

**English Language
Paper 1**

**Component 1: Fiction
Reading**

**Student revision
support pack**

What is it?

- 20% of the final marks for GCSE English Language.
- Exam length: one hour
- 5 questions

You will be given an extract of narrative fiction (a story) which was published between 1900 and 1999.

You will have to answer 5 questions on the extract.

Each question will be worth 5 or 10 marks

Sometimes bullet points will be provided – use them!

Each question targets a different assessment objective so you need to be familiar with them.

What to do when you see a question

Skills:

1. Read each question TWICE.
2. Be aware of which lines or areas of the extract each question is asking you to look at. **Top Tip:** Rule off on your copy of the extract to show which sections the question is asking for.
3. It is most sensible to read and 'track' through the text chronologically to make sure that you don't miss anything.
4. Highlight key evidence – words or phrases that will help you answer the question.
5. Write up your answer

Search and find questions

What are they?

Search and find questions will ask you to identify **explicit** and **implicit** information in the text.

What will they look like?

- “List 5...” ←
- “What do we learn about...”

Top Tip:

If it says “List” you can use bullet points to answer

How many marks?

Will be worth 5 marks

1 mark per answer

Aim for 6-7 answers to cover yourself

How long?

You should spend 5 minutes on these questions.

How to answer:

If it says list, you may use bullet points. If not, you must answer in sentences. Embed short, focussed quotations into your answers. **Do not** quote whole lengthy sentences.

Sentence Starters:

“I learn...”

Search and find questions – Putting it into practice

To answer this question, you will need to use the extract from *The Day of the Triffids* at the back of this pack.

Read lines 1-5

A1: list **five** reasons why the Triffids have not previously been seen as dangerous. [5 marks]

To answer this question, you will need to use the extract from *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* at the back of this pack.

Read lines 1-7

A1: list **five** reasons why the labour camp is an unpleasant place. [5 marks]

To answer this question, you will need to use the extract from *To Kill a Mockingbird* at the back of this pack.

Read lines 1-10

A1: list **five** reasons the children dislike visiting Mrs Dubose. [5 marks]

How questions

What are they?

How questions assess you for AO2. This means you have to comment on, explain and analyse how writers use language, using relevant subject terminology to support your views.

What will they look like?

- “How does the writer show that...”
- “How does the writer make these lines tense and dramatic”
- “How does the writer...”

How many marks?

Will be worth either 5 or 10 marks

Success Criteria

<u>10 Marks</u>
● 8-10 comments
● 4-6 focusing on language
● Overview

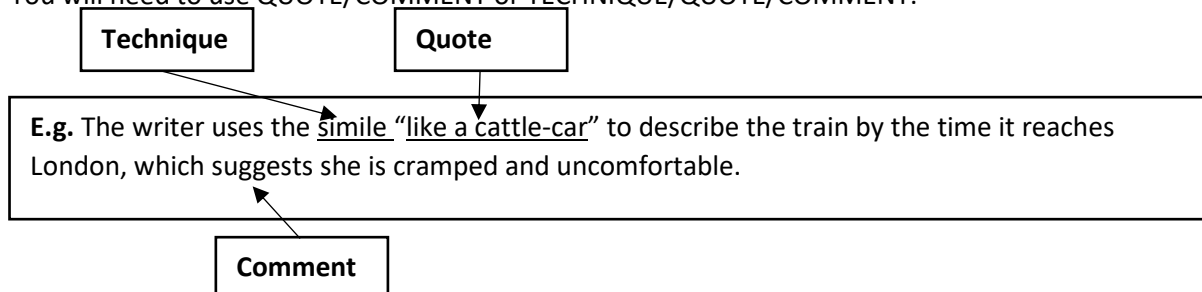
<u>5 Marks</u>
● 4-5 comments
● 2-3 focusing on language
● Overview

How long?

- 10 mark question: 15 minutes
- 5 mark question: 10 minutes

How to answer:

You will need to use QUOTE/COMMENT or TECHNIQUE/QUOTE/COMMENT.



Sentence Starters:
“The writer uses...when they write...which suggests...”
“The writer writes...which suggests...”

