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Cambridge Grammar and Writing Skills

Learner's Book 9

Mike Gould and Eoin Higgins





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3 Natural encounters	Travel/descriptive writing	To shape language to evoke a real-life situation	Questions	
4 Listen up	Review	To write an effective review that is suitable for a particular audience	Present tenses: simple and perfect	
5 Past reflections	Personal writing/autobiography	To write effective and interesting commentaries	Past tenses	
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How to use this book

Unit walkthrough

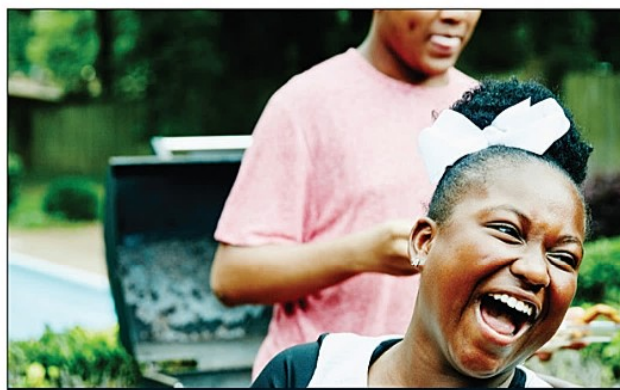
The aim shows you the type of writing that you will look at in this unit.

Here you can see your objectives for this unit if you are a first language English learner.

Each unit begins with a 'Big Question'. This helps you to think about any knowledge you already have on the themes and subject of this unit.

This lists the main features found in an effective example of this type of writing.

The unit is divided into five sections. The first section is called 'Reading'. It focuses on a text extract that is typical of the type of writing covered by this unit. Texts include literature.



1 People pointers

Your writing aim for this unit: To improve characterisation in your imaginative writing

Writing objectives for first language English	Writing and Use of English objectives for second language English
In this unit, you will:	In this unit, you will:
- establish and sustain character, point of view and voice - demonstrate control of a wide variety of sentence types - use paragraphs, and structure ideas between them, to achieve particular effects	- use infinitive and gerund forms - learn about the meaning of particles in phrasal verbs - use cohesion – quantifiers as pronouns

Key terms that you will learn: characterisation incomplete sentence

If you are a second language English learner, you can see your objectives for the unit here.

Keep these questions in mind when you are reading the text for the first time. They help you to see the purpose behind what you are reading.

Coloured words in the text and the 'Key language features' box relate to English language terms that you will learn about later in the unit.

How do I convey character effectively through speech and action?

There is a phrase, 'actions speak louder than words'. Some people do good deeds (for example, doing charitable work) but don't boast or make a fuss about it. Equally, some people promise to do something and then do not stick to their words! Can you think of people like this? Friends or relatives who just help others or work hard without making a fuss? Or can you think of a time when you promised to do something but were unable to fulfil your promise?

Effective characterisation

A good narrative built around character should:

- show the main character's speech or actions
- show how others react or respond to the main character
- allow the reader to draw conclusions about what sort of person he/she is
- often show the main character in some sort of **conflict** or **dilemma**.

Glossary

conflict: a fight or disagreement
dilemma: a difficult decision faced by someone

Reading

The following extract concerns a young man named Bronze, who has not spoken a word since a terrifying fire in his village when he was a little child. All through the year, he has been going to the local town to sell beautiful shoes made from reeds, but now the winter has come. It is snowing and no one seems interested at first.

1 As you read the text, think about these questions:

- How does the author convey Bronze's character?
- What is the dilemma or problem Bronze has to face towards the end of the extract?

Key language features

verb patterns
phrasal verbs
quantifiers as pronouns

The Shoe Boy

Bronze didn't think these city people would be **interested** in **buying** reed shoes. After all, city people had cotton-padded shoes or leather shoes. So, he didn't beckon them over.

He was right. These city people didn't wear reed shoes, but when they came past him some of them stopped. The others wondered why, and stopped too. One or two of them must have been artists. They were enchanted by the ten pairs of fluffy reed shoes in the white light of the snow. The artists saw beauty – an extraordinary beauty – in these shoes. It was **difficult to explain**. One by one they stepped closer and touched the shoes – and when they touched them, they liked them even more. Some of them **held them up** to their noses and sniffed, a whiff of straw, which was especially strong in the cold air around them.

