
GCSE
ENGLISH LANGUAGE
(8700)

Paper 1 Explorations in creative reading and writing

Insert

The source that follows is:

Source A: 20th Century prose fiction

An extract from the novel *Brighton Rock* by Graham Greene.

**Please turn the page over
to see the source**

It is 1938, in the popular seaside resort of Brighton on a Bank Holiday¹. Hale, playing the part of Kolly Kibber, works for The Daily Messenger newspaper giving out cards for prizes to the holiday crowd. But he has something else on his mind.

HALE knew, before he had been in Brighton three hours, that they meant to murder him. With his inky fingers and his bitten nails, his manner cynical and nervous, anybody could tell he didn't belong – belong to the early summer sun, the cool Whitsun² wind off the sea, the holiday crowd.

5 They came in by train from Victoria every five minutes, rocked down Queen's Road standing on the tops of the little local trams, stepped off in bewildered multitudes into fresh and glittering air: the new silver paint sparkled on the piers, the cream houses ran away into the west like a pale Victorian water-colour; a race in miniature motors, a band playing, flower gardens in bloom below the front, an aeroplane advertising something for the health in pale vanishing clouds across the sky.

10 It had seemed quite easy to Hale to be lost in Brighton. Fifty thousand people besides himself were down for the day, and for quite a while he gave himself up to the good day, drinking gins and tonics wherever his programme allowed. For he had to stick closely to a programme: from ten till eleven Queen's Road and Castle Square, from eleven till twelve the Aquarium and Palace Pier, twelve till one the front between the Old Ship and West Pier, back for lunch between one and two in any restaurant he chose round the Castle Square, and after that he had to make his way all down the
15 parade to West Pier and then to the station by the Hove streets.

Advertised on every Messenger poster: "Kolley Kibber in Brighton today". In his pocket he had a packet of cards to distribute in hidden places along his route: those who found them would receive ten shillings from the Messenger, but the big prize was reserved for who-ever challenged Hale in the proper form of words and with a copy of the Messenger in his hand: "You are Mr. Kolley Kibber. I
20 claim the Daily Messenger prize."

This was Hale's job to keep doing his duty until a challenger released him, in every seaside town in turn: yesterday Southend, today Brighton, tomorrow –

25 He drank his gin and tonic hastily as a clock struck eleven, and moved out of Castle Square. Kolley Kibber always played fair, always wore the same kind of hat as in the photograph the Messenger printed, was always on time. Yesterday in Southend he had been unchallenged: the paper liked to save its guineas³ occasionally but not too often. It was his duty today to be spotted and it was his inclination too. There were reasons why he didn't feel too safe in Brighton, even in a Whitsun crowd.

30 He leant against the rail near the Palace Pier and showed his face to the crowd as it uncoiled endlessly past him, like a twisted piece of wire, two by two, each with an air of sober and determined gaiety. They had stood all the way from Victoria in crowded carriages, they would have to wait in queues for lunch, at midnight half asleep they would rock back in trains an hour late to the cramped streets and the closed pubs and the weary walk home. With immense labour and immense patience they extricated from the long day the grain of pleasure: this sun, this music, the rattle of the miniature cars, the ghost train diving between the grinning skeletons under the Aquarium promenade, the
35 sticks of Brighton rock, the paper sailors caps.

Nobody paid any attention to Hale; no one seemed to be carrying a Messenger. He deposited one of his cards carefully on the top of a little basket and moved on, with his bitten nails and his inky fingers, alone.

Glossary

¹ Bank Holiday – an official holiday when banks and most offices are closed.

² Whitsun – A Christian festival on the seventh Sunday after Easter

³ Guineas – A guinea was an old form of currency equivalent to just over £1

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