**Week 3 Comprehension** Harry Drinkwater's Diary (Non-fiction) by Harry Drinkwater

Harry Drinkwater served as front-line soldier throughout World War One. He was initially rejected by the army for being too short, but managed to join the Birmingham Pals Battalion. He later became an officer and was awarded the Military Cross. Even though soldiers weren’t allowed to keep diaries, he kept one for the duration of the war, storing it in his tunic pocket. He fought in the Somme and Passchendael, witnessing many of his friends being killed, but miraculously managing to survive the war himself. He died in 1978.

Questions to ask before reading the text with your reading group:

1. What do you know about the war?
2. What do you think it must have been like for the soldiers fighting in the trenches?
3. What would you like to know about dinosaurs?
4. Look at the glossary—what are the key words and what do they mean?

As pupils read the text, encourage them to focus on how the key words are used in the text. After reading the text, ask the pupils the first question from their group’s section and discuss. They will then record this into their books and work independently, while you go around to the other pupils.

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<th>Section 1:</th>
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<tr>
<td>1a) Look at the summary at the top of the page. When was World War One?</td>
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<td>1b) Why do you think Harry decided to keep a diary?</td>
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<td>1c) What are blacksmith’s bellows? Use the glossary to help you.</td>
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<td>1d) Find and copy the third sub-heading in the text.</td>
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<td>1e) Why do you think Harry had to do an hour’s sentry duty every third hour? Explain your answer using evidence from the text.</td>
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<th>Section 2:</th>
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<td>2a) Why do you think the men must have been hungry? Explain your answer using evidence from the text.</td>
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<td>2b) Why do you think the trenches are full of water?</td>
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<td>2c) Find and copy a hyphenated adjective used in the text. (Two words with a hyphen in between)</td>
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<td>2d) Why do the soldiers ‘eat and drink mud’ in line 4?</td>
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<td>2e) Find and copy a phrase that explains why many soldiers may have suffered from back pain.</td>
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<th>Section 3:</th>
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<tr>
<td>3a) Why do you think Harry feels ‘half dead’ in line 12?</td>
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<td>3b) When did Harry eat cold bacon, bread and jam?</td>
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<td>3c) What does ‘feverish’ in line 9 mean? You can use a dictionary.</td>
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<td>3d) What does this word tell you about how the soldiers worked?</td>
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<td>3e) Why did the soldiers have so little food?</td>
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<td>3f) Why do you think Harry had to do an hour’s sentry duty every third hour? Explain your answer using evidence from the text.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3g) What happened to Harry on Friday March 10?</td>
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<td>3h) Why do you think that working in the mines was ‘an awful strain mentally’ (line 25)?</td>
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Harry Drinkwater was a soldier who fought in World War One (1914-1918). He joined the army at the outbreak of war and served until the war ended. He kept a diary throughout the war, which has now been published as a book. The text below is an extract from his diary.

**Monday, December 20, 1915**
The trenches are in a terrible condition — anything up to 4ft deep in mud and water. We're plastered in mud up to our faces. Our food — cold bacon, bread and jam — is slung together in a sack that hangs from the dripping dugout roof. Consequently, we eat and drink mud.

**Saturday, March 4, 1916**
Nothing here but trench after trench and, in places, the ground blown into heaps of dirt. The trees have been hacked to pieces — only black stumps remain. Nothing grows. Utter desolation.

**Tuesday, March 7**
Worked at a feverish pace, digging and strengthening trenches all through last night. Then through the day, I have to do an hour's sentry duty* every third hour. This is followed by an hour as the relief man, when I'm able to sit down. For the third hour, I can sleep. I'm feeling like most of the other fellows — half dead.

**Thursday, March 9**
Owing to food transports going astray, we have one loaf between five of us, a few biscuits and half a tin of marmalade each per day. Have just heard we have a ten-mile march before we can be billeted* [for rest]. Jolly hard lines.

**Friday, March 10**
It was snowing as we set out at 11.15 last night. I saw two fellows — fast asleep as they walked along — walked out of the ranks and fell into the ditch at the side of the road. We halted for ten minutes' rest and I dropped down into a puddle and went to sleep. Was unable to get up without help, and ended up hanging on to Lieutenant Davis on one side and a stretcher-bearer the other. Tried to pull myself together and went headlong on the road. They got me to my feet again but I was helpless. Have a vague idea that I was laid on some straw. Then oblivion.

