

Mr P's Christmas Comprehension

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Band Aid - Do They Know Its Christmas?

It's Christmas time
There's no need to be afraid
At Christmas time
We let in light and we banish shade

And in our world of plenty
We can spread a smile of joy
Throw your arms around the world
At Christmas time

But say a prayer
Pray for the other ones
At Christmas time
It's hard, but when you're having fun

There's a world outside your window
And it's a world of dread and fear
Where the only water flowing
Is the bitter sting of tears

And the Christmas bells that ring there
Are the clanging chimes of doom
Well, tonight thank God it's them
Instead of you

And there won't be snow in Africa this Christmas time
The greatest gift they'll get this year is life (oh)
Where nothing ever grows, no rain nor rivers flow
Do they know it's Christmas time at all? (oh)

(Here's to you) Raise a glass for everyone
(Here's to them) Underneath that burning sun
Do they know it's Christmas time at all?

Feed the world
Feed the world
Feed the world

Let them know it's Christmas time again
Here are the lyrics with some questions to consider!

***It's Christmastime; there's no need to be afraid
At Christmastime, we let in light and we banish shade
And in our world of plenty, we can spread a smile of joy
Throw your arms around the world at Christmastime***

- Can you find a contraction? What is it short for?
- Why is there a semi-colon in the first line?
- Why is there no need to be afraid at Christmas? We put our troubles aside and enjoy time spent with our families.
- What do the symbols of light and shade stand for? We associate light with joy and happiness, shade is darkness and is linked to danger or evil.
- What do you think the word plenty stands for? All the material things we have.
- How effective is the word plenty on a scale of 1-5?
- What does the word banish mean? On a scale of 1-5 how effective is this word?
- In what other way could we say 'throw your arms around'? Hug
- What is the singer trying to say with the last line? A hug is a sign of affection and embracing someone or something you care about.

***But say a prayer to pray for the other ones
At Christmastime
It's hard, but when you're having fun
There's a world outside your window
And it's a world of dread and fear
Where the only water flowing is the bitter sting of tears***

- Who are the other ones we should pray for? Poor, less fortunate people.
- Why is it hard to pray for others at Christmastime? We are usually consumed with what we will be getting as presents.
- What is the meaning behind the world outside your window? As we all have houses, we spend Christmas inside enjoying the time with our family but there are so many other people out there who need our help.
- What do you think about the words dread and fear?
- Why is the world full of dread and fear? Dread for what is going to happen to these people suffering and fear of how will it end?
- Whereabouts in the world were the singers singing about? Explain that in 1984 when this song was written, Bob Geldof and Midge Ure founded Band-Aid to raise money for anti-poverty efforts in Ethiopia. A large portion of Ethiopia is desert or semi-arid. When this song was recorded, there were two particularly bad famines in Ethiopia. In some areas of the country there was very little water, let alone drinkable water.
- How would a bitter sting feel? Painful

- Why does the singer describe the tears in this way? We can cry tears of happiness and when we are sad, he is really emphasising how bad and painful their situation is.

***And the Christmas bells that ring there
Are the clanging chimes of doom
Well tonight thank God it's them instead of you
And there won't be snow in Africa this Christmastime
The greatest gift they'll get this year is life
Oh, where nothing ever grows, no rain or rivers flow
Do they know it's Christmastime at all?***

- Are the bells that ring there the same as once we hear at Christmas?
- Where do you usually hear bells? At church
- What events at church usually involve bells?
- The clanging chimes of doom, what type of bells may these be? Funeral
- Well tonight thank God.... is considered the most powerful line of the song, why? It is meant to make us reflect and be very grateful that we're not suffering from starvation due to famine. Don't forget how lucky and privileged you are to be able to eat every day.
- The next few lines have been considered to be a misrepresentation of Africa, can you think why? The two Ethiopian famines of the mid-80s were caused primarily by the government's poor agricultural policies, misuse of international aid, and an overzealous military which took funds away from health spending. Poor rainfall exacerbated this. Of course, it is factually inaccurate to paint all of Africa (the second biggest continent) as one barren wasteland. There are many rivers, lots of rain, huge amounts of plant life, and even snow. To further demonstrate this point, use Google maps to try and find some.

