

ENTRY LEVEL CERTIFICATE

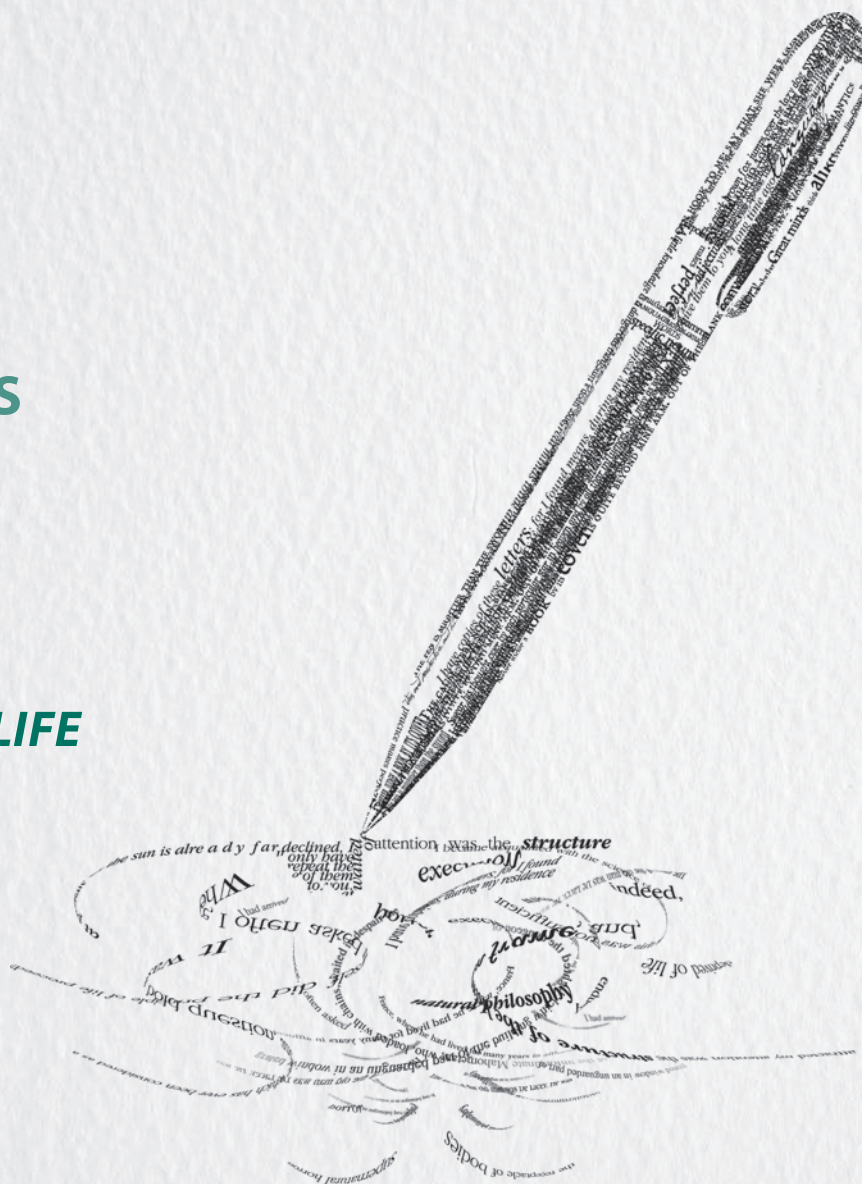
ENGLISH

R392

READING RESOURCES

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BRINGING ENGLISH TO LIFE



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Introduction

The stories that follow have been selected from scripts from the writing components for Entry Level English. They remain very much as they were written except that the mistakes have been corrected and all the punctuation supplied, including paragraphs. Some words have been changed, particularly where meaning might not be clear, and some have been added to explain details more thoroughly. There are a few, rare examples of editing to remove repetitive material.

The results show how good some of the writing is. I hope the stories will give opportunities for your candidates to have a good read, using vocabulary that is appropriate to their ability and reading about the sort of subject matter that they enjoy using.

The chief aim of OCR Entry Level English is to motivate candidates and I hope this reading material will help to encourage your students to enjoy creative writing.

