

## Bergen TA workshop plan: Wednesday 20 May 2026

### 10:00–14:00 WORKSHOP

*Getting started with reflexive thematic analysis*

12:00–12:30 Lunch break

This workshop is designed to offer a theoretically-grounded, practice-oriented, reflexive introduction to the *doing* of *reflexive* thematic analysis (the approach developed by Virginia Braun and Victoria Clarke). The teaching combines a range of pedagogical styles and activities, from mini-lectures through classroom discussion, small-group and individual- classroom activity. It asks for a reflexively open and interrogative learning-engagement from participants, as well as preparation .

You should finish with a deeper understanding of the potential (and limitations) of (reflexive) thematic analysis, important design considerations, and a good grasp of what *doing* reflexive thematic analysis looks like in practice, and what this sort of analysis can (and cannot) deliver. Not every aspect will be covered in depth, but the workshop aims to build a foundation of skills, knowledge, and a critical reflexive practice related to coding and theme generation, that collectively provide a foundation for doing rigorous analysis that is both theoretically and methodologically congruent.

*Preparation before the day*

- Read the articles
- Read the dataset and do the preparatory tasks

*Focus on the day*

- Basic dos and don'ts for reflexive TA
- Reflexivity and datasets for quality analysis
- Why does familiarisation matter?
- The gnarly task of (quality) coding
- Thinking about themes

## PREPARATION: READINGS

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2019). Reflecting on reflexive thematic analysis. *Qualitative Research in Sport, Exercise and Health*, 11(4), 589-597.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/2159676X.2019.1628806>

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2022). Conceptual and design thinking for thematic analysis. *Qualitative Psychology*, 9(1), 3–26. <https://doi.org/10.1037/qup0000196>

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2024). Supporting best practice in reflexive thematic analysis reporting in Palliative Medicine: A review of published research and introduction to the Reflexive Thematic Analysis Reporting Guidelines (RTARG). *Palliative Medicine*, 38(6), 608-616.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/02692163241234800>

Trainor, L. R., & Bundon, A. (2021). Developing the craft: reflexive accounts of doing reflexive thematic analysis. *Qualitative Research in Sport, Exercise and Health*, 13(5), 705-726.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/2159676X.2020.1840423>

*If you have access – reading the coding chapter in our book would also be useful.*

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2022). *Thematic Analysis: A Practical Guide*. London: Sage.

*Other resources:*

[www.thematicanalysis.net](http://www.thematicanalysis.net) – our Thematic Analysis website brings together key articles and offers a rich collection of video material (e.g., talks, lectures, etc.).

[www.storycompletion.net](http://www.storycompletion.net) – if you want to explore the method a bit...

## PREPARATION: DATA

### CONFIDENTIAL DATASET: NOT TO BE SHARED BEYOND TA TEACHING

Dataset generated via the method of story completion ([www.storycompletion.net](http://www.storycompletion.net)) for a project exploring meaning making around COVID-19 Lockdown rule compliance and breach.

Researchers: Virginia Braun (University of Auckland, New Zealand), Victoria Clarke (UWE, UK) & Naomi Moller (The Open University, UK)

Ethical approval for 'rapid COVID19 research'

Data collection April and May 2020

Participants recruited via social media sharing; majority UK based

Total of 285 stories generated in response to six different stems (43-53 stories per stem)

We have completed our analysis but not yet submitted it.

Methodology publication: Braun, V., Clarke, V., & Moller, N. (2020). Pandemic tales: Using story completion to explore sense-making around COVID-19 lockdown restrictions. In H. Kara & S.-M. Khoo (Eds.), *Researching in the Age of COVID-19* (Vol. III: Creativity and Ethics, pp. 39-47). Policy Press.

#### FOR THIS WORKSHOP

Sub dataset of 24 stories generated in response to four stems (only UK stories in this sub dataset)

Minor typographical errors corrected

A (very loose) research question: *What is 'going on' in complying with or breaching COVID-19 Lockdown rules?*

## PRE-WORKSHOP TASKS

**BEFORE** reading the data, write reflexive notes about your thoughts, reactions, reflections, etc, related to the topic. In this, consider how you reaction the topic/research in light of your own pandemic experiences...

#### **THEN**

**READ THE DATA** and make familiarisation notes (within the guidelines of reflexive TA) of things that strike you, questions, observations etc. Keep these relatively casual, loose.

**THIS IS NOT CODING; DO NOT CODE AT THIS POINT.** If you are tempted to code, read the data without any way to code... The point of familiarisation is not the point of coding, so try to stay within the mode of familiarisation

**AFTER** one-two read throughs (and familiarisation notes, make overall familiarisation notes of the same sort of style – but oriented to the whole dataset, not data items. There is a page at the end of this document for that.

