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Glossary of Terminology**66**

**Te****Text 1: ‘The Butcher’s Shop’**

This poem is by Angela Topping, a poet, critic and writer who taught English for many years, taken from her 2007 collection *The Way We Came*. This collection ‘reflects on how time plays tricks, and investigates the past in startling ways, both personal and public’ (see web page [**http://sicttasd.tripod.com/angelatopping/the-way-we-came.html**](http://sicttasd.tripod.com/angelatopping/the-way-we-came.html)).

The poem appears to initially be, as the title suggests, a simple description of a butcher’s shop, but moves into a meditation on the nature of what the shop represents, both as a conduit to memory, and as something more universal. It has 14 lines, and although it has not got all the traditional features of a **sonnet**, such as a complex rhyming scheme, or lines of **iambic pentameter**, it has other features that suggest that it could be classed as a poem in this form. Most strikingly, there is the sense of a **turn** in lines 9–10, and also the ways in which it appears to investigate a problem or an issue – in this case, the emotions and thoughts that the butcher’s shop summons up for the poet.

The poem seems close to – but is not quite – iambic pentameter. In fact the metre is uneven throughout, with varying numbers of syllables, from six (in line 10) to 15 (in line 9), and a shift between iambic (‘the pigs are strung’) to **trochaic** (‘dignified in martyr’s deaths’) from line to line, suggesting a calm but conversational tone. The final line of iambic pentameter suggests the completion of an idea, as does the **assonance** between ‘meat’ in line 12 and ‘bleeds’ in line 14, suggesting a **half-rhyme** at the end of the poem. As the first and last lines are metrically even, this gives the poem overall the crafted appearance which is typical of the sonnet form. Although there is little **end rhyme**, there are several **internal rhymes**, generally built on **assonance**,which help to hold the verse together, such as ‘deaths... heads... rosettes’, ‘smile... tiles’, ‘clog... soggy’ and the final ‘meat... bleeds’.

The poem is in the present tense throughout, implying the ways in which the action is continuous – this is not just a butcher’s shop, but *the* butcher’s shop – a representative, perhaps of all such shops, and of the eternal issues of eating animals that we anthropomorphise for meat.

The initial description of the pigs is given dignity by the use of a long, metrically even line, the iambic metre of the first syllables suggesting a long pause at the **caesura** after ‘rows’, adding to the impact of ‘open-mouthed’. This word suggests astonishment or surprise, though it is also a simple description of the physical appearance of the pigs, and so sets up the duality through the poem, between the physical description of the shop and the associations and **connotations** that are summoned up by each element of it. The pigs are **personified** as ‘dignified’, ‘martyrs’, ‘voting Tory’, described in terms of ‘stiff... Sunday manners’ in a way which associates them strongly with conservative humans. The **anthropomorphism** of the animals accentuates their status as living beings; it is as though the poet is suggesting that were people hung in the butcher’s shop we would find it horrific and medieval – why then should it be acceptable to have animals hung up on display in this way?

There is an element of sly comedy in the ‘porky heads / voting Tory all their lives’, the blue rosettes (presumably a reference to the rosettes that butchers sometimes display to indicate that an animal has been a prize-winning creature at a show) aligning the ‘successes’ of the pigs with the ‘successes’ of human politicians in a vivid **memento mori**,something also emphasised by the internal rhyme ‘deaths... heads’, where the rhyme itself creates a phrase which is associated with the realisation of mortality (a death’s head is a skull used as a reminder of humankind’s mortality; they were much used in the Renaissance as symbols in plays, pictures and poetry). To emphasise this link between animal and human, the butcher’s smile is described as ‘meaty’, and his fingers ‘fat as sausages’, the **metaphor** and **simile** in turn both accentuate a certain repulsion towards the processes of the butcher’s shop. The mildly sinister suggestion that his apron is stained with ‘who knows what’ obliquely refers to blood and emphasises the sense that the butcher, though smiling, is a threatening character.

The butcher’s ‘meaty’ smile also gives a sense that he is heavy, fleshy, well fed, and this aligns with the description of the images in his shop as ‘smug’. The cattle and sheep that ‘prance’ on his tiles are images that suggest a deeply conventional way of looking at animals. They are ‘woolly’ and ‘snowy’ (unlike the blood-stained whiteness of the butcher’s apron) and so distanced from the brutal reality of the processes of butchering. These representations of animals are ‘grazing / on eternity’ in much the same way as Keats describes action as being frozen in his ‘Ode on a Grecian Urn’. They are unable to change, and so are safe, immortal as ‘cute illustrations in a children’s book’. The use of the word ‘cute’ here brings a deliberate touch of **bathos** to the idea of ‘eternity’, suggesting, as it does, a failure to address reality in the illustrations. The irony of the tiles representing happy, healthy animals, contrasting with the reality of the dead corpses in the shop is clarified by the emphasis on ‘smug’ and ‘cute’ and the contrast between these adjectives and the initial ‘open-mouthed’, ‘dignified’, ‘stiff’, ‘porky’ and ‘martyrs’.

The long line 9 dwells on the idea of the idealised illustrations of the sheep and cows, and the poem is given a strong suggestion of sonnet form by the sharp turn into the short line 10: ‘what does the sheep say now?’ The contrast between the longest and shortest line in the poem emphasises the sharp question. The question both imitates what an adult might say to a child when reading a picture book with farm animals in it (with the expected answer being ‘baa baa’), and addresses the reader directly with the pointed **irony** that the sheep can now say nothing of the kind, as it is dead. The short line allows a long pause after the question before leading into the immediately physical ‘tacky sawdust clogs your shoes’. This line both offers a connection to what the sheep might say now (nothing, it is simply bleeding on to the ‘tacky sawdust’ that is placed on the floors of butchers’ shops) and also draws the reader back from the contemplative, **open question** (can we ever know what a sheep really says?) to the immediacy of the surroundings of the butcher’s shop. The word ‘clogs’ both **puns** on the wooden shoe that protects against the sort of dirt implied, and reminds us of Owen’s vivid use of the word in ‘Strange Meeting’, which speaks of blood: ‘Then, when much blood had clogged their chariot-wheels, / I would go up and wash them from sweet wells’. To clog something is to fill it with wet or sticky matter. The shoes of the speaker are ‘clogged’, made heavy and unwieldy, but the blood which implicitly makes the sawdust ‘tacky’, or sticky, is never explicitly mentioned, like the ‘who knows what’ of line 6. There is, of course, a further implicit wordplay here, with the more colloquial sense of ‘tacky’ meaning distasteful.

The final three lines solidify the central contrast within the poem with a vivid opposition. On the one hand, the ‘little plastic hedges... playing farms’ remind us of the word of the child’s picture-book, the world of the happy animals on the tiles, ‘grazing in eternity’, sheep and cows, as it were, in heaven. Animals here are toys, illustrations, objects that **signify** the pastoral and the beautiful. In some ways all adults ‘play’ at farms in that we fail to always acknowledge the significance of the animal deaths that lie behind the meat that we eat. There is a painful juxtaposition of the image of the ‘plastic hedges’ – a piercingly accurate piece of observation of the artificial garnishes used in butchers’ shops – with the ‘trays of meat’ they separate (rather than the fields of pretend animals of a toy farm). On the other hand, we have the vivid image of the parcel bleeding ‘all the way home’. The phrase ‘all the way home’ may remind the reader of the rhyme of the ‘five little pigs’ played when counting babies’ toes:

*This little pig went to market*

*This little pig stayed at home*

*This little pig ate roast beef*

*This little pig had none*

*And this little pig went ‘wee wee wee’ all the way home.*

Inside the parcel is presumably meat purchased at the shop, but this meat is not seen as attractive or tasty but as ‘cold and soggy’, words which act against any idea of the meat as appetising food. The use of ‘bleeds’ suggests wounds and life (the dead do not bleed), an active verb that implies again the pain of the ‘martyred’ pigs of the first line. The central division of the poem – the idea of animals, and the reality of their death so that we may eat meat – is beautifully juxtaposed as the powerful **monosyllabic** verb ‘bleeds’ holds us in a continuous present that seems to damp the playfulness of the earlier lines.

**Text 2: ‘Eating Out’**

This poem is by U A Fanthorpe, and is one of the poems that she lists as being ‘about my mother’ (see the interview at [**http://lidiavianu.scriptmania.com/ua\_fanthorpe.htm**](http://lidiavianu.scriptmania.com/ua_fanthorpe.htm)) thus reflecting to some extent an autobiographical experience. The poem is reminiscent, thoughtful, recalling different attitudes to ‘eating out’, that is, dining in restaurants, the title a loaded phrase that holds within it a great deal of the symbolic significance of such an event.

The awkward and discomforting subject matter is matched by the awkward prosody. The poet has chosen not to use an obvious set stanza form or a clear rhyme scheme. The metre is unusual – not the standard iambic pentameter line, but the 12-syllable alexandrine – though it is used very irregularly.

The poem is written in unrhymed couplets, 14 lines with an extra last line, giving something of the effect of a sonnet possessing an extra line, a final explanation or coda. It goes through a series of different experiences in restaurants, recalling visits taking the form of an initiation, or an education in fine dining apparently experienced in the poet’s childhood as her father rehearsed with her the processes of ‘grown-up’ eating out.

From the first couplet, there is a tension between the familiarity of eating a meal and the ‘adventure’ of eating it somewhere unfamiliar, summed up in the juxtaposition of opposites in the phrase ‘rehearsed but unknown’. The idea of a child is strongly presented with the image of the ‘table napkin tucked conscientiously under chin’, the neatness echoing the neat couplets of the poem. This poem might appear to be about ‘eating out’; going to restaurants and tea shops and so on – but in fact it is about the poet’s relationship with her parents.

‘Eating out’, that is, eating together, should be an affirming experience; here it is not. In these brief 15 lines the poem charts a lifetime of experience, from childhood through the time of her parents’ deaths. There is no real rhyme scheme, but there is the chiming of the dead rhyme ‘later... later... later’ at the end of lines 5, 8 and 13. This word moves us on from the poet’s childhood (lines 2–5) to her teenage years (lines 6–8), to young adulthood perhaps (lines 9–10), through to maturity (lines 11–12).

Apart from the irregular line lengths, what stops the poem settling into an obvious iambic rhythm is the number of lines that begin with a trochee or dactyl, i.e. a strong beat followed by a weak beat(s): see lines 2–7, 9–10, 15. This gives a flat conversational air to the poem which goes with its sad, even depressive, subject matter. None of these experiences of eating out are positive or happy. In the first childhood experience (lines 2–5), the poet as a child feels so inhibited and confused by the experience of the restaurant that she feels sick; the behaviour expected of her is **metonymically** associated with the food – it is ‘indigestible’. In the next experience, presumably in her teenage years (lines 6–8) the child is intimidated by going up to London and experiencing ‘London cuisine’, which is in fact French cooking. The rather innocent French phrases ‘*moules marinière*’ and ‘*petit four’* are here threatening. (We should remember that the poet, born in 1929, is referring to the 1940s or 50s, when ‘foreign’ food was much less well known in insular Britain.) The French phrases suggest that the teenager feels out of her depth, having to eat mussels in a particular way – ‘*How to handle* moules marinière’, and then having her spontaneity abruptly curbed in relation to the after-meal treats, the little, sweet-like *petit fours*. The next meal is also awkward: ‘he *initiated* me / Into the *ritual* consumption of lobster’. The **formal lexis** suggests that nothing is allowed to be straightforward or simple. Of course, not everyone eats these kinds of foods at restaurants: this is a particular kind of middle-class eating out which the poet now feels was unsatisfactory.

Most of the poem is built on specifics, on particular incidents and memories. The first line, however, has more abstract vocabulary which encapsulates the whole meaning of the poem:

*Adventures into rehearsed but unknown living…*

There is a strong sense of **paradox** here. ‘Adventures’ should be spontaneous and exciting, but here they are initiations into set patterns of idealized middle-class behaviour, set ideas about what makes for good restaurant dining: ‘rehearsed… living’. They are only really adventures in the sense that for the child they are initiations into previously ‘unknown’ experiences.

Throughout the poem, the gradually maturing poet feels dominated by her parents, in clearly Freudian terms. Even as a grown-up woman, when ordering food at a restaurant with her ageing and widowed mother, she is disconcerted by her mother saying ‘I’ll have whatever you’re having dear’. Perhaps she will choose something her mother doesn’t really like or that will disagree with her.

We have to look carefully at the vocabulary being used about eating. None of this vocabulary suggests joy, gusto, or spontaneity: ‘conscientiously’ (line 2), ‘supervised’, ‘explained’ (line 3), ‘proper’ (line 9). It is all about control and what is appropriate. We move from the first experience of eating out – where the child simply feels sick because of the strangeness and the pressure to behave properly – through to the final memory of her widowed mother, giving the poet the awkward responsibility of choosing for her from the menu.

**Text 3: ‘The Sweet Menu’**

This poem starts with an initial piece of **wordplay** in the title – ‘the sweet menu’ playing on the dual senses of the word ‘sweet’ as an adjective meaning ‘sugary to the taste’, with the related extended sense of ‘pleasant, enjoyable’, and the noun ‘sweet’ (and its related adjective) referring to the final course of a meal.

There is some dispute as to the **etymology** of the word ‘sweet’ in this latter sense. It probably comes ultimately from the use of the word ‘sweetmeat’, current in English as ‘swetemete’ before 1150. This word was formed from joining ‘swete’, meaning sugary, and ‘mete’, meaning food of any kind (compare ‘mincemeat’). It was first used to refer to cakes and sweet pastries, as well as candied fruit, or fruit in syrup, or marzipan. Generally such food was served as the final course of a meal.

In the US, Ireland and some former Commonwealth countries, the word ‘dessert’ is often used for all final courses, but in **higher register** English, ‘pudding’ is generally used to refer to the final course of a meal – technically, ‘dessert’ should only be used when fruit or sweetmeats are included in this course, and this tradition is held in some social contexts. As a result, in England, the use of the word ‘sweet’ to refer to pudding has been seen to be a **lower register** or northern usage.

The poem is in **unrhymed couplets** with one final single line which acts as a coda to the poem, emphasising the wordplay throughout. It describes a solitary meal in a restaurant in simple and direct language, the use of **anaphora** (There is... there is...), monosyllabic words, and simple clauses emphasising the limpidity of the language.

The first **couplet** sets up the scene. The speaker is essentially a passive observer, the syntax and choice of verb emphasising this role (‘I’m shown...’) who is placed, presumably by the waitress, at a table designed for two people, in that it has two chairs. The rest of the poem meditates upon this matter, allowing the poet to range around the social and cultural expectations that people should be in couples, or in groups. Dining at a restaurant alone is a solitary experience in a context which seems designed for company, and this is something that the poem reflects on throughout. It might seem tempting to assume that the speaker is female, and that the poem is reflecting upon the often observed awkwardness of a woman dining alone in a public place, but as it is by a male poet, in a collection which often draws upon observational scenes of everyday life from a personal perspective, it seems more likely that the solitary diner is echoing the poet’s own experience.

The ‘other chair’ of the table is significant even in its placing ‘pulled back as if someone will come’. It seems as though the restaurant staff are anticipating that the speaker will have company, that the solitary meal will become a ‘date’, a social occasion that signifies a potential relationship. It is tempting to wonder if there is ‘someone’ expected, or whether this is just a societal expectation – perhaps the speaker means to point out that there is no reason to have two chairs at a table when only one person is eating there. In either case, it emphasises that the table is designed for ‘two’ and there is only one person there.

As though to emphasise the speaker’s aloneness, other people inhabit the next couplets: ‘families... a baby... a small boy’, with active verbs ‘digs’, ‘taught’, ‘clap’ suggesting how their interactions are positive and enjoyable ones (and of course, that they are part of relationships which have proved productive in terms of having children). In line 6, it is stated ‘there is a flower in a bottle on my table’. This flower develops in significance throughout the poem, but here seems a small enlivening touch, part of the attractiveness of the restaurant, until the next line points out the strange anomaly that the flower is artificial, though it is placed in water. This immediately makes the flower take on a wider **symbolic** significance, and suggests that it echoes in some way the mood of the speaker. At its simplest, it is out of place; to develop the image, it is being offered nourishment that it does not need. The word ‘plastic’ is placed at the end of the line, and is emphasised by this position.

The flower could be any number of things (including, as it says on the next line, ‘a lily’) but its artificial nature is what dominates, and to an extent shocks. It suggests that the restaurant is not as attractive as it might at first have seemed, that there is something ‘fake’ about it, just as there is falsity in the apparent lily which is simply a piece of plastic. (It would be tempting to further develop this sense of how a lily is a flower with certain **connotations** of innocence, purity, and so on – even perhaps that it is often seen as a funeral flower, or indeed to link the sterility of a plastic flower to the single diner, as contrasted with the fecund ‘families’ that surround him.)

The poet **italicises** those parts of the poem where it is indicated that someone is speaking, emphasising the ways in which the rest of the poem appears to be an **interior monologue**. The bland statement made to the waitress, simply naming the food ordered, is developed in the following lines ‘the juice is cool, / the pizza hot and peppery’, suggesting the ways in which this interior monologue is richer and more detailed than the surface that the speaker shows to the world – suggesting the depth of thoughts and ideas that lie behind a quiet person eating alone in a noisy restaurant.

The image of the waitresses as dancers, who ‘spin’, ‘pirouette’ and ‘plié’ adds to the sense that they are both absorbed in a demanding job, and also that they enjoy what they are doing, are focused on it, in a way which excludes the speaker. As the speaker observes the simple details around, the wood of the chair (which must be faced as though it were a person throughout the meal), the glass of the ceiling, the faces of the other diners, the solitary nature of eating alone seems emphasised. Finally, in line 19, it becomes explicit: ‘I’d like to talk to someone...’ The speaker wishes to share the experience – the little **comic** detail of the plastic flower in water, for instance – with another person, but is unable to do this.

The **italicised** line 21 represents the waitress interrupting these thoughts with a standard query. The **irony** and wordplay of ‘the sweet menu’ is contrasted with the bald statement ‘facing me is the chair’. Implicitly, were the speaker not alone, there would be more ‘sweetness’ in the meal, more point in having some more food. The speaker fantasises about possibly choosing some more food, the idea of choice ‘*This one’* or ‘*That one*’ emphasised by the italics that represent speech, and the **capitalisation** and **alliteration** of ‘this’ and ‘that’. Instead, the speaker refuses more food, and follows through the social conventions of asking for the bill and tipping the waitress. Again, the private thoughts of the speaker form a contrast to the bland speech. As well as the imaginative extended metaphor of the waitresses as ballerinas, we see the sense of disappointment – that a solitary meal is functional rather than pleasurable. The choice of ‘*This one’* or ‘*That one*’ may be extended here to suggest that the speaker wishes to choose a companion – perhaps from the graceful waitresses? – but has been disappointed.

The final line of the poem again suggests a double meaning with the expression ‘it hasn’t come to much’. The amount of the bill is not very much money, but also, perhaps, the experience has not amounted to much. The experience of solitary dining, where you are unable to share either the unsatisfactory elements of the experience (such as the plastic flower) or the potentially satisfying elements (the lingering over the choice of a dessert) has left the speaker feeling unsatisfied.

**Text 4: ‘Grandpa’s Soup’**

This is another poem where there is explicit and implicit subject matter, i.e. the poem foregrounds the way the poet likes her grandfather’s soup, but it is as much about her love for this grandfather as it is about the actual soup. It is also like Text 5 and other texts, in that

it is about food that comes from a very particular place, in this case Scotland. The poem was actually chosen by the Scottish Poetry Library as one of eight poems that were decoratively printed on postcards and chosen to represent Scotland for National Poetry Day 2004, something that suggests how effectively Kay has managed to evoke a memory resonant for many people.

As we can deduce from the poem, the soup involved here is one of Scotland’s favourite dishes, a Scotch (or Scots) Broth. It involves a hough – of hock (shin) – of beef or perhaps lamb, and various vegetables cooked for a good time: it is a thick, meaty, warming soup, very appealing in the cold and wet climate of Scotland.

The poem does not use a clear or regular **stanza** **form**, and there is no regular **rhyme scheme**. This is because the poet wants to get the effect of ordinary **colloquial** speech. More than this, the poem, though written by the adult poet, is a strong memory of childhood, and of her affection for her grandfather, hence it employs elements of syntax, vocabulary, and lineation that are intended to remind us of the speech of a child. Jackie Kay is well known, as a writer, for exploring the complexities of her heritage. Adopted as a child, she later sought out her birth mother and father, a white Scottish woman and a Nigerian man, finding in the process siblings who had been brought up by their parents, while she and her brother Maxwell had both been raised by the same adoptive parents. Her first book of poems, in 1991, was the semi-autobiographical *The Adoption Papers* which retraces this experience. Hence the significance of family is here particularly important for her, as memory becomes a vehicle for seeking out identity.

Though the poet does not use a regular line length, as in more formal poetry, there are important effects here concerned with the **lineation**. Look at lines 9 and 10 for example:

*I say, Grandpa, Grandpa your soup is the best*

*soup in the world.*

The first line here (line 9) could be a complete sentence, an end-stopped line; in other words, we might imagine there was a full stop after ‘best’. In fact we are tipped over the line ending into **enjambment**. ‘best’ is an adjective relating to ‘soup’: ‘best / soup’. This unexpected emphasis on the word ‘soup’, as at the beginning of the line, reinforces our sense of the childlike nature of this speech.

Secondly, we might note the repetitions of the structure of whole phrases:

*With its diced carrots the perfect size*

*and its diced potatoes the perfect size.*

The **parison** here again creates the sense of a child speaking. Finally, and most importantly perhaps, is what Leech would call the **progressive structure** of the syntax: ‘Progressive structure is the kind of syntactic structure where clauses are strung out one after the other, in accordance with the “add on“ principle of everyday speech… linking words (subordinating or coordinating conjunctions) simply connect one clause to another as if they were beads strung together’ (Leech, *Language in Literature* (2008), p. 141). So, look at the underlined words that achieve this effect:

*No one makes soup like my Grandpa’s*

*With it diced carrots the perfect size*

*And its diced potatoes the perfect size*

*And its wee soft bits –*

*What are their names?*

*And its big bit of hough…*

This is not complex syntax, and its ‘add on’ effect is clearly imitating the kind of syntax used by a young child. The grown-up poet is imitating the syntax that she would have used more normally as a child, and so helping to create for her readers a sense of what her childhood was like, and the wonder she experienced as she looked in at the soup as her grandpa made it.

In Text 2 we saw how the French phrases were a way of enacting the strange nature of a food that the teenager found almost intimidating (moules marinière, petit faux). The use of a language that is not English, not local, helped to create the sense of how the teenager was made anxious by the experience of eating out in London restaurants. Here we have the opposite effect: local, native vocabulary enacts the way in which the poet feels wholly comfortable and at ease with this food. The poet uses local Scots words and their Scots pronunciation, to bring home how comforting she found her grandpa’s soup, how comfortable it made her feel in the world of her grandpa’s love. For instance, ‘a big bit of hough’ (line 6) is a piece of leg or shin meat from the cow (maybe sometimes lamb), a relatively cheap but potentially very tasty piece of meat, that is cooked in the middle of the vegetables and liquid to give the soup its flavour. Someone who is not Scottish, might be tempted to pronounce ‘hough’ (hɒk), i.e. hock, as though it were huff (h˄f). The poet insists we pronounce it correctly by giving us the rhyme word ‘loch’ (the Scottish word for a large, long inland lake or stretch of water), which is better known to readers from other parts of the UK.