"They'd look so good on the wall at home," one of them said.

The others nodded and reached to grab a pair, afraid of missing out. There were nine in the group. They each took a pair, and one person took two. All ten were in their hands. Until they asked the price, Bronze wasn't at all sure that they were really going to buy them. He told them his price – the price that never changed. So cheap! thought the city people, and they **handed over** their money. They were delighted with their purchases, which they would take back to the city, and took great pleasure in examining them as they walked on.

Bronze stood there in the snow with a handful of cash. He'd done it! Then someone yelled from across the road. "They **must** best get home now your shoes are sold! You'll freeze to death out here!"

This list helps you to develop an appreciation of the type of text that you have just read.

Authentic texts are more challenging than those typically found in an ESL course.

The Teacher's Resource includes work on writers' effects.

'Text analysis' is the second section of the unit. Here you will learn about the structure of the type of text that you have just read.

The activities in this section will break down the text into paragraphs and individual words, and help you to analyse them.

How the text works

Do you remember what makes good **characterisation**? Here is how the writer makes it work. He:

- reveals Bronze's thoughts and feelings directly ('He wasn't sure...')
- conveys Bronze's feelings indirectly through his actions ('He smiled...')
- shows us how others react to him (for example, the 'crowd of people')
- makes us think about Bronze's dilemma through the situation or events of the story (selling shoes outside in the winter).

Glossary

mute: someone who cannot speak
Nainai: Bronze's grandmother
warbled: sang in a high voice
jabbed: hit forcefully and quickly, with a thin object

Key term

characterisation: the way people are presented in a book, poem, play or on screen

Bronze stuffed the cash into his inside pocket, untied the rope from the trees and fastened it round his waist. He looked across the road. There was a crowd of people watching him. He waved to them, and started running off through the snow like a madman.

The sky was clear and everything was bright. Bronze took the usual road home. He wanted to sing, to sing the song that **Nainai** sang when she was twisting rope. He couldn't sing out loud, so he sang in his head.

"Fishing for prawns in trees? Oh, put away your net!
 Looking for gold in mud? There's only sand as yet!
 Oranges grow on the black locust tree
 Oh, when will we see the pe-a-ny?"
 Someone was following him.

"Hey, shoe-boy, stop!"
 Bronze stopped and glanced around warily. He didn't recognise the man and was suspicious. When the man caught up with Bronze, he said, "I saw them buying your shoes. Have you got any more? I'd like some too."

Bronze shook his head, and felt a bit sorry for him. The man wrung his hands, and sighed in disappointment. Bronze looked at him, and wished he could do something. The man turned and headed towards the pier, and Bronze turned and headed for home.

After a while Bronze slowed down. He saw the red shoes on his feet. He heard the snow crunch beneath them. He stopped walking, looked up at the sky, then down at the snow and, finally, at the red shoes, which felt warm and snug on his feet. Nainai's song **warbled** through his mind. After a moment or two, he pulled his right foot out of his shoe and put it down on the snow. The cold **jabbed** like a needle. He did the same with his left. Immediately, the cold shot through his bones. He bent forward, picked up the shoes and held them up to inspect them. They'd



only been worn once in the snow and there were no dirty marks on them. They looked like new.

Bronze smiled, then turned and ran after the man. His bare feet sent snow spraying as they hit the ground. The man was stepping down to the pier to catch the steamboat when Bronze appeared in front of him, holding up the pair of red shoes. The man couldn't believe his luck, and reached out to take them. He wanted to pay Bronze extra, but Bronze would only take his usual price.

Bronze waved at his last customer, then headed for home. He ran all the way, without once looking back. His feet were washed clean by the snow but were frozen red. Bright, bright red.

From *Bronze and Sunflower* by Cao Wenxuan

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Text analysis

Good characterisation often depends on **empathy**. This is when readers become interested in a character because they can understand and sympathise with their situation. This is sometimes expressed as 'being in their shoes' (which is very suitable in this story).

Glossary

empathy: being able to understand someone's situation or feelings

- 1 What things or aspects of the story help us to empathise with Bronze? (Think about his worries, the weather, etc.)

