

I was running late that morning; I'd slept through my alarm, which was absurd considering it went off like a shrieking **bomb siren** every morning. I briefly **debated** wearing my yellow **boots**, but **worried** they wouldn't survive the rain. Cheap **toaster** broken so I quickly **produced** a jam **sandwich** and **scoffed** it. My poor **body** ached. I'd been out **dancing** (badly) the night before, it was **sports night** (messy) at the Guild and I had to **take off** my **sexy team shirt** when someone spilt their pint of **Becks** on me. Bit of a mad **adventure** for a week night.

What's different about my morning? It's a story almost any student can relate to, but read over it once more, paying attention to the details. Now cover it up. What do you remember? Shrieking alarm, boots or no boots, sandwich, sore legs from dancing and a favourite shirt ruined – never again. If you wrote it out again, even after this brief exposure, you should get most of the details. After all, it's a familiar scene, it's easily memorable, it's only 100 words long - and it contains all the main themes I need to know for my key exam this summer: 'Fashioning Flesh and Technology: Modernism and the Body in Germany 1918-1933'

bomb siren, debate, boots, worried: Warfare in relation to debates around prosthetics and war neurosis

toaster, produced, sandwich, scoffed: Technology and capitalist modes of production and consumption

body, dancing, sports night, take off: Free body culture: dance, sport and nudity

sexy team shirt, Becks, adventure: Sexual identity through the pioneering work of German Sexologists

The memory journey works because the human brain operates through narratives and loves details. As it places the events of the story in a familiar environment – your student flat or house – the details are linked to objects you see every day, which will trigger and strengthen the memory. Adjectives help with this. Your boots are yellow, your toaster cheap, and sports night messy because these descriptions highlight the important information via a strong visual image. These images are then linked within a conceptual framework so that none of the details are forgotten. Why are you running late? Because you went out last night with your messy teammates, so you slept through your alarm, and your achy body is moving through your morning routine (dressing, breakfast) slower than usual.

Finally, the story as a whole meets one of the greatest challenges of this exam by reminding me of significant themes that link these four blocks: ambiguities of machinist society; the gendered connotations of the body; state endorsement and mass phenomena (and so on).