

Wolverston High School



English Department

English Language Unit 1

Reading & Writing Non-Fiction texts

Getting the Best Grade



Between Now and the Exam

- Buy a set of 4 highlighters and a really good handwriting pen that is a dream to use.
- Ask your teachers for the copies of past papers you've used on the course (they should be in your folder).
- Under strictly timed conditions, have a go at doing the questions. Work FLAT OUT.
- Go through your notes from this slide show. Write them out again so you are not just staring at a page.
- Carefully revise the format of the paper: what is coming up on each question, what the examiners are looking for and how long you should spend. Test yourself on this.
- Re-read your teacher's comments on your mock exam cover sheet.



The Night Before

- Do NOT do any work or revision on Monday night.
- Have a relaxing evening doing something that you enjoy (preferably something physical).
- Like gardening.
- Take a nice hot bath round about 9.00p.m.
- Go to bed around ten and read a book until 10.30.
- Sleep well!



The Morning of the Exam

- Eat a good breakfast e.g. porridge, muesli, beans on toast + fruit or fruit juice.
- At around 8.30 a.m. eat a banana and take a drink to keep your hydration levels up.
- Mentally accept that you are going to be working and concentrating flat out for 2hrs. 15mins.
- Do NOT listen to people around you. (It's OK to share nerves and get good wishes from your mates).
- Create a mental picture of you at your desk, writing. See the paper. Tick off in your mind all the different tasks you are going to have to do. See yourself doing them differently and filling the page with really satisfying work. See yourself leaving the exam room at the end, exhausted but jubilant.



In the Exam

- ANSWER ALL QUESTIONS – THERE ARE 6!
- Only spend the prescribed amount of time on each question. When that time is up, MOVE ON!
- To check that you don't over-run, keep an eye on the time: perhaps take a watch that you place right in your line of sight; perhaps write the time you need to finish each question on your paper as a reminder.
- For people looking for a Grade C, do not worry about producing a perfect answer – half marks on every task will get you a Grade C.
- BUT...if you miss a question, you will NOT get a Grade C.



In the Exam (ii)

- Do question 6 (longer writing task) **BEFORE** question 5 (shorter writing task).
- For each task, **READ THE QUESTION FIRST**, not the passage. If you've done your revision, none of these should come as a surprise.
- Read the question **AGAIN**.
- **HIGHLIGHT** the key words which reveal what they are specifically asking you to do.



The 4 Reading Tasks

- After you've highlighted the task wording, keep your highlighter to hand.
- As you are reading the passages, HIGHLIGHT the material which will help you answer the question. Highlight the quotations which will help you write your PEEL paragraphs.
- Before you begin your answer, read the question AGAIN.
- Do NOT worry about your written style – just grab as many points as you can and write in detail about the LANGUAGE and its effects.



The 4 Reading Tasks – Q1

- Q1 is always an “easy” question to get everyone confident and in the zone.
- In the mocks, the question stem was “What do you learn about...?” That’s an easy question.
- BUT... don’t get cocky or complacent. *Respect* the question.
- Get as many points as you can – cram them in.
- You’re looking to get 8/8 on this question. What a great start that would be!



The 4 Reading Tasks – Q1

Read **Source 1**, the online newspaper article called *Wind farms could blight one in six beauty spots* by Ben Leach.

- 1 What do you learn from Ben Leach's article about the issues and concerns regarding the building of wind farms? (8 marks)



The 4 Reading Tasks – Q2

- Q2 is always where you have to ***link the headline and picture to the text*** – how do they help the passage achieve its purpose and effect?
- In the passage, mark off the actual lines in the text which directly link to the picture and headline. Quote these specific lines in your answer.
- As you are reading, think about the style of text that we have here and the ***effect that it is meant to have on the reader*** – is it funny? thought-provoking? dramatic? curious? exciting? relaxing? shocking? Use this judgment to help you select the right details.



The 4 Reading Tasks – Q2

Now read **Source 2**, the article and the picture which goes with it called, *Up, up and away – the day that armchair travel really took off* by Valentine Low.

