



GCSE

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

UNIT 3

**Reading and Writing: Argumentation, Persuasion and
Instructional**

Resource Material (SPECIMEN PAPER)

For use with Section A

TEXT A shows information about risks to safety.

YOUR ODDS OF DEATH

CAUSES OF DEATH:

1. **Cardiovascular disease: 1 in 2**
2. **Smoking (by age 35): 1 in 600**
3. **Bicycle accident: 1 in 88,000**
4. **Tornado: 1 in 450,000**
5. **Lightning: 1 in 1.9 million**
6. **Bee sting: 1 in 5.5 million**
7. **U.S. commercial jet airline: 1 in 7 million**

TEXT B is a series of instructions for covering safety in your place of work.

Keep a record of any incidents

All the relevant information about an accident must be recorded including statements from any witnesses. Report the incident to your local Environmental Health Department.

Conduct risk assessments

Do this thoroughly and regularly and you're well on the way to protecting your place of work.

Create your health and safety policy

This needs to be drafted and then reviewed regularly to ensure it is up to date. Ultimately, you are accountable and need to ensure that adequate arrangements are in place.

Establish a committee to handle health and safety

The committee will be responsible for ensuring that all risk assessments and procedures are followed. They are also responsible for writing health and safety policies.

TEXT C is a report on safety in schools and colleges written by the Association of Teachers and Lecturers (ATL).

Thirty-one per cent of education staff said that they have taken the pupils they work with on fewer school trips and activities over the last three years.

A head of department at a school in England said: "I get all excited about organising a new trip and then my heart sinks when I realise how much paperwork it entails. I reckon about 100 hours of planning to organise a five-day trip abroad. Risk assessments for every moment of the day and night are ridiculous."

A house leader at an independent secondary school in England stated: "The form filling to run a school trip and the costs that are passed onto pupils as a result of having to pay for supply cover are more off-putting than what could go wrong."

There continue to be concerns from some staff over accountability. A primary school teacher in Northern Ireland said: "In spite of fears of litigation I will continue to take trips, as I do it for the children's sake—but it is a very real fear for me."

A teacher at a primary school in Wales added: "I don't fear being sued but I do worry if something were to go wrong I would be held accountable."

The pressure on exam results, taking pupils out of other examination subjects and less time actually available due to existing examination systems has also contributed to a decline in the number of trips and activities in some schools.

TEXT D is a webpage entitled 'How Safe is Flying?'

How Safe Is Flying?

Discover How Safe Flying Really Is!

1. **Pilots are professionals.** Pilots strive to give you (the passenger) the smoothest flight possible because that's how they know they are doing a good job.
2. **Commercial pilots are thought to be boring people.** Before Airlines hire a pilot, the pilot must take rigorous psychological tests to ensure he/she is someone who is detailed oriented and takes little or no risks in life. Nice people, but boring :)
3. **Pilots often go a full career without ever experiencing an engine failure.**
4. **Airplanes can fly safely to their destination if one engine fails.** If flying on a two engine plane, one engine went out, the aircraft could fly with just one.
5. **If all engines were to stop at cruising height (35,000 feet) an aircraft can glide for 30 minutes before it lands on the ground.** An aircraft has the ability to glide 120 miles because all the controls work as if the engines were still going.
6. **No flying bird can stop a jet engine.** During the testing phase, testers throw whole dead chickens through the jet engines to ensure they maintain full functionality.

TEXT E is part of a blog written by journalist Nicola Barry.

The problem of over-keen Health & Safety officials is nothing new. According to Dr Mike Esbester, of the University of Portsmouth, but is, in fact, a century old. He describes some of the early Health and Safety advice as “unintentionally hysterical”. We seem to have learned nothing in all that time and over-cautious is still the name of the game. The enthusiasm of officials to protect us from life’s knocks and bruises just makes them look stupid and petty.

You shouldn’t play conkers at school. Rugby is too tough for small boys. You name it, some idiot from Health & Safety has outlawed it. For example, in Dundee the council banned the sale of homemade cakes at a school fundraiser. If home baking isn’t good enough for a school fun day how come it is good enough to eat round the kitchen table?

It’s difficult to comprehend the mindset of a true jobsworth. It’s a term usually used to describe a council official or parking attendant; a person whose favourite line tends to be, “It’s more than my job’s worth to let you off, mate,” while enforcing some petty regulation or other. They are always people with very little authority. In fact, being a jobsworth gives them the only power they are ever likely to enjoy in their dull little lives, which is why they relish every moment of it.

How did people ever begin sticking their noses into business which did not concern them? Local authority and government employees, people who say they are public servants, who are paid with our council and income taxes, seem to think they know what is best for us. Before they invent their little rules, there is no consultation, no deliberation – just this hard-and-fast diktat which makes absolutely no sense to 99 per cent of the population it affects. It would be better if we just stayed indoors, didn’t go anywhere or do anything.

Everyone, especially schoolchildren, has to take risks. It is part and parcel of growing up.

TEXT F is a response to Nicola Barry’s blog by Karen Townsend.

Your post makes me so sad. Yes, we can all quote some anecdote about a town hall bureaucrat who bans conkers or forbids scones. We all know of some manager who just doesn’t understand or have the training and is so afraid he/she will lose their job that they over-risk-assess. Replacing common-sense with what they believe the law requires. But the examples you quote do not reflect ‘the law’.

I was formerly employed as an HM Inspector of Health & Safety. The ‘what-the-hell’ attitude is what kills. The pressure from a boss to finish a job at speed results in disabled machinery guards and finally, mutilations and disability or death. Working from height can kill if the safety equipment is not supplied or adequate or the employee does not know the safe procedure. Construction sites can be lethal.

I spent the first few months asking my then boss: ‘But why on earth would anyone put their hand/finger/leg/body in there?’ And the rest of the time learning that people do really daft things.

The Dundee ban related to the potential risk of bacteria etc. in home-baked goods—not its fattening effects. The Council took their (O.T.T.) step because they were running scared of personal injury claims. Our society has become increasingly litigious - and this in turn drives increasing caution in service-provider decisions. You may as well blame the trend to litigation as rant about ‘health and safety’.