Top Tip:

Don't just define a technique in your answer. You must comment on its effects on the reader:

The writer uses a metaphor "The final instrument of his anger against them" to compare the will to an instrument.

The writer uses a metaphor "The final instrument of his anger against them" to compare the will to an instrument. **X**

The writer uses a metaphor when he describes the will as 'the final instrument of his anger against them'. This suggests it is a specific and carefully chosen tool that he is using precisely and for maximum effect. **V**

How questions – Putting it into practice

To answer this question, you will need to use the extract from *The Day of the Triffids* at the back of this pack.

Read lines 40-55

A4: How does the writer increase the tension in these lines?

You should write about:

- What happens to increase the tension
- The writer's use of language to create tension
- The effects on the reader

[10 marks]

To answer this question, you will need to use the extract from *Enduring Love* at the back of this pack.

Read lines 1-14

A4: How does the writer create a sense of drama and tension in these lines?

You should write about:

- What happens to build drama and tension
- The writer's use of language to create drama and tension
- The effects on the reader

[10 marks]

To answer this question, you will need to use the extract from *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* at the back of this pack.

Read lines 8-14

A4: How does the writer show what life is like for Shukhov?

[5 marks]

To answer this question, you will need to use the extract from *To Kill a Mockingbird* at the back of this pack.

Read lines 22-32

A4: How does the writer suggest the children are frightened of Mrs Dubose in these lines?

You should write about:

- What happens to suggest they are frightened of Mrs Dubose
- The writer's use of language to suggest their fear
- The effects on the reader

[10 marks]

Impressions questions

What are they?

Impressions questions assess you for AO2. This means you have to comment on, explain and analyse how writers use language, using relevant subject terminology to support your views. For top marks, you will need to cover a **range** of different impressions you get about a character, setting or relationship in the text.

What will they look like?

- “What impression do you get of...”
- “What are...’s impressions of...”

How many marks?

Will be worth either 5 or 10 marks

Success Criteria

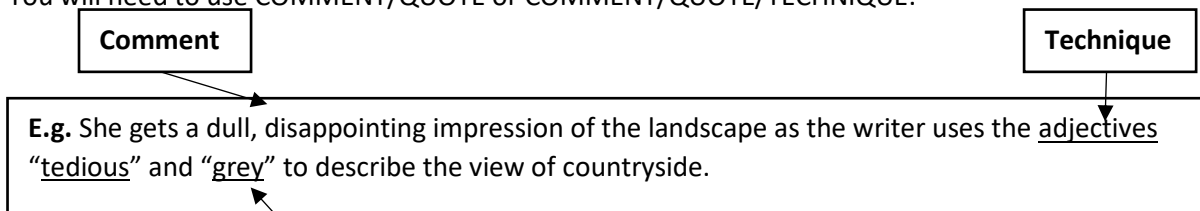
<u>10 Marks</u>	<u>5 Marks</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● 8-10 comments● 4-6 focusing on language● Overview	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● 4-5 comments● 2-3 focusing on language● Overview

How long?

- 10 mark question: 15 minutes
- 5 mark question: 10 minutes

How to answer:

You will need to use COMMENT/QUOTE or COMMENT/QUOTE/TECHNIQUE.



<p>Sentence Starters:</p> <p>“I get the impression that...because the writer uses...when they write...”</p> <p>“I get the impression that...because the writer writes...”</p> <p>“I get the impression that...because the writer uses...when they write...which suggests...”</p> <p>“I get the impression that...because the writer writes...which suggests...”</p>
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Top Tip:

If your "...which suggests..." comment would only repeat the information from your "I get the impression..." comment, you do not need it.

I get the impression Patrick is determined to upset his family as the writer uses a metaphor to describe his will as the "final instrument of his anger against them" which suggests he is determined to upset his family. **X**

I get the impression Patrick is determined to upset his family as the writer uses a metaphor to describe his will as the "final instrument of his anger against them." **V**

Top Tip:

Be careful not to be too general – it would be easy to give the overall impression that a character is a nice man, or a setting is a gloomy place etc, but that will only take you so far. Try to give more specific impressions you have as you track through the text.

