

Lucky Teacher's Guide and Key

Guide

This kit is the first in a series made in collaboration with **Comma Press**. Comma Press provide on-line access to a wealth of material in the form of contemporary short stories from British writers. The first point of access for these stories is through audio recordings, where the authors themselves can be heard reading their own stories. **BritLit** and **Comma Press** would appear to have a lot in common, not least a desire to bring modern short stories into common use as devices to discover language and share cultures.

Because the primary access to stories from Comma Press is through audio rather than written text, the format of the BritLit materials is a little different for this kit. The most important change is that students should listen to the story before they read it. The implications for this are simple – stories are to be read and they are to be told, and in this case we opt for stories that are told. For stories that are told rather than read we need to adjust our preparatory materials. Listening, as a language skill, is harder than reading. No serious student of language would disagree with this. In the classroom, however, reading is the primary language input. In this kit we hope to marry the two, and it is important that the difference between the two skills is recognised.

In this kit we have changed the way that materials are presented. We offer:

Preparation This is where most of the work is concentrated. There are activities connected with the characters in the story through audio and written contexts, as well as explorations of some of the contexts in which the characters find themselves. These activities will help the student to focus on specific language and, more importantly, to create a relationship with the characters and the environment of the story before they hear or read the story.

The Story Once the preparatory materials have been worked through (and how much is needed is the decision of the teacher), then the students are ready to hear the story. They should now listen to the audio version of the story before they read the text.

Follow Up Once the story has been heard, it can be read as well. Indeed, much of the introductory material for the story used text for reading purposes. We also offer supplementary material, such as greater contextual detail as well as some study of the language used in the story. This includes a glossary of terms unique to the story.

Read On Having engaged our students in some real stories and texts, we would like to take them further. The **Read On** section offers them a chance to review what they have already read and heard, and to look further.

Key

Preparation

Janine

4 people in the room (Janine, Laura, Lisa and 'him')

Maggie is absent

Janine is new

?speculate.....sharing a private joke – about Maggie?

She was nervous

Made her feel uncoordinated and lightheaded

In an office

Nerves caused her to giggle

Sharing 'secrets' about Maggie

To be alone

Self service café or restaurant

Herself

?speculate - superstitious?

Fate

To see the library

To share an experience

?personal speculation?

?personal speculation?

Either c) or d)

She felt he had committed himself to her

Final exercise: in this the answers the students give are always right as long as what is constructed is a narrative. It is unlikely to be the same story as the one written by Jane Rogers. In fact, the idea is to create a sense of wanting to know what the original story was to compare with their own. Therefore there are no right or wrong answers.

Superstition

Quiz 1

Score as follows:

Q1 yes -10 ; no 0 Q2 yes 0 ; no 10 Q3 yes 10 ; no 0 Q4 a) 5 b) 0 c) 10

Q5 a) 5 b) 0 c) 10 Q6 a) 5 b) 10 c) 0 Q7 yes 10 ; no 0 Q8 yes 0 ; no 10

Q9 yes 10 ; no 0 Q10 yes 10 ; no 0

25 - 65

You're not 100% superstitious, but there are certain things that you'd rather avoid...just in case! Perhaps you have a certain good luck charm, or pass on chain letters, partially for the fun, partially to protect yourself. Overall, you likely realize deep down that superstitions are mostly not true, but the ones you follow have become old habit. It makes you uncomfortable to break them, so it's simply easier to keep - especially since many of them are tightly woven into our cultural fabric. Almost everyone has the little moment of hesitation when they realize it's Friday the 13th, for example, or says "bless you" when someone sneezes. As long as your superstitions are not controlling your life in any way, there's probably no harm in them.

