

EDUQAS AS/A LEVEL ENGLISH LANGUAGE CPD AUTUMN 2015

3. Critical and Creative Writing

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CREATIVITY in the use of English at AS and A level



Students often cite writing creatively as one of the main reasons for choosing English Language – so what form does it take in these specifications?

Creativity is explicitly assessed in AO5:

Demonstrate expertise and creativity in the use of English to communicate in different ways.

This AO is assessed in:

AS - Component 2, Section B (15%)

A Level - Component 3 (15%)

AS Component 2 – Section B

- Candidates choose one of two tasks which are loosely linked to the corpus of data (short texts) provided in Section A
- The tasks may be literary or non-literary (not necessarily one of each)
- They will be given a genre, e.g. *‘the opening chapter of a novel’*, and form *‘an extract’* (SAM)
- There will be guidance on length, ‘approximately 350 words’
- The commentary requires critical analysis of linguistic choices

The link to the corpus of data might indicate:

A topic or theme
Purpose(s)
Situation
Location
Character(s)

..... offering a stimulus

What do candidates need to be able to do?

- Engage with the given task
- Write effectively for an audience
- Have a sense of purpose
- Show originality
- Write with accuracy and control
- Use language consciously to communicate
 - ideas, viewpoint, feelings, a sense of place, etc.
- Apply critical analysis to their own writing (AO3)

Engaging with the given task

The tasks set will be unpredictable so candidates should prepare by studying a variety of textual types, analysing:

- Characteristic features of different genres
- Stylistic expression that makes a text interesting (or boring!)

They should practise:

- Using varied material as a stimulus for writing
- Writing extracts (openings or specific passages) and short complete texts
- Having a sense of the length of their piece
- Making language choices consciously ready for comment

Writing effectively for an audience

The audience may be specified, be general or implicit in the task, e.g. *'a journalists' handbook'* (SAM).

Awareness of audience will contribute to:

- Formality – lexical and grammatical choices
- Knowing what can be assumed – e.g. in advice or instructions
- The use of humour, imagery, literary techniques, rhetorical devices, etc.

Having a sense of purpose

This may be implicit, e.g. an extract from a novel should entertain.

The task should be read carefully and may contain instructions, e.g.:

'giving advice' (AS SAM)

'which will appear in a guide book' (A Level SAM)

'expressing opposition'

'comparing opportunities'

'summarising views'

Assessment will take into account how effectively the purpose is achieved.

Showing originality

If students practise writing in response to data, assorted texts and other stimuli throughout their course, they should gain the confidence to approach any writing task set.

There are no 'right' responses but there are criteria for success.

Candidates can achieve originality if they respond individually and actively to their choice of given task.

Writing with accuracy and control

As in all exams, technical accuracy in written expression is assessed.

Creative writing may include non-standard forms, e.g. the representation of dialect, slang, spoken forms, etc.

The key points are the appropriateness of the chosen language and style for the task, whether these communicate with the audience, and the accurate and evaluative analysis of linguistic choices in the commentary.

Using language consciously to communicate

While practising writing in different genres, students may benefit from considering the role or stance they are assuming in relation to the audience, e.g. as a guide, witness, consumer, interpreter, etc.

It's worth asking:

Who am I...?

How do I know...?

This affects linguistic choices at all levels : 1st, 3rd person or impersonal viewpoint, the use of active/passive constructions, tense, imagery, semantic fields, humour, tone, formality, etc.

Applying critical analysis to their own writing

In their commentary, candidates should explore *how* they have used language to respond to their chosen task.

They should identify a range of points using specific linguistic terminology, quote briefly to illustrate and explain the intended effect.

AO3 – Analyse and evaluate how contextual factors and language features are associated with the construction of meaning (AS: 10%; A Level: 5%)

A Level – Component 3 – 1 ¾ hours

The creative element of the AS links to A Level work which has similar criteria for success.

Candidates choose one of two questions.

Each has a stimulus text followed by three tasks: two requiring original writing and the third a commentary on one of the original responses produced.

- The tasks may be literary or non-literary
- The specific tasks will specify the production of writing which could be from any genre

How can candidates best prepare?

