

Talk a Lot

Media

Multi-Purpose Text

Read All About It! (Original Text)

Line

1 One autumnal day at the crack of dawn, Dennis was walking into town, when an
2 alarmed youth in an orange tabard abruptly forced some torn banknotes into his
3 hand, and passed him a full bag of fresh newspapers. "If you take this bag," he said
4 urgently, boggle-eyed, "I'll give you twenty-five pounds!" Dennis took the money and
5 the bag, and the youth ran away screaming. Shortly afterwards, Dennis nonchalantly
6 abandoned the bag behind a bench and went on his way. Suddenly he heard an
7 unfamiliar accent: "Hey! No hide papers, man!" Dennis found himself being pursued
8 by an angry-looking hippy wearing an orange tabard, and closely observed by a slim
9 raven-haired femme fatale. He ducked into an alley and prostrated himself behind
10 some bins that reeked of pickle. All was quiet. "Don't speak!" croaked a terrified
11 teen, who was also clad in an orange tabard. Dennis grew mystified. "I'm Stevo,"
12 confessed the boy. "I hide here each morning and wait 'till the shift's finished. I bin all
13 my freesheets! I can't take it! The wind – the h-howling wind! The rejection when
14 people say 'No thanks, mate!' The fear!" "So why don't you quit?" asked Dennis.
15 "Dax!" intoned Stevo. "Dax is the gaffer. He'll kill me! Nobody can leave!" He
16 rocked upon his heels and quivered. "What about his girl?" enquired Dennis casually.
17 "Kristina's his *cousin*," vouchsafed Stevo. "Thank you, my friend," declared
18 Dennis, getting up. "Your secret's safe with me!" The next morning Dennis began his
19 first shift giving away freesheets. By the end of the week he'd had four dates with
20 Kristina, and within two weeks they'd split up and he'd been given the sack – along
21 with two black eyes – by the celebrated Dax. But he never did rat on Stevo, who,
22 perhaps, even to this day, is still timidly hiding there behind the pickle merchant's.
(311 words)



Read All About It! (Text with 16 Differences)

One autumnal day at the crack of **1. door (dawn)**, Dennis was walking into town, when an
alarmed youth in an orange tabard abruptly forced some torn banknotes into his hand, and
2. cast (passed) him a full bag of fresh newspapers. "If you take this bag," he said urgently,
boggle-eyed, "I'll give you twenty-five pounds!" Dennis took the money and the **3. bat (bag)**,
and the youth ran away screaming. Shortly afterwards, Dennis nonchalantly abandoned the
bag behind a **4. bend (bench)** and went on his way. Suddenly he heard **5. a (an)**
unfamiliar accent: "Hey! No hide papers, man!" Dennis found himself being pursued by an
angry-looking hippy wearing an orange tabard, and closely observed by a **6. sim (slim)**
raven-haired femme fatale. **7. We (He)** ducked into an alley and prostrated himself behind
some bins that reeked of pickle. All was quiet. "Don't speak!" croaked a terrified teen, who
was also clad in an orange tabard. Dennis **8. glue (grew)** mystified. "I'm Stevo," confessed
the boy. "I **9. high (hide)** here each morning and wait 'till the shift's finished. I bin all my
freesheets! I can't take it! The wind – the h-howling wind! The rejection **10. well (when)**
people say 'No thanks, mate!' The fear!" "So why don't you quit?" asked Dennis. "Dax!"
intoned Stevo. "Dax is the gaffer. He'll kill me! Nobody can **11. leaf (leave)!**" He rocked upon
his heels and quivered. "**12. Hot (What)** about his girl?" enquired Dennis casually. "Kristina's
his *cousin*," vouchsafed Stevo. "Thank you, my friend," declared Dennis, getting up. "Your
secret's **13. save (safe)** with me!" The next morning Dennis began his first shift giving
away freesheets. By the end of the week he'd had four **14. days (dates)** with Kristina, and
within two weeks **15. they'll (they'd)** split up and he'd been given the sack – along with two
black eyes – by the celebrated Dax. But he never did rat on Stevo, who, perhaps, even to this
16. Dane (day), is still timidly hiding there behind the pickle merchant's.

