

CCEA GCSE

# ENGLISH LANGUAGE



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# My revision planner

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[illegible]

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| REVISED                  | TESTED                   | EXAM READY               |
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**Test yourself answers**

| REVISED                  | TESTED                   | EXAM READY               |
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# Countdown to my exams



## 6–8 weeks to go

- Start by looking at the specification — make sure you know exactly what material you need to revise and the style of the examination. Use the revision planner on pages 5 and 6 to familiarise yourself with the topics.
- Organise your notes, making sure you have covered everything on the specification. The revision planner will help you to group your notes into topics.
- Work out a realistic revision plan that will allow you time for relaxation. Set aside days and times for all the subjects that you need to study, and stick to your timetable.
- Set yourself sensible targets. Break your revision down into focused sessions of around 40 minutes, divided by breaks. These Revision Notes organise the basic facts into short, memorable sections to make revising easier.

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## 2–6 weeks to go

- Read through the relevant sections of this book and refer to the exam tips, how to prepare for the exam, typical mistakes and key terms. Tick off the topics as you feel confident about them. Highlight those topics you find difficult and look at them again in detail.
- Test your understanding of each topic by working through the 'Test yourself' questions in the book. Look up the answers at the back of the book.
- Make a note of any problem areas as you revise, and ask your teacher to go over these in class.
- Look at past papers. They are one of the best ways to revise and practise your exam skills. Write or prepare planned answers to the exam practice questions provided in this book.
- Track your progress using the revision planner and give yourself a reward when you have achieved your target.

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## One week to go

- Try to fit in at least one more timed practice of an entire past paper and seek feedback from your teacher, comparing your work closely with the mark scheme.
- Check the revision planner to make sure you haven't missed out any topics. Brush up on any areas of difficulty by talking them over with a friend or getting help from your teacher.
- Attend any revision classes put on by your teacher. Remember, he or she is an expert at preparing people for examinations.

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## The day before the examination

- Flick through these Revision Notes for useful reminders, for example the exam tips, how to prepare for the exam, typical mistakes and key terms.
- Check the time and place of your examination.
- Make sure you have everything you need — extra pens and pencils, tissues, a watch, bottled water, sweets.
- Allow some time to relax and have an early night to ensure you are fresh and alert for the examinations.

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## My exams

### GCSE English Language Unit 1

Date: .....

Time: .....

Location: .....

### GCSE English Language Unit 4

Date: .....

Time: .....

Location: .....

# What does Unit 1, Section A involve?

## What is being assessed?

Section A is assessing your writing skills. This means you are being assessed on the quality and accuracy of your written work.

## What will you have to write?

You will be given a topic to write about and will be expected to promote a point of view and persuade your audience to agree with you. The question will identify the topic for discussion, the audience you are writing for and the form your writing should take.

## How long do you have?

You have 55 minutes in which to complete one task. It is advised that you spend up to 15 minutes planning for writing, 30 minutes writing your response and 10 minutes checking over and editing your work.

## How many marks are available?

The total number of marks available in Section A is 87. Up to 57 marks are available for producing an organised and interesting piece of writing which matches form with purpose to engage the interest of a reader. Up to 30 marks are available for using a range of sentence structures and accurate spelling, punctuation and grammar.

## How much are you expected to write?

Whilst it is expected that you will produce an extended response, you should prioritise the quality of your writing, rather than focusing on delivering a set quantity of writing. You should ensure there is a clear introduction, development and conclusion and, as this task requires you to promote a point of view, you will do that successfully when your ideas are developed and confidently expressed.

## Purpose, audience and form

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When promoting a point of view, you are effectively demonstrating your ability to argue and persuade. As well as writing for a specific purpose, you will be writing for a given audience (for example, teenagers or parents) and may be tasked to write in a particular form (for example, a speech or an article).

The examiner is looking for a response that:

- writes with relevance about the set topic
- shows understanding of the **purpose** of the writing
- reads like an article, speech, blog or whatever **form** is stated
- writes in a way that is appropriate for the intended **audience**.

**purpose:** why the text has been produced

**form:** how the text has been constructed and structured

**audience:** who the text is for – the reader

## Identifying purpose, audience and form

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The task itself will identify:

- the topic you are writing about
- why you are writing (purpose)
- who you are writing for (audience)
- how you should write (form).

For example:

- 1 Write a speech (a) to be delivered to your classmates (b) to persuade (c) them of the benefits of reading (d).
  - (a) Form
  - (b) Audience
  - (c) Purpose
  - (d) Topic
- 2 'Modern sports stars are overrated and overpaid.' (a) Write an article (b) for your school magazine (c) in which you share your views on this topic (d).
  - (a) Topic
  - (b) Form
  - (c) Audience
  - (d) Purpose

### Exam tip

Blogs take different forms and many can be written using **colloquial** English. Remember, in an exam you should use Standard English as you are writing for an examiner.

