

5

Food security

In this unit you will:

- apply reading strategies: making use of assumed knowledge and displayed information
- identify key words which convey the writer's stance
- identify paragraph function and understand text organization
- use enabling skills: **annotating** the text and writing notes and summaries

FOCUS TASK

You are going to read a selection of texts in order to produce a set of notes that will help you complete the following assignment:

The global population has increased from 2 billion to 7 billion in the past 80 years. In the next 40 years it is predicted to rise to 9 billion. What are the challenges and what measures can be most effective in feeding such a rapidly expanding population?



Text

Diet and sustainability key to feeding the world: A food security report, Text 5a (Source Book pp. 28–29)

Text 5a summarizes the key issues relating to food security that are covered in greater detail in the three other texts in the unit. These come from a review paper by UK government scientists, which maintains that good nutrition and sustainability are essential in order to ensure global food security.

Task 1 Surveying the text

It is important that students in higher education make decisions about how to make use of an academic text because of the large amount of reading required on some courses.

Study tip

Remember that surveying features of the text before going into detailed reading can save time and provide important insights into the content and value of the text. Features to look for include the title and any figures or graphs.

1.1 **Analyze the title of Text 5a by examining it in sections. Complete Column 2 with appropriate deductions. In the table below the title is divided into six separate parts.**

Note: Very useful ideas and information can be learnt from carefully analyzing the title of academic texts.

Title deconstruction	Deductions
Diet	relating to <u>food and nutrition</u>
sustainability	something which can be _____
key	very _____ factor(s)
feeding the world	_____
food security	having access to _____
report	a _____

- 1.2 Now consider what you can deduce from the photograph about the content of the text. Discuss your ideas with another student.

- 1.3 Look at the references at the end of the text. What useful information do these give?

Task 2**Search reading: Practising fast, accurate reading**

- 2.1 Read Text 5a quickly, but carefully, to answer questions 1–12.

Scan the text quickly to find the information you need to answer the questions. Then read the information carefully to answer accurately.

1. What solutions for achieving food security are identified in the introductory material?

2. What two major causes of starvation on a global scale are identified?

3. These two factors have resulted in there being less ...

a.

b.

4. The population 'explosion' is predicted to level off in ...

5. Approximately how many people in total are faced with insufficient food and nutrition?

a. 1 billion

b. 2 billion

c. 3 billion

6. What year does the Stanford University research relate to?

7. The dramatic decrease in vulture numbers in India has led to ...

8. What is the negative impact of developed countries importing exotic fruit?

9. What could be the negative impact of poorer countries exporting exotic fruit?

10. Where can the impact of climate change be most effectively managed?

11. In future, animals may well be the main source of ...

12. Which form of research is recommended for dealing with future food insecurity?

Task 3 Identifying functions of the text

A useful approach to understanding the organization, purpose and value of a text is to identify the functions section by section, paragraph by paragraph and if necessary, sentence by sentence. One way of doing this is by annotating the text in the margin.

Study tip

Clear annotation of text can provide useful reference for revision or further study.

3.1 Look at the two examples of annotations for lines 5–15 of Text 5a. Then highlight the parts of the text relevant to the other two annotations.

Annotations	Text extract (lines 5–15)
one reason further info. another reason + cause implication	Grave concerns about food security have surfaced for a number of reasons. Firstly, there has been a population explosion. According to the Royal Society, between 1930 and 2010 the world's population grew from 2 billion to 6.8 billion now, with a projected peak of 9 billion by 2050 (Black, 2010). A further major cause for concern is the impact on food production of climate change, brought about by global warming. Population growth and climate change will mean there is an increasing shortage of water and of land for food production, and therefore more competition for these resources.

3.2 Go through the rest of the text making brief annotations in the margin. Use a pencil in case you decide to make changes.

Identify which sections of the text have the following functions (not all of these functions might be used in this text):

- background information, e.g., giving detail of the overall situation
- general problems/implications
- exemplification, i.e., examples
- explication, i.e., further information to develop a point
- solution
- evaluation, e.g., of ideas
- viewpoints, i.e., writer's recommendations or suggestions
- conclusion

3.3 Complete the table using the annotations you made in Ex 3.2.

In the extra comments column you might write comments such as *relevant to the focus task* or *check this source*.

Function	Line numbers	Extra comments
1. background information	5-15	some reasons and implications mentioned + relevant to Focus task
2. general problems/implications		
3. exemplification		
4. explication		
5. solution		
6. evaluation		
7. viewpoints		
8. conclusion		

Task 4 The writer's choice of language

The writer's choice of language can also perform a particular function, for example, to indicate the seriousness or importance of the information or ideas being described. The use of adjectives or adverbs can play an important role in putting the writer's message across effectively. It can also help the reader identify examples of the writer's attitude or bias towards the topic.

4.1 Look at lines 1-22 and identify two more examples of language that the writer uses to convey the seriousness of the topic.

grave concerns (line 5)

- 4.2 Look at lines 23–39 and list further examples of strong descriptive language the writer uses to emphasize the problems.

brink of extinction (line 33)

- 4.3 Look at the words and phrases in the table below and find words and phrases in the text with a similar meaning.

Complete the table with the word or phrase, its word class and the number of the line where it appears. Note that the definitions are listed in the same order as the relevant words in the text.

Study tip

Taking an interest in features of the text such as the writer's choice of language will not only help your understanding of the text, but will also help to develop your reading research skills in the long term.

Definition	Line number	Word or phrase	Word class
a. deal with (P1)			
b. appear or emerge (P2)			
c. estimated high point or maximum (P2)			
d. a large amount/many (P3)			
e. having insufficient food (P3)			
f. opposite situation (P3)			
g. total amount of greenhouse emissions (P6)			
h. very possible (P7)			
i. actions/policies (P8)			

Text

The challenge of feeding 9 billion people, Text 5b

(Source Book pp. 30–31)

Text 5b looks in more detail at the issues we face in producing enough food to feed our growing world population.