

Paper 1: Explorations in Creative Reading and Writing

What's assessed

Section A: Reading

- one literature fiction text

Section B: Writing

- descriptive or narrative writing

Assessed

- written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes
- 80 marks
- 50% of GCSE

Questions

Reading (40 marks) (25%) – one single text

- 1 short form question (1 x 4 marks)
- 2 longer form questions (2 x 8 marks)
- 1 extended question (1 x 20 marks)

Writing (40 marks) (25%)

- 1 extended writing question (24 marks for content, 16 marks for technical accuracy)

GCSE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Name:

Class:

Teacher:

Target Grade:



The
Birkenhead Park
School

Paper 1

*Explorations in creative reading
and writing*

The Extracts

Paper 1 English Language

Question	Assessment Objectives	Marks available	Suggested Timing
Reading/Annotating the extract			15 mins
Question 1	AO1: Retrieval List four things from this part of the source that ...	4	5 mins
Question 2	AO2: Language analysis How does the writer use language here to ...	8	10 mins
Question 3	AO3: Structure analysis How has the writer structured the text to interest you as a reader?	8	10 mins
Question 4	AO4: Evaluation A student, having read this section, said "...". To what extent do you agree?	20	20 mins
Question 5	AO5 & AO6: Writing to describe/narrate	40 (24+16)	45 mins (5 mins planning, 35 mins writing, 5 mins checking)

What you are being assessed on:

Assessment Objective	Descriptor
AO1 (Q1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and interpret explicit and implicit information and ideas. Select and synthesise evidence from different texts.
AO2 (Q2,3)	<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.
AO4 (Q4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate texts critically and support this with appropriate textual references.
AO5 (Q5)	<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 (Q5)	<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.
NB: AO3 is not tested on Paper 1	

Q1 Extract

Claudia knew that she could never pull off the old-fashioned kind of running away. That is, running away in the heat of anger with a knapsack on her back. She didn't like discomfort; even picnics were untidy and inconvenient: all those insects and the sun melting the icing on the cupcakes. Therefore, she decided that her leaving home would not be just running from somewhere but would be running to somewhere. To a large place, a comfortable place, an indoor place, and preferably a beautiful place. And that's why she decided upon the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City.

She planned very carefully; she saved her allowance and she chose her companion. She chose Jamie, the second youngest of her three younger brothers. He could be counted on to be quiet, and now and then he was good for a laugh. Besides, he was rich; unlike most boys his age, he had never even begun collecting baseball cards. He saved almost every penny he got.

But Claudia waited to tell Jamie that she had decided upon him. She couldn't count on him to be *that* quiet for *that* long. And she calculated needing *that* long to save her weekly allowances. It seemed senseless to run away without money. Living in the suburbs had taught her that everything costs.

Q2 Extract *Northanger Abbey, Jane Austen*

She looked round the room. The window curtains seemed in motion. It could be nothing but the violence of the wind penetrating through the divisions of the shutters; and she stepped boldly forward, carelessly humming a tune, to assure herself of its being so, peeped courageously behind each curtain, saw nothing on either low window seat to scare her, and on placing a hand against the shutter, felt the strongest conviction of the wind's force. A glance at the old chest, as she turned away from this examination, was not without its use; she scorned the causeless fears of an idle fancy, and began with a most happy indifference to prepare herself for bed. "She should take her time; she should not hurry herself; she did not care if she were the last person up in the house. But she would not make up her fire; that would seem cowardly, as if she wished for the protection of light after she were in bed.

Q2 Extract *Harry Potter, J.K. Rowling*

Harry had never been inside Filch's office before; it was a place most students avoided. The room was dingy and windowless, lit by a single oil lamp dangling from the low ceiling. A faint smell of fried fish lingered about the place. Wooden filing cabinets stood around the walls; from their labels, Harry could see that they contained details of every pupil Filch had ever punished. Fred and George Weasley had an entire drawer to themselves. A highly polished collection of chains and manacles hung on the wall behind Filch's desk. It was common knowledge that he was always begging Dumbledore to let him suspend students by their ankles from the ceiling.

Filch grabbed a quill from a pot on his desk and began shuffling around looking for parchment.

Q2 Exemplar Responses – Make your prediction on the level achieved (from the mark scheme)

A. The opening paragraph consists of a single, complex sentence perhaps reflecting the onward movement of the coach. The adjective 'exposed' and the noun 'force', evoke the idea of vulnerability, danger, and how little control man has over the power of nature. The verb 'rocking', progresses the cumulative effect of the list of verbs, 'shaking', 'trembled', 'swayed' leading to the simile, 'rocking between the high wheels like a drunken man' suggesting the coach is lurching haphazardly, its movement out of control.

Level: __

B. The opening, complex sentence is long and so gives the effect of a neverending storm. Then nouns like 'gusts' and 'force' are used to show the reader how unpredictable and strong the wind was. The effect of the wind on the coach is built up by the writer's use of verbs – 'shaking', then 'trembled', then 'swayed'. The word 'trembled' makes it sound as if the coach is almost frightened of the weather.

Level: __

C. The writer says, 'The wind came in gusts at times shaking the coach'. The word 'gusts' emphasises that sometimes the wind blew stronger than others and was making the coach shake or shudder. The phrase, 'shaking the coach', has the effect of making us feel frightened for the passengers because you shake when you are afraid.

