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Creative approaches to comparing texts

Activity 1: Using images to improve skills for Question 2

Source A

thislife pictures/Alamy Stock Photo

Source B

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Source A

What can you see? (denotation)	What can you infer? (connotation)
• Rows of desks • Posed photograph • Lots of children in the picture • Not smiling • A teacher at the back • Angled desks all facing frontwards • Single learning resource (books) • Windows offer some natural light • All boys	• Stern and disciplined • Joyless? • Everyone looks the same • Crowded • Learning would be formal and possibly repetitive • Fewer opportunities for interaction • Restricted and restricting • Lacks variety (in learning opportunities, resources and social interaction)

Source B

What can you see? (denotation)	What can you infer? (connotation)
• Children sat on floor with cushions/coloured block comfortable seating • Sat in a circle, facing each other • Children communicating • Colourful surroundings and displays • Lots of books and learning materials • Own clothes • Boys and girls	• Relaxed, more informal learning environment • Interactive • Co-operative learning • Immersive/stimulating • Possibly more fun • Individuals • Inclusivity

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Activity 2: Comparing student responses

Student response 1

Source A is of an older school showing rows of students – all boys – seated in angled desks which suggests an element of formality and control. However, in source B, which is of a more modern environment, the children are seated on the floor working on laptops and tablets. This picture suggests a more informal learning environment than in source A and looks both relaxed and productive.

Student response 2

Source A is of an austere Victorian school. The image shows rows of students – all boys – seated at angled desks. The regimented feel to the room suggests an element of formality and control, and the unsmiling faces add to the feeling of joylessness that is captured by the image. However, source B depicts a modern learning environment that is far removed from the blandness of source A. Here, the children are seated on the floor and leaning on soft, coloured blocks whilst using electronic resources. This picture suggests a more informal learning environment than in source A and looks both relaxed and productive – the children are talking to each other, and learning seems to be co-operative whereas in the other image learning might well be formal and possible repetitive.

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Connecting ‘like with like’: Examples

What can you see?	Level 1 inference	Level 2 inference	Level 3 inference	Level 4 inference
The ways that the children are seated	The children are **seated differently.**	In one picture the boys are all **sitting at desks** but in the other the children are **working on computers** so they have more fun.	The children are **seated at desks** which suggests their education is formal and controlled whereas the other children are **sit on the floor** indicating a more relaxed and informal approach…	…**the difference in seating** suggests a greater degree of regimentation in Victorian society and a lack of individuality, whereas modern expectations of children’s behaviour are more relaxed as they’re encouraged to express themselves as individuals.
The presence/absence of teachers	One has a teacher in, the other one doesn’t.	In the old picture the **teacher looks really strict**, stood up but in the other it’s **just children** which shows they get on with their work.	**The teacher** in the old picture **looks strict** and the children seem scared, whereas the absence of a teacher in the other picture suggests the pupils are more trusted..	…**the presence of a teacher** reinforces the importance of authority and control whereas **the lack of teachers** suggests pupils are expected to develop self-control and are trusted to behave without the need for discipline and fear.

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Activity 3: Interpreting differences between information texts

Due to copyright restrictions, fictional holiday brochure excerpts are provided for the purpose of this activity, but you could use authentic versions with your students.

Source A

Location – Playa de la Victoria

This resort has a sea view and is adults-only. It overlooks the Mediterranean Sea and is a short walk away from Playa de la Cortadura. The resort has beautiful views and is close to the promenade with cafes and bars. The lush swimming pool and huts are surrounded by palm trees with rolling hills in the background, providing the opportunity to enjoy the sunset.

Accommodation

One-bedroom huts have air-conditioning and heating. They have a lounge with a phone, safe, satellite TV, a coffee machine, a fridge and a hairdryer.

Facilities

One pool and one jacuzzi
Solarium with deck chairs & parasols
Bar and restaurant with show cooking
Sauna
Tennis and badminton courts
Beach volleyball
Crazy golf
Laundry facilities

Your all-inclusive package

Includes breakfast, lunch and dinner every day, plus alcoholic and soft drinks, snacks and afternoon tea with cakes and sandwiches.

Rooms: 150 **Floors**: 0 **Lifts:** 0 **Transfer time:** 30 mins

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Source B

Location – Palma

The Playa de Palma is just 800 metres away and the restaurants are close by. The 4-star Hotel Elizabeth is in a wonderful position in the centre of Palma. The hotel has modern Mediterranean décor, giving it a homely, authentic quality. It boasts a range of amenities such as an indoor pool and spa, an outdoor pool, a bar and lounge and free Wi-Fi.

Accommodation

Rooms include en suite bathrooms as well as air conditioning and central heating. They also have satellite tv, piped music, a hairdryer and a phone. Tea/coffee facilities are available upon request.

Facilities

Outdoor swimming pool with a hydro massage whirlpool
Kids pool with a slide and wave zone (April-September)
Day and night time entertainment, with live musical acts twice a week
TV room
Bowling
Children's playground
Table tennis

Rooms: 220 **Floors**: 15 **Lift**s: 5 **Transfer time**: 45 minutes

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Activity 4: Writing a question

Student response

The hotel in source A is aimed at ‘adults only’ and this is reinforced by the various elements described therein. There is an emphasis on the aesthetic qualities of the location – with its ‘beautiful views’ – whilst the text also emphasises the location’s peaceful and relaxing qualities: the ‘one-bedroom huts’ are ‘surrounded by palm trees’ and provide opportunities to ‘enjoy’ the sunset’. There is a clear emphasis on peace and tranquility and the intended demographic is catered perfectly by the single level accommodation which offers minimum hassle. The relative calm and simplicity of the resort in source A is quite different from source B which prides itself on being in the ‘centre of Palma’ with ‘restaurants close by’ and thus conveys a sense of hustle and bustle, which will be enjoyed by the younger, family-oriented holidaymaker. The difference in the target audience is emphasised by the facilities on offer. Whilst source B has numerous adventure-related things to do such as ‘slides’ and ‘wave zones’ as well as a range of entertainment themes such as ‘live musical acts twice a week’, source A prides itself on its ‘bar and restaurant with show cooking’ and its ‘sauna’, ‘deck chairs and parasols’. These different elements are indicative of the target demographic: source A is geared for rest and relaxation, whilst the hotel in source B is all about filling every minute with fun and entertainment.

