

AQA English Language GCSE

A guide to the exams from

William Ellis School

8700/1 Explorations in creative writing and reading

Unseen texts

8700/2 Writers' viewpoints and perspectives

Reading



Writing



AQA English Language overview

	Reading section		Writing section	
Paper 1 Focus on 1 fiction text 1hr 45 mins (80 marks)	Q1 AO1 Identify 4 correct details through multiple choice... Identify explicit information Identify explicit ideas 4 marks	Q2 AO2 How does the writer's use of language... Explain, comment on, analyse 8 marks	Q3 AO2 How has the writer structured the text to create (a named single effect) ... Explain, comment on, analyse 8 marks	Q5: Writing AO5/AO6 Descriptive or narrative writing • Communicate clearly • Organise information • Use a range of vocab and sentences • Accurate spelling and punctuation 40 marks
	Q4 AO4 To what extent do you agree? Evaluate texts critically 20 marks	Q6 AO3 How the writers present... Compare writers' ideas and perspectives, and comment on how they are conveyed 16 marks	AO5/AO6 Students write about their own views As above 40 marks	Writing AO5/6: P1 reading source acts as stimulus for descriptive, and/or narrative writing. P2 reading sources support students to write their own views.
Paper 2 Focus on 2 non-fiction texts 1hr 45 mins (80 marks)	Q1 AO1 True/false statements... Identify and interpret explicit and implicit information and ideas 4 marks	Q2 AO1 What can you infer about the differences between... Synthesise explicit and implicit ideas & info. about a focus (often a thing) 8 marks	Q3 AO2 How does the writer's use of language... Explain, comment on, analyse 12 marks	Reading AO4/3: Evaluation of a section of text on P1 Q4 leads to comparison of two whole texts in P2 Q4.
	Q4 AO2 How has the writer structured the text to create (a named single effect) ... Explain, comment on, analyse 8 marks	Reading AO2: P1 Q2 provides a specific example for analysis. P2 Q3 requires students to select examples of their own.	Reading AO1: P1 Q1 begins with explicit retrieval. This is mirrored in P2 Q1 through true/false statements and culminates in a summary task of both implicit and explicit reference as a pointer to P2 Q4.	Assessment journey: Two equal demand papers which balance progression through the papers.

In GCSE English Language, reading is assessed using four Assessment Objectives, AO1–4:

***AO1:** Identify and interpret explicit and implicit information and ideas
Select and synthesise evidence from different texts.

AO2: Explain, comment on and analyse how writers use language and structure to achieve effects and influence readers, using relevant subject terminology to support their views.

AO3: Compare writers’ ideas and perspectives, as well as how these are conveyed, across two or more texts.

AO4: Evaluate texts critically and support this with appropriate textual references.

**AO1 is split into two strands:*

AO1i: identify and interpret explicit and implicit information and ideas.

AO1ii: select and synthesise evidence from different texts.

Writing is assessed using two Assessment Objectives, AO5–6:

AO5: Communicate clearly, effectively and imaginatively, selecting and adapting tone, style and register for different purposes, forms and audiences. Organise information and ideas, using structural and grammatical features to support coherence and cohesion of texts.

AO6: Use a range of vocabulary and sentence structures for clarity, purpose and effect, with accurate spelling and punctuation.

Different questions test different objectives as shown in the overview page opposite.

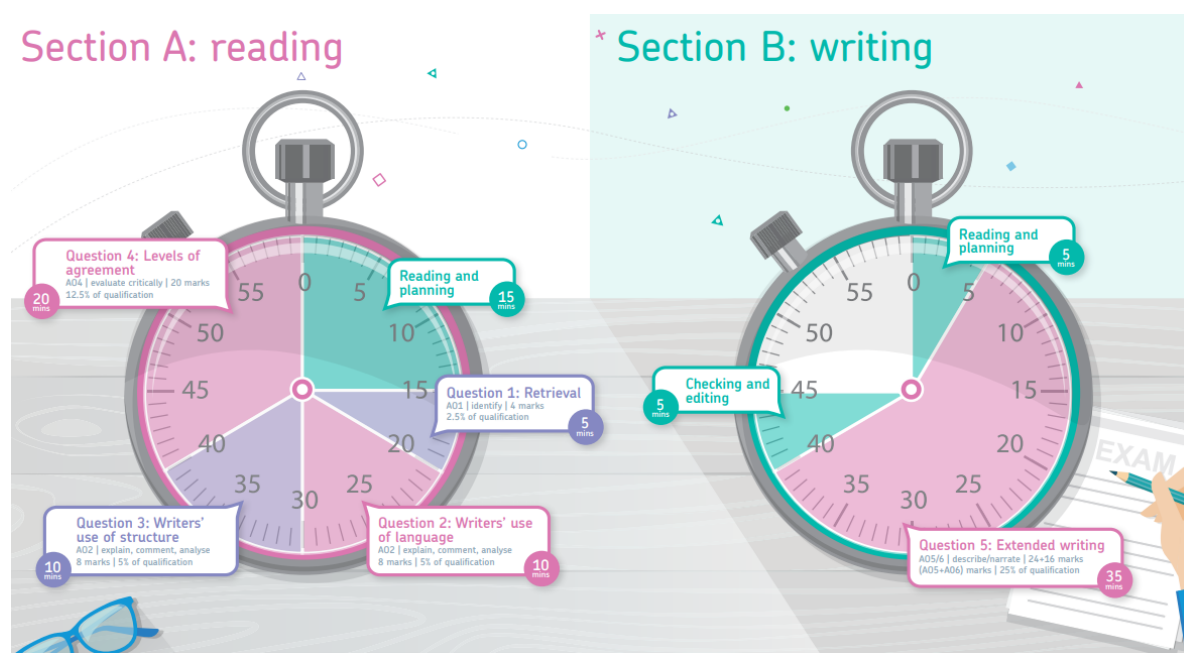
You will sit **two papers**, each lasting **one hour and forty-five minutes**. Paper 1 is called **Explorations in creative writing and reading** and Paper 2 is called **Writers’ viewpoints and perspectives**. Both papers have a **section A which tests reading** and a **section B which tests writing**.