Reading closely

- 2 This part of the story hinges around two potential problems Bronze faces.

- a Why would 'city people' be interested in Bronze's village shoes?
- b What is the second problem, or dilemma, after he has sold the shoes and sets off home?

- 3 The first part of the extract is structured around the city people looking at the shoes.

- a Why does Bronze at first think they wouldn't be interested in his shoes?
- b How do the city people show, through their actions, that they are interested in buying them?
- c What do they intend to do with the shoes?

- 4 The second part of the extract is built around the dilemma Bronze faces as he walks home.

- a What does the man call Bronze when he stops him? What is Bronze's initial reaction?
- b How does the man react when Bronze shakes his head?
- c When does Bronze decide to give the man his own shoes - at that point, or later?

- 5 You will encounter stories with much more demanding vocabulary later in this Learner's Book, but part of this story's success is that it has an almost fairy tale simplicity.

The fairy tale style of the story is partly created by the city people's reaction to the shoes.

Which words or phrases in the second paragraph mean:

- a spellbound?
- b extreme loveliness?
- c hard to describe?

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'Glossary' boxes help to explain difficult or unusual words or phrases in the text. They are highlighted in red.

'Key term' boxes highlight new or important language that you will work on in the unit.

- 6 The writer uses a number of short, simple sentences to convey Bronze's feelings or stress what has happened to him.
- a At the start, the extract states: 'He was right.' What was Bronze 'right' about?
 - b Later, after the city people had gone, the extract states: 'He'd done it!'
 - i What had he 'done'?
 - ii Why do you think the writer uses this emphatic, short sentence with an exclamation mark?
 - c The extract ends with a phrase – a sort of **incomplete sentence**: 'Bright, bright red.' Why does the writer end like this? Consider these options (more than one might be right):
 - to explain that Bronze's feet are bleeding
 - to emphasise how cold Bronze's feet must be
 - to emphasise Bronze's kindness and unselfishness
 - to emphasise how far Bronze would go to help his family
 - to show how warm his feet are.

Key term

incomplete sentence: often this is a minor sentence that is missing the usual subject plus verb structure. For example, imperatives such as 'Go!' or answers to questions might not have the usual sentence parts. 'Bright, bright red' has no subject or verb, but could stand for 'They were bright, bright red.'

Thinking about the text

What are the 'pointers' that help readers to understand characters? It can be how the character acts or behaves, or how others respond to them.

- 7 Think carefully and then answer these questions.

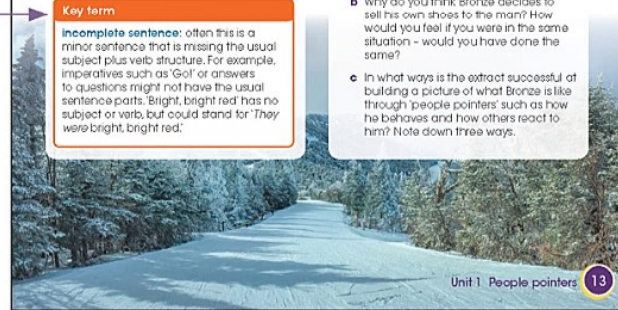
- a The writer uses the simile 'the cold jabbed like a needle' to describe how Bronze feels when he removes the shoes. What do the words 'jabbed' and 'needle' suggest about what he feels?
- b A person calls Bronze 'mute' rather than by his name. How does that make you feel as a reader?
- c What evidence is there at the end of the extract that the man at the pier appreciates Bronze's sacrifice?

React to the text

- 8 Work in pairs. Discuss these questions.

- a In the story, Bronze has to stand out in very cold weather trying to sell his shoes. Have you ever had to do a job or wait around in extremely cold weather? How did you feel? Did you want to 'give up' and go inside?
- b Why do you think Bronze decides to sell his own shoes to the man? How would you feel if you were in the same situation – would you have done the same?
- c In what ways is the extract successful at building a picture of what Bronze is like through 'people pointers' such as how he behaves and how others react to him? Note down three ways.

These discussion questions let you talk about your personal reaction to the text and add your own thoughts.



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The 'Use of English' section looks at grammar or vocabulary in relation to the text type.