66-100

Black cats, broken mirrors, spilled salt...these things likely give you the willies, because you are generally superstitious. You may not actually believe that they bring bad luck, but would rather not take the chance. While this attitude is probably not extremely harmful, make sure it's not holding you back from doing things or altering your attitude. If, for example, you feel edgy all day after reading a horoscope saying something bad will happen, you are letting your superstitious nature take over your life. If you automatically assume the worse because of some "sign" or coincidence, your belief can actually make something bad happen. Expecting, for example, to have a terrible day on Friday the 13th might make you behave in ways that will make it happen! Re-evaluate your superstitions to make sure they are not getting the best of you.

Less than 25

A black cat would cross your path and you wouldn't bat an eyelash. When it comes to superstitions, you are a hard-core realist. You doubt that the number 13 has any influence on whether the world has a good day, and simply don't want to waste time thinking about such silliness. You still may have a good luck charm or avoid certain carriers of "bad luck" (i.e. spilling salt)... but even if you do you probably know deep down that it's completely psychological. A lucky pen, for example, may help bring good fortune simply because you believe it will. In a nutshell, superstition is not your thing. You'd rather live in the real world.

Quiz 2

Scoring:

One point for every correctly answered question.

- 1)C 6) B 11) B **BONUS POINT:** Give an extra point to anyone who owns a good luck charm.
2)C 7) B 12) C
3)B 8) C 13) A
4)A 9) B 14) C
5)C 10)B

What do your actions really reveal about you and superstitions?

If you scored 5+ : You are not very superstitious. You probably use it for fun, and that's the way it should be.

If you scored 6 to 10 : You are somewhat superstitious and rituals are a small part of your every day life. You can lighten up a little if you think about superstitions and the meaning of your actions all the time.

If you scored 11+ : Superstition controls your life. You are not in the primitive ages and should run to your local library and read up on superstitions. Many of your superstitions are not valid in today's world, cross my heart and hope to die, stick a needle in my eye. ~

Faith in the Saints

There are no 'right' or 'wrong' answers here – simply a chance for some students to express their personal views or refute the arguments in the article.

In Love

Complete text

(Extra sentence is : "It is rare for anyone to feel this strongly, in spite of the hype given to it, at least at first.")

Prince Charles, at the time of his engagement, gave a rather astonishing answer when asked if he was in love by reporters. While Diana answered with a shy, 'Of course', the Prince replied, with a laugh, 'Whatever that means'. Years later we understand more about his wariness and his reluctance to be more positive, unlike most newly engaged men.

How do we fall in love? First of all, the time has to be right. We have to be willing, and whether consciously or not, *ready* for love. The man or woman who feels that either he or she is unlovable or avoids contact with the opposite sex, is unlikely to find a soul mate. On the other hand, anyone desperate to find a lover will transmit this sense of urgency and need, and frighten away any possible suitor. Many adults are surprised that it is when they have settled into a happy phase, when they are just getting on with life, that they find that special someone to love and who loves them back. Happiness, and a love of life, is a strong aphrodisiac.

Why do we fall in love? On a conscious level it is relatively easy to elaborate on why we find someone attractive or loveable, but the unconscious also comes into play and we often sense that the other person will truly understand us and meet our deepest needs. Hopefully this will turn out to be true: our instincts have led us to a partner who has the qualities we most admire, and there is a mutual psychological 'fit'. If this is not the case, then hearts can be broken. When one person projects qualities onto the 'other' that he does not possess, the mistake can cost dearly. Taken to its extreme, are stalkers; they often feel that the person in whom they have invested a great deal of care and thought, and even imagine themselves in love with, returns their passion. Why do we fall out of love? Perhaps the cruelest of all words are: 'I don't love you any more'. To have love taken away, and perhaps not understanding why, can shatter the most confident person. As anyone who has ever had a sad love affair knows, the heart, and pride, can take a long time to heal. The pain is felt physically as well as emotionally, and it can take a long time to trust someone else in that intimate way.

