

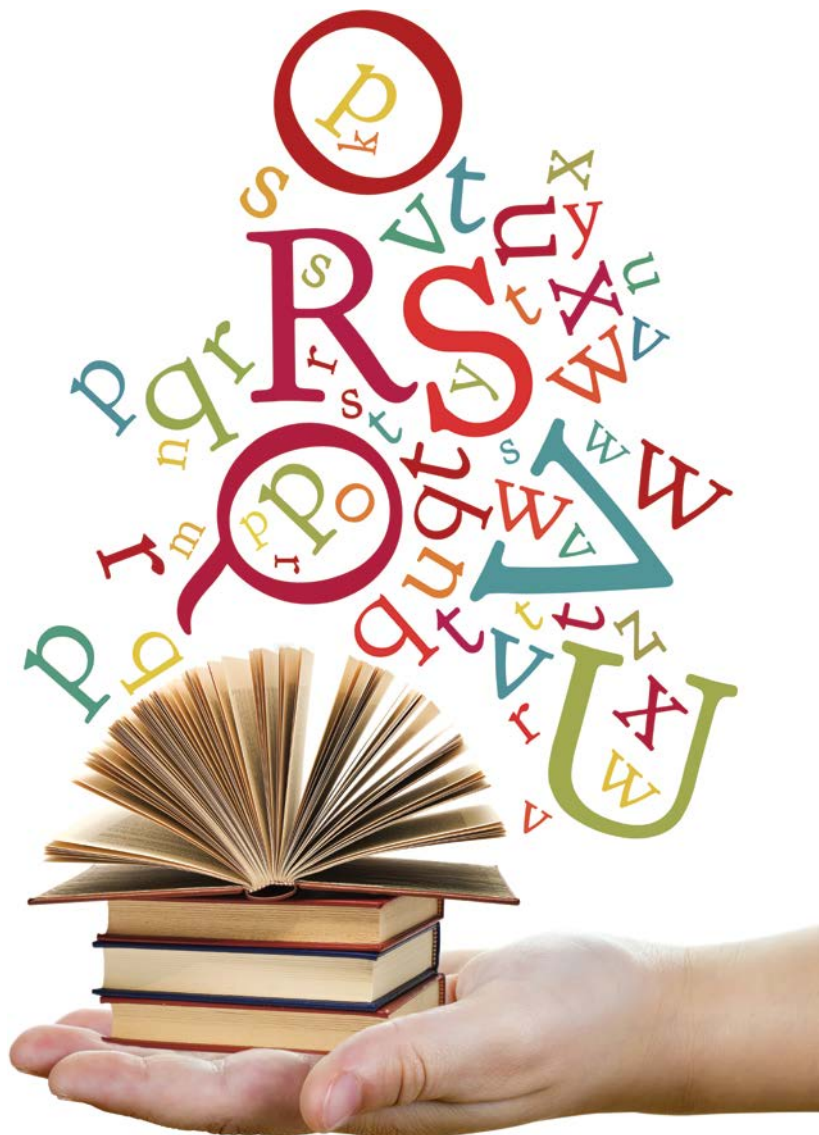
# AS AND A-LEVEL English Language and Literature

English Hub School networks, Summer 2017

Reflections on first teaching

Published date: June 2017

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# About the session

We understand the challenges you face every day. From changing schedules to exam pressures and the shift in assessment methods, we know that this year more than ever you need our support to help inspire and excite your students.

Free English Hub School networks are a chance for teachers to meet and support peers in their region.

The summer 2017 networks are for AS and A-level English Language and Literature teachers, and the theme is 'reflections on first teaching, and planning for the year ahead'.

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# Session slides



## Structure of the session

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Introduction – re-visit the specification's underlying principles

Transition and terminology

Textual Intervention

Reflection and future planning

Summer 2017 results

Support and resources available

## Introduction

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Underlying principles of the AS/A-level English Language and Literature specification

## AQA AS/A-level English Language and Literature is...

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A **holistic**, contemporary approach to the study of English

An **integrated** subject - two strands 'language' and 'literature' are pulled together/interwoven

Informed by academic field of **Stylistics**

**Coherent** – there's a thread running through the spec which is embedded in the key concepts:

- **Genre**
- **Narrative**
- **Representation**
- **Register**
- **Point of view**
- **Characterisation**
- **Literariness**

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## AQA AS/A-level English Language and Literature believes that...

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- the best form of literary criticism is grounded in **linguistics**
- the best analyses are rooted in the **language** of the text, are **focused** and **systematic**
- invites students to learn a **range of terminology**
- rewards students for **precision**
- there's **no hierarchy** of language levels

### **Discussion activity:**

Can you identify something you've done in your teaching that reinforces this ethos?

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## Link to AOs

These underlying principles are inherent in the assessment objectives

AO	Description	
AO1	Apply concepts and methods from integrated linguistic and literary study as appropriate, using associated terminology and coherent written expression	Ability to <b>describe</b> language features using terminology accurately, explore texts in a systematic way
AO2	Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in texts	Ability to <b>explain how</b> the features identified contribute to a sense of meaning – interpretation

**AO1 and AO2 are equally-weighted at A-level**

**Combined carry 56% of the marks for the qualification**

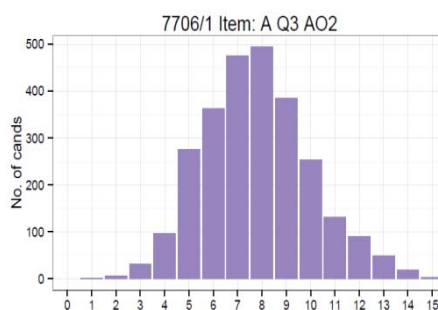
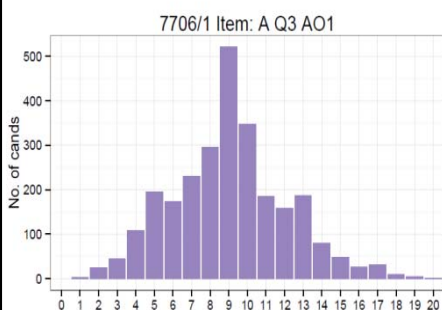
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## AS-level English Language and Literature Paper 1 Section A Imagined Worlds

The graphs below show how students performed on AO1 compared to AO2 on June 2016 AS-level Paper 1 Section A Q3 *A Handmaid's Tale*

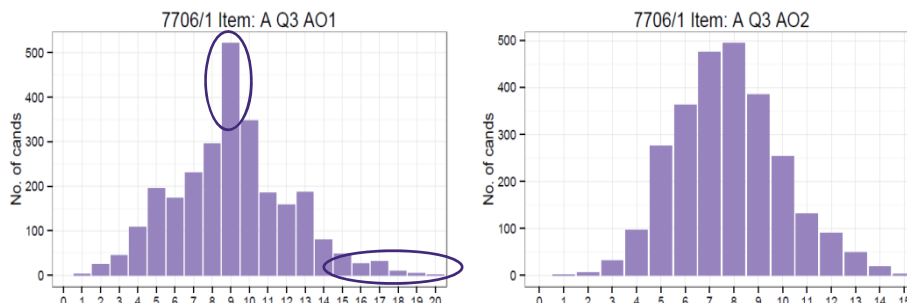
Look at both graphs. What can you deduce about students' performance on this question? What might these graphs tell us?



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## AS-level English Language and Literature Paper 1 Section A Imagined Worlds



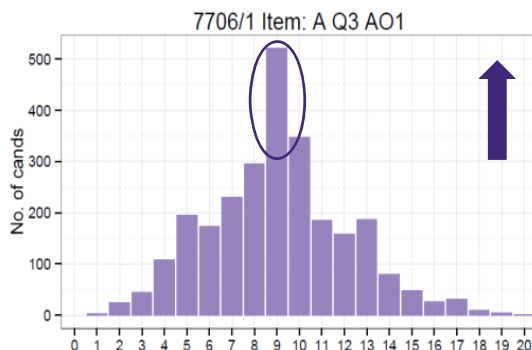
Q3	Max Mark	Cands	Mean	What this means?
A01 apply concepts and methods ... using terminology (description)	20	2672	9.05	less than half the marks
A02 analyse meanings (interpretation)	15	2672	7.77	marginally above half marks

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## Focusing on A01

There's a steep transition from mark 8 to 9 which marks the threshold between Level 2 and Level 3. The spike at 9 marks tells us many students were performing well enough to get into the bottom of Level 3.



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## Focusing on A01

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### Discussion

Look at the Level 2 and Level 3 descriptors in mark scheme.

- Can you identify a student in your class who is performing in this region?
- What are the typical traits of a response functioning at this level?
- What can students do to fall more securely into the level?

## Terminology and Transition

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### Building confidence with AO1

## Report on the exam

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“The overall impression from responses is that **AO1 is the more challenging assessment objective for many students**. The central ethos of this specification is that analysis of texts is best done through the systematic and accurate analysis of their language features. [...]

**Examiners noted that some students are tending to feature-spot**, using linguistic labels purely for the sake of it, rather than discussing how particular word choices create meaning. [...] Terminology needs to be used accurately as a tool to explore how meaning is created, rather than simply labelling.”

**Is this something you saw in your students?  
Do they find AO1 challenging?**

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## Glossary of key terms and guide to methods of language analysis

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### Discussion activity

Have you used this resource?

Have you shared this with your students?

How do you go about equipping students with the body of terms / critical vocabulary they need to know for A-level study?

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## A01 in action

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Let's look at a student response  
A-level English Language and Literature  
Paper 1 Section B Q9 *The Lovely Bones*

1. Read the whole student response
2. Identify any terms / concepts that the student has made reference to.
3. Consider how these have been used helpfully in answering the question.
4. Check the examiner's summative commentary.

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## The Definite Article

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Lang/Lit research brought to you by AQA

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## Building confidence with A01

### The Definite Article

Close reading: prose fiction

“If you’ve noticed something but you can’t get beyond naming and describing it ... think about leaving it out.”

### Activity

1. Read the blog post
2. How does this post and the concepts it presents relate to the set texts you teach and the spec as a whole?
3. Where might there be opportunities to use / engage students with this resource?

## Long term view: embedding A01 early

The National Curriculum aims to ensure that all pupils ‘acquire a wide vocabulary, an **understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions** for reading, writing and spoken language’.

The DfE provide a statutory appendix to support the programmes of study for English at KS1 and KS2 which lists the specific features/concepts students should be introduced to at each year in their learning.

### Activity:

Can you categorise the terms by the year you think they should be introduced according to the DfE?

## Terminology and transition round-up

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### **Closing thoughts**

How have you addressed this current shortfall?

How do you currently manage students' transition from GCSE to A-level?

## Textual intervention

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A-level Paper 2 Section A Writing about society

## A-level: spec at a glance

Paper 1: Telling Stories	Paper 2: Exploring Conflict	Non-exam assessment: Making Connections
<p><b>Assessed</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>written exam: 3 hours</li> <li>100 marks</li> <li>40% of A-level</li> </ul>	<p><b>Assessed</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>written exam: 2 hours 30 minutes</li> <li>100 marks</li> <li>40% of A-level</li> </ul>	<p><b>Assessed</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assessed by teachers</li> <li>Moderated by AQA</li> <li>50 marks</li> <li>20% of A-level</li> </ul>
<p><b>Questions</b></p> <p><b>Section A – Remembered Places</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One compulsory question on the <i>AQA Anthology: Paris</i> (40 marks)</li> <li>This section is closed book.</li> </ul> <p><b>Section B – Imagined Worlds</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One question from a choice of two on prose set text (35 marks)</li> <li>This section is open book.</li> </ul> <p><b>Section C – Poetic Voices</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One question from a choice of two on poetry set text (25 marks)</li> <li>This section is open book.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Questions</b></p> <p><b>Section A – Writing about Society</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One piece of re-creative writing using set text (25 marks)</li> <li>Critical commentary (30 marks)</li> <li>This section is open book.</li> </ul> <p><b>Section B – Dramatic Encounters</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One question from a choice of two on drama set text (45 marks)</li> <li>This section is open book.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Task</b></p> <p>A personal investigation that explores a specific technique or theme in both literary and non-literary discourse (2,500 – 3,000 words).</p>

Slide 8

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## Writing about society: Textual intervention

### Highlight from the textual intervention guide

*“Students are not required to recast the base text into a different genre and do not need to be taught or learn different genres on this unit. The question will always ask students to write ‘an account’ and **students should use their learning from other areas of the specification** (most obviously on narrative structure and point of view) **to inform their writing**. A useful starting point would be to encourage students to **reflect on their learning from Imagined Worlds** (point of view, representation of character, representation of speech and thought and so on) **as a way of making writing decisions of their own**. **Students are able to shape their own writing in any way, and using any narrative strategies they wish** (dialogue, 1<sup>st</sup> and/or third person perspectives, implication, description) so as to reconfigure the narrative events from a different perspective.”*

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## Textual intervention in action

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Let's look at a student response

A-level English Language and Literature  
Paper 2, Section B: Writing about society  
Q7 and Q8 *The Kite Runner*

### Activity

1. Read the whole student response
2. Identify what the student has done well. What makes this a good piece of re-creative writing? (Mark scheme provided)
3. Check the Chief Examiner's commentary

## Textual intervention round-up

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### Discussion activity

How do you prepare students for the re-creative writing?  
Share teaching ideas/approaches.

## Reflection and future planning

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## Reflection and future planning

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### **Discussion activity**

Having taught the full course have you adapted your long-term plans/  
schemes of work?

If so, what have you changed / and why?

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## Updates

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- Guidance on NEA has been updated with more guidance on how students address secondary reading requirements
- [Teaching Guide: Choosing suitable texts for NEA](#)
- [The Definite Article](#) – new blog post
- Breakdown of AOs
- Interested in attending an Integrating English Conference? (November 2017 venue TBC – free event) Visit [www.integratingenglish.com](http://www.integratingenglish.com) for more information
- AQA CPD course 'English Language for Literature specialists' (new for autumn 2017 dates TBC)

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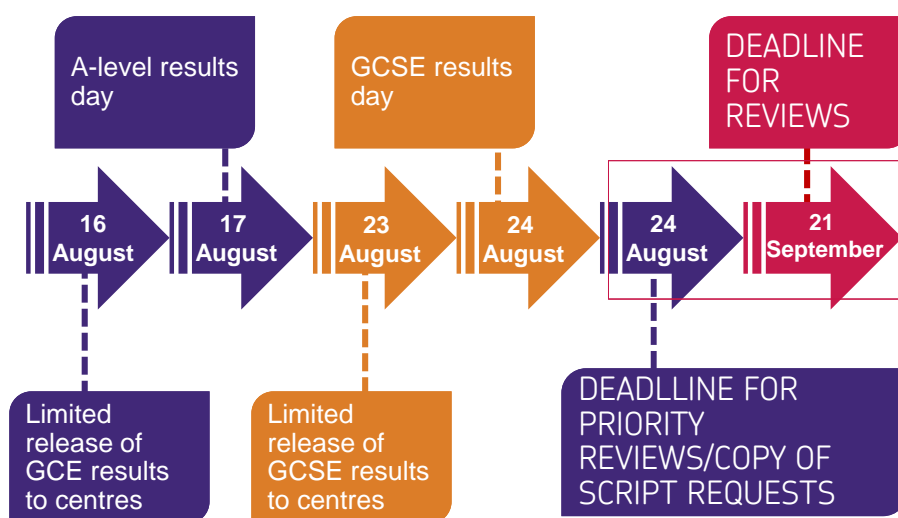
## Summer 2017 results

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## Results and post-results timeline



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## Restricted release and results days

### Restricted release day (Wednesday)

- day before results day
- available at 00:01
- [aqa.org.uk/eaga](http://aqa.org.uk/eaga) is the only place you can access our results e-documents and any late changes or amendments
- grade boundaries available (00:01 on e-AQA, 08:00 on website)
- Enhanced Results Analysis (ERA).