Impressions questions – Putting it into practice

To answer this question, you will need to use the extract from *The Day of the Triffids* at the back of this pack.

Read lines 18-30

A3: What impression do you get of the early reaction to the triffids from these lines? [10 marks]

You must refer to the text to support your answer

To answer this question, you will need to use the extract from *Enduring Love* at the back of this pack.

Read lines 115-22

A3: What impression do you get of the rescue from these lines? [10 marks]

You must refer to the text to support your answer

To answer this question, you will need to use the extract from *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* at the back of this pack.

Read lines 34-41

A3: What impression do you get of the life in the labour camp from these lines? [10 marks]

You must refer to the text to support your answer

Evaluate questions

What are they?

In the AO4 question, you will need to explain and explore your own response as a reader. It is partly to do with your personal feelings about the way a story or a character develops, but you will need to do more than express simple feelings of like and dislike. You are required to explain and analyse what a writer does in order to make you respond as you do. You need to use evidence in order to make sensible conclusions about your own response to what you have read. The examiner will be looking to see whether you can assess what you have been reading and come to a sensible judgement about it.

What will they look like?

- “Evaluate the way... is presented”
- “[statement] to what extent do you agree with this statement...”

How many marks?

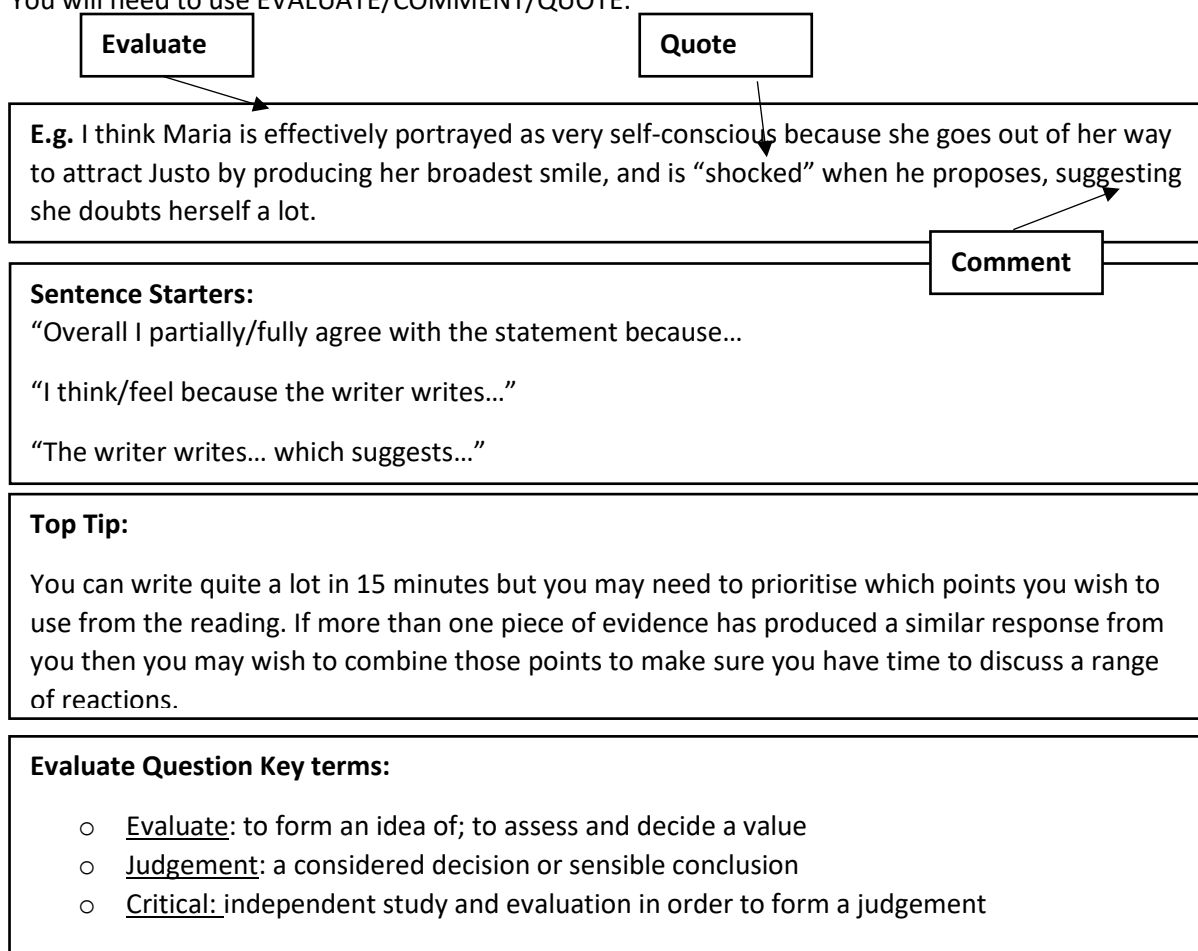
Will be worth 10 marks

How long?

You should spend 15 minutes on this question

How to answer:

You will need to use EVALUATE/COMMENT/QUOTE.



Evaluate

Quote

E.g. I think Maria is effectively portrayed as very self-conscious because she goes out of her way to attract Justo by producing her broadest smile, and is “shocked” when he proposes, suggesting she doubts herself a lot.

Comment

Sentence Starters:

“Overall I partially/fully agree with the statement because...”

“I think/feel because the writer writes...”

“The writer writes... which suggests...”

Top Tip:

You can write quite a lot in 15 minutes but you may need to prioritise which points you wish to use from the reading. If more than one piece of evidence has produced a similar response from you then you may wish to combine those points to make sure you have time to discuss a range of reactions.

Evaluate Question Key terms:

- Evaluate: to form an idea of; to assess and decide a value
- Judgement: a considered decision or sensible conclusion
- Critical: independent study and evaluation in order to form a judgement

Evaluate questions – Putting it into practice

To answer this question, you will need to use the extract from *The Day of the Triffids* at the back of this pack.

Read from line 37 to the end

