



Weird questions

Every so often, exams might hit you with something strange. Don't fear though – help is here...



You might need to tackle an unusual question in your exam

Oh no – You've flicked through your exam paper and seen a question that looks totally unfamiliar...

- 1. Don't panic** **2. Read carefully** **3. Think it through** (it's probably just asking you to apply something you do know, but in a new way)

EXAMPLE

Sometimes Maths problems might be set in a real-life (wordy) context. This means you have to work out what you need to do before you can do the maths.

Elon buys apples in crates of 50 apples. Each crate costs £22.50. He presses 3 crates of apples every weekday (Mon-Fri) and 2 crates per day at the weekend. How much will it cost Elon to buy enough crates of apples to keep pressing for 5 weeks?

Underline the information you need can help.

Use what you've underlined to create the correct calculations for your answer:

Number of crates needed for 1 week = $(3 \times 5) + (2 \times 2) = 19$

Number of crates needed for 5 weeks = $19 \times 5 = 95$

Total cost of every crate needed = $95 \times £22.50 = £2137.50$



Be prepared for tricky but predictable questions

If you know certain types of questions are bound to come up, you can be ready for them.

EXAMPLE

History – Using sources

In history, you can get questions which ask you to decide how useful a source is – these can be tricky. It might help to ask yourself:

Does any info make the source more/less reliable?

Consider:

- Who wrote it
- Who they wrote it for
- Why they wrote it

Does the source match what you know about the topic?

Consider:

- Compare what you know about topic with the information in the source.
- If they don't match, think about why

Does the source tell the full story?

- Consider whether the source leaves out key information
- The source may be unreliable if the writer is deliberately trying to hide something.



English Literature – Unseen poetry

The **first** question will be about an unseen poem. This is worth 24 marks and you should spend about 35 minutes planning and writing.

- 1) Read through and ensure you understand the basics – what it's about/who is speaking.
- 2) Read the question, highlighting the key words.
- 3) Read the poem again, highlighting all quotations relevant to the question.
- 4) Annotate the quotations on the paper with initial thoughts.
- 5) Identify your top four ideas.
- 5) Follow the Point-Evidence-Comment structure. No introduction or conclusion.
- 6) Comments = close language analysis; explore different interpretation; writer's purpose/intention/message; intended effect on reader.





English Literature – Unseen poetry continued

The **second** question will ask you to compare the first unseen poem with another. This is worth 8 marks. Aim to spend 15 minutes, writing two comparative paragraphs.

- 1) **Read through** the second poem and establish the basics.
- 2) **Re-read** both poems with focus on the question – highlight relevant quotations
- 3) Try to **identify** at least two points of comparison (similarities and/or differences) across the two poems – this can be the ideas expressed or the writers' methods used.
- 3) Aim to write about **two points of comparison** – one paragraph for each comparison structure. Ensure you mention the methods used by the writer.





Science: calculation questions

A good chunk of marks are available for calculation questions. If you find maths daunting, These things can help:

Show your working out → You get marks for it and it can help you spot silly errors

Check your answer → Make sure your answer seems sensible.

Read tables/ graphs carefully → Double check you've used the correct figures.

Geography – case studies

Think of case studies as detailed examples. You'll be asked to evaluate, explain or suggest things based on your knowledge. When answering case study questions:

EXAMPLE



There was an earthquake in Italy that caused lots of damage



In 2009, over 300 people in L'Aquila (Italy) dies following an earthquake which left more than 60,000 people homeless.



Using past papers effectively

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LxkjjU42h8s>

10:07

