
INTERNATIONAL GCSE

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Paper 2 – Source-based Reading and Directed Writing

Insert

Wednesday 3 November 2021

07:00 GMT

Time allowed: 2 hours

The six sources that follow are:

- **Source A:** *Ndura: Son of the Forest*
- **Source B:** Rainforests
- **Source C:** Why Do We Need Trees?
- **Source D:** How Nature Benefits Your Health
- **Source E:** Time Outdoors
- **Source F:** Ray Mears – *Outdoor Survival Handbook: Introduction*

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Source A***Ndura: Son of the Forest***

In this extract, a boy finds himself in an unfamiliar jungle. He wakes to find himself in a small village camp.

I slept eight straight hours and I woke up at the break of dawn. Sleeping well was a new custom that I was thankful for. The fever had disappeared. There were still some children sleeping in the hut I was in. I went out into the central clearing, proud to be among the first to get up, but I was disappointed because the whole camp was already scurrying around in frantic activity. I walked up to the fire and took a piece of meat and some fruit.

There were women working on the bark of a tree they called *pongo-pongo*. The bark was somehow softened and they smashed the bark down with stones, again and again, as if they were kneading the dough to make bread. One of the women had a more advanced piece and I discovered that it was what some of the loincloths were made of: tree bark. I came closer and touched a finished piece. It was a long and flexible cloth. Another woman pounded on some shredded vines, getting a red paste out of it with which they decorated the clothes. And other women were making nets for hunting and fishing, with liana trees.

Source B**Rainforests**

Smoke from the wildfires burning in the Amazon rainforest plunged São Paulo, 1,700 miles from the scenes of destruction, into an eerie darkness last Monday afternoon. The temporary blackout made it impossible for residents of Brazil's largest city to ignore the ecological carnage taking place on the other side of their country. But the ruin of rainforests we are currently witnessing will reverberate far beyond the borders of Brazil in decades to come.

Home to 3 million species – one in ten of all known plants and animals on Earth – the Amazon rainforest is the most biodiverse place on the planet. Three-quarters of plant species there are unique to the rainforest. The Amazon is also home to a million indigenous people, thousands of whom have lost their lives in recent decades defending the forest against commercial interests.

The rainforest plays a critical role in regulating the Earth's climate, absorbing millions of tonnes of carbon dioxide a year. Halting deforestation is no less important than eliminating fossil fuel use in terms of avoiding catastrophic global overheating. Scientists have estimated that protecting and restoring rainforests could reduce carbon emissions by 18% by 2030.

Source C**Why Do We Need Trees?**

It's a good question and perhaps not as obvious as you'd think. Trees are crucial for humans and the natural environment.

Our Earth has an amazing ability to maintain a natural balance and trees are a central part of this. Trees are able to remove excess carbon dioxide from our atmosphere and convert it into oxygen via a process called photosynthesis. Woods are vital in ensuring that our atmosphere remains oxygen-rich.

Trees are effective air filters. Some species of tree, such as the London Plane, are particularly resistant to air pollution and can help filter harmful pollutants by trapping them on their leaves and bark. That's why London Planes line many city streets across the world.

The benefits of trees and woods on our mental and physical health are well-documented. As well as improving air quality, they provide a space for people to relax and exercise, which helps cast off mental fatigue and improve memory.

Trees provide crucial habitats for much wildlife. Whether it's for birds nesting in their canopies, small mammals making their homes in the root systems, or bats roosting in their trunks, they provide a range of places to live. Oak trees have been found to support over 280 species of insects, which in turn provide food for many birds and other predators.

Whether it's in the heat of summer or the frost of winter, trees provide vital shade and shelter for both humans and animals. When it's hot, trees in our cities shade our streets and release water vapour into the air through their leaves. Farmers also recognise the importance of trees in keeping their livestock sheltered from cold, hot or windy conditions.

Trees have been shown to be useful as flood defences too. When situated near rivers and streams, they massively reduce the amount of rainwater entering watercourses. In turn, this reduces the likelihood of rivers bursting their banks and flooding low-lying areas. Trees also provide the added benefit of preventing soil erosion and protecting our watercourses from harmful pollution in run-off.

Trees are the lungs of our cities. They're the homes for our wildlife. They're our guardians against flooding. Trees are vital to so many aspects of our life.

Source D**How Nature Benefits Your Health**

How long does it take to get a dose of nature high enough to make people say they feel healthy and have a strong sense of well-being?

Precisely 120 minutes.

In a study of 20,000 people, a team led by Mathew White of the University of Exeter, found that people who spent two hours a week in local parks or other natural environments were more likely to report good health and psychological well-being than those who didn't. Two hours was a hard boundary; the study showed there were no benefits for people who didn't meet that threshold.

"It's well-known that getting outdoors in nature can be good for people's health and well-being, but until now we've not been able to say how much is enough," White said. "Two hours a week is hopefully a realistic target for many people, especially given that it can be spread over an entire week to get the benefit."

The study by White and his colleagues is only the latest in a rapidly expanding area of research that finds nature has lasting effects on people's health — physically, mentally, and emotionally.

These studies have shown that time in nature is an antidote for stress: it can lower blood pressure and stress hormone levels, enhance immune system function, increase self-esteem, reduce anxiety, and improve mood. In a recent study, researchers found that being in nature reduced feelings of isolation, promoted calm, and lifted mood.

The growing body of research has led to the tipping point at which health experts, researchers, and government officials are now proposing widespread changes aimed at bringing nature into people's everyday lives.

For example, researchers and policymakers now talk about "park deserts" in urban areas. Cities are adding or enhancing parks, and schools and other institutions are being designed with large windows and access to trees and green areas.

Studies show that the effects of nature may go even deeper than providing a sense of well-being, helping to reduce crime and aggression. A 2015 study of 2,000 people found that more exposure to nature translated into more community cohesion and substantially lower crime rates.

Understanding nature's therapeutic effects may be arriving at a promising moment. Some studies have found that anxiety over climate change is a growing phenomenon. Ironically, one of the best antidotes for that might be a dose of green space.

Source E

Time Outdoors



Source F

Ray Mears – *Outdoor Survival Handbook: Introduction*

This morning I walked up the steep trail on to one of my favourite ridges. There is an old yew tree there with low sheltering branches under which I often sit. It is now autumn; with the year coming to a close, the trees adept in their usual late-season best, and the scent of decay is in the air. As the sky pulled back its curtains and allowed the early-morning sunlight in, two roe deer in the field below began their retreat to the cover of nearby woodland.

Unusually, it has been a long time since I sat under that special tree. There have been many changes there - the trail is the most overgrown I've ever seen it. Yet, from the tree's perspective, I had hardly been gone at all. Sitting there with my back against the gnarled old grandfather trunk, in the wild again for the first time in many months, I felt truly alive.

Now, more than ever before, I appreciate the refreshment brought by the sobering rain, the heart-warming glow of a campfire and the timely scratch of thorns telling me to stop rushing and move with a more careful rhythm.

There is something to be learned everywhere in the natural world. Yet how far removed from this most of us are in our everyday lives!

Sometimes in a town or city I'm struck by the way we wear padded shoes to avoid bruising our feet on the concrete, how we have to crook and crane our necks to find the horizon and rush about to avoid being knocked over by the crowds. No wonder the sycamore trees pushing down the walls of derelict gardens, and the overflying geese, heron, kestrel and owl, all go unnoticed. With so many of us today inhabiting this modern urban environment, I can understand why the term 'wilderness' now conveys a sense of chaos and threat rather than describing a place devoid of human settlement and cultivation. To me, however, the urban landscape is far more threatening and chaotic.

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