

# Do you remember?

1. Imagine that you were going to write your autobiography. Where would you start? What periods of your childhood or specific incidents would you definitely include?
2. You're going to read and listen to an extract from *Boy*, the autobiography of author Roald Dahl. Read and listen to **Part 1** and answer the questions.

- 1) Why did the chocolate bars have numbers stamped underneath them?
  - 2) What do you think was the point of the control bar?
  - 3) What exactly did the boys have to do?
  - 4) Why was it clever of Cadbury's to use the boys?
  - 5) How did they behave when they were sampling the products?
3. Now do the same for **Part 2**.

- 1) How did Roald Dahl imagine the 'inventing room' to be?
- 2) What would he sometimes imagine himself doing?
- 3) How did he imagine Mr Cadbury reacting to his invention?
- 4) What effect did the testing of the chocolate bars have on Dahl in later life?

## PART 1



Every now and then, a plain, grey cardboard box was dished out to each boy in our House, and this, believe it or not, was a present from the great chocolate manufacturers Cadbury. Inside the box there were twelve bars of chocolate, all of different shapes, all with different fillings and all with numbers from one to twelve stamped underneath. Eleven of these bars were new inventions from the factory. The twelfth was the 'control' bar, one that we all knew well, usually a Cadbury's Coffee Cream bar. Also in the box was a sheet of paper with the numbers one to twelve on it as well as two blank columns, one for giving marks to each chocolate from nought to ten, and the other for comments.

All we were required to do in return for this splendid gift was to taste very carefully each bar of chocolate, give it marks, and make an intelligent comment on why we liked or disliked it.

It was a clever stunt. Cadbury's were using some of the greatest chocolate-bar experts in the world to test out their new inventions. We were of a sensible age, between thirteen and eighteen, and we knew intimately every chocolate bar in existence, from the Milk Flake to the Lemon Marshmallow. Quite obviously our opinions on anything new would be valuable. All of us entered into this game with great gusto, sitting in our studies and nibbling each bar with the air of connoisseurs, giving our marks and making our comments. "Too subtle for the common palate" was one note that I remember writing down.

## PART 2

For me the importance of all this was that I began to realize that the large chocolate companies actually did possess inventing rooms and they took their inventing very seriously. **I used to picture** a long white room like a laboratory, with pots of chocolate and fudge and all sorts of other delicious fillings bubbling away on the stoves, while men and women in white coats moved between the bubbling pots, tasting and mixing and concocting their wonderful new inventions.

**I used to imagine** myself working in one of these labs, and suddenly I would come up with something so unbearably delicious that I would grab it in my hand and go rushing out of the lab and along the corridor and right into the offices of the great Mr Cadbury himself. 'I've got it, Sir,' I would shout, putting the chocolate in front of him. 'It's fantastic! It's fabulous! It's marvelous! It's irresistible!' Slowly the great man would pick up my newly-invented chocolate and he would take a small bite. He would roll it round his mouth. Then all at once he would leap from his chair crying, 'You've got it! You've done it! It's a miracle!' He would slap me on the back and shout, 'We'll sell it by the million! We'll sweep the world with this one! How on earth did you do it? Your salary is doubled.' It was lovely dreaming those dreams, and I have no doubt at all that thirty-five years later, when **I was looking for** a plot for my second book for children, **I remembered** those little cardboard boxes and the newly-invented chocolates inside them, and I **began** to write a book called *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*.



**GRAMMAR** The past: habitual events and specific incidents

1. Look at the highlighted verbs in **Part 2** of the extract from *Boy*. Which ones describe...?
  - a) Specific incidents in the past
  - b) Repeated or habitual actions in the past
2. Choose the correct verb form. Sometimes both options are possible.
  - a. Connie and I *used to be* / *would be* very close, but recently we've grown apart.
  - b. When I came into the room, my aunt *sat* / *was sitting* with her back to me. When she turned round, I could see that she *had been crying* / *had cried*.
  - c. Our grandmother *always used to have* / *would always have* a surprise waiting for us when we visited.
  - d. My sister *used to live* / *would live* on her own, but then she *used to buy* / *bought* a flat with her boyfriend.
  - e. When I was small, I *was always getting* / *always used to get* into trouble at school and my parents *used to punish* / *would punish* me by not letting me play with my friends at the weekend.
  - f. Suddenly we heard a tremendous crash and we saw that a car *crashed* / *had crashed* into a tree and petrol *poured* / *was pouring* onto the road.