- Preparing to write is complementary to developing analytical skills and an awareness of genre – the *Analysis of Texts in Context* assessed in AS Component 1 and central to A Level study
- Most texts that are explored critically in class can offer stimulation for a linked writing task, imaginatively replicating the style or features of a genre or using the topic as a springboard for a script or story
- Students can be asked to create the task and mark scheme!

Some examples of candidates' responses

Some centres have kindly offered responses from trialling the specification.

- They illustrate that genre and style can be firmly established and that effective analytical points can be made in the advised word count.
- They offer models for class work and discussion for assessment.

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AS ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Component 2

Using Language

Section B: Using Language

2. (b) Write an entry for a journalists' handbook giving advice on how to write effective headlines. You should aim to write approximately 350 words.

[30]

And,

- (c) Write a commentary analysing and evaluating the linguistic and grammatical choices you have made in your writing. Comment particularly on your language features and their effectiveness in relation to the context given in either part (a) or part (b). You should aim to write approximately 250 words.

[20]

2b) It has ~~often been asked~~ ^{a question} that has been posed to me, "what makes a good article?"

When creating a good article there are several integral rules which ^{you} should ~~be~~ adhered to. The first of which is how grammar can be manipulated in your headline to create

the biggest impact. Minor sentences feature heavily in the construction of a good headline. A primary example of tabloid employment of minor sentences is the Daily Star who use headlines such as "outlook poor". The construction of the minor sentence is used to emphasise the premodified noun phrase "outlook poor". This is a direct link to the context of the article as it is related to poor weather conditions, the adjective "poor" is ~~replaced~~ ^{replaced}, quite delightfully I might add, to create a structural headline with a pun. Pragmatics are also ones to look for. It is important to make sure your headline features some form of pragmatic reference as seen in another of the Daily Star's tabloid pieces "Star in lust leer". The alliteration of the premodified noun phrase "lust leer" highlights to the audience the trouble which the star is feeling after splitting with his partner. The verb "leer" rhymes with the proper noun "peer" which is the name of Comas' new girlfriend. This link provides a cultural reference and is particularly handy if you're writing so.

If you would like to find out more, continue reading as I delve deeper into the 'amazon' which is the art of writing headlines.

2) The writer of the journalists handbook employs a range of devices in order to set tone and construct meaning. The fronted conjunction "If" in the complex sentence "If you... writing headlines" constructs ¹² a subordinating clause.

The conjunction is constructed to create a sense of longing to read on for the reader and also helps for the writer to introduce a change in topic. The writer also refers to the reader through direct address "you". The second person pronoun "you" is used to emphasise to the reader that they have a personal involvement and almost a duty to construct effective headlines. This ~~is~~ is effective as it makes the reader believe that it is important to continue reading in order to gain all of the knowledge that they need. The writer also creates paranthetical structure in the complex sentence "The adjective... humour". The paranthetical structure of ", quite delightfully I might add" is used to emphasise the writers positive opinion of the way in which the adjective is used.

