

ENGLISH EXAM: Part 2 – Sight Reading and Comprehension**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:

The First and Second World Wars turned the Natural History Museum into a hive of activity, giving historians a rich and unique perspective on wartime Britain. The Museum's invaluable contribution can be seen in the rare collection of manuscripts and photographs held by the Library and Archives.

During the Second World War the Museum supplied government and military departments with expertise on the obstacles posed by the natural world. For example, the Ministry of Supply's Assistant Director of Explosives wrote to the Museum's Zoology Department asking how to discourage field mice from 'nibbling the lengths of detonating fuse in open fields'. The Museum also received enquiries regarding explosives, carbon monoxide poisoning, mustard gas and types of rock resistant to landmine detectors.

Between September 1940 and April 1941, the Museum was severely damaged in several air raids. A large proportion of the Museum's exhibits had already been evacuated to country houses before the war. Removing the exhibits was a huge operation. Over this period, the Museum's chief librarian established a serial publication called Tin Hat, to which Museum staff were encouraged to anonymously submit humorous articles as a means of keeping up morale.

A war diary, documenting the chronology of the Museum from August 1939 to April 1945, also features in the collections.