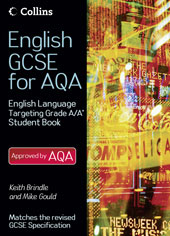
Name:   
ENGLISH GCSE HIGHER PAPER



REVISION BOOKLET

**SECTION A: READING**

In the reading paper there are FOUR questions. Each question tests a different skill. Knowing the style of questions and the skills you are being tested on will help you score as many marks as possible.

Use these skill summaries and revision sheets so you understand exactly how to approach each question!

|  |
| --- |
| **QUESTION 1: This question tests your ability to RETRIEVE RELEVENT INFORMATION and to present it in a WELL STRUCTURED answer**  **8 marks**  **Aim to spend about 13 MINUTES answering this question** |

**Skill summary: INFORMATION RETRIEVAL**

* In question 1 you have to ***FIND*** the ***relevant INFORMATION*** to answer the question
* This question is worth 8 marks
* This answer must be written in ***your OWN WORDS*** and each point you make must be ***supported with a SHORT QUOTE***
* You must be sure to include only information that is relevant to the question so read the question carefully
* Make sure you ***select information from the whole text*** rather than just from the beginning

**SAMPLE QUESTION AND ANSWER:**

***FROM: JANUARY 2011 AQA HIGHER PAPER***

**Question 1:**

**What do you learn from Elizabeth Hyde’s article about where she has been and what she has been doing? (8 marks)**

We learn that Elizabeth Hyde and her family have been on a very challenging but exciting “225 mile trip down the Colorado river” which was very well planned and organised by “an army of guides” who had brought “masses of gear”.

The holiday was completely focussed on river rafting with no time for other activities as they were “on the water for 5 – 8 hours a day” and when they weren’t actually on the water they only had time to do the basic essentials such as “eating sleeping and bathing”.

Even though the holiday was very challenging, Elizabeth loved it and had an exciting, fun, magical experience which she describes as “Disney-like” although it was also action packed and actually quite frightening at times, being compared to a “white knuckle roller coaster ride”.

As well as the excitement and adventure, Elizabeth was also amazed by the stunning scenery which was “spectacular” and the “great views” and we can see that she enjoyed her experience so much that she would like to do it again, even claiming that the experience left her wanting to “run away and become a river guide”.

**PRACTICE TEXTS AND QUESTIONS**

**Gourmet horse riding in Andalucía**

Andalucía in southern Spain is as famed for its robust cuisine as its rugged horse riding trails. This new holiday combines galloping off into the mountains with eating fantastic local food  
  


***Guide Karen leads a group of riders up a hillside trail in Andalucía. Photograph: Neil Armstrong***

The Serranía de Ronda is horse country. This mountainous region in southern Andalucía is just an hour north of the Costa del Sol, but a world away from its high-rise hotels. It is an unspoilt land of *pueblos blancos* (white villages), where every family keeps a horse in the garden, riding is a way of life and festivals are centred on displays of equestrian skill. A fitting place, in short, for a riding holiday.

Andalucía is also known for its cuisine, notably gazpacho, jamón ibérico, fried fish and, of course, sherry. **I was there to experience a new holiday, Gallops for Gourmets, that combines the twin pleasures of riding and food**. The trip was based at El Nobo, a stunning Moorish-style *cortijo* (country estate) in Gaucín, one of the white villages. I had La Bumba all to myself – a little stone cottage perched on the edge of the mountain with views stretching all the way to Gibraltar and, on a clear day, to the Atlas mountains and Africa.

**We spent four days out of seven on horseback**. My mount was Nube, a beautiful dun-coloured mare who liked to be neck reined; that is, ridden western-style with the reins loose in one hand. **For someone accustomed to the more uptight English style, it took some getting used to**. But some constructive criticism from my guide, Karen, helped me to get the hang of it eventually. At best, I felt like a cowgirl, galloping after baddies along the old smugglers' trails. In the 19th century they were used to transport contraband brandy and tobacco – now we were in pursuit of some highly prized produce of our own.

**We rode out to small farmers dotted around the mountains**, who produce some of Andalucía's finest ingredients. Karen is English but has lived in Andalucía for several years, and has befriended every horseman, muleteer and shepherd in the area. Local landowners have given her permission to ride through their property, so she is able to lead her groups to places where no other visitor can go and food producers no one else has access to. She knows the terrain inside out, and **frequently plunged down what looked like a sheer mountain drop but turned out to be a wild pig or goat track. This made for nerve-racking but exhilarating riding.**

The first producer **we visited was a beekeeper, who showed us his hives and gave us gifts of rich, dark honey, fragrant with wildflowers. Later, we ate it drizzled over fried aubergines**. Another day we rode through cork oak forests, where the trees' bark was peeled back as if they were slipping off a coat – a hallmark of the still-thriving cork industry. When the rains come, pigs are released to eat the acorns, which contribute to the delicate flavour of ibéricoham. Riders often catch a glimpse of the pigs, but the rains were late this year. **We picnicked on a ledge overlooking the valley, listening to the tinkling of cowbells and feasting on goat's cheese** and chorizo, chilled *fino* and refreshing *tinto de verano* (red wine and lemonade).

We visited Paco and Paca, a wonderful couple whose tiny farmstead housed a traditional bread oven, once used by the entire village. **We baked some bread too, and ate it with a stew of pigs' cheeks.**

Usually, we arrived back at El Nobo in the early afternoon, when **I would spend the hours before dinner sunbathing and reading on my wraparound terrace, sipping homemade lemonade and occasionally cooling off in my plunge pool** (the October sun was fiercely hot), or in the infinity pool in the terraced gardens, among citrus trees and bright flowers. The sound of the horses grazing beyond the screen of olive trees was soothing, and most evenings I lingered there until the sun dropped behind the peaks.

1. **What do we learn from this article about where Rachel Dixon has been and what she has been doing? (8 marks)**

This tells me I need to comment on the activities she’s participated in – there are likely to be many different ones so I need to try and summarize the ones that seem most important.

**I have put all relevant information in bold.**

This tells me I need to comment on the PLACE – not just WHERE it is but also WHAT IT IS LIKE. I’m going to aim to make about 2 or 3 points about this.

I have underlined all the relevant information.

When I read the information that has been underlined and printed in bold, it all adds up to give the impression of a very enjoyable holiday, in a beautiful place, eating delicious food. I want to make sure I convey that idea in my answer.

Also, when I write my answer, I am going to deal with the information in the order it happened in – starting at the beginning and working my way through to the end – rather than writing about the place first and the activities second.

***TRY IT YOURSELF BEFORE COMPARING YOUR ANSWER TO THE MODEL ANSWER ON THE FOLLOWING PAGE:***

**MODEL ANSWER**

Rachel Dixon has been on a holiday in the ‘Serrania de ‘Ronda’ which is a beautiful, rural area of ‘unspoilt land’ in ‘southern Spain’. The holiday is special because it combines horse riding with eating and enjoying delicious food as the area is ‘known for its cuisine’.

In the second paragraph she points out that this was a ‘new holiday, Gallops for Gourmets’ and she was able to enjoy staying in beautiful accommodation with wonderful views as her ‘stone cottage’ was ‘perched on the edge of a mountain’.

The holiday included lots of horse riding as we can see in paragraph three when she explain they ‘spent four out of seven days on horseback’ and we also learn that she wasn’t entirely comfortable with the Spanish style of riding which ‘took some getting used to’.