The reading questions are based on unseen texts, and the differences between these texts are outlined below:

Paper 1 unseen text – One text only from the 20th/21st century	Paper 2 unseen texts – Two linked texts from different time periods: 19th and 20th/21st century
Extract from literature prose fiction with a focus on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • openings • endings • narrative or descriptive passages • character development • atmospheric descriptions 	Extracts will be non-fiction and literary non-fiction such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • high-quality journalism • articles • reports • accounts • diaries • autobiography and biographical passages • essays • travel writing • letters

Now you will see a breakdown of the questions for each paper and tips and advice for answering each one as best you can.

Paper 1 - Explorations in creative writing and reading



We strongly recommend that you **read the questions first**, **circle the key words in each question** and then **annotate the extract** whilst you are first reading it.

- **Look carefully at the title and the introduction to the text (the contextual information given in italics before the text begins)** and read steadily through to the end: consider the closing section carefully and go back to the title: see if you can make some links between the two.
- **Look back through the text and note/underline/highlight any words that are unfamiliar: use the context of the text to work out what they (might) mean.** (A glossary may be provided for one or two words that are considered generally unfamiliar).

Paper 1 Reading section: Questions 1–4

Question 1:

4 marks – 5 minutes

AO1 Identify and interpret information

Example wording:

Read again the first part of the source, from lines 1 to 9.

Choose the four correct statements _____

This question is a **'warm up' question** and requires you to **select information by retrieving information** from the text. From June 2026 this will be set as a multiple-choice question. If you are doing old exam papers, note that AQA has not (yet) edited all their old papers to match the new style questions.

You will need to **read back over the lines stated in the question** (always the opening lines).

Question 2:

8 marks – 10 minutes

AO2 Analyse the writer's use of language

Example wording:

Look in detail at this extract, from lines 16 to 26 of the source.

How does the writer use language here to describe _____?

You could include the writer's choice of:

- words and phrases
- language features and techniques
- sentence forms.

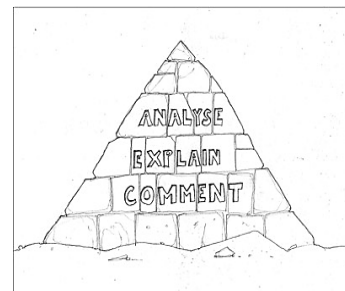
This question, together with Paper 2 Q3, **assesses language analysis**. You should **circle the focus of the question** so that your ideas and annotations link back.

The bullet points are a guide for you, but they do not have specific marks allocated to them. Marks are given for the **quality and level of response** rather than number of points made. You should only pick evidence and information from **within the lines stated in the question**. This chunk of text is boxed off for you already on the question paper. Annotate inside this box so it is easy to refer back to your notes.

The wording of AO2 which is assessed in this question shows a growing hierarchy of skills, with **analysis** being at the top.

To analyse the language of the text effectively, you should be asking 3 important questions:

- **WHAT** is the effect of the writer's language choices with links to the question (e.g. *is it to make a character appear cruel and sinister?*)
- **HOW** does the writer achieve this, using accurate subject terminology? (e.g. *is it an adjective describing the character's eyes or a simile to describe their movement?*)
- **WHY** does that feature of the language create the effect you have identified? (e.g. *is it because the word has connotations of restlessness or because the simile is comparing the character to a snake which is devious?*)



You should **select precise evidence** from the text **to suit the task**. Your answer will be strengthened by finding a range of different quotations to support your points e.g. *you might find a pattern of language and/or language features that makes a place seem threatening*. Open your answer with a set-up sentence that shows your understanding of the question focus.

Aim to **write around 3 paragraphs** for this answer with a different topic sentence in each paragraph focusing on a different aspect of the question.