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Reading the sources

Activity 6: Reading the sources

Question	Source A: *Touching the Void*	Source B: *Climbing the Meije*
What do the writers focus their attention on? Think about events, places or people described.	• The weather • The passage of time • The physicality of the writer's pain • The feeling of camaraderie despite Joe taking out his frustrations on Simon and his haste to descend • Simon's psychological/moral support	• Focus on the natural beauty of the scenery • Her gratitude to Marius – compliments his strength and the attention he pays her • Some focus on the danger and her incredulity at surviving
How are the narrators similar or different? Do they exhibit specific characteristics that you might be able to comment on?	• Joe is a more experienced climber • Has to 'read' into Simon's responses • What is unsaid? What happens if Simon leaves him to save himself? • Resilient despite the agony	• Inexperienced – relies on Marius to guide her • Some humour • Sees the climb as an adventure • Unwilling to admit her inexperience • Modest – the climb is quite a feat, perhaps recognised by the exuberant welcome she receives on her return

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Question	Source A: *Touching the Void*	Source B: *Climbing the Meije*
How are the texts structured? Do they build up to a particularly important conclusion?	• Begins with a mix of optimism (things have improved slightly) and anxiety created by lack of time. • The increase in tension is commensurate with Joe's pain. • Urgency and pace quickens, suggested by dialogue exchange, for example. • Hanging conclusion. • Chronological.	• Begins in reflective mood; reveals her feelings about the climb at the start so reader is prepared. • Moves into chronological with some specific time references. • Episodic – pauses on moments of danger. • Clear conclusion.
What other prominent methods/language features do you notice?	• Semantic fields of battle. • Language of warfare reflects a male narrator, but also pits man in a battle with nature. • Dialogue is realistic. • Specialist vocabulary related to mountains and mountaineering.	• More moderate tone/language. • Humour. • Use of double negatives might suggest her own complicated feelings about the event. • Fewer examples of figurative language but some poetic description of nature. • Use of adverbs – 'dreadfully', 'awfully' betrays her class.
Why do you think the examiner has chosen these two texts? Apart from their subject matter, what do they have in common? What themes or big ideas do the sources engage with?	• The texts could be approached from a gender perspective, with Bell challenging notions of femininity. They reveal different relationships between the writers and their partners – source A portrays an equal relationship but one which is altered by Joe's injury. Simon has a personal interest whilst Marius' relationship is professional. Indeed, Gertrude is at pains to describe Marius' caring nature which also permits comment on attitudes towards gender. • Both sources reveal the resilience of humans in the face of the challenges of nature, as well as human determination to conquer these challenges. The importance of teamwork is also highlighted in both sources. • Reading them from the perspective of human interaction and relationships, Joe never doubts Simon's commitment, nor indeed does Gertrude doubt Marius' loyalty, although their motives are different.	

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Activity 7: Image analysis and ‘big ideas’

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Activity 11: Identifying similarities and differences

November 2020 Paper 2 Question 2

You need to refer to Source A and Source B for this question.

Both writers are accompanied by another person on their adventure: Simon in Source A, and Marius in Source B.

Use details from both sources to write a summary of what you understand about the differences between the two companions, Simon and Marius.

Source A (Simon)	Source B (Marius)
• is in charge • needs to get both men down and so has a lot of responsibility • is practical – gets things done • is keeping the pace; conscious of time • has a cheerful exterior – why? He wants to remain optimistic • is purposeful • considers teamwork – male/male	• is experienced • appears kindly but he has a job to do • always walking on ahead • is physically strong • does not have the same sense of camaraderie but does prepare her bed (gentlemanly or because it's his job?) • is not only a guide, but guiding an inexperienced female climber • has a reputation to uphold?

Both:

- adopt the role of leader (for different reasons)
- are respected/admired by their partners.

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Activity 13: Comparing student responses

The two student responses below are answers to Question 2 Paper 2 (November 2020 exam).

Both writers are accompanied by another person on their adventure: Simon in Source A, and Marius in Source B. Use details from both sources to write a summary of what you understand about the differences between the two companions, Simon and Marius.

Student A

3

Do not write outside the box

0 2 You need to refer to **Source A** and **Source B** for this question.

Both writers are accompanied by another person on their adventure: Simon in Source A, and Marius in Source B.

Use details from both sources to write a summary of what you understand about the differences between the two companions, Simon and Marius.

[8 marks]

In source A, Simon seems to show no empathy for the writer and his safety. The writer mentions how "despite my cries of alarm and pain, he had kept the pace of the descent going." This shows us that he does not care about the writer and refuses to acknowledge the pain that he is putting the writer through. In source B, Marius seems much more understanding and caring towards the writer, She mentions how "there were two places where Marius literally pulled me up like a parcel." which shows that he knows what he is doing and is willing to do any thing to help the writer, Unlike Simon in Source A.

In Source A, Simon ~~is also defect~~ also makes the writer go first despite his condition "When I looked up, Simon could be seen descending quickly." He only follows after and makes the writer lead them even though ~~he had~~ the writer had broken his leg. In Source B, Marius seems to be more understanding due to the writers inexperience with climbing and "always went ahead and carried a lantern" This makes it clear that he is ~~far~~ a far better partner for the climb.

Student B

Do not write outside the box

0 2 You need to refer to **Source A** and **Source B** for this question.

Both writers are accompanied by another person on their adventure: Simon in Source A, and Marius in Source B.

Use details from both sources to write a summary of what you understand about the differences between the two companions, Simon and Marius.

