



AQA GCSE English Language Topic List for Revision

Subject: English Language

Component: Paper One - Explorations in creative reading and writing

Section A - reading

- ❑ Your reading skills will be tested on an unseen fiction text published in the 1900s or 2000s. Remember to read the context information box printed on the reading insert. It will state the name of the writer, the year it was published and whether the extract has been taken from a novel or a short story
- ❑ **Q1 List four things...** Only select information from the specified area of the text; write in sentences not single words or phrases.
- ❑ **Q2 How has the writer used language to...** Select relevant quotations; zoom in on specific words; explain both the meaning and the effect of the words used by the writer; explore multiple interpretations. Use the key words from the question throughout your answer and refer to the writer as the creator of these characters and their situations.
- ❑ **Q3 How has the writer structured the text to interest the reader?** Think what and why and work through the text in the order it's printed; aim to write three paragraphs each dealing with a different section of the extract; explain what the writer is drawing your attention to at the beginning and why this is interesting; explain what the writer shifts the focus to next and why this is interesting; explain what the writer focuses your attention on by the end and why this is interesting as well as how the ending connects to the beginning; use the words and phrases in bold to signify that you're writing about the effects of structure. To help, you could use the statement of opinion provided with Q4 to provide you with a starting point when considering how the structure of a text influences a reader's interpretation of characters and their situation.
- ❑ **Q4 [a statement of opinion on the text will be provided] To what extent do you agree?** Think carefully about the reader's opinion. With which words do you agree? With which words do you disagree? Note the section of the text that the question asks you to explore. Select evidence from the text that supports the reader's opinion; remember to zoom in on key words and explore alternative interpretations. Select evidence from the text that goes against the reader's opinion; remember to zoom in on key words and explore alternative interpretations. Consider how the structure of the text might have influenced the reader's opinion too. Aim to write two paragraphs agreeing and one paragraph disagreeing to show you are truly evaluating the evidence.

Section B - writing

- ❑ The task is usually related to the reading material so use the writer's ideas from the unseen text in terms of their interesting use of language, structure and genre to create a character, a setting and vivid description of the moment in time captured in the image or inspired by the statement.
- ❑ Avoid trying to write about too much; it's much better to focus on a moment in time and describe the finer details.
- ❑ Use interesting words to build the mood of your piece and create a clear picture of who, what, where, why and when for your reader.
- ❑ Use paragraphs to create shape and pace in your writing. A one word or one sentence paragraph can have real impact when it's used correctly. Rhetorical questions engage readers into the story but try not to use these more than twice.
- ❑ Keep dialogue to a minimum otherwise your piece will read more like a script.
- ❑ Use the full range of punctuation : ; , . ! ? ' and make sure you can use each one accurately.
- ❑ Practise spelling words you know you frequently write incorrectly.

Subject: English Language

Component: Paper Two - Writers' viewpoints and perspectives

Section A: reading

- ❑ Your reading skills will be tested on two unseen non-fiction texts, one published before 1900 and another published in the 1900s or 2000s. Remember to read the context information box printed on the reading insert. It will state the name of the writer, the year it was published and the type of text the extract has been taken from for example a travel book, an autobiography, a newspaper or a website.
- ❑ **Q1 Choose four statements which are true** Read each statement carefully and check it against the text if you're unsure; shade the circles of the ones you think are true.
- ❑ **Q2 Use details from both sources to write a summary of what you understand about...** Make clear, direct comparisons between both sources; use quotations to support your points; explain what you have inferred/learned from the evidence you have selected but don't analyse the writer's use of language.
- ❑ **Q3 How has the writer used language to...** Select relevant quotations from the specified area of the text only; zoom in on specific words; explain both the meaning and the effect of the words used by the writer; explore multiple interpretations. Analyse the methods used by the writer in the extract and demonstrate your subject knowledge. How does the extract fit into the novel as a whole? Remember to comment on the extract and the rest of the novel.
- ❑ **Q4 Compare how the writers convey their different perspectives on...** Explain the perspectives of the two writers, their thoughts and feelings about the topic; compare

how their thoughts and feelings are similar and/or different; think about how their context might have influenced the way they think about the topic; clearly identify the methods each writer uses to express their thoughts and feelings; explain the effect of the identified methods e.g. the meaning and effect of the language, the structure, the tone; use relevant quotations to support your points and remember to zoom in on specific words to explore depth of meaning and alternative interpretations.