## Tasks

Identify the topic, purpose, audience and form in each of these tasks:

- 1 Write a letter to your local council to persuade them to invest more money in leisure facilities in your area.
- 2 Write a blog in which you promote your views on whether the legal driving age should be increased to 21.
- 3 Write an article to be published in your local newspaper to persuade young people to get involved in volunteer work.

**colloquial:** conversational and informal

## Test yourself

TESTED

Read the opening paragraph to a student's response and complete the tasks which follow:

- 1 Compose the exam question to accompany this student response. You should identify topic, purpose, audience and form.
- 2 Write down three things you would advise this student to do to improve their response.
- 3 Rewrite this response so the content is suitably matched to purpose, audience and form.

Right everyone, listen up, I am talking now and I want you to listen. Today I want to talk to you about school uniform and why I think it needs to be scrapped. Do you agree or not? I think it is really ugly and really uncomfortable. Everything about this uniform is ugly, the material, the colour and the style. And it costs a fortune. I really hate having to put this ugly outfit on five days a week.

Answers on p. 88

## Register and style

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It is important to use the correct tone and register in your response. For example, you would be more formal when writing to your head teacher than you would when writing for your peers. However, never forget that, in an exam situation, the examiner is your primary audience. For this reason, avoid being too informal and never use slang.

## Tasks

Rank these writing tasks in order of formality, beginning with the most formal and working down to the least formal:

- 1 A letter to an MP to persuade them to visit your school.
- 2 A speech to your classmates to share your views on the benefits of after-school clubs.
- 3 An article for your school magazine to persuade the school community to become eco-friendlier.
- 4 An email to a friend to persuade them to go to the cinema at the weekend.
- 5 An online blog presenting your views on the benefits of social media.

## Test yourself

TESTED

☐

Select one of the above tasks and write a short opening paragraph which shows your appreciation of audience, purpose and form and adopts an appropriate register and tone.

**Answers on p. 88**



# Planning your response

You will have 55 minutes to complete Section A. It is advised that the first 15 minutes are spent planning your answer. There are two parts to the planning process:

- 1 Generating the ideas you will use in your writing.
- 2 Organising your ideas and selecting a structure.

The examiner is looking for a response that:

- develops logically
- moves confidently and **coherently** from one paragraph to another
- avoids unnecessary repetition of ideas
- includes a variety of **linguistic devices** to engage the reader
- employs a variety of sentence types and sentence lengths.

## Organising ideas

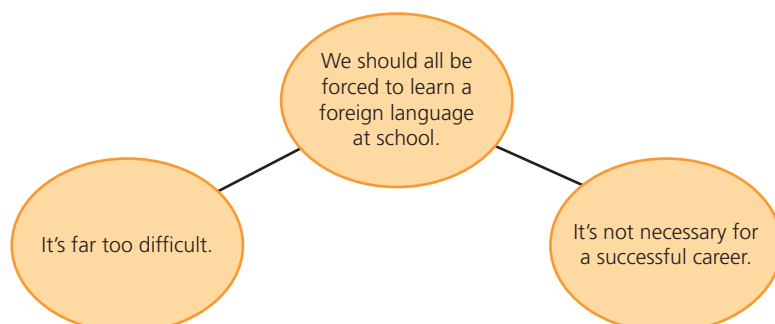
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When planning, many students adopt the following approach:

- 1 Locate and highlight key words in the question.
- 2 Record ideas in a spider diagram or bullet-point list.
- 3 Develop each idea by noting down key points to make and/or techniques to use.
- 4 Decide the best order to write ideas and how they can be linked, then number them.

## Tasks

- 1 Highlight the key words in this task:  
Write an article (a) for publication in an educational magazine (b) in which you present your views (c) on the topic: 'We should all be forced to learn a foreign language at school.' (d)  
(a) Form  
(b) Audience  
(c) Purpose  
(d) Topic
- 2 Now record your ideas in a planning diagram:



- 3 Add two more ideas to the planning diagram above.
- 4 Develop each idea; for example:

**coherently**: in a logical way

**linguistic devices**: specific techniques which are used to achieve an effect such as: alliteration; rhetorical questions; hyperbole and repetition, to name a few

