This chapter focuses on a wide range of text types – both continuous and non-continuous. Throughout this chapter you will focus on a range of the text types you have already covered in previous chapters. People feature heavily in almost every type of written text. From some of the earliest religious texts to newspapers, magazines, journals and contemporary books almost every text will include or be influenced by people.

Throughout the chapter you should consider how people are presented differently in each form of writing. Skilled writers will create believable characters who we can visualize, identify with, admire or even despise. The characters in fictional writing are made up by the writer but people in non-fiction are real. Real people can be presented in a certain light by the writer and the job of the reader is to recognize any bias or prejudice in the ways they are presented. Sometimes a reader will need to take information from more than one source to create their own interpretations and understanding of a person.

In this chapter you will further develop a range of reading, writing and oracy (speaking and listening) skills. You will encounter a range of reading activities in which you can develop your ability to synthesize, analyse, reflect and evaluate. You will practise a range of writing skills including producing a review and some narrative writing. To improve your speaking and listening, you will develop both presentation and conversation skills.

The focus of this chapter is ‘People’. The extracts you read will focus on different types of people – from both the past and the present. While you are reading and analysing the extracts, try to think about the appearance, behaviour and actions of the people within them and consider how you feel about them as a reader.

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**Key terms**

- **Synthesize**: to form something by bringing together information from different sources
- **Continuous text**: text written in sentences and paragraphs
- **Non-continuous text**: text which presents information in other ways, for example charts, tables, diagrams and graphs

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**Exam link**

**Exam relevance**

In the exams you will be asked to read from a range of different texts and this chapter will give you the opportunity to develop some of the reading skills which will help you access this variety of material. You will also be given the chance to develop the presentation skills that are required for Unit 1.

In this chapter you will:
- read, analyse and evaluate a range of different texts
- synthesize information from a range of texts
- develop skills for the writing section of the exams
- consider how to present information in speaking and listening activities.

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**Excerpts**

- ‘The key to good decision-making is evaluating the available information...’
  - Emily Oster
- ‘You never really understand a person until you consider things from his point of view – until you climb into his skin and walk around in it.’
  - Harper Lee, *To Kill a Mockingbird*
- ‘True genius resides in the capacity for evaluation of uncertain, hazardous, and conflicting information.’
  - Winston Churchill
**11 How a writer influences the reader**

**Extreme travel**

**Introduction**

Some people choose to visit and explore extreme environments. From hostile, uninhabited islands to jungles, deserts, mountains and vast areas of ice and snow, there are many extreme areas on our planet. These are often dangerous and conditions can be life-threatening.

Students are often asked to think about a writer’s techniques and how a writer may try to manipulate feelings. From holiday brochures to charity adverts, writers try to appeal to us and change the way we feel. When we are asked to consider, ‘how does the writer…?’ we need to think carefully about:

- what the writer actually says
- how the contents might affect the reader
- the writer’s method.

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**Activity 1**

Read the extract opposite. The article suggests that this is Sir Ranulph Fiennes’ ‘greatest challenge to date’.

1. Look at the subheading and write down anything that the writer says here to suggest this is a great challenge.
2. Now look at the rest of the article. How does the writer present the trek as a challenge? Use these questions to help you.

- Do any of the words suggest it is a challenge?
- What will make the adventure difficult?
- What have other people said about the area?
- Does the writer use any numbers or statistics to make the trek sound more challenging?

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**Activity 2**

Now think about each piece of information you have chosen. Can you explain why each of these suggests that the trek will be a challenge?

**Support**

The writer mentions Captain Robert Falcon Scott and Apsley Cherry-Garrard in the text. Who do you think these people are? Why do you think the writer mentions them?

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**Activity 3**

Using all the skills you’ve looked at in Activities 1 and 2, write two paragraphs to answer the following question: How does the writer persuade us that this will be a great challenge?

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**Exam link**

The following steps can help you answer “How…” questions in the exam:

1. When analysing what a writer says, work out who the writer is — in this case it is journalist Maw Kennedy, not Sir Ranulph Fiennes.
2. Look carefully at what the question asks you to do. Are you being asked how the writer persuades you to do something or why you are persuaded that this is a difficult task?
3. Once you understand what you are being asked to look at, start focusing on what the writer says and how they put their ideas together.

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**Sir Ranulph Fiennes to attempt record winter Antarctica trek**

Veteran explorer describes planned 2,000-mile trek in temperatures as low as −90°C as his greatest challenge to date

The appalling challenge of a six-month 2,000-mile walk across the south pole, in the perpetual darkness of the Antarctic winter when temperatures can plummet to −90°C, proved, perhaps inevitably, irresistible to the veteran explorer Sir Ranulph Fiennes.

Fiennes’ hero, Captain Robert Falcon Scott, wrote ‘great God, this is an awful place’ when he finally reached the south pole a century ago, before freezing and starving to death with his team on the return journey. Apsley Cherry-Garrard called his own trek “the worst journey in the world”. […] Those journeys were made in summer. Nobody before has attempted […] crossing the pole in winter. In a prepared statement, Fiennes said: ‘This will be my greatest challenge to date. We will stretch the limits of human endurance.’ […]

However, in person, at the launch at the Royal Society of The Coldest Journey, Fiennes could not really explain why anyone should contemplate such a venture, still less a man aged 68 who has survived cancer, major heart surgery, and the loss of most of the frozen finger tips on one hand – which he cut off himself with a saw bought specially for the purpose. ‘It’s what I do,’ he said, looking slightly puzzled at the question.