

[illegible]

## Section 1 - Meanings and Representations

In the first unit of the exam, and your course, you will be asked to look at how two different texts create meanings and representations when writing about a related topic. This will be the section which is most similar to your GCSE but will also be more focused and more specialised than your GCSE.

Like AQA Language Paper 2, you will look at 2 non-fiction texts, from different time periods, and write about how they use language individually as well as comparing their use of language. Unlike GCSE, you will not be asked to look at language separately to structure or presentation, but to consider how everything works together.

### What do we mean by Meanings and Representations?

- Meanings is simply how ideas and concepts are put across to the reader or listener by a text to create a certain meaning – basically the effect on the reader.
- Representations is how a person, group in society, idea or activity etc. are represented – how they are made to seem.

Have a look at the advertisement for national newspaper on the Youtube link below.

- Think about how the skinhead seems at 8 seconds in. What do you expect him to do at this point? How does his outfit add to this representation of him?
- By 16 seconds in, what do you think the skinhead is doing? What do you think of him at this moment in the video 'text'?
- By the end, how has your opinion changed? How does this view represent the skinhead?

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

This shows you how any one thing can be represented in a range of different ways.

But it is not the only thing being represented here: the advert is selling The Guardian newspaper, not skinheads. How is the paper being represented here and what does the advertisement seem to be suggesting about its rival newspapers by setting itself out as being 'different' in this?

In the course we will be looking at how words and the way they are ordered and put together create these different representations and meanings. Sometimes the viewpoints expressed will be very similar, and sometimes different. The quotations below are all headlines, or extracts from headlines from the same British newspaper. What representation of the TV show 'Love Island' is being created by each one?

Don't scoff at Love Island.  
It's British society laid bare  
...

It's a national disgrace!



Love Island normalises  
emotional abuse

'It's a microcosm of reality':  
why so many have decided  
it's OK to love Love Island

- Which of the headlines uses a command (imperative) to the audience?
- Which imitates a spoken exclamation to sound shocked and disgusted?
- Which sounds like it will go on to offer an explanation?
- Which uses an emotive noun to represent the series negatively?

## Form and Context

We then need to go on to look at how a text may reflect certain aspects of its form and context. These will affect both the language choices the text producer (writer or speaker makes) and the representations they create:

**Mode** – how does it communicate? Is it written, spoken, visual images? Is it a mixture of more than one of these (multimodal)?

**Register** – how formal, conversational, academic, complex, simple etc. are the language choices?

**Genre** – what type of text is it? Letter, email, article, advertisement, conversation in a shop, formal presentation in a meeting, internet forum, you name it, all of these could be A Level English texts.

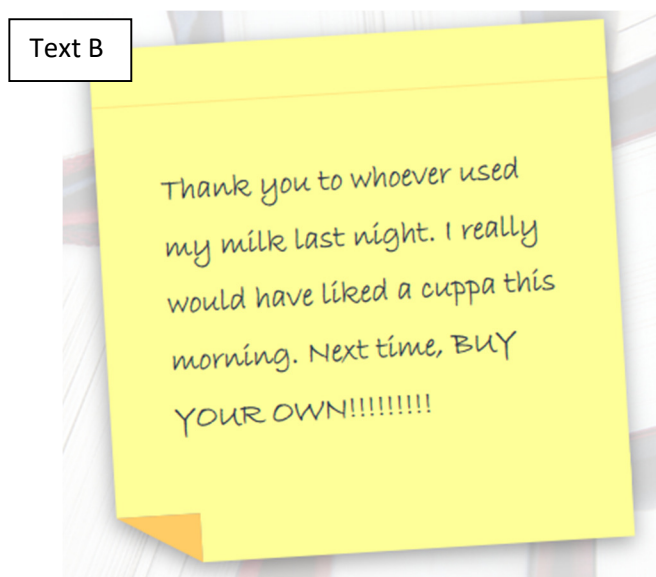
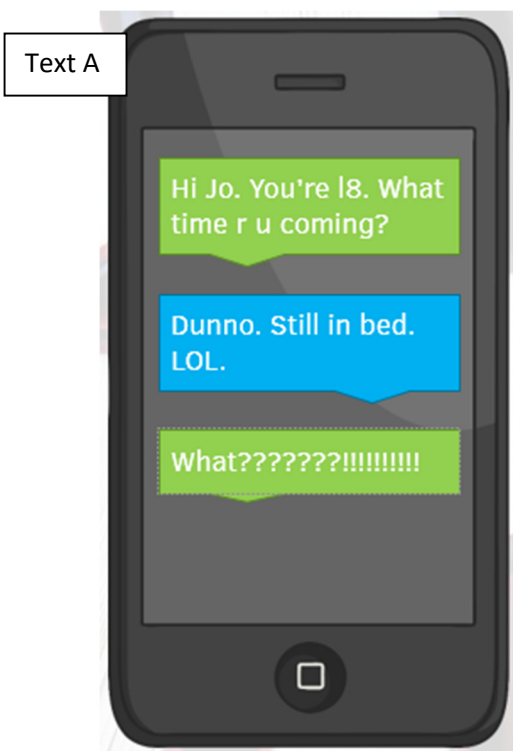
**Audience** – who is it aimed at? Are the people it is aimed at its only audience? Who will actually see an advert on the back of a bus aimed at smokers who want to give up, a charity advert for women in Africa on the back of the ladies' toilets doors in the Bridges shopping centre? And who has each advert been aimed at, who do the producers expect to respond?

**Purpose** – what is the text trying to do? Many texts will have more than one purpose: is someone persuading you by entertaining you? Is someone informing you in order to better advise you?

**Now, consider the following two texts. One is a string of three text messages; the other is written on a sticky note attached to a fridge door in a shared house.**

Think about the following points and try to answer the questions as you look at the two texts:

- Make notes on the mode, register, genre, context, audience and purpose of each text
- What is each text about?
- How does the text producer/s represent themselves?
- If there is an intended reader/audience, how does the text producer want the reader to view themselves?
- Identify any words that you find particularly interesting or effective.



### *Feedback Text A*

#### **You're l8. When will you get here?**

It's in the written mode, but contains elements of speech. It is therefore mixed mode. The register is fairly informal, as seen by the use of the abbreviation 'l8' for 'late'. The genre is a text conversation. The context is that somebody is late for a meeting or arrangement with a friend and the text producer is trying to hurry them along. The audience is the person to whom the text message is sent. The purpose of the text is to get its recipient to hurry up. By starting with the statement 'you're l8,' the text producer represents themselves as irritated or fed up of waiting.

