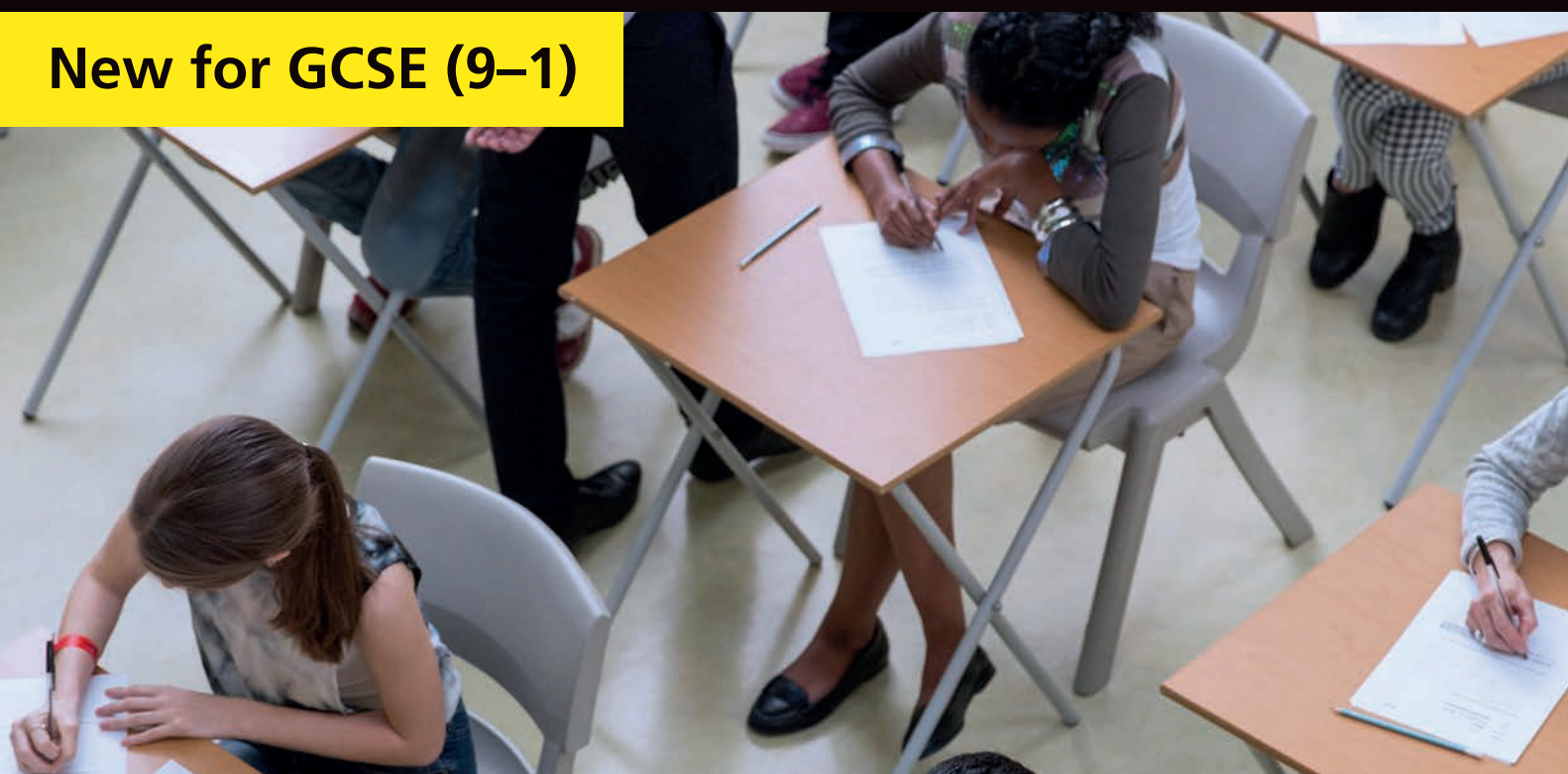


YORK NOTES for GCSE

AQA PRACTICE TESTS

New for GCSE (9–1)



AQA ENGLISH LANGUAGE

PRACTICE TESTS WITH ANSWERS



YORK NOTES



AQA ENGLISH LANGUAGE PRACTICE TESTS WITH ANSWERS

SUSANNAH WHITE

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PART ONE: INTRODUCTION

How to use these papers

This book contains four York Notes example GCSE English Language practice test papers: there are two Paper 1s (fiction) and two Paper 2s (non-fiction). All these York Notes papers have been modelled on the ones that you will sit in your AQA GCSE 9–1 English Language exams.

