

# Higher Close Reading



## Revision Pack

### Contents:

- ✓ Imagery
- ✓ Word Choice
- ✓ Sentence Structure
- ✓ Tone
- ✓ Other Techniques to be Aware Of
- ✓ Context and Link Questions
- ✓ Final Question Advice
- ✓ Reminders



# Higher Close Reading



## Imagery

When asked about imagery, you should identify a technique and explain it in as much detail as possible. Remember the formula:

*An effective image (simile/ metaphor/ personification) is "\_\_\_\_\_". Just as \_\_\_\_\_, so too the writer is suggesting that \_\_\_\_\_.*

### A Reminder of Techniques:

**Simile**: this is a comparison between one thing and another, using the words "like" or "as".

**Metaphor**: this goes a step further than a simile, describing one thing as though it is another, but this is not meant literally.

**Personification**: this is a comparison where an inanimate object is described as having human characteristics.

**Alliteration**: this is where consecutive words begin with the same consonant letter and, more importantly, the same sound.

**Assonance**: this is exactly the same as alliteration, only with vowel sounds.

**Onomatopoeia**: this is where a word makes the sound of the thing it describes.



## Higher Close Reading

### Imagery Questions



#### Example 1

*“The prime minister has allowed himself to become insulated from reality and have his feathers preened by those around him.”*

How does the writer use imagery to emphasise the prime minister's inability to do his job properly?

#### Possible Answers

- a) This is an image. The prime minister is being kept away from real things in the way that insulation keeps the cold out.
  
- b) This is a metaphor. Just as a bird preens itself so that it will look and feel attractive, so too the prime minister has been preened by the flattery of those around him. He is removed from reality and "insulated" suggests that he is protected from the harsh truths of the country's problems. "Feathers" also suggest the image of a caged bird or pet; reinforcing the idea of powerlessness.
  
- c) It is a metaphor which describes the people around the prime minister flattering him.

## Example 2

***“Now, on the lamp-lit avenue, he stopped and saw his callousness as evil, able to take all the beauty out of life; the brightness from the moon, the fragrance from roses.”***

**How does the writer use imagery to evoke the man's character?**

### **Possible Answers**

- a) In this image the man's evil is described as something concrete, not abstract.
  
- b) The image suggests that the man's presence is dark and menacing. Just as something evil would take life away from the goodness in the world, so too the man's presence sucks the goodness out of everything he comes into contact with, such as flowers, moonlight and beauty.
  
- c) The image of the man's evil is effective as it is able to suck out the good qualities of flowers, beauty and light.

### Example 3

***“Time to confess. I’m a big fan of Taggart. I have been for years, which I guess makes me old. By now this famed cop series has been transformed into a comfy, raddled old armchair, one which I slump into. The DNA boys have checked out its stains. CID have reached down the back in search of blood-encrusted weapons. In a sense that chair is also, metaphorically, Glasgow. Last night I sighed and sank into its old, familiar deeps. I was oh-so deeply disappointed. The show has, over the years been reupholstered more than once.”***

**How does the writer use imagery to effectively portray his feelings about the programme, 'Taggart'?**

### Possible Answers

- a) The TV police series is compared to an old armchair and his experience of watching it is like settling into a comfortable chair. It is effective because it relates a piece of comfortable furniture that we associate with watching TV to the familiar programme he is setting out to watch. The two things seem well matched.
  
- b) The metaphor compares his familiarity with Taggart over the years with the comfortable armchair in which he is also accustomed to watching this TV series. The series is about police work in Glasgow and the image suggests that he enjoys the show so much that he has become part of it. The forensic (DNA) and CID boys have even looked over his chair, he has been watching the show for so long. The metaphor is reinforced as an extended image by the word "reupholstered".
  
- c) The image is effective because Taggart is about murders and solving crimes and the imagery connects the two in terms familiar to viewers. By describing the DNA and CID men as actually coming into his room to look at the chair it makes the reader think of the TV programme.

## Example 4

*“No basket ever carried more eggs than young Alec did hopes that Friday.”*

Question:

How does the writer use imagery to help the reader understand more about Alec's hopes?

