

AQA GCSE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Paper 2: Writers' viewpoints and perspectives

SET B

Insert

The two sources that follow are:

Source A: 20th Century literary non-fiction

The Beadwork

An extract from a collection of biographical stories by Zitkala-Ša published in 1921

Source B: 19th Century non-fiction

Life of Blackhawk; or Ma-ka-tai-me-she-kia-kiak

An extract from Blackhawk's autobiography, published in 1833

Source A

Source A is taken from a collection of autobiographical writing by the Native American writer Zitkala-Ša, published in 1921. In this extract, she describes her experience as a child learning the traditional art of beadwork – sewing with beads – from her mother.

Soon after breakfast mother sometimes began her beadwork.

On a bright, clear day, she pulled out the wooden pegs that pinned the skirt of our wigwam to the ground, and rolled the canvas part way up on its frame of slender poles. Then the cool morning breezes swept freely through our dwelling, now and then
5 wafting the perfume of sweet grasses from newly burnt prairie.

Untying the long tasselled strings that bound a small brown buckskin¹ bag, my mother spread upon a mat beside her bunches of coloured beads, just as an artist arranges the paints upon his palette. On a lapboard she smoothed out a double sheet of soft white buckskin; and drawing from a beaded case that hung on the left of her wide belt
10 a long, narrow blade, she trimmed the buckskin into shape. Often she worked upon small moccasins for her small daughter.

Then I became intensely interested in her designing. With a proud, beaming face, I watched her work. In imagination, I saw myself walking in a new pair of snugly fitting moccasins². I felt the envious eyes of my playmates upon the pretty red beads
15 decorating my feet.

Close beside my mother I sat on a rug, with a scrap of buckskin in one hand and an awl in the other. This was the beginning of my practical observation lessons in the art of beadwork. From a skein of finely twisted threads of silvery sinews my mother pulled out a single one. With an awl she pierced the buckskin, and skilfully threaded it with
20 the white sinew. Picking up the tiny beads one by one, she strung them with the point of her thread, always twisting it carefully after every stitch.

It took many trials before I learned how to knot my sinew thread on the point of my finger, as I saw her do. Then the next difficulty was in keeping my thread stiffly twisted, so that I could easily string my beads upon it. My mother required of me original
25 designs for my lessons in beading. At first I frequently ensnared many a sunny hour into working a long design. Soon I learned from self-inflicted punishment to refrain from drawing complex patterns, for I had to finish whatever I began.

After some experience I usually drew easy and simple crosses and squares. These were some of the set forms. My original designs were not always symmetrical nor
30 sufficiently characteristic, two faults with which my mother had little patience. The quietness of her oversight made me feel strongly responsible and dependent upon my own judgment. She treated me as a dignified little individual as long as I was on my good behaviour, and how humiliated I was when some boldness of mine drew forth a rebuke from her!

¹ Leather, usually made from deer skin

² Shoes

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- 35 In the choice of colours she left me to my own taste. I was pleased with an outline of yellow upon a background of dark blue, or a combination of red and myrtle-green. There was another of red with a bluish-grey that was more conventionally used. When I became a little familiar with designing and the various pleasing combinations of colour, a harder lesson was given me. It was the sewing on, instead of beads, some tinted porcupine quills, moistened and flattened between the nails of the thumb and forefinger. My mother cut off the prickly ends and burned them at once in the centre fire. These sharp points were poisonous, and worked into the flesh wherever they lodged. For this reason, my mother said, I should not do much alone in quills until I was as tall as my cousin Warca-Ziwin.
- 40
- 45 Always after these confining lessons I was wild with surplus spirits, and found joyous relief in running loose in the open again.

Turn over for Source B

Source B

In the early 1800s, American and British settlers expanded west across the United States, acquiring more land from Native American tribes. Black Hawk was a warrior and leader of the Sauk American Indian tribe. In 1833, he told his life story which was translated into a biography and published in the same year. Source B is an extract from Black Hawk's story.

5 My reason teaches me that land cannot be sold. The Great Spirit¹ gave it to his children to live upon and cultivate, as far as is necessary for their subsistence; and so long as they occupy and cultivate it, they have the right to the soil – but if they voluntarily leave it, then any other people have a right to settle upon it. Nothing can be sold, but such things as can be carried away.

10 In consequence of the improvements of the intruders² on our fields, we found considerable difficulty to get ground to plant a little corn. Some of the whites permitted us to plant small patches in the fields they had fenced, keeping all the best ground for themselves. Our women had great difficulty in climbing their fences, (being unaccustomed to the kind,) and were ill-treated if they left a rail down.

20 One of my old friends thought he was safe. His corn-field was on a small island of Rock river. He planted his corn; it came up well – but the white man saw it! – he wanted the island, and took his team over, ploughed up the corn, and replanted it for himself! The old man shed tears; not for himself, but the distress his family would be in if they raised no corn.

25 The white people brought whiskey into our village, made our people drunk, and cheated them out of their horses, guns and traps! This fraudulent system was carried to such an extent that I apprehended serious difficulties might take place, unless a stop was put to it. Consequently, I visited all the whites and begged them not to sell whisky to my people. One of them continued the practice openly.

I took a party of my young men, went to his house, and took out his barrel and broke in the head and turned out the whisky. I did this for fear some of the whites might be killed by my people when drunk.

30 Our people were treated badly by the whites on many occasions. At one time, a white man beat one of our women cruelly, for pulling a few suckers of corn out of his field, to suck, when hungry! At another time, one of our young men was beat with clubs by two white men for opening a fence which crossed our road, to take his horse through. His shoulder blade was broken, and his body badly bruised, from which he soon after *died!*



¹ God

² British and American settlers (also known as 'the whites')

- 35 Bad, and cruel, as our people were treated by the whites, not one of them was hurt or molested by any of my band. I hope this will prove that we are a peaceable people – having permitted ten men to take possession of the corn-fields; to prevent us from planting corn; burn and destroy our lodges; ill-treat our women; and *beat to death* out men, without offering resistance to their barbarous cruelties. This is a lesson worthy for the white man to learn: to use forbearance³ when injured.
- 40 We acquainted our agent daily with our situation, and through him, the great chief at St. Louis – and hoped that something would be done for us. The whites were *complaining* at the same time that *we* were *intruding* upon their rights! THEY made themselves out the *injured* party, and *we* the *intruders*! and called loudly to the great war chief to protect *their* property.
- 45 How smooth must be the language of the whites, when they can make right look wrong, and wrong look right.

³ Patience and self-control

End of sources



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