Finding love can be a minefield, and falling in love has often been described as being under a spell. In a way we are, and that is an accurate description, and the enchantment of falling in love is quite addictive and can often blind us from seeing the reality of a relationship. Some people

find themselves unable to move on to a more everyday kind of loving, and continue to search for that heady unreal feeling of walking on air we all experience at the beginning of a relationship. Being in love means many different things to each person. Quite possibly it means something different to men and to women. But remember our first experience of falling in love was with the adults who cared for us as a child. Our experience of being in love will have been formed by the way they loved us back. Quite possibly we all continue to search for a repeat of that first blissful experience. The adolescent falling in love with a pop or film star is no bad thing. It can be a rehearsal for the real thing at a safe distance. The trap can be if a young girl falls for a man and mistakes sex for love. Many a bewildered girl is left crying, 'But I thought he loved me'.

On the road to love we also meet others who have their own agendas, which can often lead to a collision or head-on crash. But with all the ups and downs of an intimate relationship, in the words of the song, 'Being in love is better than being out'.

I think most of you will agree with me about that.

The Story

(This is a transcript of the audio version of the story. Do not give this to the students to read, except perhaps when you have finished the activities. You may need to play the story twice – it lasts 16 minutes – but do this in two separate lessons i.e. as a final activity of one lesson and the first activity of the next)

LUCKY

by Jane Rogers

There were 7 tests. If the 8.20 to Victoria was on time. If there were no empty seats. If I saw the weird couple. If I could get across the station concourse without them making any change-of-platform announcements. If the beggar was in that doorway just round the corner from the post office. If a pigeon walked across the pavement in front of me without me dodging to get it there. And if I arrived at work before nine. Check check check check check check check! He loves me.

Each day I make it more difficult and each day it's proved – apart from Tuesday which was crap in every other way as well, what can you expect, it would be unbelievable if it did always work, there has to be an exception to prove the rule. Like spelling.

He brought the report back in to me at 3.07.

- Well done Janine, you've done a good job. He smiled. - Apart from the usual problem. Have you turned that spell-checker off, or simply converted it to your own personal language?

- It's on, I said. I was trying to stop giggling. - There wasn't a single underlining. Honest.

He laughed that deep brown glow in his eyes it warms you through to your guts.

- Creative spelling. I love it! OK, I've underlined in pencil here. Can you get it in tonight's post?

He was starting to go. Like the sun disappearing behind a huge dark cloud taking all his lovely warmth away.

- Dr Anderson –

- Yes?

- I – d'you want to see the corrected copy?

- No Janine, I trust you.

Of course he does. He trusts me. He closed the door gently and you could hear my heart banging like a drum, sometimes it's dangerous, I'm afraid the others will notice – the bitching the gossip, they'd have a field day. You only have to listen to the way they talk about Maggie. Lisa was on the phone though and Laura was taking her printer to bits, the paper feed was jammed again. They don't notice. Because they can't imagine. They can't imagine he'd like someone like me. They think they're so great with their wonderbras and lipgloss and step-ladder shoes, they don't even ask me what I did on Saturday night.

Well fuck them. They know nothing.

Once he sent me a note. Jan - articles from BMJ on post-abortion depression, May 95 –97, by 10.30 if pos? You're wonderful.

I keep it folded up in my pocket. I can feel it through my jeans, secret against my thigh.

You'll be wondering how it started. I'll tell you. It's good to tell someone at last, it's been like this secret balloon inside me, this lovely growing swelling thing that makes me so huge and light I sometimes think I'll burst – burst with happiness or just take off and float into the sky. The secret wants to burst out of me, I want everyone to know. It was instant. First sight, on my second Monday there. He came into the office.

- What's this? Can't a man turn his back for an instant without everything changing? He smiled at me. He's got grey hair but he smiled right into my eyes and I had that feeling you get in a high-speed lift when it suddenly plummets 20 floors and you think Omygod.

- This is Janine, said Laura. She kicked Lisa under her desk then she said, She's filling in for Maggie.

- Welcome Janine filler-in-for-Maggie, he said. You let me know if they're not looking after you.

