

Section A: Reading

Insert

The character in this section of the story is a young boy. At this point of the story, he is playing out in the streets on a rainy day with a handmade boat from his brother.

5 Now here he was, chasing his boat down the left side of Witcham Street. He was running fast but the water was running faster and his boat was pulling ahead. He heard a deepening roar and saw that fifty yards farther down the hill the water in the gutter was cascading into a storm drain that was still open. It was a long dark semicircle cut into the curbing, and as George watched, a stripped branch, its bark as dark and glistening as sealskin, shot into the storm drain's maw. It hung up there for a moment and then slipped down inside. That was where his boat was headed.

"Oh no!" he yelled, dismayed. He put on speed, and for a moment he thought he would catch the boat. Then one of his feet slipped and he went sprawling, skinning one knee and crying out in pain. From his new pavement-level perspective he watched his boat swing around twice, momentarily caught in another whirlpool, and then disappear.

10 "Oh no!" he yelled again, and slammed his fist down on the pavement. That hurt too, and he began to cry a little. What a stupid way to lose the boat!

He got up and walked over to the storm drain. He dropped to his knees and peered in. The water made a dank hollow sound as it fell into the darkness. It was a spooky sound. It reminded him of -

"Huh!" The sound was jerked out of him as if on a string, and he recoiled.

15 There were yellow eyes in there: the sort of eyes he had always imagined but never actually seen down in the basement. It's an animal, he thought incoherently, that's all it is, some animal, maybe a housecat that got stuck down in there -

Still, he was ready to run - would run in a second or two, when his mental switchboard had dealt with the shock those two shiny yellow eyes had given him. He saw himself getting up and backing away, and that was when a voice - a perfectly reasonable and rather pleasant voice spoke to him from inside the storm drain.

20 "Hi Georgie" it said.

George blinked and looked again.

25 There was a clown in the storm drain. The light in there was far from good, but it was good enough so that George Denbrough was sure of what he was seeing. It was a clown, like in a circus or on TV. The face of the clown in the storm drain was white, there were funny tufts of red hair on either side of his bald head, and there was a big clown smile painted over his mouth.

The clown held a bunch of balloons, all colours, like gorgeous ripe fruit in one hand.

In the other he held George's newspaper boat.

Q1 Read again the first part of the source, lines 20 to 27.

List four things from this part of the text that we learn about the creature in the drain.

Q2 - Look in detail at this extract from line 14 to 27 of the Source:

How does the writer use language here to show the creature in the drain is frightening?

Q3 - You now need to think about the whole of the Source. This text is from the start of a short story.

How has the writer structured the text to interest you as the reader? [8 marks]

Q4 - Focus this part of your answer on the first part of the story from line 1 - 13.

A teacher said 'The opening of the extract shows the boy as innocent and naïve to his dangerous surroundings.'

To what extent do you agree?