There are lots of ways these papers can support your study and revision for the AQA GCSE 9–1 English Language exam. There is no 'right' way – choose the one or ones that suits your learning style best.

You could use them:

1 Alongside York Notes *AQA English Language and Literature: Revision and Exam Practice*

Do you have the York Notes *Revision and Exam Practice* guide for AQA GCSE English Language (and Literature)?

The papers in this book will allow you to try out the skills and techniques outlined in Chapters 1 to 6 of the guide. So you could:

- read a section of the guide dealing with one specific question type
- complete this question in one of the practice papers printed here.

2 As a stand-alone revision programme

Have you already mastered all of the skills needed for your exam?

Then you can keep your skills fresh by answering one or two questions from this book each day or week.

You could make a revision diary and allocate particular questions to particular times.

3 As a form of mock exam

Would you like to work under exam conditions?

You could put aside part of a day to work on a full paper in a quiet room. Set a stopwatch so that you can experience what it will be like in your real exam. If some of your friends have copies of this book then several of you could all do this together and discuss your answers afterwards.

4 As a combination of revision and exam practice

Would you like to do some revision and then try a mock exam?

Perhaps you could work through one set of papers slowly – question by question over a number of days – and then save the other set of papers to use as a mock nearer the exam.

How to use the answer sections

This book contains answer sections that will help you to understand what the examiners are looking for, and how your own responses compare against sample answers at a range of levels.

Sample answers show the key points and ideas you could have included.

Answers and model responses

Paper 1: Section A

1 (AO1)

Any four or more answers from the following:

- The street was 'leading west'.
- It was 'a place of quiet houses'.
- The houses were 'standing behind little gardens'.
- The house names were 'printed on the stuccoed gateposts'.
- The house names seemed 'usual'.
- Three of the houses were called 'Laburnum Villa', 'The Cedars' and 'Calmgorn'.
- Calmgorn had a turret 'crowned with a conical roof' which resembled a witch's hat.

2 (AO2)

Possible answers

- The silence of the atmosphere is emphasised by the adjective 'quiet'.
- The writer encourages readers to share the narrator's journey by describing his route in detail using a long sentence to reflect the way that the road 'curved to the right, ending in an open space through which passed a canal beneath a low arched bridge.'
- The adjective 'low' implies a sense of restriction.
- We know it is almost dark because the lamplighter is 'picking out the shape of the canal'. Night is often used as a mysterious setting for sinister events.
- The island in the middle of the lake may be a symbol of isolation.
- This sense of isolation is reinforced when the narrator states, 'I do not suppose I passed a dozen people'. This implies that the streets were almost empty.
- The narrator seems lost as he 'wandered in a circle'. The verb 'wandered' suggests disorientation or a lack of certainty.
- When the narrator states, 'the half light must have deceived me' the verb 'deceived' suggests trickery and the reference to 'half light' reminds us of the gloomy atmosphere.
- 'These silent streets' is an alliterative phrase which once again draws attention to the quietness that surrounds the narrator.
- The noun 'mystery' (the focus of this question) is used directly in the text in the phrase 'lurking mystery'.

Paper 1: Answers and model responses

reinforces the silence again through 'hushed', and the fact that these movements take place 'behind drawn curtains' implies secrecy and mystery.

- The phrase 'whispered voices behind the flimsy walls' uses sibilance to reflect the sound of the whispering itself.
- The adjective 'flimsy' suggests something insubstantial and easily torn, implying vulnerability.
- The verb 'stifled' has connotations of constraint or restriction.
- Since the sound of laughter is 'suddenly stifled' the narrator suggests that joy was inappropriate in this setting.
- The adjective 'sudden' in 'sudden cry of a child' implies something unexpected which might shock the narrator.
- The 'cry of a child' suggests negative emotion such as sorrow or pain.

Sample student responses

Level	Skills descriptors
Higher	Shows detailed and perceptive understanding of language: You select a very well-chosen range of details from the text. You analyse the effects of the writer's choices of language. You make sophisticated use of accurate terminology.
Mid	Shows clear understanding of language: You select a relevant range of details from the text. You clearly explain the effects of the writer's choices of language. You use accurate terminology.

Higher Level

This extract opens with an extended descriptive sentence. This is designed to encourage readers to become imaginatively involved in the narrator's journey along the road that 'curved to the right'. The adjective 'low', describing the 'arched bridge', implies a sense of restriction and limitation which is further reinforced by additional adjectives throughout the text, such as 'small', 'stifled', 'hushed' and 'quiet'. Furthermore, the writer's reference to 'quiet houses' and 'hushed movement' suggests an unnatural or forced silence which enhances the mystery of this setting.

