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| Expert Guide | | | **AQA English Language** | | | | |
| Paper 1 Section A | | | Explorations in creative reading & writing | | | | |
| Text: Unseen Fiction from either 20th or 21st century | | | | | Weighting: 25% (Sec A) | | |
| The questions: | | | | | | | |
| **Q1**: Read again the first part of the source from **lines 1 to 5**. List **four** things about … from this part of the source. | | | | | | Marks: 4 | |
| **Q2**: Look in detail at this extract from **lines … to …** of the source.  How does the writer use **language** here to describe …?  You could include the writer’s choice of:  • words and phrases  • language features and techniques  • sentence forms. . | | | | | | Marks: 8 | |
| **Q3**: You now need to think about the **whole** of the source.  This text is from the beginning of a novel.  How is the text structured to interest you as a reader?  You could write about:  • what the writer focuses your attention on at the beginning  • how and why the writer changes this focus as the source develops  • any other structural features that interest you. | | | | | | Marks: 8 | |
| **Q4**: Focus this part of your answer on the second half of the source from **line … to the end**. A student said ‘This part of the story, ….’ To what extent do you agree?  In your response, you could:  • consider your own impressions of …  • evaluate how the writer shows …  • support your response with references to the text | | | | | | Marks: 20 | |
| Skills: | | | | | | | |
| *Critical reading and comprehension: identifying and interpreting themes, ideas and information in a range of literature and other high-quality writing; reading in different ways for different purposes, and comparing and evaluating the usefulness, relevance and presentation of content for these purposes; drawing inferences and justifying these with evidence; supporting a point of view by referring to evidence within the text; identifying bias and misuse of evidence, including distinguishing between statements that are supported by evidence and those that are not; reflecting critically and evaluatively on text, using the context of the text and drawing on knowledge and skills gained from wider reading; recognising the possibility of different responses to a text.* | | | | | | | |
| *Summary ~~and synthesis~~: identifying the main theme or themes; summarising ideas and information from a single text; ~~synthesising from more than one text~~.* | | | | | | | |
| *Evaluation of a writer’s choice of vocabulary, form, grammatical and structural features: explaining and illustrating how vocabulary and grammar contribute to effectiveness and impact, using linguistic and literary terminology accurately to do so and paying attention to detail; analysing and evaluating how form and structure contribute to the effectiveness and impact of a text.* | | | | | | | |
| Assessment Objectives: | | | | Questions: | | | |
| AO1 | Identify and interpret explicit and implicit information and ideas. Select and synthesise evidence from different texts. | | | | | | 1 |
| AO2 | Explain, comment on and analyse how writers use language and structure to achieve effects and influence readers, using relevant subject terminology to support their views. | | | | | | 2, 3 |
| AO4 | Evaluate texts critically and support this with appropriate textual references | | | | | | 4 |
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| Timings: Approximately 50 minutes including thinking & planning time. | | | | | | | |
| How to approach this section: | | | | | | | |
| **Q1:**  **4 marks**  **5 mins** | | **\*\*This answer is not marked by an expert examiner. The person marking it simply has a list of possible answers to check for\*\***  Students must use the right section of the text. Draw a line down the side of the text to mark it.  Underline key words in question and ensure answers are about this.  Use it as the start of each sentence. Eg ‘The crow… The boy..  The points **must** be taken from the lines specified in the question.  The points **must**refer to the item in the question (e.g. if the question asks about the *car in lines 1 – 5*, they mustn’t comment on, for example, the *weather/the dog/the woman*).  The response can be paraphrased or quoted **but**they must not just copy out the lines. No marks for doing this.  Marks will be awarded if they include 2 points in one response. This is **brilliant news** for our lower ability students. | | | | | |
| **Q2:**  **8 marks**  **10-12 mins**  **3 paras** | | The section of the extract should be printed on the paper. If not, they should highlight / draw around it & ensure they use that section only. | | | | | |
| This is a LANGUAGE analysis question. Students must ensure they know technical vocabulary and can use it correctly. Students should be taught to make careful /’judicious’ choice for the quotations they use. *The AQA course leader made the point that this question is about making intelligent comments NOT identifying fancy techniques. Students can get top marks by exploring a word in depth – let’s not fall into the trap of over-complicating things.* | | | | | |
| Students should always develop multiple interpretations of the key single word/techniques they identify. Use ‘lexical choice’ instead of ‘word’. | | | | | |
| The following are **BANNED**:  Makes the reader want to read on / Puts an image in the reader’s mind (OF WHAT!?!?!?) / Makes it interesting or engaging / Makes it flow. | | | | | |
| Think first: What is the effect? What are we being made to think, feel or imagine? Now think: How is the writer making me think, feel or imagine these things? Which words or phrases have they used to do this? | | | | | |
| **3 is the magic number**. Identify 3 words or phrases that make you think, feel or imagine something in relation to the question. What effects do these words/phrases have? Can you identify any techniques the writer has used in your selections? | | | | | |
