

Opinion writing texts (can be printed for students, though this is not necessary):

## ***Blow a billion quid — only fatties and idlers need apply***

Jeremy Clarkson

After the riots of 2011, which were so massive and so terrifying that I can't remember where they were or what they were about, or how much damage was done, the government decided that everyone would go back to an Enid Blyton-style state of contentedness if the nation's poor people were given £448m.

On paper this looks a promising plan because if someone who is fat and unwashed is suddenly given a large lump of money it's likely he or she will immediately send their child to school instead of letting them do burgling and drugs.

And a child who's read Milton and Chaucer is statistically less likely to throw a brick through a shop window than a child who hasn't. There's no actual proof of this, obviously, but we know it to be so.

The government decided that this responsibility should be handed over to local authorities, which, again, sounds good on paper. You ask a government minister where all the poor people live in Bolton and he won't have a clue. But people on the borough council will.

After a little while the government started to ask if the councils were happy to have been sent a large amount of money. And it turned out, amazingly, that they were. Thrilled, in fact. Overjoyed.

They sent reports to London saying the scheme had been a huge success. They said that 90% had been cured of their sloth and their violent tendencies and had turned over a new leaf.

And what's more, they argued that, having invested £448m in the scheme, the government had saved £1.2bn, thanks to a reduction in the cost of policing and providing truant officers and benefits and so on.

However, and this will come as a surprise to no one at all, it seems councils may have exaggerated the benefits of having a money distribution van. Because a report released last week found that the scheme had no impact. The people who wrote it actually used those words. It had "no impact". As in: none. Diddly-squat. Zilch.

Give 400,000 jobless fatties nearly a billion quid and by next week all of it will be in the hands of Allied Breweries, Ladbrokes and Pablo Escobar. You can't change that.

Trying to do something about this is as impossible as deciding that life would be fairer if everyone were good-looking. Yes. But some of us aren't. And there's nothing that can be done to change that.

So, Mrs May. Here's a tip. The next time there are riots, don't spray anyone with money. Spray them instead with a water cannon.

[Read the full article](#)

433 words

### *Caitlin Moran: the refugee crisis*

It's time to forget emotion and be pragmatic

Once you finally stop being emotional about it – stop crying over drowned children, stop imagining that these people's lives are yours – you start to become pragmatic about the refugee crisis. You start seeing it like a politician; like a government. There are currently 65 million displaced people across the world. A population the size of Britain walking across deserts, cramming into boats, living under tarpaulins in camps as winter closes in.

No wonder the two recent UN refugee summits found it so difficult to offer solutions. More aid was promised, the refugee quotas were raised – but an additional \$4.5 billion and 110,000 refugee places in the US do not address the 65 million. The quiet presumption is – as voiced by the UK – that if we take in refugees, we encourage more to come and take their places in the camps, in the hope they will be let in next. Cut off one head, and another grows in its place. The best way to tackle a problem like this, then, is to offer some aid, but to generally stifle migration with red tape, and build walls, so that gradually people will just ... give up. The world will eventually reabsorb these problems, long before they come to our shores. That is, in the end, the compassionate and cost-effective thing to do. That is the ultimate solution to the refugee crisis.

But, of course, the world isn't some problem-absorbing sponge – these people do not melt away.

This month, the French authorities tear down the camp at Calais – without any plans for where the 1,000 unaccompanied child refugees will go. Already, 127 have disappeared – almost certainly onto the streets, where they will be easy pickings for the unscrupulous. By dragging our feet on our promise to take in more children, their disappearance has indeed solved the problem – for now. But while the US spends \$11 million a day fighting an air war against Isis, for the wont of a much smaller sum in aid, we gift criminals and terrorists a limitless supply of desperate men, women and children, whose exploitation funds attacks on us all.

So this is why, when it comes to MP Stella Creasy's amendment for Britain finally to make good its offer to home the unaccompanied child refugees in Calais, I can support it wholly unemotionally, as politicians and governments should. I agree that, in the end, it is useless to be emotional about refugees. Let's talk about how human beings do have a worth – and whenever we ignore this, others take terrifying advantage of our blindness. Yes. For the sake of us all, let us be pragmatic.

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438 words