My hands were sweating, I couldn't hit a single key right. I had to get out a pen and fiddle about pretending to make a note of something. He went over to Lisa's desk asking about some letters, his voice is deep and soft and furry my ears can pick it out anywhere it's right close up to them, in a crowd I can sometimes hear it too, low and close murmuring beside me as if it'll keep me safe from everything. When he'd finished at Lisa's desk he came back past me and he slowed down he couldn't walk past me he couldn't help himself he had to stop.

- You girls get younger every week. How old are you Janine – or is that an offensive question?

No. I was afraid I would giggle. It's horrible. It comes out sometimes and then they laugh at me they used to laugh at school. - 18.

- As old as that!

I was giggling. I couldn't help it. He would hate me and think I was an idiot. He started to laugh.

- She's a giggler! he said to Laura and Lisa. Wonderful! A dose of that all round every morning and you'd halve the NHS waiting lists!

He went then and I was giggling so hard I was gasping for breath, I could feel my face like a beetroot. But the other two didn't notice, they were whispering together, Maggie this and Maggie that, he can't wait till she gets back. He's been to see her twice in hospital. I wasn't interested in Maggie. I knew he liked me. You can tell.

You know it but you don't believe it. You have to keep checking, you don't dare to let yourself think it might be true. That someone like him could fall for me. But everything that's happened – every single thing – reinforces it.

The library. I go to the library for my lunch. Often I think I won't, I think I'll go to a wine bar where there are foreigners or business men doing deals but in the end I go to the library. The others send out for sandwiches but I don't like sitting listening to them, I like to go somewhere where I can watch people without them feeling sorry for me and trying to drag me into the conversation. In the library you go through the revolving door and past that expensive card shop then down the stairs to the café. I like the posters down the stairs, all the plays they have on there, one day I'm going to go to that theatre. One night, I should say. I bet it's different at night full of glamorous people holding drinks from the bar, chattering away, reading their programmes. Maybe I'll go with him!

At lunchtime you can sit by a pillar or the wall, usually you can get a table to yourself and there

are invisible people there, old codgers with lots of coats and a cup of tea, sometimes studenty types I suppose they use the library, or ordinary people, fat with a shopping bag. There's a man with glasses who always reads a book, everyone ignores each other and you just queue and pay for your sandwich, none of that embarrassing waiter business. You can buy theatre tickets there – I've seen where they do it. Also the toilets are good, very big with gigantic mirrors, there are four cubicles and when you come out it's like you're a film star reflecting back and forth and back and forth in the mirrors in front and behind.

He came into the library café. July 2nd. July, the 7th month. I still don't know . . . did he follow me? I can't believe he did but how else did he end up there when I was there, what are the chances of him going where I was going at lunchtime with the whole of Manchester and all the important people he has to meet for lunch and the girls asking if he wants a sandwich when they pop out - how did he end up there with me?

I was in the right hand corner by the pillar near the stairs and he came down the opposite stairs. We saw each other straight away. Instant. He smiled then there was a little frown, I was afraid he wasn't pleased to see me. But he didn't have to look at me, it's easy enough for people to pretend they haven't seen you isn't it? They do it all the time. Or he could have just smiled and waved from a distance. But no, he came straight to my table like he was drawn there by a magnet.

- All on your own Janine? Not having lunch with the other girls?

I shook my head. I was afraid I might giggle.

- Is everything alright? You all getting on OK in the office?

He was so kind he is so kind. He's the kindest person I ever met.

- Fine thank you. I just - I didn't want him to think I was stupid but I couldn't think what else to say. – I like it here.

- It's a marvellous building isn't it? A jewel in the heart of the city!

He understands everything I think.

I'm waiting for a book from the depths. May I join you?

He went to the counter and when he was there he turned back to me and made sign language pointing to the teacups then back to me. I mouthed back coffee and he smiled and I felt as if I was melting into a puddle. I was melting into a puddle it was awful my nose started to run and I had to swallow my mouth was full of saliva I was all warm and watery inside I was afraid I might have wet myself. I didn't dare to look at him until he was sitting down, he ate his sandwich in 7 bites. 7 is my lucky number.