Language, like food, can be very local. This is something the poem brings out here. One is reminded of the great poet Basil Bunting, from Northumbria, who insisted that, in his greatest poem, ‘Southrons’ (i.e. people from the South East of England) might maul the music of many lines in *Briggflatts*), i.e. their southern pronunciation of vowel sounds would spoil how the poem was supposed to sound. The correct pronunciation of ‘hough’ in the first stanza grounds the poem in Scotland. It matches up in the poem with the use of ‘wee’ (lines 4, 22), the colloquial Scots word for ‘small’, and also ‘Och’, the normal Scots form of the exclamation ‘Oh’. Though the poem uses some traditional **end rhyme** (say/day), it here sets up **internal rhyme** between three of these words (‘hough’, ‘loch’, and ‘Och’), reinforcing that this is a Scottish poem, about a much-loved Scottish grandpa. And, of course, this tallies with the fact that it is about a favourite Scottish kind of food: the Scotch Broth in which the hough, carrots, potatoes, and pearl barley are mixed.

The tenses in the poem play with our sense of time. In one sense, this is a poem set firmly in childhood, about the experience of the poet as a child visiting, or staying with, her Scottish grandpa. But it is also clearly written by the poet as a grown-up, looking back on this childhood experience. In this context, we can see that the use of the future tense in lines 16–19 is **proleptic**, the representation of things as existing *before* they actually did so. In adulthood, the poet has fallen ill, and has missed her grandpa’s soup, and has missed her grandpa (who has died) – but actually, in childhood, she does not yet know about these things and how they will happen. The **dead end rhymes** of ‘it/it’ and ‘gone/gone’, and the long **assonantal** internal rhyme of ‘long/gone’ emphasise this sense of future sadness. There seems a clear subtext involved with the soup. In lines 15–17, ‘it’ is formally ‘the soup’, but actually it seems to stand for the deep love which the soup represents to the child, and which she will miss when her grandpa is ‘gone’. The way in which the soup will become ‘sad and wrong’ echoes the way in which she will feel about her grandfather’s death. Lines 20–21 switch back abruptly into the present tense: ‘I say’. We are back directly in childhood, the little girl speaking to her grandpa, answering the question posed in line 5.

**Text 5: ‘The Coming of Yams and Mangoes**  
**and Mountain Honey’**

This poem is by the Jamaican-born poet James Berry (b. 1924), and records his delight in seeing fruits and vegetables from his native Jamaica in the London shops: it is as though ‘Caribbean hills have moved and come [to London]’ (line 4).

The notion of **linguistic deviation** is often said to be crucial to the idea of literary language as opposed to non-literary language, though many linguistics believe that there is not some ultimate definable difference between literary and non-literary language. Linguistic deviation is where literary language becomes ‘literary’ by the way in which it departs from a more standard or normal usage. In other words, we have normal use of language as a background, and it is against this background that we understand what is ‘poetic’ or ‘literary’ in effect in figures of speech, metaphor, collocation, etc.

Here the effect of this is achieved, in the first instance, simply by the vocabulary. For the English reader who is not of Jamaican or Caribbean background, many of the fruits and vegetables named here are going to be unfamiliar, so that the language of the poem seems immediately exotic. This is partly the poet’s point. He wants the reader to be taken out of his or her comfort zone, thrown into a wholly new vocabulary, suggesting to the reader that ‘English’ experience isn’t the only way in which to see the world.

All the unusual names of fruits and vegetables here are matched by other forms of linguistic deviation, notably by some complex figures of speech. Leech explains that one kind of figure of speech is **syntagmatic**: ‘A syntagmatic figure introduces a layer of patterning additional to those normally operating within the language; for example, in an alliterative figure such as *the furrow followed free* (S T Coleridge), the selection of the same initial phoneme /f/ on successive accented syllables imposes a repetitive pattern (˟ f ˟ f ˟ f) which in other types of discourse would be fortuitous and of no communicative value’ (Leech, 2008, p. 18). This poem by Barry begins with just such a syntagmatic figure:

*Handfuls hold hidden sunset* (line 1)

What this really means, in more normal, non-literary language, is that ‘**Handfuls** [of Jamaican fruits, when seen in the shops] **hold** [within them the colours of] **sunset** [specifically the Jamaican sunset, which is] **hidden**’. The alliteration, however, sets up a dance of joy. A normal collocation of words might be something like: ‘I saw bright-coloured fruits in the shops’. Here we have a **highly unpredictable collocation**, i.e. words that don’t usually occur side by side (again an effect of **linguistic deviation** often said to be typical of language when used in a literary way). It is the word ‘sunset’ that confirms the unusual language use. ‘Handfuls of fruit hold exotic colours’ would be slightly more normal. How can you ‘hold’ a sunset? The surprise in the collocation is also the joy of it: seeing these fruits is reminding Berry of his native Jamaica.

There are a number of other densely linguistic effects in the poem, certainly **highly unpredictable collocations**,or sequences of lexical items.‘The sweetnessses of summer settle smells’ (line 16) would be another example. Does it mean ‘The sweetnesses of summer [i.e. the lovely fruits] settle *as* smells [in the shops]’? The very heavy use of **sibilants** here (e.g. /s/) slows the line down. As a linguist would say, /s/ is a continuant consonant type, and it therefore slows the pace of the line, favouring prolonged articulation. The line calls out to be read in a slow and sensuous way (though of course an inexperienced reader might not see this).

The linguistic effects become particularly dense when the poet, moving his imagination from the London of the present tense, thinks of how these fruits originally grew in the Jamaican climate. Look at the frequency of sibilants, i.e. the terminal /s/ sound in these lines:

*Nights once lit the growing lots*

*With fields of squinting kitibus.*

The /s/ sound then transfers more to the beginning of words:

*Winds polished some of the skins cool but warm*

*When sun drew stripes on fish.*

The last line here is a classic instance of **linguistic deviation**, which is an effect of **foregrounding**.In the middle of the line ‘drew’ is an instance where the ‘deviation consists in the selection of an item which lies outside the normal range of choices at a particular place in the structure’ (Leech, p. 30). So in the phrase ‘When the sun… stripes on fish’ we would normally imagine ‘reflected the’, ‘illuminated the’, ‘made shine the’ as the obvious choices to fill up the blank space. ‘When the sun *drew* stripes on fish’ creates a **personification**, another effect of deviation, for the sun becomes like an artist drawing the stripes on the bright fishes of the Caribbean Sea. There are other effects of **personification** like this in the poem, e.g. ‘Mints and onions *quarrel*’ (line 17). In more normal non-literary language we might say ‘[As I was standing in the shop] the smell of mint and the smell of onion formed a contrast’. *Quarrel* makes the herb and the vegetable sound like people arguing.

To some extent the poet is making the poem self-explaining. So ‘Breadfruit a green football’ creates an image of the fruit concerned. But again notice the literariness here in the surprising metaphor. Fruits are compared to each other in a way which interweaves the images (of plantains, bananas, melons and pineapples) together. The effect is one of wonderful abundance.

In line 34, the poem moves back from the imagined growth of the fruits to London, with a pair of negatives: ‘you won’t have a topseat cooing / in peppers, won’t hear the nightingale’s / notes’ (the lines suggest that a topseat is a common name for a type of dove). The poem establishes how city things are replacing the rural: ‘red buses pass for donkeys now’. The final lines of the poem suggest that the ‘move’ of the Caribbean hills to London is something that will be continuous as long as the fruit is distributed.

The last two lines, the note at the end of the poem here seems slightly out of place. It is a gloss on *kitibu* explaining that kitibus (referred to in line 31) are clock beetles, or fireflies, with two luminous spots that shine in the dark. It initially looks as though the note is not part of the poem, but the metaphorical use of ‘squint’ again is a giveaway; it is a coda which establishes, with a slight sense of sadness, that some of these intensely vivid details may actually need to be glossed, or explained, even to those who are to buy the Caribbean fruit – in other words, that something of the richness of that heritage has been lost through the transition.

**Text 6: ‘Glory Glory be to Chocolate’**

This short poem is a witty play on the idea that chocolate is a food which is so pleasant as to be morally wrong – an idea made fun of here, but something which, as the poet establishes, has profound cultural implications.

The epigraph to the poem, by Debra (not Debrah) Waterhouse, comes from a book which promises to ‘explain the gender difference in food cravings, why the female biology triggers a need for chocolate and many other foods, and how women can enhance emotional and physical well-being by responding to their vital food messages’ (see [**http://www.waterhousepublications.com/food.htm**](http://www.waterhousepublications.com/food.htm)). It is responding to the idea that women in particular like chocolate, and that this liking is a sex-linked weakness of character, implying that women find it hard to resist temptation. The reference in this context to ‘Eve’ locates this idea of women’s inherently weak nature to mythical prehistory, with the biblical story of Adam and Eve supposedly demonstrating how women find it difficult to resist temptations. The title ‘Glory Glory be to Chocolate’ picks up on this religious reference, as it imitates the traditional Christian prayer ‘Glory be to God’. It wittily implies that chocolate is something which should be praised and given thanks for, something wonderful rather than something sinful.

The theme of sin and pleasure is continued in the other title of the poem: ‘Naughty but Nice’. This phrase was the basis of an advertising campaign that starred a series of comedians and actors such as Barbara Windsor, Larry Grayson and Les Dawson, all associated with a certain style of comedy that played on sexual stereotypes, puns and suggestive wordplay (Barbara Windsor was a star of the ‘Carry on’ series of films). The phrase was actually not associated with chocolate as such, but created for the National Dairy Council as part of a campaign for fresh cream cakes, sales of which had dropped as a result of a public perception that they were unhealthy. The idea behind the adverts was that this could be turned around to make a positive selling point, that it could be suggested that the pleasure of eating the cakes was enough to make the ‘naughtiness’ justifiable. The alliteration made the slogan very catchy, and it became part of the common register of colloquial speech, extending it into areas far from its original purpose.

As Agard notes, the phrase was suggested for the advert by Salman Rushdie, the author of *The Satanic Verses,* at a time when he was working in advertising, for the firm Ogilvie and Mather. Interestingly, it was a phrase that had been used as the title of a film as far back as 1927, suggesting that Rushdie, rather than coining the phrase (Agard plays on this word by using ‘minting’), simply resurrected it for his own purposes. However, it links with another of his slogans (for Aero chocolate), which mirrors a similar attitude towards food: ‘irresistibubble’. The implied contrast between the ‘naughty’ (not good for you) nature of chocolate and the ‘nice’ (enjoyable) element of it is something investigated throughout the poem.

The poem consists of five three-line stanzas (if you include the first, which encompasses the subtitle presented in a **large capitalised font** to emphasise its prominence as a slogan), followed by a final three lines which suggest a three-line stanza divided into a couplet and a single line to emphasise the final message of the poem.

‘Nice’ rhymes strongly with ‘twice’, establishing the link between the first line of the second stanza and the enlarged and capitalised slogan that starts the poem. It also emphasises how Agard is saying twice both ‘glory’ (in the repetition ‘glory glory be’) and the whole phrase ‘Glory glory be to chocolate’. The **semantic field** of religion continues throughout in the use of ‘manifestations’, suggesting the different ways in which chocolate may be enjoyed, as well as ‘ring... bells’, ‘little imps’, ‘sin’, ‘divine’ and ‘god’. ‘Mouth-watering’ also **connotes** temptation (one’s mouth waters for that which you cannot eat), while the chocolate itself is **personified** as ‘ring[ing] the tastebud bells’ and ‘twinkl[ing]’ at the tongue, the ‘brownies, candies, cookies’ taking the form of little demons, or ‘imps’ to implicitly tempt the eater.

The technical aspects of chocolate’s attractiveness is mentioned in line 12, with ‘O sweet releaser of endorphins’, though it is termed in ways that suggest an invocation, reinforcing the play on the idea of the religious. Opponents to the idea that chocolate is good are named only as an amorphous ‘they’, and the **hyperbolic** idea that eating chocolate is a ‘sin’ mocks the idea of resisting its attractiveness.

Theobroma Cacao sounds like a grand title, but is actually simply the **scientific name** of the cacao tree, from whose fruit chocolate is derived. The name ‘Theobroma’ is from the Greek θεοβρῶμα and literally means ‘food of the gods’, a meaning played on in the final line, while ‘cacao’ derives from the Aztec name for the tree and its fruit ‘cacahuatl’. This wordplay is continued with the idea of ‘divine barbaric pod’, divine, as it was thought to be literally the food of the gods by the Aztecs, ‘barbaric’ because their religion is generally seen to be primitive in comparison to modern beliefs. The final hyperbole of ‘every mouth a god’ contrasts with the hyperbolic ‘sinfulness’ of eating chocolate, and suggest that Agard’s teasing wordplay is a tribute to the pleasures of eating rather than a serious paean to chocolate.

**Text 7: ‘Receipt to Make Soup’**

This poem was written by the poet and satirist Alexander Pope, and sent to his friend Jonathan Swift in a composite letter, dated to September 1726. At the time, Pope was recovering from a serious accident, where he had been thrown into a river when travelling home in his carriage, and he had entertained a number of friends at his home, including John Gay and William Pulteney.

Pulteney’s cook, Monsieur Devaux, created the dish of veal described in this poem for Pope and his guests, and the recipe was written down for Swift in poetic form as a little joke. As you can see, the dish is not really that which we would now call soup, consisting of seasoned veal with a number of herbs and vegetables, steamed in a hot kettle, but with no water added ‘for it maketh things small’. Presumably the meat juices, fat, and the liquor from the vegetables such as lettuce, which has a high water content, were enough to create a savoury stock for the meat.

Although the only surviving manuscript of the poem, part of the original letter, is in Gay’s handwriting, it is known that Gay was acting as Pope’s amanuensis while he was recovering, and most scholars agree, on internal evidence, that the poem is by Pope. It is very typical of his light-hearted style and his quick and witty rhyming. He also wrote a **satirical** piece of prose called ‘Receipt to Make an Epic Poem’ which has some similarities to this text, and shows his interest in instructional writing. The poem sounds as though it is addressed directly to the recipient, and is couched in chatty, **colloquial** language, with fairly simple syntax, though some sentences are inverted, generally in order to help with creating the couplet rhymes (as in lines 3–4, where the **inverted syntax** itself helps to create the rhyme).

Pope uses the **lexis** typical of recipe books, such as the **imperative** ‘take’ that starts the poem and the permissive ‘you may...’ generally using simple clear language of instruction: ‘cut... put... season... put’. The joking tone is made clear from the second line ‘you may buy it, or steal’, as to address a clergyman with the recommendation that he should steal his meat is clearly not serious (especially in an era where stealing was still penalised by hanging).

The poem is in rhyming couplets, and the clear **end rhymes** throughout tend to be **monosyllabic**, though Pope occasionally makes them **polysyllabic** by using more than one word for the rhyme, as with ‘cut it / put it’, ‘mend if / endive’. Throughout the poem are embedded little riddling jokes, as for instance the mention of celery, thyme sorrel and parsley not by name but through association, making the recipe an exercise of intelligence for the reader, who has to decode these messages. This also increases the sense that the poem is playful, as these kinds of riddle were popular with children at the time.

The lines of verse often give the impression of being **end-stopped**, having a complete thought or idea in each, partly because of the strong couplet rhymes, but when you look more closely, there is considerable evidence of **enjambment** throughout, and the rather breathless pace of the poem is maintained by the continual linking conjunctions of ‘then... with... that... and...’ In fact the whole poem is composed of only two sentences, one of which lasts until line 26, and this accentuates the sense of a series of spoken instructions. The final four lines of this sentence also break the normal rhyming scheme, changing the rhyme to an alternating one for these four lines. This enhances the meaning of these lines, where the poet affects to reflect for a moment on how long the dish should be simmered for, the alternating rhyme slowing the pace of the poem up to the full stop which also represents the ‘full stop’ of cooking the dish to completion.

The final four lines also wittily resume the couplet form, and bring in extraneous details. The reference to Swift’s profession as a clergyman (as long as you preach) may refer to his interest in the length of sermons. Swift was himself a famous preacher, in St Patrick’s, Dublin, who was sought out by many as an engaging speaker, though he had little opinion of his own sermons, thinking them not worth saving or publishing. Fortunately, he gave 35 of them to Dr Thomas Sheridan shortly before his death, and they have been preserved. One topic on which he preached was ‘on sleeping in church’, based on an incident in the early church (Acts of the Apostles, 20:9) where a young man, falling asleep in church, fell from a gallery and was taken up for dead. He used this anecdote as a vehicle for talking about overly long sermons, something that had become fashionable in the eighteenth century. Thus, the reference to ‘*thrice* as long as you preach’ may refer indirectly to this rather unusual (for the time) concern that his preaching should not be unduly long.

The witty **juxtaposition** of the homely domestic detail of ‘skimming the fat off’ with the reverent ‘taking your hat off’ demonstrates another double rhyme, with the little domestic detail indicating both reverence – to uncover one’s head is a sign of respect, something that he would do before saying grace, or praying before the meal – and also relaxation after his work of preaching. The final lines of the poem **pun** on the double sense of ‘fill’. The dean (Swift himself) and the chapter (the officials of the cathedral, who are to share the meal) are filled with rapture, and filled with the soup, which then fills them with rapture – a final witty piece of wordplay to conclude the poem.

**Text 8: Beef Stroganoff**

This text is an **advertisement**, but it masquerades as a different type of text, and seems to deliver content which is unrelated to the product. This kind of advertisement is often called an ‘**advertorial’** (from ‘advert’ + ‘editorial’, again suggesting an unbiased, objective

‘editorial’ point of view, while covertly having a partisan bias) or an ‘**infomercial’** (this was originally a term from ‘information’ + ‘commercial’ for an extended, five-minute television commercial paid for by advertisers, which affected to deliver information rather than simply sell things). In either case, the design of the advertisement foregrounds information that might be thought of as having a place in the normal content of a newspaper or magazine feature article, downplaying the overt connection to the advertised product in favour of something more like **product placement**.

The advert was designed by Abbott Mead Vickers for Bisto Gravy, and takes the form of a recipe for beef stroganoff, using the comedian and actress Julie Waters in role as Yvonne, a chef in the style of Delia Smith. As such it is rather **postmodern** in style, something that appeals to an audience which appreciates irony. The advert is an ironic imitation of the commercialization of television presenters, a tongue-in-cheek imitation of how chefs become advertisers. In this instance, the comic persona of Yvonne is an excellent cook, but a terrible presenter, something indicated in the advert by the nature of the jokes used throughout.

The **slogan** at the top left of the advert ‘Yvonne’s Tasty Tips’ is written in a **font** that slants to the right, as if in imitation of **cursive** handwriting, though it has separate, rather than joined up letters, in a colour which echoes the ochres and browns of the photograph angled at the top right, of Julie Walters in character as Yvonne, in deliberately unfashionable clothes and make-up. It is tempting to suppose that there is a **play of words** on ‘tasty tips’ – at the very least, it is deliberately used as a **cliché**, something that represents adverts of a generation earlier.

The title of the dish and the recipe itself are in a standard font, very clearly laid out in a traditional style, with the ingredients listed first and the instructions underneath. The ingredients are each separated by a line, adding clarity to the recipe, with measurements given in both metric and imperial. Interestingly, imperial measurements are given first, which may suggest an attempt to be traditional in style. It is illustrated by a picture to the right of the ingredient list, the knife and fork on each side of the plate implying its completeness and also suggesting that it is ready to eat immediately.

The recipe is preceded by what looks like a handwritten note from ‘Yvonne’, in neat **cursive** writing. This is something that echoes recipes in woman’s magazines, where the handwritten effect suggests that the recipe has been given to a friend by a friend, and is thus to be trusted. It is written in informal, **colloquial** language: ‘foolproof’, ‘marvellous’, and signed off with ‘love’ and an X indicating a kiss. This again suggests intimacy and informality. The note contains little jokes such as the **pun** ’stronganoff’ for ‘strong enough’, playing on the name of the dish, and the pun on the dual senses of ‘serve’ meaning to present (on the plate) or to deal out to guests: ‘you can serve it with fresh country vegetables but I find it easier to use a large spoon’. **Polysyllabic** words such as ‘marvellous’ and ‘magnifique’ emphasise the sense of a lavish personality, and would help to echo the language of the accompanying series of television adverts.

The use of ‘off the telly’ is an interesting example of **lower-register** lexis, with the abbreviation ‘telly’ instead of ‘TV’ or ‘television’ suggesting that the advert is attempting to sound friendly and approachable, something echoed by the use of ‘pop’ later on (for ‘put’). The language of the recipe itself is worth noting as well, with the word ‘gently’ featuring three times in a very short space of text. The choice of words seems designed to make the preparation of the dish appear simple and straightforward, with a three-part structure consisting of ‘first’, ‘then’, and ‘finally’, implying there are only three actions required (though the ‘first’ for instance, actually requires many separate tasks). Language is kept simple, with, as well as the already-noted repetition of ‘gently’, the repetition of ‘frying-pan... fry... fry’, ‘heat... heat... heat’ and so on. Familiar words such as ‘stirring’, ‘add’, ‘simmer’, ‘pour’ also imply simple, readily completed actions that lack complexity or difficulty.

**Text 9: Why We All Need to Eat Red Meat**

This text is a piece of journalism which seeks to persuade readers of the benefits of eating red meat. It is written by John Torode, a judge on the television series *MasterChef* and therefore an acknowledged authority on what is considered to be good food. As he reveals in the first lines of this, he is an Australian, and as such considers that eating meat is in some ways part of his cultural heritage. His argument is that eating red meat is a good thing both from a health point of view, and as a socio-cultural phenomenon.

The **photographs** that illustrate this article are interesting. One is of Torode himself – looking cheerful, and pictured in a kitchen, something that cements his status as a chef. The other is of a young and attractive woman, wearing glossy red lipstick, biting into a steak kebab. The **connotations** of this picture are many and various, but it is worth noting how she seems to be wearing a white or very pale high-necked outfit, perhaps suggesting chef’s whites, that her hair is tied back (which may also suggest a no-nonsense approach or a working environment). Her nails are painted and manicured, but pale in colour, and fairly short, suggesting practicality, and her fingers are almost touching the meat which she is eating. Her teeth are showing, their whiteness a contrast with the meat, and with her red lipstick, which emphasises the ‘red’ meat of the title. The glossiness of her lipstick connotes glamour, but also suggests that she is sophisticated, but not put off eating in what seems to be a fairly unsophisticated way (that is, using her hands). The **caption** to the photograph, ‘beefed up’ creates humour, as she is clearly not ‘beefed up’ in the sense of being overly muscular or fat, and also suggests that eating meat will not increase your weight in an undesirable way.