A5: “In the last twenty lines or so of this extract, the writer increases the tension and it finally becomes clear that the triffids are dangerous.” [10 marks]

To what extent do you agree with this view?

You should write about:

- Your own impressions of the tension and the way it is increased
- How the writer has created these impressions

You must refer to the text to support your answer

To answer this question, you will need to use the extract from *Enduring Love* at the back of this pack.

Read from line 37 to the end

A5: “In the final fifteen lines of this extract, the narrator is shown to be a natural leader.” [10 marks]

To what extent do you agree with this view?

You should write about:

- Your own impressions of the way the narrator is presented here and in the extract as a whole
- How the writer has created these impressions

You must refer to the text to support your answer

To answer this question, you will need to use the extract from *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* at the back of this pack.

Read from line 26 to the end

A5: “In the final twenty or so lines of this extract, the writer encourages the reader to feel that Shukhov has found a way to deal with the hardship of the camp.” [10 marks]

To what extent do you agree with this view?

You should write about:

- Your own impressions of the way Shukhov handles life in the camp as he is presented here and in the extract as a whole
- How the writer has created these impressions

You must refer to the text to support your answer

The science fiction novel from which this extract is taken tells of the rise of the triffids, an intelligent species of plant that is able to move.

The Day of the Triffids

The thing would be about four feet high then. There must have been plenty of them about, growing up quietly and inoffensively, with nobody taking any particular notice of them – at least it seemed so, for if the biological or botanical experts were excited over them no news of their interest percolated to the general public. And so the one in our garden continued its growth peacefully, as did thousands like it in neglected spots all over the world.

5 It was some little time later that the first one picked up its roots, and walked.

10 That improbable achievement must, of course, have been known for some time in Russia where it was doubtless classified as a state secret, but as far as I have been able to confirm its first occurrence in the outside world took place in Indo-China – which meant that people went on taking practically no notice. Indo-China was one of those regions from which such curious and unlikely yarns might be expected to drift in, and frequently did – the kind of thing an editor might conceivably use if news were scarce and a touch of the 'mysterious East' would liven the paper up a bit. But in any case the Indo-Chinese specimen can have had no great lead. Within a few weeks reports of walking plants were pouring in from Sumatra, Borneo, Belgian Congo, Colombia, Brazil, and most places in the neighbourhood of the equator.