They spent the time riding out to different farms in the area and, on each farm, trying different local foods such as ‘dark honey’ which they ate ‘drizzled over aubergines’ as well as baking bread which they ‘ate with a stew of pig’s cheeks’.

The riding wasn’t always easy but it was very exciting as they ‘frequently plunged down a sheer mountain drop’ but there was also time to relax and unwind as she was able to spend time ‘sunbathing and reading’ or ‘cooling off in my plunge pool’.

***Although there was a lot of information that I initially underlined or highlighted that was relevant to the answer, I haven’t included all of it.***

***That’s because my answer provides a detailed and accurate summary of where she went (a beautiful, natural part of Spain) and what she did (rode horses, ate great food and relaxed) without missing out anything significant. Anyone who hadn’t read the actual article would still know exactly what it was about because all relevant details are covered.***

**Park life: the wildlife of Britain's cities**

Far from destroying the British love of nature, our cities have become urban oases for wildlife



***An urban fox in a town garden Photograph: Alamy***

Today, at the beginning of the 21st century, the British are more obsessed with nature and [wildlife](http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/wildlife) than any other nation on earth. Television programmes such as Springwatch have legions of loyal fans; the RSPB has more than one million members, while almost as many have joined their local wildlife trust; two out of three of us feed birds in our gardens.

And yet this national passion for wildlife is a very modern phenomenon. Its origins lie in a major change that occurred in British society around two centuries ago: the shift from a mainly rural society to a predominantly urban one, a change that at the time threatened to destroy our passion for nature altogether.

Until 1800, as many as three in four Britons lived in the countryside. A lucky few were rich landowners, living a life of leisure, but the vast majority were poor, and spent most of their waking hours working the land. If they thought about wildlife at all, it was probably with a very practical approach: was a particular creature dangerous, or simply good to eat? They certainly had little time for the appreciation of nature we take for granted today.

The industrial revolution changed our relationship with the natural world forever. Within a couple of generations, our ancestors moved lock, stock and barrel from the countryside into towns and cities. By the end of the 19th century, almost four out of five Britons lived in urban areas.

But they didn't forget their rural heritage. Indeed, Victorian Britons soon began to hanker after the life they had left behind. Excursions into the countryside, first by railway and later by road, became a regular part of people's lives. Societies such as the London Natural History Society, founded in 1858, and the West of Scotland Ramblers' Alliance, created in 1892, were formed to enable men and women to enjoy days out in the hills, woods and fields of rural Britain. By the beginning of the 20th century, an increase in mobility and leisure time saw a surge of interest in outdoor hobbies such as rambling and birdwatching; pastimes that would see an even more rapid growth after the second world war.

Yet, for many people, the occasional visit to the countryside was not enough; they also wanted to bring nature into their daily lives. Town and city parks were created, where on summer evenings and weekends they could enjoy a breath of fresh air in a green space. Later, towards the end of the 19th century and during the early years of the 20th, the demand for private green spaces created a growing network of urban gardens. As time went on and Britons became more prosperous, they sought to attract wildlife to those gardens by providing food, water, and places to nest. In doing so, urban dwellers were creating a vital refuge for the wildlife itself.

These places – many of them in the heart of our towns and cities – provide a vital oasis for Britain's wild creatures, a haven as important as anywhere in the British Isles for supporting a diverse range of plants and animals. Perhaps because of the wide range of wildlife found in our urban areas, and the frequency with which we encounter these city creatures, urban Britons are just as connected to nature as – arguably sometimes more so than – their rural neighbours. The countryside and those who live there no longer have a monopoly on nature.

Two hundred years after the greatest change in British society, landscape and nature began, we and the wildlife are together again. Yet this is not in some bucolic, rural idyll, but in the heart of our biggest and busiest cities. These are the places where Britain's wild creatures can still be seen, loved and appreciated in all their beauty, diversity and wonder.

1. **What do we learn from this article about the way British people feel about nature and how this has changed over the years? (8 marks)**

|  |
| --- |
| **QUESTION 2: PRESENTATION**  **8 MARKS**  **SPEND AROUND 13 MINUTES ON THIS QUESTION** |

**Skill summary: PRESENTATION**

* This question ***usually*** asks you to comment on ***the picture and the heading but may also ask about other presentational features*** such as text boxes, underlining, colour and so forth
* You need to pick out SPECIFIC details about the heading or picture – it’s not good enough just to say ‘it catches your eye’ or ‘it stands out’ – ***you must explain why***
* When analysing the heading look for interesting or important information as well as language techniques that have been used
* Remember to ***link anything you say to the EFFECT it has*** – what does it make the reader think, feel or do? How does it help the text to achieve its purpose?
* It’s very difficult to answer this question confidently if you haven’t identified ***the PURPOSE*** of the text first

**Question 2:**

**Explain how the heading, sub-headline and picture are effective and how they link with the text (8 marks)**

The headline ***is effective*** because it both ***informs and intrigues the reader, encouraging them to read the article***. By suggesting that a ‘fearsome’ dinosaur ‘died of a sore throat’ the headline ***surprises and amuses the reader*** as this doesn’t seem very likely or even possible and ***the reader will be encouraged to read the article to find out how it happened.***

The subheading ***is effective as it helps to clarify the heading*** by mentioning that a ‘parasite’ was involved but also ***by informing the readers*** that this information is the result of a ‘new study’ which implies something that was previously unknown and ***therefore encouraging the reader to read*** the article in order to understand what this new information reveals.

The size and angle of the ***picture make it effective – and link it to the heading*** – as it shows an enormous and ‘fearsome’ looking dinosaur skeleton towering over the people below. Using ***this picture reinforces the sense of disbelief*** that such a powerful and frightening creature could be killed by something as silly as a ‘sore throat’.

Linking this spectacular creature to a disease which affects ***pigeons increases the reader’s interest and links to the text*** which reveals in the final paragraph that a parasite could have ‘made it increasingly difficult to swallow’ and that ‘Sue may eventually have starved to death’ at which point ***we finally understand how it was possible.***

# [Are You Fit for Adventure? Three Simple Workouts to do Anywhere](http://adventureblog.nationalgeographic.com/2012/05/15/nols-are-you-fit-for-adventure-three-simple-workouts-to-do-anywhere/)

[](http://5601-adventureblog-nationalgeographic-com.voxcdn.com/files/2012/05/climbing-strength-bouldering.jpg)

***Ned Feehally, one of Britain's top boulderers holds a swing on a difficult testpiece in Snowdonia National Park, Wales***.

We adventurers often daydream of climbing rugged peaks, swimming in pristine high alpine lakes, traversing across blue-green glaciers, or trekking along rugged ridgelines with dramatic views … while we’re sitting at our desk eating donuts. Do you feel like reaching for your next adventure is just making your arms sore?

We’re working with renowned climber and adventure fitness guru **Steve Bechtel** of **Climb Strong** to develop a fitness regimen that can get even the couch potatoes among us ready to climb the highest peak in North America in one year. These workouts are being formulated for members of Expedition Denali specifically to train for climbing Denali in 2013, but if you want to follow along with the team you should start now with the following simple exercises.

No gym? No excuse. No weights? No worries. You can do these exercises in your birthday suit on your kitchen floor (although that is not recommended).

Start by gauging your base level fitness with the three tests below, and focus on achieving the listed benchmarks in about a month.

**The 3-Minute Step Test**  
Use this test to assess both recovery ability and muscular endurance in the legs. You’ll need a stopwatch, a 12-inch box, and a metronome. (Don’t have a metronome? Find one online or download one of several apps.) The idea is to step on and off the box, switching legs each step and keeping a regular pace for the entire three minutes. You’ll want to record your beginning heart rate, the total number of steps, and your heart rate one minute after the end of the test.

