**Chapter 7: Reading Assignment Briefs**

***Summary***

**Reading Summary:**  
Assignment briefs include a scenario, task, command verb, and criteria. Reading carefully helps you understand what to do and how to get the best grade.

**Key Skills:**

* Breaking down briefs
* Matching tasks to criteria
* Planning responses

**Mini Task:**  
Highlight the command verb and criteria in a sample brief.

***Classwork***

**Introduction**

In BTEC, every assignment begins with a **brief**—a document that outlines what you need to do, how to do it, and what success looks like. But here’s the catch: if you do not read the brief carefully, you might misunderstand the task, miss key instructions, or fail to meet the grading criteria.

This chapter is all about learning how to **break down a brief** like a pro. You will learn how to spot the scenario, identify the command verb, and match your response to the assessment criteria. It’s not just about reading—it’s about reading with purpose.

**What Is an Assignment Brief?**

An assignment brief is your **roadmap**. It tells you:

* What role you are playing (scenario)
* What you need to produce (task)
* How to respond (command verb)
* What the teacher is looking for (criteria)

Think of it like a recipe. If you skip the ingredients or misread the instructions, the final dish won’t turn out right—even if you worked hard.

**OPEN THIS BELOW:**

[Assignment Brief - Unit Zero - Original Sample.docx](https://o365zadkine-my.sharepoint.com/:w:/g/personal/0112278_zadkine_nl/EYTmjnF7N1RGhL3HJD90WwkB8_uU-D_r8zUsnY6UvOIAug?e=evpRfO)

**Key Parts of a Brief**

**1. Scenario**

This sets the scene. It’s often written like a real-world situation.

**Example:**  
“You work for a Dutch snack company launching a new product aimed at young consumers.”

**Why it matters:**  
It helps you understand the context and audience. Your writing should reflect this role.

**2. Task**

This tells you what to do. It might be one sentence or several steps.

**Example:**  
“Describe the target audience and explain how your product meets their needs.”

**Why it matters:**  
This is the core of your assignment. If you miss a step, you miss marks.

**3. Command Verb**

This tells you how to respond—whether to describe, explain, analyse, evaluate, or justify.

**Example:**  
“Compare two promotional strategies.”

**Why it matters:**  
The verb shapes your writing. Misunderstanding it means your answer won’t match the criteria.

**4. Criteria**

This shows what you need to do to achieve Pass, Merit, or Distinction.

**Example:**

* Pass: Describe the product features
* Merit: Explain how features meet customer needs
* Distinction: Evaluate the effectiveness of the product

**Why it matters:**  
This is how your work is graded. Matching the right level means higher marks.

**How to Break Down a Brief**

Here’s a step-by-step method:

1. **Highlight the scenario** – Who are you? What is the context?
2. **Underline the task** – What are you being asked to do?
3. **Circle the command verb** – How should you respond?
4. **Check the criteria** – What does success look like?
5. **Plan your structure** – Match each part of your writing to the brief

**Real-Life Example**

**Brief:**  
“You work for a Dutch chocolate company. Your task is to explain how your product appeals to ethical consumers and justify your choice of packaging.”

**Breakdown:**

* Scenario: You work for a chocolate company
* Task: Explain appeal + justify packaging
* Command verbs: *Explain*, *Justify*
* Criteria: You will need reasons, evidence, and a clear recommendation

**Strong Response:**  
“The product appeals to ethical consumers because it uses fair-trade cocoa and recyclable packaging. I chose a minimalist design with clear ethical messaging to reinforce the brand’s values. This approach is supported by consumer research showing that 68% of buyers prefer sustainable packaging (Smith, 2023).”

**Common Mistakes to Avoid**

| **Mistake** | **Why It’s a Problem** |
| --- | --- |
| Skipping the scenario | Your writing lacks context ❌ |
| Ignoring the command verb | You give the wrong type of answer ❌ |
| Missing part of the task | You lose marks for incomplete work ❌ |
| Not checking the criteria | You aim too low or miss the grade ❌ |

**Reflection Questions**

* Do you usually read the full brief before starting?
* Have you ever misunderstood a task because of the command verb?
* What is one strategy you will use to break down briefs more effectively?
* How confident are you in matching your work to the grading criteria?

***Homework & Reading Tasks***

**Homework Task - (Peer Evaluation for Homework):**  
Choose a sample BTEC-style brief (or use the one below) and complete the following:

**Brief:**  
“You work for a Dutch drinks company. Your task is to describe the target audience and explain how your product meets their needs.”

1. Highlight the **scenario**, **task**, and **command verbs**.
2. Write a short **plan** for your response—what will you include in each paragraph?
3. Match your plan to the **Pass and Merit criteria**.

You will do a peer evaluation for this task. You will show your finished work to a classmate of yours and get their feedback, and your classmate will take a look at your work and give you feedback. The teacher will give general and overall feedback to the whole class. **You are always welcome to show your work to the teacher in class and get on-the-spot feedback!**