### Exam tip

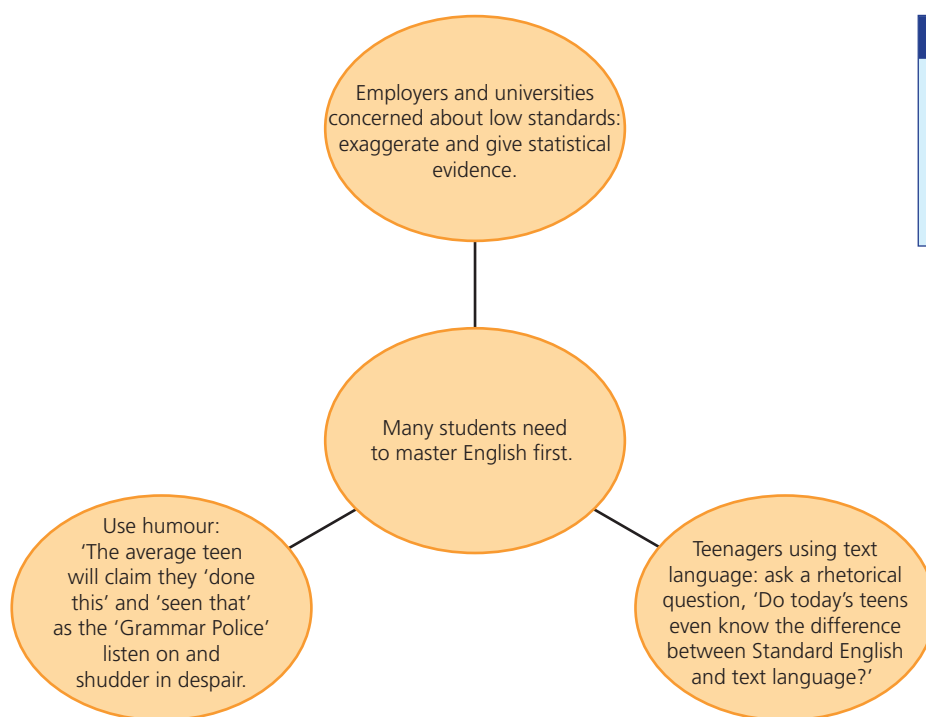
If you have a plan you will feel more confident about being able to write an extended response; you will not forget to include important points and, as you write, you can concentrate on *how* you express your ideas.

### Exam tip

A plan will look untidy as you are recording ideas as they come to mind. Don't write in full sentences when planning.

### Exam tip

To ensure you can produce an extended response, you will need to think of five or six ideas which you can develop into detailed and interesting paragraphs.

**Typical mistake**

Failing to plan effectively can mean students run out of time, run out of ideas, 'bunch' ideas together or repeat themselves.

5 Decide the order in which you will present your ideas.

**Test yourself**TESTED ☐

Complete the full planning process for this Unit 1, Section A task: Write an article for your school website persuading readers that it is stressful to be a teenager in today's world.

**Answers on p. 88**

**Openings and endings**REVISED ☐

It is important to open strongly as this is where the examiner forms their first impression of you as a writer. Remember, examiners mark a lot of scripts so they appreciate a response which is original and hooks and holds their attention. Your introduction should show an awareness of audience, purpose and form. For example, think about how the opening of a speech would differ from the opening of an article.

There are a variety of ways to engage your reader by using linguistic devices, such as a rhetorical question or a personal anecdote, but you can also vary your sentence structures and use punctuation to enhance meaning.

Below are two introductions in which students give their opinions on the use of mobile phones in school:

**Student A**

I think mobile phones should be allowed in school. I bring my mobile phone to school every day and I know lots of other pupils do the same. There are lots of reasons why mobile phones should be allowed in schools and I will share some of them with you.

## Student B

Are we really ready to relax the ban on mobile phones in school? Stop for a minute and consider the consequences: pupil concentration will certainly suffer; teacher stress will increase; cyber-bullying will soar and exam results will plummet! School is definitely not the place for a sophisticated and expensive piece of kit such as the modern smartphone...

## Tasks

- 1 Devise a list of success criteria which would help Student A to write a better introduction.

When concluding your response, you want to leave a lasting impression upon your reader. The conclusion is not the place to introduce anything new, instead you should try to appeal to the minds and hearts of your audience and compel them to share your point of view.

- 2 Below is the conclusion written by Student B. As you read it, highlight what the student has done well:

Undoubtedly, technology has enhanced our life in many ways and most teenagers suffer separation anxiety when their mobile phone is not to hand, but it is hard to see a compelling reason for introducing mobile phones into our classrooms. As much as I hate to admit it, we teens are simply not disciplined enough to get through the day without tallying up our 'likes', keeping up to date with our newsfeeds and indulging our selfie obsession. After all, few of us actually use our phone to make phone calls, and guess what? If an emergency were to occur, the school office has its very own retro landline! Do yourself and all your peers a favour, leave the phone at home ... grades depend on it.