<p>Repetition Repetition is where a word, phrase or idea it is repeated.</p> <p>e.g. 'Fog everywhere. Fog up the river, where it flows among green aits</p>	<p>Rhetorical question This is a question not expecting an answer. It is used for dramatic effect or to make a point, or convey a feeling.</p>	<p>Simile An image where one thing is compared to another using 'like' or 'as' to bring out certain qualities, e.g. to help us understand something about a certain figure or thing or to exaggerate.</p>	<p>Alliteration This is where nearby words begin with the same letter or sound, perhaps to emphasise an idea or to create a rhythm, even in prose.</p>
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and meadows; fog down the river where it rolls...'	e.g. "Do you think, because I am poor, obscure, plain, and little, I am soulless and heartless?"	e.g. 'Okonkwo's rise to fame was like a bush-fire .'	e.g. 'the cats... .spitting and snarling... would slide and sidle over the white back-garden walls'.
Onomatopoeia Words that sound like the sounds they are referring to, such as 'hiss', 'thud' or 'plod'. e.g. 'The cellar-door flew open with a booming sound.'	Tone The mood or feeling that is conveyed by the text, for instance, you may detect a nostalgic tone or a wistful one. e.g. 'Dispirited and hopeless, long hoping that tomorrow...would clear my way' has a melancholy or sad tone	Metaphor The comparison of one thing to another to bring out a certain quality or idea. e.g. 'Her voice is full of money.'	Abstract nouns that represent ideas or being, such as youth and innocence, or concrete nouns that may be piled up to suggest a crowded or busy place, for example in a market-place description or depiction of city life. Verb choices may convey energy or a certain kind of movement, e.g. 'slouch' or 'shake and rattle'.
Imagery This is the overall term for language that creates pictures in a reader's mind or is full of figurative details, shown with metaphors, similes or personification or symbolism, as examples. Dickens' writing is full of imagery, Orwell's less so (to use two familiar examples).	Hyperbole The language of exaggeration, sometimes for comic and sometimes for serious effect. An example from fiction, designed to entertain, is 'No warmth could warm, no wintry weather chill him. No wind that blew was bitterer than he, no falling snow was more intent upon its purpose'. Or, from political news, 'I'd rather be dead in a ditch than delay Brexit.'	Personification This technique is when a thing or an idea is presented as if it has human qualities, e.g. 'Children are stalked by the menace of hunger in this war-torn land' or 'fog sleeping restlessly over the city'.	Adjectives and adverbs Adjectives describe nouns and adverbs add information/description to verbs. You may notice patterns of them, as here, where both are used to show a character's focused, intense gaze on a stranger's eyes, ' full, lazy eyes with the lashes curling sharply away'.

In the table above are a range of different language features that may be in the extract – they may be useful for looking at HOW an effect is achieved. The most important part of your explanation is WHY the feature or technique you are commenting on creates an effect. Short quotations are best.

Question 3:

8 marks – 10 minutes

AO2 Analyse writer's use of structure (linked to a single effect)

Example wording:

You now need to think about the whole of the source.

This text is from the middle of a short story.

How has the writer structured the text to create... (an effect such as tension)?

You could write about:

- what the writer focuses your attention on at the beginning of the passage

- *how and why the writer changes this focus as the source develops*
- *any other structural features that interest you.*

This question is still focused on AO2 skills but **assesses structure**.

As in Q2, there are bullet points as a guide but they do not have specific marks allocated to them. Marks are given for the **quality and level of response** rather than number of points made. You need to respond to the structure of the **whole text**. The **focus of the question will change according to the text used**. You have the **freedom to choose your own examples** but should remember to consider the **effects on an alert reader**.

The most effective answers will demonstrate a detailed analysis of the writer's choice of structural features, and **frequently offer an overview** of the source's structure before then **focusing on two or three specific examples**.

Look below for an example of what that might look like:

“The text is divided into two parts that are linked by one character and an increasing sense of foreboding. At the beginning, the writer immediately establishes person, place and time by focusing our attention on Alexander waking in his bedroom ‘at dawn, startled by a nightmare’, before narrowing to the specific details of the dream, where a black bird ‘carried off his mother’. The use of the word ‘startled’ in the first sentence creates an urgent, abrupt opening, and this, together with a focus on the nightmare which follows, generates an atmosphere of unease in the reader that is carried over into the second half of the text when Alex interacts with the rest of the family at breakfast.”

As with Q2, to analyse the structure of the text effectively, you should be asking three important questions:

- **WHAT** is the effect of the writer's structural choices? (e.g. *do we find out something strange about the character's background?*)
- **HOW** does the writer do this, pinpointed with accurate subject terminology? (e.g. *is there repetition of a word or phrase?*)
- **WHY** does that feature of the structure create the effect you have identified? (e.g. *does the repetition constantly remind us that something isn't right and build tension?*)

Consider the key questions below that move from the *what*, to *how* and on to **why**:

1. When I first start to read the text, what is the writer focusing my attention on?
2. How is this being developed?
3. What feature of structure is evident at this point?
4. Why might the writer have deliberately chosen to begin the text with this focus and therefore make use of this particular feature of structure?
5. What main points of focus does the writer develop in sequence after the starting point?
6. How is each being developed?

7. Why is the writer taking me through this particular sequence?
8. How is this linked to helping me relate to the intended effect(s) at these points?
9. What does the writer focus my attention on at the end of the text?
10. How is this developed as a structural feature?
11. How am I left thinking or feeling at the end?
12. Why might the writer have aimed to bring me to this point of interest/understanding?

Be specific and **avoid generalisations**.

You should aim for **precise detail where possible**, and include reference to particular points and how they might relate to the effect being built up. This means you may or may not be using quotations, depending on the point you are making.

You can use the acronym OFFICE SHIFTS if it helps as a reminder of structural features to look out for. We recommend writing in detail about three or four well-chosen structural features:

- **O**pening of text
- **F**ocus
- **F**oreshadowing
- **I**ntroduction of new ideas
- **C**ontrasting/cyclic
- **E**nding
- **SHIFTS** from:
 - Out/in
 - Individual/group
 - Thought/action
 - Past/present/future

Question 4:

20 marks – 20 minutes

AO4 Evaluate texts critically and support this with appropriate textual references.