- D'you use this library? he said. I shook my head and he leaned forwards. Have you ever been upstairs?

Upstairs. I can't believe he asked me that.

No. The giggles were rising in my throat nearly choking me.

Well if you've finished come with me and have a look. You might want to use it one day.

He stood up and drank his coffee in three gulps. It was coffee. The same as mine – not tea. We went up the marble steps together there are 26 to the ground floor, I stepped on each one at the same time as him. We moved at the same speed.

- Wonderful institution, public libraries, he said. But we must use them. Use them or lose them, eh Janine!

He says my name so beautifully. I was giggling and he laughed too, he joins in my giggle. I thought I would never tell anyone because people would probably sneer, my mother would say something terrible and crude like he's a dirty old man or something because he's about 20 years older than me but she doesn't understand anything. Now I have to tell someone but you won't laugh because you can see he's not dirty he's kind, he's kind to a person like me when he doesn't have to be, he notices me he talks to me he looks at me he loves me.

We turned round the corner and went up the next lot of steps. 35 (definitely lucky – the sum of my birth day and month, the 27th of the 8th). There's a desk where you get books stamped then he turned in through an archway into the centre of the building and I followed him in between two tall bookcases in to the middle where it opens up. He looked at me. He was looking at me to see if I liked it. It opens up under a vast round white dome smooth as an egg, with a glass circle at the top. Around the edges, gilt lettering; SHE SHALL BRING THEE TO HONOUR WHEN THOU DOST EMBRACE HER. SHE SHALL GIVE TO THINE HEAD AN ORNAMENT OF GRACE. Me. Me and him. It must be. He knows it. Brilliant sunlight pouring through the glass dome.

- It's beautiful I said and he patted my shoulder his fingers touched my blouse.

I can feel the shape of them still on my skin I could draw round it with a biro today if you wanted me to show you. It was only for an instant and he went ahead of me towards the round counter in the middle of the room he moved away pretending it was nothing. He had to, in a public place like that we had to be careful.

My legs were trembling I sat down at the end of a long table, there was a young black woman writing away at the other end with a pile of books around her. I can come here. This magic place he wanted me to know about. All the round walls are lined with books and mustard marble pillars and tall bookcases come inwards like rays of the sun and there are big metal cabinets with newspapers and maps in, and quiet voices and pages turning. Our special place.

He picked up a book from the counter then he went round to a photocopier, I watched him fish in his pocket for change. I wanted to run over and do it for him, I could have done that. He copied 2 pages then he took the old book back to the counter. He handed it to a librarian and she smiled at him – I couldn't see his face, his back was to me but I saw the way she smiled at him and I

thought Hah! You don't know. Forget your smiling like that you slut, it's me he loves.

He came back with his papers he was looking at his watch I counted his steps, 17 from the counter. 17.

- Shall we be getting back? It's nearly 1.30.

We didn't talk on the way back, we didn't need to, we each knew what the other was thinking. He stepped in front of me and held the lobby door open for me and the security man saw us come in together smiling and happy a couple.

He's married. You guessed that. I know everything about him. The others talk; he's got 2 kids at university. His wife's a doctor, his name is Paul. They talk about him and Maggie but they know nothing. Paul. In my dreams every night he's smiling – he's reaching out to touch my shoulder – he's leaning towards me and his voice is stroking, tickling, inside my ear.

Sometimes I don't see him for days. But I know he's here. Inside the building, talking, smiling, thinking of me. We can feel it – each other's force field. I know when he's in the building and when he's out, I don't have to see him to know that. Lisa had a phone call for him and I said He's not in - and she rang through to his office because she didn't believe me. But I was right.

