

**REVISING GCSE ENGLISH LANGUAGE PAPER 1: READING**

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| **Action** | **Timing** |
| **Read Source A + Q1** | **5 minutes** |
| **Q2 (Language)** | **15 minutes** |
| **Q3 (Structure)** | **15 minutes** |
| **Q4 (Evaluate)** | **25 minutes** |
| **Q5 (Descriptive / Narrative)** | **45 minutes** |

**Glossary of Key Subject Terminology**

**Language**

**Fundamental – You MUST know and be able to identify these:**

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| **Noun**  A naming word for people, places and things.  *blue, table, cat, window* | **Adjective**  Adds description to people, places and things.  *The* ***cluttered*** *table* | **Verb**  Used to convey an action.  *run, skip, read, watch* | **Adverb**  Adds description to an action.  *He ran* ***hastily*** |
| **Pronoun**  Used to refer to a person without actually using their name.  *I, you, he, she, they* | **Simile**  Description through comparison using **‘like’** or **‘as’.**  *The buildings leaned menacingly towards each other* ***like*** *boxers* | **Metaphor**  Used to describe something as if it **is** something else.  *‘As usual, we were in our classroom,* ***that safe and wooden-walled box****.’* | **Personification**  Describes inanimate objects with human features and tendencies.  *‘Silence* ***crept*** *solemnly down the hall and absorbed the dank air that* ***lingered****.’* |
| **Zoomorphism**  Describes inanimate objects and people with animalistic tendencies.  *‘He pictured the* ***roaring*** *Pacific Ocean a few blocks from his house, spilling in furious waves against the rocks.’* | **Pathetic Fallacy**  Assigning emotions and feelings to inanimate objects  *‘The* ***sullen*** *wind was soon awake, It tore the elm-tops down for* ***spite****, and did its worst to vex the lake’* | **Alliteration**  Repetition of the same letter/sound with adjacent or closely connected words  *‘****b****oundless and* ***b****are* | **Onomatopoeia**  Words that sound like the sound they represent  *‘Pop!’ ‘Bang!’* |
| **Juxtaposition**  Placing two contrasting ideas / characters / settings / atmosphere close together in the same text for effect.  *‘Where her eyes* ***glistened*** *in the* ***glare of the sun****, his grew* ***darker*** *as the* ***shadows*** *enveloped his form.’* | **Sensory Language**  Words/phrases which describe or appeal to the sense: sight, sound, touch and smell.  *‘He had come out on to a narrow cobbled street that bubbled with a cauldron of voices:* ***garbled shouts, throaty cries, squawks of protest*** *and* ***snarled threats.’*** | **Emotive Language**  A word or phrase that expresses or makes the reader feel a certain emotion.  *‘I stared at her in* ***horror****; fear rendering my feet immovable from the spot.’* | **Repetition**  Where a word, phrase, technique or idea is repeated.  *‘****only then*** *would he let me ​trace the frozen river which ran through his face****, only then*** *would he let me ​explore the ​blown hinge of his lower jaw.’* |

**Sentence Types**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Simple**  An independent clause that makes complete sent on its own and communicates one idea. It typically contains a verb and a subject (the noun in the sentence that is doing something).  *‘Sophie reluctantly walked towards the door.’* | **Compound**  Two independent clauses linked by a coordinating conjunction (FANBOYS)  *‘Sophie reluctantly walked towards the door* ***and*** *turned the handle.’* | **Complex**  One independent clause and one (or more) subordinate clauses. Subordinate clauses begin with a subordinating conjunction. They do not make grammatical sense on their own.  ***‘Without any other choice,*** *Sophie reluctantly walked towards the door.’* | **Minor / Fragment**  A full sentence needs an independent clause in order for it to be grammatically complete.  If a subject and/or verb is missed out, this is known as a fragment sentence.  A one word sentence.  ***‘Silence.’*** |

