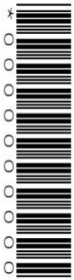


GCSE (9-1) English Language J351/02 Exploring effects and impact

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: *The Stormchasers*
Author: Adam Marek (2012)

Text 2

Text: *The Shipping News*
Author: E. Annie Proulx (1993)

Text 1

This is an abridged extract from Adam Marek's short story, The Stormchasers, published in 2012. Here the narrator describes how he and his son are preparing for a day out in search of some wild weather.

It's so windy today. My son Jakey and I are at the window watching trees bow to each other, and the snails being blown across the patio like sailboats.

5 'Listen,' I say, 'no tornadoes are coming here. Even if we got in the car right now and drove around all day like the stormchasers on TV, we'd be lucky to find one. Very lucky.'

'But what if we did?'

There is a noise from behind us. We both look at the fireplace. The wind is playing the chimney like a flute.

10 'Even if we were really lucky and did find one,' I say, 'in England it would be a tiny thing. We don't get the big ones here.'

'An F4?' he asks. We have watched documentaries about tornadoes together since he was a baby. Among six-year-olds, he is an expert.

'No way.' I say. 'An F2, if we were *really* lucky.'

'Big enough to suck up a person?'

15 He is imagining the tornado like a straw in the sky's mouth, I can see this.

'Nuh-uh,' I say. 'Just big enough to fling a couple of roof tiles about, or knock over some flowerpots, or break a greenhouse to pieces.'

'But what if...' he starts.

20 He is not going to believe me, sitting here in the house with the wind whoo-whooping around our walls like a ghost.

'Go get changed out of your jim-jams,' I say. 'I'll show you that there's nothing to be afraid of.'

25 While Jakey looks for his shoes, I pack lunch for us in a cotton shoulder bag: for me, chicken-liver pate and apple chutney sandwiches, and a flask of tea; for Jakey, cheese spread sandwiches, a fun-size Twix and two cartons of apple juice.

'All set?' I say when he gets to the bottom of the stairs. He is wearing the bright yellow raincoat that he has finally grown into. I bought them for him before he was born, when he was just in my imagination.

'Uh-huh,' he says.

30 'We'd better go say goodbye to mum,' I say.

We creep upstairs together, peep around the bedroom door. Mum is still in bed. She has the light out. Yesterday the dentist at the hospital pulled four wisdom teeth from her mouth. She has been in bed for a whole day, and mostly silent.

'Where are you going?' she says. Even her voice sounds wounded.

35 'We're going tornado chasing,' Jakey says.

'We won't be long,' I say.

Text 2

This is an abridged extract from the novel, The Shipping News, by E. Annie Proulx published in 1993.

It describes the adventures of a man called Quoye who travels to where his family originally came from to start a new life. His aunt and his two daughters (Bunny and Sunshine), and their dog Warren, go with him. Here they have found the ruined old family house, but must find somewhere else to stay the night.

Quoye's aunt stood up, hauled her black coat around and buttoned it to the neck. "It's getting mighty cold," she said. "Look." Held out her arm. Chips of snow landed in the wool. "We better make tracks," she said. "This is not a good place to get caught in a snowstorm. Well do I know."

5 "In May?" said Quoye. "Give me a break, Aunt."

"Any month of the year, my boy. Weather here beyond anything you know."

Quoye looked out. The bay faded, as though he looked through a piece of netting. Needles of snow in his face.

10 "I don't believe it," he said. But it was what he wanted. Storm and peril. Difficult tasks. Exhaustion.

On the way out the wind buffeted the car. Darkness seeped from the overcast, snow grains on the windshield. On the highway there was already a film of snow on the road surface. He turned in at the Store again.

"Getting some coffee," he said to the aunt. "Want some?"

15 "There's a big building in there and a parking lot," Quoye said to the attendant.

"Oh yar. Glove fact'ry it was. Closed up years back." The man slid two paper cups with folded ear handles at him.

Shrieking wind. The bitter coffee trembled.

"Weather," the man said to Quoye balanced in the doorway with his damp cups.

20 He bent against air. Cracking sky, a mad burst. The sign above the gas pump, a hand-painted circle of sheet metal, tore away, sliced over the store. The man came out, the door jumped from his hand, wrenched. Wind slung Quoye against the pumps. The aunt's startled face in the car window. Then the gusts bore out of the east, shooting the blizzard at them.

25 Quoye pried the door open. He'd dropped the coffee. "Look at it! Look at this," he cried. "We can't drive to Killick-Claw through twenty miles of this."

"Didn't we see a motel on the way up?"

30 "Yes we did. And it's back in Bloody Banks." He scraped at the map, his hand spangled with melting snow. "See it? It's thirty-six miles behind us." The car trembled.

"Let's help buddy with his door," said the aunt. "We'll ask him. He'll know some place."

Quoyle got the hammer from under the seat, and they stooped beneath wind. Steadied the door while the man pounded spikes.

35 He barely looked at them. Things on his mind, Quoyle thought, like whether or not the roof would lift off. But he shouted answers. Tickle Motel. Six miles east. Third time this year the door was off. First time the sign was off. Felt snowy all morning, he bellowed as they pulled onto the highway. Waved them into side-blown snow.

40 Slick road; visibility nil beyond the hood ornament. All dissolved in spinning particles. The speedometer needle at fifteen and still they skidded and jerked. The aunt leaned this way and that, hand on the dash, fingers widespread, as though by leaning she kept their balance.

“Dad, are we scared?” said Sunshine.

45 “No, honey. It’s an adventure.” Didn’t want them to grow up timid. The aunt snorted. He glanced in the rearview mirror. Warren’s yellow eyes met his. Quoyle winked at the dog. To cheer her up.

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Marek, A, (2012) *The Stormchasers*, from The Best British Short Stories 2013, ed. Nicholas Royle, Salt Publishing, p50-51.

Proulx, E. Annie (1993) *The Shipping News*, Fourth Estate, p10-11.

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