Through the piece, Torode uses many classic elements of **rhetorical** persuasive strategy, such as **personification**, **rhetorical questions**, the use of **references and statistics**, **personal anecdote**, **repetition**, **assertion**, **exclamation**, **exaggeration** and so on. Throughout the article he seeks to justify his claims by **reference to authority**, another key strategy. For instance, he uses his celebrity status to ‘namedrop’ references to ‘London’s smartest and busiest restaurants’ implicitly aligning himself and his own opinions with these places, and seeking to attract aspirational readers.

The **short paragraphs** and **short**, **simple sentences** throughout the article are very typical of tabloid journalism, and tend to assert ideas and opinions as though they were facts, even when they are clearly **hyperbolic** and inaccurate: ‘there wasn’t access to a decent piece of meat in this country’; ‘no one wanted to touch British beef’. The language throughout tends to be **emotive**. Meat is described as ‘tainted’ by the fear of disease for instance, a word which has powerful connotations of putrefaction or poisoning.

Torode uses many **rhetorical questions**, sometimes lining them up against each other in a series which imply answers already understood by the reader. He also places them next to statements so that the question immediately contradicts the statement: ‘Beef was the bad boy of British Culture. But was it?’ This creates a sense of a rather breathless and emotive argument, and also suggests that it is not measured or thought through.

Beef is seen in different ways throughout the article, with shifting **connotations**. From being simply ‘decent... meat’, it becomes untouchable, **personified** as a ‘bad boy’ who is then transformed through Torode’s campaigning work. The personification of beef as ‘the bad boy of British Culture’ is an interesting one, with the capitalisation of ‘culture’ emphasising the association between food and identity. There is something here similar to the ‘naughty but nice’ idea about chocolate in Text 6, a suggestion that food which is seen as ‘wicked’ needs to be rehabilitated.

Torode’s use of personal recollection is a well-known rhetorical strategy. By creating the image of his past life in Australia (and later in the article referencing his own children, and his family eating habits) he engages the reader, and makes his ideas seem reasonable. He spends the first part of the article explaining how he has helped to restore the reputation of British beef, and sets ‘the public’ (to whom the article is addressed) implicitly against ‘the UN’ who, it is suggested, is similar to the ‘uninformed consumers’ who worry about heart disease. The use of the emotive word ‘uninformed’ here seeks to win over those readers who by reading the paper are seeking to become better informed.

Direct address to the reader appears at this point, with ‘calm down everyone’, something that may echo the expression ‘Calm down dear’ popularised at this time by a series of adverts starring Michael Winner. The assertion and instruction in this imperative makes it clear that Torode considers himself to be an authority in the matter, while the exclamation suggests that there is considerable force behind the command. The agreement ‘yes, we are becoming more obese’ is immediately contrasted with ‘here’s the truth’, a **tag** which, rather like the earlier ‘frankly’ and the later ‘that’s a fact’, is commonly used in persuasive texts to suggest that the writer is giving the reader unique access to the truth, though such tags are often associated in spoken situations with a greater likelihood that the speaker is not being truthful.

Emotive language is used again in the assertion that ‘beef is not to blame. We are.’ It is an interesting piece of rhetorical strategy, as Torode implicitly sets up ‘beef’ as an innocent character, characterised by the use of words such as ‘simply grilled’ against the greedy consumers of ‘three courses’ at lunchtime. The two-word sentence here adds impact to the bald statement, and is **mimetically** echoed by a ‘full stop’ in the following line. This is then reinforced by the repetition of ‘too much’, the phrase used five times in a single line. The impact of the accusation is slightly dulled by the movement away from the personal ‘we’ to ‘people’, but also targeted with the use of the second person pronoun ‘you’, clearly establishing Torode as the expert, and the audience as those who are to be informed. The use of ‘you’ draws in the audience.

The next section of the article fulfils this promise, using statistics and scientific facts to reinforce its persuasiveness, and citing ‘scientists’. Colloquial language is used, such as ‘lashings of butter’, ‘chock-full of protein’ to slightly moderate this section, so that it remains accessible to the target audience of *Daily Mail* readers. The article creates problems which it can then solve, such as ‘what about the way the meat is produced?’ which it can then answer confidently. The final assertion: ‘meat is naturally healthy and it’s safe’ is then followed by a series of instructions which appear to offer a route to health, starting with ‘first, find a good butcher’, and concluding with the platitude that ‘it’s all about balance’. Overall, the article is an interesting mixture of assertion and persuasion.

**Text 10: Tripe**

This text is presented as an information text, and comes from a book whose full title is *From Eccles Cake to Hawkshead Wig: A Celebration of Northern Food*. As such, it is attempting to record items of interest about different kinds of food, some of which have lost popularity over the years, so as to record information about the before it is lost (a hawkshead wig is an oval bun spiced with caraway seed). As such, it is organised in sections, starting with a description, followed by history, technique and region of production.

The first section is in a completely capitalised font, perhaps to indicate its importance, and describes the appearance of tripes (interestingly, without saying that it is a type of meat). This neutral description seems deliberately detached, as though the writers are anxious not to assert any personal preference for or dislike of the food described, though it is described ‘on the slab’, presumably meaning on a butcher’s slab, in terms which make it sound rather like a sweetmeat than a piece of offal: ‘sheets of pale, cream-coloured tissue... honeycomb’.

In the next section, the history of tripe, we are told something of the origin of the word (though not its etymology), though not the origin of the food. It is referred to somewhat euphemistically as ‘internal organs’. Tripe comes from the first or second stomach of ruminant animals such as sheep, goats or cattle, and this may explain why it was never a luxury food, requiring long cleaning and careful cooking to make it edible, but this key fact is interestingly not introduced into the text until near the end, in line 48. The tone of the text is carefully neutral, and it often uses **passive constructions**: ‘were no doubt more important’, ‘were carefully utilized’, ‘was not thought of’ rather than active ones.

The language of the text is fairly **sophisticated**, containing a number of **polysyllabic** words, and ones of **high register**, which add authority to the description, and suggest that the target readership is an educated one: ‘utilized... analogy... numerous... nourishing... eloquent... unmentionable... proletariat’. It uses a narrative style that is anecdotal, both in its appeal to authority, as with the quotations from Shakespeare and Pepys, and in its inclusion of extraneous details, such as the description of the ‘Tripe de Luxe’ restaurant in Wigan. However, the tone of the text is assertive and informative, with inevitable summing-up statements such as ‘Tripe-boiling is now less important’, and sometimes stating as facts unsupported suppositions and generalisations such as ‘it was not often encountered on the tables of gentlefolk’ or ‘[it] is now a minority taste’. The tone of authority that this gives to the text is underpinned by the many historical references to details such as public health legislation, which imply that the assertions in the text could be substantiated in detail if the authors were called upon to do so.

The final section of the ‘history’ gives a detailed account of the lexis of tripe description, explaining the many different names given to different types of tripe, but again not explaining them; this gives the impression that the text is, again, designed for an expert or knowledgeable audience which does not need such detail.

In the penultimate section, ‘technique’ describes in more detail the preparation and commercial cooking of tripe. The **syntax** remains complex and the **sentence construction** is lengthy and descriptive, with again sophisticated language such as ‘membranes’, ‘abrasive’, ‘parboil’, ‘peroxide’ and so on. the **semantic field** is rather scientific for a description of food, with the mention of ‘tumbled’, ‘hot lime and soda solution’, ‘machine’, ‘abrasive drum’, ‘peroxide solution’ and so on, emphasising the change from the process ‘originally by hand’.

The final section is again in capitals, and simply states the location of most tripe production, though of course, it is not a food that is particular to Lancashire, and so this is slightly misleading.

**Text 11: Seven Simple Steps to Going – and Staying – Vegetarian**

This page is from the website of the Vegetarian Society, and is promoting the adoption of a vegetarian lifestyle. As such it is an interesting piece to compare to the *Mail Online* article by John Torode, which advocates the eating of meat. The website features the logo of the Vegetarian Society, and the slogan ‘understanding and respect for vegetarian lifestyles’, which implies that this is something which may not always exist in the world beyond the site.

The piece is formulated as a simple and clear series of moves towards a desired goal. The attractiveness of the goal itself – becoming vegetarian – is not really questioned, something that is unsurprising given the context of the article, on a speciality website. The **information bar** offering different sections of the site reinforces the sense of a vegetarian community of identity, something that is also accentuated by the endorsement from the celebrity figure of Sir Paul McCartney, and the similar endorsement from Victoria Alderton, a non-celebrity figure, below. Each comment is headed by a photograph, in Paul McCartney’s case clearly a posed shot, in Victoria Alderton’s a much more informal picture, where she is not looking directly at the camera; each shot reflects their status. It is interesting that the caption to each photo – a quotation from the person involved – also reflects this divide between more and less formal attitudes. Paul McCartney asks a rhetorical question: ‘what could be better...?’ which implies that those who are not vegetarians are less health conscious and less caring of the planet. It is almost as though he is incredulous that anyone might not be a vegetarian. Victoria Alderton’s comment uses more **colloquial** lexis: ‘teens’, ‘veggie’, and is also more personal, using the first person pronoun ‘I’ rather than McCartney’s more outward-looking ‘your’ and ‘us’.

The **alliteration** of the title ‘seven simple steps’ helps to reinforce the idea of simplicity and straightforwardness, and this is also reinforced by the constant use of the **second person pronoun**. This gives the impression that the text is directed personally at the reader, and makes the advice seem more friendly and accessible. Persuasive strategies are seen immediately with the injunction ‘if it suits you... take your time’, creating a sense that the advice has been specially crafted to suit the reader. Again there is a sense of becoming part of a wider community with the use of ‘some people’ and ‘others’, and by step 2 the reader is drawn into the society of ‘vegetarians’ and made to feel superior to those outsiders who ‘know very little’.

**Imperatives** are used throughout, as is typical of this sort of list, which seeks to clarify and to direct. Thus we have ‘***take*** your time’, ‘***work out*** what will suit you’, ‘***don’t be*** put off’, ‘***buy***a vegetarian cookbook’, ‘***take*** the next step’, ‘***try*** something new’, ‘***learn*** a little about nutrition’, ‘***don’t go*** it alone’, ‘***join*** the Vegetarian Society’. These imperatives give a sense of urgency to the instructions, and subtly limit the reader’s alternatives, suggesting that there is really only one route to success.

The society’s own productions are referenced throughout as a route to knowledge, from the free recipes in step 4, through the ‘nutrition info sheet’ in step 5, the ‘pitfalls guide’ in step 6 and finally the ‘quarterly magazine’ in step 7, which readers will only receive by joining the society. This accentuates the impression that the Vegetarian Society is an expert and to be relied upon, and can help guide readers through difficulties.

Those difficulties are clearly marked by the language used throughout: ‘teasing’, ‘ill-informed scare stories’, ‘the brunt of jokes and prejudices’, ‘start being careful’, ‘change... your habits’, embarrassment’, all words and phrases which suggest social difficulty and awkwardness. The guide warns of ‘pitfalls’, and mentions the need for ‘support and advice’. Readers are urged ‘Don’t go it alone’, ‘ask for... support’. All this lexis tends to suggest that changing to become a vegetarian is a process fraught with difficulty, and one which needs the support of an organisation such as the vegetarian society.

The general tone of the article is friendly, with colloquial language deliberately used (such as ‘veggie’) and simple sentence structures. The direct imperatives accentuate the impression that clear advice is being given; although choice is offered (some people... others...) there is little question about the ultimate goal of the article. Those who oppose a vegetarian lifestyle are seen as ‘ill-informed’, as opposed to the ‘expert advisors’ of the society.

**Text 12: Pizza Reviews**

This text introduces several restaurant reviews by prefacing them with a short explanation ‘How we did it’ which immediately draws the reader in to a sense of community with the writers of the text, something that may link to the origin of the text in a specialist food

magazine. The reviews are presented as being objective and unbiased, something emphasised by the use of slightly hyperbolic language such as ‘undercover agents’ and ‘anonymously’, as well as the more prosaic ‘paid for all food and drinks’ (suggesting that restaurant reviewers who identify themselves might get special concessions).

Each review is prefaced by images of the two pizzas tasted, with a heading in capitalised font of the name of the restaurant concerned, a section of text describing the reviewers’ experiences, a section headed ‘branches’, giving addresses of other locations of the restaurant chain, and a section headed ‘best value wines’, with a final ‘grade’ which consists of a mark out of five for the margherita pizza and another mark out of five for the ‘overall experience’.

There is a system to each review which adds to the impression that the testing of the pizzas is objective and unbiased; first the restaurant is described, then the food is described fairly systematically. Certain factors are noticed: the quality of the crust, the quality of the cheese and so on. The reviewers highlight their own expertise: ‘the mozzarella... tastes like generic (possibly Danish) catering mozzarella’; ‘typical of dough taken out of a fridge and not allowed to prove for long enough’; ‘air pockets that show it has been worked properly’.

The **present tense** is used in these reviews to provide a sense of immediacy (and perhaps to emphasise how the reviews focus on current experience and are up to date). So we hear ‘the branch I ***visit****’*, ‘staff ***work*** hard’, ‘our server ***apologises****’* and so on. Vivid **adjectives** are used throughout to accentuate the description of food: ‘crisp’, ‘elastic’, ‘appealing’, ‘acidic’, ‘fresh-grated’, ‘fresh’, and less appealingly, ‘slimy’, ‘tasteless’, ‘bullet-like’. There is a certain amount of **personification**, as when we hear that a tomato sauce ‘stands above most of its competitors’ or (describing a pizza) that rosemary helps to ‘lift its spirits’, or that a menu ‘trills’, and a restaurant ‘knows its way around a pizza base’. This helps to distinguish each restaurant from the other, which is important, given that the food sampled in each is so similar.

Although the reviews are written from a personal perspective, and the first person is by no means absent, there is a tendency for the style to use passive constructions that suggest authority: ‘the food is well executed’, though there is an informal tone, and abbreviations such as ‘it’s’ are used throughout. Some specialist language to describe different types of pizza is used to help accentuate this impression of authority, as are the frequent references which imply the writer’s knowledge of food, such as ‘I’ve had better’ or ‘mushrooms which, unusually, have clearly been recently sliced’.

**Humour** isused to some extent to lighten the tone of some of the reviews, For instance, **meiosis** is used to imply inadequacy ‘the Pescatore is hardly overwhelmed’, and an ironic **collocation** ‘briny treats’ stands in place of a more usual term, such as ‘seafood’. Quotation is used in the winning review of Prezzo to give a sense of the individuality of this restaurant’s staff: the waitress quoted is ‘refreshingly honest’ as opposed to the implied pretension of ‘the menu trills’ in the Piccolino review.

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**ext 13: Matthew Norman Review**

This review is quite different in type to the pizza reviews in the previous text, not least because it doesn’t pull its punches, and gives an unashamedly low score to the single restaurant under review. This kind of review is actually much more typical of a broadsheet

review of a restaurant, in that it focuses on a single place, and spends a considerable time in describing it and the food served. It is also a review which relies to a considerable extent on the character of the reviewer, in that it is intended to entertain as much as to inform. Matthew Norman is a columnist who, though famous for food writing, is perhaps best known as a political commentator. He is prolific in writing about many other subjects, including sport and also the media, and has written regularly in several broadsheet papers, including the *Telegraph*, the *Independent*, and the *Guardian*, from where this food column is taken. In 2008 he won Press Awards Columnist of the Year.

The outcome of the review is immediately evident in the circular **burst** which gives the low score of 3/10 and the **headline**, which describes Norman as a ‘brave little trouper’, an expression which immediately alerts us to the humour intended in the article as a whole. The irony of this **idiomatic phrase** is attached to the fact that it is usually used of a child who has done something courageous – for instance carried on after grazing their knee – making the ‘risks life and limb’ **hyperbolic** on a dual level. The additional sense of a ‘trouper’ being a performer in a circus or a theatre suggests that the reviewer is performing some dangerous and unusually skilful act, such as tightrope walking. The fact that the risks the writer has endured are actually those of a car breakdown, rather than the dangers of the food that he has eaten, add to this humour.

The headline is unusually long, something which emphasises the **subordinate clause** ‘not least so you won’t have to’ which suggests selflessness on the part of the reviewer. The homophone trouper/trooper also suggests the additional sense of ‘soldier’ which reinforces the humour of the statement overall, as well as tying to the reference later in the article to the ex-soldier AA man. Interestingly, rather than being in a **by-line**, the name of the reviewer is prominent, suggesting that his fame will add to the likelihood of the reader picking up the article. This is very different from the previous text, where the reviewers, though initially identified by name, were assigned only initials at the end of each review.

The restaurant food review is a normal **genre** in newspaper journalism, particularly the broadsheets, where it is often a mark of the associated wealth and leisure of an upmarket readership. Here, however, the writer sets out to disorientate and hence surprise the reader by introducing personal (biographical) material of a dramatic nature. A dangerous breakdown of his car on the M6 is not part of the normal or expected content of a newspaper review, yet here the writer mixes it in with the more standard evaluation of the restaurant in order to enliven and make more vivid the whole review. In fact, only about 60 lines of the article – less than half – focus on the restaurant itself, and half of this again is focused on the appearance of the restaurant rather than the food, something which indicate clearly the relative importance to the article of the food and the food-writer’s experience.

The personal material, and account of his motorway breakdown **frames** the main review in the centre of the text, so that the review both starts and ends with material not concerned with restaurant reviewing, emphasising how much of this review is focused on the writer himself rather than with the anonymity of reviewing. This creates a sense of narrative, the anticipation of the opening ‘not quite dying’ urging us to read further to discover the exact circumstances of the incident. It is as though the reviewer is concerned that the format of the standard review might be boring or unengaging to the reader, and so feels the need to liven it up in this manner.

The review opens with a very frank insult to the restaurant being reviewed: ‘the last place on earth anyone vaguely sane would choose for their last meal’. The idea of the final meal before death is further reinforced by the reference to ‘death row’, and then wittily moderated by a reference to another famous restaurant.

The author returns deliberately to the subject of the review in an almost **postmodern** way, foregrounding the text and the writing process: ‘professional pride demands a few words’. But it maintains an entertaining and **hyperbolic** style. Words such as ‘swanky’ suggest the familiar and **colloquial**, but they are matched by more formal synonyms such as ‘modernity’, ‘vogue’ ‘chic’ and so on which emphasise that each word is carefully chosen. There is a studied originality of expression in the unusual **adjectival compounds** in descriptions such as ‘crowd-control pastels’, and a sense that the quirky and original is valued.

To emphasise this impression, **antithesis** is used in expressions such as ‘sublimely charmless’, and ‘flows unyieldingly’, as well as larger antithetical patterns that play with specific patterns of repetition: ‘if the selling point is the view, the one flaw is that the view is over central Manchester’. The criticism is further enhanced by the use of bathos: ‘Florence, Manhattan or Sydney it is not’, as well as by an extended metaphor ‘Andrew Neil towering over Natalie Portman at a drinks party’ which makes a deft cultural reference to two famous people (there may be a hidden reference here to the repeated photograph of Andrew Neil with a young woman that is often reprinted in *Private Eye* under a variety of excuses).

The writing of the review itself is carefully crafted, with sophisticated language such as ‘pretensions’, ‘artfully’ and ‘indolence’ mixed with knowing colloquialisms such as ‘amateur hour’, ‘gutsiness’, ‘plopped’, ‘cheeky’. These seem almost to alternate, and sometimes form combinations which seem like **oxymorons**, such as ‘cheeky indolence’.

The pretentiousness of the restaurant is mocked throughout, as are its prices: ‘nothing wrong with that for an effortless lunch at home, but cheeky indolence at £5.50’. Even the menu descriptions do not escape, with the ironic bracketed aside ‘Lancashire hotpot in English’ implying that the menu description should be simplified. The language that Norman uses to describe the overpriced meal is powerful and personifies the restaurant and the food it offers through words such as: ‘cheeky’, ‘calumny’, ‘self-important horror’ and so on, while praising the one human being mentioned as ‘incongruously warm and expert’.

The final description of the frightening incident when Norman’s car breaks down on the motorway is told as a vivid **anecdote**, which draws in a number of people by directly addressing them, using anaphora (in the repetition of ‘to’) to help structure the list: ‘to those of you who swerved round me...’, ‘to the truck driver who savagely shook his fist as he passed...’, ‘to the motorway patrol officers...’, ‘to my mother...’, ’and to John’. The list seems to be arranged in increasing order of intimacy, from a group of people, to a person who reacted memorably, to people who helped, and to his mother. The fact that this is then followed by the intimate use of a name ‘John’ manages to subtly suggest that this AA patrolman is more significant, in effect, than his mother.

This strategy of direct address also highlights the nature of the review as a public document, one which might well be read by the people concerned. The deliberate **bathos** of ‘we’ll say no more about the shattered wing mirror’ suggests both how dangerous the situation was – Norman’s car was hit by someone trying to avoid its sudden stop in the middle of the fast lane – and also has connotations of telling off a child, subtly suggesting Norman’s authority. The idea of danger is reinforced by the comparison to army service – a link to the heading of the article – and the lexical field employed: ‘risk our lives in service... not that we resent the danger’, ‘it goes with the turf’, ‘posthumous recipient’, ‘obituary’ and so on. Again, the effect of this **hyperbolic** comparison is to create humour.

The direct address to the newspaper readership at the end of the article ‘you readers’ gives the article the air of a morality tale, explaining something in a **didactic** manner, something which is reinforced by the witty imagined headline at the end, which resembles a moral or **proverb**, with its final **pun** ‘to die for’ playing on the sense of enjoyment and uniqueness of the **colloquial** phrase, as well as the literal risk of death.

**Text 14: The Modern Menu**

This text is a copy of the menu from the restaurant reviewed in Text 13, and as a result the two make an obvious comparison. Interestingly, although it is possible to immediately see the starter and pudding which Norman sampled, there is no evidence of the main course of

Lancashire Hotpot which he mentions, which suggests that the restaurant changes its menu on a fairly regular basis (this menu is headed ‘Winter 2009’, and his review was written in December 2009). The heading with the name of the establishment is in a fairly small emboldened typeface, larger than the main text, but smaller than the subheadings of the various sections below, which is perhaps an attempt to imitate the style of a handwritten or daily typed-out menu (something which implies that the food offered is changed on a daily basis to reflect seasonal offerings and what is freshest at the market). The lack of a large heading or logo is certainly something which connotes unpretentiousness. The restaurant closed in February 2011.

The layout of the menu is fairly simple, in four **columns** across the page, with a couple of text boxes. The food is divided up into several sections, each headed with a **section header** indicating the contents, in a larger and bolder font than the main text. The whole menu seems to be divided up in a larger way into three sections by theme. Firstly, we can see that the far left column is devoted to the ‘Bar Menu’ (food designed to be eaten fairly quickly and less formally than in the main restaurant, usually in the bar, as the name suggests). At the foot of this column is a **text box** giving details of ‘Champagnes and Prosecco’ (an Italian sparkling wine), which may imply that these wines would go well with such light meals.

In the second column there is a section headed ‘Taste of Manchester’ which seems to be what in another restaurant might be termed the fixed price menu, or the ‘Table d’Hôte’ (to use the French **loan phrase**). Here either two or three courses are served at a fixed price, therefore avoiding uncertainty for the customer about the final bill (this is something that might connect interestingly to what Norman says about price in Text 13). They are further divided up into ‘Starters’, ‘Mains’ and ‘Puddings’, indicating the different courses, with four choices for each section.