15 This time they got into print, all right. But the much-handled stories, written up with that blend of cautiously defensive frivolity which the Press habitually employed to cover themselves in matters regarding sea-serpents, elementals, thought-transference, and other irregular phenomena prevented anyone from realizing that these accomplished plants at all resembled the quiet, respectable weed beside our rubbish heap. Not until the pictures began to appear did we realize that they were identical with it save in size.

20 The news-reel men were quickly off the mark. Possibly they got some good and interesting pictures for their trouble of flying to outlandish places, but there was a current theory among cutters that more than a few seconds of any one news-subject – except a boxing match – could not fail to paralyse an audience with boredom. My first view, therefore, of a development which was to play such an important part in my future, as well as in so many other people's, was a glimpse sandwiched between a hula contest in Honolulu, and the First Lady launching a battleship. (That is no anachronism. They were still building them; even admirals had to live.) I was permitted to see a few triffids sway across the screen to the kind of accompaniment supposed to be on the level of the great movie-going public:

25 "And now, folks, get a load of what our cameraman found in Ecuador. Vegetables on vacation! You've only seen this kind of thing after a party, but down in sunny Ecuador they see it any time – and no hangover to follow! Monster plants on the march! Say, that's given me a big idea! Maybe if we can educate our potatoes right we can fix it so they'll walk right into the pot. How'd that be, Momma?"

30 For the short time the scene was on, I stared at it, fascinated. There was our mysterious rubbish-heap plant grown to a height of seven feet or more. There was no mistaking it – and it was 'walking'!

The bole, which I now saw for the first time, was shaggy with little rootlet hairs. It would have been almost spherical but for three bluntly-tapered projections extending from the lower part. Supported on these, the main body was lifted about a foot clear of the ground.

35 When it 'walked' it moved rather like a man on crutches. Two of the blunt 'legs' slid forward, then the whole thing lurched as the rear one drew almost level with them, then the two in front slid forward again. At each 'step' the long stem whipped violently back and forth: it gave one a kind of seasick feeling to watch it. As a method of progress it looked both strenuous and clumsy – faintly reminiscent of young elephants at play. One felt that if it were to go on lurching for long in that fashion it would be bound to strip all its leaves if it did not actually break its stem.

40 Nevertheless, ungainly though it looked, it was contriving to cover the ground at something like an average walking pace.

That was about all I had time to see before the battleship launching began. It was not a lot, but it was enough to incite an investigating spirit in a boy. For, if that thing in Ecuador could do a trick like that, why not the one in our garden? Admittedly ours was a good deal smaller, but it did *look* the same...

45 About ten minutes after I got home I was digging round our triffid, carefully loosening the earth near it to encourage it to 'walk.'

50 Unfortunately there was an aspect of this self-propelled plant discovery which the news-reel people either had not experienced, or chosen for some reason of their own not to reveal. There was no warning, either. I was bending down intent on clearing the earth without harming the plant, when something from nowhere hit me one terrific slam, and knocked me out....

55 I woke up to find myself in bed, with my mother, my father, and the doctor watching me anxiously. My head felt as if it were split open, I was aching all over, and, as I later discovered, one side of my face was decorated with a blotchy-red raised weal. The insistent questions as to how I came to be lying unconscious in the garden were quite useless; I had no faintest idea what it was that had hit me. And some little time passed before I learned that I must have been one of the first persons in England to be stung by a triffid and get away with it. The triffid was, of course, immature. But before I had fully recovered my father had found out what had undoubtedly happened to me, and by the time I went into the garden again he had wreaked stern vengeance on our triffid, and disposed of the remains on a bonfire.

John Wyndham

The novel from which this extract is taken opens with a couple on a picnic, which is interrupted by a hot air balloon accident nearby.

Enduring Love

What we saw when we stood from our picnic was this: a huge grey balloon, the size of a house, the shape of a tear drop, had come down in the field. The pilot must have been half way out of the passenger basket as it touched the ground. His leg had become entangled in a rope that was attached to an anchor. Now, as the wind gusted, and pushed and lifted the balloon towards the escarpment, he was being half dragged, half carried across the field. In the basket

was a child, a boy of about ten. In a sudden lull, the man was on his feet, clutching at the basket, or at the boy. Then there was another gust, and the pilot was on his back, bumping over the rough ground, trying to dig his feet in for purchase, or lunging for the anchor behind him in order to secure it in the earth. Even if he had been able, he would not have dared disentangle himself from the anchor rope. He needed his weight to keep the balloon on the ground, and the wind could have snatched the rope from his hands.