They had a kind of party. It was to launch something – a booklet, Maternity Care into the 21st century. We were invited to stay for a drink after work. Lisa dared Laura to ask Paul if Maggie was invited and they laughed like a pair of hyenas but I ignored them. I didn't know what to wear. They dress up like secretaries, he knew I wasn't like them. He knew I was different. I was afraid his wife would be there and that I might let something slip. If I met her I might start to giggle – I wouldn't be able to help myself – she would stare at me and she would begin to realise – she'd quickly understand that this is why Paul has been so strange lately, so dreamy and absent-minded, smiling to himself and humming a little song. Because of me.

I worried about it all night, the fear of it kept me awake. I didn't want to make things difficult for him. That was the last thing I wanted. And I had nothing I could wear.

In the end I decided not to go, when the others finished at 5 and locked the office I put on my jacket and went down the stairs. They got in the lift, they didn't bother to say goodbye.

As I was going across the lobby he came bursting in from the street carrying a huge bouquet.

- Hello, he said. Coming up for a drink?

- I have to go home.

- Oh that's a shame. He wanted me there. He knew how much I wanted to be there. – Well have a carnation. I'm sure the chairlady of the AHA won't miss one!

He pulled out a long-stemmed bright red carnation. As red as blood as red as my heart thumping Paul Paul Paul. It's a promise. He knows

why I'm going home. He knows we will be together one day – soon. I keep the carnation pressed inside Rebecca.

Maggie was coming back to work the week after that so my job ended but on my last day I saw 2 magpies when I was walking to the station – 2 for joy! And they gave me a card signed by everyone in the office and he'd put Thanks for all your hard work. Good luck, giggler! Paul X With a kiss. He had to be careful because everyone would see the card, but even so, he put a kiss.

I'm working in the accounts department now at Debenhams. It's 7 minutes to the library, I go there every lunchtime. I don't like it so much since they redecorated, the café is navy blue and yellow, a depressing combination. There are even blue lights, they seem to shed darkness. It's been a long time since I saw him, I think that's why I'm bursting to talk about it. Sometimes I go upstairs to the big white domed room and sit at a table and look at a book. That's where we'll meet again. He knows I'm here. I can sense it. Soon it will be July, our anniversary.

Follow Up

Manchester

1. Manchester University
2. Art Gallery
3. Urbis
4. China Town
5. Art Gallery
6. China Town
7. Romp
8. Sunday Market
9. Romp
10. Fashion Market

Biography

1. F
2. F (8)
3. T
4. T (NSW)
5. F
6. F (already does)
7. F

Interview

1. The old saying tells us that creativity is “10% inspiration and 90% perspiration”. How would you rate these two percentages in light of your own experience?
2. How much time do you spend writing and how much teaching or engaged in other ways to make a living?
3. What made you start writing? When did this happen?
4. Which literary figures have inspired you?
5. Are there any women writers who have especially influenced you?

6. Which non-literary figures have inspired you?
7. What are the best and worst things about being a writer?
8. Do you have an underlying philosophy which you are trying to transmit through your writing?
9. Which living authors do you most admire?
10. What question would you most like to ask Philip Roth and Doris Lessing?
11. Is the story 'Lucky' based on any direct experiences?
12. Does Manchester offer a particularly rich source of inspirational material?
13. If you weren't a writer, what would you be?
14. Complete this sentence: "Apart from writing, I'm good at"
15. Do you have any particular pet hates?

Obsessive Compulsive Disorder

This article is to be read to stimulate discussion. It is an area which affects a great number of young people and the teacher should be aware that some members of the class either suffer from this disorder or think they do. The discussion should not, therefore, be judgmental in tone but constructive and enquiring.

Relevant to Janine's behaviour may be the following: repeated behaviour pattern; rituals; symmetry and order; lucky and unlucky numbers; counting rituals.

