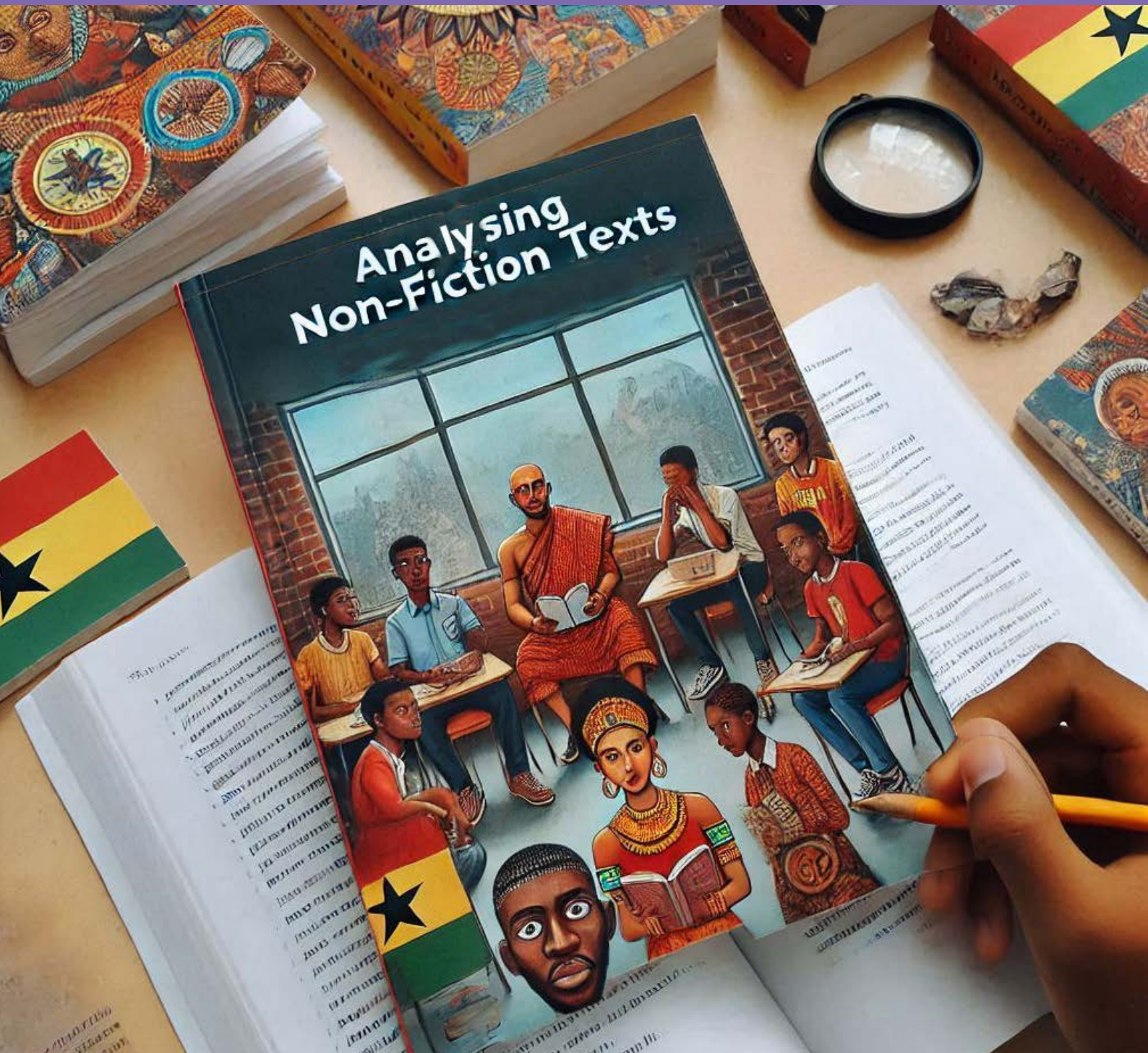


SECTION

23

ANALYSING NON-FICTION TEXTS



READING COMPREHENSION

INTRODUCTION

In Section 18 and some other sections, we discussed in detail some text comprehension strategies that we can use/apply in our reading of given texts (whether fiction or non-fiction) to be able to analyse the texts. We looked at reading techniques like skimming, scanning, close-reading, and light reading. We went further to look at some other features of texts that can help us analyse them. These, we identified as titles of texts, headings/sub-headings, bold prints, italics, examples, illustrations, pictures/images, and videos in texts.