Level: __

Week 1: Unseen Assessment

Q1: List four things we learn from this part of the text about setting.

It was an eighty-cow dairy, and the troop of milkers, regular and supernumerary, were all at work; for, though the time of year was as yet but early April, the feed lay entirely in water-meadows, and the cows were 'in full pail'. The hour was about six in the evening, and three-fourths of the large, red, rectangular animals having been finished off, there was opportunity for a little conversation.

Q2: How does the writer use language here to describe the atmosphere?

Maddened mentally, and nearly suffocated by pressure, the sleeper struggled; the incubus, still regarding her, withdrew to the foot of the bed, only, however, to come forward by degrees, resume her seat, and flash her left hand as before.

Gasping for breath, Rhoda, in a last desperate effort, swung out her right hand, seized the confronting spectre by its obtrusive left arm and whirled it backward to the floor, starting up herself as she did so with a low cry.

'O, merciful heaven!' she cried, sitting on the edge of the bed in a cold seat; 'that was not a dream – she was here!' She could feel her antagonist's arm within her grasp even now – the very flesh and bone of it, as it seemed. She looked on the floor whither she had whirled the spectre, but there was nothing to be seen.

Week 2

This extract is from the opening of a novel by Daphne du Maurier. Although written in 1936 it is set in the past. In this section a coach and horses, with its passengers, is making its way through Cornwall to Jamaica Inn.

Jamaica Inn

It was a cold grey day in late November. The weather had changed overnight, when a backing wind brought a granite sky and a mizzling rain with it, and although it was now only a little after two o'clock in the afternoon the pallor of a winter evening seemed to have closed upon the hills, cloaking them in mist. It would be dark by four. The air was clammy cold, and for all the tightly
5 closed windows it penetrated the interior of the coach. The leather seats felt damp to the hands, and there must have been a small crack in the roof, because now and again little drips of rain fell softly through, smudging the leather and leaving a dark-blue stain like a splodge of ink.

The wind came in gusts, at times shaking the coach as it travelled round the bend of the road, and in the exposed places on the high ground it blew with such force that the whole body of the
10 coach trembled and swayed, rocking between the high wheels like a drunken man.

The driver, muffled in a greatcoat to his ears, bent almost double in his seat in a faint endeavour to gain shelter from his own shoulders, while the dispirited horses plodded sullenly to his command, too broken by the wind and the rain to feel the whip that now and again cracked above their heads, while it swung between the numb fingers of the driver.

15 The wheels of the coach creaked and groaned as they sank into the ruts on the road, and sometimes they flung up the soft spattered mud against the windows, where it mingled with the constant driving rain, and whatever view there might have been of the countryside was hopelessly obscured.

The few passengers huddled together for warmth, exclaiming in unison when the coach sank
20 into a heavier rut than usual, and one old fellow, who had kept up a constant complaint ever since he had joined the coach at Truro, rose from his seat in a fury; and, fumbling with the window-sash, let the window down with a crash, bringing a shower of rain upon himself and his fellow-passengers. He thrust his head out and shouted up to the driver, cursing him in a high petulant voice for a rogue and a murderer; that they would all be dead before they reached
25 Bodmin if he persisted in driving at breakneck speed; they had no breath left in their bodies as it was, and he for one would never travel by coach again.

Whether the driver heard him or not was uncertain: it seemed more likely that the stream of reproaches was carried away in the wind, for the old fellow, after waiting a moment, put up the window again, having thoroughly chilled the interior of the coach, and, settling himself once
30 more in his corner, wrapped his blanket about his knees and muttered in his beard.

His nearest neighbour, a jovial, red-faced woman in a blue cloak, sighed heavily, in sympathy, and, with a wink to anyone who might be looking and a jerk of her head towards the old man, she remarked for at least the twentieth time that it was the dirtiest night she ever remembered, and she had known some; that it was proper old weather and no mistaking it for summer this
35 time; and, burrowing into the depths of a large basket, she brought out a great hunk of cake and plunged into it with strong white teeth.

Mary Yellan sat in the opposite corner, where the trickle of rain oozed through the crack in the roof. Sometimes a cold drip of moisture fell upon her shoulder, which she brushed away with impatient fingers.

40 She sat with her chin cupped in her hands, her eyes fixed on the window splashed with mud and rain, hoping with a sort of desperate interest that some ray of light would break the heavy blanket of sky, and but a momentary trace of that lost blue heaven that had mantled Helford yesterday shine for an instant as a forerunner of fortune.

