

Name: _____ () Class: _____ Date: _____

While researching content for a drama performance, you have come across a play about a dystopian future. Read the play script.

Text 1 Play script

Scene 1

It is the year 2203, ten years after World War III. The recovering human civilization is facing yet another challenge—the Black Flu. Dr Zachary Jones is running a mobile clinic in the urban slums. His nurse, Holly, has just seen out the last patient.

5 **Holly:** That was our hundredth case of Black Flu this week. Will this ever end? *(starts tidying up)*

Zachary: *(looks at his case file)* There's no point worrying about what you can't control, Holly. How are things at the hospital?

10 **Holly:** As of yesterday, they said they're low on beds and are assigning patients to blankets on the floor. Basic medical supplies have run out, not to mention drugs and antibiotics. Lots of people still turn up every day. Almost all of them infected, and half the doctors have been killed off. They ... they also said ... *(pauses, hesitant)*

Zachary: We're not leaving these people behind!

15 **Holly:** *(hurriedly)* Yes, yes, that's what I told them. But I don't think that's the last we'll hear of it.

Zachary: We're staying here as long as supplies hold out. End of story.



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Scene 2

20 *Dr Jones is attending a meeting at the hospital with other doctors, including Chief Physician Dr Helen Draxler.*

Dr Draxler: Thank you all for coming. As you know, we're still stuck in one of the deadliest ever threats to our species, and ...

25 **Zachary:** *(interrupts)* Just tell us where things stand. Are we any closer to developing a cure?

Dr Draxler: My team has been working around the clock, but the virus is extremely resistant. It also has a remarkable ability to adapt to changing host environments. It mutates so quickly that we barely have time to isolate and attack it before it slips through our fingers again. Quite frankly, we've hit a wall.

30

Zachary: You'd better step it up, Helen. A third of the global population has already died. Latest projections have another third infected or dead within six months!

35 **Dr Draxler:** Thank you for pointing out the gravity of the situation, Dr Jones. Since you've been gone for two months, let me update you on the situation on our side. Our current doctor-patient ratio is 1:100. We might as well be studying the virus in our sleep. Want us to 'step it up'? Why don't you bring our doctors back from the dead? Or maybe summon a certain genius who thought he was too good for this hospital?

40 **Zachary:** You know precisely why I left, Helen. The slums are not a lost cause.

Dr Draxler: You can play the saviour all you want. But if we don't find a cure soon, there will be no one left to save!

45 **Zachary:** *(presses smartwatch to project a photo of a child on the wall)* Nico lost his entire family to this pandemic, but the boy himself displays no signs of hives, black nails or discoloured hair. I'm positive there are similar cases out there. If we can find them, there's your cure.

50 That's pointless, Zach. There must be millions in the slums. You must focus on the bigger picture. Sometimes that means making sacrifices.



Further simplified reading and comprehension

Unit 4

Name: _____ () Class: _____ Date: _____

Comprehension 1 *Your friend wants to know more about dystopian stories. Answer her questions using information from the play script. For multiple-choice questions, choose the best answer and blacken ONE circle only.*

- 1** The Black Flu is 'yet another challenge' (line 3) for human civilization. What challenge came before it?

- 2** Name THREE things that the hospital is lacking.

i) _____

ii) _____

iii) _____

- 3** In line 12, Holly does not finish her sentence. This is probably because _____.

- ☐ A Dr Jones interrupts her
- ☐ B she forgets what she wants to say
- ☐ C she is afraid Dr Jones will not like what she says
- ☐ D she is hiding something from Dr Jones

- 4** State TWO characteristics of the Black Flu virus that affect the difficulty of finding a cure.

i) _____

ii) _____

- 5** What is the meaning of the expression 'hit a wall' (lines 29 & 30)?

- 6** Number the following events in chronological order. Write 1–4 on the lines provided.

Black Flu kills two-thirds of people worldwide. _____

World War III begins. _____

The hospital experiences difficulties. _____

Dr Zachary Jones sets up his mobile clinic. _____

- 7** Complete the following table about the characters in the script.

Character	Job duties
Zachary Jones	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consulting patients in _____ _____
Helen Draxler	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> _____ _____ _____

- 8** Who does 'a certain genius' (line 38) refer to?

- 9** Which of the following is NOT a symptom of the Black Flu?

- ☐ A black nails
- ☐ B discoloured hair
- ☐ C fever
- ☐ D hives

Oxford English (Second Edition) 3A

Further simplified reading and comprehension

4 of 4

Unit 4

Name: _____ () Class: _____ Date: _____

10 Why does Dr Jones bring up the case of Nico?

11 Dr Draxler tells Dr Jones to 'focus on the bigger picture' even if it 'means making sacrifices' (lines 50–52). What does she want Dr Jones to sacrifice?

- | | |
|---|---|
| A his job | |
| B the lives of infected people in the slums | |
| C working at the hospital | A B C D |
| D finding the cure in a laboratory | <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> |

12 Which of the following is the best title for the play?

- | | | |
|------------------|------------|---|
| A Beyond the War | C Survival | A B C D |
| B All Must Live | D Doctors | <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> |

13 Below is a summary of the play script. In three of the lines, there is ONE mistake. If you find a mistake, underline the mistake and replace the word with one that expresses the correct idea. Write the word in the space on the right. If there is no mistake, put a tick (✓) in the space. The first one has been done for you.

	Example	Treatment
e.g.	In the year 2193, mankind is suffering from an outbreak	
i)	of Black Flu, an infectious disease. It is difficult to	
ii)	combat because it isolates so quickly. At Dr Draxler's	
iii)	hospital, each doctor has one million patients to look	
iv)	after. They do not have time to find a virus.	

14 Complete the following passage with words from Text 1 that are similar in meaning to the words in brackets. Use ONE word to complete each blank.

Many dystopian films depict a world plagued by a deadly 'super disease'. It starts off like any regular disease: a handful of people become (i) _____ (*diseased*, lines 5–13) with it. They seek medical help and might be given antibiotics, but the virus or bacteria is (ii) _____ (*immune*, lines 26–30) to all medicines. Many people die while very few recover. Before long, the situation develops into a full-scale (iii) _____ (*plague*, lines 43–51), with many (iv) _____ (*estimates*, lines 31–39) predicting a huge death toll. The protagonist of the film must fight for survival, either by finding a cure or by escaping to faraway lands unaffected by the disease.