3. Complete with the verb in Brackets using a narrative tense or *would / used to*.

### My earliest memory

When I was about four or five, my grandmother, who was Polish, was living (live) in London and we children often <sup>1</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ (spend) weekends at her flat. My grandfather <sup>2</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ (die) a couple of years earlier, so I suppose she was in need of company. We loved going there, as my grandmother <sup>3</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ (cook) special meals for us and <sup>4</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ (take) us for lovely walks in Regent's Park, which was quite nearby. One occasion that I remember really well was when I <sup>5</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ (invite) to stay with her on my own, without my brothers and sisters. On the first day, after lunch, my grandmother <sup>6</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ (go) for her rest.

I <sup>7</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ (try) to sleep, but I couldn't, so after a while I <sup>8</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ (get up) and <sup>9</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ (decide) to explore the flat.

Everything was very quiet, so I was convinced that my grandmother <sup>10</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ (sleep).

The room I most <sup>11</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ (want) to explore was my grandfather's study, I imagine, precisely because I <sup>12</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ (tell) not to go in there. I opened the door and went in and was immediately drawn to his large old desk. I <sup>13</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ (climb) onto the chair

and <sup>14</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ (see) on the desk a green pen in a kind of stand, with a bottle of ink. I <sup>15</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ (ask) my parents for a real pen for a long time, but they <sup>16</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ (refuse), foreseeing the mess that I was almost bound to make with the ink.

I picked up the pen and then tried to open the bottle of ink. At that moment I <sup>17</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ (hear) my grandmother's voice saying, 'Christina? Where are you? What are you doing?' To my horror, I <sup>18</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ (realize) that my grandmother <sup>19</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ (get up) out of bed and <sup>20</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ (come) towards the study. Two seconds later, she <sup>21</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ (open) the door. I will never forget the awful feeling of shame that she <sup>22</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ (catch) me doing something that she <sup>23</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ (forbid) me to do.

4. Listen to six people talking about their childhood. What are the different expressions they use to say (approximately) how old they were at the time?

5. Choose some of the topics below and talk about things you habitually did or felt in your childhood.

things I used to be afraid of  
my primary school  
places we would go to  
for family holidays  
food and drink I used to love (or hate)

Christmas  
being ill  
toys and games  
I used to love  
birthdays  
nightmares I used to have

#### VOCABULARY & PRONUNCIATION



##### Abstract nouns

An abstract noun is one that is used to express an idea, a concept, an experience, or a quality rather than an object, e.g. *childhood* and *fear* are abstract nouns, whereas *bed* and *trousers* are not.

Abstract nouns are formed:

- 1 by adding a suffix to nouns, verbs, or adjectives, e.g. *child - childhood*.  
nouns can add *-hood*, *-ship*, or *-dom*  
verbs can add *-ment* or *-tion*  
adjectives can add *-ness*, *-ity*, or *-dom*
- 2 with a new word, e.g. *afraid - fear*.

1 + <i>-hood</i>	2 + <i>-ship</i>	3 + <i>-dom</i>	4 + <i>-ity</i>

5 + <i>-ness</i>	6 + <i>-(a)tion</i>	7 + <i>-ment</i>

1. Make abstract nouns by adding a suffix to the words below and making any other changes necessary and write them in the correct columns.

achieve adult amaze aware  
bored celebrate curious disappoint  
excite free friend frustrate  
generous happy ill imagine improve  
kind member neighbour partner  
possible relation sad tempt wise

2. Listen to each group and check.

3. Listen to three people talking about their earliest childhood memory and answer the questions for each speaker.

- How old was he / she?
- What event was his / her memory of?
- What emotion(s) did he / she feel?

#### 4. What is your earliest memory? How reliable do you think your first memory is?

You're going to listen to a radio programme about some research that has been done on first memories.

Before you listen, discuss the following questions.

- a) How far back in our lives can we usually remember things?
- b) Why can't we remember things before that age?
- c) What kinds of 1) feelings and 2) events might people be more likely to remember?
- d) Are our first memories mostly visual or of sounds and smells?
- e) Why might some people's first memories be unreliable?



**Listen to the what the speaker says and compare your answers.**

#### 5. Now listen to the speaker talk about psychologist Jean Piaget's first memory. Write down what you think are the key words. Listen again and try to add more detail.

### SPEAKING

Do you have any childhood memories of the feelings or events below? Do you know roughly how old you were at the time? Choose some of these events and feelings to talk about.