***Here's to you, raise a glass for everyone
Here's to them, underneath that burning sun
Do they know it's Christmastime at all?***

- Why should we raise a glass for everyone? We should be making sure we think about everyone around the world.
- What does Christmas mean to us?
- Why does the singer ask a question? To make us realise that the way we celebrate Christmas is very different to the way people living in poverty and harsh conditions will be.

***Feed the world
Feed the world***

Feed the world

Let them know it's Christmastime again

Feed the world

Let them know it's Christmastime again

- What do we mean by feed the world?
- Why is it repeated?
-
- Why do you think the song was so successful? Do you think it is still popular today? Is it still relevant today over 30 years later? Why do you think this?

John Lewis - Moz the Monster

Link - <https://youtu.be/sa5dzQhvbil>

Bedtime Story Video - https://youtu.be/GPYvVyg11_s

So here are some questions to pose when watching the video:

- Pause at 5 seconds. Ask the children to share clues about the boy and his room - bed sheets, the book he is reading, his animal slippers etc. What can we infer from this about the boy? What words can we use to describe him?
- Pause at 11 seconds. How is the boy feeling? How do we know? What could the noise be?
- Pause at 16 seconds. How does the boy feel? How do we know? What about the monster? How does he feel? why do you think this?
- Pause at 29 seconds. Is the boy happy about having a monster under the bed? How do you know? What has the boy done to try and sleep? Has it worked? Why?
- Pause at 40 seconds. What has made the monster come out from under the bed? Why did he choose to do that? Who was more scared of each other - the boy or the monster?
- Pause at 1 minute. How old is the monster? What makes you think this? Why do the boy and monster hide from Dad? What might happen if they get caught?
- Pause at 1.10. What are the positives of having the monster under the bed? What are the negatives? Would you like a monster under your bed? Why?
- Pause at 1.22. What does the monster realise? Why do you think? What do you think the monster will do?
- Pause at 1.45. Why are they having to say goodbye to each other? How do they feel about it? Why do they feel this way?
- Watch to the end. What did the monster give as a present? Why did he choose this gift?
- Do you like the story? Why/why not?

What I like most about the advert is the song 'Golden Slumbers' by Elbow, which was originally performed by the Beatles. Here are the lyrics:

[Verse 1]

*Once there was a way
To get back homeward
Once there was a way
To get back home*

[Chorus]

*Sleep, little darling, do not cry
I will sing a lullaby*

*Golden slumbers fill your eyes
Smiles awake you when you rise
Sleep, little darling, do not cry
And I will sing a lullaby
And I will sing a lullaby*

[Verse 2]

*Once there was a way
To get back homeward
Once there was a way
To get back home*

[Chorus]

*Sleep, little darling, do not cry
And I will sing a lullaby*

The lyrics were inspired by a poem by Thomas Dekker. Here is a copy of the original poem:

*Golden slumbers kiss your eyes,
Smiles awake you when you rise.
Sleep, pretty wantons, do not cry,
And I will sing a lullaby:
Rock them, rock them, lullaby.*

*Care is heavy, therefore sleep you;
You are care, and care must keep you.
Sleep, pretty wantons, do not cry,
And I will sing a lullaby:
Rock them, rock them, lullaby.*

I would use this poem and explore it.

- After reading the poem ask the children what the poem is about? It is a lullaby designed to send a little baby off to the land of sleep. It is about a parent dealing with all the worries of another so they can be truly relaxed and serene. At this point you may need to clarify a lullaby.
- What does the phrase Golden Slumber mean? Why has the author use the word golden? Why does he choose the verb kiss?
- 'Smiles awake when you rise' tells us what about the baby? They are well loved, it shows us that the baby is be watched carefully by loving parents. Once the slumber is over, this baby will be confronted by love and happiness rather than troubles and worries.
- What do you think the phrase 'pretty wantons' means?

