1.37-2 Comprehension: Mixed-Genre Set 2: 1-hour Pack

GL ASSESSMENT / CSSE 11+ Entrance English (GL Assessment / CSSE style) · about 60 minutes

Total Marks

Name: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / _____

Answer ALL questions.

Reading texts

Text 1: The Lantern Keeper's Daughter

Original short fiction written for Revision Library.

Amara pressed her palm against the cold stone and listened. Somewhere above her, the wind was worrying at the lantern room's broken window, and the sound rose and fell like breathing.

Her grandfather had warned her never to climb past the store room, but he had gone to the mainland for the day, and the spiral stairs curled upward, pale in the gloom, daring her to follow them.

She began to climb, one hand trailing along the iron rail, until she reached a door she had never noticed before. It was smaller than the others, set into an alcove, and painted the faded green of old bottle glass. A brass key, tied with frayed string, hung from a nail beside it.

Amara's fingers hovered over the key. Her grandfather had lived in this lighthouse for forty years, had kept its lamp burning through storms that had wrecked ships along this stretch of the Northumberland coast, and he had never once mentioned a locked room.

She lifted the key from its nail and fitted it to the lock. It turned with a groan, as though woken from a long sleep, and the door swung inward on hinges that had not moved in years.

Dust hung in the thin grey light. Along one wall stood a workbench crowded with instruments she did not recognise, brass and glass and tarnished silver, arranged with the same careful precision as everything else in her grandfather's world. Above the bench, a row of shelves sagged under the weight of logbooks, their leather spines cracked and pale with age.

Amara stepped closer and drew one down. The pages were brittle, the ink faded to the colour of weak tea, but the handwriting was unmistakably her grandfather's, small and slanted and neat. She turned to the final entry and read a single line, underlined twice: "Tell her when she is old enough to understand."

Outside, the wind dropped, and for a moment the whole tower seemed to hold its breath, waiting.

Text 2: Return of the Red Kite

Original non-fiction text written for Revision Library.

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Thirty years ago, if you had stood on a hillside in the Chilterns and looked up, you would have seen an empty sky. Today you are almost certain to spot a red kite, wheeling overhead on its long, forked tail, scanning the fields below for carrion.

The red kite was once one of Britain's commonest birds of prey. Medieval Londoners even valued kites for clearing rubbish from the streets, and it was illegal to kill one. By the late nineteenth century, however, gamekeepers and farmers had persecuted the species almost to extinction, wrongly blaming it for taking lambs and game birds. By 1930, only a handful of pairs survived, hidden away in the remote valleys of central Wales.

In 1989, conservationists began one of the most successful reintroduction projects in British history. Young kites from Spain and Sweden were released into the Chiltern Hills, chosen because the rolling farmland and mixed woodland offered ideal hunting and nesting conditions. Each bird was fitted with a lightweight wing tag so that scientists could track its movements without disturbing its natural behaviour.

"Nobody expected the population to recover this quickly," explains Dr Priya Nair, a raptor ecologist who has studied the project since its early years. "Within twenty years, we had gone from six breeding pairs to several thousand. It shows what can happen when a species is simply given the chance to thrive."

The kites have since spread far beyond the Chilterns, with breeding populations now established in Yorkshire, Scotland and Northern Ireland. Some conservationists estimate that the UK is now home to around ten per cent of the world's red kite population, a remarkable turnaround for a bird that had almost vanished from these islands within living memory.

Not everyone has welcomed the kites' return. A small number of farmers report occasional losses of young poultry, and in some towns the birds have learned to swoop for food scraps, startling picnickers. Even so, most conservationists agree that the red kite's recovery stands as one of the clearest proofs that careful, well-funded conservation can reverse centuries of decline.

1 Give the meaning of each of the following words as they are used in Text 2.

(a) 'carrion' (paragraph 1) **(1)**

(b) 'persecuted' (paragraph 2) **(1)**

(c) 'reintroduction' (paragraph 3) **(1)**

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2 Name the two countries the young red kites released into the Chiltern Hills were brought from.

(2)

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3 Why, according to the article, were the Chiltern Hills chosen as the release site for the kites?

(2)

---

4 According to Dr Priya Nair, roughly how many breeding pairs of kites were there when the project began, and roughly how many were there within twenty years?

