



English Language GCSE



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| Exam Board: AQA | 2 Papers (50% each) 1 hour 45 mins each; 80 Marks (40 reading/ 40 writing) | https://www.aqa.org.uk/exams-administration/exams-guidance/find-past-papers-and-mark-schemes |
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Skills students are examined on:

| Reading Skills | Writing Skills |
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| Summarising a text (pulling out key details); Similarities and differences between the attitudes/ ideas of 2 texts; Identifying effective language choices in a text; Identifying structural choices in a text (how are the ideas organised, plus - what is where and why?); Using appropriate terminology; Commenting on the effect of a writer's choices on the reader. | Writing to describe or narrate – a fictional piece of writing full of description. Writing to argue or persuade – opinionated writing. Useful websites for texts: https://www.theguardian.com/profile/editorial https://www.bl.uk/teaching-resources/19th-century-non-fiction-texts-crime-and-punishment (a brilliant resource pack with instructions). http://resources.edugas.co.uk/Pages/ResourceSingle.aspx?rId=643 (pdf printable resources here are great). http://www.bl.uk/learning/langlit/texts/context.html |

Suggested revision activities to help your child prepare for the English Language exam:

Being a confident and well-practised reader is essential

Collect high quality extracts of texts for your child to read. Newspaper and magazine articles, opinion articles/ comment columns, descriptive writing, autobiographical writing

Read the extract with your child. Get them to turn it over (face down) and tell you 5 key pieces of information they can remember OR test them by asking them quick fire true/ false questions about what they have just read.

Ask them to identify what the purpose of the text was. Who was it written for? Why was it written? Keeping that in mind, they should highlight the 5 key words or phrases which help the writer to achieve this purpose.

Give them a copy of the text chopped up into individual paragraphs. Can they put the text back together again? How did they know which paragraphs came at the beginning, middle and end? Was the opening effective? Why/ why not?

Professional writing is a great place to learn how to write well. Your child can use a good example of opinion writing (from a newspaper opinion column) as a style model to help them to write their own. They can steal sentence starters, or ideas from it to build their confidence.

Help them to find 2 texts which are on the same topic but are different. Perhaps 2 different newspaper articles reporting the same event or 2 sportsperson's autobiographies. Can they find 5 similarities and 5 differences? They can think about both content (details/ ideas) and language choices.

Create a glossary of terms

Encourage your child to go back through their exercise book and create a glossary of all of the terms they have used in English.

| Term | Definition | Look/ cover/ write/ check practise | Use it in a sentence |
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Quote Explosions

Get your child to zoom in on choices made in small phrases from a text – headlines are great for this.

Connotations of words (what they suggest/ make the reader think of).

Techniques or devices – identify and label

Link back to the writer's purpose. How does this choice help them to achieve this?

Chosen phrase/ sentence/ headline

Any other words/ phrases from the text you could link this to?

Sentence structure, construction or length?

Timed Writing

Once your child feels confident and has practised not in timed conditions, help them by timing them to write paragraphs. An 8 mark question should take 10 minutes in the exam and be 2 paragraphs long, for example. Time them 5 minutes to write 1 paragraph.

Planning

Help them to organise their ideas and plan a response. Encourage them to do the following:

1. Read the question and highlight the key words;
2. Highlight and annotate the relevant section of the text;
3. Note down ideas which you can use to answer. Use arrows and numbers to divide these into paragraphs.