

Edexcel GCSE English Language Paper 1: Fiction and Imaginative Writing



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Assessment Objectives

This exam will test you on the following skills. Each question will have a different assessment focus.

Reading:

AO1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify and interpret explicit and implicit information and ideas.• Select and synthesise evidence from different texts.
AO2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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.
AO3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Compare writers' ideas and perspectives, as well as how these are conveyed, across two or more texts. (Not assessed in this exam.)
AO4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Evaluate texts critically and support this with appropriate textual references.

Writing:

AO5	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Communicate clearly, effectively and imaginatively, selecting and adapting tone, style and register for different forms, purposes and audiences.• Organise information and ideas, using structural and grammatical features to support coherence and cohesion of texts.
AO6	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Candidates must use a range of vocabulary and sentence structures for clarity, purpose and effect, with accurate spelling and punctuation.

Overview of the Exam

Paper 1: Fiction and Imaginative Writing

Date and time: _____

Duration: 1 hour 45 minutes

Marks: 64

Weighting: 40% of total GCSE grade

Section 1: Reading and answering four questions on a pre-19th century fiction extract. (24 marks)

Section 2: A choice of two fiction **writing** tasks. (40 marks)

Suggested breakdown of marks and timings:

Task	Marks	Suggested timing
Reading text	N/A	8 minutes
Question 1 (AO1)	1 mark	2 minutes
Question 2 (AO1)	2 marks	5 minutes
Question 3 (AO2)	6 marks	10 minutes
Question 4 (AO4)	15 marks	25 minutes
Question 5/6 (AO5 and AO6)	40 marks	45 minutes
Checking your work	N/A	10 minutes
Total	64 marks	1 hour 45 minutes

Section A: The Text

The Facts

What will I need to do?

Read an extract from a 19th century piece of fiction (novel or short story). Any particularly unusual words will be marked with an asterisk and explained in a glossary at the bottom of the text.



Suggested time spent: 8 minutes.

Top tips:

- Don't skim through the text first time round – make sure you read it carefully.
- If there are any words or phrases you don't understand, try to use their context in the writing to work out their meaning.
- Remember that you can write on the text as you go through it.

Sample Text

The following is an extract from the middle of a novel published in 1861. The narrator, Pip, lives in London. His friend Herbert, with whom he shares rooms, is out of town when one night Pip receives an unexpected visitor.



Great Expectations: Charles Dickens

1 Business had taken Herbert on a journey to Marseilles. I was alone, and had a dull sense of being alone. Dispirited and anxious, long hoping that tomorrow or next week would clear my way, and long disappointed, I sadly missed the cheerful face and ready response of my friend.

It was wretched weather; stormy and wet, stormy and wet; and mud, mud, mud, deep in all
5 the streets. Day after day, a vast heavy veil had been driving over London from the East, and it drove still, as if in the East there were an Eternity of cloud and wind. So furious had been the gusts, that high buildings in town had had the lead stripped off their roofs; and in the country, trees had been torn up, and sails of windmills carried away; and gloomy accounts had come in from the coast, of shipwreck and death. Violent blasts of rain had accompanied
10 these rages of wind, and the day just closed as I sat down to read had been the worst of all.

Alterations have been made in that part of the Temple* since that time, and it has not now so lonely a character as it had then, nor is it so exposed to the river. We lived at the top of the last house, and the wind rushing up the river shook the house that night, like discharges of cannon, or breakings of a sea. When the rain came with it and dashed against the windows,
15 I thought, raising my eyes to them as they rocked, that I might have fancied myself in a

storm-beaten lighthouse. Occasionally, the smoke came rolling down the chimney as though it could not bear to go out into such a night; and when I set the doors open and looked down the staircase, the staircase lamps were blown out; and when I shaded my face with my hands and looked through the black windows (opening them ever so little was out of the question
20 in the teeth of such wind and rain), I saw that the lamps in the court were blown out, and that the lamps on the bridges and the shore were shuddering, and that the coal-fires in barges on the river were being carried away before the wind like red-hot splashes in the rain.

