

SPECIAL REPORT

SAVING SIGHT



Preston (right) and his granny (second left) meet Etienne and his parents

IT'S estimated that 75% of all blindness is avoidable. Put simply, millions of people become blind because they can't get simple surgery or treatment that could save their sight. And too often, if you live in a poor community, going blind means losing your chance to go to school, earn a living or live independently. CBM is a charity that works across the world's poorest countries to prevent avoidable blindness and restore sight.

TV presenter Diane Louise Jordan recently got to visit Rwanda with CBM to meet a ten-year-old boy called Etienne. He had cataracts, which is like a heavy white sheet that covers your eye, blocking your vision. Diane took her 12-year-old grandson, Preston, with her. Here, Preston tells us about his time with Etienne and the amazing sight-saving surgery that charities like CBM carry out.

THE JOURNEY

The flight to Rwanda was nine hours long. It was amazing getting off the plane. The air smelt different and humid; I liked it. I was tired and slept so well in the hotel that first night.

After breakfast the next morning, we jumped into a 4x4 and set off to meet Etienne in his village. The journey to the village was very bumpy because there were no proper roads after a bit, and it was just dirt with some really big dips. Etienne's house was basic. I couldn't see any furniture. It was emotional to meet Etienne. He was kind of sad and nervous. He's got six siblings. Their clothes were a bit broken and tattered. We all chatted, then it was time for Etienne to go to the hospital. It was weird to see Etienne going in the car with his dad. It was his first time ever in a car. I think he was scared, and he was crying.



THE GOODBYE

The next day, we made the journey over the bumpy roads to visit Etienne, who was back at his house. Etienne's mum looked totally different, smiling all the time. I was amazed again that Etienne could see. I gave him my football. He was really happy to have it. It was so good to see him kicking it around. My granny and I also gave him some colouring pens and a book to colour in. I couldn't believe it when I saw him starting to draw stick men. It really did seem like a miracle.

I was sad to say goodbye to Etienne but he'll be going to school now, which is great. I'd love to hear how he gets on. His dad said that he hopes Etienne will now become a doctor and help other people as he has been helped.

THE SURGERY

We had to get up at 6:30 the next morning. I was excited because Etienne would be having his surgery today. When we got to Kabgayi hospital, I wasn't allowed to see the surgery; I was too young.

They explained to me that he would go to sleep with an anaesthetic, then they would make a small cut with a scalpel and take out the cloudy cataract. Then his eye would be clear and he could see again. For adults, they do the operation while you're awake, just with medicine to stop any pain. I was glad Etienne would be asleep, so he wouldn't feel afraid.

We had to go back to the hospital very early the next morning, as the doctors take the bandages off patients first thing. I sat on the bed with Etienne. It must have hurt when the bandages were taken off his eyes, but Etienne was so brave. The doctor held out a pen and it was crazy to see Etienne reach out and grab it. He could see! I felt amazed that it was that easy for someone not to be blind any more. It's cool how he could not see, then 24 hours later he could.



DID YOU KNOW?

● Thirty six million people around the world are blind, while 217 million are visually impaired. The vast majority live in developing countries.

● Around half of all blindness is caused by cataracts, where the lens of the eye becomes cloudy. Cataracts can be treated with simple surgery, which costs as little as £24 for an adult or £95 for a child.

● Two-thirds of blind people are women. In wealthier countries this is because women live longer than men; in developing countries, it is because women are less likely to get the healthcare they need.

● Last year, as a result of CBM's fundraising, 29 million people were treated for blinding diseases. Some 605,000 people were given sight-restoring cataract surgery, while 446,000 glasses and low-vision devices were distributed.

GLOSSARY

Rwanda – A country in Central Africa. It is one of the smallest countries on the African mainland and is bordered by Uganda, Tanzania, Burundi and the Democratic Republic of the Congo



Questions on: Special Report – Saving sight

Part A: Find and explain the facts

A1. What is CBM?

A2. Fill in the numbers to complete the sentences about blindness and the work of CBM.

..... million people around the world are blind, while million are visually impaired. Last year, as a result of CBM's fundraising, million people were treated for blinding diseases. Some people were given sight-restoring cataract surgery, while glasses and low-vision devices were distributed.

A3. What causes around half of all blindness?

A4. Who are the following people?

Diane Louise Jordan	
Preston	
Etienne	

A5. Summarise what happens during cataract surgery.

Part B: Deduce and infer information

B1. Why is blindness particularly limiting for those living in a poor community?