Assessment Grid Component 2: Section B Creative Writing

BAND	AO5 Demonstrate expertise and creativity in the use of English in different ways 30 marks	Guidance
5	<p style="text-align: center;">25-30 marks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High level of creativity with some flair • Confident and original expression • Skilful engagement with audience • Form and structure linked intelligently to content 	<p>High (29-30): Demonstrates expertise and self-assurance, flair and originality with language consciously and creatively manipulated for effect. Intelligent and engaging writing. Skilful engagement with audience.</p> <p>Mid (27-28): Accurate and confident throughout. Originality in approach, content and style. Thoughtful personal engagement with task and audience. Assured control of content. Form and structure linked intelligently.</p> <p>Low (25-26): Very good understanding of task. Genre and style understanding underpins choices made about form/structure. Polished style. Voice confident in places, with some confident engagement with audience.</p>
4	<p style="text-align: center;">19-24 marks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thoughtful creativity • Well-crafted and controlled expression • Effective engagement with audience • Form and structure purposefully linked to content 	<p>High (23-24): Strong sense of the writer as an individual. Thoughtful creativity. Some assured linguistic choices. Response shaped by target audience. Explicit focus on task genre. Carefully controlled and sustained expression.</p> <p>Mid (21-22): Some assurance in the approach—although not all creative choices will be effective. Engagement with audience well developed. Writing demonstrates some interesting features. Purposeful linking of form and structure to content.</p> <p>Low (19-20): Response consciously crafted for effect in places. Some purposeful language choices. Secure understanding of audience. Good structure.</p>
3	<p style="text-align: center;">13-18 marks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reasonable creativity • Sound expression • Clear attempt to engage audience • Form and structure sensibly linked to content 	<p>High (17-18): Clear personal voice. Creative linguistic choices. Clear engagement with target audience. Organises material for effect. Expression generally sound and style controlled.</p> <p>Mid (15-16): Response generally clear and accurate. Some sensible personal, creative language choices. Clear focus on task and audience. Sensible development of content.</p> <p>Low (13-14): Expression mostly sound. Clear organisation. Focuses on demands of task and attempts to engage with audience. Good sense of shaping the writing. Some understanding of link between form, content and structure.</p>
2	<p style="text-align: center;">7-12 marks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some creativity • Basic expression with some accuracy • Some awareness of audience • Some attempt to match form and structure to content 	<p>High (11-12): Straightforward expression. Some creative engagement with task. Sense of structure. Clear signs that knowledge of genre underpins some lexical choices. Some awareness of audience.</p> <p>Mid (9-10): Adequate expression. Knowledge of genre and basic awareness of audience underpin some linguistic decisions. Some evidence that link between form/content is understood.</p> <p>Low (7-8): Technical errors but they will not affect understanding. Some basic awareness of genre and audience in places. Some stylistic inconsistency.</p>
1	<p style="text-align: center;">1-6 marks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited creativity • Errors in expression and lapses in clarity • Limited sense of audience • Limited attempt to link form and structure to content 	<p>High (5-6): Technical inaccuracy and lack of fluency in expression. Some limited awareness of audience. Some evidence of occasional attempt to choose words for effect.</p> <p>Mid (3-4): Expression lacks clarity/accuracy. Limited understanding of task. Response may lack development.</p> <p>Low (1-2): Expression often awkward and frequent technical errors. Little explicit evidence of organisation. cursory awareness of demands of task. Response may be very brief or incomplete.</p>
0	0 marks: Response not credit worthy or not attempted	

- (c) **Write a commentary analysing and evaluating the linguistic and grammatical choices you have made in your writing.** Comment particularly on your language features and their effectiveness in relation to the context given in either part (a) or part (b). **You should aim to write approximately 250 words.** [20]

Candidates should demonstrate their ability to analyse and evaluate their own linguistic and structural choices. There should be a clear attempt to explain what they have tried to achieve (*e.g. modifiers to create atmosphere; clear explanations of technical terms*) and to assess the effectiveness. Discussion should explore how the key contextual factors (*e.g. audience, purpose and genre*) and the distinctive language features (*e.g. creation of a fictional world; figurative language, attributive/predicative adjectives; grammatical mood, sentence structure; subject specific language*) have shaped meaning.

Assessment Grid Component 2: Section B Critical Writing

BAND	AO3 Analyse and evaluate how contextual factors and language features are associated with the construction of meaning. 20 marks
5	17-20 marks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confident analysis of contextual factors • Productive discussion of the construction of meaning • Perceptive evaluation
4	13-16 marks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective analysis of contextual factors • Some insightful discussion of the construction of meaning • Purposeful evaluation
3	9-12 marks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sensible analysis of contextual factors • Generally clear discussion of the construction of meaning • Relevant evaluation
2	5-8 marks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some valid analysis of contextual factors • Undeveloped discussion of the construction of meaning • Inconsistent evaluation
1	4 marks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some general awareness of context • Limited sense of how meaning is constructed • Limited evaluation
0	0 marks Response not credit worthy or not attempted

A level SAM Component 3

Write an extract from a story in which a particular room is the backdrop to an important event in the life of the main character.

