**N5 RUAE - Study Tips for Exam Preparation**

Types of Questions

**Using your own words**

Some questions will require you to use your own words in order to demonstrate understanding. If you can put something in your own words, you have understood it; if you do not understand something, you will not be able to express it in your own words.

Using your own words means you may have to:

Explain what a word or expression in the passage means

Explain the main point the writer is making

Give the reason for something that happens in the passage

Show that you understand a piece of information the passage gives

**Context Questions**

You may be asked to work out from the context what a word or expression means. In these cases, the examiners think that you may not know the given word, but that you should be able to work it out from what surrounds it in the passage.

Context questions might be worded like this:

How does the context of lines xx-xx help you to work out what is meant by „\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_‟?

Work out from the context what is meant by “\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_‟ in line xx.

Context questions are usually worth 2 marks. You earn one mark showing what the word means, and the second for showing how you could work this out from the context.

Your answer should therefore be in 2 sentences, with the 2nd including short quotations from the context.

Use this pattern to structure your answers:

The word/expression “\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_” as used here means “\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_‟. I can work this from the context because…

**Imagery Questions**

Similes, metaphors and personification are all examples of imagery.

**Use this structure to analyse an image:**

Just as… (explain the literal meaning), so too… (explain the metaphorical meaning).

Example: He has a mountain of work to do.

**You could analyse the image like this:**

**Just as a** mountain is large and is challenging to climb, **so too** is theamount of work he has to do enormous.

**Link Questions**

You may be asked a link question. These often ask you to say how a sentence creates an effective link between one paragraph and another. These questions are usually worth 2 marks and you can:

1. Quote a word or phrase from the sentence and explain how it links back to the previous paragraph

2. Quote another word or phrase and explain how it links forward to what the writer talks about next.

**Tone**

It is easy to understand what we mean by tone if we think of a speaking voice. When you hear someone speaking, you can tell if he/she is angry, confused, excited or afraid. Skilled writers can create a tone by word choice. Some of the most common tones that crop up in exam questions are humorous, matter–of-fact, critical, angry, conversational, formal, informal, etc.

**Sentence structure questions:** Sentence structure is how a sentence is made and built up. A number of smaller techniques contribute to sentence structure:

a. **Sentence** **Length:** Look at whether a sentence is noticeably long, or noticeably short, especially if its length contrasts with the length of other sentences nearby.

b. **Punctuation and** **Lists:** look for complex punctuation such as colons, semi-colons, inverted commas, parenthesis etc. With regards to listing, what is being listed and what does the list suggest?

c. **Repetition:** what is being repeated, and what does this repetition suggest?

d. **Word order**: have any words been put in a position in the sentence that creates emphasis? What is the impact of this?

e. **Climax and anti-climax:**  do the writer’s ideas build up to an important point? Or do you expect an important point that doesn’t arrive?

**MORE TIPS**

1. Use a clear, logical layout in your answers.
2. ‘With reference to the text’ means you have to quote.
3. When you’re asked to use your own words, double check that you have actually done this!
4. Pay close attention to the number of marks each question is worth.
5. Read the question carefully (some might ask you to explain briefly or explain fully, for example).