My friend from the North

My friend Sean came to stay with me in London for a week. Every day he wore such embarrassing clothes, such as a bright red top and bright green trousers. He was so embarrassing that I could not sit next to him. People were looking at us all the time.

When we met up with my friends, they were shocked to see me with him. They said, 'Who is that?' and I said that it was my friend from the North. 'He's come to stay with me for a week.'

My friend Peter looked him over and said, 'You're a bit weird, wearing those clothes. Is that what you wear up North?'

Sean said yes and all of us went out, but he was talking a lot of nonsense about life up North. My friends kept on coming up to me and saying, 'I'm not being horrible, but I don't think you should bring him again.'

So I said to Sean, 'I'm not being horrible, but this is the last time I shall bring you here, because you are embarrassing and you have shown me up in front of all my friends.' I said, 'Hopefully we will still keep in contact. I'll ring you up in a couple of days. I hope you keep well up North.'

I wish I had not done that

It was a great day! The sun was beaming down. The sky was as deep as the deepest ocean and all the leaves had come out on the trees. I could smell fresh cut grass in the air. The crops were growing in all the fields. The corn was swaying from side to side and barley was like the sea waving across the top.

I decided I would go to town. There was a long queue of people at the bus stop and I stood with them for a bit. Old people and young people, we all stood waiting together for this bus.

And just then I remembered that I had forgotten to feed my fish and my bird that morning. I couldn't leave them hungry, so I thought that I would catch the next bus and I walked back home. I fed the animals and had a cup of tea.

When I reached the bus stop again it was not so busy. People were starting to get their money out. I did too. Eventually the bus came. The driver had a big smile on his face and he was in a happy mood. I paid, went upstairs and sat down in the front.

The journey began and was going perfectly. I sat looking out of the window and enjoying the view. On a double-decker you can see all around.

Just then, everything suddenly went wrong. The bus went out of control and everybody started screaming. It was heading straight for Nostell Priory Lake, and at that moment, my whole life flashed in front of me. The bus was rattling wildly and I headed for the back, determined to get to the emergency exit.

When I was half way down, the bus hit the water. The shock flung me back to the front. I tried again and saw the water coming in rapidly at the back. I managed to open the emergency exit by pushing hard – and it flung open. After a lot of pushing and shoving, I got myself and an adult out of the bus. We struggled to the shore and a paramedic soon arrived and treated us.

To this day I hate getting on and even seeing a bus. It terrifies me. I was almost sick with fear the first time I got on a bus after that.

The Medallion

Mark was a young man of fifteen with short, black hair and blue eyes. He was going to Scotland with his family on their holidays. His parents liked it up there, but Mark didn't. He said there were no people of his own age to be with. But they still went.

They arrived at two o'clock. Mark went off with his sister, Katie, to explore, while his parents stayed in the hotel. He was playing football in the field with Katie when, out of the corner of his eye, he saw something shining. He went over to it and picked it up. It was a silver medallion with a chain attached. Mark put it in his pocket and went back to his game of football.

When they got back to the hotel, Mark had another look at the medallion. On it was some strange writing.

Katie said, 'Maybe we should find the owner.'

'No,' replied Mark. 'It's mine!' His voice was very angry. He put it round his neck defiantly. Katie went off to her room and went to bed.

When Katie woke up next morning, Mark was gone. They searched the whole of the hotel for him. Then Katie went down to the field and there she saw him. She ran up to him and asked him what he was doing. He replied that he was going down to the lake. 'Why?' she asked, and he said, 'I don't know!'

He turned round and looked at her. She saw that he was very pale, his hair was not combed, and his eyes were like black slits.

She tried to get the medallion away from him, but he just pushed her aside. Then after fighting for several minutes, she grabbed the medallion and the chain broke. Mark fell to the floor, and immediately Katie threw the medallion away. They walked back to the hotel. Mark said to Katie, 'Let's not tell them about what just happened,' and she answered, 'O.K.'

Two other people were playing on the field and one of them saw the medallion and picked it up.

The end?