**Sunday, May 7**
Working in the mines — an awful strain mentally. We're some three-parts of a mile under the ground. Air is got down by means of a large pair of blacksmith's bellows*, connected to a long pipe. But it's very stuffy, and we work with backs bent for eight hours.

An extract from *Harry's War* by Harry Drinkwater.

**Glossary**
sentry duty — keeping guard
blacksmith's bellows — a tool which gives out air
billeted — housed
Tim Peake was interested in flying from a young age. In 1992, he graduated from Sandhurst as a British Army officer and went on as an army pilot, flying instructor and test pilot. In 2008, he applied to become an astronaut with the European Space Agency (ESA). Out of more than 8000 applicants, he was one of six to be selected. In December 2015, he became the first British man to live on the International Space Station (ISS) spending 185 days in space. Tim gave this interview shortly before he travelled to the ISS.

Questions to ask before reading the text with your reading group:
1) What is an interview?
2) Raise two questions you would like to find out about Tim Peake.
3) Look at the glossary- what are the key words and what do they mean?

As pupils read the text, encourage them to focus on what they find out about Tim Peake.

After reading the text, ask the pupils the first question from their group's section and discuss. They will then record this into their books and work independently, while you go around to the other pupils.

Section 1:
1a) What is the first question in the interview?
1b) What does the word ‘persevere’ mean? Use the glossary to help you.
1c) What does Tim play badly?
1d) What does Tim like to watch on TV?
1e) Why does Tim think that if someone has their heart set on something, they need to keep going?

Section 2:
2a) How do astronauts settle into a circadian rhythm?
2b) Look at the summary. When did Tim live on the International Space Station?
2c) Explain why sleeping on the International Space Station is difficult.
2d) Why do you think astronauts need to be ‘calm under pressure’ (lines 16-17)?
2e) Why does Tim think that any interest in science is crucial if someone wants to be an astronaut?

Section 3:
3a) Why do you think that Tim says there is a moment of apprehension when the rocket is about to launch? Explain your answer.
3b) What do you think the word ‘crucial’ means? You can use a dictionary.
3c) How does the layout of this extract make it easier to read?
3d) Why do you think astronauts need to be good at working in a team?
3e) How do we know that Tim is excited about going into space? Use evidence from the text.
3f) Why do you think that Tim did this interview? Explain your answer fully.
3g) Do you think that life on the International Space Station sounds similar or different to life on Earth? Explain your answer fully.
3h) Would you like to go to space? Explain your answer fully.
An Interview with Tim Peake

Tim Peake is a British astronaut with the European Space Agency (ESA). Between December 2015 and June 2016 he lived on the International Space Station, where he carried out important scientific experiments. He gave this interview shortly before he went into space.

What are you most nervous and excited about?

I wouldn’t say I was nervous, but I’m sure there will be a moment of apprehension* when I’m sat on top of a rocket and it’s about to launch. Also there’s spacewalking — most astronauts say the first time the hatch opens and you go out and find yourself looking at Earth 400km beneath you, it’s a shock. But the spacewalk, if I get to do one, is what I’m most looking forward to. It would be wonderful if I got the opportunity.

What do you do in a typical day?

There’s no such thing as a typical day! Sleeping can be quite hard because there is no day or night like on Earth — we see 16 sunrises and sunsets every day. In fact, there are new adjustable lights to try to help our bodies settle into a circadian* rhythm. Every morning we’re told what we will be doing by mission control and they guide us at all times. We do have short rest times, though. We can watch TV (I like to watch rugby), and there’s a guitar. I play it very badly. I know a few Oasis and Coldplay songs.

What skills do you need?

You need to be good at team work and communicating, as astronauts are only a very small part of the huge international team that works 24/7 to support the ISS*. You also need to be calm under pressure, and generally fit and healthy. An interest in science is crucial as you need to have a good understanding of the experiments you do, and you need to work in lab conditions and use scientific equipment.

What advice would you give to someone considering a career in space?

Find out what it is that really excites you. This will no doubt also be the subject that you are best at! For me, it was an early passion for flying that led to a career as a military pilot, prior to* becoming a test pilot and gaining a degree in flight dynamics later in life. [...] If you have set your heart on something you want to do, keep going, work hard, and persevere* and your dreams will come true.

An abridged extract from www.destinationspace.uk

Glossary

- apprehension — worry
- circadian — 24 hour
- ISS — International Space Station