

AQA 

GCSE

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

**Paper 2 Writers' viewpoints and
perspectives**

8700/2

Insert

[Turn over]

The two sources that follow are:

SOURCE A: 21st Century non-fiction

‘How can my son be a year old already?’ by Stuart Heritage

A newspaper article from ‘The Guardian’ newspaper published in 2016.

SOURCE B: 19th Century literary non-fiction

‘Boy Lost’

An extract from a Victorian newspaper in which a mother writes about her son.

PLEASE TURN THE PAGE OVER TO SEE THE SOURCES

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[Turn over]

SOURCE A

This is an article published in The Guardian newspaper in 2016. The writer, Stuart Heritage, explores how he feels now that his son is a year old.

How can my son be a year old already? He's growing up fast, leaving milestones in his wake – and tiny parts of me along with them



A picture shows a birthday cake, covered in white icing with a candle on top in the shape of the number one.

**1 My son turned one last week. The
day marked the end of what has been
both the longest and shortest year of
my life. From the instant he was
5 born, it's felt as if my son has always
been part of this family. I don't mean
that in an obnoxious, heart-eyed,
this-was-always-meant-to-be way. I
simply mean that I haven't slept for a
10 year and I don't really know how time
works any more. Whole years have
passed in some of the afternoons
I've spent with him lately. Entire
galaxies have been born and thrived
15 and withered and died in the time it's
taken him to eat a mouthful of
porridge.**

**How is he one already? First he was
born, and then I blinked, and now in
20 his place is a little boy who can walk
and has teeth and knows how to**

[Turn over]

switch off the television at precisely the most important moment of anything I ever try to watch. It's not
25 exactly the most unprecedented development in all of human history – child gradually gets older – but it's the first time I've seen it close up. It's
29 honestly quite hard to grasp.

30 A year ago, he was a sleepy ball of scrunched-up flesh, but is now determinedly his own person. I can see everyone in him – me, my wife, my parents – yet he's already
35 separate from all of us. He's giddy and silly. He's a show-off, albeit one who's irrationally terrified of my dad. He loves running up to people and waiting for them to twang his lips like
40 a ruler on a table. When he gets tired and barks gibberish in the middle of the room, he throws his entire body into it, like he's trying to shove the noise up a hill.

**45 With every tiny development – every
new step he takes, every new tooth
and sound and reaction that comes
along to ambush us – we’re
confronted with a slightly different
50 child.**

**Photos of him taken in the summer
seem like dispatches from a million
years ago. Photos of him taken last
week seem like a different boy. He’s
55 blasting ahead as far as he can. He’s
leaving milestone after milestone in
his wake and tiny parts of me along
58 with them.**

**He’ll never again be the tiny baby
60 who nestled in the crook of my arm,
sucking on my little finger in the
middle of the night while his mum
slept. Nor will he be the baby amazed
by the taste and texture of solid food.**

[Turn over]

65 Soon enough he'll stop being the
baby who totters over and rests his
head on my shoulder whenever he
gets tired, or laughs uncontrollably
whenever I say the word 'teeth' for
70 reasons I don't think I'll ever work out.

But I've had a year of this and it's ok.
He's never going to stop changing,
and I don't want him to. This sadness,
this constant sense of loss, of time
75 slipping just beyond your grasp, is an
important part of this process. He
won't realise this, of course. He's got
years of unbroken progress ahead of
him, where everything will always be
80 new and he'll keep obliviously
brushing away all of the silly old fools
who tell him how much he's grown.

One day it'll creep up on him. Years of
his life will pass in a moment and he
85 won't be able to understand where
they've gone.

But it's ok. You can't hoard time. You just have to make the most of what you have.

[Turn over]

SOURCE B

This is an extract from a Victorian newspaper article of the 1800s. The writer explores how she feels now that her son has grown up.

‘Boy Lost’

**He had black eyes, with long lashes, red cheeks, and hair almost black and almost curly. He wore a crimson plaid jacket, with full trousers
5 buttoned on, had a habit of whistling, and liked to ask questions. He was accompanied by a small black dog.**

It is a long while now since he disappeared.

10 I have a very pleasant house and
much company. My guests say, ‘Ah,
it is pleasant to be here! Everything
has such an orderly, put-away look –
nothing about under foot, no dirt!’
15 But my eyes are aching for the sight
of cut paper upon the floor; of
tumbled-down card-houses; of
wooden sheep and cattle; of pop-
guns, bows and arrows, whips, tops
20 and go-carts. I want to see crumbs
on the carpet, and paste spilt on the
kitchen table. I want to see the chairs
and tables turned the wrong way
about; yet these things used to fret
25 me once.

**They say, ‘How quiet you are here;
ah, one here may be at peace.’ But
my ears are aching for the pattering
of little feet; for a hearty shout, a**

[Turn over]

**30 shrill whistle, for the crack of little
whips, for the noise of drums and tin
trumpets; yet these things made me
nervous once.**

**They say – ‘Ah, you are not tied at
35 home. How delightful to be always at
liberty for concerts, lectures, and
parties! No responsibilities for you.’
But I want responsibilities; I want to
listen for the school bell of
40 mornings; to give the last hasty
wash and brush, and then to watch
from the window nimble feet
bounding away to school. I want to
replace lost buttons and obliterate
45 mud stains, fruit stains, treacle
stains, and paints of all colours. I
want to be sitting by a little crib of
evenings, when weary little feet are
at rest, and prattling voices are
50 hushed, that mothers may sing their
lullabies. They don’t know their
happiness then – those mothers.**

I didn't. All these things I called responsibilities once.

55 A manly figure stands before me now. He is taller than I, has thick black whiskers, and wears a frock coat, billowy shirt, and cravat. He has just come from college. He calls
60 me mother, but I am rather unwilling to own him. He stoutly declares that he is my boy, and says he will prove it. He brings me his little boat to show the red stripe on the sail, and
65 the name on the stern – 'Lucy Lowe' – our neighbour's little girl who, because of her long curls, and pretty round face, was the chosen favourite of my little boy. How the red comes
70 to his face when he shows me the name on the boat!

[Turn over]

And I see it all as plain as if it were
written in a book. My little boy is lost,
and my big boy will soon be. I wish
75 he were still a little boy in a long
white night gown, lying in his crib,
with me sitting by, holding his hand
in mine, pushing the curls back from
his forehead, watching his eyelids
80 droop, and listening to his deep
breathing. If I only had my little boy
again, how patient I would be! How
much I would bear, and how little I
would fret and scold! I can never
85 have him back again; but there are
still many mothers who haven't yet
lost their little boys. I wonder if they
know they are living their very best
days; that now is the time to really
90 enjoy their children!

I think if I had been more to my little
boy I might now be more to my
grown up one.

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