### Results day (Thursday)

- can be released to students 06:00 hours
- students must not receive results, by post or otherwise, prior to this time.

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## Support available

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- Customer Services team 0800 197 7162  
[eos@aqa.org.uk](mailto:eos@aqa.org.uk)  
  
<https://www.facebook.com/AQAforexamsofficers>
- Relationship Managers who are linked to your school
- Enhanced Results analysis (eAQA)
- Reports on the examination (eAQA)
- Longer term – feedback courses

## Enhanced Results Analysis (ERA)

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Online tool accessible via e-AQA

Provides instant exam results analysis according to school, subject, classes/groups and individual students

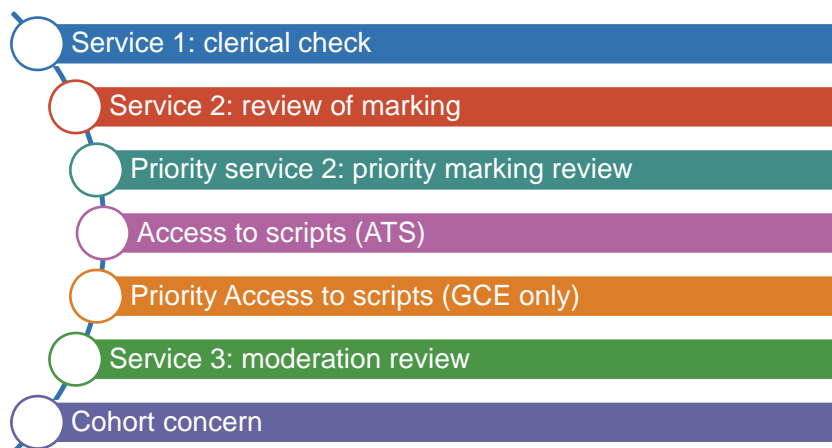
ERA will help you to

- see how students performed in specific topics
- identify students' strengths and weaknesses, so you can focus your teaching to improve performance
- spot year-on-year trends and measure achievement against other schools

User guides available via the website that show you how to make the best use of the resource

[aqa.org.uk/era](http://aqa.org.uk/era)

## Post-results services



## Priority marking review (A-level only)

A priority review is a **quicker service** for students who are concerned about a grade and whose place at a university or other higher education institution depends on the outcome.

It's available for AS and A-level students only.

Do not request a priority access to scripts first as this may mean cause them to miss the priority review **deadline 24<sup>th</sup> August**.

It takes up to 15 calendar days to complete.

It includes

- a clerical check
- a second examiner will review the paper again to identify genuine marking errors or unreasonable marking
- we'll make sure all the marks are counted.

## Post results services – 2016 Ofqual changes

In 2016 Ofqual published 'Decisions on marking reviews and appeals, grade boundaries and The Code of Practice'. The below URL is case sensitive:

[bit.ly/1TV9Em8](http://bit.ly/1TV9Em8)

Key points raised in the publication relating to post-results were:

- Exam boards are required to correct marking and moderation errors, but not otherwise allow marks to be changed.
- Exam boards are permitted to accept marking review requests directly from students.

## Ofqual changes – what they mean

**Exam boards are required to correct marking and moderation errors but not otherwise change marks.**

We will only review papers to correct genuine marking errors – we can't change reasonable marks.

Marks should only be changed where:

- there is a marking error (can be adjusted upward or downward to correct the mark)
- the original marking cannot be supported by evidence from the mark scheme and "the original marking represents an unreasonable application of academic judgement"

## Ofqual changes – what they mean

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**Exam boards are permitted to accept requests for reviews and appeals directly from students.**

We will not be accepting post-results requests directly from students in summer 2017.

We agree with the JCQ that it's really important that students have the right support when making decisions like this, and schools have the expertise to discuss these issues with exam boards.

## Enquiries about results: student consent

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Students must be made aware of the risk of mark and grade changes resulting from a marking review. **Marks and grades may be lowered.**

Schools/colleges should have the written consent from a student for any review of marking request (except review of moderation)

Schools/colleges should keep this consent on file for six months



## Extended review of marking

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Ofqual introduced further procedural changes for 2017 relating to the Extended review of marking service:

- The service is listed as 'Cohort concern'
- Grade protection has been removed by Ofqual. This means **grades can go down** when scripts are reviewed
- Head of centre will have to endorse the application, ensuring students are aware of the possibility of downward mark change
- Must be a full cohort review – we can't limit this service to those students who accept the new risk.

## Non-exam assessment (NEA): what to do if your marks are adjusted

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If your marks are adjusted we advise that you take the following steps:

- Carefully consider the comments on the moderation feedback form. (If you do not receive the feedback email [courseworkadmin@aqa.org.uk](mailto:courseworkadmin@aqa.org.uk))
- Look again at the marks you provided for the sample of work which has been moderated. This sample will have been returned to you and should be scrutinised against the comments on the form.
- If you ultimately wish to challenge the adjustment applied, then this can only be done through the post- results services (Service 3 moderation review)
- It's only available to whole subjects, not individual students
- It takes up to 35 calendar days



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Thank you

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# Lessons from the AS sitting, summer 2016

## Generic mark grid extract: AS Paper 1, Section A

This extract from the mark scheme for AS-level Paper 1, Section A (Imagined Worlds) is included as a handy reference for understanding areas of underperformance in the first AS series, summer 2016.

A01: Apply concepts and methods from integrated linguistic and literary study as appropriate, using associated terminology and coherent written expression		A02: Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in texts	
This rewards students' ability to apply concepts and methods from integrated linguistic and literary study to prose fiction, and specifically to the analysis of a specific narrative technique. AO1 also rewards the ability to maintain an academic style throughout the essay.		This relates to students' ability to examine the ways that meanings are shaped in their chosen text through the selection and exploration of relevant parts of the extract in response to a specific focus.	
Level / mark	Students are likely to:	Level / mark	Students are likely to:
L5 17-20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Apply a range of terminology accurately.</li> <li>Select language levels with sustained relevance and evaluate patterns.</li> <li>Express ideas with sophistication and sustained development.</li> </ul>	L 5 13-15	<p>Offer a thorough and open-minded analysis by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>interpreting the question focus subtly</li> <li>providing a perceptive interpretation</li> <li>making careful selections from the extract</li> <li>including wholly relevant ideas.</li> </ul> <p>Provide perceptive accounts of how meanings are shaped by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>investigating closely narrative techniques</li> <li>evaluating the writer's craft through close analysis of details.</li> </ul>
L4 13-16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Apply terminology relevantly and mainly accurately.</li> <li>Select language levels purposefully and explore some patterns.</li> <li>Express ideas coherently and with development.</li> </ul>	L 4 10-12	<p>Offer a good and secure analysis by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>interpreting the question focus relevantly</li> <li>providing a clear and sound interpretation</li> <li>making appropriate choices from the extract</li> <li>including ideas that are relevant.</li> </ul> <p>Offer a clear account of how meanings are shaped by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>exploring how narrative techniques contribute to meaning</li> <li>examining the writer's craft through close comment on some details.</li> </ul>

Level / mark	Students are likely to:	Level / mark	Students are likely to:
L3 9-12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Apply terminology with some accuracy.</li> <li>Select language levels and explain some features.</li> <li>Present ideas with some clear topics and organisation.</li> </ul>	L3 7-9	<p>Offer some analysis by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>identifying the question focus straightforwardly</li> <li>providing some valid interpretations</li> <li>making some successful choices from the extract</li> <li>including ideas that are generally relevant.</li> </ul> <p>Show some awareness of how meanings are shaped by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>explaining some ways that narrative technique contributes to meaning</li> <li>discussing the writer's craft through reference to some examples.</li> </ul>
L2 5-8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Apply terminology with more general labels.</li> <li>Select language levels with incomplete development and identify some features.</li> <li>Communicate ideas with some organisation.</li> </ul>	L 2 4-6	<p>Offer a partially descriptive/ analytical account by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>commenting generally on the question focus</li> <li>providing general interpretative points</li> <li>showing less certainty in selecting from the extract</li> <li>possibly including some irrelevant ideas.</li> </ul> <p>Show a partial or an emerging awareness of how meanings are shaped by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>commenting broadly on narrative technique</li> <li>making general observations about the writer's craft with little comment on how meaning is conveyed.</li> </ul>
L1 1-4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describe language features without linguistic description.</li> <li>Show limited awareness of language levels but may describe some features.</li> <li>Present material with little organisation.</li> </ul>	L1 1-3	<p>Offer a brief/ undeveloped account by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>describing the question focus</li> <li>offering limited interpretation</li> <li>making limited reference to the extract</li> <li>including irrelevant ideas.</li> </ul> <p>Show limited awareness of how meanings are shaped by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>labelling with little relevance to technique</li> <li>making brief or no reference to the writer's craft.</li> </ul>

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## Lessons from the AS sitting, summer 2016

These highlights from the report on the exam (AS Paper 1, Views and Voices) were published after the first AS sitting in summer 2016 and highlight some of the areas of underperformance.

### AS Paper 1: Views and Voices

Examiners reported that responses to the poetry questions tended to contain more detailed language analysis. In fact, **some students who hardly included any precise linguistic comment in their Section A answers, were able to produce much more detailed and successful analysis in Section B.**

The **overall impression from responses is that AO1 is the more challenging assessment objective for many students. The central ethos of this specification is that analysis of texts is best done through the systematic and accurate analysis of their language features.** There were a number of students who used little or no terminology, applied terminology incorrectly or used terms imprecisely. For example, there was often confusion between simple and minor sentences, adjectives and verbs, simile/metaphor/personification, elision and ellipsis, and 'juxtaposition' and 'oxymoron' were frequently used for any kind of contrast. It was **pleasing to see students attempting to analyse their texts using newer concepts and analytical tools.** A number of students explored deictic patterns, although some were unsure about what constituted deixis and applied the term to any temporal or spatial reference.

Examiners noted that **some students are tending to feature-spot, using linguistic labels purely for the sake of it, rather than discussing how particular word choices create meaning. One of the major areas where students could improve is in the selection of language levels to purposefully explore the ways the writer has constructed the narrative in the prose text and in the construction of the poetic voice and the presentation of time, place, people and events in the poetry. Terminology needs to be used accurately as a tool to explore how meaning is created, rather than simply labelling.**

As a general overview, successful responses:

- **discussed the construction and effects of narrative point of view**
- **applied terminology accurately**
- **used precise terminology and explored in detail how meanings are shaped**
- made considered and **relevant use of different concepts and tools** (eg types of narration, modality, representation of speech and thought)
- provided interpretations that were well supported by detailed evidence from the text

As a general overview, less successful candidates:

- **did not use precise terminology or made errors in the application of terminology**
- **used general labels** (eg 'word', 'tone', 'imagery') rather than more precise terms
- **feature spotted**, with very limited exploration of meaning
- made broad assertions, **not supported by clear examples.**

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# Glossary of terms

We've reproduced some of the key concepts and terms explored in different levels of language analysis. Remember that this isn't an exhaustive list, it just shows some typical, popular examples.

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## Glossary of terms

### Phonetics, phonology and prosodics

At this level students describe and explore the sound system (phonology), the ways that sounds produced by users of that system are produced (phonetics), and how rhythm and intonation are used in speech. Students can study:

- the phoneme as a basic distinct unit of sound
- the different types of vowel phonemes (long, short and diphthongs)
- how consonant phonemes are formed in terms of voicing, place of articulation and manner of articulation
- how individual phonemes combine to form syllables
- how variations of the same phoneme may occur in pronunciations of certain words
- variations in speech patterns of individuals and groups in terms of regional accent, and as a result of accommodation
- the representation of the speech patterns of individuals and groups in different discourses
- the use of sound iconicity (eg onomatopoeia, alliteration, assonance, consonance) for effect
- how speakers use variations in pitch, intonation, volume and speed depending on situational aspects
- how the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) can be used to represent and talk about the different aspects of the sound system.

#### Key terms, condensed

Phoneme	The basic unit of sound.
Diphthong	A vowel sound that is the combination of two separate sounds, where a speaker glides from one to another.
Voicing	The act of the vocal cords either vibrating (voiced) or not vibrating (unvoiced) in the production of a consonant sound.
Place of articulation	The position in the mouth where a consonant sound is produced.
Manner of articulation	The extent to which airflow is interrupted by parts of the mouth in the production of consonant sounds.
Syllable	A sound unit with a vowel at its centre.
Accent	A regional variety of speech that differs from other regional varieties in terms of pronunciation.
Accommodation	The ways that individuals adjust their speech patterns to match others.
Sound iconicity	The use of the sound system to mirror form or meaning.
International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA)	An internationally recognised system of phonetic transcription.



## Lexis and Semantics

At this level students describe and explore the vocabulary system of English. Students can study:

- the denotative and connotational meanings of words
- how meanings are constructed through the use of figurative language such as metaphor
- sense relationships between words through the concepts of semantic fields, synonyms, antonyms, hypernyms and hyponyms
- how individuals and groups vary vocabulary choices according to audience and purpose, and how levels of formality may vary according to these contextual factors
- how speakers may use specialist registers and examples of jargon
- how speakers' sociolects and dialects reflect variations according to group membership and geographical region
- how variation in text design reflects variation in language use between individuals, groups, communities and nations
- how new words are formed through the process of neology, for example through blending, compounding, and the forming of acronyms, initialisms and eponyms
- how words and their meanings change over time, for example through narrowing, broadening, amelioration, pejoration, and semantic reclamation.

### Key terms, condensed

Denotative and connotational meanings	The literal (denotative) and associated (connotational) meanings of words.
Figurative language	Language used in a non-literal way in order to describe something in another's terms (eg simile or metaphor).
Semantic fields	Groups of words connected by a shared meaning.
Synonyms	Words that have equivalent meanings.
Antonyms	Words that have contrasting meanings.
Hypernyms	Words whose meanings contain other words, (eg animal contains dog, cat and fish).
Hyponyms	Words that can be included in a larger, more general category (eg the hyponyms car, bus, aeroplane as a form of the hypernym transport).
Levels of formality	Vocabulary styles including slang, colloquial, taboo, formal and frozen levels.
Jargon	A technical vocabulary associated with a particular occupation or activity.
Sociolect	A language style associated with a particular social group.
Dialect	A language style associated with a particular geographical region.
Neology	The process of new word formation, including the following: blends, compounds, acronyms, initialisms, eponyms.
Semantic change	The process of words changing meaning, including the following: narrowing, broadening, amelioration, pejoration, semantic reclamation.

## Grammar

At this level students describe and explore word formation (morphology) and order and structure within the larger units of phrases, clauses and sentences (syntax). Students can study:

- how root morphemes combine with affixes to show tense or number (inflectional function), or to form new words (derivational function)
- how head words in phrases are modified to form larger structures to provide more detail about people, places, objects or events
- how elements are arranged in clauses to support meaning and to achieve different kinds of effects
- how point of view can be grammatically realised in different ways through writers' and speakers' use of the active or passive voice
- how English verbs show the concept of time through tense and aspect
- how single clauses form multi-clause structures through co-ordination and subordination, and how in writing, these represent different types of sentences
- how clauses and sentences function in different ways, for example to form statements, form questions, give commands or make exclamations.