## **PERSONAL REFLEXIVITY NOTES**

## WORKSHOP DATASET

**Stem 1:** Like the rest of the country, Alex has been under significant COVID-19 restrictions for a while, and is feeling frustrated and ‘cooped up’. As tomorrow is going to be warm and sunny, Alex is thinking about going for a drive to the beach, 30 minutes from their home...

*Please continue the story of Alex and write about what happens next. There are no limits to the scope of your story, but we ask you to consider these three elements:*

- *Alex’s decision-making process*
- *What ‘decision’ Alex reaches*
- *The outcomes or consequences of that decision*

<b>ID</b>	<b>STORY</b>	<b>FAMILIARISATION NOTES</b>
A6 (UK)	Alex is torn. On the one hand he knows that the guidelines suggest we should all stay local but Alex lives in a built up area. During his daily exercise he sees lots of people also going for a walk and he really struggles to stay the recommended 2m away from people as they cross paths on the footpath. On the beach it would be much easier to keep his distance from everyone else. Plus Alex's dog has not had a proper walk in such a long time and roger loves his runs on the beach. In the end, he can't bring himself to break the guidelines. He thinks of all those who are sitting in their small flats, following the guidelines and knows he'll feel guilty if he goes. He takes roger for a walk around the block and feels sorry for himself and feels guilty that he can't get out into the open to let roger off the lead for a proper run around. He even feels guilty that he was seriously considering breaking the guidelines and wonders how long this will go on for.	
A8 (UK)	When Alex talked with his partner, she told him that's not a good idea since if he goes he is showing behaviour that more people can start to take. Alex thinks his partner is right but at the same time the 'anxiety' he is feeling is bigger for him and he really thinks that going to the beach will help him and also 'is just the beach, probably no one is there and no one will see him'. Alex goes to the beach, as well as other 20 people thinking in the same way that him. At the same time, his partner knows, she realised how selfish and irresponsible he is and, looking at the positive side, that it's better for her to know this even during a crisis. She now decides Alex is not the kind of person she wants to be with. During crisis time we need to look at the big picture, if no one	

	<p>can go out I won't go out since for now, it is a collective commitment we should take. She is sad and disappointed, but clear of how this crisis is informing her not just about Alex but also about so many other things in the world. In the meantime, Alex is in his way back home, happy of his decision and thinking where to go next for the next week and also looking forward to attending the 'clap for the NHS'. He doesn't know next week he will be single, he doesn't know there are so many people thinking like him right now even when he saw more people there. He is not in the risk population, so he doesn't care. His 'anxiety', that is not real anxiety but what a lot of people is feeling right now for this unprecedented conditions, it is more important than the fear of dying of so many people, that the impossibility of sleep of real anxious people. At 8 PM, Alex goes out to clap for carers, really loud, waking up his nurse neighbour. But he feels great...as so many people clapping.</p>	
<p>A23 (UK)</p>	<p>Alex thinks to himself that it wouldn't be that bad to go to the beach, because he could still make sure he kept his distance from other people. Is that allowed? You're allowed to do exercise and go for walks, after all. He's a little worried though that the beach might be patrolled. Alex's brother who he lives with seems up for coming too. In the end, Alex drives to the beach with his brother. When they arrive, they finds it is surprisingly busy. It makes Alex feel a little reassured. It feels like quite a normal day, except that people keep their distance more than usual and the cafe is closed. Alex and his brother end up going for a walk along the beach, having a sit down in a quiet part where nobody is close by, and then driving home. Both of them were a little uptight and not hugely relaxed. But they agree on the way home that it was nice to have gone out.</p>	
<p>A27 (UK)</p>	<p>Alex is well aware of the restrictions on non-essential travel imposed by the government, but is also aware that people are allowed to leave their home once per day for 'exercise'. What exactly this 'exercise' entails is ambiguous however, so Alex reckons they might be able to get away with it if they are careful. After all, there have been reports of people being told off and fined for relaxing in public places like parks in the sunny weather by the police. The beach is a bit far, so Alex is concerned that it might be pushing the limits of what is</p>	

