also playing well and has achieved a number of successes. But we need committed players for the other two teams which we regard as our training teams. Come and join us! You may discover that you have hidden talents!

Vocabulary Study

all, give it your all (*cliché*)
to put as much effort as possible into something or into doing something. The cliché **give it your best shot** has a similar meaning.

couch potato (*idiom/cliché*)
someone who spends too much time sitting around, especially spending a lot of time watching television rather than doing something active.

ear, a word in your ear (*idiom/cliché*)
a private or confidential remark to someone that you don't want other people to hear.

feet, have two left feet (*idiom/cliché*)
to be very clumsy or awkward in moving your feet.

first and foremost (*cliché*)
most importantly. This is one of several clichés where both words in the cliché mean the

same thing and the two are used together for emphasis.

fit, fighting fit (*cliché*)
very well or healthy. In origin, the cliché refers to a boxer being in good enough condition to fight.

form, in (or on) top form (*cliché*)
used to indicate that someone is doing something as well as they can. The cliché comes from horse racing, the word 'form' referring to the condition and fitness of a horse.

head and shoulders above someone or something (*idiom/cliché*)
very much better than someone or something. In origin, the cliché refers to someone who is much taller than others.

pick and choose (*cliché*)
to make your choice of

something very carefully, often with the suggestion that there is a wide choice available.

rain, come rain or shine (*cliché*)
whatever the weather is; whatever happens. This cliché is sometimes shortened to rain or shine. The word 'shine' refers to sunshine.

strength, go from strength to strength (*cliché*)
to get better and better or more and more successful.

team, a team player (*jargon*)
a person who works well with a group of other people and who is more concerned with the success of the group as a whole than with their own personal success; often used as part of business jargon and in job advertisements.

Recalling Information

1. What was the purpose of the appeal from the PE Department?

2. List the requirements that students must have when they join the football clubs.

3. Name the benefits of football stated in the appeal.

4. Why did the school need more football players?

Understanding Information

1. An appeal has to be persuasive in order to achieve its purpose. Would you have been persuaded by it? Before you decide, analyse the arguments made.

**Arguments to persuade
students to join**

**How convincing are
these arguments?**

1.

2.

3.

2. Would you agree that having a strong extracurricular activities record is important? Why?

3. Replace each of the phrases in bold with an idiom that has the same meaning and write it on the line provided. Choose from the idioms used in the passage.

(a) To lose weight, the **inactive person** was told to diet and exercise regularly.

(b) **Whatever the circumstances**, you can count on us to be there.

(c) John has my vote for the award as he is **very much better than** the other candidates. _____

(d) Most supermarkets will allow customers to **select freely** from a wide range of fruit and vegetables. _____

(e) After months of rigorous training, the cycling team is **full of strength and stamina**. _____

4. In 100 words, summarize the key points in the appeal. Include the following:

- The purpose of the appeal
- The PE Department's expectations of students in the football teams
- The benefits for students who join

Writing Activity

Imagine that you are a captain of your school sports club and you are asked by the teacher-in-charge to think of ways to get more students to join. Pick a sport that you know about and write a proposal of 200 words to the teacher-in-charge. Include the following, and add details as necessary.

- Members will be trained by an ex-student who was a champion of that sport.
- Annual residential training camp will be held.
- Arrangements with sports shop for members to buy sports equipment at a discount.
- Programme of friendly matches with neighbouring schools.
- Social get-togethers will be held end of each term.



Lined writing area for notes. The page contains 26 horizontal lines.



A Surprise Job Move

A conversation on someone's reasons for changing jobs.

Pre-Reading Questions

1. What would cause a person to change jobs?
2. What do you think of someone who changes jobs?
3. Do you agree with the following statements? Why or why not?
 - It is wrong to leave a job because of poor working relationships.
 - Never move to a lower paying job.

Reading Passage

Now read the passage below. You can look up the meanings of the words and idioms in bold in the Vocabulary Study section that follows.

'I've just heard that Mike's moved jobs,' said Jack to Peter. 'The strange thing is that he's moved to a much smaller firm and he's usually so ambitious. It doesn't sound like the kind of thing he'd do. Moving to a larger firm would be much more his style.'

Peter replied, 'I was talking to him briefly last night, but he didn't have time to give me any details. He said he'd tell me all about it next time we meet. I gather that he still liked the work he was doing, but the marketing department, where he worked, had become a **revolving door**. A lot of people left before Mike did and their replacements are staying **no time at all**. That must be very unsettling for everyone.'

Just then, Mike walked in and they asked him what had happened to make him change jobs. He began to tell them the background to his move. '**To put it in a nutshell**, it's all the fault of the new marketing director. About six months ago, management decided that as a

company we didn't have a **high** enough **profile** and they got rid of Jeff Jones, who was head of marketing, and appointed someone to improve the **image** of the company. Unfortunately, **the new broom** is one of those people who takes an instant dislike to some people and sets out to make their lives a misery. I don't know what he's done for the public image of the firm, but morale **has hit rock bottom**. It's particularly sad because Jeff Jones was a good boss and it was a very happy department when he was there.'

Peter said, 'That's dreadful. It's very difficult to work under such circumstances. How did you get on with him?'

'I got on with him all right, I suppose, but his mood could change from one minute to another. None of us **knew where we stood** with him. I decided early on to get out **while the going was good** and was lucky enough to get a job with Smith & Jones. They're a much smaller company, but you can see that they're **going places**. They treat their staff well and so they stay around.'

'It might be in the end a good career move, then,' said Jack. 'Perhaps he did you a favour, after all.'

'Certainly,' said Jack. 'I've taken a cut in salary at the moment, but **looking at the big picture** I can see that my promotion prospects are much better.'

'You wouldn't go back to your old job if this new man left, then?' asked Peter.

'After the way management let him treat us?' asked Mike. '**You must be joking!**'

Vocabulary Study

bottom, hit rock bottom

(idiom/cliché)

to reach the lowest level possible. The expression can also be used of a person to indicate that they are in an extremely bad situation.

broom, a new broom

(cliché)

used to describe someone who has just taken over a job and who is likely to make a lot of changes. The expression is a reference to the expression **a new broom sweeps clean** which means that someone who has just taken up a position is very likely to make a lot of changes.

door, a revolving door

(jargon)

a situation or organization in which people do not stay very long; often used in business contexts.

going, while the going is good

(idiom/cliché)

while conditions are favourable. In horse racing the

word 'going' refers to the state of the ground which affects how quickly horses will be able to run.

image

(jargon)

how someone or something appears to others; very much overused in a variety of contexts, especially business and show business ones.

joke, you must be joking

(cliché)

used to emphasize how unlikely or ridiculous the speaker considers something that has just been said is, although the person who has said it may well be quite serious. An alternative form of this cliché is **you're joking, of course!**

nutshell, to put it in a nutshell

(idiom/cliché)

in a few exact words.

picture, look at the big picture

(idiom/cliché)

to take into consideration the whole of a situation and not just some of the details.

place, going places

(cliché)

to be likely to achieve great success; used in informal contexts.

profile, a high profile

(cliché)

if someone or something has a high profile people notice them a great deal. The cliché **keep a high profile** means to try to get as much public attention as possible. The opposite is **keep a low profile**, which means to try to get as little public attention as possible. The word 'profile' means, literally, the outline of someone's face as seen from the side.

stand, know where someone stands

(idiom/cliché)

to understand exactly the nature of your situation or circumstances.

time, no time at all

(cliché)

an extremely short amount of time.

Recalling Information

1. What did Jack find strange about Mike's change of jobs?

2. What was the reason for the company to appoint a new marketing director?

3. What condition in the company caused Mike to resign?

4. What attracted Mike to join the new company?

Understanding Information

1. Write a sentence explaining the office environment **before** and **after** the new marketing director joined the company.

Before: _____

After: _____

2. From the passage, **infer**, with supporting evidence, three characteristics of:

(a) Mike

(b) the new marketing director

3. The passage gives us Mike's viewpoint about the new marketing director. Do you believe Mike's view, or are you uncertain what to believe? Give reasons for your answer.

4. Why would Mike not return to the company even if the new marketing director left?

5. Rewrite each of the following sentences using an idiom from the box to replace the words in bold print.

to put it in a nutshell	knew where we stood
look at the big picture	a high profile
had hit rock bottom	the new broom

- (a) **The new head of department** has a reputation for being dynamic and will surely make changes.

(b) At the closing-down sale, prices **were at the lowest level possible**.

(c) Uncomfortable with **being noticed**, the new tennis champion avoided going to public places.

(d) It would take me a while to explain but, **very briefly**, he had found a more challenging job.

(e) A leader should be able to **take an overview**, as well as attend to details.

(f) Mdm Halimah was a firm and fair teacher and with her, we always **knew our position**.

6. Imagine that Mike is sending an email to his friend, Paul, to explain his job move. In 100 words, summarize the essential information in the email from Mike to Paul.

Writing Activity

You would have noticed that the information in this unit was presented as a conversation between Mike, Jack and Peter. You would have realized that dialogues are a powerful means to tell us about people. Write a conversation on **one** of the following situations, using idioms and expressions that you have learnt so far. Try as much as you can to bring out the characters in the dialogue.

- A dialogue between two friends. One of them is thinking of taking a holiday job while the other advises him/her to concentrate on catching up on his/her school work instead.
- A dialogue between two friends. One of them would like to change his/her co-curricular activity (CCA), while the other points out to him/her the advantage of continuing in it.

Launch of a Lunch Club
A community-based initiative



Lined writing area for notes, consisting of 20 horizontal lines.



Launch of a Lunch Club

A speech launching a lunch club for senior citizens.

Pre-Reading Questions

1. What do you think is the purpose of a lunch club?
2. Who do you think would join a lunch club?
3. When a lunch club is launched, what would you expect the programme to be?

Reading Passage

Now read the passage below. You can look up the meanings of the words and idioms in bold in the Vocabulary Study section that follows.

Ladies and gentlemen, it is my great pleasure to preside over the proceedings at the first meeting of the Woodville Lunch Club for Senior Citizens. We all hope that this will be a great success and that there will be many more to come. I am extremely pleased that so many of you are able to be here today and I extend a warm welcome to you all. I would like to say a particularly warm welcome to Mrs Joan Miller, who is ninety-four **years young** today. I'm sure that you will all join me in wishing Joan a very happy birthday.

The aim of the club is, of course, not only to provide food, although it is extremely important that people of all ages eat nourishing food, and I can tell you now that it is absolutely delicious! I have already sampled it.

However, the club exists to provide companionship as well as food and I'm sure that many of you would like to stay on after the lunch things have been cleared away so that you can have a chat. You may well find a **kindred spirit** among the other club members.

Companionship is important when you're **getting on a bit** and feeling a bit lonely and it's not always easy to find. I'm **no spring chicken** myself and I know that I don't make friends as easily as I

did when I was younger. There just aren't the same opportunities available when you **are not as young as you were** and so you should all **make the most of** this one.

Of course, many of you have the companionship of family, and families are **all very well**, but if yours are anything like mine they'll always be in a hurry. They rush here and there, doing this and that **at a rate of knots** and making us old ones feel that we are **in the way**. Most of them don't mean to make us feel like that, of course, and they'd be horrified if they thought we did, but it's all too easy for us to feel that we're **beyond our shelf life** in the midst of all this frenzied activity. Somehow life didn't seem quite so hectic when I was young.

Today, we're not in a hurry. We're providing an **oasis of calm** so that you can get to know each other, although I'm sure that by the time you all get chatting it won't be an oasis of calm any more. It'll probably be more **like the tower of Babel!** Indeed, I hope that will be the case because that will show that you're all enjoying yourselves and that is one of the main points of this club. Have fun!