#### **Dunno. Still in bed. LOL.**

This person replies in an even more casual way with a less formal register - 'Dunno.' This is mimicking speech as we might say that, but would normally write 'Don't know.' This is common in text messages and suggests that texting is mixed mode. This person doesn't seem apologetic and continues in the casual register with the incomplete sentence 'still in bed' and the text acronym 'LOL.'

#### **What?????!!!!!!!**

This person is now more obviously angry and impatient, or possibly amused if, for instance the person is known for being late and this was expected (if you don't have a friend like this, you probably are that friend) – only if we fully know the context can we accurately read their meaning. They have represented this by using question and exclamation marks, allowing us to 'hear' their attitude.

### *Feedback Text B*

The mode is written, but as it contains element of speech towards the end, it is mixed mode. The register is also mixed, for effect: it is both informal and formal in places – 'Thank you' and 'whoever.' The genre of this is a note. The context of this is obviously somebody writing the note after someone has used all of their milk. The intended audience is the guilty party, although it will be read by more than one person.

#### **Thank you to whoever used my milk last night.**

The purpose is both to complain and warn the person. The words 'Thank you' are obviously sarcastic.

#### **I really would have liked a cuppa this morning.**

This tone continues when the person says 'I really would have liked a cuppa.' This implies that they were not able to as somebody has used all their milk, but this is expressed quite indirectly. 'Cuppa' is informal.

#### **Next time, BUY YOUR OWN!!!!!!!!!!**

This is more direct, moving from indirectly criticising the person by using the statement (The A Level word for this is a *declarative*), 'I really would have liked' to a command (The word we would use for this is an *imperative*). The person makes this imperative stand out and sound like a shout by using capitals and exclamation marks: 'BUY YOUR OWN!!!!!!!!!!' It now, therefore, becomes mixed mode.

## Language Methods

One of the ways we look at language is by considering the different 'methods' a writer uses when creating it. One way of looking at these is moving from smallest to largest:

- from individual sounds, **PHONOLOGY**
- to the words which are chosen, **LEXIS**
- to the way words are modified and changed for purposes (e.g. hope, hopes, hoped, hopeful, hopefully), **GRAMMAR / MORPHOLOGY**
- to groups of words and the way they are put together, **GRAMMAR AND SYNTAX**
- to the way we infer meanings which aren't actually stated, **PRAGMATICS**
- to the way a whole text is organised and developed, **DISCOURSE**
- to the way it is presented on the page and how any images, colours or fonts add to the representations, **GRAPHOLOGY**.

You can see several of these at work in the texts above. In both, words have been chosen because of the effect they will have 'Lo!', 'really liked'. When you look at the words, you are looking at the lexis. Both imply meanings which aren't actually stated and only the context allows us to understand what the writer actually meant by "What????????!!!!!!!" or "thank you...". This use of context to create the meaning is pragmatics. The texts are laid out as a question and response. This is a discourse structure. Also, the note uses capital letters. This is a graphology choice which the writer has made to emphasise their feelings.

Usually we will be looking at longer texts, articles, web pages etc. but adverts are a good way to practice the skills we need. Have a look at the following adverts and use the questions to identify the representations and some of the key language used to create these.



*Dettol disinfectant hand gel advert from a supermarket magazine*

Mode:

Genre: Magazine Advertisement

Audience:

Purpose:

What representation of public transport is created, especially its cleanliness?

What representation of reader is created?

What representation of product (hand gel) is created?

What does it do?

What can it do for the reader?

The advert uses an interrogative sentence (a question).

How do you think this makes it more effective? (this is A Level, it makes the reader think is not an appropriate answer)

How does graphology add to the representations created?





*Greenpeace advertisement from an American current affairs magazine*

The effectiveness of this advertisement relies on several pragmatic features – the reader needs to recognise from the graphology a nuclear mushroom cloud and Donald Trump's hair and needs to have the contextual knowledge that Trump tweets messages which insult and offend other world leaders.

Mode:

Genre: Magazine Advertisement

Audience:

Purpose:

What representation of Donald Trump is created?

What representation of the situation the world is in is created?

What 'product' or idea is being sold?

The advert uses an imperative sentence (a command). How do you think this makes it more effective? (again, remember to write an A Level quality answer)

The advert also uses a verb 'retweet'. What effect does this particular lexical choice have? Who is this aimed at i.e., who is likely to 'retweet' and cause a disaster?

What well known phrase is this adapted from and what is the effect of that on the meanings created?

How does graphology create the representations here?



*Heinz Ketchup advert from a women's chat / gossip magazine*

Mode:

Genre: Magazine Advertisement

Audience:

Purpose:

What representation of Heinz is created?

What representation of the product is created?

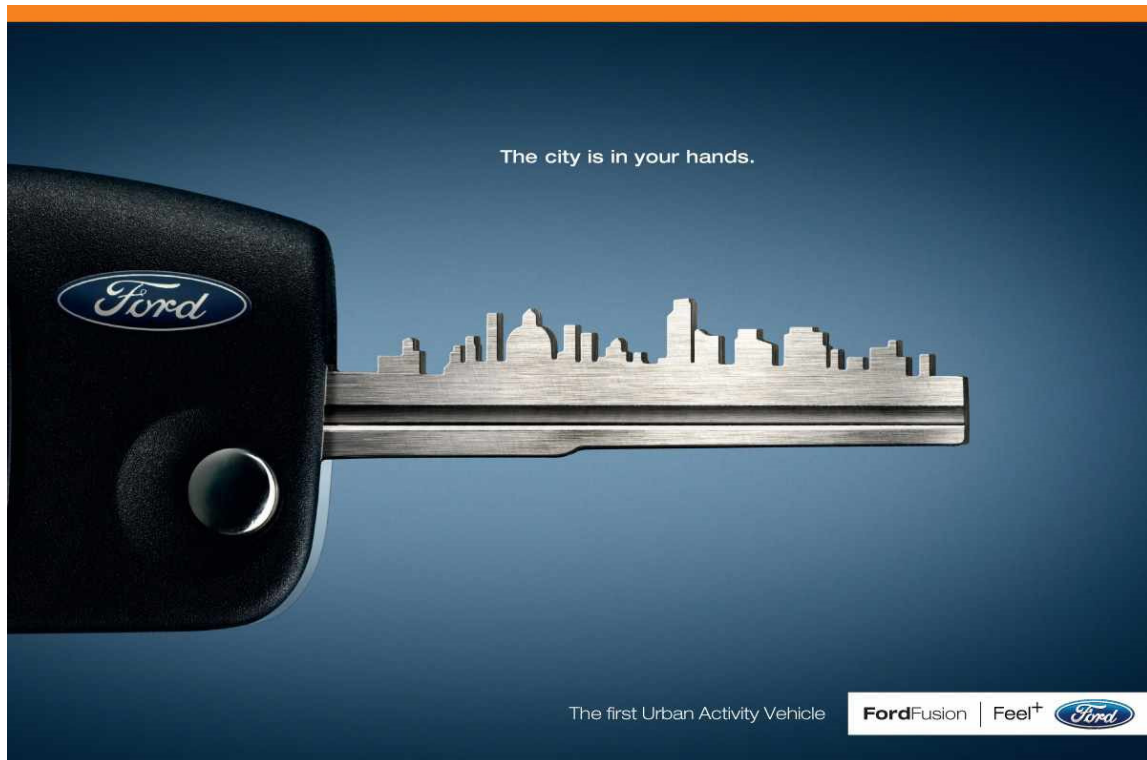
What representation of the reader, and what they want from their food is implied?