Example wording:

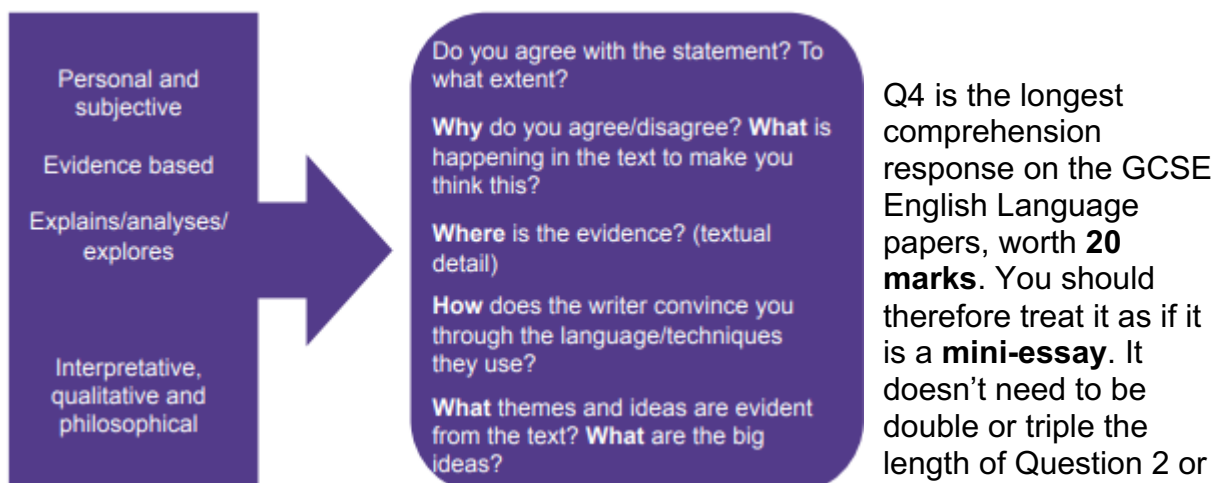
Focus on the second part of the source, from line 31 to the end.

In this part of the source, Eckels' panic could make him seem ridiculous or vulnerable.

To what extent do you agree with this statement?

In your response, you could:

- *consider your impressions of Eckels' reaction to the Tyrannosaurus Rex*
- *comment on how the writer describes the monster*
- *support your response with references to the text.*



side, you need to consider if you have responded in enough depth. In terms of time, you should be thinking of **around 20–25 minutes**. This question is designed to stretch you and this is where exam candidates can 'open up the lead', so to speak.

If Q1 refers to paragraph 1, Q2 refers to paragraph 2 or 3, Q3 asks you to refer to the organisation of ideas in the whole text, Q4 requires you to have an evaluative overview of the text. The questions build on each other so **do them in the order given**.

You will be given a statement and asked whether you agree or disagree (legacy papers will have different wording). As it is an evaluation question, you could show support of aspects of both sides of an argument, but it is probably best if you **mostly** agree with one perspective, with reservations (the 'Yes...but' approach).

You need to say **why** you agree or disagree with a reading and comment on the writer's methods to justify your response.

Have a look at this (adapted) example part-response below. It scored 13/20 marks.

In this part of the story, where Alice continues digging for the object, the writer creates suspense and shows that Alice is a determined character.

To what extent do you agree and/or disagree with this statement?

In your response, you could:

- consider your impressions of Alice's character
- comment on the methods used by the writer to create suspense
- support your response with references to the text.

I agree that we are shown throughout that the woman feels driven to keep going, which makes the reader want to find out what it is she has found, but also expect that she may face a nasty surprise. Firstly, at the beginning of the section, the writer says the woman couldn't do anything but keep going. "She had no choice, then, did she?" This gives us the impression that she could only do one thing, which was to try and find out where the strange noise was coming from and that she didn't have an option to just leave it and ignore it.

As the text continues, we can see that "she must trace the sound to its origin." The imperative verb "must" means that she feels she like she needs to find it, it's essential. It's also described with the adjective "awkward", making it sound difficult. So we can see that she is almost forced to find where the sound is coming from.

Furthermore, the skull is described as mysterious, not only because of the strange "mewing" sound that it is making and how it seems to be calling to her, but also because we wonder what it is doing there.

The adjectives "Unnamed" and "Unknown" make us think that there are many questions to be answered. It makes the reader wonder who placed the bones there and why they were making a noise, and is the woman risking her safety.

Finally at the end, we are left with a cliff-hanger, because we expect the woman to find some answers to these questions, but she doesn't find anything. "She could find no more of the skeleton than a dozen or so random bones". This suggests there is still a lot of the mystery to be uncovered.

What we have here...

- a clear, partially evaluative response to the statement that is fairly detailed
- some relevant references to the text which are embedded in the response
- clearer methods though it doesn't really discuss the effects of those methods

- some clear comments on the language and its effects.

Paper 1 Writing section: Question 5

Question 5:

40 marks – 45 minutes

AO5: Communicate clearly, effectively and imaginatively, selecting and adapting tone, style and register for different forms, purposes and audiences. Organise information and ideas, using structural and grammatical features to support coherence and cohesion of texts

AO6: Candidates must use a range of vocabulary and sentence structures for clarity, purpose and effect, with accurate spelling and punctuation.



