



RUA E

Revision

3 DIFFERENT TYPES OF QUESTIONS

- Understanding (asks you about what the writer has written and cannot be learnt or taught)
- Analysis (asks you about how the writer has written - the techniques they have used) this can be learnt and can be taught
- Evaluation (asks how effective the writing / technique is)

UNDERSTANDING

- Understanding questions are relatively simple to recognise and are generally easy to answer provided that you understand what has been written
- That is why is it so important to read, especially broadsheet newspapers
- **Higher – you must try to answer all understanding questions in your own words unless you're asked otherwise**

OWN WORDS

- You must try to change the words that have been written within reason. There will be words (mainly nouns) that you will not be able to change without being ridiculous, so use your head!
- However, you **MUST** make sure you keep the meaning the same. The minute you change the meaning is the minute you get 0 marks! Be careful!
- You can:
 - Change the tense
 - Change the order
 - Think of a different way of saying the same thing



EXAMPLE

- This year would offer me space and time in quantities that I could not yet fully imagine
- The time would provide me with freedom in a way that I have never experienced before



YOU TRY

- There would be no locked doors, no keys to remember, no bills, no money
- There would be none of the daily stresses of life to worry about

CONTEXT QUESTIONS

- A context question asks you the meaning of a word within a specific context giving evidence
- It is worth two marks
- What does context mean here?
- What the writer is talking about
- REMEMBER that the meaning of words can change depending on the context in which they are used. Do not simply assume you know what a word means – read the context (what comes before and after the word itself) every time!
- The context will always give you an example, definition or a similar word to help you, you just need to find it!!
- What is the formula for answering a context question?

CONTEXT QUESTION FORMULA

- 1. Give the meaning of the word (1)
- 2. Quote from the context AND explain how this quotation helped you to arrive at the meaning (1)

- Lay out your answer in a clear bullet points
- 1. _____ means _____ (1)
- 2. “_____” gives examples of _____(1)

EXAMPLE

- “Those people who choose their jobs as a vocation seem to be happier – nurses, teachers, nursery nurses.” Give the meaning of the word “vocation”
- Vocation means a job you are compelled to do
- “nurses, teachers and nursery nurses” gives a list of the types of jobs people need to want to do because it needs to be part of who they are in order to do it successfully.

YOU TRY

- The rumours that Douglas was a prisoner were still unsubstantiated. There had been no witnessing to his bailing out of the plane, and no solid information could be expected from beyond enemy lines for weeks, perhaps even months.
- Question: Show how the context helped you to arrive at the meaning of the word *unsubstantiated*. (2)

Answer:

- Unsubstantiated means unconfirmed (1)
- The fact there were “no witnesses” and “no solid information” suggests that there was no firm proof. (1)
- Remember not to over complicate things - keep it simple!

LINK QUESTION

- A link question asks you to show your understanding of how an argument links together. It is worth two marks
- Usually the question focuses on a link between two paragraphs, but can also ask you about a link between two sentences
- The link will mostly, but not always, be found at the start of the paragraph sentence
- What is the formula for answering a link question?

LINK QUESTION FORMULA

- Quote the word/phrase which links back to the previous paragraph/sentence AND explain how. You need to show an understanding of what the previous paragraph, or sentence, was about. (1)
- Quote the word/phrase which links forward AND explain how. You will need to show a clear understanding of what this paragraph, or sentence, is about. (1)

EXAMPLE

- William Shakespeare is easily the best known of our English writers. Virtually every man on the street can name some of his plays and his characters, and many people can also recite lines from his poetry by heart. However, despite our familiarity with his work, we know relatively little of the man himself. We do not know when or why he became an actor, we know nothing of his life in London, and almost nothing of his personal response.
- Answer
- “Our familiarity with his work” looks back at the topic of how widely known Shakespeare’s work is. (1)
- “”we know relatively little of the man himself” introduces the new topic of the things we don’t know about him. (1)

YOU TRY

At school, Alistair had shown exceptional promise. He has excelled as a scholar, as a musician and on the games field; his popularity and talent had made him an obvious choice for the head boy in his year.

His university career had made a sad contrast to the years as a golden boy. A baffling lack of commitment saw him fail his first year exams, and after a nervous breakdown early in his second year, he dropped out all together.

