

- Paper 1 focuses on reading and writing fiction. You will be given one extract from a fiction text (called a **source** in the exam).
- It's important to get your timing right in this exam and use the marks as guidance. The following timings are suggestions only.

Question	Marks available	Suggested timings
Reading section		
Initial reading		Approx. 5 mins
Q1	4	5 mins
Q2	8	12 mins (including annotating section)
Q3	8	13 mins (including rereading source)
Q4	20	25 mins
Writing section		
Q5	40 (24 content + 16 SPaG)	
Planning	-	10
Writing	-	30
Reviewing/proofreading	-	5

Initial active reading of the source

Do not jump straight to answering the questions; take some time to read the source through. Try to work exactly what the author is trying to 'show you' by the end of the extract. Ask yourself the question: have any of these ideas developed or changed by the end? Feel free to make notes about what is happening / being focused on / being described by the narrator alongside each paragraph.

Question 1

List four things you learn from the source about ...

- All you need to do is identify explicit information and ideas from the source.

General tips for question 1

- Underline the keyword in the question and put brackets around the lines given (e.g. Read again lines 1-5) to ensure that your answers are completely appropriate to the question.
- Answer in concise sentences. **Try to save as much time as possible on this question.**
- Do not be afraid to state the obvious - you will not get any additional marks for adding any detail, so **do not** make any inferences.

Question 2

How does the writer use language to ...?

You will look at a small section of the same extract and have to consider **how** the writer's choice of language technique has created a specific impact on the reader. As a reader, think about the overall **tone** that is created in this section.

Below are some potential words to describe the overall tone:

optimistic	honest	aggressive	naïve	sympathetic
tense	admiring	sarcastic	anxious	violent
passionate	exciting	uneasy	intense	powerful

- Highlight any words/phrases that create this overall effect. Remember to stick to **specific** quotations. Choose a **maximum** of three quotations that you have highlighted to focus on in your response.
- Write a statement about the first quotation, referring to the overall tone. For example, 'The writer establishes the narrator's fear...' or 'The writer highlights the tension of the situation...' or 'The writer uses language to demonstrate the anxiety of...'
- Embed your first quotation in your statement. For example, 'The writer highlights the girl's determination by stating 'She ran, ran like the devil himself were chasing her, ran like all hell was biting at her ankles.'
- Offer an initial interpretation of what the quotation shows using relevant subject terminology. For example, 'The repetition of the verb 'ran' exaggerates the girl's sheer desperation to escape the tornado.'
- Add a deeper analysis of the quotation, focusing on single words or phrases. For example, 'Furthermore, the use of religious imagery connected to 'hell' suggests that the worst possible thing imaginable - the tornado - has been sent to punish her in some way, therefore highlighting the necessity of her escape.'
- Consider the subsequent impact on the reader. For example, 'This is likely to evoke anxiety in the reader, who will be desperate for Ruby to flee the omnipotent tornado.'
- Repeat the process with another quotation.

General tips for question 2:

- Choose quotations that offer layers of interpretation - do not focus on words/phrases that only offer an obvious meaning.
- 'Think outside the box' and be perceptive: offer your own unique interpretation.
- Always avoid empty statements like 'It creates a picture in the reader's mind.'
- Do not feature spot - you will not earn any marks for simply identifying language techniques used, e.g. 'The writer uses lots of strong adjectives and similes.' **Subject terminology should only be used to enhance your thorough analysis.**
- Remember to consider the impact on the reader - you! How do specific words/phrases make you feel?
- Do not focus on quotations outside of the section given, though you can refer back to what is happening in the source in your analysis, if necessary.
- Stick to the given timings for this question: it is only worth 10% of the overall grade.

Some useful analytical vocabulary and phrases:

shows	exaggerates	mirrors	has connotations of	reveals
demonstrates	forces the reader to	reinforces	is often associated with	portrays
highlights	allows the reader to	amplifies	explores	evokes
makes the reader	denotes	the use of	creates	suggests

Question 3

How has the writer structured the text to interest you as a reader?

- For this question, you will need to respond to **the whole source**, analysing **how** the writer's choices of **structural** techniques create a specific impact on readers.
- Ask yourself the question: how has the writer 'built' this extract? What techniques have they used and why?
- Think about what the writer focuses on at the beginning, middle and end of the extract, and how their ideas have changed/developed and how.
- Remember to refer back to how these techniques interest or 'hook' the reader - you!

