FLASHFILE 16 Better babies?

1. Script extract: Andrew Niccol, *Gattaca*, 1997

TB → p. 140

1. Before reading, **look** at the text.

a. Identify its specificities as well as the type of document.

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b. Read the introductory paragraph. **Make** hypotheses about the elements Maria and Antonio might want to choose for their future baby.

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2. Read the first speech by the geneticist.

a. Explain what the geneticist's job consists of.

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b. Compare your hypotheses with the elements the scientist is actually able to select for the couple.

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3. Focus on the stage directions. **Fill in** the table using the following elements and **justify** your answers with a line from the text.

nervous | pleased, satisfied | a bit cheerful | partly sceptical | knowledgeable | comforting | tactful | enthusiastic | protecting oneself

Maria	Antonio	The geneticist
•	•	• .....
.....	.....	• .....
•	•	• .....
.....	.....	• .....
•	.....	.....

4. Focus on Antonio.

a. Read lines 11-13. **Explain** what he means when he says: *"leave some things to chance"*.

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b. Describe how his opinion has changed on line 22.

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5. Focus again **on** the stage directions related to Maria and **comment on** the evolution of her opinion about gene editing.

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6. Focus on the geneticist.

a. Say what the stage directions show about him.

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b. Focus on lines 44-50. **Describe** other elements the geneticist is able to select.

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c. Sum up the geneticist's strategies to sound convincing in the following passages.

• Lines 14 to 21. .....

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• Lines 38-41. .....

d. Say whether these strategies are successful or not.

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7. Explain what Antonio's final line reveals about gene editing and people who want to resort to it.

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2. Is editing the DNA of an unborn child ethical or unethical?, *Interesting Engineering*, 2022



TB → p. 141

1. Before watching, **draw up** a list of arguments scientists might raise about gene editing.

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2. Focus on the passage about the movie *Gattaca*.

a. Give information about the names given to human beings.

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b. Sum up how this fictional aspect is echoed in real life today.

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c. Collect expressions showing that genome editing may soon no longer be fiction.

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3. Focus on the scientific community.

a. Tick True or False: Scientists agree on the ethics of gene editing. ❑ T ❑ F

b. Justify your answer with expressions from the video.

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4. Explain what the 2019 study reveals about the evolution of the use of gene editing.

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5. Sum up Dr Kevin Smith's opinion about people's opinions on gene editing.

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6. Rephrase the supporters' arguments for gene editing.

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3. Should We Use Gene Editing to Make Better Babies?, *Open to Debate*, 2022

TB → p. 141

WAY 1

1. Before watching, **look at** the cartoon.

a. Describe the situation.

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b. Identify:

• what happened to the girl: .....

• how her father may feel about it: .....

.....

• what the cartoon denounces about gene editing: .....

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2. Watch the introduction of the video (00'00-00'36).

a. Tick True or False: The majority of people agree on the ethics of gene editing. ❑ T ❑ F

b. Justify your answer with expressions from the video.

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3. Focus on speaker John Donvan's speech. **Watch** the rest of the video.

a. Pick out adjectives and adverbs he uses to describe the development of gene editing and **say** what it reveals about his opinion.

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b. Explain how the law regulates gene editing around the world.

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4. Focus on speaker Marcy Darnovsky's speech.

a. Sum up her opinion on the making of *"better babies"*.

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b. Pick out expressions she uses to introduce and support her opinion:

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c. Pick out expressions she uses to debunk her opponent's opinions:

Adjectives/adverbs	Nouns	Subjective language
• ..... • ..... • ..... •	• ..... •	• .....

d. Explain what she means by *"In fact, it would throw open the doors to new kinds of social injustice."*

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e. **Sum up** two arguments she uses to counter the idea that hereditary gene disorders can justify gene editing.

5. **Focus on** both expressions by the voice-over and Marcy Darnovsky: *"Picture this: a genetic disease runs in your family."* and *"Let's take a look at that: say that you have a harmful gene variant…"*.

a. **Describe** the strategy both speakers use.

b. **Explain** the effect targeted.

WAY 2

1. Before watching, **look** at the cartoon.

a. **Describe** the situation and **explain** what happened to the girl.

b. **Explain** what the cartoon denounces about gene editing.

2. **Watch** the first part of the video (00'00-01'17).

a. **Sum up** people's opinions about gene editing.

b. **Comment on** speaker John Donvan's opinion on this medical advancement.

3. **Focus on** speaker Marcy Darnovsky's speech. **Rephrase** her arguments against the making of "better babies". **Watch** the rest of the video.

4. **Explain** how both the voice-over and Marcy Darnovsky use similar strategies in the following passages to sound convincing: *"Picture this: a genetic disease runs in your family."* and *"Let's take a look at that: say that you have a harmful gene variant…"*.

TEAMWORK TB → p. 140-141

With your partner, **complete** the table.

	Doc 1	Doc 2	Doc 3	Doc 4
Modal forms to speak about the future or to express a prediction about the future				
Modal forms to make hypotheses or express possiblities				
Modal forms to ask ethical questions				
Yes/No questions asked with a rising intonation				
WH- questions asked with a falling intonation				
Public opinion about gene editing				
Scientists' opinion about gene editing				

YOUR PROJECT

Drafting your presentation

1. Gather information about *Gattaca*. **Fill in** the table with your ideas.

Presentation of the movie (title, filmmaker, date)	....
Description of the society	.....
Details about the main character	....
Ethical issues it raises	.....

2. Organise your ideas about gene editing.

a. The scientists' opinions: .....
Their arguments: .....
Examples: .....
b. The public's opinion: .....
Their arguments: .....
Examples: .....

3. Structure the presentation.

a. Clarify your objective.

- What you want to present: ❑ a film ❑ a book ❑ a report ❑ ethical issues
- The context: ❑ a school presentation ❑ a radio show ❑ the screening of a film
- What you want your audience to do: ❑ understand a science-fiction story

❑ make a connection between fiction and reality ❑ watch more science videos

b. Write the introduction to get your audience's attention. **Clarify** your intent:

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c. List contrasting expressions:

- to introduce and support an opinion: .....
- to debunk an opponent's opinion: .....

d. Use modals:

- to speak about or predict the future: .....
- to make hypotheses or express possibilities: .....
- to ask ethical questions: .....

e. Include different types of questions using the appropriate intonation:

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f. Make the ending sound convincing.

- **Sum up** how the movie relates to recent issues.

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- **Explain** why it is important to watch it.

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