



GCSE

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

**Paper 2 Writers' viewpoints and
perspectives**

8700/2

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The two sources that follow are:

SOURCE A: 21st Century non-fiction

**‘Diary of a Young
Naturalist’ by
Dara McAnulty**

**An extract from a diary,
published in 2020**

**SOURCE B: 19th Century literary
non-fiction**

**‘The Debt We Owe to Birds
and Beasts’ by Gordon
Stables**

**An extract from a magazine,
published in 1889**

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SOURCE A

Source A is an extract from a diary written in 2020. The writer is 16-year-old student Dara McAnulty, who is from Northern Ireland. He had just attended a meeting about environmental issues. Here, he shares his concerns about the natural world.

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The passage begins with the lines:

Sunday 3rd February

February has rushed in, following days of so much *doing*. My chemistry exam is over and I'm just back from London again, for another speech and event.

And ends with the lines:

**And maybe the rubble can be used to
build something better and more
beautiful, enabling our own wildness.
Imagine that.**

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SOURCE B

Source B is an extract from a magazine article called ‘The Debt We Owe to Birds and Beasts’, written in 1889 by Gordon Stables. Here, he reflects on the attitude of humans to the natural world.

As we come to the end of the nineteenth century, we cannot shut our eyes to the fact that there is a vast amount of thoughtless and destructive cruelty, coupled with thoughtless extravagance in the use of Nature’s gifts and bounties. At the same time, we find a vast increase in nervous disorders in our working population, due to strain on body and mind as they struggle for wealth or even existence.

In old school books, there used to be a story of a boy who first ate the cake his mother had sent him, and

then cried because it was all gone. We are very much in the same position; we are eating our cake, and our descendants in a few centuries 20 will have to cry because we have left none for them.

At present, there is a sad lack of what may be called national economy. This is noticeable all 25 around us, and in some instances the crime – for needless extravagance is a crime – brings its own punishment. About one-third of our precious life-giving coals, for 30 example, is wasted in smoke; and in consequence, during at least one-third of the year, the great world of London is enveloped in health-destroying fog and gloom, which 35 might almost be called the very shadow of death itself, so fearfully

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does it increase our annual rates of mortality. Everyone knows that there is a remedy for this state of matters, but our politicians and our government are too slow to act on this. When they eventually do so, even the dark and loathsome streets of the East End of London will catch glimpses of glorious sunshine, and light and heat will help to banish death and disease.

The same thoughtless extravagance goes on in the animal world, in the desire for ivory and wild beasts' skins and fur and feathers. Already the very noblest of our larger animals that dwell far away in forests or jungles are becoming woefully scarce; before long they will all be sacrificed at the shrine of fashionable folly for the sake of our clothes and accessories.

Birds are trapped and shot for the
60 sake of their feathers, to decorate
hats. But the songbirds of this
country have a value which it would
be difficult to measure. Consider
them as they are in their native
65 woods, when in the sweet
springtime every tree harbours a
musician, every bush shelters a
songster; when every leaf seems to
have found a voice, while far above
70 us the fleecy clouds themselves are
ringing with the glad melody of
birds. One does not need to be a
poet, or a naturalist either, to enjoy
such a concert as this: to the weary,
75 to the tired brain-worker, to the
labourer in the towns, who has
escaped from drudgery for a day,
and come down to the cool green
country, it means life and health
80 itself. Birdsong is soothing. The

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soul seems to borrow from the birds a portion of their ecstatic joy, the mind becomes calm, the nerves are soothed by their songs, cares and
85 worries are for a time forgotten, and thoughts carried far away to better worlds than this.

It will surely be a poor sort of world to live in where neither buffalo nor
90 bison roams in the wilderness of the grasslands; when the roar of the king of beasts awakes no more the echoes of the African hills; when the elephant, the seal, and the bear can
95 only be seen stuffed in museums; when coals have gone down, and heat and power can only be obtained from the earth's dark depths, or from the heaving of the ocean; when the
100 woods shall be silent in spring, and the only notion of birdsong shall be that handed down in stories. It will

**certainly be a poorer sort of world,
and we creatures of the present age
105 will be well out of it.**

END OF SOURCES

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