"I had obsessive compulsive disorder"

Obsessions:

Underlined in previous text should be:

Fear of dirt or germs

Fear of contamination

Fear of illness or harm

A need for symmetry

Rituals

Grooming

Repeating

Ordering or arranging

Cleaning rituals

Word Work Prepositions

“Please, go in and sit down,” she said, opening the door which led into a marble-floored library, resplendent with books from top to bottom. He instinctively looked up to/towards the light pouring in from the windows surrounding the dome. He entered the room as directed and stood between two circular tables from where he could see through the floor-level window to the garden beyond. He looked back at his hostess, only to see she had mysteriously disappeared. He moved slowly round the side of the room and finally settled himself down in/into the most comfortable-looking armchair in the room, and waited to see what would happen next.

Phrasal verbs

There are two versions of the phrasal verbs activity – one as a listening activity and one as a writing/reading activity. **Do not do both activities – choose one only!** The order of the phrasal verbs is the same in both. They are:

turned off	disconnect or switch off something
filling in	substitute
looking after	taking care
pick out	recognise or discern
fall for	become (suddenly?) in love
send out	ask for a delivery to be brought to you
pop out	leave a place briefly
end up	arrive at a place (eventually?)
getting on	being friendly
fish in	try to find something (that is hidden?)

The matching activity is the same for both approaches:

Sentence completion:

1. She didn't want to go home because she and her aunt were **getting on** so well.
2. They meant to go to the cinema but **ended up** at the night club instead.
3. He spent the evening **looking after** his sister who was feeling ill.
4. I've come to **fill in** for the girl who went sick.
5. He's just **popped out** but he'll be back in a minute.

Glossary (Listening)

AHA – Area Health Authority
BMJ – British Medical Journal
NHS – National Health Service

1. bitching	(b)	8. frown	(b)	15 melting	(b)
2. bursting	(c)	9. furry	(a)	16 murmuring	(a)
3. chatter	(a)	10 gasping	(b)	17 smooth	(c)
4. choking	(a)	11 giggle	(a)	18 tickling	(b)
5. Debenhams	(b)	12 gossip	(c)	19 trembling	(c)
6. dodging	(b)	13 humming	(c)	20 whispering	(a)
7. drag	(c)	14 jammed	(a)		

Read On Summarising

1. F (train) 2. T 3. T 4. F 5. F 6. U (but unlikely) 7. F 8. T 9. U (unlikely) 10. F

Claustrophobia

a) encourage students to think of as many claustrophobic places as possible, and share them. et those who find this a problem to try and explain what they feel to those who don't.

b) this is potential a tricky area as both meanings of the word are spelled the same and are both nouns, although it is also a verb.

c) they might need to go into L1 to express some of these or else you will simply end up with list of qualifying adjectives – 'bad smell' 'pleasant smell'. Here's a check list of two kinds from a thesaurus:

Unpleasant: fetid; stink; malodorous; stench; reek; whiffy; rancid; musty; foul; acrid; offensive

Pleasant: sweet; aromatic; scented; perfumed; balmy; spicy; fruity

Listening:

Claustrophobia

Gaia Holmes

On the morning bus

I can smell

a hundred lives

in the breath

that crowds the air;

old garlic, weak tea,

cornflakes, porridge.

The man sitting behind me

has the sap

of last nights woman

clinging to his beard,

relics of lust

gunking up the cracks

in his lips.

The office girl opposite

has the almond breath

of forced hunger

and rusty nail-head eyes
that wolf down
the passing hills.
The old woman beside me,
with a scab of jam
on her chin,
smells of raspberries
and loneliness,
I sniff wisps of grief
every time she moves.
There is the stable-scent
of a muesli breakfast
coming from the back,
hot straw and skimmed milk
pushed out by the heat vent.
Someone reeks of guilt,
like violets and sulphur,
like dentists gas
it makes me gag.
This invasion
of sweat, skin ,soap
and stale love
is too intimate
for this time of day.
I press myself
against the window,
suck clean coldness
out of glass.

@ Gaia Holmes

Taken from *Dr James Graham's Celestial Bed* (Comma, April 06)
www.commapress.co.uk