[8 marks]

In the first source the writer was accompanied by Simon who was very calculative and making decitions that would be perhaps beneficial for both climbers. His strategy making skills were represented by the description of him 'weighing up the possibilities', suggesting he was careful to make the best decition. He was taking the role of a leader as we see the narrator trusting him ~~much~~ 'it was Simon's decision'.

In the second ~~[illegible]~~ source Marius who was accompanying the writer was very helpful, thoughtful and caring. This is displayed by the fact he 'kindly put my ring', showing Marions cares about his partner's comfort and prioritises it contrasting to the way Simon was pushing the limit of his partner not considering his difficulty as much 'he didn't seem to hear me'.

Marius was shown to take responsibility for his partner and putting him first as he

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Do not write outside box

knew he had less experience 'literally pulled me up like a parcel, he was strong as a bear' this however is not the relationship and attitude the other ~~people~~ acompanient had, Simon was more demanding and determined 'Hauling of screeming for Simon to stop achieved nothing' emphasises his lack of thought whereas Marius in the second source was more tolerand 'called Marious calmly'.

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Vocabulary and 'levelling up'

Activity 14: Combing the vocabulary

MARK SCHEME – GCSE ENGLISH LANGUAGE – 8700/2 – JUNE 2020

0 2 You need to refer to **Source A** and **Source B** for this question.

Both writers are accompanied by another person on their adventure: Simon in Source A, and Marius in Source B.

Use details from both sources to write a summary of what you understand about the differences between the two companions, Simon and Marius.

[8 marks]

AO1
- Identify and interpret explicit and implicit information and ideas
- Select and synthesise evidence from different texts

This question assesses both bullets

Level	**Skills Descriptors**	**Indicative Standard** This indicative standard provides an exemplification of the skills descriptors at each level. It is not a model answer, nor a complete response, nor does it seek to exemplify any particular content.
Level 4 Perceptive, detailed summary 7–8 marks	Shows perceptive or detailed synthesis and interpretation of both texts: • Makes perceptive inferences from both texts • Makes judicious references/use of textual detail relevant to the focus of the question • Shows perceptive differences between texts	In Source B, 'local guide' Marius is 'hired' and therefore paid to ensure the safety and success of the writer. She buys his experience and knowledge of the mountains to achieve her ambition. On the other hand, in Source A, Joe's companion, Simon, is involved in a 'partnership' which suggests that mutual respect, skill and collaboration are essential to ensuring their safety and survival. However, although one relationship is based on an equal friendship and the other is based on two strangers entering a business transaction, both companions take responsibility for the life or death of the person they are climbing with, which shows that both relationships can be just as effective.
Level 3 Clear, relevant summary 5–6 marks	Shows clear synthesis and interpretation of both texts: • Makes clear inferences from both texts • Selects clear references/ textual detail relevant to the focus of the question • Shows clear differences between texts	In Source B, Marius has been 'hired' as a 'local guide' to help the writer because of his knowledge of the mountain, but although he has never met her before, he is very loyal and supportive. Simon, the companion in Source A, is also loyal but he is climbing with Joe as an equal partner rather than a paid guide. Joe says 'the partnership had worked … effectively' showing that the close relationship between the two companions was really important as they were working together to survive after the accident.

Level 2 Some, attempts at summary 3–4 marks	Shows some interpretation from one/both texts: • Attempts some inference(s) from one/both texts • Selects some appropriate references /textual detail from one/both texts • Shows some differences between texts	The companion in Source B is a 'local guide' who has been 'hired' to help the writer climb the mountain which means she has paid him to help because without his help she wouldn't manage it. This is different to Source A because Joe and Simon know each other already and are climbing together, so Simon is not being paid to help like Marius is. In Source A, Joe says that it is a 'partnership' which means they work together well.
Level 1 Simple, limited summary 1–2 marks	Shows simple awareness from one/both texts: • Offers paraphrase rather than inference • Selects simple reference(s)/textual detail(s) from one/both texts • Shows simple difference between texts	In Source B the companion is called Marius and he is a guide who shows her where to go. It says 'hired a local guide'. This is different to Source A because the writer and the companion are both climbers not guides. The writer says they are a 'partnership' which shows they are like partners.
Level 0 No marks	Nothing to reward	

Note:

- If the quality of the response is L1 but only deals with one text, the mark must be 1 not 2.
- If the quality of the response is L2 but only deals with one text, the mark must be 3 not 4.
- A candidate has to deal with both texts and address the correct focus of the question to achieve L3 or above.

The focus of this question is the difference between the two companions.

AO1 content may include ideas such as:

- their relationship to the writer
- their actions
- their experience
- their knowledge
- their confidence
- their skills
- their decision-making

Vocabulary: Progression through the levels

Here are some words/phrases you may have selected from the indicative standard on the previous page.

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
• different • shows • climbers • guides	• different • means • paid to help • she wouldn't manage • know each other already • climbing together • work together well	• knowledge of the mountain • loyal and supportive • equal partner • close relationship • important • survive	• paid to ensure • safety and success • experience and knowledge • achieve her ambition • mutual respect, skill and collaboration • essential to ensuring • safety and survival • entering a business transaction • take responsibility • effective
• simple vocabulary used to explain concrete ideas • synonymising words in the question • lacks inference	• some 'Tier 2' vocabulary and phrasing such as 'manage' to suggest • some inferential comment	• Tier 2 vocabulary is more developed to include some abstract nouns such as 'knowledge'	• more sophisticated vocabulary with abstract nouns and noun phrases used throughout ('ambition', 'mutual respect, skill and collaboration') • use of more abstract 'big' ideas ('business transaction' • inferences drawn from the differences

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Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
They are like partners.	They work together well.	They were working together to survive after the accident.	They are ‘involved in a partnership which suggests that mutual respect, skill and collaboration are essential to ensuring their safety and survival.’