We know that it is nearly night because the lamplighter is 'picking out the shape of the canal'. The verb 'deceived' used in 'the half light must have deceived me' has connotations of trickery or foul

The marking criteria tell you what the examiners are looking for.

PART TWO: YORK NOTES PRACTICE TEST ONE

Mid Level

Includes visual details

Well structured

Early that morning, I ran to my bedroom window to see snow falling. A few flakes landed on the glass and then they slid down and plopped onto the porch roof.

Use of literary device (alliteration of 'p')

Below me, the street looked white. The gateposts wore little bobby hats. A dog trotted up the road behind his mistress and he left a trail of footprints. I loved the snow as a kid, but not now.

To my left, slumped on the window ledge, sat my last teddy bear. Idly, I picked him up. He was a white bear with a red bow around his neck. Snowy, that's what I used to call him. It seemed a suitable name for such a wintry day. I put him down, quickly forgotten, and continued waiting at the window. Splash! Another snowflake landed straight in front of me. As a child I might have made a wish on it, but today I was too busy waiting. [Overall comment: This student could have used a more sophisticated vocabulary]

Lower Level

Needs more variety in sentence forms as we have several sentences starting 'We'

Incorrect grammar. This should be 'We were'

This word needs an apostrophe ('she'd'), otherwise it reads as 'shed' (a garden hut)

Use of alliteration ('n')

Slightly confused image, not developed

Molly was at her window hiding behind the net curtains. We could see her dark hair behind the nets. We was really worried about her as she was in a right tizzy about something. Yesterday her face looked all blotchy like she'd been crying.

We thought Molly didn't want to talk to us, which was odd because the three of us are best mates. Her curtains twitched again. We really didn't know what to do! If Molly was upset we wanted to be there for her, so we hung about whilst her nosy neighbour watched us.

Molly fluttered like a butterfly behind the net curtains. She didn't want to see us and her iPhone was off. After a bit, we walked back down her drive and onto the street. When we reached the end of Molly's road, we turned back once more. Then I saw her flapping about like a ghost behind that white curtain.

The word 'tizzy' is a bit too informal ('state' might be a better word choice)

Attempts to vary vocabulary

Attempts to use simile but this is rather clichéd

Sample responses at different levels show you the difference between Higher, Mid and Lower Level work.

Assessment Objectives

Your work will be examined through the six Assessment Objectives (AOs) listed below. Each question in the practice papers is assessed by one or occasionally two of these.

Section A: Reading – Assessment Objectives

AO1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Identify and interpret explicit and implicit information and ideas. ● Select and synthesise evidence from different texts.
AO2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Explain, comment on and analyse how writers use language and structure to achieve effects and influence readers, using relevant subject terminology to support their views.
AO3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Compare writers' ideas and perspectives, as well as how these are conveyed, across two or more texts.
AO4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Evaluate texts critically and support this with appropriate textual references.

Section B: Writing – Assessment Objectives

AO5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Communicate clearly, effectively and imaginatively, selecting and adapting tone, style and register for different forms, purposes and audiences. ● Organise information and ideas, using structural and grammatical features to support coherence and cohesion of texts.
AO6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Use a range of vocabulary and sentence structures for clarity, purpose and effect, with accurate spelling and punctuation (20% of total marks).



AO coverage across the papers

The grids below show you the Assessment Objectives examined on each practice paper. As you can see, some AOs apply to both papers while others apply to only one paper. As you answer the questions in this book, keep checking these Assessment Objectives until you are sure which ones apply to each question. Then you will know exactly what the examiners are looking for.

Remember to notice the number of marks allowed for each question as this will help you to gauge how much you should write and how much time you should spend on each question.

Paper 1: Explorations in creative reading and writing

Section	Question number	AO	Number of marks
A	1	AO1	4
A	2	AO2	8
A	3	AO2	8
A	4	AO4	20
B	5	AO5, AO6	40

Paper 2: Writers' viewpoints and perspectives

Section	Question number	AO	Number of marks
A	1	AO1	4
A	2	AO1	8
A	3	AO2	12
A	4	AO3	16
B	5	AO5, AO6	40

PART TWO: YORK NOTES PRACTICE TEST ONE

Paper 1: Explorations in creative reading and writing

Time allowed: 1 hour 45 minutes

Materials

For this paper you must have:

- Source A – printed within the question paper.