### Possible Answers

- a) This is a simple metaphor where hopes and eggs are related to one another. Just as someone would carry a basket of eggs, so too Alec is carrying people's expectations. It is effective because it relates to a small town or village where eggs would be carried in a basket.
- b) The image is of a basket. Alec is like that basket and carries hopes rather than eggs. He is important and has been trusted with something risky; just as eggs can break, so too he can let people down. This is effective in showing his nervousness. The word "no" at the beginning of the sentence reinforces the importance of Alec's hopes.
- c) The eggs and hopes are similar: just as eggs are easily lost or damaged, so too are the hopes which Alec feels he is the keeper of and wants to protect. The imagery is simple but effective as we can all relate to how easily a large basket could be dropped and how easily hopes can be denied or disappointed.

# Close Reading

## Imagery Assessment Sheet

<b>Example</b>	<b><u>Comments</u></b>
<b>Answer A</b>	
<b>Answer B</b>	
<b>Answer C</b>	

<b>Example</b>	<b><u>Comments</u></b>
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<b><u>Example</u></b>	<b><u>Comments</u></b>
<b>Answer A</b>	
<b>Answer B</b>	
<b>Answer C</b>	





# Higher Close Reading



## Word Choice

When asked about word choice, you should always consider what effect the words used by the writer have on the reader - **why** have they used particular words and phrases? **How** do they help their argument?

### The writer might:

- Use **informal** or **colloquial** language, which sounds more like spoken language and can contain:
  - Abbreviations
  - use of the second person ("you")
  - slang words and expressions
  - Informal expressions (e.g. "by the way", "you know")
  - use of nicknames and shortened versions of words
  - lapses in written grammar rules.
- Use **dialect**, a style of language specific to one area where English is spoken, e.g. Scots.
- Use **rhetorical language**: this is often used when someone is giving a speech; it is formal, elevated and has an impressive effect. Think of a politician giving a speech.
- Use **jargon**: formal language using technical terms on a particular subject. This is often used negatively, to make someone sound knowledgeable about a particular subject.
- Use **Archaisms** (old-fashioned words or expressions; e.g. "thou"/ "a soft answer turneth away wrath").
- Most often, you will be asked to explain the **connotations** of a word and show **why the writer has used it**.
  - Think if the word used is emotive (trying to stir up strong feeling in the reader). E.g. "horrifying" and "appalling" are much more **emotive** than "unpleasant".

### Remember the formula:

The word \_\_\_\_\_ has connotations of \_\_\_\_\_,  
which makes the reader think of \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_. This adds to the writer's idea that \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

# Close Reading

## **Word Choice**

### **Example 1**

***A nine-year-old boy is attacked and killed while fleeing from dingoes on a beach at Fraser Island, in north-eastern Australia. The news, as rare as it is horrifying, elicits the predictably violent response. There have been calls for the complete destruction of the island's 160 protected dingoes. Past attacks are dredged up and retold in graphic detail.***  
**How does the author convey his disapproval of the suggestion that all the dingoes should be killed? (2A)**

### **Possible Answers**

- d) The writer does this using words like “violent”, “destruction”, “dredged up”, “and “graphic” to show how strongly he feels.
  
- e) The word “predictably” has connotations of an automatic response. This makes the reader think that the people are responding without thought, which adds to the writer’s idea that they are unoriginal and dull. “Dredged up” has connotations of digging deep, which suggests that people are looking far into the past to come up with any old excuse that they can find. The author clearly does not think much of these people.
  
- f) The words “violent” and “destruction” both suggest how aggressive the people’s response is and the writer makes it clear that he disapproves of this, as the responses are full of over-exaggerated negativity.
  
- g) The writer uses many words which show how irresponsible, thoughtless and aggressive these people are being and so makes his disapproval quite clear.

