

GCSE English – how to approach Paper 1 reading questions

Q1 – Identify explicit information and ideas

List 4 things . . .

Marks given
4 marks

Max Time spend
5 minutes

Make
4 points

AO1

- Identify explicit information and ideas

Identify explicit information and ideas

- Underline key words in the question and pay attention to the line numbers specified
- Read the text and highlight 4 main points linked to the question
- Put these key points in your own words, as a full sentence, or quote them
- Make sure each point is different

Q2 – Language

How does the writer's use of language . . .

Marks given
8 marks

Max Time spend
10 minutes

Make approx.
3 – 4 points

AO2

Explain, comment on and analyse how writers use language to achieve effects and influence readers, using relevant subject terminology

Comment, Explain, Analyse

- The question assesses language – words/ phrases/ language features/ language techniques/ sentences
- Use language terminology
- Select relevant quotations
- Explain and analyse the effects of the writer's choices of language

Q3 – Structure

How does the writer structure the text to . . .

Marks given
8 marks

Max Time spend
15 minutes

Make approx.
3 points

AO2

Explain, comment on and analyse how writers use structure to achieve effects and influence readers, using relevant subject terminology

Comment, Explain, Analyse

This question addresses structural features:

- This question will be: "How has the writer structured the text to interest the reader?"
- Read the text and look at the beginning, how it changed focus in the middle, and the end
- Supply quotes to back up your points
- Try to explain why this part of the story is interesting

Q4 – Evaluate texts

To what extent do you agree . . .

Marks given
20 marks

Max Time spend
20 minutes

Make approx.
3+ points

AO4

Evaluate texts critically and support this with appropriate textual references

Make a personal judgement with references to the text

- You will be given a statement about the text to discuss
- Underline key words in the question and pay attention to the line numbers specified
- Write about your own ideas and interpretations of the text
- Evaluate what the writer has achieved – and state how much you agree with the statement
- Select relevant quotations from the text – and analyse these with terminology