**Advanced – You COULD know and be able to identify these:**

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| **Superlatives**  A hyperbolic adjective or adverb  *‘She was the* ***tallest*** *in her class.’* | **Modal Verb**  Verbs that are used to show the level of possibility, indicate ability, show obligation or give permission  *‘Might, can, should, will’* | **Sibilance**  Repetition of the “s” sound with adjacent or closely connected words..  *‘Which yet* ***s****urvive,* ***s****tamped on the****s****e lifele****ss*** *thing****s****.’* | **Extended Metaphor**  A central metaphor that acts like an “umbrella” to connect other metaphors or comparisons within it. It can span several lines or an entire text. |
| **Ambiguity**  Where a word or phrase has two or more possible interpretations | **Hyperbole**  Deliberate exaggeration  *‘My hand feels like it’s going to drop off.’* | **Semantic Field**  Where words are categorised based on a shared meaning.  *Orbit, planets, meteorite and gravity are all within the semantic field of space*. | **Symbolism**  Generally speaking, a symbol is a sign representing something other than itself.  *Light can be symbolic of hope, guidance or purity.* |

**Sentence Types**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Compound-Complex Sentence**  Two independent clauses joined by a co-ordinating conjunction and one or more subordinate clauses  .  ***‘Without any other choice,*** *Sophie reluctantly walked towards the door* ***and*** *turned the handle,* ***apprehensive as to what waited for her on the other side.’*** | **Declarative Sentence**  A statement.  *‘Trophy hunting is absolutely barbaric’* |
| **Imperative Sentence**  A command  *‘Ban trophy hunting.’* | **Exclamatory Sentence**  A sentence which ends with an exclamation mark for emphasis.  *‘It’s disgusting!’* |

**Structural Techniques**

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| --- | --- |
| **Beginning** | The opening of a text. This is where the main ideas and focus(s) of the text are introduced. |
| **Middle** | The section of the text between the opening and the ending. This is where ideas, characters, settings, themes and the main focus is developed. |
| **End** | This is the conclusion of the text. |
| **Shift of Focus** | Where the writer deliberately guides the reader’s attention from one things to another. For example: from a setting to a character or from one object to another. |
| **Zooming In** | Where a writer focuses on something specifically and describes it in great depth and detail. |
| **Zooming Out** | Where a writer focuses on or describes something more generally such as the atmosphere in a room. |
| **Foreshadowing** | A suggestion or hint of an event or revelation which will occur later in the text. |
| **Contrast** | Where two opposites are placed closely together for emphasis. |
| **Dialogue** | Character speech |
| **Flashback** | Where the focus shifts from the present to the past and back again. |
| **Time Shift** | Where the focus shifts from the present to the future. |
| **Inside to Outside**  **(and vice versa)** | Where a writer shifts the focus from inside a setting to outside. This can also apply to characters: a writer may describe a character’s thoughts and feelings (inside) before shifting the reader’s focus to their physical appearance or actions (outside). |
| **Cyclical** | When the end of a text is similar to the beginning. For example, the text ends in the same setting or the character finds themselves in the same situation. |
| **Cliff-hanger** | An unresolved ending. |
| **Exposition** | The first stage of a narrative. Characters, settings, atmosphere and key ideas are introduced. |
| **Conflict** | The second stage of a narrative. There is a problem or issue that affects the protagonist. |
| **Rising Action** | The third stage of a narrative. The tension or excitement builds towards the climactic moment. |
| **Climax** | The fourth stage of narrative. This is the main event for which the ‘Conflict’ was the catalyst. This is the peak of the narrative where the main issue is tackled or there is a plot twist. |
| **Falling Action** | The fifth stage of narrative. A decrease in tension building towards the end of the text. However, depending on the focus of the climax, not all narratives will have a ‘falling action’. |
| **Resolution** | The sixth stage of narrative. The ending, usually cyclical, conclusive or a cliff hanger. |

**Understanding Paper 1 and the Source**

**About the source**

You will receive **one** source with your exam paper; it will be an extract taken from a novel published in the 20th or 21st century. Questions 1 to 4 (the Reading section) will be based around this extract.

Before you start reading the source, you must read the context box at the top of the page. This will give you some relevant information about the source to aid your understanding: the text it came from, any characters within the extract, when it is set/ was published etc.

**DO NOT** include any quotations from this box in any of your answers – it is not officially part of the source.

**Reading the Source – 5 minutes**

At the beginning of the exam, read through your source carefully and ask yourself the following questions:

* What is it about?
* What are the **5** key moments?
* From whose perspective is it written?

As you’re reading the source, annotate each paragraph with a **summary** of the main focus / event / purpose in four or five words. E.g. Protagonist introduced, nightmare / blackbird = symbolism

**Top Tip**



Whilst you are summarising the main events, if you notice any structural techniques or effective uses of language, highlight and label them! They may be useful later in the exam when you are responding to questions 3 and 4.