Whilst ‘partners’ sounds more effective than ‘work together well’, it is in fact derived from ‘partnership’ which is in the question.	Work together well’ shows some progression, however, as is typical of students working at Level 2, they are essentially synonymising the word ‘partnership’ used in the question.	At Level 3, there is more of a sense of understanding. The notion of partnership is unpicked and qualified by the reference to the necessity of working together to survive.	Although this Level 4 example uses the word ‘partnership’ as it appears in the question, the response is nuanced by the more sophisticated use of vocabulary that helps the student unpack further layers of signification.

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Activity 15: Comparing student responses

The two student responses below are further answers to Question 2 Paper 2 (November 2020 exam):

Both writers are accompanied by another person on their adventure: Simon in Source A, and Marius in Source B. Use details from both sources to write a summary of what you understand about the differences between the two companions, Simon and Marius.

Student C

3

Do not write outside the box

0 2 You need to refer to **Source A** and **Source B** for this question.

Both writers are accompanied by another person on their adventure: Simon in Source A, and Marius in Source B.

Use details from both sources to write a summary of what you understand about the differences between the two companions, Simon and Marius.

[8 marks]

In Source A Simon seems like a very happy person as we can see on the next quote "At this rate we should be down by nine o'clock, He said cheerfully" This is a reflect of his optimist personality as ~~he doesn't seem to be affect~~ his high energy doesn't seem to be affected by his companion's situation. He is the type of person that sees the light at the end of the tunnel. whereas in Source B Marius seems like a very peaceful person as he does things "kindly" and "calmly" since this is his job he doesn't get too excited or very cheerful as he is used to do this type of thing every day. He is not a person who shows his emotions easily so he is hard to read, and create ~~been~~ a rapport with.

Do not write outside the box

In Source A simon seems like a very unpatient person. when he says "Nothing to wait For. Come on" ~~the~~ This is a reflect of his active personality as he wants to get things over with very Fast and quick. He doesn't like to waste ~~the~~ time. On the other hand Marius is more slow and likes to do things on a practical step by step way as he always "went ahead and carried a lantern" this shows how he is alway prepared as he thinks things ahead before he starts to do something.

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Student D

3

0 2 You need to refer to **Source A** and **Source B** for this question.

Both writers are accompanied by another person on their adventure: Simon in Source A, and Marius in Source B.

Use details from both sources to write a summary of what you understand about the differences between the two companions, Simon and Marius.

[8 marks]

~~In Source A companion Simon was presented as an optimistic confident companion partener to Joe. This is presented with~~

The writer in source A presents Simon to be a very ~~resit~~ resilient and strong partener to Joe. ~~This~~ With the use of "it was Simon's decision," ~~from~~ ~~theam~~ it shows that Simon took the ~~leader~~ lead and made the important ~~decit~~ decisions between the ~~two~~ ~~two~~ two. Suggesting the authority he had in the situation and showing Simon to the reader as a strong ~~figure~~ fighter. In contrast to Marius source B Marius was a lot more ~~gentel~~ ~~gentet~~ gentale with his partener, he helped her out and made things easier ~~for~~ ~~for~~ ~~for~~ for her. For example, with "Marius had kindly put my rug in a ~~corner~~ corner of the floor" ~~s~~ p depict Marius to be a kind ~~and~~ and ~~rehabit~~ reliable person. He ~~also~~ also helped his partener to feel more comftable, presenting their close partenership. ~~Both Simon and Marius seem to have handled their~~ ~~their~~ ~~dangerous~~ ~~M~~ Simon was more tough and attentive while ~~Mrac~~ Marius appears caring and ~~sensitive~~ sensitive to ~~the~~ others.

Another ~~diff~~ ~~difference~~ ~~between~~ the ~~the~~ ~~companions~~ two is is that ~~is~~ they both handled ~~the~~ their dangerous experiences

Do not write outside box

differently. This is presented through ~~the use~~ "~~Simis~~ Simon had already started to climb down" showing how Simon was ready and ~~set~~ to go. This shows ~~sis~~ Simon to be a ~~p~~ someone who ~~is~~ is quick to act in critical situations. The writer continues to ~~use~~ use "his confidence was infectious" to show how Simon ~~was~~ is a very determined person and was competent enough to try to get ~~the~~ the and ~~himself to~~ himself back to the ~~base~~ camp.

However this contrasts to source B in where Morius was taking the ~~risks risk~~ risks to be able to safetly save his partener. This is demonstrated in "Morius remained the ~~corner~~ corner steadfastly holding ~~the~~ the rope tight" ~~despite~~ despite the very dangerous situation they were both in. Morius was ~~come~~ to ~~take~~ take responsibility and try to save his partener. ~~There is also also a contrast in~~ ~~Morius~~ Morius also shows off his strength when he" pulled me up like a parcel" showing that he is quite ~~a~~ strong, fears man. Which is similar in a way to ~~Si~~ Simon.

Overall both ~~accompanions~~ ~~we~~ showed to take care of their ~~carter~~ partenerss well, Morius ~~seemest~~ was a lot more calm and showed a strength ~~was~~. As where Simion ~~was~~ from the start ~~a~~ presents a strong, determined ~~characters~~ characteristics.

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Comparing perspectives – Question 4

Activity 17: Incorporating methods

The two student responses beginning on the following page are answers to Question 4 Paper 2 (November 2020 exam).

Compare how the writers convey their different feelings and perspectives on their adventures in the mountains.

In your answer, you could:

- compare their different feelings and perspectives on their adventures
- compare the methods the writers use to convey their feelings and perspectives
- support your response with references to both texts.

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Student E

Do not write outside the box

0 4 For this question, you need to refer to the **whole of Source A**, together with the **whole of Source B**.

Compare how the writers convey their different feelings and perspectives on their adventures in the mountains.

In your answer, you could:

- compare their different feelings and perspectives on their adventures
- compare the methods the writers use to convey their feelings and perspectives
- support your response with references to both texts.

