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GCSE English Literature Focus on:

Managing multiple texts

Build on your students' assessment performance using our self-guided, modular training pack

Pre-reading booklet

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Using this pack

This pack is designed to be facilitated by a Head of Department/Subject Leader of English, but these materials can also be used by individual teachers for self-delivered purposes. Pitched with new and experienced teachers in mind, the materials can be used flexibly and adapted accordingly. You may choose to deliver the course in the sequence provided or use the pre-session reflection and route map to build a more bespoke session that focuses on the areas your colleagues (or you) are less confident teaching.

We have repurposed some content from our Hub network meeting materials and other AQA resources in the creation of this teaching pack, which is intended to help you deliver CPD sessions for teaching colleagues on GCSE English Language Paper 2. It will focus on the skill of synthesising and comparing the two source texts provided in this paper. These sessions will give your colleagues the opportunity to explore a range of practical activities, how it is assessed and consider implications for the classroom.

During these sessions, you'll explore a variety of ways to help students develop their synthesis and comparison skills in preparation for Question 2 and Question 4 on Paper 2. There'll also be opportunities for teachers to:

- improve their understanding of synthesis and inference skills (Paper 2 Question 2)
- reinforce their understanding of comparison skills (Paper 2 Question 4)
- explore the use of 'big ideas' in non-fiction texts
- consider the importance of vocabulary to help students improve their exam responses
- understand how a knowledge of structure can deepen students' appreciation of texts and as a writer's method
- read and discuss examiner insights and feedback
- acquire a range of teaching ideas, strategies and activities to support students
- compare and discuss typical features of different levels of response
- compare and discuss example student responses.

Before the session

- Ask your colleagues to each complete the pre-session reflection (page 9 in this booklet) and tailor the training session to the needs of your colleagues accordingly. The route map beginning on page 8 will help you plan which activities to focus on in the session.
- Each colleague should have a copy of the *Activities* booklet and the *Handout* booklet and access to the required exam papers and inserts provided within the pack.

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Running the session

- Establish the specific areas colleagues indicated they wanted to focus on.
- The presentation slides will guide you through the activities (a number of slides include additional notes for the facilitator).
- When delivering to a group, it may be useful to explain the session is not an attempt to prescribe how to teach English and instead provides possible ideas and strategies to trial with students.
- Encourage colleagues to undertake the activities to determine if they could work for their students as they stand or if they require adaptation.

After the session

- Ask your colleagues to each complete the post-session reflection to ensure the training has been successful.
- As a group, discuss how you can support each other to embed the learning in your teaching.

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Summary of activities

Below is a brief overview of the activities provided within the pack. These are written from the perspective of group delivery by a Head of Department/Subject Leader of English, but the activities can still be attempted when completing this pack on your own as part of your professional development. Activities are divided by section as identified in the presentation.

Section 1: What students need to do

This section provides a brief recap of the Assessment Objectives for Question 2 and Question 4 on GCSE English Language Paper 2. There are no activities in this section.

Section 2: Creative approaches to comparing texts

In this section, delegates will explore different ways of engaging their students in the skills of synthesis, comparison, and inference. Often students question the relevance of exam questions, but here we provide two specific examples of how the skills required for success in Question 2 of GCSE English Language Paper 2 are relevant to the real world. The first activity requires students to compare images from different time periods, and this can be easily replicated by teachers with other sources. The second part of this section focuses on comparing real-world information texts – in this case holiday brochures – to select appropriate information, read between the lines, and make appropriate judgements.

- Activity 1: Using images to improve skills for Question 2
- Activity 2: Comparing student responses
- Activity 3: Interpreting differences between information texts
- Activity 4: Writing a question

Section 3: Reading the sources

This section is designed to improve how students read the sources and prepare for the exam questions. Too often, students don't take the time to read the material in sufficient depth or they ignore the source information and the context box. The activities in this section are designed to get students to think more carefully about their reading.