### Key terms, condensed

Morpheme	The smallest grammatical unit, either a root or an affix.
Root morpheme	A morpheme that can stand on its own as a word.
Affix	A morpheme that combines with a root morpheme to create a new word.
Phrase	A group of words centred around a head word.
Head word	The central word in a phrase which gives the phrase its name (eg noun phrase, adjective phrase) and may be modified by other words.
Modification	The adding of additional words to provide more detail to a head word in a phrase either before it (pre-modification) or after it (post-modification).
Clause	A group of words centred around a verb, which may be either grammatically complete (main clause) or incomplete (subordinate clause).
Active voice	A clause where the agent (doer) of an action is the subject.
Passive voice	A clause where the patient (the entity affected by an action) is in the subject position, and the agent either follows or is left out.
Tense	How the time of an event is marked (usually through verb inflection): past, present and future.
Aspect	Another element of marking the time of an event, by specifying whether they are progressive (ongoing) or perfective (completed).
Coordination	The joining of two or more independent clauses via co-ordinating conjunctions. Single words and longer phrases can also be co-ordinated.
Subordination	The joining of two or more clauses where only one is independent (the main clause) and the others dependent (subordinate clause/clauses).
Sentence	A larger unit of meaning, which may be formed of a single clause (simple sentence) or several clauses (compound or complex sentences).
Sentence function	The purpose a sentence fulfils in communication: as a statement, question, command or exclamation. These are also referred to in many grammar books as (respectively): declaratives, interrogatives, imperatives and exclamatives.
Word class	The grammatical category into which words can be placed, including noun, adjective, verb, adverb, determiner, pronoun, preposition, conjunction.

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## Pragmatics

At this level students describe and explore the implied meanings of English and how language use creates meanings in interactional contexts. Students can study:

- the implied meanings of words, utterances and speech acts in their specific contexts
- face, politeness and co-operation in language interaction
- how text receivers draw inferences from others' language uses
- the influence of different contexts on the meanings of communicative acts
- how attitudes, values and ideologies can be signalled through language choices
- how language is used to enact and reflect relationships between people.

### Key terms, condensed

Implicature	An implied meaning that has to be inferred as a result of a conversational maxim being broken.
Inference	The understanding of implied meanings.
Irony	Using language to signal an attitude other than what has been literally expressed.
Deixis	Words that are context-bound where meaning depends on who is using them, and where and when they are being used.
Speech acts	Communicative acts that carry meaning beyond the words and phrases used within them, for example, apologies and promises.
Politeness	The awareness of others' needs to be approved of and liked (positive politeness) and/or given freedom to express their own identity and choices (negative politeness).
Face	The concept of how all communication relies on presenting a 'face' to listeners and audiences, and how face-threatening acts (the threat to either positive or negative face) and the management of positive and negative face needs contribute to interaction.
Cooperative principles in conversation	How interaction is generally based upon various kinds of cooperative behaviour between speakers.

## Discourse

At this level students describe and explore the ways in which whole texts (written, spoken and multimodal) are constructed at a level beyond the word, phrase, clause and sentence. Students can study:

- discourse structure: how a text is structured overall (ie how its parts are assembled). For example: a question and answer format; problem – solution structure; narrative structure; adjacency pairs in a spoken interaction
- how references are made within and between texts using cohesive devices and referencing
- narrative structures in texts
- how texts are related to and contribute towards wider beliefs, ideologies and values in society.

### Key terms, condensed

Discourse markers	Words, phrases or clauses that help to organise what we say or write (eg “OK”, “So”, “As I was saying…”).
Adjuncts	Non-essential elements of clauses (usually adverbials) that can be omitted (eg “I’ll see you in the morning”).
Disjuncts	Sentence adverbs that work to express an attitude or stance towards material that follows (eg “Frankly, I’m appalled at what she said” or “Sadly, not one of them survived”).
Narrative structures	How events, actions and processes are sequenced when recounting a story.
Anaphoric reference	Making reference back to something previously identified in a text (often using pronouns to refer to an already established reference point eg “The woman stood by the door. She made detailed notes of what she could see”).
Cataphoric reference	Making reference forwards to something as yet unidentified in a text. Eg “It was warm. It was living. It was Uncle George.”
Exophoric reference	Making reference to things beyond the language of a text itself (as opposed to <b>endophoric</b> , which is within the language of the text), perhaps within a speaker’s immediate physical context eg “Look at <b>that</b> ”.
Interdiscursivity	The use of discourses from one field as part of another (eg the use of science discourses in the selling of beauty products, or the use of commercial discourses in education).
Critical discourse analysis	The use of linguistic analysis to explore the ideologies, positions and values of texts and their producers.

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## Graphology

At this level students describe and explore the visual aspects of text design and appearance. Students can study:

- how text producers use aspects of text design to help create meaning, for example through the use of layout, space, typographical and orthographical features and colour
- how images are used on their own or in conjunction with writing and sound as multimodal texts to represent ideas, individuals or groups
- how variation in text design reflects variation in language use within individuals and groups and across time, and as a result of advances in technology and shifting cultural practices.

### Key terms, condensed

Layout	The way in which a text is physically structured.
Typographical features	The features of fonts used in texts such as font type, size and colour.
Orthographical features	The features of the writing system such as spelling, capitalisation and punctuation.
Multimodal texts	Texts that rely on the interplay of different codes (eg the visual, the written and the auditory) to help shape meaning.

## Additional shorter definitions

Key terms, but not levels of language analysis.

### Key terms, condensed

Audience	The receivers or intended receivers of a text (written, spoken, multimodal). The concept of an ideal audience/reader is often found in critical discourse. Texts might also have multiple audiences.
Discourses	Used in many different (and sometime contradictory) ways in language study. Can be used to refer to a mode of language (eg spoken or written discourse), a register (eg medical or legal discourse), a way of thinking about and presenting something (eg representing language using a discourse of decay).
Foregrounding	The way in which texts emphasise key events or ideas through the use of attention-seeking devices (in terms of lexis, semantics, phonology or grammar) that either repeat content (parallelism) or break established patterns (deviation). Deviation may be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• external: breaking from the normal conventions of language use, for example in the use of nonsense words or ungrammatical constructions</li><li>• internal: breaking from a pattern that has previously been set up in the text for a striking effect.</li></ul>
Genre	The way of categorising and classifying different types of texts according to their features or expected shared conventions. Genres come into being as the result of people agreeing about perceived similar characteristics in terms of content or style. Genres are fluid and dynamic and new genres continually evolve as a result of new technologies and cultural practices.
Literariness	The degree to which a text displays qualities that mean that people see it as literary and as literature. However, since many so called 'non-literary' texts display aspects of creative language use that is often seen as a marker of being literary, it is best to think of literariness as a continuum rather than viewing texts as being absolutely 'literary' or 'non-literary'.
Mode	The way in which language is communicated between text producer and text receiver and the physical channel through which this is carried out. At its simplest, this could be spoken or written (visual or auditory channel). Mode also encompasses ideas around planning and spontaneity, distance between text producer and receiver, how transitory or long-lasting a text is. Mode is more than a binary opposition, is sometimes visualised as a continuum and is constantly changing as new communication technologies blur the lines between older forms.
Narrative	A type of text or discourse that functions to tell a series of events. A narrative is the organisation of experience told by a narrator to any number of narratees. A narrative has two distinctive parts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• the story: the events, places, characters and time of action that act as the building blocks of the narrative</li><li>• the narrative discourse: the particular shaping of those building blocks into something worth telling through specific choices in language and structure.</li></ul>

Poetic voice	The way in which a sense of identity is projected through language choices so as to give the impression of a distinct persona with a personal history and a set of beliefs and values.
Grammatical voice	(ie active and passive) is a different concept and mentioned in the relevant section.
Point of view	The way in which events and experiences are filtered through a particular perspective to provide a particular version of reality. Point of view may be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• related to how a narrative is presented in terms of space and time through the use of deixis, time frames, and flashbacks and flashforwards</li> <li>• related to a particular ideological viewpoint, such as an individual's way of seeing the world or thinking about events (often in an extreme way). These might be shown through the use of modal verbs, adjectives and adverbs to stress belief or commitment and/or the use of idiosyncratic words and phrases</li> <li>• related to distinguishing between who tells and who sees, as in the case of a narrative told in the third person but which seems to be filtered through a particular character's consciousness.</li> </ul>
Positioning	How a text producer places or orientates him/herself to the subject being presented and towards the audience or reader being addressed.
Purpose	The intention or objective behind a text in terms of what it is designed to do and how it is used. Texts can have many different and overlapping purposes.
Register	A variety (or style) of language that is associated with a particular situation of use. Registers may be either written, spoken or multimodal.
Representation	How experiences, views and ideas are 're-presented' to readers, listeners and viewers through language and other meaning-making resources in order to influence their way of seeing the world.

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# A-level Paper 1, Section B: Imagined worlds

Featuring marking support, sample question, student answer and examiner commentary.



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## A-level Paper 1 Section B: Imagined worlds

### Sample question

This question is lifted from the Specimen Assessment Material (SAM) on [aqa.org.uk/7707](https://www.aqa.org.uk/7707) under 'Assess'.

A sample answer and examiner commentary follow overleaf.

**0 9** Read the extract printed below. This is from the section of the novel where Samuel and Lindsey discover an abandoned house.

Explore the significance of the abandoned house in the novel. You should consider:

- the presentation of the house in the extract below and at different points of the novel
- the use of fantasy elements in constructing a fictional world.

**[35 marks]**

"Do you think there's someone inside?" Lindsey asked.

"It's dark."

"It's spooky."

They looked at each other, and my sister said what they both were thinking. "It's dry!"

5

They held hands in the heavy rain and ran toward the house as fast as they could, trying not to trip or slide in the increasing mud.

10

As they drew closer, Samuel could make out the steep pitch of the roof and the small wooden cross work that hung down from the gables. Most of the windows on the bottom floor had been covered over with wood, but the front door swung back and forth on its hinges, banging against the plaster wall on the inside. Though part of him wanted to stand outside in the rain and stare up at the eaves and cornices, he rushed into the house with Lindsey. They stood a few feet inside the doorway, shivering and staring out into the pre-suburban forest that surrounded them. Quickly I scanned the rooms of the old house. They were alone. No scary monsters lurked in corners, no wandering men had taken root.

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## A-level Paper 1 Section B: Imagined worlds

### Sample answer

This is a sample response to the Specimen Assessment Material (SAM) on [aqa.org.uk/7707](https://www.aqa.org.uk/7707) under 'Assess'.

"The abandoned house that is discovered by Lindsey and Samuel in Chapter Seventeen is significant for a number of reasons. It is used as a metaphor by Sebald to present the love Samuel has for Lindsey and his desire to protect her. It signifies how the homodiegetic narrator, Susie, wishes to protect her sister as she watches and lives through Lindsey vicariously, wishing to protect her from any dangers the house may bring. It also continues the theme of buildings as locations that can be places either of security or danger.

Representation of speech is used in the extract to convey how, despite initially being wary of the house, Lindsey and Samuel are not scared because they have each other. Lindsey's apprehensive interrogative, 'Do you think there is someone inside?' is followed by free direct speech in which they both express fears about the house. Their declaratives reveal the certainty that 'It's dark' and 'It's spooky', the adjectives 'dark' and 'spooky' reminding the reader of the gothic conventions of the haunted house and the expectation that something frightening will occur. Their body language conveys their connections with each other through the kinesics of how they 'looked at each other' and the haptics of their 'held hands', causing them to forget about their fear of the house as they have each other for support. Lindsey follows with the declarative 'It's dry!' her exclamation conveying her relief at finding shelter from the rain and suggesting that the house is a place of refuge and thus undermining the genre expectations of the gothic haunted house.

Representations of speech are also used in other parts of the novel to present the house as a metaphor for Lindsey. Samuel describes the house using the noun phrases 'gorgeous old wreck' and the 'most beautiful thing' he'd ever seen. The juxtaposition of the 'old' and 'wrecked' house with the adjectives 'beautiful' and 'gorgeous' convey Samuel's admiration for the house despite it being broken. He says that the house 'needs me, I can feel it', causing Lindsey to declare, 'Samuel Heckler, fixer of broken things'. The house is used to represent Lindsey, as following Susie's death she was broken due to her grief but Samuel saved her and has continued to look after her ever since.

Sebald writes in a homodiegetic narrative style, using Susie as the omniscient narrator. This allows her to access the characters' thoughts and feelings, providing the reader with privileged information. Sebald creates a world in which the dead narrator, Susie, can move through time and space, reflective of the fantasy genre of the novel. In the extract, Susie watches over Lindsey and Samuel as they return from their graduation and discover the house in the woods. Susie describes how, 'Quickly, I scanned the rooms of the old house. They were alone.' The verb 'scanned' modified by the adverb 'quickly' reinforces the idea that Susie has the ability to watch over Lindsey and to see into places no human narrator could. She signifies to the reader through the simple sentence, 'They were alone', that the abandoned house is, in fact, a safe place and counters the reader's expectations that this might be the scene for a horror story through the parallelism of the final sentence of the extract, with both clauses beginning with the negatives, 'No scary monsters...., no wandering men...' Early reviews of the novel suggested that part of the reason for the popularity of the book was that it offered a sense of hope in the aftermath of the 9/11

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terrorist attack on America and there is certainly something comforting in the fact that the abandoned house holds no terror.

Description is used to create the setting of the storyworld during the extract. The pathetic fallacy of the rainy weather and the gothic appearance of the house, both typical tropes of the gothic genre, are ignored by Lindsey and Samuel as their need to shelter from the weather becomes more important than their fears. The description of the way 'the front door swung back and forth on its hinges, banging against the plaster wall inside' is reminiscent of a scene from a horror film and would normally suggest that something unpleasant is about to happen. In the novel, houses have been both places of comfort and places of danger and at first the reader is unsure which of these the abandoned house will be but the reactions of Lindsey and Samuel and the supernatural assurance of Susie inform the reader that this will be a safe house that provides a sanctuary and is therefore a break with the past.

The previous 'abandoned house' that Lindsey entered was when she broke into Mr Harvey's house. Susie describes Mr Harvey's house as 'barren' and lacking in human warmth. In that episode, Susie is much more fearful for her sister, and the house makes Lindsey feel deeply uneasy. Susie describes her sister's feelings with the metaphor, 'she felt encased in something heavy, a fly trapped in a spider's funnel web'. Mr Harvey's house reflects his unpleasant character: like a sinister spider, he threatens to catch her, whereas the abandoned house that Lindsey and Samuel find has a very different atmosphere. Here, Susie describes how Lindsey feels 'hidden away, tucked safely in an outside corner of the world with the one person she loved more than anyone else'. The verbs modified by adverbs 'hidden away' and 'tucked safely' emphasise how the abandoned house is a sanctuary. Some critics recognised this positive ending as being one of the strengths of the novel for readers – a safe haven has been created in a dangerous world. However, others, like Rebecca Mead, have argued that having a 'feel-good' book about rape and murder is ultimately unsettling and the transformation of the abandoned house plays a part in this 'feel-good' ending."

## A-level Paper 1, Section B

### Generic mark grid extract

This generic mark grid is reproduced as a helpful reference point for addressing the example material that follows.

