

Bittersweet chocolate

Answers

LINKS TO:

Stage 2, Module 13

Learning Object 2: Talk about chocolate

Exercise 1

Sample answers:

1.1 What characteristics identify this text as a feature article?

A key characteristic of a feature article is that it is a story that helps the audience to better understand a person, place or issue. In this article, we learn about the life of Afram, a 10-year-old boy who is working in the chocolate industry in Africa. The article helps the readers to understand that instead of attending school, Afram must work to help support his family. Furthermore, the author says that Afram's story is not an isolated one: child labour exists in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

Towards the end of the article, the author expresses his own feelings as he wonders whether Afram has helped to make the Valentine's Day chocolates he loves so much. The author appeals to the readers' emotions and attempts to persuade or challenge them by using the following questions:

- Are these children being exploited? Or is it really exploitation if this is their only means of survival?
- By purchasing chocolate, are we helping support starving children like Afram? Or are we perpetuating their exploitation?

Finally, this is a feature article because it also contains the following characteristics:

- a headline, 'The not-so-sweet side of chocolate'
- a byline, Ardi Sugianto, Editor-in-chief
- a lead paragraph to entice the reader into the story: it talks about a 10-year-old African boy named Afram, who must work to support his family
- a lengthy, in-depth story
- a conclusion that uses rhetorical questions to prompt thought and debate
- it invites the audience to keep thinking about the issue once they have finished reading by asking them to provide their thoughts and opinions on the subject.

1.2 How does the headline draw the reader into the text?

The headline draws the reader into the text by making a contradictory statement: everyone knows that

chocolate is sweet but the headline states 'The not-so-sweet side to the chocolate industry'. When reading the headline I wanted to know why it was stating that chocolate had a not-so-sweet side and so I read on.

1.3 According to the byline of this article, who is the writer?

The writer is Ardi Sugianto, the Editor-in-chief of *Buletin Harapan Bangsa*.

1.4 Why do you think the writer has stated their position along with their name?

By stating his position the writer establishes his credentials. As editor, we know that this person has experience in publishing and critiquing the works of others.

1.5 In your opinion, what was the author's purpose in writing this article?

I believe that the author wrote this piece to raise awareness about the issue of child labour around the world. He wants to inform others about what is going on in the chocolate industry and start a dialogue with his readers about the exploitation of children.

1.6 In the conclusion the author has solicited responses from readers. Why do you think this is?

I believe the author wants to encourage discussion about child labour and find ways to combat the problem.

Exercise 2

Sample answers:

2.1 What is the topic of this feature article?

The topic of the article is child labour around the world, focusing particularly on child labour in the chocolate industry.

2.2 What prompted the author to write about this topic?

The author, while searching for chocolate recipes on the Internet, discovered an article about a young boy in Africa who works on a cocoa plantation. He was so shocked to learn that this child, Afram, spends his days as a child labourer that he decided to raise awareness about the issue by writing an editorial piece for his school newspaper.

2.3 What details were given in the article about Afram's working conditions and daily life?

The article states that Afram works to support his family and cannot go to school. It also states that he works on a cocoa plantation doing hard labour, including heavy lifting.

2.4 According to the article how many children in the world work as child labourers?

According to the article there are almost 250 million child labourers around the world between the ages of 5 and 14.

2.5 What do you notice about the distribution of child labourers around the globe? What do you think are the reasons for this distribution?

Sixty-one per cent of child labourers come from Asia, 32 per cent from Africa and 7 per cent from Latin America. These are all continents with high poverty rates and I believe that children in these countries probably need to work to survive.

2.6 How do you feel about the fact that 70 per cent of children work in dangerous conditions? What can you infer from this statistic?

I am surprised that so many children have to work in dangerous conditions. This tells me that the work they are doing is either unsuitable for children, may be illegal or is in an unofficial sweat-shop environment.

2.7 How does the author feel about the issue of child labour? Give specific examples from the text to back up your answer.

The author is shocked and can't believe that child labour exists in modern society. We know this because the closer it gets to Valentine's Day the more his appetite for chocolate diminishes because he can't stop thinking about Afram, and other children like him, who help in the production of chocolate.

2.8 How do you think Afram feels about having to work to help support his family?

Afram has not been able to play and go to school as children in Australia are able to do, but he may not be aware of missing out on anything. If he is aware then he may feel a little sad. Like all children he would probably like more time to play with his friends. Even so, he probably feels a sense of achievement when he receives his pay because he knows that it will go towards helping his family.

2.9 What impact would being a child labourer have on the life of the child involved?

Afram and children like him have missed out on their childhood and the opportunity to receive an education. This will mean that his future options will be restricted to this type of work and therefore perpetuate the cycle of poverty and exploitation to the next generation.

2.10 Do you think that children should be allowed to work to help support their families?

I think that the children should only be permitted to work no more than a couple of hours a day after they have completed their compulsory schooling commitments. At least with some education, they would have a better chance of breaking the cycle of poverty in their adult years.

2.11 What chores do you do at home? How much time do you spend each day or week doing chores?

At home, I sometimes have to help with the cleaning of the dishes and with taking out the rubbish. I am also given the responsibility of keeping my own room and personal belongings clean and tidy. Compared to what Afram has to do, I have nothing to complain about.

2.12 Do you have a job outside your home? If so, how often or how many hours do you work?

I do not yet have a job outside my home because I am still too young. When I am a bit older I hope to get a job at a fast-food outlet to gain some experience in the workforce.

2.13 What do you receive in exchange for the work you do at home?

In return for the work I do at home I receive pocket money each week to spend on whatever I like. If I want to save this money towards something, my parents will provide me with a packed lunch for school. Otherwise I can spend this money at the school canteen.

2.14 In the conclusion, the editor asks for responses from his readers. Write a paragraph in Indonesian expressing your personal thoughts and opinions on the topic of child labour.

Saya tidak setuju dengan adanya buruh anak-anak. Anak-anak berumur 10 tahun seharusnya pergi ke sekolah dan mengharapakan masa depan yang cerah.

Pada saat yang sama, saya mengerti bahwa ada banyak negara miskin di dunia dan anak-anak yang tinggal di sana harus bekerja untuk menyediakan makanan bagi diri sendiri dan keluarga mereka. Keadaan ini memang sulit. Kita harus berusaha sebaik-baiknya untuk memperbaiki keadaan ini dengan cara mendukung kegiatan amal dan organisasi yang menolong negara-negara miskin.