STRUCTURAL TERMINOLOGY		Plot or story – What happens and in what order?	Narrative – How is the story told?
Definition: Structure refers to the way a piece of writing is organised. Every piece of writing contains a combination of structural techniques. These are the materials with which extended pieces of writing are built. Writers use particular structural techniques to achieve specific effects. By organising their writing in these ways, authors are trying to control the ways you think about the story and how you feel about its characters.	Characters	Exposition – the beginning: when places, people and the situation are introduced.	First person – when the narrator tells his or her own story using the pronouns 'I' or 'we'.
		Rising action – a situation develops: a series of relevant incidents that create suspense, interest and tension in a narrative.	Third person – when a story is told by some kind of witness to the events who uses people's names and the pronouns 'he', 'she' or 'they'.
		Climax – the situation becomes critical: the most intense, exciting, or important point of a story, where the issue is fought out.	Narrator – the storyteller.
		Anti-climax – something significant seems to have been building up but at the final moment it all collapses, or is undermined.	Monologue – when one character speaks for him or herself.
		Falling action – the calm after the storm: this occurs right after the climax. It is what happens after the main problem of the story has been solved.	Dialogue – this is how writers present conversations between characters.
Altered impression – how does the writer change your view of a character?	Resolution (or denouement) – the solution: this is the end of the story, when lessons are learned, justice is served and people begin to live with the consequences.	Reported speech – when we are told what a speaker meant rather than what exactly he or she said; e.g. 'he said that he would go', based on 'I will go'.	Free indirect discourse – when a narrator adopts the language of a particular character in narrating what is happening; e.g. 'Lily the caretaker's daughter was literally run off her feet'.
General Terms	Sentence Structures	Flashback – when a narrator takes you back in time to show you an event from a character's past?	
Sequencing – the order of the events or of the descriptions.	Simple sentences – these express one simple idea; e.g. 'Jesus <i>wept</i> '. They can be very short.	Circular narrative – when the last line of an extract takes you right back to the beginning.	
Contrast – when two different types of setting or character are presented together so that they reveal something about one another.	Compound sentences – these express two simple ideas and a conjunction (FANBOYS) is used to stick them together; e.g. 'Jesus <i>wept</i> and the disciples <i>ran away</i> '.	Key Questions	
Repetition – when the same word, phrase or image appears again and again in a piece of writing.	Complex sentences – these express a complex idea; e.g. 'Upset, Jesus <i>wept</i> '. They can be very long.	Think about how the structure works in terms of the effects it creates. Ask yourself why the paragraphs are ordered the way they are. Is it important for us to know certain bits of information before we get to the next part of the text?	
Building tension – when a writer makes you feel or fear that something dramatic is going to happen.	Non-sentences – sometimes writers present words or phrases as if they are sentences; e.g. 'Jesus'.	Look for links from the beginning to the end of a text. For example, is there a repeated image? Or is there a significant change in an attitude, character or setting?	
Foreshadowing – when a writer makes you feel that a specific thing is going to happen; e.g. a murder or a marriage.	Short sentences – sentences of no more than seven words are often used to create a feeling of pace or urgency.		

Teaching plot and structure (1)

Beginnings:

- What is the narrative hook? How is the reader drawn into the story?
- Is a setting/time period established?
- Is a character (or characters) introduced?
- Is a theme or story-line suggested?
- Is there a narrator? First or third person? What is their tone of voice like?
- Is the narrator omniscient? Are there multiple narrative viewpoints?
- Is dialogue used? What effect does it have on the reader?
- Is there a prevailing tense (past or present)? What effect does this have?
- Has the writer used contrast or juxtaposition?
- Has the writer moved from the general to the particular or vice versa?
- Is there a shift in perspective?

Middles:

- Is a problem introduced? How quickly is the problem introduced?
- How do the characters deal with the problem?
- Are all the characters behaving in the same way? (Have the characters changed in any way? What has motivated this change?)
- Has the setting changed?
- Has there been a time-shift?
- Are there clear links with earlier parts of the story/play?
- Does the writer suggest what is to come?

Endings:

- Does the story/play come to a definite end? How is the problem resolved?
- Does the story end as you expected?
- Have the characters changed in any way?
- Does the end echo the opening?
- Is there a moral/message?

Pupil Response:

The text, about a journey, is structured to also take the reader on a journey: from the general to the specific; from the outside to the inside; from the weather, through the coach, the driver and horses, to the passengers. There is also a constant reminder of the weather which permeates each part – the ‘little drips of rain’ that came through the roof and, later, ‘the rain oozed through the crack in the roof’ onto Mary’s shoulder – so the reader is constantly made wet and uncomfortable, just like the passengers.

Around the middle of the extract, the outside and the inside are made to coincide when the old man opens the window –this also moves the focus of the reader to the inside of the coach. The text narrows down to take the reader from the countryside of Cornwall –the wide ‘granite sky’ and the evening which ‘closed upon the hills’, to the inside of Mary Yellan’s head as she contemplates the weather and hopes for a ‘momentary trace’ of ‘blue heaven’.

Week 2: Unseen Assessment

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

In thirty-five feet of water, the great fish swam slowly, its tail waving just enough to maintain motion. It saw nothing, for the water was murky with motes of vegetation. The fish had been moving parallel to the shoreline. Now it turned, banking slightly, and followed the bottom gradually upward. The fish perceived more light in the water, but still it saw nothing.

The boy was resting, his arms dangling down, his feet and ankles dipping in and out of the water with each small swell. His head was turned towards shore, and he noticed that he had been carried out beyond what his mother would consider safe. He could see her lying on her towel, and the man and child playing in the wavewash. He was not afraid, for the water was calm and he wasn't really very far from shore – only forty yards or so. But he wanted to get closer; otherwise his mother might sit up, spy him, and order him out of the water. He eased himself back a little bit so he could use his feet to help propel himself. He began to kick and paddle towards shore. His arms displaced water almost silently, but his kicking feet made erratic splashes and left swirls of bubbles in his wake.

The fish did not hear the sound, but rather registered the sharp and jerky impulses emitted by the kicks. They were signals, faint but true, and the fish locked on them, homing. It rose, slowly at first, then gaining speed as the signals grew stronger.