In this Section, focus our attention on non-fiction texts.

By the end of this Section, you should be able to:

- Use a variety of text comprehension strategies to analyse fiction and non-fiction texts.

Key Ideas

- Fiction is an imaginary literary work that is created for the exploration of ideas. It is not necessarily based on facts or on what really happened.
- Non-fiction is a narrative that is based on facts or what actually transpired. It aims to give a true account of real things or events.
- Comprehension strategies are a variety of different approaches we employ in reading a given text to gain understanding as we aim to analyse the text.

ANALYSING NON-FICTION TEXTS

Comprehension strategies are plans of actions that are carried out to accomplish or achieve a specific goal or outcome. In other words, comprehension strategies are a variety/different approaches we employ in reading a given text to get an understanding of the text. These serve as processes or procedures that one has to follow in getting the analysis of the text realised or achieved.

A fictional text is a text that is not factual, or a text that is based on the imagination/creativity of the writer. This implies that the writer or the narrator had not encountered such a text or story that is being given out to the audience. Thus, the producer of the text or story can just think around any happening anywhere and decide to make something out of it for the audience.

Non-fiction text, on the other hand, is one that is produced based on facts. This text or narrative is produced from what actually took place or happened. This is a real-life event. Examples of non-fictional works include history books, travel guides, biography,

autobiography, and others. While the perspective might be different, the essential facts and chronology generally remain unchanged.

So, in our attempt to analyse non-fiction text, we can apply the text comprehension strategies identified above. Apart from these ones, there are some other strategies one can also use to be able to analyse a given non-fiction text. Consider the following:

1. Identifying the main idea and summarising it is a strategy that would help readers analyse a text. Getting to know the main idea of a text would go a long way to help one determine what is important and what is not. This would help the readers summarise/write it in their own words. In doing so, the person would be able to analyse the text.
2. Questioning is another strategy one can employ. That is, asking and answering questions about the text serves as a very significant approach to nonfiction analyses. The questions could be what the text is about, what elements are in the text, what does the writing seek to achieve, and others.
3. Visualising is also not out of place. Thus, when learners are reading, they can visualise/ create their own mental images of the text or take advantage of the illustrations that may be embedded in the text. This allows them better to appreciate and analyse the text under consideration.
4. In addition to the above is prediction. When learners make predictions about the text, they are able to analyse the text based on the title that may be given. They then begin to have expectations based on their previous knowledge about a similar topic. As they read, they may review their prediction since they would have more information about the text. As they predict, they begin to have a clue as to what might happen at the end. This would help in the analyses of the given nonfiction text.
5. The strategy of retelling a story (narrative) cannot be omitted. With this, learners are asked to retell the story they have read in their own words. This would force them to analyse the story in order to determine what is important in the story. When doing this, learners are not just recounting the story, but also drawing their own conclusions about it. This amounts to exploring the story/narrative. This is because without analysing, learners would not be able to retell it.
6. When we are analysing a nonfiction narrative, it is also important that we consider these elements of the narrative; setting (when and where the events of the text take place), characters and characterisation (people or animals involved in the narrative, and how they develop over time), plot (story line, which includes one or more problems that need to be solved), theme (the main idea or lesson the author wants readers to learn).

If you pay keen attention to these text comprehension strategies and the earlier ones, you would be able to better predict and analyse non-fiction texts. Learners are therefore encouraged and advised not to turn a deaf ear to these and many more strategies in their attempt to analyse comprehension texts.

Know, Want-to-know, and Learned (KWL)

As part of the efforts to analyse a text, learners could be asked in groups to brainstorm the title/topic of a text to come out with what they know or can say about the title before they start to read the text. They are also asked to state what they need or want to know about the text. And after reading, they state what they have learned from the text.

All of these procedures would help the learners to fill the prediction form at the appropriate columns of the form - starting from what they know based on the topic (K), what they want to know from the text (W), and what they have learned at the end of the reading the text (L). This constitutes a prediction. After this, learners present and explain to the class what they have on the KWL form, and state what has taken place at each level of the reading.

If one is able to do this effectively, it would greatly help in analysing any given text.