The advert uses the verb 'grows' instead of a more accurate one like 'makes'. What representations are the company trying to create about their product and themselves by doing this?

How does the graphology add to this representation?

Sometimes it is not the lexis or the sentence types but phrases – groups of words which create meanings:

*Billboard advertisement for a Ford MPV*



Mode:

Genre: Billboard Advertisement

Audience:

Purpose:

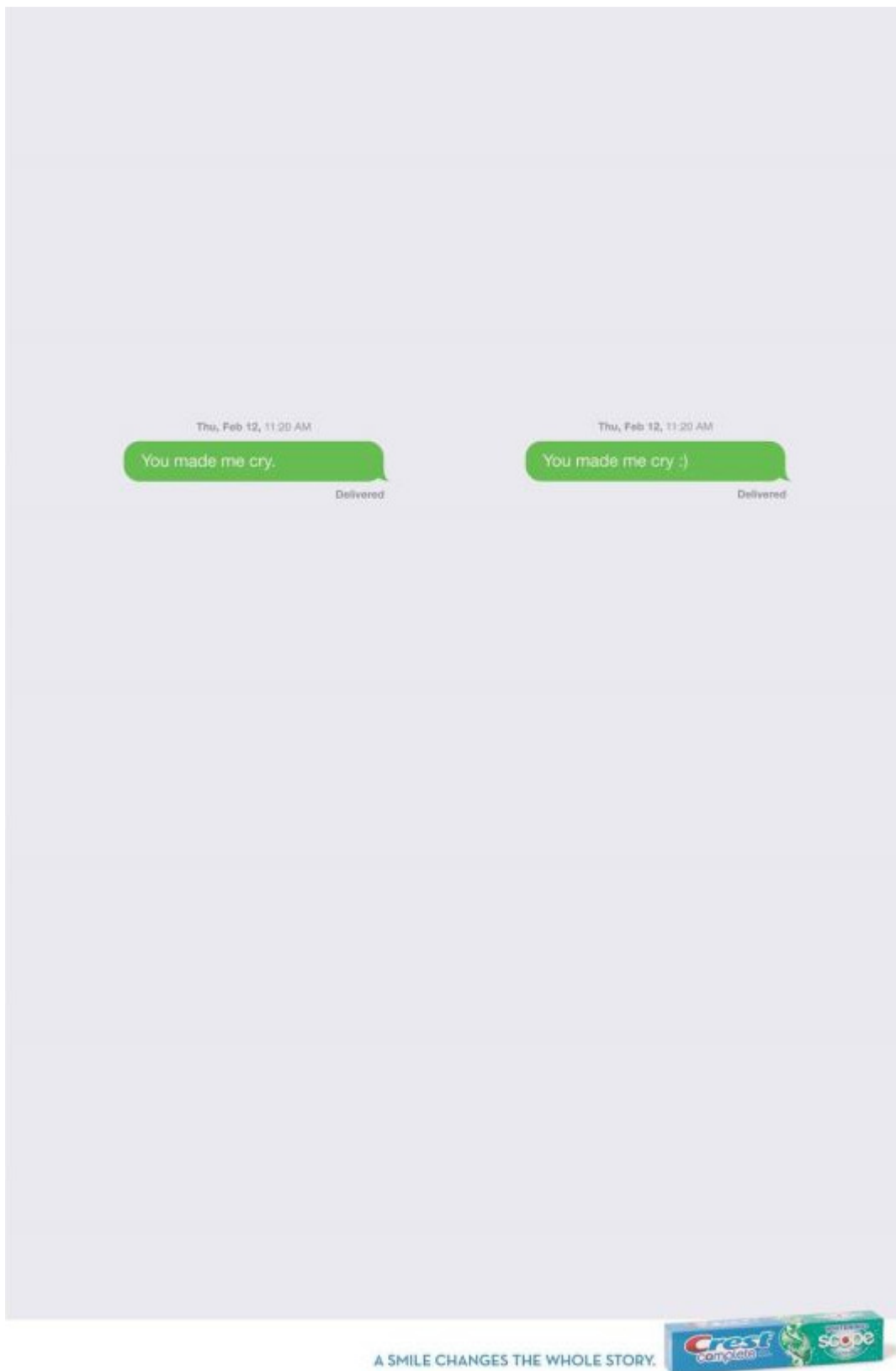
What representation of the product is created?

What representation of the reader, and what they want from their vehicle is implied?

The advert uses the prepositional phrase 'in your hands' to suggest what the vehicle can give the reader. What representations are the company trying to create about their product and themselves by doing this? How is this intended to make the reader feel – free / limited, powerful / powerless, adventurous / homeloving?

How does the graphology add to this representation?

In addition, spelling (orthography) and punctuation can also have an effect on the readers and can therefore help to create meanings and representations for the reader. Have a look at the following two advertisements and try to explain what idea these features are trying to represent:



A SMILE CHANGES THE WHOLE STORY.



Mode:

Genre: Magazine Advertisement

Audience:

Purpose:

How does the punctuation in the texts communicate the message and reinforce the slogan in the bottom right of the advertisement?





Mode:

Genre: Newspaper Road Safety Advertisement

Audience:

Purpose:

What meaning (message) is created by the advertisement?

How does the spelling error communicate the message and reinforce the slogan in the bottom right of the advertisement?