Example wording (changed since June 2024):

Write a description of a market-place from your imagination. You may want to use the picture provided for ideas.

Or

Write the opening of a story with the title 'Abandoned'.

For Paper 1 you have a **choice of two questions**.

There will always be an image that is loosely related to the text in some way. You **may** be asked to **describe**, and you **may** be asked to **narrate**. There will be one describe and one narrate option. In other words, don't only prepare for one! You could find that the task related to the image is to describe, but it could also be to narrate.

There are 40 marks available for Question 5, and they are divided into 24 marks for content and organisation, with 16 marks for technical accuracy.

Content and organisation:	Technical accuracy:
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Is the way you're writing matched to the audience?2. Is what you're writing a clear narrative or clear description?3. How effective is your vocabulary, phrasing and use of language features?4. How clearly is your writing structured?5. Is the writing engaging? Are the ideas clearly connected?6. Are the paragraphs clearly linked and well-organised?	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Is the sentence demarcation accurate?2. Is there a range of punctuation? Is it accurate?3. Are there a range of sentence forms?4. Is the language and grammar secure?5. How accurate is the spelling?6. How broad is the vocabulary?

Descriptive choice

Much descriptive writing is vastly improved through careful planning. Since there is no natural order to description, it's important that you plan it carefully, even if you are only including a short paragraph of it in a story. The

A useful strategy to use for description sometimes is to start with **prepositions**. These placing words will help you order your writing later on. They also help you think beyond 'in front', and should help if you want to take a 'guided tour' approach.

Look at this example from *Bleak House* by Charles Dickens

Fog everywhere. Fog up the river, where it flows among green aits and meadows; fog down the river, where it rolls defiled among the tiers of shipping and the waterside pollutions of a great (and dirty) city. Fog on the Essex marshes, fog on the Kentish heights. Fog creeping into the cabooses of collier-brigs; fog lying out on the yards, and hovering in the rigging of great ships; fog drooping on the gunwales of barges and small boats. Fog in the eyes and throats of ancient Greenwich pensioners, wheezing by the firesides of their wards; fog in the stem and bowl of the afternoon pipe of the wrathful skipper, down in his close cabin; fog cruelly pinching the toes and fingers of his shivering little 'prentice boy on deck. Chance people on the bridges peeping over the parapets into a nether sky of fog, with fog all round them, as if they were up in a balloon, and hanging in the misty clouds.

The prepositions are highlighted – they're not fancy or flashy. We have no 'betwixts' or 'yonders'. Lots of use of 'on' and 'in'. But what you have is patterning. Can you see how we have *up* and then *among*, *down* and then *among*? That's a pattern on which the description rests. There is a thoughtfulness about that. All of those *ins*, *ons*, *downs*, *intos*, *overs*... they all support that notion of 'Fog everywhere'.

When you plan like this, try and think of 360° around you as Dickens has done.

So if it were a passage entitled 'The Park' you could think

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ through the gates ▪ up above ▪ yet higher still ▪ far in the distance ▪ beyond that ▪ just out of reach ▪ beneath ▪ below ▪ beside me 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ through the gates, [sound] the laughter of children, squawks of pleasure, squeals of joy ▪ up above [sight] kites soared, making busy stitches on the fabric of the sky ▪ yet higher still [sight] birds circled and plummeted, aerial acrobatics, weaved and dived, ▪ Above it all [sight] a cloudless sky, cold, deceptive, ▪ far in the distance, [sight] a dog chasing squirrels [sound] yips of joy ▪ beyond that, [sight], trees, the woods, [sight] the alien structures of the city, [sight] towers rising up like... (simile?) ▪ next to me, [sight] a family picnic underneath a cherry tree, picnic rug showered with blossom, excited children in brightly-coloured coats, parents shivering over a flask, discarded sandwiches, crinkled napkins. "Zak, no!" and parents trying to wipe the dirty, chocolate-smearing faces of their uncooperative offspring. ▪ behind them, [sight] the lido, drained for winter. [flashforward] In the summer, busy with families, teenagers, gossip, sunbathers, office workers. [now] drab, flash of fake turquoise, forlorn ▪ in the very heart of the park, [sight] an overgrown, derelict manor house, conservatory – a lost world, sanctuary from the icy spring winds
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▪ alongside that	▪ Inside, [sight] warm, air rich with the [smell] smells of tropical plants, heavy, muggy, unpleasant
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You can even use time prepositions or transport the reader to a different season for contrast, which is going to score highly for organisation and structure. include a mini-narrative or two and a little bit of dialogue. **Think of yourself as creating an opening scene to a movie** rather than trying to describe a picture. Consider taking on an unusual voice, like a pigeon or a kite.

Narrative choice

Narrative in itself has a sense of chronology or time progression. The moving on of time gives you a skeleton structure that descriptive writing doesn't always have.

You can use this structure to help you plan.

Situation – Complication – Resolution.

For a 45-minute narrative, you do not want to be more detailed than that.

Start your plan with the resolution. A simple twist in the tale often works well.

- *What if a school bully turns out not to be a school bully?*
- *What if the mild-mannered caretaker turns out to be a spy?*
- *What if the dog saves the day?*

And then work back.