- Why does the author repeat the words lullaby and rock them? The repetition of 'lullaby' and 'rock them' and the gentle rhyme at the end of each line. This is designed to be read softly and be soothing. It is describing the actions of the person singing it – 'sing a lullaby', while they 'rock' the baby to sleep.
- In the second verse, the word care is used in three ways, in what ways is the word used? First, 'care is heavy' meaning that troubles and worries weigh us down and make life difficult. Then the baby is described as 'care' for someone else, as its parents have to watch over and worry about its health and happiness, so the baby is something for them to 'care' or worry about, but the baby itself is always kept free from worry.
- Is this poem a happy or sad one? What makes you think this.

Relating back to the advert, ask the students to consider why this song/poem was chosen.

John Lewis - Buster The Boxer

Video Link - <https://youtu.be/4qo27xcVS5I>

So watch the clip and ask the following questions:

Pause at 10 seconds.

- What does the young girl love to do? How do we know?
- What might be on her Christmas List?
- What do you think the dog is thinking when he is watching the girl?
- Why does Mum tell the girl to stop?

Pause at 25 seconds

- What has Dad built for the girl?
- Why has Santa not delivered this gift? (This is a tricky question and actually got quite a backlash online. I feel it is easily explainable by either suggesting Santa delivered it early for it to be built, it was too big to fit in the sleigh, the girl had already written her Christmas letter and this was a surprise from the parents)
- How does Dad feel as he is building it? How do you know?

Pause at 1 minute 25 seconds.

- Can we name all the animals that go onto the trampoline?
- Are there any similarities about the animal? This could open up a discussion about nocturnal animals. Are all the animals nocturnal? How do we know?
- How do the foxes feel when they first step onto the trampoline? Why do you think this?
- Do you think foxes and badgers usually get on? Why do they decide to be nice to each other?
- How does buster feel watching from inside? How do we know?

Pause at 1 minute 33 seconds.

- What day is it? How do we know?
- How is the little girl feeling? How do you know?
- What do you think Buster will do?

Watch to the end.

- How does the girl and her parents react when Buster jumps on the trampoline?
- How do we know this?
- Why do you think they are so shocked? Link to Buster at the start and how obedient he is.

- Do you like the advert? Why?
- What is the message that John Lewis wants to get across through the advert?

Can we think of some words for what Buster does on the trampoline:

Jump, leap, bounce...

Once you have had the discussion about the film, we can now introduce some text:

Print out and photocopy the following sentences and in groups ask the children to put them into chronological order. The sentences are simple to support children with decoding.

Buster runs onto the trampoline and jumps up and down.

Buster watches the girl jump on her bed.

Buster is sad watching animals bounce on the trampoline.

Dad makes a trampoline in the garden.

This activity will start getting children to understand the structure of a narrative and ordering stories in chronological order.

John Lewis - Man on the Moon

Link to video - <https://youtu.be/jGY-T4W-BOc>

What I love about this year's effort, is how powerful the music and the lyrics are. John Murray has kindly put together some questions based on the song and the lyrics, which were originally performed by Oasis.

Questions to consider, this can be used as a pre-reading task, aimed at Upper KS2 -

- Why do you think the singer wants to leave 'this city'?
- Why do you think 'this old town don't smell too pretty'?
- There is a grammatical error here. Can you spot it?
- Why do you think this error has been included?
- What effect does it have on how the listener feels towards the singer?
- How do you think 'this old town' smells? Draw a picture of the things that might make it smell this way.
- When somebody is alone and feeling lonely, why might they describe themselves as being on an 'island'?
- How can people feel they are living on an isolated 'island' in a city when surrounded by lots of people? Do you sometimes feel this way?
- Why might you want to leave this situation? What would you want to find/move to instead?
- Why might this be described as a 'soul asylum'?
- Do you think the old man in the video once felt this way? Why do you think he left for the moon? Do you think he found the happiness and friendship he was looking for?
- What dreams do you think he is still looking for?
- Why do you think the line 'half the world away' is repeated so often.
- Do you believe him when he says 'I don't feel down'? Why? Why not?