[16 marks]

In source A the writer feels agony and weakness as he can't help to ignore his difficulty and ~~point~~ pain, [redacted] 'there was nothing I could do to bring the igony to an end', the use of the noun 'igony' highlights the great pain and the use of 'nothing I could emphasises the situation and the vornubility the writer has and his lack of controll perhaps saving him. This is again reinforced by the use of the adjective 'uncontrolably' to describe his leg shooking. On other hand this feeling [redacted] again represented in the second source, even though the writer enjoys the veew 'gorgeous, quite cloudless' his little experience makes him feel vornulable and lacking controll 'Marius litterally pulled me up' showing he is dependent on his partner again when he says 'I gave myself up for lost'.

Turn over ▶

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Do not write outside the box

Showing in both sources the writers find the adventure difficult and faking over Chetri. As Joe describes that him 'pressing my face into the snow, gritted my teeth, and waited.' was the only thing that temporary eased the pain and Gertrude Bell thought 'didn't seem possible that I could get up all the hill'.

However one main difference is the the way the writers finnish the extract. In source A we see Joe being optimistic for a second and seeing the appreciation of the partnership 'had worked effectively' but shortly after that his 'optimism evaporated', the jorney hasn't finised for him he uses the metaphor 'hummering torture' to describe his feeling towards the adventure suggesting he finds it cruel and exhausting. In contrast to that in source B 'the worst was over and the most tedious part has to come' proves the writer is now safe and towards the end we see him in his hotel room injoying

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the evening 'had cups of tea and read your letters' suggesting the adventure was not fun as he is 'not tired' even though he felt some difficulty completing the journey. This is clearly not the perspective the writer had in source A where he was 'in pain and 'dreadfully tired'

Turn over ▶

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Student F

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0 4 For this question, you need to refer to **the whole of Source A**, together with the **whole of Source B**.

Compare how the writers convey their different feelings and perspectives on their adventures in the mountains.

In your answer, you could:

- compare their different feelings and perspectives on their adventures
- compare the methods the writers use to convey their feelings and perspectives
- support your response with references to both texts.

[16 marks]

In source A, the writer conveys their gradual decrease ~~optimism and the~~ in optimism and

In source A, the writer conveys their adventure on the mountain as a challenging and painful experience. This is ~~the~~ illustrated by the ~~a~~ gradual decrease in Joe's optimism as since at the start they felt that they had "lost the sense of hopelessness" and were hopeful they could make it further down by the end the writer ends with a short simple sentence ~~com~~ " My ~~optimism~~ optimism evaporated". The writer parallels the "ebbing" pain of his knee with the optimism he carries. As the pain of ~~the~~ his knee gets worse he loses hope and the personification of the knee as a "hammering torture" with a "vengeance" shows the writer feeling ~~anxiety as the effect~~ hatred towards control over his knee and the noun "torture" emphasises how challenging and arduous his adventure is. ~~I'm~~ On the other hand, Getrude had a more positive experience as she comments on the landscape as being "gorgeous" and the "beautiful peaceful view" indicating how usually stunning ~~in~~ it looked compared to the "freezing blast of snow" ~~the~~ ~~of~~ the difference

Turn over ▶

0 9

IB/G/Jun20/8700/2

Do not write outside the box

visual description

comparison indicates how for Getrude the adventure was more scenic and has far less tension. Since, for Getrude the going down the mountain was "tedious" indicating how relaxed she was whereas Joe was in a life threatening situation. The short simple sentence "There was no difficulty" encapsulates Getrude's feelings one of excitement and ease. Joe's ~~[illegible]~~ Ione

In addition, the description of Getrude's pains as her "Shoulders and neck feels neither sore" directly contrasts Joe's "state of agony" he felt and the more serious tone in Source A, she was be "isolated" indicates the severity of Joe's injury and causes helps understand his vulnerability on the mountain relying on Simon for support, ~~[illegible]~~ compared the more relaxed tone in Source B despite as the stories in Source B are much lower B makes Miss Getrude ~~[illegible]~~ as "~~[illegible]~~" despite Getrudes belief.

There is a sense of irony as Getrude recalls the event as "painful" despite only having minor injuries, such as bruises and "painfully bruised" compared to Joe's brutal leg injury. highlights the more dramatic ~~of~~ effect the writers in Source B of their to create. Despite the brutal injury, ~~they~~ in spite of Simon knies ~~skull~~ ~~[illegible]~~ be ~~optimistic~~ for Joe. The hyperbole in the description of her ~~[illegible]~~ as "painfully bruised" indicates she attempts to impress the recipient of her ~~reader~~ cut from letter as the journey was "no difficulty". This shows ~~[illegible]~~

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Do not write outside the box

~~that she has to~~ enter ~~her~~. This is ~~the~~ perhaps utilised by the
writer to convey the soldiers ~~[illegible]~~ well the treble she
went through, at the start of the climb.

Turn over ▶

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Activity 19: Student responses

Below is a further response to Question 4 Paper 2 (November 2020 exam):

Student G

Do not write outside the box

0 4 For this question, you need to refer to the **whole of Source A**, together with the **whole of Source B.**

Compare how the writers convey their different feelings and perspectives on their adventures in the mountains.

In your answer, you could:

- compare their different feelings and perspectives on their adventures
- compare the methods the writers use to convey their feelings and perspectives
- support your response with references to both texts.

