

LET'S START!

Look at the pictures and discuss.

- 1 What sort of good or bad news could the people be receiving?
- 2 How do you think the people passing on the news might be feeling?

UNIT 5

Good news, bad news



Discuss in groups.

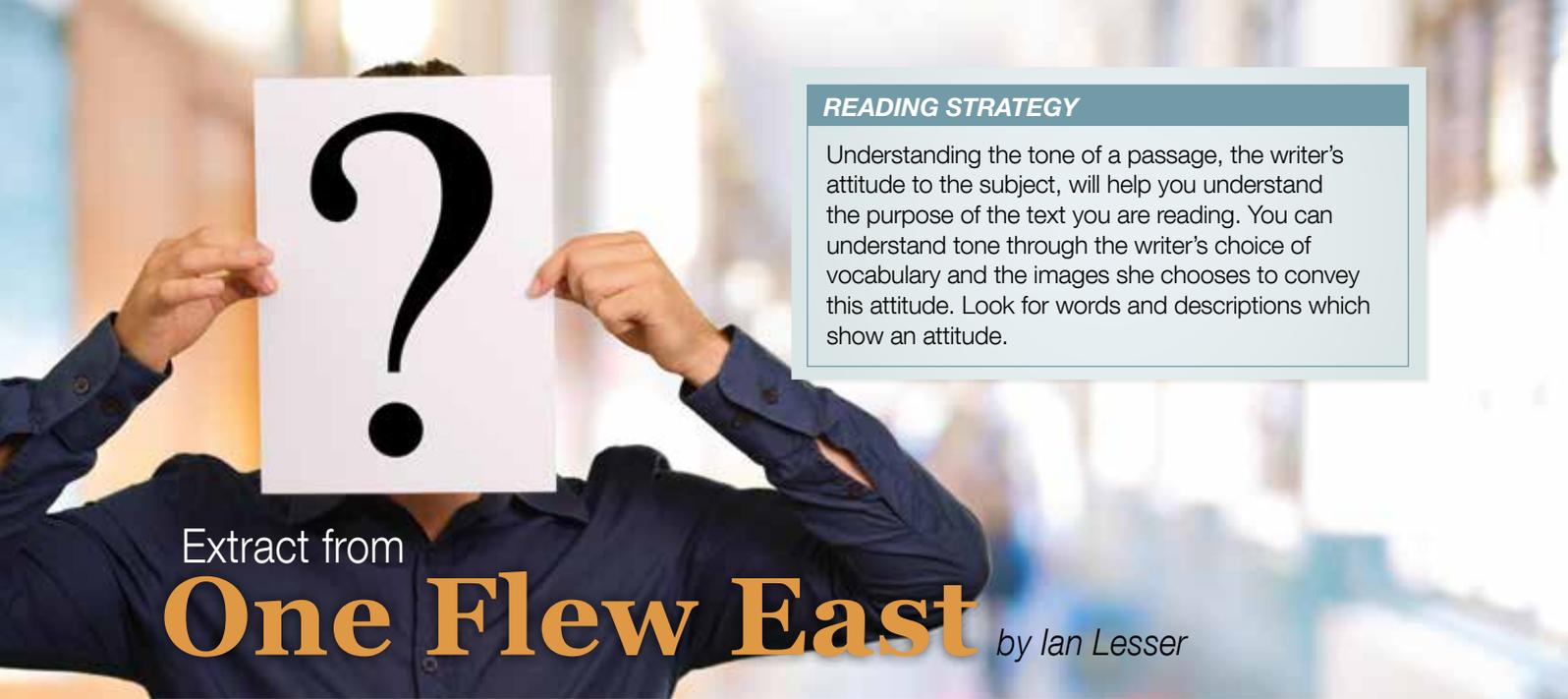
- 1 In the last century, how has the way personal news is shared changed?
- 2 What is your preferred way of sharing news, either good or bad, with your peers?