| **Q3:**  **8 marks**  **12-15 mins**  **3 paras** | | This question is much more about perspective and focus and movement. A good way of teaching it initially is through film. Then moving onto a text, get the students to see the text as a film & how/why the camera would be used. | | | | | |
| Where in a text is the source from? Why might this be significant? What does it tell us if this is taken from the beginning of a novel (for example)? | | | | | |
| Ignore ‘could’ and replace with ‘should’ – these bullet points should guide your answer.  3 is the magic number. You are going to write about three different ways in which the text is structured to interest you as a reader. | | | | | |
| Whose view is the text written from? What time? Where? What does the writer focus your attention on at the beginning (bullet one)? Why?  In a word, summarise what each of the paragraphs are about – what do you notice about the focus of each? Where does it shift? What’s the effect? | | | | | |
| SENTENCES are a language feature but can be explored in this question by analysing WHERE the writer has chosen to place them. For example, short simple sentences at the beginning or end & WHY. | | | | | |
| What else do you notice about the structure of the text? You might consider: connections and links across paragraphs; introductions and developments; reiterations; repetitions, threads, patterns, motifs; the sequence through the passage; narrative perspective; summaries and conclusions; outside to inside perspectives (vice versa) and movement from big to small (ideas/perspectives).  Spend no more than 10 minutes answering this question and then move on.  **Technical vocabulary:**  **Zoom in / Panoramic description / changes focus / perspective / motif / endings / introduction of character** | | | | | |
|  | | Example statements:  The text opens with a detailed description of the old seaman- ‘his hands ragged and scarred, with black, broken nails’. This is significant because the writer is establishing the characters and ensuring the reader focuses his/her attention on…  In the middle of the extract, the writer changes the focus from a physical description of the seaman, to examples of the way he spoke. This shifts the focus of the reader to…  The sentence ‘And that was all we could learn of our guest’ is structurally important because it gives the reader a strong sense of conclusion to the description of the seaman and creates a sense that the character was enigmatic or… | | | | | |
| **Q4:**  **20 marks**  **20-25 mins**  **2 sides / 4 paras / ideas** | | **They won’t get this section of the extract re-printed. They must make sure they write about the correct section.**  Not purely a language analysis question. This must be focussed on ***how much the students agree with a statement, and explain why using evidence which they then explore.*** They should always mostly agree but *could* include one paragraph on how they might disagree. | | | | | |
| Always begin with ‘I agree with the statement…’ | | | | | |
| What are your first impressions? How have you come to that impression?  Plan your response. **3 is the magic number.** Find three parts of the text that you can use to respond to the statement and write about them. | | | | | |
| For some students, PEACH can be a useful acronym to structure their three paragraphs: P – Personal Opinion e.g. I agree that… E – Evidence e.g. This is clear when… A – Analyse e.g. This suggests… It could imply that… However… CH – Choice of words e.g. The word ‘ghost’ has connotations of… | | | | | |
| Max time on this question = 20 mins otherwise they’ll leave too little time for Q5 (or run out if they’ve done Q5 first!) | | | | | |
| Evaluative words and phrases- successful, effective, judicious etc.  Refer directly to statement throughout response.  Range of quotations linked to statement.  Writer’s methods (word classes, language, structure)  Evaluate the effect of these on the reader in detail. | | | | | |
| For example:  I fully agree that William is feeling low – ‘For several minutes …he sat unmoving, staring out before him’ seems to indicate that he is not engaged with what is going on around him. It seems to be typical behaviour of somebody who is downhearted. Additionally, he thinks about ‘students he would never see or know’. This free indirect discourse (or simply ‘this’) gives a strong indication of loneliness, which a reader could reasonably associate with feeling low.  The writer clearly intends for the reader to feel sympathy for William in this part of the book. He uses the weather to indicate that this character is vulnerable – even a ‘thin chill’ can get to him – ‘the thin chill of the late fall day cut through his clothing’. The writer could also be using pathetic fallacy here to indicate that something negative will happen to this man. These could lead us to understand that he is not a happy character at this point in the novel.  I do not fully agree that William is feeling low. Although there are some indications that he’s not particularly happy, this is not necessarily the same as feeling ‘low’. I believe that he is not interested in university life. He feels detached from the other students. For example, they ‘brushed against him’ – so he has physical contact with them but the writer makes it very clear to the reader that he does not have any emotional connection with them. Also, we are shown the inner confusion felt by William: ‘he felt very distant from them and very close to them’. This is disorientating for the reader because the phrase appears to contradict itself. The writer is drawing the reader into the feelings of the character, who may feel confused by being in such a busy place, yet not knowing anybody. This doesn’t necessarily indicate that he’s low, though. | | | | | |