**The Push-Up/Squat Challenge**This is Bechtel’s personal favorite. There’s no timing, just keeping track of reps. Start by doing a push-up—the real kind. This means straight arms down to chest touching the floor. If you can’t do one this way, start with knee push-ups. Do one rep, then stand up and do a full squat. Then, drop for two push-ups followed by two squats. Continue this pattern, without rest, until you fail to execute a rep or need to take a break. Make sure you note the exact details of your push-ups (strict, knee, etc.) and squats.

**The 5K Test**  
Get on a treadmill and cover a 5K as fast as you can. Sounds easy, right? Let’s do it at a 5 percent grade. This will give your legs a better idea of what you’re up against on a mountain. Run or walk or do a combination of both. Then do it with a 10-20 pound backpack.

**One-Month Benchmarks:**  
• You should be able to take a step about every two seconds.  
• You should be able to hit 6-7 on the Push-Up/Squat Challenge. Already there? Improve your number over the next month.  
• You should be comfortable carrying a light 10-20 pound pack for 4-5 miles on uneven terrain, that should be about right.  
• You should be comfortable exercising 2-3 days in a row.

Stay tuned for your next workout in a month!

1. **How are the headline and picture effective and how do they link to the text? (8 marks)**

The key word – effective means what effect do they have? Why have they been used? How do they help the text achieve its purpose? What do they make the reader think, feel, do? It’s very difficult to comment on this if I’m not clear what the purpose of the text is.

I mustn’t forget to comment on this – there are connections between the heading, picture and text which I need to identify and comment on.

When I read the text there seem to be two ‘purposes’ – it’s clearly giving me information (informing) me about 3 fitness tests I can take to check how fit I am but it’s also seeming to challenge me to do them – persuading me. So when I look at the heading and the image I have these ideas in my mind.

When I look at the heading, picture and text I’m not looking at them as separate things – they are all part of ONE TEXT so I look at them as a whole. The examiner wants to know that I can see how they all fit together to make this text effective so that’s what I’m going to try and explain – the arrows I’ve included show some of the connections I have identified.

***TRY IT YOURSELF BEFORE COMPARING YOUR ANSWER TO THE MODEL ANSWER ON THE FOLLOWING PAGE:***

**MODEL ANSWER**

The heading is effective as it is informative and also adds to the persuasiveness of the text. By including the words ‘fit’ and ‘simple workouts’ the heading informs the reader that this text will provide information about activities the reader can do to get in shape with relative ease. Furthermore, the rhetorical question ‘Are You Fit for Adventure?’ is persuasive as it challenges the reader to think about their physical fitness and whether it is preventing them from living their life to the full.

The effect of the picture is to capture the attention of the reader by using a dramatic and exciting image of a climber hanging on to a cliff with threatening looking clouds in the background. There is an obvious link between the picture and heading as the heading mentions ‘Adventure’ and the man in the picture is doing something very adventurous. This is also effective in helping the text to achieve its purpose of informing and persuading as it suggests that the workouts being explained in the text will help the reader to achieve incredible things, just like the man in the picture has done.

The text describes adventurers who ‘daydream of climbing rugged peaks’ – just like the man in the picture, persuading the reader to believe that instead of daydreaming they can actually do these things if they follow these workouts. Furthermore, the heading calls the workouts ‘simple’ and when we read the explanations in the text, we can see that they are as they require ‘No gym’ and ‘No weights’. This informs the reader that they require no equipment to do these activities and persuades us to try them.

***There were many more connections I could have made between the heading, picture and text but again I have concentrated on the ones that I think are most important – the idea that these workouts are easy but can still help you to achieve great things. Both the heading and the picture suggest that, as does the text, because they are all working together to inform and persuade.***

# Grin and bear it: McEvoy lopes through the streets of BathI was swept along by a river of people as I carried the Olympic Torch

***Runner 93 - aka Sportsmail’s Olympics Correspondent Jonathan McEvoy - sees the beautiful city of Bath fall in love with the Games as he carries the flame through the West Country.***

 The greatest inaccuracy relating to the coming Games appears to be contained in the reference books. There the boffins put the population of Bath at around 80,000.

At least travelling through the beautiful spa city yesterday brought to mind one of the greatest lines written in the *Daily Mail*, when Vincent Mulchrone reported the scene on the eve of Sir Winston Churchill’s funeral. ‘Two rivers run though London tonight, and one of them is made of people,’ he reported.

Well, if Bath’s population is truly just 80,000 then every single one of them was out there close to the Avon, cheering and waving flags, as the Olympic torch relay called by.

Grin and bear it: McEvoy lopes through the streets of Bath

They were young and recording the day on iPods and smartphones. They were old and leaning on walking sticks. They were babies carried in their mothers’ harnesses.

They were peering out of sash windows three storeys up. Some wore school uniforms, some were suited and booted, others simply clad in T-shirts and shorts.

A swathe of middle England was falling in love with the Olympics before our very eyes.

Jason Gardener, gold relay medallist from the Athens Olympics, is Bath born. And as the bus carrying him and the other torch carriers pulled out of Bath University, the campus was lined perhaps a dozen deep. I swear his eyes were moist. That is, at least, how it looked to me.

I was runner 93 on Day Four as the torch relay snakes its way across Britain on its journey to the Opening Ceremony on July 27. Runner 93 is also a cynic when the situation demands. I should also add that I was running as a guest of Coca-Cola. I can assure you my approval cannot be bought for anything so soft, or fizzy.

But having seen the flame lit in ancient Olympia and having flown over with the lanterns last week, I can only attest that this was the most special moment.

Here in Bath, warmed in mood by an unbroken blue sky, I was reminded of what Daley Thompson (if you will forgive the name-dropping) told me as we drove over here. I asked that most infectious of sports enthusiasts what it would mean to him if he were selected to light the Olympic cauldron in the Stadium. ‘You know what,’ he said, aware the identity of that person is as yet unknown and will remain a closely guarded secret. ‘It would be better than being made a Sir or a Lord. It would be the best thing in the world.’

That feeling would be understood by my fellow runners yesterday. They all had their achievements to commend them: James Eynon, the teenager I succeeded in the relay, helped save his school from closure. Kate Pocock (nee Allenby), to whom I handed the flame, took the bronze pentathlon medal in Sydney 12 years ago and is now a teacher in Bath. One man had lost 16 stone and runs marathons. A mother had beaten a brain tumour and dedicates herself to charity work in Africa.

Humbly, I can only claim to have got the torch my 300 metres without incident.

1. **How are the headline and picture effective and how do they link to the text? (8 marks)**

|  |
| --- |
| **QUESTION 3: INFERRING MEANING**  **8 MARKS**  **SPEND AROUND 13 MINUTES ON THIS QUESTION** |

**Skill summary: INFERRING MEANING**

* You need to explain ***at least 4 different points*** but should aim to do more if you can
* This question requires you to ‘read between the lines’ meaning you have to ***show you have understood*** what the writer was suggesting in the text and the effect it has
* You must use a PEE structure to answer this question
* Be sure that when you make a point that it actually states something ***insightful*** about the text and when you comment make sure you are ***precise, detailed and specific***
* Make sure you have understood what the question is asking and ***keep your points relevant*** – a good way of doing this is to ***use words from the question*** when you are making your point
* Again, ***there are marks for the way your answer is structured*** so be sure to use connectives to link and develop your points

**Question 3:**

**Explain which parts of Pete Boardman’s story of the return to camp 6 you find tense and exciting (8 marks)**

***The first line of the story creates tension and excitement*** by emphasising that the narrator is under pressure. By telling us ‘A decision was needed’ we immediately feel a sense of urgency because even though we might not know what the ‘decision’ is about we know that he doesn’t have time to waste and he must act quickly. ***This feeling of urgency is increased even more at the end of the first paragraph*** when he writes ‘time was up’ showing that there is no longer time to think and action must be taken.