UNIT OBJECTIVES

- Read an extract from a novel where someone receives bad news
- Write a short story about a piece of good news
- Listen to a radio talk about reactions to good or bad news
- Present news in a positive way
- Create a leaflet giving advice on dealing with bad news

READING STRATEGY

Understanding the tone of a passage, the writer's attitude to the subject, will help you understand the purpose of the text you are reading. You can understand tone through the writer's choice of vocabulary and the images she chooses to convey this attitude. Look for words and descriptions which show an attitude.



Extract from **One Flew East** by Ian Lesser

Shawn Belsher knew the exact moment his face had become translucent. His skin was already pale against the stark black of his hair, but now—after this news—the doctor would surely mistake him for a ghost. The oncologist regarded him with a mix of wariness and concern.

'You're obviously mistaken,' Shawn said, and inhaled a deep breath to quell a rising panic. No way the doctor could be right. He exhaled, closed his eyes, and counted to three. When he re-opened them, the doctor's eyebrows had knit into a solid line. The dreaded uni-brow. In spite of his current predicament, Shawn couldn't fully hide his smirk.

'Look,' he said, recognizing he likely wasn't the first to question a physician's diagnosis. 'I feel great! I haven't had so much as a cold in at least three years. It's all that vitamin C the wife feeds me. **Ingenious** stuff, don't you think? This prognosis comes out of the blue—it's so unexpected. I don't mean to **insult** your intelligence, doc, but there's no way I've got the Big C. The tests are wrong. Your machinery is broken. You're wrong.'

Dr Fedoruk cleared his throat, shifted the papers on his granite-top desk. After a long pause, he folded his hands and leaned forward, so that the folds of his lab coat spread to reveal a pressed dress shirt and red tie. 'I understand this might be difficult news to accept at first—'

'You think I'm in denial? Hogwash,' Shawn said. 'I do, however, think your diagnosis is **outrageous**. I've read your credentials, doctor. Surely someone with your qualifications would know better than to toy with someone's emotions like this. Is this what passes for health care these days? Crude jokes at someone's expense? How **pathetic**.'

Shawn pushed his chair away from the desk and crossed his legs, uncrossed them, tucked his feet under the chair. He reached forward for a glass of water and took a long sip to cool the dry heat burning from the base of his throat. Across the room, the metal arm on an oversized clock ticked away another minute, the sound amplified in the otherwise silent room.

'So what? Now you've nothing to say?' He wriggled his nose to block the scent of antiseptic, the sharp odour of

cleanliness. 'Where are the hidden cameras?' He cupped his hands around his mouth and shouted, 'Come out, come out wherever you are!'

After a pause, Shawn frowned. 'Seriously? When you finally confess this is a big hoax, do you think I'll be **elated**? **Grateful** even? What a sorry excuse for—'

Dr Fedoruk raised his hand in protest. 'Mr Belsher, please. I realize this is perhaps scary news, but I find your attitude quite **offensive**. If you can't speak to me rationally, perhaps I could call someone else in? We have a wonderful psychiatrist on staff.'

'Now you think I need a shrink?' Shawn stood and threw his arms into the air. Spittle flew from his lips. 'That's just **awesome**. This place is a real boost to my ego. First cancer and then—'

Shawn's breath caught in his throat. He swallowed as realization began to settle in, his mind filtering through a list of ignored symptoms, signs, indicators that something wasn't quite right, that his body wasn't working as efficiently as it once had, was somehow infected.

'I only told you about the psychiatrist because I thought it would make you feel better. This isn't an easy prognosis to accept,' Dr Fedoruk said. 'Everyone reacts differently.'

Shawn nodded his head slowly and eased into the uncomfortable plastic chair. Doctors' offices should have padded seats for this kind of news, he thought. He exhaled in a series of short, shuddering breaths.

He remembered his mother's reaction when she'd found out her second husband had lung cancer—she was **furious**, irrational. Maybe she still was, years after his death. Shawn knew she blamed the disease on everything from depression to smoking, even though his father had never touched a cigarette in his life.