## Focusing on Language

The following two text extracts are from newspaper articles about 100 years apart, both on the topic of voting. Text A is from a 2017 article in the Guardian with the headline 'Most people in the world can't vote, we are lucky' – 13 reasons to vote'.

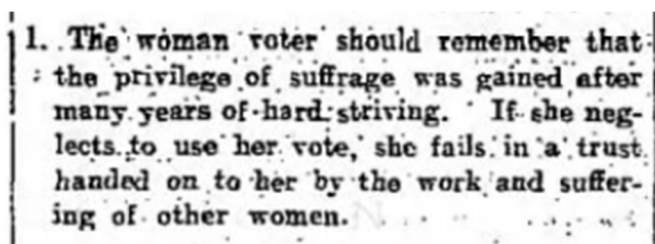
### **Text A**

Because as a young adult and first time voter, I don't want to be part of the problem of low turnout among 18-24 year olds that leaves us ignored and marginalised by politicians who focus on subsidising wealthy pensioners.

The table below contains a mixed up analysis of how some of the meanings and representations in this tiny extract. The first column is in order and explores different meanings and representations in the text but the quotation and analysis columns are mixed up. Try to decide which quotation and analysis go with each feature identified.

Feature	Quotation	Analysis
The writer represents herself as new to voting, by introducing herself using the pre-modifying adjectives	"I don't want to be part of the problem".	This uses two prepositional phrases to clearly identify the problem but not the reason, avoiding placing any blame. The adjective 'low' shows that less of this age group vote than older people, which suggests they are less interested or are disillusioned with politics whereas the use of statistical data represents the writer as well informed.
However, she represents herself as more politically motivated than other 18 to 24 year olds in the main clause	"the problem of low turnout among 18-24 year olds"	The abstract noun 'problem' indicates that she views other 18 -24 year old's voting habits as unsatisfactory and the use of the indicative mood (statement) shows her clear rejection of this behaviour and her distancing herself from it.
She clearly represents most other young people as less politically engaged than her in the noun phrase	"young" and "first-time"	which would usually be used to suggest she is a novice and doesn't really know what she is doing, especially as in modern times the younger generations are seen as having little interest in politics.
Next, she identifies the problem created by the low youth turnout, representing the politicians as neglecting young people using the verbs	"who focus on subsidising wealthy pensioners"	The verb 'leaves' has connotations of neglect and politicians not attending to their responsibilities. The description of the treatment of youth society as 'marginalised' and 'ignored' implies they feel pushed out; not considered or valued, possibly linking back to, and explaining why so many choose not to vote.
Finally, the writer represents politicians as having the wrong priorities using the relative clause	"leaves", "ignored" and "marginalised"	The juxtaposition of the verb 'subsidising' which suggests the person needs and is receiving financial help, and the adjective 'wealthy' to describe the pensioners receiving these subsidies implies that this financial aid is unneeded and unjustified. It represents the politicians as corrupt or, at best, only interested in those who typically vote so could be seen as an argument for more young voters to actually vote, like the writer plans to.

Text B is from The Manchester Guardian in 1923 and was published under the headline 'Election Day – SIX RULES FOR THE WOMAN VOTER'.



Transcript:

1. The woman voter should remember that the privilege of suffrage was gained after many years of hard-striving. If she neglects to use her vote, she fails in a trust handed on to her by the work and suffering of other women.

Below are a series of representations which might be in the text. Decide which are true and which are false:

**Women voters are:**

- a) Forgetful
- b) Unreliable
- c) All the same

**Voting is:**

- a) A responsibility
- b) Important
- c) Only important for men

**The right for women to vote is:**

- a) A privilege
- b) Unnecessary
- c) Hard won

Which of these features link to each of the representations you identified as true?

- The third person noun phrase "the woman voter"
- The modal verb "should"
- The abstract noun "privilege"
- The prepositional phrase "after many years of hard striving"
- The verbs "neglects" and "fails"
- The noun phrase "a trust handed on to her"
- The prepositional phrase "by the work and suffering of other women."

### Extension task

Write an explanation of how the extract uses language to represent women and voting

### Comparison task

Are there any features which both extracts use which are similar?


Complete the table below to identify some

Feature	Example and representation created in Text A	Example and representation created in Text B
Adjectives		
Noun phrases		
Verbs		

## Text A

### An extract from a forum on a cycling website

# Singletrack



[Overview](#) [Bike Forum](#) [Chat Forum](#) [Classifieds](#) [Forum Help](#)

This topic has 51 replies, 34 voices, and was last updated 9 years ago by mudmonster.

Viewing 40 posts – 1 through 40 (of 52 total)

12

## Fireworks....should they be banned?

devon\_roadie *Member*

I grew up with parents who put on a firework party every year for friends and family, so do appreciate the enjoyment they can bring if used safely.

But last night I was walking two young ladies home after an evening out, one of which is nearly 8 months pregnant. We passed a group of youths setting off rockets in the street. As we walked further down the street we realised they were getting ready to launch one at us. Before we knew it a large rocket was screaming straight towards us as we ran and it exploded right beside my pregnant friend who was trying to run away from it. The explosion made her fall over....straight onto her stomach. I shouted that she was pregnant but they still carried on launching rockets at us!

I had to call an ambulance, and also the police. She was in pain and understandably very shaken up and worried. The neighbours who came out were sick of this anti-social behaviour in their area and things were very heated indeed, people were prepared to take the law into their own hands and find the youths responsible.

These were large rockets with powerful explosions. I'd hate to be a kill joy because I know they can be used safely but should fireworks be banned for public sale? Or rockets at the very least?


I hope my friend is ok, but I've yet to hear any more since she went off to hospital. The police were given a couple of names so I hope they manage to find the jobs that did this.

Posted 9 years ago

deadlydarcy *Member*

In short, yes.

Posted 9 years ago

 bruk *Subscriber*

Shorter. YES!

Posted 9 years ago

Waderider *Member*

Fireworks don't have to be used be jobs to be problematic. Wildlife and domestic animals suffer for what seems like months at this time of year from their fear of fireworks. People get injured even when not acting like arses. Round here the place ends up littered with fireworks debris. Should be prosecuted for littering....

Then taking into account the anti-social use problem, and considering on the opposite side of the scales the amount of pleasure derived from fireworks, there is no way they should be on sale.

