



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 I beat my insomnia'

**An extract from an article written in 2016
by journalist Arifa Akbar**

SOURCE B 19th Century literary non-fiction

'A sleepless night'

**An extract from an article written in 1872
by journalist Fanny Fern**

[Turn over]

SOURCE A

SOURCE A is an extract from a newspaper article written in 2016 by journalist Arifa Akbar about her experience of insomnia, which is when a person has difficulty sleeping.

1 Now, I am about to say something that I never
thought I would: I had a good night's sleep last
night. And the night before that. All week in fact, I
have tipped into bed, my mind restless for one
5 shuddering moment before I turn to lie flat on my
back and repeat a well-rehearsed script, at which
point my thoughts drop off into dark velvety sleep.

A full night's sleep could never have happened a
few years ago. I am 44 now but, until my late 30s, I
10 had insomnia that clung on from childhood and
11 progressively beat me down.

It began when I was ten — I would deliberately keep
myself awake to pick over the day. It would take
me five or six hours to get to sleep and, even then,
15 it would be interrupted. My immune system was
shot. I lived on the edge of my nerves. I fought it
with remedies from the herbal to the hard stuff, but
it just seemed to get worse.

Two decades into the insomnia, at the age of 30, I
20 was waking up — if I had fallen asleep at all — with
sore eyes, itchy skin and a high-pitched sense of
mental hysteria, which, at its worst, made me feel
as though my life was unravelling.

I felt as if I had tried every known cure going — and
25 there are plenty, given almost a third of us admit to
being sleep deprived. I tried giving up coffee,
sugar and heavy dinners. Still awake. Baking at
3am. Still awake and getting fatter. Hypnosis,
which did nothing at all. In desperation I bought a
30 therapeutic electromagnetic mattress to
'recalibrate my energy field'. It just gave me a stiff
back. Sleeping pills knocked me out for a few
days, then the insomnia crept back.

So when I came across a magazine article
35 mentioning AT (Autogenic Training – a form of
self-hypnosis and an apparent fix for insomnia,
formulated by a German psychiatrist in the 1930s),
scepticism kicked in. I took the article to my doctor
anyway — what harm was there in running it past
40 him?

That is how I found myself sitting with
11 strangers, memorising a script to focus on our
bodies from limb to limb, and then our organs, like
a strange, verbal body scan. I was told to repeat
45 the exercise three times a day, for 15 minutes each
time — ideally in a quiet spot, sitting back on a
chair or lying down.

It looked like I was merely resting with my eyes
closed, but in my head I was repeating sentences:
50 'My right arm is heavy and warm', 'my heartbeat is
calm and regular' and 'my neck and shoulders are
heavy and warm'.

[Turn over]

The script had to be followed in a certain order, and repeated three times. There was nothing more to it
55 than that. And so I started chanting. To myself, that is, silently, three times a day.

A few weeks into my course, I began to feel something. My insomnia hadn't disappeared but I began to feel calmer, brighter, and less wired all
60 the time. I felt my memory get sharper. I didn't have to write constant reminders to myself or search for the right words while speaking as I'd become used to doing.

My insomnia, at my most tormented, was
65 excruciatingly noisy. I could feel my brain rev up in the night and start to chatter, sorting out things I hadn't given it time to reflect on. Self-hypnosis began to turn down the noise.

Then it happened. Around Week Four, sleep came
70 like a welcome black tide, knocking me out suddenly. It felt miraculous. I was overjoyed, but suspicious. This had happened before and insomnia had always returned with a vengeance.

But the insomnia hasn't come back. I still think of
75 self-hypnosis as some form of magic, despite the science. I fear the spell will break and the insomnia will creep back one day.

And so I carry on repeating the script — and, so far, it carries on working its magic.

END OF SOURCE A

SOURCE B

SOURCE B is an extract taken from a magazine article written in 1872 by American journalist Fanny Fern. Here, she writes about her experience of being unable to sleep.

1 You know what it is to lie awake at night, I suppose, while every human creature in the house is sleeping, with perspiration standing in drops on your forehead; with twitching fingers, and kicking toes, and glaring
5 eyes; with disgust at the distant tap, tap, tap, of feet on the sidewalk; planning your revenge tomorrow (should you survive to see it) upon the owner of that blind across the street, which has been flapping to and fro all night, and yet never dropped on
10 somebody's head, as you hoped it might, so that you were saved from the noisy nuisance.

In vain have you tried saying the Multiplication Table; in vain have you repeated poetry by the yard, or counted to one hundred; in vain have you done any of
15 the foolish things recommended in such cases. Two o'clock has just struck, and no sleep has followed. Well—if you can't sleep, you won't sleep, that's all. You'll just get up, and strike a light and read. You do it; but the fire is low, and cold shivers run up and
20 down your back-bone. Three o'clock! You're hungry! Yes—that must be it. You'll go to the cupboard and get a bit of cold chicken. Good heavens! It's gone! Those lumpish, snoring wretches have devoured it before going to bed!

[Turn over]

25 You walk to the window. It is some comfort that the
stars have to wink all night as well as you. Good!
You're glad of it. Four o'clock! Gracious! How will
you feel to-morrow? Suppose you should run from
the top of the stairs to the bottom, as fast and as loud
30 as you could, and wake up the whole family. And as
the vision of terrified night-gowns appears in your
mind, you start grinning like a maniac; then laughing
hysterically; then crying outright; and the next thing
you know it is eight o'clock in the morning, and coffee
35 and rolls are awaiting your arrival.

36 And as to mosquitoes. Ah! You too must have
suffered. You have lain, hour after hour, listening to
that never-ceasing war-song, till you were as nervous
as a cat. You have turned over; you have lain on your
40 side, lain on your back, lain on your face. You have
doubled your fists up under your arm-pits, and
twisted your feet into hard knots under your
night-clothes, to no avail. You have then fallen back
on your dignity and the pygmy-ness of your
45 tormentors, and folded your arms resolutely over
your chest, and looked fiercely up to the ceiling...
And yet, at that very moment, an "owdacious" bite
has sent you flying, with a smothered exclamation,
into the middle of the floor, bewailing the day you
50 were born.

Next day you get a mosquito net. What a fool not to
think of it before. You drape it round your bed. It
looks safe. You explore it carefully that night before
getting in, that there is no treacherous hole left for the
55 enemy. You put out the light, and oh! blissful

happiness, listen to their howl of rage outside, and fall asleep. Next morning you wake with a splitting headache. Can it be the confined air of the net? Horrible! You spend that day nursing your head and
60 your anger.

That night you refuse to gasp under a net, for all the mosquitoes that ever swarmed. You even light your gaslight defiantly, open the windows, and sneer at the black demons as they buzz in for their nocturnal raid.
65 You sit and read—occasionally boxing your own ears—till the small hours, and then—to bed; only to dash frantically against the wall, throw your pillows at the enemy, laugh hysterically, and rise at daylight a bleary-eyed, spotted, dismal wretch!

END OF SOURCES

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