



# GCSE Practice Paper

## ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Paper 2: Writers' viewpoints and perspectives

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### Insert

Source A: 21st Century non-fiction

*Air Pollution in London*

A newspaper article about pollution levels in London.

Source B: 19th Century non-fiction

*A Life in Pea Soup*

An extract from the autobiography of Michael Hall, written in 1872.

Please turn the page over to see the sources

## Source A

This is a newspaper article about pollution levels in London.

# AIR POLLUTION

- 1 Air pollution responsible for increased hospital admissions, new report suggests.

A new report says failures to reduce pollution levels in London and other large cities are leading to an increase in admissions to hospitals, largely for respiratory illnesses.

- 6 A leading scientist and advisor to the government, Professor Anthony Freidland, has co-authored a new paper, published this week in the British Medical Journal, which concludes air pollution is now a major contributing factor in hospital admissions this year.

- 10 Parts of inner cities, most notably London, have very high levels of nitrogen dioxide and particulate matter (PM) pollution, far in excess of World Health Organization guidelines. The report identifies the principal cause as traffic emissions. Houses, public buildings (such as libraries and schools) and parks are often found close to busy stretches of roads.

- 15 Marchmont Primary School in North West London sits a mere few metres away from the North Circular, one of London's busiest and most polluted roads. Nitrogen dioxide levels within the school grounds often reach  
18 illegal levels both by EU and national measures. The whole school seems, at times, to be enveloped in a sickly embrace of dust particles and sinister  
20 gases. Teachers remark that they often feel the need to keep the windows closed, even on hot summer days, in order to keep the smell of traffic fumes out. One in eleven pupils at this school suffer from asthma or have experienced respiratory problems.

- 25 Julie is a mother of two at the school. She says has noticed a change in her children's health since they started at the school three years ago:

- 'We have always lived in London, so we are no strangers to pollution. But we live on quite a leafy road in a high rise. We are on the 23rd floor, and the air is fresh for us when we open the windows. But, ever since starting at Marchmont, my daughter complains sometimes of feeling tight-chested.  
30 We've taken her to the doctor, but they don't really know what is causing it. I'm pretty sure, though - it's got to be the fumes she breathes in every day! It's such a shame as the school is great, the teachers are supportive and dedicated, and she's got really good friends there. I just wish there



34 was a way of lifting up the school and transporting it far away from the  
35 road.”

Three pupils at Marchmont have been admitted to paediatric wards, and one to an intensive care unit, with acute respiratory diseases in the last year. Whilst it is difficult to trace the cause of these admissions to pollution, the coincidence seems hard to ignore.

40 Dr Patrick Hart, a leading consultant in respiratory medicine, has noted a rise in his own wards of adults with no prior or underlying illnesses, being admitted for respiratory failure, asthma and lung infections. “We perhaps will never know what brings these patients (who are otherwise fit and healthy) into our wards,” Hart says. “Many of the cases are idiopathic,  
45 but my strong instinct is that levels of toxic gases in the air are strongly contributory. Most of our patients live in the inner city area, close to busy roads.”

The new report corroborates Dr Hart’s anecdotal experience and is likely to increase pressure on the government to tackle illegal levels of air pollution  
50 across the country.

However, it is not all doom, dust and gaseous gloom. Experts report a “dramatic” decline in London’s pollution levels since Sadiq Khan became mayor. That does not mean that the problem is solved, as the new report exposes. Yet, whilst many parts of our cities are still plagued by illegal  
55 levels of nitrogen dioxide, there is a consensus in government that we must clean up our air.

Further falls in pollution have been seen after the Covid-19 lockdown began earlier this year, showing levels of nitrogen dioxide by roads in central London fell by 44% between early 2017 and early 2020.

60 Pollution cuts in London have been achieved by charges that have deterred dirty vehicles from entering the city centre and have driven up the use of cleaner vehicles. Putting low-emission buses on the dirtiest routes, ending the licensing of new diesel taxis and extending the amount of protected space for cycling have also contributed.

**Turn over for Source B**

## Source B

This is an extract from the autobiography of Michael Hall, written in 1872. In 1849, his son moved to London.