## Tasks

### Discourse:

1. How does the OP (original poster) start his main post? Why do you think he starts in this way? How is he trying to represent himself?
2. Why does the OP go on to his narrative next? What does it have to do with his topic and how does it create representations of fireworks, the 'youths' and himself?
3. A theorist, William Labov, identified six different stages in a spoken narrative (when someone tells a story in a conversation). They are:
  - a. An abstract – indicating the story is about to start
  - b. An orientation – introducing who, what, where, when etc.
  - c. Complicating action – the problem or complication and main body of the action
  - d. Resolution – the final events – how the story is completed
  - e. Evaluation – any comments or additions to the basic plot to indicate opinions, attitudes etc. These may be scattered through the rest of the narrative
  - f. Coda – a comment which indicates that the narrative is complete.Can you spot any of these stages in the OP's post? Which parts are likely to show the OP's opinions and the representations he creates in the most obvious way?
4. The text is an extract from a forum which means it is often seen as multi-modal: having features of written and spoken texts. How is the way it is structured as a whole text like a conversation?

### Grammar and syntax:

1. The OP uses an interrogative for the title of the post. Why do you think this is?
2. The OP uses interrogatives in several places in his main post. Select one and decide whether you think it is a request for information or is actually meant to imply the writer's beliefs and attitude.
3. In the second paragraph, the OP uses several sentences which contain more than one piece of information. Chose one sentence and decide why the additional information was included. What meaning or representations does it create that strengthens the OP's message?

### Lexis:

1. Look at the usernames the posters have chosen for themselves. Can you tell any information about them from the names they have used? Do any names suggest anything about the personality, interests or opinions of the posters?
2. The writer uses the noun 'youths' to start with but switches to 'yobs' at the end. What is the difference in representations created by these two words?
3. What is the effect of:
  - a. The verb 'screaming'
  - b. The adjective 'anti-social'
  - c. The adjective 'powerful'
  - d. The verb 'suffer'

### Challenge task:

Write an essay answer which explains how language is used in the text to create representations of the fireworks, youths and the forum members. Remember for each one it is essential to quote, and, if you can, name the feature which is creating the representation you have identified.

There is a typed transcript on the following page as some of the original text is hard to read.

## OUR LONDON CORRESPONDENT.

[We deem it right to state that we do not at all times identify ourselves with our Correspondent's opinions.]

Fireworks and November naturally go together, owing to the continued existence of the festival of Guy Fawkes, but even those who have the greatest love for historical celebrations must wish that in our large towns, at least, "the Fifth" ceased to be a red-letter day in the calendar of our youths. Never a year passes without some sad accidents being recorded as having sprung from the premature explosion of fireworks, and the fact that on the night of the Fifth, as November succeeds to November, the Metropolitan Fire Brigade is more than usually on the alert, and not a single man is spared from the ranks, throws a somewhat lurid light upon the dangers which always surround us on that date. The fact is that both bonfires and fireworks are altogether out of place in crowded cities, and no one who ventures abroad in the suburbs of London on Guy Fawkes night is likely to dispute it. For when little boys are seen hurling squibs and crackers about, heedless where they fall provided they make plenty of splutter and sparks, while those of larger growth occupy themselves with sending up rockets, the fiery stick attached to which falls upon neighbouring roofs, it is with apprehension he looks around lest the result should be an outbreak of flames in some dwelling hard by. "Boys will be boys" is usually the answer when objections of this kind are taken to any of their amusements, but the community has a trouble to prevent them from making mischief. And the law which already provides that children under thirteen shall not be supplied with fireworks may fairly be extended.



Transcript (highlighting relates to tasks set, not original text)

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### Tasks

1. Check the definitions if necessary and decide which of the following word classes are in pink, blue, green, and yellow.
  - Nouns
  - Adjectives
  - Verbs
  - Adverbs
2. Can you identify:
  - A proper noun
  - A superlative adjective
  - A modal verb
  - An adverb of frequency
3. Decide what representations are being created of: Fireworks, the 'boys' who play with squibs and crackers (and "those of larger growth" who send up rockets), the laws on fireworks, the writer, the reader and, looking at the introduction, the newspaper who have printed the article.

### Challenge task:

Write an essay answer which explains how language is used in the text to create representations of three of the objects, groups or people mentioned above. Remember for each one it is essential to quote, and to name the feature which is creating the representation you have identified.

## **Section 2: Child Language Acquisition**

*The second topic on exam paper 1, and a topic you will start to look at in Year 12 is how children learn to use language, both written and spoken. The following resources focus on speech rather than writing as this is what we learn first, but is only a sample of the whole topic.*







### **Activity 1**

First, before you begin any study of the topic, try to research the answers to these questions about your own language development:

- ☐ How old were you when you spoke your first word?
- ☐ What was your first word? What was your first word apart from labelling family members?
- ☐ Which words did people actually try to teach you? Names, words associated with manners, objects?
- ☐ What mistakes did you make with your early speech?
- ☐ Were there any sounds you found particularly hard to pronounce?
- ☐ What words did you clearly understand before you could say them yourself?

### **Activity 2**

Now examine your own ideas and beliefs about child language acquisition by answering these questions. It would be useful to note down your answers to be able to refer back to.

-  When do you believe children first start to learn language?
-  Do all children learn language in the same way?
-  What are a child's most common first words?
-  What kinds of mistakes do children often make? What reasons do you have for this - why do you think your answer is likely to be correct?
-  Are all letter sounds equally easy to pronounce?
-  Do children learn by copying the adults around them?
  - If so, why do they say words adults don't e.g. swummed?
  - If not, where do they learn the rules of lexis, grammar, discourse etc. which allow them to communicate effectively?

### **Activity 3**

Below are a series of links to videos on YouTube introducing some information about Child Language Acquisition (CLA) and some of the key theorists and ideas. Work your way through them (there are a lot – you don't need to watch them all at once) and make notes on the main points.

Once you have watched them, see if you have changed your mind about any of your ideas in task 2

#### **CLA Youtube videos**

Patricia Kuhl – the genius of babies

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G2XBikHW954>

David Crystal - what is CLA?

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gs\\_MjI08-Eo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gs_MjI08-Eo)

## Competing theories of CLA

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RRGwdfQV8kU>

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jr\\_hK2Owq8o](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jr_hK2Owq8o)

Chomsky

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7Cgpfw4z8cw>

Skinner

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e-JpKo-uwwA>

Piaget

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iSiOnfqqlL4>

Bruner

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-fZiBMkGv-8>

(but ignore spelling mistake for Chomsky at start)

## Stages of language acquisition

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

## Activity 4

Below is a transcript of a section of a conversation between a child and its carer. Can you link the terms and definitions in the boxes around it to the correct feature in the speech?