## Example 2

*Inevitably, there will be isolated casualties. I know of a mountain lion that killed a jaguar in Denver, Colorado. A child died after it was mauled by an urban coyote in the States. And now the tragic case of the boy killed by the rogue dingo. But these cases make news precisely because of their extreme rarity. We must not be provoked into a frenzy of over-reactive culling as a result of this latest tragedy. The key to harmonious co-habitation is encapsulated in one word: respect.*

**Question:**

**Show how the word choice in the sentence “We must not...latest tragedy” is important in emphasising the writer’s point of view. (2A)**

### **Possible Answers**

- a) “Culling” is an emotive word which has connotations of extensive, possibly unnecessary killing. This helps to put the writer’s point of view across that mass killing is most definitely not the answer.
  
- b) “Frenzy” suggests they are mad.
  
- c) It emphasises the writer’s point of view by using the word “provoked”. This means we must not be provoked into something we should not do and also “over-reactive” which means that people must not overreact to the situation.
  
- d) “Provoked” means the other people are trying to makes us do something against our will; “must not” is very strong and assertive.

### Example 3

*I'm not sure what to call them, since it is hard to describe these constructions, with their insanely grinning, appallingly-paid staff dressed like circus clowns dispensing lumps of fatty meat and slices of crumpled lettuce in soggy buns, accompanied by tubs of greasy French Fries and teeth-rotting drinks, as 'restaurants'. True, they are 'places where food is bought and eaten', but it would be a sad world if these were really considered restaurants.*

**Question:**

**Show how the author's word choice in this paragraph makes clear her contempt for fast food restaurants. (2A)**

### Possible Answers

- a) She says they are “insanely grinning, appallingly-paid staff dressed like circus clowns” and that they serve “lumps of fatty meat and slices of crumpled lettuce in soggy buns” – she thinks it is all terrible.
- b) She says the food is unhealthy, and that the staff are badly paid and stupidly dressed. She calls them “constructions” which sounds very unfriendly as it has connotations of something which is mechanical and makes the reader feel that these ‘restaurants’ have no soul. This makes clear that the writer has an intense dislike for these places.
- c) The use of “circus” and “clowns” makes them seem ridiculous, and “lumps” does not sound very appealing or healthy.
- d) She is contemptuous of the staff: “Inanely grinning” suggests that they look almost mad, and “circus” makes the whole thing sound like an elaborate sideshow that cannot be taken seriously. She describes the food as “lumps” instead of portions, which has connotations of something unappealing and inelegant, and describes the salad as “crumpled” and “soggy” which suggests that it is lifeless and unappetising.

## Example 4

*Ever since I was a child, museums have fascinated me. I love them. Even the most dusty and drab have a magic for me. I was the despair of my mother when I was a child, for I was always bringing home fossils, bits of interesting rock and such like, to add to the overburdened windowsill museum which I had of my own.*

**Question:**

**Show how the word choice in this paragraph emphasises the writer's interest in museums. (2A)**

### **Possible Answers:**

- a) He tells us how much he likes museums and that he has always liked them. He likes every type of museum, no matter how old or drab.
- b) "Magic" suggests enchantment and pleasure; "fascinated" has connotations of being deeply and enjoyably absorbed. This helps the reader understand how intriguing the writer found museums.
- c) The writer emphasises his interest in museums by using the word "magic", which suggests there is something special, almost mysteriously appealing about them.
- d) Words like "magic" and "fascinated" show how the writer is attracted to museums.

# Close Reading

## Word Choice Assessment Sheet

<u>Example 1</u>	<u>Comments</u>
<b>Answer A</b>	
<b>Answer B</b>	
<b>Answer C</b>	
<b>Answer D</b>	

<u>Example 2</u>	<u>Comments</u>
<b>Answer A</b>	
<b>Answer B</b>	
<b>Answer C</b>	
<b>Answer D</b>	

<u>Example 3</u>	<u>Comments</u>
<b>Answer A</b>	
<b>Answer B</b>	
<b>Answer C</b>	
<b>Answer D</b>	

<u>Example 4</u>	<u>Comments</u>
<b>Answer A</b>	
<b>Answer B</b>	
<b>Answer C</b>	
<b>Answer D</b>	



## Word Choice Questions



- 1) *“My guest was lying sprawled on his back. There was a long knife through his heart which skewered him to the floor.”*