Three hours ago this was an empty room, and now it's my home for the next year. My mother and I had spent hours choosing the right colour scheme to make the room homely and friendly, and it was perfect. The plush orange throw is folded neatly halfway across my bed over a clean white bedsheet, tied together with deep brown and dark orange fluffy pillows. The wooden owl sits on the bedside table next to a rustic lamp that needs a new lightbulb. I sit the teddy penguin he'd bought me in front of the cushions; I can't sleep without it. At the end of my bed I've stood a vase holding wooden twigs wrapped in fairy lights. I've unpacked my straighteners, hair dryer, shampoo and conditioner, and makeup and put them neatly on the desk that runs along one side of the room, with the en suite at the end. The curtains are a standard blue colour that they have in every room, but I'm hoping I can take them down and replace them with some autumnal light orange ones. The en suite, that I'd prayed and hoped I would get in the application for accommodation process, now has my Soap and Glory shower gel and body scrub, John Frieda shampoo and conditioner, and my retainer at the side of the sink from when I had braces 4 years ago.

"You're going to have so much fun here," my mum says, checking in the wardrobe and cupboards to make sure everything is in the right place.

I feel excited. I've been wanting this new start for months and now I can finally start again at university.

Choose one of the texts you have produced and write a commentary analysing and evaluating your language use. Comment particularly on your use of language features and their effectiveness in relation to the context given in part (a).

My fictional extract is based on a girl's first day moving into university, which is aimed at teenagers going through similar experiences. The macro purpose is to entertain, with it being a fiction book, and the micro purpose is to provide comfort for those also moving out as it shows that it is a common worry. This particular extract has the semantic focus of the room the girl is moving into.

The adverbial of time 'three hours ago' and the first person singular pronoun 'I' gives the impression that this is in the format of a diary because these are typical features of this genre. This is effective because it demonstrates to the audience the personal emotions and feelings the girl had on the day of moving out, meaning the audience can relate which fulfils the macro purpose.

The noun phrases consisting of concrete nouns and pre-modifying attributive adjectives, such as 'the plush orange throw', 'a clean white bedsheet' and 'a rustic lamp', provide a detailed description of how the room is decorated. This fulfils the semantic focus as it sets the scene for the girl moving into university and how her bedroom is the backdrop of this event. This also conveys textures and colours, which creates sensory and visual imagery. This is effective in creating a visual image of how the scenery is.

The syndetic list of concrete nouns 'straighteners, hair dryer, shampoo and conditioner, and makeup' is effective in demonstrating the consideration needed for packing for university, which links to the micro purpose of comforting the audience because it gives them an idea of the type of items to consider. It also reflects the girl's feminine personality because she has

took the time to mention these items, meaning they are likely to be priorities within the items she has packed.

The mother's attitude has also been considered, shown by the direct speech "You're going to have so much fun here", which shows that the mother is excited for her daughter. However, it also may connote that whilst she understands she will have fun, she will miss her. This is typical of a diary-style piece of writing to write down what someone has said because it would be difficult to remember if not. This is also linked to the audience because it implies that the teenagers moving away to university should consider the attitudes of their parents as well.

To conclude, the linguistic features were effective in describing the room and how this will be a backdrop to the girl moving away to university, which is a life changing event. The most effective linguistic feature in doing so was the noun phrases as these are typical of a descriptive piece of text, because they are useful in denoting information about the items in the room.

Assessment grid: Component 3 Questions 1 (a) and (b) OR 2 (a) and (b)

