

Question A1: Extracting key information

This question will be worth 5 marks and you will have to list five points that you have found in the opening section of the extract provided. You can quote the details or put them into your own words. The answers may be clearly stated (explicit information) or you may have to work out what is implied in the text (implicit information).

What exactly must I do?

You need to find five details about a character, setting or event. There is no need to write at length. Just find and list the same number of points as there are marks. You do not have to use your own words, although you can if you wish.



ACTIVITY 1

Read this extract. The narrator has gone to London with her mother. They are approached by a stranger.

Just then, a man came up to us. He was a small man and he was pretty old, probably seventy or more. He raised his hat politely and said to my mother 'Excuse me. I do hope you will excuse me. ...' He had a fine white moustache and bushy white eyebrows and a wrinkly pink face. He was sheltering under an umbrella which he held high over his head.

From 'The Umbrella Man' by Roald Dahl

List five things we learn about the man.

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5



ACTIVITY 2

In this extract, Mary is taken to a remote farm in South Africa, where she is to live.

The house looked shut and dark, as she approached it. Then a strange bird called, a wild nocturnal sound, and she ran, suddenly terrified, as if a hostile breath had blown upon her from another world. And as she stumbled in her high heels over the uneven ground, there was a stir and cackle of geese. The homely sound comforted her and she stopped and put out her hand to touch the leaves of a plant standing in a tin. Her fingers were fragrant with the familiar scent of geraniums.

ACTIVITY CONTINUES ➔

Then a square of light appeared in the blank wall of the house and she saw Richard's tall shape stooping inside. She went up the steps to the door and entered a room lit by a single candle. Richard had vanished again and in the dim light the room seemed tiny, tiny and very low. The roof was corrugated iron and there was a strong, musty smell, almost animal-like.

From *The Grass is Singing* by Doris Lessing

List five things we learn about the farm.

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5



ACTIVITY 3

In this extract the narrator, Saleem, describes his birth.

I was born in the city of Bombay ... once upon a time. No, that won't do, there's no getting away from the date: I was born in Doctor Narlikar's Nursing Home on August 15th, 1947. And the time? The time matters, too. Well then: at night. No, it's important to be more ... On the stroke of midnight, as a matter of fact. Clock-hands joined palms in respectful greeting as I came. Oh, spell it out, spell it out: at the precise instant of India's arrival at independence, I tumbled forth into the world. There were gasps. And, outside the window, fireworks and crowds. A few seconds later, my father broke his big toe.

From *Midnight's Children* by Salman Rushdie

List five things we learn about the event of Saleem's birth.

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

Extended practice

In this extract, a man who has been sleeping rough, has been brought into the narrator's family house to be given food and shelter.

We boys adored the look of the man; the girls, fastidious, were more uncertain of him. But he was no tramp or he wouldn't be in the kitchen. He had four bright medals in his pocket, which he would produce and polish and lay on the table like money. He spoke like nobody else we knew; in fact, we couldn't understand many of his words. But Mother seemed to understand him, and would ask him questions, and look at the photographs he carried in his shirt and sigh and shake her head. He talked something of battles and of flying in the air, and it was all wonderful to us.

From *Cider With Rosie* by Laurie Lee

List five things we learn about the man. (Do not include information from the introductory sentence.)

[5]

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5