- “The years as a golden boy” refers back to the previous description of Alistair’s successful school career (1)
- “made a sad contrast” leads up to the list of disasters which overtook him whilst at university (1)

ANALYSIS QUESTIONS

- Analysis questions are asking you to show an understanding of how a piece of writing is written, in other words, the techniques used by the writer.
- For analysis questions you must always quote and comment (remember that you get no marks for a quotation alone)
- You must explain the effect of the technique within the context
- Remember 1 comment = 1 mark

SENTENCE STRUCTURE

- One thing that people always find tricky is questions on sentence structure, but it shouldn't be.
- Like most other questions, if you learn the techniques and their effect you should be able to apply it to any context
- Again, remember that quote + comment is essential

PUNCTUATION

- The type of punctuation you could be asked about are:
 - **Inverted commas (2””)** titles, quotations, direct speech and to mark off a word or phrase from the rest of the sentence perhaps because the writer doesn't agree with it
 - **Colon (:)** introduces a quotation, list, explanation, expansion or rephrasing of the previous statement
 - **Semi-colon (;)** generally marks the end of a sentence but less firmly than a full stop. It comes between two statements which are closely connected, or which balance or contrast with one another. It might also be used to separate a list of phrases
 - **Single dash (-)** can be used to introduce an extra piece of information just as a colon does. It can also be used to indicate a breaking off in a sentence “*if we should fail –*”
 - **Parenthesis ((), --)** to mark an extra piece of information in a sentence which will not effect the meaning of the sentence if removed
 - **Ellipsis (...)** it indicates that a word (or words) is left out or implied. Various effects can be created depending on the context: suspense, humour, irony, innuendo etc

EXAMPLE

- At this time pass all the characters of the Spanish streets: the dark veiled woman hurrying home from the priest; the Civil Guard whom nobody greets; gold-skinned sailors and strutting carters; goat-faced ruffians down from the hills; and old men with the hollow eyes of hermits – their skin stretched thin on chill, severe bones.
- Answer:
- Colon “the Spanish streets:” indicates a list of all the different people is to follow
- Semi-colons are used to separate out the phrases that describe these characters
- The dash before “- their skin stretched...” adds extra information to reinforce the effect of the “hollow eyes”

SENTENCE PATTERNS

- **Inversion**

- Where the subject comes after the words that tell us more about it (the opposite of normal English) “Up and up leapt the flames”. This alters the emphasis of the sentence

- **Repetition**

- Where the writer may use certain word patterns for effect (think of the rule of three)

- **Lists, climax and anti-climax**

- Lists often have a progression of ideas. Where the writer builds up to something we call is a climax; when the writer builds up to something but it doesn't come, we call it an anti-climax

- **Antithesis**

- Balancing opposites together to make a contrast

“Those that I fight I do not hate

Those that I guard I do not love.”

- **Length of sentence**

- often the length of sentences will reflect what is being discussed or will be for particular effect. Remember that a minor sentence does not include a verb!

REMEMBER THAT A GOOD ANSWER WILL:

- Do more than simply identify a feature of sentence structure
 - Go beyond explain the general function of a feature
 - Comment how the feature is used ***in this specific example***
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- ***Remember to use phrases like “this is effective because ...” or “the writer uses this techniques to emphasise ...”***

EXAMPLE

- Let every nation know, whether it wishes us well or ill, that we shall pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, oppose any foe to assure the survival and success of liberty.
- Answer
- Repetition of expressions on the pattern of a verb followed by the word “any” followed by a noun. These are arranged in ascending order of importance, building up to a climax. (1)
- Antithesis “support/oppose” to highlight the strength of feeling and how far they will go to protect liberty. (1)

WORD CHOICE

- Remember that when asked about a specific word think about:
 - How the meaning of the sentence would change if you took the word out or replaced it with a similar word
 - How it effects the tone – does it reveal the write's feelings?
- Think about the denotation (the literal meaning of the word) and the connotation (the ideas we associated with the word)
- Quote the word, give the denotation and comment on the connotations

IMAGERY

- Metaphor – one thing is said to be something else, but not meant literally
- Simile – one thing is compared to another using the words “as” or “like”
- Personification – when we give an inanimate object human/life-like qualities

- What must you remember to do when answering questions on imagery?
 - 1. Say what type of image it is
 - 2. Give the root meaning (what is being compared to what?)
 - 3. Explain the link between them and explain why it is effective in the context

How do we structure an answer on imagery?