***Tension increases in the second paragraph*** when we see things are not going according to plan. He tells us ‘we went the wrong way’ and ‘there was still no sign of Mick’. Since we already know that there is no time to waste, ***this creates tension and increases the excitement*** because the mistakes they are making place them in more and more danger which is ***exciting and tense***.

***The story grows even more exciting in the third and fourth paragraphs*** as the weather gets worse and the conditions become more dangerous. The writer tells us ‘we were covered by a powder-snow avalanche’ and ‘the surging snow buffeted over and around me’. Because we already know their lives are in danger, this description of the worsening weather shows us that everything is going against them and their chances of surviving are shrinking all the time ***so the tension and excitement reaches a peak.***

***Finally, the tension is released and we feel a surge of happy excitement*** when we realise the men will be ok. In the final paragraph we are told ‘it was a miracle that we found the last of the fixed ropes’ and ‘stumbled into camp’. We are delighted and relived that the men have survived and excited that they have escaped this terrible situation.

# Ralston's choice

In the final part of our serialisation of his harrowing tale, Aron Ralston recalls the last hours of his ordeal in the Utah wilderness. After six days trapped by the boulder, he at last found the courage and the means to sever his crushed hand and free himself  
  


Aron Ralston prepares to chop off his own arm to free himself from under a boulder in Blue John Canyon, Utah. Photograph: Simon & Schuster

I watch dawn pushing its way into the canyon. It is Thursday, May 1 - day six of my ordeal. **I cannot believe I'm still alive. I should have died days ago. Without any task or stimulus, I'm no longer living, no longer surviving**. I'm just waiting. I have nothing whatsoever to do. Only in action does my life approximate anything more than existence. Miserable, I watch another empty hour pass by.

Top of Form

Bottom of Form

But I have to do something, despite the inutility of any action. I reach for my hammer rock. **Adrenaline channels into anger**, and I raise the hammer, in retribution for what this wretched piece of geology has done to my hand.

Bonk! I strike the boulder. Thwock! Again. **The rage blooms purple in my mind**, amid a small mushroom cloud of pulverised grit. I bring the rock down again. Carrunch! **I growl with animalistic fury** in response to the pain pulsing in my left hand.

Whoa, Aron. **You might have taken that too far**.

I've created a mess once again. To brush the dirt off my trapped arm, away from the open wound, I pick up my knife. Sweeping the grit off my thumb, I accidentally gouge myself and rip away a thin piece of decayed flesh. It peels back like a skin of boiled milk before I catch what is going on. I already knew my hand had to be decomposing. Without circulation, it has been dying since I became entrapped. Whenever I considered amputation, it had always been under the premise that the hand was dead and would have to be amputated once I was freed. But I hadn't known how fast the putrefaction had advanced since Saturday afternoon.

Out of curiosity, I poke my thumb with the blade. It punctures the epidermis as if it is dipping into a stick of room-temperature butter, and releases a tell-tale hiss of escaping gas. **Though the smell is faint to my desensitised nose, it is abjectly unpleasant, the stench of a carcass.**

**All I want now is to simply rid myself of any connection to this decomposing appendage.**

**I don't want it.**

**It's not a part of me.**

**I scream out in pure hate, shrieking as I batter my body** to and fro against the canyon walls, losing every bit of composure that I've struggled so intensely to maintain. Then I feel my arm bend unnaturally in the unbudging grip of the chockstone.

An epiphany strikes me with the magnificent glory of a holy intervention and instantly brings my seizure to a halt: if I torque my arm far enough, I can break my forearm bones.

Holy Christ, Aron, that's it. That's it!

I put my left hand under the boulder and push hard, to exert a maximum downward force on my radius bone. As I slowly bend my arm down and to the left, a pow! reverberates like a muted cap-gun shot up and down Blue John Canyon. I don't say a word, but I reach to feel my forearm. There is an abnormal lump on top of my wrist. I pull my body away from the chockstone and down again, simulating the position I was just in, and feel a gap between the serrated edges of my cleanly broken arm bone.

Without further pause and again in silence, I hump my body up over the chockstone, with a single purpose in my mind. Smearing my shoes against the canyon walls, I push with my legs and grab the back of the chockstone with my left hand, pulling with every bit of ferocity I can muster, hard, harder, and a second cap-gun shot ends my ulna's anticipation.

Sweating and euphoric, I again touch my right arm two inches below my wrist. Both bones have splintered in the same place.

I am overcome with the excitement of having solved the riddle of my imprisonment. Hustling to deploy the shorter and sharper of my multi-tool's two blades, I push the knife into my wrist, watching my skin stretch inwardly, until the point pierces and sinks to its hilt. In a blaze of pain, I know the job is just starting. With a glance at my watch - it is 10.32am - I motivate myself: "OK, Aron, here we go. You're in it now."

1. **Explain some of the thoughts and feelings Aron Ralston had during his terrible ordeal. (8 marks)**

This word is very important – it reminds me I need to show my understanding. The only way I can do this is by making points, supporting them with evidence and then analysing and exploring the quotes I have chosen. I must ***INFER*** meaning which means show that I have understood what the writer thinks and feels even when he doesn’t just come out and say it.

The question mentions two different things so I need to be sure I comment on both. Also, I want ***a range of DIFFERENT thoughts and feelings*** – in a text of this length the thoughts and feelings are likely to change so I must make sure I look at the whole text.

When I read the text I understand it’s about a man who is trapped in a terrible situation and the only way to escape is to cut his own arm off so I expect to find some terrible thoughts and feelings. But I also imagine that since he has been trapped for days and is about to die, there will also be some sense of excitement or relief when he figures out how to escape.

When I read the text, underlining or highlighting thoughts and feelings as I go***, I notice a CHANGE in the TONE*** – at first he seems angry, despairing even but as the text continues he grows determined before becoming excited. ***For a top answer I want to capture this change in mood by explaining how his thoughts and feelings develop – he doesn’t feel or think the same all the way through and I want to show the examiner that I understand that***.

***TRY IT YOURSELF BEFORE COMPARING YOUR ANSWER TO THE MODEL ANSWER ON THE FOLLOWING PAGE:***

**MODEL ANSWER**

Aron Ralston’s thoughts and feelings change during the course of this text. In the first paragraph he seems to feel despair, as though he has given up hope of escaping or being rescued. In the first paragraph he states that ‘I am no longer living, no longer surviving. I’m just waiting’. This implies that he has lost hope of escaping and is waiting for death to arrive

Despite his despair he forces himself to take action. In paragraph two he states that ‘I have to do something’ but the word ‘something’ suggests he doesn’t know what to do and doesn’t actually believe that anything he does will really make a difference. His despair and frustration turns to anger when he hits the boulder. He describes how ‘the rage blooms’ and ‘I growl with animalistic fury’. He is so frustrated with his situation that he attempts to destroy the boulder but when it doesn’t work he becomes enraged which gives the impression that he isn’t thinking clearly or logically.