Vocabulary Study

chicken, no spring chicken

(idiom/cliché)

someone who is no longer young; used in informal contexts, often in a humorous or derogatory way, usually being applied to women.

get, getting on a bit

(cliché)

getting old; used in informal contexts. The comment at *years young* below also applies to this cliché.

knot, at a rate of knots

(idiom/cliché)

extremely quickly. A knot is the unit for measuring the speed of boats, ships and aircraft. The speed of boats and ships was once measured by counting how many knots, tied at regular intervals along a piece of rope, ran out in a particular length of time.

most, make the most of something

(cliché)
to take full advantage of something.

oasis, an oasis of calm

(cliché)

a peaceful or pleasant place or period of time in the middle of something noisy or busy. 'An oasis', literally, is an area in the desert where there is water and where plants can grow.

shelf, beyond (or past) your (or its) shelf life*(idiom/cliché)*

beyond the stage at which someone or something is useful; used in informal, sometimes humorous, contexts. Literally, the expression means that an item of food, drink or medicine has been kept beyond the time by which it should be used. The cliché **on the shelf** is used with reference to someone, particularly a woman, who has not married and seems unlikely now to do so. The origin of this expression refers to goods which are left on the shelf because no one wants to buy them. The cliché **past your (or its) sell-by date** has a similar meaning.

spirit, a kindred spirit*(cliché)*

a person who is very like someone else in interests,

attitude to life, personality or temperament.

tower, like the tower of Babel*(cliché)*

extremely noisy and confused, with everyone talking at once. In origin, this cliché is a biblical reference. According to the Book of Genesis, the people of the earth all originally spoke one language, but God worried that they were becoming too ambitious when they began to build the city of Babel with its tower, and made them all speak different languages, which caused great confusion.

way, in the way*(cliché)*

to stop someone from getting on with what they want to do; to be an obstacle or nuisance.

well, all very well*(cliché)*

apparently satisfactory, but not completely so in fact.

young, not to be as young as you were*(cliché)*

to be getting old and not as strong and healthy as you once were. A cliché with a similar meaning is **not to be getting any younger**. The comment at **years young** below applies also to both of these clichés.

young, years young*(cliché)*

the expression used in the passage, where the word 'old' would normally be used instead of 'young', is often used in informal contexts as a supposed compliment to the old, but it can often seem patronizing. It is common to use euphemisms which avoid using the word 'old' because people are often afraid of getting old, and possibly infirm, and do not want to admit that they are getting old. *See not to be as young as you were* above.

Recalling Information

1. In the context of the passage, say whether the following sentences are true or false.

- (a) The Woodville Lunch Club for Senior Citizens was meeting for the first time.

True / False

- (b) The club aimed to provide food and companionship for senior citizens.

True / False

(c) Senior citizens find it easy to make new friends.

True / False

(d) Senior citizens generally have fewer opportunities to socialize.

True / False

(e) Family members often neglect the elderly in the family.

True / False

(f) Family members deliberately make the elderly feel they are beyond their shelf life.

True / False

(g) Those present were invited to spend a leisurely afternoon at the club.

True / False

(h) A great deal of chatter would prove that members were enjoying themselves.

True / False

Understanding Information

1. What position do you think the speaker would hold in the club? Why do you think so?

2. Why do you think the speaker gave a special welcome to Mrs Joan Miller?

3. Pick out the phrases and expressions that make the speech sound informal.

4. Identify which of the following sentences expresses a **fact** and which an **opinion** by putting a tick in the correct box. A fact is a piece of information that can be proved to be either true or false because there is evidence to support it. An opinion cannot be proved to be true or false as it states what a person thinks.

	Fact	Opinion
(a) However, the club exists to provide companionship as well as food.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(b) I have already sampled it.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(c) Companionship is important when you're getting on a bit and feeling a bit lonely.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(d) Somehow life didn't seem quite so hectic when I was young.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(e) Of course, many of you have the companionship of family.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(f) We're providing an oasis of calm so that you can get to know each other.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

5. Match each of the sentences in column A with a follow-up comment in column B. Write the letter of the correct follow-up comment in the box that corresponds to the sentence.

Column A

- Let's make the most of this public holiday.
- It is like the tower of Babel in this hall.
- Sally and Jane are truly kindred spirits.
- The reading room will provide an oasis of calm.

Column B

- Everyone's shouting to be heard.
- It's meant for students to spend quiet time.
- We can spend the whole day at the National Park.
- They even share the same taste in food.

6. You are the secretary of the Lunch Club and you want to summarize the speech for the club's news bulletin. Write a summary of the main points in 100 words.

Writing Activity

You are the President of a new club in your school. It could be an Environmental Club, a Stamp Collectors Club, an Astronomy Club or another club of your choice. Write a welcome address of 150 words. The address should have the following main parts:

- Opening words to welcome members
- Aims of the club
- Reasons for having the club
- Closing words – hope for its success



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The Young's View of the Old

A conversation giving contrasting views on the elderly.

Pre-Reading Questions

1. What is your view of the old?
2. How similar is your view to that of others your age?
3. Do you agree with the following statements? Why or why not?
 - Older people do not enjoy the same activities as the young.
 - The young do not expect the old to be independent.

Reading Passage

Now read the passage below. You can look up the meanings of the words and idioms in bold in the Vocabulary Study section that follows.

'What are you laughing at?' Jane asked Meg as they met while walking their dogs in the park.

'I was just telling my grandson that I was thinking of taking up salsa dancing and he was horrified. He said I was much too old to do anything so energetic and that I might fall and hurt myself,' replied Meg. 'He obviously thinks that I'm **over the hill**.'

'My granddaughter's the same,' said Jane. 'She's always giving me little hints about what I should and shouldn't do. They hate us doing anything that'll draw attention to ourselves and embarrass them. I was having fun dancing at a party at their house last week and she looked at me as though she would like to tell me to **act my age**. I told her that **you are only as old as you feel** and she wasn't a bit pleased. **Mind you**, she treats her mother, my daughter, in the same way and Sheila's only 45!'

'Yes, they clearly think that anybody over 25 shouldn't have any fun at all,' replied Meg, 'and they obviously regard us as absolutely ancient. They probably think that we grandmothers should spend all our time sitting in rocking chairs by the fireside knitting.'

'**That'll be the day!**' said Jane. 'Apart from anything else I can't knit **for toffee**. Tell me more about the salsa dancing. That sounds much more **my cup of tea**. I should take more exercise, anyway.'

'Oh, I wasn't really serious about that,' said Meg. 'I've a much younger friend who goes every week to a salsa class, but I'm not really tempted by the idea. I much prefer yoga. I was really only **winding my grandson up** when I mentioned salsa. I knew exactly how he would react—and he reacted **true to form**. He's so predictable!'

'You'd think that they'd be glad that we're leading independent lives and not hanging around them all the time, asking them to do things for us and generally **getting in their hair**,' said Jane. 'Yet they seem much more concerned with what we're doing than we are with what they're doing. I don't remember worrying about what my grandmother was doing when I was that age. Do you?'

'No, but that's probably because she was sitting by the fireside knitting all the time or doing all the housework,' laughed Meg. 'Times have changed and now **golden oldies** like us can do anything we like as long as we are in good health and can afford it. **The world is our oyster!** But don't tell my grandson I said so! He'll buy me a rocking chair!'

Vocabulary Study

age, act your age

(cliché)

to behave in a way that is traditionally considered suitable and acceptable for someone of your age, often used of someone who is not doing so. The cliché also means to behave in a childish manner; often used in the imperative.

day, that'll be the day

(cliché)

used to emphasize the unlikelihood of something happening; used in informal contexts.

form, true to form

(cliché)

in the way that you would expect someone to behave from your past experience of them; often used of behaviour that is unacceptable in some way.

hair, get in someone's

hair *(idiom/cliché)*

to annoy someone, especially by being a nuisance and stopping them from getting on with what they should be doing; used in informal contexts.

hill, over the hill

(idiom/cliché)

getting old and so past the age at which you are at your most productive, effective or energetic stage; used in informal contexts. The idea behind the cliché is that someone has reached the top of a hill, representing the peak of their life, and is now going down the other side.

mind you *(cliché)*

used as if to remind someone of something, but often used either as emphasis for the statement which is coming next or almost meaninglessly by someone to whom the cliché has become a habit.

old, golden oldie *(cliché)*

a person who is no longer young, but may still be quite successful or energetic; used in informal, often humorous, contexts. The expression was originally applied to a song or film which is quite old but is still popular.

old, you are only as old as you feel *(cliché)*

a saying which emphasizes that what age you are is not important and that what is

important is your attitude to life and how you feel.

oyster, the world's your oyster *(idiom/cliché)*

used to emphasize how wide the range of opportunities available to someone is, although they may not appreciate this. This cliché refers to a passage in Shakespeare's *The Merry Wives of Windsor*—'Why, then, the world's mine oyster, which I with sword will open.' The idea behind the cliché is that successful opportunities can be extracted from life as a pearl can be extracted from an oyster.

tea, (not) my cup of tea

(idiom/cliché)

something that someone is likely to enjoy or be interested in; used in informal contexts.

toffee, for toffee *(cliché)*

used to emphasize how bad or unskilful someone is at something; used in very informal contexts.

wind someone up *(cliché)*

deliberately to tease or annoy someone; used in informal contexts.

Recalling Information

1. 'Salsa' is a Spanish word, which literally means 'sauce'. The salsa dance is 'saucy' and provocative, and is usually danced, with a partner, to music of a medium to fast tempo. Describe the reaction of Meg's grandson when she told him that she was thinking of taking up salsa dancing.

2. What did Jane's granddaughter think of Jane dancing at a party?

3. What told you that Meg was not serious about taking up salsa dancing?

4. Describe Meg's view about what golden oldies can do.

Understanding Information

1. Pick out an example of humour in the conversation between Meg and Jane.

2. Identify three exaggerated statements in Meg's and Jane's conversation.

3. Do you think Meg and Jane are typical of grandmothers in their 50s and 60s? Give reasons for your answer.

4. Match each of the situations in column A with the appropriate feeling in column B by joining the dots.

Column A

- (a) He likes to keep busy so a boat cruise is not his cup of tea. •
- (b) The children were left in the playground so they would not get in their father's hair. •
- (c) He is all heart and is so easy to wind up. •
- (d) The enthusiastic young man regards the world as his oyster. •
- (e) True to form, he shook off the compliments. •

Column B

- He is emotional
- He dislikes it.
- He would not be bothered.
- He behaves consistently.
- He is optimistic.

No Food in the Flat

A conversation on responsibility and doing one's share.

Pre-Reading Questions

1. Ask one question that you want answered after reading the passage.
2. Suggest why there would be no food in the flat.
3. Complete this statement: "When I found that there was no food in the flat,

I _____.

Reading Passage

Now read the passage below. You can look up the meanings of the words and idioms in bold in the Vocabulary Study section that follows.

'There's absolutely nothing to eat in this flat!' said Tony, looking in the fridge. 'The weekly shopping should have been done last night. Whose turn was it?'

'Do you really have to ask?' said Ronnie wearily, not bothering to look at the roster which was pinned to the kitchen wall. 'It was Jeff's, of course, but he forgot as usual. He really doesn't **pull his weight** around here. I'm sure that you're all as tired as I am of **dancing attendance on** him. He never **does a hand's turn**! Someone should tell him that he'll have to go if he doesn't start doing his share. That might jolt him into doing some of the work.'

'**Rather you than me!**' said Andy. 'He'll **go ballistic** if you even suggest that he should go. Besides, you're forgetting one important thing. It was Jeff's flat originally and his name's on the lease. We all moved in after him, if you remember. If we start **making waves** he might well tell us to go. Perhaps we'll just have to put up with it.'

Anyway, we could have worse flat mates than Jeff. He may have an appalling attitude to housework and shopping, but he's very easy to get along with and he can be a lot of fun.'

Tony said, 'The trouble with Jeff is that he was brought up with four older sisters who **waited on him hand and foot** and he was **the apple of his mother's eye** because she had waited so long to have a son. He's used to having everything done for him. It's not really his fault although I must admit that it's annoying.'

'**Nice work if you can get it!**' said Ronnie, 'but he's not at home now. Jeff seems to live on another planet most of the time. When he does remember to buy food, he buys incredibly expensive gourmet items and spends the entire week's food money **in one fell swoop**. He never buys things like **common or garden** cheese or tins of baked beans.'