- *Why would someone think the bully was a bully?*
- *Why would someone think the caretaker wasn't a spy?*
- *Why would a dog need to save the day?*

That's then the 'complication' or problem.

And then put them in a scene in which that problem can happen.

- *A scene where someone thinks the school bully will hurt them – turns out the bully isn't a bully.*
- *A set of spies have a meeting – a caretaker clears up – he's the spy*
- *A Duke of Edinburgh trip – a boy gets lost – a dog finds him*

Simple plots are the stuff of our lives. It's how you write them that counts. And you'll find another list of three to help you with that, too: try to ensure your writing has a mixture of: **Narration (action) – Description – Dialogue.**

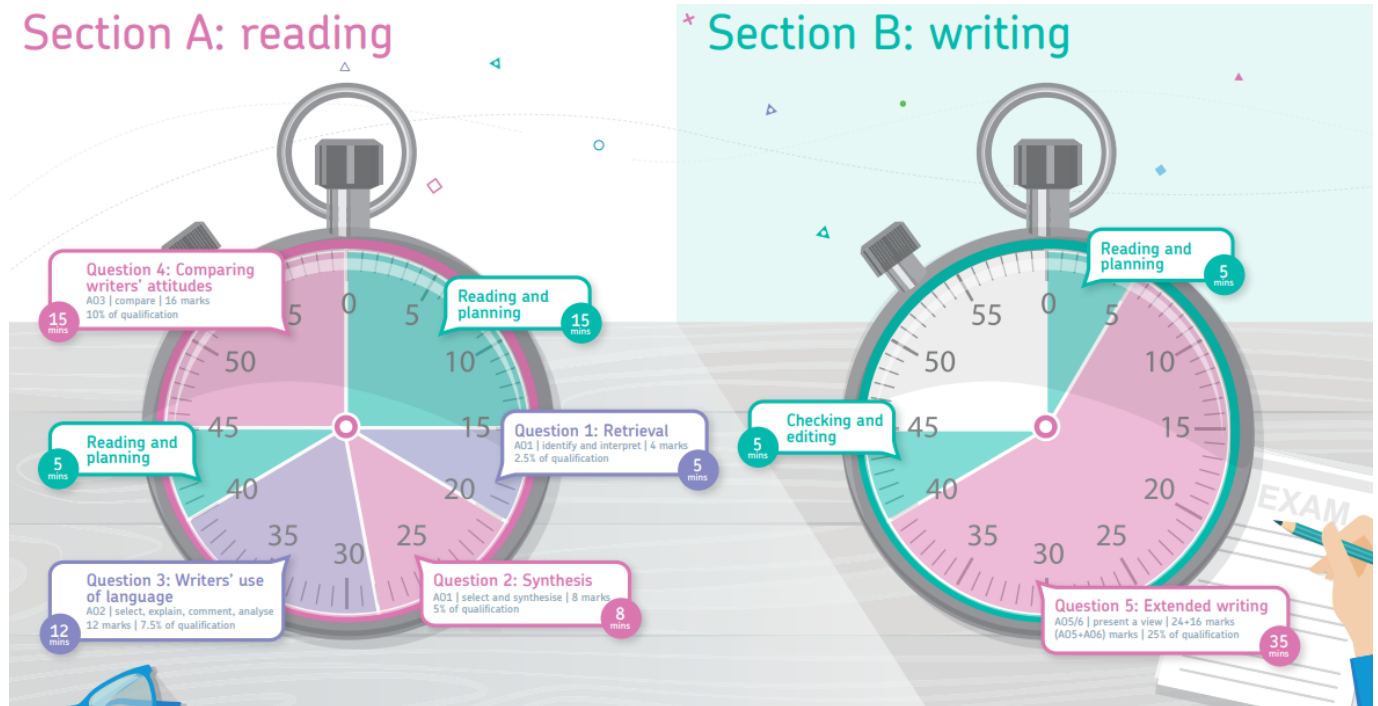
From 2026 onwards, you will be allowed to write just the opening of a story, and this is because the exam board do not want pre-learned stories, over-complicated plots or formulaic writing (as some internet 'tutors' encourage). You will be rewarded for control of pace and mood, detail, originality and flair.

Top Tips:

- Limit the number of characters you have in your story: three maximum (or a group/crowd counting as one).

- Start in the moments right before the action if doing a whole story. No-one wants to read that you woke up and ate your cornflakes if it has nothing to do with what later happens
- If writing a whole story, don't feel like you need to give an explained ending. If you get to the point where you can't find a solution to your story, just leave it open. This is much better than a 'and then I woke up' or 'it was all a dream' ending.

Paper 2 – Writers' Viewpoints and Perspectives



We strongly recommend that you **read the questions first, circle the key words in each question** and then **annotate the extracts** whilst you are first reading them.

- **Look carefully at the title and the introduction to the text (the contextual information given in italics before the text begins)** and read steadily through to the end: consider the closing section carefully and go back to the title: see if you can make some links between the two.
- **Look back through the text and note/underline/highlight any words** that are unfamiliar: **use the context to work out what they (might) mean.** (A glossary may be provided for one or two words that are generally considered as unfamiliar but may not include all words which students could be unsure of).

Paper 2 Reading section: Questions 1 – 4

Question 1:

4 marks – 5 minutes

AO1 Identify & interpret information

Example wording:

Read again the first part of Source A from lines 1 to 12.

