



Oxford Cambridge and RSA

**Thursday 23 May 2024 – Morning**

**GCSE (9–1) English Language**

**J351/01 Communicating information and ideas**

**Insert**

**Time allowed: 2 hours**



### INSTRUCTIONS

- Use the Insert to answer the questions in Section A.
- Do **not** send this Insert for marking. Keep it in the centre or recycle it.

### INFORMATION

- This document has **8** pages.



**Details of text extracts:****Text 1**

Text: adapted from *Autobiography*

Author: Joseph Carey Merrick (1884)

**Text 2**

Text: adapted from *My Left Foot*

Author: Christy Brown (1954)

## Text 1

Joseph Carey Merrick was born with severe physical deformities which made his life very challenging. He joined an exhibition and people would pay to be able to come and look at him. In this short autobiography he explains how he came to be part of the exhibition.

I first saw the light on the 5th of August 1860. I was born in Lee Street, Leicester. I went to school like other children until I was about 11 or 12 years of age, when the greatest misfortune of my life occurred, namely – the death of my mother. Peace to her; she was a good mother to me.

After she died my father broke up his home and went to lodgings. Unfortunately for me, he married his landlady. Henceforth, I never had one moment's comfort. My stepmother, having children of her own, and I, not being so handsome as they, together with my deformity, she was the means of making my life a perfect misery. Lamé and deformed as I was, I ran, or rather walked away, from home two or three times. But I suppose my father had some spark of parental feeling left, so he induced me to return home again.

When I was about 13 years old, I was sent about the town to see if I could procure work, but, being lame and deformed, no one would employ me. When I went home for my meals, my stepmother used to say I had not been to seek for work. I was taunted and sneered at so that I would not go home for my meals and used to stay in the streets with a hungry belly rather than return for anything to eat. What few half-meals I did have, I was taunted with the remark — “That’s more than you have earned.” The best friend I had in those days was my father’s brother, Mr. Merrick, Hairdresser, Church Gate, Leicester.

Being unable to get employment, my father got me a license to hawk<sup>1</sup> around the town, but, being deformed, people would not come to the door to buy my wares. In consequence of my ill luck, my life was again made a misery to me, so that I again ran away, and went hawking on my own account, but my deformity had grown to such an extent that I could not move about the town without having a crowd of people gather around me.

So, thought I, I’ll get my living by being exhibited about the country. Knowing Mr. Sam Torr of Gladstone Vaults, Leicester, went in for Novelties, I wrote to him. He came to see me, and soon arranged matters, recommending me to Mr. Ellis, The Bee-hive Inn, Nottingham, from whom I received the greatest kindness and attention. He helped me make my first appearance before the public, who have treated me well. In fact, I may say, I am as comfortable now as I was uncomfortable before.

<sup>1</sup> hawk – to sell goods by going door to door

**Text 2**

Christy Brown was born with physical disabilities which meant that he could not speak. He could not control any of his body except for his left foot. In this extract from his autobiography Christy is still a young child, sitting at home, watching his sister write with chalk on a slate.

© Christy Brown, *My Left Foot*, pages 15-17, Vintage, Random House, 1954. Item removed due to third party copyright restrictions.



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