The three year old speaker has made a virtuous error and overgeneralised the 'ed' ending rule, applying it to a verb which does not actually use 'ed' to form its past tense.

The phonetic spelling was used by the writer of the transcript to show this child is struggling to pronounce the r sound (phoneme) and has substituted the easier to pronounce w phoneme.

The child appears to be in the post-telegraphic stage as they can produce quite grammatically complete 'sentences'.

One morning Topsy and Tim woked up (.) when they saw a **rabbit** /wæbɪt/ in the **garden** /gaden/ and their neighbour catch the rabbit (.) and the rabbit was going /gəʊɪŋ/ to stay at Topsy and Tim house (.) what they did was (.) they **builded** a cage for the rabbit [indecipherable] and they called him **Wiggles** because he wiggled his noses a lot (.)

The speaker appears not to have completely grasped the possessive 's' to indicate that the house relates to Topsy and Tim.

The speaker has also struggled to correctly apply the grammatical rule that adding 's' indicates something is a plural. The ability to apply this rule is often seen as evidence for Chomsky's theories of Universal Grammar and the 'LAD'.

### Section 3 – Language Diversity

The language diversity topic relates mainly to Language paper 2 and different topics from within it will be studied across Year 12. There are three main topics (accent and dialect, gender and occupation) and a whole range of smaller, associated topics (age, ethnicity, interests, sexuality etc.).

The basic idea is that everyone's language is different to everybody else's.

Try to think of ways your language is different to:

- Your parents or carers'
- Your brothers and sisters, if you have any
- Your friends
- Other people in your class
- Your favourite social media celebrity, favourite musician or favourite presenter

It is likely you will share certain feature with all of these groups: you probably live in the same area and be the same social class as your close family, you will be the same gender as some of the people listed, have the same interests as others and similar in age to several, but all of the different influences on you and life experiences you have make your language individual to you alone.

Before you start looking too closely at the topic, it is important you understand the following words. Research them, understand them and note down their definitions:

Idiolect –

Sociolect –

Dialect –

Accent –

Can you think of any specific words which are only used by people...

- From your region of the country?
- Who are the same age as you?
- Who are interested in the same hobbies, music, fashions or computer games etc. as you?
- Who are the same gender as you?

And in contrast, can you think of any words you hear around you but definitely would not use because you belong to one of these groups in society?

## **Topic 1 – Accent and Dialect**

### **Activity 1**

Many people confuse accent and dialect, even though they are different elements of language, as you know if you completed the tasks on the previous page. This region has some very distinct dialect terms. Use some of the following internet pages to research the dialect(s) of the North-East, past and present.

- Which are the most well-known terms today?
- Which have fallen out of use or you don't know?
- Were there any which you were surprised to find were just local words?

<https://www.settlein.com/10-slang-terms-youll-hear-sunderland/>

<https://www.thenorthernecho.co.uk/news/14021568.sunlun-lad-launches-canny-bewk-mackem-dictionary-plus-top-ten-words-wearside/>

<https://epdf.pub/a-dictionary-of-north-east-dialect.html>

[http://www.houghtonlespring.org.uk/articles/pitmatic\\_guide\\_book.pdf](http://www.houghtonlespring.org.uk/articles/pitmatic_guide_book.pdf)

<https://englandsnortheast.co.uk/geordie-dictionary-a-b/>

<https://www.bl.uk/british-accent-and-dialects/articles/geordie-a-regional-dialect-of-english>

this one's more accent than dialect, but is very informative

<https://www.sunderlandecho.com/news/politics/why-mackems-speak-such-distinctive-accent-and-what-makes-it-different-geordie-1381902>

### **Activity 2**

Whilst lots of accents are simply named after the geographical place they come from, Mackem and Geordie aren't the only accents which have names different to the places they come from. Do you know, or can you find out which areas are associated with these accents?

- Scouse
- Brummie
- Cockney

But accent doesn't have to link a person to a place. Sometimes, someone's accent reflects their social class (or even the social class they wish they were).

### **Activity 3 – Research task**

- Research what is meant by 'Standard English' and 'Non-standard English'. Are these accent or dialect terms?
- Find out what is meant by the terms 'Queen's English', 'BBC English' and 'Received Pronunciation'.
- Try to find out where these accents originate from.
- Find out what 'Estuary English' is and whether it is spreading or shrinking
- Why might these be seen to be non-regional?

We also look at attitudes to accents and dialects. It is not uncommon to hear people express a like or dislike of someone's accent, to comment that their accent has changed or to make assumptions about people based on the way they speak (which can be quite stereotyped and inaccurate).

#### Activity 4 – Attitudes to Accent and Dialect

Below is a list of twelve accents. A survey in 2014 asked people which was the most attractive accent. Try to put them into the order you think they came in at - most to least attractive. You can check your answers on the article in the graph at the bottom of the page and see if you agree with the rest of the country.

Glaswegian  
Yorkshire  
Geordie  
Mancunian

Scouse  
Northern Irish  
Welsh  
Brummie

Southern Irish  
Received Pronunciation  
Cockney  
Westcountry

#### Activity 5

This is a recipe created by the writer of the Mackem Dictionary and put on his Twitter page as a challenge to locals to make and post pictures of their own during the lockdown.

- How many non-standard words can you spot?
- Do the spellings relate to a difference in the dialect or the accent?
- What Mackem accent features can you identify?

## HOW CAN I MACK A PINK SLICE?

**INGREDIENTS**

300G OF BUTTER OR MARGARINE  
120G CASTER SUGAR  
1 LARGE EGG YOKE  
500G PLAIN FLOUR  
400G RASPBERRY JAM  
500G ICENEN SUGAR  
PINK FOOD COLOURING  
2 TSP VANILLA EXTRACT

**1. HEAT OVEN TO 180C/160C FAN/GAS MARK FOWER**

**2. LINE A 20X30CM TIN WITH BAKING PARCHMENT OR GREASE PROOF PAPER (TO HELP REMOVE THE SLICE AFTER BAKING)**

**3. MAKE SURE THE BUTTER IS AT ROOM TEMPERATURE, AND BEAT IT TOGETHER WITH THE CASTER SUGAR, VANILLA EXTRACT AND EGG YOKE WITH AN ELECTRIC BLENDER/WHISK UNTIL THE MIXTURE IS A PALE COLOUR**