**How does the writer use word choice to emphasise the brutality of the attack on the guest?**

- 2) *“Hastings is not only a fabulous resort but is of course linked to the best known date in history, 1066. From the year of this most famous battle, the region has been acquiring a greater wealth of history and fascination than can be found anywhere else in the country. Within comfortably short journey times you will discover magnificent castles, ancient towns steeped in over a thousand years of history and pretty villages with famous pasts. All these are linked by glorious rolling countryside with welcoming old world pubs and restaurants along the way.”*

**Show how word choice is used to give a positive impression of the area.**

- 3) *“The figure was shrouded in a garment of deepest black which concealed its head, its face, its form and left nothing of it visible except one bony hand.”*

**How does the writer use word choice to emphasise how unsettling the figure is?**

- 4) *“Back in the main trench, I stood on the fire-step to watch the sky whitening. The sad and stricken country emerged. I could see the ruined village below the hill and the leafless trees which waited like sentries. Down in the craters, the dead water took on a dull gleam from the sky above. I stared at the tangles of wire and saw that there was no comfort left in my life. My steel hat became heavier on my head as I thought back to how I’d been on leave last month.”*

**Show how word choice is used to create a depressing mood he**





# Higher Close Reading

## Sentence Structure

When writing about sentence structure, you must describe the noteworthy features of a sentence and explain their effect. Follow these three steps:

### 1. What type of sentence is it?

- Statement
- Question (Note especially rhetorical questions, where no answer is really expected. This could encourage the reader to consider an idea, or might help make a statement stronger.)
- Command
- Exclamation
- Minor sentence - this is a sentence without a verb. Eg. *"What, now?"*

### 2. Consider whether sentences/ paragraphs are:

long and complex (contains several clauses; i.e. several verbs).  
short and simple (communicates language quickly and directly).

### 3. Look at the arrangement of words within the sentence, particularly in longer ones. Consider commenting on the following features:

- Word order - has inversion (reversal of normal word order) been used?
- Sentence patterns - has a list, repetition, climax or anti-climax (a build-up that never comes) been used? E.g.

#### ***"I came, I saw, I conquered"***

The list of verbs creates a sense of action; the repetition of "I" suggests a dominating, egotistical character; the list of verbs ascend in order of importance, leading to a climax.

- Has antithesis been used? This means to balance opposites together to create a contrast. E.g.

***"Those that I fight I do not hate  
Those that I guard I do not love."***  
W.B. Yeats

- Tense
- Parenthesis
- Punctuation:

- ✓ **Commas** - can indicate a list
- ✓ **Colons** - introduce quotations, lists, explanations and expansions of previous statements.
- ✓ **Semi-colons** - can separate phrases in a list, and indicate a link between two sentences which are closely related, or which balance or contrast each other.
- ✓ **Inverted commas** - show speech, quotations, titles and sarcasm.
- ✓ **Dashes** - a single dash works like a colon to add extra information; it might also be used informally to convey an outpouring of ideas or emotions. **Two** dashes can indicate parenthesis.
- ✓ **Hyphens** - join two words together to make a compound word.

**Now you are ready to tackle questions on sentence structure!**

**Remember:**

No marks are awarded for identifying a technique and giving a generic answer. You **must**:

- **Explain the effect** of the technique and show **how** it helps the writer's argument. Think about **why** it has been included and **why** is it effective. E.g.
  - If a rhetorical question is used, why has it been used in this particular case? How does it affect the reader? How does it help the writer's argument?

If parenthesis is included, why has this extra information been added?  
How does it help the writer's





# Higher Close Reading



## Tone

This refers to the attitude that a writer conveys towards a subject. They might be passionately for or against a particular topic and express this through various means.

### Various Tones

- **Emotive** - emotional language is used, to gain a response from the reader.
- **Humorous** - the writer might be mocking something, or being affectionately humorous about something.
- **Light-hearted** - the writer is being playful and not overly serious.
- **Ironic** - the writer will criticise or mock something in a humorous way.
- **Sarcastic** - the writer will say the opposite of what they mean.
- **Angry** - the writer will feel strongly about something.
- **Gloomy** - the writer will have a negative outlook on a situation.
- **Anxious** - the writer will appear worried about something.
- **Joyful** - the writer will appear filled with happiness.
- **Sorrowful** - the writer will appear extremely sad about something.