Here are some questions to consider for the video -

- In the first 5 seconds, how does the girl feel? How do you know? How old is she?
- In the opening scene, what tells us that one of the characters might have an interest in space?
- Who do you think owns the telescope?
- Do you think the girl's brother will have the same interest? Why not? What computer game might he be playing...Space Invaders?
- Has she used the telescope before? How do you know?
- How does she feel when she sees the man on the moon? Why does she wave?
- Who do you think the old man is? Why?
- How old might he be?
- At 43 seconds, how do we know she is desperate to get home to the telescope?

- Do you think the man is lonely? What makes you think this? Has he always been alone?
- At 56 seconds, what is symbolic of this image and what does it make the girl think to do?
- Why do you think the girl writes to the old man rather than Santa (which all the other children will be doing at this time of year)? What does this tell us about the girl's character?
- What do you think is in the letter? How might it be different to a typical 'Dear Santa' letter?
- Can you think of a way in which she can get the letter to the moon? Predict whether these will work.
- From which room in the house does she try and send the letter? Why?
- How does she try and send it? She fails. How do both the girl and the old man feel? How do they show their feelings? Would you feel the same way?
- What type of Christmas does the girl have? How is it different to the old man? Is this similar to your Christmas? What does Christmas mean to you?
- What do mum and dad buy the girl for Christmas?
- Does the girl like her present? How does she show this?
- If the girl likes her present so much, why does she give it away? What does this tell us about the girl's character? Do you think this is a good way to be? Why? Why not?
- What do you notice about the colour of the moon and the man? How are they linked and what effect does this have? How does this add to our understanding of the character?
- How does that change when the present appears? What do you think the present is?
- How does the old man feel? Why does he cry? Is crying always a sad thing?
- After Christmas is over, do you think the old man and the girl will keep in touch and continue their friendship?

John Lewis - Monty the Penguin

Link to the Video - <https://youtu.be/RSxOjBljyhI>

Straight away what immediately jumps out to me is the direct link to the story 'Lost and Found,' by Oliver Jeffers.

Although in the book, the penguin seems to be more attached to the boy and it is the other way round in the advert, there are definite links that can be made and discussions about the advert and book.

- Before starting the video pause at one second, ask the children about the setting?
- Where is it? What clues tell us it the bedroom of a young boy? What hobbies interests may the young boy have? What is the evidence?
- What is the relationship between the boy and penguin? How do you know? What do they do together?
- What is the penguin's favourite food?
- Pause at 56 seconds, what happens to get the boy excited? How does the penguin react? Why does this confuse the boy? What is the penguin interested in?
- Pause at 1:03 what word describes the Penguins feelings towards what he sees on the TV? How do we know from his reaction? Eyes widen etc
- At 1:15 how does the boy react to the Penguin's peculiar behaviour? How does he feel? How do we know? Why is he confused?
- At 1:27 what does the boy realise? What do you think he will do?
- At 1:40 how is the penguin feeling? How do you know?
- Has the boy done the right thing?
- How does the mother react at 1:46?

Writing activities -

- Write a diary recount as the boy and the year with his penguin friend.
- Write a contrasting diary as the penguin.
- Write a letter to Father Christmas from the penguin/boy
- Write a set of instructions for how to keep a penguin as a pet.
- Research and create a information text on Penguins
- Look into the way climate change is affecting the habitats of penguins.
- Ask the children what animal they would like as a pet and write a story about keeping that wild animal.
- Write shape poems about Penguins.
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Aldi - Kevin The Carrot 2016

Link to video - <https://youtu.be/J4rX8OG4APQ>

Pause at 13 seconds.