First of all, you will read about the new grammar or vocabulary in one of these presentation boxes. You will be asked to actively think about the grammar rules and use.

Use of English

Later in the unit you are going to write part of a story about a character.

Gerunds and infinitives

Grammar presentation

In stories it is important to vary the language to keep the reader's attention, so writers often use a wide variety of verb patterns.

- 1 Match the sentence parts from the story on pages 10–11 to the verb patterns.

- | | |
|--|---------------------------|
| a ...people would be interested in buying red shoes. | i verb + infinitive |
| b It was difficult to explain. | ii verb + gerund |
| c He wanted to sing... | iii infinitive of purpose |
| d He stopped walking, looked up at the sky... | iv preposition + gerund |
| e The others nodded and reached to grab a pair. | v adjective + infinitive |

Find more examples of each pattern from Activity 1 in the story.

- 2 Verbs of the senses are followed by the gerund or the infinitive without to, depending on the meaning. Study these examples.

She saw them **buying** your shoes. The action was in progress when she saw it.

He heard the snow **crunch** beneath them.

A short action that he heard from beginning to end.

- 3 Choose the correct verb form for each sentence.

- a Chen turned around and saw a large man walk / walking towards him.
- b Aza put her hand out to take / taking the money.
- c They were tired of to wait / waiting around in the cold.
- d Sanjay was too shy to interrupt / interrupting the conversation.
- e I don't mind to leave / leaving a little later if you can't now.
- f They didn't appear to be / being eager to continue / continuing.

- 4 Complete the story extract with the correct form of the verbs in brackets.



Meera heard a voice (a) _____ (call) her but she refused (b) _____ (turn) around. Her friend kept (c) _____ (talk) so Meera focused all her attention on (d) _____ (listen) to Tara's long rant about how impossible it was (e) _____ (study) in the library with all the noise. But it was no use. The voice got more difficult (f) _____ (ignore) and Meera decided (g) _____ (glance) around quickly ... she was delighted (h) _____ (see) it was someone she knew.

This is followed by lots of activities to help you practise the new language.

Each unit includes one grammar box and one vocabulary box.

Vocabulary: phrasal verb particles

Vocabulary presentation

Certain movements or actions can only be described using phrasal verbs. In descriptive language in stories, phrasal verbs can be very useful. Often the meaning of the particle can help you to understand what the phrasal verb means.

5 Look at the following phrasal verbs from the story on pages 10–11. What do the particles mean?

- a Some of them held them up to their noses...
- b ...they handed over their money.
- c ...took great pleasure in examining them as they walked on.
- d He waved to them, and started running off...
- e The man couldn't believe his luck, and reached out to take them.

6 Choose the correct particle to complete each sentence.

- a All lifted up / off the box to check how heavy it was.
- b Instead of stopping the car, she just drove up / on.
- c Diya stepped around / over the puddle but Shyla jumped right into it.
- d Aulia caught up / on with Rati to ask him for help, but he just walked up / off.
- e We slowed off / down to let some sheep cross the road, then they all ran away / over across the fields.

Tip

Understanding the different meanings of prepositions and particles can really help you to learn phrasal verbs.

7 Complete the story extract with the correct particles.

Chang didn't know whether to ride (a) _____ or stop to help the old woman who had obviously fallen (b) _____. In the end, he pulled (c) _____ on his bike, hopped (d) _____ and laid his bike (e) _____ on the ground. The woman looked (f) _____ at Chang and held (g) _____ her hand. Chang pulled her (h) _____ and she began to walk (i) _____ without saying anything. Just as Chang was about to ride (j) _____ on his bike, the woman turned (k) _____ and called (l) _____ to Chang. 'Thank you, little girl,' she said and smiled.

Cohesion: quantifiers as pronouns

Cohesion presentation

Sometimes we can use quantifiers (some, any, many, a few, etc.) as pronouns when it is clear what they are referring to.

8 What do the quantifiers in bold in this sentence refer to?

'I saw **them** buying your shoes. Have you got **any more**? I'd like **some** too.'

9 Cross out the words that are not needed in each sentence.

- a Mrs Zhang offered some cake but I didn't want any more cake.
- b There were boys standing around the door. Some of the boys were laughing.
- c A bowl of sugar was placed in front of Hana. She put some sugar in her tea.
- d People started to run in all directions. Many people took shelter in the shops and a few people stood under the tree.