Choose four statements below which are true.

This question is a **'warm up' question.**

Statements are in **chronological order**, in the same sequence as they appear in the relevant section of the text, so consider each statement in order, from A to H. Choose **only four statements** as every statement **beyond four means losing a mark**.

Question 2:

8 marks – 10-12 minutes

AO1 Synthesis of implicit and explicit ideas

You need to refer to Source A and Source B for this question.

Example wording:

The writers in Source A and Source B are travelling on very different types of boat.

What can you infer about the differences between the two boats?

0 2 You need to refer to **Source A** and **Source B** for this question.

The writers in **Source A** and **Source B** are travelling on different types of trains.

What can you infer about the differences between the two trains?

[8 marks]

To begin this question, make sure you **underline the focus** that you are looking to address.

Next, **locate everything to do with the focus in Source A and underline all of it. Do the same with source B.**

Then go back to Source A, having Source B fresh in your mind, and focus in on the points that **are connected or come under a bigger idea**. For instance, both sources refer to when the boats were made, and the boats' different functions.

Underline once again and pick out a **few pairs of things that are different**.

Follow the guidance from the examiners' report (box below) and start **with a difference, a quotation, some inferences, then contrast, more quotations, more inference**.

The boat in Source A is only small, but the ability to right itself when it capsizes shows it is designed for safety; the technology ensures that although the tiny boat cannot withstand the waves which are 'towering over' it, after the disaster, it springs 'upright' again. It is ironic that, whilst the rowing boat is designed to right itself after capsizing, the far bigger and heavier steamship is more likely to 'turn over once and for all' and sink permanently below the waves, showing that design is more important than size when it comes to safety at sea. The boat in Source B is described as 'ancient and much damaged' which implies the ship

Good responses included those where students identified a difference between the activities, selected appropriate textual detail from one text and inferred some meaning, before turning to the other text, selecting another textual detail and inferring something about the difference between both texts. Where this approach was repeated with a second difference, students were well-rewarded, according to the level of detail they offered and whether the quality of their comments was an attempt, clear or perceptive.

has taken a severe battering from previous storms, but this might suggest that the ship is actually more likely to survive this storm, as its old age proves how resilient and reliable it is.

This (incomplete response) follows a loose formula ...

- a) In Source A [subject & focus from question] and make a point, followed by quotation.
- b) Explain quotation and make inference about what it means or suggests.
- c) Contrast with Source B [using subject & focus from question] and make another point, followed by a second quoted reference.
- d) Explain quotation and make inference about what it means or suggests and how that's different from Source A.
- e) Add an 'also' and take it further, explain the difference more deeply or give reasons for the difference. (This step isn't exemplified above as it's not a complete response).

Making inferences is the tougher part. You need to think about what a detail suggests or what it means. The following phrases should help develop inferences:

- *it suggests that*
- *it makes us think*
- *it gives the impression that*
- *it could be that*
- *it may indicate that*
- *it sounds as if*
- *it seems*
- *we can assume that*

Weaker responses will mostly be making a connection and giving a quotation, whereas **better responses will be inferring meaning**. You also need to make sure **you aren't mentioning language features**. That's Question 3 and isn't credited here.

Don't write more than you are being asked for. Two paragraphs can gain 8 marks.

Question 3:

12 marks – 15 minutes

AO2 Analyse the writer's use of language

Example wording:

You now need to refer only to Source A from lines 16 to 26.

How does the writer use language to describe the power of the sea?

See the advice for answering paper 1 Q2. Both of these questions ask students to focus on the writer's use of language. The only difference is that the paper 2 question is **worth slightly more marks** (12 in comparison to 8) and should be given more time to answer.

Question 4:

16 marks – 20 minutes

AO3 Compare writers' ideas and perspectives, as well as how these are conveyed, across two or more texts

For this question, you need to refer to the whole of Source A, together with the whole of Source B.

Example wording:

Compare how the writers convey their different perspectives and feelings about their experiences at sea.

In your answer, you could:

- *compare their different perspectives and feelings*
- *compare the methods the writers use to convey their different perspectives and feelings*
- *support your response with references to both texts.*

This question is worth the most in the reading section for Paper 2 and asks students to **compare VIEWPOINTS/PERSPECTIVES**.

What is meant by a VIEWPOINT?

- What a writer feels about...
- What a writer focuses on might give us a clue
- The writer's attitude towards...
- Tone – how do they 'come across'?

You need to identify **WHAT each writer feels/thinks** and **HOW they get across these feelings** – so you need to comment on and analyse **METHODS** – and **WHY those methods emphasise the writer's feelings**.

The focus of this question is to **compare one writer's viewpoints to another's**, so judge if the **writers are feeling the same or differently from one another** in each.

Consider the framework:

Feelings and perspectives – detail (evidence) – methods – comparison

- Identify a feeling or viewpoint in Source 1
- Use a quotation to support my point
- Mention the method and explore the quotation's meaning
- Explain the method and effect
- Comparison link to point in Source 2
- Use a quotation to support my point
- Mention the method and explore the quotation's meaning
- Explain the method and the effect

Comparing similarities

Similarly...

Likewise...

In the same way...

Also...

Equally, we see..

Comparing differences

On the other hand..

Conversely...

