

## Contents

<b>Introduction</b> .....	3
<b>Text 1: Jane Austen's letter to her sister, Cassandra Austen</b> .....	4
Lesson 1 .....	8
Lesson 2 .....	14
<b>Text 2: <i>The Guardian</i> article: 'Why teaching table manners can do more harm than good'</b> .....	20
Lesson 1 .....	22
Lesson 2 .....	26
<b>Text 3: Excerpt taken from <i>The Elephant Man and Other Reminiscences</i> by Sir Frederick Treves</b> .....	30
Lesson 1 .....	33
Lesson 2 .....	41
<b>Text 4: Excerpt taken from <i>My Left Foot</i> by Christy Brown</b> .....	48
Lesson 1 .....	51
Lesson 2 .....	53
<b>Text 5: Charlotte Brontë's letter to her father</b> .....	57
Lesson 1 .....	59
Lesson 2 .....	65
<b>Text 6: Excerpt from <i>A History of Modern Britain</i> by Andrew Marr</b> .....	69
Lesson 1 .....	71
Lesson 2 .....	75
<b>Text 7: Excerpt from Henry Morley, <i>Household Words</i>, 'Our Phantom Ship: China'</b> .....	82
Lesson 1 .....	84
Lesson 2 .....	88
<b>Text 8: Excerpt from <i>Behind the Wall</i> by Colin Thubron</b> .....	95
Lesson 1 .....	98
Lesson 2 .....	100
<b>Text 9: Excerpt from Charles Darwin <i>The Voyage of the Beagle</i></b> .....	105
Lesson 1 .....	107
Lesson 2 .....	112
<b>Text 10: Excerpt from <i>Follow the Rabbit-Proof Fence</i></b> .....	120
Lesson 1 .....	122
Lesson 2 .....	126
<b>Acknowledgements</b> .....	129
Extended, printable version of Kevin Rudd's speech .....	130

## Introduction

This GCSE pack is designed to help students engage with and prepare for the reading non-fiction elements of the GCSE English Language specifications (2015). It contains 10 non-fiction texts from the 19th, 20th and 21st centuries. Each non-fiction text has a thematically linked 'partner text'. This means that the texts can be taught discretely, or in partnership with one another (looking at differences in perspective, context, language and/or attitudes).

In addition to the non-fiction texts, the pack includes 20 lesson plans, accompanying resources and suggestions for differentiation.

The pack has been devised for use with the English Language AQA, Edexcel, OCR and WJEC Eduqas specifications. There are specific resources and exam practice questions for each of these specifications included within the pack. The activities and ideas will help students to: read and evaluate texts critically, compare ideas and perspectives across two or more texts and analyse the use of language and structure to achieve effects and influence the reader.

Which texts and activities you choose to study, and how many you use, will depend on the nature of your classes and how much time you have available. The intention is that you pick the activities that are best suited to your students' needs.

Our thanks go to our contributor, Helen Millman Jones who wrote this pack.

We hope you enjoy using this pack. If you have any questions, please get in touch: email [support@teachit.co.uk](mailto:support@teachit.co.uk) or call us on **01225 788850**. Alternatively, you might like to give some feedback for other Teachit members – you can do this by adding a comment on the [resource page](#) on Teachit. (Please log in to access this.)

## Text 4: Excerpt taken from *My Left Foot* by Christy Brown

### Lesson 1

#### Starter activities

1. **Artistic challenge.** Ask students to take off their shoes and socks and try to draw a picture using only the toes of their left foot. You might specify what you want them to draw or give them freedom of choice.

Alternatively they might work in groups with one person volunteering to do the drawing or you might ask students to complete the task as homework prior to the lesson.

Students should be encouraged to display their pictures and discuss the merits of the pictures produced and the difficulties which they encountered whilst doing them.

2. **Introducing Christy Brown.** Show students this [Bonhams auctions webpage](#) which details letters, paintings and papers produced by Christy Brown. These images will open students' eyes to what he managed to achieve, using only the toes of his left foot. Explain that Christy Brown was a talented writer as well as an artist and that you are going to be reading an extract from his autobiography. Ask students what they can predict about the nature of his disability?

#### Main activities

1. **Getting going (AO1).** Read the first three paragraphs of the article and ask students to share their first impressions of this autobiography. What information do you learn about Christy's beginnings in life?
2. **Challenging negative perceptions.** Read from paragraph four when Christy explains the difficulties that he faced as a child with cerebral palsy.

As you read the text, ask students to find and highlight or underline each of the following words or phrases, representing the views of the medical profession about Christy.