<b>A01: Apply concepts and methods from integrated linguistic and literary study as appropriate, using associated terminology and coherent written expression</b>		<b>A02: Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in texts</b>		<b>A03: Demonstrate understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts in which texts are produced and received</b>	
This rewards students' ability to apply concepts and methods from integrated linguistic and literary study to prose fiction, and specifically to the analysis of a specific narrative technique. AO1 also rewards the ability to maintain an academic style throughout the essay.		This relates to students' ability to examine the ways that meanings are shaped in their chosen text through the selection and exploration of relevant parts of the novel in response to a specific focus.		This relates to students' ability to explore their chosen novel as part of a wider literary genre (fantasy). It also rewards students' ability to evaluate the influence of contextual factors (social, historical, biographical, literary) on the production and interpretation of their chosen text.	
<b>Level/ mark</b>	<b>Students are likely to:</b>	<b>Level/ mark</b>	<b>Students are likely to:</b>	<b>Level/ mark</b>	<b>Students are likely to:</b>
<b>L5 9-10</b>	<p><b>Apply a range of terminology accurately.</b></p> <p><b>Select language levels with sustained relevance and evaluation of patterns.</b></p> <p><b>Express ideas with sophistication and sustained development.</b></p>	<b>L5 9-10</b>	<p><b>Offer a thorough and open-minded analysis by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>interpreting the question focus subtly</li> <li>providing a perceptive interpretation</li> <li>making careful selections from the text.</li> <li>including wholly relevant ideas.</li> </ul> <p><b>Provide perceptive accounts of how meanings are shaped by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>investigating closely narrative techniques</li> <li>evaluating the writer's craft through close analysis of details.</li> </ul>	<b>L5 13-15</b>	<p><b>Offer a perceptive account.</b></p> <p><b>Evaluate:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>aspects of the novel in relation to the fantasy genre</li> <li>the use of particular genre conventions</li> <li>the influence of contextual factors on the production and various interpretations of the novel.</li> </ul>

Level/ mark	Students are likely to:	Level/ mark	Students are likely to:	Level/ mark	Students are likely to:
L4 7-8	<p>Apply terminology relevantly and mainly accurately.</p> <p>Select language levels purposefully and explore some patterns.</p> <p>Express ideas coherently and with development.</p>	L 4 7-8	<p><b>Offer a good and secure analysis by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>interpreting the question focus relevantly</li> <li>providing a clear and sound interpretation</li> <li>making appropriate choices from the text.</li> <li>including ideas that are relevant.</li> </ul> <p><b>Offer a clear account of how meanings are shaped by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>exploring how narrative techniques contribute to meaning</li> <li>examining the writer's craft through close comment on some details.</li> </ul>	L4 10-12	<p><b>Offer a clear account.</b></p> <p><b>Analyse:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>aspects of the novel in relation to the fantasy genre</li> <li>genre conventions</li> <li>how the production and various interpretations of the novel are motivated by contextual factors.</li> </ul>
L3 5-6	<p>Apply terminology with some accuracy.</p> <p>Select language levels and explain some features.</p> <p>Present ideas with some clear topics and organisation.</p>	L3 5-6	<p><b>Offer some analysis by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>identifying the question focus straightforwardly</li> <li>providing some valid interpretations</li> <li>making some successful choices from the text.</li> <li>including ideas that are generally relevant.</li> </ul> <p><b>Show some awareness of how meanings are shaped by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>explaining some ways that narrative techniques contribute to meaning</li> <li>discussing the writer's craft through reference to some examples.</li> </ul>	L3 7-9	<p><b>Offer some consideration.</b></p> <p><b>Explain:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>aspects of the novel in relation to the fantasy genre</li> <li>more obvious genre conventions</li> <li>the contexts in which the novel was produced and has been interpreted.</li> </ul>

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## A-level Paper 1 Section B: Imagined worlds

### Marking support

For a reminder of the question, skip back six pages.

#### A01

- use of initial direct and free direct speech to add urgency and tension
- relaying of events from Susie's perspective with access to Samuel and Lindsey's consciousness: 'my sister said what they were both thinking'
- representation of house as potentially dangerous through pre-modified noun phrases: 'scary monsters', 'wandering men'
- repetition of stock phrases with variation for effect: 'It's dark' (possible connotations: unoccupied, fear, unknown), 'It's spooky' (suggestions of the supernatural, the gothic), 'It's dry!' (rational practicalities overriding less rational preoccupations)
- possible use of metaphor in the use of thunder to represent Lindsey's mood, fears, preoccupations
- phrases used to describe the building and its interior: 'covered over with wood', 'banging against the plaster wall', (connotations of before civilisation) 'pre-suburban forest' (overlapping different landscapes across time).

#### A02

- Susie's relationship with her sister and sense of duty to protect
- locations as places of explicit experiences and memories; idea of the house as a cultural signifier and place of safety, comfort
- contrast of 'inside' and 'outside' spaces, boundaries, thresholds: different freedoms, different constraints
- comparisons with other internal and external locations (Harvey's house, the hole, the cornfield, heaven, the Salmon family home)
- comparisons with later function of house in the novel (Lindsey's garden)
- locations as both containing and excluding: rain, damp, light; sounds, smells.

#### A03:

- gothic elements: dark ruin, night, mystery, isolation, abandoned building
- Susie's role as a fantastical narrator and her ability to view Earth in spirit form, enabling narrative switches between time and space
- Sebald's/early twentieth-century concerns with dangers facing individuals, fear of the *stranger* and *the unknown*
- use of the house in traditional and modern ghost stories: *the haunted house* as a symbol and/or motif
- the novel as a 'rite of passage' narrative and as the charting of a family through time
- relevant references to literary critical and non-academic readings from a variety of theoretical stances.

Possible choices of extracts are listed below. Examiner however must be prepared to credit other valid choices:

- Chap One – Mr Harvey's dugout room
- Chap Three – Susie's family home
- Chap Four – the sinkhole
- Chap Fourteen – Lindsey breaks into Harvey's empty house

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## A-level Paper 1 Section B: Imagined worlds

### Examiner commentary

Here, a senior examiner gives her thoughts on the student response reproduced on the previous pages:

#### A01

A range of terminology is used accurately and language levels are explored in an entirely relevant way. Ideas are very well expressed and the line of argument is developed and sustained.

**Level 5 (10 marks)**

#### A02

There is a perceptive overview in response to the question, together with a close consideration of the effects of a number of stylistic choices. There is clear evidence of an evaluation of the writer's craft based on careful selections from different points in the novel.

**Level 5 (10 marks)**

#### A03

A number of perceptive comments are made about the gothic/horror genre in relation to the abandoned house. There is a clear appreciation of the fantasy genre's use of Susie as narrator. The student also considers the responses of readers and critics.

**Level 5 (15 marks)**

#### In summary

This is a conceptualised answer with a thoughtful overview in response to the question. It is an example of the best that could be expected under exam conditions and therefore has attracted full marks.

**Total mark: 35 out of 35**

**Full marks response**

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# The research digest for Language and Literature teachers

The Definite Article is a blog which digests research from higher education that teachers could use with students in the classroom.

[thedefinitearticle.aqa.org.uk](http://thedefinitearticle.aqa.org.uk)



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# The Definite Article

## Close reading: prose fiction (classroom activity)

We've reproduced a popular, practical post from *The Definite Article* below. For more research digests, classroom activities, news and events based around Language and Literature research, visit [thedefinitearticle.aqa.org.uk](http://thedefinitearticle.aqa.org.uk)

Reading time: 8 minutes

### Introduction

Close reading is a big part of exams, as well as an essential, everyday part of studying and developing an understanding of a text. These five steps offer just one way of doing close reading. This five-step approach, designed for students, draws on four really helpful concepts from stylistics about the process of interpretation, and takes care to avoid some common problems. It is designed for extracts from prose fiction, but can be easily adapted for other kinds of texts.

### Five steps in close reading for extracts from prose fiction

#### 1. Read through for initial impressions

Start by noticing your initial impressions, rather than by looking for big themes straight away. Themes are often broad and complex, like 'a critique of capitalism' in F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* or 'warning against totalitarianism' in George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. In novels, themes can arise through lots of small, sometimes subtle suggestions interspersed throughout the whole text. If you're dealing with just a couple of paragraphs from a novel, looking for broad themes can be a struggle. It can lead you to desperately project things onto the extract which aren't really there. Focusing only on themes can also lead you to miss or neglect the less obvious, often less specific or definite aspects of interpretation which contribute to those themes. Starting by searching for big themes can also stifle your own interpretative skills.

It can be easier, and often ultimately more insightful, to begin with initial impressions. Impressions can be less fully formed, more abstract and less precise than the kinds of themes we often focus on when discussing texts. Initial impressions can include aspects of atmosphere (e.g. 'gloominess', 'confusion and disorientation', 'a sense of innocence' or 'a sense of mystery', etc.), setting (e.g. 'a vastness, desolation') and character relations (e.g. 'cold and uncooperative'), etc. These kinds of impressions are the very beginnings of interpretation, and it is these aspects which usually add up to the fully formed themes: it is through these impressions that those themes are constructed, developed and communicated.

**Start your close reading by asking yourself what initial impressions arise for you in your reading.** This will keep your close reading grounded in the text and will help you pay proper attention to your own interpretative responses.

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## 2. Annotation and analysis

The next step is to go back through the extract with those interpretative impressions in mind, and try to locate where, and how, in the text they arise. What do you notice, sentence by sentence? Underline the parts which stand out to you, including those which seem to be fueling those interpretative impressions, and any others you might have. For everything you underline, draw an arrow out into the margins and note down the following:

- a) What kind of feature of language is it? Use terms and concepts you have learnt about to help you be detailed and precise.
- b) What is it doing, in this context? What is it contributing to the meaning of the extract?
- c) Does it relate to or connect up and with any other features and features of the extract?

It is here that four useful principles of interpretation come into play.

- **Foregrounding:** Foregrounding is the relative prominence (as consciously or subconsciously perceived by the reader) of particular features (through patterns and deviation). An important part of the study of literature, and particularly close reading, is the act of paying attention to prominence, and making what might at first be subconscious impressions become conscious – bringing them into focus and conscious attention. Features are foregrounded through parallelism and deviation, and they work to create meaning together through ‘cohesion of foregrounding’.
- **Parallelism:** According to Short’s (1996) ‘Parallelism rule’ for interpretation, paralleled structures suggest meaningful connections. So, paralleled features like repeated sounds, or metaphors, or structural repetition such as each adjective in a list of three adjectives, lead us to look for and create connections between each repeated element. Each repeated element gains associations of the other in the pair or set. Their associations combine to create a whole, integrated impression made up of its parts.
- **Deviation:** Deviation is departure from a norm, convention, system or pattern. For example, you might encounter a list of adjectives all two syllables long, and then the list closes with one which is three syllables long. The deviation from the parallelism (the repeated pattern of two-syllable adjectives) makes the three-syllable adjective stand out, and seem or become more meaningfully significant.
- **Cohesion of foregrounding:** ‘Cohesion of foregrounding’ is a phrase coined by Geoffrey Leech, in *Style in Fiction* (1970), to describe the way in which we try to link up foregrounded features and find meaning in the ways they function together. A good example is the way in which we see a constellation in an array of stars, drawing a connecting shape between the stars that shine the brightest. Themes arise through our process of ‘connecting up the (foregrounded) dots’.

These are processes of interpretation which underlie close reading, and which help to explain what we notice and how we find meaning. If you’re struggling to ‘see’ anything meaningful in a close reading text, focus on the parts which have triggered your initial interpretative impressions, and look for foregrounding, patterns and deviation.

*Tip: The reason the interpretative impressions you started with are called ‘initial’ interpretative impressions is because they are likely to evolve and change, as you start exploring them, into fuller and deeper interpretative impressions and analytical insights.*

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### 3. Reflective relation to themes

In some tasks, you're given a close reading extract which is an extract from a bigger text, like a novel, which you've studied and are familiar with. The fourth step in this process is to reflect on the kinds of things which you see at work in the close reading text, and explore connections between these and the themes and workings of the whole novel.

### 4. Selection and planning

As your interpretative skills and confidence develop, you'll get better at seeing more and more in a close reading text. Not all of it will be hugely interpretatively significant, and you may not have time to cover all of it in an exam. **Select your key points** based on how interpretatively significant they are. If something at work in this extract is closely tied in with one of the novel's broader themes, it's probably worth including, but only if you've got something to say about how it's working here. If you've noticed something but you can't get beyond naming and describing it (that is, you can't go beyond description to analysis), think about leaving it out.

Once you've chosen your key points, **select the best (most illustrative) example(s)** to quote and discuss when making that point. Again, you might not have time to include everything that illustrates that point: be selective.

Remember, a response to a close reading exercise needs to be structured carefully, just like any other kind of essay. **Decide on a sequence for your points.** You could order them in a way which follows the extract's sequential development, or you could start with the points which bear the most interpretative significance and work on to those which are interesting but which you find less deeply meaningful. Alternatively, you could begin with points discussing aspects of the extract which are interpretatively interesting but which don't seem overtly connected to the themes of the novel as a whole, and then move on to the elements of the extract which do relate and contribute to the novel's broader themes.

### 5. Writing your response

Now it's time to write your response. Don't forget to include an introduction and a conclusion, just like any other essay. The paragraphs which make up the main body of the essay need to do the following:

- Each main paragraph should **clearly communicate one point**, through illustrative examples and analytical argument.
- That central point should **explain the relationship between a feature of the text and its interpretative effects**. If you find yourself devoting a paragraph to describing a feature without talking about its effects, or describing interpretative effects without talking about how the text creates those effects, that paragraph needs to be developed or cut.
- Always **provide and discuss illustrative quotations** to explain the relationship between the feature and effect.

A main paragraph can do more than this, of course, such as considering other possible interpretations, but these are the essential elements.

*A last tip: Communicating clearly is more important than sounding intelligent or 'academic'. If trying to write in a very sophisticated style results in your phrasing becoming confused and confusing and your meaning getting lost, step back to a more simple and straightforward style. There's no point in using lots of long words and complex sentence structures if the person reading your essay can't understand what you mean. Clarity is always the priority.*

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## Conclusion

This five step process is just one approach. There are lots of other ways of doing close reading. Some will suit you and your thinking and planning processes more than others. This approach does, though, cover some of the crucial bases, and helps you to avoid the risks of trying to map big themes onto extracts awkwardly or inauthentically, and instead make convincing, text-based arguments explaining your interpretation. Underpinned by four key stylistic concepts, it offers a structure for paying close attention to and interpreting the extract itself, always holding firmly onto the relationship between features and interpretative effects. Try it out with some extracts from texts you're studying and see what kinds of close readings it helps you create.

## Further reading

For more on foregrounding, parallelism, deviation and cohesion of foregrounding, see *Exploring the Language of Poems, Plays and Prose* by Mick Short (Longman, 1996) and 'Ling131', an online stylistics course created by the same author (you can find a description and link in our 'Online Resources' post, here: [bit.ly/2qFJpmt](https://bit.ly/2qFJpmt))

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# Activity: English programme of study (KS1/2)

## Activity: English programme of study for KS1/2

This information is taken from National curriculum in England: English programmes of study, available in full here: [bit.ly/1FfvEex](https://bit.ly/1FfvEex). This contains public sector information licensed under the Open Government Licence v3.0.

The National Curriculum aims to ensure that all pupils "acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language".

The DfE provide two statutory appendices to support the programmes of study for English at KS1 and KS2: one on spelling and the other on vocabulary, grammar and punctuation which lists the specific features/concepts students should be introduced to at each year in their learning.