You may also find an extra presentation box focusing on punctuation or cohesion. This information will help you to write better texts.

Helpful 'Tips' relating to grammar and writing can be found in each unit.

'Guided writing' is the fourth section. This will guide you step-by-step through a writing activity that is related to the text type.

You will be presented with a model task to complete.

Guided writing

You have decided to enter a story competition with a story using the following title: 'The Outsider'. Create an extract from a story, written in the third person, in which a character from one community or place is in a strange or very different place. Your character has to face some sort of problematic situation or dilemma, and describe how other people react to him or her.

Write an extract from a story for the competition.



Think/Plan

Work in pairs. Generate ideas about your main character. Answer the questions to help you.

- a Why is your character considered an 'outsider'?
- b What is his/her name? What does he/she look like?
- c Does he/she have any distinguishing features?

Tip

You could use a mind map to generate ideas for your story. Use the questions to help you.

2 Now organise your story. Think about the setting, the main events, and the outcome. Discuss these questions with a partner.

- a Where does the story take place? What is the situation?
- b What dilemma does the character face?
- c How does the character resolve the situation?

Useful language

Phrases: [character] didn't think that... After all... [character] wasn't at all sure that... He/She didn't recognise... was suspicious... felt a bit sorry for... wished he/she could do something.

Gerunds and infinitives: it was difficult/easy to... He/She was too shy to... He/She wanted to... X didn't appear to... X was tired of... Ing X seemed interested in... Ing X heard/saw him/her... Ing. He/She stopped... Ing.

Phrasal verbs (actions): hold up/lift up, hand over/step over, walk on/dive on, run off, reach out, catch up with, slow down, run away.

Write: the build-up

The story about Bronce on pages 10–11 starts by presenting a situation in which the main character seems to have come out very well, despite his first impression.

Write the first part of your story.

- a First, think about the build-up to the dilemma. Here are some ideas:
 - X was sure she was going in the right direction.
 - X was excited to be putting on his new school uniform for the first time.
 - It had been a delicious lunch and X felt great.

Create an atmosphere, with details about the place, the weather, the people, the action, etc.

'Useful language' boxes provide words and phrases that will help with your writing.

The first step is to brainstorm and plan ideas for your writing.

This will include opportunities to plan collaboratively with other students.

Helpful 'Tips' relating to grammar and writing can be found in each unit.

You will work intensively on writing just one part of the text type.

Useful facts relating to the text type or writing can be found in the 'Did you know?' boxes.

Write: first paragraph

Write the first paragraph of your review. Include the following information:

- the name of the band and the album
- the release date and the time since the band's last album
- the number of tracks
- potential audience/appeal.

You should also write a headline and a subtitle.

Write: main body

Write the main body of your review. Describe some stand-out tracks or aspects of the album. Include information about the music, lyrics, style and content, and use interesting adjectives to describe these aspects. Write two or three paragraphs.

- Use the present perfect simple to explain the background to the track.
- Use the present simple to comment on the different aspects of the track.
- Show your knowledge of music: instruments, styles, production, etc.

Did you know?

Reviewers often pack a lot of information into the sentences in the main body. Look at this example from the review on pages 40–41.

Suga, who has often proven his skill at writing melancholy lyrics, does it again in 'Tilvia: Seesaw, a fiery synthesiser-driven number that charts the end of a relationship.

style and content

background information

Write: conclusion

Now write the conclusion of your review. Use the final paragraph to comment on the future of the band, album and/or genre. Here are some ideas to help you.

- This album will surely consolidate...
- This new material will definitely appeal to...
- It may not be their best material so far, but it will...
- Perhaps this new album will help to put [band] on the international stage.

Things to remember when writing a review

- Write about something relevant at the time of writing.
- Match the style and language to your audience.
- Demonstrate your knowledge of the topic through the vocabulary.
- Give a strong viewpoint in an entertaining way.
- Use the present perfect to explain the background.
- Use the present simple to comment on what you are reviewing.

Check your first draft

When you have finished writing your review, share it with your partner.