B2. What evidence is there to suggest that Etienne's family are poor?

B3. Why are women more likely than men to suffer from blindness?

B4. Why did Etienne's mum look "totally different, smiling all the time" after Etienne's operation?

B5. Why did it "seem like a miracle" when Preston saw Etienne starting to draw stick men?

Part C: Analyse the writing and presentation

C1. Suggest why Preston has written this report, not his famous grandmother or a First News reporter.

C2. What is the effect of the writer's use of the words "crazy" and "cool"?

Part D: Writing task

Imagine that you've been asked to interview Etienne for this report. Based on what you've read, think of five appropriate questions to ask him about his experience of receiving sight-restoring surgery.

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[illegible]

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Part C: Analyse the writing and presentation

C1. Suggest why Preston has written this report, not his famous grandmother or a *First News* reporter.

[illegible]

[illegible]

Imagine that you've been asked to interview Etienne for this report. Based on what you've read, think of five appropriate questions to ask him about his experience of receiving sight-restoring surgery.

[illegible]

Teacher Answers

AIM OF THE NEWS COMPREHENSIONS: News reports are unique non-fiction texts. Being real, they naturally engage students, and with the range of topics that are covered, help to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of the wider world outside the classroom. The reports are ideal for short, focused comprehension or discussion activities. Along with the opportunity to find fascinating facts and appreciate the opinions of those involved, there is plenty to be inferred and deduced to understand in more depth what is being reported. Like authors, journalists play with language, so news 'stories' are rich nuggets of text to investigate and provide the opportunity for literacy programmes.

TEACHER ANSWER GUIDE: The teacher answers are intended to provide a guide to the reading skill each question is practising. Suggestions are given for a starting point for responses that students would be expected to give at the start of KS3. Further suggestions then give fuller, more developed responses that students will work towards by the end of KS3, in preparation for the non-fiction elements of GCSE English language.

Questions on: Special Report – Saving sight

PART A

A1. What is CBM?

READING SKILL — Find and explain information

Possible answer

Expected response

- CBM is a charity that works across the world's poorest countries to prevent avoidable blindness and restore sight.

A2. Fill in the numbers to complete the sentences about blindness and the work of CBM.

READING SKILL — Find and explain information

Possible answer

Starting point — some information correctly identified

Developed response — information correctly identified

- **Thirty six** million people around the world are blind, while **217** million are visually impaired. Last year, as a result of CBM's fundraising, **29** million people were treated for blinding diseases. Some **605,000** people were given sight-restoring cataract surgery, while **446,000** glasses and low-vision devices were distributed.

A3. What causes around half of all blindness?

READING SKILL — Find and explain information

Possible answer

Starting point

- Around half of all blindness is caused by cataracts, where the lens of the eye becomes cloudy.

Development

- Cataracts can be treated with simple surgery, which costs as little as £24 for an adult or £95 for a child.

A4. Who are the following people?

READING SKILL — Find and explain information

Possible answer

Starting point — some relevant information identified

Developed response — relevant information clearly explained

Diane Louise Jordan	She is a TV presenter. She recently got to visit Rwanda with CBM to see the amazing sight-saving surgery that charities like CBM carry out.
Preston	Preston is Diane's 12-year-old grandson. He went with her on the trip to Rwanda and wrote this report about his time there.
Etienne	Etienne is a ten-year-old boy who had cataracts. He met Diane and Preston and shared his experience of having cataract surgery with them.

A5. Summarise what happens during cataract surgery.

READING SKILL — Find and explain information

Possible answer

Starting point

- During cataract surgery, young patients are put to sleep with an anaesthetic. The surgeon makes a small cut with a scalpel and takes out the cloudy cataract. Then the eye will be clear and the patient will be able to see again.

Development

- The bandages are removed very early the next morning.

PART B**B1. Why is blindness particularly limiting for those living in a poor community?**

READING SKILL — Infer information and justify with evidence from the text

Possible answer**Starting point**

- Blindness is particularly limiting if you live in a poor community because it means that you could lose your chance to go to school, earn a living or live independently.

Development

- This is because in poor communities there isn't any money available to adapt buildings or provide aid so that people with disabilities such as blindness are able to access schools or workplaces. Transport is also an issue as vehicles are scarce and people often have to walk miles to get to where they need to be. However, this would be impossible for blind people or those with visual impairments as there aren't proper roads, so it would be too dangerous for them to try to negotiate the bumps and dips on the dirt tracks.

B2. What evidence is there to suggest that Etienne's family are poor?

