

**Jack Monroe: retrieving information about her survival**

For these retrieval questions, you will need a copy of the introduction to Jack Monroe's cookbook, *A Girl Called Jack*, published in 2014. It is available on pp.90-91 of Teachit's [AQA English Language Paper 2 exam skills pack](#).

**Task**

Read the extract and answer the questions which follow, to find out more about Jack Monroe.

1. What situation did Jack find herself in between 2011 and 2012?
  
2. In the first paragraph, Jack contrasts her previous lifestyle with some new aspects of her life. Find two things she had to give up:
  - i. ....
  - ii. ....
  
3. She then faced new challenges in her home life as a result of changing her diet. Find and list three new challenges:
  - i. ....
  - ii. ....
  - iii. ....
  
4. In the second paragraph, Jack reflects on what she's lost but then manages to reframe her thoughts to adopt a 'can-do' attitude which is shown through the use of some active, positive verbs. What are they?
  
5. In paragraph three, Jack goes on to say how rewarding she found cooking at home. What were the surprising results of her new regime? List as many of the surprising results as you can.
  
6. In paragraphs four and five, Jack describes some of the rewards of cooking so cheaply and quickly. What are they?
  
7. Jack's target audience is not people with big budgets and expensive kitchens. In paragraph six, she explains how with her recipe books she intends to 'tackle food poverty'. She makes some bold claims! What does she say can be achieved?
  
8. You could describe Jack Monroe as a 'survivor'. She faced extreme challenges and turned her life around. Sum up the 'survival story' of Jack Monroe.

**Survivor challenge!**

Research Jack Monroe to find out more about her life and what she has achieved despite difficult circumstances. Make an information sheet about Jack Monroe.

**Include information about:**

- the difficulties she has faced
- the solutions she found to help her overcome those difficulties
- the messages she has for us all.

### Christina Koch: comparing life on Earth now with an astronaut's 're-entry'

Read the article about astronaut Christina Koch, here:

[theatlantic.com/science/archive/2020/03/coronavirus-astronauts-isolation-social-distancing/608893/](https://theatlantic.com/science/archive/2020/03/coronavirus-astronauts-isolation-social-distancing/608893/)

This is an American article which examines how an astronaut's experiences compare with our situation in a 'lockdown' society. Here, the example given is the USA, but while many of us are social distancing or in isolation, the situation is similar to our own.

### Task

Answer the questions below to explore how the writer makes comparisons between our lives in 'lockdown' with the life of an astronaut.

1. According to the writer, how is the life of an astronaut comparable with our lives during 'lockdown' amid the coronavirus outbreak?
2. What advice did astronauts Scott Kelly, Chris Hadfield and Christina Koch give us?
3. How is our situation worse than the situation of astronauts, according to the writer and many experts?
4. What does the writer say we should do since we don't have a 'mission control' looking out for us?
5. How is an astronaut's re-entry described in the article? What does the writer predict about our 're-entry'?
6. At the end of the article, what tips does the writer say Christina Koch has for her friends / us during this unsettling time?

### Survivor challenge!

Research Christina Koch to find out more about her life and how she coped with a state of isolation and confinement. Make an information sheet about Christina Koch.

**Include information about:**

- the challenges of being an astronaut
- the solutions she found to help her overcome those difficulties
- the messages she has for us all.

**John McAvoy:** summarising a survival tale

Read the article about armed robber turned ironman, John McAvoy, here:

[olympicchannel.com/en/stories/features/detail/john-mcavoy-ironman-former-criminal-cope-isolation/](https://olympicchannel.com/en/stories/features/detail/john-mcavoy-ironman-former-criminal-cope-isolation/)

**Task**

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Summarise John McAvoy's 'survival' story.

Before you begin, make some notes to plan your written summary.

You might use some of these questions to help you:

- Who is he?
- What was his background?
- Who influenced his life and how did he spend his teenage years?
- What was the turning point for him?
- How did he start to turn his life around?
- What messages does he have for us all, living in a 'lockdown' situation?

