

**OXFORD CAMBRIDGE AND RSA EXAMINATIONS
GCSE (9–1)**

J351/02

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Exploring effects and impact

Reading Insert

MONDAY 12 JUNE 2017:

Morning

TIME ALLOWED: 2 hours

plus your additional time allowance

MODIFIED ENLARGED 24pt

**YOU MUST HAVE:
the Question Paper**

READ INSTRUCTIONS OVERLEAF



INSTRUCTIONS

The materials in this Reading Insert are for use with the questions in Section A of the Question Paper.

INFORMATION

Any blank pages are indicated.

Details of text extracts:

TEXT 1

Text: 'Cider with Rosie'

Author: Laurie Lee (1959)

TEXT 2

Text: 'A Child's Christmas in Wales'

Author: Dylan Thomas (1950)

TEXT 1

This is an abridged and adapted extract from Laurie Lee's novel, *Cider with Rosie*, published in 1959, which describes his childhood. Here the narrator is describing a winter's day when he, his brothers and the village boys go out to play.

Winter was no more typical of our valley than summer. It was not even summer's opposite; it was merely that other place. And somehow one never remembered the journey towards it; one arrived, and winter was here. The day came suddenly when all details were different and the village had to be rediscovered. One's nose went dead so that it hurt to breathe, and there were jigsaws of frost on the window. The light filled the house with a green polar glow; while outside – in the invisible world – there was a strange hard silence, or a metallic creaking, a faint throbbing of twigs and wires.

The kitchen that morning would be full of steam, billowing from kettles and

**pots. The outside pump was frozen
again, making a sound like broken
crockery, so that the girls tore icicles
from the edge of the roof for water and
we drank boiled ice in our tea.** 20

**‘It’s wicked,’ said Mother. ‘The poor,
poor birds.’ And she flapped her arms
with vigour.** 25

**She and the girls were wrapped in
all they had, coats and scarves and
mittens; some had the shivers and
some drops on their noses, while poor
little Phyllis sat rocking in a chair
holding her sore feet like a handful of
bees.** 30

**‘The poor, poor birds,’ Mother said
again.** 35

**They were hopping around the
windowsill, calling for bread and fats
– robins, blackbirds, wood-peckers,
jays, never seen together until now. We
fed them for a while, amazed at their
tameness, then put on our long wool
scarves.** 40

‘Can we go out, Mother?’

**‘Well, don’t catch cold. And remember
to get some wood.’ 45**

**First we found some old cocoa-tins,
punched them with holes, then packed
them with smouldering rags. If held in
the hand and blown on occasionally
they would keep hot for several hours. 50
They were warmer than gloves, and
smelt better too. In any case, we never
wore gloves.**

**So, armed with these, and full of hot
breakfast, we stepped out into the 55
winter world.**

**It was a world of glass, sparkling and
motionless. Vapours had frozen all
over the trees and transformed them
into confections of sugar. Everything 60
was rigid, locked-up and sealed, and
when we breathed the air it smelt like
needles and stabbed our nostrils and
made us sneeze.**

Having sucked a few icicles, and 65
kicked the water-butt – to hear its solid
sound – and breathed through the frost
on the window-pane, we ran up into
the road. We hung around waiting for
something to happen. A dog trotted 70
past like a ghost in a cloud, panting his
aura around him.

Now the winter's day was set in
motion and we rode through its crystal
kingdom. We examined the village 75
for its freaks of frost, for anything we
might use. We saw the frozen spring
by the side of the road, huge like a
swollen flower. We saw trees lopped-
off by their burdens of ice, cow-tracks 80
like pot-holes in rock, quiet lumps of
sheep licking the spiky grass with their
black and rotting tongues. The church
clock had stopped and the weather-
cock was frozen, so that both time and 85
the winds were stilled; and nothing, we
thought, could be more exciting than
this.

TEXT 2

This is an abridged extract from Dylan Thomas's story, *A Child's Christmas in Wales*, published in 1950. The writer remembers his childhood, growing up in Swansea near the Mumbles Road. Here he is remembering a day in the snow spent with his friend, Jim.

It was on the afternoon of the day of
Christmas Eve, and I was in
Mrs. Prothero's garden, waiting for
cats, with her son Jim. It was snowing.
It was always snowing at Christmas. 5
December, in my memory is white
as Lapland, although there were no
reindeers. But there were cats. Patient,
cold and callous, our hands wrapped in
socks, we waited to snowball the cats. 10
Sleek and long as jaguars and horrible-
whiskered, spitting and snarling, they
would slide and sidle over the white
back-garden walls, and the lynx-eyed
hunters, Jim and I, fur-capped and 15
moccasined trappers from Hudson
Bay, off Mumbles Road, would hurl our
deadly snowballs at the green of their
eyes.

**The wise cats never appeared. We
were so still, Eskimo-footed arctic
marksmen in the muffling silence of
the eternal snows – eternal, ever since
Wednesday – that we never heard
Mrs. Prothero’s first cry from her igloo
at the bottom of the garden. Or, if we
heard it at all, it was, to us, like the far-
off challenge of our enemy and prey,
the neighbour’s polar cat. But soon
the voice grew louder. “Fire!” cried
Mrs. Prothero, and she beat the dinner-
gong¹.**

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**And we ran down the garden, with
the snowballs in our arms, towards
the house; and smoke, indeed, was
pouring out of the dining room, and the
gong was bombilating². This was better
than all the cats in Wales standing on
the wall in a row. We bounded into
the house, laden with snowballs, and
stopped at the open door of the smoke-
filled room.**

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**Something was burning all right;
perhaps it was Mr. Prothero, who
always slept there after midday dinner**

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with a newspaper over his face. But he was standing in the middle of the room, saying, “A fine Christmas!” and smacking at the smoke with a slipper.

“Call the fire brigade,” cried 50
Mrs. Prothero as she beat the gong.
“They won’t be there,” said
Mr. Prothero, “it’s Christmas.”

There was no fire to be seen, only 55
clouds of smoke and Mr. Prothero
standing in the middle of them,
waving his slipper as though he were
conducting.

“Do something,” he said.

And we threw all our snowballs into the 60
smoke – I think we missed
Mr. Prothero – and ran out of the house
to the telephone box.

“Let’s call the police as well,” Jim said.

“And the ambulance.” 65

“And Ernie Jenkins, he likes fires.”

But we only called the fire brigade, and soon the fire engine came and three tall men in helmets brought a hose into the house and Mr. Prothero got out just in time before they turned it on. Nobody could have had a noisier Christmas Eve.

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¹Dinner-gong = small piece of metal struck to call people to dinner

²Bombilating = vibrating

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