



**Christian Brothers School**

# GCSE English Revision Guide



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**Examination 60% of your final mark**

**Higher tier (A\*-D) Foundation tier (C – G)**

**Paper 1 (2 hours)**

Section A - Responding to a fiction text. (15%)

Section B - Writing to analyse, review and comment. (15%)

**Paper 2 (2 hours)**

Section A - Writing to inform, explain or describe (15%)

Section B - Responding to non-fiction/media texts. (15%)

**Coursework 40% of your final mark**

# Paper 1 Section A

## Responding to a Fiction Text



## Paper 1 Section A – Comprehension (fiction)

### Questions:

Q1 - Setting

Q2 - Character

Q3 - Writer's Craft

### Reading the Passage (15 minutes)

1. Read the passage once quickly. Scan the questions.
2. 2<sup>nd</sup> reading - use a highlighter - highlight evidence on setting and character
3. 3<sup>rd</sup> reading - use a highlighter (different colour) - highlight evidence on writer's craft

### Answer the questions using PEE:

**Point**

**Explain**

**Evidence**

### Example answers using PEE:

#### Setting:

The house is very run down. I know this because tiles are missing from the roof, windows are broken and the door is hanging off. The writer describes the house as a "tumble down wreck".

#### Character:

John is a very selfish man. We see how selfish he is when he refuses to give Mary any money when she needs it to pay the bills. Mary calls him "a greedy, self-centred brute".

#### Writer's craft

The writer creates tension in the passage through the relationship between John and Mary. They are always fighting and arguing with each other. The writer uses a simile to describe them: "like a pair of battling bulldogs".

Your answer should focus on the following language features:

**P**ersonification

**R**epetition

**O**nomatopoeia

**E**motive language

**P**aradox

**T**one

**S**imiles

**M**etaphors

**A**lliteration

**A**ssonance

**I**rony

**Q**uestions

**R**hetorical questions

**Activity:**

Create a memorable **ACRONYM** to remember the features of language in the list above.

## 1. Character

Question: What do you learn about \_\_\_\_\_ ?

Character Checklist	Example	✓
What does (character) look like?		
What does (character) do?		
What does (character) say?		
How do they relate to other characters?		
What do other characters say about them?		
What are the strengths of (character)?		
What are the weaknesses of (character)?		
What vulnerabilities does (character) have?		
What do you think motivates (character) in (situation)?		
Did (character's) motives change throughout the passage? How?		
Do you agree with (positive or negative statement about a character)? Why?		
Do you think (character) should have...? Why or why not?		
What caused (character) to (behaviour)?		
At (position in story) how do you think the character feels?		
What else could (character) have tried to (solve or avoid complication)?		

**Activity**

***“When his dinner finally arrived, Tony ate hurriedly and left a very small tip.”***

What does this sentence tell us about Tony?

**Activity**

***“Danny couldn’t help feeling nervous. He desperately wanted everything to go well on his first day, but hadn’t known what lessons to prepare for. Should he have brought a PE Kit? Should he have brought a lab coat like at Park House? Were calculators allowed? He still didn’t know why things had gone wrong at Park House. For two years he’d loved it. Then suddenly the work got harder. His homework had taken him hours to do and then he’d got bad marks for it – and for the weekly tests. Then, he’d been asked to leave, just like that, without warning. The head had written to his parents saying he wasn’t the ‘right material’. He’d seen the letter, but still didn’t know what that meant. Not the right material. He fingered the cuff of his blazer.”***

What does this paragraph tell us about Danny?



### Sample Character Traits

able	demanding	hopeless	restless
active	dependable	humorous	rich
adventurous	depressed	ignorant	rough
affectionate	determined	imaginative	rowdy
afraid	discouraged	impatient	rude
alert	dishonest	impolite	sad
ambitious	disrespectful	inconsiderate	safe
angry	doubtful	independent	satisfied
annoyed	dull	industrious	scared
anxious	dutiful	innocent	secretive
apologetic	eager	intelligent	selfish
arrogant	easy-going	jealous	serious
attentive	efficient	kindly	sharp
average	embarrassed	lazy	short
bad	encouraging	leader	shy
blue	energetic	lively	silly
bold	evil	lonely	skilful
bored	excited	loving	sly
bossy	expert	loyal	smart
brainy	fair	lucky	sneaky
brave	faithful	mature	sorry
bright	fearless	mean	spoiled
brilliant	fierce	messy	stingy
busy	foolish	miserable	strange
calm	fortunate	mysterious	strict
careful	foul	naughty	stubborn
careless	fresh	nervous	sweet
cautious	friendly	nice	talented
charming	frustrated	noisy	tall
cheerful	funny	obedient	thankful
childish	gentle	obnoxious	thoughtful
clever	giving	old	thoughtless
clumsy	glamorous	peaceful	tired
coarse	gloomy	picky	tolerant
concerned	good	pleasant	touchy
confident	graceful	polite	trusting
confused	grateful	poor	trustworthy
considerate	greedy	popular	unfriendly
cooperative	grouchy	positive	unhappy
courageous	grumpy	precise	upset
cowardly	guilty	proper	useful
cross	happy	proud	warm
cruel	harsh	quick	weak
curious	hateful	quiet	wicked
dangerous	healthy	rational	wise
daring	helpful	reliable	worried
dark	honest	religious	wrong
decisive	hopeful	responsible	young

## 2. Setting

Setting is the time and place of the action of a story. The setting may be specific and detailed and introduced at the very beginning of the story, or it may be merely suggested through the use of details scattered throughout the story. Customs, manners, clothing, scenery, weather, geography, buildings, and methods of transportation are all part of setting.

### Specific Elements of Setting

- Time and Place
- Mood

#### Time and Place

Read the following passage:

***On a rainy November morning in 1776, a soldier trod a solitary path along a road in western Virginia. His gait was slow, and his face—barely visible beneath untold layers of grime—betrayed an anguished, exhausted expression.***

Answer the following questions:

- Where does the story take place? What details tell you this?
- When do the events of this story take place? What clues tell you so?

#### Mood

The setting can help develop and establish the mood of a story. A vivid description of the setting will help the reader to see, hear, smell, taste, and touch the environment of the story.

Read the following passage:

***It was a cold and cheerless evening. The fog seemed to hover over the street, clutching the buildings, the streetlamps—the entire city—in a damp, icy grip. If one were to stand still, passers-by would emerge briefly from the gloom, only to disappear from view after taking just a few steps. These ghostly apparitions tormented James as he impatiently waited for his valet to return with his carriage.***

Answer the following questions:

- What sensory details does the author use to draw the reader into the setting?
- What mood do these details help create?

**Activity:**

Write a list of ten basic things that might be found in the room of a teenager. Write a description of these items, setting a cheerful mood. Use adjectives and adverbs, verbs and nouns that evoke a positive feeling. Then write a paragraph describing the same basic items, but creating a sad or depressing mood. Again, use words that will evoke the intended mood in your reader.