Instructions

- Answer all questions.
- Answer the questions in the space provided, continuing onto a separate sheet if needed.
- Do all rough work in a notebook or on separate sheets of paper.
- You must refer to the sources provided.
- You should not use a dictionary.

Information

- The marks for questions are shown in brackets.
- The maximum mark for this paper is 80.
- There are 40 marks for Section A and 40 marks for Section B.
- You are reminded of the need for good English and clear presentation in your answers.
- The quality of your reading is assessed in Section A.
- The quality of your writing is assessed in Section B.

Advice

- You are advised to spend about 15 minutes reading through the source and all five questions you have to answer.
- You should make sure you leave sufficient time to check your answers.

Source A

This extract is taken from a Sherlock Holmes crime novel called *The Hound of the Baskervilles* by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. This book was first published in serial form in 1901–2. In this extract Holmes and Watson hear a terrible sound on the moors.

Holmes had sprung to his feet, and I saw his dark, athletic outline at the door of the hut, his shoulders stooping, his head thrust forward, his face peering into the darkness.

‘Hush!’ he whispered. ‘Hush!’

5 The cry had been loud on account of its vehemence, but it had pealed out from somewhere far off on the shadowy plain. Now it burst upon our ears, nearer, louder, more urgent than before.

‘Where is it?’ Holmes whispered; and I knew from the thrill of his voice that he, the man of iron, was shaken to the soul. ‘Where is it, Watson?’

‘There, I think.’ I pointed into the darkness.

10 ‘No, there!’

Again the agonized cry swept through the silent night, louder and much nearer than ever. And a new sound mingled with it, a deep, muttered rumble, musical and yet menacing, rising and falling like the low, constant murmur of the sea.

‘The hound!’ cried Holmes. ‘Come, Watson, come! Great heavens, if we are too late!’

15 He had started running swiftly over the moor, and I had followed at his heels. But now from somewhere among the broken ground immediately in front of us there came one last despairing yell, and then a dull, heavy thud. We halted and listened. Not another sound broke the heavy silence of the windless night.

20 I saw Holmes put his hand to his forehead like a man distracted.¹ He stamped his feet upon the ground.

‘He has beaten us, Watson. We are too late.’

‘No, no, surely not!’

‘Fool that I was to hold my hand.² And you, Watson, see what comes of abandoning your charge! But, by Heaven, if the worst has happened we’ll avenge him!’

25 Blindly we ran through the gloom, blundering against boulders, forcing our way through gorse bushes, panting up hills and rushing down slopes, heading always in the direction whence those dreadful sounds had come. At every rise Holmes looked eagerly round him, but the shadows were thick upon the moor, and nothing moved upon its dreary face.

‘Can you see anything?’

30 ‘Nothing.’

‘But, hark, what is that?’

A low moan had fallen upon our ears. There it was again upon our left! On that side a ridge of rocks ended in a sheer cliff which overlooked a stone-strewn slope. On its jagged face was spread-eagled some dark, irregular object. As we ran towards it the vague outline hardened
35 into a definite shape. It was a prostrate man face downward upon the ground, the head doubled under him at a horrible angle, the shoulders rounded and the body hunched together as if in the act of throwing a somersault. So grotesque was the attitude that I could not for the instant realize that that moan had been the passing of his soul. Not a whisper, not a rustle, rose now from the dark figure over which we stooped. Holmes laid his hand upon
40 him and held it up again, with an exclamation of horror. The gleam of the match which he struck shone upon his clotted fingers and upon the ghastly pool which widened slowly from the crushed skull of the victim. And it shone upon something else which turned our hearts sick and faint within us – the body of Sir Henry Baskerville!

There was no chance of either of us forgetting that peculiar ruddy tweed suit – the very one
45 which he had worn on the first morning that we had seen him in Baker Street. We caught the one clear glimpse of it, and then the match flickered and went out, even as the hope had gone out of our souls. Holmes groaned, and his face glimmered white through the darkness.

‘The brute! the brute!’ I cried with clenched hands. ‘Oh Holmes, I shall never forgive myself for having left him to his fate.’

Glossary

distracted¹ – mentally confused or deeply troubled by grief and anxiety.

hold my hand² – wait without taking action.

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, **lines 1 to 13**.

List **four** things from this part of the text about the sound the two men hear.

[4 marks]

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

4 _____

2 Look in detail at this extract from **lines 14 to 28** of the source:

‘The hound!’ cried Holmes. ‘Come, Watson, come! Great heavens, if we are too late!’