(2)

---

5 Explain the effect of the writer including a direct quotation from Dr Priya Nair in paragraph 4.

(3)

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6 How does the writer structure the final paragraph of Text 2 to present a balanced view of the red kites' return? Refer to the order of ideas in your answer.

(3)

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7 Both texts describe something that was once hidden or kept out of sight. Find one phrase from Text 1 and one phrase from Text 2 that show this idea.

(2)

8 Text 1 is fiction and Text 2 is non-fiction. Give one feature of Text 1 that shows it is fiction, and one feature of Text 2 that shows it is a non-fiction, informative text.

(2)

9 Compare the purposes of the two texts. What is Text 1 trying to do, and what is Text 2 trying to do?

(3)

10 Text 1 ends with the description 'the whole tower seemed to hold its breath, waiting'. Text 2 states that the population went 'from six breeding pairs to several thousand'. Explain the effect of each of these descriptions.

(3)

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11 Give the meaning of each of the following words as they are used in Text 1.

(a) 'alcove' (paragraph 3) **(1)**

(b) 'frayed' (paragraph 3) **(1)**

(c) 'brittle' (paragraph 7) **(1)**

(d) 'unmistakably' (paragraph 7) **(1)**

12 In paragraph 1, the writer describes the sound of the wind as rising and falling 'like breathing'. Explain the effect of this simile on the reader.

(2)

13 What does the fact that the door is described as 'smaller than the others' and 'set into an alcove' suggest about the room behind it?

(2)

14 The writer describes the lock turning 'as though woken from a long sleep'. Explain the effect of this description.

(3)

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15 According to paragraph 4, how long had Amara's grandfather lived in the lighthouse?

(1)

16 How does the writer use sentence length to build tension across the extract? Refer to at least two examples in your answer.

(3)

17 Look at paragraph 1 of Text 1. Where is Amara at the start of the extract, and what is she doing?

(1)

18 According to Text 2, in what year did conservationists begin releasing red kites into the Chiltern Hills?

(1)

19 Find and copy the phrase that explains why kites were valued in medieval London.

(1)

20 Find and copy one word from paragraph 1 that suggests the wind is behaving like a living creature.

(1)

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21 What is the writer's main purpose in this article, and how do the facts and statistics used throughout help to achieve it?

(4)

22 Using details from both texts, explain two ways in which the idea of something hidden being revealed is handled differently in Text 1 and Text 2.

(4)

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23 Which text do you think is more effective at engaging its reader, Text 1 or Text 2? Support your answer with evidence and language analysis from at least one text.

(6)

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24 Evaluate how effectively the writer creates a sense of mystery in the final two paragraphs of the extract (from 'Amara stepped closer' to the end). You should comment on: the writer's word choices; the effect of the quoted line; how the extract ends.

(4)

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Mark scheme · 1.37-2 Comprehension: Mixed-Genre Set 2: 1-hour Pack

Question 1

(a) Meaning close to 'the dead, decaying flesh of animals' **B1**

(a) Answer: the dead, decaying flesh of animals

(b) Meaning close to 'deliberately and repeatedly hunted, harmed or treated with hostility' **B1**

(b) Answer: deliberately and repeatedly hunted or treated with hostility

(c) Meaning close to 'bringing a species back to an area where it had died out or disappeared' **B1**

(c) Answer: bringing a species back to an area where it had died out

Question 2

Spain **B1**

Sweden **B1**

Answer: Spain and Sweden.

Question 3

The rolling farmland offered ideal hunting conditions **B1**

The mixed woodland offered ideal nesting conditions **B1**

Answer: Because the rolling farmland offered ideal hunting conditions and the mixed woodland offered ideal nesting conditions.

Question 4

Six breeding pairs at the start **B1**

Several thousand within twenty years **B1**

Answer: There were six breeding pairs at the start, rising to several thousand within twenty years.

Question 5

Adds authority/credibility, since she is an expert (a raptor ecologist) who has studied the project first-hand **B1**

Makes the information feel more personal and engaging for the reader than a plain statement of fact **B1**

The specific statistic within the quotation (six pairs to several thousand) emphasises the scale of the recovery, making the claim feel more vivid and convincing **B1**

Answer: Including an expert's direct words makes the information more credible, since Dr Nair speaks from first-hand experience of the project; her specific statistic also makes the scale of the recovery feel more vivid and convincing to the reader.