**Spatial Order**

There are several ways to organize a description of a place. You could start at the right and move to the left. You could start at the top and move to the bottom. Or you could start at the place closest to you and move to the place farthest from you, as in the following passage:

*The door of the mansion dwarfed anyone who approached it. Even the tallest visitors had to reach up high to grasp the ornate door knocker (which surely was made of solid gold). The door swung open into a grand hallway, with floors of spotless pink marble. The walls were covered in gigantic mirrors, so that the foyer appeared to be at least three times larger than its already impressive size. At the end of the hallway, a grand white staircase spiralled up and up—so far that you might have expected an angel to greet you when you reached the top. But that was not so. The stairs actually led to a large, but surprisingly ordinary looking hallway with slightly worn, green carpeting and a long row of nearly identical doors. It almost resembled a hotel.*

## The Purpose of Setting

A writer chooses a particular setting for a short story, not because it is realistic or accurate, but because of what it accomplishes in the story.

Setting is used for a number of reasons:

1. The setting can provide important information about the main character, whether he or she is connected to the setting, at home in it, an outsider, or a guest.
2. A setting that is vivid increases the credibility of the character and the action. If the reader accepts the setting as real, then the reader is more likely to accept the characters who live there, and their behaviour as real. On the other hand, "mistakes" in setting may cause the reader to give up on the story as "fake". This applies to fantasy settings as well as realistic settings.
3. The setting of a story often has a direct connection to the story's meaning. For example a description of a house can help illustrate an overall feeling of loneliness and isolation. Or the intense activity of a city setting might be linked to excitement. These feelings can be connected to a character or to the theme.
4. Sometimes the setting will hold keys to understanding one of the characters. Where a person lives is often very much a part of who that person is.
5. The setting can be used to create mood and atmosphere, if these are important to the story.

## Analysing Language: Setting

Example:

***A dirtier or more wretched place he had never seen. The street was very narrow and muddy, and the air was impregnated with filthy odours. There were a good many small shops; but the only stock in trade appeared to be heaps of children, who, even at that time of night, were crawling in and out at the doors, or screaming from the inside. The sole places that seemed to prosper amid the general blight of the place, were the public-houses. (from Oliver Twist)***

Question: How does the writer's description of the PLACE create a sense of bleakness/ happiness/ unfriendliness, etc?

Setting Checklist	Example	✓
Powerful Words		
Interesting Images		
Meaningful Comparisons		
Key Details		

### 3. Writer's Craft

Sample question:

How has the writer tried to capture and sustain the reader's interest?

You should consider how the writer:

- makes the events dramatic/humorous/frightening, etc
- creates interesting characters
- uses descriptive words and phrases.

Match the feature of language in the table below with the correct example:

<b>1. Simile</b>	a) Insecurity held her ransom
<b>2. Alliteration</b>	b) The taste of sweat slowly trickled down his brooding, now grief ridden lips
<b>3. Use of short sentences to create a mood of tension</b>	c) Home seemed such a beautiful comfort to her, especially as she now considered the glowing fire, the welcoming hug of granddad and the luxurious carpeted lounge, just longing for her arrival.
<b>4. Use of the senses</b>	d) Her eyes were a blue ocean of sparkling blue diamonds, simmering in the summer breeze.
<b>5. Personification</b>	e) Bernarbia Boost for bewildered Blues
<b>6. Use of longer, complex sentences to create a mood of calm</b>	f) He was as isolated as a lighthouse without the beam of hope.
<b>7. Metaphors</b>	g) Who was it? Stop thinking about it, the footsteps, the footsteps getting louder, louder by the minute. Who is it? Who's there?
<b>8. Description of setting</b>	h) The air was sweet with sunshine, homing in on my eager limbs.
<b>9. Description of character's thoughts and feelings</b>	i) Facially, she was a strange combination of a witch's frown and a cry for help
<b>10. Description of character's background, appearance, personality</b>	j) But wait – this was it. I have finally made it. Is this the end?
<b>11. Range of punctuation used for dramatic effect</b>	k) His guilt seemed to be invading him, yet his inner strength pushed it to one side once more.
<b>12. Use of repetition</b>	l) The forest was thick with black, sickly fog which reflected the inhabitants.

Writer's Craft Checklist	Example	√
1. Simile		
2. Alliteration		
3. Use of short sentences to create a mood of tension		
4. Use of the senses		
5. Personification		
6. Use of longer, complex sentences to create a mood of calm		
7. Metaphors		
8. Description of setting		
9. Description of character's thoughts and feelings		
10. Description of character's background, appearance, personality		
11. Range of punctuation used for dramatic effect		
12. Use of repetition		

## Some Humorous Techniques Used by Writers:

### 1. The "Double As" technique

Where the word "as" is used twice in a sentence: "He was as hungry as a toothless man in an apple orchard."

### 2. The "So" technique

"It was SO hot out, chickens were lining up in front of Kentucky Fried Chicken and begging to be plucked!"

### 3. A serious-sounding sentence made humorous by adding a comment in brackets:

"The secret to my quick weight-loss is that I drank 10 glasses of water every day (and then my bladder fell out)."

### 4. The most popular technique is exaggeration.

The house was so large, the occupants had to hire a taxi just to go to the bathroom.

### 5. Then there is the opposite of exaggeration, which is the "understatement" or "shrinking" technique.

This technique describes things as much smaller and less significant than they actually are: "The guy who painted our house charged by the hour and used a brush that had only two hairs on it."

### **Identify some of these techniques in the paragraph below:**

*It was raining so hard the night we went to the restaurant, Carnival Cruise Lines pulled up next to us in the parking lot. We were seated at a table that was no bigger than a deck of cards and it was so close to the table behind us, when I reached up to scratch my head, I scratched the guy's head behind me and panicked, thinking I'd suddenly gone bald. Everything on the menu looked delicious (especially the blob of gravy stuck on the front and the smear of mashed potatoes on the back). We finally ordered the chicken dinner. When our food arrived, not only was it as cold as a snowman's behind, the portion was so small, it looked as if a hummingbird had died on the plate. After our meal, which we downed in 1.5 seconds, we ordered dessert. My chocolate cake was so sweet, my teeth continued to ache even after I took them out for the night.*



## Different Types of Verbal & Written Humour:

Banter: good-natured teasing back and forth; exchange of witty remarks.

Blunder: wit based on a person who makes a mistake, which makes them appear foolish.

Caricature: exaggeration of a person's mental, physical, or personality traits.

Conundrum: a word puzzle that can't be solved because the answer is a pun, e.g. Why do cows wear bells? Their horns don't work.

Exaggerism: an exaggerated witticism that overstates the features, defects, or the strangeness of someone or something.

Freudian Slip: a funny statement which seems to just pop out, but which *actually* comes from the person's subconscious thoughts.

Hyperbole: extreme exaggeration.

