

English Language Paper 1 – Source A

This extract is from the beginning of 'The Woman in Black' by Susan Hill. It is the early 1900s and Arthur Kipps is starting a journey from London to go to Eel Marsh House and attend the funeral of Mrs Drablow.

1 It was a Monday afternoon in November and already growing dark, not because of the
lateness of the hour - it was barely three o'clock - but because of the fog, the thickest of
London pea-soupers, which had hemmed us in on all sides since dawn – if, indeed, there
5 had been a dawn, for the fog had scarcely allowed any daylight to penetrate the foul gloom
of the atmosphere.

Fog was outdoors, hanging over the river, creeping in and out of alleyways and passages,
swirling thickly between the bare trees of all the parks and gardens of the city, and indoors,
too, seething through cracks and crannies like sour breath, gaining a sly entrance at every
opening of a door. It was a yellow fog, a filthy, evil-smelling fog, a fog that choked and
10 blinded, smeared and stained. Groping their way blindly across roads, men and women
took their lives in their hands, stumbling along the pavements, they clutched at railings and
at one another, for guidance.

Sounds were deadened, shapes blurred. It was a fog that had come three days before, and
did not seem inclined to go away and it had, I suppose, the quality of all such fogs – it was
15 menacing and sinister, disguising the familiar world and confusing the people in it, as they
were confused by having their eyes covered and being turned about, in a game of Blind
Man's Buff.

It was, in all, miserable weather and lowering to the spirits in the dearest month of the
year.

20 It would be easy to look back and to believe that all that day I had a sense of foreboding
about my journey to come, that some sixth sense, some telepathic intuition that may lie
dormant and submerged in most men, had stirred and become alert within me. But I was, in
those days of my youth, a sturdy, commonsensical fellow, and I felt no uneasiness or
apprehension whatsoever. Any depression of my usual blithe spirits was solely on account
25 of the fog, and of November, and the same dreariness was shared by every citizen of
London.

So far as I can faithfully recall, however, I felt nothing other than curiosity, a professional
interest in what scant account of the business Mr Bentley had put before me, coupled with
a mild sense of adventure, for I had never before visited that remote part of England to
30 which I was now travelling – and a certain relief at the prospect of getting away from the
unhealthy atmosphere of fog and dankness. Moreover, I was barely twenty-three years old,
and retained a schoolboy's passion for everything to do with railway stations and journeys
on steam locomotives.

- 01.** Read again the first part of the source, from **lines 1 to 5**.
List **four** things about the day from this part of the source.

[4 marks]

- 02.** Look in detail at this extract, from **lines 1 to 12** of the source:

1	It was a Monday afternoon in November and already growing dark, not because of the lateness of the hour - it was barely three o'clock - but because of the fog, the thickest of London pea-soupers, which had hemmed us in on all sides since dawn – if, indeed, there had been a dawn, for the fog had scarcely allowed any daylight to penetrate the foul gloom
5	of the atmosphere.
	Fog was outdoors, hanging over the river, creeping in and out of alleyways and passages, swirling thickly between the bare trees of all the parks and gardens of the city, and indoors, too, seething through cracks and crannies like sour breath, gaining a sly entrance at every opening of a door. It was a yellow fog, a filthy, evil-smelling fog, a fog that choked and
10	blinded, smeared and stained. Groping their way blindly across roads, men and women took their lives in their hands, stumbling along the pavements, they clutched at railings and at one another, for guidance.

How does the writer use language here to describe the fog?

You could include the writer's choice of:

- Words and phrases
- Language features and techniques
- Sentence forms.

[8 marks]

- 03.** You now need to think about the **whole** of the source.
This text is from the beginning of a novel.

How has the writer structured the text to interest you as a reader?

You could write about:

- What the writer focusses your attention on at the beginning of the source
- How and why the writer changes this focus as the source develops
- Any other structural features that interest you.

[8 marks]

- 04.** Focus this part of your answer on the second part of the source, from **line 13 to the end**.

A student said, 'This part of the story shows how the narrator, Arthur Kipps, was not worried about future events, despite the ominous weather, and was in fact looking forward to it.'

To what extent do you agree?

In your response, you could:

- Consider your own impressions of Arthur Kipps
- Evaluate how the writer conveys Arthur's thoughts about his present and future situations
- Support your response with references to the text.

[20 marks]

05. Your local newspaper is running a creative writing competition and they intend to publish the winning entries.

Either

Describe a setting suggested by this picture:



Or

Write the beginning of a story about someone who is looking forward to something.

(24 marks for content and organisation
16 marks for technical accuracy)

[40 marks]