As I ran I heard him shouting at the boy, urging him to leap clear of the basket. But the boy was tossed from one side to another as the balloon lurched across the field. He regained his balance and got a leg over the edge of the basket. The balloon rose and fell, thumping into a hummock, and the boy dropped backwards out of sight. Then he was up again, arms stretched out towards the man and shouting something in return – words or inarticulate fear, I couldn't tell.

I must have been a hundred yards away when the situation came under control. The wind had dropped, the man was on his feet, bending over the anchor as he drove it into the ground. He had unlooped the rope from his leg. For some reason, complacency, exhaustion or simply because he was doing what he was told, the boy remained where he was. The towering balloon wavered and tilted and tugged, but the beast was tamed. I slowed my pace, though I did not stop. As the man straightened, he saw us – or at least the farm workers and me – and he waved us on. He still needed help, but I was glad to slow to a brisk walk. The farm labourers were also walking now.

One of them was coughing loudly. But the man with the car, John Logan, knew something we didn't and kept on running. As for Jed Parry, my view of him was blocked by the balloon that lay between us.

The wind renewed its rage in the treetops just before I felt its force on my back. Then it struck the balloon which ceased its innocent comical wagging and was suddenly stilled. Its only motion was a shimmer of strain that rippled out across its ridged surface as the contained energy accumulated. It broke free, the anchor flew up in a spray of dirt, and balloon and basket rose ten feet in the air. The boy was thrown back, out of sight. The pilot had the rope in his hands and was lifted two feet clear off the ground. If Logan had not reached him and taken hold of one of the many dangling lines the balloon would have carried the boy away. Instead, both men were now being pulled across the field, and the farm workers and I were running again.

I got there before them. When I took a rope the basket was above head height. The boy inside it was screaming.

Despite the wind, I caught the smell of urine. Jed Parry was on a rope seconds after me, and the two farm workers, Joseph Lacey and Toby Greene, caught hold just after him. Greene was having a coughing fit, but he kept his grip. The pilot was shouting instructions at us, but too frantically, and no one was listening. He had been struggling too long, and now he was exhausted and emotionally out of control. With five of us on the lines the balloon was secured. We simply had to keep steady on our feet and pull hand over hand to bring the basket

down, and this, despite whatever the pilot was shouting, was what we began to do.

By this time we were standing on the escarpment. The ground dropped away sharply at a gradient of about twenty-five per cent, and then levelled out into a gentle slope towards the bottom. In winter this is a favourite tobogganing spot for local kids. We were all talking at once. Two of us, myself and the motorist, wanted to walk the balloon away from the edge. Someone thought the priority was to get the boy out. Someone else was calling

for the balloon to be pulled down so that we could anchor it firmly. I saw no contradiction, for we could be pulling the balloon down as we moved back into the field. But the second opinion was prevailing. The pilot had a fourth idea, but no one knew or cared what it was.

I should make something clear. There may have been a vague communality of purpose, but we were never a team.

There was no chance, no time. Coincidences of time and place, a predisposition to help had brought us together under the balloon. No one was in charge – or everyone was, and we were in a shouting match. The pilot, red-faced, bawling and sweating, we ignored. Incompetence came off him like heat. But we were beginning to bawl our own instructions too. I know that if I had been uncontested leader the tragedy would not have happened. Later I heard some of the others say the same thing about themselves. But there was not time, no opportunity for force of character to show. Any leader, any firm plan would have been preferable to none.

No human society, from the hunter-gatherer to the post-industrial, has come to the attention of anthropologists that did not have its leaders and the led; and no emergency was ever dealt with effectively by democratic process.

Ian McEwan

The novel from which this extract is taken follows a prisoner through one day of his long imprisonment in a Russian labour camp. The action takes place in 1951.

