

SECTION A (PAPER 1)– 40 MARKS.

EDEXCEL IGCSE

- In section A you will come across Non-Fictional texts . Fictional texts are imagined by writers where non-fictional texts describe the opposite. Most of non-fictional texts are accurate or in other words that really happened. But **not all of them** are accurate.
- In section A ,You will come up with texts like, Autobiography, Biography, Journals, blogs, Obituaries, Speeches, diary, feature articles, news reports, magazines even stories.
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Now let's see what some of these are.

1. **Autobiography** – Where the writer describes his or her own life. Here the writer may use hyperbole to show the effect of exaggeration.

Another form of autobiographical writing is **Diary or journal or the modern equivalent , the blog.**

2. **Biography** is the life story of a famous or interesting person . That may be taken from history or from the present day .

3. **News reports** may appear in newspapers or magazines . News is expected to be objective and unbiased and based on clear evidence.

4. **Featured Articles** are usually topics of interest to a large number of readers. Their topic can be about anything ranging from family matters to global politics.

5. **An obituary** is a newspaper article , found most frequently on broadsheet newspapers, about a remarkable or well-known person who has just died .

****-----**broadsheet newspaper is a newspaper printed on large sheet of paper, especially a serious newspaper**-----**

6. **Speeches-** Speeches can be given for many different reasons. People make speeches in debates or after formal dinners to entertain an audience. However the most famous speeches are those that are made by famous politicians as part of campaigns.

So how is your question paper based on the IGCSE English language paper?

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There will be a total of 7 questions in your Section A , paper 1. Out of which questions 1, 2,4 and 5 are very short questions. Here You should answer the shortest question in your own words. In other words in most cases writers will ask you direct questions with an expectation of direct answers as they contain a maximum of 1 -2 marks each. They will ask you to find information from the text and to give an example of this. You will need to provide one example for each question; there are no extra marks for providing more.

On the other hand; questions 3,6 and 7 require the longest answers as they are worth 10-15 marks. In these questions you are allowed to quote from the text however, coping long phrases and sentences from the text are not a great idea. It may ask you to consider the writer's impressions of the subject or to concentrate on the writers thoughts and fillings.

You should support your answer with short quotations from the text as evidence to back up your point. At this point the " point-evidence-explain" (P-E-E) is a good model to answer these questions. While answering you have to think where the information is given Explicitly or implicitly.

- Now the examiner wants you to organize you answers (that is long ones) in a certain way as most of their questions are from quoting from the passage and asking your opinions ; requesting you to describe it.
 ** An example question would be like : **explain how the writer presents her account of life at sea. You should support your answers with close reference to the passage , including brief quotations. ****
- Now this is how they want the answers in most of the time :
 1. Stating the story /text in "clear text" with no confusion to the writing which may arise due to mistaken use of parts of speech or other factors of English language; In short they want to know "actually what happened"
 2. They want you to use "precise details"
 3. They want you to use frequent personal pronouns.
 4. They (in most cases) will want you to maintain a first person perspective method.
 5. Use plenty of language devices in your writings.

- AUDIENCE PURPOSE AND LANGUAGE

Now, every text you read or come across has a purpose in it. Its best if you get into the habit of thinking about audience ,purpose and language whenever you read a text. A writer's purpose has a good deal to do with their audience . A writer will never write for everyone. If a writer is writing a story about a crime for a seven – year old child. He would choose appropriate language for the reader, considering their age or level of understanding and the subject matter.

Similarly, a script written for a stand-up comedian will be very different in style and in all aspects of language as well.

Now , to provide the best of marks examiners want you to learn technical term for descriptive effects , which will allow you to express yourself more precisely in your analysis of writing. You can improve things like these which most of the writers uses:

- **Alliteration and assonance** : these will make language more emphatic/more rhythmic/ more memorable
- **Onomatopoeia** – these makes phrases more vivid and powerful
- **Descriptive phrases** – these makes the reader imagine the scene
- **Verbs of motion and action** – makes the language more dynamic and energetic
- **Wordplay / exaggeration** – makes writing light hearted and amusing
- **Abstract nouns** : Makes writing more intellectual or more to do with ideas.
- **Repetition** : Emphasis a particular point or word

TYPES OF SENTENCES :

Not only these techniques are used in writing but if we go back to the basics we can find that sentence complexities are also being used in a number of ways that remind us of our good old school days . Some of them are :

1. Simple sentences : which consists of one main clause
2. Compound sentences : Two or more main clause joined by “and” , “but” , “so” , “or” .
3. Complex sentences : Contains at least one subordinate clause
4. Incomplete sentences : does not have a complete main clause ex-“ He stopped. Silence”

THE STRUCTURE OF A TEXT :

Now, when you are reading the passages in SECTION A (2 passages), try to understand the purpose of the passage , which can only be done by careful reading of the passage. Try to look at the way in which the writer uses the basic types of writing that you find in non-fiction :

