

# GCSE ENGLISH LANGUAGE (8700)

Paper 1 Explorations in Creative Writing and Reading

Time allowed: 1 hour 45 minutes

## Materials

For this paper you must have:

- Source A**

## Instructions

- Answer **all** questions.
- Use black ink or black ball-point pen.
- Fill in the boxes on this page.
- You must answer the questions in the spaces provided.
- Do not write outside the box around each page or on blank pages.
- Do all rough work in this book. Cross through any work you do not want to be marked.
- You must refer to the insert booklet provided.
- You must **not** use a dictionary.

## Information

- The marks for questions are shown in brackets.
- The maximum mark of 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.
- You will be assessed on the quality of your **reading** in **Section A**.
- You will be assessed on the quality of your **writing** 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 passage is from the opening of a novel *Alice and the Fly* by James Rice. Here, we are introduced to Greg, a shy teenager who suffers from arachnophobia (fear of spiders) which he refers to as **Them**. In this extract he is on his way home on the bus.

The bus was late tonight. It was raining, that icy winter rain, the kind that stings. Even under the shelter on Green Avenue I got soaked because the wind kept lifting the rain onto me. By the time the bus arrived I was dripping, so numb I couldn't feel myself climbing on board.

It was the older driver again, the one with the moustache. He gave me that smile of his. A hint of a frown. An I-know all- about-you nod. I dropped the fare into the bowl and he told me I'd be better off buying a weekly pass, cheaper that way. I just tore off my ticket, kept my head down.

The bus was full of the usual uniforms. Yellow visibility jackets, Waitrose name badges. A cleaner slept with her Marigolds on. No one who works in Skipdale actually lives here, they all get the bus back to the Pitt. I hurried up the aisle to my usual seat, a couple of rows from the back. For a few minutes we waited, listening to the click-clack of the indicator. I watched the wet blur of rain on the window – the reflection of the lights, flashing in the puddles on the pavement. Then the engine trembled back to life and the bus pulled off through Skipdale.

I got a little shivery today, between those first couple of stops. Thinking now about all those passengers on the bus, it makes me wonder how I do it every night. It's not people so much that bother me. It's **Them**. I heard once that a person is never more than three metres away from one of **Them** at any time, and since then I can't help feeling that the more people there are around, the more there's a chance that one of **Them**'ll be around too. I know that's stupid.

We soon reached the Prancing Horse. Even through the rain I could make out the small crowd huddled under the shelter. The doors hissed open and Man With Ear Hair stumbled through, shaking his umbrella, handing over his change. He took the disabled seat at the front and made full use of its legroom. Woman Who Sneezes was next, squeezing beside a Waitrose employee, her bulk spilling over into the aisle. A couple of old ladies showed their passes, riding back from their day out in the crime-free capital of England. 'It's such a nice town,' they told the driver. 'It's such a nice pub, it was such nice fish.' Their sagging faces were so expressionless I could have reached out and given them a wobble.

And then there was you, all red curls and smiles, stepping up to buy your ticket, and the warmth rose through me like helium to my brain.

5

10

15

20

25

## Section A: Reading

Answer **all** questions in this section.  
You are advised to spend about 45 minutes on this section.

1. Read lines 1 – 13. Write down 4 things you learn about the bus.

4 marks.

2. Re-read lines 8 – 18

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How does the writer use language here to describe the experience of being on the bus?

You could include the writer's choice of:

- words and phrases
- language features and techniques
- sentence forms.

8 marks

3. You now need to think about the whole of the Source.

This text is from the opening of a novel.

How has the writer structured the text to interest you as a reader?

You could write about:

- what the writer focuses your attention on at the beginning
- how and why the writer changes this focus as the Source develops
- any other structural features that interest you.

8 marks

4. Focus this part of your answer on the second part of the Source from line 14 to the end.

A student, having read this section of the text said: “The writer shows that Greg feels uncomfortable on the bus through the description of the passengers and the setting.”

To what extent do you agree?

In your response, you could:

- write about your own impressions of the characters and the setting
- evaluate how the writer has created these impressions
- support your opinions with references to the text.

[20 marks]

**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 have been asked to produce a piece of writing for a collection of descriptive writing your school is creating.

Either: write a description based on this picture:



Or write a short story based upon a time when you experienced fear.

(24 marks for content and organisation  
16 marks for technical accuracy)

40 marks