ACTIVITY 23.1

1. Read the passage below and perform the activities that follow.

BETTER LATE THAN NEVER

I never thought of the benefit I was going to reap until I was stopped halfway to the destination. I thought that life belonged to me alone and nobody would have to bother me with the way I have to live. I cared not about what happened to other people around me. I would always get annoyed with people whenever they tried to say a word of advice to me. I felt they were encroaching into my life.

To avoid my family and other acquaintances, I took to the streets of a nearby town. I would roam the whole day, feeding on any little food that came my way. Walking alone became boring for me. So, I had to seek the company of other street guys. They allowed me to join them, and I soon became one of them.

After roaming during daytime, I would go and pass my night on the veranda of a storeroom. This continued for some time, so I began feeling real boredom. To clear this, I decided to find out from colleagues where they slept. They told me that since they came together, they never slept at night. I wondered what they did at night that they never slept. Being so curious, I made them take me to where they sat. When we got there late in the evening, they lit some round folded papers. I did not know the content of the papers, but they started smoking it. One of them offered it to me to also smoke, saying that if I do, I would never fall asleep. I tried to decline the offer, but they insisted. I finally took it and also smoked. Truly, nothing like sleep came to me that day. I then got involved fully in the activity.

I continued this for some time but realised that my way of thinking and behaving started changing day by day. Whenever I sat alone, I felt like shouting, laughing, and sometimes getting annoyed but at nothing.

I started becoming lean and weak. Fortunately, an old man from my

community met me in town and was surprised to see me in such a terrible condition. The next day, from nowhere, I was surrounded by some guys from my community. They bundled me up and sent me home. From then, I could not get access to my guys in town. A few weeks after, I regained myself.

2. Read the passage critically one more time. Sit with three of your colleagues, analyse it and bring out the main idea out of it.
3. Taking the title into consideration, predict what would have happened to the writer if he had been left in town to continue with his life.
4. Share your group's prediction with the entire class and support it with evidence from the text.

Activity 23.2

1. Based on the knowledge you have gained from the text above, and other experiences, write a non-fiction text on a topic of your choice.
2. Prepare a flip chart or PowerPoint presentation of the non-fiction you have written.

Review Questions

Read the passage below carefully and answer the questions that follow it

Education is the key to unlocking your full potential. It is the foundation upon which you can build a successful future. In Ghana, where we face many challenges such as poverty and unemployment, education is even more crucial.

Education helps you acquire knowledge, skills, and values that can lift you out of poverty. With education, you can secure better-paying jobs, improve your standard of living, and support your families.

Education empowers women and girls, giving them a voice and the ability to make informed decisions about their lives. Educated women are more likely to participate in the workforce, earn higher incomes, and contribute to their communities.

Education drives economic growth by producing skilled workers, innovators, and entrepreneurs. As Ghana strives to become a middle-income country, education is critical to achieving this goal.

Education improves health outcomes by teaching you how to make informed decisions about your health, nutrition, and well-being. Educated individuals are more likely to adopt healthy habits and seek medical care when needed.

Education unlocks opportunities for personal growth, travel, and cultural exchange. It broadens your perspective, helps you understand different cultures, and prepares you for an increasingly globalised world.

In conclusion, education is a powerful tool that can transform your life, your community, and your country. As a Ghanaian student, you have the opportunity to access education and unlock your full potential. Embrace it, work hard, and strive for excellence.

1. State the main ideas from the extract above.
2. Identify some text comprehension strategies that can help you analyse non-fiction text.
3. Interpret the main ideas you identified in Question 1 above.
4. Watch the video below https://youtu.be/vpGKJDTu0Zs?si=p9pW_HScICKTZQmB
Make predictions intermittently (beginning, middle and at the end) as you watch the video.
5. Create a non-fiction text of three paragraphs each on the following topics:
 - a. Climate change
 - b. Drug abuse
 - c. Discipline
 - d. Tolerance
 - e. Teenage pregnancy

Extended Reading

1. Dadzie, A.B.K and Grant, N. (2008). *New Gateway English for Senior High School Book 1* (2nd ed.). Longman Publications
2. Sandy, A.J. (2020) *English for Senior Secondary Schools Book 1*(volume 1). Independently Published
3. Victor, Y. *et al*; Leonard, A. (2008). *Black Star Series Book 1* (volume 1). Cambridge University Press

Glossary

Biography

A life story of someone written/told by another person.

Autobiography

A life story of someone written by oneself.

Acknowledgements



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