



**Upper secondary
Week 17**

PAPER 2 TECHNIQUES

SECTION B



Text 2

The text is about a man who experiences wild hallucinations while on a boat. Read it carefully and answer Questions 5 – 13.

1 One night, as I was rowing homewards with difficulty my twelve-footer boat, I stopped a few moments to draw breath near a reed-covered spot. The river was perfectly calm and there was not a sound to be heard. Somehow, I felt myself affected by the unusual silence that surrounded me. All the creatures, frogs and toads were silent.

2 Suddenly, a frog croaked to my right, and close beside me. I shuddered. It ceased, and I heard nothing more, and resolved to smoke, to soothe my mind. But I could not smoke; at the second draw I was nauseated, and gave up trying. I began to sing. The sound of my voice was distressing to me. So I lay still, but presently the slight motion of the boat disturbed me. It seemed to me as if she were making huge lurches, from 10 bank to bank of the river, touching each bank alternately. I felt as though I was in a tempest. I heard noises around me. I sprang to my feet with a single bound; the water was glistening, all was serene.

3 I saw that my nerves were somewhat wobbly, and I resolved to leave the spot but no matter how hard I tried, I could not raise the anchor. I felt a resistance. It had 15 caught on something at the bottom of the river. I began pulling again, but all in vain.

4 I sat down, disheartened, and began to reflect on my situation. I could not dream of breaking this chain, or detaching it from the boat, for it was massive and was riveted at the bows to a piece of wood as thick as my arm. However, as the weather was so fine I thought that it probably would not be long before some fisherman came to my 20 aid. My ill-luck had quieted me.

5 Suddenly, there was a little knock at the side of the boat. I gave a start, and a cold sweat broke out all over me. The noise was, doubtless, caused by some piece of driftwood borne along by the current, but that was enough. I seized the chain and tensed my muscles in a desperate effort. The anchor held firm. I sat down again, 25 exhausted.

6 The river had slowly become cloaked in a thick white fog and it seemed as if I was buried to the waist in a cloud of cotton of whiteness. All sorts of strange fancies came into my mind. I thought that someone was trying to climb into my boat which I could no longer distinguish, and that the river, hidden by the thick fog, was full of strange 30 creatures which were swimming all around me.

7 I felt horribly uncomfortable, my forehead felt as if it had a tight band round it, my heart out of control, it jumped as if prompted by an electrical surge and it almost suffocated me, and, almost beside myself, I thought of swimming away from the place. But then, again, the very idea made me tremble with fear. I saw myself, lost, going 35 by guesswork in this heavy fog, struggling about amid the grasses and reeds which I could not escape, my breath rattling with fear, neither seeing the bank, nor finding

my boat; and it seemed as if I would be dragged down by the feet to the bottom of these black waters.

8 This stupid, inexplicable fear increased, and became terror. I remained motionless, 40 my eyes staring, my ears on the stretch with expectation of something terrible. I believe if it had occurred to a fish to jump out of the water, as often happens, that would be enough to make me fall over, stiff and unconscious.

9 However, by a violent effort, I succeeded in becoming almost rational again. Then an idea came to me, and I began to shout with all my might towards all the points of the compass in succession. When my throat was absolutely paralyzed, I listened. 45 A dog was howling, at a great distance. Yet no human voice did I hear.

5. Explain how the language used in paragraph 2 makes the narrator appear to be highly disturbed.

Support your ideas with three details from paragraph 1.

[3]

6. At the beginning of paragraph 3 (line 14), 'I saw that my nerves were somewhat wobbly, and I resolved to leave the spot but no matter how hard I tried, I could not raise the anchor.'

Identify the word or phrase in the given sentence which suggests

(i) that the narrator was losing his calm –

[1]

(ii) a strong thought about a course of action –

[1]

7. At the beginning of paragraph 6 (line 27), 'The river had slowly become cloaked in a thick white fog and it seemed as if I was buried to the waist in a cloud of cotton of whiteness.'

(i) What is the fog being compared to here?

[1]

(ii) Why does the narrator use the word 'buried'?

[1]

8. From paragraph 5 (line 23) 'The noise was, doubtless, caused by some piece of driftwood borne along by the current, but that was enough.'

(i) What does 'that' refer to in the sentence? [1]

(ii) How did the narrator show that 'that' was enough? [1]

9. In paragraph 5 (line 23), what is unusual and effective about the phrase 'cold sweat'? [2]

10 The narrator uses similes 'as if it had a tight band round' (line 32) and 'as if prompted by an electrical surge' (line 33).

What do these similes suggest about what the narrator was experiencing? [2]

Similes	What the narrator was experiencing
as if it had a tight band round	
as if prompted by an electrical surge	

11. From paragraph 8, describe the extent of the narrator's state of fear. Give evidence from the passage to support your answer. [1]

12. Give evidence from paragraphs 8 and 9 to support the following:

(i) The narrator condemned the fear, a fear he could not understand. [1]

(ii) The narrator did not shout for help for long before a dog howled. [1]

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13. The structure of the text reflects the main feelings of the narrator as he goes through the night in his boat alone on the river. Complete the flow chart by choosing one word from the box to summarise the main feeling described in each part of the text. There are some extra words in the box you do not need to use. [4]

Narrator's feelings

brooding	liberated	hallucinating	relaxed
startled	furious	jumpy	

Flow Chart

