

# **The Picture and the Story**

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National Geographic Learning

## The five w's and the h

### 1) Look at the picture and try to answer the 6 questions

Who?

What?

Where?

When?

Why?

How?



### 2) With any news story these questions should be answered as soon as possible. Read the article and see if that is the case.

#### The invisible man

In his latest work created in the summer of 2011 at his Beijing studio, Chinese artist Liu Bolin blends into a background of a supermarket soft drinks display. When his assistants finished painting him in, he seemed to have disappeared. Entitled 'Plasticizer', the piece is supposed to express Bolin's shock at the discovery of plasticizer in food products. Plasticizers are additives generally used to make plastic and other non-food products less rigid.

Such pictures have made Bolin internationally famous, which is ironic because they started out as a statement about how unwanted he felt by society. Bolin loves the challenge of blending into any surroundings: a building site, a telephone box, a national monument. No trick photography or photoshopping is used and careful planning is needed for each image. First, before entering the scene, he tells the photographer how he would like the picture to look. Then he asks his assistant to paint him in. This process can take up to ten hours while Bolin stands completely still, presumably in some discomfort.

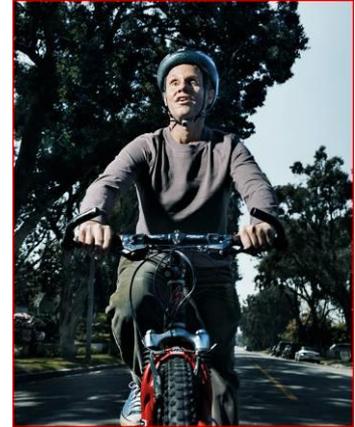
His pictures appear to have struck a chord with many people because more recently, Bolin has branched out from his Chinese roots and created a series of photos where he is camouflaged in other settings: New York, Paris, Venice, Rome and London.

*Life Advanced by Paul Dummett © National Geographic Learning 2013*

## Vocabulary building – A2 / B1

### 1) Look at the picture and make a mental note of what you see. Then listen to the story

This is the story of a man who **xeperase** a physical problem in an amazing way. Daniel Kish was **tyflos** from the age of one. But he learned to see by using his **glossa** and his **aftia**. From a young age Daniel made a click with his **glossa** as he walked. Then he listened for an **icho**. If the **icho** was loud, he knew an object was near. If the **icho** was not loud, he knew the object was far away. Daniel is now very good at using this technique. He can click his **glossa** two or three times every second. He can even ride a bicycle - something that is impossible for most **tyflos** people. The same technique is used by a **nykterida**, which only flies at night and uses it to find its way in the dark. For this reason people call Daniel “the real **nykterida** man”.



### 2) Look at the words and listen to the story again. Then tell each other what each word means

Anapiria  
Tyflos  
Klik  
Glossa  
Aftia  
Icho  
Nykterida

### 3) Tell the story to each other using the words as prompts

This is the story of a man who overcame a physical problem in an amazing way. Daniel Kish was blind from the age of one. But he learned to see by using his tongue and his ears. From a young age Daniel made a click with his tongue as he walked. Then he listened for an echo. If the echo was loud, he knew an object was near. If the echo was not loud, he knew the object was far away. Daniel is now very good at using this technique. He can click his tongue two or three times every second. He can even ride a bicycle, something that most blind people find impossible. The same technique is used by bats, who use it to find their way in the dark. For this reason people call Daniel “the real batman”.

## Collaborative Storytelling – Wait for the punchline ...

1) Pre-teach the vocabulary, then tell the story up to the punchline; half the sts then shut their eyes and close their ears. The other half hear the punchline. Collaboratively they retell the story and at the end Studen A gives the punchline



An old guy goes into a bar carrying a paper bag. “I really need a drink”, he says to the bartender. “I’m afraid I haven’t got any money, but I can show you a great trick”  
The bar is quiet, so the bartender says, “OK, if it’s a great trick” and pours him a drink.

