Literacy Lowdown
To advance your wider reading

A Level students should:
• undertake wider reading.
• use factual texts and discursive / creative material.

Summary
Ranulph Fiennes is a venerated British explorer and this book chronicles some of his greatest expeditions. In Dhofar, he learnt the secret of dealing with fear: to ‘keep a ruthlessly tight clamp on your imagination’ whilst survival lessons were endured on expeditions in Norway and the Empty Quarter. In pursuit of being an explorer ‘who discovered and mapped new territory or travelled where no man had been before’ an audacious ‘mad but marvellous’ Transglobe Expedition to circumnavigate the world is a highlight.

Specification Links
Seen from outer space ‘it radiates like a great white lantern across the bottom of the world’ according to astronauts. AQA 3.2.1.5.1 An outline of the contemporary geography, including climate, of Antarctica. In Germany you were a tiny cog in the vast NATO wheel, but down in Dhofar you can personally make a difference to history. The Soviets desperately need to control the Omani coast and thus block 80% of the free world’s oil. Now they’ve taken Aden, Dhofar will be next. Edexcel 7.2 Patterns of power change over time and OCR 1.1.3 Option C – Dry Landscapes. By the 1990s the Poles and Mount Everest had become tourist destinations, but back in 1982 only a few individuals had attempted to reach the North Pole. Eduqas 3.2.3 Biodiversity under threat

Key Quotes
Many of the world’s greatest mountaineers have died on their way back down from hazardous ascents. Exhausted, they had dropped their guard. In Dhofar I learned never to relax within a war zone. Getting Started p18

Why do you risk your life on expeditions?’ I am constantly asked. The popular, romantic answer is a mixture of ‘because it’s there’ or ‘we do it for the country…British explorers have always led the way’, or at least: ‘I love remote places where no man has trod before’. To respond by admitting I need to make a living and that expedition-leading is my livelihood is not always appreciated. Getting Started p30

Ginnie spent two months in the archives and map room of the Royal Geographical Society. She found a route [up the Yukon river], by way of nine different rivers, which might take us on an unprecedented 3,000-mile journey. The Learning Process p46

The thing is so difficult it is not worth attempting. The thing is so difficult I cannot help attempting it. André Make or Break p62

I think that was the single most satisfactory moment of my life. For three hours we heaved, tugged, paddled and often lost sight of the ship, but soon after midnight we climbed on board. The [Transglobe] circle was complete. Dictator or Democrat p121