

AS English Language

Paper One

- You have 2 hours and 15 minutes to complete this paper
- You must complete the first compulsory passage – commentary and directed writing
- You may choose whether to do the second passage or the third passage
- Each passage has a commentary and a directed writing question

Commentary:

- Before you start writing, read the passage at least twice. The first reading should be to gather the gist or sense of the passage, allowing the second reading to focus on the way the passage works, the specific language style and the mood created.
- Show the writer that you understand what is going on
 - General idea of the text is not good enough at AS level
 - Regurgitating what is given to you in the blurb will give you no extra marks
 - Show the progression of the content in the passage
 - Centralise the overview of content, tone, structure and purpose in an introduction
- Deal with **all** the significant points
- Have an effective use of English Language – the use of the best terms to explain things
 - Choose the correct technique in order to create an effect
 - Choose vocabulary that is suitable and accurate
- Writer's effects are central
 - Within body paragraphs, markers expect numerous pieces of evidence which are explained and clearly link to the overall effect/idea/tone
 - As early in the response as possible, establish that you know the genre, tone, purpose, content and organisation
- In a commentary, you must address the:
 - **Audience** – know who the writer considers the audience; no pieces of writing are in isolation, every piece has a writer and an audience (sender and receiver)
 - **Context** – what has influenced the writer into writing the text; what scenario was the text written and received
 - **Genre** – classification of texts according to conventions
 - **Purpose** – why the piece was written; usually to inform, to persuade, to provoke or to entertain
 - **Content** – what happens in the text
- It may be easiest to divide the passage into sections and discuss each section in a different body paragraph to ensure that equal attention is given to the different sections – some candidates focus more on the beginning and ending of the passage

Commentary Introduction

- Your response should begin with a brief introduction to the passage so that an overview or framework established. It is the framework outlined in this introduction which shapes the analysis of the piece.
- These should be brief – four to five lines long
- These should talk about purpose in a general way which does not close down other possibilities
- These should not use any quotations or unnecessary linguistic terminology
- These should summarise and establish the tone, structure, content and purpose to be further developed in the body paragraphs

Directed Writing:

- This must be between 120-150 words; writing more than this is wasted effort and time
- This can be related to the content of the given passage or the style or voice of the writer of the passage
- Be very aware of what and who you are writing for
- You will be given a genre - be familiar with the genre of the writing. Try to include aspects of the genre *e.g. salutation for a letter, headline for an article etc.*
- As far as possible do NOT lift words or phrases from the original text.
- When asked a question of the style/voice of the writer, the genre of the passage will remain the same *e.g. the original passage is a news article and you will be asked to write another news article by the same writer concerning a different scenario/situation*
- You should try to establish 4-5 elements from the original passage in your writing *e.g. 5 language techniques that the writer uses or 5 solid references to the content of the original*
- For the style/voice questions, there must be a connection between the commentary and the directed writing piece – if you mention a technique that the writer uses in the commentary, you should use that technique for this directed writing piece

Paper Two

- You have 2 Hours to complete this paper.
- You will write 'Imaginative Writing' piece and one 'Writing for an Audience' piece.
- Both pieces are worth 25 marks

Section A - Imaginative Writing:

- 3 Options chosen from:
 - Opening of a short story/story/novel
 - Scenario with given first line or last line
 - Descriptive Piece
 - Comparison descriptive task
 - Sensory piece
 - Monologue between characters
- Should be between 600 and 900 words

Descriptive Writing

- You will either be given a scenario *e.g. a beach* or you will be given two contexts, usually a before and after an event or before and during the event *e.g. before and after a fire*.
- For the comparison piece you should write two separate passages of 300-450 words each.
- This will be written in third person narration
- Do not include character's thoughts or feelings
- In the comparative piece, the two pieces do not have to follow the same structure or progression as long as a connection is made between the two.