The boy stopped for a moment to rest. The signals ceased. The fish slowed, turning its head from side to side, trying to recover them. The boy lay perfectly still, and the fish passed beneath him, skimming the sandy bottom. Again it turned.

The boy resumed paddling. He kicked only every third or fourth stroke; kicking was more exertion than steady paddling. But the occasional kicks sent new signals to the fish. This time it needed to lock on them only an instant, for it was almost directly below the boy. The fish rose. Nearly vertical, it now saw the commotion on the surface. There was no conviction that what thrashed above was food, but food was not a concept of significance. The fish was impelled to attack: if what it swallowed was digestible, that was food; if not, it would later be regurgitated. The mouth opened, and with a final sweep of the sickle tail the fish struck.

The boy's last – only – thought was that he had been punched in the stomach. The breath was driven from him in a sudden rush. He had no time to cry out, nor, had he had the time, would he have known what to cry, for he could not see the fish. The fish's head drove the raft out of the water. The jaws smashed together, engulfing head, arms, shoulders, trunk, pelvis and most of the raft. Nearly half the fish had come clear of the water, and it slid forward and down in a belly flopping motion, grinding the mass of flesh and bone and rubber. The boy's legs were severed at the hip, and they sank, spinning slowly to the bottom.

(See bullet points on PowerPoint)

Week 3

Candidate 1

I agree with this student on a high extent because I feel as if I am in the coach with the main characters. I felt the writer gave great imagery because I could imagine what it would be like to be there on the coach. The language the writer uses has a huge impact on the emotion, I and other readers may experience. For example 'she sat with her chin cupped in her hands, her eyes fixed on the window splashed with mud and rain, hoping with a sort of desperate interest that some ray of light would break the heavy blanket of sky, and but a momentary trace of that lost blue heaven that had mantled Helford yesterday shine for an instant as a forerunner of fortune.'

The characters in this text show that they really are stuck in a cold filled coach. I can picture what the characters look like because of the way the writer gives the image through certain descriptive words such as: 'red faced women in a blue cloak sighed heavily.' This gives me the judgement that she is cold and sad/depressed due to the vocabulary that the writer uses. He/she does this by using words that have a deep mind fulfilled meaning, such as 'sighed' and 'heavily'. This shows me how the writer is trying to put this character across to me.

Each character has a different personality according to how they are described in the source

The writer has given me the impression that the driver doesn't really want to be there and that he is quite bitter when it comes to talking with people. The source also shows me that the other passengers would do anything to stay warm, and that they are just as helpless as anyone else.

Candidate 2

It feels like you are inside with them, you can see the characters and the weather through the window. "her eyes fixed on the window splashed with mud and rain" shows that this woman is bored and the only thing she can do is look out of the window. "blanket of sky" is a metaphor, because the sky isn't really a blanket.

Candidate 3

I agree with this statement to a certain extent as despite describing the appearance of one of the characters the author only scrapes the surface about each one and their current actions.

The "old fellow" who had kept up a constant complaint is portrayed first. He is clearly very on edge and is a character not afraid to voice his opinion as he hurls abuse at the driver, "cursing him in a high petulant voice". The fact that the author describes the man's voice to be of a "high" pitch shows he is panicked about the situation and he is worried for his safety as a person's voice raising in pitch is a result of that.

The word "petulant" indicates the man is bad tempered and sulky; like a child, which contrasts with his appearance of being an "old fellow". By cursing the driver the man also appears to be ill mannered and when he let the window down consequently in "bringing a shower of rain upon himself and his fellow passengers," he is displayed as being inconsiderate to others. The man may feel he holds more importance than the other passengers on the coach as there are no apologies given for his actions after having "thoroughly chilled the interior of the coach," This statement may not just be physically due to the cold weather but also down to the cold, awkward atmosphere the man has created inside the bus after his petulant shouts.

Additionally, the man "muttered into his beard", which is a sign the man is lonely or prefers to be in the presence of just himself rather than others. The fact the man likes to be alone may be why he was so rude to the driver as he isn't used to human company especially when he isn't in control of the situation.

Candidate 4

I agree with this statement because I do feel as if I am in the coach with the passengers. I get the impression that "old-fellow" is a very moody character that is not afraid to speak his mind. I am lead to think this because he "curses" at the driver, eventhough it is not the driver's fault that the whether is bad. I can tell that this passenger has a short temper because he rises from his seat in a "fury" which suggests that he is blind with rage at the situation.

Mary Yellan seems to be quite an interesting character in the novel. She intrigues the reader because not much is said about her in the passage. She seems hopeful, and different to the others. The other passengers are "huddled together" but Mary Yellan sits in the "opposite corner."

The writer has created these impressions by using lots of adjectives. She refers to Mary Yellan as having "impatient fingers" which is an unusual description of someone; this is what makes the reader interested in her.

The writer also uses onomatopoeies to create the effect that we are in the coach with them. "Crash" and "plunged" are used so the reader can hear what is happening which helps them to imagine what is going on. The "shower of rain" makes the reader feel the rain on their skin which would be very annoying of a passenger on the coach.

