

# Talk a Lot

## Problems

### Multi-Purpose Text

#### England 1 – Broccoli 0 (Original Text)

Line

1 It's the last Saturday in September, and Maggie and Dennis are both getting ready  
2 for the evening ahead. Since his parents are away, Dennis has invited ten of his  
3 mates to watch the England match, while Maggie is also keen to have the house to  
4 herself, having invited a "friend" round for a "homework session". She's currently in  
5 the kitchen frantically preparing an elaborate (and not at all romantic) meal in his  
6 honour. They've been fighting all week over who would get the house. For Dennis it  
7 was remarkably simple: "It's England Paraguay, innit!" "But I never have the house to  
8 myself!" complained Maggie, sticking her bottom lip out and trying hard to make it  
9 tremble. Neither side has backed down, hence the uneasy stalemate that now exists.  
10 A delicious aroma of broccoli and oregano rises from the kitchen, as Dennis slumps  
11 before the telly, indolently awaiting his mates and the pre-match build-up. "Just go out  
12 to a pub an' watch it!" begs Maggie for the fifteenth time, "Byron is due any minute!"  
13 "Sorry, sis," says Dennis, restlessly channel surfing, "I'm the oldest – y'know?"  
14 Exasperated, Maggie returns to the kitchen to crack some more yolks. Seven o'clock  
15 arrives, but not Byron. Build-up becomes the match proper, and Dennis's mates  
16 tuck into Maggie's cooking manfully, appreciative that snacks have been laid on.  
17 Maggie weeps as she re-reads the text from Byron – "I'm immersed in coding my  
18 iPad app..." – and seals the leftovers in tupperware boxes. Post-match analysis  
19 wraps up and Dennis and pals decamp to the pub... All except for one sensitive soul:  
20 a trainee fireman called Gareth, who has offered to help Maggie tidy up.  
(279 words)



#### England 1 – Broccoli 0 (Text with 20 Differences)

It's the **1. past (last)** Saturday in September, and Maggie and Dennis are both getting ready for the **2. meeting (evening)** ahead. Since his parents are away, Dennis has invited ten of his mates to watch the England match, while Maggie is also **3. seen (keen)** to have the house to herself, having invited a "friend" **4. down (round)** for a "homework session". She's **5. sullenly (currently)** in the kitchen frantically preparing an elaborate (and not at all romantic) meal in his honour. They've been **6. biting (fighting)** all week over who would get the house. For Dennis it was remarkably **7. pimple (simple)**: "It's England Paraguay, innit!" "But I **8. ever (never)** have the house to myself!" complained Maggie, sticking her **9. button (bottom)** lip out and trying hard to make it tremble. **10. Either (Neither)** side has backed down, hence the uneasy **11. whale bait (stalemate)** that now exists. A delicious aroma of broccoli and oregano rises from the kitchen, as Dennis slumps **12. afore (before)** the telly, indolently awaiting his mates and the pre-match build-up. "Just go out to a pub an' watch it!" begs Maggie for the **13. fiftieth (fifteenth)** time, "Byron is due any minute!" "Sorry, sis," says **14. Kenneth (Dennis)**, restlessly channel surfing, "I'm the oldest – y'know?" Exasperated, Maggie returns to the kitchen to crack some more **15. jokes (yolks)**. Seven o'clock arrives, but not Byron. Build-up becomes the match proper, and Dennis's mates tuck into **16. Aggie's (Maggie's)** cooking manfully, appreciative that **17. stacks (snacks)** have been laid on. Maggie weeps as she re-reads the text from Byron – "I'm immersed in coding my iPad app..." – and seals the leftovers in tupperware **18. foxes (boxes)**. Post-match **19. paralysis (analysis)** wraps up and Dennis and pals decamp to the pub... All except for one sensitive soul: a trainee **20. barman (fireman)** called Gareth, who has offered to help Maggie tidy up.

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## Problems

### Multi-Purpose Text

#### England 1 – Broccoli 0 (Guess the Function Words)



I' t last Saturday i September, a Maggie a Dennis a both getting ready f t evening ahead. Since h parents a away, Dennis h invited ten o h mates t watch t England match, w Maggie i a keen t have t house t h , having invited a "friend" round f a "homework session". S ' currently i t kitchen frantically preparing a elaborate (a not a all romantic) meal i h honour. T 'v b fighting all week over who w get t house.