Sometimes she even blamed herself.

Shawn wiped his forehead with the back of his hand. A sheen of sweat covered his skin and cooled under the low air conditioning. A thick ray of sunshine edged its way in through the windows, somehow intrusive against the storm brewing in Shawn's mind and heart.

He licked his lips, inhaled. 'Dr Fedoruk, what am I going to tell my wife?'

READING

A Skim the extract and answer the questions.

- 1 What news has Shawn Belsher received?
- 2 Did he expect to get this news? How do you know?

D Write the questions.

- 1 _____
Because his hair was very black and his face had become translucent.
- 2 _____
Because he has been taking a lot of vitamin C.
- 3 _____
a lab coat, a dress shirt, and a red tie
- 4 _____
That it is outrageous.
- 5 _____
Because he feels Shawn's reaction is not rational.
- 6 _____
It's uncomfortable.

E Match the lines from the extract to the tone words.

- | | |
|---------------|--------------------------|
| 1 disbelief | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2 fear | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3 sarcasm | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4 nervousness | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5 anger | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6 anxiety | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7 shock | <input type="checkbox"/> |
- a He exhaled in a series of short, shuddering breaths.
 - b 'That's just awesome.'
 - c Dr Fedoruk cleared his throat, shifted the papers on his granite-top desk.
 - d 'Seriously? When you finally confess this is a big hoax, do you think I'll be elated? Grateful even? What a sorry excuse for—'
 - e '... there's no way I've got the Big C. The tests are wrong. Your machinery is broken. You're wrong.'
 - f A sheen of sweat covered his skin and cooled under the low air conditioning.
 - g Shawn said, and inhaled a deep breath to quell a rising panic.

B Discuss in pairs.

- 1 Why do you think cancer is known as 'the Big C'?
- 2 Why might a doctor suggest a patient sees a psychiatrist after receiving bad news?

F Circle the correct answers.

- 1 My father was ___ when the police told him my sister had been caught stealing.
 - a elated
 - b insulted
 - c furious
- 2 He had devised ___ system for cheating money out of unsuspecting customers.
 - a an ingenious
 - b a pathetic
 - c an outrageous
- 3 Karen has always demonstrated ___ disregard for authority figures.
 - a grateful
 - b awesome
 - c outrageous
- 4 When my father demanded an apology, the man ___ him in front of us all.
 - a offended
 - b insulted
 - c elated

C Read the text again. Circle T (true) or F (false). Then identify the places in the text which gave you the answers.

- 1 **T/F** Shawn isn't afraid when he hears the news.
- 2 **T/F** Shawn finds the doctor's face funny.
- 3 **T/F** Shawn thinks it isn't unusual for patients to question their diagnosis.
- 4 **T/F** Shawn accepts the doctor's prognosis immediately.
- 5 **T/F** Shawn believes he's being filmed as part of a cruel joke.
- 6 **T/F** Dr Fedoruk must be considered an excellent doctor.
- 7 **T/F** Shawn truly considers himself to be in excellent health.
- 8 **T/F** Dr Fedoruk thinks Shawn's reaction is normal.
- 9 **T/F** Shawn's mother died of cancer.
- 10 **T/F** Shawn has probably started sweating because he is too hot.

USEFUL EXPRESSIONS

Sarcasm is a way of speaking, in which what is said, is the opposite of what is meant. For example, when Mr Belsher says— 'That's just awesome. This place is a real boost to my ego.'— he is being sarcastic.

WRITING

G Complete the email with **ONE** word in each gap.

MY_MAIL

INBOX SEND TRASH

Melissa!

You (1) _____ never guess what has happened. Marvin has (2) _____ proposed! I can't believe it! It was a real bolt from the (3) _____. We were sitting on the beach (4) _____ out to sea when he suddenly pulled out a small velvet box, popped it (5) _____, and then popped the question. It was so romantic! And there was no way I (6) _____ have said 'No' when I saw that beautiful diamond ring sitting on its little cushion.

