

# Thinking, wanting and knowing

## Reading

In this excerpt from a Scandinavian film script, note the variations we have on the work *think*.  
Read the script silently or act it out in threes, taking the parts of Haro, Leni and the director.

Scene 246 from 'Brakbordsma' (*Breakfast*) by Ingmar Pintman.

Leni stares into her coffee cup, contemplating her life in the bottom of it.

*Leni:* Can you **picture us in ...?**

She breaks off. Haro looks up from his paper; their eyes meet briefly.

*Leni:* Do you envisage us doing this for the rest of...?

Long pause. Haro **is lost in thought, in a world of his own**. He gazes out of the window, reflecting on the chances they have missed.

*Leni:* I can't imagine anything any more that will break the routine of...

The camera passes over Haro's **meditating** face.

*Leni:* It's become impossible to **visualise** a time or place in which we won't...

Pause. Suddenly she **collects her thoughts, pulls herself together**.

*Leni:* How's breakfast?

Haro is not **concentrating, pre-occupied with** the falling snowflakes.

*Haro:* Cold. (Pause) Cold bacon.

Leni is dreaming of her childhood.

*Leni:* I **wasn't aware** you liked it hot.

Haro continues to **speculate** on what might have been.

*Haro:* I don't.

Long pause. They both **have a lot on their mind**.

*Haro:* If you **weigh up** both sides, **balance the pros and cons**, consider it **from each angle, bear in mind** every little detail, you begin to **realize** that the importance of hot bacon can be greatly **exaggerated in one's mind**.

Leni is **inventing an excuse** for not going with him this evening, **making up a story** on which to **improvise** later.

*Leni:* I **was day-dreaming**.

**Pause. She has a sudden brainwave.**

*Leni:* **Suppose ...** just suppose that there was another opportunity, another chance to...

*Haro:* I've been **toying with the idea of** cutting out the bacon ... at breakfast.

Pause.

*Leni:* This evening ... you know, this evening, I'm sorry, but I'm ...

*Haro:* I'm **seriously thinking of** doing without it.

The word **is going over and over** in Leni's brain until she whispers it, almost inaudibly.

*Leni:* That's just **make-believe**.

Haro **pretends** not to have heard.

*Haro:* I've **come to a decision**. (Pause) This **conclusion I've reached ...** it's that... His **mind begins to wander**. She is trying to **guess** what is **going on in his head**.

*Haro:* I've **discovered** certain things about myself in the last few weeks, you see ... and I've **decided...**

He is suddenly **miles away, his mind is a blank**. (Pause) He tries again.

*Haro:* Yes, I've **resolved ...**

Leni **thinks** she **understands**; her **mind is racing**.

Haro: **Made up my mind**, you know ... I'm **going to** try sausages.

Leni: Why don't you **sleep on it**, **think it over**?

Haro: I never **change my mind** after breakfast. (Pause) **On second thoughts**,...

**A flash of inspiration** from Leni:

Leni: It strikes me that... they've been very foolish. Has it **occurred to** you that they might... **reconsider**?

**She is confused**.

Haro: What do you mean?

The camera tracks to the window and the falling snow.

Leni: Nothing.

## Jigsaw Reading

Here are some comments made by two people at various times in their working life - when they were 16, 26, 36, 46 and 56. Unfortunately, they have become mixed up. Read them and try to decide at which age each was spoken. Notice how many **feelings, desires, hopes** and **fears** are expressed. Which paragraph do you identify with most? Which person do you envy less, feel more sorry for?

My twelfth job in ten years; it was **the last thing I wanted**. **All I've ever asked for is a bit** of security. I'm determined to keep this job with Button and Co. longer than the others, so I'm **keen to** make a good impression.

I'm between jobs again at the moment. I've **forced myself to stop worrying** about it. I'll be **glad if** I can keep finding work until I'm old enough to stop. I **could do with** three or four more long term temporary contracts. Of course, I **wouldn't say no to** a permanent one, but.... Quite frankly, I **wouldn't mind** going abroad, but I should think foreign employers would be a bit **reluctant** to take on someone my age.

