

Revision Guide

AQA GCSE ENGLISH LANGUAGE PAPER 1

EXPLORATIONS IN CREATIVE READING + WRITING

Scrbbley.

AQA GCSE Language Paper 1 is, in many ways, a fun paper that allows students to express their creativity and explore the creative writing of top writers.

Here are some tips for how to do well in the exam:

- Read lots! Ideally, read a mixture of novels and short stories, but if you don't have much time for reading, then aim to read 2-3 short stories per week as a minimum.
- Keep a vocabulary list - every time you come across a new word, write it down. At the end of the week, go through your words and find definitions for them.
- Improve your reading level slowly - don't try to read very hard texts straight away because it will put you off. Read a mixture of fun stories that you enjoy and read for pleasure, and more challenging texts that improve your reading level.
- Set goals and targets, and reward yourself for your achievements.
- Get gradually used to creative writing. Start by writing creative sentences and paragraphs, then move up to writing full stories and full descriptive pieces.
- Get into a habit of writing something creative at least twice per week - even if it's just a few sentences each time.
- Prepare well ahead of the exam, setting good habits up as early as possible.

**Reading
comprehension**

High vocabulary

**Inference (reading
between the lines)**

Analysis

Summary

Comparison

Evaluation

**Creative writing
(descriptive +
narrative)**

HOW TO STUDY:

- Learn what type of revision structure works for you - it depends on your concentration levels, learning style, engagement and motivation
- Meet up in revision groups - explore debates and discussions on modern and controversial topics, share work, set tasks together, take breaks and have fun
- Learn independently - set lots of small tasks that you can tick off, use mark schemes to check your answers, read lots of different types of nonfiction, develop your own reading tastes and habits
- Keep very organised notes - a revision book or folder is a good idea
- Condense your revision notes - highlight or write out anything that you forgot
- Take regular breaks - either work intensely for short periods, or go at a slow pace and take your time
- Understand and take on board feedback from others, using it to improve your work
- Read lots of high grade student examples to help get yourself to the right standard - focus on structuring as well as language and writing style!
- HOW TO GET TOP GRADES:
- Understand and work with mark schemes
- Keep a vocabulary list of new words, academic phrases and advanced techniques or terminology
- Make sure you read a breakdown of exam questions / types
- Learn essay / analytical writing to a high standard (PEE paragraphs / Intro / Thesis / Conclusions / Summaries)
- Learn how to write a range of fiction forms (narrative and descriptive writing)
- Practice papers and get feedback (complete a minimum of 4 full papers with feedback before you take your actual exam)

BREAKDOWN OF THE PAPER

The aim of this paper is to engage students in a creative text and inspire them to write creatively.

Here's what it says in the course description:

- In section A, **reading a literary fiction text** in order to consider how established writers use narrative and descriptive techniques to capture the interest of readers.
- In section B, **writing their own creative text**, inspired by the topic that they have responded to in section A to demonstrate their narrative and descriptive skills in response to a written prompt, scenario or visual image.

The paper will assess in this sequence, **AO1, AO2** and **AO4** for reading, and **AO5** and **AO6** for writing. Section A will be allocated 40 marks, and Section B will be allocated 40 marks to give an **equal weighting** to the reading and writing tasks.

READING:

A01:

- identify and interpret explicit and implicit information and ideas
- select and synthesise evidence from different texts

A02: 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

A03: Compare writers' ideas and perspectives, as well as how these are conveyed, across two or more texts

A04: Evaluate texts critically and support this with appropriate textual references

WRITING:

A05: 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

A06: Candidates must use a range of vocabulary and sentence structures for clarity, purpose and effect, with accurate spelling and punctuation. (This requirement must constitute 20% of the marks for each specification as a whole.)

SECTION A

The source for the reading questions will be a literary fiction text. It will be drawn from **either the 20th or 21st century**. Its genre will be **prose fiction**. This could include extracts from novels or short stories. The extract may focus on openings, endings, narrative perspectives and points of view, narrative or descriptive passages, character, atmospheric descriptions and other appropriate narrative and descriptive approaches.

SECTION B

As a stimulus for students' own writing, there will be a choice of scenario, written prompt or visual image that is related to the topic of the reading text in section A. The scenario sets out a context for writing with a designated audience, purpose and form that will differ to those specified on Paper 2.

TYPES OF CREATIVE WRITING:

DESCRIPTIVE WRITING: CREATE AN ATMOSPHERE

- Not a full story
- Transport the reader to a specific time / place - real or imagined
- Make the scene feel real

OR

NARRATIVE WRITING: STORY OR PART OF A STORY

- A story, or part of a story
- Follow the 'Freytag's pyramid' structure
- Include prose and dialogue
- Lots of action needed - move the plot forwards

TIMING: 1hr 45 mins in total

- Practise timings before taking the real exam
- Complete mock papers / questions in accurately timed conditions + get your teachers or tutor to mark them + take on board feedback
- After noting down your feedback, try again and aim for a better grade each time you try. It's good to make a checklist for each question of things to remember to include, that way over time you'll train yourself to hit all the targets required for the mark scheme on each question.

Section A: Reading (40 marks) (25% of overall GCSE) – two linked texts

Spend 55mins - 1hr on this section

- Before you answer the questions, spend 10 mins reading through the texts thoroughly. Don't skip this stage or do it too fast, as you need to absorb the information and think about it properly before you begin writing.
- 1 short form question (1 x 4 marks) > 5 mins
- 2 longer form comparative and analysis questions (1 x 8, 1 x 12 marks) > 8-10 + 12-15 mins
- 1 extended question (1 x 16 marks) > 15 - 20 mins
- 5 mins reading through and checking your answers

Section B: Writing (40 marks) (25% of overall GCSE)

Spend 45-50 mins on this section

- 1 extended writing question (24 marks for content, 16 marks for technical accuracy)
- Understand all the keywords of the question before you start, make sure your answer is as targeted as possible towards the question.
- Plan your writing before you begin - take around 5 mins to plan, it doesn't need to be in great detail it can just be an overview of where you're going with the question. Make sure to identify your GAP (Genre, Audience, Purpose) as thoroughly as you can before starting to plan.
- Spend around 35-40 mins writing. Write using as complex vocabulary as you can, try to adapt your style to suit the GAP and use a huge range of language techniques and punctuation. This is a persuasive piece so rhetorical devices are especially important to use here. Semicolons and colons are considered high level pieces of punctuation, definitely learn how to use those and put them into this answer.

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