Finally, there are two columns with the larger menu, what is known sometimes in restaurants as the ‘à la carte’ menu, where dishes are selected and ordered individually. Again, each subsection is headed ‘Starters’, ‘Mains’ and ‘Puddings’, but there is also a section called ‘Side orders’ and a text box headed ‘Sunday Lunch’ which offers a whole roast chicken for £25. In the à la carte menu there are many more choices, with eight starters, nine main courses, six puddings and five possible side orders.

The language of the menu seems to be fairly simple and informal, something reflected in the use of the informal abbreviation ‘mains’ for ‘main courses’. The diner is addressed directly, and sometimes informally, in the second person, as in ‘a selection of quick dishes for you to choose’ or the aside ‘we’ll be leaving the carving up to you’, while the restaurant as a whole is personified in the first person plural as in ‘We are now serving Sunday lunch...’, or ‘our commitment...’ This gives the impression that the financial transaction between restaurant and diner is more friendly than commercial, implying that they are hosts and the diners are guests.

At the start of the menu there is what seems to be a ‘mission statement’, something which declares the ideological purpose of the restaurant (you may remember similar declarations to this from the pizza reviews in Text 12). The statement asserts ‘these dishes are a reflection of our commitment to quality regional foodstuffs’.

Throughout the menu, most dishes do not have names (as Norman suggests, for instance ‘Lancashire Hotpot’), but are instead described at some length both through their ingredients and through the style of cooking. The style of cooking of each dish is sometimes mentioned: ‘homemade’, ‘braised’, ‘roast’, ‘pickled’, ‘beer battered’ and so on.

There seems to be emphasis on the individuality of the ingredients, and their provenance with, for instance, the potatoes identified as ‘Anya’ potatoes, the beetroot as ‘heritage’, the scallops as ‘Scottish’ and the herrings as ‘Orkney herrings’. Interestingly, herrings feature both in a dish in the ‘taste of Manchester’ fixed-price menu, and in the à la carte menu; in the latter they are identified as from Orkney, in the former, they are simply ‘herrings’, something which may reflect the greater exclusivity of the latter style of menu.

**Text 15: Hygiene Improvement Regulations**

This text is a good example of a text written for a specific purpose. It consists of the instructions for issuing ‘Hygiene improvement notices’ and ‘Hygiene prohibition orders’, both of which are documents which have the power to close down an establishment which serves food. The improvement notice is in the nature of a warning, with the prohibition order something that follows from a conviction for a food hygiene offence.

What is immediately striking here is the way in which each part of the text is organised into paragraphs, labelled with (a), (b), (c) and so on so as to make it easy to negotiate one’s way to the correct part of the text. The listing is established in order to clarify the process by which an order is given out. Instead of the **discourse markers** which you might expect, such as ‘firstly’, ‘secondly’ and so on, the sentence begun by the opening lines, the subject of which is ‘an authorised officer’ continues through the alphabetised bullet points (interestingly, this officer is gendered as ‘he’; perhaps simply following the convention, though now rather outdated, to use the male singular as a neutral pronoun).

The language throughout is very **legalistic**, so as to ensure that there are no verbal ‘loopholes’ through which the law may be evaded. **Formal terminology** is used, with forceful verbs such as such as ‘comply’, ‘specify’ or ‘require’. Terms are very carefully hedged about with language that makes clarity more important than fluency: ‘grounds for believing’, ‘those measures, or measures which are at least equivalent to them’, so as to make it difficult for people to suggest that anything has not been clearly defined.

**Abbreviations** are notably absent in this text. It tends towards fairly lengthy sentences, and the language is complex and **polysyllabic**: ‘compliance’, ‘constitute’, ‘specify’, equivalent’, ‘impairment’, ‘appropriate’, ‘prohibition’. Many of these words are not words that are commonly used in everyday speech, having been chosen apparently deliberately for their legal, rather than their semantic, significance. Other legalistic phrases are evident in the text, such as ‘with respect to’, ‘any process or treatment’ and so on, generally qualifying possible options so as to limit the possibility of misinterpretation. In the third paragraph of the ‘prohibition orders’ section, this becomes almost meaningless to the casual reader, with its many references back to subparagraphs. It is clearly not intended to be read as a complete unit, but referred to in specific instances, and the numbering and paragraphs make this referencing back and forth a smoother process.

One very evident difference between this text and those written to entertain, for instance, is the way in which it uses repetition. Particular words are repeated very frequently, such as ‘convicted’, ‘offence’, ‘prohibition’ and so on; there is no effort to vary them, rather once they have been defined, they are deliberately reused. In this context, synonyms are undesirable as they detract from the clarity of the text.

**Text 16: Nigella Express**

This text is from a cookery book written by Nigella Lawson, which was made to accompany a television series of the same name. A transcript of part of the series where Nigella describes how to make this dish forms the basis of Text 17. This text and the one following are therefore an interesting comparison in terms of language.

From the outset, the text has a friendly and informal address to the reader. The initial statement is an **assertion** which brooks of no contradiction, suggesting something of the confident personality of the presenter. The phrase has a gnomic quality, due to the repetition and mirroring of parallel phrases: ‘the best way to start the day... the best way to end it’, the paired phrases also reinforcing Nigella’s view of what is ‘the best’.

The direct address to the reader continues with the use of the **second person** throughout: ‘you can’, but actually goes a step further than some other texts in that it creates a friendly and confiding tone by the use of idiomatic phrases such as ‘you know’ which imply a friendly confidence between the writer and the reader. The writer’s personal opinion is very prominent throughout, with the first person used a great deal, instead of the more impersonal ‘we’ which you sometimes get in such texts, a confident ‘I love it... I’m tempted...’ draws the reader in to a sense of sensual enjoyment – something that is very much a hallmark of this cookery writer’s style.

**Informal language** laces the introduction to the recipe. The writer mentions ‘greatest hangover cures’, ‘partywise’, ‘whip up a batch of these’, ‘no need to scout around’, all colloquial phrases which help to suggest the spoken voice, as does the filler ‘you know’. There is a strong sense of engagement between the writer and the reader, and one of shared experience ‘as you do’, ‘to your liking’, where it is implied that both author and reader know about the basics of cooking eggs.

Nigella seems anxious to create a sense of the warm and attractive sensuality of cooking throughout this passage; she describes herself as ‘tempted’ by the food. Alliteration is used as in ‘**m**ake it even **m**ore of a **m**eal’ to add an ‘mmmm’ sound that imitates that usually associated with the enjoyment of food. The reference to ‘hangover cures’ implies pleasure is sought in drink as well as in food, though even the ‘cure’ is seen as a treat in itself, rather than a medicine. The idea that there is ‘no need to scout around for excuses’ suggests again something of the ambivalent attitude to food and pleasure suggested by ‘naughty but nice’; the implication that the sensual pleasure of eating is something that is linked to temptation, and might be thought to need an excuse – an idea immediately dismissed – again implies that the dish is a treat.

The recipe itself is preceded by an ingredients list. Perhaps in order to make the recipe as simple as possible, and preserve the sense that it is a ‘simple’ dish, the more mundane tasks, such as the cutting up and deseeding of the chilli and the tomato, and the chopping of the onion, are included almost as an afterthought as part of the ingredients list itself. Salt is specified as preferably ‘Maldon’ Salt, a particular brand of sea salt from Maldon in Essex, which is more expensive than ordinary salt, something that makes the recipe seem more exclusive and individual.

The instructions for the recipe are direct and simple, with a series of clear imperatives: ‘heat the vegetables... roll up the corn tortillas’. Words such as ‘snip’ rather than ‘cut’ imply effortlessness, as does the assumption that the food will automatically become ‘crisp and golden’. The present tense is used throughout to give a sense of continuous action, with participles emphasising this sense of the continuous: ‘turning... using... setting... stirring’.

The recipe is faced with a colour reproduction of the finished dish, styled with a cup of what looks like black coffee (also a famous hangover cure) beside it, the prevailing colours of red and yellow in the food are well set off by the black crockery and pan. The edges of the pan are slightly smeared with food; it is not too neat a shot, again giving a sense of the ‘reality’ of the dish, and the way in which it is opposed to more formal styles of cooking.

Interestingly, the dish is said to serve only two people. This is unusual in cookery books (the standard number tends to be four, as in Text 8), and again may imply intimacy and a sense that this dish is a private treat rather than something to serve up to a family.

**Text 17: Transcript from Nigella Express**

Many of the features of the previous text are reproduced in this transcript, though if anything it is an even more exaggerated example of the informal and personal interaction with the viewer. Nigella Lawson’s image as a cookery writer and presenter is grounded in the informal and the sensual, as well as a sense of the almost flirtatious, typified here by her mention of ‘the only thing that gets me up in the morning’, or ‘I like a bit of heat in the morning’, as well as her trademark consumption of the dish at the end of the presentation.

The direct address to the reader in the previous text is here mimicked by a direct address to the camera: ‘let me tell you’; the informal phraseology is strongly emphasised by words like ‘yummy’ (a childish word which here emphasises the ways in which Nigella is a ‘yummy mummy’, in the common phrase), and the ‘m’ sounds in the middle of that word that imitate the wordless appreciation of food are again reemphasised by ‘m’ alliteration: ‘**m**orning **m**eals... **m**ere sleepy **m**oments’. Alliterative pairings feature frequently throughout the whole extract, in phrases such as ‘**f**ast and **f**abulous’, ‘a **c**lear **c**onscience’, and even in triplets such as ‘**w**orkdays **w**eekdays **w**eekends’ but are here emphasised by the interpolated pictures of the dishes concerned; it is as though they are being made into memorable titles by this linguistic feature: ‘**b**reakfast **b**ruschetta’, ‘**s**peedy **s**hortcut **c**hocolate **c**roissants’, ‘**s**picy **s**crambled eggs’.

This playing with the sound of words culminates in the ‘ultimate’ breakfast, which is described with both heavy alliteration, echoing and even rhyme: ‘get up and go breakfast a wake up shake up go get em smoothie’. The informal slang ‘go get em’ again creates a sense that Nigella is becoming friendly with the viewer, and also makes her appear less distanced from the ‘ordinary person’. This is something replicated throughout the passage, as she uses colloquial and simple words such as ‘a bit’, ‘snip’, ‘ok’ while she cooks, and says ‘gonna’ rather than ‘going to’ (a phonetic feature reflected in the transcript). It is possible that her status as a wealthy upper-middle-class ‘domestic goddess’ might otherwise seem to remove her from the realm of the ordinary viewer’s lifestyle, so this may be an important part of the creation of her image.

As in Text 16, the personal is strongly present throughout; the authority of her recipes is further emphasised by the insistent use of ‘my’ in ‘***my***... breakfast’, ‘***my*** pussyfoot cocktail’, ‘***my*** instant mix pancakes’. Her feelings (‘I’m just making it because I love it’, ‘this is what I feel should go in next’, ‘I like my eggs quite salty’, ‘treat myself’) are seen as more important than any formal ‘rules’ of cookery. Again, the idea of the pleasures of food and drink being in some way ‘naughty’ is foregrounded, with the mention of the ‘hangover salve’ paired with the assertion ‘I speak with a clear conscience’.

Nigella creates a running commentary on what she is doing throughout which continues to engage the viewer at a personal level, and again seems to deal with issues of propriety and guilt: ‘I don’t mind how you chop it’, ‘don’t be hard on yourself’, ‘this is not as odd as it looks’, ‘I’m gonna have to clear this up later’, ‘I’m not gonna worry about adding to the mess’.

The pauses in the transcript are generally those which are created through the physical activity of cooking; small pauses are evident where Nigella is performing a physical task which requires a certain degree of concentration, and this also explains the ways in which the speech is sometimes slightly disjointed: ‘anyway (.) like a bit of heat in the morning (-) chop the chilli’. Although she uses informal language, there is evidence of considerable sophistication at a lexical level, for instance with the expression ‘one syncopated move’ or the vivid metaphor of ‘golden shards of fried tortilla’.

As the meal comes towards completion, there is some emphasis on the immediacy of the cooking process – something that is a feature of certain cookery programmes, and serves to separate cooks such as Nigella or Jamie Oliver from more traditional television programmes. Here she exclaims ‘ah perfect’, ‘oh the softness of this golden egg’, and ‘perfection’ to emphasise the sensual enjoyment that the completion of the dish provokes. The expression ‘we’re on’ suggests the theatrical, an apt reflection of her cookery style.

**Text 18: Transcript of a Family Meal**

This text is a record of a dinner table conversation from an American family of four, as the anthology indicates. Even were this attribution not given, it would be rapidly clear that the conversation took place at mealtime, and centred on the serving of a meal, and it would

also be possible to tell that this family is American because of the use of ‘Mom’ as an abbreviation for ‘mother’ (UK English uses ‘Mum’ or ‘Ma’ in this context), the reference to ‘chips’ (referring to what are called ‘crisps’ in UK English), the use of ‘y’all’ (characteristic especially of the southern United States) and perhaps the use of ‘tail’ in line 25 (though this may refer to an actual tail, and be referring to the family pet).

Several things about this conversation are interesting, and may be features of the transcript rather than of the conversation. For instance, there is no indication of overlap in the conversation, where more than one person speaks at once. In real conversations, this is very rare. There is also no indication of pauses, or how long they might be, which leads us to conjecture these details. The conversation as a whole demonstrates how discussions over food are often not about the food itself, but about the quasi-sacramental significance of eating together as a family; family bonding is evident throughout through jokes, caustic remarks, small kindnesses and what is clearly a lot of non-verbal communication.

The conversation is extremely disjointed and **non-linear**, compared to the transcript which follows, and this is not entirely due to the greater number of speakers. As the participants are engaged in a shared activity, it is likely that a lot of meaning is conveyed through gesture, glance, body language and proximity. As a result there is not a great deal of ordered turn-taking, but rather several different exchanges interrupted and incomplete. We also start off *in media res*, with the topic under discussion unclear.

The first utterance, from D, shows **repetition** and **hesitation**. The son means to say (as he ultimately does) ‘give it a rest’ (that is, please stop talking about this topic), but prefaces this with a hesitant ‘I’, suggesting that he wishes to say something less passive and more commanding (such as ‘I wish you’d leave it alone’). He then says ‘give ***me*** a rest’, which may indicate his real meaning, but which is in some respects a **Freudian slip** in that it is an unconscious speaking of what is really on his mind, i.e. that he needs a rest from whatever it is his mother is doing or saying to him. He swiftly **self-corrects** to ‘give it a rest’, and continues with what sounds like an apology: ‘I didn’t think about you’. This is qualified by ‘I mean...’ and ‘some other instance’, both phrases which suggest that he is having some difficulty in expressing himself, and explaining himself.

His mother’s response suggests mockery, in that her apparent acceptance ‘well I can understand’ is followed by an imitation of herself in what is clearly a ridiculous situation: ‘Hi I’m David’s mother, try to ignore me’. However, it is suggested that this is an amiable piece of teasing by his response ‘I went with a girl like you once’, which mocks his mother in return, comparing her to an ex-girlfriend (and therefore by implication an undesirable one). His expletive ‘damn chilli’ suggests a forcefulness about his speech at this point which moves the conversation on to the next stage.

Michael reinforces his brother here by endorsing and echoing his last statement, confirming it with ‘Okay’. He also takes the initiative and invites his father into the conversation by asking him about his intentions when it comes to serving the meal. His father’s response: ‘doesn’t matter’ is a typical example of how responses in speech often signify more than they pretend. When he says it doesn’t matter if he serves the chilli, he is also signifying that (unlike David and his mother) he has no desire to enter into the quarrel; in brief, he is being neutral and agreeable.

This passivity contrasts with the mother’s next utterance, which is a commanding **imperative**: ‘would you get those chips in there’, implying perhaps that she has already asked them to be brought in before, and that this is a repeated request. The father reinforces the impression of being a peacemaker, by his immediate response and endearment (honey), offering to help her, albeit in another way.

The next few utterances exemplify how transcripts are unable to fill in the whole picture of a conversation. The mother says ‘oh wait, we still have quite a few’, to which David replies ‘I don’t see any others’. The context suggests that she is referring to the chips, but in a real conversation it is unlikely that there would be any doubt, because of the direction of her glance, or other non-verbal signals. The brief exchange, however, is very characteristic of natural speech as the swift turn-taking does not ever make this explicit. In response to his mother’s ‘I know you don’t’, David repeats and modifies his statement to move it on – from not seeing chips, he concludes they don’t have chips, which provokes his mother’s next rather sarcastic comment: ‘I think it will be a help to you’.

Again it looks as though the father, J, is the peacemaker here, as he interrupts the exchange with an apparent **non sequitur** ‘Here’s Mom’s’, presumably serving out the chilli. Michael helps him in changing the subject with the reference ‘this isn’t according to grandpa’, presumably a jocular reference to the idea that the chilli is not served in the same way as his grandfather would choose to serve it, and this theme of conversation continues for a few turns. Then the mother interrupts again with an **assertive question**: ‘Are you going to put water in our cups’ (this is interestingly punctuated with an exclamation mark rather than a question mark, indicating that it is **exclamatory** rather than questioning), followed immediately by a genuine question responded to quickly by Michael. She again responds with an **imperative**: ‘put all the water in here’ before making an all-embracing and general statement: ‘well, here we are’. This probably suggests that the family are all served and ready to start eating; again, it is a statement which reaches beyond the obvious statement of fact, implying ‘***as*** we are all now here...’

The father’s utterance ‘what’ looks like a non sequitur, but may in fact be a response to a non-verbal signal, as it is followed by a request from the mother to turn off the TV (another indicator that they are all seated and ready to eat). It could also be a response to a non-verbal signal from the dog, American Pie, indicating that it wants to leave the room, as he then addresses the dog. His assertion ‘I said I’ll take you to the bathroom’ is another example of an Americanism, as he means that he will take the dog outside to relieve itself – but as the colloquial expression for this in America for humans is to go to the bathroom, he uses the phrase, creating an unintentionally amusing incongruity.

The reference by the mother to ‘your tail’ could either refer to the father, moving from the table (referring to his rear end, an Americanism) or, literally, to the dog’s tail. Again ‘oh sorry’ gives no real indication as to what is being apologised for, it is simply an aside before she starts on what is clearly intended to be an appropriate topic for dinner-table discussion, ‘Sarah’s sister’s baby’.

The conversation as a whole demonstrates how important non-verbal signals are, but also suggests the imperfections of the transcription process that does not include an indication of movement or gesture. Fillers are almost entirely absent, as are indications of pauses or hesitations, suggesting that the transcript would make easier reading if they were present. It also indicates clearly how often non-linear conversations can be perfectly comprehensible to those present – or to those who understand the private codes that are often developed, through jokes and shared intimacy, between families.

**Text 19: Transcript, Ordering Burgers**

This transcript seems initially to be much clearer in meaning than the previous text, and this is because it records a fairly linear process of decision-making between only two people. It demonstrates many of the features of ordinary turn-taking, interruption, layering, hesitation and so on.

For instance, the hesitation indicated by the ellipsis following ‘er...’ in the first transcript is a very typical conversational feature; the sound ‘er’ features as a **placeholder**, maintaining the speaker’s intention of continuing. The speaker’s statement ‘I’m going to have an old timer with cheese’ is substantiated by the repetition of ‘I’m’ as the more definite ‘I am’, an example of **epanalepsis** that also establishes that the utterance has been completed. In response to the other speaker’s query, Speaker 1 clarifies that ‘the old timer’ is a type of burger, and the conversation builds from this point, developing into a discussion of the different kinds of food on offer and their appeal.

Both speakers seem to use casual and informal language, as you would expect from the context, and even **echo** each other in repeating phrases: ‘I’m gonna have’, ‘I’m gonna have, I think I’m gonna have...’; ‘Are you gonna have... what you gonna have?’ Both speakers also use frequent **tag questions** such as ‘don’t you?’ and ‘do you?’, which tend to bond together participants in a conversation, and reassure each other with **non-verbal signs of agreement** such as ‘mm’.

Interestingly, in this conversation the idea of food as temptation, or something to resist, is clearly present, when S2 says ‘I’m trying not to have nachos’ but then finally decides to have them, saying ‘I’m gonna have to have nachos, I’m addicted to it...’ The **hyperbolic** use of the word ‘addicted’ here suggests that this is simply a jovial reference to the attractiveness of the food, but nonetheless brings in a sense that some foods are dangerously attractive.

There is frequent overlap in this conversation, which is a very typical feature of a non-formal conversation. It is striking, however, that when the server enters the conversation, though she is greeted with an immediate question rather than a response to her polite greeting, their style of speech does change slightly. The lack of response to the server’s ‘Hi’ may be an indication of perceived status difference, but it may also be that the speakers have indicated a response to her greeting in a non-verbal manner, such as by smiling warmly, something not indicated in the transcript. The third person ‘they’ of line 16 turns to a second person ‘you’, the waitress standing in here for the restaurant as a whole (something similar to the use of language in some of the restaurant reviews). Her response ‘sorry’ is a compressed utterance, standing for a repetition of the question, ‘sorry, we don’t do cider’, and it is tempting to suggest that her brevity of response may be connected to their lack of greeting.

When S1 orders, it is noticeable that the speech used is more formal than in the ‘deciding’ phase of the conversation. Instead of ‘I’m gonna’, we see ‘I’ll have’, and then from Speaker 2 an even more polite ‘Can I have’. As the two speakers interact with the waitress, she takes a larger share in the conversation, and interestingly, they seem to hesitate more, using fillers such as ‘erm’ and ‘er’ more frequently than before. This may be because they are making their final choices, and so having to formulate definite decisions, pausing before they do so. However, as well as hesitating they are still asking questions about details of the menu, so it is equally possible that the pauses indicate that their conversation has become slightly more constrained in the presence of the waitress.

The waitress represents authority to some extent, for instance, she is asked ‘are the veggy burgers nice?’ A question that is presumably unlikely to get a negative answer in the circumstances. However, she does **hedge** by saying ‘they’re not made on the premises, though’, the conditional tag implying that they are therefore not as good as those that *are* made on the premises. This intervention is met with an assent ‘all right’ which suggests that the subtext has been accepted, as the speaker chooses another burger instead.

The final repetitions show another good example of overlap, here where the waitress is repeating the details of the order as she (presumably) writes it down. The first speaker laughs at the order, implying a comment on its unusual nature.

**Text 20: From *The Importance of Being Earnest***

This extract demonstrates the ways in which food can be used as a weapon of social interaction. The comedy relies on the fact that there are certain social conventions of speech and behaviour to which both Cecily and Gwendolen are expected to adhere. First performed in 1895, the comedy plays on the fairly strict social conventions of the time – more than one scene focuses on the drinking of tea – and the ways in which polite conversation can mask bitter confrontations and subtle insults.

The first stage direction gives a strong clue as to the overall tone of the scene: ‘*The presence of the servants exercises a restraining influence, under which both girls chafe*‘. Here the social differences of society are, in effect, reversed. Although the servants are apparently of lower status than both girls, it is nonetheless the servants who govern the tone of the conversation, and exercise power in this respect. Because the girls do not want to appear less than refined in front of the servants, their conflict has to be masked and appear like acceptably polite behaviour for young ladies.

