

ENGLISH EXAM: Part 2 – Sight Reading and Comprehension**Timing: Minimum 10 minutes, maximum 15 minutes****CANDIDATE BRIEF:**

The examiner will ask you to start reading this text aloud in your own time. You may NOT ask questions about the text.

The examiner will then ask you to explain particular words or phrases, especially those of an idiomatic or colloquial nature, and also ask two questions about the meaning of the text. You will keep the text in front of you.

TEXT:

By 1960, Britain's once-thriving Music Hall industry was virtually dead. Theatres with their faded notions of Empire gave way to Cinema and the threat of Television. Where thousands once linked arms singing popular songs, watching acrobatics, seeing feats of strength, and listening to risqué jokes, now the echoes of those acts lay as whispers amongst the stalls' threadbare seats. The Halls flourished in the 19th Century, but had their origins in the taverns of the 16th and 17th Centuries. Minstrels plied their trade egged on by drunken crowds.

As time passed, the notoriety of the Music Hall acts and camaraderie produced grew. Entrepreneurial businessmen tapped into this commerciality and had purpose-built status symbol theatres to provide a 'home' for acts and punters. With names like The Apollo giving gravitas approaching Olympian ideals, so the owners basked in wealth and glory.

The Music Hall became the mass populist entertainment for the population. Every town had one, where everyone could be entertained by variety acts showing off the performers' skills. The acts varied from singers, joke-tellers, comics, acrobats, to dancers. They enabled audiences to share a symbiotic relationship with one another; inspired war poets; showed short films; and they and the halls reflected both the ideals and foibles of their era.