

Stokesley School: sample paper G

Pearson Edexcel Level 1/Level 2 GCSE (9–1)

English Language

Paper 1: Fiction and Imaginative Writing

Section A: Reading Text Insert

Specimen Papers for first teaching
September 2015

Time: 1 hour 45 minutes

Paper Reference

1EN0/01

Do not return the insert with the question paper.

Advice

- Read the text before answering the questions in Section A of the question paper.

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PEARSON

Read the text below and answer Questions 1–4 on the question paper.

In this extract, Alton Locke, a young boy, starts work as a tailor-boy in the attic of a tailor's shop. His employer, Mr Jones, takes him into the main room and hands him over to one of the other men to train Alton up.

I stumbled after Mr. Jones up a dark, narrow, iron staircase till we emerged through a trap-door into a garret at the top of the house. I recoiled with disgust at the scene before me; and here I was to work--perhaps through life! A low lean-to room, stifling me with the combined odours of human breath and perspiration, stale beer, the sweet sickly smell of gin, and the sour and hardly less disgusting one of new cloth. On the floor, thick with dust and dirt, scraps of stuff and ends of thread, sat some dozen haggard, untidy, shoeless men, with a mingled look of care and recklessness that made me shudder. The windows were tight closed to keep out the cold winter air; and the condensed breath ran in streams down the panes, chequering the dreary outlook of chimney-tops and smoke. The conductor handed me over to one of the men.

"Here, Crossthwaite, take this **younker** and make a tailor of him. Keep him next you, and jab him up with your needle if he **shirks**."

He disappeared down the trap-door, and mechanically, as if in a dream, I sat down by the man and listened to his instructions, kindly enough bestowed. But I did not remain in peace two minutes. A burst of chatter rose as the foreman vanished, and a tall, bloated, sharp-nosed young man next me bawled in my ear,--

"I say, young'un, do you know why we're nearer heaven here than our neighbours?"

"I shouldn't have thought so," answered I with a naiveté which raised a laugh, and dashed the tall man for a moment.

"Yer don't? Then I'll tell yer. Because we're at the top of the house in the first place, and next place yer'll die here six months sooner than if yer worked in the room below. Ain't that logic and science, **Orator**?" appealing to Crossthwaite.

"Why?" I asked.

"Because you get all the other floors' stink up here as well as your own. Concentrated essence of man's flesh is what you're breathing. Cellar workroom we calls Rheumatic Ward, because of the damp. Ground-floor's Fever Ward--them as don't get typhus gets dysentery, and them as don't get dysentery gets typhus--your nose'd tell yer why if you opened the back window. First floor's **Ashmy** Ward--don't you hear 'um now through the cracks in the boards, puffing away like a nest of young locomotives? And this here most **august** and upper-crust loft is the Conscrumptive Hospital. First you begins to cough, then you proceeds to **expectorate**. Then your cheeks they grows red, and your nose it grows thin, and your bones they stick out, till they comes through your skin. And then, when you've sufficiently covered the poor dear aristocracy," Here he paused and then said in a sing-song voice, "Die, die, die, away you fly. Your body's in the ground and your soul is in the sky."

And then the **ribald** lay down on his back, stretched himself out, and pretended to die in a fit of coughing, which though pretend at first swiftly became more real than my poor assaulted ears could stand, and I, shocked and bewildered, let my tears fall fast upon my knees.

Younker – slang for youngster

Shirks – tries to get away without working hard

Orator – speaker

Ashmy – slang for Asthma

August – inspiring admiration/full of dignity

Expectorate – coughing up phlegm/mucus

Ribald – a vulgar, rude, loud person