Question 6

Identifies that the paragraph opens with a counterpoint or negative viewpoint (farmers' losses, startled picnickers) **B1**

Identifies that this is followed by the connective 'Even so' and a return to a positive conclusion **B1**

Explains the effect, e.g. acknowledging opposing views before reinforcing the main argument leaves the reader with a favourable final impression **B1**

Answer: The paragraph opens by acknowledging a counter-argument (farmers' losses, startled picnickers), then uses the connective 'Even so' to pivot back to a positive conclusion. Placing the criticism first and the positive view last means the article ends on a favourable impression despite presenting both sides.

Question 7

Valid phrase from Text 1, e.g. 'he had never once mentioned a locked room' **B1**

Valid phrase from Text 2, e.g. 'hidden away in the remote valleys of central Wales' **B1**

Answer: Text 1: 'he had never once mentioned a locked room'. Text 2: 'hidden away in the remote valleys of central Wales'.

Question 8

Valid fiction feature of Text 1, e.g. a named character (Amara), descriptive narrative language, or a quoted line of writing within the story **B1**

Valid non-fiction feature of Text 2, e.g. specific dates/statistics (1989, ten per cent), a named expert (Dr Priya Nair), or an explanatory, factual tone **B1**

Answer: Text 1 (fiction): has a named character, Amara, and uses descriptive narrative language. Text 2 (non-fiction): uses specific dates and statistics (e.g. 1989, ten per cent) and quotes a named expert, Dr Priya Nair.

Question 9

Identifies that Text 1's purpose is to entertain and build a sense of mystery/suspense through narrative **B1**

Identifies that Text 2's purpose is to inform the reader and to show/persuade that conservation can succeed, using facts **B1**

Makes a valid comparative point, e.g. both aim to engage the reader's interest, but through different techniques - narrative tension versus factual evidence **B1**

Answer: Text 1's purpose is to entertain and build a sense of mystery through narrative and suspense. Text 2's purpose is to inform the reader about the red kite's recovery and to persuade them that conservation works, using facts and expert opinion rather than storytelling. Both aim to engage the reader, but through very different techniques.

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Question 10

Explains the effect of the personification in Text 1, e.g. it creates a tense, suspenseful pause that mirrors the reader's own anticipation **B1**

Explains the effect of the statistic in Text 2, e.g. the precise numbers make the scale of the recovery feel striking and convincing **B1**

Makes a valid comparative/overall point, e.g. both descriptions create impact at a key moment, but Text 1 does so emotionally/imaginatively while Text 2 does so factually **B1**

Answer: The personification in Text 1 creates a tense, suspenseful pause that mirrors the reader's own anticipation, while the precise statistic in Text 2 makes the scale of the recovery feel striking and convincing. Both create impact at a key moment, but Text 1 does so emotionally and Text 2 does so factually.

Question 11

(a) Meaning close to 'a small recess or hollow set into a wall' **B1**

(a) Answer: a small recess or hollow set into a wall

(b) Meaning close to 'worn, unravelling at the edges through age or use' **B1**

(b) Answer: worn and unravelling at the edges, through age or use

(c) Meaning close to 'hard but easily broken or crumbled, especially with age' **B1**

(c) Answer: hard but easily broken, especially through age

(d) Meaning close to 'in a way that is impossible to mistake for anything/anyone else; clearly' **B1**

(d) Answer: clearly and without any doubt; impossible to mistake for anyone else's

Question 12

Identifies that the simile makes the wind/lighthouse seem alive, or personifies it **B1**

Explains the effect, e.g. creates an eerie, unsettling atmosphere from the opening line, or hints that something unusual is about to happen **B1**

Answer: The simile makes the wind sound as though the lighthouse itself is alive and breathing, creating an eerie, unsettling atmosphere right from the opening line.

Question 13

Suggests the room/door is easy to overlook or miss **B1**

Suggests the room was deliberately tucked away or meant to be kept hidden **B1**

Answer: It suggests the door is easy to overlook and may have been deliberately tucked away, hinting that whatever is behind it was meant to stay hidden.

Question 14

Identifies this as personification, giving the lock human/living qualities **B1**

Explains that it suggests the door has been unused/undisturbed for a very long time **B1**

Comments on the wider effect, e.g. adds a slightly otherworldly or mysterious feel, building suspense as the door is about to be opened **B1**

Answer: The personification suggests the lock has been undisturbed for a very long time, as though it were sleeping. This gives the moment a slightly otherworldly, mysterious feel and builds suspense just before the door opens.