*'Twas the night before Christmas
A carrot gazed at the sky,
Thinking..."I could meet Santa!When he gets his Mince Pie."*

- What day is it?
- Look at the word 'Twas. What is unusual about it? Why has the author started with this word?
- How do we know it is a contraction?
- Do you know of any other stories that start that way? Make links to the poem, the Night Before Christmas. I will hopefully blog about this poem soon.
- What type of text are we reading? How do we know?
- What is the rhyming pattern?
- Look at the word 'gazed,' on a scale of 1-5 where would you put this, why?
- What has the family left out for Santa?
- Why have they left it next to the fireplace?
- What will Kevin have to do to get to the Mince Pie, can we make a prediction?

Pause at 30 seconds.

*But a Christmassy Spread
Though a joy to us all,
Can be quite scary
When you're three inches tall.*

- How does Kevin feel about his journey? How do we know?
- What is a 'Christmassy spread'?
- Can you find the adverb in the third line? Why do you think the author has chosen this word?
- On a scale of 1-5, where would you put the word 'scary'?
- What is the contraction in the last line?
- How big is three inches?
- On your whiteboards, can you write a simile to describe the roast potatoes chasing Kevin.
- What might the grater be used for at a Christmas dinner?

Pause at 47 seconds.

Still our carrot went forth,

*On his dangerous quest,
And soldiered on bravely,
To the chimney breast.
He finally arrived,
Though exhausted methinks,
As he said to himself,
"Just a quick forty winks."*

- What does the phrase 'went forth' mean? Does it sound formal? Have you heard it before? Why do you think the author has chosen it?
- Find the adjective to describe the quest.
- On a scale of 1-5, where would you put the word quest? What else could we have used? Why do you think the author chose quest?
- Why has the author used the verb soldiered? What effect does this have?
- What is the adverb used to describe it? What does this tell us about the quest?
- On a scale of 1-5, where would you put the word 'exhausted'?
- Discuss the word 'methinks' is this a modern word? Why has the author chosen to use this?
- What does Kevin mean when he says forty winks?

Watch to the end.

*Then all of a sudden,
Young carrot awoke,
Flying high over London,
Or Glasgow, Or Stoke.
So the sleigh flew much faster
That cold Christmas Eve,
Powered on by a carrot,
We like to believe.*

- What has happened to Kevin?
 - Why has the author used the conjunction 'or'?
 - Why do London, Glasgow and Stoke all have capital letters?
 - Which word is used to describe the Christmas Eve?
 - Why do you think the sleigh flew much fast?
 - Do you think this story is real? What evidence in the text makes us think not?
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- What does Aldi sell?
 - Why do you think they chose a carrot as the main character?
 - Why do you think they chose to name him Kevin?
 - Do you like the advert? Give reasons for your answer.

Aldi - Kevin The Carrot 2017

Link to Advert: <https://youtu.be/NEs-dADRIJw>

One cold Christmas Eve on snow-covered ground,
A carrot awoke to a most mysterious sound,
As he departed that magical night,
His heart skipped a beat it was love at first sight.

But a midnight express is no place to be,
Was it a murder? Only carrot could see,
And a turn of events caused a commotion,
A chance for our hero to show his devotion.

"Are you OK?"
"I think I just peed myself!"

So our carrots made tracks through the wind and the snow,
On the lookout for Santa, would they find him? Ho Ho Ho.

- Why has the author described the weather at the start? How does this set the atmosphere for the story?
- What does Kevin think the mysterious sound might be?
- Why has the night been described as magical?
- Why did Kevin's heart skip a beat? Why has the author made a link to his heart?
- How do we know Kevin is on a train? What evidence from the text supports this?
- What does the word commotion mean?
- What caused the commotion?
- What does the word devotion mean?
- Why is Kevin's response funny? Pun on the word peed.
- What is unusual about the phrase 'made tracks' linked in the video?
- What might the train be?

Sainsbury's - The Greatest Gift

Link to Video - <https://youtu.be/bq5SGSCZe4E>

Pause at 46 seconds

*Another year over, where do they go to, it's a mystery
Now it's December, so much to remember before Christmas Eve
I'm already late, and my train is delayed,
disruption on the line! race into work and the place is berserk,
yes it's Christmas time! wanna find the greatest gift I can give my family
But right now I don't have time to breathe*

- What does the first line of the song imply? Time moves quickly
- Why does the singer use the word mystery?
- What does he need to remember before Christmas Eve?
- Why is he late?
- What does the word disruption mean?
- Why has he chose the word 'race' to describe how he went to work?
- On a scale of 1-5, how effective is the word berserk?
- Why is his work berserk at Christmas?
- Why does he want the greatest gift for his family?
- What does he mean by the phrase 'don't have time to breathe'?