**Source A**

Alex Cold lives with his parents and two younger sisters, Andrea and Nicole, in a small American town, but when his mother becomes ill, family life changes beyond recognition.

Alexander Cold awakened at dawn, startled by a nightmare. He had been dreaming that an enormous black bird had crashed against the window with a clatter of shattered glass, flown into the house, and carried off his mother. In the dream, he had watched helplessly as it clasped her clothing in its yellow claws, flew out the same broken window, and disappeared into a sky heavy with dark clouds.

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What had awakened him was the noise from the storm: wind lashing the trees, rain on the rooftop, and thunder. He turned on the light with a sensation of being adrift in a boat, and pushed closer to the bulk of the large dog sleeping beside him. He pictured the roaring Pacific Ocean a few blocks from his house, spilling in furious waves against the rocks. He lay listening to the storm and thinking about the black bird and about his mother, waiting for the pounding in his chest to die down. He was still tangled in the images of his bad dream.

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Alexander looked at the clock: 6.30, time to get up. Outside, it was beginning to get light. He decided that this was going to be a terrible day, one of those days when it’s best to stay in bed because everything is going to turn out bad. There had been a lot of days like that since his mother got sick; sometimes the air in the house felt heavy, like being at the bottom of the sea.

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At breakfast Alex was not in the mood to applaud his father’s efforts at making pancakes. His father was not exactly a good cook; the only thing he knew how to do was pancakes, and they always turned out like rubber-tyre tortillas. His children didn’t want to hurt his feelings, so they pretended to eat them, but any time he wasn’t looking, they spit them out.

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‘When’s Momma going to get better?’ Nicole asked, trying to spear a rubbery pancake with her fork.

‘Shut up, Nicole,’ Alex replied.

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‘Momma’s going to die,’ Andrea added.

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‘Liar! She’s not going to die!’ shrieked Nicole.

‘You two are just kids. You don’t know what you’re talking about!’ Alex exclaimed.

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‘Here, girls. Quiet now. Momma is going to get better,’ his father interrupted, without much conviction.

Alex was angry with his father, his sisters, life in general – even with his mother for getting sick. He rushed out of the kitchen, ready to leave without breakfast.

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Except for his father’s pancakes and an occasional tuna-and-mayonnaise sandwich, no one in the family had cooked for months. There was nothing in the refrigerator but orange juice, milk and ice cream; at night they ordered in pizza or Chinese food. At first it was almost like a party, because each of them ate whenever and whatever they pleased, mainly sweets, but by now everyone missed the balanced diet of normal times.

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Alex had realised during those months how enormous their mother’s presence had been and how painful her absence was now. He missed her easy laughter and her affection, even her discipline. She was stricter than his father, and sharper. It was impossible to fool her; she could see the unseeable. He missed her music, her flowers, the once-familiar fragrance of fresh-baked cookies, and the smell of paint. It used to be that his mother could work several hours in her studio, keep the house immaculate, and still welcome her children after school with cookies.  Now she barely got out of bed to walk through the rooms with a confused air, as if she didn’t recognise anything; she was too thin, and her sunken eyes were circled with shadows. Her canvases, which once were explosions of colour, sat forgotten on their easels, and her oil paints dried in their tubes. His mother seemed to have shrunk; she was little more than a silent ghost.

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**Source Notes**

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| --- | --- |
| **What is the source about?** |  |
| **What are the 5 key moments?** | **1.**  **2.**  **3.**  **4.**  **5.** |
| **From whose perspective is it written?** |  |

**Q2 - Analysing Language:** How does the writer use language to…

**15 minutes**

**How to approach the question**

1. Read the focus of the question carefully - it could be in relation to character, setting, atmosphere or idea, and highlight the key words in the question.
2. Next, read through the extract and identify approximately 2-3 quotations (words/phrases) that are relevant to the focus of your question.
3. Be selective with your quotes. Which quotation can you analyse in more depth? Which quotation offers you a more perceptive interpretation?
4. Annotate your chosen quotations by zooming in on key words/phrases, applying a word that best describes how the focus of the question is presented, identifying the word class, language technique or sentence form used by the writer for effect and the connotations your word/phrase conveys.
5. Write **1 CUMULATIVE** paragraph that identifies the overall effect and then **2 x PETALZ** paragraphs in response to the question.

