

Example # 2 – Extemporaneous Reading

An excerpt from *A Series of Unfortunate Events - The Wide Window* by Lemony Snicket

Aunt Josephine did not like to leave the house very much, because there were so many things outside that frightened her, but one day the children told her what the cab driver had said about Hurricane Herman approaching, and she agreed to take them into town in order to buy Groceries. Aunt Josephine was afraid to drive in automobiles, because the doors might get stuck, leaving her trapped inside, so they walked the long way down the hill. By the time the Bauderlaires reached the market their legs were sore from the walk.

“Are you sure that you won’t let us cook for you?” Violet asked, as Aunt Josephine reached into the barrel of limes. “When we lived with Count Olaf, we learned how to make puttanesca sauce. It was quite easy and perfectly safe.”

Aunt Josephine shook her head. “It is my responsibility as your caretaker to cook for you, and I am eager to try this recipe for cold lime stew. Count Olaf certainly does sound evil. Imagine forcing children to stand near a stove!”

“He was very cruel to us,” Klaus agreed, not adding that being forced to cook had been the least of their problems when they lived with Count Olaf. “Sometimes I still have nightmares about the terrible tattoo on his ankle. It always scared me.”

Aunt Josephine frowned, and patted her bun. “I’m afraid you made a grammatical mistake, Klaus,” she said sternly. “When you said, ‘It always scared me,’ you sounded as if you meant that his ankle always scared you, but you meant his tattoo. So you should have said, ‘The tattoo always scared me.’ So you understand?”

“Yes, I understand,” Klaus said, sighing. “Thank you for pointing that out, Aunt Josephine.”

“Niku!” Sunny shrieked, which probably meant something like “It wasn’t very nice to point out Klaus’s grammatical mistake when he was talking about something that upset him.”

“No, no Sunny,” Aunt Josephine said firmly, looking up from her shopping list. “‘Niku’ isn’t a word. Remember what we said about using correct English. Now Violet, would you please get some cucumbers? I thought I would make chilled cucumber soup again sometime next week.”

Violet groaned inwardly, a phrase which here means “said nothing but felt disappointed at the prospect of another chilly dinner,” but she smiled at Aunt Josephine and headed down an aisle of the market in search of cucumbers.