Irony: a leading part of humour. Irony is using words to express something *completely different* from the literal meaning. Usually, someone says the opposite of what they mean and the listener believes the opposite of what they said.

- **Verbal Irony**: what is said is opposite of what is meant ("Lovely day out" when the weather is the opposite).
- **Situational Irony**: an outcome that turns out to be very different from what was expected.
- **Dramatic Irony**: the audience realizes implications of words or acts that the characters do not perceive.

Joke: short story ending with a funny climactic twist.

Parody: humorous version of any well-known writing.

Practical Joke: a joke put into action. You hear an oral joke, sees a printed joke, and feel the practical joke. The trick is played on another person and the humour comes from what happens.

Recovery: a combination of blunder and wit, where a person makes an error, and then saves himself with a fast correction.

Repartee: includes clever replies and retorts. The most common form is the insult.

Satire: wit that is critical humour. Satire is sarcasm that makes fun of something.

Situational Humour: this is comedy that comes from your own life. This type of humour is based on a humorous situation that you have experienced.

Understatement: making something that is regular or large seem extremely smaller or less. Intentionally down- sizing a large object.

Wisecrack: any clever remark about a particular person or thing. Wisecracks are quick wordplays about a person.

Wit: humour, irony, sarcasm, satire, repartee. Wit is funny because of the sudden sharpness and quick perception. Wit can bite. Verbal wit is a type of humour known as Wordplay.

# Paper 1 Section B

## Writing to analyse, review and comment



### Revision tips

- Practise writing as many different text types as you can
- Find a method of planning that suits your writing style
- Practise making brief plans for writing tasks, and repeat them over and over again.
- Time your writing carefully - spend 10/15 minutes planning and 45/50 minutes writing

The examiner wants to know if you can do the following things:

**ANALYSE:**

Can you think critically about a topic? Can you get information together on a topic, and reflect on it? Can you break a topic down into manageable chunks in order to better communicate your ideas about it?

**REVIEW:**

Are you able to structure your writing effectively so that the reader feels that they have gained an overview of a topic? Are you able to see the big picture (cliché!) rather than getting bogged down in little details? Can you make sure that you don't get side-tracked?

**COMMENT:**

Can you shape an effective personal response to a topic? Can you show yourself to be someone who doesn't just rely on other people's ideas and thoughts?

<p><b>Analyse</b> Can you consider different viewpoints about an issue?</p>	<p><b>Review</b> Can you summarise and give your opinion on something?</p>	<p><b>Comment</b> Can you give your personal response about something?</p>
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**ANALYSING, REVIEWING and COMMENTING**

These types of writing are very similar. They are all based upon:

- a thoughtful and well-considered analysis of the topic in question (given for coursework or exam)
- a careful selection of the information revealed by the analysis
- a piece of well-structured, lively and personal writing based upon the analysis.

What varies between them is, largely, the blend between fact and opinion - that is, how subjective or objective your writing needs to be.

### **Writing to Analyse**

Analysing means breaking your topic down into its key parts to learn about their individual meaning or qualities in order to be able to write a discussion of these that shows how they contribute to the whole. An analysis is usually written in the form of an essay.

### **Writing to Review**

Reviewing requires you to break a topic down then to write a lively and authoritative account that is well judged, carefully considered and entertaining for its audience. A review is usually written with a media audience in mind, such as a magazine article.

### **Writing to Comment**

Commenting is a more personal and opinionated style and needs to be more subjective. You might be asked to write a comment for a magazine or newspaper article or as a speech.

A commentary needs to be a well-considered personal assessment, one that remains focused tightly throughout on its topic, sticking with just this: it is your individual view of what you consider important about the topic.

**Commentaries must never be a mere summary of their topic.**

### **OBJECTIVITY?**

It's worth remembering that all writing must reflect, to some degree, its writer's attitude towards the topic - that is, be subjective. When it's important to reduce the subjectivity of a piece of writing, such as in an explanation, this natural personal bias can be reduced by providing a variety of different points of view.

**For example, if your topic is smoking, you should think about its 'pros and cons'; even with such a contentious topic, there are always two or more sides.**

### **A CAREFUL ANALYSIS IS VITAL...**

A key aspect of this kind of writing is the need to break down - that is, analyse - your topic so you can identify which key individual aspects are important, relevant or interesting for your audience's needs.

It will be your ability to be able to sort out what is from what is not important that will determine, in part, the marks you are awarded. Having sorted out what you believe is important, you then need to discuss and evaluate your topic at several levels:

- As an introduction, you'll need to cover the topic as a whole, concisely and with a 'broad brush', e.g. in a film review, mention its genre, its storyline, its director and its main stars.
- You'll need to discuss its key individual parts and comment on how these contribute to the effect of the whole.
- You'll need to discuss how the parts have been combined to create an effective overall structure.
- In a review, you'll need to be careful not to create a 'spoiler' by giving away too much of the plot and risk ruining the audience's enjoyment.

### **A CLOSE AWARENESS OF AUDIENCE**

This points to another key aspect of this writing: you need to show in the writing a close consideration of the needs of your audience. This means that what you write must be useful, interesting and clear.

Because your readers will be relying on what you say another key quality of this writing is its authoritative tone. You will need to sound convincing, knowledgeable and certain.

### **PLANNING!**

A further important aspect of mark schemes is to award marks for the quality of the organisation of your writing. The examiner is looking for evidence that you have consciously shaped your writing to allow its meaning to unfold clearly, usefully and in an interesting way for your audience.

Releasing the details you give in a controlled way, in 'bite size chunks', will help your reader understand and enjoy reading about your topic.

Checklist for Analyse/ Review/ Comment	√
Have you broken your topic down into its key segments and written about only these?	
Is your writing lively as well as easy to understand and follow?	
Have you shown from this analysis how the individual parts work together as a structure?	
Have you taken account of what or how much your reader already knows?	
Have you given your readers what they need to know in a way that can be easily digested?	
Have you tried to interest and involve your reader by writing in a lively style?	
Have you organised your writing so its structure is effective, logical and clear?	
If needed, have you used a technical vocabulary?	
Have you used examples and explained these and their effect and purpose in sufficient detail?	
Have you drawn comparisons with other similar things to clarify points?	
Have you drawn on similar events or used an anecdote to create a clear and lively piece of writing?	
Have you given relevant facts, descriptions, examples or, if relevant, statistics?	

**Consider the following issue:**

**"In the future we will all be slaves to things like personal stereos, computers and mobile phones".**

**Analyse the following response. Annotate, identifying successful features.**

***It has been suggested that having 169 TV channels and building motorways through the countryside is 'progress'. Analyse this view of progress, commenting on why things are developing in this way and what reasons people might have to disagree.***

Ever since Neanderthal man first rubbed dry sticks to make fire or figured out that wheels work better when round, mankind has sought progress. It's just another form of evolution: Darwin should be proud. However, the greater our advances, the more controversial they can become; to the extent that many might question whether they are 'progress' at all. When progress ameliorates life, that is one thing; but when it simply improves *lifestyle*, that is something else entirely.