Can you categorise the word list overleaf into the headings below? What do you think of the levels of understanding expected?

Year 1, age 5-6

Year 2, age 6-7

Year 3, age 7-8

Year 4, age 8-9

Year 5, age 9-10

Year 6, age 10-11

Non-statutory

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Can you categorise this word list into the headings on the previous page? What do you think of the levels of understanding expected?

active voice	grapheme-phoneme	pronoun
adjective	correspondences	punctuation
adverb	head	question mark
adverbial	headings	question tag
ambiguity	homonym	Received Pronunciation
antonym	homophone	register
apostrophe	hyphen	relative clause
article	independent clause	repetition
auxiliary verb	infinitive	reporting clause
brackets	inflection	root word
bullets	informal	schwa
capital letter	intransitive verb	semi-colon
clause	inverted commas	sentence
cohesion	letter	simple past
cohesive device	main clause	singular
colon	modal verb	speech marks
columns	modify, modifier	split digraph
command	morphology	Standard English
commas	narrative	statement
complement	negation	stress
compound, compounding	noun	subheadings
conjunction	noun phrase	subject
consonant	object	subjunctive
continuous	paragraph	subordinate, subordination
co-ordinate, co-ordination	parenthesis	subordinate clause
dashes	participle	suffix
determiner	passive	syllable
digraph	past tense	synonym
direct speech	perfect	tables
ellipsis	phoneme	tense
etymology	phrase	transitive verb
exclamation mark	plural	trigraph
finite verb	possessive	unstressed
formal	prefix	verb
fronting, fronted	preposition	vowel
full stop	preposition phrase	word
future	present perfect	word class
grapheme	present tense	word family
	progressive	

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# How A-level and GCSE Assessment objectives align



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## How A-level and GCSE Assessment objectives align

To reinforce the link between AS/A-level Language and Literature, and the two GCSE English specifications, we've listed how the assessment objectives link up.

Remember, GCSE English subjects prepare students for the study of AS and A-level English Language and Literature via:

- reading and evaluating a wide range of high-quality, challenging texts from the 19<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries, including literature and extended literary non-fiction texts
- creatively and critically engaging with language and ways of producing and interpreting language
- developing their skills of analysis of a writer's choice of vocabulary, grammatical and structural features
- acquiring and applying a wide vocabulary, alongside a knowledge and understanding of linguistic and literary terminology
- making comparisons between texts across a range of genres and analysing the relationships between different texts and their contexts
- developing skills in producing and developing written and spoken language.

We've illustrated this on the grid opposite.

AO	AS/A-level Language and Literature AO descriptor	Link to GCSE Language AOs	Link to GCSE Literature AOs
AO1	Apply concepts and methods from integrated linguistic and literary study as appropriate, using associated terminology and coherent written expression.	AO2:[...] using relevant subject terminology AO6: Students must use a range of vocabulary [...] with accurate spelling and punctuation.	AO2: [...] using relevant subject terminology where appropriate. AO4: Use a range of vocabulary and sentence structures for clarity, purpose and effect, with accurate spelling and punctuation.
AO2	Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in texts.	AO2: Explain, comment on and analyse how writers use language and structure to achieve effects and influence readers AO4: Evaluate texts critically and support this with appropriate textual references.	AO1: Read, understand and respond to texts. Students should be able to: • maintain a critical style and develop an informed personal response • use textual references, including quotations, to support and illustrate interpretations. AO2: Analyse the language, form and structure used by a writer to create meanings and effects.
AO3	Demonstrate understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts in which texts are produced and received.		AO3: Show understanding of the relationships between texts and the contexts in which they were written.
AO4	Explore connections across texts, informed by linguistic and literary concepts and methods.	AO3: Compare writers' ideas and perspectives, as well as how these are conveyed, across two or more texts.	
AO5	Demonstrate expertise and creativity in the use of English to communicate in different ways.	AO5: Communicate clearly, effectively and imaginatively, selecting and adapting tone, style and register for different forms, purposes and audiences. Organise information and ideas, using structural and grammatical features to support coherence and cohesion of texts. AO6: Students must use a range of vocabulary and sentence structures for clarity, purpose and effect.	AO1: [...] maintain a critical style AO4: Use a range of vocabulary and sentence structures for clarity, purpose and effect.

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# Updated for 2017 – writing about society: textual intervention guide

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## Writing about society: textual intervention guide

This guide supports teachers preparing for A-level English Language and Literature Paper 2 Section A: Writing about society. To find it online, navigate to [bit.ly/2rmyXAH](https://bit.ly/2rmyXAH)

The component requires students to undertake a re-creative writing task. This draws heavily on the work of Rob Pope and his 1995 book *Textual Intervention* (Routledge).

Pope's pedagogy argues that students learn best when they are deliberately engaged in re-balancing of aspects of the original text (the base text) so as to draw attention to why language choices were originally made. It builds on three important and interrelated concepts.

1. Language is a system from which users make choices at the exclusion of alternative ones
2. All language choices that writers make are a type of design, which means that each choice is a significant one
3. Intervening in a base text to create a new text offers students ways of exploring both their own writing and that of the original author

In intervening, a student is asked to think about the 'what if' and the 'why', for example:

- What if a different word were chosen?
- What if agency was postponed or deleted in a passive construction?
- What if a series of verb processes were reified through nominalisation? What if direct speech were presented as free indirect speech?
- What if a different aspect of a character's actions-speech-history were foregrounded and given attention?
- What if a monologue became a dialogue or a dialogue a monologue?
- What if the text was presented from an alternative point of view? Or for a different purpose? Or audience? In what circumstances would someone make these decisions? Why would they do so? What would happen if the context(s) of production and reception changed? And so on...

### The recasting task

Textual intervention work can take place at various levels: at the micro-levels of orthography, lexis, grammar, and semantics; and at the macro-levels of text organisation, discourse, and genre.

**On this task, students are rewarded for showing in their writing and commentary that they recognise the importance of specific language choices and how these choices may give rise to certain interpretative effects.**

Examples of interventionist work can include 'translating' into a different form or text type or taking a specific episode in a text that isn't fully developed and developing that at the expense of what is currently there. However, on this specification students should be particularly focused on reconfiguring events in the base text from a different point of view. This might be the point of view of either:

- an 'included participant' (a character explicitly mentioned in the base text)
- an 'excluded participant' (a character not explicitly mentioned but whose existence can be assumed).

For example in the *Into the Wild* extract taken from the SAM, students might be asked to recast the events from the perspective of the included participant Gallien (as in the specimen question) or an

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excluded participant such as another driver on the road out of Fairbanks who might have seen Alex.

Using the extract from the opening of Chapter 1: "Jim Gallien had driven four miles out of Fairbanks [...] The bush is an unforgiving place, however, that cares nothing for hope or longing".

When writing from a different point of view students should be taught to develop potential centres from which such alternative points of view can be presented, and consider how the 'world' of the text would be reconfigured to project a version of reality from this different centre. They might think about:

- making changes to explicit markers of point of view such as type of narrator, manipulation of individual speech patterns, the use of modality, presentation of speech and thought (moving from narrator to character driven modes), and so on
- how the same series of events would be portrayed through another perspective; what would be emphasised and what would be downplayed or omitted from the base text
- how they would show shifts in narrative time and place, for example an account written some time after the events in the base text, and in a different location.

Students should draw on their knowledge of the character (if appropriate) from their reading of the base text when developing a point of view so as to be consistent with the parameters of the fictional world of the base text. This would mean maintaining some consistency, for example, with how a character speaks or looks. Clearly, this may not be possible when the point of view is from an excluded participant. In this instance, however, students should be faithful to how other characters might be represented as speaking and acting.

Students are not required to recast the base text into a different genre and do not need to be taught or learn different genres on this unit. The question will always ask students to write 'an account' and students should use their learning from other areas of the specification (most obviously on narrative structure and point of view) to inform their writing. A useful starting point would be to encourage students to reflect on their learning from *Imagined Worlds* (point of view, representation of character, representation of speech and thought and so on) as a way of making writing decisions of their own. Students are able to shape their own writing in any way, and using any narrative strategies they wish (dialogue, 1<sup>st</sup> and/or third person perspectives, implication, description) so as to reconfigure the narrative events from a different perspective.

### The commentary

An important part of textual intervention work is the reflective commentary in which students explore their own work and evaluate their use of **specific language choices** that they consciously made at the expense of others. In doing this, they should also be able to reflect on the base text and the original author's own position as a text designer.

For example, why does Jon Krakauer (*Into the Wild*) make the choices that he does in presenting characters, scenes and events? What might he want to achieve? In answering these questions, students should be taught to draw connections between their own decisions as a writer and that of the original author so as to enrich their understanding both of the base text and of themselves as conscious shapers and manipulators of language for effect.

### Reading for teachers

Pope, R. (1995) *Textual Intervention, Critical and Creative Strategies for Literary Studies*, Routledge: Oxon.

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Chapters 16 (*Imagined worlds*) and 18 (*Writing about society*), in Giovanelli, M., Macrae, A., Titjen, F., and Cushing, I. (2015) *AQA English Language and Literature*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Student responses with examiner commentary, for Paper 2 Section A: *Writing about society* can be found here, [bit.ly/2tbUCNp](https://bit.ly/2tbUCNp)

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# A-level Paper 2, Section A: Writing about society

Sample questions, extract, student responses and examiner commentary.

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## A-level Paper 2, Section A: Writing about society

### Sample question

This question is lifted from the Specimen Assessment Material (SAM) on [aqa.org.uk/7707](https://www.aqa.org.uk/7707) under 'Assess'.

The extract, a sample answer and examiner commentary follow overleaf.

**0 7** Read Chapter Two

**from**

'It was in that small shack'

**to**

'I have seen old donkeys better suited to be a husband'.

This describes the circumstances of Hassan's birth and his mother's desertion of the family.

Imagine that there is a journalist covering Hassan's story many years later. Recast the base text into a description of running away that she might give the journalist.

In your transformation you should consider:

- Sanaubar's perspective on her marriage
- how she views other characters.

You should write about 300 words.

**[25 marks]**

**and**

**0 8** Write a commentary explaining the decisions you have made in transforming the base text for this new account and the effects of reshaping Hosseini's original description.

In your commentary you should:

- consider how you have used language to shape your intended meaning
- demonstrate the connections between the base text and your transformed text
- structure your writing clearly to express your ideas.

You should write about 400 words.

**[30 marks]**



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## A-level Paper 2 Section A: Writing about society

### Extract from *The Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini

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"It was in that small shack that Hassan's mother, Sanaubar, gave birth to him one cold winter day in 1964. While my mother hemorrhaged to death during childbirth, Hassan lost his less than a week after he was born. Lost her to a fate most Afghans considered far worse than death: She ran off with a clan of traveling singers and dancers.

Hassan never talked about his mother, as if she'd never existed. I always wondered if he dreamed about her, about what she looked like, where she was. I wondered if he longed to meet her. Did he ache for her, the way I ached for the mother I had never met? One day, we were walking from my father's house to Cinema Zainab for a new Iranian movie, taking the shortcut through the military barracks near Istiqlal Middle School-Baba had forbidden us to take that shortcut, but he was in Pakistan with Rahim Khan at the time. We hopped the fence that surrounded the barracks, skipped over a little creek, and broke into the open dirt field where old, abandoned tanks collected dust. A group of soldiers huddled in the shade of one of those tanks, smoking cigarettes and playing cards. One of them saw us, elbowed the guy next to him, and called Hassan.

"Hey, you!" he said. "I know you."

We had never seen him before. He was a squatty man with a shaved head and black stubble on his face. The way he grinned at us, leered, scared me. "Just keep walking," I muttered to Hassan.

"You! The Hazara! Look at me when I'm talking to you!" the soldier barked. He handed his cigarette to the guy next to him, made a circle with the thumb and index finger of one hand. Poked the middle finger of his other hand through the circle. Poked it in and out. In and out. "I knew your mother, did you know that? I knew her real good. I took her from behind by that creek over there."

The soldiers laughed. One of them made a squealing sound. I told Hassan to keep walking, keep walking.

"What a tight little sugary cunt she had!" the soldier was saying, shaking hands with the others, grinning. Later, in the dark, after the movie had started, I heard Hassan next to me, croaking. Tears were sliding down his cheeks. I reached across my seat, slung my arm around him, pulled him close. He rested his head on my shoulder. "He took you for some-one else," I whispered. "He took you for someone else."

I'm told no one was really surprised when Sanaubar eloped. People had raised their eyebrows when Ali, a man who had memorized the Koran, married Sanaubar, a woman nineteen years younger, a beautiful but notoriously unscrupulous woman who lived up to her dishonorable reputation. Like Ali, she was a Shi'a Muslim and an ethnic Hazara. She was also his first cousin and therefore a natural choice for a spouse. But beyond those similarities, Ali and Sanaubar had little in common, least of all their respective appearances. While Sanaubar's brilliant green eyes and impish face had, rumor has it, tempted countless men into sin, Ali had a congenital paralysis of his lower facial muscles, a condition that

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rendered him unable to smile and left him perpetually grim-faced. It was an odd thing to see the stone-faced Ali happy, or sad, because only his slanted brown eyes glinted with a smile or welled with sorrow. People say that eyes are windows to the soul. Never was that more true than with Ali, who could only reveal himself through his eyes.

I have heard that Sanaubar's suggestive stride and oscillating hips sent men to reveries of infidelity. But polio had left Ali with a twisted, atrophied right leg that was sallow skin over bone with little in between except a paper-thin layer of muscle. I remember one day, when I was eight, Ali was taking me to the bazaar to buy some naan. I was walking behind him, humming, trying to imitate his walk. I watched him swing his scraggy leg in a sweeping arc, watched his whole body tilt impossibly to the right every time he planted that foot. It seemed a minor miracle he didn't tip over with each step. When I tried it, I almost fell into the gutter. That got me giggling. Ali turned around, caught me aping him. He didn't say anything. Not then, not ever. He just kept walking.

Ali's face and his walk frightened some of the younger children in the neighborhood. But the real trouble was with the older kids. They chased him on the street, and mocked him when he hobbled by. Some had taken to calling him Babalu, or Boogeyman. "Hey, Babalu, who did you eat today?" they barked to a chorus of laughter. "Who did you eat, you flat-nosed Babalu?"

They called him "flat-nosed" because of Ali and Hassan's characteristic Hazara Mongoloid features. For years, that was all I knew about the Hazaras, that they were Mogul descendants, and that they looked a little like Chinese people. School textbooks barely mentioned them and referred to their ancestry only in passing. Then one day, I was in Baba's study, looking through his stuff, when I found one of my mother's old history books. It was written by an Iranian named Khorami. I blew the dust off it, sneaked it into bed with me that night, and was stunned to find an entire chapter on Hazara history. An entire chapter dedicated to Hassan's people! In it, I read that my people, the Pashtuns, had persecuted and oppressed the Hazaras. It said the Hazaras had tried to rise against the Pashtuns in the nineteenth century, but the Pashtuns had "quelled them with unspeakable violence." The book said that my people had killed the Hazaras, driven them from their lands, burned their homes, and sold their women. The book said part of the reason Pashtuns had oppressed the Hazaras was that Pashtuns were Sunni Muslims, while Hazaras were Shi'a. The book said a lot of things I didn't know, things my teachers hadn't mentioned. Things Baba hadn't mentioned either. It also said some things I did know, like that people called Hazaras mice-eating, flat-nosed, load-carrying donkeys. I had heard some of the kids in the neighborhood yell those names to Hassan.