**4. STIR IN THE FLOUR USING A WOODEN SPOON THEN USE YOUR HANDS TO TURN IT INTO A CRUMBLY DOUGH**

**5. PRESS HALF THE MIXTURE INTO THE BASE OF THE TIN AS EVENLY AS POSSIBLE - USING A POTATO MASHER HERE IS HELPFUL. SMOOTH THE TOP**

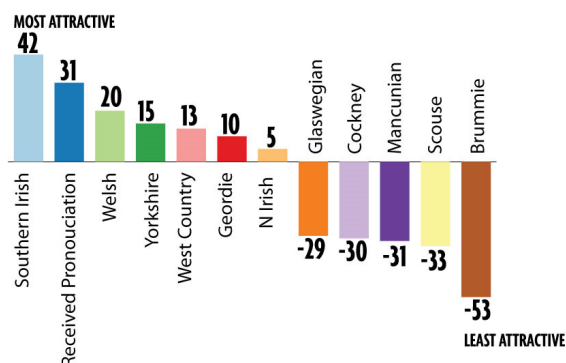
**6. SPREAD THE JAM OWER IT LEAVING A 1CM GAP FROM THE EDGE**

**7. CRUMBLE OWER THE REMAINING MIXTURE AND PAT IT DOWN EVENLY. DINNET GET CHEWED IF IT ISN'T COMPLETELY EVEN - THE ICENEN WILL HIDE IT**

**8. BAKE FOR 35 MINS UNTIL GOLDEN. LEAVE IN THE TIN TO COOL.**

**9. WHEN COOL SIFT THE ICENEN SUGAR AND STIR IN A MAXIMUM OF 100ML OF WATTER AND A LITTLE FOOD COLOURING - TRY HALF A TEASPOON AND ADD MORE TO TASTE. AIM FOR THICK ICENEN (THE CONSISTENCY OF CLARTS)**

**10. POUR OWER THE BASE AND TILT THE TIN TO SPREAD EVENLY. LEAVE TO SET OWERNEET IDEALLY. REMOVE FROM THE TIN AN CUT INTO SQUARES**



Answers to Activity 4:



## Topic 2 – Language and Gender

There have been many different theories about the way different gender speak, whether it is different or the same, what reasons there might be for any differences, if people's speech reflects the gender of the person they are speaking to and the gender of the person they are speaking about.

### Activity 1 – Examine your own language use

Think about the words you would use to describe a man or a woman with the features in the table below

	Female	Male
Attractive		
Spends a lot of time and money on fashion		
Speaks their mind and tells people what to do		
Spends a lot of time working out and weight training		

If you have used the same words in some of the columns, are they seen as equally complimentary or negative?

### Activity 2

Consider these questions and identify your own preconceptions about language use:

- If you were researching men and women's speech and had to predict any differences you would find, what would you expect the differences to be?
- Do you think men speak differently when speaking to men and women?
- Do you think women speak differently when speaking to men and women?
- Do you imagine the following sentence would be said by a man or a woman?  
*Jen and Malcom's new sitting room is beautiful; a kind of pale seafoam green on the walls with a gorgeous cream and gold sofa.*
- What about the following sentence?  
*Aye, Malcom's painted it some green colour, said it took him hours.*
- What have the two speakers done differently that made you decide which gender probably spoke each one?
- If you believe men and women speak differently because of their gender, why do you think this is? Does it reflect a genetic difference or are do they learn to speak differently as they grow up: Is it 'nature' or 'nurture'?
- Why have I written 'men and women' and 'man or woman'? Would it sound any different to you if someone wrote 'women and men'?

### Topic 3 - Language and Occupation

Some differences in our language are more obvious than others. One you may not have considered is the difference between someone's language when at work and when at home.

When we are at work our language is likely to contain lexis we would not use in different environments, or not use as much. We may share certain understanding with the people we work with so we can speak to them in a way someone from outside the workplace might not understand. We might even have certain discourse structures we are expected to follow and certain scripts we are expected to use – as you're probably aware if you've ever been spoken to by one of the shop assistants in the Disney Store, or received a call from a call-centre.

#### Activity 1

Use your own experience, if you have had a job, and the experience of the people you live with to create a list of language and language features associated with work for example, if you have worked in a café you might have come across words associated with food prep., serving, customers, clearing tables, working a till etc. There might even be specific words used for these not used elsewhere. You might have had a way of greeting customers or a phrase you used to hurry them up or ask if they had finished.

Some of the words you have come up with will probably be very specific to jobs, objects or concepts relating to work. Some may be initials or initials pronounced as words (acronyms).

Words which we might associate or use more in a specific job are called *occupational lexis*.

Words which we would almost never use outside of a particular occupation are called *restricted lexis*. Think about medical, legal or scientific terms which people from other professions would not understand.

#### Activity 2

Can you think of a phrase that would only ever be used by:

- A café, bar or restaurant worker
- A flight attendant
- A doctor (you can look up some restricted lexis for this one if you want to challenge yourself)
- A lawyer (again, you may want to look something up)
- A farmer

Which of these do we most expect to use restricted lexis?

Chances are, virtually every occupation has some lexis not understood by people who have not done that job.

#### Activity 3

Which jobs would you associate with the following lists of words?

- Rotavator, crop rotation, telehandler, DEFRA and grazing
- Interaction design, digital rights management, cutscene, mesh and platform
- Holding pattern, apron (but it is not an apron you would wear), crosscheck, deadhead and starburst
- Casein, rennet, whey, hoop and milling

Choose from: airline staff (pilots or flight attendants), Computer games development, farmer, cheesemakers

#### Activity 4

Below is a transcript of a conversation between a doctor and a patient taken from 'GPs: Behind Closed Doors' series 5. In a transcript the punctuation is used slightly differently from a script and brackets with full stops or numbers of seconds are used to indicate longer and shorter pauses in speech. Note down any examples you can see of where the doctor's profession has influenced the language she is using.

Doctor: OK (.) how can I help  
Patient: first of all (.) I got pains in me hands again  
Doctor: right (.) let me just see what I did before  
Patient: you gimme n'injection (.) a steroids  
Doctor: did I  
Patient: yes  
Doctor: and was that for carpal tunnel syndrome  
Patient: yeah (.) but it is getting painful again  
Doctor: put your finger on where it hurts (1) there  
Patient: just here  
Doctor: OK so it's not carpal tunnel (.) it's arthritis again  
Patient: is it (.) oh happy days

Consider:

- Who is more in control of the conversation
- What kinds of sentences the doctor uses
- Who uses occupational or restricted lexis
- Who uses language more formally and why

#### Topic 4 – Other Influences

As mentioned before, dialect (geographical and social), gender and occupation are not the only influences on an individual's language use. Another difference that affects people's language is age. Below are some words and phrases – decide how old you think the speaker of each word is (they may also be linked to a certain dialect or social group in other ways than age).