Interestingly, Dr Robert Oppenheimer must have understood this debate all too well. In the 1930s, he was the chief scientist in charge of the development of the USA's nuclear technology. Only a few years later, the American government harnessed this very same technology to drop atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Oppenheimer spent the rest of his life campaigning against nuclear proliferation so much that the American government started to restrict his personal freedom. What would he have said if asked if any 'progress' had really been achieved?

Nonetheless, it is important for us to acknowledge the complexity of the issue, and few could argue that some progress is unequivocally good. In medicine, for example, advances in technology have led to the eradication of diseases which, as little as fifty years ago, claimed victims every day. Even AIDS, until recently thought invincible, may now have a cure or vaccination in sight.

Similarly, computer technology has totally transformed the way in which we live our lives today, and many of us rely on our trusty PC to organise everything from our finances to our daily routines. I defy anyone to argue that my iPod is not a good thing – six hours driving to the Lake District over the summer would have been toddler hell without the entire Horrid Henry back catalogue playing over the car stereo. And where would we be in schools, without computers to improve both teaching and learning?

However, it is not difficult to flip the coin of progress to the other, less shiny side. For example, how many channels do we *really* need on our TV sets? I have free access to dozens of channels now, and there is still, invariably, very little worth watching. Instead, television's hold over our lives is becoming more and more intense, and, to the benefit of whom? In the words of Bruce Springsteen, there are "57 channels and nothing on".

It is also hard to dispute that the increasing industrialisation of society is placing our planet in grave danger. A new motorway might cut the journey time from A to B in two; but it cuts the countryside in two too. Cheap plane travel might send thousands more people into the sky; but that sky is choking as a result. When progress is at the expense of the planet we inhabit, some would say that it is not progress at all. After all, what is the point of improving life on earth, if there will be no *earth* to host it?

When you think about it, it is easy to sympathise with those who favour a more 'no-nonsense', 'back to basics' approach to life. If you were to remove all technology from your life, would you *really* be worse off? I would miss my iPod, but I managed before I first bought it; and there are few ailments I fight off through a trip to Boots that a decent shaman couldn't cure with a few crushed leaves and a nice hot poultice. And as for roads and interminable television, they may well spruce up my lifestyle – but my life could probably do perfectly well without them.



## SYNONYMS FOR "ANALYSE"

- Estimate
- Evaluate
- Examine
- Interpret
- Investigate
- Judge
- Break down
- Think through

### Activity:

#### Signposts/ Discursive Markers:

Some examples:

- *There are undoubtedly some major advantages*
- *To begin with*
- *Furthermore*

Read through the previous passage on "Progress" and identify the discursive markers and why they were used.

## Writing Template for Analyse, Review, Comment

Paragraph/ section	Write here any notes, key words, sentences you might use:
<p><b>Paragraph 1:</b> Introduction Show that the topic is understood. Write a topic sentence.</p>	
<p><b>Section 2(several paragraphs):</b> Use your sources to explain the benefits of e.g. travel. Use discursive markers. Make a general/ moral point. Use extended vocabulary.</p>	
<p><b>Section 3 (several paragraphs):</b> Use your sources to explain the pitfalls e.g. travel. Use discursive markers. Make a general/ moral point. Use extended vocabulary</p>	
<p><b>Last Paragraph:</b> Conclusion. Write an engaging Conclusion.</p>	

## Writing to Analyse/Review/comment

The answer is marked out of 30. Marks are split into 20 for content and organization and 10 for sentence structure, punctuation and spelling.

### Content & Organisation

- Have you shown understanding of the **purpose** and format of the task?
- Have you shown sustained awareness of the reader / intended audience?
- Is the content coverage well-judged, **detailed**, and fitting for the purpose?
- Are the arguments convincingly developed and supported by relevant detail?
- Have the ideas been selected and prioritised to construct a sophisticated argument?
- Do the paragraphs have a topic sentence linking to the argument?
- Have you used a range of stylistic devices (rhetorical questions, emotive language etc) adapted to purpose / audience?

For top marks:

- Is there a wide range of appropriate, **extended vocabulary** and is it used to create effect or convey precise meaning?

### Sentence structure, punctuation and spelling.

- Is there appropriate and effective variation of sentence structures?
- Is there a sophisticated use of simple, compound and complex sentences to achieve particular effects?
- Is there accurate punctuation used to vary pace, clarify meaning, avoid ambiguity and create deliberate effects?
- Is virtually all spelling, including that of complex irregular words, correct?

### Sentence structure and punctuation

- variety, clarity and accuracy of sentence structures.
- variety and accuracy of punctuation.

### Text structure and organisation

- coherence - how the whole text hangs together, including order and sequence, and structural features such as openings and closings.
- cohesion - how different sections of the text are organised, including grouping of material, connecting and elaborating within paragraphs / sections.

### Composition and effect

- adaptation to purpose, form and reader.
- viewpoint - establishing and maintaining the position / stance of author, narrator, characters and others.
- style - rhetorical effect, choice of language and technical or literary devices.

### Using PEE for writing:

POINT	EVIDENCE	EXPLAIN
Firstly Initially Furthermore Also To begin with In addition To start with Additionally Moreover Then To conclude Finally	for example as revealed by this is shown when demonstrated by for instance an instance to show that such as	we can conclude that it appears that it is possible that this suggests this makes it seem which makes us think perhaps the reader can infer

## CONNECTIVES AND DISCOURSE MARKERS

also	equally
as well as	similarly
moreover	likewise
too	as with
next	whereas
then	instead of
firstly	alternatively
secondly	otherwise
thirdly	unlike
finally	on the other hand
meanwhile	for example
above all	as revealed by
in particular	however
especially	although
significantly	unless
indeed	except
notably	if
so	yet
thus	apart from
therefore	because
consequently	

# Paper 2 Section A

## Writing to inform, explain and describe



### Revision tips

- Practise writing as many different text types as you can
- Find a method of planning that suits your writing style
- Practise making brief plans for writing tasks, and repeat them over and over again.
- Time your writing carefully - spend 10/15 minutes planning and 45/50 minutes writing

# Writing to Inform

## Key Terms

Did you know.....

Were you aware that.....

There are many kinds of.....

There are many ways to.....

Not many people know that/about.....

By far the most interesting/enjoyable/exciting aspect is.....

## Features of writing to inform

- a clear, precise and effective opening
- explain the context
- write in the present tense
- include relevant detail - examples, statistics, proof
- use specialised/technical language where appropriate
- cover a range of relevant points about the topic
- coherent, logical structure
- effective paragraph links
- style which interests the reader in the topic

## Activity

1. Imagine your French exchange partner is coming to live in your town for a term. Write to inform him/her about the town. You could include details about :
  - i. local tourist attractions
  - ii. sports and leisure facilities
  - iii. local transport and places to visit nearby
2. A magazine is requesting information from its readers about incidents that have had a significant effect on their lives. Write about an occasion when you made a serious mistake.