The following week, after class, I showed the book to my teacher and pointed to the chapter on the Hazaras. He skimmed through a couple of pages, snickered, handed the book back. "That's the one thing Shi'a people do well," he said, picking up his papers, "passing themselves as martyrs." He wrinkled his nose when he said the word Shi'a, like it was some kind of disease.

But despite sharing ethnic heritage and family blood, Sanaubar joined the neighborhood kids in taunting Ali. I have heard that she made no secret of her disdain for his appearance.

"This is a husband?" she would sneer. "I have seen old donkeys better suited to be a husband."

## A-level Paper 2 Section A: Writing about society

### Example student response (re-creative writing)

This is a response to the Sample Assessment Material (SAM) from [aqa.org.uk/7707](http://aqa.org.uk/7707) under 'Assess'.

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Example student response	Annotations
<p>"I was miserable from the day I married him. I had many handsome suitors after me but I was made to marry my cousin. Do you know how awful that was for me? You were just a journalist, of course you don't. I had many prospects ahead of me, I wanted to sing, and dance. Yet I was forced to look after that crippled old man. I know that as a Shia Muslim I should have offered up my unhappiness to Allah, but it really wasn't worth it! I was beautiful, you know. Even soldier's would whistle my way and complement my green eyes, or my tremendous hips. I could not help it, I was young, and unfortunately unavailable to them, which sent them even crazier.</p> <p>It wasn't just the young children that Ali's face frightened. It frightened me too! Can you blame me? A young girl married to a Hazara that looked like a mongoloid! Your reader maybe shocked by my opinion, but they were not in my position. The other children may have been cruel to him by comparing <u>him</u> to animals and calling Ali a "Babalu", but they were right. He seemed more animalistic than human.</p> <p>That is why I had the affair. I couldn't deal with a husband like that. Hassan, my dear Hassan, he was not Ali's child, and he knew that. I cannot break the identity of Hassan's father but he was so much bolder than Ali. So smart and well presented. Someone worthy of my affection. Despite Ali not being Hassan's father, my son was born with the same disturbed face. I could not deal with that more humiliation and fear. I could not love a child that looked like the man I despise marrying. I saw A week later I saw the singers and the dancers passing through town. I saw my opportunity and I took it. Overnight I had escaped my old life and was on to better thing)."</p>	

## A-level Paper 2 Section A: Writing about society

### Generic mark grid (re-creative writing)

A05 Demonstrate expertise and creativity in the use of English to communicate in different ways	
<p>In these questions, students are assessed on their creativity in carrying out a writing task. Creativity is assessed via the following dimensions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• creation of a new and original piece of writing</li> <li>• control of any chosen style(s)</li> <li>• use of the base text by staying within feasible parameters of the narrative.</li> </ul>	
Level/ mark	Students are likely to:
L5 21-25	<p>Show a high degree of flair and originality.</p> <p>Sustain a chosen style or styles of writing throughout.</p> <p>Use the base text convincingly.</p>
L4 16-20	<p>Some flair and originality.</p> <p>Sustain a chosen style or styles of writing strongly.</p> <p>Use the base text mainly convincingly.</p>
L3 11-15	<p>Produce writing that is imaginative in parts, but where some aspects are also derivative or unoriginal.</p> <p>Sustain a chosen style or styles of writing in most of the text.</p> <p>Use the base text with some success.</p>
L2 6-10	<p>Produce writing which has one or two imaginative elements, but where more of the writing is derivative or unoriginal.</p> <p>Sustain a chosen style or styles of writing with only partial success.</p> <p>Use the base text sporadically.</p>
L1 1-5	<p>Produce some writing but with limited new perspectives introduced.</p> <p>Attempt to sustain a style but with limited success.</p> <p>Use the base text minimally.</p>
0	Nothing written.

## A-level Paper 2 Section A: Writing about society

### Annotated example student response (re-creative writing)

This is a response to the SAM from [aqa.org.uk/7707](http://aqa.org.uk/7707) under 'Assess'.

0 7

Example student response	Chief Examiner's annotations
<p>"I was miserable from the day I married him. I had many handsome suitors after me but I was made to marry my cousin. <b>Do you know how awful that was for me? You were just a journalist, of course you don't (1).</b> I had many prospects ahead of me, I wanted to sing, and dance. Yet I was forced to look after that crippled old man. <b>I know that as a Shia Muslim I should have offered up my unhappiness to Allah, but it really wasn't worth it! (2) I was beautiful, you know(3). Even soldier's would whistle my way and complement my green eyes, or my tremendous hips. I could not help it, I was young, and unfortunately unavailable to them, which sent them even crazier (4).</b></p> <p>It wasn't just the young children that Ali's face frightened. <b>It frightened me too! Can you blame me? A young girl married to a Hazara that looked like a mongoloid! (5) Your reader maybe shocked by my opinion, but they were not in my position (6).</b> The other children may have been cruel to him by comparing <u>him</u> to animals and calling Ali a "Babalu", but they were right. He seemed more animalistic than human.</p> <p>That is why I had the affair. I couldn't deal with a husband like that. Hassan, my dear Hassan, he was not Ali's child, and he knew that. <b>I cannot break the identity of Hassan's father but he was so much bolder than Ali. So smart and well presented. Someone worthy of my affection (7).</b> Despite Ali not being Hassan's father, my son was born with the same disturbed face. I could not deal with that more humiliation and fear. I could not love a child that looked like the man I despise marrying. <del>I saw</del> <b>A week later I saw the singers and the dancers passing through town. I saw my opportunity and I took it. Overnight I had escaped my old life and was on to better things (8)."</b></p>	<p>(1) Good sense of the task set and the intended audience of a journalist for Sanaubar's account.</p> <p>(2) Integrates knowledge of base text well into the account.</p> <p>(3) Effective creation of a spoken account, calling upon typical features of spoken discourse.</p> <p>(4) Development of Sanaubar's character using information convincingly from the base text.</p> <p>(5) Range of sentence types and a choice of a simile that shocks but also develops Sanaubar's character and highlights her attitudes to Ali and her marriage.</p> <p>(6) Again there is an understanding of the task and the intended audience for the journalist's article.</p> <p>(7) Knowledge of base text and effectively introducing Hassan's parentage in a clever way.</p> <p>(8) A controlled account right to the end, with the account brought to an end with Sanaubar running away.</p>

## A-level Paper 2 Section A: Writing about society

### Annotated extract from *The Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini

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Extract	Chief Examiner's annotations
<p>It was in that small shack that Hassan's mother, Sanaubar, gave birth to him one cold winter day in 1964. While my mother haemorrhaged to death during childbirth, Hassan lost his less than a week after he was born. Lost her to a fate most Afghans considered far worse than death: <b>She ran off with a clan of traveling singers and dancers (1).</b></p> <p>Hassan never talked about his mother, as if she'd never existed. I always wondered if he dreamed about her, about what she looked like, where she was. I wondered if he longed to meet her. Did he ache for her, the way I ached for the mother I had never met? One day, we were walking from my father's house to Cinema Zainab for a new Iranian movie, taking the shortcut through the military barracks near Istiqlal Middle School-Baba had forbidden us to take that shortcut, but he was in Pakistan with Rahim Khan at the time. We hopped the fence that surrounded the barracks, skipped over a little creek, and broke into the open dirt field where old, abandoned tanks collected dust. A group of soldiers huddled in the shade of one of those tanks, smoking cigarettes and playing cards. One of them saw us, elbowed the guy next to him, and called Hassan.</p> <p>"Hey, you!" he said. "I know you."</p> <p>We had never seen him before. He was a squatty man with a shaved head and black stubble on his face. The way he grinned at us, leered, scared me. "Just keep walking," I muttered to Hassan.</p> <p>"You! The Hazara! Look at me when I'm talking to you!" the soldier barked. He handed his cigarette to the guy next to him, made a circle with the thumb and index finger of one hand. Poked the middle finger of his other hand through the circle. Poked it in and out. <b>In and out. I knew your mother, did you know that? I knew her real good. I took her from behind by that creek over there. (2)</b></p> <p>The soldiers laughed. One of them made a squealing</p>	<p>(1) Information that the student builds into the end of her own account, providing a convincing account for Sanaubar's reasons for doing this:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• her unhappiness with her marriage</li><li>• her dislike of her husband</li><li>• her affair with an unknown other</li><li>• her desire to have a different and exciting life.</li></ul> <p>(2) Information regarding Sanaubar's appeal to the soldiers is used carefully in the student's recast. In this Sanaubar alludes to her appeal to the soldiers rather than brings her sexual behaviour to the journalist's attention.</p>

sound. I told Hassan to keep walking, keep walking.

"What a tight little sugary cunt she had!" the soldier was saying, shaking hands with the others, grinning. Later, in the dark, after the movie had started, I heard Hassan next to me, croaking. Tears were sliding down his cheeks. I reached across my seat, slung my arm around him, pulled him close. He rested his head on my shoulder. "He took you for some-one else," I whispered. "He took you for someone else."

I'm told no one was really surprised when Sanaubar eloped. People had raised their eyebrows when Ali, a man who had memorized the Koran, married Sanaubar, a woman nineteen years younger, a beautiful but notoriously unscrupulous woman who lived up to her dishonorable reputation. Like Ali, she was a Shi'a Muslim and an ethnic Hazara. She was also his first cousin and therefore a natural choice for a spouse. But beyond those similarities, Ali and Sanaubar had little in common, least of all their respective appearances. While Sanaubar's brilliant green eyes and impish face had, rumor has it, tempted countless men into sin, Ali had a congenital paralysis of his lower facial muscles, a condition that rendered him unable to smile and left him perpetually grim-faced. (3) It was an odd thing to see the stone-faced Ali happy, or sad, because only his slanted brown eyes glinted with a smile or welled with sorrow. People say that eyes are windows to the soul. Never was that more true than with Ali, who could only reveal himself through his eyes.

I have heard that Sanaubar's suggestive stride and oscillating hips sent men to reveries of infidelity. But polio had left Ali with a twisted, atrophied right leg that was sallow skin over bone with little in between except a paper-thin layer of muscle. I remember one day, when I was eight, Ali was taking me to the bazaar to buy some naan. I was walking behind him, humming, trying to imitate his walk. I watched him swing his scraggy leg in a sweeping arc, watched his whole body tilt impossibly to the right every time he planted that foot. It seemed a minor miracle he didn't tip over with each step. When I tried it, I almost fell into the gutter. That got me giggling. Ali turned around, caught me aping him. He didn't say anything. Not then, not ever. He just kept walking.

Ali's face and his walk frightened some of the younger children in the neighborhood. But the real trouble was with the older kids. They chased him on the street, and mocked him when he hobbled by. Some had taken to

(3) The student uses this information carefully and thoughtfully in her recast:

- the age difference between Ali and Sanaubar
- her ethnic and religious background
- her attractiveness in contrast to Ali's physical appearance

calling him Babalu, or Boogeyman. "Hey, Babalu, who did you eat today?" they barked to a chorus of laughter. "Who did you eat, you flat-nosed Babalu ?" (4)

They called him "flat-nosed" because of Ali and Hassan's characteristic Hazara Mongoloid features. For years, that was all I knew about the Hazaras, that they were Mogul descendants, and that they looked a little like Chinese people. School textbooks barely mentioned them and referred to their ancestry only in passing. Then one day, I was in Baba's study, looking through his stuff, when I found one of my mother's old history books. It was written by an Iranian named Khorami. I blew the dust off it, sneaked it into bed with me that night, and was stunned to find an entire chapter on Hazara history. An entire chapter dedicated to Hassan's people! In it, I read that my people, the Pashtuns, had persecuted and oppressed the Hazaras. It said the Hazaras had tried to rise against the Pashtuns in the nineteenth century, but the Pashtuns had "quelled them with unspeakable violence." The book said that my people had killed the Hazaras, driven them from their lands, burned their homes, and sold their women. The book said part of the reason Pashtuns had oppressed the Hazaras was that Pashtuns were Sunni Muslims, while Hazaras were Shi'a. The book said a lot of things I didn't know, things my teachers hadn't mentioned. Things Baba hadn't mentioned either. It also said some things I did know, like that people called Hazaras mice-eating, flat-nosed, load-carrying donkeys. I had heard some of the kids in the neighborhood yell those names to Hassan.

The following week, after class, I showed the book to my teacher and pointed to the chapter on the Hazaras. He skimmed through a couple of pages, snickered, handed the book back. "That's the one thing Shi'a people do well," he said, picking up his papers, "passing themselves as martyrs." He wrinkled his nose when he said the word Shi'a, like it was some kind of disease.

But despite sharing ethnic heritage and family blood, Sanaubar joined the neighborhood kids in taunting Ali. I have heard that she made no secret of her disdain for his appearance.

"This is a husband?" she would sneer. "I have seen old donkeys better suited to be a husband."(5)

(4) The student uses this information from the base text in her recast to elaborate upon the effect Ali's appearance had on others.

(5) The recast does not use this quotation directly but Sanaubar's disdain for Ali is represented throughout.



## A-level Paper 2 Section A: Writing about society

### Example student response (critical commentary)

This is a response to the SAM from [aqa.org.uk/7707](http://aqa.org.uk/7707) under 'Assess'.

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Example student response	Annotations
<p>“Plan Homodiegetic narrator Pronouns “I, you, me, him, they”. Adjectives “miserable, handsome, beautiful, awful, shocked” Nouns “cousin, Ali, Allah, Shi’a muslim, Hassan, Babalu” Sentence types – declarative, exclamative, interrogative</p> <p>In this recast I have used a homodiegetic narrator from Sanaubar’s perspective. This is shown through the use of the first person singular pronoun “I” and “me” that is repeatedly used; and also the second person pronoun “you” to show how I am talking to the journalist, and the third person pronoun “him” and the third person plural “they” to show I was talking about Ali or the other children. I have changed this from the base text as in the base text we do not get Sanaubar’s personal perspective, other than a short use of direct speech: “This is a husband?... I have seen donkeys better suited...” By changing it into a homodiegetic narrator I have been able to show the reader a much more personal account from Sanaubar.</p> <p>Here I have used adjectives such as “miserable” and “awful” to show Sanaubar’s opinion on her marriage to Ali. The base text only gives a short snapshot of her opinion, however here I have made it clear just how much she does not like Ali. I have also used the adjective “handsome” when talking about other characters such as the other men that Sanaubar attracted, this is not described in the base text, and is again showing the reader Sanaubar’s lack of respect for her husband and marriage, and clear vanity by calling herself “beautiful”.</p> <p>The nouns I have used in this recast show the reader Sanaubar’s disregard for her marriage and eventually her son. The noun “Shia muslim” and “Allah” have been used here so I can show the reader that Sanaubar’s actions do not only offend her husband and son, but also her marriage. The base text rarely refers to her</p>	

religion, however I have changed it so the reader can see that Sanaubar is so unhappy that she even goes against Allah. I have also used the noun "Hassan" to show Sanaubar is aware of her son and abandons him very cruelly. The base text does not show the thought process of her leaving her son, however I find it quite important to highlight her selfishness. ~~The view that she is selfish is present in the base text. It might have been interesting to~~ The sentence types used show the clear opinion of Sanaubar. The declarative, "I was miserable from the day I married him." sets up the paragraph well as the reader is clearly shown the negative tone of the passage, this clear feeling is not shown through the base text, we don't see how miserable Sanaubar was. The interrogative, "do you know how awful that was for me?" shows Sanaubar's desperation to be understood, even by a journalist, which is not shown in the base text, as her state of mind is not mentioned. "A young girl married to a Hazara that looks like a mongoloid!". This exclamative shows the reader to an extent, the desperation and hatred that she feels within her marriage towards Ali. It is important to see, as in the base text we don't get this feelings transmitted to us at all. Which limits our understanding to Sanaubar's character.