- hopeless case
- mentally defective
- beyond hope
- imbecile
- crippled
- dull
- incapable
- idiot

Ask students to challenge all of those words by replacing them with an antonym or other near equivalent.

- 3. Role play.** Ask students to work in pairs and role play a conversation between Christy's mother and a doctor. During the conversation, the doctor outlines Christy's prognosis in negative terms, using some of the words from the text and Christy's mother challenges those views.

(Students should use some of the pairs of words which they came up with in task 3 above.)

### Plenary activity

1. Give students the opportunity to show their role plays.
2. Discuss early 20<sup>th</sup> century treatment of disabled people.
  - Would Christy be treated like this by doctors today?
  - Why or why not?

**Text 4: Excerpt taken from *My Left Foot* by Christy Brown**

**Lesson 2**

**Starter activity**

- 1. Attitudes and prejudices.** Bring up these BBC news links to [Ellie Simmonds](#) and [Cerrie Burnell](#). (You could also link students to images of Stephen Hawking, Warwick Davis or Stevie Wonder.) Ask students to identify the people presented and discuss their contribution to society.
  - What sort of attitudes and prejudices might they face in their lives on account of their disabilities?
  - How can we challenge those prejudices?

**Main activities**

- 1. Prepare to compare.** This task is designed to address the following objectives:

**AO2**

Explain, comment on and analyse how writers use language and structure to achieve effects and influence readers, using relevant subject terminology to support their views.

**AO3**

Compare writers' ideas and perspectives, as well as how these are conveyed across two or more texts.

Give students the worksheet on [Exploring and comparing attitudes](#) in this text. This is aimed at preparing students to tackle a **comparative question** which forms a key part of the assessment criteria for all exam boards. It is important to note that this task asks students to compare ideas and perspectives within **one** text.

**2. Linked writing** (AO5, AO6). Give students a choice of writing tasks which reflect the style of tasks on the writing exam papers, along these lines:

- Write a speech in which you argue that disabled people are positive role models in society.
- Write a letter to the director of Channel 4 outlining your views about the representation of disabled people on television. The following link might be helpful: [The Undateables: Freak show TV or challenging prejudice? - Features - TV & Radio - The Independent](#)
- ‘Attitudes towards disabled people are as bad in the 21<sup>st</sup> century as they were in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.’ Argue your view.

### Plenary activity

**1. Drawing links between the writing of Christy Brown and Frederick Treves.**

Give students the following statement, which is modelled on an OCR exam-style question:

‘These texts are powerful because they show people standing up to prejudice about disability.’ How far you do agree?

**2. Planning task.** You may wish to take this further with your class and ask them to plan an exam answer in response to the above statement. If so, the following bullet points will be useful at providing them with a structure. This is modelled on an OCR exam-style question, but the bullet points will support all students to consider what they learn from these texts:

- Discuss what you learn about prejudice and disability from the texts
- Explain the impact of these ideas on you
- Compare the **ways** ideas about prejudice and disability are presented. (Look at structure and language.)

Use quotations from both texts to support your answer.

**Lesson 2 resource**

**Exploring and comparing attitudes**

Christy's mother and the medical profession view Christy's condition very differently. Use the following grid to explore those differences.

1. Find a quotation to support each of the statements on the grid:

Extension: Add extra points of your own.

Christy's mother	The medical profession
Optimistic about her son's prospects.	Pessimistic about Christy's prospects.
Believes that, despite his physical disabilities, he is intelligent.	Believes that Christy is mentally deficient.
Loves her son and wants him to be a part of her family.	Believes that Christy should be ignored.

2. Now write up your ideas as an answer this question:

**Compare how the writer conveys the different attitudes of Christy's mother and the medical profession towards his disability.**

*Note that this type of question will normally require you to gather information from two separate sources. Here you are using the material from one text to show that you can make comparisons between the different attitudes shown.*

- It is important to address the 'how' part of the question by exploring the effects of the words in the quotations that you use.
- Here is an example:

In the extract from *My Left Foot* the writer tells us that his mother was optimistic about his prospects, despite his physical disabilities. He writes that 'mother's faith in me seemed almost an impertinence' to the doctors. The quotation suggests that his mother's belief in him was very strong, despite the opposition from the doctors. The word 'faith' is a hopeful word, suggesting that Christy's mother had an instinctive and deep conviction that her son could have a future.

**Useful linking phrases for contrast:**

In contrast to this ...

Whereas ...

However...

Whilst ...

On the other hand ...