You should have spotted the student used:

- inclusive language: 'our', 'we' and 'us'
- humour/exaggeration: 'suffer separation anxiety' and 'retro landline'
- triple: 'without tallying up our "likes", keeping up to date with our newsfeeds and indulging our selfie obsession'
- connectives to link ideas: 'After all'
- a question to engage the reader: '...and guess what?'
- imperatives: 'Do yourself a favour, leave...'
- exclamatory sentences, ellipsis and inverted commas.

### Assessment comment

This is a Level 5 response as the student confidently uses language to leave an impression upon the reader. They successfully connect with their reader and write in an engaging and lively style.

## Mark scheme

Read the mark scheme below and identify what you need to do to achieve the higher levels.

|                |   |
|----------------|---|
| <b>Level 1</b> | <p>Limited awareness of audience and purpose.</p> <p>Uncomplicated style with simple/few language techniques.</p> <p>Limited evidence of structural features.</p>   |
| <b>Level 2</b> | <p>Some awareness of audience and purpose.</p> <p>Ideas are developed to promote a point of view or compel the reader.</p> <p>Some recognition of form.</p> <p>Some successful attempts to use language techniques and structural features.</p> |

|         |  |
|---------|--|
| Level 3 | Clear awareness of audience and purpose.<br>Ideas are developed in an interesting way with a range of language techniques to engage or compel the reader.<br>Writes with a clear appreciation of form.<br>Evidence of a variety of structural features.  |
| Level 4 | Confident awareness of audience and purpose.<br>Ideas are developed in a way that is increasingly convincing and compelling.<br>Confident recognition of form.<br>Successfully uses a variety of language techniques throughout the response with structural features used to enhance meaning and/or engagement.                     |
| Level 5 | Highly impressive awareness of audience and purpose.<br>Highly confident development of a range of ideas to make the piece engaging and interesting.<br>Assured recognition of form.<br>Highly confident in using a full range of language techniques to achieve effects.<br>Assured organisation of ideas with structural features. |

Test yourself

TESTED

Plan in detail and then write the opening and concluding paragraphs for this task: Write a speech in which you persuade your audience to recycle more and be less wasteful.

Aim to:

- complete your detailed plan in 15 minutes, including identifying the techniques you will use in each paragraph to engage your reader
- produce an interesting introduction and conclusion which uses linguistic devices, varies sentence lengths and uses punctuation to enhance meaning.

Answers on p. 88

Promoting a point of view

REVISED

When you promote your point of view, you want your audience to be convinced by what you say and share your opinions. To do this successfully, you should use a range of persuasive techniques which will help you put forward a convincing argument which appeals to the heart and mind of your reader. You will want to establish a positive rapport with your reader, which means you will acknowledge the reader throughout your response.

The examiner is looking for a response which:

- confidently and convincingly develops ideas
- uses a range of linguistic devices which help engage a reader
- positively connects with the reader.

You will not convince anyone to share your opinions unless you can develop your reasoning. Remember, you will not make an argument in one or two sentences.

Typical mistake

Students often prioritise communicating their opinions on a given topic and do not give enough thought to *how* they are writing so that they interest their reader.

Tasks

- 1 Read these two extracts written by GCSE students trying to persuade their audience to be more charitable. Decide which one is more successful in promoting their point of view:

Student A

You just never know when you might find yourself needing help from others. Life can be unpredictable and no man is an island. For this reason, I strongly believe that we should all be a little more charitable.

Student B

Being charitable is not about being wealthy, it's about being human. To be frank, we have all become increasingly selfish but this benefits nobody! As one person, you might not be able to end world hunger but you can make a difference in the lives of others through small acts of kindness such as giving up your seat on the bus or train, smiling more and even lifting litter to help create a cleaner environment for us all. These actions cost nothing but if we all introduced them into our everyday interactions, wouldn't the world be a better place? Wouldn't we feel better about ourselves?

2 Improve the response written by Student A by developing the ideas so that they are more clear and convincing.

Engaging a reader

REVISED

The most important thing to do to engage your reader is to believe in what you write. Your reader will be swayed by writing which is passionate and convincing. Having hooked the reader's attention in your opening paragraph, you must work to maintain their interest throughout your writing. You can do this by:

- using a range of persuasive techniques to appeal to the heart and mind of the reader (these are explored in more detail on page 16)
- using a variety of sentence structures to make your writing lively (these are explored in more detail on page 21)
- using conversational phrases to 'talk' to your reader.