F Dennis i w remarkably simple: "I' England Paraguay, i !" "B I never have t house t m !" complained Maggie, sticking h bottom lip out a trying hard t make i tremble. Neither side h backed down, hence t uneasy stalemate t now exists. A delicious aroma o broccoli a oregano rises f t kitchen, a Dennis slumps b t telly, indolently awaiting h mates a t pre-match build-up.



"Just go out t a pub a ' watch i !" begs Maggie f t fifteenth time, "Byron i due any minute!" "Sorry, sis," says Dennis, restlessly channel surfing, "I' t oldest – y'know?" Exasperated, Maggie returns t t kitchen t crack s more yolks. Seven o'clock arrives, b not Byron. Build-up becomes t match proper, a Dennis's mates tuck into Maggie's cooking manfully, appreciative t snacks h b laid on.



Maggie weeps a s re-reads t text f Byron – "I' immersed i coding m iPad app..." – a seals t leftovers i tupperware boxes. Post-match analysis wraps up a Dennis a pals decamp t t pub... All except f one sensitive soul: a trainee fireman called Gareth, w h offered t help Maggie tidy up.

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## Problems

### Multi-Purpose Text

#### England 1 – Broccoli 0 (What's the Question?)

1. Dennis.
2. Saturday.
3. Go to the pub and watch the match.
4. Maggie.
5. Ten.
6. That they were going to do their homework together.
7. All week.
8. Gareth.
9. After the post-match analysis.
10. By pretending to cry.
11. Yes, after the match had ended.
12. Paraguay.
13. Trainee fireman.
14. Because he was busy coding his iPad app.
15. Maggie put it into tupperware boxes to keep for another day.
16. Byron.
17. We don't know, but from the ingredients it might have been an Italian or Mediterranean dish.
18. Because they both believed that they had the right to use the house.
19. Because she wanted to impress Byron.
20. He slumped in front of the TV.
21. Ten of his mates.
22. To the pub.
23. England versus Paraguay.
24. She said that she never got the house to herself.
25. The aroma of broccoli and oregano.
26. Because he was older than Maggie.
27. No, not really.
28. Dennis and his friends.
29. At seven o'clock in the evening.
30. She was planning a romantic meal for Byron and herself.

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#### England 1 – Broccoli 0 (True, False, or Unknown?)

1. The story took place in October.
2. Maggie was upset that Dennis hadn't backed down.
3. Maggie is the eldest sibling.
4. Maggie had agreed with her parents that she could use the house.
5. The pre-match build-up preceded the match proper.
6. Paraguay played England at football.
7. Maggie was looking forward to doing her homework with Byron.
8. Dennis and his mates went to the pub after the post-match analysis.
9. Paraguay were playing Wales in the match.
10. Gareth helped Maggie to tidy up while his mates went for a drink.
11. Byron popped round to see Maggie for a few minutes after finishing coding his app.
12. Byron preferred to stay at home because he didn't want to get involved with Maggie.
13. Gareth was a trainee farmer.
14. Gareth and Maggie spent ages tidying up, then went into the garden.
15. Maggie had invited her friend for a meal.
16. They watched a World Cup qualifier match.
17. Maggie was not planning a romantic meal for her friend Byron.
18. Byron didn't come because he was busy with his IT work.
19. Gareth joined his mates in the pub after helping Maggie clean up.
20. Dennis had invited twelve friends round to watch the match.
21. Dennis wanted to watch the football match with his friends.
22. Dennis's parents had gone on holiday.
23. Byron was due to arrive at seven thirty.
24. Dennis rested while Maggie worked in the kitchen.
25. Dennis was channel surfing because he was bored.
26. Maggie tried to make Dennis feel sorry for her, so that she would get her own way.
27. Maggie is a great cook.
28. Maggie watched the pre-match build-up.
29. England beat Paraguay 2-0 [two-nil].
30. Most of Dennis's mates were trainee firemen.