I've got to write fast, I'm supposed to (7) _____ be getting ready for dinner. But I'd be elated (8) _____ you would agree to be my maid of honour. Will you? The (9) _____ news is, Marvin wants to get married really fast. The bad news is, he actually wants to do it here, in Barbados, next week.

Do you (10) _____ you could get out here? I don't want to do it (11) _____ you, Sis. You're the only family I've got.

I'm going to give you some (12) _____ to digest my awesome news and then I'll call you. I know you're dying to say congratulations!

Love,
Aurora

I Imagine you were given these pieces of news. Think about how you would react.

- Describe your physical reaction and how you felt at the time.
 - Think about where you were when you received the news, who gave you the news, and whether it was (un)expected.
- 1 made redundant
 - 2 announcement of a new birth or pregnancy
 - 3 news of an engagement or marriage
 - 4 given the all-clear after a worrying medical check-up
 - 5 discovery that you've passed exams with flying colours
 - 6 somebody has had a nasty accident

When my boss said those words, I jumped to my feet and screamed; I was furious that it was happening to me again.

J You are going to write a short story about receiving a piece of good news. Before you begin, think about these questions.

- Who gave you the good news?
- What were you doing at the time the news was given to you?
- Was the news expected or unexpected?
- What was your reaction to the news?
- How did the news affect your life?
- What exactly was the piece of news?

K Now write your short story using the plan. Write 220–260 words.

- Introduction:** Something that will catch the reader's attention
- Paragraph 1:** Set the scene
- Paragraph 2:** Describe receiving the piece of news
- Paragraph 3:** Explain how life changed
- Conclusion:** A short closing paragraph completing the story

H You have received an email from an old school friend. Read the message and the short biography about you from a literary magazine and respond. Write 180–220 words.

MY_MAIL

INBOX SEND TRASH

Hey!

It's been such a long time! How are you? What's been happening in your life?

I've been living abroad and I've just moved back to the UK. I would love to hook up and catch up. Are you still determinedly single? Did you ever write that book? How is your family?

Love,
Raff

Rebecca Hart has done it again. Only one year after topping best seller lists, she has published another truly ingenious thriller with an awesome twist. This is the third book in the Detective Krueger series of crime novels set in South Africa, and they're just getting better and better. Rumour has it that she will be nominated for the Booker Prize this year—a first for crime fiction.

REBECCA HART

Bio Box

South African born Hart finally tied the knot this summer with her partner of three years, author Martin Hurt. Rumour has it they are old schoolmates and Martin was a much needed support for Hart after she lost her parents in a freak sailing accident.

HOMEWORK

Complete Activity K at home if necessary.

Anaphoric reference

Refer to *English Guide C1* page 20

The news came like a bolt from the blue. **It** was so unexpected.

I only told you about what happened because I thought **it** would make you feel better.

My cousin is getting married. **It's** really good news, isn't it?

Janet met an old school friend of hers in town. **They** were really excited to see each other.

Heather was always full of suggestions. **The advice**, however, wasn't always appreciated.

When a sentence mentions two people, the anaphoric reference can be ambiguous.

James went on holiday with Jack.

It was **his** first time abroad. (unclear)

It was **James'** first time abroad. (clear)

F Read the sentences and underline what the bold words refer back to.

- I've heard that Tamsin and James are getting married. But **it's** probably no surprise to you.
- Did you get an explanation for her behaviour? **It** really upset the kids.
- What are Troy and family doing at the weekend? We'd love to have **them** over.
- Dealing with the revelation has been hard for Gordon and myself, but **we** think in time we'll accept **it**.
- The video was loaded onto her page first thing in the morning and by midday **it** had been viewed by thousands of people.
- The doctor recommended that we participate in therapy sessions, but we really didn't think we needed **them**.
- The statement kept going round and round in his head and **it** was eating away at him.

H Complete the paragraphs with appropriate anaphoric references. Do not use the same reference more than once.

