



**GCSE**  
**ENGLISH LANGUAGE**

**Paper 2 Writers' viewpoints and perspectives**

**8700/2**

**Insert**

**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**

## 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 born, it's felt as if my son has always been part of this family.
- 5 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 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.
- 10 Entire galaxies have been born and thrived 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 his place is a little boy who  
15 can walk and has teeth and knows how to switch off the television at precisely the most important moment of anything I ever try to watch. It's not exactly the most unprecedented development in all of human history – child gradually gets older – but  
20 it's the first time I've seen it close up. It's honestly  
21 quite hard to grasp.

22 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  
25 he's already 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 a ruler on a table. When he gets tired and barks gibberish in  
30 the middle of the room, he throws his entire body into it, like he's trying to shove the noise up a hill.

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  
35 slightly different 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 blasting ahead as far as he can. He's leaving  
40 milestone after milestone in his wake and tiny parts  
41 of me along with them.

[Turn over]

He'll never again be the tiny baby 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  
45 be the baby amazed by the taste and texture of solid food. 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 reasons I don't  
50 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 slipping just beyond your grasp, is an important part of this  
55 process. He won't realise this, of course. He's got years of unbroken progress ahead of him, where everything will always be new and he'll keep obliviously brushing away all of the silly old fools who tell him how much he's grown.

60 One day it'll creep up on him. Years of his life will pass in a moment and he 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.

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**[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 buttoned on, had a habit of whistling, and liked to ask questions.**

**5 He was accompanied by a small black dog.**

**It is a long while now since he disappeared.**

**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**

**10 under foot, no dirt!’ 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 and go-carts. I want to see crumbs on the carpet, and paste spilt on**

**15 the kitchen table. I want to see the chairs and tables turned the wrong way about; yet these things used to fret me once.**

They say, 'How quiet you are here; ah, one here may  
be at peace.' But my ears are aching for the pattering  
20 of little feet; for a hearty shout, a 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 home. How  
delightful to be always at liberty for concerts,  
25 lectures, and parties! No responsibilities for you.' But  
I want responsibilities; I want to listen for the school  
bell of 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  
30 buttons and obliterate 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 hushed, that mothers  
may sing their lullabies. They don't know their  
35 happiness then – those mothers. I didn't. All these  
things I called responsibilities once.

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  
40 college. He calls 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 the name on the  
stern – 'Lucy Lowe' – our neighbour's little girl who,  
45 because of her long curls, and pretty round face, was  
the chosen favourite of my little boy. How the red  
comes 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.  
50 My little boy is lost, and my big boy will soon be. I  
wish 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 droop, and listening to  
55 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 have him  
back again; but there are still many mothers who  
haven't yet lost their little boys. I wonder if they know  
60 they are living their very best days; that now is the  
time to really enjoy their children!

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

**END OF SOURCES**



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