I read with my watch upon the table, purposing to close my book at eleven o'clock. As I shut it, Saint Paul's, and all the many church-clocks in the City — some leading, some
25 accompanying, some following — struck that hour. The sound was curiously flawed by the wind; and I was listening, and thinking how the wind assailed** and tore it, when I heard a footstep on the stair.

What nervous folly made me start, and awfully connect it with the footstep of my dead sister, matters not. It was past in a moment, and I listened again, and heard the footstep stumble
30 in coming on. Remembering then, that the staircase-lights were blown out, I took up my reading-lamp and went out to the stair-head. Whoever was below had stopped on seeing my lamp, for all was quiet.

"There is someone down there, is there not?" I called out, looking down.

"Yes," said a voice from the darkness beneath.

35 "What floor do you want?"

"The top. Mr. Pip."

"That is my name. — There is nothing the matter?"

"Nothing the matter," returned the voice. And the man came on.

*the Temple – buildings in central London where lawyers train, live and work.

**Assailed - assaulted.

Section A: Question 1

The Facts

Worth: 1 mark

You will be tested on **AO1**. (See p1. for details.)

Suggested time spent: 2 minutes

What will I need to do?

Locate a specific piece of information, such as a word or phrase, from the text.

Top tips:

- Read the question very carefully – the examiner is looking for a precise detail.
- Use the line references to get to the appropriate piece of text quickly.
- Make sure you take your information from the text – don't attempt to answer from memory!



Sample Question

This question refers to the text on p3.

From lines 1 to 3, identify a phrase which explains why Herbert is not present.



Sample Answer

Read the following answer to the sample question. Do you think this is correct? If not, what do you think is the correct answer?

“I was alone, and had a dull sense of being alone.”



Section A: Question 2

The Facts

Worth: 2 marks

You will be tested on AO1. (See p1. for details.)

Suggested time spent: 5 minutes

What will I need to do?

Locate two pieces of information in the text. There may be more than two available, and the information may be surface meaning (such as a fact) or implied meaning (such as a suggestion or hint). You can use specific quotations from the text or your own words, or both.

Top tips:

- Only give two pieces of information – this is a two mark question so don't spend a long time on it.
- Make sure that your two points are different – don't say the same thing in different ways!
- Read carefully for implied meaning.
- Use the line references to get to the appropriate piece of text quickly.
- Make sure you take your information from the text – don't attempt to answer from memory!



Sample Question

This question refers to the text on p3.

From lines 4 to 10, give two examples of how the storm is violent.



Sample Answer

Read the following answers to the sample question. Do you think they are correct? If not, how would you change them?

1. "high buildings in town had had the lead stripped off their roofs"
2. Houses have lost the leading from their roofs because the storm is so bad.



Section A: Question 3

The Facts

Worth: 6 marks

You will be tested on AO2. (See p1. for details.)

Suggested time spent: 10 minutes

What will I need to do?

Identify and analyse how the writer uses words, phrases, rhetorical and structural devices to create particular effects. You will need to quote from the text directly and you will need to explain how the quotations you have chosen make your points.

Top tips:

- Make sure you refer to both language and structure in your answer – you can't get high marks if you don't reference both.
- Use the line references to get to the appropriate piece of text quickly.
- Highlight on the text words or phrases you think you may use in your answer.
- Remember to use short, precise quotations from the text.
- It's not enough to just identify the techniques being used – you must explain how they are effective.



Sample Question

This question refers to the text on p3.

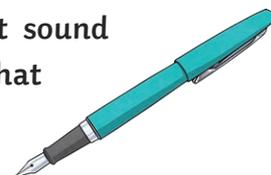
From lines 11 to 22, how does the narrator use language and structure to convey the strength of the storm?



Sample Answer

Read the following answer to the sample question. What is good about it, and what needs improvement? Can you write a better answer?