Towards the middle of the text he realises that his hand is actually decaying and he is disgusted and repulsed by it. He thinks ‘I don’t want it. It’s not part of me’ and although this shows he thinks it’s revolting, it also inspires him as he explains ‘An epiphany strikes me…Holy Christ…that’s it.’ This exclamation shows that he has suddenly realised something he’d never thought of and is incredibly excited by it.

Aron realises he can escape by cutting off his own arm and rather than being terrified by the idea he is happy and positive for the first time in the text. He describes himself as ‘euphoric’ and ‘overcome with excitement’ which seems strange for someone who is about to do something so terrible but he knows he can save his own life and is thrilled.

***There is way too much information in the text to explain every thought and feeling he has so I have concentrated on giving an overview of his changing feelings throughout the text – despair – frustration – anger – revulsion – excitement – happiness which all adds up to give a broad, thorough answer.***

**Shark attack**

As I make my ascent the feeling that something is watching me is overwhelming and I keep turning around hoping to see what it is that is causing this feeling. The murky area between 30 feet and the surface seems as though it never ends. The visibility is less that one meter, fortunately there is no current. What seems like an eternity finally comes to an end and I reach the surface. The equipment that I am wearing consists of a set of triple air tanks that extend out past my body on both sides and a new item called an inflateable diving vest. This was the first time I had ever used the vest.   
  
I push my mask up on my forehead and try to locate the boat, it's about 100 yards away. I notice my partner Al reaching the boat and being helped on board. A 100 yard swim for me is not difficult, but what happens next makes it seem like it’s a 100 miles. With my mask on my forehead I roll over on my back, remove the regulator from my mouth and start to swim back to the boat. I am holding a camera housing in my right hand and my left hand is down along my side. After swimming half the distance back to the boat everything was going well until I feel a gentle tug on my left wrist. I thought maybe it was another diver so I look over but see nothing. At a second glance I see this huge pool of blood in the water. Events from this point on start to deteriorate at a rapid rate. I have no idea where this blood is coming from until I lift up my left arm and see this huge tear in my wetsuit and all the flesh torn away from my wrist. I can’t move my hand or fingers. My mind does not seem to register what’s happening until at that moment I see this enormous dorsal fin and tail directly in front of me and I know I’m in trouble. This is a 16 foot Great White Shark and he wants to eat me.   
  
This animal weighs in at about 3000 lbs and anything that happens from this point on to save me is either luck or in somebody else's hands. The shark comes in with tremendous force and grabs me by the midsection. Fortunately the scuba tanks that extend past my body prevent him from doing any major damage. Once he feels the metal he releases me. At this point I start to yell for help. The divers on the boat are now witnessing a nightmare in the making.   
  
The water around me becomes very calm and I feel as though the shark has left, but this was not to be. At that moment this huge mouth and head come out of the water and the shark grabs my left leg. Now I know that I am in a fight for my life. The shark pulls me underwater by my leg and starts thrashing back and forth. I’m about 10 feet underwater with no mask on and no air, and all I can think about is drowning. I immediately start to fight, and using my camera I hit the animal repeatedly on the nose and head and at the same time instinct and training kicks in and I pull the CO2 cartridge to inflate the diving vest and try to create some buoyancy. I continue hitting the shark, and during this time I remember saying the words ... “Please God make it go away”. I am not a real religious person, but I do attend church on occasion and I obviously believe in God because the most amazing thing happened at that moment. The shark let go and I floated to the surface. I start yelling again for help and my friend Al does the bravest thing a human can do for another. He goes the ultimate extra mile and puts his life on the line for me. He dives in the water and swims to me and tows me back to the boat without knowing whether the shark was still there or not. An incredibly brave feat.   
  
We have no idea how badly I am hurt, but I can attest to the fact that there is a tremendous amount of blood in the water and I am going into shock.

1. **Explain which part of this story you find tense and exciting (8 marks)**

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| **QUESTION 4: ANALYSING and COMPARING THE EFFECTS OF LANGUAGE**  **16 MARKS**  **SPEND AROUND 21 MINUTES ON THIS QUESTION** |

**Skill summary: ANALYSING and COMPARING THE EFFECTS OF LANGUAGE**

* FIND examples of language and ***analyse their effect on the reader*** and ***how the language helps the text achieve its purpose***
* You must ANALYSE each example of language using clear point, evidence, explanation paragraphs
* Your explanation and analysis must be as detailed and clear as possible
* You must ***link your analysis to the writer’s PURPOSE***
* You must use clear paragraphs and ***discourse markers*** to structure your answer and also to ***make comparisons*** between the texts
* Write a ***MINIMUM of FOUR*** paragraphs, each focused on comparing a different type of language
* Make sure that you comment on ***a variety of different language techniques***

**Question 4:**

**Compare the different ways in which language is used for effect in the two texts. Give some examples and analyse what the effects are.**

Source 3 and Source 1 ***both use language to describe*** an adventurous experience ***in an entertaining, exciting way*** although ***Source 3 seems more tense and serious*** than ***Source 1 which is more light hearted and fun***.

Source 3 begins with ***a short sentence that shows urgency and creates tension***. By telling us “A decision was needed” the reader immediately knows that the men in the story are in danger and under pressure which creates tension from the beginning. On the other hand, ***Source 1 begins with a joke*** when the guide tells them that there are only two rules – ‘stay in the boat’ and ‘stay in the boat’. While ***this is quite light hearted*** and suggests that this article won’t be as serious as source 3 ***it does also emphasise that there is going to be some action and danger in this text.***

In Source 3 the writer continues ***using language to build the tension*** by focusing on time ticking away. He writes ‘time was up’ and ‘it was now half past 4’ to remind us that the men were racing against the clock and the later it got the more danger they were in. In contrast, ***Source 1 uses facts to inform*** us of the details of the trip. We are told it was a “13 day, 225 mile trip”. Although this is not particularly exciting ***it does inform us that this trip will be a challenging and difficult experience*** and we are interested in finding out how the writer copes.

The writer of ***Source 3 continues to create tension by using emotive language*** to show how the men become increasingly scared as things continue to go wrong. By describing the situation as a ‘tragedy’ we can see that something awful is happening and we know the men are afraid because he describes his ‘panic’ showing that they are afraid they might be killed. Although ***Source 1 also uses emotive language to show that rafting is dangerous and exciting*** – she uses words like ‘plunging’ and ‘screaming’ - ***she also uses figurative language to show how fun it is***. She describes the experience as ‘Disneyland-like” and a ‘roller-coaster ride’ which shows us that although there was some danger, it was also a magical, fun filled and enjoyable experience and not life threatening like the adventure described in Source 3.

Finally, at the end of each Source ***both writers use language to show their relief and happiness*** when their adventures end. In Source 3 the writer calls their survival a ‘miracle’ and describes how he ‘burst into tears’ which relieves the tension that has been built up as we realise the narrator is safe and has survived his ordeal. Similarly, Source 1 ends happily as the writer claims she was ‘exhilarated’ and wanted to ‘become a river guide’ showing that she thoroughly enjoyed the experience and would love to do it again.