	<p>allowed.</p> <p>Alex decides to take the risk to go and starts the drive. The roads are not busy but on the way Alex notices a fair number of cars driving around still and other people on foot, as well as many individual joggers. This starts to validate Alex's decision because these people seem to be thinking along the same lines, making use of their once-a-day exercise allocation, but generally staying apart from other people.</p> <p>Alex arrives at the beach and sees that there are other people here too, probably those who live more locally to the beach, though it is pretty quiet even on this sunny day. But people seem to be aware of the restrictions and are generally keeping to themselves, wide spaces between people and no big crowds or sunbathers. This helps Alex to feel better about their risky choice when seeing this. Alex takes advantage of the opportunity to walk up and down the beach a few times, making sure to a keep a good distance from other beachgoers, and is prepared to say they are making use of their exercise allowance if asked.</p> <p>After about an hour of this, Alex decides that is enough a drives home. The return journey is as uneventful as the journey out, and they return home safely and without reprimand. Alex still feels tentative about the whole excursion however, and decides that next time they will probably go somewhere more local instead.</p>	
<p>A30 (UK)</p>	<p>Alex decides to go for the drive with the plan that he will exercise for longer than the drive. He thinks this meets the rules of lockdown. The next day whilst driving to the beach his car breaks down in the middle of a country lane. Probably because it hasn't been on the road for 6 weeks it overheats. Alex doesn't have any recovery insurance so calls his brother. His brother is the only person he knows with a car who can potentially either pick him up or tow him home. However, Alex's brother James is married to Sarah who is shielding for 12 weeks because she has Cystic Fibrosis. Alex feels really bad as he knows James has been taking real care of his wife and avoiding going out, but he sees no other option.</p> <p>No-one else is stopping or asking Alex if he is OK. Fortunately he has managed to pull into a narrow layby. Some people are beeping and making hand gestures at him. Alex has an anxiety disorder so is getting more and more panicked and James can hear this when he calls.</p>	

	<p>James decides to help, although Sarah is very angry and it causes a row before he leaves. On arrival at the country lane someone is trying to help Alex but he really shouldn't be as he doesn't look very well and is coughing and sweaty. James goes over to help and they all realise that all that has happened is that the radiator has leaked a little and once topped up Alex can get on his way. They fill up the radiator and Alex and James head home. Sadly both Alex and James become ill over the next week and get diagnosed with Covid-19 as does Sarah. Both brothers recover relatively quickly, but sadly Sarah doesn't and after two weeks in ICU she dies. Neither James or Alex can attend the funeral due to the restrictions. James never forgives Alex and they become estranged.</p>	
A39 (UK)	<p>Alex really want to go to the beach, to get out in a big open space and enjoy the sea but in the back of his mind he kind of knows it would be breaking the rules or at least the spirit of them. He thinks its unlikely he would get stopped by the police, although does know a few people who have been stopped on local roads when they have just been going to the supermarket. He wonders if he did get stopped he could pretend he's doing something legit. He decides to sleep on it and decide what to do in the morning. Just as he's going to bed, a friend messages him to say that his uncle has just died of COVID 19. The family don't know where he caught it and he friend's mum, who Alex likes, is distraught at losing her brother. He doesn't sleep well that night. The next morning it is sunny and warm as forecast but Alex decide not to go to the beach. Instead he goes out for an hour on his bike. When he gets back from his bike ride, he gets a call from the friend whose uncle has just dies. His friend is quite upset and angry about people 'breaking the rules' and not considering the consequences. Even though Alex is still feeling frustrated about life being so restricted, and he feels that he probably wouldn't have done anyone else any harm going to the beach, he's kind of glad he didn't go as he would have felt bad admitting it to his friend.</p>	

**Stem 2:** The country is in COVID-19 Lockdown and individual freedom of movement is restricted. Pat and Kim are now both working at home, and it's pretty cramped and frustrating. Even though they don't need to shop for essentials, and have already taken some exercise that morning, they're talking about leaving their home to...

*Please continue the story and write about what happens. There are no limits to the scope of your story, but please include some discussion of Pat and Kim's deliberations, what they decide, and why.*

<b>ID</b>	<b>STORY</b>	<b>FAMILIARISATION NOTES</b>
PK42 (UK)	To take another walk. Pat suggested the idea, and argues that they can go for another walk whilst maintaining social distancing as they live in a remote area. He says that there's no risk to them or anyone else as they'll be careful. Kim is anxious and reluctant, and says that even though she understands there's no additional risk it's against the rules. But Pat points out that Kim's mental health is suffering and the lockdown is causing them both stress and strain, and that the benefits of going for an extra walk far outweigh the risk. They end up going.	
PK39 (UK)	...stretch their legs, perhaps visiting a local shop for a pint of milk to provide an excuse. Pat argues that there's nothing within the guidance that should dissuade them from doing this - milk is a foodstuff and can be classified as essential, and there's nothing to say that shopping and exercise have to be combined into a single trip. Kim argues that the spirit of the guidelines is more important than the letter and that Pat is trying to game the system. The point is to limit contact with other people to limit the spread of the virus. They don't need to go out for milk, regardless of how 'essential' milk might be and they've used up their exercise allowance. Pat concedes the point but mutters something about human rights and freedom. Kim also points out that their neighbours, with whom they don't get along, might report them.  They agree not to save their next excursion until tomorrow. The atmosphere in the household is dull and tense for the rest of the day. Pat drinks more than the NHS would advise.	
PK37 (UK)	have some fresh air. It can be pretty hard to stay focused when you're stuck in front of the computer screen for long hours. Well, at least that's what Pat	