Merriam’s first question: ‘shall I lay tea here as usual, Miss?’ is really a statement masked as a question: ‘I shall lay tea here as usual (unless you instruct me not to do so)’ and as such he instructs Cecily as to how she should be entertaining her guest. Her repetition and echoing of the last part of his sentence: ‘yes, as usual’ emphasises her dependence on him in this respect. The long pause suggests the girls’ discomfort with each other, and their unwillingness to resume their interrupted argument before the servants; Wilde’s stage direction indicating that they should ‘glare’ at each other emphasises this.

Finally, Gwendolen breaks the silence with a **phatic** opening in which she asks about walking. Cecily replies conventionally, but Gwendolen undermines her with the implication that the boast ‘you can see five counties’ is excessive; this is suggested by the statement ‘I don’t like crowds’, which contains humour, as it matches an inanimate feature of landscape (five counties) with a term generally used of human beings (crowds). Cecily’s immediate response is couched with the **stage direction** ‘*sweetly*‘, implying malice, as the juxtaposition between the pleasant tone and the critical statement (pointing out her apparent inconsistency) suggests malice. Watching this scene is a good way to consider the ways in which **tone** can add to meaning in speech – acting it out ‘straight’ could make it seem like simply a series of benign misunderstandings. Gwendolen’s physical reactions ‘*bites her lip and beats her foot nervously*‘ clarify how we are to read her spoken reactions, suggesting for instance that the following line ‘quite a well-kept garden’ means to suggest ‘quite’ as an insult (i.e. synonymous with ‘fairly’ or ‘not very’) rather than quite as an intensifier (as in ‘quite wonderful’). The conversation continues to seem as though the girls are verbally fencing with each other, with Gwendolen implying that Cecily is unsophisticated as she is country-bred, while Cecily implies that Gwendolen is less knowledgeable than she. The phrase ‘anybody who is anybody’ for instance, that Gwendolen uses, suggests that people only exist (*are* anybody) if they are seen as important by a very select social group.

Both girls are careful to use very formal **terms of address**, calling each other ‘Miss Fairfax’ and ‘Miss Cardew’, while using informal **asides** (‘detestable girl’), and clearly disliking each other. This element of the comedy is enhanced by the stage directions: ‘*elaborate politeness*‘, ‘*sweetly*‘, ‘*in a bored manner*‘ ‘*superciliously*‘ and so on, as well as by the use of **dramatic irony** – the audience are aware that the two girls are, in fact, mistaken in thinking that they are in love with the same man, and so all this resentment is in fact misplaced.

The use of food as, in effect, a weapon in this scene creates **humour**. Gwendolen is served sugar in her tea when she does not wish it, and given cake when she has asked for bread and butter. These actions are impolite, but have been provoked by Gwendolen’s matching impoliteness in her apparently casual comments: ‘sugar is not fashionable any more’ and ‘Cake is rarely seen at the best houses nowadays’. These apparently objective **statements** are, of course, designed to irritate or even humiliate Cecily by reinforcing the sense that Gwendolen is better informed about the fashionable world than she is. The physical comedy created by her drinking tea she finds too sweet and picking up a slice of cake she thinks is something else emphasises the incongruity and unexpectedness of Cecily’s actions.

Gwendolen’s angry acknowledgement of Cecily’s actions breaks through social conventions, and marks a victory for Cecily in their silent battle. Her exaggerated, third-person praise of her own character: ‘I am known for the gentleness of my disposition, and the extraordinary sweetness of my nature’ is something that the audience at this stage in the play might already recognise as not strictly true, given that one of her first lines in the play is ‘I am never wrong’, and that she is the daughter of the formidable Lady Bracknell.

Gwendolen’s final lines in this extract reflect and echo those of her first meeting with Cecily. On first meeting her, she says: ‘Something tells me that we are going to be great friends. I like you already more than I can say. My first impressions of people are never wrong.’ This statement is matched by her claim here that: ‘From the moment I saw you I distrusted you. I felt that you were false and deceitful. I am never deceived in such matters. My first impressions of people are invariably right.’ The contradiction is a witty one, given that the two comments are only a few moments apart in stage time, and the verbal **antithesis** of ‘invariably right’ and ‘never wrong’, where the two phrases sound like opposites, though in fact having the same meaning, emphasises the comic confusion.

Cecily’s final remark emphasises her perceived triumph. The extreme politeness of ‘trespassing on your valuable time’ masks a clear insult (the subtext to the comment is ‘please leave’), and the additional implication that ‘you have many other calls of a similar character to make in the neighbourhood’ implies that she has either many potential lovers to chase, or that she is going to have to deal with many other women in Cecily’s position.

**Text 21: From *Titus Andronicus***

This scene comes from near the end of the play, and is the climax to a number of events that have been excessively violent and horrific. *Titus Andronicus* is a play that has caused a great deal of shock and horror in its time, and it has often been suggested that it is not entirely the work of Shakespeare, although modern scholarship generally accepts that it is so.

The plot is as follows, in brief: the Roman general Titus Andronicus returns to Rome after defeating the Goths in battle to find that the people have acclaimed him as emperor, as opposed to the warring sons of the late emperor, Saturninus and Bassanius. He refuses the crown, and supports Saturninus’ claim to the throne. He also sacrifices one of his captives, the son of Tamora, Queen of the Goths, in spite of her pleas for mercy, in revenge for his own sons’ deaths in battle.

Once made emperor, Saturninus announces that he intends to marry Lavinia, Titus’ daughter, to which Titus agrees, despite the fact that she is already betrothed to Bassanius, and resists the match. Her brothers and Bassanius defend her and help her to escape, and in the process Titus kills one of his own sons. Saturninus decides to marry Tamora instead, and she persuades him to pardon Bassanius and the sons of Titus, apparently forgiving him for the death of her son.

However, in revenge, Tamora takes advantage of a royal hunting trip to encourage her sons to murder Bassanius, frame Lavinia’s brothers for the murder, and rape and mutilate Titus’ daughter, Lavinia. Titus himself loses his hand through a piece of trickery where he is persuaded by Tamora to cut it off in order to save the life of his two framed sons; the offer is false and in exchange for his hand he receives their severed heads.

As a result, Titus determines to revenge himself on Tamora for these crimes, and invites her to dinner with Saturninus. In scene II we can see the first part of his plot, as he binds and kills Tamora’s sons. Thinking Titus mad with grief, Tamora has presented herself to him as ‘Revenge’, and here he picks up her **nominative determinism**, calling the boys ‘Murder’ and ‘Rape’ and thus depersonalising them, making it more easy to think about killing them.

The tragedy is written in **blank verse**, with lines of **iambic pentameter**, though in this section the verse is at times uneven – something which may either suggest the hand of a writer less expert than Shakespeare, or suggest Titus’ lack of control. Line 6, in particular is unusual. In its present form it has 12 syllables, and although the first half-line is iambic, the second is not; it is tempting to suppose that it should be something like ‘and the other rape’ which would fit metrically. The uneven line may suggest Titus is showing strong emotion at this point.

Titus uses language that combines horror with sweetness in order to emphasise the torment of Lavinia, and also to remind the audience of what has been done to her. The two men are bound and gagged, so that they may not speak, but are compelled to hear – a situation analogous to the one that they have placed Lavinia in, by cutting out her tongue. She is described in terms of the natural: firstly as a ‘spring’ which has been contaminated, and then as though the mention of ‘spring’ has created an association with its **homonym** spring the season, associated with ‘summer’ as opposed to the ‘winter’ of her attackers. The mention of Titus’ own severed hand is paired with ‘merry jest’ to emphasise the horror of the deception that Tamora practised on him, and Lavinia’s ‘sweet hands’ and ‘spotless chastity’ opposed to the ‘inhuman traitors’.

The scene is almost grotesque, with Lavinia holding a bowl between the stumps of her wrists to catch the blood that her father will shed with his single hand – the action on stage emphasises the maiming that is being revenged in this way. It is aligned to an almost fairy-tale grotesqueness of imagination, with the idea of ‘grinding bones’ and making the blood into a paste to create pastry (the aptly named ‘coffin’ is actually a form of raised pie). This reminds the audience, perhaps, of the story of Jack and the Beanstalk (a folk tale said by Francis Palgrave to be of Viking origin) where the giant says:

*Fee-fi-fo-fum!*

*I smell the blood of an Englishman,*

*Be he 'live, or be he dead,*

*I'll grind his bones to make my bread.*

We know that Shakespeare knew this story, as he references it in *King Lear*, where Edgar says in Act 3 scene 4:

*Child Rowland to the dark tower came,*

*His word was still,—Fie, foh, and fum,*

*I smell the blood of a British man.*

The idea of baking the men’s heads in pies or pasties is almost bathetic; the horror is mixed with an uneasy comedy (the ‘horrid laughter’ that has often been associated with the play).

Titus references a range of classical stories. Tamora is likened to the Titan Cronus, ruler of the earth, who devoured his own children so that they would not supplant his position. He also refers to the story from Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* of Philomel and Procne. Philomel was raped by her brother-in-law, who cut out her tongue so that she could not tell her sister Procne what had happened. However, still having the use of her hands, she wove her story into a tapestry to alert her sister. When Procne understood that her husband was the rapist of her sister, she killed her own baby and fed him in a dish to his father for revenge. Titus here says he will be ‘worse than Progne’, meaning presumably that he will kill both Tamora’s sons – though as it proves, he is also intending to kill Tamora herself. He also references the ‘centaur’s feast’ referring presumably to the battle between the Centaurs and the Lapiths at the wedding feast of Pirithous, where the centaurs, unused to wine, started a fight when the centaur Eurytion tried to rape the bride.

Titus’ reference to ‘playing the cook’ of course refers to the fact that a man of his status would not be a cook – he is pretending to be the cook for purposes of revenge and to prepare this particular dish. When he enters in the next scene, the guests are surprised that he is dressed in this humble way, though they accept his explanation that he is simply taking care of the details of the feast.

There is considerable **dramatic irony** at the start of scene III, where Marcus introduces the feast with the promise that it is created ‘for an honourable end’. The word ‘honour’ of course has an especial resonance here, as it is attached not simply to matters of revenge, but especially to the idea of a woman’s chastity, and so the revenge of Lavinia is foreshadowed. Similarly, Titus’ promise ‘although the cheer be poor, / Twill fill your stomachs’ has a double resonance. The cheer, or celebration from his point of view, is definitely poor, in that he is deeply unhappy, but he is also insulting Tamora’s sons here, in that ‘cheer’ can include the idea of ‘food and drink’. To his guests, of course, he simply seems to be a self-deprecating and humble host. In the same way, his comment to Tamora ‘If you knew my heart, you were [beholden to me]’ is full of menace to the knowing audience, but on the face of it seems like conventional courtesy.

Titus interrupts the banquet with a question which at first seems to be a conversational starter about a matter of honour. His immediate application of this to his own daughter’s plight, and his murder of her, is deeply shocking, not least because it focuses on ideas of ‘shame’ and honour which are tied to the idea that a female child is her father’s property (you can see a similar attitude in Leonato in *Much Ado About Nothing*, where he takes his daughter’s shaming at her wedding as a personal insult).

At this point of high tension in the scene, we notice that the verse moves into rhyming couplets – heroic couplets – which serves to emphasise the melodramatic nature of the scene. Shakespeare often uses couplets as a signal of a scene’s ending – here, a whole range of couplets (‘unkind/blind’, ‘deed/feed’, ‘thus/Demetrius’, ’tongue/wrong’, ’presently/pie’, ‘fed/bred’) which must suggest to the audience that they are on the verge of ending the scene, thus drawing out the tension further, are followed by a single unrhymed line: ‘witness my knife’s sharp point’, on which he stabs Tamora. The three lines that follow form a triplet, emphasising the reciprocal violence that they frame. ‘Deed’ from Saturninus is rhymed with ‘bleed’ and then ‘deed’ again from Lucius, who picks up and plays with Saturninus’ words: ‘death for a deadly deed’. Lucius also creates an **internal rhyme** ‘meed for meed, death for a deadly deed’, the concentrated repetition sounding almost like a tongue-twister, and well enacting the complexity of the situation.

**Text 22: A Modest Proposal**

This text is one of the most famous of all satires, and certainly one of the wittiest texts that discusses cannibalism. Swift wrote this as a political pamphlet in 1729, to protest about the conditions of the poor in Ireland, and it has served as an example of sustained rhetorical control and satire ever since. The title itself is an example of **meiosis**, where the apparent humility of ‘modest’ acts against the shocking nature of the content of the pamphlet.

Swift probably based his satire on Roman, Juvenelian satires, and the text has often been explicitly compared to Tertullian’s *Apology* (a satirical attack on the persecution of the early Christians) in both style and substance. It demonstrates extraordinary rhetorical control, in that the main idea is withheld from the reader for some time, so that the reader is initially lured into the belief that the speaker is proposing a serious plan to relieve the sufferings of the poor.

The opening of the extract from the text given here demonstrates something that will be a feature of it throughout – the focus on ‘calculation’ and numbers. This is a deliberate imitation of contemporary pamphleteers, but also creates a dehumanisation of the people discussed, who become commodities rather than individuals. We might notice, for instance, the gradual move from ‘souls’ to ‘couples’ to ‘breeders’, the lexis here reflecting the attitude that these people are of interest only as statistics. The text contains many features of rhetoric, including the continual assumption of agreement from the reader: ‘The question therefore, is...’, and the assumption of authority in the author: ‘as I have already said... is utterly impossible’. There is a tendency towards extreme or **superlative** statements such as ‘utterly impossible’, ‘we can neither employ them in handicraft nor in agriculture’ and so on, which are reinforced by the continual reference to details of money.

Swift uses many of the conventional strategies of persuasive rhetoric. We can see, for instance, the appeal to authority in ‘a principal gentleman in the County of Cavan’ or ‘a very knowing American of my acquaintance’, and the use of emotive language such as ‘protested’, and ‘assured’ to reinforce this authority. The idea of men and women being ‘breeders’ has already reified them to some extent, while the suggestion that a child younger than twelve ‘is no very saleable commodity’, as well as the horrific picture of children of twelve being sold, reduces a human life to a ‘commodity’ which cannot be ‘turn[ed] to account’, **Litotes** is used throughout, as when Swift suggests his proposal ‘will not be liable to the least objection’, and there are many other negatives in the text concerning the plight of the children: ‘very seldom’, ‘utterly impossible’, ‘cannot be so many’, ‘he never knew above one or two instances’, ‘is no saleable commodity’, which tends to prepare the reader for the proposal being, at least, positive.

The **semantic field** in paragraph 4 of this extract, therefore, seems at first sight to be a pleasant one to do with consumption: ‘young healthy... well nursed... delicious, nourishing and wholesome food... stewed, roasted, baked or boiled... fricassee or ragout’. It is only the single word ‘child’ that disturbs this picture, and so powerful is the surrounding semantic field that the reader at first sight has to go back and check the meaning before realising the full horror of the proposal. Tone and meaning are in such absolute conflict that the purpose of the satire can be missed, even by experienced readers.

The proposal is developed in the following paragraphs in ways which are both amusing and horrific. The people under discussion continue to be **reified** by comparisons with animals: ‘sheep, black-cattle, or swine’, with verbs such as ‘serve’ suggesting that there is no emotion involved in their relationships. The ordinary social context of ‘an entertainment with friends’ and the calculations of how much meat will be needed for different dishes serves to underline the horror of the proposal, as the details seem so convincingly thought through. It is only at line 43 that Swift’s biting satire becomes absolutely clear, as he makes a play on the word ‘devouring’, making literal a metaphor of unjust landlords, and making clear that his proposal is an attack on the system that he pretends to support.

The details of ‘popish infants’ adds to the impression of genocidal dehumanisation – the children are labelled as a particular type of meat, and human beings treated as though they are simply animals that can be relied on to breed at certain times of year. The satire is developed with the extended description of the squire who would ‘learn to be a good landlord’ with the grotesque implication that he would do for money what he would not do for humanity’s sake.

**Text 23: Jonathan Crisp**

This text, and the one that follows it, may be conveniently analysed together, as they make such an immediate comparison to each other. They are both packets for potato crisps, and each has been designed in a manner which is different to the conventions of this rather

unusual genre of text. Both crisp packets are made of a foil-like material which makes them stand out, and both seem designed to draw the customer’s eye through their clarity of design.

Both brands of crisp are designed to appeal to an increasing market for ‘posh’ crisps – that is for crisps that are seen as not so much a quick and lower-class cheap snack, but as a gourmet treat, something that might be shared with friends. Both texts therefore use characterisation and personification to enliven their packaging, and to distinguish them from their more mainstream rivals. Each has a distinctive illustration. Jonathan Crisp uses a caricature, which, as the firm itself maintains, is one of: ‘a series of illustrations of the archetypal English upper class twit that mimic the product flavours’. In this instance the ‘type’ could be described as an irascible retired colonel, his temper ‘peppery’ in a pun which picks up on the name of the flavour, jalapeño pepper. The man has red eyebrows and beard, which may connote a quick temper, as red hair is often associated, perhaps metonymically, with a ‘fiery’ temper.

The name of the product, Jonathan Crisp, is itself a type of personification, as it suggests that the man is called Jonathan, or that the manufacturer shares his name with his product (it is simply an invented brand name, though the firm do make considerable efforts to maintain the style of discourse that assumes the existence of a Jonathan Crisp even on their web page). Other illustrations seem to resemble famous people, for instance the horseradish and sour cream flavour character originally closely resembled cartoons of Princess Anne (well known for her Olympic horse riding, perhaps hence the association with the ‘horse’ flavour), and the image was later withdrawn after publicity to this effect – the character now slightly resembles the Duchess of Cornwall instead. The managing director of Jonathan Crisp admits these similarities, saying ‘Some people even say the character with the cheesy grin on our Mature Cheddar and Red Onion flavour is Tony Blair.’

The front of the packet is plain, with little writing on it except for the brand name, flavour, slogan, and packet size, which are all smaller than the illustration of the character personifying the flavour. The cursive script of the company name is echoed in the text which sits beside the picture, ‘Crisps of Natural Character’, but the name of the flavour is printed in a simpler typeface, sans serif and capitalised, vertically aligned in a textbox which matches the colour of the man’s moustache and eyebrows. The 40g packet is briefly characterised as ‘A glorious 40g size’ something very untypical in an ordinary packet of crisps.

This tone is continued on the back of the packet. The text is arranged in two columns, either side of the packet’s central seam. On the top left is a text box matching the one on the front in colour, with the ‘signature’ brand name running across it, but not quite fitting within its bounds. Beneath this is a capitalised heading ‘Jalapeño Pepper’ in a red sans serif font, with a centred description of the flavour below it. This description takes the form of an anecdote, the imagined situation being the caricatured colonel on the front of the packet commenting on the crisps which his friend Jonathan Crisp, has designed, ‘inspired’ by his character.

The language throughout this section uses slightly old-fashioned expressions such as ‘by Jove’, ‘chuffed’, ‘jolly’, and ‘foreign johnnies’ which suggests the idiolect of the British upper classes of some decades ago. This fits with the remit for the brand, which is avowedly ‘posh’. The terms used are unusual now, and could even be thought of as offensive in the case of ‘foreign johnnies’. Slang such as ‘more-ish’ is used, a term which has the effect of a casual coinage, a compound of ‘more’ and the suffix ‘ish’.

The same style of apparent idiolect is used in parenthesis for the ‘best before’ date, which is glossed as ‘scoff by’, ‘scoff’ being upper-class slang for ‘eat’. This gives the overall impression that the whole packet is made individual in this way. However, the text on the right-hand side of the back of the packet is much more conventional, giving a list of ingredients, another indication of packet weight, and various other pieces of statutory information.

**Text 24: Salty Dog Crisps**

‘Salty Dog’ crisps contrast with ‘Jonathan Crisp’ crisps in the ways in which they are marketed, their slogan is ‘crisps that bite back’ and they use the logo of the terrier dog (something based on the inventor’s own dog) to connote a rough authenticity. Whereas ‘Jonathan Crisps’

play on the idea of snobbery, half-seriously exaggerating their exclusivity, ‘Salty Dog’ crisps perhaps play on the idea of the ‘old salt’ or ‘old sea dog’; the image is of a practical, rough but honest person who is in some ways the reverse of the image presented by the other crisp packet (though they are both aiming for a similar market, in that they are both seeking to attract people away from the major brands such as Walker’s).

The dog cartoon features on the centre of the packet. Unlike in Jonathan Crisp, the picture does not dominate the front of the packet. Instead the name does, in a clear but slightly uneven sans serif typeface which has letters at odd angles to each other, mimicking a ‘handcrafted’ look. There is even a suggestion of something like a potato stamp or wood-carved printing-stamp in the faint border around the word ‘dog’. The name is far larger than the picture of the dog, which appears to be scampering through the words. The name has above it ‘the hand-cooked crisps’ in capitals; the lettering again appears a little uneven, with capital and lower case letters apparently mixed (the ‘h’ of ‘hand’ is lower case, for instance). The text box which gives the flavour of the crisps has a similar mixture of upper and lower case letters, giving the same slightly uneven impression, if not exactly suggesting that the packet has been hand-made, then at least suggesting such connotations.

The ‘mission statement’ of the crisps is at the base of the packet. Like Jonathan Crisp, there is a suggestion that the eponymous Salty is personally involved in the making of the crisps: ‘Salty Dog digs up only the biggest and best potatoes’ (there is a play here on the literal sense of ‘dig’ and the related sense of ‘find’). The words chosen are deliberately simple and sometimes alliterative: ‘dog... digs’, ‘biggest and best’, ‘bite back’. The blurb explains the process of crisp-making, with words that suggest that the process is personally supervised, and somehow more ‘hands-on’ than other brands of crisp might be: ‘sliced thickly and hand-cooked’. They are explicitly compared to the idea of the dog, as a mark of authenticity: ‘like Salty our crisps are rough around the edges, but they are 100% real’.

On the reverse of the pack, like Jonathan Crisp, the pack has two columns of information, one on each side of the central seam. Again the central logo of the name is in the upper left-hand corner (though not in a text box, and with an illustration). However, unlike the other packet, there is personalised marketing information on both sides of the back of the packet.

On the right-hand side of the packet is the ingredient list, as in the other packet, but this is followed by a short section ‘about us’ that purports to be a little company history, but is in effect a personalised version of the much more standard form of guarantee on the other packet. After this is the ingredient list, the best before date and the weight.

On the left side is another cartoon picture of the dog, in a different position, and a text box asking the question ‘howler or growler?’ This, it becomes evident, is an invitation to judge the joke printed underneath – in other words is it a ‘howler’ (slang for ‘funny’) or a ‘growler’ (their invention – presumably meaning something you don’t find funny, and would growl at). Both words, of course, have connotations of dogs, which can be described as howling or growling just as humans can. Below the joke is an invitation to text a better one in – this use of new technology is very distinctive, and helps to suggest not only that the crisp packet can become part of a social game, when people tell jokes to each other, inspired by the one on the packet, but that the company is sensitive to consumer reactions, even to a joke on a crisp packet.