**Survivor challenge!**

Do some more research into the life of John McAvoy to find out more about his life and what he has achieved despite difficult circumstances. Make an information sheet about John McAvoy.

Include information about:

- the difficulties he has faced
- the solutions he found to help him overcome those difficulties
- the messages he has for us all.

### Brian Keenan: analysing the language of a captive

For these language analysis questions, you will need a copy of an extract from Brian Keenan's autobiography, on p.82 of Teachit's [Reading more non-fiction teaching pack](#).

Brian Keenan's autobiography is based on his experiences as a hostage in Beirut. In the extract, he describes his cell and how it feels to be held prisoner.

### Task

Answer the questions below to explore the language used by Brian Keenan in the extract.

1. Keenan uses pronouns to engage the reader. Find these and explain what effect they have on us.
2. Keenan describes his cell in detail in the second paragraph. Which of the following words could you use to explain how Keenan describes his cell?

cosy	homely	claustrophobic
boring	confined	comfortable
poorly built	liberating	uninviting

3. Keenan uses positional language throughout the passage. Find examples of phrases which show where things are inside the cell in the third paragraph and explain why he has used these phrases.
4. Throughout the extract, Keenan describes how the experiences affected his senses. Choose **one** of the senses below and explain how Keenan described this particular sensory experience.
  - **Sight:** how the cell was built, his toothbrush, his bedcover.
  - **Sound:** the door.
  - **Touch:** the walls and the temperature.
  - **Smell:** the blanket and the window.

### Survivor challenge!

Do some more research into the life of Brian Keenan to find out more about his life and what he has achieved despite difficult circumstances. Make an information sheet about Brian Keenan.

Include information about:

- the difficulties he faced
- the solutions he found to help him overcome those difficulties
- the messages he has for us all.

### Comparing survivors

People can 'survive' all kinds of situations: accidents, victimisation by dangerous people, managing a mental illness, being influenced by other negative people in their lives, and confinement or deprivation of basic needs.

Here are some 'survivors' of various situations, who have now gone on to achieve great things, for themselves and for the greater good of helping other people. Click on the links to find their 'survival' stories and then complete the table with information about them.

Sabrina Cohen-Hatton:	<a href="https://theguardian.com/books/2019/apr/07/sabrina-cohen-hatton-firefighter-fire-safety-heat-of-the-moment">theguardian.com/books/2019/apr/07/sabrina-cohen-hatton-firefighter-fire-safety-heat-of-the-moment</a>
Taylor Swift:	<a href="https://variety.com/2020/music/news/taylor-swift-eating-disorder-netflix-documentary-miss-american-1203478047/">variety.com/2020/music/news/taylor-swift-eating-disorder-netflix-documentary-miss-american-1203478047/</a>
Aron Ralston:	<a href="https://telegraph.co.uk/films/0/127-hours-aron-ralstons-story-survival/">telegraph.co.uk/films/0/127-hours-aron-ralstons-story-survival/</a>

Name	What did they 'survive'?	What did they learn about themselves?	What did they do differently afterwards?
Sabrina Cohen-Hatton			
Taylor Swift			
Aron Ralston			

### Independent reading

#### Stories of survival

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While you're at home, you may want to dip in to some new books. Why not find the autobiographies written by some of the survivors listed below, or by someone else whose life story interests you? Reading for pleasure can help to improve your empathy skills and boost your mood, so find something which is of interest to you!

John McAvoy

Sabrina Cohen-Hatton

Brian Keenan

Terry Waite

Nelson Mandela

#### New ways to enjoy reading

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Alternatively, find ways to enjoy books which help you to 'escape' this strange new reality. Why not try some of the ideas below to experience books in new ways?