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### Multi-Purpose Text

#### Glossary of New Words

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

Line:	Unfamiliar English:	Explanation:	Translation:
3	<u>mates</u>	(n) informal word for <i>friends</i>	
4	a " <u>friend</u> "	(iron/euph) the speech marks indicate that the word "friend" is ironic and a euphemism for something else, in this case a person that Maggie sees as more than a friend, i.e. she fancies this person and would like to become his girlfriend	
4	a " <u>homework session</u> "	(iron/euph) again, the speech marks indicate irony. In this context "homework session" is clearly a euphemism for "romantic meal"	
5	<u>frantically</u>	(adv) in a hurried and stressed out manner	
5	<u>elaborate</u>	(adj) complicated; complex	
5	(and <u>not</u> at all <u>romantic</u> )	(iron) The use of brackets indicates irony, i.e. the opposite of what is said is actually true – Maggie <i>is</i> preparing a romantic meal	
5	in his <u>honour</u>	(phr) especially for him; to make him feel special. This phrase is rather an exaggeration, because it would normally be used to talk about preparations for an important dignitary or monarch	
7	<u>England Paraguay</u>	(phr) England are playing a football match against Paraguay	
7	<u>innit</u>	(contr/irreg) isn't it?	
8	... <u>trying hard</u> to <u>make</u> it <u>tremble</u> .	(phr) Maggie wants to make it look as if she's really upset and about to cry, so that she gets her own way	
9	to <u>back down</u>	(phr v) to surrender; to admit defeat; to give up	
9	hence	(conj) "the result of which is..."; "which leads to..."	
9	<u>uneasy</u>	(adj) awkward; difficult; uncomfortable	
9	<u>stalemate</u>	(n) deadlock; impasse; a situation in which neither party in a dispute will compromise	
10	<u>aroma</u>	(n) smell	
10	<u>oregano</u>	(n unc) a herb used in cooking, esp. in Italian, Greek, and Latin American dishes	
10	to <u>slump</u>	(v) to sit in an awkward and careless manner	
11	<u>telly</u>	(n) informal word for <i>television</i>	
11	<u>indolently</u>	(adv) lazily; idly; in a lazy manner; in a way that deliberately wastes time	
11	the <u>pre-match build-up</u>	(phr) the discussion and analysis that takes place on TV before a football match begins	
12	an'	(contr) and	
12	any <u>minute</u>	(adverbial) very soon, i.e. he could arrive now	
13	<u>sis</u>	(abbr) short for <i>sister</i>	
13	to <u>channel surf</u>	(v) to keep changing channels on TV using the remote control, without watching any programme for longer than a few seconds	
13	y' <u>know</u> ?	(contr) you know? (do you know?) In this context <i>y'know</i> is used to show that the preceding comment is indisputable, and therefore to end any debate	
14	Ex <u>asperated</u>	(adj) angry and frustrated	
14	to <u>crack</u> some <u>more yolks</u>	(phr) Maggie will, of course, crack <i>eggs</i> to get the yolks, but this phrase is used to emphasise that she will crack the eggs for the yolks	
14	<u>yolks</u>	(n) the yellow part of an egg	
15	the <u>match proper</u>	(id) the actual match. To say "the _____ proper" means that something occurs after a preliminary or preparatory phase, e.g. "After a little discussion about modal verbs, we began the lesson proper."	

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Line:	Unfamiliar English:	Explanation:	Translation:
16	to <u>tuck into</u>	(phr v) to eat enthusiastically, with much enjoyment	
16	<u>manfully</u>	(sarc) courageously; bravely; selflessly without fear. This is a rather sarcastic way to describe the situation. Dennis's friends may be eating food that would have otherwise been wasted, but it didn't require any particular courage for them to do it!	
16	to <u>lay on</u>	(phr v) to provide food and/or drink for a special occasion, e.g. a party or a conference	
17	<u>immersed</u>	(adj) absorbed; busy with; wrapped up in	
17	<u>coding</u> my iPad <u>app</u>	(phr) Byron is busy creating an application for the Apple iPad portable electronic device	
18	to <u>seal</u>	(v) to close something firmly, usually so that it is air-tight; to lock	
18	<u>tupperware</u> <u>boxes</u>	(n) air-tight plastic containers that can be used to store food	
18	<u>post-match</u> <u>analysis</u>	(phr) the discussion about a football match that takes place on TV just after the game has finished. The opposite of "the pre-match build-up" (see line 11)	
19	to <u>wrap up</u>	(phr v) to conclude or be concluded by sby; to finish in a satisfactory way, e.g. "The mystery was finally wrapped up" (i.e. solved successfully)	
19	<u>pals</u>	(n) informal word for <i>friends</i>	
19	to <u>decamp</u>	(v/iron) to move to another place as one large group of people, e.g. "The soldiers decamped to Winchester." An ironic parallel is drawn between Dennis and his mates, and soldiers – ironic because soldiers would probably be on a serious mission, while the boys' aim is totally trivial – to have a drink	
19	<u>one sensitive</u> <u>soul</u>	(phr/iron) a thoughtful person; the phrase is used with some irony. We don't usually think of firemen – trainee or otherwise – as being particularly sensitive. Perhaps Gareth has more romantic ambitions in mind than simply helping Maggie to tidy up	
20	to <u>tidy up</u>	(phr v) to clean and organise the house after the party	