[16 marks]

Despite the idea that Simpson is a climber, which suggests that he loves climbing and has a passion for it, the extract displays the exact opposite. Before the source come up in Simpson's autobiographical account, ~~at~~ both Joe and Simon both had an ~~[illegible]~~ invading sense of hopelessness, as shown early on in the source where it says, 'we had lost the sense of hopelessness that had invaded us at the ice cliff'. This quote ~~can clearly be interpreted~~ shows the reader that after Simpson broke his leg there was a looking ~~[illegible]~~ suspicion from the two experienced climbers that there was no solution to the problem facing them ~~[illegible]~~. This idea is even reinstated later on in the source where Simpson appears to lack any hope of keeping his broken leg away from the snow, describing it as 'an impossible task'. The use of this hyperbole shows how Simpson is both extremely pessimistic about the situation he is facing and ~~does not~~ is lacking in the belief that he

Turn over ▶

0 9

IB/G/Jun20/8700/2

Do not write outside the box

can protect his knee. These ideas show an overriding idea that Simpson's ~~prospective~~ perception of enjoyment on adventures in the mountains has changed; he is instead feeling it is ~~torture~~ torturous.

~~On the other hand,~~ Bell also seems to believe that adventures in the mountain are not very fun, as shown when the letter reads: 'I'll tell you - it's awful'. Whilst this letter is likely for someone who Bell shares a bond with it also ~~seemingly~~ appears to directly address the audience - telling those who were considering mountain expeditions that the experience is not as good as it seems. However, later on in that same paragraph Bell explains ~~how she is~~ that 'fortunately' she did not turn away from the challenge she was facing; also saying that she could 'look back on it in complete satisfaction'. This shows that Gertrude is thankful she was able to experience ~~a~~ climbing a mountain while also giving the impression to the reader that it is something she will look back on fondly for the rest of her ~~life~~ life, - ~~creating a happy~~ leaving the reader to feel happy for her success. This shows that overall, Simpson did not have an enjoyable experience adventuring in the mountains whilst Bell did.

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Activity 20: Using the 'hook' method

Below is a further response to Question 4 Paper 2 (November 2020 exam):

Student H

Do not write outside the box

0 4 For this question, you need to refer to the **whole of Source A**, together with the **whole of Source B.**

Compare how the writers convey their different feelings and perspectives on their adventures in the mountains.

In your answer, you could:

- ~~compare their different feelings and perspectives on their adventures~~
- compare the methods the writers use to convey their feelings and perspectives
- support your response with references to both texts.

[16 marks]

In both Sources ~~w~~ the writers have different feelings about their expierence. In Source A the writer uses lots negative emotive language to portray how bad ~~their~~ his expierence is. He constantly references "pain" and the weather to give an image to the reader about how bad mountain climbing is. However this juxtaposed by Source B where the writer describes himself to have 'high spirits' and the summit 'was gorgeous'. he does this to emphasise how fun and exciting mountain climbing is. from this we know the writer in Source A is trying to portray a negative image of rock climbing. ~~And the writer in Source B is trying~~ due to his bad expierence. However in Source B the writer portrays a positive image of ~~rock~~ mountain climbing because he had a particularly pleasant expierence.

Turn over ▶

0 9

IB/G/Jun20/8700/2

Do not write outside box

Both writers the weather to portray how they are feeling. In Source A the writer uses the weather to ~~make you~~ exagerate how bad his experience was. Describing it as "freezing blasts of snow biting into my face" the words ~~freezing~~ 'blasts' and 'biting' give connotations of the wild and warfare. Which are typically one sided. In this case it is one sided and he is on the losing side. He does this to give off a negative message about the weather because it has caused 'nausea' and 'pain'. How ever in source B the writer uses the weather to describe the beauty of the ~~mountain~~ Mountains. By stating that 'Clear stars and the Moon' ~~there are~~ the sky is clear giving him nothing to complain about and only good things to say about the sky and the mountain. He further reinforces this by stating that 'It wasn't really cold' and that he has 'high spirits'. He does this because he has had a great experience and only has good things to say about it.

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Activity 21: ‘Big ideas’, vocabulary and the ‘hook’ method

Below is a further response to Question 4 Paper 2 (November 2020 exam):

Student I (extract from a longer response)

‘There are also gender differences between the two writers’ perspectives. Joe and Simon are both male and seem to have an equal ‘partnership’. However, Joe’s perspective is not typically masculine as he lets Simon make the important decisions. His injury means that he is weaker and subservient and loses the right to take joint decisions. Simon takes on the dominant male role because Joe’s lack of physical strength diminishes his power in the relationship. Joe announces this humiliating realisation in a simple factual sentence: ‘It was Simon’s decision.’ In Source B, Gertrude’s perspective is more stereotypically female. She includes lots of domestic details about sleeping and washing, she comments on the views, and is happy to be lifted up the mountain ‘like a parcel.’ Using this simile turns Gertrude literally into an object rather than a person in her own right. However, it’s ironic that Gertrude is in some ways the dominant one, from a class and financial point of view, as she pays Marius for his services, meaning ultimately she has the power in the relationship, which was very uncommon for a woman at that time.’

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Student response commentaries

Activity 2

Commentary

Student response 2 uses the same ideas as the first one – the layout of the room and how the children are seated – but develops the inferences in more detail. Student response 2 picks up on more abstract ideas such as the harshness of the Victorian setting and explores these using a range of vocabulary that shapes the inferences into something perceptive. For example, response 1 uses the idea of 'formality and control' but the response 2 extends this by comparing this to a sense of regimentation which itself leads to 'joylessness'. The difference between the images referred to in response 1 is restricted to phrases such as 'more modern environment' and 'more informal learning environment'. However, response 2 goes further to connect the formality/informality binary opposition to a mode of teaching which, in Source A, may be less engaging.

Activity 13

Commentary

Student A is stronger on the interpretation of ideas in the individual texts than in the interpretation of differences between them. The student makes clear inferences about both Simon and Marius – that one fails to acknowledge the pain he is inflicting on his companion, and that the other recognises his companion's inexperience – but is only able to identify the differences rather than exploring them. The phrase 'unlike Simon' tagged onto the end of the first paragraph was an opportunity missed by the candidate to examine that difference further. The mark awarded was therefore at the lower end of Level 3.