BAND	AO5 Demonstrate expertise and creativity in the use of English to communicate in different ways 30 marks each	Guidance
5	25-30 marks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sophisticated and appropriate expression • Confident and conscious linguistic/stylistic choices • Highly original with real flair • Form and content skilfully linked to genre/purpose 	<p>High (29-30): Sophisticated and self-assured. Demonstrates flair and originality. Language consciously and creatively manipulated for effect. Skilful engagement with audience. High level of understanding. Distinctive and thought-provoking writing.</p> <p>Mid (27-28): Well-balanced, accurate and confident throughout. Originality in approach, content and style. Thoughtful personal engagement with task and audience. Assured control of content. Form and structure linked intelligently.</p> <p>Low (25-26): Very good understanding of task. Genre used aptly to underpin linguistic/stylistic choices. Polished style and strong sense of context. Voice confident in places, with some perceptive writing.</p>
4	19-24 marks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fluent and controlled expression • Purposeful linguistic/stylistic choices • Original and engaging • Form and content effectively linked to genre/purpose 	<p>High (23-24): a stronger sense of the writer as an individual with evidence of thoughtful creativity and purposeful linguistic choices. The response will show some signs of originality and will be clearly shaped by the target audience and the genre. Expression will be fluent, carefully controlled and sustained.</p> <p>Mid (21-22): There will be some assurance in the approach—although not all creative choices will be effective. Engagement with the audience will be well developed. The writing will begin to demonstrate some interesting features, but these may not be sustained</p> <p>Low (19-20): Responses will be consciously crafted for effect with some purposeful language choices and a secure understanding of audience. The structure will be well controlled, with effective links established between form/content and genre/purpose.</p>
3	13-18 marks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accurate and sound expression • Competent linguistic/stylistic choices • Some originality and clear attempt to engage • Form and content sensibly linked to genre/purpose 	<p>High (17-18): Examples of a personal voice and competent linguistic choices should be evident. There will be a sensible engagement with the target audience and a conscious attempt to organise material for effect. Expression will be generally sound and accurate; the style will be controlled.</p> <p>Mid (15-16): Responses should be generally clear and accurate with some sensible personal language choices being made. There should be a clear focus on the task with a sensible development of the content of the piece. The writing will be engaging</p> <p>Low (13-14): Expression should be mostly sound and organisation quite clear. Focus on the demands of the task should begin to shape the writing: form and content should be sensibly linked to genre and purpose, and there should be a some attempt to engage.</p>
2	7-12 marks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some inconsistency/inaccuracy and expression is rather basic • Evidence of some straightforward linguistic/stylistic choices • Some awareness of audience • Some attempt to match form and content to genre/purpose 	<p>High (11-12): Expression will be straightforward, but with some technical inaccuracy. There will be some basic engagement with the audience and some attempt to match form/content to genre/purpose. There will be some evidence of conscious lexical choices in places. Responses will be marked by inconsistency.</p> <p>Mid (9-10): Knowledge of genre and a basic awareness of audience may underpin some linguistic decisions. Expression will be adequate, though inconsistent in places with some faults in the writing. There will be some evidence that the link between form/content is understood.</p> <p>Low (7-8): The range of a response will be narrow, but there may be some basic awareness of genre in places. Technical errors will not affect understanding, but there may be some lack of fluency. Language choices will be basic.</p>
1	1-6 marks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frequent lapses and errors in expression • Insufficient awareness of linguistic/stylistic choices • Little sense of audience Limited attempt to link form and content to genre/purpose 	<p>High (5-6): Technical inaccuracy and lack of fluency in expression will still be evident, but there may be some limited awareness of audience, and evidence of the occasional attempt to choose words for effect. There may be some limited awareness of links between content and genre.</p> <p>Mid (3-4): Some limited understanding of the task may begin to show, but the writing will lack clarity/accuracy. The response may lack development. There will be limited engagement with language choices.</p> <p>Low (1-2): There will be little explicit evidence of organisation and only a cursory awareness of the demands of the task. Expression will often be awkward with frequent technical errors. There will be little sense of audience and limited awareness of stylistic choices. The response may be very brief or incomplete.</p>
0	0 marks: response not credit worthy or not attempted	

- (c) **Choose one of the texts you have produced and write a commentary analysing and evaluating your language use. Comment particularly on your use of language features and their effectiveness in relation to the context given in either part (a) or part (b).** **[20]**

Candidates should critically analyse and evaluate **one** of the texts produced in (a) or (b). There should be a clear attempt to explain what they have tried to achieve (e.g. a sense of place; a distinctive voice; a persuasive tone) and to assess the effectiveness. Candidates should explore the contextual factors (e.g. audience, purpose, genre) and the language features (e.g. use of modifiers/concrete nouns to create a fictional world; figurative language; subject specific language; variations in sentence structure), considering how these shape meaning. They should refer to the language levels, and use apt and accurate quotation to support points.