Paper 2 Writing section: Question 5

Question 5:

40 marks – 45 minutes (+ planning time)

AO5: Communicate clearly, effectively and imaginatively, selecting and adapting tone, style and register for different forms, purposes and audiences. Organise

information and ideas, using structural and grammatical features to support coherence and cohesion of texts

AO6: Candidates must use a range of vocabulary and sentence structures for clarity, purpose and effect, with accurate spelling and punctuation.

Example wording:

“Homework has no value. Some students get it done for them; some don’t do it at all. Students should be relaxing in their free time.”

Write an article for a broadsheet newspaper in which you explain your point of view on this statement.

This writing task is loosely linked to the topic or theme of the reading sources and the following aspects of the writing task **will remain the same**:

- a **statement (sometimes a complicated one so that it gives you choices about which part to focus on) at the start of the question** setting out a **clear audience, purpose and form**
- it will be an **inspiring, provocative/controversial statement** that prompts students to write a response offering their own attitude/viewpoint.

What will be subject to **change each exam season**:

- the **specified audience, purpose and form**
- the **exact wording of the question stem** and choice of command words.

The **assessment objectives for this question are the same as the Q5 in paper 1**, so the expectations of imaginative style, convincing content and technical accuracy remain the same. **However, the type of writing required is very different.**

One of the most crucial elements of preparation for this question is to understand the **genre/form, audience and purpose**.

The range of **purposes** (think about purpose as **WHY** you are writing) could be:

- writing to explain
- writing to instruct/advise
- writing to argue
- writing to persuade

Write to explain	Write to argue	Write to persuade	Write to instruct/advise
Explain what you think about...	Argue the case for or against the statement that...	Persuade the writer of the statement that...	Advise the reader of the best way to...

The range of **audiences** (think about **WHO** you are writing to) will always be formal audiences, like individuals or groups relevant to the genre/form. This could range from students to council members.

The range of **genres/forms** (think about **WHAT** kind of writing it is) could be:

- letter
- article
- text for a leaflet (never actually set, but mentioned in AQA’s list)
- text of a speech
- essay

Each **genre/form** comes with its own set of **stylistic features** which are outlined below:

Letter	
As a minimum, students should include:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an indication that someone is sending the letter to someone • paragraphs.
More detailed/developed indicators of form could include:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the use of addresses • a date • a formal mode of address if required e.g. Dear Sir/Madam or a named recipient • effectively/fluent sequenced paragraphs • an appropriate mode of signing off: Yours sincerely/faithfully.

Article	
As a minimum, students should include:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the use of a simple title • paragraphs.
More detailed/developed indicators of form could include:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a clear/apt/original title • a strapline • subheadings • an introductory (overview) paragraph • effectively/fluent sequenced paragraphs.

Text for a leaflet	
As a minimum, students should include:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the use of a simple title • paragraphs or sections.
More detailed/developed indicators of form could include:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a clear/apt/original title • organisational devices such as inventive subheadings or boxes • bullet points • effectively/fluently sequenced paragraphs.

Text of a speech	
As a minimum, students should include:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a simple address to an audience • sections • a final address to an audience.
More detailed/developed indicators of form could include:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a clear address to an audience • effective/fluently linked sections to indicate sequence • rhetorical indicators that an audience is being addressed throughout • a clear sign off e.g. 'Thank you for listening'.

Essay	
As a minimum, students should include:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a simple introduction and conclusion • paragraphs.
More detailed/developed indicators of form could include:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an effective introduction and convincing conclusion • effectively/fluently linked paragraphs to sequence a range of ideas.

Look at the grid below to see **how tone and style** can change depending on the genre/form, audience and purpose but with the same statement to respond to.

How your FORM, AUDIENCE and PURPOSE change the style of your writing...

ISSUE: 'Arts education has no place in schools. Students need to spend all their time learning the basics of English and maths.'

Basic sentence: *I think that arts subjects give students the chance to show their creativity.*

Form	Audience	Purpose	Sentence
Letter to the school magazine	Students	Persuade & entertain	My mates in Year 11 find subjects like art give us a couple of hours in the week when we can chill out and express ourselves creatively.
Letter to your Headteacher	Headteacher	Persuade	In my experience, subjects such as dance and drama give students like me the chance to show off our creative abilities.
Letter to the head of the Arts Foundation for England	Director of the Arts Foundation	Persuade	I am passionate about the arts and am certain that the arts provide students with the human right to exemplify their innate creativity in a range of art forms.
Article for a tabloid newspaper	Less sophisticated readers	Persuade & entertain	Subjects like drama give students the chance to be creative.
Article for broadsheet newspaper	More sophisticated readers	Persuade	I believe that arts subjects allow our young people the opportunity to demonstrate their individual creative talents.
Article for a blog magazine aimed at teenagers	Teenagers	Persuade & entertain	Art, drama, dance and music are the only subjects at school where teenagers like me and you can go and let our creative juices flow!
Speech for a debating competition	Students, parents & teachers	Persuade & entertain	I am convinced – and so should you be – that our wonderful arts subjects – drama, music, art and dance – provide us with a forum to show to the world our unique creative gifts.
Speech for election to student council	Students	Persuade & gain votes	I believe in the future of the arts because subjects like music and drama give us, the students, <u>the</u> chance to display our creativity.
Speech for school open evening	Parents	Persuade & impress	At our school we value subjects like art and drama because we feel they provide us with the opportunity to express our creative talents.