The narrator shows the storm is bad by saying “the wind rushing up the river shook the house that night” which shows that the wind is strong. He uses a simile: “like discharges of a cannon”. He also says it is like being in a “storm-beaten lighthouse” which makes it sound scary. He says he could not go outside as the weather is too bad, and he says that the lamps have all gone out which shows how strong the storm is. He uses a simile at the end to show what the coal-fires looked like: “red-hot splashes”.



Word Bank

The following phrases may be useful when writing your answer:

The writer/narrator uses / refers to / employs...

The writer/narrator builds / creates / develops...

The writer/narrator creates a mood / atmosphere / sense / feeling of...

The use of simile / metaphor / personification / short sentences / ellipsis creates a sense of...

The pace / rhythm of the text increases/decreases here so that...



Section A: Question 4

The Facts

Worth: 15 marks

You will be tested on AO4. (See p1. for details.)

Suggested time spent: 25 minutes

What will I need to do?

Evaluate how successful the writer has been throughout the entire text. This will involve referring to language and structural devices the writer uses, but you will also need to show how the writer builds an effect over the course of the piece. Your answer will need to have an overview of the text supplied, as well as an understanding of specific details. You will need to use quotations in your answer.

Top tips:

- Use specific quotations from the text.
- Think about how the text changes from beginning to end – how does the author take the reader on an emotional or psychological journey?
- Remember to refer to the reader – what impression does the author make on them?
- Make sure your answer is personal – you are offering a judgement – but is firmly backed up by the text.
- Don't criticise the author too much – the text is likely to be regarded as a classic of English literature!



Sample Question

This question refers to the text on p3.

In this extract, there is an attempt to build tension. Evaluate how successfully this is achieved. Support your views with detailed reference to the text.



Sample Answer

Read the following answer to the sample question. What is good about it, and what needs improvement? Can you write a better answer?

The narrator starts by explaining that he is alone, which makes the reader realise that he has no-one to help him if things get bad. He repeats his descriptions of the “wretched weather”, which stresses how bad the weather is. The weather is really important in helping to set the mood of the piece.

He then goes on to describe the weather in more detail, saying the wind shaking the house is like “the discharges of a cannon” which makes it sound violent and makes us think he might be in danger. Then he lists how all the lamps have gone out so it is dark.

When he’s described all the noises of clocks going off and the wind he then adds in a footstep on the stair which is quite spooky and adds to the feeling that something bad is going to happen. He then thinks about his “dead sister” which makes us think that something supernatural is happening. Then he goes out and looks and you can tell there is someone on the stairs and they stop, which is scary because you don’t know who it is.

Finally they do speak and in a way it is worse because they ask for him by name, so you know that whoever it is is coming for him which makes us wonder why.



Word Bank

The following phrases may be useful when writing your answer:

The following phrases may be useful when writing your answer:

The writer/narrator uses / refers to / employs...

The writer/narrator builds / creates / develops...

The writer/narrator creates a mood / atmosphere / sense / feeling of...

The pace / rhythm of the text increases/decreases here so that...

The reader is given the impression that...

This is effective because...

This creates a feeling of... by...



Section B: Question 5/6

The Facts

Worth: 40 marks

You will be tested on AO5 (24 marks) and AO6 (16 marks). (See p1. for details.)

Suggested time spent: 45 minutes

What will I need to do?

Choose one of two possible tasks. These will both require you to write an engaging, imaginative fiction piece which could be based on your real experiences or entirely made up. It should be appropriate to the purpose, audience and form stated in the task. One of the tasks will include two images – you have the option of using one as a stimulus for your piece but you do not have to do this.

Top tips:

- Make sure your piece is carefully structured – take two minutes to plan it first.
- Use a wide range of vocabulary, sentence structures and literary devices – this is your opportunity to show off!
- Make sure you have read the question carefully – it's important that your writing fits the task given.
- Take great care with spelling, punctuation and grammar – 16 marks are available for technical accuracy.