Read the following question:

**Write a letter to a friend who is planning to visit a place you know well. Make your letter *informative*, useful and interesting to read.**

This is a section from an 'A' grade answer. Annotate the answer identifying the successful features of informative writing.

A lively start that addresses the reader directly 'you'.

So you're going on holiday to KL! It's a brilliant place, a real mix of Malay, Chinese and Indian culture. There's so much going on that you won't want to go to bed at night. Now you're probably thinking, 'I hope she's not going to bore me writing some tedious travel guide.' Well I'm not. You'll find your own way, but here are a few suggestions about things that you can say or do.

Your first adventure will be negotiating the airport. I don't like it, even if it is very modern and impressive. I went there when it was first built and got lost it was so big. Every time I tried to find our departure lounge I ended up wandering into a different shop. Apparently the airport was designed so that people could be channelled into retail outlets to buy more goodies.

Anyway, if you manage to get through the airport, you'll need to get a taxi into the city centre, which (I say should) will take about an hour. Have you been to the Far East before? If you haven't, the traffic might come as a shock. Sometimes it gets gridlocked for hours on end and nothing moves except the meter on the taxi. If you're lucky, though, you'll end up in the middle of town in time to see some of the city before dark. There are so many things to do, like going to Petronas Towers, visiting the National Museum, taking a trip on the elevated railway – or simply indulging yourself in a delicious local meal from a hawker stall.



# Writing to Explain

## Key Terms

The most important aspect of...

The value of.....

In order to.....

The priority is to.....

The next stage.....

You will find that.....

The first thing to do is.....

As a result.....

Another reason.....

Although.....

Above all.....

Inevitably.....

Consequently.....

The results will be.....

An unexpected outcome .....

## Features of writing to explain

- a clear, precise writing style
- appropriate vocabulary
- specific examples
- explanations of 'why'
- explanations of 'how'
- clear links between points
- clear and logical structure
- a concise and effective conclusion

## Activity

1. Think of a time when you decided on a particular course of action. Explain why you made the choice you did, giving reasons.
2. Choose a particular interest or hobby that you have. Explain how your interest has developed and why it is important to you.

## Exploring writing to explain

Read the following question and answer

**Lots of people have favourite places – rooms, buildings, places outside. Write about some favourite places of your own and explain what makes them so special.**

The following extract is the first paragraph of an 'A' grade answer. Annotate, identifying successful features.

Unusual choice of location grabs the reader's attention	One of my favourite places is the bus shelter outside school. Most people would not think a bus shelter is very interesting, and would expect a favourite place to be somewhere exotic. I suppose the main reason I like it so much – at least in the winter, is because it is one of the few places anyone can keep dry and reasonably warm on a main road when you need to get off the school premises at lunchtime. If you think a bus shelter is an odd place to choose, there are others who seem to share my odd choice. The other day for instance, the shelter was packed full of people chatting and nobody got any of the buses that pulled up. You'll see now that it is not the décor or the architecture that makes the shelter a favourite place; it's the company and the social diary. Yesterday I met up with three of my closest friends who I hadn't seen for three days. We solved the world's problems, swapped gossip and sorted out the weekend before getting back to Maths in Lesson 4. If you had to face Maths Lesson 4, you'd begin to see why the bus shelter is a favourite place	

Write the next paragraph yourself about a favourite place of your own.

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# Writing to Describe

## Key Terms

- The memory of...                      To hear/see/feel/touch/see always evokes...
- The effect of...                      upon me always...
- My feelings were...                      Emotionally, I...
- This was reinforced by...                      The impact was greater because...
- Suddenly, I understood that... I became aware of...

## Features of writing to explain

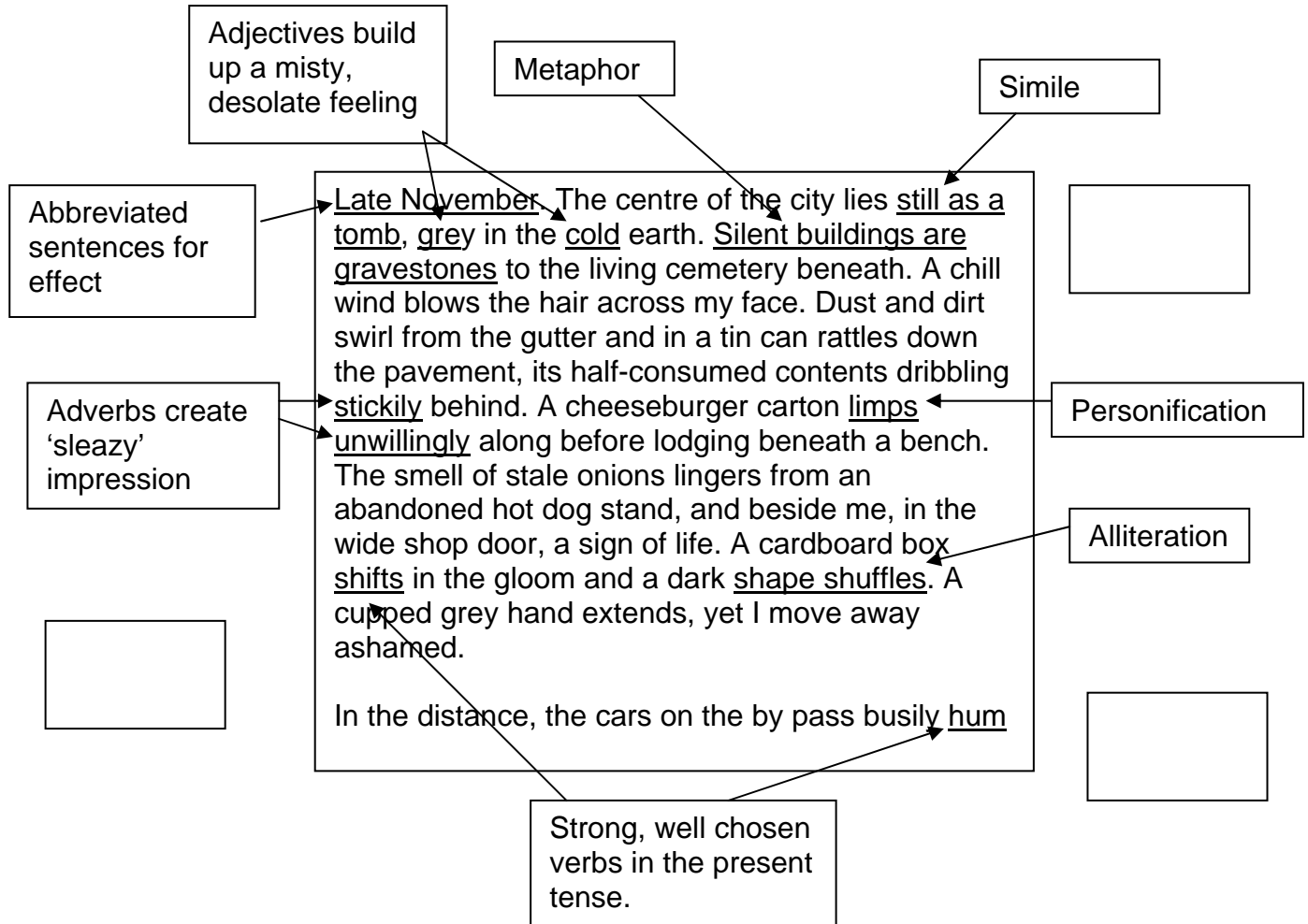
- an effective and interesting opening
- effective use of adjectives and adverbs
- attention to detail
- appeal to the senses - touch, sight, sound, smell, taste
- vocabulary which describes atmosphere
- vocabulary which describes feelings and reactions
- imagery - similes, metaphors, alliteration, personification, onomatopoeia
- more involved language
- effective sentences - balance of simple, compound and complex
- appeal to the audience
- effective conclusion, perhaps emotive