(abbr) abbreviation  
(adj) adjective  
(adv) adverb  
(conj) conjunction  
(contr) contraction  
esp. especially

(euph) euphemism  
(id) idiom  
(iron) irony  
(irreg) irregular grammar  
(n) noun  
(n unc) noun (uncountable)

(phr) phrase  
(phr v) phrasal verb  
(sarc) sarcasm  
(sby) somebody  
(v) verb

#### Extension 1:

Encourage students to look at the verb forms used in the story. Ask them what time the story is set in (the past). If it's set in the past, why are present verb forms used to tell the story? For example:

*It's the last Saturday in September...*

*She's currently in the kitchen frantically preparing...*

*...a trainee fireman called Gareth, who has offered to help Maggie tidy up.*

Ask students to retell the story (in pairs or small groups) using past verb forms, e.g.

*It was the last Saturday in September...*

*She was in the kitchen frantically preparing...*

*...a trainee fireman called Gareth, who had offered to help Maggie tidy up.*

Discuss the effect of using present forms to tell a story that is set in the past, e.g. it can bring immediacy to the story; the story becomes more interesting and relevant because the listener needs to imagine it happening *now*, at this present moment, etc. How does the story change when past forms are used instead?

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### Multi-Purpose Text

#### Extension 2:

Ask students to count the number of characters in the text (there are 4 named characters, as well as Maggie and Dennis's parents, and Dennis's group of ten friends, not to mention the team of pundits on TV), 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, where they recall what happened from their point of view.

#### Extension 3:

Students continue the story – either as a role play or a monologue – and explore what happened next...

#### Answers:

##### England 1 – Broccoli 0 (Guess the Function Words)

See Original Text for answer.

##### England 1 – Broccoli 0 (What's the Question?)

Answers will vary. Suggested answers:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1. What is the name of Maggie's brother?                                       | 18. Why didn't either side in the dispute back down?                              |
| 2. What day was it in the story?   | 19. Why was Maggie preparing an elaborate meal?                                   |
| 3. What did Maggie beg Dennis to do?   | 20. What did Dennis do while he was waiting for his friends?                      |
| 4. What is the name of Dennis's sister?  | 21. Who did Dennis invite to watch the football?                                  |
| 5. How many friends did Dennis invite to watch the match?                      | 22. Where did Dennis and his mates go after the post-match analysis had finished? |
| 6. What was Maggie's alleged reason for inviting Byron round?                  | 23. Who was playing in the football match?  |
| 7. How long had Maggie and Dennis been fighting about who would get the house? | 24. Why did Maggie feel hard done by?   |
| 8. Who stayed behind to help Maggie tidy up?                                   | 25. What smelled delicious?   |
| 9. When did the lads go to the pub?  | 26. Why did Dennis feel that he had the right to use the house?                   |
| 10. How did Maggie try to make Dennis feel sorry for her?                      | 27. Did Byron have a good excuse for letting Maggie down?                         |
| 11. Did Maggie get the house to herself?                                       | 28. Who ate Maggie's cooking?   |
| 12. Which team was England playing?  | 29. What time was Byron due to arrive?  |
| 13. What was Gareth's job?   | 30. Why did Maggie want to have the house to herself?                             |
| 14. Why didn't Byron come round to spend time with Maggie?                     |   |
| 15. What happened to the excess food?  |   |
| 16. Who did Maggie invite round for a meal?                                    |   |
| 17. What was Maggie cooking?   |   |

##### England 1 – Broccoli 0 (True, False, or Unknown?)

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

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