- 2 Explain how the headline and picture are effective and how they link to the text. (8 marks)



The 4 Reading Tasks – Q3

- Q3 is an “explain” task where you have to *interpret* what you’ve read and put it in your own words in as much detail as possible.
- There will be no pictures with Text 3 – this is usually from a semi-literary source such as travel writing, autobiography etc.
- Don’t forget to look at the WHOLE text – there may be variations in tone, style, emotion etc. and you must try to cover the whole range.



The 4 Reading Tasks – Q3

Now read **Source 3**, *Storm at sea*, which is an extract from a non-fiction book.

- 3** Explain some of the thoughts and feelings Claire Francis has during the storm. *(8 marks)*



The 4 Reading Tasks – Q4

- Q4 is the tough one, that's why they give it twice the number of marks.
- You always have to COMPARE Text 3 and ONE of the other two texts of your choice.
- Choose wisely – look for the *best* passage to go with Text 3. Look for the one which is most DIFFERENT.
- The focus here is on language, language, language, not the “story-line”.
- You need PEEL, PEEL, PEEL – ***get lots of quotations + critical verbs*** (captures, suggests etc.) to talk about the effect.
- Write roughly an equal amount about each passage; possibly just a *bit* more about Text 3, as that has the most language features.



The 4 Reading Tasks – Q4

Now you need to refer to **Source 3**, *Storm at sea* and **either Source 1 or Source 2**. You are going to compare the **two** texts, one of which you have chosen.

- 4** Compare the different ways in which language is used for effect in **the two** texts.
Give some examples and analyse the effects. (16 marks)



The 2 Writing Tasks

- It will tell you your audience, purpose and genre. Make sure you have highlighted these in the task and make sure you show them in your writing.
- **PLAN** your writing before you start. Think of a great beginning, a great ending *which links to your beginning* and plan what is going into each paragraph.
- **No paragraphs = no Grade C.**
- Use **connectives** e.g. *furthermore, on the other hand* to help you BUILD your piece.
- The writing tasks are always linked in some way to the reading tasks. They are on the same general topic or area.
- You can use the reading passages that you've just read to help you get ideas on the topics, but don't copy their story-lines!



The 2 Writing Tasks

- If you get an article, ***set it out as an article***, with headline, columns, dummy picture etc.
- If it's a local newspaper or magazine, then make some reference to the area or community.
- If it's a website, then put in a hyperlink or two to show the examiner that you've noticed.
- If you get a speech, then start with *Ladies & Gentlemen* or *My Fellow Students* and make sure you address them throughout your speech.



The 2 Writing Tasks – Q6

- Q6 is the LONGER writing task.
- It always asks you to ARGUE or PERSUADE.
- Think really hard about what will make your points convincing – CONTROL your writing to affect your audience.
- Have a really strong opening – perhaps directly address your audience or ask an intriguing question.
- Have a DELIBERATE ending, which links back to your first line or your headline.



The 2 Writing Tasks – Q6

- 6 Many people believe that it is our duty to cut back on our use of the world's resources, and that we must invest in greener forms of energy for the future – whatever the cost.

Write an article for an environmental website which argues **for or against** this idea.

(24 marks)



The 2 Writing Tasks – Q5

- Q5 is the SHORTER writing task.
- It always asks you to EXPLAIN or DESCRIBE.
- It will NOT ask you to tell a story! Even if it asks about your own life, the focus will be on describing and explaining, in other words ***your thoughts and reflections***, not the events themselves. This should be a *thoughtful* piece of writing.
- It doesn't matter if you make it up!!!
- Even though it may be about your personal thoughts, watch out for the AUDIENCE – in the mocks, for example, you were writing for a local newspaper. Did you notice that?
- Have a really strong opening – perhaps directly address your audience or ask an intriguing question.
- Have a DELIBERATE ending, which links back to your first line or your headline.



The 2 Writing Tasks – Q5

- 5** Sometimes difficult decisions have to be made. Describe a decision that you, or someone you know, had to make and explain the consequences. Your piece will appear in the *Real Lives* section of your local newspaper. (16 marks)



Question Timings

- **Learn this formula:**
 - Q1 Reading = 15mins.
 - Q2 Reading = 15mins.
 - Q3 Reading = 15mins.
 - Q4 Reading = 30mins.
 - Q6 Longer Writing = 35mins.
 - Q5 Shorter Writing = 25mins.

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Finally...

● BELIEVE!