

Modified Enlarged 18pt

OXFORD CAMBRIDGE AND RSA EXAMINATIONS

Tuesday 4 June 2019 – Morning

GCSE (9–1) English Language

J351/01 Communicating information and ideas

Reading Insert

**Time allowed: 2 hours
plus your additional time allowance**

**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.

DETAILS OF TEXT EXTRACTS:

TEXT 1

Text: adapted from 'The Charge of the Light Brigade'

Author: William Howard Russell (1854)

TEXT 2

Text: adapted from 'Let Us Make a Vow to the Dead'

Author: Ronald Reagan (1984)

TEXT 1

William Howard Russell was sent by ‘The Times’ newspaper to report on the Crimean War from the frontline. This is an extract from his account of the Charge of the Light Brigade when a small number of cavalymen rode their horses into attack against Russian gun batteries even though they knew most of them would be killed.

At ten past eleven our Light Cavalry brigade rushed to the front. The whole brigade scarcely made one effective regiment. They swept proudly past, glittering in the morning sun in all the pride and splendour of war. We could hardly believe the evidence of our senses! Surely that handful of men were not going to charge an army in position? Alas! It was but too true – their desperate valour knew no bounds, and far indeed was it removed from its better part – discretion.

They advanced in two lines, quickening their pace as they closed towards the enemy. A more fearful spectacle was never witnessed than by those who, without the power to aid, beheld their heroic countrymen rushing into the arms of death.

At the distance of 1200 yards the whole line of the enemy gun batteries belched forth, from thirty iron mouths, a flood of smoke and flame, through which hissed the deadly cannon balls. The flight of the cannonballs was marked by instant gaps in our ranks, by dead men and horses, and by horses flying wounded or riderless across the plain. The brigade, however, never halted or slacked its speed for an instant.

25 With its diminished ranks thinned by those thirty
guns, which the Russians had laid with most deadly
accuracy, with a halo of flashing steel above their
heads, and with a cheer which was many a noble
30 fellow's death cry, the brigade flew into the smoke
of the guns; but, before they were lost from view,
the plain was strewn with their bodies and with the
carcasses of horses. They were exposed to fire from
the gun batteries on both hills, as well as to direct
fire of rifles.

35 Through the clouds of smoke we could see their
sabres flashing as they rode up to the guns and
dashed between them, cutting down the gunners
as they stood. The blaze of their steel, as an officer
standing near me said, was 'like the turn of a shoal
40 of mackerel'. We saw them riding through the guns,
as I have said; to our delight, we saw them returning,
after breaking through a column of Russian infantry,
and scattering them like chaff – but then the flank
fire from a gun battery on the hill swept them down,
45 scattered and broken as they were.

Wounded men and dismounted cavalymen flying
towards us told the sad tale – demigods could not
have done what they had failed to do. It was as much
as our Heavy Cavalry Brigade could do to cover
50 the retreat of the miserable remnant of that band
of heroes as they returned to that place they had
so lately quitted in all the pride of life. At twenty-
five to twelve not a British soldier, except the dead
and dying, was left in front of those bloody Russian
55 guns.

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