

GCSE (9-1) English Language

J351/01 Communicating information and ideas

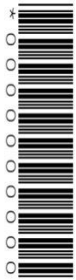
Reading Insert

Practice paper - Set 1

Time allowed: 2 hours

You must have:

- the Question Paper



INSTRUCTIONS

- The materials in this Reading Insert are for use with the questions in Section A of the Question Paper.

INFORMATION

- This document consists of **8** pages. Any blank pages are indicated.

Details of text extracts:

Text 1

Text: *Narrative of the Most Extraordinary Shipwreck of the Whaleship Essex*

Author: Owen Chase (1821).

Text 2

Text: *Yet Being Someone Other*

Author: Laurens van der Post (1982).

Text 1

*This is an extract from **Narrative of the Most Extraordinary Shipwreck of the Whaleship Essex**. Owen Chase was the first mate on the whaling ship the Essex during a two-and-a-half-year whaling voyage which began in 1819. On the morning of October 28, 1820, a huge whale rammed his ship twice and sank it.*

After a few moments reflection I concluded that the whale had made a hole in the ship, and that it would be necessary to set the pumps going. Accordingly they were rigged, but had not been in operation more than one minute before I again caught sight of the whale, apparently in convulsions, on the top of the water.

5 I could distinctly see him smack his jaws together, as if distracted with rage and fury. He remained a short time in this situation, and then started off with great speed, across the bows of the ship. By this time the ship had settled down a considerable distance in the water, and I gave her up for lost.

10 I heard the cry of a man at the hatch- way: "here he is – he is making for us again." I turned around, and saw him directly ahead of us, coming down apparently with twice his ordinary speed, and, to me, it appeared with tenfold fury and vengeance in his aspect.

15 The surf flew in all directions about him, and his course towards us was marked by a white foam which he made with the continual violent thrashing of his tail; his head was about half out of water, and in that way he came upon, and again struck the ship. He struck her directly under the cathead¹, and completely smashed in her bows. He passed under the ship again and we saw no more of him.

20 Our situation at this moment can be more readily imagined than described. The shock to our feelings was such, as I am sure none can have an adequate idea of, that were not there: the misfortune happened at a moment when we least dreamt of any accident; and from the pleasing anticipations we had formed, of realizing the certain profits of our labour, we were dejected by a sudden, most mysterious, and overwhelming calamity.

After several hours of idle sorrow I began to reflect upon the accident, and endeavoured to realize by what destiny or design this sudden and most deadly attack had been made upon us by an animal never before suspected of planning to do harm.

25 Every fact seemed to support me in concluding that it was anything but chance which directed his operations; he made several attacks upon the ship, at a short interval between them, both of which, according to their direction, were calculated to do us the most injury, by being made ahead, and thereby combining the speed of the two objects for the shock; to cause which, the exact manoeuvres which he made were necessary.

30 His aspect was most horrible, and such as indicated resentment and fury. He came directly from the shoal which we had just before entered, and in which we had struck three of his companions, as if fired with revenge for their sufferings.

¹ Cathead - a beam on the bow of a ship used to support the anchor

Text 2

*This is an extract from **Yet Being Someone Other**, an account of his travels written by Laurens van der Post. He had a passionate interest in the sea and took part as an observer in a voyage on whaling ship. Here he describes the hunting of a whale.*

The sea suddenly came alive and there arose the greatest blow¹ of all. I saw it rise some thirty to forty feet into the air. Now that we were near, I realised I had never seen anything more beautiful and moving – a beauty indeed great enough to give it a kind of sanctity and make it pure and innocent in my imagination.

5 As this, the highest of all the blows, established itself in the air, it was followed by the reappearance of the whale, slowly and majestically arching itself over the crest of the swell. I had become so totally absorbed in what had now become for me an act of almost biblical revelation, that the desperate reactions on the ship were of almost secondary importance.

10 It seemed to me that we were almost within firing range. Indeed, when the second blow came, and that broad back reappeared so close, the crystal silence was suddenly shattered by the sound of gunshot. In my line of vision appeared a cable with something heavy at the end of it, wriggling like the fastest of snakes towards the whale.

15 It hit its target in the centre of the back. I winced at the shock and pain of the harpoon's entry into the warm flesh and blood. At once a spurt of mist appeared where the harpoon had entered deep into the flesh of the whale, and a slighter and lesser thud from within the inner tabernacle of its body, reached my ears.

20 On the one hand, I could not deny the excitement which the process of stalking and hunting at sea had evoked in me although I was only present as an observer. On the other hand, an equal and opposite disgust nearly overwhelmed me when the hunt was successful and I was faced with the fact that I had aided and abetted an act of murder.

25 In this increasingly technological moment of my youth, control of life was passing more and more from nature to man. There were already available all sorts of artificial substitutes for the essential oils of which whales had once been the only source of supply. What, I asked myself bitterly, could justify such killing except the greed of man for money, and money, moreover, acquired in the easiest and cheapest way without regard to the consequences?

Worse still, I was certain that ignoring the alarm caused by such killing in the heart of nature could be the beginning of a war between man and the planet which had brought him forth that would threaten his future on earth itself.

¹ Blow - a spray of water from the whale's blowhole

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