One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich

As usual, at five o'clock that morning reveille was sounded by the blows of a hammer on a length of rail hanging up near the staff quarters. The intermittent sounds barely penetrated the window-panes on which the frost lay two fingers thick and then ended almost as soon as they'd begun. It was cold outside, and the camp-guard was reluctant to go on beating out the reveille for long.

- 5 The clanging ceased, but everything outside still looked like the middle of the night when Ivan Denisovich Shukhov got up to go to the bucket. It was pitch dark except for the yellow light cast on the window by three lamps – two in the outer zone, one inside the camp itself.

And no one came to unbolt the barrack-hut door; there was no sound of the barrack-orderlies pushing a pole into place to lift the barrel of nightsoil and carry it out.

- 10 Shukhov never overslept reveille. He always got up at once, for the next ninety minutes, until they assembled for work, belonged to him, not to the authorities, and any old-timer could always earn a bit – by sewing a pair of over-mittens for someone out of old sleeve lining; or bringing some rich lag in the team his dry valenki – right up to his bunk, so that he wouldn't have to stumble barefoot round the heap of boots looking for his own pair; or going the rounds of the store-huts, offering to be of service, sweeping up this or fetching that; or going to the
15 mess-hall to collect bowls from the tables and bring them stacked to the dishwashers – you're sure to be given something to eat there, though there were plenty of others at that game, more than plenty – and, what's worse, if you found a bowl with something left in it you could hardly resist licking it out. But Shukhov had never forgotten the words of his first team-leader, Kuziomin – a hard-bitten prisoner who had already been in for twelve years by 1943 – who told the newcomers, just in from the front, as they sat beside a fire in a desolate cutting in the forest:
20 "Here, lads, we live by the law of the taiga. But even here people manage to live. D'you know who are the ones the samps finish off? Those who lick other men's left-overs, those who set store by the doctors, and those who peach on their mates."

As for peachers, he was wrong there. Those people were sure to get through camp all right. Only, they were saving their own skin at the expense of other people's blood.

- 25 Shukhov always arose at reveille. But this day he didn't. He had felt queer the evening before, feverish, with pains all over his body. He hadn't been able to get warm all through the night. Even in his sleep he had felt at one moment that he was getting seriously ill, at another that he was getting better. He had longed for the morning not to come.

But the morning came as usual.

- 30 Anyway, it wasn't surprising that he'd felt cold in the night. That ice on the window-panes! And the white cobwebs of hoar-frost all along the huge hut where the walls joined the ceiling!

- He didn't get up. He lay there in his bunk on the top tier, his head buried in a blanket and a coat, his two feet stuffed into one sleeve, with the end tucked under, of his wadded jacket. He couldn't see, but his ears told him everything going on in the barrack-room and especially in the corner his team occupied. He heard the heavy
35 tread of the orderlies carrying one of the big barrels of nightsoil along the passage outside. A light job, that was considered, a job for the infirm, but just you try and carry out the muck without spilling any. He heard some of the 75th slamming bunches of boots on to the floor from the drying-shed. Now their own lads were doing it (it was their own team's turn, too, to dry valenki). Tiurin, the team-leader, and his deputy Pavlo put on their valenki, without a word but he heard their bunks creaking. Now Pavlo would be going off to the bread-stores
40 and Tiurin to the staff quarters to see the P.P.D.

- Ah, but not simply to report as usual to the authorities who distributed the daily assignments. Shukhov remembered that this morning his fate hung in the balance: they wanted to shift the 104th from the building-shops to a new site, the 'Socialist Way of Life' settlement. It lay in open country covered with snow-drifts, and before anything else could be done there they would have to dig pits and put up posts and attach barbed wire to
45 them. Wire themselves in, so that they wouldn't run away. Only then would they start building.

There wouldn't be a warm corner for a whole month. Not a dog-kennel. And fires were out of the question. Where was the firewood to come from? Warm up with the work, that was your only salvation.

- No wonder the team-leader looked so worried, that was his responsibility – to elbow some other team, some bunch of clod-hoppers, into the assignment instead of the 104th. Of course he wouldn't get the authorities to
50 agree if he turned up empty-handed. He'd have to take a pound of pork-fat to the senior official there, if not a couple of pounds.