Approaches should include reflection on:

- the use of language and stylistic choices
- the distinctive contextual factors (e.g. genre, audience, purpose)
- how far the intended effects were achieved.

BAND	AO3 Analyse and evaluate how contextual factors and language features are associated with the construction of meaning Part (c) 20 marks
5	17-20 marks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confident analysis of a range of contextual factors • Productive discussion of the construction of meaning • Perceptive evaluation of the effectiveness of communication
4	13-16 marks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective analysis of contextual factors • Some insightful discussion of the construction of meaning • Purposeful evaluation of the effectiveness of communication
3	9-12 marks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sensible analysis of contextual factors • Generally clear discussion of the construction of meaning • Relevant evaluation of the effectiveness of communication
2	5-8 marks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some valid analysis of contextual factors • Undeveloped discussion of the construction of meaning • Inconsistent evaluation of the effectiveness of communication
1	1-4 marks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some general awareness of context • Little sense of how meaning is constructed • Limited evaluation of the effectiveness of communication
0 marks: Response not credit worthy or not attempted	

The Infamy

The day woke up and got dressed, just like any other September morning. The unsuspecting city was ready for its usual swarm of people from the airport and the Subway and the interstate and the taxicabs, to commence the daily routine. Reminiscent of bottomless canyons, the streets of Lower Manhattan were playing host to the vast influx of humanity.

Domineering and majestic; the skyscrapers watch over the bustling scene. Art deco vying with ultra-modern architectural styles, but one thing they shared was their superior height that beckoned the visitors to crane their necks in awe. They made an uneven horizon but the twin towers reigned supreme as they nudged well above their neighbours. As seen from the Hudson River they resembled two soldiers guarding the entrance to Lower Manhattan. Mighty and unassailable.

Down below the turmoil of typical city life took shape. Shopkeepers ensured their displays of tempting wares were dusted and straightened, replenished where necessary after the previous days onslaught by shoppers. Coffees were prepared at speed: cappuccinos, skinny lattes and espressos, to stay or to go. The street sweepers caressed the sidewalks, ensuring the pristine appearance was recreated again, a vital part of the daily ritual. The financial pulse of the city was already prepared for the ebb and flow of vast amounts of monetary transactions, buying, selling and the sealing of deals. While the rich got richer, the nannies obediently took their charges to their private daycares seemingly unaware of tantrums brewing.

The black dot emerged in the distance. Silent. Ordinary. Innocuous. An observant eye may have queried its growing proximity to the twin sentinels. Gradually but purposefully this indistinct shape took on the form of a recognisable plane. Each second past, the deadly warrior stealthily encroached ever closer to its target. Nearer and nearer. Closer and closer.

Blissfully unaware, the still as yet unscathed city continued to stretch and unwind itself. The great bridges groaned under the weight of cars, taxis and tourists all feeding the hungry mouths of shops, restaurants and offices.

Word count: 339

My creative piece is designed to capture the horror of the terrorist act of 9/11. The intended audience is adult, the lexical field includes many polysyllabic words and the theme of violence is suitable for a mature age group. The purpose is to describe the events of 9 11 in an emotive fashion. My themes are universal; loss, pain and anguish. Also it links to an incredibly taxing issue for governments today; the appalling ingenuity and spread of terrorism. I decided to write it in third person present tense, thus I act as an observer to the events of 9 11 subsequently.

The register is formal, and therefore sympathetic to the content. Nonetheless I have used Americanisms such as 'skinny lattes', a concrete noun, to make my writing authentic. I use syndetic listing 'from the airport and the Subway and the interstate and the taxicabs' which challenges the norm of separating lists using commas, a literary device designed to emphasise the accumulative effect of the different methods of transport throughout the city.

The narrative structure communicates a busy pace of life. I have personified the city which portrays the characteristics of New York as a fast paced, energetic city. I have used the semantic field for mobility and speed when referring to concrete nouns such as 'taxicabs' and 'the airport'. I have used the repetition of minor sentences which require the reader to pause as can be seen in: 'Silent. Ordinary. Innocuous' whilst simultaneously creating tension from the inexorable advance of the threat.