The Loch Ness Monster

One evening I was walking alongside the lake with my dog when all of a sudden, I saw a huge creature emerge from the water. All the birds scattered. I ran home and rang 999 and asked them to bring the TV reporters down to the lake. They arrived half an hour later and asked if there were any witnesses who could identify the creature.

One man came up to the police and said, 'I saw it all.' The police officer asked the man what it looked like and the man said, 'It had a huge neck like a giraffe and a bump on its head.' The police officer said, 'Was there anything else you could see?' 'No', answered the man. 'I couldn't see anything else because it was underwater. I was standing behind some bushes when it came out.'

The next day I went to the lake again with my dog and saw TV reporters, police cars – the lot – just waiting to catch that poor, innocent thing which had done nothing. I thought that I had to do something to help the creature. Just as I was thinking that, it suddenly emerged from the water where the firemen were waiting to capture it.

Early that evening, scientists came with their instruments to analyse the monster. They took a blood sample and put it in a machine, and started to check what sort the creature was.

Late at night, I started to feel sorry for what I had done and I cried and shouted out, 'It's my fault!' I hurried down to the laboratory and asked if I could see the creature but they said they had not finished. I asked if I could see it the next day and they were still not sure whether they would have finished.

After the night had passed, I went to the laboratory and asked if they had found out what it was. One of the scientists said, 'Yes, we think it is a Loch Ness monster. It's probably the very last one of its kind. After this one dies, there will be no more.'

There were some scuba divers who went down to see whether it had given birth, and they come up with a baby Loch Ness monster.

The day I started smoking

The thing that I regret most of all is the day I started smoking.

I was in school fields with my brother and his mates, and my brother's friend Simo asked me if I wanted a fag. I said no at first because I thought it was stupid and I had no reason to want to start smoking. But then everyone else was smoking, so I thought I might as well since just one would not do me any harm. I had more and more every day and, before I knew it, I was smoking as much as everyone else. At first I didn't inhale the smoke, but as time went on, I started to.

Now, when I look back, I think that it is very stupid, and it's hard to quit.

I think it's stupid because it can kill you. It makes your lungs black and it makes your clothes smell. Some boys don't like girls that smoke and a lot of girls feel the same. Probably the main reason why it's stupid is because it costs £2.20 for ten fags and about £4.50 for twenty.

And that's why I regret smoking.

The fair

Tea took ages; I was so excited, I couldn't wait to go to the fair. I kept shouting to my sister, 'Come on! Aren't you ready yet?' Finally she was ready: 'Bye Mum, bye Dad!' The door slammed behind her.

My sister kept telling me to slow down, but I had to run there. I just wanted to eat some Candy Floss and feel the wind in my hair on the big rides. Finally we were there. I could smell the Candy Floss. It was lovely.

'Let's go on that ride, no that ride, no that ride!' I just couldn't make my mind up.

My sister shouted to me when I was getting ready to go on the Roller Coaster: 'I'll be back in two minutes – I'm just going to the toilet.'

'O.K. Yeeeeeeeeessss!! This is fantastic! Yippee!' Then I thought I'd have another go, but I hadn't any money. Where was my sister? I couldn't see her anywhere.

I asked a salesman where the toilets were and I ran as fast as I could, but she wasn't there. I was so scared.

'I am so worried,' I said to myself, and felt a cold shiver down my back. 'I'm so alone. I miss my sister. I have to find her.' Suddenly I thought I saw her and ran as fast as my legs could go. It was her.

'Where have you been?' I shouted.

'What do you care?'

'Who's that lad waving at you?'

'It's none of your business. Just leave me alone and go back to your roller coaster. Here's some money – now clear off!'

'I hate you.'

'Whatever!'

'Fine! Don't come crying to me when you're pregnant.'

I was all alone again. I thought I should make my way home and tell my mum and dad.

Then suddenly – OW!! What was that for?

A faraway voice said, 'Sorry love, but a girl's been found raped and dead. Sorry, love.'

I just froze and I think I fainted and I must have banged my head. I woke up and my eyes were blurred and I thought I was in heaven because I saw my sister.

Then I realised I was in hospital and it was my sister and she was alive. I jumped up. OW! My head!!

'Sit down,' she said, 'and I'll tell you where I was. I was in the toilet just across the road. I had too much Candy Floss and I was sick. Sorry, I should have told you.'