Opening of a Short Story/Story/Novel

- You will be given a title and a mood or theme you have to represent in your writing piece
- You will be asked to write either a short story or a novel; the short story should get to action quicker and generally be at a faster pace than in a novel
- It is best to enter the examination with this question, with preset characters and locations, that can be adapted to what the question requires, as to save long periods of planning which could be better spent writing
- The question may sometimes state that you are the narrator, and thus must be written in first person
- It is best to write these responses in third person
- As it is the opening of the story, it is best not to write about large events that would typically occur in a story's climax
- Flashbacks should be used

Section B - Writing for an Audience:

- You are given 3 Options chosen from the following genres:
 - Speech/Voiceover
 - Brochure
 - Letter
 - Article
 - Two alternating opinions
 - News Report
- You must write a piece between 600 and 900 words
- For each option an audience will be given *e.g. write for a school newspaper*
- Marks are awarded for content and for structure/presentation
- Topics given are usually based on modern society
- Discourse markers should be constantly used throughout the piece

Multiple Responses

- Some tasks involve giving two different perspectives/pieces
- There does not need to be a correlation between the two pieces unless there is an obvious requirement *e.g. 2 Articles* usually would not need to reference each other, whereas 2 Politicians in a debate would acknowledge each other
- The two pieces do not need to demonstrate any similarities grammatically or structurally

Discourse Markers

- Used to clearly present an argument in 'Writing for an Audience' questions
- Markers will look for these the see the presentation of a clear and structured argument

Ordering	Consequences	Simultaneity
Firstly, secondly...	Because of this	Meanwhile
Next	Therefore	At the same time
Ultimately		Whilst
Lastly		In the mean time

Continuation	Concession	Conclusion
Furthermore	However	Finally
Moreover	On the other hand	In Conclusion
In addition	Admittedly	In Summation
Another	Yet	Overall
Then	Not withstanding	
Similarly	In spite of this	
Another aspect to consider	None the less/never the less	

Genres

- When writing your 'Directed Writing' piece or your 'Writing for an Audience' piece you will be given a genre that you MUST follow.
- Know your genres and what must be required by each of them as to not lose any simple marks

Article:

- Can be an online forum, review, or magazine-style response
- Online forum must be written in first person with a relaxed register and should create a character/voice for the speaker
- Review should present a bias either way; should generally be in first person but not necessarily. You should present facts and ideas.
- Magazine-style responses should have a clear audience and explicit references must be made towards them *e.g. car jargon for a car magazine audience*. You should use a variety of syntax and sentence grammatical construction. All magazine articles should generally have a 'snappy' headline – generally demonstrating wordplay. This headline should be over two lines. A by-line should be clear and apparent. There should be a more personal style of opinion and less need for balance *i.e. no bias*

News Report:

- Should have a strong sense of structure and a focus on factual information
- Headline and by-line are significant aspects of this. The headline should be over two lines
- Shot paragraphs but does not need to be written in columns – this will waste time if you do this
- Present information with fluency and accuracy – it is very important to have clear references to any content given
- The opening paragraph of the article (also known as a lead/lede) must give the reader a summary of the key information – who, what, when, and where
- This should not be written in first person
- This should have a balanced approach/no bias *e.g. instead of 'criminal', use 'accused'*

Letter:

- Must begin with a salutation *e.g. Dear _____*
- Audience must be formally addressed unless relationship is obviously casual
- Full style (*i.e. address, name, date etc.*) is not required however it can help to ground you in the genre
- When forming the salutation, always refer to the title or last name of a person, unless casual relationship
- Usually first person
- Must create a clear character through the language

Journal:

- Used for specific events or actions
- Key events recorded but not necessarily in any sequence
- The writing is not for sole consumption, they are designed to be read by others and therefore should communicate thoughts and feelings in a more formal style
- Should be written in first person

Diary:

- Never begin with 'Dear Diary'
- Often written in a time of crisis or as a way of recording personal, often reflective thoughts
- Diaries are recorded in chronological order so it should you should begin with a date and continue the writing in chronological order
- Must ascertain if events occur over more than one day; logic needs to be included with when to change dates. If dates are changed, keep them as sequential as possible
- Always written in First Person and usually informal
- Should be personal in nature as the only audience for this text is the writer
- Do not personalise it with any extra information – do not go outside of the given text/what the question is asking you for
- Must express a character's feelings and reaction to events
- Uses a mix of present, past and future tense in ideas

Speech:

- Try to present, in written form, a spoken text. Should use the spoken word style – fairly straightforward language, clear message and range of syntax
- Given for a purpose; usually persuasive or recount key events
- Should be structured like an essay – clear intro and conclusion (summary of speech)
- You should always plan the speech first – there can be no rambling in a speech
- Voiceovers have been included more in recent years *e.g. promotional video, radio/TV programme, podcast.*
- The focus is on the text content, not on camera angles, sound effects, props or actions made by the speaker – these are not required at all and no extra marks will be given
- ALWAYS have the audience in mind – this is called writing for an audience
- For persuasive speeches you are expected to use rhetorical devices but more explanatory speeches will not require them
- Write in first person
- Try to obtain the 'voice' of the speaker
- Consider your use of tenses – how will it have an effect?
- Usually begin with 'I am speaking to you today...' or similar