1. Description : try to understand where something is or where something happens or the appearance of the people and objects
 2. Narrative : what happened or is happening
 3. Dialog or speech : including talking to oneself
 4. Thoughts and feelings
 5. Background information, facts or explanation .
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Coming to the passages and Questions , when you are given the passages you need to read and think about what it is saying. **Try using the following questions :**

1. What sort of text is it.
2. What is the text about
3. Who is the intended audience for the text
4. Is the writer trying to make a particular point
5. What and linguistic technique does the writer use
6. What effects do these techniques have
7. How does the text makes you feel personally

IDENTIFYING KEY INFORMATION : ASK YOURSELF THESE QUESTIONS.

When you are provided with these unseen passages (which are non-fictional) , you can use a system called **TAP**.

- **Type** : what type of text is it? Is it done in first person ?
 - **SUBJECT** : What is the subject of the text? Is the subject matter aimed at a particular age group?
 - **Narrative perspective** : Is it an autobiography, biography , speech ?
 - **Tense** : Is it written in present tense or in retrospective?
- **Audience** : Who is the intended audience ? How do you get to know this?
 - **Age** : is the subject matter aimed at a particular age group ?
 - **Knowledge** : What do you need to know to make sense of these passages
 - **Tone** : What kind of tone is the piece written in ? Is the language used formal or informal?
- **Purpose** : What is the purpose of the text . Is it informing you , persuading (cause someone to belief something) you or explaining it to you. The main difference between fiction and non-fiction is that non-fiction is usually written for a precise **practical purpose** , where as fiction is usually written to entertain . In order to give you a system for thinking about purpose you can use these suggestions
 - **Inform, explain, describe** : Is the writer writing to make something clear or to give information

- **Argue , persuade , advise** : Is the writer writing to discuss an issue or persuade someone to share their views
- **Explore , imagine, entertain** : Is the writing written with no other purpose than to entertain the reader?

ANALYZING THE TEXT (asking these questions)

Once you found the key information that you have extracted using the TAP technique, now you begin analyzing the texts much more deeply. This time try finding how the writer used language and sentence structure to influence the reader. These are how you do it

- ❖ Read the title carefully. get a grasp of what the passage may be ? what might be expected or you can predict from the passage after reading the title.
- ❖ consider reading the beginning and the ending of the passage carefully
- ❖ read the text in full to get a sense of the passage's tone and content
- ❖ underline :
 - (a) words that you don't understand
 - (b) words or phrases that you feel are important. (use a pencil)
- ❖ (Again) Who is the intended audience and how do you know this?
- ❖ What is the purpose of the passage ? Is it informing you, explaining you or persuading you?
- ❖ what language has the writer used to convey some of the messages in his text that may look implicit.

SOLVING QUESTION 7 (THE BIG GUY)

The final question for Section A is Question no 7 and it will always tell you to compare the two unseen texts that you have been given. This question is the longest and most complex and represents about a third of the marks available in section A

according to the provided guidelines, there are 5 steps on “**HOW TO**” solving this question :

- 1) The essay/answer that you write in response to the question will be comparative that is based on both the passages provided to you (passage 1 and passage 2). The question will likely be focused on
 - (a) what the texts are about , key themes and author's conclusions
 - (b) the author's use of language , character and other effects

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- 2) Begin by stating what the texts are about considering its '**explicit**' and '**implicit**' meanings
- 3) Refer to interesting or relevant points of details (very general answers will not be successful).
Avoid retelling the story and make sure how the devices and the feature works. Use P-E-E technique on you answer
- 4) Draw clear links and contrasts between the texts. make sure you compare and contrast the texts by using words and phrases such as "similarly" , "in comparison " or "on the other hand" .
- 5) Use quotations to support your comments. You may refer to a whole paragraph or a long section but avoid coping it out in full. use quotations using inverted commas.

SAMPLE STUDENT'S ANWER (SHOWING HOW TO ACTUALLY WRITE)

One of the key differences between the texts is their tone. Text one uses humour, such as in the description of the 'disturbingly red hotdog sausages', the personification of the 'worn-out' humitas waiting to be saved by someone and the unexpected simile comparing guinea pigs with 'a bottle of champagne'. This tone amuses the reader, which helps to engage their interest in what the writer wants to tell them about Ecuador. However, the tone becomes a little more serious towards the end of the text, as the writer explains the uses of cuy. In comparison, Text two uses a more serious tone throughout. Its style, especially in the third paragraph, is similar to that of an encyclopedia, using technical terms such as 'pods', 'mattak' and 'tupilaks' and giving the reader a great deal of factual information without much use of simile or personification. This helps to convey the seriousness of the writer's ethical dilemma and the 'absolute necessity' of hunting in the arctic.

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