

Textploitation

Bridging the Gap between IELTS & EAP

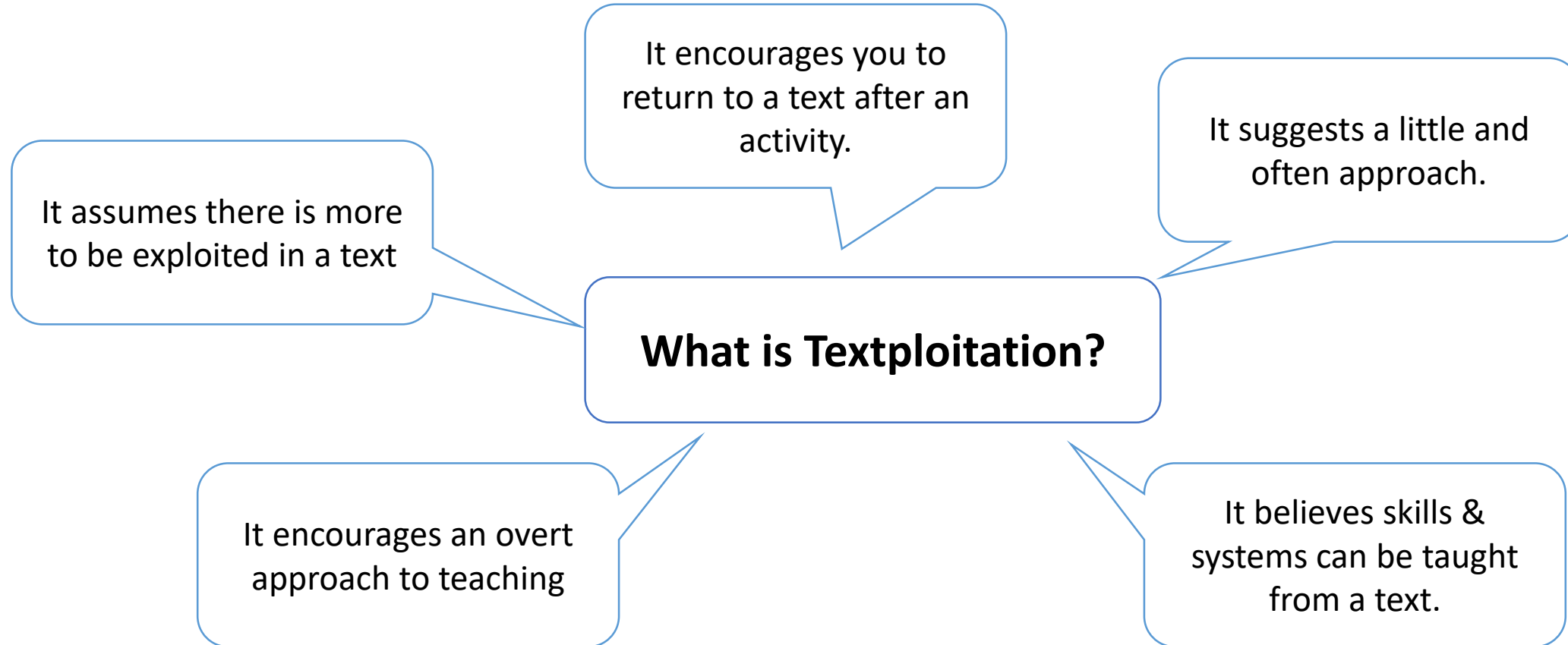
By

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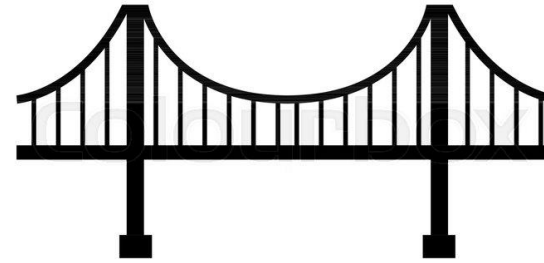
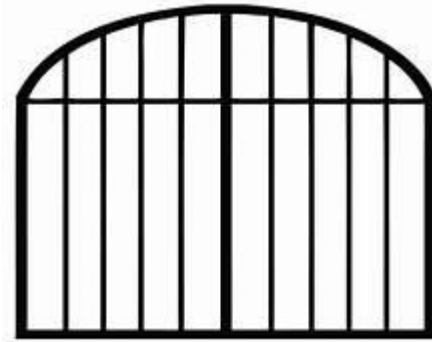
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Aims:

- To discuss & challenge the current narrative surrounding IELTS.
- To encourage you to reframe the exam/course for your students.
 - To give you the tools to do so.