Student B engages with a big idea of leadership, and makes detailed inferences about Simon's decision making skills, his strategic thinking, his calculations and the benefits of these for both climbers. These are Level 4 inferences. In the second paragraph, the student comments perceptively on the difference between Marius prioritising Gertrude's comfort and Simon's determination to push Joe as far as he can. This could have been more detailed and could have been matched with a more perceptive understanding of Source B, and for this reason, the mark awarded was at the lower end of Level 4.

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Activity 15

Commentary

Student C uses a diverse range of vocabulary to explain their understanding of the sources. They use adjectives such as: happy, peaceful, excited, cheerful, active, fast and quick, slow and practical. These are not particularly ambitious words by any means, but they are clear. The student's vocabulary also includes phrases such as: step by step, optimist personality, high energy, and create a rapport, which may be relatively familiar, but nevertheless contribute to the student's ability to explain their understanding clearly. The mark awarded was at the top of Level 3.

Student D demonstrates the student's wider vocabulary and demonstrates how the more sophisticated Tier 2 vocabulary provides a more nuanced and subtle understanding which meets the criteria for Level 4. Adjectives such as: resilient, sensitive, critical and competent, indicate a more perceptive grasp of the companions' characteristics. Equally, the use of abstract nouns such as: responsibility, authority and partnership, signpost that the student is engaging with big ideas, which again supports their progress into Level 4. The student was awarded full marks.

Activity 17

Commentary

Student E provides comment on a range of methods used by both writers, although is stronger on Source A. They refer to specific words, identifying the word class (not always correctly): the noun 'agony' and the adjective 'uncontrollably'. The comments explaining why they have been used and what effect they create are clear. The student makes excellent use of a comparison of the structure of the extracts with an explicit focus on explaining the contrast between the endings of both, and how they impact on the reader. Finally, the comment on the metaphor 'hammering torture,' is used effectively to explain clearly the writer's attitude to pain. The student was awarded the top mark in Level 3.

In Student F's response we see an even wider range of methods selected for comment and comparison, which are integrated and brought together in an impressive way. The student comments on the effects of short simple sentences, the use of parallels, personification 'hammering torture', visual description and hyperbole. In most cases, the student explains how and why they have been chosen by the writers, but these comments are not always as full or as detailed as they might be. There are also references to structural features such as contrasts, and the student is rewarded for the way in which they link the methods to the creation of either a serious tone or relaxed tone, depending on the text. The student was awarded a mark midway in Level 4.

Activity 19

Commentary

Student G adopts an approach to Source A whereby they trace the progress of the writer's fluctuating sense of optimism through an understanding of how structure has been used. The student makes references to the chronology of the extract throughout, using phrases such as: early on, before the source, re(in)stated later on etc. By tracking these shifts on perspective, the student secures a mark in Level 3 for their clarity of understanding of the writer's perspectives as well as demonstrating a clear understanding of the methods used. The mark awarded was mid-level 3.

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Activity 20

Commentary

The first page of Student H's response exemplifies a typical Level 2 response, with the student attempting to meet the demands of the different strands within the task. However, at the top of the second page, they use the 'hook' method to really good effect. The sentence 'Both writers use the weather to portray how they are feeling' sets them up beautifully for a comparison of the writers' perspectives which is clearly 'like for like'; explicitly engages with the concept of the texts as deliberate constructs, commenting on how and why the writers use the weather to create specific effects. The response was awarded a mark at the lower end of Level 3.

Activity 21

Commentary

Student I (an extract from a longer response) is explicit in adopting a conceptualised approach and has clearly been taught to read texts through a specific lens. By taking gender as a starting point, the student is able to interpret the writers' perspectives on their experiences and relationships in both texts individually but is also able to make comparisons on how one writer behaves according to gender stereotypes, whilst the other does not. Furthermore, the student develops their response to explore why the stereotypes might not fit the circumstances, and offers some historical perspective too, in explaining Gertrude Bell's position. The methods are understated but clear and relevant, and in both sources support the ideas; the vocabulary is mature, abstract and ambitious in places, but the perceptive comments are determined by the conceptualised ideas in the response rather than a particularly impressive vocabulary, demonstrating that this sort of response is not just the preserve of a few. The response was awarded a mark towards the top of Level 4.

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Reports on the examination

Here we have collated some of the most relevant comments regarding managing multiple texts that have appeared in the GCSE English Language Reports on the examination. The full reports can be found on Centre Services.

Paper 2 Question 2

- This question **assesses:**
  - the student's skill both in interpreting the implied meanings of texts and in synthesising ideas and evidence. These two key skills are weighted equally within the mark scheme (**June 2019**)
  - their ability to explore connections between the two texts and to infer meaning in response to a given focus (**June 2017**)
  - a student's ability to write a summary by synthesising and interpreting evidence from both sources, according to a given focus (**June 2018**).
- Students are expected to have absorbed information from the whole of both sources relating to this specific focus and bring the information and ideas together to consider either the similarities or differences, as directed (**November 2019**).
- The wording of this question include[s] the phrase 'what you understand about', which [is] intended to encourage students to infer meaning rather than simply summarise. It is vital that, in preparing students to respond to Question 2, it is made very clear that interpretation is at the heart of both key skills assessed here (making inferences and showing differences). This is true regardless of whether the focus of the question is concrete or abstract (**June 2018**).
- The **focus** of the question:
  - is likely to have a very narrow, discrete focus. There are two reasons why the focus of the task is deliberately narrow. Firstly, it enforces the need for students to select specific information and ideas from the wider text, allowing the assessment of those retrieval skills enshrined in AO1. Secondly, it ensures that there is no crossover with the comparative task set in Question 4, which has a wider focus (**June 2017**).
  - varies and could invite students to engage with an abstract focus (such as the behaviour of school children in November 2017), or it could involve a more concrete aspect of the text (such as the activities of the boys in June 2017) (**June 2019**).
  - (could ask students) to explore similarities rather than differences in the two texts.
- Within the framework offered by the Assessment Objective, students are expected to 'synthesise evidence' (which includes information, ideas and textual detail); this allows the selection and interpretation of similarities or differences to be equally valid. Although the focus of the question was on similarities, comments on differences were also rewarded by examiners where they were appropriate to the focus of the question (**November 2018**).
- Where students failed to maximise marks, it was occasionally as a result of their focus being exclusively on differences rather than similarities. While comments about differences can be credited as part of a discussion of similarities, students are reminded that they must focus on the question set. The focus on similarities rather than differences was chosen to give students the widest number of options (**November 2019**).
- Teachers are advised to continue offering students a breadth of non-fiction texts throughout KS4 and developing their skills in identifying similarities and differences across a range of different aspects, both concrete and abstract (**June 2019**).