**Top Tip**

Although the focus of your response **MUST** be based on quotes taken from the allocated extract, you should consider the wider context. In other words, consider what you have read before and after the extract to make more perceptive inferences and avoid any pesky potential misinterpretations!

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| **SUBJECT TERMINOLOGY** | |
| **Noun** | **Adjective** |
| **Dynamic Verb** | **Adverb** |
| **Simile** | **Metaphor** |
| **Personification** | **Zoomorphism** |
| **Connotations** | **Simple** |
| **Compound** | **Complex** |
| **Lists** | **Juxtaposition** |
| **Repetition** | **Pathetic Fallacy** |

2) Look in detail at this extract from **lines 6 to 11** of the source:

What had awakened him was the noise from the storm: wind lashing the trees, rain on the rooftop, and thunder. He turned on the light with a sensation of being adrift in a boat, and pushed closer to the bulk of the large dog sleeping beside him. He pictured the roaring Pacific Ocean a few blocks from his house, spilling in furious waves against the rocks. He lay listening to the storm and thinking about the black bird and about his mother, waiting for the pounding in his chest to die down. He was still tangled in the images of his bad dream.

How does the writer use language here to describe the effects of the storm?

You could include the writer’s choice of:

* words and phrases
* language features and techniques
* sentence forms.

[8 marks]

**Notes:**

**Putting it altogether:**

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| **POINT:** Identify a language feature and comment on how it is used to describe **the effects of the storm.** | * In the extract, the writer uses a [insert language feature] to describe the storm as… / emphasise how the storm… |
| **EVIDENCE:** Select a quotation to illustrate your point. | * This is evident / illustrated when the writer states… |
| **TERMINOLOGY + ANALYSE:** Zoom in on key words/phrases, identify connotations and explain in detail what they suggest about the **effects of the storm**, including layers of meaning. | * The [insert language feature + key word/phrase] connotes…which implies / emphasises… * Furthermore, it could also suggest… |
| **LINK:** Select a second quotation which reinforces your point. Analyse it! | * This idea is reinforced when the writer states [insert link quote] * The [insert language feature + key word / phrase] connotes…which intimates… * Moreover, it could also suggest… |
| **ZOOM IN ON EFFECT:** Explain what this makes the reader think, feel, imagine or understand **about the storm.** | * This would make the reader think / feel / imagine / understand… |

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| **POINT** |  |
| **EVIDENCE** |  |
| **TERMINOLOGY / ANALYSE** |  |
| **LINK** |  |
| **ZOOM IN ON EFFECT** |  |

**Q3 - Analysing Structure:** How is the text structured to interest the reader?

**15 minutes**

**How to approach the question**

1. Read the source carefully and identify the main focus of the text: character, atmosphere, setting, idea or event.
2. Look carefully at the beginning. How does the writer introduce the main focus? (What is your first impression and how does the writer use structure to establish it?)
3. Look carefully at the middle. How does the writer shift the focus of the text to develop or contrast your understanding of the main focus that was introduced in the beginning? (What do you learn about the main focus that you didn’t know from reading the beginning?)
4. Look carefully at the ending. How does the writer conclude the main focus? (What is your final impression of the main focus and how does it compare to the beginning / middle? How does the writer end the source?)
5. Label each section with the appropriate structural techniques.
6. Write 3x PEE paragraphs. (or stick with PETALZ if it makes more sense to you)

**Top Tip**

Start your response with a single sentence that summarises how the text has been structured as a whole. For example*: The writer deliberately structures the source to develop the reader’s understanding of…*

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| **SUBJECT TERMINOLOGY** | |
| **Beginning** | **Middle** |
| **End** | **Introduce** |
| **Develop** | **Conclude** |
| **Shift of focus** | **Zooming in / out** |
| **Inside to outside** | **Dialogue** |
| **Contrast** | **Foreshadowing** |
| **Flashback** | **Time Shift** |
| **Paralipsis** | **Journey** |
| **Cliff hanger** | **Cyclical** |

3) You now need to think about the **whole** of the source.

This text is taken from the beginning of a novel.  
  
How is the text structured to interest you as a reader?

You could write about:

* what the writer focuses your attention on at the beginning
* how and why the writer changes this focus as the source develops
* any other structural features that interest you.