Structural techniques to consider:

simple sentences	lists	fragments	exclamatory sentences	rhetorical questions
tone	repetition	opening line	semantic field	extended imagery
narrative focus - action, dialogue, description	climax - the most 'tense' part	'zooming in' on particular details	setting	narrative perspective - first person, third person, etc.

General tips for question 3

- Do not write about language techniques, e.g. similes, metaphors, etc. (unless they are repeated throughout the extract).
- Do not simply retell what happens in the extract.
- Include relevant quotations as evidence from the text.
- Remember to refer back to how the technique interests you as a reader.
- Always avoid empty comments like 'It makes the reader want to read on.'
- Stick to the given timings for this question: it is only worth 10% of the overall grade.

Question 4

To what extent do you agree...?

- This is a question where you will be given a short statement based on someone's opinion/viewpoint of the source. You must decide **how far** you agree with the statement. It is usually easier to **agree** with the statement, but recognise perhaps one reason why somebody could **disagree** with it.
- Ask yourself the question: what is the viewpoint that is being expressed? Do you agree or disagree? What specific quotations make you feel this way? How has the writer used language AND/OR structural techniques in these quotations to achieve this?
- Try to convince the examiner that your viewpoint is correct by using the tips outlined for questions 2 and 3 above, referring to anything that will provide solid evidence in your argument.

General tips for question 4

- Be assertive with what you think - as long as you can justify your opinion with relevant evidence, you cannot be wrong!
- Use a range of evidence to justify your point of view, e.g. language techniques and structural techniques - don't simply focus on one of these things.
- Again, try not to talk about **everything**: choose the most relevant quotations that enable you to provide the strongest evidence.
- Remember that this question is worth 50% of the reading section and therefore you should be spending a significant amount of time on it.

Question 5

- You will usually have a choice of tasks, either *descriptive* or *narrative*. There will also be an image that you can use as inspiration.
- It is highly recommended that you go for the descriptive option, unless you are a confident and competent story writer.

Descriptive tasks will ask you to describe a place or a moment. Remember, time does not move in descriptive writing. You can describe the picture as though you are inside or outside of it, and you can take the perspective of anything you want within that image. You should **not** write a story for this task, but your writing will still need to be accurately organised into coherent paragraphs.

- Remember - your description **does not** need to be limited by the picture - the image is to be used for inspiration only. Be unique, different and inspiring, avoiding clichéd similes and overused vocabulary.

Narrative tasks will ask you to tell a story, or a section of a story. Remember to think carefully about the structure of your story and how you can engage the reader. Ensure that your story has a clear purpose. If using dialogue, ensure that you are using it to advance the action, and that it is punctuated accurately - do not overuse it. Have a clear beginning, middle and ending. Using a cyclical narrative that starts and ends in the same place is a useful method for ensuring that your writing is structured successfully.

- In both tasks, remember to vary your vocabulary, making it as sophisticated as possible. Include a range of language and structural techniques to interest the reader, but do not feel as though you have to cram in as many similes, metaphors, etc. as possible!

- Similarly, do not just ‘throw in’ punctuation like colons and semi-colons in an attempt to look fancy. Instead, ensure that your writing is punctuated accurately throughout, and that your sentences are controlled.
- Planning your written response is imperative. You must spend at least 5 minutes (ideally 10) producing a clear plan of your writing. Although this is not marked, it will ensure that your writing does not get out of control. You could use a mind-map to brainstorm initial ideas before writing a bullet-point list of what you are going to include in each paragraph (even for the descriptive task).
- Proofreading your answer is also important. Leave time to read back through your writing, correcting any common errors such as capital letters, comma splices and missing apostrophes.

Possible revision strategies

- Read a variety of 19th and early 20th century literature so that you can expose yourself to unfamiliar language. Lots of classic literature is available free on the internet.
- Choose a section of text in a book that you are reading. Make a bullet point list of anything you learn about a particular character, setting or event.
- Take two or three quotations from a text that you are reading and analyse them using the step-by-step process for question 2.
- Print out an extract from a fiction text and cut the paragraphs up into cards. Shuffle them and then try to place them back in the correct order, using the writer’s use of structural techniques to help you.
- As you read through a text, try to formulate potential statements that could be used for question 4 in an exam paper.
- Use the internet to search for ‘interesting’, ‘amazing’ or ‘unusual’ images. Practise describing them for 10-15 minutes, experimenting with different narrative perspectives and styles.