



23/7

## 1 ( READING ) Read the text.

### A modern miner

1 Today there are no coal mines left<sup>1</sup> in  
England. Hatfield Mine in Doncaster, North  
England was the last mine and it closed in  
2015. John Barrow worked there for over 20  
5 years. Here he tells us about his work in the  
mines.

“Work in the mines changed a lot over the  
last 100 years. I started to work there when  
I was 16, but I first went down into the  
10 mine when I was 18. For the first month an  
older miner took me with him. He looked  
after me and taught me how to stay safe.  
Like 100 years ago, the miners were all very  
good friends: everyone looked after the new  
15 miners.

The work in a mine is a difficult job, but it  
was much harder 100 years ago. Then, they  
had to push and pull the heavy coal. When  
I worked there, machines did all the hard  
20 work. I worked the machines with a remote  
control<sup>2</sup>, a bit like a TV remote. We had  
lamps in all the tunnels, so we didn't have to  
work in the dark any more.

It was still a dangerous job because there  
25 were sometimes accidents or gas explosions.  
About 30 years ago we used canaries to warn  
us about gas. We talked to the canaries – they  
were like our pets. Later there was an alarm<sup>3</sup>  
if there was gas in the mine. When I worked  
30 there, I heard the alarm over 20 times, but  
luckily there was never an explosion.



My grandfather and father were also miners.  
When I was a little boy, almost everyone in  
my village worked at the mine. But now the  
mine has closed. Coal isn't popular today.  
This makes me sad because it is the end of  
a part of English history. But it's also good  
news because the future will be better. We  
can use sunshine<sup>4</sup> and wind today, so coal  
isn't so important these days.”