Mario thought, Should I tell her or shouldn't I? The question spun round and round in his head and (1) _____ slowly started to push every other logical argument to the sides, like a massive centrifuge. Slowly, though, (2) _____ started to see the answers he needed. (3) _____ were all lined up in neat little lists. And the first (4) _____ was no, he shouldn't!

Christian was convinced that the decision had been wrong. (5) _____ wasn't based on a whim. (6) _____ was based on the almost imperceptible shadow of insecurity that had passed across Marilyn's face as (7) _____ had made the announcement: 'After long discussion with the partners, (8) _____ have come to the conclusion that the best company to undertake this project is Colred Corp'. The words seemed false.

'I really want to open my eyes now. Can I?' (9) _____ had been covered tightly with a black scarf so that even if I had opened (10) _____, seeing would have been out of the question. And (11) _____ was suddenly something imperative. Relying on my ears had given me a clue, but now vision could only satisfy my burning desire to feel a part of his handiwork.

G Correct the sentences.

- I was outside without an umbrella when the storm hit. They hadn't been forecast, and all I could do was find shelter and wait.
- My friends and I only manage to get together once in a blue moon, and she inevitably turns it into a long night.
- Just pass the news on to whoever will listen. They need to be shared.
- You have to tell Maud's mum and dad about the problem. I think they're suffering from anorexia.
- I love the shoes in this shop. I found this pair I really like, but there's no way I can afford it.
- Martha doesn't believe that Derek is the one. They should be better looking, better educated, and more fun.

I In pairs, use the pictures to describe a real or imaginary incident.

Think about ...

- what the incident involved.
- the characters who were involved.
- where and when the incident took place.



J Discuss in pairs.

- We have to learn to live in the present moment.
- Some Buddhist concepts could be very helpful in making people less stressed.
- Exercise is a key factor in helping prolong life.

We have to learn to live in the present moment

I really like that idea, and have heard it before, but ...

COMMUNICATION

A  **Track 11** Listen and circle the correct answers.

- The announcer didn't continue working with animals because ___.
 - seeing sick or hurt animals used to upset him
 - he didn't feel like he was making a difference
 - the job was only available for one summer
- The day Andrew received news of the pregnancy, ___.
 - he was stranded in a storm
 - he had had a dreadful day at work
 - his wife had had difficulty getting hold of him
- Why isn't Monica excited about her cousin's wedding?
 - She was hoping to get married before her.
 - She can't stand her cousin.
 - The groom is Monica's ex-boyfriend.
- Before Caroline and her husband won the lottery, ___.
 - they would buy lottery tickets regularly
 - they were having money problems
 - they lived in a very small house
- What happened as a result of winning the lottery?
 - Caroline and her husband were able to give money gifts to all their family.
 - They fell out with some of their friends.
 - They have been forced to make new friends with different people.
- Why did Brett lose his job?
 - Because he was always in a bad mood at work.
 - Because his boss disliked him and wanted to shame him.
 - Because he lost an important client.
- What was Brett's first reaction when he lost his job?
 - He rushed out and started looking for another.
 - He got very depressed.
 - He decided to stay at home and let his partner work longer hours.
- In next week's show, there will be a talk about ___.
 - how to give bad news effectively
 - the psychological implications of receiving different kinds of news
 - the medical effects of bad news

B  **Track 11** Listen again. Circle T (true) or F (false).

- T / F The announcer was very attached to his dog as a child.
- T / F Andrew didn't want to become a father.
- T / F Monica knew her boyfriend was having an affair before they broke up.
- T / F Monica and her cousin are no longer close friends.
- T / F Caroline and her husband kept their lottery win a secret.
- T / F Brett believes his boss enjoyed firing him.
- T / F Brett and his partner were declared bankrupt.
- T / F The announcer feels it's important to learn from the things that happen to us.

C  **Track 11** Listen again. Complete the summaries about the different speakers' experiences.

When the announcer was 12, his dog was (1) _____. Because of that, he spent a couple of summers as a (2) _____. He did not keep the job, however, because he (3) _____ for being around sick or hurt animals.