JUST AS ... SO ...

- “A house like this becomes a dinosaur”
- Metaphor
- Comparing an old house to a dinosaur
- Just as a dinosaur is obsolete, big and consumes a great deal, so we gain the impression that the house is also big, old and needs a lot to keep it going.

Remember to discuss the thing that is brought in by way of comparison first and then show what this tells us about the subject.

YOU TRY

- *The rain raced along horizontally, sticking into them like glass splinters till they were wet through.*
- *Simile*
- *Comparing the rain to glass splinters*
- *Just as glass splinters are sharp and penetrating and would cause pain so too does the rain. It suggests that the rain is hitting people with such force that they are being wounded by it.*

TONE

- We are going to look at tone in a lot more detail soon, but lets go over the basics just now.
- What do we mean by tone?
- Tone does not relate directly to meaning, but rather to the way in which something is said
- When asked about tone first decide if it is serious or humorous and light-hearted

tone

- **Light-hearted**

- Informal language
- Conversational – chatty, friendly ...
- Flippant tone – writer is showing an disrespectful attitude to something normally taken seriously
- Irony – used when the author says the opposite of what they really mean (irony could be humorous, but also serious)
- Sarcastic tone – use of irony to criticise or wound it'd target
- Mocking tone – uses irony and sarcasm to ridicule something or someone
- Satirical tone – extreme form of irony where the writer will hold a subject up to ridicule in order to attack it

- **Serious**

- Formal language
- Thoughtful/reflective
- Respectful
- Emotive – will generally be serious and will play upon the emotions of the reader
- Matter-of-fact
- Persuasive

WHEN ANSWERING QUESTIONS ON TONE

1. Identify the tone used
2. Quote the techniques which allowed you to understand the tone (word choice, sentence structure, imagery etc)
3. Comment on how these techniques helped you to decide on the tone

If in any doubt just say either serious or humorous, don't go further unless you are absolutely sure!!

LANGUAGE QUESTIONS

- These questions always seem to confuse people, but they are actually very general
- Whenever you are asked something like “*By referring to at least two features of language, analyse how the writer ...*” you need to remember that you can comment on any of the following techniques:

- Sentence structure
- Word choice
- Imagery
- Contrast
- Tone



- Go for what is easy first (word choice, imagery) and remember you don't need to balance your answer – if you are asked to look at two features but it's for 4 marks you can achieve 3 marks on word choice and 1 on imagery etc

COMPARISON QUESTION: THINGS TO REMEMBER

- **Layout**

- Always write clear subheadings for each of your areas of agreement/disagreement and underline them
- This allows the marker to see right from the start how many you have got
- Under each heading write **TWO** bullet points – one for each author
- Each bullet point should contain a quotation/reference and a comment explaining their view clearly
- This should be done as many times as time allows you, but remember for full marks you need at least 3
- If you only write 2 you cannot get any more than two marks; if you only write one you can only get one mark even if it is really well developed

AN EXAMPLE

- They both agree that Donald Trump does what he wants no matter what
 - Passage one says the ... showing us that she believes ...
 - Passage two agrees by stating that “...” thus highlighting ...
- They both agree that Donald Trump is does not the experiences required for being President
 - Passage one explains that “...” showing ...
 - Passage two agrees by showing us some of his past experiences like ...
- They both agree that he is popular within his own party
 - Passage one ...
 - Passage two ...

IF THEY AGREE AND DISAGREE ...

- Include another heading!
- Areas of Agreement:
- Donald Trump is popular
 - Passage one...
 - Passage two...
- Areas of Disagreement:
- They disagree about him being a good president
 - Passage one...
 - Passage two...

WORKING ON THE PASSAGES TO UNDERSTAND THE MAIN IDEAS

- Take careful note of the overview provided for you before the passage.
- Answering the questions in Passage 1 – even looking at the questions – helps you pick out main ideas
- Try to distinguish key ideas from definitions, illustrations, examples and expansions which are there to support the key ideas
- Is there a clear topic sentence? The first sentence of each paragraph in the main body of the passage often will introduce the topic.
- Sometimes writers use anecdotes (stories) to introduce a point [or topic in an introduction]. Look for the point after the anecdote.
- Sometimes the anecdote will be an illustration of the point the writer has made.
- The conclusion will often provide a summary or restatement of the writer's view.