	<p>had on her mind while Kim had an idea to take a longer walk around the block just like the other day when she could call her friend who came out at their door and they saw each other. They spoke for about 15mins which was amazing as they didn't break any rules of social distancing and also got to have a quick catch up. Kim felt good about this and thought of doing that again today. She was however mindful that she wouldn't probably let Pat know this time about this venture as Pat was quite upset last time. Pat argued that it was not right because it will encourage more people to do so eventually increasing crowd on the street and people visiting their friends. Kim sometimes struggles to understand Pat's logic. She gets confused with what's right or wrong. She then decided to do what made her feel good... visiting her friend who's while maintaining the government guideline on social distancing. At the end of the day, she felt she was not breaking any rules so not doing anything wrong. It was not like some stupid ethical issue and social responsibility as Pat makes it out to be. Kim always thought Pat was a bit too rigid with everything. She however made sure not to let Pat know about her intension and also decided to go out once Pat was back from her walk to avoid being seen with her friend.</p>	
<p>PK31 (UK)</p>	<p>They take another walk because they need to get up and stretch for their mental health. They avoided people on the first walk and so there is no harm going for another one. Pat thinks about popping to the shop for some 'essential shopping' but really it's to buy one essential item and spend the rest of the time buying treats and escaping her home. She doesn't go because she can't be bothered to wait in line. An easy compromise is another walk. They wait and go after dinner in the evening to space it out a bit. They come up with a story to justify it if someone makes an unkind comment or they get stopped by a figure of authority.</p>	
<p>PK26 (UK)</p>	<p>Go and visit their family. They really have been missing them a lot and feel like seeing them again would cheer them up. They are aware that this would go against the rules but feel that it is necessary to see family to maintain their mental</p>	

	<p>health at this difficult time. After they have visited their family they start to feel guilty for their actions. They wonder if they already have the virus and have actually carried it onto their family members or if they have brought the virus back home to their housemates. They decide that from now on they must adhere to the rules like everyone else as this is essential to keep everyone safe and they just hope for the health of their family and friends.</p>	
<p>PK4 (UK)</p>	<p>...'visit' a friend who lives alone in the neighbouring village. It is about two miles away and they are concerned that their friend won't have seen anyone for three weeks. Pat thinks that it won't hurt to take an extra walk and just stop by to wave and say hello, but Kim feels torn. Whilst their intent would be positive and come from the heart; it would be going against the lockdown rules and would mean that they were potentially taking unnecessary risks. "Oh, come on!" exclaimed an exasperated Pat..."It is one time. Jules is all alone and won't have seen anyone for weeks. We would stay a proper distance away and won't be putting anyone in danger...and anyway, who is actually going to know?" "We would know" countered Kim "and that doesn't sit very well with me at all". Kim's moral conscience was kicking in and they felt very uneasy about even contemplating breaking the rules. "We sit here every day and comment on the 'idiots' sunbathing in the parks and having BBQs that need to be broken up by the police; and yet we are still contemplating ignoring the rules ourselves. How can that be OK?" "But it is so different" argued Pat. "We would be going to see someone who is alone and lonely and has no-one else to check-in on them. Our intention is not to break the rules, but to do something good and helpful. It is so different." "But is it really?" mused Kim. "Is it really that different? Rules are rules and the moment we start bending them, then that's it. Where does it stop?" "Seriously, Kim!" exclaimed Pat. "I am not asking you to throw a party; just to come and visit a friend in need. Surely that's not such a big ask? We just go the once; have a quick chat, then come back. That's it." Kim paused for a minute and thought about it. On</p>	

	<p>one hand she was desperate to go and see Jules. They knew she was struggling and that a friendly face would make all the difference, and yet Kim also felt a deep sense of duty to stick to the rules, however hard that may be. It was such a tough decision and it wouldn't be the only time they'd have to make such a call in the coming weeks. Kim felt totally torn.</p> <p>"Look, Pat. I am sorry, as much as I am worried about Jules, I can't bring myself to break the rules and go visit her. If you want to go, I am not going to stop you as it is your decision, but my choice is to stay here because if I got stopped I couldn't justify my trip as essential. You do what you need to do, and let's leave it at that...please."</p> <p>And with that, Pat grabbed her coat and headed out to check on Jules. "I'll probably be about an hour and a half" mumbled Pat, feeling frustrated with Kim and her morals...and yet also feeling more than a little guilt about leaving the house for the second time that day.</p>	
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**STEM 3:** Sam has been keeping in touch with friends online during the COVID-19 Lockdown, and learned that some of them are going to meet up in the big local park, just after dark, to hang out and have a drink... They're encouraging Sam to come along...