He had started running swiftly over the moor, and I had followed at his heels. But now from somewhere among the broken ground immediately in front of us there came one last despairing yell, and then a dull, heavy thud. We halted and listened. Not another sound broke the heavy silence of the windless night.

I saw Holmes put his hand to his forehead like a man distracted. He stamped his feet upon the ground.

‘He has beaten us, Watson. We are too late.’

‘No, no, surely not!’

‘Fool that I was to hold my hand. And you, Watson, see what comes of abandoning your charge! But, by Heaven, if the worst has happened we’ll avenge him!’

Blindly we ran through the gloom, blundering against boulders, forcing our way through gorse bushes, panting up hills and rushing down slopes, heading always in the direction whence those dreadful sounds had come. At every rise Holmes looked eagerly round him, but the shadows were thick upon the moor, and nothing moved upon its dreary face.

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.

5 You are going to enter a creative writing competition.

Your entry will be judged by a panel of people of your own age.

Either: Write a description suggested by this picture:



Or:

Write the opening part of a story that begins with a desperate chase in a bleak setting.

(24 marks for content and organisation

16 marks for technical accuracy)

[40 marks]

Paper 2: Writers' viewpoints and perspectives

Time allowed: 1 hour 45 minutes

Materials

For this paper you must have:

- Source A and Source B – which are located on pages 22–4.

Instructions

- Answer all questions.
- Answer the questions in the space provided, continuing onto a separate sheet if needed.
- Do all rough work in a notebook or on separate sheets of paper.
- You must refer to the Sources provided.
- You should not use a dictionary.

Information

- The marks for questions are shown in brackets.
- The maximum mark for this paper is 80.
- There are 40 marks for Section A and 40 marks for Section B.
- You are reminded of the need for good English and clear presentation in your answers.
- The quality of your reading is assessed in Section A.
- The quality of your writing is assessed in Section B.

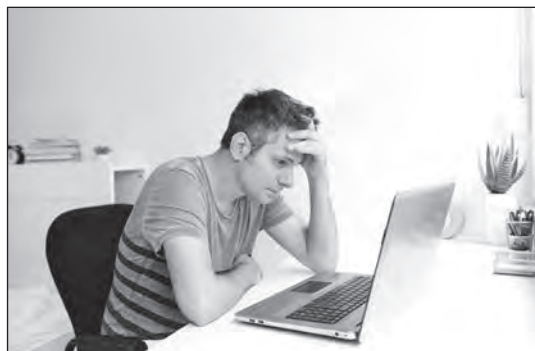
Advice

- You are advised to spend about 15 minutes reading through the Sources and all five questions you have to answer.
- You should make sure you leave sufficient time to check your answers.

Source A – 21st Century non-fiction

This Source is an extract from an article written for *The Guardian* by a father contemplating the long school summer holidays.

Why working parents like me dread the summer holidays



The Guardian, Friday 22 July 2016, by Andy Dawson (theguardian.com)

Before it appears that I'm some kind of villainous dad, I need to establish that ever since they came into my life, my overriding purpose in life has been to be a diligent, devoted parent to my two children [...]

5 But each year when the summer holidays loom I transform into a twitchy, cranky mess, breaking out in cold sweats and clawing at my own skin as I fret about what's to come once they've been turfed through the school gate for the last time.

If you're a working parent of a school-age child, you know exactly what I'm talking about. If you haven't been dreading the onset of the summer break and the impossible work/parenting juggle that comes with it, you're a liar.

10 On one hand I'm incredibly lucky that, as a freelance writer, I get to work from home and am usually unimpeded by obstacles such as fixed working hours or a remote workplace (although the thought of such sanctuary has its appeal).

15 Having said that, I also have to write 30,000 words of a book between now and the end of August, which means that it's going to get really, really tense around here when the children's mum is occupied with her proper job. In fact, I had to get out of bed at 5am just to find the time to write this piece, but that's OK.

20 We're not short of things to do – we live a couple of miles from the north-east coast and a short car ride away from the majestic Northumberland countryside, so day trips are well catered for. Plus there's the new-found wonders of Pokémon Go – less than a week into that craze and we're all sporting [...] tans from extended adventures in the sunshine.

But the book deadline means I can't afford to take a sustained period off work, which leaves us with those days when we're all rattling around the house, getting right on each other's wick.