'That's true,' said Andy. 'Perhaps it's just as well that he hardly ever does the shopping! Otherwise, we'd all starve. In fact, I'm starving right now. All this talk of food has whetted my appetite. There's no point in standing around here complaining about Jeff and his faults. You know as well as I do that **the leopard doesn't change its spots**. I'd rather spend the time doing the shopping myself. Then we can eat.'

'Well said!' agreed Tony. 'I'll come with you if you like and we can stop off at the pub on the way back.'

'Don't you dare!' exclaimed Ronnie. 'I need some food as soon as possible.'

Vocabulary Study

apple, the apple of someone's eye (*idiom/cliché*)

someone who is exceptionally well loved; a favourite person. The pupil of the eye was once referred to as an apple because it was thought to be solid and apple-shaped. The expression suggests that someone regards someone else as being as important to them as the pupil of their eye. Another cliché which has a similar meaning is **blue-eyed boy**, a man or boy who is so much loved that the person who loves him cannot see his faults and thinks that he can do no wrong; usually used in a derogatory way.

attendance, dance attendance on someone

(*idiom/cliché*)
to be ready to attend to all the wishes of a person and get them anything which they need.

ballistic, go ballistic

(*cliché*)
suddenly to become very angry and often lose control of yourself; used in very informal contexts. Ballistics is the scientific study of objects that are shot or thrown through

the air. Another cliché with a similar meaning, also used in very informal contexts, is **go bananas**.

garden, common or garden

(*cliché*)
ordinary, not unusual. In origin, the cliché refers to plants which either grow wild or are commonly found in ordinary gardens, as opposed to something more exotic.

hand, not to do a hand's turn

(*cliché*)
not to do any work. A cliché with a similar meaning is **not to lift a finger**.

hand, wait on someone hand and foot

(*idiom/cliché*)
to do everything for someone and get them everything they need while they do nothing.

leopard, the leopard doesn't change its spots

(*cliché*)
a saying used to emphasize that people tend not to change their attitude or behaviour.

swoop, in (or at) one fell swoop

(*cliché*)
at the same time, in the course of one action. The cliché is a reference to a quotation from Shakespeare's

play *Macbeth*—'Oh hell-kite! All? What, all my pretty chickens and their dam in one fell swoop?' The kite is a bird of prey which swoops down on its prey and 'fell' is an old word meaning cruel or savage.

wave, make waves (*cliché*)
to cause trouble; used in informal contexts. In origin, the cliché refers to a ship causing waves in still water by passing through it.

weight, pull your weight

(*idiom/cliché*)
to do your fair share of the work; or take your fair share of a responsibility.

work, nice work if you can get it

(*cliché*)
used to comment on how desirable or comfortable someone's situation is; used in informal contexts.

you, rather you than me

(*cliché*)
used to emphasize that what is being referred to is something that the speaker would certainly not want to do because it is unpleasant, difficult or dangerous; used in informal contexts.

Recalling Information

1. Explain why there was no food in the flat.

2. Why was it that the others should not tell Jeff off?

3. What was Tony's explanation for Jeff's attitude to housework and shopping?

4. What kinds of food did Jeff usually buy?

5. What was Andy's solution to their problem?

Understanding Information

1. From the conversation, **infer** the relationship among Tony, Ronnie, Andy and Jeff.

2. Use the organizer below to write a few sentences to describe the characteristics of each of the people you have just read about.

People	Characteristics
Andy	
Jeff	
Ronnie	
Tony	

3. Rewrite each of the following sentences, replacing the idiom with your own words, without changing the meaning.

(a) He really doesn't pull his weight around here.

(b) I'm sure that you're all as tired as I am of dancing attendance on him.

(c) He'll go ballistic if you even suggest that he should go.

(d) He was the apple of his mother's eye.

(e) You know as well as I do that the leopard doesn't change its spots.

4. After dinner that evening, Ronnie emailed to his sister and included one short paragraph about Jeff's forgetfulness, why Jeff was the way he was, and why they could not tell Jeff to go. Write out the paragraph in 90 words.

Writing Activity

You return home from school after a long day of lessons and co-curricular activities to find the sink full of dishes because your younger sibling has not done his/her duty of washing up. This is not the first time that the tasks have not been done. There are other times when the household chores are done, but unsatisfactorily. You feel strongly that he/she should contribute. Write a note of 200 words to convince him/her of this.

You may use some or all of the notes below, adding your own ideas, if you wish, to make your note convincing:

- Benefits of doing household tasks: develops responsibility – self-esteem – self-confidence – teaches life-skills – time management
- How to go about it: decide who should do what jobs – agree on acceptable standards and work quality – set deadlines for work to be done – rewards for job well done – consequences of not finishing tasks.



A large area containing 25 horizontal lines for writing.

Brainstorming Session

An introduction by a marketing director.

Pre-Reading Questions

1. What do you think is a brainstorming session?
2. How helpful is it to have several people give ideas and suggestions to solve a problem?
3. Why would a brainstorming session be held?

Reading Passage

Now read the passage below. You can look up the meanings of the words and idioms in bold in the Vocabulary Study section that follows.

You are all well aware that this is not the time of year for our sales conference. I have called you together for an extra meeting and one which has a very specific purpose—the exchange of ideas. Of course, we always aim to cover this at the annual conference, but there are so many things to be dealt with there that there is never enough time to allow for an adequate ideas session. Many of you must leave the conference hall thinking that you did **not** have an opportunity **to get a word in edgeways** and that is a great pity.

I hope to remedy this today because this meeting consists of a series of **brainstorming sessions**. We hope that you will all make a contribution. The sales force is no place for **shrinking violets** and so let's hear from you. I am sure that you all usually have plenty to say at the conference coffee breaks or in the pub afterwards and so now is your chance to communicate your thoughts to a wide audience.

It is all too easy in a large organization for management not to involve the **rank and file** to a great enough degree. Undoubtedly, the management team will have regular **councils of war** among themselves at which they will consider a whole **raft** of measures and proposals for making the company more aggressive and more profitable.

It is likely, too, that the management team may have **focus groups** among their customers who will advise them on what the customer is looking for in a particular product. Such groups have been found to be invaluable to us in our efforts to understand the **mindset** of potential customers.

However, the people who do the actual selling of the product, and, indeed, the people who make the products, are often left **out in the cold**. They rarely get a chance to **put in their penn'orth** and this is unfair. As the marketing director I am not in a position to do anything about the producers of our product, but I am providing those who sell our products with an opportunity to have their views heard.

I want you all to speak **straight from the shoulder**. There is no point in organizing these sessions if everyone is going to **pussyfoot around**, afraid to say what they really think in front of management. We want to hear what you have to say, whether this takes the form of a complaint about the way things are run, a suggestion about improving efficiency, a proposal for increasing sales, a plan for a new product or whatever.

Right, everyone. Get talking!

brainstorming session

(jargon)

a meeting of a group of people with the intention of generating new and creative ideas or improving problem-solving; often overused, particularly in business and marketing contexts. In American English a 'brainstorm' means the same as British English 'brainwave', a sudden good idea. In British English 'brainstorm' refers to something that has suddenly gone wrong with someone's mind, which makes them unable to think clearly and which may affect their behaviour.

cold, out in the cold

(idiom/cliché)

not included or involved in something, often deliberately so.

focus group

(jargon)

a small group of people representative of a wide range of people who are asked to give their opinions on a particular subject; originally used with reference to political or governmental issues or market research, but now widely overused, often being used of a group which is not really representative.

mindset

(jargon)

a way of thinking, or a set of beliefs or attitudes which

affects the way in which someone usually thinks or acts; very much overused and now increasingly used loosely instead of the word 'mind'.

penn'orth, put in your

penn'orth

(idiom/cliché)

to give your opinion about something. The word 'penn'orth' is short for 'pennyworth' and sometimes this word appears in the cliché instead of 'penn'orth'.

pussyfoot around

(cliché)

to be very careful about what you say or do and avoid speaking frankly in case you upset someone; used in informal contexts. In origin, the expression refers to the careful, stealthy way in which a cat moves.

raft

(jargon)

a series or set of things, such as plans or proposals; a large number or amount; overused in several contexts, including administration, politics and business. A raft is a kind of simple boat made by tying pieces of wood together and the original idea of 'raft' in the jargon sense was that it was used as a collective noun for a number of things that formed a set. Increasingly, it is becoming used just to indicate a large number of things, whether they form an actual set or not.

rank and file

(cliché)

the ordinary people or less important people in an organization. The expression originally referred to ordinary soldiers. The ranks and files were the horizontal and vertical lines in which battalions of soldiers were once drawn up in the battlefield and on parade.

shoulder, straight from the

shoulder

(idiom/cliché)

with complete frankness and directness. The origin of the expression lies in boxing and refers to a blow which has all the boxer's force behind it.

violet, shrinking violet

(idiom/cliché)

someone who is very shy and timid.

war, council of war

(cliché)

a meeting called to put together a plan of action, usually in an emergency. Literally, the phrase refers to a meeting of military officers or politicians to discuss a plan of action in time of war.

word, not to get a word in

edgeways

(idiom/cliché)

not to get a chance to say anything because other people are talking too much.

Recalling Information

1. What was the purpose of the meeting called by the marketing director?

2. What would the meeting consist of?

3. What were the regular methods by which the organization received ideas?

4. What was the value of focus groups?

5. Which groups of people usually did not get a chance to air their views?

Understanding Information

1. In his address, the marketing director wanted to convince the sales staff that he wished to give them a chance to express their views. Analyse his approach, using the guiding questions below.

- (a) Which three sentences show that he told the staff they should speak openly?

(b) How did he explain the ways other groups had opportunities to be heard?

(c) What were the suggestions made about the things that staff could bring up?

2. In paragraph 5, why did the marketing director say that he was not in a position to do anything about the producers of their product?

3. Rewrite each of the following sentences, using the expression given in brackets, so that your sentence has **an opposite meaning** of the given sentence. The first one is done for you as an example.

(a) Juliet is an assertive young lady and cannot be pushed around. (shrinking violet)

Juliet is a shrinking violet and avoids going to parties.

(b) The conference gave all the staff a chance to air their views at length. (to get a word in edgeways)

(c) The review committee's report was disappointing as it gave just a few recommendations. (raft)

(d) The senior management occupies the penthouse in the building. (rank and file)

(e) I'm not sure whether to believe Tom as he has a habit of hiding the truth. (straight from the shoulder)

4. Summarize in 100 words the main points in the marketing director's address. Include:
- the purpose for the meeting
 - the explanation that other groups had opportunities to be heard
 - the suggestions of what the staff could bring up

Follow-up Activity

Hold a brainstorming session to generate as many ideas as possible on a topic that is of interest to the group. You are free to choose your own topic.

HOW TO BRAINSTORM

Procedure

1. Gather a group of four to six people. Have one person to coordinate the proceedings, to introduce the purpose of the brainstorming session and to outline the rules. This person should also ensure the rules are followed and should actively encourage the participants. This person is the facilitator ('to facilitate' means to make easier).
2. Ideally you will then have a brief warm-up on a totally unrelated and fun topic. This will get your creative juices going and help establish a less restrictive mood. You should only start the main topic when the right mood is established.
3. With the purpose and topic established, everyone in the group shouts out their ideas and they are all written down so that they can be analysed later. The most common method of recording the ideas is on flipcharts (large pads of paper) but it's fine to use a blackboard, overhead projector transparencies, a computer or individual pads of paper. A secretary can be useful.
4. You should all follow the standard brainstorming rules:
 - Postpone and withhold your judgment of ideas.
 - Encourage wild and exaggerated ideas.
 - Quantity counts at this stage, not quality.
 - Build on the ideas put forward by others.
 - Every person and every idea has equal worth.
5. At the end of the specified time period, end the brainstorming session. Go back and pick on suggestions the group finds interesting. Now is the time for the group to ask questions (for example: 'What did you mean by.....?'), and to give explanations and comments.

A Summons from the Managing Director

A conversation on the reasons for the summons.

Pre-Reading Questions

1. Ask one question that you want answered after reading the passage.
2. Suggest some reasons why a managing director would want to see an employee.
3. What do you expect that employee to feel when sent for by the managing director?

