

**GCSE**

**ENGLISH LANGUAGE**

Paper 2 Writers' viewpoints and perspectives

**Insert**

**Source A:** an extract from The Art of Travel by Alain de Botton

**Source B:** an extract from Rambles in Germany and Italy, in 1840, 1842 and 1843 by Mary Shelley

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## SOURCE A - 21<sup>st</sup> Century non-fiction

*Alain de Botton is a philosopher, writer and television presenter. Here, he gives his thoughts about travelling abroad in an article that was published in a travel magazine.*

### THE ART OF TRAVEL

Awakening early on that first morning, I slipped on the dressing gown provided and went out on to the veranda<sup>1</sup>. In the dawn light the sky was a pale grey-blue and, after the rustlings of the night before, all the creatures and even the wind seemed in deep sleep. It was as quiet as a library. Beyond the hotel room stretched a wide beach which was covered at first with coconut trees and then sloped unhindered towards the sea. I climbed over the veranda's low railings and walked across the sand. Nature was at her most benevolent<sup>2</sup>. It was as if, in creating this small horseshoe bay, she had chosen to atone<sup>3</sup> for her ill-temper in other regions and decided to display only her munificence<sup>4</sup>. The trees provided shade and milk, the floor of the sea was lined with shells, the sand was powdery and the colour of sun-ripened wheat, and the air – even in the shade – had an enveloping, profound warmth to it so unlike the fragility of northern European heat, always prone to cede<sup>5</sup>, even in midsummer, to a more assertive, proprietary<sup>6</sup> chill.

I found a deck chair at the edge of the sea. I could hear small lapping sounds beside me, as if a kindly monster was taking discreet sips of water from a large goblet. A few birds were waking up and beginning to career through the air in matinal<sup>7</sup> excitement. Behind me, the raffia roofs of the hotel bungalows were visible through gaps in the trees. Before me was a view that I recognised from the brochure: the beach stretched away in a gentle curve towards the tip of the bay, behind it were jungle-covered hills and the first row of coconut trees inclined irregularly towards the turquoise sea, as though some of them were craning their necks to catch a better angle of the sun.

Yet this description only imperfectly reflects what occurred within me that morning, for my attention was in truth far more fractured and confused than the foregoing paragraphs suggest. I may have noticed a few birds careering through the air in excitement, but my awareness of them was weakened by a number of other, incongruous and unrelated elements, among these, a sore throat that I had developed during the flight, a worry at not having informed a colleague that I would be away, a pressure across both temples and a rising need to visit the bathroom. A momentous but until then overlooked fact was making its first appearance: that I had inadvertently brought myself with me to the island.

It is easy to forget ourselves when we contemplate pictorial and verbal descriptions of places. At home, as my eyes had panned over photographs of Barbados, there were no reminders that those eyes were intimately tied to a body and mind which would travel with me wherever I went and that might, over time, assert their presence in ways which would threaten or even negate the purpose of what the eyes had come there to see. At home, I would concentrate on pictures of a hotel room, a beach or a sky and ignore the complex creature in which this observation was taking place and for whom this was only a small part of a larger, more multi-faceted task of living.

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<sup>1</sup> Veranda - a roofed platform along the outside of a house, level with the ground floor

<sup>2</sup> Benevolent - well-meaning or kindly

<sup>3</sup> Atone - make amends or repair

<sup>4</sup> Munificence - generosity

<sup>5</sup> Cede - give up power

<sup>6</sup> Proprietary - ownership

<sup>7</sup> Matinal - relating to or taking place in the morning

## SOURCE B - 19<sup>th</sup> Century non-fiction

*The text is an extract adapted from a travel narrative written by Mary Shelley. In a series of letters she recounts her experiences whilst abroad with family and friends. In this extract she begins in the town of Linz and enjoys the River Danube, takes a train to Gmunden, breaking the journey at Lambach to visit the Traun waterfall.*

### RAMBLES IN GERMANY AND ITALY, IN 1840, 1842 AND 1843

Letter III

Monday September 5<sup>th</sup>

The train of the railroad started at two in the afternoon for Gmunden: we thus had a few hours to spare. One of our party climbed the heights above Linz, to feast his eyes on the view which had enchanted me the preceding evening. There is no circumstance in travelling, consequent on my narrow means that I regret so much, as my being obliged to deny myself hiring a carriage when I  
5 arrive in a strange town, and the not being able to drive about everywhere, and see everything. I wandered about the town, and stood long on the bridge, drinking in the beauty of the scene, till soul became full to the brim with the sense of delight. The river is indeed magnificent; with speed, yet with a vastness that makes speed majestic, it hurries on the course assigned to it by the Creator. Never, never had I so much enjoyed the glory of the earth. The Danube gives Linz a superiority over  
10 a thousand scenes otherwise of equal beauty. Standing on the bridge, above is a narrow pass, hedged in by high sombre rocks, and the river sweeps, darkening as it goes, beneath the gloomy shadows of the cliffs; below, it flows in a mighty stream through a valley of wide expanse, till you lose sight of it at the base of distant mountains. I should liked to have stayed some days a Linz: I grieved also not to be going by stream to Vienna.

15 Our drive by the railroad to Gmunden was delightful. We had a little carriage to ourselves. Our road lay through a valley watered by a stream, and adorned by woods; it was a secluded home-felt scene; while the high distant mountains redeemed it from tameness. After the sandy deserts of Prussia, and the burnt-up country round Dresden, the freshness and green of a pastoral valley, the murmur of streams and rivulets, the delightful shadow of the trees, imparted a sense of peace and amenity  
20 that lapped me in Elysium<sup>1</sup>. We changed the train at Lambach, a quiet shady village. We had bargained that we should be allowed to visit the falls of the Traun on our way. It was evening before we reached the spot, and the falls are nearly a mile from the road; we had no guide but were told we could not miss the way. Our path lay through a wood, and as the twilight deepened we sometimes doubted whether we had gone astray through the gloom of the thicket. You know that a  
25 mile of unknown road, with some suspicion hovering in the mind as to whether you are in the right path, becomes at least three, or rather one feels as if it would never end. We came at last to the brink of the precipice above the river and descended by steps cut in the rock. We thus reached the lower part of the fall. With some difficulty, it being late, the Miller was found, and meanwhile we clambered to the points of rock from which the cascade is viewed. It was dim twilight, with the  
30 moon quietly moving among the summer clouds, and shedding its silver on the waters. The river winding above through a wooded ravine comes to an abrupt rocky descent, over which it falls with foam and spray. The drought had reduced the supply of water; a portion also carried off for the purpose of traffic – a wooden canal being constructed to allow the salt barges to ascend and descend the Traun without interruption from the cascade. This canal is on an inclined plain and it

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<sup>1</sup> Elysium - a state of perfect happiness

35 would be very delightful to rush down: we could not, as there was no boat; but for six swanzikers (six  
eightpences) the sluices<sup>2</sup> were shut and the water blocked up, turned to feed and augment<sup>3</sup> the fall.  
The evening hour took from the accuracy of our view, but added immeasurably to its charm; the  
mysterious glittering of the spray beneath the moon; the deep shadows of the rocks and trees; the  
soft air and dashing water – here was the reward for infinite fatigue and inconvenience; here we  
40 grasped an hour which, when the memory of every discomfort has become almost a pleasure, will  
endure as one of the sweetest in life.

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<sup>2</sup> Sluices - sliding gate to control the flow of water

<sup>3</sup> Augment - make greater by adding something

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