The writer describes the characters in great detail. The "Red-faced" woman is described using long, complex sentences which helps the reader to imagine the character that is sat in the coach

Candidate 6

I do agree with the student because the writer explains the characters and the interior of the coach, as if we, the reader, are a character and as if we are there seeing it. Also the writer describes a image to the reader if we are there looking at what the author is describing however the author doesn't describe 1 character directly the author describes a few characters vaguely which allows the reader to interpret and picture the characters freely with just a few set features. For example with the man who shouts all we know about him is that has a beard and he 'rose from his seat in a fury'. This gives the reader the impression he is in a bad mood and he is not happy therefore the other characters maybe have the same emotions This gives the reader a negative impression on the source giving the scene a negative vibe. The writer also uses the weather to cause a negative vibe. I think the writer is setting the scene for a future event such as a accident. I get this impression because the writer gives the reader a negative atmosphere which gives the impression that something bad is going to happen.

The writer makes the reader feel the emotions of the characters when we are listening to the characters speak. Also the tone of which the characters give a negative impression.

Week 3: Unseen Assessment

Read the extract on the following page.

A student, having read this section of the text said: **"The writer creates a sense of sadness through the author's tone."**

To what extent do you agree?

In your response, you could:

- write about your own impressions of the characters
- evaluate how the writer has created these impressions
- support your opinions with quotations from the text.

Week 3: Unseen Assessment

Extract from *Spies* by Michael Frayn

Where the story began, though, was where most of our projects and adventures began – at Keith's house. At the tea table, in fact – I can hear the soft clinking made by the four blue beads that weighted the lace cloth covering the tall jug of lemon barley...

No, wait. I've got that wrong. The glass beads are clinking against the glass of the jug because the cover's stirring in the breeze. We're outside, in the middle of the morning, near the chicken run at the bottom of the garden, building the transcontinental railway.

Yes, because I can hear something else, as well - the trains on the real railway, as they emerge from the cutting on to the embankment above our heads just beyond the wire fence. I can see the showers of sparks they throw up from the live rail. The jug of lemon barley isn't our tea- it's our elevenses, waiting with two biscuits each on a tray his mother has brought us out from the house, and set down on the red brick path beside us. It's as she walks away, up the red brick path, that Keith so calmly and quietly drops his bombshell.

When is this? The sun's shining as the beads clink against the jug, but I have a feeling that there's still a trace of fallen apple blossom on the earthworks for the transcontinental railway, and that his mother's worried about whether we're warm enough out there. 'You'll come inside, chaps, won't you, if you get chilly?' May still, perhaps. Why aren't we at school? Perhaps it's a Saturday or a Sunday. No, there's the feel of a weekday morning in the air; it's unmistakable, even if the season isn't. Something that doesn't quite fit here, as so often when one tries to assemble different bits to make a whole.

Or have I got everything back to front? Had the policeman already happened before this? It's so difficult to remember what order things occurred in – but if you can't remember that, then it's impossible to work out which led to which, and what the connection was. What I remember, when I examine my memory carefully, isn't a narrative at all. It's a collection of vivid particulars. Certain words spoken, certain objects glimpsed. Certain gestures and expressions. Certain moods, certain weathers, certain times of day and states of light. Certain individual moments, which seem to mean so much, but which mean in fact so little until the hidden links between them have been found.

Where did the policeman come in the story? We watch him as he pedals slowly up the Close. His appearance has simultaneously justified all our suspicions and overtaken all our efforts, because he's coming to arrest Keith's mother...

No, no- that was earlier. We're running happily and innocently up the street beside him, and he represents nothing but the hope of a little excitement out of nowhere. He cycles right past all the houses, looking at each of them in turn, goes round the turning circle at the end, cycles back down the street ... and dismounts in front of No. 12. What I remember for sure is the look on Keith's mother's face, as we run in to tell her that there's a policeman going to Auntie Dee's. For a moment all her composure's gone. She looks ill and frightened. She's throwing the front door open and not walking but running down the street...

I understand now, of course, that she and Auntie Dee and Mrs Berrill and the McAfees all lived in dread of policemen and telegraph boys, as everyone did then who had someone in the family away fighting. I've forgotten now what it had turned out to be- nothing to do with Uncle Peter, anyway. A complaint about Auntie Dee's blackout, I think. She was always rather slapdash about it.

Once again I see that look cross Keith's mother's face, and this time I think I see something else beside the fear. Something that reminds me of the look on Keith's face, when his father's discovered some dereliction in his duties towards his bicycle or his cricket gear: a suggestion of guilt. Or is memory being overwritten by hindsight once more?

If the policeman and the look had already happened, could they by any chance have planted the first seed of an idea in Keith's mind? I think now that most probably Keith's words came out of nowhere, that they were spontaneously created in the moment they were uttered. That they were a blind leap of pure fantasy. Or of pure intuition. Or, like so many things, of both.

From those six random words, anyway, came everything that followed, brought forth simply by Keith's uttering them and by my hearing them. The rest of our lives was determined in that one brief moment as the beads clinked against the jug and Keith's mother walked away from us, through the brightness of the morning, over the last of the fallen white blossom on the red brick path, erect, composed, and invulnerable, and Keith watched her go, with the dreamy look in his eye that I remembered from the start of so many of our projects.

'My mother', he said reflectively, almost regretfully, 'is a German spy.'

Student Response to Q4 (Spies Extract)

Having read the extract I can agree, to a certain extent, that the writer creates a sense of sadness through the author's tone. However, this sense of sadness seems to be portrayed through an atmosphere of regret and uncertainty. One way that the author does this is by withholding information and the focus on "vivid particulars". This is evident through the recurring image of the "beads clinking" which helps to increase the dramatic tension coupled with the vague phrases: "perhaps", "I've forgotten" and "which seem to mean so much, yet mean so little." Collectively, these language choices present an unreliable narrator which adds to the confusion within the extract.

