



# Christian Brothers School

AQA REVISION GUIDE:

# ENGLISH

To prepare for GCSE in English you need to develop your skills in reading and writing.

There are things you can do, apart from using this booklet, to help you improve your reading and writing.

- ❖ Read as often as you can.
- ❖ Make a point of trying to read a newspaper once or twice a week.
- ❖ Look around you and read leaflets and adverts that you see in public places.
- ❖ Find out more about your favourite sport or interest by reading a magazine about it.
- ❖ If you do not like full-length stories, choose short ones that can be read in half an hour.
- ❖ Think about what you are reading. Ask yourself: Do they work well? Do they achieve what they set out to do?
- ❖ When you come across new words, use a dictionary to find out what they mean and start to use them in your own writing.
- ❖ Think about the way you write and the way other people write.
- ❖ Look at different ways ideas can be organised and sentences put together and start to experiment with these.

# Paper 1

## Section A

You must be able to;

- Follow an argument
- Understand the difference between **Fact and Opinion**
- Understand how a writer uses **Presentational Devices**
- Understand how a writer uses **Linguistic Devices (Language)**
- Identify what the writer's **Purpose** is ( Inform Educate Advise Persuade Entertain)
- Identify who the writer's **Audience** is ( Children Teenagers Adults Women Sportspeople)

### Fact and Opinion

- A **fact** is something that you can prove is true
- An **opinion** is what someone believes to be true

Fact:

Thirty per cent of car owners drive a Ford.

Opinion:

Ford make the best cars.

### Expert opinion

- This is the opinion of someone who is an expert on a particular subject.  
Alex Ferguson said that Wayne Rooney is the best player in the **Premiership**.

A writer will use opinions in order to persuade his audience.

### Presentational Devices

When reading a text you need to think about how its presentation affects the reader.

Some presentational devices are:

- **Headings** - How does the heading grab your attention?
  - A bigger heading will be more noticeable than a smaller one.
  - The wording is important.
  - Is it jokey? Is it puzzling? Is it serious? Does it shock or startle the reader?
  
- **Subheadings** - These are used to break up the text. They work like headings to attract attention.
  
- **Illustrations** - These include photographs, drawings and diagrams. Think about:
  - The size of a picture
  - The position of the illustration on the page
  - What does the picture show?
  
- **Captions** - These are written under a picture. They may:
  - Tell you what is in the picture
  - Tell you what the writer wants you to notice
  - Give extra information
  - Comment on the picture
  
- **Use of colour** - Think about the colours used in the text and illustrations:
  - What colours are used?
  - Why did the writer choose these colours?
  - Do the colours represent something else? For example yellow is a cheerful colour, grey could represent sadness etc.
  
- **Range of fonts** - A range of fonts can:
  - Give variety.
  - Make the text look more interesting.
  - Separate out bits of information.
  - Make it easier for the reader to find his/her way through a text.
  
- **Italics, Underlining and Bold Print** - These are used when a writer wants to:
  - Emphasise something important
  - Draw the reader's attention to a particular piece of text.
  
- **Logo** - a symbol, word/s or both connected to a product or service.

- **Slogan** - a catchy, memorable phrase.

### Linguistic Devices (Language)

Looking at language

Writers use many different techniques to create particular effects:

- Sometimes they ask questions in order to make the reader think
- Sometimes they repeat a particular word or phrase for emphasis
- Sometimes they exaggerate in order to make something sound very good or very bad.

- **Repetition** - This is where a statement or word is repeated three times to reinforce the message. Sometimes repetitions are used to make you remember a word or a phrase.
- **Exaggeration** - is when something is embellished.
- **Rhetorical Questions** - Rhetorical Questions are used in texts to make you think, but they do not require an answer.
- **Tone** - Tone can be defined as the **attitude of the writer** towards the subject in a text. You need to assess the **language** in which it is written. If it seems quite light-hearted, then it is possible that the text has a humorous tone; whereas text with lots of facts about an important topic is probably quite serious in tone.
- **Emotive Language** - This is used when the writer uses words or phrases to make the reader *feel* something.
- **Opinion as fact** - This is to present beliefs as if they are factual truths.
- **Comparatives** - compare things, e.g. a braver man. Comparatives often end -er, but sometimes has the word *more* in front of the adjective, e.g. *more* nervous.
- **Superlatives** - state that something is the best, e.g. the bravest man. Superlatives often end -est, but sometimes have the word *most* in front of the adjective, e.g. *most* nervous.

## Paper 1

### Section B

**Identify what the writer's Purpose is (Inform, Educate, Advise, Persuade, and Entertain)**

A purpose: the reason or reasons you are writing.

**Identify who the writer's Audience is (Children, Teenagers, Adults, Women, and Sportspeople)**

An audience: the intended readers or readers for whom you are writing.

All non fiction writing has two things in common. It is written for a particular audience and it is written with a particular purpose in mind.

The audience might be adults and the purpose might be to persuade them to donate money. The audience might be children and the purpose might be to warn them about the danger of smoking. The words a writer uses will depend on the audience and the purpose.

So the first question you must ask when given a piece of writing is who the writing is aimed at?

The second question is what is the writer trying to do? Inform, Educate, Entertain or Persuade?