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Read All About It! (Guess the Function Words)



One autumnal day a t crack o dawn, Dennis w walking i town, w a alarmed youth i a orange tabard abruptly forced s torn banknotes i h hand, a passed h a full bag o fresh newspapers. "I y take t bag," h said urgently, boggle-eyed, "I' give y twenty-five pounds!" Dennis took t money a t bag, a t youth ran away screaming. Shortly afterwards, Dennis nonchalantly abandoned t bag b a bench a went o h way.



Suddenly h heard a unfamiliar accent: "Hey! No hide papers, man!" Dennis found h b pursued b a angry-looking hippy wearing a orange tabard, a closely observed b a slim raven-haired femme fatale. H ducked i a alley a prostrated h b s bins t reeked o pickle. All w quiet. "Don't speak!" croaked a terrified teen, w w a clad i a orange tabard. Dennis grew mystified. "I' Stevo," confessed t boy.



"I hide h each morning a wait 't t shift's finished. I bin all m freesheets! I can't take i! T wind – t h-howling wind! T rejection w people say 'No thanks, mate! T fear!" "S why don't y quit?" asked Dennis. "Dax!" intoned Stevo. "Dax i t gaffer. H ' kill me! Nobody c leave!" H rocked u h heels a quivered. "What a h girl?" enquired Dennis casually. "Kristina's h *cousin*," vouchsafed Stevo.



"Thank y , m friend," declared Dennis, getting up. "Y secret's safe w m !" T next morning Dennis began h first shift giving away freesheets. B t end o t week h ' had four dates w Kristina, a w two weeks t ' split up a h ' b given t sack – a w two black eyes – b t celebrated Dax. B h never did rat o Stevo, w , perhaps, even t t day, i still timidly hiding there b t pickle merchant's.

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Read All About It! (What's the Question?)

1. Autumn.
2. Kristina.
3. Answers will vary, e.g. because Dax didn't like Dennis going out with his cousin.
4. Dennis.
5. Kristina.
6. Because he didn't want to do his job giving away freesheets.
7. Manager of the freesheet team.
8. Twenty-five pounds in cash and his bag of freesheets.
9. Black – she was raven-haired.
10. Freesheets (free newspapers).
11. We don't know exactly. He was a working teenager, so presumably between sixteen and nineteen.
12. Answers will vary, e.g. the job made him feel stressed out.
13. He left it behind a bench.
14. For about two weeks.
15. No, he didn't.
16. Dax.
17. So that he would take his bag of freesheets, allowing him to leave.
18. Orange.
19. Because he fancied Kristina.
20. Behind some pickle-filled bins.
21. No, he spoke in broken English.
22. Two people.
23. A person who worked giving away freesheets.
24. He was walking into town.
25. Freesheet distributor.
26. AWOL freesheet distributor Stevo.
27. Because he was afraid of Dax.
28. It was early in the morning.
29. Four.
30. Dax did.

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Read All About It! (True, False, or Unknown?)

1. Dax was from The Netherlands.
2. Dax gave Dennis two black eyes.
3. Dennis kept Stevo's secret.
4. Stevo asked Dennis his name.
5. Dennis was given twenty pounds.
6. Kristina was attracted to Dennis because of his looks.
7. Dax was formerly a customer operations manager for a well-known global brand.
8. Dax beat up Dennis because Dennis dumped Kristina.
9. Kristina liked Dennis.
10. Dax had been the freesheet team's manager for two years.
11. Kristina was Dax's cousin.
12. The freesheet business has since closed down due to falling revenues.
13. The freesheet distributors were afraid of their boss.
14. Stevo is still in hiding.
15. Stevo wouldn't tell Dennis what he wanted to know.
16. Dennis was originally going to the bank.
17. Dennis made twenty-five pounds.
18. Dax was pleased that Dennis and Kristina got together.
19. The youth who gave Dennis twenty-five pounds was called Gareth.
20. Dennis and Kristina went out for a week.
21. The newspaper distributors had to wear orange tabards.
22. Kristina was Dax's second-cousin.
23. Two angry hippies chased Dennis.
24. Dennis and Stevo hid behind a pickle merchant's.
25. Dennis spent some of the twenty-five pounds on a large jar of pickle.
26. Dennis took the money, then left the bag behind a bench.
27. Stevo was twenty-five years old.
28. The story took place in winter.
29. Stevo was afraid of Dax.
30. Dax spoke English really well.