**Text 25: That Surprising Craig Girl**

This text is an advertisement for Grape-Nuts, a breakfast cereal which was created in 1897, containing neither grapes nor nuts (though its inventor believed that it did contain ‘grape sugars’). It originally appeared in *Good Housekeeping,* a magazine which is aimed at middle-

class women, and, as its name suggests, focuses very much on the traditional stereotype of how a woman should be concerned with the business of being ‘feminine’ and homemaking.

The advertisement is designed not to look like an advertisement, but rather like a gossip column, so as to appeal to its female audience. It is clearly intended to inspire feelings of admiration, and the desire to emulate, with the main illustration showing a capable and attractive-looking young woman defeating a young man in an athletic competition, in this case a punting race. He seems to be floundering and graceless, off-balance and almost falling into the river, while she is leaning confidently back on the punting pole, apparently relaxed even as she wins the race.

The connotations of punting would be strongly positive ones in social terms, as it is a recreation associated strongly with the university cities of Oxford and Cambridge, thus suggesting intellectual as well as physical distinction. The boats that can be seen in the background resemble the college ‘barges’ of Oxford, from where spectators would watch the college boat races, and this again suggests that the young woman is competing in a distinguished public sphere. On the other hand, her dress and headscarf indicate that she is not dressed in any kind of sportswear, suggesting that her sportiness is effortless and a recreation rather than a serious pursuit.

The left-set headline imitates a verbal **exclamation**, and sounds as though it is a gossipy comment made about the young woman in question, something emphasised by the description of her as the ‘Craig girl’, as though the person talking does not know her very well. The name also suggests that she is unmarried (a ‘girl’ as opposed to a ‘woman’), and that her primary importance is as a member of her family (the Craig family) rather than as an individual, something emphasised by the way in which her first name is not used. The usage suggests that she adds to the distinction or reputation of the family by her behaviour, and that this is her primary role in life.  It is as though if you eat grape nuts, you too will be talked about in this way, as ‘surprising’, different, somehow special and distinctive.

The main text of the advertisement enlarges upon this initial impression. It is divided into three **columns**, the first of which, thinner than the others, is only half-filled with the nutritional information relating to Grape-Nuts. It is interesting to see how this differs from the equivalent information on more modern texts – it is full of assertions about the contents of the food, but has no details of quantities, recommended daily allowances and so on.

The second column is almost entirely written in gossip-column style, abbreviated and slangy (for the times) in its reference to ‘Pam Craig’s latest’ (presumably an **ellipsis** standing for ‘latest exploit’, ‘latest adventure’ or some similar phrase). The race is referred to as ‘the half-mile punting singles’ the word ‘singles’ again standing in for a longer phrase such as ‘single-person competition’. The familiar tone of ‘Pam could always be trusted to do *something* unexpected’ is accentuated by the use of italics, which heightens the sense of expressiveness, suggesting emphasis on the italicised word. The assertion that ‘she beat the county’s lady tennis champion in straight sets’ is inserted almost as a **parenthesis**, after a **parenthetical dash**, which again suggests something about the speed and intonation of the words.

The use of ‘everyone’ in ‘everyone said’ (line 7) is a generalisation which is common in gossipy discussions, suggesting that the information is reliable, while actually giving no precise indication of its source, and this phrase is inverted and repeated again at the end of the account of the race in ‘said everyone’ (lines18–19). The reversal of the phrase adds a sense of **chiasmus** to the intervening text thus framed, as well as forming an example of **epanalepsis**, suggesting how carefully the text has been composed.

**Dialogue** is suggested by the question immediately answered at the start of the next paragraph, implying that the ‘speaker’ of the advertisement is engaged in a discussion with the person reading it. The use of ‘girl or no girl’ picks up on the use of ‘girl’ as opposed to ‘woman’ or ‘lady’, connoting youth and inexperience, and implies that girls in general are thought of as being weak or unlikely to win sporting competitions against men. Here the main substance of the advert is introduced: ‘there isn’t really anything surprising about perfect physical condition winning’. It affects to quote ‘Pam’, which keeping the quotation, in actuality, conditional: ‘she’d [she ***would***] tell you’. In other words, it uses the traditional advertising ‘hook’ of suggesting that the information is reliable as it comes directly from a trusted person.

The recipe ‘Pam’ gives for success initially seems to have nothing at all to do with Grape-Nuts – and indeed, throughout, there is no explicit linkage between her success and the food, which may indicate a caution and probity in the advertiser (at this date, it does not reflect advertising legislation). The injunction to eat ‘proper’ food though is emphasised by italicization again: ‘*that* especially’, and followed by a single, isolated short sentence: ‘And she’s right’. The rest of the column explains the benefits of ‘proper’ food.

At the start of the third column, the connection is made with Grape-Nuts, meaning that the sentence ‘that’s the secret of grape-nuts’ is aligned with the initial lines about Pam’s success, suggesting a close connection between the two. This is underlined by the line at the base of the advertisement, in cursive script, apparently handwritten: ‘Do you know the Grape-Nuts secret?’ The implication (though never clearly stated) is clearly that the ‘secret’ is also the ‘secret’ of Pam’s sporting and social prowess, and the underlined ‘you’ suggests that the reader is as yet, outside the charmed circle of those who do know the secret.

The advertisement has a number of interesting pieces of pseudo-science, such as the suggestion that the chewing of the cereal will help to strengthen teeth and prevent cavities, and contains a special offer of free packets of Grape-Nuts (Grape-Nuts was actually the first cereal to be promoted by money-off coupons). It also offers a copy of a book about breakfasts written by a woman – but one with letters after her name, suggesting that she is a learned woman, thus combining the ideas of authority in both the academic and domestic spheres. This suggests how much the company is trying to capture the female market, but also suggests that they are strongly marketing the cereal as a health food.

**Text 26: From *The Uses of Literacy***

This text is extracted from *The Uses of Literacy*, a book by Richard Hoggart, the renowned academic and cultural critic. Part autobiography, part commentary on a vanishing way of life, and a lament for the cultural hegemony he saw as being inflicted upon the working classes, it is often seen as a seminal text for many kinds of cultural studies, recording, as it does, personal perceptions of a now vanishing way of life.

In this section, Hoggart discusses the different types of food that are valued by the working classes, and the reasons for this. The text opens with a confident assertion that sets the tone for the whole extract – there is a clear sense of authority and knowledge throughout, and the references to phrases in inverted commas make it clear that the idea of ‘a good table’ for instance is not one which he necessarily shares himself.

Throughout the extract, Hoggart distinguishes himself from the people about whom he writes, using phrases such as ‘many families’, ‘a husband’ or ‘any housewife’ to clarify that the information that he is retailing is based on observation rather than on personal experience. The detached style, which favours the passive, emphasises this; authority is given by the syntax: ‘this still means’, ‘salads are not popular’, ‘the mistrust of cafés has been reinforced’.

There is a focus upon the impact of language – almost, a sense of advertising – with the discussion of the use of the phrases ‘home-cooked’ or ‘home-made’ and their impact. The expressions used about food are interesting: ‘good’ (not, he clarifies, the same as ‘healthy’), ‘no body’, ‘something tasty’. Hoggart glosses this last as ‘something solid, preferably meaty, and with a well-defined flavour’, and goes into some detail about how this can be achieved. At this point, he also considers the use of proprietary brands such as ‘Oxo’ (later on he discusses ‘Spam’).

The listing of cheap cuts of meat which are ‘by-products’ draws on personal experience, and this comes more strongly into the account at this point. Hoggart has already briefly mentioned how ‘I used to notice... my relatives’ and now returns more decisively to ‘in my house’, giving a detailed account of his normal diet, and thus including himself and his own early experience with the people that he is studying. This experience is broadened out so that it includes almost everyone: ‘at the weekend, we lived largely, like everyone else except the very poor’. This personal experience seems to give the text authority and conviction, and it is easy not to notice that the assertions are often generalisations, and not supported by any concrete evidence apart from personal recollection.

As the text progresses, these personal elements become more and more dominant, until Hoggart is giving a detailed account of his own personal tastes, which extends to a kind of self-mockery as he realises that he is affected by this, even after experiencing very different kinds of food: ‘I still find it far ”tastier” than fresh salmon’. Further authority is given by the anecdote about ‘a family of five’, but again there is no evidence for statements such as ‘it is not a cheap food’.

In the final paragraph, Hoggart uses what seems to be a quotation to reinforce his point. This is couched in what looks like dialect, the use of ‘y’ for ‘you’ suggesting perhaps a northern working-class accent. This contrasts with his own word usage, and suggests that he is quoting someone who he has met or interviewed. The ‘y’ of the quotation contrasts with the ‘you’ of ‘you have to ensure plenty of bulk and protein for the heavy workers’ which suggests a far more generalised and plural ‘you’.

There is a certain **irony** in ‘no doubt the effects are less admirable than the aims’ (note the use of **litotes** here), where the false teeth, indigestion and constipation that he mentions are all implicitly linked to the food; it is almost as though the ‘tastiness’ that he discusses is set against the nutritional value of the meals; as though tastiness is somehow deceptive.

The final idea creates an **antithesis** between a ‘middle-aged working-class woman’ and a ‘prosperous middle-aged business-man’ in both physical and cultural terms. It is an interesting and subjective perception. The idea that one kind of fatness is more sleek than the other, ‘shiny and polished’ would seem to have more to do with Hoggart’s political views than with a factual difference between types of flesh.

**Text 27: Workhouse Diets**

This text, in contrast to Text 26, relies a great deal upon facts and figures, though this is also supported by anecdotal details. It comes from a book which, despite its title, is more a chronicle of social history than a recipe book, full of anecdotes and fascinating personal stories that give interesting background on the establishment and running of the workhouse system. The author also has a website ([**http://www.workhouses.org.uk/**](http://www.workhouses.org.uk/)) which is full of interesting information in the same vein.

This extract starts with two charts laying out the details of workhouse food allocations. These are not dated. The days of the week are on the left-hand side, and the charts illustrate how food is divided differently depending on the sex of the recipient, with ‘children under nine years of age to be dieted at discretion’. The surprisingly generous allocation of food to children above nine of the same rations as women is one of the things here that immediately suggests that the common perception of workhouses as places of privation and ill-treatment is something that is not quite accurate.

This point is addressed in more detail in the following text, which directly addresses the issues raised by *Oliver Twist*, giving precise publication details, which inspire confidence in the information that follows. The style of the text is fluent, with frequent use of **parentheses** that create the impression of a fast-moving train of thought. Frequent **discourse markers** (‘although’, ‘though’, ‘however’) clarify the text, increasing the sense that it is authoritatively organised and a well-structured argument. The authority of the author is strongly asserted: ‘despite the impression given by Dickens...’, but supported by an ‘example’.

The first paragraph of this text asserts that *Oliver Twist* gives an inaccurate impression, and explains that the book ‘straddles the two eras [of workhouse organisation] slightly awkwardly’; the second seems to create a balance by explaining that the book arose in part from the opposition to the new workhouse arrangements. The illustration of the novel which is mentioned and briefly analysed is provided for the reader below the text, so that it is possible to judge for oneself how far the illustration matches the descriptions in the text such as ‘scrawny’ and ‘bulging-eyed’. This detail has the effect of making us more likely, as readers, to trust other ideas for which there is not such visible evidence; it establishes the author as knowledgeable.

The mention of the image is immediately followed by an extraordinarily long series of questions in the following paragraph. Fourteen questions are set up, some of which seem to be rhetorical (‘exactly how accurate was that image?’, ‘does it tell the whole story?’), but others appear to be matters of fact which are impossible for the reader to determine one way or another: ‘Were nettles ever on the workhouse menu? Or chocolate?’

The effect of this is to create an engagement in these issues on the part of the reader. The intriguing possibilities that are raised make it evident that the picture of life in the workhouse is not as simple as Cruickshank’s illustration might imply, and the paragraph ends by explaining that almost all of these sometimes apparently contradictory ideas have truth in them. In effect this acts like an extended blurb for the book – it makes it clear that the initial impression that we might have of what workhouse life involves, from novels (and the films of novels) such as *Oliver Twist* is in reality quite flawed and incomplete. The final listing of possible food apart from ‘the dreaded gruel’ seems to emphasise this sense that the reader has a lot to learn – even the unfamiliar (to a modern ear) names of foods such as ‘frumenty, lobscouse, hasty pudding and colcannon’ suggest that reading on might be an interesting pursuit.

**Text 28: From *Oliver Twist***

This text has a particularly strong resonance, given the title of the anthology, as it is from the musical version of this Dickens novel that the phrase ‘Food, Glorious Food’ is taken. In that context, it is a song where the workhouse boys imagine the possible delicious dishes that they might feast upon, if they had the power. Strikingly, in the novel, there is no such mention of the possibilities of the imagination; in fact the gruel is never described in detail, and the boys never speculate on the alternatives that might be available.

Gruel is a thin porridge, made by boiling oatmeal or another meal in milk or (more usually) water. It is not normally thought of as a delicious or especially nourishing dish – indeed the mixture in the cauldron of the witches in Macbeth is described as ‘gruel’ – but rather as one which sustains life for invalids or those who are not able to cope with more nourishing food. Throughout the passage, Dickens balances the idea of food with the idea of deprivation. For instance, although the semantic field of cookery and provisioning is well established, with words such as ‘fed... apron... ladled... gruel... mealtimes... porringer... bread... bowls... spoons... devoured’, there is a matching field of the inanimate, as in ‘stone... copper... copper... bricks’ which emphasises the lack of actual food. The words ‘bowl’ and ‘spoons’ are repeated, as the licking and cleaning of the porringers is described, but without any corresponding description of what fills them.

Dickens **ironically** describes the gruel as a ‘festive composition’, enhancing the **semantic** **field** of celebration with the idea of ‘occasions of great public rejoicing’, and emphasising the **bathos** of the addition of a tiny quantity of bread, the measurement ‘two ounces and a quarter’ suggesting the precision with which it is doled out. The formality of the language here also emphasises the ways in which the institutional grandeur of the workhouse acts against the freedom of the boys; the food is inadequate, but it is implied that it is considered to be absolutely adequate by the providers, the board and the beadle. Although the deprivation of the boys is taken seriously by Dickens, who felt passionately about the issues raised in this novel, there is an element of comedy in the depiction of the boy who threatens, as though by chance, to eat the little boy who sleeps next to him. Dickens characterises him through the use of free indirect speech: he ‘hadn’t been used to that sort of thing’, as well as through his height, and his memory of his father (in which details he is distinguished sharply from Oliver Twist himself). The repetition of the word ‘happen’ in different forms in ‘he might some night *happen* to eat the boy who slept next to him, who *happened* to be a weakly youth’ is an interesting example of **polyptoton,** the play on the word emphasising the apparently accidental and casual nature of the proposed cannibalism, and therefore enhancing the comic effect.

The language that Dickens uses to describe the feelings of the boys is strongly contrasted with the formality of the rest of the description: they ‘assiduously’ suck up stray splashes of gruel; they suffer ‘tortures’; they are ‘voracious and wild with hunger’; one has ‘a wild, hungry eye’, and speaks ‘darkly’ to the others. Oliver finally is ‘desperate with hunger, and reckless with misery’, ‘alarmed at his own temerity’. Yet this vivid language contrasts with their reserved behaviour. They do not, in fact, speak out, but ‘hint’, ‘whisper’, ‘wink’ and ‘nudge’, emphasising the fear that the authorities in the workhouse engender. There is some suggestion of the military in this control of incipient violence, and a suggestion of mutiny in the description of the ‘council’ and the ‘lots’ cast to decide who should protest (Oliver, when he finally does, is of course characterised as a ‘small rebel’).

This militaristic feel is further emphasised in the next paragraph. The ‘master’ who gives out food is described as dressed in ‘his cook’s *uniform*’, he ‘stationed’ himself at the copper, with assistants who ‘ranged themselves behind him’. This choice of language emphasises the ways in which the regime of the workhouse is unsuitable for children, and the ways in which it seems impossible to defy. The names used by Dickens in this passage are worthy of comment. There is a certain amount of what has been called ‘**nominative determinism’** – that is, names which give clues about character. The beadle, for instance, is called ‘Mr Bumble’ which suggests both a ‘bumblebee’ – a large, round bee – and the verb ‘to bumble’ which means to make mistakes or errors – the image created is of a fat person who gets things wrong. Mr Limbkins, by contrast, sounds rather like ‘lambkins’, initially suggesting a gentle person, something that might be substantiated by his later refusal to let Oliver be apprenticed as a chimney sweeper.

Dickens describes Oliver’s act of asking for more as something that demonstrates courage, but that also causes consternation, and comedy is again created here by the extreme and hyperbolic reaction of the master to the simple request for more food, something that in almost any other context would be considered to be a reasonable and moderate request. Comedy is again created by the contrast between the ‘fat, healthy man’ and the small child, and his pallor in reaction to the request. To turn pale suggests generally either fear or rage, and the use of ‘stupefied astonishment’ suggests the former. This impression is reinforced by his ‘faint voice’ and the way it is described that he ‘clung for support to the copper’. The assistants and boys are both ‘paralysed’, and thus aligned as spectators to this event, Oliver being isolated as he repeats his request.

The sudden violence of the master, the ‘blow’ and ‘shriek’ then **contrasts** with this moment of silence and astonishment. Food here has become something that is battled over, something that is the nexus of power, rather than a simple necessity. This idea, that food represents something in political terms, is substantiated by the description of the board as sitting ‘in conclave’. This refers to how cardinals sit when electing a pope; it connotes the most serious of discussions, and emphasises their seriousness in response to Oliver’s offence. Rebelling in terms of food is seen as rebelling at the most profound level. Just as the control of food, an everyday necessity is seen as the opportunity for the exercise of power by the workhouse authorities. The responses of the board to Oliver’s behaviour, the reaction of ‘horror... on every countenance’ are again seen to be **hyperbolic**, and **comic**, though serious in its consequences for Oliver. The response ‘that boy will be hung’ suggests a criminal future for Oliver, as though the act of asking for more food were the same as theft, or even murder. The ludicrous statement is emphasised by the use of **epanalepsis**, with the phrase repeated at the start and end of the clause to emphasise the speaker’s determination to make his point.

**Text 29: From *The Warden***

In the novel, the ‘Warden’ of the title is an elderly cleric, Mr Harding, who holds a comfortable sinecure – an appointment to an almshouse which brings in a great deal of money, but which requires relatively little in the way of duties. He was appointed to the post by his old friend the Bishop of Grantchester, and carries out the duties conscientiously. The

Warden is the father-in-law of Archdeacon Grantly, the son of the bishop. A young reformer, John Bold, interests himself in the matter of the almshouses, and starts a campaign, taken up by *The Jupiter*, a daily paper which strongly resembles *The Times,* to reform the situation. The matter of the almshouses becomes something of a battleground between the would-be reformers and the more conservative elements of the diocese. In this extract from *The Warden*, Trollope is describing the house of one of his most comfortably off characters, Archdeacon Grantly, and food is an important part of the description which is to establish his wealth and his confidence.

The Archdeacon is a man of independent means, and his house at the rectory of Plumstead Episcopi is seen to be luxurious in the extreme. This is in contrast to the more uncomplicated living habits of his father, and of Mr Harding, who despite his generous income, is a man of simple tastes. Mr Harding, as we discover in the course of the novel, is not altogether conformable with the style of living at Plumstead, and what it implies about how the clergy can be wealthy, and this is part of the reason that he eventually makes the decision to voluntarily surrender his living. The very name of the rectory connotes wealth: ‘Plumstead’, suggesting the wealth of fruit borne by a plum tree (a ‘plum’ also meaning a good piece of fortune; cf. ‘little Jack Horner’[[1]](http://www.northleamingtonschool.warwickshire.sch.uk/files/4398%20-%20AQA%20B%20LangLit%20Food%20Glorious%20Food%20Anthology.doc" \l "_ftn1)), and ‘Episcopi’ meaning belonging to a bishopric. Trollope introduces the scene by emphasising both the comfort and the slight lack of taste in the rectory. The positive semantic field created by ‘well-furnished... comfortable... belongings... comfortable... gorgeous... grand... money... colours... lights... perfectly’ is undercut by the negatives ‘neither... nor even... might have been better... might have been avoided... sacrifice... might have been better chosen... more perfectly... somewhat marred’.

All the furnishings, Trollope implies, have been bought because they are going to help create ‘the thorough clerical aspect of the whole’; here, he is clearly using ‘clerical’ in an ironic sense, as the ‘thick... costly... embossed... heavy’ furnishings seem chosen to impress, and their darkness is the only thing which can be thought of as ‘clerical’. However, this rich semantic field is again balanced with one which suggests that these items are not all that attractive: ‘dark... sombre... so as to half exclude the light’, and the complex sentence structure enhances this mixture of the negative and the positive. Instead of a simple sentence: ‘these things were bought for a purpose’, Trollope gives us: ’nor were those... without a purpose’ the double negative almost cancelling out the positive idea behind the sentence. The opposition between ‘old-fashioned’ and ‘modern’ is imitated by the immediately following **parison**: ‘equally costly... equally plain’ and culminates in the concluding statement: ‘the apparent object had been to spend money without obtaining brilliancy or splendour’.

As the description continues, Trollope continues to develop this idea, using weight to connote both inconvenience and value: ‘thick and solid silver... silver forks... so heavy as to be disagreeable’, culminating with the **bathetic** ‘the bread-basket was of a weight really formidable to any but really robust persons’. This idea, of a weighty bread-basket (when a basket by nature is designed to be a light container) creates **humour** and points up the irony with which the whole description is imbued.

In the very long sentence that starts in line 18 and reaches to line 26, the syntax helps to create the sense of overabundance, with semicolons the only pauses in what seems like a breathless list of foods.

**Superlatives** are used to emphasise the perfections of the Plumstead table, in triplet form that enhances the effect: ‘very best... very blackest... very thickest’. **Polysyndeton** is used in the description of the different kinds of bread to enhance the effect of lushness; each pair of breads linked by ‘and’ but then strung together in a great list, so that an effect is created, as though the possibilities are endless. The **binary oppositions** between ‘dry... and buttered’, ‘hot... and cold’, ‘white... and brown’, ‘home-made... and bakers’, ‘wheaten... and oaten’ enrich the description so that it does seem by the end as though Trollope is trying to describe every possible type of bread: ‘and if there be other breads than these, they were there’.

To this descriptions are added of other kinds of food, with enlivening adjectives: ‘crispy’, ‘devilled’, ‘little fishes in a little box’ all of which help to create the impression of a table overladen with good things. The ‘frizzling’ kidneys, Trollope wryly notes ‘were placed closely contiguous to the plate of the worthy archdeacon himself’, at which point his satire seems to show more clearly. The formality and alliteration of the phrase ‘closely contiguous’ almost suggests that it is the archdeacon’s own phrase; the small selfishness suggests something not entirely ‘worthy’ about his nature.