Pause at 1 minute 57 seconds:

*The streets are chaotic, the shops idiotic, there's a queue for the queue
A granny's taking her time at the front of the line ('Ninety-one... ninety-two...')
There's a party at work and the manager's twerking inappropriately
To top off the day, another train is delayed, it's a catastrophe
Christmas time is here, I'd like to spend the time with the ones I love so dear
I'm trying to find the greatest gift I can give my family
I don't have time, there's only one of me
Tell me how do people do it all, I'll never get it done
If only there was a way to be in two places at once...
Wait... that gives me an idea!*

- What do the words chaotic and idiotic mean? Do you think they are effective word choices?
- What is 'there's' a contraction of?
- 'There's a queue for the queue' is a phrase to show what?
- Feel free to skip the twerking line 🙄
- What phrase shows the singer is being sarcastic?
- On a scale of 1-5, how effective is the word catastrophe?

- How is the singer showing he is getting more desperate as time passes?
- Do you think he is a good Dad? Why?
- Do you think he thinks he is a good Dad? Why do you think this?
- Why has the singer used ellipses?
- Why has he also used an exclamation mark?
- Can we make a prediction about what his idea will be? Why do you think this?

Watch until the end.

If I wasn't alone, what if I had a clone, I could do so much more! It would all be a breeze, with a couple more mes, I'd have time galore! I wanna find the greatest gift I can give my family. The greatest gift I can give is me. Now I can meet with the boss and empty out my inbox all simultaneously. Leaving me time to spend with my family and friends, where I wanna be! I wanna find the greatest gift I can give my family. The greatest gift that I can give is me! I wanna find the greatest gift I can give my family. The greatest gift that I can give is me! I wanna find the greatest gift I can give my family. The greatest gift that I can give is me! I wanna find the greatest gift I can give my family. The greatest gift that I can give is me! I wanna find the greatest gift I can give my family. The greatest gift that I can give is me!

- What is a clone?
- Why would it be a breeze?
- What does the word 'galore' mean?
- Was your prediction correct?
- Do you think the singer enjoys work? Explain your answer?
- What is the greatest gift?
- What is the message that Sainsbury's are trying to express in this advert?
- Do you like the advert? Why/Why not?

M&S - Mrs Claus (2016)

Link to Video - <https://youtu.be/V5QPXhStb5I>

Pause at 16 seconds on the close up of the letter.

- How old do you think the child is who wrote the letter? How do you know?

Mrs Claus: Hot tea, cheese and pickle. Keep away from this mince pies!

Father Christmas: Any last minute requests?

Mrs Claus: No, no, just bills. Fly safe. Don't forget Australia!

Father Christmas: I won't. Easily done. Rudolf harrrr

- Why has Mrs Claus kept the letter a secret?
- What impressions do we get of her as a character so far?
- Why does she tell Father Christmas to keep away from Mince Pies? Do you think he will?
- Why might Father Christmas forget Australia?

Dear Mrs Claus,

My name is Jake and I am six years old. I've a big sister called Anna who is tall and sometimes angry. I also have a dog called Tiger who loves eating things. This Christmas, I need your help because I want something and I know can get it for me. You might think I don't like my sister very much but I do. I love her a lot and I want her to be happy at Christmas.

Love,

Jake

Ages 6 but 7 in two weeks.

- Why do you think Jake has written a letter to Mrs Claus and not Santa?
- How old do you think Anna is?
- Why might Anna be sometime angry?
- How do you know that Jake loves his dog Tiger?
- What type of opener is 'This Christmas'?
- How does Jake persuade Mrs Claus to help him?
- Why might Mrs Claus think Jake doesn't like his sister?