*Please continue the story of Sam and friends and write about what happens next. There are no limits to the scope of your story, but we ask you to consider these three elements:*

- *Sam's decision-making process*
- *What 'decision' Sam reaches*
- *The outcomes or consequences of that decision*

<b>ID</b>	<b>STORY</b>	<b>FAMILIARISATION NOTES</b>
S1 (UK)	<p>Sam put his phone down and propped himself back on his pillows. He was totally bored with this lockdown business and really fancied going to meet up at the park. On the other hand he didn't want to get sick, but he told himself he was young and healthy so maybe the risks weren't that high. After all he could just go for an hour or so. Sam smiled at the thought of seeing the gang and having a laugh, having a drink. After all if he didn't get too close to everyone then what was the harm? He looked at the clock and saw it was dinner time, going downstairs he decided to eat, get ready and go out. Great shepherds pie and ice cream just what he fancied, he sat eating dinner with his family, mum, dad and his younger brother. They were eating in front of the tv and watching the news; mum and dad were keen to know the latest news about Covid 19 so it was bound to be the topic of conversation. After the news finished his dad said he would be glad when this was over, but even though it was difficult to stay in he would endure it because the family was safe. His mum agreed and added she'd be glad to get out and see everyone, get back to work and was worried about her mum. She lived alone, two streets away and relied on Sam's mum to drop off food. Sam's mum added that she hoped she didn't get sick because her mum would be in a mess without her. Sam's younger brother said he wanted to get back to see his mates and wondered how some of the staff were because they'd been off sick with Covid 19 symptoms before school broke up. Sam joined in saying that young people were safe and that they could probably go out and none of his friends were ill. His younger brother told Sam that actually you can be a carrier and not seem I'll, he'd</p>	

	<p>seen that on tv. Sam went back upstairs to get ready however he didn't feel so sure about his superman immunity now. He decided to go for a walk and if he passed the park he could decide then. As he was leaving the house his phone began to ping, ' hi mate, where are you?' Take a look at this clip of the corona virus challenge, some geezer licking the bog'. Sam watched in disbelief as a man licked the toilet rim. He googled the coronavirus challenge to find out more, there was a picture of the same guy hooked up to a ventilator. He texted his mate back, sorry mate see you at the park when this is over, I'm doing my own challenge.</p>	
<p>S11 (UK)</p>	<p>Sam lies back on her bed. She is longing to see her mates. It has been nearly four weeks and she has barely left the house. That argument with her Dad is still playing around her mind, he is such a dick sometimes, he just doesn't listen and thinks he knows everything. Her stomach feels wobbly as she thinks about it. The walls of her tiny box room feel like a prison, but this is the only place in the house where she can be alone. She never thought she'd say this, but she really misses going to college, not just to see her mates, but to feel like a proper person, her own person. She just can't be herself at home, all those stupid rules and 'family game nights' are really winding her up. She grabs her phone and replies to the group message, 'I'm in!'. Sneaking out of the house is easy, she's done it a million times before, and it feels so good to walk down the road, alone. To be free and independent. To be in her own space. The park is only ten minutes away but she goes the long way round, by the river, just to have more time on her own. She can hear them before she sees them. So bloody loud. She smiles to herself, but also worries about the noise. What if we get caught. Those other kids were sent home by the police last week and their parents told and everything. Her Dad would kill her. As she walks toward the sound of them, their shapes start to form in the darkness, some of them sitting on the swings, others on a nearby bench, someone tall, standing, pacing. She stops and listens. They are bitching about someone, she can't work out who. Something doesn't feel right. They're all too close,</p>	

