MODEL ANSWER

The writers, Elton and Natkin, do indeed appear to have very different views on vegetarianism: Elton spends most of the extract mocking vegetarians and vegetarianism in general, whereas Natkin, for the most part, makes serious personal comments on his reasons for being a vegetarian.

Elton ridicules the vegetarian diet as unappealing: “having to eat rabbit food or multi-grain when you fancied a hot dog.” The demeaning, unappetising metaphor “rabbit food” shows that his character thinks that most vegetarian food is only fit for herbivorous animals, not humans. Natkin, on the other hand, writes that “It takes vastly more grain (to produce) meat than if you eat the grain directly.” He is advocating the benefits to the environment of humans eating the grain that Elton describes as “rabbit food” which is a far more serious and intellectual argument.

Elton again pokes fun at vegetarians when he states: “Hitler, after all, was a veggie – but he didn’t mind cooking Jews.” This is absolutely abhorrent, emotive diction, which many people may find offensive but Elton, himself Jewish, might defend it as using black humour to make an engagingly absurd example of vegetarians not necessarily being good people. Natkin also uses this style of humour when he writes that when he sees an animal he does not think: “I’d like to cut your head off, skin you and eat your muscles.” This creates repulsive, grotesque images which are designed to show the reader the true horror of what eating meat really involves.

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