Just as it seems that there can be no more food described, Trollope introduces the ‘huge ham and huge sirloin’, using ‘huge’ twice almost as if he has run out of descriptive words. The emphasis here on the vast quantity of food at the table of a clergyman, along with the implicit amount of work behind the production of the ‘snow-white napkin’ (to have such clean table linen was in itself a sign of wealth –having servants to do your laundry to a high standards) establishes the luxury and corruption that Trollope was interested in criticising – or at least examining – in the rest of the novel. The deeply ironic ‘such was the ordinary fare at Plumstead Episcopi’ underlines how far from ordinary this would be for most people, especially the poor people of the parish that the archdeacon supposedly serves.

**Text 30: Little Grey Rabbit’s Pancake Day**

This text is taken from a children’s story written in 1967, part of a series about the eponymous character Little Grey Rabbit, by Alison Uttley, which was started in 1929. The **anthropomorphic** lead character throughout the series of books is considered by critics to

be rather darker than some equivalent children’s stories, and contemporary events do intrude upon the books (as in 1942, when she published *Hare Joins the Home Guard*), but by and large they deal with simple activities, with titles such as such as *Squirrel Goes Skating,* *Little Grey Rabbit’s Birthday Party* or *Little Grey Rabbit’s Washing Day*. As the series develops, the titles seem to get a little more adventurous, with *Little Grey Rabbit Makes Lace, Little Grey Rabbit Goes to the Sea,* and even (in 1970) *Little Grey Rabbit Goes to the North Pole*. In this text, however, we see a very typical story; a domestic activity is explained through the medium of Little Grey Rabbit and her friends. In effect, it is a lesson in how you might make pancakes.

Throughout the story, which seems to take place in a timeless rural idyll, there is no real sense of Grey Rabbit and her friends as anything other than human in terms of their thoughts and feelings. The animals are, however, simply characterised according to quasi-traditional qualities. Thus, Hare can jump the highest, and wins the first pancake, the fox is cunning and secretive, catching a pancake not meant for him (he is evidently excluded from the group of friends, presumably as a predator) and running away to eat it. The mole is careful and discreet, but competent, and the hedgehog is not as competent as the others, and depicted in a slightly childlike way – Grey Rabbit takes care of him.

Little Grey Rabbit, ‘the clever rabbit’ is clearly the central character throughout the story, and the syntax of the extract reflects this. She is made the subject of many of the sentences, the repeated ‘she... she... she’ creating a sense of **anaphora** which binds the story together. By following her actions, the reader finds out about the process of pancake making: ‘She beat the eggs and the flour... She put the frying-pan over the fire... she sprinkled a few drops of sorrel juice... she tossed the pancake... she fried the other side... she threw the golden pancake high in the air’ and so on.

Little Grey Rabbit has a **didactic** air, instructing and correcting her friends, using imperatives: ‘”Not quite ready” warned Little Grey Rabbit’, ‘“Eat it!” Cried Little Grey Rabbit, “It isn’t a hat. Eat it before it gets cold.”’ The other animals ‘beg’ her for permission to try tossing the pancakes, but once she has instructed them they are able to do it for themselves. At the end of the story, she sits before the fire with Fuzzypeg while the other animals clean up, and tidy the house, and she sings a song, suggesting that she is something of a motherly figure to the other creatures. The song she invents is typical of nursery songs, including personal detail about those sung to, reassuring them that they are all included in the processes of pancake making and the celebrations. In this way the song is rather reminiscent of one such as ‘Pat a cake, pat a cake, baker’s man’, with its final line of ‘And a very small pancake for Fuzpeg and me’ imitating ‘put it in the oven for baby and me’ (this resemblance even goes so far as to abbreviate Fuzzypeg’s name from three syllables to two, thus more closely resembling ‘baby’).

There is a certain amount of authenticating rustic detail in the story – so, the rabbit uses ‘a brush made of birch twigs’ to beat the pancake mixture and adds flavouring ‘squeezed from the wild wood-sorrel leaves’, before lifting the pancake ‘with a thin little stick’. Later, the mole uses ‘a pinch of honey and a sprinkle of wild thyme’, and the animals clean the copper frying pan ‘with bunches of grass’. These details serve to differentiate what Little Grey Rabbit does from what the readers might see done at their own houses, and they create a sense of the special or mysterious about the story. Similarly, some of the characters are given particular names which link them to a rural past, so, for instance, the mole is called Mouldy Warp, and the hedgehog is called Fuzzypeg (though his cousins are called Tim and Bill!) A ‘mouldiwarp’ is a traditional name for a mole (it literally means ‘earth-shifter’), and although ‘fuzzypeg’ is not so well attested, some evidence suggests that it may mean ‘fluffy head’, which would be an ironic reference to the hedgehog’s sharp spikes (cf. Mr Fezziwig in *A Christmas Carol* by Charles Dickens for a similar name).

The series is apparently aimed at children from the age of four upwards, but, rather like the Beatrix Potter books to which they have often been compared, they are designed for adults to read to children rather than for children to read for themselves. The repetitive language would, however, help with the early stages of reading. The language of the story is fairly simple language, with many monosyllabic and occasionally disyllabic words. There is a tendency to use sentences and clauses that are almost completely monosyllabic and simple in construction, such as ‘So he had to turn his head to eat it’; ‘and he ran back to the house’; ‘this is her song’. The repetition of words and phrases such as ‘he ran outside... and everyone ran after him’ has a similar effect, focusing on key words. Much of the text is of this type, though there are also some words which are fairly complex, such as ‘frothed’, ‘sprinkled’ or ‘sheltered’.

The story is divided into paragraphs of a few lines each, each of which contains a fairly simple idea. Each of these paragraphs is headed with a large initial letter, its font double the size of the rest of the text, taking up two lines, and a few capitalised words. This gives emphasis to each paragraph opening, an emphasis that is also present in occasional capitalisation throughout the text (e.g. ‘“three to be OFF”, he chanted’), presumably indicating the tone in which the story should be read.

Throughout the text, the attitude towards food is one of both pleasure and education. Pancakes, it is made clear, are delicious, ‘so sweet, so crinkly and crisp’, but they are also a special treat for ‘Pancake Day’, one which you have to be taught to respect (by cleaning the pan, by sharing, by being careful) as well as to enjoy.

**Text 31: From *The Man of Property***

This novel, written in 1906, is the opening of a series popularly known as *The Forsyte Saga*, which tells of the tangled emotional lives of a group of wealthy, but not aristocratic, English people. Soames Forsyte, whose name may be an ironic example of nominative determination

(as he shows very little foresight) is married to the beautiful Irene. He tries to isolate her from society, partly by building a beautiful new house in the country. Unfortunately, this brings her into contact with the architect of the house, Philip Bosinney, who although engaged to Irene’s friend June, falls in love with Irene, and she with him. In thisdescription of a small dinner party with all four present, every action is freighted with significance. The ways in which the four people act are determined by the pre-existing relationships between them, and the sympathies created by these, as well as by fears and jealousies.

Food here becomes merely a symbol with which wealthy people can express their satisfaction or dissatisfaction, though it is not only food which becomes a vehicle for emotion; the scent of a flower, or the admiration of a sunset can equally be employed by Galsworthy as a tool to express how his characters relate to each other. He describes the serving of the dinner in almost painful detail, each course seeming to indicate something different, and offering new opportunities for the expression of strong emotion in symbolic form. The repeated offering and taking away of food punctuates each section of the description. Although this starts off with some variation: ‘was taken away’, ‘they were borne away’ soon the verbal motif ‘was removed’ is repeated, creating a sense of inevitability about the process, and accentuating the negative atmosphere of the passage.

The fact that dinner is said to be ‘in silence’ emphasises this uneasy atmosphere, and the physical opposition between the men and women that the place settings dictate seem to represent a deeper psychological opposition between each pair. The triple repetition of ‘in silence’ is emphasised by the anaphora, as the latter two phrases start their respective sentences. Conversational awkwardness and silence seems to characterise the whole meal. We are told ‘no one replied’, ‘silence fell’, ‘long silence followed’, ‘but no one answered’, ‘there was a lengthy pause’, ‘No one replied’ (again) and there are interruptions and non sequiturs, as when Soames criticises the asparagus or asks after Spanish olives.

The choice of verb for indicating Bosinney’s first speech is a significant one. He does not ‘speak’ or ‘say’, but ‘venture[s]’, suggesting a tentativeness about his first remark that shows awareness of the awkward silence. Irene’s echoing of him suggests how much she is in sympathy with him – both supporting his statement, and perhaps sharing the emotions that prompted it. The repeated word ‘spring’ is thrown back harshly by June, with an exclamation mark emphasising her scornful tone. The statement ‘there isn’t a breath of air’ suggests the stifled emotional atmosphere, and the bald statement ‘no one replied’ suggests both that people do not agree with her and also that they are threatened by her aggression.

At the next course, a comment is made by Soames with reference to the champagne: ‘you’ll find it dry’. It is unclear to whom this is addressed, but it is not a promising start to a conversation and remains unanswered. Galsworthy here moves between reported speech (‘June again refused’) and direct speech, perhaps so as to distinguish between conversation which is significant in its content, and that which is simply significant because of its meaning. It is made clear that the food is tasty; the soup is described as ‘excellent’ and the fish ‘a fine fresh sole’, so June’s refusal of the cutlets seems to indicate something more than a simple unwillingness to eat. This is reinforced by Soames’ comment ‘You’d better take a cutlet, June, there’s nothing wrong’, which suggests a link between food and emotion.

The brief conversation between Irene and Bosinney about the blackbird seems spontaneous and engaging; her use of ‘he’s such a darling!’ seems, by a form of metonymy, to suggest that Bosinney is attractive to her, and the serving of the salad and spring chicken – both fresh sounding foods – seems to underline this idea. Irene throughout seems to be associated with springtime – her mentions of birdsong, flowers and so on act as a counterpoint to June, whose name is also a form of **nominative determination**, suggests a difference to, or even opposition to this season. This opposition becomes explicit when, in response to Irene’s **phatic** conversational openings about the weather and the flowers, June contradicts both her opinions (‘there isn’t a breath of air!’) and Bosinney’s (‘How *can* you like the scent?’). June’s rudeness here is emphasised by Irene’s courtesy; apparently taking her latter comment at face value, she asks a servant to remove the flowers as ‘Miss June can’t bear the scent’, a comment June again contradicts: ‘No; let it stay’.

Soames seems to be characterised by his critical nature during this meal – though a more charitable interpretation would simply say that he is an overanxious host. He is reserved about the champagne: ‘you’ll find it dry’; grudging about the cutlets: ‘there’s nothing wrong’; and finally openly critical of the food: ‘the asparagus is very poor’, ‘why can’t we have the Spanish [olives]?’ In contrast, Bosinney makes positive comments that support Irene: ‘Rather’, ‘Wonderful! The scent’s extraordinary’, his understanding of her, and sympathy with her culminating in their brief moment of communion about the sunset when their eyes meet. Interestingly, June is again characterised as ‘scornful’ here, commenting ‘A London sunset!’, as though it is a ridiculous thing to admire a sunset that is not in the country.

June, as Soames highlights – ‘you’re drinking nothing!’ – seems to avoid eating and drinking during the meal. Though she presumably does both, the only acts that are described are her refusals, and her calling for more sugar (more symbolic sweetness?) for the apple charlotte (which Soames, interestingly, commends as ‘good!’), and her ‘demand’ for more water. This contrasts with Irene, who speaks ‘smilingly’ and ‘softly’ throughout.

The origins of different types of food are mentioned in interesting ways. As well as the ‘sole from Dover’, we are introduced to ‘Olives from France, with Russian caviare’, ‘German Plums’ and ‘Turkish coffee’ (not to mention the Egyptian cigarettes), as though the cosmopolitan nature of the food is in contrast to the provincial nature of the petty squabbles and awkwardness suggested in the meal. However, at the end of the meal the plums bring a moment of ‘perfect harmony’ as all four eat together, emphasising how food is seen to be something that symbolises relationships. This harmony is broken by Bosinney’s game of counting up the plum stones, with Irene’s completion of the saying ‘Never’, seeming to suggest that, perhaps, their relationship will not develop any further. Her comment about the beautiful sunset, and Bosinney’s reply that it is ‘underneath the dark’ seem to suggest a subtext about beauty and restriction that may relate to Irene and the ‘darkness’ of her husband’s possessiveness, emphasised by her later remark, ‘if only—‘, the ellipsis suggesting all kinds of possibilities for her longing, apart from the one that she gives, ‘if only it could always be the spring’.

Spring here may suggest promise and (as is traditional) love. It is as though Irene is asking for a world where the possibility of love remains ever open, as opposed to the world that June represents, where possibilities become closed off. June’s departure, saying ‘Come, Phil’, emphasises both her possession of Bosinney, and his reluctance to leave Irene. His last words are to her, and answered ‘softly’ by her, as though a private communication is made in public; Soames’ ‘sneering smile’ and comment ‘I wish you luck!’ here takes on a darker double meaning.

**Text 32: From *More Pricks than Kicks***

This extract is from an early short story by Samuel Beckett, called ‘Dante and the Lobster’, the first short story in his early collection *More Pricks than Kicks* (1934)*.* Here we can see many of the most characteristic elements of a future great writer; much of his style is already in place.

The mode of the story is clearly **serio-comic** and **mock-heroic**, and it involves a lot of **hyperbole**. Put simply, this is a wildly exaggerated and essentially comic piece of writing. What actually happens? Very little. If you were to translate the extract into more direct and neutral prose, it might read: ‘Belacqua decided to make himself a toasted sandwich for lunch. He used a metal toasting-frame to toast two slices of bread on his gas cooker. He liked his toast virtually burnt. He put salt and pepper and mustard on the toasted slices, to make his sandwich, which he wrapped in paper, to carry as his lunch’. That gives in just five lines Beckett’s 55 lines. Clearly here style exceeds content. Beckett is blowing up into huge dimensions this simple series of actions, for the fun of it, and for what it allows him to achieve via his complex and allusive literary style.

There are many features of the prose here that could be considered non-literary and related to speech: colloquial phrasing and low-register vocabulary (‘make a hash of the whole proceedings’, line 21; ‘What the hell did he care?’, line 38), as well as several instances of the use of sayings and proverbs (‘if a thing was worth doing at all it was worth doing well’, lines 33–34). However, these are drawn up into what is a very sophisticated and highly literary piece of writing, a virtuosic exercise in style almost for its own sake. In his early life, Samuel Beckett had acted as helper and secretary to one of the great Modernist writers, James Joyce, and had in fact been with Joyce as the latter wrote one of the most complex works of modernism, *Finnegan’s Wake.* Beckett, in other words, is a very self-conscious and sophisticated writer, and in this passage he is playing games with literary style, in a sense showing off, making riffs on more standard uses of English.

The story is set in 1920s’ Dublin and has a basically realistic background and frame. Belacqua is not making toast as we would today, with an electric toaster. The electric toaster was introduced in the 1920s, but of course it relied on houses having electricity (many did not). Here Belacqua is making toast using a metal framing device on a gas cooker, something which is actually hard to get right. Nonetheless, there is a huge element of enjoyable **hyperbole** (exaggeration) in the passage based on the standard comic device of the mock-epic (or **mock-heroic**) mode. The defining work in this genre is Alexander Pope’s *The Rape of the Lock* (1714).

A **mock-heroic** work uses the conventions from heroic or epic poetry, i.e. Homer’s *Iliad*, and applies them to ordinary or trivial life, hence creating a comic effect. In *The Rape of the Lock* Pope takes the mannerisms, tropes, and metaphors of a style of writing which was used by Homer and Virgil to describe the great battles between heroic warriors outside Troy (a grand style, in other words) and uses it to describe a rich young girl going to a society party, playing cards with friends, and having a silly argument. It is the disparity between the grand style and the trivial subject matter which creates the comic effect. Here Beckett is doing something similar. He uses a sometimes grand language and style to describe the simple matter of making toast, and the difference between style and subject matter creates comedy.

So, for instance, we might imagine that the sentence beginning ‘Two inexorable drives with the…’ (line 14) was going to end with the word for some grand weapon (sword, for example) but it only leads to the bathetic ‘bread-saw’ (i.e. bread knife). ‘When the first candidate was done… it changed places with its comrade’ (lines 28–29): again, this sounds like something important or military, but only refers to two pieces of bread; ‘he would devour it with a sense of rapture and victory’ (lines 45–46): that surely sounds like some a tremendous feast, a special gourmet meal, when really all that will be eaten is a rather odd mustard sandwich. This is certainly one element of the high comedy or farce: grand language and phrasing being deployed on something so little. In fact, on something rather odd, since this is a strange sandwich indeed that Belacqua is making: virtually burnt toast, without butter, stuck together with Coleman’s Savora mustard (here referred to as just ‘Savora’ (line 40). This is one important element of the comedy, but there are others.The extract contains a lot of down-to-earth, ordinary, colloquial language, and also proverbs and sayings. At the same time, it contains highly literary and sophisticated effects, which match up oddly with the more colloquial phrasing. Put simply, Beckett is mixing up the **demotic** and the **literary** as part of the overall comedy of the passage. There is plenty of demotic language here, e.g. ‘it made the toast *soggy*’ (lines 42–43). However, mixed in with this, Beckett uses language in a sophisticated, highly literary, indeed sometimes poetic way: ‘He lowered the gas a suspicion and plaqued one flabby slab plump down on glowing fabric…’ (lines 24–25). ‘Plaqued’, a verb, seems to be a **neologism** (an invented word), made up from the noun ‘plaque’ (an ornamental or elaborate plate, tablet, or sign). There is heavy alliteration here on the /l/ sound (p**l**aqued…f**l**abby s**l**ab p**l**ump down… g**l**owing) and also more obviously between ‘plaqued’ and ‘plump’ and ‘flabby and ‘fabric’, as well as **assonance** in the long ‘a’ vowels ‘plaqued... flabby... slab... fabric’. This heightened effect of language to describe putting a piece of toast on to cook, is deliciously ludicrous.

When Belacqua hangs back up the hot toasting rack, it singes the old wallpaper, and Beckett creates another mock-heroic effect: ‘This was an act of dilapidation, for it seared a great weal in the paper’. In colloquial language this might begin: ‘This was a mistake…’, but instead Beckett uses a **polysyllabic** and Latinate word (it comes from the Latin *delapidare*, meaning to demolish or squander), whose formal meaning is ‘the state or process of falling into decay’. It is a grand and formal word put into a mundane, very everyday context: hence the comic effect.

In the next line it is noted that the wallpaper ‘was livid with age’. ‘Livid’ here is not colloquial. Its ordinary meaning in English is ‘furiously angry’, which is probably not what Beckett means here. The multi-lingual Beckett is probably remembering its French and Latin meanings, i.e. ‘pale’, ‘grey’; ‘slate-coloured’, ‘discoloured by bruising’, all of which fit the sense here better. Similarly, in line 53, the archaic phrasing ‘they clave the one to the other’, is used instead of the colloquial ‘they stick together’ (‘clave’ is the archaic past tense of ‘cleave’), and the formal word ‘viscid’ (instead of its colloquial equivalent, ‘sticky’). Archaism and formal vocabulary here create a phrasing which is highly poetic.

The high point of the comedy is supplied by the ludicrously inappropriate allusion to a great Shakespeare tragedy. As Belacqua thinks of the joy of eating the wonderful sandwich he has made, that gastronomic ‘victory’, he says that ‘it would be like smiting the sledded Polacks on the ice’. The allusion is to *Hamlet,* lines 54–62. Marcellus and Horatio have just seen the ghost of Hamlet’s father, in full military armour:

*HORATIO:               Before my God, I might not this believe*

*Without the sensible and true avouch*

*Of mine own eyes.*

*MARCELLUS:               Is it not like the King?*

*HORATIO:               As thou art to thyself.*

*Such was the very armour he had on*

*When he the ambitious Norway combated.*

*So frowned he once when in an angry parley*

*He smote the sledded Polacks on the ice.*

In other words: ‘once, this great king, in full armour, frustrated in negotiation with Polish generals, who had travelled by sledge, got angry and struck them.’ This is grand language from Shakespeare. It is meant here to convey the heroic stature of Hamlet’s father, the great military leader. Yet Belacqua ends up using it to describe his sense of victory in eating his mustard sandwich! It is a fine joke.

Everything in the passage is seen from Belacqua’s point of view; the passage makes extensive use of **free indirect speech**, i.e. language which, though not in quotation marks, clearly indicates the actual thoughts of the character whose actions are being described. Belacqua’s name itself provides easy entry into the whole question of farce here. Beckett takes this highly unusual name from a character in Dante’s *Purgatorio*, yet the world he inhabits is a seedy, down-at-heel 1920s Dublin house. Overall, we can say that this is high literary farce. A perfectly ordinary happening – a man making a toasted sandwich – becomes Beckett’s excuse for creating an elaborate and virtuosic piece of writing.

**Text 33: From *Porterhouse Blue***

This extract is from Tom Sharpe’s comic novel *Porterhouse Blue*. The title itself is a **pun**, giving some insight into the nature of the rest of the book, which is about the goings-on at a fictional Cambridge college. A ‘Blue’ is the term given for the award of Cambridge University

colours to an athlete who has competed on behalf of the university (thus, those who take part in the annual boat race against Oxford, are ‘rowing blues’. In the fictional world of the college, a ‘Porterhouse Blue’ is the term for a type of debilitating stroke brought on by too much rich food and heavy drinking, in the traditions of the college. As the novel opens, the old master has died from such a stroke, and has been unable to name his successor, as tradition demands, hence, for the first time in the college’s history, a new master has been brought in on the authority of the college ‘visitor’, the Queen (the term ‘visitor’ is one that actually exists in colleges – a largely ceremonial figure of authority, thought sometimes, as here, used to resolve problems).

In this extract, we see a typical college feast, with the new master of the college, Sir Godber Evans, presiding. Sir Godber is an idealistic left-wing politician and former member of the college, who himself hated his time there, and who is deeply opposed to its traditions, seeing them as outmoded and damaging. Here the lavishness of the college entertainments is described at length, with Sir Godber’s silent disapproval evident throughout. Watching him from the gallery is an old college servant, Skullion (his name a deeply symbolic piece of **nominative determination**), who is concerned that the new master is not the kind of man his predecessors were, and will not keep up the college traditions.

The opening statement ‘It was a fine feast’ has almost the quality of **meiosis** when one reads the description of the meal that follows, and immediately suggests how habitual such feasts are for the college. The **free indirect speech** gives the impression that all the fellows are discussing it, and the alliteration of ‘**f**ine **f**east’ in the opening words is caught up by the alliteration on ‘**f**amous **f**or its **f**ood’ at the end of the next sentence.

The listing of food served sounds as though it is drawn directly from a menu, this effect enhanced by the use of French phraseology, as French is traditionally associated with restaurant menus and fine dining, and also by the ordering of the foods as they would be served. Expensive food such as caviar is mentioned, and the unusual delicacy of ‘swan stuffed with widgeon’ suggests how exotic the fare is. The naming of specific wines emphasises the idea that ‘each course had a different wine’, syntactically as well as semantically repeated in ‘each place was laid with five glasses’, and the specific terminology: ‘Pouilly Fumé’ suggests knowledge and appreciation of fine wine. Later on, the dean’s use of the French term ‘*gamin*’ to describe the flavour of the swan adds to this sense of refinement, though here it is opposed to the master’s private thoughts.