## Activity

1. Describe your ideal school. You could include details about:
  - buildings and environment
  - resources and teachers
  - subjects
2. Describe the atmosphere in a shopping centre when it is open and describe it when it is closed.

Descriptive tasks are often where candidates do best! Look at the text below and see if you can spot and add any more annotations of successful features.

### Successful description



Using the descriptive techniques above write your own brief description of a city at night:

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## Writing to Inform/Explain/Describe

The answer is marked out of 30. Marks are split into 20 for content and organization and 10 for sentence structure, punctuation and spelling.

### Content & Organisation

- Have you shown understanding of the **purpose** and format of the task?
- Have you shown sustained awareness of the reader / intended audience?
- Is the content coverage **detailed**, and fitting for the purpose?
- Do the paragraphs have a topic sentence?
- Have you used a range of stylistic devices (rhetorical questions, emotive language etc) adapted to purpose / audience?

For top marks:

- Is there a wide range of appropriate, **extended vocabulary** and is it used to create effect or convey precise meaning?

### Sentence structure, punctuation and spelling.

- Is there appropriate and effective variation of sentence structures?
- Is there a sophisticated use of simple, compound and complex sentences to achieve particular effects?
- Is there accurate punctuation used to vary pace, clarify meaning, avoid ambiguity and create deliberate effects?
- Is virtually all spelling, including that of complex irregular words, correct?

## **Checklist for improvement:**

### **Grade E > D > C**

- Do you consciously and deliberately construct, for example, plot, mood, and setting, atmosphere and characterisation, using detail, control and shape?
- Is there a sense of purpose and audience?
- Are the ideas clearly and logically organised and is there some use of devices to achieve effects?
- Is your grammar generally appropriate and is there some variety of vocabulary?
- Is it mostly spelled correctly?
- Is there control of tenses, agreements and punctuation and a variety of sentence structures?

### **Grade C > B > A > A\***

- Have you shown skill in creating plot, atmosphere, mood and characterisation?
- Is there a consistent awareness of purpose and chosen audience?
- Is there effective use of devices for particular effects?
- Do you use a wide vocabulary, appropriately used, which you have spelled correctly?
- Is there secure control of tenses and connectives?
- Is there secure control of punctuation?
- Are your sentences and paragraphs coherently linked?

## PREPARING A SPEECH/ TALK

### *PLANNING*

If you are writing a speech/talk think about your audience, your voice, your body language and making pauses.

### *CONTENT*

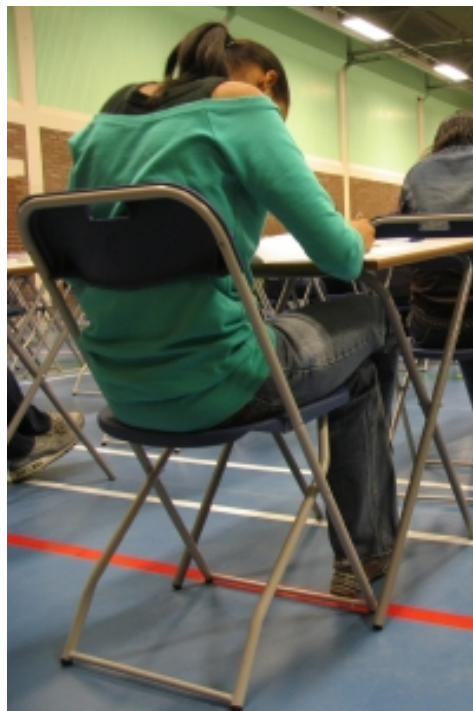
- Write a plan. List and number points to get best order
- Don't include too many ideas
- Include about 6 main points
- Introduce your argument
- Put forward your arguments clearly
- Try to interest and entertain your audience
- Use short dramatic sentences
- Try to anticipate and destroy any arguments that might be put forward against your own
- Sum up and repeat your main idea

### **Tips**

- Make the audience believe you
- Exaggerate for effect
- Shock (emotive language)
- Entertain (anecdote, funny examples)
- Involve your audience (ask rhetorical questions, include detail they can relate to)
- Repeat points (Use *anaphora* - 3 part list)
- Use language to grip your audience
- Don't shy away from being biased: if you want to persuade your audience to think like you, use every trick in the book!

# Paper 2 Section B

## Responding to non-fiction texts





## Paper 2 Section B

In this part of the exam you will be asked to answer questions on a media text and a piece of personal writing. You have an hour to answer questions on each text and to compare the differences and similarities between texts.

**Top Tip 1** - The first time you read the exam texts, answer these questions briefly on each text:

**Who** wrote/published it?

**What** is it about?

**Where** would you find it?

**When** was it written?

**Why** was it written?

**Top Tip 2** - Learn the meanings of the key terms below.

### Key terms for analysis of media and non-fiction texts

<b>Layout</b>	How a text is laid out on the page
<b>Fact</b>	Something that can be proved
<b>Opinion</b>	A personal point of view
<b>Headline</b>	The large text introducing an article
<b>Statistics</b>	Facts, figures and graphs
<b>Caption</b>	The information under a photograph/image
<b>Photographs</b>	Photographs used for effect e.g. to show what a place looks like, to create drama, emotion, etc.
<b>Long distance/close up</b>	Distance from which the photo is taken
<b>Emotive language</b>	Words or phrases that appeal to your feelings
<b>Rhetorical question</b>	Questions asked for effect rather than an answer
<b>Pun</b>	A play on words for humorous effect
<b>Slogan</b>	Catchword or phrase e.g. <i>Just Do It!</i>
<b>Tone</b>	The way in which the text is written e.g. <i>angrily</i>
<b>Alliteration</b>	Repeating sounds for effect
<b>Repetition</b>	When a word or phrase is repeated for effect
<b>Formal</b>	Official style of writing
<b>Informal</b>	Chatty or casual style of writing
<b>Bullet points</b>	A big dot to highlight key points
<b>Bias</b>	The opinion that the writer wants you to agree with
<b>Presentational devices</b>	Ways of presenting things on a page
<b>Content</b>	What the article is about
<b>Article</b>	Non fiction writing in a newspaper or magazine