- What words can you think of to describe Jake? Can you back these up with evidence from the text and film.
- Can you find all the proper nouns in the letter. How many are there?
- How many contractions can you find? What type of contractions have been used?
- Why does Jake add the phrase 'a lot' to his last sentence?
- What do you notice about the name of the helicopter?

Watch to the end.

Father Christmas: Merry Christmas! So, how was your night?

Mrs Claus: Oh you know, quiet.

Father Christmas: How did that get there?

Mrs Claus: Well it wouldn't be fun if you knew all my secrets.

- Do you think Mrs Claus gets a lot of letters? Why/why not?
- Why does Mrs Claus describe her night as 'quiet'?

Edeka Christmas Advert 2015

Link to Video - https://youtu.be/4_B6wQMd2eI

Before watching the Advert

Set the scene: It is Christmas and you need to phone your dad to tell him you can't make it. Predict what the message might say and how it will be constructed: Will it be formal or informal? How will it start? What else might you say? How long will it be? How will the message end? Why do you think this? What might you say? How might you say it?

Sit children in pairs back to back.

Give each learner a copy of the phone message.

Allow the children to read it silently to themselves. Ask them to think about how they would say the words if they were leaving the message for real. Get them to think about their tone of voice, the pace at which they would speak, which words you would stress and why, would you pause at any point and if so, for how long.

Now practice reading the message to each other back to back.

Transcript (The phone message translated)

Hello Daddy, it's me.

Hello Grandpa!

I just wanted to call and let you know that we can't make it for Christmas this year. We'll try again next year. It'll work out, I promise. Merry Christmas, Daddy.

See you soon.

Merry Christmas, Grandpa!

It is important that children do not face each other at this point in order that they focus on the pitch and pace of their speech. This technique is also an excellent way in which to develop a keen understanding of how aspects such as audience, purpose, main idea, language choice and style are often interlinked.

Those learners who can empathise with the character will often demonstrate their better understanding of the text by bringing the text to life. By acting it out will increase their understanding of both the text as whole and specific elements within it. However, those learners who read the text out in a monotone and have difficulty bringing this text to life will often be those who have less emotional dexterity. These readers have often surpassed the decoding stage and are quite able to retrieve literal information. They may also be able to recognise key words and employ basic deductive reasoning skills. But it is with the higher order reading skill of inference that they will have real problems with and, as such, their appreciation and understanding of the text will be limited.

Comprehension Questions based on the answer machine message:

- Who do you think left the message? To whom did they leave it? Why?
- Do you think the phrase 'Hello Daddy' and 'Hello Grandpa' are said the same way? (Notice the difference between the use of a full stop and the exclamation mark).
- Why might this not be the case? What might this difference of voices tell us about the how the daughter and granddaughter are feeling and which of the two doesn't really understand the situation fully?
- How old might this suggest the granddaughter is?
- Is this echoed again later in the text? How so?
- How else does the daughter show that she is trying to be warm and apologetic to her father, even though the message she is delivering is not a very loving one?
- What does her use of contractions show us?
- Now imagine you have received that message.
- How do you feel? Why?

You are now ready to watch the advert:

- Why did the old man miss the phone call?
- Why do you think he has a dog?
- When he is preparing his Christmas dinner and looks out of the window, what does he see? How does this make him feel? What do you think he is thinking at this point? Why?
- How do we know the man was married? What do you think has happened to his wife? Why do you think that? How long has he been on his own?
- How are you feeling at this point in the film: [A] towards the old man [B] towards his family? Why?
- Why do you think we see him sat at the head of a long table alone?
- Why do we see him dressed three different ways while he is eating his Christmas dinner?
- What does this tell us about the promise his daughter made?