**Personification** is used in the description of the serving of the feast: ‘the silver dishes came... announced by the swish of the doors’, and the members of the college seem to lose their individuality in the ‘ancient ritual’, reduced to ‘the clatter of knives and forks, the clink of glasses, the rustle of napkins’. There is a strong contrast created between ‘outside’ with the alliterative ‘winter wind’ that ‘swept through the streets’ and ‘inside’ with its ‘warmth and conviviality’. The imagery of the ‘hundred candles ensconced in silver candelabra’ accentuates this sense of luxury and tradition (ensconced is also a delicate **pun** – a sconce is another name for a candle or torch fixed to a wall). Throughout the passage, Sharpe uses a great deal of vivid descriptive language. He seems to like **alliteration**, **assonance** and even **onomatopoeia** (the swish of the doors), and uses unusual lexis such as ‘ensconced’ or ‘rubicund’.

The description of the master contrasts with the warm picture of the feast, not least because he is characterised as ‘dyspeptic’, meaning ‘like a sufferer from indigestion’, the adjective vividly opposed to the senior tutor, who speaks ‘sebaceously’ or in an oily manner. Again, this word is carefully chosen – the sebaceous glands are those which oil the skin and hair, so rather than simply meaning ‘oily’, ‘sebaceous’ means something more like ‘greasy’, as a pimple might be. Indeed, the whole **semantic field** that surrounds the master is strikingly different from that which has preceded this section: ‘fixed... grim... pale... discomforts... remote’. His private thoughts contrast sharply with the initially attractive picture of the feast as ‘fine... famous’; it is as though the initial description has been made through the eyes of the other dons, and now we see the members of the college as they really are: ‘atavistic... greasy with perspiration... mouths interminably full’.

The recollections of Sir Godber act as a counterpoint to the serving of the final courses of the feast: ‘the brandy trifle and the stilton’, the rich food and ‘florid’ faces seeming to represent the corruption about which he has been meditating. The ‘loud assertions which passed for conversation’ contrast with his silence and his refusal to join in the feasting: ‘Sir Godber observed and abstained’. Skullion’s observations are contrasted with his. Through the eyes of the college servants the feast appears very different; words such as ‘brilliant’, ‘glory’ and ‘glittered’ are used, and ‘there was no envy in his eyes, only approval at the fitness of the arrangements’. Sharpe creates humour and a sharp irony out of the idea that the new master of the college actually disapproves of the sumptuous nature of the feast, and yet the servant (who he wishes to enfranchise) approves of it, and revels in his own subjection.

**Good Revision Activities**

➊              Create a set of cards with the names of texts and their text numbers on. Play ‘lotto’, with students matching the turned-down title to the text number so as to facilitate their ability to quickly find texts in the anthology.

➌              Group together texts in different ways on a wall display – for instance, historically, thematically, lexically – to help students see connections and comparisons between them.

➍              Make reduced-size copies of the texts and put them on cards as brief visual reminders of each text. Ask students to sort them in response to different exam questions, to practise thinking about them in different ways.

**Possible Exam Questions**

For the most recent exam questions, look at the AQA website where past papers are eventually posted ([**http://store.aqa.org.uk**](http://store.aqa.org.uk)). The following questions are similar in type to AQA questions, and can be used to help prepare for the exam, but the AQA questions and assessment objectives should always be referred to in any course of revision.

**1.              Food can be a source of social tension.**

              Select any **two** texts from the anthology where food is presented in this way by writers and/or speakers, and compare the attitudes shown towards food in your selected texts. You should write about how ideas are conveyed, considering the following points, where relevant:

▫              Grammar and syntax

▫              Register

▫              The context of production and reception

▫              Structure and form

▫              Imagery and symbolism

▫              Lexical choice

**2.              Food can be a source of anxiety and worry.**

              Select any **two** texts from the anthology where food is presented in this way by writers and/or speakers, and compare the attitudes shown towards food in your selected texts. You should write about how ideas are conveyed, considering the following points, where relevant:

▫              Grammar and syntax

▫              Register

▫              The context of production and reception

▫              Structure and form

▫              Imagery and symbolism

▫              Lexical choice

**3.              Food can be a means of exploring memory or culture.**

              Select any **two** texts from the anthology where food is presented in this way by writers and/or speakers, and compare the attitudes shown towards food in your selected texts. You should write about how ideas are conveyed, considering the following points, where relevant:

▫              Grammar and syntax

▫              Register

▫              The context of production and reception

▫              Structure and form

▫              Imagery and symbolism

▫              Lexical choice

**4.              Eating is seen as more than an essential bodily activity.**

              Select any **two** texts from the anthology where food is presented in this way by writers and/or speakers, and compare the attitudes shown towards food in your selected texts. You should write about how ideas are conveyed, considering the following points, where relevant:

▫              Grammar and syntax

▫              Register

▫              The context of production and reception

▫              Structure and form

▫              Imagery and symbolism

▫              Lexical choice

**5.              Food can be something that arouses strong emotions.**

              Select any **two** texts from the anthology where food is presented in this way by writers and/or speakers, and compare the attitudes shown towards food in your selected texts. You should write about how ideas are conveyed, considering the following points, where relevant:

▫              Grammar and syntax

▫              Register

▫              The context of production and reception

▫              Structure and form

▫              Imagery and symbolism

▫              Lexical choice

**6.              The preparation and eating of food can be seen as a luxury or leisure occupation.**

              Select any **two** texts from the anthology where food is presented in this way by writers and/or speakers, and compare the attitudes shown towards food in your selected texts. You should write about how ideas are conveyed, considering the following points, where relevant:

▫              Grammar and syntax

▫              Register

▫              The context of production and reception

▫              Structure and form

▫              Imagery and symbolism

▫              Lexical choice

**7.              Food can be seen as a necessity or something provided out of duty.**

              Select any **two** texts from the anthology where food is presented in this way by writers and/or speakers, and compare the attitudes shown towards food in your selected texts. You should write about how ideas are conveyed, considering the following points, where relevant:

▫              Grammar and syntax

▫              Register

▫              The context of production and reception

▫              Structure and form

▫              Imagery and symbolism

▫              Lexical choice

**Glossary of Terminology**

Using the correct terminology in a commentary will allow you to be more precise and exact in your description of effects, and your analysis of a writer’s style. As well as the more unusual words below, do not neglect simple terms – always try to use the right word in the right place. You can annotate your copy of the anthology as a way of reminding yourself about terms.

| **Term** | **Definition** |
| --- | --- |
| **Active listening** | Using words, non-verbal utterances or gestures to encourage a speaker to continue and to assure the speaker of the listener’s attention |
| **Adjective** | A word which describes a noun, e.g. beautiful |
| **Adjectival subordinate clause** | See **subordinate clause** |
| **Adverb** | A word which describes a verb, e.g. silently |
| **Adverbial subordinate clause** | See **subordinate clause** |
| **Alliteration** | Prosodic feature where words close to one another begin with the same initial consonantal sound, and (usually) the same letter, e.g. ‘**r**ound and **r**ound the **r**ugged **r**ocks the **r**agged **r**ascals **r**an’ |
| **Anecdotal** | Relating to anecdotes or stories, often used as an example to make a particular point |
| **Ambiguity** | Uncertainty of definition or meaning; the possibility of two or more readings of a word or text |
| **Ambivalence** | The existence of opposing thoughts and feelings towards something or someone, such as love and hate |
| **Anthropomorphic** | Attributing to animals human thoughts, characteristics or feelings |
| **Archaic** | Language which is deliberately imitating that of an earlier time; the poet Spenser, for instance, deliberately used **archaisms** in words and syntax from earlier poems to make his epic poem *The Fairie Queene* appear to have more ‘grace and authority’ than it might otherwise have had |
| **Assonance** | Prosodic feature where words close to one another share a similar vowel sound |
| **Audience** | The group of people at whom a text is directed or intended for. |
| **Autograph** | Literally ‘self-writing’ – the handwriting typical of an individual; in manuscript terms, a copy of a text by the author |
| **Auxesis** | A rhetorical figure where emphasis is created through arranging words in ascending order of importance or intensity |
| **Bathetic** | See **bathos** |
| **Bathos** | The sudden descent from heightened language or theme into ‘low’ language or theme, for dramatic effect, sometimes associated with crudity or comedy, sometimes summed up by the saying ‘from the sublime to the ridiculous’ |
| **Binary opposition** | Any paired opposition which involves two concepts which are the reverse of each other, as in darkness and light, sound and silence. |
| **Blank verse** | Unrhymed lines of iambic pentameter |
| **Capitalisation** | The use of upper case letters throughout. Generally creates excessive emphasis. In Internet usage, to capitalise written text is seen as equivalent to shouting, and perceived as aggressive. |
| **Caption** | Piece of text (generally below a picture) which explains or illuminates the action of an illustration |
| **Circumlocution** | Also called periphrasis, this means ‘going around the houses’ in descriptive terms: saying something in an overly complex manner, and sometimes avoiding a particular word. Often linked to **euphemism.** |
| **Cliché** | Expression so often used that it becomes overfamiliar and predictable, and is hence seen to be unoriginal |
| **Cliffhanger** | Suspense-filled ending which leaves the audience eager to know more of what is going to happen in a narrative – named after the literal use in films or novels of someone left in a life-threatening situation |
| **Colonial** | Relating to empires and the attitudes and values espoused by imperial ideas. In relation to literature, expressions which suggest a level of prejudice against the ways in which things are done in colonised countries as opposed to the ways in which the empire ruling such a country would prefer to have them done. |
| **Collocation** | A group of words which appear together so commonly as to appear almost like a unit (such as ‘crystal clear’) |
| **Colloquialism / colloquial speech** | Words used commonly in the ordinary speech of a country |
| **Common register** | See **register** |
| **Conceit** | An extended or fanciful image or a series of ideas which link together to create an elaborate image |
| **Conjunctions** | Words that link together two clauses in a sentence, e.g. ‘and’, ‘but’, ‘or’ |
| **Connotation** | The associations called up by a particular word or sign that exist beyond its literal meaning. Often opposed to **denotation**. For instance, you might say that the word ‘rose’ **denotes** a type of flower, whereas its **connotations** are those of love and romance. |
| **Cursive** | A style of font or handwriting characterised by its flowing, interconnected nature (*cursivus* means ‘flowing’ in Latin) |
| **Declarative** | A sentence which asserts something |
| **Definite article** | An article is a word which precedes a noun to indicate the type of reference made to it. A definite article refers to a single member of a group. In English ‘the’ is known as the definite article. Often opposed to the **indefinite article**. |
| **Demotic** | **Demotic** comes from the Greek word *demos,* meaning ‘the people’; it is the same word from which we get ‘democracy’. Language which is demotic is the kind of language used by ordinary people: it is popular and colloquial. |
| **Denotation** | The literal or ‘obvious’ meaning of a word or sign. Its immediate sense, or dictionary definition. Often opposed to **connotation**.For instance, you might say thatthe word ‘rose’ **denotes** a type of flower, whereas its **connotations** are those of love and romance. |
| **Didactic** | Related to formal structures of teaching: moralising, intended to convey learning |
| **Direct speech** | Speech framed in inverted commas or quotation marks; the literal recording of what someone has said: he said ‘It’s cold’ |
| **Discourse marker** | A word which generally does not affect the meaning of a sentence, but acts as something of a ‘placeholder’ to structure the text. Words such as ‘although’, ‘however’, ‘firstly’ and so on are all discourse markers. |
| **Dramatic irony** | In a play, the situation where the audience have knowledge that is not shared by all the characters on stage. Hence characters may do or say things that create unwitting humour, irony or tension. |
| **Dramatic monologue** | A form of poetry, most famously popularised by Robert Browning, where the speaker of a poem acts as though delivering a monologue to an unseen auditor. It is often highly ironic, as the speaker attempts to boast or justify his or her actions and the reader, in the place of the unseen hearer, discovers more about their character than they realise that they reveal. |
| **Ellipsis** | The omission of a word or words; sometimes indicated by the use of three dots of punctuation ‘…’ |
| **Emotive** | Designed to stir the emotions |
| **End rhyme** | Rhyme that takes place at the end of a line; often referred to in distinction to **internal rhyme** |
| **Enjambment** | The ‘carrying on’ of the sense of one line of poetry to the next line, over the line break |
| **Epanalepsis** | The same word occurring at the beginning and send of a clause, sentence, paragraph and so on |
| **Epistrophe** | A rhetorical figure where the final words of a clause or sentence are repeated |
| **Euphemism** | The use of another word or phrase in place of one considered to be rude or inappropriate for the circumstance; for instance, the use of ‘fell asleep’ for ‘died’ |
| **Exclamatory** | A sentence with the force of an exclamation |
| **Expletive** | An exclamation which is generally transgressive, a curse or swear word. Sometimes indicated in radio or censored film with a ‘bleep’ sound, or in print with a number of asterisks or an initial letter followed by asterisks or blanks. |
| **Filler** | A word or phrase used, as the name suggests, to fill gaps in conversation or to give time for thinking, as, for instance, ‘you know’, ‘like’, etc. |
| **Font** | The lettering in which a text is produced. A style of typeface which is consistent across all letters of the alphabet. |
| **Free indirect speech** | A style of narration where words act as the directly spoken word, but have no indication of who speaks them, such as ‘he said’ or quotation marks. They often create the effect of showing a person’s inner thoughts and feelings. |
| **Grammar** | The study of how words relate to each other in a sentence; more colloquially, defined or unspoken rules which dictate how a language is arranged |
| **Headline** | Line of print which summarizes a new story in a few words, generally in strikingly larger, bolder print at the top of an article |
| **Heroic couplets** | Rhymed couplets of iambic pentameter |
| **High register** | See **register** |
| **Hyperbole** | A rhetorical term describing ‘over the top’ expression; extreme exaggeration for comic or emotive effect |
| **Hypercorrection** | Correcting a word when it is not necessary. Hypercorrection is often a result of the overly strict application or spelling or grammatical ‘rules’. |
| **Iambic** | Consisting of a two-beat metrical unit, the **iamb**, with a weak stress followed by a strong stress; often considered the natural rhythm of human speech. Iambic pentameter consists of five iambs, and is the favoured metre for Shakespeare’s plays. It is considered formal and suitable for serious or heroic drama. |
| **Idiolect** | The style of speech or writing individual to a particular person |
| **Imperative** | A sentence which instructs someone to do something |
| **Indefinite article** | An article is a word which precedes a noun to indicate the type of reference made to it. An indefinite article refers to any member of a group without specifying which. In English ‘a’ is known as the indefinite article. Often opposed to the **definite article**. |
| **Indirect speech (sometimes called reported speech)** | Speech without inverted commas or quotation marks which records the meaning of what someone has said but sometimes rephrases it: ‘he commented that it was cold’ |
| **Interlocutor** | Person who speaks to another, usually the person questioning or initiating the conversation |
| **Internal rhyme** | Rhyme that links together words in the middle, rather than at the end, of lines. Internal rhyme may also link an **end rhyme** with a rhyme in the middle of a line. |
| **Interrogative** | A sentence which questions something |
| **Intransitive** | A verb that does not have a direct object. Often opposed to **transitive**. Verbs can often switch from transitive to intransitive uses. For instance in the sentence ‘I ran quickly across the road’, *ran* is **intransitive**, but in the sentence ‘I ran my own company’, *ran* is **transitive**, with ‘company’ acting as the **object** of the sentence. |
| **Irony** | Saying one thing while meaning another, often its exact opposite, generally for satirical effect |
| **Italicisation** | Script or font which is slanted to the right in an imitation of old-fashioned cursive script, generally used for emphasis *like this* |
| **Juxtaposition** | The placing of two things close together, generally to create a deliberate contrast |
| **Legal language** | Language which is particularly associated with the law and legislature. Generally language which is **archaic** in a particular way, or which enacts provisions against ambiguity. |
| **Lexis** | Vocabulary, word-choice. Technically, the whole stock of words and expressions in a language as opposed to its **grammar** or other technical features. |
| **Linear** | In terms of narrative, telling a story in simple chronological order, from A to B to C without distractions. Often opposed to **non-linear**. |
| **Litotes** | A rhetorical figure where an idea is expressed by denying its opposite, for example ‘not bad’ meaning ‘good’ |
| **Low register** | See **register** |
| **Meiosis** | Literally, ‘lessening’. A form of understatement, often conflated with litotes. Meiosis understates something to suggest that it is less important than it is. An example might be the use of ‘the Troubles’ to describe the conflict in Northern Ireland. |
| **Metonymy** | The use of one thing in substitution for another (metonymy literally means ‘change of place’) where the two things are connected in some way, as in ‘a glass of the warm south’ meaning a glass of wine, or ‘a man of the cloth’ meaning a clergyman. Metonymy generally uses something large to replace something smaller, **synecdoche** does the reverse. |
| **Mock-heroic** | A style which takes the conventions of heroic or epic literature and uses them to describe ordinary events in an exaggerated style for comic effect |
| **Non-linear** | In terms of a story or account, not going straight from A to B to C in chronological order, but wandering about and adding other elements to the narrative. Often opposed to **linear**. |
| **Non sequitur** | Literally, ‘not following’. An utterance which does not answer the previous conversation turn, but seems to start another topic completely, an irrelevance. |
| **Noun phrase** | A phrase which stands in place of a single word, with a noun and a number of modifiers; often titles can act as noun phrases, for instance ‘Her Royal Highness’ meaning the Queen |
| **Object** | A noun or noun phrase that denotes something involved in the subject’s performance of a **transitive** **verb**. For instance, in the sentence ‘The cat ate a mouse’ the cat is the **subject** because it does the eating, the mouse is the **object** because it is eaten. |
| **Onomatopoeia** | Prosodic feature where a word’s sound is imitative of its meaning, e.g. bang, pop, crackle |
| **Oral narrative** | Storytelling which is distinguished by the characteristics of natural speech, being designed to be spoken rather than written down. Oral narratives are often characterised. |
| **Oxymoron** | A figure of speech which combines two different and contrasting ideas such as ‘dark fire’ |
| **Parataxis** | A figure where a series of clauses are connected together without subordinating or coordinating conjunction |
| **Parison** | A figure where clauses are structured similarly, either with identical words, or with equivalent words, e.g. noun for noun, verb for verb, adjective for adjective in the same positions. Generally the similarity of structure emphasises where the clauses differ from each other. |
| **Parenthetical dashes** | Long dashes which frame a parenthesis, or aside, in writing |
| **Pastiche** | A copy or mockery of another form, often for satirical or comic effect |
| **Pathos** | The deliberate attempt to evoke pity in the reader through the use of heartrending material or emotive language |
| **Phatic** | Language which is characterised by being casual or designed to fill space in a conversation to ease the social wheels. For instance, most comments about the weather tend to be phatic rather than serious enquiries about others’ opinions. A typical example of a phatic comment is when a patient is asked by a doctor how they are and he or she says ‘fine’. They may in fact be quite unwell, but they automatically respond with a comment they feel is acceptable socially. |
| **Phonetic** | Relating to sound; in terms of spelling, a word is spelt with an imitation of how to pronounce a word rather than with its traditional spelling. For instance, ‘giv’ is a phonetic spelling of ‘give’. |
| **Placeholder** | Sound or words, often fillers, used to indicate that the speaker intends to continue their utterance. Often suggests the thinking process. |
| **Pull quote** | A quotation from an article which is highlighted as a subheading or inserted in a text box or otherwise made prominent in order to ‘pull’ the reader into the article and make them want to read it. |
| **Register** | The level at which language operates, generally described as high or low. **High register** words are uncommon in ordinary speech as they are seen as overly complex and formal, whereas **low register** words are often seen as inappropriately crude or slangy. The **common register** is the register generally acceptable in ordinary speech and not seen as specially heightened or low. |
| **Reported speech** | See **indirect speech** |
| **Semantic field** | Group of words which suggest a certain context or mood when used in close proximity |
| **Slang** | Phrases or expressions used by a particular group or class, generally informal and sometimes seen as crude or inappropriate in polite conversation |
| **Speech bubble** | Text box, often rounded, with a small ‘tail’ which links to the mouth of a person supposed to be speaking the words in the text box. See **thought bubble**. |
| **Stanza** | A unit of poetry, usually consisting of a regular number of lines |
| **Strapline** | A **subheading**, usually in a long **text box**, printed above the main headline. Often used for a slogan or motto which appears on all publicity literature for a given organisation. |
| **Structural balance** | A balancing feature in the structure or form of a text, such as two similar passages ‘framing’ another |
| **Subheading** | Smaller headline some way through an article which heads and sums up the material immediately following it. Often used as paragraph divisions in tabloid journalism. |
| **Subject** | A noun or noun phrase that takes the active part in a sentence, who ‘does’ the verb. For instance, in the sentence ‘The cat ate a mouse’ the cat is the **subject** because it does the eating, the mouse is the **object** because it is eaten. |
| **Subordinate clause** | A clause in a sentence which is dependent upon another element in the sentence. For instance, an **adjectival subordinate clause** might take the place of an adjective and depend on a noun, whereas an **adverbial subordinate clause** might take the place of an adverb and depend on the verb. In either case, the clause would describe the word on which it depends. |
| **Subtext** | That which lies beneath the literal meaning of a text |
| **Superlative** | The final form of comparison than which there is none more extreme, e.g. best, worst, most beautiful. |
| **Synecdoche** | A form of **metonymy** where a part is used to represent the whole, as in ‘redhead’ to mean a red-haired person, or ‘wheels’ to indicate a car |
| **Syntactic** | Relating to **syntax** |
| **Syntax** | Word order; the logical arrangement of words in a sentence which can shift meaning. |
| **Target audience** | Audience which a text is designed to attract or interest |
| **Text box** | Box-shaped insertion in a text which contains a separate portion of the text. Often used for **captions** or **pull quotes**. |
| **Textspeak** | Abbreviated formulas, generally phonetic, derived from the formulas used in text messaging to save time before the invention of predictive text (and still preferred by some users). For instance, L8 for ‘late’ or CU for ‘see you’. |
| **Thought bubble** | **Speech bubble** indicating silent thought rather than speech, by convention with cloud-like edges and a line of small circles linking it to the head of the person to whom it is supposed to be attached. |
| **Transitive** | A verb which needs an object. Often opposed to **intransitive**. Verbs can often switch from transitive to intransitive uses. For instance in the sentence ‘I ran quickly across the road’, *ran* is **intransitive**, but in the sentence ‘I ran my own company’, *ran* is **transitive**, with ‘company’ acting as the **object** of the sentence. |
| **Tripartite** | In three parts or sections; rhetorically, three is an especially effective number of repetitions |
| **Trope** | A common pattern, or theme in literature, a motif repeated so much that it becomes a kind of ‘shorthand’ for expressing a particular feeling, such as a rose=love. Generally originating as part of a rhetorical figure or **conceit**. |
| **Utterance** | A complete unit of speech (in speech analysis) |

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[[1]](http://www.northleamingtonschool.warwickshire.sch.uk/files/4398%20-%20AQA%20B%20LangLit%20Food%20Glorious%20Food%20Anthology.doc" \l "_ftnref1) [**http://www.rhymes.org.uk/little\_jack\_horner.htm**](http://www.rhymes.org.uk/little_jack_horner.htm)