



Oxford Cambridge and RSA

Date – Morning/Afternoon

GCSE (9–1) English Language

J351/02 Exploring effects and impacts

Sample Insert

Time allowed: 2 hours



INSTRUCTIONS

- Use this 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 **4** pages.

The two texts that follow are:

Text 1: Adapted from *The Birds* written in 1952 by Daphne du Maurier

Text 2: Adapted from *I'm the King of the Castle* written in 1970 by Susan Hill

Text 1

This is an extract from the short story, '*The Birds*' by Daphne du Maurier (published in 1952). Nat Hocken is a farm labourer. In this extract, Nat is returning home from work.

There have been reports of birds, including gulls and gannets, behaving strangely.

Nat hurried on. Past the little wood, past the old barn, and then across the stile to the remaining field. 1

As he jumped the stile he heard the whir of wings. A black-backed gull dived down at him from the sky, missed, swerved in flight, and rose to dive again. In a moment it was joined by others, six, seven, a dozen. Nat dropped his hoe¹. The hoe was useless. Covering his head with his arms, he ran toward the cottage. They kept coming at him from the air, silent save for the beating wings. The terrible, fluttering wings. He could feel the blood on his hands, his wrists, his neck. Each stab of a swooping beak tore his flesh. 5

If only he could keep them from his eyes. Nothing else mattered. He must keep them from his eyes. They had not learned yet how to cling to a shoulder, how to rip clothing, how to dive in mass upon the head, upon the body. But with each dive, with each attack, they became bolder. And they had no thought for themselves. When they dived low and missed, they crashed, bruised and broken, on the ground. As Nat ran he stumbled, kicking their spent bodies in front of him. 10

He found the door; he hammered upon it with his bleeding hands. Because of the boarded windows no light shone. Everything was dark. 15

"Let me in," he shouted, "it's Nat. Let me in."

He shouted loud to make himself heard above the whir of the gulls' wings.

Then he saw the gannet, poised for the dive, above him in the sky. The gulls circled, retired, soared, one after another, against the wind. Only the gannet remained. One single gannet above him in the sky. The wings folded suddenly to its body. It dropped like a stone. Nat screamed, and the door opened. He stumbled across the threshold, and his wife threw her weight against the door. 20

They heard the thud of the gannet as it fell.

¹ hoe = gardening tool

Text 2

This is an extract from the short story, '*I'm the King of the Castle*' by Susan Hill (published in 1970). In this extract, Kingshaw, a young boy, feels he is being bullied, and has gone for a walk in the fields.

When he first saw the crow, he took no notice. There had been several crows. This one
glided down into the corn on its enormous, ragged black wings. He began to be aware of it
when it rose up suddenly, circled overhead, and then dived to land not very far away from
him. Kingshaw could see the feathers on its head, shining blank in between the butter-
coloured corn-stalks. Then it rose, and circled, and came down again, this time not quite
landing, but flapping about his head, beating its wings and making a sound like flat leather
pieces being slapped together. It was the largest crow he had ever seen. As it came down
for the third time, he looked up and noticed its beak, opening in a screech. The inside of its
mouth was scarlet. It had small glinting eyes.

Kingshaw got up and flapped his arms. For a moment, the bird retreated a little way off, and
higher up in the sky. He began to walk rather quickly back, through the path in the corn,
looking ahead of him. Stupid to be scared of a rotten bird. What could a bird do? But he felt
his own extreme isolation, high up in the cornfield.

For a moment, he could only hear the soft thudding of his own footsteps, and the silky sound
of the corn, brushing against him. Then, there was a rush of air, as the great crow came
beating down, and wheeled about his head. The beak opened and the hoarse caaw came
out again and again, from inside the scarlet mouth.

Kingshaw began to run, not caring, now, if he trampled the corn, wanting to get away, down
into the next field. He thought that the corn might be some kind of crow's food store, in which
he was seen as an invader. Perhaps this was only the first of a whole battalion of crows, that
would rise up and swoop at him. Get on to the grass then, he thought, get on to the grass,
that'll be safe, it'll go away. He wondered if it had mistaken him for some hostile animal,
lurking down in the corn.

His progress was very slow, through the cornfield, the thick stalks bunched together and
got in his way, and he had to shove them back with his arms. But he reached the gate and
climbed it, and dropped on to the grass of the field on the other side. Sweat was running
down his forehead and into his eyes. He looked up. The crow kept on coming. He ran.

But it wasn't easy to run down this field, either, because of the tractor ruts. He began to leap
wildly from side to side of them, his legs stretched as wide as they could go, and for a short
time, it seemed that he did go faster. The crow dived again, and, as it rose, Kingshaw felt the
tip of its black wing, beating against his face. He gave a sudden, dry sob. Then, his left foot
caught in one of the ruts and he keeled over, going down straight forwards.

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