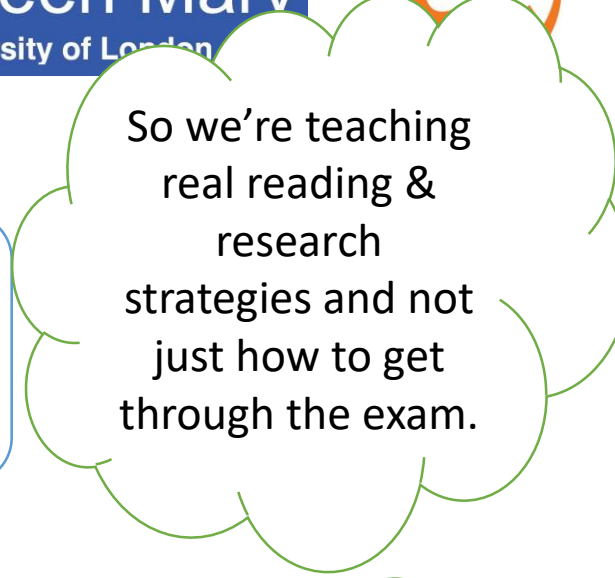
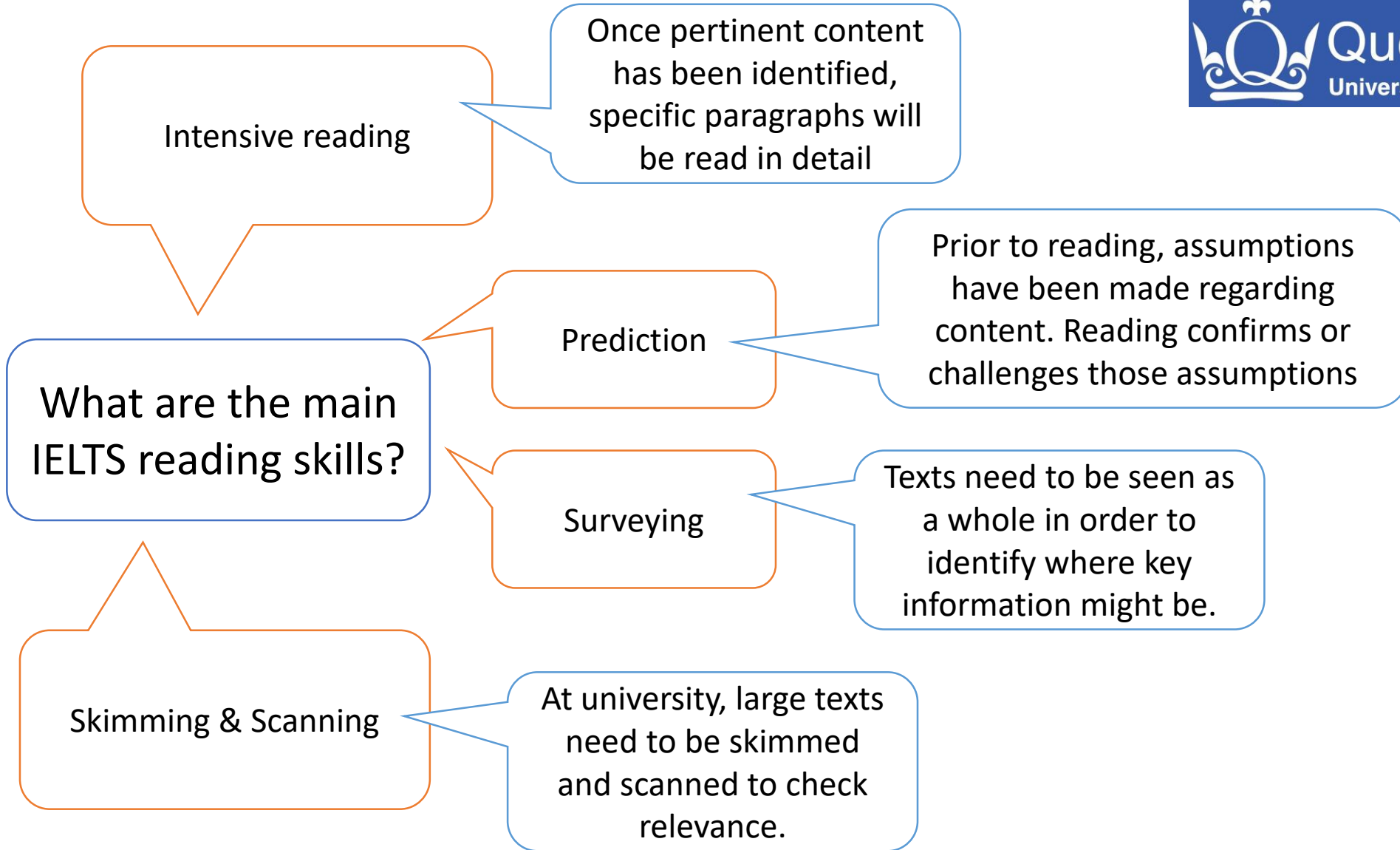
How do your students see the IELTS exam / course?