READING SKILL — Infer information and justify with evidence from the text

Possible answer**Starting point — some comments based on textual evidence****Development — detailed comments securely based on textual evidence**

It is evident that Etienne's family are poor for the following reasons:

- On the way to their village Preston noticed that: "...there were no proper roads after a bit, and it was just dirt with some really big dips." This suggests that there isn't enough money in the area to maintain proper roads.
- Preston said that "Etienne's house was basic" and he "couldn't see any furniture".
- When Preston met Etienne and his six siblings, he noticed that "their clothes were broken and a bit tattered". This suggests that they can't afford to buy new clothes very often.
- When Etienne went to hospital in a car, "it was his first time ever in a car". In developed countries, most families own at least one car of their own. The fact that Etienne has never been in a car until his operation shows that there aren't many cars where he lives, and this suggests a certain level of poverty.

B3. Why are women more likely than men to suffer from blindness?

READING SKILL — Infer information and justify with evidence from the text

Possible answer**Starting point**

- In wealthier countries this is because women live longer than men. However, in developing countries, it is because women are less likely to get the healthcare they need.

Development

- Many eye diseases develop with age, and because women in wealthier countries live longer than men they are more likely to be affected.
- In developing countries, it still tends to be believed that women should focus on raising children and household chores. Thus, women have less status than men and their health is rarely made a priority. Therefore, they don't get access to the simple surgery or treatment that could save their sight.

B4. Why did Etienne's mum look "totally different, smiling all the time" after Etienne's operation?

READING SKILL — Infer information and justify with evidence from the text

Possible answer**Starting point**

- Etienne's mum was smiling all the time because she was so pleased that Etienne's surgery had gone well and that his sight had been restored.

Development

- In developing countries, like Rwanda, having a disabled child is particularly worrying. There is little, if any, provision for those with disabilities, so a family with a disabled child has the constant worry of how to plan any sort of future for them. Stress and worry can take its toll on a person's appearance. Therefore, it is likely that Etienne's mum looks "totally different" because the weight of worry has been lifted from her shoulders. Now that Etienne has his vision back, he will be able to go to school and contribute to family life.

B5. Why did it "seem like a miracle" when Preston saw Etienne starting to draw stick men?

READING SKILL — Infer information and justify with evidence from the text

Possible answer**Starting point**

- It seemed like a "miracle" because Etienne had been blind when Preston met him.

Development

- Being able to draw stick men might not seem very impressive, but it is incredible for Preston to witness because Etienne had been unable to even see a pen or pencil only 24 hours earlier. It shows that the effects of the surgery are startling because a person can go from being blind to being able to see in a very short space of time.

PART C

C1. Suggest why Preston has written this report, not his famous grandmother or a First News reporter.

READING SKILL — Explain methods used by the writer with appropriate use of terminology

Possible answer

Starting point

- It is likely that Preston has written this report because he is 12 years old and thus First News' young readers are more likely to be able to relate to what he has to say.

Development

- Furthermore, Preston is a similar age to ten-year-old Etienne, so they spent time playing and bonding. Then Preston got to witness some of Etienne's experience of the surgery and this meant that he could write an engaging first-hand account. He is in a better position to write the report than a First News reporter who wasn't on the trip.
- It is true that Preston's grandmother, Diane Louise Jordan, is famous and that her involvement in the work of the charity is a form of celebrity endorsement. However, First News readers are not likely to be familiar with her. Therefore, a report written by someone their own age is much more likely to appeal.

C2. What is the effect of the writer's use of the words "crazy" and "cool"?

READING SKILL — Recognise effect of language choices

Possible answer

Starting point

- The writer uses the word "crazy" to show how mad and incredible it seemed that Etienne could see as soon as his bandages were removed. The writer used the word "cool" to express how impressive it was that the operation could transform someone from being blind to having vision in just 24 hours.

Development

- The use of both words is informal and creates a friendly, chatty tone. This helps engage First News readers.

PART D – WRITING TASK

Imagine that you've been asked to interview Etienne for this report. Based on what you've read, think of five appropriate questions to ask him about his experience of receiving sight-restoring surgery.

READING SKILL — Develop personal ideas from reading news stories

Possible answer

1. What were you most worried about when you found out that you were going to have surgery?
2. What were you most looking forward to doing once your sight was restored?
3. What was the first thing that you saw when the bandages were removed?
4. What is the most beautiful thing that you've seen since your operation?
5. What would you say to people to persuade them to support CBM, the charity that helped you?