[After 30 seconds]

- What family does the old man have?
 - Why might they not be able to see him at Christmas?
- Eldest son: busy with important work as a doctor saving lives
- Youngest son: lives very far away in another country/continent
- Daughter: has a young family to look after
- Each of his children receives a message:
 - Eldest son: text. Youngest son: phone call. Daughter: letter/card

- Why do you think it is the eldest child who receives a message first? What do you think the message is? Is it the same message the other two children receive. Why might it not be? How will each of them feel? Why? What will they do next?
- How does each of the old man's children show their regret?

[53 seconds]

- Why are the characters dressed in black outside a church?
- Why does the daughter hug the youngest brother and not the eldest brother at this point in time?

[1 minute, 5 seconds]

- When they arrive at the old man's home, why are the candles on the dinner table lit? Who do you think has lit them? Do you think it is significant that the lit candles are on the dining table and not elsewhere? What might this suggest?
- Why does the translator use ellipsis when the daughter says 'Daddy...' and the granddaughter says 'Grandpa!'? What does this tell us about [A] How these two characters are feeling and [B] their understanding of the situation itself?

[1 minute, 27 seconds]

- Why do you think it is left to the eldest son to carve the turkey?
- Why do you think this is the first time we see the old man happy?

[The End]

- What is the last line of the advert?
- What message/moral is it trying to teach us? Do you agree or disagree with this message? Why? Why not?
- After you have watched the advert
- If this had really happened, was the old man right to do what he did to his children? Discuss for and against his actions.

The song can also be used as a text to explore:

Lyrics:

I never told you how

How much you mean to me

What in the world I would do

I just never made it through to you

Ooh, to you

There goes a day, there goes a week

So many goals I had to reach

The more I did, the less I cared

The more I miss the love you shared

If life is a song, somehow it's sad

I don't know the words without you dad

You've been on my mind all the time

And I'm missing you

Home used to be just some walls that I
knew

But the truth is that home means nothing
without you

So I got to say

Won't you grow old

'Cause it's you that I want to last

As long as I need you here

And I'm begging you, daddy please don't
leave

You once told your little girl

You're unbreakable

There goes a month, there goes a year

So many things out there I fear

You helped me up when I was down

You taught me how to stand my ground

This life is a song, happy and sad

And I don't want to sing without you dad

Maybe it's selfish when I say these words

But I'm missing you

Home used to be just some walls that I
knew

But the truth is that home means nothing
without you

So I got to say

Won't you grow old

'Cause it's you that I want to last

As long that I need you here

And I'm begging you, daddy please don't
leave

You once told your little girl

You're unbreakable

Oh, oh, oh

The truth is my home means nothing without
you

Comprehension Questions

Title:

- The title of this song is Dad. Why do you think the song writer chose such a short and simple title for a song that is quite deep and meaningful? What do you think of when you hear or say the word Dad?

Verse 1:

- Do you think it is important to tell the people you care about that you love them? Why might some people not do this if it is so important?
- It is often said 'actions speak louder than words.'
- What do you think this phrase means?
- Do you agree or disagree with it?
- Why?
- How might you apply this to the words left by the daughter in her phone message in the advert?
- What lesson might this have about our promises?

Verse 2:

- Lines 1-2: How is the passage of time shown? What is important to the singer at this point of time? What do you think her 'goals' were? Do you think they are the same now? Why? Why not?
- Lines 3-4: What do you think these two lines mean? Explain them in your own words to a partner. How might this happen in your life?
- Why do you think the singer says this is a sad song? Do you agree with her? Why?
- Where do you think her Dad is?

Verse 3:

- What is the difference between a house and a home? What really makes a home a home?

Verse 4:

- Why do you think the last verse is a single line?
- Why do you think it starts with the statement 'Truth is' but then quickly uses an ellipsis?
- Do we see a similar literary device in the advert?
- How effective is it? Why?

- What line from Verse 3 is repeated here?
- Why do you think the song writer chose to do this?

Further links to the advert:

- Do you think this was a good song choice to use for the German Christmas advert? Why? Why not?
- How does its message of the song link to the moral or the advert? What theme do they have in common?
- Is there anything about the song and advert that are different? One ends happily whereas the other is sad throughout. Do you think using this song enhanced the overall idea/message of the advert in any way? How so?