

There's no place like home

LINKS TO:

Stage 3, Module 7

Learning Object 3: *I can't wait*

Exercise 1

Sample answers:

- 1.1 What are the main ideas in the text? Summarise the main ideas from each paragraph. Use quotations from the text to support your answer.**

Introduction:

In the first paragraph the author relates an anecdote about his last day in Australia. He quotes his father saying, '*... dan di akhir semua petualanganmu yang mengagumkan itu, semoga kamu pulang dengan selamat kepada kami, orang-orang yang mencintaimu.*'

Body paragraph 1:

In this paragraph, the main idea is that the author no longer feels that Australia is his only home. He writes, '*aku melihatnya hanya sebagai salah satu dari rumah-rumah yang aku miliki.*'

Body paragraph 2:

The main idea in this paragraph is the author's experience of living in many countries. The author states that he '*lahir di Australia, tapi orangtuaku melewati hampir seluruh masa kecilku tinggal dan bekerja di luar negeri.*'

Body paragraph 3:

The main focus of this paragraph is the author's feelings about home on his return to Australia, and his perception of the sense of home experienced by other Australian children. He writes, '*Namun demikian, waktu kami akhirnya kembali ke Australia ... aku tidak merasa kerasan.*'

Body paragraph 4:

The main idea in this paragraph is the very different concepts of home that Indigenous Australians have, and how the word 'home' has been used in Indigenous politics. He writes, '*Dalam artian tertentu, banyak orang yang berasal dari generasi yang hilang ini tidak akan bisa "pulang".*'

Conclusion:

In the concluding paragraph, the main idea the author conveys is his sense of being very fortunate to have so many places to call home, particularly in comparison to people whose '*rumahnya sudah hancur.*'

- 1.2 Were there particular words or phrases you found difficult to understand? What strategies did you use to understand these words or phrases, or to understand the text as a whole, despite not being sure what they meant?**

There are a couple of strategies that I use to understand words or phrases that are difficult to comprehend. First of all, I look at the context and try to see if I can understand the words preceding or following the difficult words or phrases. For example, the word '*kerasan*' appears in paragraphs three and four. This word is paired with the word '*merasa*', which I know means 'to feel', so I can deduce that '*kerasan*' must describe a feeling. With the word '*diutarakan*' used in paragraph two, however, I definitely need a dictionary to look up its meaning. I know that it is a passive verb, because it starts with the prefix *di-*. I know the word '*utara*' means 'north', but I cannot work out what the combination means. After consulting a dictionary I found out that the word '*mengutarakan*' — the active form of '*diutarakan*' — means 'to say', so I now know that '*diutarakan*' means 'to be said'.

Exercise 2

Sample answers:

2.1 What assumptions does the author of the text make in terms of things such as culture, history, race, background, age, religion or gender? You might consider this in terms of both the audience for the text, and the individuals or types of people (diplomats, Australians, and so on) mentioned in the text.

Although it is difficult to say with any certainty what the author's assumptions are, his blog post does seem to be addressed to readers of a similar social milieu and age. I don't think it is addressed to people of any particular gender. He is writing in Indonesian, so the reader will need to be able to read Indonesian, but he is also writing about Australia. I think a reader who has some knowledge of Australia would get more out of the essay than someone who is unfamiliar with the country.

In body paragraph 3, the author writes about the other children he and his sister met at school. He makes the assumption that they have not lived overseas, and that their home lives were all the same.

2.2 What evidence does the author provide to support his arguments? How reliable is the evidence?

Most of the evidence the author provides to support his argument is case-study style, based on his own experiences and observations. He provides a direct quotation of something his father said, but the rest of his evidence is largely summaries of events in his life.

In body paragraph 4, he expands this evidence base by referring to the *Bringing Them Home* report about the stolen generation.

2.3 How relevant is the evidence the author uses to support his arguments?

The author clearly states that he is talking about his own thoughts and feelings about home. Because the personal essay is about the author's perceptions of home, the evidence of his personal experiences is relevant to his argument. Body paragraph 4 is an exception to this personal focus. In this paragraph the author states that home 'is as much a political idea as a personal idea'. His reference to the *Bringing Them Home* report provides relevant comment for this argument.

2.4 What other evidence about the notion of home could the author have included? Try to think of at least one other piece of evidence that would support the author's claims, and one that would show another side of the issue.

Other ideas about home that the author could have explored include the experiences of people with unhappy childhood memories. He could also have explored the issue of homelessness, for example, providing evidence about the levels of homelessness in Asia after the tsunami, or in Haiti after the earthquake.

I have a friend who spent the first 12 years of his life living on a boat. To him, home is not a set location. I think it would be interesting to explore the way nomadic people conceptualise the notion of home.