	<p>leaning in to talk and laugh together, arms around shoulders, thighs touching, hands ruffling hair, fist bumps, passing cans of drink around between them. They shouldn't be touching. She watches. Her nervousness turns to anger. She wants to go over and tell them to stop being idiots. Move away from each other. Stop touching. She wants to yell at them, don't any of you have grandparents - she thinks about Nan, sitting in her armchair in their living room with her oxygen cylinder beside her, every breath slow and noisy, every breath an effort, every breath a sign that she is still full of life, still part of their lives. Sam turns around, and retraces her steps. As she follows the river path home, she takes her phone out of her pocket and texts 'shit! Dad caught me trying to leave, shut in my room, hate this so much.'</p>	
<p>S12 (UK)</p>	<p>Sam is tempted. This appeals to her rebellious streak! She has really been missing her friends and the relaxed chat and laughs that they have over a few drinks. She has been furloughed from work and her days at home are long and boring. She is using up her savings and worries about paying her rent. She would really like a break from the stress and boredom of the lockdown. Any how, she is young and fit and so are her friends and she can't see that meeting in the park will put anyone at risk, especially if everyone agrees to keep a few metres apart. Sam reflects that these days she does not even think about hugging or shaking hands with her friends, and realises that her natural responses have changed drastically over the last few weeks. However, Sam realises that the planned get together will inevitably attract attention in a city park. The council recently closed the part for a week because of people getting together in groups, which Sam knows full well is against the lockdown rules. She knows how essential the park is to the wellbeing of local people, many of whom live in small flats in the surrounding estates. Sam does not want to come across as judgemental, but she decides that she will not join her friends, and will encourage them to cancel the get together. Maybe they can find another way of getting together online - a virtual club night or gaming evening. Sam thinks about the party that she will organise when the lockdown is over and imagines</p>	

	<p>how thrilling it will be to do all the things that she used to take for granted - drinking and dancing with friends and moving from club to club, enjoying city life. She feels sad and trapped.</p>	
<p>S25 (UK)</p>	<p>Sam was initially tempted to join his friends; it had been so long since he saw them and he had been feeling really lonely recently. He knew his family and some of his other friends would disapprove but he could just not tell them what he had done. Plus, he didn't want his friends to think he was being dry or square, or judging them for going to the park. But then Sam thought about it a little more, and he thought - I've not been seeing friends for six weeks now, if I break the rules now that will undermine all the good work I've done, there'll be no point in having stuck by the rules for this long. Sam decided he wasn't going to, but struggled to tell his friends - it's not like he could say he was busy doing something else! Eventually, he texted them saying "I've got a bit of a cough so I'm going to stay home to be on the safe side". Part of him wished he could just say "I'm not coming because it's against the rules", but he worried how his friends would react to that. He felt like suggesting he might have symptoms made his decision a bit more legitimate or likely to be acceptable to his friends. His friends accepted his excuses without question, and Sam went to bed feeling like he had done the right thing.</p>	
<p>S29 (UK)</p>	<p>Sam closed his computer. he'd just finished Facetiming his best friend Ben. Ben had told him about the plan to meet up in the local park about 10-30pm next Saturday night. He'd promised him it would be cool! A fun way to spend an otherwise boring evening. It's not fair that we should be kept away from our friends when we are not really at risk. This coronavirus will not damage us any more than a case of flu. It's only the wrinklier who need to be kept apart, his friend had told him. Sam agreed but he had nagging fears about his Gran who shared this house with him and his mother. He loved his Gran though he never said much about her to his friends. He knew how much his Mum had needed her to look after him and his little brother after his father's accident. He knew that she was frail now and he didn't want to see her gasping for breath and in</p>	

	<p>hospital, alone. He also knew how hard it was to keep her separate from the rest of the family. Ben said they would all sit apart from each other in the park but Sam wondered how long that would last once they'd had a few drinks. Their usual drinking bouts ended in rough stuff so he knew how close they would all get. Then there was the added problem of creeping out of the house without anyone seeing or noticing his disappearance. His brother would certainly hear him. He had no idea how he would get hold of any drink! Perhaps it would be best to just forget the whole thing. Could he tell Ben why? Maybe his mates would just think he was a wuss &amp; ignore him from now on. Maybe Ben would understand. He opened up his computer to speak to Ben again. He'd just have to risk it. Maybe when they got back to school and things became normal again his mates would forget this. Anyway he'd be leaving for uni in October and hopefully meet new people. He could leave these problems behind.</p>	
<p>S39 (UK)</p>	<p>Sam is conflicted because he's bloody bored and lonely- despite the best efforts of his parents to encourage him to spend time with them, playing lame card games and watching dodgy films. He would love to go meet his mates. He takes a walk most days and FaceTimes his friends. And he does bump into people in the woods where they exchange a few words and have a companionable smoke, a few metres apart. But his conscience pricks him quite frequently. He wants to see his girlfriend- but hasn't done it in person so far. It's almost as though if he lets the barrier down and meets her or goes to the park after dark with his friends- it might make it harder to NOT do that the next time. And his conscience tells him this is a collective responsibility thing and whilst there would be little impact of just him meeting up with his mates, if everyone crossed the line then this quarantine thing would have been a waste of time. So he doesn't go. They call him a pussy and he doesn't rise to it.</p>	

**Stem 4:** Jack is a single parent with three young kids, all at home during the COVID-19 Lockdown. Jack has been taking the kids for a walk near their home each day to get some exercise. But after a week, the kids are bouncing off the walls. The forecast tomorrow is for sunshine, and Jack is thinking about taking them to a park for a long spell outside...