Primarily, the narrator seems to convey a lot of self-doubt and hesitancy through the extensive use of rhetorical questions, asking "When is this?" or "Why aren't we at school?" which exemplifies their obvious apprehension. Additionally, the use of question words such as "when" almost creates a sense of unease masked with an underlying melancholy. Whereas the narrator usually portrays the fluid content of the story, in this case it is portrayed as detached and almost dream-like; it is perhaps a recollection of memory. Furthermore, this dream-like hesitancy can also be seen through the chosen punctuation, including an extensive amount of hyphens and ellipses which contributes to the disjointed effect. This could portray a shortness of breath, creating urgency which is further reiterated through the narrative.

From the idea of "a German spy" and "the policeman", we can conclude that something tragic might happen as the language is ambiguous and closely linked with crime. The sadness is accentuated towards the end of the extract through the slow unravelling of the information as Keith presents this fact "almost regretfully" which creates a sense of catharsis as the secret is finally revealed to the reader.

Week 4

- ☐ Create a mini plan beforehand: consider language devices, vocabulary & engaging ideas
- ☐ Create a highly effective opening and closing for your piece of writing. Your narrative hook is key! Consider: a reflective question, a shocking statement, a thought-provoking triplet, shock tactic or topic loop.
- ☐ Read the question carefully and ensure that your style/tone carefully matches the examiner's requirements. Is the narrative well structured? Does the description zoom in and out?
- ☐ Organise your work effectively using paragraphs and discourse markers.
- ☐ Vary your sentence structures and ensure that they are grammatically accurate: simple, compound, complex, single word phrases etc.
- ☐ Use some imperative language and interrogatives, in moderation, to mix up your writing and ideas.
- ☐ Use a range of ambitious vocabulary – keep thinking of interesting synonyms for familiar/boring words. Always challenge yourself to use at least one brand new word that you've learned.
- ☐ Vary your punctuation use. You could use a colon, semi-colon or ellipsis in your writing to improve the fluency.
- ☐ For a descriptive writing task, (avoid beginning with 'the' and) vary your sentence openers to include the 'Magic 5': *Preposition, Verb, Adverb, Adjective & Simile*.
- ☐ Revise your personal spelling and homophones targets.

Exemplar Descriptive Writing

Iridescent strands of hair cascaded down her back and created a luminous silhouette which was difficult to ignore. Cowering beneath the opulent doorway, she feigned a smile at her onlooker. Her topaz eyes radiated a sense of serenity and I decided her stare could subdue even the fiercest of men. Who is this object of my adoration? Who is this alluring yet silent one? Peering nonchalantly at the ornate hand-held mirror, her evanescent smile was scarcely visible through the cracked glass.

Week 5

In Susan Hill's novel I'm the King of the Castle, a young boy, Kingshaw, has decided to run away from home. He sets out across the fields towards a wood.

The cornfield was high up. He stood in the very middle of it, now, and the sun came glaring down. He could feel the sweat running over his back, and in the creases of his thighs. His face was burning. He sat down, although the stubble pricked at him, through his jeans, and looked over at the dark line of trees on the edge of Hang wood. They seemed very close –
5 all the individual branches were clearly outlined. The fields around him were absolutely still.

When he first saw the crow, he took no notice. There had been several crows. This one glided down into the corn on its enormous, ragged black wings. He began to be aware of it when it rose up suddenly, circled overhead, and then dived, to land not very far away from him. Kingshaw could see the feathers on its head, shining black in between the butter-
10 coloured corn-stalks. Then it rose, and circled, and came down again, this time not quite landing, but flapping about his head, beating its wings and making a sound like flat leather pieces being slapped together. It was the largest crow he had ever seen. As it came down for the third time, he looked up and noticed its beak, opening in a screech. The inside of its mouth was scarlet, it had small glinting eyes.

15 Kingshaw got up and flapped his arms. For a moment, the bird retreated a little way off, and higher up in the sky. He began to walk rather quickly back, through the path in the corn, looking ahead of him. Stupid to be scared of a rotten bird. What could a bird do? But he felt his own extreme isolation, high up in the cornfield.

For a moment, he could only hear the soft thudding of his own footsteps, and the silky
20 sound of the corn, brushing against him. Then, there was a rush of air, as the great crow came beating down, and wheeled about his head. The beak opened and the hoarse caw came out again and again, from inside the scarlet mouth.

The following extract is from *The Constant Princess* by historical novelist Philippa Gregory.

1491

There was a scream, and then the loud roar of fire enveloping silken hangings, then a mounting crescendo of shouts of panic that spread and spread from one tent to another as the flames ran too, leaping from one silk standard to another, running up guy ropes and bursting through muslin doors. Then the horses were neighing in terror and men shouting to calm them, but the terror in their own voices made it worse, until the whole plain was alight with a thousand raging blazes, and the night swirled with smoke and rang with shouts and screams.

The little girl, starting up out of her bed in her fear, cried out in Spanish for her mother and screamed: "The Moors? Are the Moors coming for us?"

"Dear God, save us, they are firing the camp!" her nurse gasped. "Mother of God, they will rape me and spit you on their sickle blades."

"Mother!" cried the child, struggling from her bed. "Where is my mother?"

