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

Time 1 hour 45 minutes

Paper reference **1EN0/01**

English Language

PAPER 1: Fiction and Imaginative Writing
Section A: Reading Text Insert

Source Booklet

Do not return this Booklet with the question paper.

Advice

- Read the text before answering the questions in Section A of the Question Paper.

Turn over ▶

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Q:1/1/1

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

In this extract, Oliver is a little boy, being forced against his will to burgle a rich house in the middle of the night. The two robbers, Bill Sikes and Toby Crackit, have already walked Oliver a long way out of London and are waiting in a house before they set out on their robbery.

***Oliver Twist*: Charles Dickens**

Sikes busied himself in fastening on Oliver's cape.

'Now then!' said Sikes, holding out his hand.

Oliver, who was completely stupefied* by the unwonted exercise, and the air, put his hand mechanically into that which Sikes extended for the purpose.

'Take his other hand, Toby,' said Sikes.

The man went to the door, and returned to announce that all was quiet. The two robbers issued forth with Oliver between them.

It was now intensely dark. The fog was much heavier than it had been in the early part of the night; and the atmosphere was so damp, that, although no rain fell, Oliver's hair and eyebrows, within a few minutes after leaving the house, had become stiff with the half-frozen moisture that was floating about.

They crossed the bridge, and kept on towards the lights which he had seen before. They were at no great distance off; and, as they walked pretty briskly, they soon arrived at Chertsey.

'Slap through the town,' whispered Sikes; 'there'll be nobody in the way, tonight, to see us.'

Toby acquiesced**; and they hurried through the main street of the little town, which at that late hour was wholly deserted. A dim light shone at intervals from some bedroom window; and the hoarse barking of dogs occasionally broke the silence of the night. But there was nobody abroad. They had cleared the town, as the church-bell struck two.

Quickening their pace, they turned up a road upon the left hand. After walking about a quarter of a mile, they stopped before a detached house surrounded by a wall: to the top of which, Toby Crackit, scarcely pausing to take breath, climbed in a twinkling.

'The boy next,' said Toby. 'Hoist him up; I'll catch hold of him.'

Before Oliver had time to look round, Sikes had caught him under the arms; and in three or four seconds he and Toby were lying on the grass on the other side. Sikes followed directly. And they stole cautiously towards the house.

And now, for the first time, Oliver, well-nigh mad with grief and terror, saw that housebreaking and robbery, if not murder, were the objects of the expedition. He clasped his hands together, and involuntarily uttered a subdued exclamation of horror.
A mist came before his eyes; the cold sweat stood upon his ashy face; his limbs failed him; and he sank upon his knees.

'Get up!' murmured Sikes, trembling with rage, and drawing the pistol from his pocket; 'Get up, or I'll strew your brains upon the grass.'

'Oh! for God's sake let me go!' cried Oliver; 'let me run away and die in the fields. I will

never come near London; never, never! Oh! pray have mercy on me, and do not make me steal. For the love of all the bright Angels that rest in Heaven, have mercy upon me!'

The man to whom this appeal was made, swore a dreadful oath, and had cocked the pistol***, when Toby, striking it from his grasp, placed his hand upon the boy's mouth, and dragged him to the house.

'Hush!' cried the man. 'Say another word, and I'll do your business myself with a crack on the head. That makes no noise, and is quite as certain, and more genteel. Here, Bill, wrench the shutter open. He's game enough now, I'll engage. I've seen older hands of his age took the same way, for a minute or two, on a cold night.'

Sikes plied the crowbar vigorously, but with little noise. After some delay, and some assistance from Toby, the shutter to which he had referred, swung open on its hinges. 'Now listen, you young limb,' whispered Sikes, drawing a dark lantern from his pocket, and throwing the glare full on Oliver's face; 'I'm going to put you through there. Take this light; go softly up the steps straight afore you, and along the little hall, to the street door; unfasten it, and let us in.'

*stupefied** – unable to think or feel properly, often caused by extreme tiredness

*acquiesced*** – agreed to do something without objecting

*cocked the pistol**** – got the gun ready to fire

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Acknowledgement:

Oliver Twist by Charles Dickens, 1839