**TYPES OF LANGUAGE THAT MIGHT BE MENTIONED IN QUESTION 4:**

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| **TYPE OF LANGUAGE:** | **KEY WORDS THAT CAN DESCRIBE EXAMPLES OF THIS LANGUAGE:** | **SOME TECHNIQUES YOU MIGHT FIND** |
| 1. Informative language / writing to inform | FACTUAL AUTHORITATIVE TRUSTWORTHY SERIOUS | Facts  Statistic  Quotes |
| 1. Persuasive language / writing to persuade | CONVINCING EMOTIVE CATCHY MEMORABLE | Opinions  Facts  Emotive language  Repetition  Rhetorical question  Direct address |
| 1. Descriptive language / writing to describe | DRAMATIC VIVID LIVELY EMOTIVE | Imagery  Metaphor  Simile  Alliteration  Onomatopoeia  Personification  Adverbs  Adjectives |
| 1. Writing that shows someone’s point of view | PERSONAL EMOTIVE  BIASED | Personal pronouns |
| 1. Entertaining writing / writing to entertain | HUMOUROUS LIVELY CATCHY  INTRIGUING  SURPRISING | Jokes  Puns  Rhyme  Imagery  Hyperbole  Sarcasm |
| 1. Dramatic / tense / suspenseful writing | EXCITING  TENSE  DRAMATIC  SHOCKING | Short sentences  Well chosen verbs |
| 1. Emotive writing | HAPPY  DELIGHTED  THRILLED  MISERABLE  OPTIMISTIC  PESSIMISTIC |  |
| 1. Advice | REASSURING  COMFORTING  SUGGESTING  ENCOURAGING  POLITE | Direct address  Modals (could, would, should) |

# Tsunamis

## Killer Waves



Photograph by Deshakalyan Chowdhury/AFP/Getty Images

A tsunami is a **series of ocean waves that sends surges of water, sometimes reaching heights** of **over 100 feet (30.5 meters),** onto land. These **walls of water can cause widespread destruction** when they **crash** ashore.

These **awe-inspiring waves** are typically caused by large, undersea earthquakes at tectonic plate boundaries. When the ocean floor at a plate boundary rises or falls suddenly it displaces the water above it and **launches the rolling waves** that will become a tsunami.

Most tsunamis, about 80 percent, happen within the Pacific Ocean’s “Ring of Fire,” a geologically active area where tectonic shifts make volcanoes and earthquakes common.

Tsunamis may also be caused by underwater landslides or volcanic eruptions. They may even be launched, as they frequently were in Earth’s ancient past, by the impact of a large meteorite **plunging** into an ocean.

**Tsunamis race across the sea** at up **to 500 miles (805 kilometers) an hour**—about **as fast as a jet airplane.** At that pace they can cross the entire expanse of the Pacific Ocean in less than a day. And their long wavelengths mean they lose very little energy along the way.

In deep ocean, tsunami waves may appear only a foot or so high. But as they approach shoreline and enter shallower water they slow down and begin to grow in energy and height. The tops of the waves move faster than their bottoms do, which causes them to rise precipitously.

A tsunami’s trough, the low point beneath the wave’s crest, often reaches shore first. When it does, it produces a vacuum effect that sucks coastal water seaward and exposes harbor and sea floors. This retreating of sea water is **an important warning** sign of a tsunami, because the wave’s crest and its enormous volume of water typically hit shore five minutes or so later. Recognizing this phenomenon can save lives.

A tsunami is usually composed of a series of waves, called a wave train, so its **destructive force** may be compounded as successive waves reach shore. People experiencing a tsunami should remember that the danger may not have passed with the first wave and should await official word that it is safe to return to **vulnerable locations**.

Some tsunamis do not appear on shore as massive breaking waves but instead resemble a quickly **surging tide** that inundates coastal areas.

**The best defense** against any tsunami is **early warning** that allows people to seek higher ground. The Pacific Tsunami Warning System, a coalition of 26 nations headquartered in Hawaii, maintains a web of seismic equipment and water level gauges to identify tsunamis at sea. Similar systems are proposed to **protect** coastal areas worldwide.

**End of a Splendid Journey**

*Elizabeth Shutes, aged 40, was governess to nineteen-year-old Margaret Graham who was traveling with her parents. As Shutes and her charge sit in their First Class cabin they feel a shudder travel through the ship. At first comforted by her belief in the safety of the ship, Elizabeth's composure is soon shattered by the realization of the imminent tragedy:*

"**Suddenly** a queer quivering ran under me, apparently the whole length of the ship. **Startled by the very strangeness of the shivering motion, I sprang** to the floor. With too perfect a trust in that mighty vessel I again lay down. Some one knocked at my door, and the voice of a friend said: 'Come quickly to my cabin; an iceberg has just passed our window; I know we have just struck one.'

**No confusion, no noise of any kind, one could believe no danger imminent**. Our stewardess came and said she could learn nothing. Looking out into the corridor I saw heads appearing asking questions from half-closed doors. My friend was by this time dressed; still her daughter and I talked on, Margaret pretending to eat a sandwich. Her hand shook so that the bread kept parting company from the chicken. Then I saw she was **frightened**, and for the first time I was too, but why get dressed, as no one had given the slightest hint of any possible danger? An officer's cap passed the door. I asked: 'Is there an accident or **danger** of any kind? 'None, so far as I know', was his **courteous answer, spoken quietly and most kindly**. This same officer then entered a cabin a little distance down the companionway and, by this time distrustful of everything, I listened intently, and distinctly heard, 'We can keep the water out for a while.' Then, and not until then, did I realize **the horror** of an accident at sea. Now it was too late to dress; no time for a waist, but a coat and skirt were soon on; slippers were quicker than shoes; the stewardess put on our life-preservers, and we were just ready when Mr Roebling came to tell us he would take us to our friend's mother, who was waiting above ...

No laughing throng, but on either side [of the staircases] stand quietly, bravely, the stewards, all equipped with the **white, ghostly life-preservers**. Always the thing one tries not to see even crossing a ferry. **Now only pale faces**, each form strapped about with those white bars. So **gruesome a scene**. We passed on. **The awful good-byes**. The quiet look of hope in the brave men's eyes as the wives were put into the lifeboats. Nothing escaped one at this fearful moment. We left from the sun deck, **seventy-five feet above the water**. Mr Case and Mr Roebling, brave American men, saw us to the lifeboat, made no effort to save themselves, but stepped back on deck. Later they went to an honoured grave.

Our lifeboat, with thirty-six in it, began lowering to the sea. This was done amid the greatest confusion. Rough seamen all giving different orders. No officer aboard. As only one side of the ropes worked, the lifeboat at one time was in such a position that it seemed we must capsize in mid-air. At last the ropes worked together, and **we drew nearer and nearer the black, oily water**. The first touch of our lifeboat on that **black sea** came to me as a last good-bye to life, and so we put off - a tiny boat on a great sea - rowed away from what had been a safe home for five days.

...The stars slowly disappeared, and in their place came the faint pink glow of another day. Then I heard, 'A light, a ship.' I could not, would not, look while there was a bit of doubt, but kept my eyes away. All night long I had heard, 'A light!' Each time it proved to be one of our other lifeboats, someone lighting a piece of paper, anything they could find to burn, and now I could not believe. Someone found a newspaper; it was lighted and held up. Then I looked and saw a ship. A **ship bright with lights; strong and steady** she waited, and we were to be saved. A straw hat was offered it would burn longer. That same ship that had come to save us might run us down. But no; she is still. The two, the ship and the dawn, came together, a living painting."

1. **Compare the way language is used for effect in two of the texts you have studied. (16 marks)**

Every text has a purpose – so how does the language help it to achieve its purpose?

Why has the writer chosen those specific words? What do they make the reader think? How do they make the reader feel? What do they encourage the reader to do?

I must highlight similarities and differences in the language and the way it’s used. This means using comparative connectives

Language means ‘words’ so it’s essential to try and keep my quotes short and specific. Also, while I need to try and identify techniques used, it’s more important that I analyse them thoroughly.

