



GCSE ENGLISH LANGUAGE (8700)

Paper 2 Writers' viewpoints and perspectives

Insert

The sources that follow are:

Source A: 20th Century non-fiction

The Death Zone by Matt Dickinson

An extract from a book printed in 1997.

Source B: 19th Century literary non-fiction

London Snow

An extract from a diary written by Arthur Munby published in 1867.

**Please turn the page over
to see the sources**

Source A

British climber, Matt Dickinson, together with his team, is attempting to scale Mount Everest. At base camp, a thousand feet below them, his colleague, Audrey Salkeld is the first to see the approaching storm.

The Death Zone

- 1 At 5,360 metres, base camp is a cheerless place at the best of times, but once the sun has dipped beneath the surrounding ridges, it is like living in a freezer. Shivering with the cold, Salkeld left the mess tent and walked across the ice of the Khumbu glacier towards her tent to find some extra clothing.
- 5 Glancing into the sky to the south, she became one of the first people, and probably *the* very first, to see what was sweeping up from the lower valleys of the Himalayas towards Everest. It was a sight which fixed her to the spot, all thoughts of seeking out a few more layers of clothing momentarily forgotten.

Sudden squalls are common in the afternoon on Everest but Salkeld had never seen anything like
 10 this before. She later described it as looking like a tyre dump fire, great billowing lilac clouds racing up from the south. She called out other members of the team from our tents, and they
 12 stood watching in awe as the apocalyptic vision crept silently and swiftly towards them.

At speeds touching 80 to 100 kilometres an hour, the storm whipped into the camp just minutes
 13 later, plunging the temperature down by ten to fifteen degrees in as many seconds, ripping into
 15 the tents in a blinding fury of driving snow. The storm swept up the southern flanks of Everest engulfing the ice-clad slopes effortlessly in a swirling mantle of hurricane-force winds. Within minutes it had the northern side in its grip and then it rose to take the summit. The mightiest mountain in the world disappeared from view as the storm took control.

If Shiva, the Hindu god of destruction, and Nemesis, the Greek goddess of retribution, had joined
 20 forces they could not have done a better job of devastation than nature itself did on that day. The timing was uncanny, as bad as it was possible to be. If the storm had struck in winter then no one would have been hurt. But as chance would have it, the tempest¹ arrived on the busiest day of the
 23 Everest calendar, right in the middle of the pre-monsoon climbing season.

Our expedition, a British attempt on the North Face via the North-East Ridge, was at camp three
 25 when the storm thundered in.

We immediately knew that this was something far more dangerous than any other storm that had hit us in the eight weeks we had been there. The temperature fell to ten degrees below freezing, then twenty, then thirty degrees below. The wind became a constant, bullying force, pulling guy ropes from the glacier ice, tumbling fully-laden equipment barrels into crevasses and demolishing
 30 our canvas mess tent with frightening ease. The dome tents, built to withstand hurricane-force winds, creaked and groaned under the beating, distorted into shapes they were never designed for and straining the tent poles to their limits.

We could have been in the Antarctic, on the Greenland ice cap, or at the North Pole, so complete was the blanket of driving snow which obscured every feature around us. Not a single landmark,
 35 not even the huge North Ridge, was visible through the raging white-out of the blizzard.

Through the white wall of snow, and rising across the tempestuous roar of the wind across the glacier was another sound: a sinister howl which told of even greater powers at play in the altitudes above us; the scream of the storm as it whirled across the North Face at 8,000 metres and above.

40 There, in the 'Death Zone', more than thirty climbers were fighting for their lives. On the northern side three Indian climbers were stranded, exhausted and with their oxygen supplies running out, high on the North-East Ridge. On the southern side, two commercial expeditions were strung out between the South Col² and the summit.

45 The night that faced them was a night from hell. By the end of the following day, the three Indian climbers on the north side and five of the climbers on the south were dead. The total of eight fatalities made this the greatest loss of life in any twenty-four hour period on the peak.

Glossary:

tempest¹ – storm

South Col² – a mountain path

Turn over for Source B

Turn over ►

Source B

Arthur Munby kept a diary in the 1800s, and in these extracts, taken from January 1867, he describes London in the snow.

London Snow

- 1 *Wednesday, 2 January.* Since midnight, snow had silently fallen, to the depth of six to eight inches; by breakfast time it was all over except a slight flaky dropping, and the day was calm and very cold. Nothing could be more beautiful; no change more complete and charming. The trees around the fountain near Garden Court were loaded with snow: an
5 exquisite tracery of white branches, relieved against the dark red house fronts.

But in the streets the transformation was greatest. All traffic, except afoot, was stopped; no cabs, no omnibuses, no wagons. The snow lay in heaps in the road; men were scraping and shovelling the footways; and people in thick coats and wrappers stepped noiselessly along. The Strand was as quiet and empty as a village street at nightfall; even the foot
10 passengers were far fewer than usual.

Here in the heart of London, and at midday, there was absolute cleanliness and brightness, absolute silence: instead of the roar and rush of wheels, the selfish hurry, the dirt and the cloudy fog, we had the loveliness and utter purity of new- fallen snow. It fell without force or sound; and all things huge and hasty and noisy were paralyzed in a moment. I walked
15 along enjoying the wondrous lovely scene, the long perspective of houses, all grown picturesque and antique; their gable roofs white against a clear sky, and every overhanging joint and beam in their outline picked out in brilliant white; and beneath them, the tumbled and peopleless pavement of snow. It was like the quaint still London of old; one might have been arm in arm with Mr. Pepys, or even Mr. W. Shakespeare. And this state of things
20 lasted all day.

There were many crossing sweepers about: I noticed one near Saint Clement Danes, a girl of seventeen or so, in ragged but warm shawl, and a bit of an old bonnet, whose dark rough hair was covered with snow, and hung in a tangled white mass, like the foam of a waterfall, over her brown bonny face, as she stood with her broom under her arm, stamping and
25 blowing her fingers.

Friday, 4 January. The cold out of doors at ten this morning was more intense, to my apprehension, than I ever remember. My beard froze, and the nape of my neck, and my heart seemed paralyzed. A headache came on, and by the end of the short walk from here to Whitehall I was almost helpless.

30 At 4pm I walked westward, thinking to call on my friends, the Thackerays. The Horseguards Parade and the Mall were one sheet of snow, with paths trodden but not swept: a thick brown fog brooded over it, deepening the twilight; and muffled spectral figures hurried to and fro across the slippery ground. In Victoria Street a girl begged of me: a ragged tall girl of nineteen, by name Caroline Randall, by trade an ironer; who has no home; who slept last
35 night on a step in a sheltered corner, and felt 'as cold as a frog', she said.

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Insert to Paper 2