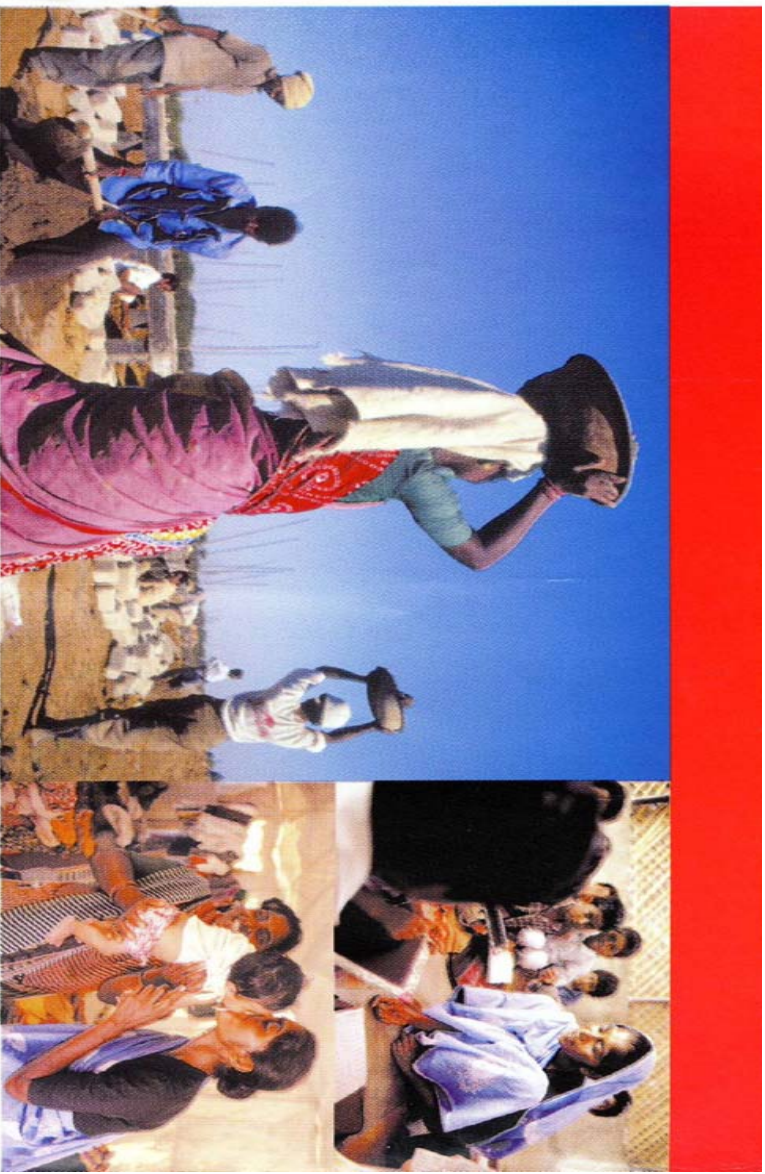
<b>Logo</b>	Easily recognisable company design e.g. <i>Nike tick</i>
<b>Masthead</b>	The name of the newspaper on the front page.
<b>Representation</b>	The way in which a group, person or place is presented by the media
<b>Target Audience</b>	A group of people 'targeted' by the media

For each passage, questions may cover:

- **The viewpoint** - who is writing? Is the narrator biased?
- **The audience** (who it was written for) and purpose (why it was written).
- **The content/ideas** eg use of **facts** - "Belfast is a large city in Northern Ireland" and **opinions** - "Belfast has the best shops in Northern Ireland".
- **The structure** - how it is put together. Look for:
  - **Introduction** of topic.
  - **Development of argument/ideas**, paragraph by paragraph. Look how this is done using examples, statistics, advice, expert opinion, details, anecdotes, interview, questions.
  - **Conclusion** or summary finishes the piece.
  -
- **The language** - Look at how words are used to create certain effects eg. outrage, persuasion, humour.
- **The presentation** - ie. layout, headings, font size, colour, photos, logos, etc.

### Activity

Read the following two texts, annotate them using as many of these key terms as possible. See how many features you can find. When you annotate focus on the effect of these features on the reader e.g. *The headline of this article introduces the theme of the article in a clear and amusing fashion.*



Kelpeeti Lathigam/NG Pictures for ActionAid

## “For aid agencies, an emergency is 48 hours; in real poverty, it is every day.”

Martin Macvean

There’s a historic view that development and emergency work are somehow diametrically opposed processes.

ActionAid’s emergency work over three decades proves otherwise. When drought, flood, earthquake or any other natural disaster affects poor people, it merely deepens the nature of poverty; the remedies to that poverty remain the same.

In January 2001 the Indian state of Gujarat suffered the worst earthquake in the country’s history. At least 20,000 people were killed and a million were made homeless. The British public gave £24 million as a result of an appeal by the Disasters Emergency Committee (of which ActionAid is a member). The Indian government also gave £1 billion.

Sadly, not all this help reached the poor. The problems of caste, bias and the sheer scale of the disaster left whole communities out of the aid effort. ActionAid saw the situation in Gujarat as a human rights issue as much as an emergency and planned accordingly.

Survival in a situation like this is obviously the first priority. But, beyond survival, we work to ensure that poor people’s assets are not lost, to help them earn a living now and in the future, to get involved in the decisions which affect them, to get a fair share of the resources available and to be able to cope with future emergencies.

ActionAid’s response included an all-woman team led by Dharitri Patnaik. They arranged community centres for the poor and traumatised, supported orphans and

widows, helped the illiterate write housing applications, organised day-care centres, helped people reconstruct their houses and livelihoods. It was a distinctive approach to the disaster.

And it is one we adopt whenever our continuing programmes with poor people are interrupted by emergencies and disasters. We spent £9 million on emergency work in 1999, £6.5 million in 2000 and £7.3 million in 2001. The current situation in Southern Africa will again call for similar responses and initiatives from us.

To support ActionAid please call

**01460 238 047**

[www.actionaid.org](http://www.actionaid.org)

**actionaid**

Text 1

## Tiny changes make big difference to planet

Paul Brown, environment correspondent

Tuesday December 30, 2003

[The Guardian](#)

As Britain throws away the extra 2.5m tonnes of rubbish generated by Christmas, the Environment Agency is urging people to make a pledge to help save the planet.

Taking a shower rather than a bath, planting a tree, and cutting down the daily car mileage are among its 60 suggestions for reversing the trends destroying the British environment.

In its annual report it says that small efforts by a sufficiently large number of people can make a big difference. And, by counting the pledges, it hopes to calculate how big a difference the country is making.

For example, if every driver took one fewer car journey a week, average nine miles, it would cut carbon dioxide emissions from traffic by 13%.