When I read these texts the first thing I need to do is identify the purpose – I cannot explain the effectiveness of the language if I don’t know what the writer is trying to achieve.

The first text is informing me about Tsunamis – I know this because it uses lots of factual language. However, I also noticed that there is some descriptive language showing the power and danger of tsunamis so I want to comment on that as well.

The second text is telling a story – of a young woman’s escape from the Titanic. Stories are meant to be entertaining and also to describe an event so I am looking for language which describes and entertains me. There is lots of it. I also know this is a tragic event, and probably very scary for the narrator, so I look for language that shows that.

***TRY IT YOURSELF BEFORE COMPARING YOUR ANSWER TO THE MODEL ANSWER ON THE FOLLOWING PAGE:***

The first text, Tsunamis (text A) uses language to inform the reader about the causes and effects of tsunamis as well as describing their awesome power. The second text, End of a Splendid Journey (text B) describes the sinking of the Titanic using language which reveals the sadness and fear the narrator felt during the event.

Text A uses alliteration in the first line to describe what a tsunami is and at the same time show its incredible power. The line ‘series of ocean waves that sends surges of water, sometimes’ uses the repetitive ‘s’ sound perhaps to remind the reader of the sound waves make and therefore to engage our interest in the very first line of the text. Text B also uses alliteration in the opening lines although this time to highlight the shock the narrator got when the Titanic hit an iceberg. She describes how ‘Startled by the very strangeness of the shivering motion, I sprang’. In the same way as text A, this alliteration is used to engage our interest right at the beginning of the text by emphasizing the narrator’s surprise.

Because it is informative, text A uses more facts than text B in order show the reader how big and dangerous tsunamis can be. In the first paragraph we are informed that they can reach ‘100 feet’ and later in the text that they can travel at ‘500 miles an hour’. Both of these facts emphasise the power tsunamis possess and the threat they pose. Text 2 uses hardly any facts at all but there is one in the third paragraph which also suggests danger. The narrator mentions the ‘seventy-five feet’ drop from the deck to the water. This is a tremendous height and so the fact reminds the reader of what a life-threatening situation this is.

Both texts are similar in that they use imagery to show danger. The writer of text A uses the metaphor ‘walls of water’ to show how high, wide and intimidating tsunamis can be and also as simile – ‘as fast as a jet airplane’ – to show their tremendous speed. Similarly, the writer in text B uses a metaphor when she describes the ‘white, ghostly life-preservers’. By describing the life preservers in this way the writer creates images of death and dying and reminds us that her life, and those of the others on the ship, could end at any moment.

Finally, both texts are rich in adjectives and carefully chosen verbs although use them in slightly different ways. The use of adjectives and verbs in text A again emphasises the power of tsunamis. By describing using verbs like ‘launches’, ‘crash’ and ‘plunging’ the writer highlights natures destructiveness and implies that people are weak and puny compared to the power of the ocean. Similarly, in text B the writer uses carefully chosen adjectives to show the sadness and misery of what she experienced. Words like ‘horror’, ‘gruesome’ and ‘awful’ help the reader to imagine the tragic scene she is describing and understand a little of the emotion that those on the Titanic would have experienced.

***What I have tried to do is identify the main ideas that the writer is conveying (power, danger in TEXT A, fear, sadness in TEXT B) and pick out different types of language that are used to convey these ideas.***

***When I underlined language I thought was relevant, I thought specifically about different techniques and looked for examples. It was only when I began to write my answer that I thought about the similarities and differences between the two texts – it turned out there were lots of similarities!***

1. **Compare the different ways that language is used for effect in two of the texts you have studied.**

***If you want to practice this question, you can use ANY of the texts that have been included in this booklet. There are a variety of texts with a variety of purposes and a variety of different types of language so test yourself by identifying the different language techniques they have used and comparing them.***

**SECTION B: WRITING**

**Key techniques for success in writing section:**

* Have a clear and interesting opening and ending
* Use the correct form and features appropriate for that form – e.g. letter, leaflet, article, speech etc
* Use at least five types of punctuation – including lots of questions and exclamations to engage the reader, ellipsis to create suspense and pauses
* Use one or two ‘one-sentence’ paragraphs
* Check homophones such as: your / you’re / there / their / they’re
* Check apostrophes VERY carefully, this is the type of punctuation that marks are most often dropped for
* Check capital letters for place and people names
* Make sure you use clear sentences that make sense!
* Make your writing as entertaining and interesting as possible!
* Use varied and clear discourse markers
* Vary you sentences by starting them in different ways and having a mixture of long and short sentences where appropriate
* Use well-developed points backed up by evidence, examples, statistics, anecdotes and quotes
* Build good paragraphs by using a topic sentence and developing ALL other ideas in the paragraph around this sentence

**WRITING TO EXPLAIN**When you are **explaining** you have to give detailed reasons and justifications for the points you are making. Make sure all your points are backed up with clear explanations.

**WRITING TO INFORM**  
When you are **informing** you have to give your reader a range of factual information about a particular topic. Make sure all the information you give is clear and try and make it sound as interesting and entertaining as possible.

**WRITING TO ADVISE**  
When you are **advising** you are helping the reader decide what to do. You need to give them a variety of options and advice and do so in a friendly, sympathetic way – remember, you are making suggestions rather than telling them what to do.

**WRITING TO DESCRIBE**  
When you are **describing** you are helping the reader visualise something or somewhere or someone. You need to use vivid and lively language so they can clearly visualise what you are writing about, but also try to make your writing as emotive and entertaining as possible.

**WRITING TO PERSUADE**  
When you are **persuading** you are trying to convince the reader to do something or think something. You must write in an entertaining manner, using lots of persuasive techniques so that the reader cannot fail but agree with you. Be assertive and forceful.

**WRITING TO ARGUE**  
When you are **arguing** you must convince the reader that your point of view about a topic is the correct one. You points must be very clear and convincing, and backed up with proper evidence, which might take the form of statistics, expert quotes, anecdotes and other examples. You should also use counter-argument to anticipate opposing views to your own.

**SAMPLE WRITING TASKS:**

**Task: write a letter to the producers of a new TV series called ‘Dream Jobs’ explaining what your dream job is and why you should go on the programme.***Examiner’s notes: This is a highly original piece. As well as clear sentences, paragraphs and punctuation what is also impressive is that the candidate has thought of an original and unusual ‘dream job’, which makes his work stand out from the crowd. Finally, the candidate uses a sense of humour throughout to really engage and entertain the reader.* Dream Jobs Studios

78 Anchor Road

E57 1RQ

Dear Dream Jobs,

I am writing this letter to tell you about my dream job and why I would love to try it. I am not going to bore you by telling you about how I’d like to be a footballer; or a dancer or and singer because everybody wants to be these things. But I am unique.

Have you ever been in that situation where you have no milk to go with your cornflakes? Have you been in that situation where you have no milk in your tea? Or have you ever just wished for a cow so you could have more milk?

If you have said ‘yes’ to any of these questions you will not be surprised to hear that my dream job is … to be a milk man!

You should pick me, in fact, you HAVE to pick me and let me experience my dream job for a day. In the UK only one in 10,000 people are milkmen, whereas in the US (with their stronger economy) one in 9,000 people are milkmen. Look at that gigantic difference!

I want to be a milkman because it’s part of my heritage: my great-grandfather was a milkman; my grandfather was a milkman; my Dad is a currently a milkman and I want to be a milkman. Furthermore, I think this job will help me to get more girls’ numbers. Currently, I have never had the nerve to talk to a girl. If I become a milkman, however, I will get girls’ numbers left, right and centre! Every girl loves a good milkman!