Reading Passage

Now read the passage below. You can look up the meanings of the words and idioms in bold in the Vocabulary Study section that follows.

'The managing director would like to see you in his office,' said Brian to Lucy and Johnny. 'He didn't say what it was about, but you'd better go right away. You know he **has a short fuse** if people keep him waiting.'

'Are you sure you don't know what he wants?' asked Lucy suspiciously. Lucy didn't like Brian very much, especially since he teased her a lot.

'**Scout's honour!**' replied Brian, 'but perhaps someone's told him that you two are **an item** and he wants to complain. One of you might have to leave and get another job.'

'Don't be ridiculous!' snapped Lucy. 'We're both in the advertising department and he probably wants to talk about this season's brochures. In any case, there's no rule that says that members of staff can't go out with each other. Why should he care?'

'I was only joking,' replied Brian. 'Don't **get your knickers in a twist** and you should be **making tracks**. Don't just stand there. Mr Giles might think that I forgot to tell you.'

'You shouldn't let Brian **rattle your cage**,' said Johnny to Lucy. 'He just teases you because you **rise to the bait**. If you ignore him he'll stop doing it. Now, let's go and see what old Giles wants before he comes looking for us.'

Lucy and Johnny were with Mr Giles for a long time and their colleagues were beginning to wonder why. Usually visits to the managing director were extremely brief. 'They've been gone a long time,' said Mary. 'You don't think old Giles is **on the warpath** because they're going out with each other.'

'No, I don't,' said Anna. '**In all conscience**, there's no reason why two members of staff shouldn't have a relationship, as long as it doesn't interfere with their work. Mr Giles has no grounds for complaint.'

Just then Johnny and Lucy appeared, looking far from happy. Their colleagues were anxious to know what had happened. 'Did you **get it in the neck** from old Giles?' asked Brian.

'No, we didn't,' said Lucy to Brian. 'He's very pleased with our work. In fact, he complimented us both on our report writing. Unfortunately, that means that he's chosen us to help him compile the new company **mission statement** for next month's shareholders' meeting. Worse, he wants it by this evening and I **have a lot on my plate** already. I don't suppose anyone feels like helping.'

'Absolutely not!' said everyone. Brian went off laughing, much to the annoyance of Lucy.

Vocabulary Study

bait, rise to the bait

(idiom/cliché)

to react to someone's remarks in exactly the way which they intend you. In origin, the expression refers to a fish rising to catch the bait on an angler's line.

cage, rattle your cage

(idiom/cliché)

to annoy or upset someone; used in informal contexts. In origin, the expression refers to visitors to a zoo rattling the cages of the animals to get them to react.

conscience, in all conscience

(cliché)

used to indicate that something is fair and reasonable; often used more or less meaninglessly by people to whom it has become a habit.

fuse, have (or on) a short fuse

(idiom/cliché)

used to indicate that someone becomes angry very easily; used in informal contexts. The word 'fuse' here refers to a piece of string or paper which is lit to make a firework or

bomb explode. The firework or bomb would explode more quickly if the string or paper were very short.

honour, scout's honour!

(cliché)

used to emphasize that you are telling the truth; often used in humorous contexts. The Scouts is an international organization, originally for boys, which encourages young people to learn practical skills and take part in a wide range of activities.

item, an item

(cliché)

said of two people who are having a romantic or sexual relationship; used in informal contexts.

knickers, get your knickers in a twist

(colloquialism)

to become agitated or upset, often about something that is not really important; used in very informal contexts.

mission statement

(jargon)

an official statement of the aims of a company or organization; much overused

because it is thought to sound impressive.

neck, get it in the neck

(idiom/cliché)

to be punished or reprimanded; used in very informal contexts.

plate, have a lot on your plate

(idiom/cliché)

to have a great deal to do or attend to; used in fairly informal contexts. The expression can have several forms, such as **have too much on your plate** or **have enough on your plate**.

track, make tracks

(idiom/cliché)

to go away; to leave somewhere; used in informal contexts.

warpath, on the warpath

(idiom/cliché)

in a very angry mood. The expression is associated with North American Indians when they were ready for war.

Recalling Information

1. What was the summons from the managing director?

2. Give an example that showed Brian was a tease.

3. What was Lucy's guess as to the reason for the summons?

4. What was the reason for the summons to Mr Giles' office?

Understanding Information

1. How do you think Lucy and Johnny felt
(a) just before they went to Mr Giles' office?

- (b) after they left his office?

2. Think of five adjectives (e.g. 'friendly') to describe the office environment.

(a) _____ (b) _____

(c) _____ (d) _____

(e) _____

3. Match each of the situations in column A with the correct reaction in column B by joining the dots.

Column A

(a) You just have this habit of rattling his cage and now we're all in for it.

(b) With the end-of-year reports to write, he has a lot on his plate.

(c) I'm not surprised that he yelled. He has a short fuse.

(d) He is on the warpath because of the trick you played.

Column B

• He is annoyed.

• He is furious.

• He is busy.

• He is upset.

4. Summarize in 80 words the gist of the whole passage.

Writing Activity

What you have just read is an office conversation. Most of the expressions used in this conversation are informal, meaning that they are used in a light-hearted setting without rules and regulations.

Below are some features of an informal dialogue:

- Interaction between two or more people
- Repetition (of one's own and friend's words)
- Simple vocabulary

Write an informal conversation, taking one of the following situations or make up a situation of your own:

- Two friends are talking about an exciting sports event that one of them has watched.
- Two or three friends are chatting about whether or not to hold a surprise birthday party for a classmate.

New Competition

A managing director tells his workforce of a threat to their business.

Pre-Reading Questions

1. Is competition good or bad?
2. Do you like competition in your studies and in sports? Why or why not?
3. What would life be like without competition?

Reading Passage

Now read the passage below. You can look up the meanings of the words and idioms in bold in the Vocabulary Study section that follows.

As you are probably aware, one of our major American competitors, Steiner & Warbuck, is planning to open a branch of their company in our area. Obviously, we do not yet know how this will **impact on** our business, but we must try to ensure that it will have as little effect as possible. **The bottom line** is that we are the market leaders in this area and we must strive to maintain that position.

I am not even going to pretend that this will be easy. Steiner & Warbuck is a much larger company than ours, with considerably more financial resources. We will certainly not, from that point of view, be competing on a **level playing field**.

However, we do have some advantages. We have been established for some time in the market, have a good reputation and have a good many extremely loyal customers. In recent years, we have regularly improved on our sales figures and have increased the profitability of the company substantially.

Also, we have the advantage of time. The news of Steiner & Warbuck's plans has just been announced and they will not get access to the property which they have purchased for three months. Since the building is in need of extensive renovation and refurbishment, it will be some considerable time before they move in and get the branch **up and running**.

Then there will be the problem of staff. I gather from a **reliable source** that they plan to send a senior management team over from the States until the business here is **on stream**. However, they will have to establish an **infrastructure** from local resources and that could prove quite difficult. We all know that there is a lack of trained administrative staff available locally.

All this, then, is to our advantage, but we must certainly not **rest on our laurels**. We must react positively to the arrival of our competitors.

With this in mind, we are organizing an aggressive marketing campaign starting next month. All our effort must go into this and so please put this first when you are **prioritizing** your workload. You will all be given weekly **targets**, and although they may seem very high, and even unattainable, they reflect the kind of effort that has to be made if the firm is to survive the arrival of this competition.

As yet, I have no other information about our competitor's plans, but when I do, you may be sure that I will keep you **up to speed**. We must not be **caught napping**. There is work to be done and I must not keep you from it any longer.

field, a level playing field

(idiom/cliché)

a situation in which no one involved has any special advantages and so it is fair to all. The expression refers to a field where some form of sport is played.

impact on something

(jargon)

to have an effect on; overused, especially in political and business contexts, because it is thought to sound impressive. The word 'impact' is one of several words that were formerly mostly used as nouns but have now also acquired a verbal use.

infrastructure *(jargon)*

the people and systems which are necessary for something to operate; much overused, especially in a business or commercial context. The word was originally used to refer to the system of public services and facilities, including roads, power supplies, water supplies, communication services, which are required for commercial or military activity to operate.

laurel, rest on your laurels

(idiom/cliché)

to rely on your reputation based on past successes without making any effort to achieve further success. The expression **look to your laurels** is used to advise or

warn someone that if they want to continue their success and maintain their present position, they had better make more effort, often because they are facing new competition. In origin, both expressions refer to the ancient Greek practice of crowning the winner of a competition with leaves of laurel.

line, the bottom line

(idiom/cliché)

the most important point. This cliché comes from accountancy where it refers to the bottom line of a financial statement which indicates the extent of the profit or loss.

napping, caught napping

(idiom/cliché)

in a situation in which you are unprepared for something that happens and so not be ready to deal with it; used in fairly informal contexts. 'To nap' means to sleep lightly, often during the day.

on stream *(idiom/cliché)*

in or into production, use or operation. The cliché has its origin in the oil industry from oil coming on stream. See **up and running** below.

prioritize *(jargon)*

to arrange things which you have to do in order of importance or urgency; much overused especially in business or political contexts.

source, a reliable source

(cliché)

a person who has provided information which is believed to be reliable and true but who will not be named for some reason; often used in journalese and sometimes used in humorous contexts.

speed, up to speed

(jargon)

fully informed about the progress of something; having all the most recent information about something; used in fairly informal contexts. Literally, this expression means having reached the maximum or desirable speed or rate of progress and it is also used to refer to something that has reached its highest level of efficiency or success.

target *(jargon)*

a result or goal which you are trying to achieve. As more and more emphasis is placed on the importance of producing visible proof of how well people are doing, so the word 'target' has increased in use and become overused. The word 'target' was originally used of the object which is aimed at in some sports, such as shooting and darts.

up and running *(cliché)*

working; operating.

Recalling Information

1. What was the new competition that the company would face?

2. Why did the managing director say that maintaining the company's place as market leader would not be easy?

3. List the advantages that the managing director pointed out in paragraph 3.

4. In what sense did the company have the advantage of time?

5. Describe the problem that Steiner & Warbuck would face with staff.

Understanding Information

1. The managing director's address was to impress on his staff that the company would be up against stiff competition. Using the graphic organizer below, list as many advantages and disadvantages as you can find mentioned in his address. You will find that an advantage for the local company can also be expressed as a disadvantage for the American competitor and vice versa.

	Local company	American competitor
Advantages		
Disadvantages		

2. How would the local company prepare itself for the new competition?

3. Match each sentence in column A with a follow-up comment in column B. Write the letter of the correct follow-up comment in the box that corresponds with the sentence.

Column A	Column B
1. The store will receive the goods next week. <input data-bbox="598 504 695 561" type="text"/>	A. Let me keep you up to speed on what's happened.
2. You can trust what he told you. <input data-bbox="598 599 695 656" type="text"/>	B. You will have to prioritize your study schedule.
3. The exams are coming up close. <input data-bbox="598 694 695 752" type="text"/>	C. I fear it will have a negative impact on team morale.
4. You've been on leave for the last two weeks. <input data-bbox="598 790 695 847" type="text"/>	D. We can expect it to be up and running in two weeks.
5. One of our star players is injured. <input data-bbox="598 885 695 942" type="text"/>	E. It comes from a reliable source.

4. Summarize in 100 words, the advantages and disadvantages that the local company had in the face of new competition.

Writing Activity

Suppose that a very established secondary school with an excellent reputation is going to relocate to its new building just opposite to your school. As the new school will provide competition to yours in attracting good students, your principal asks you to write a leaflet of 200 words to be given to primary schools in your area.

The purpose of the leaflet is to persuade primary school pupils of the advantages of joining your secondary school. In the leaflet, give details of the following facilities and resources of your school:

- Library
- Computer laboratories
- Science laboratories
- Special purpose rooms, e.g. music room, art room, audio-visual room
- Sports facilities

CV Deception

A conversation on a staff member's CV deception.

Pre-Reading Questions

1. CV stands for 'curriculum vitae' or biodata. Why would someone need to write a CV?
2. What would a person put in his CV?
3. From the title above, what do you think the passage is about?

