

Paper Reference(s) 1EN0/01
Pearson Edexcel Level 1/Level 2 GCSE (9–1)

English Language
PAPER 1: Fiction and Imaginative Writing

Tuesday 7 November 2023 – Morning

Time: 1 hour 45 minutes

Reading Text Insert

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

ADVICE

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

Contents

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4–9	Section A
10–11	Section B – Image 1
12–13	Section B – Image 2

Read the text below and answer Questions 1–4 on the Question Paper.

In this extract the narrator is travelling to the remote mining village of Pit End. As night approaches, he decides to take a short cut and to walk across the fields.

*** barren – bleak and lifeless**

**** habitation – a place where people live**

**Was it an Illusion? A Parson's Story:
Amelia B. Edwards**

It was a dull, raw afternoon of mid-November, growing duller and more raw as the day declined and the east wind blew sharper ... 'How much further now, driver?' I asked, as we arrived at the foot of a longer and a stiffer hill than any we had yet passed over.

5

(continued on the next page)

Turn over

Section A continued.

**He turned a straw in his mouth, and
grunted something about ‘fewer than five
mile by the road’.** 10

**And then I learned that by turning off
and taking a certain footpath across
the fields, this distance might be
considerably shortened. I decided,
therefore, to walk the rest of the way; 15
and, setting off at a good pace, I soon
left driver and cart behind. At the top of
the hill I lost sight of them, and coming
presently to a little road-side ruin, I found
the footpath without difficulty.** 20

**It led me across a barren* slope divided
by stone fences, with here and there a
group of shattered sheds, a tall chimney,
and a blackened cinder-mound, marking
the site of a deserted mine. A light fog, 25
meanwhile, was creeping up from the
east, and the dusk was gathering fast.**

(continued on the next page)

Turn over

Section A continued.

Now, to lose one's way in such a place and at such an hour would be disagreeable enough, and the footpath – 30
 a trodden track already half obliterated – would be indistinguishable in the course of another ten minutes. Looking anxiously ahead, therefore, in the hope of seeing some sign of habitation**, 35
 I hastened on, scaling one stone stile after another, till I all at once found myself going around the edge of a line of fences. Following these, with bare boughs branching out overhead 40
 and dead leaves rustling underfoot, I came presently to a point where the path divided.

Which should I take?

There was no time to be lost in 45
 hesitation; so I chose the meadow, the further end of which was lost to sight in a fleecy bank of fog.

(continued on the next page)

Turn over

Section A continued.

Up to this moment I had not met a living
 soul of whom to ask my way; it was, 50
 therefore, with no little sense of relief
 that I saw a man emerging from the
 fog and coming along the path. As we
 neared each other – I advancing rapidly;
 he slowly – I observed that he dragged 55
 the left foot, limping as he walked. It
 was, however, so dark and so misty,
 that not till we were within half a dozen
 yards of each other could I see that
 he wore a dark suit and a felt hat, and 60
 looked something like a church minister.
 As soon as we were within speaking
 distance, I addressed him.

‘Can you tell me’, I said, ‘if I am right for
 Pit End, and how far I have to go?’ 65

He came on, looking straight before
 him; taking no notice of my question;
 apparently not hearing it.

(continued on the next page)

Turn over

Section A continued.

‘I beg your pardon,’ I said, raising my voice; ‘but will this path take me to Pit End, and if so’ ... He had passed on without pausing; without looking at me; I could almost have believed, without seeing me! **70**

I stopped, with the words on my lips; then turned to look after – perhaps, to follow – him. **75**

**But instead of following,
I stood bewildered.**

What had become of him? **80**

And what lad was that going up the path by which I had just come – that tall lad, half-running, half-walking, with a fishing-rod over his shoulder? I could have taken my oath that I had neither met nor passed him. Where then had he come from? And where was the man to whom **85**

(continued on the next page)

Turn over

Section A continued.

**I had spoken not three seconds ago,
and who, at his limping pace, could not
have made more than a couple of yards 90
in the time? My confusion was such that
I stood quite still, looking after the lad
with the fishing-rod till he disappeared in
the gloom.**

Was I dreaming? 95

Image 1 on the following page shows a black and white photograph of a microphone on a stage. The photograph is taken from behind the microphone, facing out towards the audience. The background is blurred but you can tell that there are many rows of people watching from tiered seating.

IMAGE 1



Image 2 on the following page shows a black and white photograph of a young person on a videocall. She is sitting at a desk with a keyboard in front of her. The screen is split into twenty, each part for a different caller. There are a variety of different people pictured in each of the sections. There is a woman holding a baby in one picture. Another picture has a girl standing outside, near some cars. One picture, with two women, has computers in the background. Other pictures have single men and women in their homes and workplaces.

IMAGE 2



SOURCE INFORMATION:

Was it an Illusion? A Parson's Story,
by Amelia B. Edwards, 1818, from
<https://americanliterature.com/author/amelia-b-edwards/short-story/was-it-an-illusion-a-parsons-story> (Work is out of copyright.)

Image 1: Getty Images / uschools

Image 2: Getty Images / FilippoBacci