



# **GCSE Practice Paper**

## **English Language**

### **Paper 2: Non-fiction and Transactional Writing**

#### **Source A: Reading Text Insert**

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Read the text below and answer Questions 1–3 on the question paper.

### TEXT 1

*Extract from 'Down and Out in Paris and London' by George Orwell.*

*This extract is about being poor in London. It is taken from an autobiography by George Orwell.*

- 1 At about eleven I began looking for a bed. I had read about doss-houses<sup>1</sup> (they are never called doss-houses, by the way), and I supposed that one could get a bed for fourpence or thereabouts. Seeing a man, a navvy or something of the kind, standing on the kerb in the Waterloo Road, I
- 5 stopped and questioned him. I said that I was stony broke and wanted the cheapest bed I could get.

'Oh,' said he, 'you go to that 'ouse across the street there, with the sign "Good Beds for Single Men". That's a good kip [sleeping place], that is. I bin there myself on and off. You'll find it cheap and clean.'

- 10 It was a tall, battered-looking house, with dim lights in all the windows, some of which were patched with brown paper. I entered a stone passage-way, and a little etiolated boy with sleepy eyes appeared from a door leading to a cellar. Murmurous sounds came from the cellar, and a wave of hot air and cheese. The boy yawned and held out his hand.

- 15 'Want a kip? That'll be a 'og, guv'nor.'

- I paid the shilling, and the boy led me up a rickety unlighted staircase to a bedroom. It had a sweetish reek of paregoric<sup>2</sup> and foul linen; the windows seemed to be tight shut, and the air was almost suffocating at first. There was a candle burning, and I saw that the room measured fifteen feet
- 20 square by eight high, and had eight beds in it. Already six lodgers were in bed, queer lumpy shapes with all their own clothes, even their boots, piled on top of them. Someone was coughing in a loathsome manner in one corner.

- 24 When I got into the bed I found that it was as hard as a board, and as
- 25 for the pillow, it was a mere hard cylinder like a block of wood. It was rather worse than sleeping on a table, because the bed was not six feet long, and very narrow, and the mattress was convex, so that one had to hold on to avoid falling out. The sheets stank so horribly of sweat that I could not bear them near my nose. Also, the bedclothes only consisted
- 30 of the sheets and a cotton counterpane, so that though stuffy it was none
- 31 too warm. Several noises recurred throughout the night. About once in an hour the man on my left--a sailor, I think--woke up, swore vilely, and

33 lighted a cigarette. Another man, victim of a bladder disease, got up and  
noisily used his chamber-pot half a dozen times during the night. The man  
35 in the corner had a coughing fit once in every twenty minutes, so regularly  
that one came to listen for it as one listens for the next yap when a dog is  
baying the moon. It was an unspeakably repellent sound; a foul bubbling  
and retching, as though the man's bowels were being churned up within  
him. Once when he struck a match I saw that he was a very old man, with  
40 a grey, sunken face like that of a corpse, and he was wearing his trousers  
wrapped round his head as a nightcap, a thing which for some reason  
disgusted me very much. Every time he coughed or the other man swore, a  
43 sleepy voice from one of the other beds cried out:

'Shut up! Oh, for Christ's-- sake shut up!'

45 I had about an hour's sleep in all.

<sup>1</sup>a cheap shelter or hostel for homeless people

<sup>2</sup>medicine that was used to treat coughs in the past



Read the text below and answer Questions 4–7 on the Question paper.

## TEXT 2

*This is a newspaper article about the rise in homelessness in London during the COVID-19 pandemic.*

- 1      Trafalgar Square at night is silent. It is empty of all its usual visitors: excited tourists, cafe workers on their breaks and the usual hubbub of commuters. Instead, clusters of homeless people seek shelter under the great porticos of the National Gallery or St Martin-in-the Fields. They are  
5      unspeaking. Too tired and cold to spark up conversation.

- The number of rough sleepers has increased dramatically over the past year, largely due to Covid. The crisis has meant many people have unexpectedly lost their jobs, and find themselves unable to pay rent. Landlords have thrown them out of their homes with little warning and  
10      no concern for their plight. Services that used to help and support people with mental health issues, or those recovering from drug addictions, have seen their funding cut. All in all, it has been a perfect storm for charities working with homeless people.