Reading Passage

Now read the passage below. You can look up the meanings of the words and idioms in bold in the Vocabulary Study section that follows.

'I have a piece of bad news for you,' said Meg to her boss. 'You're going to have to start looking for an office manager again.'

'What!' exclaimed Mr Ramsay. 'But Sally just started two days ago. She can't have resigned yet surely! We're not as bad a firm as that!'

'No, she hasn't,' replied Meg, 'but you're going to have to **give her the boot**. At least that's the message from head office. She's to leave the building right away.'

'Oh no! It took me such a long time to go through all the applicants and select her,' he said, sitting down at his desk and putting his head in his hands wearily. 'What's she done? Surely she hasn't **had her hand in the till** already.'

'It's nothing like that,' replied Meg. 'Apparently, she **airbrushed** her CV and the HR manager at head office has just found out. **Basically**, she invented a degree and a business diploma. Her references were

genuine, although they **gilded the lily** a bit, but they were written by two close friends of hers. They run a business together and she used to do some part-time work for them occasionally—but not work of the standard required here. **Actually**, it's just as well it was discovered now. She would never have coped with the work.'

'**Words fail me!**' cried Mr Ramsay. 'I thought I was a good judge of character and she seemed **the best of the bunch**. I must be **losing my grip** as an interviewer.'

'**You can't win 'em all!**' said Meg comfortingly. 'You're usually **spot on** when it comes to choosing people for jobs. Don't blame yourself. It's apparently quite common now for people to tell lies in their CV and many of them are never found out. Sally was unlucky, I suppose. They don't always check educational qualifications, it seems, but the deputy office manager Mary Brown did a business diploma at the same college as Sally claimed she had been at, and graduated the same year Sally said that she did. It was a small college and Mary didn't know her.'

'Mary could just be making a mistake, I suppose,' said Mr Ramsay.

'I'm afraid not,' Meg replied. 'They checked with both the college and the university. Sally had never been registered at either and so the HR department started checking the rest of her CV, found out about her references and **the rest is history**.'

'I need a cup of coffee fast,' said Mr Ramsay. 'I can't believe I'm going to have to start the interviewing process over again.'

Vocabulary Study

actually (*cliché*)

often used meaninglessly, especially by people to whom it has become a habit; can also be used when contrasting what is actual or real with what is not.

airbrush (*jargon*)

to make something seem better than it is. Literally, to 'airbrush' means to improve a picture or photograph using an airbrush, a device for spraying paint which uses compressed air.

basically (*cliché*)

used when referring to the most important point or feature of something or when stating what is the most important about a situation. This cliché is often used more or less meaninglessly by people to whom its use has become a habit.

boot, give someone the boot (*idiom/cliché*)

to dismiss someone; used in informal contexts. The idea

behind the cliché is that someone has been kicked out.

bunch, the best of the bunch (*cliché*)

the best or most suitable person in a group; sometimes suggesting that the group as a whole is not particularly good. **The best of a bad bunch** (or **lot**) is a similar cliché which puts more emphasis on how bad the group is.

grip, lose your grip

(*idiom/cliché*)

to become less good at something or less able to deal with something than you were before.

history, the rest is history

(*cliché*)

used to indicate that everyone knows the rest of the story or account which you have been telling or the account which you have been giving and so you need say no more.

lily, gild the lily (*idiom/cliché*)

to try to improve something

when it is already good enough; to add unnecessary details or decoration.

spot on (*cliché*)

exactly right or accurate; used in fairly informal contexts.

till, have your hand (or fingers) in the till (*idiom/cliché*)

to steal from the shop or business where you work; used in informal contexts.

win, you can't win 'em all (*cliché*)

a saying used when you have failed to do something to indicate that sometimes you just have to accept failure or defeat; used in informal contexts. The word 'em' is short for 'them'.

word, words fail me (*cliché*)

used to emphasize that you are so surprised, shocked or displeased that you cannot describe your feelings.

Recalling Information

1. What was the piece of 'bad news' that Meg brought to her boss, Mr Ramsay?

2. What wrong did Mr Ramsay think Sally had done?

3. What had Sally done to deceive the company?

4. Why did Meg think the early discovery was 'just as well'?

5. Who first suspected that Sally's CV was not genuine?

Understanding Information

1. Sally had worked part-time for the company that wrote the references. Yet the references were part of the deception. Explain why.

2. Mr Ramsay blamed himself for being a poor interviewer. Elaborate on what he meant.

3. How was the deception about the degree and references discovered? Trace the series of events described in paragraphs 5, 7 and 9, using the organizer below.

	Series of Events
1	
2	
3	

4. Complete each of the sentences with a suitable idiom from the box below.

the rest is history

the best of the bunch

spot on

losing his grip

give him the boot

- (a) Highly stressed, Tom felt he was _____ and decided to see a doctor.
- (b) Rather than _____, the manager told him to upgrade his skills.
- (c) Guess what! You were _____ in predicting the top three finalists.
- (d) Though the new General Manager came from a humble background, he won a scholarship to university and _____.
- (e) Some people are critical of the management team but I can tell you they are _____.
5. In 100 words, summarize the episode of the CV deception. Explain what the deception was, how it was discovered and what the outcome was.

Writing Activity

With computer technology, it is now possible for dishonest people to buy fake degrees and professional certificates from websites to boost their chances of getting a job. Imagine that you are a reporter of a local newspaper and your editor asks you to write a balanced report of 200 words on this scam based on the following notes:

- People selling the degrees and certificates – what they have to gain.
- People buying the degrees and certificates – what they have to gain and lose.
- Employers who believe the certificates are genuine – possible consequences for employers who have employed someone with fake qualifications.

Jim in Trouble

A conversation on how to deal with the situation.

Pre-Reading Questions

1. Recall an occasion when you were in trouble.
2. Did you think you deserved to be in trouble?
3. What effect did the incident have on you?

Reading Passage

Now read the passage below. You can look up the meanings of the words and idioms in bold in the Vocabulary Study section that follows.

'**Someone who shall remain nameless** must have told Mum that I was home a bit late last night,' said Jim. 'She's absolutely furious with me.'

'**Don't look at me!**' replied his sister Mary. 'I don't know why you think someone had to tell Mum. It was quite obvious that you were late home. You made such a noise that you woke the whole household and you weren't just a bit late. You were extremely late! I looked at the clock and it was **the wee small hours** when I heard you stumbling upstairs. You were supposed to be home by eleven.'

'Nonsense!' exclaimed Jim. 'It may have been a few minutes past **the witching hour**, but that's all. I remember looking at the clock in Joe's house as I was leaving the party.'

'Then your eyesight must be getting very bad or you got badly lost on the way home,' was Mary's reply. 'Joe only lives two streets away.'

'Do you think Mum might have forgotten all about it by this evening?' asked Jim hopefully. 'Perhaps she'll have calmed down. She doesn't usually stay angry with us for very long, does she?'

'**Get a reality check!**' said Mary. 'You know she has a **bee in her bonnet** about us being in at a reasonable time during the week. She thinks staying out late will affect our college work and she's so keen for us to get good qualifications.'

'But I don't have any lectures this morning. I don't have to be in college until this afternoon. I could have still been **in the land of nod** if Mum hadn't come barging in and woken me up **at some ungodly hour to tear a strip off me.**'

'She was still **breathing fire** when she left for work. She was so furious with you that she didn't even say goodbye to the rest of us,' replied Mary.

'What time will she be home?' asked Jim. 'Is she working late tonight?'

'**Ask me another!**' said Mary. 'Why do you want to know?'

'I thought that if I could get her calmed down she might let me borrow the car,' replied Jim. 'I'm going over to Jenny's flat this evening and it's right at the other side of town. The bus service to that part of town is terrible.'

'Don't **push your luck!**' advised Mary. 'The best thing that you can do is to keep out of Mum's way for as long as possible, preferably by staying in your room and studying. She probably won't allow you to leave the house tonight, let alone lend you the car. I think you're underestimating just how angry she is.'

another, ask me another

(cliché)

used to indicate that you don't know the answer to a question which you have been asked; used in informal, sometimes humorous, contexts.

bee, a bee in your bonnet

(idiom/cliché)

something about which you feel strongly and about which you can't stop thinking or talking. In origin, the cliché refers to a bee being trapped inside a hat and so unable to get out, comparing this to an idea which you get into your head and cannot get rid of.

fire, breathe fire

(idiom/cliché)

to speak or act in an extremely angry way; used in informal contexts. In origin, the cliché refers to a dragon in legend which breathed fire when it was angry.

hour, at some (or an)

ungodly hour *(cliché)*

very late at night or very early in the morning and, therefore, often very inconvenient or annoying.

hour, the wee small hours

(cliché)

the hours immediately after midnight, one o'clock, two

o'clock, three o'clock, etc;

used in informal contexts.

The word 'wee' is originally a Scottish word meaning small and so 'wee' and 'small' in this expression both mean the same thing, making it an example of tautology. An alternative form of the cliché is **the small hours**.

hour, the witching hour

(cliché)

midnight; used mostly in informal or humorous contexts. Witches are said to begin practising their magic at midnight.

look, don't look at me

(cliché)

used to indicate that you are not involved in something or that you do not wish to be involved in something; used in informal contexts.

luck, push your luck

(idiom/cliché)

to take a foolish risk that might well result in trouble for you, often by trying to gain too much when you had been reasonably successful up till then; used in informal contexts, often found in negative constructions.

nameless, someone who

shall (or must) remain

nameless *(cliché)*

used when someone is reluctant to mention the name of the person who is being referred to for some reason or other; often used in humorous contexts where it is obvious who is being referred to.

nod, in the land of nod

(idiom/cliché)

asleep; used in informal contexts, often in relation to children or in humorous contexts. From the fact that people often nod when they are about to fall asleep, as in 'nod off', to go to sleep, often for a short time, and often sitting in a chair during the day; used in informal contexts.

reality, get a reality check

(jargon)

to stop being unrealistic and accept the facts of a situation.

strip, tear a strip off

someone *(idiom/cliché)*

to reprimand or scold someone or criticize someone severely for doing something wrong. This expression originates from the idea of whipping someone so severely that you take off a piece of skin.

Recalling Information

1. What is the difference between 'the wee small hours' and 'the witching hour'?

2. How do you know that Mary did not believe Jim returned home a few minutes past the witching hour?

3. What was the reason that Jim's mother wanted him home at a reasonable hour?

4. What did Jim intend to ask his mother that evening?

Understanding Information

1. Comment on whether you find the title 'Jim in Trouble' appropriate.

2. Do you think Jim was sorry that he had displeased his mother? Give a reason for your answer.

3. From the dialogue you can contrast the characters of Mary and Jim. Pick out as many different characteristics between them as you can.

4. What is your view of parents who fix the time for their teenage children to return home at night?

5. Write a sentence using the idiom given in brackets for each of the situations below. The first one is done for you as an example.

- (a) You and your friends have a party to welcome the New Year. (the wee small hours)

My friend and I were partying till the wee small hours to welcome the New Year.

- (b) The grandchildren know that they must always remember to greet their grandmother or she will tell them off about courtesy. (a bee in her bonnet)

- (c) You and your friends take part in a charity team event that begins at 5 a.m. (at some ungodly hour)

- (d) You are careless and break your mother's favourite vase. (breathing fire)

- (e) You attend an afternoon lecture after a heavy lunch. (in the land of Nod)

- (f) You pass a test without much studying and want to do the same for next year. (push your luck)

6. Summarize the main points of the passage in 80 words.

Writing Activity

Notice that the information in this unit is presented as a conversation between Mary and Jim. You will realize that dialogues are a powerful means to tell us about people. Write a conversation using the expressions that you have learnt so far. Try as much as you can to bring out the characters in the dialogue.

You and your brother/sister have a discussion about a family matter. Choose from one of the following situations, or use one of your own situations, so long as it is a discussion between you and your sibling on a family matter.

- Though you are both getting the same amount of pocket money, you think it's enough but your sibling does not. He/she wants to ask your parents to increase the amount.
- You are happy with the 10 pm deadline that your parents have set for you to return home at night. But your sibling wants it extended to 11 pm.