I said, 'I missed you.'

'I missed you too.'

On board the Titanic

It was the summer of 1912. I was a waiter at a little fish shop on the docks where the Titanic was moored. I saw them launch the ship and as soon as I saw the adverts for a waiter, I went straight to the office and registered. I had three months to wait.

They went past like a snail in a hurry. Then finally the day came. I had to go through the controls because I'm not English. It took me ages. I finally got through but not without being molested by one of those posh English policemen.

At last I got on the ship. The kitchen was massive but the smell was atrocious. It smelled like rotten fish marinated in rotten cabbage. It first it made you feel sick in your stomach, but I got used to it after a week or two. The smell was so bad that the person who I was sharing a room with asked me if I had fish in my pockets.

I soon made friends with tall, blonde woman. She was French and had a great sense of humour. She was always laughing at my terrible jokes. On the second day I just couldn't wait till the next day! I got into the kitchen and straightaway ran out. I'd had a really rough night and the smell of rotten fish made my stomach churn. I suppose I should not have had all that beer the night before. I was out with the blonde woman.

Anyway, days passed and I seemed to be doing the same thing every day.

Then it was a sunny Sunday morning, the best morning of all the time I'd been on the ship. I was thinking to myself, this will be a good day. I had to be up at six o'clock, so I said goodbye to Anne, the French girl, and off to work I went. First order was hash browns, egg, bowl of cereal and toast.

And then my day turned sour.

First I went to the wrong table twice. When I finally got there the toast was cold as were the hash browns. I got a telling off by the people and in my head I was thinking please don't let the manager come. Then all of a sudden a great booming voice like a giant running said, 'What seems to be the matter?' Mrs Smith was so unfair about it. She said I was so slow a turtle could beat me in a race and all the food was cold. Now I've never been rude to a customer in my life. I tried to explain to the manager, but he just told me to go to my room for the rest of the day. I began to get really angry and snapped at everyone. Then I went to sleep because I wasn't needed for the rest of the day.

I was asleep for about four hours and then I woke up because of my stomach. I hadn't eaten anything from six that morning. I usually don't notice it because I'm working so hard. I went downstairs to get something to eat. It was the best meal I'd had in all my time on the Titanic – fresh vegetables and beef.

While I was going back to my room I caught the smell of a cigar and I just had to have one. I had to give up when I got the job because they said it was unhygienic. So I went to my room and put on my tuxedo, which they gave me for the last night on the ship. I looked like an

upper class person and I walked into the bar and pretended I had lots of money. I smoked and I talked about politics. Time seemed to fly by.

Before I knew it, it was one o'clock in the morning. I stumbled back to my room so drunk that I walked into the wrong room three times. When I got there I got a right telling off from Anne. I said I was sorry, lay down and fell asleep. About thirty minutes later I was woken by a massive shake. It felt like an earthquake. I woke up, ran outside and there was a big block of ice on the deck. I looked over the edge and saw that we had been hit by an iceberg. I was really terrified inside but I didn't want to show it. I went back to bed after half an hour or so. I was just nodding off when there was a great knock at the door. There was a tall man with short black hair. He said, 'Get your lifebelts! The ship is letting in water!'

I shouted something I can't repeat.

Anne shouted, 'What's going on?'

We both grabbed our lifebelts and ran for the boats.

The crew were only letting on women and children so I said to Anne, 'Get on and I'll meet you back on land.' She was trying to get on the boat and there was a big gang of men trying to force themselves on. One of the crew fired a shot, the men ran away and Anne fell into the boat. Watching her get further and further away was the worst feeling I've ever experienced in my life. It was like someone had hit me in the throat.

When she had gone I kept on asking the crew if we could get on yet, but they said there was not much chance of my escaping from the Titanic. I ran to my room and under my bed were my life savings, £177, so I ran right to the back of the boat and paid Mike, one of my friends, to let me on a boat.

Thousands of people died that night and I'm glad I wasn't one of them. Since then I've had two children and four grandchildren. I kept my word to my wife, Anne, and I've started my life savings all over again.

OCR Resources: *the small print*

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