## A-level Paper 2 Section A: Writing about society

### Generic mark grid (critical commentary)

A02 Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in texts		A04 Explore connections across texts, informed by linguistic and literary concepts and methods		A05 Demonstrate expertise and creativity in the use of English to communicate in different ways	
In the commentary, this rewards students for making analytical comments about their own writing. They do this by identifying the language choices they made and offering a rationale for their decisions.		In the commentary, this rewards students for their ability to make connections between the text they produced in the re-writing task, and the base text which constituted their starting point. They need to refer specifically to the nature of the base text in order to achieve a comparison and target A04.		In these questions, students are assessed on their writing expertise in producing a commentary on the re-writing they did in Questions 1, 3, 5 and 7.  Writing expertise is assessed via the following dimensions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• creation of a well organised text</li> <li>• accuracy of writing.</li> </ul>	
Level/ mark	Students are likely to:	Level/ mark	Students are likely to:	Level/ mark	Students are likely to:
<b>L5</b> <b>13-15</b>	Provide perceptive accounts of how meanings are shaped, by judiciously selecting and identifying significant language features and by evaluating the choices they made.	<b>L5</b> <b>9-10</b>	Offer perceptive insights about particular aspects of language and likely effects produced in the base text, compared with their transformed text.	<b>L5</b> <b>5</b>	Produce a commentary which is well organised and accurately written.
<b>L4</b> <b>10-12</b>	Provide competent accounts of how meanings are shaped, by carefully selecting and identifying some significant language features and by exploring the choices they made.	<b>L4</b> <b>7-8</b>	Offer productive comments about relevant aspects of language and likely effects produced in the base text, compared with their transformed text.	<b>L4</b> <b>4</b>	Produce a commentary which is organised competently, and which is mostly accurate.

Level/ mark	Students are likely to:	Level/ mark	Students are likely to:	Level/ mark	Students are likely to:
<b>L3</b> <b>7-9</b>	Provide clear accounts of how meanings are shaped, by identifying some language features and by making some observations about the choices they made.	<b>L3</b> <b>5-6</b>	Offer some useful comments about relevant aspects of language and likely effects produced in the base text, compared with their transformed text.	<b>L3</b> <b>3</b>	Produce a commentary which is uneven both in its organisation and in its level of accuracy.
<b>L2</b> <b>4-6</b>	Provide broad accounts of how meanings are shaped, by identifying one or two language features and offering generalised comments about the choices they made.	<b>L2</b> <b>3-4</b>	Offer limited comments, not always with relevance, about aspects of language and likely effects produced in the base text, compared with their transformed text.	<b>L2</b> <b>2</b>	Produce a commentary which attempts to organise ideas, but with limited success and with basic errors.
<b>L1</b> <b>1-3</b>	Provide minimal accounts of how meanings are shaped, by offering scant reference to language features and little or no comment about the choices they made.	<b>L1</b> <b>1-2</b>	Offer generalised comments, with little relevance, about aspects of language and likely effects produced in the base text, compared with their transformed text.	<b>L1</b> <b>1</b>	Produce a commentary with limited cohesion and frequent errors.
<b>0</b>	Nothing written about the text.	<b>0</b>	Nothing written about connections across texts.	<b>0</b>	Nothing written.

## A-level Paper 2 Section A: Writing about society

### Annotated example student response (critical commentary)

This is a response to the SAM from [aqa.org.uk/7707](http://aqa.org.uk/7707) under 'Assess'.

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Example student response	Chief Examiner's annotations
<p>“Plan Homodiegetic narrator Pronouns “I, you, me, him, they”. Adjectives “miserable, handsome, beautiful, awful, shocked” Nouns “cousin, Ali, Allah, Shi’a muslim, Hassan, Babalu” Sentence types – declarative, exclamative, interrogative</p> <p>In this recast I have used a <b>homodiegetic narrator from Sanaubar’s perspective (1)</b>. This is shown through the use of the first person singular pronoun “I” and “me” that is repeatedly used; and also the second person pronoun “you” to show how I am talking to the journalist, and the third person pronoun “him” and the third person plural “they” to show I was talking about Ali or the other children. <b>I have changed this from the base text as in the base text we do not get Sanaubar’s personal perspective, other than a short use of direct speech: “This is a husband?... I have seen donkeys better suited...” By changing it into a homodiegetic narrator I have been able to show the reader a much more personal account from Sanaubar.(2)</b></p> <p>Here I have used adjectives such as “miserable” and “awful” to show Sanaubar’s opinion on her marriage to Ali. The base text only gives a short snapshot of her opinion, however here I have made it clear just how much she does not like Ali. <b>I have also used the adjective “handsome” when talking about other characters such as the other men that Sanaubar attracted, this is not described in the base text, and is again showing the reader Sanaubar’s lack of respect for her husband and marriage, and clear vanity by calling herself “beautiful”.(3)</b></p> <p>The <b>nouns(4)</b> I have used in this recast show the reader Sanaubar’s disregard for her marriage and eventually her son. The noun “Shia muslim” and “Allah” have been used here so I can show the reader that Sanaubar’s actions do not only offend her husband and son, but also her marriage. The base text rarely refers</p>	<p>(1) Choice of narrative point of view explored and its realisation through the pronoun system.</p> <p>(2) Explicitly discusses her choices in her recast, comparing what is given in the base text to her presentation. This last point could have been developed further.</p> <p>(3) Compares her choices to those of the base text and builds this into a point on characterisation.</p> <p>(4) Selects this language feature and explores her use of nouns to create different effects in her own writing.</p>

to her religion, however I have changed it so the reader can see that Sanaubar is so unhappy that she even goes against Allah. I have also used the noun "Hassan" to show Sanaubar is aware of her son and abandons him very cruelly. **The base text does not show the thought process of her leaving her son, however I find it quite important to highlight her selfishness. (5)** ~~The view that she is selfish is present in the base text. It might have been interesting to~~ The sentence types used show the clear opinion of Sanaubar. **The declarative (6)**, "I was miserable from the day I married him." sets up the paragraph well as the reader is clearly shown the negative tone of the passage, this clear feeling is not shown through the base text, we don't see how miserable Sanaubar was. The interrogative, "do you know how awful that was for me?" shows Sanaubar's desperation to be understood, even by a journalist, which is not shown in the base text, as her state of mind is not mentioned. "A young girl married to a Hazara that looks like a mongoloid!". This exclamative shows the reader to an extent, the desperation and hatred that she feels within her marriage towards Ali. It is important to see, as in the base text we don't get this feelings transmitted to us at all. Which limits our understanding to Sanaubar's character.

**(5)** Carefully contrasts here (and elsewhere) what is not in the base text and why she chooses to include it.

**(6)** This final paragraph on sentence functions is perhaps the least successful as it seems list-like, although she makes some interesting suggestions that her intention is to give more of a rounded characterisation than Hosseini offers.

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## A-level Paper 2 Section A: Writing about society

### Examiner commentary

Here, a senior examiner gives her thoughts on the student responses reproduced on the previous pages.

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#### A05

##### **Demonstrate expertise and creativity in the use of English to communicate in different ways.**

The account is imaginative, although it is based effectively on the fictional world that Hosseini creates. The student's recognition of the journalist audience is good and she foregrounds this with Sanaubar's acknowledgement of the journalist audience through the direct address, as well as the use of interactive spoken discourse features. The student sustains the voice she has chosen throughout the account and Sanaubar's more rounded character is consistent with the information in the base text.

The recast is based on careful selections from the extract given, showing a good sense of what is needed and useful from it and what is not. Examiners felt that it was very solid in this band, although not with quite the flair needed for the top band. This recast is confident and competent but does not have the creative deftness of touch that would characterise a Level 5 response. The meeting of the word count and the control of the writing until the end is another positive attribute of the student's recast.

**Level 4 (18 marks out of 25)**

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#### A02

##### **Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in texts**

Clear account of some features (pronouns, adjectives, nouns and sentence types). Perhaps is a little reminiscent of the AS approach of identifying a fixed number of features. A strength of the commentary is in the identification of a number of language features accurately, even if the supporting comments are quite straightforward at times. These comments need further development to become more perceptive but there are sensible links to narrative point of view and characterisation; overall, the student presents their creative thought processes both relevantly and clearly.

**Level 3 (9 marks)**

#### A04

##### **Explore connections across texts, informed by linguistic and literary concepts and methods**

Some useful comments about the base text and the adaptation are threaded into the commentary. There is a clear sense that the student has both read the text and engaged with it, and that the choices in the new text are made with what is already known about Sanaubar's character and the events of the novel. The connections are informed by concepts (point of view and characterisation) and the new text choices are based convincingly within the existing parameters of the novel. It is evident that 'stylistics' as a method has informed the approach; this is shown in the careful selection of features and concepts and the precise and mainly detailed observations made.

**Level 3 (6 marks)**

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A05

**Demonstrate expertise and creativity in the use of English to communicate in different ways**

The response is organised, accurate and clearly written. Meaning is never in doubt and the ideas are packaged together into a well-paragraphed response.

**Level 5 (5 marks)**

In summary

**Total mark awarded: 20 out of 30**



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# Assessment objectives breakdown

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## Assessment objectives breakdown

This is an overview of each examined component, with further guidance and clarification on what each question assesses, and what a typical student might focus on in their response.

### Paper 1: Telling stories

#### Section A: Remembered places

Students study a wide range of **linguistic and generic features**, as well as related issues around questions of **representation and viewpoint** in texts taken from a range of time periods. The anthology offers opportunities for detailed exploration of the **ubiquitous nature of narrative and systematic study of the representation of place**. In studying, thinking, and writing about the anthology, students should consider:

- the ways in which writers and speakers present places, societies, people and events
- the metaphorical nature of representation: the ways that narrative itself can sometimes be seen as a personal journey for writers and speakers
- the influence of contextual factors such as time period, race, social class and gender on the content and focus of narratives
- the affordances and limitations of different media
- different generic conventions and different purposes for communicating ideas and viewpoints about travel, people and place
- how people and their relationships are realised through point of view, attitude, specific registers, physical descriptions, speech and thought.

## Key terms for Paper 1, Section A

- **Genre:** a way of grouping texts based on expected shared conventions.
- **Representation:** the portrayal of events, people and circumstances through language and other meaning-making resources to create a way of seeing the world.
- **Point of view:** the perspective(s) used in a text through which a version of reality is presented.
- **Register:** a variety of language that is associated with a particular situation of use.
- **Literariness:** the degree to which a text displays 'literary' qualities along a continuum rather than being absolutely 'literary' or 'non-literary'.

A01 (15 marks)	A03 (15 marks)	A04 (10 marks)
<p>The mark scheme shows that this assesses three distinct strands:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• expression and presentation of ideas</li> <li>• use of terminology</li> <li>• selection of and analysis at different/appropriate language levels.</li> </ul> <p>Focuses could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the subjective nature of reconstruction</li> <li>• different perspectives on places, people and societies depending on age, gender, class</li> <li>• the ways that spaces and places are remembered and retold and reconstructed in narratives</li> <li>• attitudes to culture and society</li> <li>• the importance of journeys: physically and metaphorically</li> <li>• the use of memory as a tool for representation and reconstruction.</li> </ul>	<p>The mark scheme shows that this assesses three distinct strands:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• factors associated with mode</li> <li>• generic conventions including different ways of storytelling afforded by different genres</li> <li>• the influence of contextual factors (production and reception) on the negotiation and shaping of meaning.</li> </ul>	<p>The mark scheme shows that this assesses students' abilities to explore connections between texts and highlight similarities and differences. A second strand is that these connections should be <b>in the context of an overarching focus on the representation of place.</b></p>

## Paper 1: Telling stories

### Section B: Imagined worlds

Students explore the imagined worlds of these texts that are **characterised by unusual narratives, narrators, characters, settings and events**. Students also consider key aspects of the texts that place them in particular contexts of production and reception. Students analyse the language choices made by writers in order to study the following:

- point of view
- characterisation
- presentation of time and space/place
- narrative structure.

#### Key terms for Paper 1, Section B

- **Narrator:** a fictional entity responsible for telling the story in the novel (note the general definition for a narrator on this specification is: a person responsible for writing or speaking a narrative).
- **Storyworld:** the fictional world that is shaped and framed by the narrative.
- **Characterisation:** the range of strategies that authors and readers use to build and develop characters.
- **Point of view:** the perspective(s) used in a text through which a version of reality is presented.
- **Genre:** a way of grouping texts based on expected shared conventions.
- **Speech and thought presentation:** the ways in which a character's speech and thought are shown through varying degrees of narrator control.

A01 (10 marks)	A03 (10 marks)	A04 (15 marks)
<p>The mark scheme shows that this assesses three distinct strands:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• use of terminology</li> <li>• selection and analysis at different/appropriate language levels</li> <li>• expression and presentation of ideas.</li> </ul> <p>Focuses could include comments on (to support AO2):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• specific examples of world-building: setting up and maintaining fictional spaces/places and time frames</li> <li>• particular configurations of 'telling' that are important to the extract eg 'who tells' and 'to whom they tell'</li> </ul>	<p>The mark scheme shows that this assesses three distinct strands:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• maintaining a focus and selection of appropriate detail</li> <li>• an ability to interpret</li> <li>• analysis of narrative technique(s) and authorial craft.</li> </ul>	<p>The mark scheme shows that this assesses three distinct strands:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• features of the extracts and the wider novel associated with the fantasy genre</li> <li>• genre conventions</li> <li>• the influence of contextual factors (production and reception) on the negotiation and shaping of meaning.</li> </ul> <p>For example, if studying <i>The Lovely Bones</i>, it would be possible for students to address AO3 by discussing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• how the novel (and extract) might be considered to be from the <b>fantasy genre</b> (eg themes, characters, plot)</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ways in which characterisation operates in the extract: how characters are presented and understood in terms of how they look, their individual speech patterns, interaction with others and various types of body language</li> <li>• specific types of character (eg different narrative roles, simple v developed characters)</li> <li>• how actions and descriptions are representing through different kinds of verb processes</li> <li>• the various ways of representing speech and thought (character v narrator driven)</li> <li>• different points of view, types of narrator, stance and reliability</li> <li>• other important authorial/narrator choices such as text layout and structure, use of allusions and intertextual references.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• social, historical, political, biographical and literary influences on <b>both the production and the reception</b> of the novel (eg relevant points from the study of Sebald’s own reflections on the writing of the novel, gothic and feminist influences, ‘adversity’ narratives, relevant references to specific literary critical and non-academic readings from a variety of theoretical lenses and stances, any re-writings/adaptations)</li> </ul> <p>These are not exhaustive lists and students may address AO3 in different ways. For the third bullet point, ‘literary-critical’ interpretations are not privileged over others and there is no need for students to necessarily learn and quote named critics.</p>
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## Paper 1: Telling stories

### Section C: Poetic voices

Students study **the nature and function of poetic voice in the telling of events and the presentation of people**. In studying the role of language in the construction of perspective, students explore and analyse:

- the presentation of time: understanding the past, reviewing past experiences, the manipulation of time
- the importance of place: locations and memories, the ways in which these are captured in voice(s), and their effect on individuals
- how people and their relationships are realised through point of view, attitude, specific registers, physical descriptions, speech and thought
- the presentation of events through the poet's selection of material, the use of narrative frames and other poetic techniques.