Controversial Toll Charging

A radio interview with a local councillor.

Pre-Reading Questions

1. What is a toll charge?
2. What is meant by 'controversial'?
3. Why would a local councillor be interviewed?

Reading Passage

Now read the interview below. You can look up the meanings of the words and idioms in bold in the Vocabulary Study section that follows.

Interviewer: Councillor Brown, thank you for sparing the time to come along and talk to us today. As you are aware, a great many people are concerned about the announcement of the council's decision to charge tolls on cars entering the city centre.

Councillor: No decision of the kind has been made. The public concern can be blamed on the press who are **having a field day** with this subject. Consequently, the whole situation has **got out of hand** and **rumours are rife**. The truth of the matter is that we are aware that something must be done urgently about the ever-worsening traffic congestion and we are investigating a number of options. Toll-charging is just one of these.

Interviewer: You're **preaching to the converted** here when you say that something must be done to improve the traffic situation, but is the charging of tolls a viable possibility? Owners of shops in the city centre are expressing concern that such a scheme would virtually

mark the end of city-centre shopping. Others fear that collecting tolls would simply add to the congestion while motorists queue to pay the tolls.

Councillor: If there is one thing which I have learned in my long years of service as a councillor it is that **you can't please all of the people all of the time**. Although everybody seemingly agrees that something must be done about the traffic, every time we put forward a proposal, someone **throws a spanner in the works**. Most motorists **pay lip service to** the idea that we need to reduce the amount of traffic coming into the city centre but they want to **look after number one**. They don't want to use public transport.

Interviewer: **But there's the rub**. If there were better public transport, it wouldn't be an inconvenience to use it and people would be more inclined to leave their cars at home.

Councillor: It's a **chicken-and-egg situation**. We need more money in order to improve our public transport system to the extent that motorists will use it. It is only right, in our view, that some of that money should come directly from the motorists, although, I repeat, no decision has been made on road tolls.

Interviewer: I think that a great many people feel that it is more than time that the council did come to a decision about traffic. You appear to have been **going round in circles** for several years on the subject. We feel that you are not really getting to grips with the **nuts and bolts** of the situation.

Councillor: That remark is most unfair and not at all helpful.

Vocabulary Study

chicken, a chicken-and-egg situation (*idiom/cliché*)

a situation in which it is not clear which of two closely related situations occurred first and caused the other. The cliché is also used to describe a problem situation in which the seeming solution is also the cause of the problem. The origin of this cliché is in the saying **which came first, the chicken or the egg?**

circle, go round in circles (*idiom/cliché*)

to make no progress with a problem, however much thought or effort you put into it. The cliché comes from the idea of someone who is lost going round in circles and keeping coming back to where they started from.

converted, preach to the converted (*cliché*)

to try to persuade people that something is a good thing when they already believe this.

day, have a field day (*idiom/cliché*)

to take as much advantage of an opportunity as possible and do what you want or

enjoy yourself, often by criticizing or upsetting someone else. A field day was originally a day on which soldiers practised and demonstrated their skills in front of high-ranking officers.

hand, get out of hand (*idiom/cliché*)

to become difficult or impossible to handle or control.

lip, pay lip service to something (*idiom/cliché*)

to express agreement with something without meaning this and without doing anything to support it. The idea behind the cliché is that only the lips, as the organ of speech, are being used to show agreement or support.

nuts and bolts (*idiom/cliché*)

the practical details of something.

one, look after number one (*cliché*)

to take care of yourself and your own interests and not worry at all about other people; used in informal contexts. An alternative form

of the cliché is **look out for number one**.

please, you can't please all of the people all of the time (*cliché*)

used to emphasize that since not all people are the same and consequently have different attitudes and opinions, you cannot hope to get approval from everyone for what you say and do.

rub, there's the rub (*cliché*)

that is what makes a situation difficult or impossible.

rumours are rife (*cliché*)

used to emphasize that there are a great many rumours going around about something.

spanner, throw a spanner in the works (*idiom/cliché*)

to prevent something from going ahead as planned; to spoil or ruin a plan.

Recalling Information

1. What was the subject matter of the radio interview with Councillor Brown?

2. Why were toll charges being considered?

3. What were the objections to toll charges into the city centre?

4. What solution was given by the interviewer to the heavy use of cars into the city centre?

5. What criticism did the interviewer make of the council?

Understanding Information

1. The Councillor blamed the press for causing public concern. Explain how the press could be held responsible for public concern.

2. Complete the following sentences to show cause and effect.

- (a) The council was examining a number of options because _____
_____.
- (b) Shop owners in the city centre were worried about a lack of shoppers as a consequence of _____.
- (c) The Councillor believed heavy traffic in the city centre was caused by _____
_____.
- (d) Because there was a shortage of funds, the council _____
_____.

3. Match each sentence or question in column A with the appropriate response in column B by joining the dots.

Column A

- (a) Have you found a solution yet? •
- (b) We want to have a win-win situation in which all groups gain something. •
- (c) The main committee will propose the concept. •
- (d) We must think of a way to discipline him. •
- (e) Did you know there is a recycling service for all unwanted papers, plastics and glass bottles? •

Column B

- You're being idealistic. You can't please all of the people all of the time.
- I've been using it for months. Actually, you're preaching to the converted.
- No, I'm afraid not. We seem to be going round in circles.
- I agree, if we wait any longer he'll get completely out of hand.
- OK, that's fine. But who will take care of the nuts and bolts?

4. Write a 100-word summary of the radio interview. Include these points:

- The option of charging tolls
- The reason for this option
- Some concerns about the tolls
- A possible solution

Writing Activity

You are the president of one of the co-curricular clubs in your school. The club members meet once a week to take part in activities but often these activities are not successfully carried out because of poor attendance or late-coming. You propose some changes that would improve punctuality and attendance. Many members object to these proposals and one of them wants you to answer some questions at the next club meeting. The questions are given to you in advance. Prepare your answers in writing.

1. Many members are concerned that you intend to impose a fine on members who are late for meetings or who do not attend. Do you think you have the authority to do that?

2. Why have you not thought of first asking members why they are late or irregular in attendance?

3. Have you thought of other ways to get members to be punctual and regular in attendance?

4. How can you stop members from resigning from the club if these fines are imposed?

READ and UNDERSTAND 4

Answer Key

Unit 1 Grim Discovery

Recalling Information

- The shocking news was that the body of a young woman had been found in a wooded area just outside the town.
- Jim Bradley was led to the discovery by his dog.
- He called the police on his mobile phone.
- He was anxious and wanted to leave the scene quickly. Also, he was sympathetic to the relatives of the dead woman.
- The police could not reveal the identity of the dead woman as her next of kin had not yet been informed.

Understanding Information

- Suitable footwear could be hiking or trekking shoes or boots.
- He put the leash on the dog to hold him back from digging in the ground to uncover the body.
- People would be alarmed to know that there is a murderer in their midst. They would be afraid that the murderer could strike again.
1. E 2. D 3. B 4. C 5. A
- Summary – include these points:
 - Jim Bradley and dog taking a walk in wooded area in town of Springfield.
 - Dog rushed into undergrowth, started digging in ground.
 - Human arm sticking out and dog uncovering dead body.
 - He put leash on dog, called police on his mobile.
 - He was frightened.
 - He was sympathetic to the relatives of the murdered woman.

Unit 2 A Sales Report

Recalling Information

- True 2. False 3. False 4. True 5. True
- False 7. False 8. True

Understanding Information

- | Statements made by the sales director | |
|---|--|
| (b) Sales in the first quarter hit an all-time high because of a major new product. | |
| (c) For the rest of the year, sales results were not as good as in the first quarter. It was not realistic to expect the first quarter results to be kept up. | |
| (d) The company learnt how to better handle a product launching in future. | |
| (e) Overall it was a successful year and the company expected better results the next year. | |
- (a) food for thought (b) gloom and doom
(c) bucked the trend (d) input
(e) broke all records
- Summary – include these points:
 - End of the year report given to members of the sales force for input.
 - Sales in the first quarter hit an all-time high.
 - Reason – a major new product launched.
 - Remaining quarters were not as good as in the first quarter.
 - Reason – could not keep up the first quarter results.
 - Learn how to better handle a product launching in future.
 - Overall a successful year.
 - Expected better results the next year.

Unit 3 Problems at Work

Recalling Information

- Billy and Sam were colleagues. OR Billy and Sam were co-workers in the same company.
- Mr Brown was taken ill and had an operation. He was recuperating for a couple of months.
- Mr Brown's sister, Mrs Wiley, had taken over from him.

- Billy said that Mrs Wiley was impossible to please. She criticized everyone's work all the time and her secretary had taken ill with stress.

Understanding Information

- Mr Brown was the General Manager. It was said that having someone brought in over him made the deputy manager angry.
- Mrs Wiley had a forceful character in the way she took over her brother's company when he was ill. She had little consideration for the employees' feelings and criticized them freely and compared them unfavourably with her own employees. She seemed vain about her appearance as she dressed younger than her age.
- Mr Brown was probably someone who listened to the opinions of his employees and cared about their feelings. He bustled them to put in their best effort without having to scold or criticize them.
- (a) be up and about (b) were having a ball
(c) mutton dressed as lamb (d) hopping mad
(e) put him in the picture
- Summary – include these points:
 - Mr Brown was very ill and everyone was worried.
 - But he was recovering from an operation.
 - In his absence, his sister came from America and took over the running of the office.
 - Everyone unhappy with Mrs Wiley's management style.
 - She was critical and inconsiderate.
 - She caused the business to lose clients and suppliers.

Unit 4 Health Scores

Recalling Information

- 'Yet, it is difficult for the lay person to decide which should be taken seriously and which should be taken with a pinch of salt.' OR 'All of them seem so convincing when we read them and most of us do not have the specialized knowledge to separate the wheat from the chaff.'
- Communication technology has made it possible for people to find out about health scores.
- One problem is that the information is complex and therefore takes time to understand. The other problem is that the information keeps changing.
- Any two of these examples can be accepted: Red meat should be strictly avoided because it increased cholesterol levels and was bad for the heart. Chicken could contain salmonella. Much of the fruit and vegetables in supermarkets contained dangerously high levels of pesticide.

Understanding Information

- Most lay people do not have enough specialized knowledge to judge whether a health score was based on fact or it was well researched. Moreover, it is time-consuming to read all the information. It is also confusing as the information keeps changing.
- (1) Is it once again the media, always a convenient whipping boy for everything, it seems, who are to blame? The media is once again a convenient whipping boy and should be blamed.
(2) Shouldn't the media take the wraps off things that we should be concerned about? The media should take the wraps off things is what we should be concerned about.
- Any three of the following exaggerated statements:
 - 'If we were to take all these scores seriously we would be afraid to eat anything at all.'
 - 'It seems that no sooner do we take on board what we should eat and what we should not than they move the goalposts.'
 - 'It appears that whenever we open our mouths and put something in it, we could be damaging our health.'
 - 'We just cannot avoid living dangerously if we eat to eat.'
- (a) Not been given up-to-date information.
(b) Make a difficult situation even more difficult.
(c) Had understood after reading and investigating.

- Summary – include these points:

- Communication technology has made it possible to get more news of health scores.
- The media tends to readily publish health scores.
- Most people do not have the specialized knowledge.
- Often confused by the changing information.
- Examples of health scores: avoid red meat because of risk of heart attack, chicken infected with salmonella, fruits and vegetables had high levels of pesticides.

Unit 5 Desperate Immigrants

Recalling Information

- One concern is the growing number. The other concern is their safety.
- Asylum seekers use their own life savings or their parents' savings.
- They are willing to take the risk if their lives are in danger or they face imprisonment in their own countries.
- Some are hidden in container lorries with not enough food, drink and air to breathe. Some hang on to the bottom of trains.
- After entering the country, the asylum seekers are likely to be deported.