How do you talk about it with your students?

Ugh, gonna
need some
help changing
this
narrative...





So we're teaching real reading & research strategies and not just how to get through the exam.





So we're actually preparing them for university writing. These skills are relevant beyond the exam.



At university, your answer matters.

Coherence: Answering the question

At university, this is no longer a thing.

What are the main IELTS writing skills?

Showing range

Paraphrasing / summarising

No longer a way of losing points, it's now a way to avoid plagiarism and summarising is a key strategy.

Cohesion: organization & linking

Linking moves from something that shows range to something that holds a text together. Structuring an argument, actually summarising in the conclusion, referencing well.

Let's take stock: what are we saying / not saying?

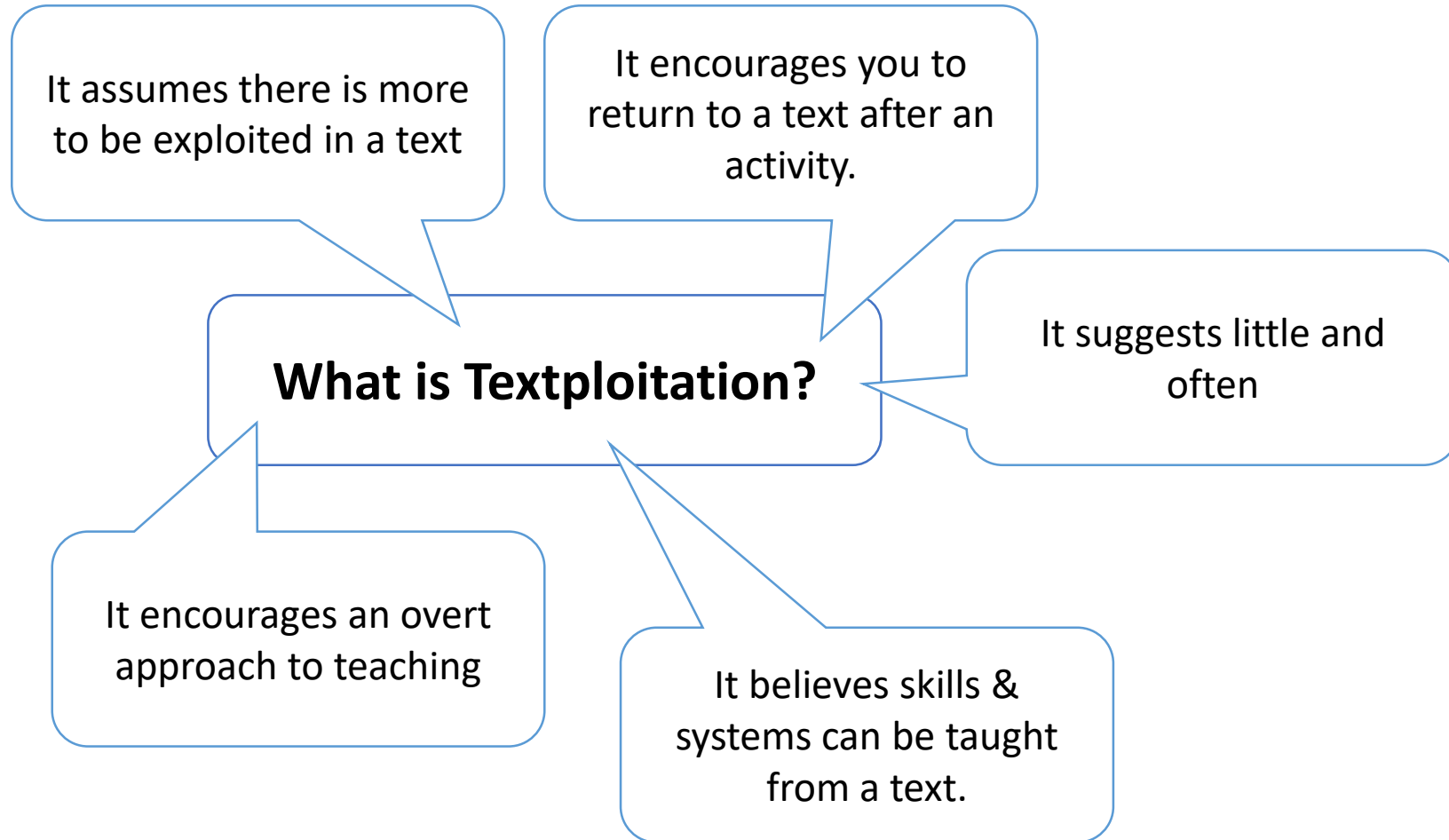
We are not saying:

- You're teaching IELTS wrong.
- You should be bringing in university texts or expecting university-standard writing.

We are saying:

- Our students are taking IELTS in order to prepare themselves for university.
- The exam tests (to some extent) the main academic skills they will need.
- Our students don't necessarily realise this. They see it as a means to an end.
- By changing how we talk about the skills and putting the focus on their future, we can engage them.
- By exploiting your IELTS texts further, you can better prepare them for the challenges ahead.





What's so funny?

John McCrone reviews recent research on humour

The joke comes over the headphones: ' Which side of a dog has the most hair? The left.' No, not funny. Try again. ' Which side of a dog has the most hair? The outside.' Hah! The punchline is silly yet fitting, tempting a smile, even a laugh. Laughter has always struck people as deeply mysterious, perhaps pointless. The writer Arthur Koestler dubbed it the luxury reflex: 'unique in that it serves no apparent biological purpose'.

Theories about humour have an ancient pedigree. Plato expressed the idea that humour is simply a delighted feeling of superiority over others. Kant and Freud felt that joke-telling relies on building up a psychic tension which is safely punctured by the ludicrousness of the punchline. But most modern humour theorists have settled on some version of Aristotle's belief that jokes are based on a reaction to or resolution of incongruity, when the punchline is either a nonsense or, though appearing silly, has a clever second meaning.

Graeme Ritchie, a computational linguist in Edinburgh, studies the linguistic structure of jokes in order to understand not only humour but language understanding and reasoning in machines. He says that while there is no single format for jokes, many revolve around a sudden and surprising conceptual shift. A comedian will present a situation followed by an unexpected interpretation that is also apt.

So even if a punchline sounds silly, the listener can see there is a clever semantic fit and that sudden mental 'Aha!' is the buzz that makes us laugh. Viewed from this angle, humour is just a form of creative insight, a sudden leap to a new perspective.

However, there is another type of laughter, the laughter of social appeasement and it is important to understand this too. Play is a crucial part of development in most young mammals. Rats produce ultrasonic squeaks to prevent their scuffles turning nasty. Chimpanzees have a 'play-face' - a gaping expression accompanied by a panting 'ah, ah' noise. In humans, these signals have mutated into smiles and laughs. Researchers believe social situations, rather than cognitive events such as jokes, trigger these instinctual markers of play or appeasement. People laugh on fairground rides or when tickled to flag a play situation, whether they feel amused or not.

Both social and cognitive types of laughter tap into the same expressive machinery in our brains, the emotion and motor circuits that produce smiles and excited vocalisations. However, if cognitive laughter is the product of more general thought processes, it should result from more expansive brain activity.