When Andrew heard about the pregnancy, he had been (4) _____ in order to (5) _____ off work. The weather was (6) _____ and he was feeling sorry for himself. The news really (7) _____.

When Caroline and her husband won (8) _____, they were over the moon. They had been talking about (9) _____ to make ends meet. After the win, their lives didn't only change (10) _____. They had to (11) _____ the fact that some of their relationships would change.

When Brett lost his job all he wanted to do was (12) _____ and let his girlfriend (13) _____. However, the bank announcing that they were on the brink of bankruptcy was the (14) _____ to get cracking.

D Complete the diary entry with one word or two words in each gap.

Last week, Mom calls me and she says, 'Your cousin is getting married. (1) _____ really tremendous news, isn't it?' Well, I know wedding announcements are a happy occasion, but not in this (2) _____. I mean it (3) _____ been if she wasn't marrying my ex-boyfriend—(4) _____ who left me for her.

It will be a year in July (5) _____ the two of us broke up, but they've been going together for much longer. I should have known it. He always cancelled our dates at the last minute. Of course, (6) _____ was never home, either. So it really qualifies (7) _____ bad news. And it has changed our relationship. I mean my cousin (8) _____ used to hang out quite a (9) _____, but we barely see each other now, and when we (10) _____, it's pretty tense. Oh well. I'm sure one day my prince will come, when the time is right.

E Discuss in pairs.

- Is it more difficult to deal with losing pets at a very young age?
- How would you feel if your boyfriend or girlfriend was cheating on you with someone you know? Who would be to blame?
- Why is winning the lottery both good and bad?
- Is sacking somebody in front of colleagues inappropriate? Why?

USEFUL EXPRESSIONS

The good news / bad news is that ...

F Take turns role-playing in pairs. One person will announce great news and the other will respond to the news.



Student A 1

You have been at university, but you are leaving because you have been offered a very exciting job. You think that this is excellent news because a job is far better than studying and you'll make a lot of money. You are determined to take this job and you feel truly elated at the prospect. You never really wanted to go to university anyway.



Student A 2

You have decided to leave work and start up a business. You've done quite a lot of research and you think you can make it work. You are planning to hand in your notice in a week. You are extremely excited about this liberating move and are looking forward to being your own boss. Tell your wife or husband.

Your son/daughter has called to tell you that he/she is leaving university to start a brilliant job. He/she is very excited. You are not at all convinced that this is a good idea. He/she is an excellent student and has the potential to get a great job albeit steadier and more boring. Say you're happy but, try to talk him/her out of it.

Student B 1



Your life partner has just returned home to inform you that he/she is quitting work in order to go into business. You are horrified because the economic climate is dire. You also haven't shared the fact that you have secretly spent a lot of money. Try to persuade your partner of the folly of his decision.

Student B 2



USEFUL EXPRESSIONS

Announcing your news

I've got tremendous news ...

I've got something really exciting to tell you ...

You're not going to believe my news ...

Responding to news

I don't believe it!

You're joking!

Really?

Are you sure that's a good thing?

G Read the examples of bad news. Then think of ways to put a positive spin on the news and persuade people to see each as good news. Make notes in your notebooks.

- You have to make someone redundant. They have a very good position.
- Your husband has just turned 55 and you (his wife) are pregnant for the fifth time.
- You need to explain to a patient that his leg is broken in three places and he will need complete bed rest for six months.
- You are in a relationship and living in a capital city. You have been promoted and have to go and live in a small town elsewhere.
- You are the head of a nation you must tell your country that you are going to war.

H Now take turns presenting your news from G to the class. Then decide who presented the news in the most positive way.

I Discuss in groups.

- 1 Why is it a good idea to present bad news in a positive light or gently?
- 2 Can you think of examples of events that when first digested were perceived as very bad news, but in the long run, turned out to have positive outcomes?