*Please continue the story of Jack and their kids and write about what happens next. There are no limits to the scope of your story, but we ask you to consider these three elements:*

- *Jack's decision-making process*
- *What 'decision' Jack reaches*
- *The outcomes or consequences of that decision*

<b>ID</b>	<b>STORY</b>	<b>FAMILIARISATION NOTES</b>
J1 (UK)	<p>...to run around and let off steam. To be honest, he needed a break too. The walls of the house seemed to be closing in on him, and he wasn't sure what was more important - getting them tired out by bedtime or giving himself the chance to breathe. The walks were hectic enough, getting all three dressed and the little one bundled up in a warm jacket, and then out of the jacket because it was too warm outside, oh no back into the bloody jacket because the wind is blowing again...and all the while, the other two running wild, one almost darting into the road and the other getting in the way of an older woman shuffling down the pavement towards them. Try explaining social distancing to a seven year old. A few hours in the sun with a blanket and a ball could completely change the game for them all...but he knew he shouldn't. It's not like the government had said how long your daily walk could be (or had they? He hadn't been checking the news anymore, finding it too upsetting to imagine all the death and destruction looming ahead and behind, no end in sight), and what was really the difference between a twenty minute walk and a few hours in one spot at the park? They could find a quiet patch and they wouldn't be bothering anyone. And anyway, what about vitamin D? Growing kids needed to be outside, he was sure. And yet, in the back of his mind he knew that he shouldn't text his sister to check what she thought about the whole thing. It wasn't like she'd get it anyway, her and Bob reverently parenting one twelve-year-old and posting continually about homeschooling and the pressures of lockdown, as if they had any idea what it was like to touch your hair and realise you hadn't showered in a week, and then</p>	

	<p>realise that you couldn't remember the last time you showered without listening out for a cry or a yell or a quarrel or a thump the whole time. He sighed. It wasn't her fault. He was getting bitter at everyone, but it was just because he was tired and strung out and he could hear them all running riot in the other room. One hour, he thought. There was no harm going to the park for an hour, and if there was, well, he'd deal with the public shaming or the fine or whatever it was, if he just thought they might all come home happy and calm.</p>	
<p>J3 (UK)</p>	<p>Jack hoped that the kids might forget his promise since he himself now felt uneasy about an extended period of time in the park. He'd been awake most of the night wondering how to avoid the park which would potentially be full of other families and the difficulties involved with social distancing. That said he didn't want to disappoint them either because they were bored and tetchy; the daily walk had become monotonous even though he had tried to vary the route. Jack felt really sorry for the kids, they had spent nearly a month in lockdown and cabin fever was setting in. On the morning of planned walk Jack had an early morning coffee and went into the small garden at the back of their house. He looked at the garden and decided that perhaps there was some way to occupy the children and to avoid the park. Although the garden was small there was enough space to create activities to dispel the boredom. He found several plastic storage tubs, filled one with water and another with soil, to both he added plastic tubs and spoons. He coloured the water with food dye and then set up a game of skittles with large plastic water bottles filled with water. He created mud in the soil box and added spoons. He took the old slide from the shed and set it up under the washing line, over this he hung the hose pipe and would create a water slide later on when the day warmed up. He decided that today's walk would be made more exciting if the kids went in fancy dress which they could decide on after breakfast. Speaking of breakfast, they could help prepare the breakfast, picnic lunch in the garden and then tea. Jack thought that planning activities, games, exercise, hairdressing, storytelling, cooking, art and crafts were going to be his and the kids life</p>	