- Check that your partner has included all of the correct information.
- Pay attention to whether his/her opinions are clear and consistent.
- Assess whether the style and language are appropriate for the type of reader.

Peer assessment

Decide on a set of criteria for your partner to use to evaluate your work.

Now write a second draft of your review.

Unit 4 Listen up 47

'Things to remember' offers a reminder of the important points that you should cover in your writing.

The unit includes opportunities for self-assessment. This will help you to develop responsibility for your own learning.

You will also learn to edit and then redraft your own writing.

The 'Peer assessment' boxes allow you to collaborate with other students and reflect on each other's work.

'Independent writing' is the final section. Using all the information that you have learnt in the unit, you can now complete an entire writing activity on your own.

The word limit for your writing activity is provided.

Each writing activity has a choice of tasks. This will help you to access the right one for you.

The unit ends with a progress checklist where you can reflect on your own learning.

Independent writing

Write a story of 300–350 words that conveys a character. Choose one of these ideas for a character or use your own.

- Henry didn't mind that everyone was taller than her.
- Alpin always wore a red woolly hat.
- Junko walked out of the sea back to the beach. It was colder today.

Follow these stages.

Stage 1 Generate ideas for your character. Think about: what he/she looks like; how he/she dresses; how he/she speaks and moves.

Stage 2 Put your ideas into a mind map.

- Where will your story take place? What situation does your main character find himself/herself in?
- What dilemma does he/she face?
- How does it all end?

Stage 3 Write your story in paragraphs, following your plan. Use the checklist to make sure your story is full of suspense.

Writer's checklist: conveying character

- Have you created an interesting character?
- Have you conveyed your character through their speech and actions?
- Have you created a dilemma for your character?
- Have you used a variety of sentence structures to create different effects?
- Have you made the reader think about the character through the situation and events?
- Have you used phrasal verbs for different actions?

Editor's checklist

Check

- that your ideas are organised into paragraphs
- your spelling and use of capital letters
- punctuation
- the grammar is correct – phrasal verbs, gerunds and infinitives.

Final draft

Once you have completed your story, post it on the wall in your class or on your class website. Invite readers to comment on it.

Check your progress

I can:	Needs more work	Almost there	All done!
develop and convey a character through speech and actions			
create a dilemma for a character to face and resolve			
use a variety of short and long sentences to build tension			
reveal the character's feelings through their actions			

The 'Writer's checklist' is a final reminder of what you covered in the unit and what you should include in your writing.

The 'Editor's checklist' is a final reminder of how to edit and proofread your writing.

'Final draft' suggests what you or your whole class can do with your finished writing.



1 People pointers

Your writing aim for this unit: To improve characterisation in your imaginative writing

Writing objectives for first language English

In this unit, you will:

- establish and sustain character, point of view and voice
- demonstrate control of a wide variety of sentence types
- use paragraphs, and structure ideas between them, to achieve particular effects.

Writing and Use of English objectives for second language English

In this unit, you will:

- use infinitive and gerund forms
- learn about the meaning of particles in phrasal verbs
- use cohesion – quantifiers as pronouns.

Key terms that you will learn: characterisation incomplete sentence

How do I convey character effectively through speech and action?

There is a phrase, 'actions speak louder than words'. Some people do good deeds (for example, doing charitable work) but don't boast or make a fuss about it. Equally, some people promise to do something and then do not stick to their words! Can you think of people like this? Friends or relatives who just help others or work hard without making a fuss? Or can you think of a time when you promised to do something but were unable to fulfil your promise?

Effective characterisation

A good narrative built around character should:

- show the main character's *speech* or *actions*
- show *how others react* or *respond* to the main character
- *allow the reader to draw conclusions* about what sort of person he/she is
- often show the main character in some sort of **conflict** or **dilemma**.

Glossary

conflict: a fight or disagreement

dilemma: a difficult decision faced by someone

Reading

The following extract concerns a young man named Bronze, who has not spoken a word since a terrifying fire in his village when he was a little child. All through the year, he has been going to the local town to sell beautiful shoes made from reeds, but now the winter has come. It is snowing and no one seems interested at first.

- 1 As you read the text, think about these questions:
 - a How does the author convey Bronze's character?
 - b What is the dilemma or problem Bronze has to face towards the end of the extract?