- The government says it has housed 90% of those who were sleeping rough across the country, paying for hotel rooms or temporary accommodation in an attempt to stop the spread of Covid-19. However, in London, cardboard shacks are popping up in worrying numbers and conditions on the streets are getting much harsher. The day centres, where the homeless used to receive a hot meal and a shower, are now  
20      closed. They have no place to wash their clothes or to go to the bathroom. As a consequence, conditions for those living on the streets are increasingly unhygienic. Charity workers report seeing cases of diseases, such as TB, once thought all but eradicated in this country.

- Even if a hotel room or a place in a shelter can be found, this is not the warm, safe haven you might imagine. Steve, a young man who worked in a nearby restaurant, lost his job suddenly during the crisis, like many others in the catering and hospitality industry. He was housed in a shelter, but left almost immediately, preferring to risk sleeping on the cold, exposed streets of London:

- 30      “The shelter was scary. During the night, you could hear people muttering to themselves. Weird sounds. Frightening, you know? These people are clearly addicted to some kind of drug. The rooms were cold. The mattress was filthy with these black stains on it. It looked like dried blood.

35 At about 1am, I heard a lot of banging and shouting on my door. A man  
was screaming through the door, saying he was going to kill someone if  
he didn't get his fix; I thought, that's it! I'm out of here. I'd rather take my  
chances on the streets. I'd actually get more sleep out there than here."

40 Many have criticised the government for failing to anticipate the crisis  
in homeless. Freida Mason, the founder of Care and Compassion, said  
more needed to be done to support those who have found themselves  
suddenly without a job. "There are degrees of homelessness: those who  
have severe mental health issues, those who are addicted to drink or  
drugs, and those with no family or social support. These people, of course,  
must be supported by the relevant associations. However, increasingly,  
45 we are seeing people who have families, education, and who are in good  
health, yet they are sleeping rough. They have lost their jobs with little to  
no notice, and have been forced out of their rented accommodation before  
they have had a chance to sort themselves out. It is a disaster that reflects  
the failure of government schemes. It needs to be sorted out, and it needs  
50 to be sorted out now."

There can be no doubt that Covid has had a detrimental impact on the  
already challenging homelessness situation in London. Now, as we  
navigate a new normal, we must keep these issues at the forefront of our  
minds to ensure this increasing population gets the help they desperately  
55 need.



Name:

Date:

Score:

# GCSE English Language

## Paper 2: Non-fiction and Transactional Writing Question Paper

### Section A: Reading

Read Text 1. Then answer Questions 1-3.

1

In lines 24 to 31, identify two details about the sleeping conditions.

1

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2

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[2 marks]

2

From lines 33 to 43, give two reasons why Orwell struggled to sleep.

1

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2

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[2 marks]

Analyse how the writer uses language and structure to interest and engage the reader.

- Language features and techniques
- Structural features and techniques
- The effect on the reader

**[15 marks]**

[illegible]



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Lined writing area consisting of 25 horizontal lines.

Read Text 2. Then answer questions 4-6.

**4** Why is Trafalgar Square silent at night? Give **one** reason.

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[1 mark]

**5** In lines 7-9, identify the phrase that shows people have found themselves suddenly without a home.

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[1 mark]



The writer attempts to evoke our pity for the homeless. Evaluate how successfully this is achieved. Support your views with detailed reference to the text.

[illegible]



Lined writing area with 20 horizontal lines.



Handwriting practice area consisting of 20 horizontal lines.

[illegible]

Compare how the writers of Text 1 and Text 2 present their ideas and perspectives on homelessness.

- The ideas and perspectives of the writers
- How they are presented
- How they are different/similar

**[14 marks]**

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## Section B: Transactional Writing

Answer ONE question.

**EITHER:**

**\*8**

Write a letter to the homeless charity, applying to volunteer for them.

In your letter, you could:

- state why you are interested in the position
- describe the experience and skills that make you a good candidate
- explain the difference you can make to the lives of homeless people

as well as any other ideas you may have.

*\*Your response will be marked for the accurate and appropriate use of vocabulary, spelling, punctuation and grammar*

**[40 marks]**

**OR:**

**\*9**

Write an article for a newspaper, exploring how to support charities.

You could write about:

- the ways to support charities, e.g. fundraising events, voluntary work, donations
- the different types of charities and the impact they have, e.g. food banks, homelessness, research
- what the benefits are and/or what the problems could be

as well as any other ideas you may have.

**[40 marks]**



Lined writing area with 20 horizontal lines.





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