Understanding Information

- (a) Asylum seekers risk their lives to get to another country because they hope for a safer, better life.
(b) Some of these people are unscrupulous and would take the life savings from asylum seekers.
(c) The consequence of the dangerous methods used to transport the asylum seekers is that many asylum seekers are injured or even killed in the process.
(d) When asylum seekers are not granted a safe haven, it means that they would be deported after spending months waiting for the outcome of their applications.
- Aspiring parents are willing to do that in the hope that their sons and daughters will have a brighter future in another country that is safe and where they can find work.
- The profiteers have no compassion for the hardships of asylum seekers. They are totally dishonest in taking the life savings of asylum seekers when they know they cannot safely transport them to a safe haven. They value money above human life.
- | Column A | Column B |
|----------|---|
| (a) — | after he risked life and limb to save the drowning child. |
| (b) — | went on to win against all the odds. |
| (c) — | and so don't expect repayment. |
| (d) — | is to save for a rainy day. |
| (e) — | in times of economic crises |
- Summary – include these points:
 - Asylum seekers were desperate to leave their own country to seek a safer and better life in another country.
 - They paid with their life savings or their parents' life savings.
 - The methods of transport were sometimes life-threatening – some hid in container lorries without enough food, drink or air, or they hung on to the bottom of trains.
 - When they reached their destination, they were often deported.

Unit 6 Miraculous Rescue

Recalling Information

- Martin Giles rescued Margaret Redwood and her three children from the fire.
- The fire started in the kitchen of Margaret Redwood's house at 5 Woodview Terrace in the night.
- Mr Giles climbed a ladder to rescue the family.
- Mrs Redwood sustained minor burns and shock. Her five-year old daughter suffered from severe smoke inhalation and was hospitalized. The other two children escaped without a scratch.
- Mr Giles saw the flames and heard the children scream.
- The fire appeared to have been caused by faulty wiring.

Understanding Information

- Students can give any sensible answer to this question, e.g. invite him for dinner, write him an effusive thank you letter.
- Any five of these: selfless, courageous, bold, fearless, civic-minded, humane. Accept other suitable adjectives but not a number of synonyms, such as both 'brave' and 'courageous'.
- Jack Lauder said that when there is a fire, the public is advised not to try to rescue people caught in the fire but to leave that job to the firemen. However, in this case if Mr Giles had not risked his life, the children would have died in the fire. While the firemen are trained in such rescue work, for an ordinary person like Mr Giles it took magnificent courage and he should be given a medal.
1. D 2. C 3. E 4. A 5. B
- Summary – include these points:
 - Woodview Terrace caught fire one night.
 - A woman, Margaret Redwood, and her three children were asleep upstairs.
 - Mr Martin Giles, their next-door neighbor, saved their lives.
 - He climbed up a ladder and rescued the family.
 - One of the children suffered severe smoke inhalation and was recovering in hospital.
 - The other two children were unharmed.
 - The mother had minor burns and was in shock.
 - The fire may have been caused by faulty electric wiring.

Unit 7 Flood Damage

Recalling Information

- One possible explanation was that a water pipe had burst. Another was that a staff member had accidentally left a tap running in the theatre bar after a party at the theatre.
- The flooding was a double whammy for Mr Burchill as he was the owner of the theatre, and his flat which was next door to the theatre was also greatly damaged.
- People speculated that Mr Burchill might close down the theatre as it was not making money.
- Mr Burchill denied the speculation that he would close the theatre.
- They regarded the flooding as a blessing in disguise as the theatre was in a shocking state of repair and should either be pulled down or completely renovated.

Understanding Information

- The flooding was described as ironic because the whole area had experienced drought conditions lately and people were asked to conserve water.
- | |
|---|
| The water supply to the building was cut off. |
| ↓ |
| Work began on drying out the theatre. |
| ↓ |
| The theatre, the bar and restaurant were closed down for repairs. |
| ↓ |
| The owner announced that he was not shutting down the theatre. |

- Mr Burchill could find the staff member who was found guilty of causing the flooding through negligence.
- On the one hand, the theatre owner, Mr Burchill, and the theatre manager, Mr Redpath, said that they were devastated by the flooding and damage done to the theatre. They said that repairs would be carried out and there was no possibility of a permanent closure of the theatre. On the other hand, some people in the area thought the flooding was fortunate in that it would force the owner either to pull down the theatre or repair it as it was in a shocking condition.
- (a) the why's and wherefore's (b) by leaps and bounds (c) a blessing in disguise (d) a double whammy (e) have business as usual
- Summary – include these points:
 - One morning, staff found the Carousel Theatre knee deep in water.
 - Water supply shut off and drying out work started.

- Exact cause not known, guessed a burst pipe was the cause.
- Owner was devastated, but rapid repairs would be carried out.
- Owner ruled out permanent closure of theatre.
- Theatre manager said it was not known how long repairs would take.

Unit 8 Closure of a Local Bookshop

Recalling Information

- Book-lovers would be saddened by the closure of Morton's.
- The reason for Morton's closure was that it faced financial difficulties.
- Mr Morton had tried for many months to find a buyer for the bookshop.
- One reason was that Morton's was located in the high street, but people preferred the shopping complexes out of town where there was ample parking space. Another reason was the better selection of goods in the shopping complexes.

Understanding Information

- A person faced with a Hobson's choice means he does not have a choice at all. He has to take what is offered or nothing at all.
- Mr Morton said that the shop was about to go bankrupt in the last few months. So rather than go bankrupt, the shop would be closed. It was against his nature to admit that the shop had failed but he had to face the truth that it had happened.
- Mr Robert Morton: "Town centre shops are facing a very uncertain future and I fear that several of them will soon be in the same position as we are today." Mr Jim Park: "Sadly, high street shopping is in danger of becoming past its sell-by date."
- (a) past their sell-by date (b) a general exodus (c) fought tooth and nail (d) in a tight corner (e) and of the road
- Summary – include these main points:
 - The shop was losing money and was close to becoming bankrupt.
 - The owner tried to save the shop by looking for a buyer for it or for the building but failed to do so.
 - He could not find a buyer because shops in the town were facing poor business.
 - First, there was rising cost.
 - Second, people preferred to shop further from town where there was ample parking and a better range of goods.

Unit 9 Bills, Bills, Bills

Recalling Information

- Lucy was concerned that the bills could not all be paid that month.
- Lucy used to buy new clothes and make-up without thinking twice but after she had the twins she could not afford to.
- The reason was that she found it impossible to find childcare for two babies of exactly the same age.
- Lucy's mother felt she was too old and did not have enough energy to look after the twins.
- Mike's mother was working part-time. Moreover, she had a major row once with Lucy and both of them did not see eye to eye on childcare. Also, she did not offer to help.

Understanding Information

- Below are possible adjectives. Accept other suitable or equivalent adjectives.
Lucy: pessimistic, complaining, vain, practical
Mike: positive, optimistic, unrealistic, impractical
Lucy's mother: firm, inflexible
Mike's mother: independent-minded, self-centred
- However, this was a situation in which well-thought out plans have not worked out because of unforeseen circumstances.
- Allow students to discuss this question in the context of their community or country.
- (a) halcyon days (b) share and share alike (c) let bygones be bygones (d) see eye to eye (e) think twice

5. Summary – include these main points:

- Lucy had to look after two babies and this was very time-consuming.
- She could not return to work as neither her mother nor mother-in-law was able or willing to help with child-minding.
- Without the extra income, Lucy was unable to afford new clothes and make-up which she missed buying.
- Even more difficult was that with one income, they could not afford to pay all their bills.
- Lucy missed not being able to work.

Unit 10 Footballers Required

Recalling Information

- The purpose of the appeal was to tell students in the school football teams to attend the training sessions regularly.
- The PE Department required that students have some football talent and the commitment to turn up for all the practices. Furthermore, they should put in their best effort when they were at the practice sessions.
- One benefit was that playing football made them physically fit. The other was that a good extra-curricular activities record would help in getting university admission. In addition, business firms would give preference to those who had been team players.
- The school needed more football players to make up the four training teams.

Understanding Information

Arguments to persuade students to join	How convincing are these arguments?
1. For health's should take more physical exercise and football was an excellent way to get fit.	Students' personal views.
2. Having a good extra-curricular activities record would help students gain university entry.	
3. Employers looked at extra-curricular activities record as it would show whether the person was a team player.	

- Allow students to give their views based on their own experiences. Encourage them to explain why they hold those views.
- (a) couch potato (b) come rain or shine (c) head and shoulders above (d) pick and choose (e) fighting fit
- Summary – include these main points:
 - The PE Department appealed to students to be regular in attending football training.
 - If the response was not good enough, there would be three or even two teams instead of four.
 - The appeal said that some football talent was needed. But more important was for students to be committed by attending practice sessions twice a week regularly, come rain or shine.
 - During practice sessions, they should play hard.
 - Students would benefit by keeping fit.
 - Moreover, having a good extra-curricular activities record would help students gain university entry.
 - Employers would look at extra-curricular activities record as it would show whether the person was a team player.

Unit 11 A Surprise Job Move

Recalling Information

- Jack found it strange that Mike moved to a much smaller firm, as he was usually so ambitious.
- The management decided that the company needed a new marketing director to raise the profile of the company.
- Mike resigned because he did not know where he stood with the new marketing director.

4. Mike joined the new company because he could see the company was going places; it treated its staff well and so they stayed. Also, Mike thought he would have better promotion prospects there.

Understanding Information

- Before** – employees in the department worked in a happy environment.
After – morale was low.
- Accept equivalent characteristics and other reasonable ones:
 - Mike: he had initiative; he was forward-looking, independent-minded, ambitious; he had a clear sense of direction and clear focus.
 - New marketing director: arrogant, unfriendly, wanted his own way, lacked people skills, was a poor motivator of people.
- It is likely that Mike can be believed as he was resigning from a large company to join a smaller company for less pay.
- Mike would not return as he had lost trust in the management. He thought they had made a mistake in changing marketing directors and if management allowed the new marketing director to mistreat employees, Mike did not want to work for such a company.
- The new team
 - had hit rock bottom
 - a high profile
 - to put it in a nutshell
 - look at the big picture
 - knew where we stood
- Summary – suggested answer:**
Hi Paul,
I've just changed jobs. I've moved to a smaller firm, Smith and Jones, and will take a pay cut but it's worth it as the long-term promotion prospects are much better here. The main reason for leaving the old company is that the new marketing director had turned the office environment from a happy one to one with low morale. He disliked someone, he would make his life miserable. Though I got on with him, I couldn't be sure when he would turn on me. So I decided to leave. Wish me luck.
Cheers,
Mike.

Unit 12 Launch of a Lunch Club

Recalling Information

- (a) True (b) True (c) False (d) True (e) False
(f) False (g) True (h) True

Understanding Information

- The speaker was the President of the club. This was clear from his opening statement that he had great pleasure to preside over the proceedings at the first meeting.
- It was because that day was Mrs Joan Miller's 94th birthday.
- the speaker frequently used the first person
 - he used contracted forms, e.g. I'm, we're, it'll
 - he used conversational expressions, e.g. 'of course', 'Have fun'.
- Fact
 - Fact
 - Opinion
 - Opinion
 - Fact
 - Fact
1. C 2. A 3. D 4. B
- Summary – include these main points:**
 - At the launch of the Woodville Lunch Club for Senior Citizens – speaker warmly welcomed those present.
 - Extended birthday greetings to Mrs Joan Miller who had her 94th birthday that day.
 - Aim of club – to provide food and companionship.
 - Companionship important – harder for older people to make friends because of fewer opportunities.
 - As for companionship of family – they were busy and had little time for elderly family members.
 - Ended by inviting everyone to spend time enjoying each other's company.

Unit 13 The Young's View of the Old

Recalling Information

- He was horrified and said she was too old to take up this energetic dance.
- Jane's granddaughter was embarrassed and seemed to think her grandmother was too old for such activities.
- Meg said she mentioned salsa dancing to wind her grandson up. She actually preferred yoga.