- 1 I remember that we started our journey well before dawn, loading the carriage with all that Peter would require. He was to begin an apprenticeship in London, to learn a trade and better his prospects. I had begged him to stay in the country, to stay away from that dark city, but he
- 5 was steadfast in his determination. It was a crisp November morning, the air biting our faces as we passed along frozen hedgerows. The sounds of the horses steaming along the lanes pierced the silence and, as darkness turned to light, cottages began to puff a steady, lazy stream of smoke from their chimneys.
- 10 The stream turned into a river and, as we approached London, the smoke became a vast ocean of thick black smog. It hung over the streets, suffocating the buildings and their inhabitants. There was a great din of voices, of shouting, of clanging and rattling, like a theatre with a stage the size of a city. Suddenly, I found myself being hurled about the carriage, my
- 15 grip on the reins lost. The horses were terrified by what was passing at their side — a great locomotive, chugging along the railroad and heading towards the long spires of factory chimneys in the distance. I regained control and insulted the machine under my breath. Peter was amused. ‘That’s progress, father.’
- 20 As we became enveloped into the city, the light took on a strange hue: yellow in colour, but sickly in character. The smell, too, became inescapable. All species of waste littered the sides of the streets and festered with an indescribable stench. I had to reach for the collar of my coat, wrapping it around my face to escape its embrace. We arrived in a
- 25 dingy street and ascended the stairs of one of the houses, guided by the owner. He was a small man with a hoarse voice. Grinning, he turned to us and said, ‘a real pea souper today, eh?’ He left us at the door of Peter’s
- 28 room and, finally, once settled into the cramped space, it was my turn to leave.
- 30 I did not return for 10 months. My life had continued as normal in the country, disrupted only by the absence of my eldest son. It was news of his illness that forced me to return. The letter from the physician suggested my company was expected urgently and, as such, I decided to use the new railroad that passed close by the village. I reached London quickly, where
- 35 the smog seemed more dense than ever. The bright sun hardly penetrated into the depths of the streets, masked by the thick smoke pumping from below. I fumbled through this dense brick undergrowth back to the street I had left Peter in so many months before.

40 I found him in his bed, completely unrecognisable. His face was sunken,  
his eyes tired. Every so often, he broke into a hacking cough, barely  
able to string a few words together. The optimism that usually filled his  
face had turned into a gloomy resignation. I found myself resigned too,  
completely helpless to the whims of fate. The room was filthy, the walls  
45 blackened and the air heavy. His clothes were darkened by soot, which  
dusted every surface and settled in every corner. The physician met me  
there. He did not know exactly what was wrong, but speculated it was  
consumption. My resignation grew deeper and more troubled.

50 Although he was much too weak to travel, I was determined that he would  
return home. With great difficulty, the physician and I carried him down  
to the street and bundled him into a cab. We rode through the streets,  
through the filth and the nauseating vapours to the station. The train  
ensured our speedy exit from that city of illness back into the country.  
There, Peter would recover and escape the blanket of smog that infected  
the capital.

### Glossary

\* pea souper – a common term for a thick yellow fog caused by air pollution.

\* consumption – an old fashioned name for tuberculosis, an infection of the lungs.

### END OF SOURCES



Name:

Date:

Score:

# GCSE English Language

## Paper 2: Writers' viewpoints and perspectives

### Section A: Reading

Answer all questions in this section.

1

Read again the first part of **Source A** from lines 1 to 18.

Choose **four** statements below which are true.

- Shade the circles in the boxes of the ones that you think are true.
- Choose a maximum of four statements.
- If you make an error, cross out the whole box.
- If you change your mind and require a statement that has been crossed out, then draw a circle around the box.

[4 marks]

A A new report links pollution to hospital admissions.

☐

B Schools are never built near busy, polluted roads.

☐

C Nitrogen dioxide is a gas that contributes to hospital admissions.

☐

D Inner cities have the highest levels of pollution.

☐

E Pollution in the UK never reaches illegal levels.

☐

F The report was published in a medical journal.

☐

G The writer of the report remains anonymous.

☐

H The air in parks is always fresh and clean.

☐

You need to refer to **Source A** and **B** for this question.

Use details from both sources to write a summary of what you understand about the similar experiences of people living in the city.

[illegible]



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Turn over for the next question



[illegible]

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Turn over for the next question

For this question, you need to refer to the **whole of Source A**, together with the **whole of Source B**.

In your answer, you could:

- compare their similar feelings and perspectives on pollution and disease in the city
- compare the methods the writers use to convey their perspectives
- support your response with references to both texts

[illegible]



20 horizontal lines for writing.

This image shows a single page of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page, typical of notebook paper or a document template. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the page.

**Remember to plan your answer.**

5

**[40 marks]**

[illegible]



[illegible]



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**END OF QUESTIONS**