Key language features

verb patterns

phrasal verbs

quantifiers as pronouns

The Shoe Boy

Bronze didn't think these city people would be **interested in buying** reed shoes. After all, city people had cotton-padded shoes or leather shoes. So, he didn't beckon them over.

He was right. These city people didn't wear reed shoes, but when they came past him some of them stopped. The others wondered why, and stopped too. One or two of them must have been artists. They were enchanted by the ten pairs of fluffy reed shoes in the white light of the snow. The artists saw beauty – an extraordinary beauty – in these shoes. It was **difficult to explain**. One by one they stepped closer and touched the shoes – and when they touched them, they liked them even more. Some of them **held them up** to their noses and sniffed, a whiff of straw, which was especially strong in the cold air around them.

"They'd look so good on the wall at home," one of them said.

The others nodded and reached to grab a pair, afraid of missing out. There were nine in the group. They each took a pair, and one person took two. All ten were in their hands. Until they asked the price, Bronze wasn't at all sure that they were really going to buy them. He told them his price – the price that never changed. So cheap! thought the city people, and they **handed over** their money. They were delighted with their purchases, which they would take back to the city, and took great pleasure in examining them as they walked on.

Bronze stood there in the snow with a handful of cash. He'd done it! Then someone yelled from across the road, "Hey, **mute**, best get home now your shoes are sold! You'll freeze to death out here!"

How the text works

Do you remember what makes good **characterisation**? Here is how the writer makes it work. He:

- reveals Bronze's thoughts and feelings directly ('He wasn't sure...')
- conveys Bronze's feelings indirectly through his actions ('He smiled...')
- shows us how others react to him (for example, the 'crowd of people')
- makes us think about Bronze's dilemma through the situation or events of the story (selling shoes outside in the winter).

Bronze stuffed the cash into his inside pocket, untied the rope from the trees and fastened it round his waist. He looked across the road. There was a crowd of people watching him. He waved to them, and started running off through the snow like a madman.

The sky was clear and everything was bright. Bronze took the usual road home. He wanted to sing, to sing the song that **Nainai** sang when she was twisting rope. He couldn't sing out loud, so he sang in his head:

"Fishing for prawns in trees? Oh, put away your net!

Looking for gold in mud? There's only sand as yet!

Oranges grow on the black locust tree

Oh, when will we see the pe-o-ny?"

Someone was following him.

"Hey, shoe-boy, stop!"

Bronze stopped and glanced around warily. He didn't recognise the man and was suspicious. When the man caught up with Bronze, he said, "I saw them buying your shoes. Have you got any **more**? I'd like **some** too."

Bronze shook his head, and felt a bit sorry for him. The man wrung his hands, and sighed in disappointment. Bronze looked at him, and wished he could do something. The man turned and headed towards the pier, and Bronze turned and headed for home. After a while Bronze slowed down. He saw the reed shoes on his feet. He heard the snow crunch beneath them. He stopped walking, looked up at the sky, then down at the snow and, finally, at the reed shoes, which felt warm and snug on his feet. Nainai's song **warbled** through his mind. After a moment or two, he pulled his right foot out of his shoe and put it down on the snow. The cold **jabbed** like a needle. He did the same with his left. Immediately, the cold shot through his bones. He bent forward, picked up the shoes and held them up to inspect them. They'd

Glossary

mute: someone who cannot speak

Nainai: Bronze's grandmother

warbled: sang in a high voice

jabbed: hit forcefully and quickly, with a thin object

Key term

characterisation: the way people are presented in a book, poem, play or on screen



only been worn once in the snow and there were no dirty marks on them. They looked like new.

Bronze smiled, then turned and ran after the man. His bare feet sent snow spraying as they hit the ground. The man was stepping down to the pier to catch the steamboat when Bronze appeared in front of him, holding up the pair of reed shoes. The man couldn't believe his luck, and reached out to take them. He wanted to pay Bronze extra, but Bronze would only take his usual price.

Bronze waved at his last customer, then headed for home. He ran all the way, without once looking back. His feet were washed clean by the snow but were frozen red. Bright, bright red.

From *Bronze and Sunflower* by Cao Wenxuan