GCSE
ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Paper 2 Writers' viewpoints and perspectives

Insert

The two sources that follow are:

Source A: 20th Century literary non-fiction

The Other Side of the Dale

An extract from a book by Gervase Phinn, published in 1998.

Source B: 19th Century non-fiction

The Ragged School

An extract from a diary written by a teacher, published in 1849.

Please turn the page over to see the sources

Source A

This extract is from a non-fiction book called 'The Other Side of the Dale' written in 1998 by Gervase Phinn about his experiences as a School Inspector in the north of England. In the extract he describes a visit to a primary school in Crompton.

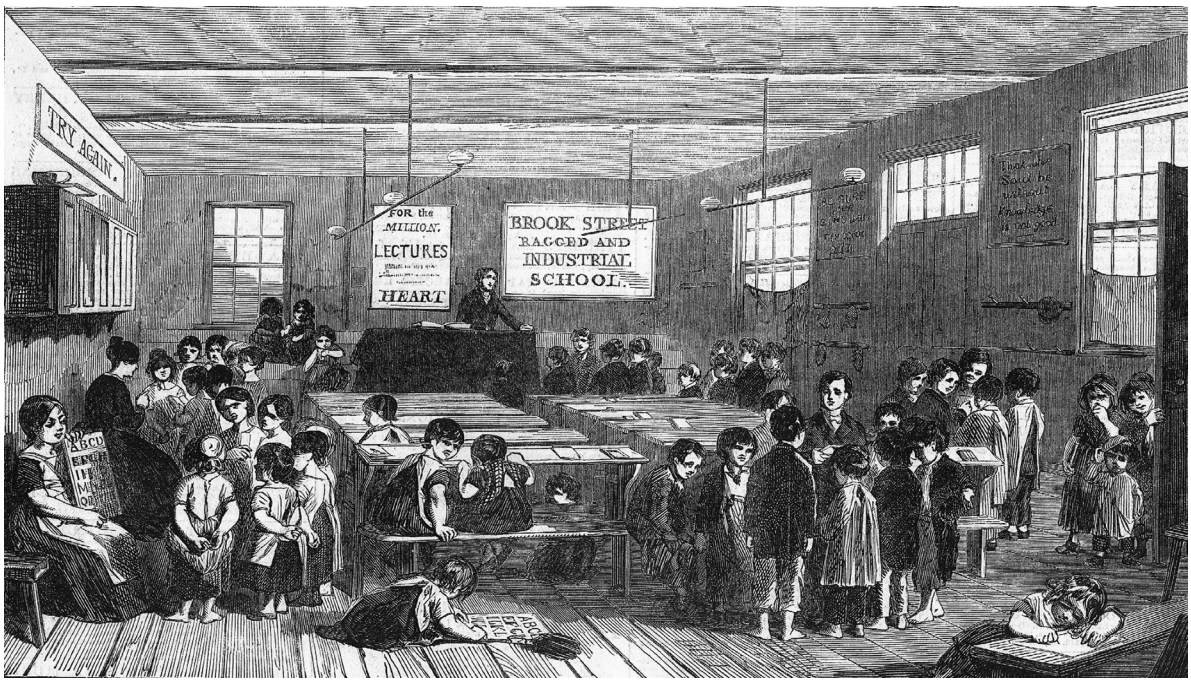
Source A cannot be reproduced here due to third party copyright restrictions.

Turn over for Source B

Source B

Source B is taken from a diary written in 1849 by a teacher at a ragged school. Ragged schools were set up to teach children whose parents were too poor to pay for their education. The schools were often housed in unsuitable buildings in poor areas of the city.

EXTRACTS FROM THE PRIVATE DIARY OF THE MASTER OF A LONDON RAGGED SCHOOL



Oct. 29th 1849 –

On the way to the school this morning, it was a dismal scene . . . nothing but squalid dirt and idleness – the lanes leading to the school were full of men, women and children: shouting, gossiping, swearing, and laughing in a most discordant manner. The whole population seemed to be on the eve of a great outbreak of some kind or another, ready for anything but work . . . These lanes are a moral hell . . . We prepared the school by placing benches for the division of the scholars into four classes, and as they came tumbling and bawling up the stairs, we directed them to seats. Shortly after ten o'clock I spoke to them kindly, and then asked them to join with me in prayer.

No school can be possibly worse than this. Here the very appearance of one's coat is to them the badge of class and respectability, for they know very well that we are the representatives of beings with whom they have ever considered themselves at war.

I had occasion to punish a boy slightly this morning. He swore most horribly, and rushed from the school. I took little notice of this display, and sat down calmly to hear the class read. I was suddenly startled by a large stone passing my ear. If it had struck me on the head, I must have been severely hurt. I got out of the reach of stones thrown through the window, and continued the lesson. Several followed – half-a-dozen at least. He was ready in the courtyard with a brick in his hand, to have his revenge when I came out.

Several visitors called in the afternoon, and they had scarcely left when a most distressing scene occurred. Two girls of twelve or thirteen years of age quarrelled. The first notice I had of this was to see the pair boxing most viciously. Before I could get at them, they had hold of each other's hair, and were yelling most fearfully. They fought like furies, but before we could separate them, one had received a severe and lasting injury in the eye, and her nose bled profusely. I sent her home, and went again to work, but it had not been quiet for ten minutes when a fearful outbreak took place. Seven women rushed into the school and outside, at least fifty women had collected. These were the mothers and friends of the girls who had fought. Having abused me in no measured terms – they proceeded to fight. Our boys cheered most tremendously. The women swore and shrieked. Those outside responded. Never, surely, was such a noise heard before. I did not believe that human beings resident in this city could so behave . . .

So by the help of God we must work harder. It is a post of honour. It is a forlorn hope.

Oct. 30th 1849 –

If possible the scholars were more unruly to-day than they were yesterday, but no serious outbreak took place. All our copybooks have been stolen, and proofs exist that the school is used at night as a sleeping-room. We must get a stronger door to it. I must also get a tub to stand by the pump in the courtyard, and a piece of coarse towelling and soap. My duties must resolve themselves into –

First – To see the boys and girls well washed and scrubbed
Secondly – To try to get prayers said decently
Thirdly – To give them a lesson in their duties and privileges
Fourthly – Some religious instruction
Fifthly – Reading
Sixthly – Writing
Seventhly – Arithmetic.

END OF SOURCES

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