## More Examples:

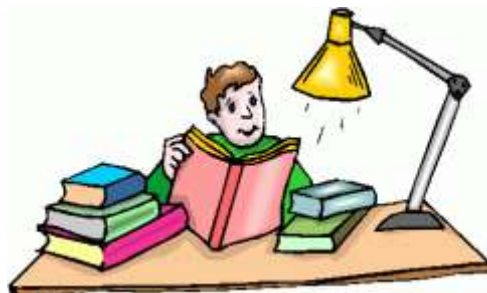
Serious	Indignant	Polite	Outraged
Friendly	Informal	Hostile	Informative
Unsympathetic	Bitter	Formal	Passionate
Sympathetic	Haughty	Friendly	Optimistic
Mocking	Flippant	Excited	Pessimistic
Nostalgic	Confidential	Empathic	Contemptuous
Critical	Stern	Intense	Cynical

## To gain full marks in a tone question, you must:

- Identify the tone being used.
- Quote an example which effectively shows the tone.
- Explain how the word choice/ imagery/ sentence structure shows that this is the tone being used. Remember to use your formulas here!
- **No marks** are usually awarded for identifying tone alone, especially not in a 'Language' question. Identifying it can only gain you more marks if you couple it with analysis of another technique (this may be hyperbole, euphemism, pun, etc. too; just make sure you **identify the technique** and **explain its effect.**)

## The Formula for a Tone Question:

An example of effective use of tone is: " \_\_\_\_\_ ", where the tone is \_\_\_\_\_, used by the writer to give the impression that \_\_\_\_\_. This is shown through \_\_\_\_\_.





# Higher Close Reading

## More Techniques You Can Comment On

### All you have to do is:

1. **Identify** the technique
2. **Explain** its effect
3. **Show how** it helps the writer's argument (link back to question)



- **Alliteration**: repetition of consonant sounds in two or more words. The writer will be trying to create a specific effect with this. For example:

*The hissing snake slithered slowly through the slimy undergrowth.*

- **Assonance**: repetition of vowel sounds in two or more words. For example:

*It's all doom and gloom.*

- **Pun**: a play on words which sound similar but have different meanings. This usually creates humour. For example:

*This book on anti-gravity is impossible to put down.*

- **Hyperbole**: deliberate over exaggeration to emphasise the point being made, often for a humorous effect. For example:

*I've told you a million times!*

- **Understatement**: the opposite of hyperbole. For example:  
*I received about two teaspoonfuls of soup, which were hardly visible at the bottom of the bowl.*
- **Euphemism**: a way to make an unwelcome truth seem less harsh, often connected with death. For example:  
*Passed away/ big boned*
- **Cliché**: an overused expression. For example:  
*As good as gold/ part and parcel of/ in this day and age.*
- **Archaism**: a word from the past which is no longer used. For example:  
*Thyself/ thou/ thy/ ye*
- **Paradox**: a statement which appears to be a contradiction at first, but on closer inspection contains a truth. For example:  
*Nowadays people know the price of everything, and the value of nothing.*
- **Oxymoron**: when two opposites are placed side by side to emphasise the contrast. For example:  
*Open secret/ living dead/ seriously funny.*
- **Juxtaposition**: to place side by side. This is often used to highlight the contrast between two things. For example:  
*I was still in prison, but I felt free.*

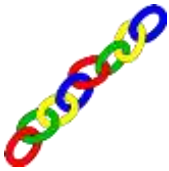


# National 5

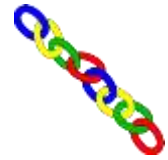
## Context Questions

If you are asked to explain the meaning of a word you are unfamiliar with, you will often be able to work it out from the words around it. If so, structure your answer like this:

The word \_\_\_\_\_ means \_\_\_\_\_ Its meaning can be worked out from the context, where the word(s) \_\_\_\_\_ suggest(s) that \_\_\_\_\_.