1. Swap some of your books with friends - taking care to do so safely. Add mini-reviews on sticky notes to share your thoughts and tips.
2. Try out some 'extreme' reading. Challenge your friends to share photos of themselves reading in unusual places!
3. Give a reading challenge a go. Try some of these:  
[teachitenglish.co.uk/resources/ks3/independent-reading/reading/reading-bingo-challenge/26565](https://www.teachitenglish.co.uk/resources/ks3/independent-reading/reading/reading-bingo-challenge/26565)  
[teachitenglish.co.uk/resources/ks3/independent-reading/reading/fiction-activities/12902](https://www.teachitenglish.co.uk/resources/ks3/independent-reading/reading/fiction-activities/12902)
4. Listen to audiobooks.
5. Watch some 'author live' events (you can catch up later instead if you miss these). Listen carefully to the author's expression and evaluate how they make their books sound funny, serious, scary or how they have created suspense.
6. Read 'around' your GCSE English Literature texts - find books by the same author, books written at the same time, influential books or take time to re-read your class text.
7. Keep a record of books, articles and magazines you read during 'lockdown' which have helped you. Share these with your friends.

**Answers**

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1. She was unemployed.
2. i. and ii. Shopping online and fruit and vegetable deliveries.
3. i. Poor sleep patterns, ii. A constantly hungry child, iii. Skin problems
4. 'I decided to **dust off** my apron'; 'cook meals from scratch', 'I cut down on meat', 'I ... **fell in love** with home-cooked food again'.
5. Her £10 budget still allowed her to bake bread, make protein-rich soups, casseroles, curries and stews; she and her son were healthier and happier (and not starving), they still had three meals a day and snacks; she started to find it quick and delightful; there was little preparation and washing-up; she could multiply the quantities and freeze left-overs.
6. Having dinner parties where friends compliment her cooking and people emailing her on her blog saying how pleasantly surprised they are that their children are being more adventurous with their food.
7. Make things from what's already in the cupboard, spend less money, reduce waste, cook quickly - even with a toddler hanging on your leg.

**Christina Koch:** comparing life on Earth now with an astronaut's 're-entry'

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1. Astronauts spend six months or more away from loved ones, they live in a confined space and interact with the same few people.
2. Keep a busy schedule, learn a new skill, chat with friends via video - perhaps even sharing an activity together (e.g. running).
3. We didn't sign up for the experience, we were already living in a climate of fear - about poor health or financial worries, we have a work environment full of distractions, we don't have the safety net of 'mission control' - instead we have governments trying to offer solutions which might not actually be possible. By contrast, astronauts are mentally prepared for the situation they are about to be in and have counselling for teamwork, communication and self-care, and then they have a team of psychologists offering support prior to re-entry.
4. Find ways to feel a sense of community and belonging, to remind yourself that 'we are in this together'.

5. They are helped by psychologists to adapt back to normal life and to expect things to have changed a lot. They are encouraged to take things easy and their wellbeing is monitored. It takes a while to adjust to the sensory overload. There might be similarities for us in that we won't have interacted closely with other human beings in the same way for months. Astronauts usually look forward to seeing a crowd of faces; this pandemic might have instilled a deeper fear about being in crowds of people again, given the risk of infection.
6. Writing down things which we are grateful for at the end of each day, to help put things into perspective.

**Brian Keenan: analysing the language of a captive**

1. 'I,' 'us,' 'we,' 'you'. He uses these so that we understand and then feel intimately connected with his experience to the point of empathy.

2.

		<b>claustrophobic</b>
<b>boring</b>	<b>confined</b>	
<b>poorly built</b>		<b>uninviting</b>

3. 'In one corner,' 'in another corner,' 'On the mattress,' 'At the head of the mattress'. These phrases help us to create a sort of mental map of where everything is in the cell so that we can imagine the exact space he is in.

4.

- Sight: poorly built - it doesn't sound safe or in any way homely; his toothbrush sounds unhygienic and the bedcover and blanket sound like borrowed rags (they were previously curtains and the blanket belonged to a previous inmate).
- Sound: it's silent other than the door's padlock described with a brutal simile, which makes it very eerie.
- Touch: the concrete walls are described so vividly that you can feel the discomfort of the cell, and the cell's heat prevents him from using the fetid blanket.
- Smell: the blanket smells foul, 'urine' is mentioned and the window can't be opened, all of which give an impression of a stale, filthy environment.