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Quantity vs quality?

- Students do not need to make a large number of points: quality is more important than quantity. It is the depth and detail of comments which is rewarded rather than the breadth and range of comments. Some students wrote more than the two sides available within the answer booklet, continuing onto an additional page, but rarely achieved a higher mark as a result of their extended answer. The negative impact, however, was felt later on in the exam when some of these students inevitably ran out of time to write an extended response to Question 4, where there are 16 marks available, as opposed to the 8 marks available for Question 2 (**November 2017**).
- Improving the detailed explanation of a small number of inferences is more beneficial than making a larger number of questionable or less precise inferences (**November 2017, June 2019).**
- Encouraging students to write in detail is an approach well worth adopting, as it can often be the means of moving up a level. For example, a student working at Level 2 might typically attempt to make one inference, and then move on to make a separate point. However, by focusing and commenting further on the same point, the student is more likely to provide the explanation they need to meet the criteria for 'clear' at Level 3. By the same token, a student working at Level 3, by engaging in more detail with the same point and looking to extend and develop their comment with further inferences, is in a better position to move into Level 4. Coaching students in the patience required to add depth and detail to their responses can only be a positive way forward for all abilities (**June 2019**).
- At the highest level, the **most successful responses** students were rewarded for responses which were perceptive or detailed or, in some cases, both. Students can offer interpretation which is perceptive: insightful, conceptualised or profound; or which is detailed: extended, developed or analytical (**June 2019**).
- **Finally,** students should be reminded to always read the introduction in the text box before reading the extract, as there is frequently contextualising information to help orientate students in advance of reading an unseen text. It is also helpful if students can practise reading texts where there is more than one character (**November 2020**).

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Paper 2 Question 4

- This question:
  - presents a demanding and multi-dimensional challenge for students (**June 2018**)
  - requires students to juggle the need to compare and comment on ideas and perspectives as well as methods (**June 2017**)
  - requires (students) to read and understand information and ideas from two substantial sources and focus on the writers' perspectives specifically. They are expected to bring together and compare the two perspectives, analysing the differences and linking these points of view to the methods used by the writers to convey them. There are three discrete key skills which contribute towards a particularly challenging comprehension task (**November 2019**).
  - requires a response which includes not just a demonstration of the student's understanding of the ideas and perspectives in both texts, but also a comparison of these ideas and the writers' different perspectives, supported by relevant textual detail, and an explanation of how both writers have used a range of methods to convey their points of view (**June 2018**)
  - builds on the inferential understanding and synthesis of ideas required by Question 2 (the 'what'), and the exploration of language methods required by Question 3 (the 'how') (**June 2019**).
- Each of the three preceding reading questions provides the student with practice and inspiration for this response, with the understanding of ideas introduced in Question 1, synthesis between texts in Question 2, and a focus on methods in Question 3. These questions offer the student stepping stones towards meeting the challenge of Question 4 (**June 2018**).
- The **focus** of this question**:**
  - is a more open than any of the previous three reading questions, allowing students to engage with the whole of both sources and to extract whatever they choose to illustrate their response.(**November 2017**)
  - is usually very straight-forward, encompassing the whole of both texts (November 2020)
  - is deliberately broad in order to allow students to select the details which have caught their attention (**November 2020**)
  - may vary according to the content of the sources, and teachers should advise students that this may be the case and to be guided by [the precise words of the question] in their response (**June 2019**)
  - will always be the perspectives, attitudes or feelings of the writers (November 2019)
  - could be on similarities. Students progressed naturally from an identification of the writers' similar perspectives to explore the different methods the writers used to present their points of view (**November 2018**).
- The **most successful** responses:
  - identify like with like – this is key to success in Question 4, but is also central to the synthesis required in Question 2, and is therefore a valuable teaching focus
  - compare 'like with like' is essential for meeting level 3 and level 4 criteria (**June 2019**)
  - move seamlessly between perspectives and methods in their wide-ranging analysis of the texts (**June 19**).
- Three points of comparison are sufficient to demonstrate clear or perceptive understanding (**November 2019**).

- The **less successful** responses:
  - tend to focus on ideas at the expense of perspectives; deal with the texts separately without making meaningful connections; and identify methods used without exploring their effect or how they contributed to presenting the writer's point of view (**June 2018**)
  - repeat the content of their Question 2 response (**November 2018**). The focus of Question 4 will always be different from the focus for Question 2; these two questions address entirely different AOs and therefore require different skills. Students therefore need to have a distinctly different mental schema in approaching each question in Section A (**November 2019**)
  - ignore the reference to methods in the task entirely. This omission left students offering a more two-dimensional comparison which engaged exclusively with the 'what' and not the 'how' (**June 2017**).
  - do not address the 'how' in this question, and their marks are reduced as a result. Exploring the methods used by the writers is an integral and necessary strand of this task and students should be prepared for this requirement (**June 2019**).

On formula/rigid writing structures

There was limited evidence of an overly mechanistic approach to structuring responses to Question 4, suggesting students were finding their own way intuitively through the task and, in many cases, producing coherent extended answers. It appears that, where students tracked their way through the disparate elements of the task step by step, they were able to meet the criteria for success (**June 2017**).

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Contact us

T: 0161 953 7504
E: english-gcse@aqa.org.uk

aqa.org.uk

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