**I'd rather not think** about how many jobs I've had. I used to **dream of** making my way up to the top of some firm or other - a firm of accountants, perhaps. Instead, I've **settled for** odd jobs here and there, **aimed for** posts they didn't even **consider** me for, **compromised** left, right and centre and **made do with** what came my way. At times I **would have given my right arm for**

**I'd love to** do something like teaching for a while, as a change from book-keeping. Teaching English to foreign students **appeals to** me; I really **like the sound of it**. **For two pins, I'd leave** James, James and James and try a summer course at the Sunshine School of English just down the road. **To be quite honest, I just don't feel like** going into the office today - or ever again. I'm **in the mood for** something completely different.

**I'm undecided as to** whether to go on to university or leave school now. **I feel quite tempted to** start work in the real world, but on the other hand **I'd quite like** three years doing nothing very much and give myself time to **make a choice** of career. To tell the truth, I **don't really fancy** getting tied down to one profession just yet.

I suppose **I'm resigned to** being an accountant with J, J and J until I'm 65. I know it's too late to **have regrets, but I do wish** I had tried harder to make the break. **I had every intention of** doing so. There seemed to be so many **options** open once, so many **alternatives** to pick from, so many possibilities from which to **choose**. I recall how I **flirted with** journalism, how I

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a comfortable job, regular salary, some sort of prospects. And each time I **accepted** second or third best. I do so **yearn** for a second chance. Silly, isn't it?

I've just had my notice from Smith Bros. Ltd. I'm **dreading** having to look round for work again. I've **given up** being choosy. **I'd be more than happy just to** have any sort of job now. **I'm desperate to** find anything that's reasonable. I really **have no strong preference** any more.

**I can't wait to** leave school. **I'm dying to** start work. I mean to find a nice steady job in a well-established firm, and **intend to** work my way up from the bottom. I'm **anxious to** learn about all sides of the business, because I **hope to** be on the management side by the time I'm 40.

was once quite **committed to** becoming a social worker, how I **turned my back on** a teaching career. I hate **to admit it, but I fear** it's true. **I'm longing** for my retirement.

Well, I've **made a resolution to** leave the old firm within the next eighteen months. **I'm really looking forward to** a change. I **couldn't face** going on in accountancy until I retire. I **feel inclined to** try publishing; I've **got my eye on** a company just down the road. I **have half a mind to** write to them today.

I didn't really **plan to** get into accountancy. I'm **not sure I ever really wanted to** work in the world of business, but there it is, here I am. I suppose I **was just drawn to** it somehow, **attracted to** it like a magnet. **I'm going to give it** a few more years and then change. I rather **like the idea** of being a journalist; there is a newspaper office just down the road.

## Practice

Rewrite the sentence given in each item four times, using each of the four words below it. For example:

I wouldn't like to be a millionaire.  
fancy / hate / pleasure / last  
I *wouldn't fancy being* a millionaire.  
I *would hate to be* a millionaire.  
*Being* a millionaire *would give me no pleasure at all.*  
*A millionaire is the last thing I would want to be.*

- 1 I want to see him again very much,  
forward / dying / wait / longing
- 2 I didn't intend to spend so long there,  
planned / mean / planning / intention
- 3 I would like a holiday,  
could / feel / mind / say no
- 4 I want to go to London on Saturday, not Sunday,  
rather / prefer / preferable / preference
- 5 I don't really want to move away from the coast,  
keen / reluctant / fancy / idea

Discuss or write the answer to this question.

How have your ideas, plans, feelings on the following subjects changed in the past five or ten years?

- |            |  |
|------------|--|
| 1 marriage | 3 bringing up children (present or future) |
| 2 career   | 4 money                                    |

Act or write conversations in which each of the people below is interviewed about their attitude to their work.

- 1 a young reporter recently taken on by a national newspaper
- 2 a worker on an assembly line
- 3 a pilot who has recently retired
- 4 a 45-year-old actor or actress who is past his or her best
- 5 an English teacher who's been teaching beginners for twenty-five years

Act or write out a conversation in which you discuss your holiday plans for next summer with two friends. See if you can agree on a holiday together, although you have very different ideas about what you would really like to do.

Write a goodbye note left by a runaway teenager for his parents.

Write, in dialogue form, a conversation which took place eighty years ago between a young man and his future father-in-law. The young man is trying to prove he will be a worthy husband for the other's daughter.

Add here any other words or expressions about thinking, wanting and knowing you may meet.

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