Frock	Throw shade	LOL	Tripe
Boomer	Cheerio	Marvellous	Selfie
Creps	Flex	Disco	Influencer
YOLO	Wireless	Club (meaning	Snazzy
Courting	I was like	nightclub)	Clarts
Take a chill pill	Whatever	Lowkey	Splodging

The YouTube videos below also offer some interesting information and examples about accents, dialects and how the multi-ethnic make-up of London is affecting the language spoken there.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0KdVoSS\\_2PM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0KdVoSS_2PM)

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vISlf3b\\_BSs](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vISlf3b_BSs)

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5-BLK\\_-68Jo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5-BLK_-68Jo)

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

#### Challenge Activity

Write up the ideas you have found as an essay responding to the task: Explore the idea that each individual's language is unique because of the wide range of influences on them.

## Section 4 – Language Change

It is probably obvious to anyone who has ever read Shakespeare, written in early modern English that language changes. To many people, Shakespeare appears hard to understand and they assume that the language he uses is what people mean when they refer to 'Old English' but in fact old and middle English were both used before Shakespeare's time – can you find out the approximate dates?

### Activity 1

There are many reasons for language change. Below are a few of the influences which cause our language to change and in the second column there are words introduced into the English language in the last 400 years. Can you link the words to the influence? Correct answers are at the bottom of this section but have a go at guessing first.

Trade and travel	Cookie (meaning biscuit, not the internet meaning)
Invention and discovery	ipad
War	Transgender
Foreign influence e.g. media, social media, music	Refrigerator becomes 'fridge'
Simplification	Cool (meaning good)
Social change	Avocado
Youth culture and the desire of each generation to be different from past ones	Shell-shock

A lot of our language has been 'borrowed' from other languages. This does not mean we are planning to give them back but that we have taken them and often changed them slightly then used them as an integral part of our own language. English has many borrowings partly due to its history of trade and colonisation. If you don't know what is meant by colonisation and the British Empire, it will really help you to find out what these mean before studying this topic.

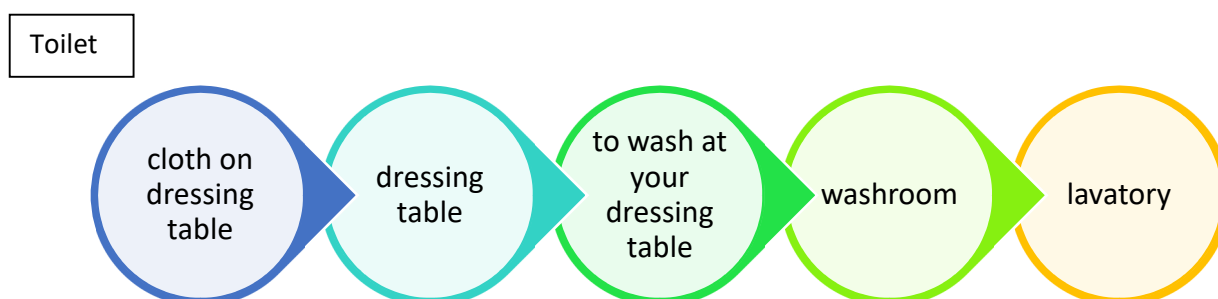
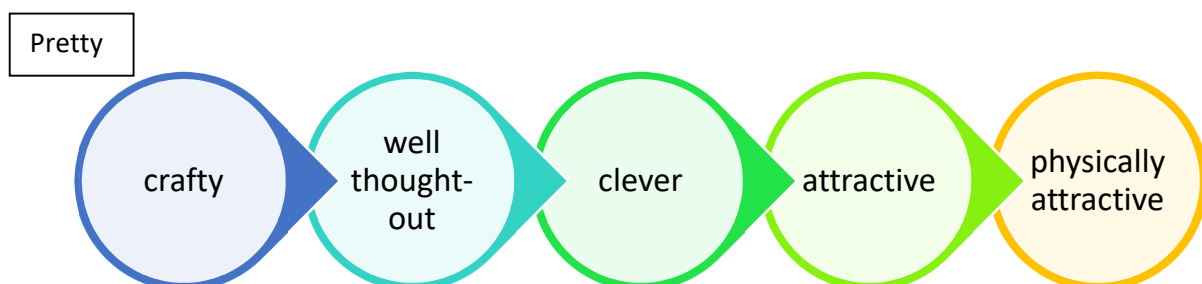
### Activity 2

Look up the following words and find out which language we originally borrowed them from. The word 'etymology' might be useful in an internet search as it means the study of word origins. Again, answers are below but try to work them out for yourself first.

- Alcohol (Arabic)
- Yacht (Norwegian or Dutch)
- Cardiology (Greek – many medical words are Greek in origin)
- Meditate (Latin)
- Tomato (Nahuatl – The language of the Aztecs, it arrived in English from Spain)
- Bungalow (Gujerati or Hindi – languages used in India)
- Denim (French)
- Tsunami (Japanese)
- Ketchup (Chinese, Malay or Vietnamese)

### Activity 3

Some words change meaning over time, for example pretty and toilet used to mean something quite different as you can see from the diagrams below. Can you produce similar diagrams showing the way the meanings of the words silly, nice, mayhem and journey



Answers to Activity 1:

Trade and travel	Avocado
Invention and discovery	ipad
War	Shell-shock
Foreign influence e.g. media, social media, music	Cookie
Simplification	Refrigerator becomes 'fridge'
Social change	Transgender
Youth culture and the desire of each generation to be different from past ones	Cool (meaning good)

Answers to Activity 2:

- Alcohol (Arabic)
- Yacht (Norwegian or Dutch)
- Cardiology (Greek – many medical words are Greek in origin)
- Meditate (Latin)
- Tomato (Nahuatl – The language of the Aztecs, it arrived in English from Spain)
- Bungalow (Gujerati or Hindi – languages used in India)
- Denim (French)
- Tsunami (Japanese)
- Ketchup (Chinese, Malay or Vietnamese)

**We hope you have enjoyed this quick run through of the main topics of English Language A Level and look forward to seeing you in the new school year.**