A Level students should:

- undertake wider reading.
- use factual texts and discursive/creative material.

Summary
Simon travels through Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan for his first educational documentary called Meet the Stans. His journey from childhood to adult exploration is fraught with difficulty which he overcomes by putting ‘one foot in front of the other’ and taking life one step at a time. Simon takes you from his work at The Sunday Times to his ominous publication called The New Jackals (Al Qaeda) and then through central Asia.

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Specification Links
Environmental catastrophe Kazakhstan p157-160 AQA 3.1.6.2 Factors influencing the changing of ecosystems, including climate change and human exploitation of the global environment. Edexcel 5.7 There are physical and human causes of water insecurity. Corruption Uzbekistan p193-196 Pamir mountains Kyrgyzstan p213 AQA unequal flows of people, money, ideas and technology. Edexcel 3.3 There are physical, political, economic and environmental reasons why some locations remain largely 'switched off'. Somaliland and Mr Big Beard p235-250 OCR 2.1 Places are multi-faceted, shaped by shifting flows and connections. Eduqas 2.2.2 Drivers of migration including the development of diaspora communities.

Key Quotes
A French attack helicopter swooped low overhead…pricey supermarkets were stuffed with French wine and foie gras…Libreville was one of the most expensive cities to live anywhere in Africa. Gabon p7

From the start we thought that by blending issues into the adventure, mixing light and shade, we might encourage people to watch the shows p154

Parched, contaminated sand blew over villages and sickened unemployed fishermen [in the dried Aral Sea]. Kazakhstan p158

‘Who comes here now?’ I asked…‘Diplomats, VIPs and the beezneez [criminal] elite’ he replied. Kyrgyzstan p178

Just a generation before, tribes like the Aché weren’t considered to be human by the Paraguayans…‘big game’ hunters could fly in to track people in the jungle and shoot them. Paraguay p189

The [Tajik] border region was the real badlands. Militants, drug smugglers and the Taliban were active in the area. Tajikistan p214