She dashed outside, her nightgown flapping at her legs, the hangings of her tent now alight and blazing up behind her in an inferno of panic. All the thousand, thousand tents in the camp were ablaze, sparks pouring up into the dark night sky like fiery fountains, blowing like a swarm of fireflies to carry the disaster onwards.

"Mother!" She screamed for help.

Out of the flames came two huge, dark horses, like great, mythical beasts moving as one, jet black against the brightness of the fire. High up, higher than one could dream, the child's mother bent down to speak to her daughter who was trembling, her head no higher than the horse's shoulder. "Stay with your nurse and be a good girl," the woman commanded, no trace of fear in her voice. "Your father and I have to ride out and show ourselves."

"Let me come with you! Mother! I shall be burned. Let me come! The Moors will get me!" The little girl reached her arms up to her mother.

The firelight glinted weirdly off the mother's breastplate, off the embossed greaves of her legs, as if she were a metal woman, a woman of silver and gilt, as she leaned forwards to command. "If the men don't see me, then they will desert," she said sternly. "You don't want that."

"I don't care!" the child wailed in her panic. "I don't care about anything but you! Lift me up!"

"The army comes first," the woman mounted high on the black horse ruled. "I have to ride out."

She turned her horse's head from her panic-stricken daughter. "I will come back for you," she said over her shoulder. "Wait there. I have to do this now."

Helpless, the child watched her mother and father ride away. "Madre!" she whimpered. "Madre! Please!" but the woman did not turn.

"We will be burned alive!" Madilla, her servant, screamed behind her. "Run! Run and hide!"

"You can be quiet." The child rounded on her with sudden angry spite. "If I, the Princess of Wales herself, can be left in a burning campsite, then you, who are nothing but a Morisco anyway, can certainly endure it."

Week 5

The following extract is from *Transmission* by Hari Kunzru.

Behind the front desk sat a receptionist. Above her a row of clocks, relic of the optimistic 1960s, displayed the time in key world cities. New Delhi seemed to be only two hours ahead of New York, and one behind Tokyo. Automatically Arjun found himself calculating the shrinkage in the world implied by this error, but, lacking even a best estimate for certain of the variables, his thoughts trailed away. For a moment or two the image hung around ominously in his brain – the globe contracting like a deflating beach ball.

It was punctured by a cleaner pushing a mop over his toes. He frowned at the man, who stared unapologetically back as he continued his progress across the lobby. At the desk the receptionist directed him to a bank of elevators. Stepping out at the eighth floor, he walked up and down a corridor searching, with rising panic, for Office Suite E. Just as he was beginning to think he had been given an incorrect address, he came to a door with a handwritten sign taped over the nameplate: INTERVIEWS HERE. He knocked, received no reply, knocked again, then shuffled about for a while wondering what to do. The shuffling did not seem to help, so he kneeled down and polished his smudged shoes with his handkerchief.

'Excuse me please?'

He looked up at a prim young woman in a peach-coloured salwar-kameez.

'Yes?'

'Would you mind moving out of the way?'

'Sorry.'

She brushed past him and unceremoniously pulled the door open to reveal a waiting room filled with nervous young people, sitting on orange plastic chairs with the peculiar self-isolating stiffness interview candidates share with criminal defendants and people in STD-clinic reception areas. The woman swept in and announced herself to a clerk, who checked her name on a list and assigned her a number. Consumed by his own inadequacy, Arjun followed.

The candidates squirmed. They coughed and played with their hands. They pretended to flick through magazines and made elaborate attempts to avoid eye contact with one another. All the seats were occupied, so Arjun picked a spot near a window and stood there, shifting his weight from foot to foot and trying to reboot himself in positive mode. *Listen, Mehta. You don't know how many positions Databodies has open. Perhaps there are several. The Americans have a skills shortage. They want as many programmers as they can get.* But such a number of applicants? There were at least fifty people in the room.

Student Response to Q4

Arjun's mind is unsettled and he is made nervous by the situation he is in and the people he meets. The clocks act as a distraction because they are wrong, and produce the bizarre image in his mind of a 'globe contracting like a deflating beach ball'. The image is amusing – more like a bad omen. Similarly, although the cleaner mopping over Arjun's shows is humorous for the reader, for Arjun it is annoying and unsettling, and this builds to 'rising panic'. The repetition of the words 'knocked' and 'shuffled' and 'shuffled' tells me that Arjun is in a nervy and confused state. By contrast, the character of the 'prim young woman' comes across as confident and efficient – she 'pulls the door open unceremoniously' – which just adds to Arjun's feeling of being inadequate.

The image of horrible 'bright orange' chairs and the idea of the interviewees being 'criminal defendants' seems exaggerated but funny – just like your worst nightmare waiting room; and the writer chooses words like 'squirmed' and 'coughed' to show that they were all suffering and edgy.

In the end, Arjun's state of mind improves. He tries to 'reboot himself' – like he would a computer – into a more positive frame of mind. His 'shifting from foot to foot' still makes me, as a reader; smile; but I think he might be all right.

Week 6: Classroom Mock Exam

Source A:

In this extract from a short story, 'The Thing in the Forest' by A.S. Byatt, two little girls have been evacuated to the countryside during the Second World War.