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Multi-Purpose Text

Glossary of New Words

Here are some words and phrases from the text that may be unfamiliar. Find and write down definitions, explanations, and translations below, as required. Stressed syllables are underlined.

Line:	Unfamiliar English:	Definition / Explanation / Translation:
1	aut <u>umn</u> al	
1	at the <u>crack</u> of <u>dawn</u>	
2	a <u>tabard</u>	
4	<u>urgently</u>	
4	<u>boggle-eyed</u>	
5	<u>nonchalantly</u>	
6	to <u>abandon</u>	
7	"Hey! <u>No</u> <u>hide</u> <u>papers</u> , <u>man</u> !"	
7	to <u>pursue</u>	
9	<u>raven-haired</u>	
9	<u>femme-fatale</u>	
9	to <u>duck</u> into	
9	to <u>prostrate</u> yourself	
10	to <u>reek</u>	
10	to <u>croak</u>	
11	<u>teen</u>	
11	to be <u>clad</u> in sth	
11	<u>mystified</u>	
11	<u>Stevo</u>	
12	to <u>bin</u> sth	
13	<u>freesheets</u>	
13	h- <u>howling</u>	
15	<u>Dax</u>	
15	to <u>intone</u>	
15	the <u>gaffer</u>	
15	"He'll <u>kill</u> me! <u>Nobody</u> can <u>leave</u> !"	
16	He <u>rocked</u> upon his <u>heels</u>	
16	to <u>quiver</u>	
17	to <u>vouchsafe</u>	
19	a <u>date</u>	
20	to <u>split</u> up	
20	to be <u>given</u> the <u>sack</u>	
21	<u>two black eyes</u>	
21	the <u>celebrated</u> <u>Dax</u>	
21	to <u>rat</u> on sby	
22	who, <u>perhaps</u> , <u>even</u> to this <u>day</u> , is <u>still</u> ...	
22	<u>timidly</u>	
22	<u>pickle-merchant's</u>	

(adj) adjective
(adv) adverb
(id) idiom
(iron) irony

(n) noun
(phr) phrase
(phr v) phrasal verb
(sby) somebody

(sl) slang
(sth) something
(v) verb
(v phr) verb phrase

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Multi-Purpose Text

Glossary of New Words

Here are some words and phrases from the text that may be unfamiliar. You could either pre-teach them, or encourage students to find translations in a bilingual dictionary. Stressed syllables are underlined.

Line:	Unfamiliar English:	Definition / Explanation:
1	autumnal	(adj) connected with the season of autumn
1	at the crack of dawn	(id) very early in the morning
2	a tabard	(n) a brightly-coloured sleeveless tunic, usually worn by people who are working in the street as part of a team
4	urgently	(adv) forcefully, with much energy, in a powerful manner
4	boggle-eyed	(adj) staring with wide-open eyes, e.g. a very surprised or very stressed person might look at you in a boggle-eyed way
5	nonchalantly	(adv) casually, in a relaxed manner
6	to abandon	(v) to leave sth or sby somewhere, with the intention of never returning
7	"Hey! No hide papers, man!"	(phr) Clearly, English is not Dax's first language. He means to use the imperative form: "Hey! Don't hide the papers!" "man" is a word that hippies tend to use as a general form of address for people that they meet
7	to pursue	(v) to follow, to chase
9	raven-haired	(adj) with shiny black hair. "raven-haired" implies that the woman is enigmatic and exotic: not simply "black-haired", but "raven-haired"
9	femme-fatale	(n) a term used to describe a beautiful, mysterious, dangerous, woman
9	to duck into	(phr v) when being pursued, to quickly change direction
9	to prostrate yourself	(v) to lie down flat on your front
10	to reek	(v) to smell of sth unpleasant, e.g. rotting food
10	to croak	(v) to speak in a low voice with a dry throat
11	teen	(n) teenager
11	to be clad in sth	(v phr) to be wearing sth
11	mystified	(adj) very confused, bewildered
11	Stevo	(person) first name – nickname for "Steven"
12	to bin sth	(v, sl) to put sth in the bin
13	freesheets	(n) free newspapers which are given away outside bus and train stations and in town centres by part-time workers (often students)
13	h-howling	(adj) the repetition of the first letter – "h" – indicates that Stevo is shivering with either cold or fear – or both
15	Dax	(person) we can assume from Dax's name – in particular from the letter "x" – that he is not from the UK; as well as from how he speaks in line 7
15	to intone	(v) to speak slowly and distinctly so that your listener hears you very clearly
15	the gaffer	(sl) the boss, the manager
15	"He'll kill me! Nobody can leave!"	(phr) this is (hopefully!) an exaggeration brought about by fear and intimidation on the part of Dax
16	He rocked upon his heels	(phr) we imagine Stevo sitting on the floor cross-legged, hugging his knees, rocking backwards and forwards, with his heels pressed to the floor
16	to quiver	(v) to tremble
17	to vouchsafe	(v) to tell sth in an exaggerated manner (old-fashioned terminology)
19	a date	(n) a romantic meeting
20	to split up	(phr v) to break up; to end a romantic relationship
20	to be given the sack	(v phr) passive form; to be told that your job no longer exists
21	two black eyes	(phr) you would get a black eye if somebody punched you in the face, making the area around your eye turn black and blue
21	the celebrated Dax	(adj) in this context "celebrated" is used in an ironic way to mean "notable", "famous" or "renowned". It's ironic, since he is more "feared" than "celebrated"
21	to rat on sby	(phr v) to tell on sby, to give somebody away, to tell sby's secret
22	who, perhaps, even to this day, is still...	(iron) this is tongue-in-cheek, because the reader knows that the story is fictional (don't they...?!)
22	timidly	(adv) nervously, in a frightened manner
22	pickle-merchant's	(n) again, this is rather tongue-in-cheek, and used for comic effect. Most readers will realise that there are no shops in the UK that sell only pickles!