	<p>saver. The days needed structure a bit like school but not pressured. He just couldn't take the risk of going to the park, at least not yet. He decided that he needed to be more creative, because the consequences of Covid 19 were dire not only for the children but for himself also. He reasoned that even if he were to fall ill the children would be alone; the consequences were incalculable and potentially devastating for his family. Satisfied he was keeping his family safe he felt stronger in his resolve to follow his action plan and to try and entertain the kids at home. With trepidation he went back inside to start another day with his young family.</p>	
<p>J25 (UK)</p>	<p>Jack knows that the park is large and has been relatively empty for the times that he's been there for walks previously. He judges that the risk of contagion is low as long as it does not become busy. So he collects a bundle of play and sports toys and tells the kids that they are going to play in the park but they must stay away from anyone else. As they walk to the park the kids are really happy and excited that they will be able to kick a football around and play outside for longer. They stay in the park for most of the afternoon until the kids get tired and Jack decides to take them home. As they are exit the park boundaries someone in a house opposite shouts out the window 'I've been watching you. You've broken the rules and if you come back again I'm going to phone the police'. Jack ignores the comment but one of his kids asks whether they will go to prison for going out. Jack says no but they do need to be careful and it's best if they don't come back to the park for the next few days. His kids become more anxious and worried that they will get into trouble for breaking the rules. Jack feels guilty for going out to the park for so long even though they had a good time and his kids got to run around. He wonders whether he made the right decision and decides he will stay in with his kids for the next few days.</p>	
<p>J36 (UK)</p>	<p>Jack and her three kids live in a small 3-bedroom flat with a balcony but no garden and the lack of space is sending them all a bit loopy. She knows the park is likely to be busy and might be patrolled by the police who are trying to move people on if they're sitting in groups. However, the park is large and offers an</p>	

	<p>opportunity for her and the kids to mess about a bit, kick a ball around and let off some steam. She decides she will take the kids but lets them know that they won't be able to play on the swings or slide and that they need to keep their distance from people, even if they see any of their friends. Her children are aged between 6 and 10 so they understand the restrictions around Covid-19. She also reasons that walking 20 minutes to and from the park will help to tire the kids out, and help them feel that they're going out somewhere special rather than taking the usual walk around the block. From her Whatsapp conversations with other mums, Jack knows that some people disapprove of going to the park for exercise, but she's getting a bit fed up of hearing people with large gardens criticise others in this way. Their trip to the park went well - the kids enjoyed playing football and running around and even played a quick game of hide and seek in the woodlands next to the park, which was quiet. Jack also felt that she got a bit of much-needed breathing space as she stood and watched the kids running around together, and she decided to make an outing to the park at least once a week as long as the weather was nice enough as they all needed something to look forward to.</p>	
<p>J41 (UK)</p>	<p>As Jack sees his kids getting excited with the lovely weather and their little bodies restless to go out, he felt helpless as a parent. He knew it may not be the right thing but do government think of the dilemma and trouble parents get into when their young kids are trapped inside the house. Jack thought, " its not like my kids are old enough to understand the restrictions or even what was happening outside the world. Their tiny feet are scratching the ground all the time as they are itchy. They ask me everyday if they can go out and plead so much as if I am a monster and made these rules. It's too much of the guilt. I know, I am not a monster but a responsible citizen and got to do what I need to". While Jack was having all those racing thoughts, he also felt good that he was being responsible unlike their neighbours who had snuck in their couple of friends in their garden the other day to have a tea party while 'maintaining social distancing'. Jack felt his anger rising with this memory. He also realised how torn he felt being a parent looking at his</p>	

	<p>helpless kids and to act as a responsible citizen. He felt sad for a moment thinking of his dead wife and only if she was there, things could be better. He shrugged off this thought mindfully as he knew he didn't have the luxury of time and space to even acknowledge how lonely he has been feeling lately and more so since the lockdown. He decided to put all his emotions, conflicts and dilemma aside and decided to entertain kids in their back garden like every day. He knew if they go out now, the kids would want to do that more and also he may end up feeling guilt himself. Besides, is it not safe for the kids to stay indoor which is important than everything else. This was the thought that surmount everything and helped him win the battle this time. He smiled with a relief and got on with next train of thoughts to plan a garden BBQ party with the kids and a game of football.</p>	
<p>J46 (UK)</p>	<p>Jack knows that the kids will benefit from having time playing outside in the sunshine and feels bad for them that have had to be cooped up inside for so long with only a short break for exercise. Jack thinks it will be good for everyone's mental health, having some normality back. But Jack also knows that there's a high risk of children spreading infection and doesn't want to unnecessarily risk the kids picking something up from other kids in the park. Jack decides though that as they do not have direct contact with vulnerable people, they will go to the park for a long day out tomorrow. The next day, Jack and the three children go to the park and spend a couple of there. They enjoy a picnic there too and the kids seem to be getting a long much better. The park is packed full of people and children being children means that social distancing is seldom observed between them whilst playing, but nobody seems to mind this. A couple of weeks after neither Jack or the children have shown any symptoms of COVID-19. This makes Jack feel that the risks have been somewhat blown out of proportion by the government and so Jack starts to relax their attitude towards social distancing; going to the park more often with the children, popping round to see family members and going out for the day with the children to leisure spots.</p>	

## **OVERALL FAMILIARISATION NOTES**