Word count: 254

Dying Love of the Sea

Ever so gently, the moonlight caressed the curves of each wave, before they devoured the rocks that faced them. Creeping up onto shore the tide swirled with the dull sand that occasionally glistened by the moonlight that shone bright against the murky night sky. An enchanting castle cast its shadow on the beach, with tall blue-tipped towers with grand flags at their peaks; they blew magnificently as the wind manipulated their movements. The stars in the foreground illuminated every detail of the charming structure including every window and the perfectly hand-carved design that outlined them. The great clock that dominated the face of the tallest tower struck eleven o'clock.

Meanwhile the prince rode aimlessly along the shore on his trusted black steed.

"A wife, a wife is what a prince needs," the prince admitted.

Climbing off his horse his feet met the damp sand and he admired the ocean before him.

"But I want a lady as beautiful as the ocean I knew as a child!" he proclaimed, thinking he was alone. But she watched him closely. Daring and simply divine, he was everything a prince should be. On all occasions he was dressed in the finest clothes, draped in jewels, wrapped in furs and stood tall, always. His mere presence made ladies melt and fall at his feet. Peasants and Lords alike would tremble if his piercing blue eyes were to look down on them. She did not melt, but still she observed from a distance.

Unaware of what was lurking beneath the tide he followed the movements of the waves with his eyes, oblivious to the fact that his eyes were also looking at her. Their eyes met for only a moment or two before she squirmed with discomfort and hid behind the rocks that broke the surface of the water.

"What was that?" the prince jumped onto his horse, he had seen something bizarre move in the water. Every one of his muscles were tense, he clenched onto the leather reins tightly. But he was not afraid. He was surprised, intrigued, pleased even.

Word Count: 350

The genre of the text is a gothic short story, which is loosely based on the fairy tale, The Little Mermaid. Its purpose is to entertain its teenage audience, specifically teenage girls.

In the first paragraph a very typical fairy tales setting has been described. In the first simple declarative sentence the fronted adverbial of manner “Ever so gently” suggests a calming atmosphere. The complex declarative sentence “An enchanting castle cast its shadow on the beach, with tall blue-tipped towers with grand flags at their peaks; they blew magnificently as the wind manipulated their movements.” is where clear conventions of a fairy tale settings are used. The concrete noun “castle” is present in many fairy tales and the attributive modifier “enchanting” highlights how magical the setting is. The weather is described but in a discrete way: “the wind manipulated their movements” – the dynamic verb “manipulated” suggests the winds are strong. In many cases a windy dull night might suggest an eerie atmosphere but through the use of concrete nouns such as “the stars” and “the moonlight” it seems the atmosphere is in fact almost magical.

The reader is aware that the prince is vulnerable and open to danger and will be intrigued to discover if something happens to him as it is a peculiar for a prince to have such characteristics. Princes are usually strong, brave and the heroes in fairy tales but instead in this story he is the victim, another common feature in both gothic stories and fairy tales.

Word Count: 251

AS and A Level English Language – Creative writing

What's in a word?



apple



Apple

- fruit with red or yellow or green skin and sweet to tart crisp whitish flesh
- native Eurasian tree widely cultivated in many varieties for its firm rounded edible fruits

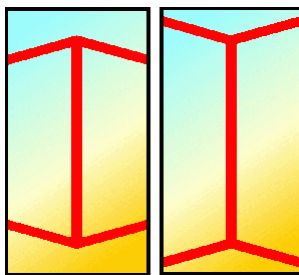
wordnet.princeton.edu/perl/webwn



<http://www.tomhunter.org/>

Woman reading a possession order

What difference does a title make?



It's all about context!

Three non-literary texts

For each of these extracts, compose a creative writing task which uses some aspect of the text as a stimulus. The task can be literary or non-literary.