#### **Writing to argue**

- When you write to argue you want to present a particular point of view.

Examples of exam questions on argumentative writing:

- (1) Your school wants to ban Saturday jobs for students. Write a letter to your principal in which you argue for or against Saturday jobs.
- (2) Write an article for your school magazine arguing for or against school uniforms.

How to plan your writing:

- (1) make a list of three key points you are going to make
- (2) list the points you will make to develop these key points
- (3) include at least four of the features of argumentative writing listed below:
  - make a clear opening statement
  - try to make the reader think your opinion is a good idea
  - move onto a new point
  - state opinions as facts
  - write in the present tense
  - make a direct appeal to the reader using "we" or "you"
  - use rhetorical questions
  - use exclamation to emphasise a point
  - give evidence to support your view

### **Writing to persuade**

- When you are writing to persuade your intentions is to make your readers believe something, agree with something or do something.

Examples of exam questions on persuasive writing:

- (1) Write a leaflet for use in a Tourist Information Office advertising a place you know well to persuade your readers to visit it.
- (2) Write the text for a speech where you persuade people that more can be done to protect the environment.

### **Writing to Advise**

- When you are writing to advise your aim is to offer suggestions that will help to solve a particular problem. You find advice in newspapers, advertisements, leaflets, books and on the internet.

How to plan your writing:

- (1) be clear about the purpose of the writing
- (2) make a list of key points
- (3) include at least four of the following features of persuasive writing:
  - make a direct, dramatic opening statement
  - address the reader directly as "you"
  - repeat ideas
  - give evidence to support the opening statement
  - repeat words and phrases to emphasise your message
  - use rhetorical questions
  - use the word "we" to draw the reader in
  - use short sentences for greater impact
  - make clear statements of your intentions



## Paper 2

**Paper 2** - This paper examines **Reading** in **Section A** and **Writing** in **Section B**. Each section is worth 15% of your final mark for English.

**Section A** requires a reading response to poetry from different cultures and traditions. This poetry is in **Section 1** of the AQA Anthology. You need to show that you:

- Understand what the poems are about
- Can select the right information to answer the questions
- Can write about the way the poets present their ideas
- Can make appropriate reference to the poems

**You have 45 minutes to answer this question in the exam. It is important to spend 10 minutes planning your response.**

Planning your answer:

- Highlight the key words in the question
- Write a plan under the following headings
  - **Theme** (things shown about the culture) - Give a definition of the theme in the question. Explain how the theme relates to the poems you are writing about.
  - **Structure** - How the poem is organised, line length, stanza shape, narrative, first person, unusual presentation, time scale, rhyme or rhythm, punctuation)
  - Write about any similarities or difference in the structure of both poems.
  - **Language** - The way the poet uses words, images, similes, metaphors, powerful words, assonance, and alliteration, onomatopoeia, contrasting ideas, who is speaking, Non-standard English, personification, questions or commands.
  - For each poem write a couple of sentences about how the type of language used in the poem relates to the theme of the question.
  - Explain any similarities or differences in the way the poets use language.

- For each poem write a couple of sentences about how the type of language used in the poem relates to the theme of the question.
  - Explain any similarities or difference in the way the poets use language.
  - Remember to use quotations.
  - Feelings and Ideas - Write one sentence about how the feelings expressed in the poems are similar or different and relate this to the theme of the question.
  - Write about the feelings of the poet and the feelings of the character in the poems. Use quotations.
  - Personal Response (What you think and feel about the poems)
  - Say which poem you preferred and why.
  - Write about what you have learned about the theme.
  - Show some sympathy - connect the poem to your own feelings and thoughts.
- A **simile** is a figure of speech comparing two unlike things, often introduced with the word "like" or "as".
- A **metaphor** is a figure of speech concisely comparing two things, saying that one is the other.
- **Imagery** is a collection of images.
- **Alliteration** is a literary device that consists in repeating the same consonant sound at the beginning of several words in close succession. An example is, "Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers..."
- **Assonance** is the use of vowel sound to create internal rhyming within phrases or sentences. For example, in the phrase "Do you like blue?" the /u:/ ("o"/"ou"/"ue" sound) is repeated within the sentence and is assonant.
- **Onomatopoeia** is a word that imitates or suggests the source of the sound that it describes such as "oink" or "meow" or "roar".
- **Personification** is a description of an inanimate object as being a **living person** or **animal** as in: "The sun shone brightly down on me as if she were shining for me alone".

**Section B** requires writing which informs, explains or describes. Some of the tasks may be linked to themes in the poems. You will be given a choice of questions and need to show that you can:

- Communicate your ideas clearly
- Write for purpose and audience
- Organise your writing into sentences and paragraphs
- Use a range of words
- Use a range of sentences structures
- Spell and punctuate your writing accurately.

**You have 45 minutes to answer this question. You should spend 5 minutes planning your answer and 5 minutes checking your paragraphing, punctuation and spelling.**

- ✓ Read each questions carefully and choose the one you feel you can do best.
- ✓ Gather your ideas in a spider diagram.
- ✓ Decide on the order in which you will present your ideas.
- ✓ Read each paragraph carefully to check your answer makes sense. Add or cross out words. Correct any mistakes in spelling and punctuation.