

Paper 1: Explorations in creative reading and writing

Time allowed: 1 hour 45 minutes

There are 40 marks for Section A and 40 marks for Section B

The source that follows is:

Source A: 20th Century prose-fiction*Love for Lydia* by H. E. Bates

It is an extract from a novel written in 1952, but set in the 1920s.

This extract is from the opening of the novel. The narrator, a young journalist, is describing his first sighting of Lydia Aspen, who arrives in his town with her two aunts, the Aspen sisters.

After the death of their elder brother the two Aspen sisters came back to Evensford at the end of February, driving in the enormous brown coachwork Daimler¹ with the gilt monograms² on the doors, through a sudden fall of snow.

5 Across the valley the floods of January, frozen to wide lakes of ice, were cut into enormous rectangular patterns by black hedgerows that lay like a wreckage of logs washed down on the broken river. A hard dark wind blew straight across the ice from the north-east, beating in at that end of the town where for a few hundred yards the High Street runs straight, past what is now Johnson's car-wrecking yard, under the railway arches, and then between the high causeways that make it like a dry canal. It was so cold that solid ice seemed to be whipped up from the valley on the wind, to explode into whirlwinds of harsh and bitter dust that pranced about in stinging clouds. Ice formed everywhere in dry black pools, polished in sheltered places, ruckled with dark waves at street corners or on sloping gutters where wind had flurried the last falls of rain.

10 Frost had begun in the third week of January, and from that date until the beginning of April it did not leave us for a day. All the time the same dark wind came with it, blowing bitterly and savagely over long flat meadows of frozen floods. There was no snow with it until the afternoon the Aspen sisters came back; and then it began to fall lightly, in sudden flusters, no more than vapour, and then gritty and larger, like grains of rice.

15 It began falling almost exactly at the moment the heavy brown Daimler drove past the old Succoth chapel, with its frozen steps like a waterfall of chipped glass, opposite the branch offices of *The County Examiner*³, where the windows were partly glazed over with a pattern of starry fern. It came suddenly on a darkened whirl of wind that flowered into whiteness. The wind seemed to twist violently in the air and snatch from nowhere the snow that was like white vapour, catching the Daimler broadside⁴ at the same time. Through the windows of *The Examiner*, where I stood nursing the wrist I had sprained while skating, I saw the car shudder and swerve and twist itself into a skid and then out again. From a confusion of leopard rugs on the back seat the younger Miss Aspen, Juliana, seemed to shudder too and was swung forward, snatching at the silken window cord with her right hand. The elder one, Bertie, bounced like a rosy dumpling. They were still both in black. But round the neck of the younger one was pinned a violet woollen scarf, as if she had caught a cold, and it was when she jolted forward, clutching the scarf with one hand and the window cord with the other, that I saw Elliott Aspen's daughter, Lydia, sitting there, between her aunts, for the first time.

25 She had long coils of black hair that fell across her shoulders, so that she seemed to be wearing a hood. I saw only part of her face, jerked forward above her raised coat collar, startled but not frightened by the skid. She did not lift her hands. It was her eyes instead that seemed to stretch out, first to one window and then another, in an effort to get her bearings, as if she did not know exactly where she was. And in that moment, before the car straightened and righted itself and went on, she seemed, I thought, about fifteen.

30 It was my first mistake about her.

¹Daimler – a large, luxurious and very expensive car

²monograms – sets of a person's initials

³The County Examiner – the local newspaper where the narrator works

⁴broadside – on the side (i.e. on the side of the Daimler)

 **Time**

Before you answer any questions, spend about **15 minutes reading** the source and all five questions you have to answer (in Section A and Section B).

After the reading time, spend about **45 minutes on Section A** – including planning and checking time – and about **5 minutes on Question 1**.

Unlocking the question

Underline the key words in the question before you begin writing so that you are sure about the **focus** of the question.

Hint

You don't need to use full sentences to answer Question 1. Just identify the information in the source and list your points.

Revision Guide

Pages 13–14

Watch out!

Stick closely to the focus of the question. Here you are being asked about the sisters' **journey**.

Watch out!

Don't just copy out the section the question is asking about! Keep any quotations as short as possible and make sure you copy them correctly.

SECTION A – Reading

Answer ALL questions in this section.

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

- 1 Read again the first part of the source from **lines 1 to 2**. List **four** things from this part of the source about the Aspen sisters' journey.

(4 marks)

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2 Look in detail at this extract from **lines 7 to 14** of the source:

It was so cold that solid ice seemed to be whipped up from the valley on the wind, to explode into whirlwinds of harsh and bitter dust that pranced about in stinging clouds. Ice formed everywhere in dry black pools, polished in sheltered places, ruckled with dark waves at street corners or on sloping gutters where wind had flurried the last falls of rain. Frost had begun in the third week of January, and from that date until the beginning of April it did not leave us for a day. All the time the same dark wind came with it, blowing bitterly and savagely over long flat meadows of frozen floods. There was no snow with it until the afternoon the Aspen sisters came back; and then it began to fall lightly, in sudden flusters, no more than vapour, and then gritty and larger, like grains of rice.

How does the writer use language here to describe the weather?
You could include the writer's choice of:

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

(8 marks)

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 **Time**

Spend about **10 minutes** on this question.

Unlocking the question

The bullet points remind you that this question is testing your ability to comment on how **language** and **structure** are used for **effect**. You don't have to cover all of the bullet points – focus on the ones that are most relevant to the extract.

Unlocking the question

Underline the key words in the question first so that you understand the **focus**. Here, the focus is the language used to describe the weather, so you should look at *descriptive words, phrases and techniques*.

Watch out!

Don't just identify every interesting language feature – always start by focusing on the question. Read through the extract carefully, underlining words and phrases that relate to the question.

Watch out!

Don't just label sentences as single-clause (simple), multi-clause (compound and complex) or minor. Make sure you comment on **why** they have been used and the **effects** they create.

Hint

As well as looking at **figurative language**, always consider the writer's **vocabulary** choices. Use inference to think of the **connotations** of individual words and phrases – but remember to stay focused on the question!

Revision Guide

Pages 19–21

LEARN IT!

Make sure you are familiar with a wide range of **language techniques**, **figurative language devices** and **word classes**. Here, for example, you could look out for adjectives, personification, metaphors and similes, lists and adverbs.

Revision Guide

Pages 19–23

Watch out!

Don't just list the techniques and devices you find – you must **explain their effect in relation to the question focus**. You can still explain the connotations or effects even if you don't know the name of the technique or device being used.

A large rectangular area with rounded corners, containing 25 horizontal dotted lines for writing.