



AQA Style

GCSE

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Paper 2 - 002

Insert

(80 Marks)

Sources included in this insert:

Source A – 21st Century non-fiction

Fighting Back by Julie Read

Source B – 19th Century literary non-fiction

Overseer's Report on Conditions for the Sick in Huddersfield Workhouse

Fighting Back by Julie Read

This is an extract from an autobiography 'Fighting Back' written in 2014. Julie Read tells about the time when, aged 21, she became extremely poorly with an illness that affects the nervous system and causes immense pain.

Being in pain is one of the most difficult things to describe. It's amorphous, it changes its shape, location and intensity, it sometimes digs its claws into you, while at other times is nothing worse than a dull thud. It's like a hand, a black hand inside your body; it can nip and pinch, poke and scratch or beat and punch.

5 When it comes to pain, one person's excruciating is another person's bearable. No-one can understand someone else's agony. So the literal and metaphorical bed-island I am stranded on is surrounded by an ocean of people, all caring, all willing to help. But not one of them can reach me properly and completely know how this feels. It is no-one's fault, it is just the way of things.

10 The world goes grey when pain is your friend. Pleasure leaks out of everything. Food is no longer appetising, books can't hold your attention and films are just a blur of meaningless noise and hazy colour. It surprised me how important these small things are in order to feel content. I wasn't mourning the fact that I wasn't going to be able to travel abroad for at least two years, that I may not be able to work for the foreseeable future, instead I lamented
15 the fact that a bowl of rice crispies was now like eating dried rabbit droppings in water, chocolate was nauseating and, to top it all off, crisps felt like salted cardboard and were almost impossible to swallow.

Pain is a wall of glass separating you and the rest of the world. Like you are looking in through a window at the world you knew, full of colours and comforts and conversation.
20 You know it is all still there, but you cannot feel it, touch it or make it seem real.

Sleep is the only escape. If you can call it that. Plunged into vivid nightmares of being enclosed in a tunnel and running for your life, waking dreams of small boys lost and wandering in striped pyjamas, snakes inhabiting the sink in the corner. It's hard to know where reality ends and fantasy begins. Plus there is never any stillness in a hospital.
25 Even at night the hushed tones of the nurses, the squeak of their rubber soled shoes on the floor, the occasional groan from other patients and the incessant bleep and hum of machines keep grasping for your attention, making sleep an unlikely visitor.

Those long, hollow hours gave me too much time to think about my fate, and I began to dread their inevitable coming.

30 I tried my best with the TV. Some of my favourite programmes; House, Life on Mars, The Tudors I already had on my iPad. So, during those night hours I resolved to put in the headphones and turn my attention to the stories therein. I would be successful for around five minutes and then like a hook on a fishing line, the pain would sink into my attention and pull it away from the programme. I would resist, change position, readjust my pillows,
35 but it was no good. I couldn't seem to be absorbed by the drama any more. Instead the pain absorbed me.

Of course there were the drugs, yes, those lovely painkillers come to solve all your problems. And they do, for about 30 minutes after a glorious jab (you begin to look forward to the pain

Source A - 21st Century non-fiction

40 of it), you can relax, talk, maybe even sleep a little. But whatever hole the pain has been thrown into, it crawls up out of the darkness like an ugly troll and before you know it, its strong arms have you in their grip again.

45 Interestingly, even though medical professionals have said I'm wrong, I theorise that those much needed painkillers caused a permanent change in my brain. Now I hallucinate fairly regularly, usually when I am very tired. Sometimes it's a huge spider putting its fat hairy legs one at a time over the arm of my chair. On other occasions a large, grey and rather beautiful snake has slowly uncurled underneath my coffee table. Embarrassingly at a party once I told the host that another guest had just come in through the front door, but there was nobody there. At a barbecue I jumped because I'd seen a raccoon peep around the legs of the chair opposite me.

50 These hallucinations last seconds and are certainly not distressing or frightening (luckily I don't mind spiders and snakes), I just accept them as part of my life. In fact the only people who do get uptight about them are doctors who suddenly look very grave and start using words like 'psychosis' and 'delusion'. To my mind, if it doesn't bother me, why should it bother them? I always know (eventually) that they aren't real and I am very sure that
55 being given large doses of morphine every four hours for weeks altered my perception of the world.



Overseer's Report on Conditions for the Sick in Huddersfield Workhouse

In 1847, an investigation was conducted into conditions for the sick at Huddersfield Workhouse. It was undertaken after a letter from Thomas Tatham, the Medical Officer for the northern district of Huddersfield, raised serious concerns about how the poor were treated when they were ill.

OVERSEER'S REPORT

May 1847

5 The overseers of the poor of the township of Huddersfield, having received it in instruction from a vestry meeting of the township (assembled on the 23rd day of March last, to nominate fit and proper persons to fill the said office of overseers), to institute an inquiry into certain allegations then and there made, as to the general treatment the sick poor had received in the Huddersfield workhouse, beg to say that they have complied with the request contained in the resolution of the said vestry meeting, and have thereupon to report as follows:-

10 The overseers have had before them the medical officer of the northern division of the township, (in which district the workhouse is situated), and also several of the parties who have acted as nurses to the sick poor, both in the workhouse and in the temporary fever hospital. They have also made it their business to prosecute certain inquiries at the workhouse itself; and the result of all is that: that they are forced to the conclusion that the sick poor have been most shamefully neglected; that they have been and still are devoid of the necessary articles of clothing and bedding; that they have been suffered to remain for weeks at a time in the most filthy and disgusting state; that patients have been allowed to remain for nine weeks altogether without a change of linen or of bed clothing, that beds in which patients suffering in typhus have died, one after another, have been again and again and repeatedly used for fresh patients, without any change or attempt at purification; that the said beds were only bags of straw and shavings, for the most part laid on the floor, and that the whole swarmed with lice; that two patients suffering in infectious fever, were almost constantly put together in one bed; that it not unfrequently happened that one would be ragingly delirious, when the other was dying; and that it is a fact that a living patient had occupied the same bed with a corpse for a considerable period after death; that the patients have been for months together without properly appointed nurses to attend to them; that there has been for a considerable time none but male paupers to attend female patients; that when the poor sick creatures were laid in the most abject and helpless state-so debilitated as to pass their dejections as they lay, they have been suffered to remain in the most befouled state possible, besmeared in their own excrement, for days together, and not even washed; that the necessary stimulants ordered by the medical officer have been withheld; that when patients' lives even depended on the free administration of wine, the fever hospital has been left without for more than forty-eight hours at a time; that death occurred amongst the patients from which such stimulant was withheld, which the medical officer attributes to this very cause; that the party whose duty it was to have provided such wine, was repeatedly applied to for it, both by the nurses at the hospital and the medical officer.