Podcast:

- Try to only have one speaker is possible
- Writing should have multiple references to 'internet context' e.g. 'If you downloaded this' or 'This podcast/programme is to...' or 'Streaming live'
- Sound effects or adverts do not need to be included

TV Voiceover/Brochure:

- Reference to images, sound effects, camera angles are not required; however there should be some reference to what the screen is showing i.e. "Here is the main gymnasium"
- Take a wide view and slowly go narrower i.e. If promotional voiceover for high school begin with the grounds/buildings and gradually discuss classrooms and finally students
- Often in second person
- Usually promotional and should contain a large amount of persuasive techniques
- A brochure follows the same genre style, however no reference to the television audience

Interview:

- You must put who is speaking before each section of dialogue – if you are not given names you are allowed to make your own names or simply place INTERVIEWER and INTERVIEWEE. The names you choose must be appropriate.
- The interview questions should be short and allow a wide range of response as to allow for the most writing on your part in the answer. These questions do not have to relate back to the previous one as this may hinder the amount that the interviewee can answer

Autobiography/Memoir/Biography:

- Autobiographies and Memoirs are written in first person
- Must convey a sense of an intense experience of event, rather than a simple narrative or recording of routine everyday occurrences
- These recount past events that have had an impact on them, or in which particular people they have met or known have made an impression – thus when writing them, the events or people discussed should be significant to the narrator
- Biographies are written mainly in third person
- Biographies focus on the life or character of someone interesting, whom they believe will be of interest to the reader

Spelling Rules

Having multiple spelling mistakes in your writing guarantees a low mark.

1. Word ending with a silent 'e' usually drop the 'e' before a suffix beginning with a vowel.

e.g.

Survive + -al = Survival

Abuse + -ive = Abusive

EXCEPTIONS:

- Retain the 'e' if it is possible for the word to be confused with another

e.g.

Dye + -ing = Dyeing

- Words containing 'g' or 'c' before the 'e' retain the 'e'

e.g.

Courage + -ous = Courageous

- Words ending in 'ie' change the 'i' to a 'y'

e.g.

Die + -ing = Dying

2. Word with a silent 'e' retain the 'e' before a suffix beginning with a consonant.

e.g.

Arrange + -ment = Arrangement

Forgive + -ness = Forgiveness

EXCEPTIONS:

- Judge/judgment, argue/argument, whole/wholly, awe/awful

3. Words with one syllable, ending in a single consonant preceded by a single vowel, double the final consonants before a suffix beginning with a vowel.

e.g.

Run + -ing = Running

EXCEPTIONS:

- If the word ends in two or more consonants, or if the final consonant is preceded by two vowels, the rule does not apply

e.g.

Debt + -or = Debtor

4. **In words of two or more syllables that are accented on the final syllable and end in a single consonant preceded by a single vowel, double the final consonant before a suffix beginning with a vowel.**

e.g.

Refer + -ing = Referring

Regret + -able = Regrettable

EXCEPTIONS:

- If the accent is not on the last syllable, the final consonant is not doubled
e.g.
Benefit + -ed = Benefited
- If the word ends in two consonants, if the final consonant is preceded by two vowels or if the accent shifts to the first syllable when the suffix is added, the rule does not apply
e.g.
Perform + -ance = Performance (two consonants)
Repeat + -ing = Repeating (two vowels)

5. **Use 'i' before 'e' except when the two letters follow 'c' and have a long 'e' sound, or when two vowels are pronounced with a long 'a'.**

e.g.

Conceit (long 'e' after 'c')

Vein (two vowels with long 'a' sound)

Shield (other letters)

6. **Words ending in 'y' preceded by a consonant usually change the 'y' to 'i' before any suffix except one beginning with 'i'**

e.g.

Beauty -> Beautiful

Lady -> Ladies

EXCEPTIONS:

- If the final y is preceded by a vowel, the rule does not apply
e.g.
Journeys
Essays
Boys

Key Terms

Writer's Register

Attitude – the presentation of a bias from a character or writer

Bias – favouring of positive representation of an ideal, individual or group. Recognisable through superlatives/comparatives and the analysis of the attitude

Casual Language – a reference to the tone of the passage – expressed through often colloquial language and relaxed adherence to the grammar rules

Colloquial Language – highly informal; the use of everyday language *e.g. including slang*

Conversational Language – written form expressing language synonymous with conversation which may include standard or non-standard English. It often uses largely informal content.