If you would like to help make this country even greater, (even though that’s virtually impossible because our country is so great already) make my dreams come true by giving me my dream job! I promise you, I will become a role model for every single future milkman in this country!  
Yours faithfully,

Joe Jones

P.S. If my mother writes to you asking you about my ‘Dream Job’ application, tell her I said I wanted to be a doctor.

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| **Task: Write a letter to a newspaper persuading your readers that a job or your choice deserves a salary of £30,000.** *Examiner’s notes: This candidate wrote from the point of view of a teacher. This is a highly original piece. As well as clear sentences, paragraphs and punctuation what is also impressive is that the candidate has thought of an original and unusual ‘dream job’, which makes his work stand out from the crowd. Finally, the candidate uses a sense of humour throughout to really engage and entertain the reader.*  Dear Daily Mirror,  Is my job worth £30,000? In my career I have been taught skills to teach children, and to know when to make the right decisions. I have taken courses to teach with children with special needs; both gifted children and children with difficulties in learning.  I have struggled with stress because of my workload - even on weekends I don’t have time for my own children. I have put up with so much rudeness, aggression and sometimes even violence. Even during the evenings, the strain of each day takes its toll on my free time. I am sometimes so busy I don’t have enough sleep and I hardly ever get to see my friends – when I do, I am often so stressed and tired that I don’t really make the best of the time I have with them. My job means that I always put my students first, before myself and my own hobbies, before my own family.  How can you tell me my job is not worth a decent salary?  I almost died because I had to put myself in the place of a parent during a fight. I have had chairs thrown at me, knives pointed at me, valuables taken from me. All from these so-called ‘gangsters’ – I sometimes have 30 of them in a room to manage on my own.  And despite all this, there are people who say teachers don’t deserve a salary that would allow them to one day buy their own decent home, or take a nice holiday with their family!  To be honest, I think that if you were to see what I do in an average 10 hour day, you’d double my salary at the end of it. I can guarantee that by the end of two weeks working in my school you would want to runaway and never look back – you’d wonder why anybody does the job?  But we’re not asking for you to double our salary. We know times are hard and everybody is making demands on taxpayer’s money. We’re not asking for much….just a decent salary for a difficult job. A salary that will mean the best young people will want to go in to teaching and help our children achieve the best.  In my heart, the children in my school are like my own children. You can’t put a price on the care and love that a good teacher has for their pupils.  But if you could it would be more than £30,000 a year.  Yours,  **Sam Smith**  *Teacher, South East London* |

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| **Task: Write a letter to a friend persuading them to watch one of your favourite TV shows or films and explaining why it is so good.**  *Examiner’s notes: This is a really impressive piece which gets into band 4 (B-) because it’s so confident – the candidate uses personal pronouns (‘your nephew’) to make it seem really friendly and relaxed, and direct address (‘you know I’m normally…’) to make it convincing and appropriately informal. But he also uses sophisticated ideas to present his analysis of the characters (‘struggles to interact with women’) and backs up his argument with facts (‘rated in the top 20’). There’s also a good range of punctuation and sentences.*  Dear Peter,  How are you? I hope all is well. I’ve started watching a comedy series called ‘Two and a Half Men’. It’s absolutely hilarious. The young lad Jake reminds me so much of your nephew! That’s one reason why I recommend you start watching it. The fifth season is coming out next week, so you can start watching it from then. The programme is really interesting and funny. You know I’m normally into horror, sci-fi and action genres, not comedy, but this programme has changed that.  The main plot of the show is that a rich man, Charlie, lives with his brother, Alan. Charlie is an alcoholic but loving uncle who makes me laugh at everything he does! Even what he wears makes tears come out of my eyes. Alan is not as rich as Charlie and struggles to interact with women, which also has me in tears of laughter. But the best character is Jake; a young boy who is so adorable and everything he does is funny.  I’ve been watching the show for about two weeks now and it’s never boring. There’s always a moment that makes you fall off the edge of your chair. I’ll have to work promptly to catch up on the episodes I’ve missed.  I know you’re crazily in love with comedy shows, that’s why I had to tell you about this. I guarantee you will be cracking up and giggling with the thoughts of moments that happen in this programme.  In addition to how much I love it and how much YOU will love it, the programme is rated in the top 20 in America. I really believe you will love it.  The programme comes out at 10pm every day of the week. It’s got the whole package - adult humour, kid’s humour - everything! Comedy Central is where you can watch it. If you decide that you want to watch it from the very first episode visit the website [www.twoandahalfmen.com](http://www.twoandahalfmen.com) to catch up on other magnificent episodes.  I hope you enjoy it!  Yours,  Alex |

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| **Life for young people today is far too easy. They never have to fight for anything and don’t know how lucky they are. Argue for or against this statement.**  *Examiner’s notes: This is a really impressive piece which gets top marks. Lots of exaggeration and humour makes it a pleasure to read. Every paragraph contains a clear and well- developed point. There is also an effective use of counter-argument. Punctuation, sentences and paragraphs are accurate and secure and there are lots of questions used to engage the reader.*  For young people today, life is a walk in the park - when I was young I had to get out of bed at 4:30am to walk 10 miles to school, barefoot, often through the snow.  Without breakfast.  When lunchtime came I was lucky if I had a dry crust of bread to nibble on and a warm cup of tap water to drink. And you know what? I was one of the lucky ones! Life was tough when I was a kid; youngsters today don’t have a clue how easy they have it and what do they do? Moan, moan, moan and moan some more!  The problem today is that we live in a world where young people believe they ‘deserve’ whatever they want. They feel like society ‘owes’ them something. They watch TV and see people with no personality, no talent and no charm rolling in cash – the wasters on shows like ‘TOWIE’, the ‘X-Factor’ or ‘Made in Chelsea’ – and think ‘Yeah, I’ll have some of that!’ 17-year old footballers who have never even played for the first team are earning £50 000 a week and kids think that’s what life is like. There’s no understanding that success requires blood, sweat and tears because everywhere they look they see people drinking champagne and driving BMW’s without having done anything to earn it.  ‘That’s not fair’ some parents will say, ‘I teach my kids the value of hard work. I make them earn their pocket money by doing chores around the house and never give them anything they haven’t earned.’ And of course this is true – for some people! There will always be a handful of parents who raise their kids with the right values and beliefs but (sadly) these parents are a very significant minority. Most parents these days are as bad as their kids – why do you think 1.4 million people play the lottery each week? They want something for nothing…  Then there’s school. Don’t even get me started on school. When I was 16 you sat in silence for 8 hours a day copying notes from the board. If you whispered to your friend, you got caned. If you turned around in your seat, you got caned. If you looked at the teacher funny, you got caned. Today it’s the other way round – if a teacher even coughs too loudly in a student’s direction they get sued! At the end of the year you wrote exams and if you failed you did it all over again – when I was in Year 7 there was a 15 year old in my class who’d failed 3 times! Today? Teachers aren’t teachers any more; they’re performing monkeys who have to keep the poor little darlings entertained by juggling balls of fire while standing on their heads because if kids misbehave it’s the teacher’s fault for not making the lesson entertaining enough!  Yes, for young people today life certainly is a walk in the park. And they’ll never have to walk to school in the snow because when it snows these days, school is cancelled. It’s a disgrace and the next time I hear a kid complain about how tough life is, how much pressure they’re under or how dangerous the world is I think I’ll have to prove them right – by giving them a good caning! |