LANGUAGE BUILDER

A Match the words to their definitions.

bizarre
dazzle
(feel) blue
gloomy
heart-warming
(lift one's) spirits
marvellous
over the moon
tremendous

- 1 feel unhappy and mildly depressed (not clinically)
- 2 strange or unusual
- 3 dark, overcast, and causing to feel in a bad mood (of the weather)
- 4 cheer up; make someone feel happy after feeling low
- 5 extremely happy (usually after hearing fantastic news)
- 6 amaze or impress deeply with a spectacular display
- 7 (usually of a story) causing joy and tender feelings
- 8 great in amount scale or tendency; excellent
- 9 causing wonder or astonishment in a positive way

B Put the underlined words in the correct sentences.

- 1 On first meeting Carla, we were truly over the moon by her wit and charm, but we soon realized she was selfish and egocentric. _____
- 2 It was a day so marvellous that one could expect nothing other than negative news. _____
- 3 My parents were dazzled when I told them I was expecting twins—'Two grandchildren in one go!' they exclaimed. _____
- 4 Margot felt that her performance in the play had been nothing short of gloomy and she expected rave reviews. _____
- 5 It took a heart-warming effort on Carter's part to actually admit that he had made a mistake. _____
- 6 Agnes found the support and kindness shown by her neighbours, when she lost her husband, truly tremendous. _____
- 7 'I think a night out with your friends would help to feel blue and stop moping around.' _____
- 8 'We can't even listen to music anymore. Everything seems to make you lift your spirits.' _____

C Complete the story with the correct form of words in A.

I had a very (1) _____ experience today. A man approached me in the street, kissed me on both cheeks, and said he was (2) _____ to see me again after so many years. When I told him that he must have mistaken me for somebody else, he laughed and said, 'Darling, what a (3) _____ joke! You always were one for making a situation entertaining. It does so (4) _____ to always poke fun like that'.

'No,' I insisted 'I'm not joking and I definitely don't know you.' With that, his hands dropped from my sides, his face crumpled, and he started making a (5) _____ wailing noise. As you can imagine, it didn't take long for people to start staring. Luckily for me, a police officer approached to question the reason for the dreadful disturbance. After an explanation, the police officer led the man away. It was (6) _____ to see how gentle he was, but the incident was not a good start to a rather (7) _____ day, and I have spent the rest of it (8) _____.

D Discuss in groups.

- 1 What is the most bizarre, heart-warming, or marvellous piece of news you have ever heard?
- 2 Have you ever been determined to dazzle somebody? How did you go about it? What was the situation?
- 3 How do gloomy days make you feel? How do you like to spend them?
- 4 When you're feeling blue, what really lifts your spirits?
- 5 What kinds of things have made you feel over the moon?

E Play a game.

- Begin a story with this line and keep it going for as long as possible.
Martin woke up feeling really blue ...
- Put the class into a circle.
- Each student should add one line to the story.
- Try to use the vocabulary from this lesson.
- One person should keep notes of the story and then reread it at the end.



Cataphoric reference

Refer to *English Guide C1* page 20

This will really make you laugh! She forgot to take her umbrella and got soaked!

What you have to do is tell her while you have a chance.

Finding the **best time** to tell her will be difficult. As soon as you get to work would be good.

I should have known **it**. He always cancels at the last minute.

F Circle the correct answers.

- 1 Cataphora is a device for referring **forwards / backwards** to something in a text.
- 2 Cataphoric references are pronouns, nouns, or phrases which **repeat / do not repeat** the reference used in the text.
- 3 Cataphoric references are used to **close / introduce** a reference or subject.
- 4 Cataphora is an effective tool for **reducing / adding** emphasis when writing.

G Complete the sentences with suitable cataphoric references.

- 1 You will never guess _____ I saw at a gallery in London today! Angelina Jolie!
- 2 We want to share some fantastic _____ with you. We're adopting a baby.
- 3 I don't want to play any part in _____. The whole show is going to be a disaster.
- 4 _____ is what you should do. Wait until the weekend when he is relaxed, and then tell him.
- 5 My parents have certain _____, that education is character building and university is a must.
- 6 I don't want to holiday with _____. Kate and Brian are the most conservative people we know.