Sample Question

Either

*5 Write about a time when you, or someone you know, received an unexpected visitor. Your response could be real or imagined.

*Your response will be marked for the accurate and appropriate use of vocabulary, spelling, punctuation and grammar.

*Or

6 Look at the images provided. Write about a scary experience. Your response could be real or imagined. You may wish to base your response on one of the images.

*Your response will be marked for the accurate and appropriate use of vocabulary, spelling, punctuation and grammar.



Sample Answer

Read the following task. What is good about it, and what needs improvement? Can you write a better piece?

As soon as I buckled my seatbelt I knew that something was wrong. I could just tell that something was'nt right and as we went down the runway I got more and more nervous. I wanted to shout out stop the plane I want to get off! but I did not dare because I new it would really upset my mum and dad.

We were meant to be going on a holiday of a lifetime and they were realy exited. They had'nt talked about anything else for week's and I new how important it was to them. We were going to florida and they had saved up for ages. But now I was not felling so sure i wanted to go.

The plane rose into the air and i felt my stomach do a backflip like one of the dancers off diversity. As it got higher and higher I could feel myself start to panic and I was sure I would start screaming. But I was a stone statue. At last we seemed to stop climbing and started just cruising along but I was still worried. Why had'nt the seatbelt lite gone off?

Suddenly there was an announcement over the speakers. "Ladys and gentleman there is a problem."

Suddenly everyone was screaming and my mum and dad looked really white like they had seen a ghost. Dont worry, I said it wil be ok.

They held my hand and we hung onto each other as we felt the plane turn round and start to go back to the airport. One of the wheels in the undercarriage had gone wrong which was why we couldn't keep going. I was panicking like mad but luckily eventually the plane made a safe landing. We all sighed a big sigh of releif! And we still got to go to florida and it was the best holiday ever.



Word Bank

Try including some of the following literary techniques in your writing:

Alliteration,

Juxtaposition,

Personification,

Emotive language,

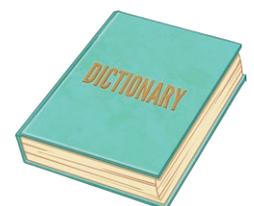
Metaphor,

Sibilance,

Irony,

Onomatopoeia,

Simile,



Final Tips

- When you know the time of your exam, work out what the timings for each question will be.
e.g. Exam starts at 1.30pm:

Reading the text:	1.30pm
Question 1:	1.38pm
Question 2:	1.40pm
Question 3:	1.45pm
Question 4:	1.55pm
Question 5/6:	2.20pm
Checking your work:	3.05pm
End of exam:	3.15pm

- If you miss your timings, don't panic. Move to the next question quickly – you can always return to the previous one if you have time at the end.
- Read the text provided carefully. If you're unsure of what some of the words mean, try to work out their meanings by looking at their context in the sentence.
- Remember to read for **implied** meaning, as well as **surface** meaning.
- Read the questions very carefully. If need be, underline key words so you are sure what you are being asked.
- Look at the marks available and adapt your response accordingly. There is no point writing two pages for a six mark question and half a page for a 15 mark question.
- Write on your copy of the text if you want to. This is **your** exam paper – annotate and highlight as you need.
- Keep quotations short – a few words at most.
- Try to integrate quotations into your sentences, for example:
The narrator dislikes the man's coat. He says it is "ghastly". X
The narrator dislikes the man's "ghastly" coat. ✓
- Never criticise an author. You can evaluate their work, using evidence from the text, but do not make sweeping statements about whether you personally like or dislike the text.
- Plan your written task – a spider diagram, list or flow chart will help you to create cohesion in your writing.
- Pay attention to your spelling, punctuation and grammar. This is worth 16 marks in Section B of the exam. Don't make silly mistakes, such as forgetting to use capital letters correctly.
- Check your work carefully when you have finished. Use every minute you have!

Believe in yourself. You are prepared and
you can do this!