Formal Writing – correct use of grammatical structure, vocabulary and syntax

Informal Writing – the use of non-standard English. This covers any piece that is not standard English.

Tone – sense/feelings associated with a piece of writing

Narration

First Person – a story is told from the point of view of the narrator

Narrative Point of View – the perspective through which a story is communicated

Narrative Time – the placement of the story in time – past, present or future

Narrative Voice – the format through which a story is communicated

Second Person – a relatively rare type of story-telling, addressing a specific someone; often paired with first person and used in letter-writing

Third Person – provides the greatest flexibility to the author and thus is the most commonly used narrative mode in literature. In the third-person narrative mode, each and every character is referred to by the narrator as 'he', 'she', 'it', or 'they'

Third Person Limited – when the narrator can see the thoughts of only one of the characters in the story

Third Person Objective – when the narrator tells the story without describing any of the character's thoughts or feelings

Third Person Omniscient – when the narrator can see the thoughts of all the characters in the story

Third Person Subjective – when the narrator can see the thoughts of one or more characters in a story

Parts of Speech

Adjective – describes the noun

Demonstrative Adjective – adjectives used to point out specific people or things *e.g. that, this, these, those; this book*

Interrogative Adjective – modify nouns to ask questions *e.g. whose, which, what; which is greater?*

Qualitative Adjective – an adjective used to define qualities of a person or thing *e.g. male, female, English, student*

Definite Numeral Adjective – adjectives that are specific in numbers – includes cardinal numbers (*e.g. one, two*) and ordinal numbers (*e.g. first, second*)

Indefinite Numeral Adjective – adjectives that indicate an indefinite number *e.g. all, many, several, few*

Possessive Adjective – an adjective suggesting ownership *e.g. my, your, his/he, our; my food*

Colon – used to introduce a list

Conjunction – joins clauses or sentences together

Semicolon – used to indicate a pause longer than a comma but shorter than a full stop or to separate related main ideas that are not connected by a conjunction

Common Noun – all tangible members of a large class *e.g. boy, umbrella, stain*

Proper Noun – names of significant things *e.g. Christopher, America, Lord*

Collective Noun – name of a group *e.g. gaggle, herd, crowd*

Abstract Noun – intangible quality *e.g. love, happiness*

Pronoun – replaces a noun within the grammatical construction of a sentence; avoids repetition

Personal Pronoun – a pronoun that represents a person in a sentence *e.g. I, you, he, she, we, they, our*

Reflexive Pronouns – pronouns that refer back to the subject of the sentence *e.g. myself, himself, herself, ourselves*

Possessive Pronouns – a pronoun indicating ownership *e.g. mine, yours, his, hers; that is mine*

Demonstrative Pronouns – pronouns used to point out specific people or things *e.g. this, that, these, those; this does not taste good*

Distributive Pronouns – pronouns that consider members of groups separately rather than collectively *e.g. each, either, neither*

Interrogative Pronouns – a pronoun used in order to ask a question *e.g. who, which, what, whom, whose; Which car will they give us?*

Sentence Related Terminology

Active Sentence – a sentence where the subject performs the action stated by the verb

Affirmative – a positive statement affirming that something is positive

Antithesis – putting two opposing concepts together using grammar *e.g. give me liberty or give me death*

Clause – a group of related words that has both a subject and a verb

Complex Sentence – contains one independent clause and one or more dependent clauses

Compound Sentence – consists of two independent clauses joined by a conjunction

Compound-complex sentence – consists of two independent clauses and one or more dependent clause

Declarative – makes a statement. This is your basic type of sentence.

Ellipsis – used to demonstrate that one or more words have been omitted in a quotation

Exclamatory – an exclamation.

Interrogative – a question. To arouse the reader's curiosity and encourage them to read on to find an answer, or to prompt the reader to think of their own opinion on a matter

Inversion – reversing or changing the order of words in a sentence for emphasis of one particular part

Juxtaposition – putting contrasting ideas together

Listing – setting out items in list form, often using commas or bullet points

Minor Sentence – an incomplete sentence that may be missing a subject

Oxymoron – a figure of speech that juxtaposes elements that appear to be contradictory within a phrase *e.g. giant midget*

Parallelism – repeating similar grammatical structures to give rhythm

Parenthesis – brackets; used to insert additional information into a sentence

Passive Sentence – the subject is acted upon by the verb

Predicate – the rest of the sentence when not including the subject – contains the verb