Task:

Read this IELTS reading section.

- 1) What skills would you highlight?
- 2) How would you bridge them with EAP?
- 3) What could you point out that could help them with their academic writing?

Reading Skills

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Which bits did you skim?
Did you scan for key words? Read intensively?

How did you approach reading this article?

Why did you approach it in that way?

How well did it work for you?

When will you use this skill in university?

Why are we practicing this skill? Why have we taught it? Why are we asking you to apply it?

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Choose a single paragraph to focus on

Consider actual cohesion in the paragraph

What linking is actually present?

What is the function of each sentence?

Topic sentence / claim / evidence / counter / analysis / conclusion / bridge to next paragraph or link to prior?

Vocabulary Building

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Give them the language they need to discuss the functions. Topic sentence, etc.

Return to a text and identify lexical fields for topic / argument building etc.

When will this be useful for you?

Critical Thinking

Not technically assessed in IELTS

But crucial at university level...worth developing?

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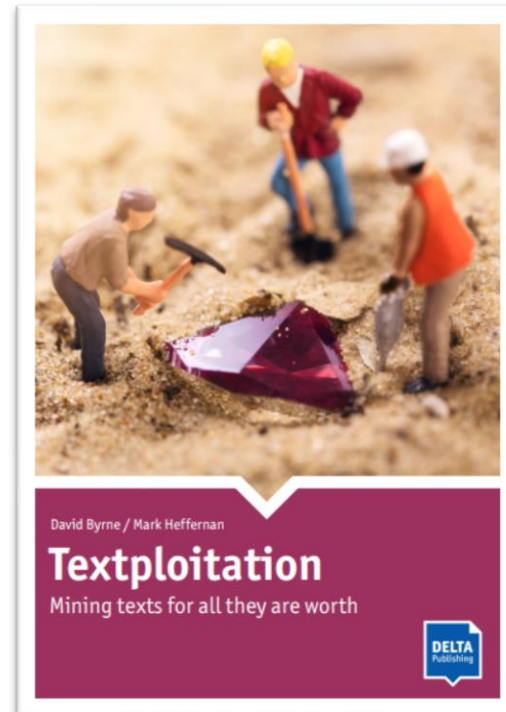
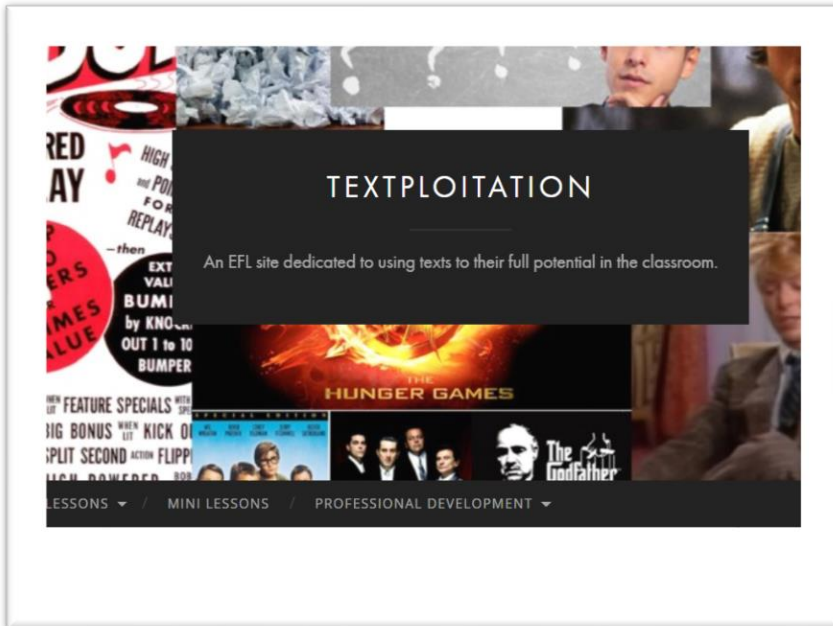
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These texts are full of people and opinions.

Would there be value in:

- 1) Googling them to learn more?
- 2) Considering their bias?
- 3) Summarising their opinions and evaluating them?
- 4) Discussing writer opinion?



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