4. Meg believed that golden oldies could do anything they liked as long as they were in good health and could afford it.

Understanding Information

- It was humorous when Meg said, 'The world is our oyster! But don't tell my grandson I said so! He'll buy me a rocking chair!' [Accept other suitable examples of humour.]
- 'He obviously thinks I'm over the hill.'
Yes, they clearly think that anybody over 25 shouldn't have any fun at all, and they obviously regard us as absolutely ancient.
They probably think that we grandmothers should spend all our time sitting in rocking chairs by the fireside knitting!
- Allow students to give their views based on their own observations. There is no right or wrong answer.
- | Column A | Column B |
|----------|---------------------------|
| (a) ... | He dislikes it. |
| (b) ... | He would not be bothered. |
| (c) ... | He is unobtrusive. |
| (d) ... | He is optimistic. |
| (e) ... | He behaves consistently. |
- Summary – include these main points:**
 - The young think that those in their 50s and 60s cannot take part in energetic activities such as salsa dancing or dancing at parties.
 - They think that even those over 40 should behave in a sedate way.
 - The young would be horrified to hear their parents and grandparents being active and having fun.

Unit 14 No Food in the Flat

Recalling Information

- It was Jeff's turn to shop for food and he had forgotten to do so.
- They should not tell Jeff off as it was Jeff who had rented the flat and his name was on the lease. If the others told Jeff off, he might tell them to go.
- Tony explained that Jeff was waited on hand and foot by four older sisters. Moreover, as he was the youngest and his mother had waited so long to have a son, she doted on him.
- Jeff usually bought expensive gourmet foods.
- Amy's solution was that he would do the shopping.

Understanding Information

- They were all flat mates, sharing a rented flat and sharing expenses as well as household duties.
- Amy: He could see both sides of an issue. He pointed out that Jeff, despite his shortcomings, was the one who first leased the flat. He also made the point that Jeff was easy to get along with and was good company. Amy was practical and said that rather than complain about Jeff, they should go out and buy some food.
Jeff: He was irresponsible in not carrying his share of the household duties. He was extravagant in the way he bought gourmet foods and spent the week's food budget for one meal. He was quick-tempered and would get into a rage if asked to leave the flat.
Ronnie: He was impatient with Jeff's irresponsible behaviour and complained loudly about it. He suggested drastic action be taken, such as asking Jeff to leave. He also complained about Jeff's lack of thrift and good sense in buying gourmet foods.
Tony: He was far-minded in explaining that Jeff had been spoilt by his mother and four older sisters.
- He doesn't do his fair share of work here.
 - I'm sure that you're all as tired as I am, attending to all his wishes.
 - He'll be furiously angry if you even suggest that he should go.
 - He was his mother's favourite child.
 - You know as well as I do that it is impossible for a person to change his attitude or behaviour.
- Summary – suggested answer:**
Our flat mate, Jeff, has once again forgotten to buy food when it was his turn to do so. We all agree that he is hopelessly irresponsible. Tony thinks that it's probably because Jeff was so spoilt by his four older sisters and a mother who doted on him. But we can't tell Jeff to leave as he was the one who found the flat in the first place and we

came after him. Besides he's so easy to get along with and I like his company.

Unit 15 Brainstorming Session

Recalling Information

- The purpose of the meeting was to enable the employees to exchange ideas.
- The meeting would consist of a series of brainstorming sessions.
- The organization received ideas from the management team in their councils of war and from the focus groups among their customers.
- The value of focus groups was that they helped the organization to understand the mindset of potential customers.
- Usually these were the employees who made the products and those who sold the products.

Understanding Information

- The three scenarios are:
 - The sales force is no place for shrinking violets and so let's hear from you.
 - I want you all to speak straight from the shoulder.
 - There is no point organizing these meetings if everyone is going to pussyfoot around, afraid to say what they really think in front of management.
 - The management team had their meetings and the customers would give their views in focus groups.
 - He gave examples of what the sales force could bring up. They could bring up a complaint about how the work place was managed, they could give suggestions for improving efficiency, propose how to improve sales or suggest a new product.
- He was in charge of promoting the sale of the product and was not in charge of manufacturing the product.
- The conference did not give participants a chance to get a word in edgewise and was a failure, in my view.
 - The review committee's report was really impressive with its raft of recommendations.
 - The rank and file in the company occupy the lower floors, separate from the senior management.
 - I know I can believe Tom as he speaks straight from the shoulder.
- Summary – include these main points:**
 - the marketing director called the meeting of the sales force.
 - The purpose was to give them a chance to hold brainstorming sessions and air their views.
 - At the management level, there were meetings to consider measures and proposals.
 - For the customers there were focus groups to enable them to give feedback on the product.
 - At that meeting, the sales staff was asked to be frank. They could raise complaints, give suggestions on improving work efficiency or improving sales, or suggest a new product.

Unit 16 A Summons from the Managing Director

Recalling Information

- The summons was for Lucy and Johnny to see him in his office.
- Brian teased Lucy that perhaps the managing director had heard that she and Johnny were an item and might want one of them to leave the company.
- Lucy's guess was that the managing director wanted to talk about that season's brochure.
- The reason was that Mr Giles wanted Lucy and Johnny to compile the new company mission statement for the shareholders' meeting the following month. They were to have it ready by the evening.

Understanding Information

- Just before Lucy and Johnny went to Mr Giles' office, they probably felt anxious about the surprise summons. They must have also been curious to know what it was about.
 - After they left his office, they were unhappy that they were given a new project that had to be completed by

- that evening. At the same time they must have been pleased that they were complimented on their work.
2. sociable, open, casual, pleasant, uncooperative (Accept other suitable adjectives)

Column A **Column B**

- (a) ... He is upset.
(b) ... He is busy.
(c) ... He is annoyed.
(d) ... He is furious.

4. Summary – include these main points:

- The office staff made guesses about the reason that Lucy and Johnny were asked to see the managing director.
- One guess – to regret Lucy and Johnny for being romantically linked.
- The actual reason – he wanted Lucy and Johnny to compile the new company mission statement by that evening.

Unit 17 New Competition

Recalling Information

- The new competition was that one of the company's major American competitors was planning to open a branch in their area.
- The managing director gave the reason that their competitor, Steiner & Warbuck, was a larger company than theirs with considerably more financial resources.
- The advantages of the company were its long established place in the market, its good reputation and its many extremely loyal customers. It also had improved its sales figures and increased its profits in recent years.
- It had the advantage of being as Steiner & Warbuck had yet to take over the property they had bought for three months and they needed time to renovate it.
- Steiner & Warbuck would find it difficult to hire trained administrative staff locally.

Understanding Information

	Local company	American competitor
Advantages	Established in the market. Had a good reputation. Had trained staff. Had many loyal customers. Sales improved in recent years. Profits increased.	Larger company. More financial resources.
Disadvantages	Was smaller than the rival company. Had less financial resources.	New in the market. No customer base. Would take time to start business as office building would need extensive renovation and refurbishment. Would have trouble recruiting trained administrative staff locally.

- The company would organize an aggressive marketing campaign. Staff would be given weekly targets.
1. D 2. E 3. B 4. A 5. C
- Summary – include these main points:
 - Advantages: Established in the market – had a good reputation – had many loyal customers – sales and profits improved in recent years.
 - Disadvantages: Was smaller than the rival company – had less financial resources.

Unit 18 CV Deception

Recalling Information

- The 'bad news' was that he would have to start looking for an office manager again.

- Mr Ramsay thought that Sally had her hands in the till. Off Mr Ramsay thought that Sally had stolen money from the company.
- Sally had invented a degree and business diploma and had two close friends write her references.
- It was because if Sally had stayed on, she would never have coped with the work.
- It was Mary Brown, the deputy office manager.

Understanding Information

- It was because the references were written by Sally's friends and they gave her better references than she deserved.
- Mr Ramsay blamed himself for not being able to see through Sally's bluff when he interviewed her.

Series of Events	
1.	The deputy office manager, Mary Brown, studied at the same college as the one Sally claimed she had been at and graduated the same year. As it was a small college and Mary Brown did not know Sally, she became suspicious.
2.	When Sally's educational qualifications were checked with the college and the university, it was found that Sally was never registered at either.
3.	The HR department of the company checked Sally's CV and found out that the references had been written by friends whom she had worked with.

- (a) losing his grip (b) give him the boot.
(c) spent on (d) the rest is history
(e) the best of the bunch
- Summary – include these main points:
 - The deputy office manager, Mary Brown, studied at the same college as the one Sally, the new office manager, claimed she had been at and graduated the same year.
 - It was a small college and Mary Brown did not know Sally. She became suspicious.
 - Sally's educational qualifications were checked with the college and the university.
 - It was found that Sally was never registered at either.
 - The HR department of the company checked Sally's CV.
 - Found out her references had been written by friends whom she had worked with.
 - Sally was dismissed after two days on the job.

Unit 19 Jim in Trouble

Recalling Information

- 'The wee small hours' is the time after midnight and could be 1 am, 2 am or 3 am. 'The witching hour' is midnight.
- From her reply, we know that Mary did not believe Jim. She said, 'Then your eyesight must be getting very bad or you got badly lost on the way home. Joe only lives two streets away.'
- Jim's mother wanted him home at a reasonable hour because she thought that staying out late would affect his college work and she was keen for him to get good qualifications.
- Jim intended to ask his mother for the loan of her car for the evening.

Understanding Information

- EITHER** The title 'Jim in Trouble' is appropriate as the passage was about a situation in which Jim had angered his mother because he returned home very late. He was in his mother's bad books and his sister advised him to stay out of his mother's way for as long as possible.
OR The title 'Jim in Trouble' is not appropriate. Though Jim was scolded by his mother because he returned home very late, he was not punished. Hence the title exaggerates the situation.
- Jim did not appear to be sorry that he had displeased his mother. His only thought was whether his mother would be home early enough that night so that he could ask her to lend him her car.

- While Mary was obedient, Jim was not. Mary was sensitive to her mother's feelings, but Jim was insensitive and was not affected by his mother's anger.
- Allow students to give their views on this topic.
- (b) We know that we must always remember to greet our grandmother as she has a bee in her bonnet about courtesy.
 - My friends and I will take part in a charity team event that begins at some ungodly hour.
 - My mother is breathing fire at my carelessness in breaking her favourite vase.
 - I was in the land of Nod during the afternoon lecture as I had a heavy lunch.
 - I've passed a lot without much studying and want to push my luck next year by doing the same thing.
- Summary – include these main points:
 - Jim angered his mother.
 - The reason – he returned home in the wee hours one night.
 - His mother scolded him in the morning.
 - Jim's mother thought that staying out late would affect his college work.
 - Jim was unrepentant and was hoping to borrow his mother's car that night.
 - Mary thought the best thing he could do was to stay in his room and study.

Unit 20 Controversial Toll Charging

Recalling Information

- The subject matter of the radio interview was the charging of tolls on cars entering the city centre.
- Toll charges were being considered as a solution to the ever-worsening traffic congestion.
- One objection was that shop owners in the city centre would lose their business. Another objection was that collecting tolls would add to the congestion as motorists would need to queue to pay the tolls.
- The interviewer said that if there was better public transport, people would use it and leave their cars at home.
- The interviewer criticized the council for going round in circles for several years about the traffic problem and not coming to a decision.

Understanding Information

- The press could be held responsible for public concern because it had reported that the authorities were going ahead to impose toll charges, when in fact it had not yet been decided.
 - The council was examining a number of options because of the urgent need to solve traffic congestion.
 - Shop owners in the city centre were worried about a lack of shoppers as a consequence of toll charges to enter the city centre.
 - The Councillor believed heavy traffic in the city centre was caused by people refusing to use public transport to enter the city centre.
 - Because there was a shortage of funds, the council could not improve the public transport system.

Column A

- (a) ... No, I'm afraid not. We seem to be going round in circles.
(b) ... You're being idealistic. You can't please all of the people all of the time.
(c) ... OK, that's fine. But who will take care of the nuts and bolts?
(d) ... I agree, if we wait any longer he'll get completely out of hand.
(e) ... I've been using it for months. Actually, you're preaching to the converted.

4. Summary – include these main points:

- The council was considering the option of charging tolls on motorists who enter the city centre.
- The reason – to reduce traffic congestion.
- Concerns of motorists; they would have to pay the toll.
- Concern of shop owners in the city centre: people would stop going to the city centre shops.
- The interviewer suggested that the solution was to improve the public transport system.
- The Councillor replied that money had to be raised to improve the public transport system.