Section B: writing

- ❑ You will be given a statement of opinion to inspire your own thoughts and feelings about a topic usually related to the reading material used in section A. This allows you to get some ideas from the ways the two professional writers have expressed their thoughts and feelings about the topic in the question through their use of language, tone and structure.
- ❑ You must not begin with 'I agree/disagree with the statement'. Instead, be clear about the type of text you've been asked to write (e.g. article, speech, letter) and the audience you've been asked to write for (e.g. MP, editor of a newspaper, council, fellow students, head teacher).
- ❑ If you don't have strong feelings about the topic yourself, consider another person's point of view and write from their perspective e.g. a parent, a teacher, a sports coach, someone specifically connected with the topic. This might allow you to be more creative with your language.
- ❑ Remember to express the viewpoint with passion and conviction through the use of language, punctuation, sentence forms and varied paragraphs in a logical structure.
- ❑ An effective writing frame to use is:
 1. **Picture this:** a vivid description of the worst case scenario connected to this issue/problem followed up by a single sentence rhetorical question paragraph for impact.
 2. **Globally,** explain how this issue is a problem world over and the impact this issue is having on the whole world. Provide examples which are either real or invented to reinforce the fact that this issue is something the reader should be concerned about.
 3. **Nationally,** explain how this issue is a problem in our country and the impact this issue is having on our wider UK population. Provide examples which are either real or invented to reinforce the fact that this issue is something the reader should be concerned about.
 4. **Locally,** narrow the focus to a local example of the issue having a real impact. Provide an example of someone or something locally that has been affected by this issue. Reinforce the reason why you think this issue needs to be resolved now.
 5. **Now picture this:** describe another scenario but this time, as a result of the issue being improved or even eradicated, the situation is now better and the future

brighter. This section should aim to encourage the reader to take action to achieve that brighter future rather than retain the bleak one from the worst case scenario. Another single sentence rhetorical question paragraph will work well here too.

6. **If...then** conclude with a warning that things will only get better if the reader acts now. Use imperative verbs to call the reader to action and emotive language to gain their support.

Strategies and Resources for Revision:

- ❑ **For Paper One reading:** select an extract from a short story or a novel and create your own questions in the style of the examination paper. Look carefully at descriptive passages and practise identifying specific techniques. Consider how these techniques have been used skilfully by the writer to provoke a reaction in you as the reader – do the words make you feel angry, sad, uneasy, frightened? Are they creating a certain mood by the way the weather or the lighting is being described? How are they showing you what their character is doing and feeling? How have they sequenced their ideas in the passage? Why was it necessary to know something at the beginning before realising its connection and importance to the ending?
- ❑ **For Paper One writing:** Create a character in your mind and a situation that character finds themselves in. Practise describing them and their surroundings so well a reader could draw them. This initial idea can usually be tailored to any task you'll find on an exam paper, and you might feel more confident knowing you have a character and situation in mind already
- ❑ Search for interesting and unusual images and practise writing clearly detailed descriptions as well as different storylines and characters to create a bank of ideas you could recall in the examination.
- ❑ **For Paper Two reading:** Read about current topical issues: the environment; poverty; climate change; corruption in business and sport; the benefits of healthy eating and well-being; the pros and cons of travel; issues affecting young people such as work, exams, peer pressure, and social change.
- ❑ **For Paper Two writing:** After reading about current topical issues, debate with your family and friends to hear a range of opinions about topical issues to help you form your own perspective.
- ❑ Watch topical issue programmes such C4 Dispatches <https://www.channel4.com/collection/dispatches>, and BBC Panorama <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b006t14n> to hear how the presenters express their feelings and present their arguments.

- ❑ **For both Paper One and Paper Two:** Read past examination papers on the AQA website [AQA | GCSE | English Language | Assessment resources](#) and on Teams.