(adj) adjective
(adv) adverb
(id) idiom
(iron) irony

(n) noun
(phr) phrase
(phr v) phrasal verb
(sby) somebody

(sl) slang
(sth) something
(v) verb
(v phr) verb phrase

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Extension 1:

Ask students to count the number of characters in the text (there are four named characters), then to create a role play or dialogue, using a few of the characters. Or, students could work on their own and create a monologue using one character from the text (or a bystander), where they recall what happened from their point of view.

Extension 2:

Students continue the story – either as a role play or a monologue – and explore what happened next... Or, they could imagine a prequel – what were the characters doing... a) one week, b) one day, or c) one hour before the story begins?

Answers:

Read All About It! (Guess the Function Words)

See Original Text for answer.

Read All About It! (What's the Question?)

Answers will vary. Suggested answers:

1. What season was it?
2. Who watched Dennis being chased?
3. Why do you think Dennis got two black eyes?
4. Who was walking into town at the beginning of the story?
5. What was the name of Dax's cousin?
6. Why was Stevo hiding?
7. What was Dax's job?
8. What did the youth in an orange tabard give to Dennis?
9. What colour hair did Dax's cousin have?
10. What was Stevo supposed to hand out?
11. How old was Stevo?
12. Why do you think the youth at the beginning of the story was so upset?
13. What did Dennis do with the bag of newspapers?
14. How long did Kristina go out with Dennis for?
15. Did Dennis give away Stevo's secret?
16. Who chased Dennis?
17. Why did the youth give Dennis twenty-five pounds?
18. What colour tabards did the newspaper team have to wear?
19. Why did Dennis want to get a job giving away freesheets?
20. Where did Dennis hide?
21. Was Dax an English native speaker?
22. How many people hid behind the pickle merchant's?
23. Who was Stevo?
24. Where was Dennis going at the start of the story?
25. What new job did Dennis get?
26. Who did Dennis meet behind the bins?
27. Why wouldn't Stevo quit his job?
28. What time was it at the beginning of the story?
29. How many dates did Dennis have with Dax's cousin that week?
30. Who shouted at Dennis?

Read All About It! (True, False, or Unknown?)

(T = True, F = False, U = Unknown)

- | | | |
|-------|-------|-------|
| 1. U | 11. T | 21. T |
| 2. T | 12. U | 22. F |
| 3. T | 13. T | 23. F |
| 4. F | 14. U | 24. T |
| 5. F | 15. F | 25. U |
| 6. U | 16. U | 26. T |
| 7. U | 17. T | 27. F |
| 8. U | 18. F | 28. F |
| 9. T | 19. U | 29. T |
| 10. U | 20. F | 30. F |