The two little girls had not met before, and made friends on the train. They shared a square of chocolate, and took alternate bites at an apple. One gave the other the inside page of her *Beano*. Their names were Penny and Primrose. Penny was thin and dark and taller, possibly older, than Primrose, who was plump and blonde and curly. Primrose had bitten nails, and a velvet collar to her dressy green coat. Penny had a bloodless transparent paleness, a touch of blue in her fine lips. Neither of them knew where they were going, since neither of their mothers had quite known how to explain the danger to them. How do you say to your child, I am sending you away, because enemy bombs may fall out of the sky, because the streets of the city may burn like forest fires of brick and timber, but I myself am staying here, in what I believe may be daily danger of burning, burying alive and gas, and ultimately perhaps a grey army rolling in on tanks over the suburbs, or sailing its submarines up our river, all guns blazing? So the mothers (who did not resemble each other at all) behaved alike, and explained nothing, it was easier. Their daughters they knew were little girls who would not be able to understand or imagine.

The girls discussed on the train whether it was a sort of holiday or a sort of punishment, or a bit of both. Penny had read a book about Boy Scouts, but the children on the train did not appear to be Brownies or Wolf Cubs, only a mongrel battalion of the lost. Both little girls had the idea that these were all perhaps *not very good children*, possibly being sent away for that reason. They were pleased to be able to define each other as 'nice'. They would stick together, they agreed. Try to sit together, and things.

The train crawled sluggishly further and further away from the city and their homes. It was not a clean train – the upholstery of their carriage had the dank smell of unwashed trousers, and the gusts of hot steam rolling backwards past their windows were full of specks of flimsy ash, and sharp grit, and occasional fiery sparks that pricked face and fingers like hot needles if you opened the window. It was very noisy too, whenever it picked up a little speed. The engine gave great bellowing sighs, and the invisible wheels underneath clicked rhythmically and monotonously. Tap-tap-tap-CRASH, tap-tap-tap-CRASH. The window-panes were both grimy and misted up. The train stopped frequently, and when it stopped, they used their gloves to wipe rounds, through which they peered out at flooded fields, furrowed hillsides and tiny stations ^(1.) **whose names were carefully blacked out**, whose platforms were empty of life.

The children did not know that the namelessness was meant to baffle or delude an invading army. They felt – they did not think it out, but somewhere inside them the idea sprouted – that the erasure was because of them, because they were not meant to know where they were going or, like Hansel and Gretel, to find the way back. They did not speak to each other of this anxiety, but began the kind of conversation children have about things they really disliked, things that upset, or disgusted, or frightened them. Semolina pudding with its grainy texture, mushy peas, fat on roast meat. Listening to the stairs and the window-sashes creaking in the dark or the wind. Having your head held roughly back over the basin to have your hair washed, with cold water running down inside your ^(2.) **liberty bodice**. Gangs in playgrounds. They felt the pressure of all of the other alien children in all the other carriages as a potential gang. They shared another square of chocolate, licked their fingers, and looked out at a great white goose flapping its wings beside an inky pond.

Glossary:

1. **Whose names were carefully blacked out** – during the Second World War, place names on stations and road signs were blacked out so that, if the enemy invaded, they would find it harder to know where they were.
2. **Liberty bodice** – a kind of vest once worn by girls and women

Section A: Reading

Answer **all** questions in this section.

You are advised to spend about 45 minutes on this section

1. Read again the first part of the source, lines 1-4.

List **four** things you learn about the girls.

[4 marks]

2. Look in detail at this extract from lines 4-14 of the source:

Primrose. Penny was thin and dark and taller, possibly older, than Primrose, who was plump and blonde and curly. Primrose had bitten nails, and a velvet collar to her dressy green coat. Penny had a bloodless transparent paleness, a touch of blue in her fine lips. Neither of them knew where they were going, since neither of their mothers had quite known how to explain the danger to them. How do you say to your child, I am sending you away, because enemy bombs may fall out of the sky, because the streets of the city may burn like forest fires of brick and timber, but I myself am staying here, in what I believe may be daily danger of burning, burying alive and gas, and ultimately perhaps a grey army rolling in on tanks over the suburbs, or sailing its submarines up our river, all guns blazing? So the mothers (who did not resemble each other at all) behaved alike, and explained nothing, it was easier. Their daughters they knew were little girls who would not be able to understand or imagine.

How does the writer use language here to create a sense of danger and destruction in the coming war?

You could include the writer's choice of:

- Words and phrases
- Language features and techniques
- Sentence forms

[8 marks]

3. You now need to think about the **whole** of the **source**.

This text is from the opening of a short story.

How has the writer structured the text 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 focus as the extract develops
- Any other structural features that interest you

[8 marks]

4. Focus this part of your answer on the text from line 15 to the end.

A student, having read this section of the text said: “The writer really brings out the feelings of confusion and fear the girls had during their experience”.

To what extent do you agree?

In your response, you should:

- Write about the impression that you get of the girls’ experience
- Evaluate how the writer has created these impressions
- Support your opinions with quotations from the text

[20 marks]

Section B: Writing

You are advised to spend about 45 minutes on this section.

Write in full sentences.

You are reminded of the need to plan your answer.

You should leave enough time to check your work at the end.

5. Your class is compiling an anthology of writing about journeys which will be on the school website.

Either:

Write a description suggested by this picture:



(24 marks for content and organisation
16 marks for technical accuracy)

[40 marks]

Or:

Write a part of a story about a journey through a dangerous landscape.