As such, a domestic state of emergency kicks into operation. The house as we know it ceases to exist. Any kind of structure or order flies out of the window, with chores abandoned

25 and the ironing pile relocated to a hidden bubble of space behind the settee so we can all pretend it isn't there.

Bits of Lego, random action figures and hundreds of collector cards are strewn all over the floor, with the living room now resembling a toy shop that has been ransacked in a riot.

30 Try as I might to get some work done, it's as laborious as pushing a golf ball up a custard mountain with the tip of my nose. The kids seem to have developed some sort of innate, unspoken tag team system. The moment I sit down after finishing a 20-minute football match in the garden with the boy one, the girl one appears and wants to know if she can have some strawberries or whether I know why the printer has stopped working.

35 You know you're broken when you find yourself on eBay, researching the cost of those paper boiler suits that decorators and lab technicians wear. We'll all look daft, but it'll cut right down on laundry.

40 There's always the option of farming them out (in the nicest possible way, obviously) to someone else, but the cost is too great, be it financially (childcare fees are exorbitant) or emotionally (their grandparents are now shattered husks, wrecked from more than a decade of ad hoc babysitting).

45 It's not just the days – the summer holidays blight your evenings too. Extensions to regular bedtimes mean that the younglings are mooching about the house well after 11pm. Thinking of catching up on the last series of Game of Thrones at the end of a hard day's life-juggling? Better get your finger poised over the remote in case they wander in from their respective leisure spaces to submit some kind of random cheese enquiry or ask if you can evict a spider from the bathroom.

50 The whole thing is a lot like regular parenting, only filtered through a psychedelic kaleidoscope and played out at three times its usual speed. You quickly realise how much of the strain of child-rearing is carried by the education system, and you vow never to make one of those snide remarks about teachers knocking off at half three each day and spending most of their lives on holiday.

Source B – 19th Century literary non-fiction

This Source is taken from a letter written by George Gissing, an English novelist who lived from 1857–1903. His letter describes a national bank holiday in 1882.

It is Bank Holiday to-day, and the streets are overcrowded with swarms of people. Never is so clearly to be seen the vulgarity of the people as at these holiday times. Their notion of a holiday is to rush in crowds to some sweltering place, such as the Crystal Palace,¹ and there sit and drink and quarrel themselves into stupidity. Miserable children are lugged about, yelling at the top of their voices, and are beaten because they yell. Troops of hideous creatures drive wildly about the town in gigs,² donkey-carts, cabbage-carts, dirt-carts, and think it enjoyment. The pleasure of peace and quietness, of rest for body and mind, is not understood. Thousands are tempted by cheap trips to go off for the day to the seaside, and succeed in wearying themselves to death, for the sake of eating a greasy meal in a Margate Coffee-shop, and getting five minutes' glimpse of the sea through eyes blinded with dirt and perspiration. Places like Hampstead Heath and the various parks and commons are packed with screeching drunkards, one general mass of dust and heat and rage and exhaustion. Yet this is the best kind of holiday the people are capable of.

It is utterly absurd, this idea of setting aside single days for great public holidays. It will never do anything but harm. What we want is a general shortening of the working hours all year round, so that, for instance, all labour would be over at 4 o'clock in the afternoon. Then the idea of hours of leisure would become familiar to the people and they would learn to make some sensible use of them. Of course this is impossible so long as we work for working's sake. All the world's work – all that is really necessary for the health and comfort and even luxury of mankind – could be performed in three or four hours of each day. There is so much labour just because there is so much money-grubbing. Every man has to fight for a living with his neighbour, and the grocer who keeps his shop open till half an hour after midnight has an advantage over him who closes at twelve. Work in itself is *not an end; only a means*; but we nowadays make it an end, and three-fourths of the world cannot understand anything else.

Glossary

Crystal Palace¹ – a large, glass building in London which was often used for shows, concerts and exhibitions.

gigs² – a gig is a two-wheeled carriage pulled by a horse.

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 **Source A, lines 1 to 16**.

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

- Tick the boxes of the ones that you think are true.
- Choose a maximum of four statements.

[4 marks]

- | | |
|--|--------------------------|
| A Andy Dawson claims to be devoted to his children. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| B Andy Dawson dreads the end of term. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| C As a writer, Andy Dawson faces fewer work complications than some other parents. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| D Andy Dawson has never wanted to work in a remote location. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| E Andy Dawson believes other parents share his feelings about school holidays. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| F Andy Dawson is not concerned about his approaching deadline. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| G The children's mother also works from home. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| H Andy Dawson always gets up at 5am to work. | <input type="checkbox"/> |