The old guy takes his time over the drink. Then, when he’s finished he goes over to piano in the corner, reaches into his bag and pulls out a large frog. He sits him on the piano and says ‘Play’.

The frog then launches into a perfect rendition of Gershwin’s Rhapsody in Blue. ‘That’s amazing’, says the bartender and pours the man another drink. ‘How did he do that?’ ‘I trained him myself’, says the man. ‘Now for a sandwich, I’ll show you another trick.’

The bartender hurries out the back and brings the man a large ham sandwich. The old guy eats it and then goes back to the piano. This time he pulls a rat out of the bag and sits it on top of the piano. ‘Sing’ he says. And while the frog plays the music again on the piano the rat sings ‘Hey Jude’ by the Beatles.

That’s incredible’ says the bartender. But halfway through to song the door opens and in walks a Hollywood agent.

‘Are these creatures yours?’ he says to the old guy.

‘They sure are’, says the old guy

‘I’ll give you \$500,000’, for the pair.

“Sorry, they’re not for sale”, says the old guy

“OK. \$750,000.”

“ I don’t think so”

“OK, then. How much do you want for just the rat?”

“Mmmm .. I’d take a million, I guess”

And the agent writes him a cheque and leaves with the rat. When he’s gone, the bartender says. “Why didn’t you sell the frog? You could have got another million at least”

“Oh, I’d never sell the frog”, says the old guy. “He’s far too good a ventriloquist.”

Adapted from *Rich Hall, Things Snowball (Abacus, 2002)*

## Perspectives

### 1) Read the story below and note the main events.

John Byrne, a 38-year-old homeless man who had lived on the streets on Dublin for the best part of 22 years, was sitting on O'Connell Bridge which straddles the River Liffey in the centre of Dublin. O'Connell Bridge is a main thoroughfare into the centre of Dublin and Byrne used to sit there and beg quite often. Beside him was his companion, a rabbit named Barney. As he sat there, an 18-year-old youth passed by, picked up the rabbit and tossed it over the bridge into the river below. Without hesitation, Byrne jumped into the freezing cold water after it. He managed to grab the rabbit and then hold onto a ledge under the bridge to prevent them both from being swept down the river by the current. One of the hundreds of onlookers called the emergency services to help get Byrne back to land but it was a good forty minutes before help arrived. In the meantime, Byrne gave Barney the kiss of life and managed to save the rabbit from dying.

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### 2) Work in groups of three. Cover the text. Then retell the story from the perspective of:

A John Byrne

B The 18-year old youth

C A member of the emergency services

### 3) Discuss what action (if any) you think should be taken in light of this incident.

### 4) Compare your answers to what actually happened

Byrne was given a 'Compassionate Citizen award' and thousands of people sent message of support; the youth was sentenced to 4 months in prison.

## Choose your ending - Optimist or Pessimist

On a bright Saturday morning in September, a young man is clinging to the face of Half Dome, a sheer 2,130-foot wall of granite in the heart of Yosemite Valley. He's alone, so high off the ground that perhaps only the eagles take notice. Hanging on by his fingertips to an edge of rock as thin as a coin, shoes resting on mere ripples in the rock, professional climber Alex Honnold is attempting something no one has ever tried before: to climb the Northwest Face route on Half Dome without a rope. In many ways it's another day at the office for Honnold, but less than a hundred feet from the summit, something potentially disastrous occurs – he loses the smallest measure of confidence.



For two hours and 45 minutes, Honnold has been in the zone, flawlessly performing one precise athletic move after another, and not once has he hesitated. In the sport of free soloing, which means climbing with only a chalk bag and rock shoes – no rope, no gear, nothing to keep you stuck to the stone but your own belief and ability – doubt is dangerous. If Honnold merely believes his fingertips can't hold, he will fall to his death. Now, with mental fatigue and the glass-slick slab in front of him, he's paralysed, out of his comfort zone.