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

Friday 7 June 2019

Morning (Time: 2 hours and 5 minutes) | Paper Reference **1EN0/02**

English Language

Paper 2: Non-fiction and Transactional Writing
Section A: Reading Texts Insert

Do not return the Insert with the Question Paper.

Advice

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

Turn over ▶

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Read the text below and answer Questions 1–3 on the Question Paper.

TEXT 1

Extract from 'Notes From A Small Island: Journey Through Britain' by Bill Bryson (1993).

This edited extract is written by writer Bill Bryson. He moved around Britain documenting his experiences for his travel writing, and here he is trying to decide which local guesthouse he will spend the night in.

Further on along the front there stood a clutch of guesthouses, large and virtually indistinguishable, and a few of them had vacancy signs perched in their windows. I had eight or ten to choose from, which always puts me in a mild worry because I have an unerring* instinct for choosing badly.

My wife can survey a row of guesthouses and instantly identify the one run by a white-haired widow with a kindly nature and a fondness for children, snowy sheets and sparkling bathroom porcelain, whereas I can generally count on choosing the one run by a guy with a grasping manner, a drooping fag and the sort of cough that makes you wonder where he puts the phlegm. Such, I felt gloomily certain, would be the case tonight.

All the guesthouses had boards out front listing their many amenities** – 'Colour TV', 'En Suite All Rooms', 'Hospitality Trays' – which only heightened my sense of unease and doom. How could I possibly choose intelligently among such a range of options? One offered satellite TV and a trouser press and another boasted, in special jaunty italics, 'Current Fire Certificate' – something I had never thought to ask for in a B&B. It was so much easier in the days when the very most you could hope for was hot and cold in all rooms.

I selected a place that looked reasonable enough from the outside – its board promised a colour TV and coffee-making facilities, about all I require these days for a lively Saturday night – but from the moment I set foot in the door and drew in the mildewy pong of damp plaster and peeling wallpaper, I knew it was a bad choice. I was about to turn and flee when the proprietor emerged from a back room and stayed my retreat with an unenthusiastic 'Yes?' A short conversation revealed that a single room with breakfast could be had for £19.50 – little short of a swindle. It was entirely out of the question that I would stay the night in such a dismal place at such a larcenous*** price, so I said, 'That sounds fine,' and signed in. Well, it's so hard to say no.

My room was everything I expected it to be – cold and cheerless, with grubbily matted carpet and those mysterious ceiling stains that bring to mind a neglected corpse in the room above. Fingers of icy wind slipped through the single ill-fitting sash window. I drew the curtains and was not surprised that they had to be pulled violently before they would budge and came nowhere near meeting in the middle. There was a tray of coffee things but the cups were – let me be charitable – disgusting and the spoon was stuck to the tray. The bathroom, faintly illuminated by a distant light activated by a length of string, had curling floor tiles and years of accumulated muck packed into every corner and crack.

*unerring** - certain
*amenities*** - facilities, services
*larcenous**** - criminal, like being stolen from

Read the text below and answer Questions 4-7 on the Question Paper.

TEXT 2

Extract from 'A 'great place to stay' or 'dirty' with 'horrible service' and 'stale' rooms? Opinions are divided over the Canada hotel where William and Kate are set to stay' by Sherelle Jacobs (2016).

This edited extract is taken from The Telegraph newspaper's report on a hotel where members of the British Royal Family are due to stay.

The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge — who are on an eight-day royal tour of Canada — are due to spend the night at a remote three-star hotel where carpeted bathrooms 'smell like cooking at mealtimes'. Critical comments date back several years; many of the more colourful ones have been posted as recently as this summer and September 2016.

William and Kate have said that they are 'delighted' to be staying at the Coast High Country Inn in Whitehorse, in the wild north-west territory of Yukon. But some TripAdvisor users have left scathing comments alleging shower curtains with handprints from former guests, dirty lavatory bowls, and the 'putrid' stink in the rooms. One previous guest described the double room they were sharing with their partner as 'the same size as a cabin on a cruiseliner' and claimed that the bed was so small they were forced to sleep on the floor.

The difficulties when it comes to assessing the veracity* and accuracy of negative reviews on TripAdvisor have come under scrutiny in recent years. Nor is all the feedback on the Coast High Country Inn page negative. The average response seems to be one of restrained approval; many TripAdvisor users have given the hotel three or four stars.

One describes the staff as 'friendly and helpful', another praises the 'comfy beds and linens', and advises that the restaurant is 'nice to relax with a beer'.

In contradiction to claims about dirtiness and poor-quality staff, an especially enthusiastic patron also describes the hotel as having 'clean, well-appointed rooms and excellent courteous service for only marginally more than you would pay for a far less professional and [more] tired hotel.'

But it's hard to ignore the more vitriolic** feedback. The hotel used to house a YMCA hostel***. One enraged guest took to the internet to brand its transformation into a hotel in the Nineties as the equivalent of 'putting lipstick on a pig'.

William and Kate will be staying in the best room of the bunch — the Premium King Jacuzzi room which costs from £153 a night. Although this comes with a hot tub, the hotel doesn't appear to have an untarnished reputation in the bath tub stakes — one TripAdvisor user talks about a broken whirlpool; a second expresses their disbelief over a missing bath plug.

The Jacuzzi room comes with a kitchenette. But one individual who stayed in a self-catering room has also complained about the absence of wine glasses, and 'absolute minimum number' of cutlery.

The royal couple, who will stay at the hotel without their children, may also struggle to get a good night's sleep. One guest review on TripAdvisor laments that 'we could constantly hear a door banging'; another that 'rooms above the pub are loud, late into the evening with music playing till 1am'. And a particularly puzzled guest even retells an episode when the fire alarm went off one day for no apparent reason at all.

The on-site restaurant seems slightly more popular. Health-conscious Kate may nonetheless struggle with the grease-smeared menu of brisket with barbecue sauce, corn bread with whipped maple bacon butter, and flash-fried chicken wings. That's if the food arrives. 40

*veracity** - truth
*vitriolic*** - poisonous
*YMCA hostel**** - cheap, temporary accommodation for travellers

Sources:

Text 1: *Notes From A Small Island: Journey Through Britain*, Bill Bryson, 1993, Transworld Publishers (Kindle Edition).

Text 2: *A 'great place to stay' or 'dirty' with 'horrible service' and 'stale' rooms? Opinions are divided over the Canada hotel where William and Kate are set to stay,* Sherelle Jacobs, 2016, The Telegraph.

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