Question 15

Forty years **B1**

Answer: Forty years.

Question 16

Identifies a long, multi-clause sentence (e.g. paragraph 4) that delays action and builds detail, creating anticipation **B1**

Identifies the short final sentence (paragraph 8) used for impact, slowing the pace at a key moment **B1**

Explains the overall effect, e.g. the contrast in sentence length mirrors Amara's growing suspense and leaves the reader in suspense too **B1**

Answer: The writer uses long, layered sentences (e.g. paragraph 4) to delay the moment of discovery and build anticipation, then switches to a short sentence at the very end to create a pause, leaving the reader in suspense.

Question 17

Identifies that Amara is inside the lighthouse (near the lantern room), listening to / pressing her hand against the stone wall **B1**

Answer: Amara is inside the lighthouse, standing with her palm against the cold stone wall, listening to the wind.

Question 18

1989 **B1**

Answer: 1989.

Question 19

valued kites for clearing rubbish from the streets **B1**

Answer: valued kites for clearing rubbish from the streets

Question 20

worrying (accept 'breathing', as the sound is compared to breathing) **B1**

Answer: worrying

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Question 21

Level 1 Basic identification of purpose (e.g. to inform), with little or no use of evidence. **1**

Level 2 Clear identification of purpose with relevant supporting evidence from the text. **2-3**

Level 3 Well-evidenced explanation of purpose, showing how specific facts and statistics build the writer's case across the whole article. **4**

Indicative content:

- Purpose is to inform readers about the red kite's recovery, and to persuade them that conservation can succeed
- Statistics (six pairs to several thousand; around ten per cent of the world's population) provide measurable evidence of success
- The historical detail (medieval protection, near-extinction by 1930) creates contrast that makes the recovery seem more impressive
- The expert quotation adds authority to the persuasive purpose

Question 22

Identifies that in Text 1 the locked room and logbook are revealed to Amara, but the reason for the secrecy is left unresolved at the end **B1**

Develops this point with reference, e.g. the final quoted line ('Tell her when she is old enough to understand') raises a question that is not answered **B1**

Identifies that in Text 2 the red kite's near-disappearance is fully explained, and its 'reintroduction' is openly described and celebrated **B1**

Develops this point with reference, e.g. facts and statistics are used to explain exactly how and why the population recovered, leaving no mystery **B1**

Answer: In Text 1, the locked room and logbook are revealed to Amara, but why they were kept secret is left unresolved, ending on the unanswered quoted line 'Tell her when she is old enough to understand.' In Text 2, by contrast, the red kite's near-disappearance and later reintroduction are fully explained using facts and statistics, so nothing is left mysterious by the end.

Question 23

Level 1 States a preference with little or no justification; minimal or no textual reference. **1-2**

Level 2 Gives a clear opinion supported by relevant reference or quotation from at least one text, with some comment on effect. **3-4**

Level 3 Gives a well-reasoned, developed opinion supported by precise, well-chosen references from at least one text (ideally both), with perceptive analysis of language or structure and its effect on the reader. **5-6**

Indicative content:

- Text 1: suspense, sensory imagery, personification, an unresolved ending, e.g. 'the whole tower seemed to hold its breath, waiting'
- Text 2: precise statistics, expert quotation, balanced argument, e.g. 'from six breeding pairs to several thousand', real-world relevance
- Either viewpoint is acceptable if well supported by precise textual evidence
- Credit comparative analysis of how narrative technique (Text 1: imagery, suspense, character) versus factual exposition (Text 2: statistics, expert opinion, balanced structure) engages the reader differently
- Reward a genuine personal response with clear textual justification and understanding of the writer's craft

Question 24

Level 1 Simple comment(s) on word choice or content, with little or no reference to the effect on the reader. **1-2**

Level 2 Clear explanation of how language and structure create mystery, supported by relevant evidence. **3**

Level 3 Detailed, well-evidenced evaluation of how the writer's choices combine to build mystery, including the effect of the unresolved final line. **4**

Indicative content:

- Descriptive detail ('brittle' pages, ink 'the colour of weak tea') suggests age and secrecy
- The direct quotation 'Tell her when she is old enough to understand' withholds information, creating intrigue about who 'her' is
- Personification in the final line ('the whole tower seemed to hold its breath, waiting') mirrors the reader's own suspense
- The extract ends on an unresolved cliffhanger rather than an answer, deliberately withholding information from the reader

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