## Key terms for Paper 1, Section C

- **Identity:** a speaker's sense of who s/he is.
- **Poetic Voice:** the way in which the speaker's sense of identity is projected through language choices so as to give the impression of a distinct persona with a personal history and a set of beliefs and values.
- **Point of view:** the perspective(s) used in a text through which a version of reality is presented.
- **Genre:** a way of grouping texts based on expected shared conventions.
- **Register:** a variety of language that is associated with a particular situation of use.

A01 (15 marks)	A02 (10 marks)
<p>The mark scheme shows that this assesses three distinct strands:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• use of terminology</li> <li>• selection of analysis at different/appropriate language levels</li> <li>• expression and presentation of ideas.</li> </ul> <p>Focuses could include comments on (to support A02):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• particular configurations of 'telling': who speaks and to whom, and any changes that occur within the poem(s)</li> <li>• possible reasons for wanting to tell this story – the 'tellability' of the poem</li> <li>• how poetic voice is set up and developed across poem(s)</li> <li>• ways in which perspective is constructed</li> <li>• the various ways of representing speech and thought (character v speaker driven)</li> <li>• different uses of memories and representations of events (eg childhood)</li> <li>• how story worlds, locations and time frames are constructed and developed</li> <li>• other important authorial/speaker choices such as text layout and structure, use of allusions and intertextual references.</li> </ul>	<p>The mark scheme shows that this assesses three distinct strands:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• maintaining a focus on and selection of appropriate detail</li> <li>• an ability to interpret</li> <li>• analysis of the construction of poetic voice and authorial craft.</li> </ul>

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## Paper 2: Exploring conflict

### Section A: Writing about society

Students explore the ways that **writers present people**, their **points of view** and their **relationships with others**. They look at how writers:

- shape the narrative structure and present events, time and places
- reveal the speech and thought processes of the characters and narrator(s)
- use situations of conflict to express ideas about societies and their values.

In addition, students develop the skills to adapt and shape the original material (the base text) to respond to different re-creative tasks. These skills include awareness of:

- the nature of monologue and dialogue
- how changing point of view, genre, context, purpose, audience or mode can re-shape meanings
- how undeveloped aspects of the narrative and characterisation might be developed further
- the importance of specific moments in time or descriptions of place.



## Key terms for Paper 2, Section A

- **Society:** a group of people working and living in a specific location who act out cultural beliefs and practices.
- **Characterisation:** the range of strategies that authors and readers use to build and develop characters.
- **Point of view:** the perspective(s) used in a text through which a version of reality is presented.
- **Motif:** a repeated concrete object, place or phrase occurs in a work of fiction and is related to a particular theme.
- **Base text:** the original text from which re-creative writing takes place.

### Questions 1, 3, 5, 7

#### A05 (25 marks) (intervention task)

The mark scheme shows that this assesses three distinct strands:

- flair and originality
- sustained use of style
- convincing use of base text.

### Questions 2, 4, 6, 8 (commentary)

A02 (15 marks)	A04 (10 marks)	A05 (5 marks)
<p>The mark scheme shows that this assesses two distinct strands:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• identification of language features used</li><li>• analysis and evaluation of decisions made to shape the text.</li></ul>	<p>The mark scheme shows that this assesses one strand: making connections (similarities and differences) between their own decisions as writers and the decisions and effects achieved by the writers of the base text.</p>	<p>The mark scheme shows that this assesses two distinct strands:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• organisation of the commentary</li><li>• accuracy of writing.</li></ul>

Students have been asked to:

- consider how they have used language to shape their intended meaning
- demonstrate the connections between the base text and their transformed text
- structure their writing clearly to express their ideas.

They should:

- refer to specific features they have used
- apply concepts or language levels
- refer to the base text.

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## Paper 2: Exploring conflict

### Section B: Dramatic encounters

Students explore the ways that **conflicts are presented**, the meanings that can be inferred from the language use and **the contextual reasons for these conflicts**. As part of their study, students analyse areas relevant to the study of **drama and dramatic discourse**, including how playwrights:

- represent natural speech features
- use language to create distinctively different characters
- show characters asserting power and positioning others via their language and behavior
- use the idea of conflict to create dynamic narratives and address the wider themes of the play.

## Key terms for Paper 2, Section B

- **Speech acts:** the forms and functions associated with particular utterances and types of speech.
- **Felicity conditions:** the conditions needed for a speech act to achieve its purpose, such as the authority of the speaker and the situation of the speaker.
- **Conversational maxims:** explicit principles that provide a backdrop for conversation to take place so that speakers can easily understand one another.
- **Politeness strategies:** distinctive ways in which speakers can choose to speak to avoid threatening face.
- **Impoliteness:** the act of directly threatening face (using impoliteness strategies).

A02 (15 marks)	A04 (20 marks)	A05 (10 marks)
<p>The mark scheme shows that this assesses three distinct strands:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• use of terminology</li> <li>• selection of and analysis at different/appropriate language levels</li> <li>• expression and presentation of ideas.</li> </ul> <p>Focuses could include comments on (to support AO2):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the ways in which dramatic monologue and dialogue are organised and presented</li> <li>• the use of different speech acts associated with particular characters and in interaction</li> <li>• conversational strategies that are given to characters to shape identity, for example turn-taking, exchange structures, co-operation, im/politeness strategies, inference and implication</li> <li>• distinctive personal vocabularies, speech patterns and registers given to characters</li> <li>• other ways of constructing identities, presenting conflict and highlighting tensions between</li> </ul>	<p>The mark scheme shows that this assesses three distinct strands:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• an ability to interpret and evaluate the question focus</li> <li>• sSelecting appropriate detail</li> <li>• analysis of authorial craft.</li> </ul>	<p>The mark scheme shows that this assesses two distinct strands:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• generic conventions of drama</li> <li>• the influence of contextual factors (production and reception) on the negotiation and shaping of meaning.</li> </ul> <p>For example, if studying <i>Othello</i>, it would be possible for students to address AO3 by discussing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• how <b>specific dramatic conventions and the affordances of the stage</b> are used (eg soliloquy, asides, use of theatrical space, stage directions)</li> <li>• social, historical, political, and literary influences on the <b>production and reception</b> of the play (eg relevant points from the study of early Jacobean theatre, Shakespearean tragedy, revenge and domestic tragedies, the roles of men and women in society, relevant references to specific literary critical and non-academic readings from a variety of theoretical lenses and</li> </ul>

<p>characters and the fictional worlds they inhabit, for example through physical descriptions, stage directions and orthographical conventions.</p>		<p>stances, any re-writings/adaptations).</p> <p>These are not exhaustive lists and indicative content should be written in a way that encourages examiners to reward students for different ways in which they might apply their learning. For the second bullet point, 'literary-critical' interpretations are not privileged over others and there is no need for candidates to necessarily learn and quote named critics.</p>
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# Choosing suitable texts for the NEA

This five step lesson idea will help you support your students in scoping a focus and texts for their non-exam assessment (NEA) investigation. It's also available as a download, here: [bit.ly/2ricfyn](https://bit.ly/2ricfyn)

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## Choosing suitable texts for the NEA

This encourages students to think about:

- choosing literary and non-literary material
- deciding a relevant focus
- making active connections.

By using a set text for *Imagined Worlds* students can explore what they know already about:

- **themes**
- some aspect of **representation**
- **particular language features**
- some aspect of **narrative/point of view**.

Remember, it's not possible to choose exam texts, but other texts by the same authors or from a similar source are acceptable.

### Learning objectives

Students will:

- understand how to use stylistics as a research methodology
- begin to select research questions
- use the activity to trigger their own ideas for making active connections
- use the activity as a springboard for choosing literary and non-literary material.

### Prior knowledge needed

Students should have some knowledge of these key concepts:

- genre
- narrative
- point of view
- register
- representation
- literariness.

Students should also be confident with choosing and applying language levels in order to showcase their skill in close language-driven analysis in the NEA's report-based format.

### Lesson preparation

Teachers will need the following resources:

- whiteboard
- poster paper
- copies of the set text
- post-it notes
- internet access.

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## Activities

### Part 1: starter – explore literary texts (5 minutes)

Ask students to individually list key themes and significant language features from their Imagined Worlds text (see attached *Dracula* example). You may want to remind students of the key concepts to generate interesting aspects (eg shifting narrative perspectives, or first person narration).

### Part 2: exploring literary texts

Either, a student-led approach

1. In groups, ask students to consolidate these into mind maps and present back to other groups. You could develop this naturally by exploring common or particularly unusual ideas.

Or, a more teacher-led alternative

2. Take one response per student and create a front-of-class mind-map. Students will need to capture this for the next part, for example by photographing it.

### Part 3: making connections to non-literary material

Compile a list of non-literary material types and sources, and give this to your students. Some ideas include:

- YouTube video
- TV
- film
- songs
- speech
- Twitter, Facebook, or other social media
- blogs
- newspapers/magazines
- books
- letters/diaries/emails.

Ask students to suggest non-literary material to link to each of the literary text ideas, and as many options as possible for each (see *Dracula* example).

One way to generate examples One approach could be to think about the literary representation of accent and dialect or standard and non-standard English in literary texts (such as *Trainspotting*, *Wuthering Heights*, *A Concise Chinese-English Dictionary for Lovers*, or *V*). This could result in the following non-literary material:

- recordings (and phonetic transcriptions) of regional speakers, either
  - produced by students
  - sourced from places like the [BBC Listening Project](#) / [BBC Voices](#)
- regional speakers recording a word list
- interviews with speakers talking about accent and dialects (their own and others)
- transcripts of television shows set in different areas
- newspaper articles about accent and dialect
- song lyrics featuring non-standard English or varieties of English
- emails from non-native English speakers
- computer mediated communication and social media language use.

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#### Part 4: finding text extracts and non-literary material

Students use their set text to practise finding suitable extracts to match up the themes and concepts from their mind map.

Page number	Summary of extract

They then research and record possible non-literary material to use.

Source	Website link

It could be effective to structure this as a group activity with some students taking responsibility for finding instances from the literary extracts, while others look for non-literary material.

This is developed when students discuss the suggestions and critically analyse suitability for investigation focus.

#### Part 5: plenary - validating ideas (5 minutes)

Each student chooses one of their connections, writes a 'tweet' on what they like about it, and sticks it on their group's poster or on the whiteboard.

#### Further work

1. The same activity could be repeated using another core literary text, if this is the approach taken to the NEA. Students may build an affinity with their investigation focus if they pursue a particular interest.
2. Students may narrow down their own choices more effectively if they produce their mind maps individually. This could then be followed up with the students exploring relevant secondary readings and creating research questions for their chosen texts and connections.



## Example starter outcome

### Gothic

- horror
- terror
- motifs
- symbols.

### Representation

- vampires
- monsters.

### Deixis

- spatial
- personal.

### Genre

- telegrams
- reports
- diaries.

Setting, place, and location.

## Dracula

- themes
- ideas
- linguistic features
- concepts.

### Characterisation

- roles
- description
- dialogue.

Standard and non-standard English.

Point of view, narration, and story-telling.

### Representation of 'otherness'

- different cultures.

### Accent and dialect

- representation
- phonological features
- grammatical features
- lexical features.

### Travel

- dangers
- journeys as self-discovery.

### Gender

- women's language use (dialogue)
- representation of 'types' of woman
- representation of masculinity
- representation of femininity.

## Example starter outcome

### Gothic

- horror
- terror
- motifs
- symbols.

Film trailers or song lyrics.

### Representation

- vampires
- monsters.

Films or scripts.

### Deixis

- spatial
- personal.

Guidebooks (special) or news reports.

### Genre

- telegrams
- reports
- diaries.

Personal diaries, or a corpus of different genres, eg text messages or blogs.

### Setting, place, and location

Travel brochures.

## Dracula

and non-literary material

### Characterisation

- roles
- description
- dialogue.

Personal jokes or anecdotes.

### Standard and non-standard English.

Word lists, adverts, songs.

### Accent and dialect

- representation
- phonological features
- grammatical features
- lexical features.

Transcripts of spontaneous speech (private or public eg BBC Voices).

### Representation of 'otherness'

- different cultures.

Newspaper reports, film scripts, private interviews, TV interviews.

### Point of view, narration, and story-telling.

Charity leaflets or transcripts of speech.

### Travel

- dangers
- journeys as self-discovery.

Travel writing (books, blogs, transcripts from TV).

### Gender

- Women's language use (dialogue)
- Representation of 'types' of woman
- Representation of masculinity and femininity.

Newspaper reports or adverts.

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# Appendix

Other useful bits and pieces from the English Hub School network session

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## English programme of study for KS2/1

This information is taken from National curriculum in England: English programmes of study, available in full here: [bit.ly/1FfvEex](https://bit.ly/1FfvEex). This contains public sector information licensed under the Open Government Licence v3.0.

The National Curriculum aims to ensure that all pupils "acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language".

The DfE provide two statutory appendices to support the programmes of study for English at KS1 and KS2: one on spelling and the other on vocabulary, grammar and punctuation which lists the specific features/concepts students should be introduced to at each year in their learning.

Below the terms have been categorised according to the year in which they should be learned.

### Year 1, age 5-6

adjective	negation	sentence
capital letter	noun	singular
clause	plural	suffix
exclamation mark	prefix	verb
full stop	pronoun	word
letter	punctuation	
narrative	question mark	

### Year 2, age 6-7

adverb	co-ordinate, co-ordination	statement
apostrophe	noun phrase	subordinate, subordination
command	past tense	
commas	present tense	
compound, compounding	progressive	

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### Year 3, age 7-8

cohesion  
conjunction  
consonant  
direct speech  
headings

inverted commas  
paragraph  
preposition  
present perfect  
simple past

speech marks  
subheadings  
subordinate clause  
vowel  
word family

### Year 4, age 8-9

adverbial  
determiner  
fronting, fronted  
inflection

modify, modifier  
possessive  
preposition  
phrase

reporting clause  
Standard English

### Year 5, age 9-10

ambiguity  
brackets  
dashes

modal verb  
parenthesis

relative clause

### Year 6, age 10-11

active voice  
antonym  
bullets  
cohesive device  
colon  
columns  
ellipsis

formal  
hyphen  
independent clause  
informal  
object  
passive  
question tags

repetition  
semi-colon  
subject  
subjunctive  
synonym  
tables

### Non-statutory

article  
auxiliary verb  
complement  
continuous  
digraph  
etymology  
finite verb  
future  
gapheme  
grapheme-phoneme  
correspondences  
head

homonym  
homophone  
infinitive  
intransitive verb  
main clause  
morphology  
participle  
perfect  
phoneme  
phrase  
Received Pronunciation  
register

root word  
schwa  
split digraph  
stress  
syllable  
tense  
transitive verb  
trigraph  
unstressed  
word class

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## Notes

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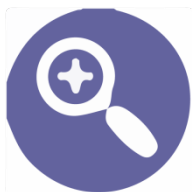
“ERA is really easy to use. Any service that informs departments and can be used in an empowering way to enhance teaching and learning – and is free – has to be a fantastic educational tool.”

Melanie, Head of English



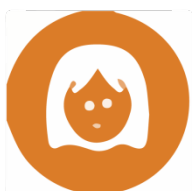
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