1. Cycling

First Great Western policy

Policy description

High Speed Train services between London, South Wales and the West Country Free of charge. Reservations are compulsory weekdays on services arriving at London Paddington 0700 to 1000, or departing London Paddington from 1500 to 1900. Six cycle spaces per train. Tandems can be carried on most services. Please visit website for details of restrictions. Local services between London, the Cotswolds and throughout the Thames Valley. Free of charge. Reservations not available. Two cycle spaces per train. Restrictions apply weekdays on services arriving at London Paddington 0745 to 0945, or departing London Paddington from 1630 to 1900. Local, rural and inter-urban services throughout the West Country. Free of charge. Reservations recommended on Cardiff-Portsmouth services. Two cycle spaces per train. Please note fully folded bicycles are allowed on all services

<http://ojp.nationalrail.co.uk/service>

2. UK Outlook for Saturday 15 Aug 2015 to Monday 24 Aug 2015:

Warm and humid conditions likely to affect eastern parts at first, with outbreaks of heavy and thundery rain. Clearer and fresher conditions in the west, with sunny periods and isolated showers, will push eastwards to all parts through the day. Sunday may see more in the way of drier and sunnier weather across the country, but still some scattered showers. It is then likely that rather cool and changeable conditions will return across the northwestern half of the UK, giving some wet and breezy weather at times. Southeastern areas are more likely to see the best of any drier and more settled conditions with temperatures generally near average, and perhaps warm at times, however there is still a chance of showers or longer spells of rain here as well.

<http://www.metoffice.gov.uk/public/weather/forecast>

3. Green mac 'n' cheese with cheese & broccoli

This bright green beauty will make quite the impression when it's plonked into the middle of the table. It's also super simple: while the components of your mac 'n' cheese are cooking, break up a head of broccoli and steam until soft enough to be easily pierced by a fork – about 8 mins – and wash around 200g of fresh spinach. Before constructing your dish, whiz the vegetables into the white sauce with a stick blender, then combine the gorgeous green sauce with the pasta. Top with lots of Parmesan and a few sprigs of basil, then bake until golden.

<http://www.jamieoliver.com/news-and-features/features/incredible-mac-n-cheese-four-ways/#6xhAf5ko43CjO3fI.99>

Exploring viewpoint

Each of the three extracts below introduce a character. Read each carefully, then:

- 1) Identify the viewpoint used by each author. Annotate the sheet and/or note down the key linguistic feature(s) that indicate this.
- 2) Note down how the viewpoint chosen affects the reader's response – e.g. the tone created, expectations of what might happen, your understanding of the character....
- 3) Read the texts again – can you identify any further techniques the writer is using to create character and atmosphere?
- 4) Create a character in one paragraph and explore writing different versions, changing viewpoint, tense, sentence structure, etc.
- 5) Write a commentary and/or work with a partner and discuss effects.

Text A

Jim Braddon was a high-grade salesman employed by a breakfast cereal company in Philadelphia: a placid honest man who would never have injured anything larger than a fly. The 1941 war had affected him little for he was over forty and his employers claimed he was indispensable. But he took up German – he had a German grandmother – because he thought that one day this might prove useful, and that was the only new thing that happened to him between 1941 and 1945.

The Tenth Man (1985) Graham Greene

Text B

Henry Robinson is the name. I'm a postman, a federal civil servant, and have been since 1947. I've lived in the West all my life, except for a three-year stint in the Army during the war. I've been divorced twenty years, have two children I haven't seen in almost that long. I'm not a frivolous man, nor am I, in my opinion, a serious man. It's my belief a man has to be a little of both these days. I believe too, in the value of work – the harder the better. A man who isn't working has got too much time to dwell on himself and his problems.

What Do You Do in San Francisco? (1966) Raymond Carver

Text C

Before you parted company with the Probation Service, you were working as the Bail Intervention Officer at Oldham Magistrates' Court. Every day was different, every day was the same. Every morning at about seven o'clock, you turned up at the police station and, if you remembered the passwords and key-codes, made your way along a concrete tunnel, up a flight of stairs, and emerged in the holding cells under the courtroom. The desk sergeant, if he was in a good mood, gave you a list of the men and women arrested overnight, along with a few details of the offences. If he'd got out of bed the wrong side, or hadn't been asked to do overtime at Old Trafford for the big match on Saturday, you sat there like a lemon until one of the other officers finished his coffee and threw a bunch of papers at you.

All Points North (1998) Simon Armitage