

Question 1: Reading

You should spend about 45 minutes on this question.

Remind yourself of *Electricity Comes to Cocoa Bottom* from the London Examinations Anthology and then answer Question 1 which is printed on page 3.

Then all the children of Cocoa Bottom
went to see Mr. Samuel's electric lights.
They camped on the grass bank outside his house,
their lamps filled with oil,
5 waiting for sunset,
watching the sky turn yellow, orange.
Grannie Patterson across the road
peeped through the crack in her porch door.
The cable was drawn like a pencil line across the sun.
10 The fireflies waited in the shadows,
their lanterns off.
The kling-klings¹ swooped in from the hills,
congregating in the orange trees.
A breeze coming home from sea held its breath;
15 bamboo lining the dirt road stopped its swaying,
and evening came as soft as chiffon curtains:
Closing. Closing.

Light!
Mr. Samuel smiling on the verandah –
20 a silhouette against the yellow shimmer behind him –
and there arising such a gasp,
such a fluttering of wings,
tweet-a-whit,
such a swaying, swaying.
25 Light! Marvellous light!
And then the breeze rose up from above the trees,
swelling and swelling into a wind
such that the long grass bent forward
stretching across the bank like so many bowed heads.
30 And a voice in the wind whispered:
Is there one among us to record this moment?
But there was none –

no one (except for a few warm rocks
hidden among mongoose ferns) even heard a sound.
35 Already the children of Cocoa Bottom
had lit their lamps for the dark journey home,
and it was too late –
the moment had passed.

Marcia Douglas

¹*Kling-klings*: birds