There's never any harm in trying, so why not have a go at the sick-bay and get a few days off if you can? After all, he did feel as though every limb was out of joint.

Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn

The novel from which this extract is taken is set in Alabama in the United States in the 1930s. Key themes of the novel include racism, and how good and evil can coexist.

To Kill a Mockingbird

The following Monday afternoon Jem and I climbed the steep front steps to Mrs Dubose's house and padded down the open hallway. Jem, armed with Ivanhoe and full of superior knowledge, knocked at the second door on the left.

'Mrs Dubose?' he called.

5 Jessie opened the wood door and unlatched the screen door.

'Is that you, Jem Finch?' she said. 'You got your sister with you. I don't know -'

'Let 'em both in, Jessie,' said Mrs Dubose. Jessie admitted us and went off to the kitchen.

10 An oppressive odour met us when we crossed the threshold, an odour I had met many times in rain-rotted grey houses where there are coal-oil lamps, water dippers, and unbleached domestic sheets. It always made me afraid, expectant, watchful.

In the corner of the room was a brass bed, and in the bed was Mrs Dubose. I wondered if Jem's activities had put her there, and for a moment I felt sorry for her. She was lying under a pile of quilts and looked almost friendly. There was a marble-topped washstand by her bed; on it were a glass with a teaspoon in it, a red ear syringe, a box of absorbent cotton, and a steel alarm clock standing on three tiny legs.

15 'So you brought that dirty little sister of yours, did you?' was her greeting.

Jem said quietly, 'My sister ain't dirty and I ain't scared of you,' although I noticed his knees shaking.

I was expecting a tirade, but all she said was, 'You may commence reading, Jeremy.'

Jem sat down in a cane-bottom chair and opened Ivanhoe. I pulled up another one and sat beside him.

'Come closer,' said Mrs Dubose. 'Come to the side of the bed.'

20 We moved our chairs forward. This was the nearest I had ever been to her, and the thing I wanted most to do was move my chair back again.

She was horrible. Her face was the colour of a dirty pillowcase, and the corners of her mouth glistened with wet, which inclined like a glacier down the deep grooves enclosing her chin. Old-age liver spots dotted her cheeks, and her pale eyes had black pinpoint pupils. Her hands were knobby, and the cuticles were grown up over her
25 fingernails. Her bottom plate was not in, and her upper lip protruded; from time to time she would draw her nether lip to her upper plate and carry her chin with it. This made the wet move faster.

I didn't look any more than I had to. Jem re-opened Ivanhoe and began reading. I tried to keep up with him, but he read too fast. When Jem came to a word he didn't know, he skipped it, but Mrs Dubose would catch him and make him spell it out. Jem read for perhaps twenty minutes, during which time I looked at the soot-stained
30 mantelpiece, out of the window, anywhere to keep from looking at her. As he read along, I noticed that

Mrs Dubose's corrections grew fewer and farther between, that Jem had even left one sentence dangling in mid-air. She was not listening.

I looked towards the bed.

35 Something had happened to her. She lay on her back, with the quilts up to her chin. Only her head and shoulders were visible. Her head moved slowly from side to side. From time to time she would open her mouth wide, and I could see her tongue undulate faintly. Cords of saliva would collect on her lips; she would draw them in, then open her mouth again. Her mouth seemed to have a private existence of its own. It worked separate and apart from the rest of her, out and in, like a clam hole at low tide. Occasionally it would say, 'Pt,' like some viscous substance coming to a boil.

40 I pulled Jem's sleeve.

He looked at me, then at the bed. Her head made its regular sweep towards us, and Jem said, 'Mrs Dubose, are you all right?' She did not hear him.

45 The alarm clock went off and scared us stiff. A minute later, nerves still tingling, Jem and I were on the sidewalk headed for home. We did not run away, Jessie sent us: before the clock wound down she was in the room pushing Jem and me out of it.

'Shoo,' she said, 'you all go home.'

Jem hesitated at the door. 'It's time for her medicine,' Jessie said. As the door swung shut behind us I saw Jessie walking quickly toward Mrs Dubose's bed.

Harper Lee