

Paper Reference(s) 1EN0/01

**Pearson Edexcel Level 1/Level 2
GCSE (9–1)**

English Language

**Paper 1: Fiction and Imaginative
Writing**

Section A: Reading Text Insert

Tuesday 6 June 2017 – Morning

**Time: 1 hour 45 minutes plus your
additional time allowance**

**DO NOT RETURN THIS INSERT
WITH THE QUESTION PAPER.**

ADVICE TO CANDIDATES

- **Read the text before answering the questions in Section A of the question paper.**

Read the text below and answer Questions 1–4 on the question paper.

In this extract the narrator is walking back to London alone late at night. He has arrived at a deserted crossroads.

The Woman in White: Wilkie Collins

In one moment, Every drop of blood in my body was brought to a stop by the touch of a hand laid lightly and suddenly on my shoulder from behind me.

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I turned on the instant, with my fingers tightening round the handle of my stick.

There, in the middle of the broad bright high-road – there, as if it had that moment sprung out of the earth or dropped from the heaven – stood the figure of a solitary woman, dressed

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from head to foot in white garments,
her face bent in grave inquiry on mine, 15
her hand pointing to the dark cloud
over London, as I faced her.

I was far too seriously startled by
the suddenness with which this
extraordinary apparition stood before 20
me, in the dead of night and in that
lonely place, to ask what she wanted.
The strange woman spoke first.

“Is that the road to London?” she said.

I looked attentively at her, as she put 25
that singular question to me. It was
then nearly one o'clock. All I could
discern distinctly by the moonlight
was a colourless, youthful face,
meagre* and sharp to look at about the 30
cheeks and chin; large, grave, wistfully
attentive eyes; nervous, uncertain
lips; and light hair of a pale, brownish-
yellow hue. There was nothing wild,

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nothing immodest in her manner: it 35
 was quiet and self-controlled, a little
 melancholy and a little touched by
 suspicion; not exactly the manner of
 a lady, and, at the same time, not the
 manner of a woman in the humblest 40
 rank of life. The voice, little as I
 had yet heard of it, had something
 curiously still and mechanical in
 its tones, and the utterance was
 remarkably rapid. She held a small bag 45
 in her hand: and her dress – bonnet,
 shawl, and gown all of white – was,
 so far as I could guess, certainly not
 composed of very delicate or very
 expensive materials. Her figure was 50
 slight, and rather above the average
 height – her gait** and actions free
 from the slightest approach to
 extravagance. This was all that I
 could observe of her in the dim light 55
 and under the perplexingly strange
 circumstances of our meeting. What
 sort of a woman she was, and how she
 (Continues on next page) (Turn over)

came to be out alone in the high-road,
an hour after midnight, I altogether 60
failed to guess. The one thing of which
I felt certain was, that the grossest of
mankind could not have misconstrued
her motive in speaking, even at that
suspiciously late hour and in that 65
suspiciously lonely place.

“Did you hear me?” she said, still
quietly and rapidly, and without the
least fretfulness or impatience. “I
asked if that was the way to London.” 70

“Yes,” I replied, “that is the way: it
leads to St. John’s Wood and the
Regent’s Park. You must excuse my
not answering you before. I was rather
startled by your sudden appearance 75
in the road; and I am, even now, quite
unable to account for it.”

“You don’t suspect me of doing
anything wrong, do you? I have done
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nothing wrong. I have met with an accident – I am very unfortunate in being here alone so late. Why do you suspect me of doing wrong?” 80

She spoke with unnecessary earnestness and agitation, and shrank back from me several paces. I did my best to reassure her. 85

“Pray don’t suppose that I have any idea of suspecting you,” I said, “or any other wish than to be of assistance to you, if I can. I only wondered at your appearance in the road, because it seemed to me to be empty the instant before I saw you.” 90

She turned, and pointed back to a place at the junction of the road to London and the road to Hampstead, where there was a gap in the hedge. 95

“I heard you coming,” she said, “and
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hid there to see what sort of man 100
you were, before I risked speaking. I
doubted and feared about it till you
passed; and then I was obliged to
steal after you, and touch you.”

Steal after me and touch me? Why not 105
call to me? Strange, to say the least of
it.

meagre* – thin and undernourished

gait** – a person’s manner of
walking