H Complete the second sentence so that it includes a cataphoric reference. Then underline the cataphoric reference in the second sentence.

- 1 The diamond ring is a very valuable object. It's inside my house and I want you to find it for me.
There is an object of great value inside my house, a _____ to find it for me.
- 2 My father gave me an old cigar box a few weeks before dying.
A few weeks before _____.
- 3 My aunt was very disappointed to have had no children.
_____ not to have had any children.
- 4 Does that man over there look like he's in trouble?
_____, doesn't he, the man over there?
- 5 Guess my unbelievable piece of news. I'm moving to New York.
You won't believe _____!
- 6 I suggest the Royal Grand. Finding a good place to get married is not easy.
Finding a good place to get married is not easy, so _____.



I Work in pairs. Complete or add to these sentences. Then take turns reading what you wrote to your partners and see if they can match what you wrote to the beginning.

- 1 If you read his works, ...
- 2 When I first saw her dance, ...
- 3 This is my firm belief, ...
- 4 I know who they are ...
- 5 This will really make you laugh.

J What is strange about this cataphoric sentence? What do you think is meant?

'It must have been tough on your mother, not having any children.'

—Ginger Rogers,
42nd Street, 1933

PRE-TASK

- A** You are going to create a leaflet which helps people deal with bad news. Before you begin, work in groups to order these examples of bad news from 1 (worst news) to 9. Then decide which examples of bad news would require help.

- Your request for funding is denied.
- You discover you have failed important exams.
- You or someone close to you is suffering from a life-threatening illness.
- You have had a major bereavement.

- Your partner wants a divorce.
- You have been made redundant.
- Someone has crashed your car.
- Your house is going to be repossessed.
- Your company has gone bankrupt.

- B** Work in pairs. When you hear bad news, what do you do to feel better? Look at the pictures and decide which show things you should do to feel better, and which show things you shouldn't do. Explain your choices.



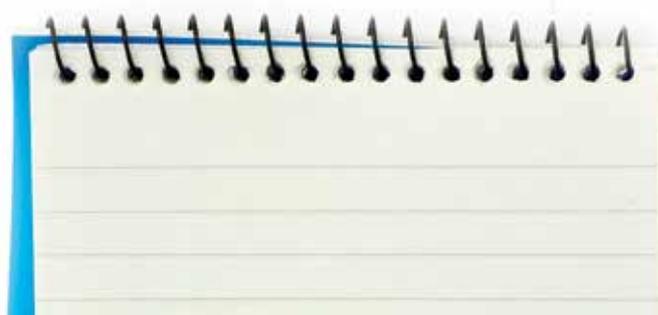
- C** Read the piece of advice. Which piece of bad news in A could it be helpful for?

Look for the positives.

You feel your world has fallen apart, but with every terrible situation, there will always be some positives. Talk them through with someone else, or write them down. When you feel low, you can glance at the list of positives and feel a little better. It may be hard to see clearly at this time, but no matter how horrible the news is, you will always be able to comfort yourself with the positives.

- D** Work in groups. Read the advice for dealing with bad news. Write a few sentences to explain the relevance of advice. Use the example in C to help you. Then add more pieces of advice that you can include in your leaflet.

- Don't feel guilty.
- Don't hold back your emotions.
- Don't feel that you are alone.



TASK

E In pairs, create your leaflets. Think about the bad news people get and the types of advice that can help people in those situations. Give your leaflet a title.

Bad news	Advice

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POST-TASK

F Exchange your leaflets with other members of the class. As you look at the leaflets, discuss the questions.

- 1 Does the leaflet give helpful advice?
- 2 Is it set out clearly?
- 3 Would you benefit from following this advice personally?

G Vote on which leaflet provides the best advice. Then prepare feedback for each group regarding their leaflets. What was good? What could be improved?