Repetition – re-stating a word, phrase, sentence or concept a number of times for emphasis *e.g. location, location, location*

Rhetorical – a statement turned into a question; a question that is asked to emphasise a point, not to get an answer. Can be used ironically

Run-on Sentence – consists of two or more main clauses that are run together without proper punctuation

Sentence Fragment – an incomplete sentence that is lacking a subject and a verb

Simple Sentence – can have a single subject or a compound subject as well as a single predicate or a compound predicate, however it only has one independent clause

Subject – the main focus of a sentence

Techniques

Allusion – an indirect reference to something in popular culture

Analogy – an imagined scenario to explain a situation

Anecdote – a short story inserted into the middle of conversation

Antonym – a word with the opposite meaning to another word *e.g. love/hate*

Archaism – something is archaic when the word, spelling or construction is old fashioned

Cliché – an over-used or worn out expression that is now unoriginal

Climax – the peak of action in a narrative passage

Coinage – a newly created word, or a word that is 'coined' by the writer

Connotation – the association/inferred meanings which a word has that is not technically part of its meaning

Denotation – the dictionary definition of a word

Dialogue – speech between people as features in a piece of writing

Diction – the word of choice of an author, based on correctness, clearness and effectiveness

Euphemism – a mild or vague way of stating something that is perhaps too harsh or blunt

Expletive – a swear word or exclamation used to express emotion rather than meaning

Extended Metaphor – when a metaphor is continued throughout a piece of writing

Filler – words used by a speaker when they need time to think *e.g. um*

Homonym – a word that has the same spelling as another word, but a different meaning *e.g. bow of a ship and bow in archery*

Homophone – a word that sounds the same as another word but is different *e.g. peace/piece*

Hyperbole – an exaggerated statement *e.g. not in a million years*

Idiom – a phrase that may not make literal sense, but is understood by a group of people

Imagery – used by the writer to describe settings; can be gustatory (taste), auditory (sound), kinaesthetic (feel), olfactory (smell), visual (see)

Jargon – specialised language used in a particular field or occupation *e.g. RAM*

Metaphor – a figure of speech that identifies something as being the same as some unrelated thing, thus highlighting the similarities

Methods of Characterisation – how a character is formed through a character's actions, dialogue, thoughts, appearance, interaction with others and others thoughts of the character

Motif – any recurring element with symbolic significance in a story. A narrative motif can be created through the use of imagery, structural components, language, and other narrative elements

Organisation – form of the text; how it appears on the page

Pace – the feeling of quickness or slowness that emerges from the progression of sentences in a written text. The length and punctuation of sentences have a big impact on this

Personification – when something inhuman is given human qualities

Portmanteau Words – when two words are combined in form and meaning into one *e.g. Kim + Kanye = Kimye*

Quotation – using the words of someone else by inserting them in quotation marks

Redundancy/Tautology – using more words than are required to give the sense intended *e.g. kill bugs dead*

Simile – when one thing is compared to another using the words 'like' or 'as'

Symbol – an object that represents, stands for, or suggests an idea. Symbols take the form of words, sounds, gestures, or visual images

Synonym – a word with the same or similar meaning to another word *e.g. hide and conceal*

Understatement – like euphemism, understatement is used to lessen the effect of something. It is a form of irony

Humour

Bathos – anti-climax – usually the inclusion of the ridiculous or inconsequential *e.g. Osama Bin Laden is wanted for conspiracy, murder, terrorism and the theft of a small cat*

Black Humour – makes fun of human pain and suffering because it is absurd rather than pitiful

Caricature – making something ridiculous by exaggerating or distorting prominent features

Colloquialism – the use of colloquial language in a formal situation

Incongruity – language is deliberately mismatched in the situation e.g. *“Oh Hell” said the Queen of Parliament*

Invective – speech or writing that attacks, insults or denounces a person, topic or institution

Irony – the expression of one’s meaning by using language that normally signifies the opposite, typically for humorous or empathic effect

Litote/Meiosis – understatement

Parody – most often referred to in pop-culture as ‘spoof’; makes fun of general expected conventions of a genre. It is the imitation of the serious manner and characteristic features or a particular work

Pun – a play on words, often where two words sound similar or the same

Satire – using humour at the expense of a significant person or idea to convey a serious point or objection

Self-Depreciation – the writer highlights/exposes his/her shortcoming

Stereotype – oversimplified representation of class, gender, religion, race or occupation