## Linking Questions



You may be asked to comment on how a writer's argument is structured: it may be helpful to look at what is called a 'linking sentence':

- look at one sentence, either in the middle or at the start of a paragraph.
- Identify and quote the word/ phrase which links back to the ideas in the previous section and explain those ideas.
- Identify and quote the word/ phrase which links back to the ideas in the next section, and explain those ideas.

Use the following formula to help you structure your

In this sentence, the word(s) “ \_\_\_\_\_ ” link(s) back to the idea(s) \_\_\_\_\_ in the previous section, and the word(s) “ \_\_\_\_\_ ” link(s) forward to the idea(s) \_\_\_\_\_ in the next lines.



# Higher English Close Reading



## Final Question

The question will ask you about how both passages agree on the issue which they are writing about, disagree or both.

Here are the marking guidelines from the SQA:

- |   |
|---|
| <p><b><u>5 marks:</u></b> identification of essential areas of agreement and/ or disagreement, with intelligent use of supporting evidence</p> <p><b><u>4 marks:</u></b> identification of essential areas of agreement and/ or disagreement, with sound use of supporting evidence</p> <p><b><u>3 marks:</u></b> identification of essential areas of agreement and/ or, with some supporting evidence</p> <p><b><u>2 marks:</u></b> identification of only two areas of agreement and/ or , or more than two without supporting evidence</p> <p><b><u>1 mark:</u></b> identification of just one essential area of agreement and/ or disagreement</p> <p><b><u>0 marks:</u></b> failure to identify any essential area of agreement and/ or disagreement and/or complete misunderstanding of the task</p> |
|---|

**This means that:**

If you only identify areas of agreement/ disagreement, no matter how many you pick up on, **you cannot gain more than 2 marks.**

### **Giving "supporting evidence"**

**Take this advice:**

- Quotes alone will gain you **no** marks, and so are a waste of time.
- If you are going to quote, then you must **explain** your quotations.
- It is often best to **summarise** an argument/ idea from a passage as evidence, as this means you will show a good understanding of it.





# Higher Close Reading

## Reminders



- If a question has a **U** next to it, this is an **Understanding** Question and you **must** use your own words as far as possible to prove that you understand the passage. Look out for **Context** and **Link** questions here too.
- If a question has an **A** next to it, it means you need to **analyse language**, so you will be using your **formulas**.
- If a question has an **E** next to it, you will be asked to give your opinion on the effect of language. You will most likely also **analyse language**, but remember to **explain why it is effective**.
- If you are asked to "**comment on language**" then you can discuss:
  - Word choice
  - Imagery
  - Tone (if you can show how it is shown through imagery/ word choice/ sentence structure)
  - Sentence structure (it's hard to gain marks here, so avoid if possible, unless something really seems good to answer on).
- If a "language" question is worth **4** marks, then you must comment on **more than one** technique. Giving **3** answers on word choice and **1** on sentence structure would be fine.
- Be **specific** in all your analysis.

- Remember, there will often be quite a few options for you to pick to analyse in Analysis questions; **always pick the examples you know you can say the most about!**
- Imagery - these tend to be worth **2** marks, and a good, detailed analysis of an image will gain you **2** marks. If you can't say too much about an image, then discuss another one too.
- Word choice: unless there is an awful lot you can say about one word, then assume you will gain only one mark for an analysis of one word.
- Remember to **always link back to the question that is being asked.**
- Tone - Identifying the tone alone will rarely gain you marks. You must then go on to **show how the tone is created** through word choice/ imagery/ sentence structure/ any other technique and show how that helps the writer get their point across. Remember your formulas, if appropriate.
- Final question - you will need to:
  - Identify key areas of agreement/ disagreement/ both
  - Back up your statements with evidence from the passage. This will either be through **summarising** sections, or through **quoting and explaining.**
  - **No marks** are given for quotes alone!
  - It's a good idea to jot down, at the side of each paragraph, what the writer's main point(s) is in each one. You will be looking closely at most paragraphs anyway, so this won't take much time. When you get to the final question, you can use your little summaries instead of trawling through both passages again for ideas.