Furthermore, it's all too easy to see non-fiction material as 'stand-alone' texts. However, by considering non-fiction texts within a framework of 'big ideas', this section will encourage teachers to think about where non-fiction texts fit within their curriculum framework. This can lead to students offering more nuanced responses. Activities include:

- Activity 5: Using the source information and 'context' box
- Activity 6: Reading the sources
- Activity 7: Image analysis and 'big ideas'
- Activity 8: Connecting to the 'big idea'
- Activity 9: What are your 'big ideas'?
- Activity 10: 'Big ideas' in the exam

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Section 4: Synthesis and inference – Question 2

This section gives teachers more support on the skills required for Question 2. Activities include comparing student responses and looking more closely at the mark scheme.

- Activity 11: Identifying similarities and differences
- Activity 12: Referencing the text
- Activity 13: Comparing student responses

Section 5: Vocabulary and 'levelling up'

This section focuses on how a wider, more sophisticated vocabulary can impact upon a reading response. It examines different responses and explores how a more precise vocabulary can help students offer more nuanced responses.

- Activity 14: Combing the vocabulary
- Activity 15: Comparing student responses
- Activity 16: Vocabulary and extended knowledge

Section 6: Comparing perspectives – Question 4

This section gives guidance and support for preparing students for the demands of Question 4. We look back at some previous material, particularly the use of structure as a method to explore writer's perspectives and shifts in tone and mood.

- Activity 17: Incorporating methods
- Activity 18: Comparing structure
- Activity 19: Student responses
- Activity 20: Using the 'hook' method
- Activity 21: 'Big ideas', vocabulary and the 'hook' method

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Area for development

Do you want an overview of Paper 2 and a reminder of the AOs?

- Section 1: What students need to do Slides 3-7
- What is Q2 asking students to do? Slides 34-36, 38
- What is Q4 asking students to do? Slides 51-55

Do you want to improve students' responses to Question 2?

- Section 4: Synthetics and inference Slides 33-39
  - Activity 11: Identifying similarities and differences
  - Activity 12: Referencing the text
  - Activity 12: Comparing student responses
- Section 5: Vocabulary and 'levelling up' Slides 40-49
  - Activity 14: Combing the vocabulary
  - Activity 15: Comparing student responses
  - Activity 15: Vocabulary and extended knowledge

Do you want to help students improve their reading of the sources?

- Section 3: Reading the sources Slides 20-32
  - Activity 5: Using the source info and context box
  - Activity 6: Reading the sources
  - Activity 7: Image analysis and 'big ideas'
  - Activity 8: Connecting to the 'big idea'
  - Activity 9: What are your 'big ideas'
  - Activity 10: 'Big ideas' in the exam

Do you want some innovative approaches to teaching comparison?

- Section 2: Creative approaches to comparing texts Slides 8-19
  - Activity 1: Using image to compare skills for Q2
  - Activity 2: Comparing student responses
  - Activity 3: Interpreting differences between information text
  - Activity 4: Writing a question

Do you want to know more about teaching and assessing Question 4?

- Section 6: Comparing perspectives Slides 50-68
  - Activity 17: Incorporating methods
  - Activity 18: Comparing structure
  - Activity 19: Student responses
  - Activity 20: Using 'hook' method
  - Activity 21: 'Big ideas' vocabulary and hooks

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Pre-session health check

Reflecting on your teaching experience, rate your current level of confidence using the following prompts to complete the table below. Grade the area of development statements according to your confidence where 0 is not confident at all and 5 is very confident.

- What do you enjoy about teaching non-fiction texts?
- What do you find challenging?
- Which aspects of the assessment are secure and where do you need more clarity?
- Thinking of your GCSE teaching group(s), what level(s) are they currently working at and what's their potential? In which areas do they need more support/development?

Area of development	Confident – areas of strength/secure knowledge	Less confident – areas needing clarity/more support
Teaching the reading of non-fiction texts.		
Understanding the skills students need to succeed in Question 2 and Question 4.		
Assessment of Question 2 and Question 4.		

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Notes

Contact us

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

aqa.org.uk

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