Recycling and composting waste, rather than throwing it away as rubbish, can reduce council tax bills as well as saving the environment. Many of the trends which make life more or less pleasant are made up of millions of individual actions by people who do not think about the consequences.

Barbara Young, the agency's chief executive, said: "Some aspects of the UK's environment are improving. Air and water quality is better now than it has been for decades.

"The 20th century's peaseouper smogs and toxic rivers are gone for good. But in some areas progress is slower. And some things are getting worse. If we all resolve to do something where we live for a healthier environment, then together we can make a difference."

One of the more serious and increasing local problems is flytipping, reported cases of which rose by 20% last year. The agency hotline for reporting fly tippers is 0800 807060.

The blackspots are Stratford, Harrow, Birmingham, Leeds, Liverpool, Rotherham, Bracknell, and Preston.

The worst air pollution is in Redcar and Middlesbrough, Cleveland; Blackpool, Lancashire; Thurrock, Kent; Southend, Essex; Brent, north Kensington, Bexley and Eltham, London; and Norwich, Norfolk.

Some of the agency's comments will make uncomfortable reading for ministers.

For example, it points out that aircraft contribute about 3.5% of the pollution that causes the greenhouse effect, and that if the polluter pays principle, which in theory is government policy, were applied, it would add £280 to the price of a return ticket to Australia.

Another area where government intervention and policies are still insufficient is farming methods and land use.

Sediments from soil erosion have harmed more than half the trout spawning beds in 51 river reaches in England, and farming practices are still damaging soil. Flooding, particularly muddy floods, are increasing because farmland is left bare of crops and grass.

The director of Friends of the Earth, Tony Juniper, said: "It is crucial that we all do what we can to improve the quality of our environment, but it is also important that business and the government take the agency's advice, too.

"Unfortunately, as the recent decision to massively expand British airports shows, environmental issues are frequently marginalised in order to promote outdated and unsustainable economic policies."

Comparison grid for non-fiction and media texts

Features	Text 1	Text 2
Form		
Purpose		
Audience		
Main argument/point		
How is it developed?		
Language devices		
Structural devices		
Presentational devices		
Which is more successful? Why?		

*Techniques that writers use to make texts persuasive:*

<b>Anecdotes</b>	Short personal stories which help prove a point and provide interest.
<b>Assertion</b>	Something stated as though it must be true but not backed up with facts e.g. 'GCSE exams are obviously becoming easier'
<b>Discourse Markers</b>	Words which link points and develop a line of thought e.g. 'although...' 'as a result of...'
<b>Emotive Language</b>	Language used to make a reader feel a particular emotion e.g. anger, pride, pity.
<b>Facts</b>	Things that can be proved to be true. Useful for supporting an argument, e.g. Belfast has a population of approximately one third of a million.
<b>Humour</b>	Makes your writing lively
<b>Imagery</b>	Creates an image/picture in your mind Language i.e. metaphors and similes
<b>Opinion</b>	Things that one person believes but which somebody else might not believe. Opinions of 'experts' are useful in persuasive writing e.g. Belfast is the greatest sports city in the UK.
<b>Repetition</b>	Repeating key words or ideas to emphasise
<b>Rhetorical Questions</b>	Questions which raise the emotions of the reader and do not expect an answer, e.g. 'We all know that things need to change, don't we?' They are used in persuasive writing to encourage the reader to think in the same way as the writer.
<b>Slogans</b>	Powerful, maybe witty phrases to sum up key ideas.
<b>Features of layout and presentation</b>	The way words, pictures, graphics, paragraphs, lines of text, headings, subheadings and symbols are arranged on the page. This affects the way something is read, especially in leaflets, adverts, newspaper articles etc.
<b>Opening/Ending</b>	To grip your reader e.g. an anecdote e.g. a final powerful point

## Defining Style

Style describes the ways that the author uses words — the author's word choice, sentence structure, figurative language, and sentence arrangement all work together to establish mood, images, and meaning in the text. Style describes how the author describes events, objects, and ideas.

One easy way to understand literary style is to think about fashion styles. Clothes can be formal and dressy, informal and casual, athletic, and so forth. Literary style is like the clothes that a text puts on. By analogy, the information underneath is like the person's body, and the specific words, structures, and arrangements that are used are like the clothes. Just as we can dress one person in several different fashions, we can dress a single message in several different literary styles:

### **Informal**

"Nothing like that ever happened," Tony replied.

### **Formal**

"With great fortune, that happenstance did not become a reality," Tony stated.

### **Journalistic**

"It did not happen," Tony said.

### **Archaic**

"Verily, it was a circumstance, to be noted, that appeared not to so much have been a reality as to have evolved as a thing that had not yet come to be," Tony impelled.

### **Activity:**

The style that an author uses influences how we interpret the facts that are presented. Consider the differences between the following sentences:

1. **He's passed away.**
2. **He's sleeping with the fishes.**
3. **He died.**
4. **He's gone to meet his Maker.**
5. **He kicked the bucket.**

The version of the sentence that a writer chooses tells us a lot about the situation, the speaker, and the person being spoken to (the audience).

## Elements of Style

<b>Specific Element</b>	<b>Examples</b>
Formal/informal	dialect, colloquialisms, use of slang
Choice of vocabulary	rich in description
Function	to discredit, to criticise, to mock or make fun of, to praise, to support, etc
Imagery	creates an image/picture in your mind - use of language i.e. metaphors and similes
Technical Devices	repetition/ alliteration/ onomatopoeia
Sentence	length and variety/ simple/ compound/ complex/ exclamations/ questions
Variety in paragraph construction	short sentences for dramatic effect, longer sentences to provide detail



## A\* in English

1. A\* writers are fluent, assured, confident and often individual or quirky. They take risks in their writing.
2. Most importantly, A\* writers use a variety of simple and complex sentences. Sentence variety is the key. They may start a paragraph with a short, simple sentence. They may use some sentences which coordinate ideas with "and", "but" or "or". They will also use complex sentences. But the key is variety - no single style dominates.
3. A\* writers use vocabulary which is descriptive (but not too flowery), precise, visual and occasionally unexpected. They use simple, familiar words as well as more complex ones. Their writing helps us to see what they are describing or to understand the ideas they are explaining

This is A\* writing:

Describe the room you are in.

*This room is prison-like. It feels somehow as if I am trapped here, imprisoned, even though the window is open, the door ajar, and a breeze drifts in from outside. All the same it is a prison, a place where I am locked each evening until I've completed my homework. It ought to be a private place of enjoyable study; instead, sadly, with the exams looming, it's a place I loathe.*

(= variety of sentences, variety of vocabulary)

This isn't A\* writing:

Describe the room you are in.

*The room is small and like a prison. I feel as if I am trapped here because of all the work I have to do before the exams. A window and door are open and there is a soft breeze but it still feels to me like a prison cell.*

(= lack of variety of sentences and predictable vocabulary)