[8 marks]

BEGINNING: How is the main focus introduced?

MIDDLE: How is the main focus developed?

END: How is the main focus concluded?

END: How is the main focus concluded?

**Putting it altogether**

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| **POINT:** WHAT structural technique(s) is the writer using to introduce, develop or conclude your understanding of Alex? | * At the beginning, the writer uses [insert structural technique] to introduce… * In the middle, the writer uses [insert structural technique] to develop… * At the end of the extract, the writer uses [insert structural technique] to contrast / conclude the reader’s impression of… |
| **EVIDENCE:** WHERE is this illustrated? | * This is evident in lines … to … |
| **EXPLANATION:** HOW does the writer’s use of structure affect the reader? | * The writer’s use of [insert structural technique] makes the reader think / feel / imagine / understand… * **Furthermore / Alternatively, it could cause the reader to…** |

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| **BEGINNING** | **POINT** | **EVIDENCE** | **EXPLANATION** |
|  |  |  |
| **MIDDLE** | **POINT** | **EVIDENCE** | **EXPLANATION** |
|  |  |  |
| **END** | **POINT** | **EVIDENCE** | **EXPLANATION** |
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**Q4 - Evaluate:** To what extent…?

**25 minutes**

**How to approach the question**

1. Read the statement carefully and identify the key parts that you’ll be engaging with.
2. Draw a bracket around the section of the source you’ve been allocated for this question and read the bullet points - they’ll guide you to focus on certain aspects of the source.
3. Re-read this section of the source and select 4 quotations that enable you to agree or disagree with the statement.
4. Next to each quote, identify your reason for choosing it. What does it convey that allows you to agree or disagree? This will be your point for each paragraph.
5. You need to use your skills from Q2 and Q3 here. Go back through your highlighted quotations and identify any language features or structural techniques used by the writer. You **MUST** identify the writer’s methods!
6. Write 2-3 PETALZ paragraphs in response to the statement.

**Top Tip**

Don’t repeat the statement in your point, state an opinion – why do you agree or disagree? You can then analyse your chosen quote to prove your point!

REMEMBER: You can wholly agree, wholly disagree or do a bit of both!

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| --- | --- |
| **SUBJECT TERMINOLOGY** | |
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| **Compound** | **Complex** |
| **Lists** | **Juxtaposition** |
| **Repetition** | **Pathetic Fallacy** |

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| --- | --- |
| **SUBJECT TERMINOLOGY** | |
| **Beginning** | **Middle** |
| **End** | **Introduce** |
| **Develop** | **Conclude** |
| **Shift of focus** | **Zooming in / out** |
| **Inside to outside** | **Dialogue** |
| **Contrast** | **Foreshadowing** |
| **Flashback** | **Time Shift** |
| **Paralipsis** | **Journey** |
| **Cliff hanger** | **Cyclical** |

4) Focus this part of your answer on the second half of the source from **line 16 to the end.**

A student said ‘This part of the story, set during breakfast time, shows that Alex is struggling to cope with his mother’s illness.’

To what extent do you agree? In your response, you could:

* consider your own impressions of Alex
* evaluate how the writer shows that Alex is struggling to cope
* support your response with references to the text.

[20 marks]

**Notes:**

**Putting it altogether**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **POINT:** State your opinion – why you agree / disagree with the statement. | * I completely / partially agree/disagree with the statement because… |
| **EVIDENCE:** Select a quote to justify your opinion. | * This is evident / when the writer states… |
| **TERMINOLOGY + ANALYSE:** Zoom in on all relevant key words / phrases, identify language features and explain what they suggest about Alex. | * The [insert language feature + key word/phrase] connotes… which implies… * Furthermore / In addition, |
| **LINK:** Select a second quotation which supports your opinion and analyse as above. | * This idea is reinforced later in the text when... * The [insert language feature + key word/phrase] connotes… which suggests… * Furthermore / In addition |
| **ZOOM IN ON EFFECT:** Explain WHY this quote makes you agree / disagree with the statement – what does it make you TFIU about Alex? | * This makes me as a reader... |

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| --- | --- |
| **POINT** |  |
| **EVIDENCE** |  |
| **TERMINOLOGY / ANALYSE** |  |
| **LINK** |  |
| **ZOOM IN TO EFFECT** |  |