

# AQA GCSE English Language

## SET A

### Paper 1 Explorations in creative reading and writing

**Time allowed: 1 hour 45 minutes**

**For this paper, you will need:**

- The **Source text**, which is provided in a separate insert.

**Instructions to candidates**

- Answer **all** the questions in the spaces provided.
- Write your answers in **black** ink or ball-point pen.
- Write your name and other details in the boxes below.
- Cross out any rough work that you do not want to be marked.
- You need to refer to the insert booklet for this exam.
- You should **not** use a dictionary.

**Information for candidates**

- The marks available are given in brackets next to each question.
- There are 80 marks available for this exam paper.
- Section A** will test your reading skills and **Section B** will test your writing skills. There are 40 marks available for each section.
- You must use good English and clear presentation in your answers.

**Advice for candidates**

- You should spend about **15 minutes** reading through the source and all five questions.
- Make sure you leave enough time to check your answers at the end of the exam.

For Examiner's Use	
Question	Mark
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
<b>Total</b>	

Centre name						Surname					
Centre number						Other names					
Candidate number						Candidate signature					

*Acknowledgements*

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Extract on page 3 from *El Dorado: A Kansas Recessional*, by Willa Cather.

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**Section A: Reading**

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Answer **all** questions in this section.

You are advised to spend about 45 minutes on this section.

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Read again the first part of the source, **lines 1 to 7**.

List **four** things from this part of the text about the river.

**[4 marks]**

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- 2 .....  
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- 3 .....  
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- 4 .....  
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Beyond the river with its belt of amber woodland rose the bluffs, ragged, broken, covered with shaggy red grass and bare of trees, save for the few stunted oaks that grew upon their steep sides. They were pathetic little trees, that sent their roots down through thirty feet of hard clay bluff to the river level. They were as old as the first settler could remember, and yet no one could assert that they had ever grown an inch. They seldom, if ever, bore acorns; it took all the nourishment that soil could give just to exist. There was a sort of mysterious kinship between those trees and the men who lived, or tried to live, there. They were alike in more ways than one.

Across the river stretched the level land like the top of an oven. It was a country flat and featureless, without tones or shadows, without accent or emphasis of any kind to break its vast monotony. It was a scene done entirely in high lights, without relief, without a single commanding eminence to rest the eye upon. The flat plains rolled to the unbroken horizon vacant and void, forever reaching in empty yearning toward something they never attained.

How does the writer use language here to describe the Solomon Valley?

You could include the writer's choice of:

- words and phrases
- language features and techniques
- sentence forms.

**[8 marks]**

[illegible]



You now need to think about the **whole** of the **source**.

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This text is from the opening of a short story.

How has the writer structured the text to gain and hold the reader’s interest?

You could write about:

- what the writer focuses your attention on at the beginning
- how and why the writer changes this focus as the source develops
- any other structural features that interest you.

**[8 marks]**

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Focus this part of your answer on the second part of the source,  
**from line 19 to the end.**

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A student, having read this section of the text, said: “The writer makes the reader feel sympathy for Colonel Bywaters. His life seems to be very hard and lonely.”

To what extent do you agree?

In your response, you could:

- write about your own impressions of Colonel Bywaters
- evaluate how the writer has created these impressions
- support your opinions with references to the text.

**[20 marks]**

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## Section B: Writing

You are advised to spend about 45 minutes on this section.

Write in full sentences.

You are reminded of the need to plan your answer.

You should leave enough time to check your work at the end.

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Your local newspaper is running a creative writing competition.  
The winner will have their work published in the paper.

Your entry will be judged by a local author.

**Either:** Write a description suggested by this picture:



**Or:** Write a short story about a lonely and isolated place.

(24 marks for content and organisation  
16 marks for technical accuracy)

**[40 marks]**

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**END OF QUESTIONS**

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