Whilst you do not want to be too informal, you should address your reader directly:

|                                |   |  |                            |
|--------------------------------|---|--|----------------------------|
| I know what you're thinking... | Let me tell you...                        | Can you believe...?                        | You may have heard...      |
| ...shocking, I know.           | For what it's worth...                    | Like me, you will...                       | We all know...             |
| To be frank...                 | It wouldn't be an overstatement to say... | Just take a minute to reflect upon that... | How many times have you... |

Task

Read the extract below taken from a student's response to the task: Write a speech where you discuss the educational benefits of school trips.  
Decide what could be included at the relevant points, to make the response more engaging.

...**A**... school trips are nothing more than a day out of school. ...**B**... I truly believe that they are a valuable opportunity to bring learning to life. ...**C**... heard young people ask, 'Why are we learning this?' Young people need to appreciate the relevance of their learning, they need to understand how classroom content connects to the real world. ...**D**... school trips are probably one of the most effective and memorable learning opportunities a young person can experience.

Test yourself

TESTED

Write a paragraph where you argue that school trips are too expensive and do not offer value for money. Include three phrases to engage your reader.

Answers on p. 88

Writing persuasively

REVISED

You will have encountered a range of linguistic devices throughout your study of English at Key Stages 3 and 4. You may have devised an acronym to help you remember the most common techniques. The important thing is to show you can skilfully use a range of persuasive techniques throughout your response.

Remember, you begin by generating your ideas first and then plan how to work the various techniques into your writing to enhance the delivery of your ideas. You must also express yourself confidently, even disguising your opinion as fact to make your writing convincing.

Tasks

- 1 Practise using a range of persuasive techniques by rewriting the sentences below to make them more persuasive:
  - (a) Completing homework is important if you want to do well in school.
  - (b) Too many young people are not getting enough exercise.
  - (c) I think we are too reliant on technology.
  - (d) Computer games are fun.
  - (e) If you sponsor a pet you can give it a better life.
- 2 Rewrite each of three paragraphs below, making them more persuasive by including the persuasive techniques listed:

Exam tip

Many students use this acronym to help them remember persuasive techniques:

- **R** Repetition
- **A** Alliteration
- **I** Imperative
- **N** Name an expert
- **F** Facts
- **O** Opinions
- **R** Rhetorical questions
- **E** Emotive language
- **S** Statistics
- **T** Triple/rule of three

| First attempt  | Rewrite to include...                           | Redraft |
|--|---|---------|
| Modern sports stars are grossly overpaid. Not only do they take home a large salary for the little work they do, they also earn a lot of money from sponsorship deals.                           | Rhetorical question<br>Statistics               |         |
| We consume too much junk food. We know the risks that come with eating such an unhealthy diet, but we just can't seem to stop. We are setting ourselves up for a whole range of health problems. | Exaggeration<br>List of three<br>Name an expert |         |

| First attempt   | Rewrite to include...                        | Redraft |
|---|--|---------|
| We should all be taught first aid in schools. This is a valuable skill. By teaching first aid in schools we would be creating a safer, less selfish society. Life is precious and there is no reason why people should suffer or even die because we were too lazy to learn basic first aid. First aid saves lives. | Repetition<br>Imperative<br>Emotive language |         |

3 Read the extract below from a student’s response to the following task:  
Write a speech for your classmates persuading them of the benefits of part-time work.  
Then answer the prompt questions.

There is nothing more rewarding than earning your own money and being able to indulge yourself at the end of the working week. No more must I endure the humiliation of begging my parents for a loan, only to be forced to clean the entire house in return for a few paltry pounds. No more must I miss out on epic adventures with friends due to an empty purse. No more must I save for months to be able to afford the latest ‘must-have’ purchase. I can have it all! Did you know that, on average, UK parents spend a whopping £520.00 per month per teenager? Not in my house!

What’s more, a part-time job doesn’t just offer financial freedom, it provides you with something much better, something so precious it is desired by employers the length and breadth of the country. I am of course speaking of ... experience! As we all know, it’s a fiercely competitive world out there. According to Professor Kelly from Queen’s University Belfast, ‘Employers are no longer simply seeking qualifications, they want to see more, they want to see young people gaining experience either in a paid or voluntary capacity.’ Heed this advice, a part-time job shows your ability to manage a demanding workload, it proves you have ambition and it equips you with the confidence to interact with people. Do yourself a favour, get a part-time job. You won’t regret it.

How is the writer’s opinion presented persuasively in this opening sentence?

What words are employed effectively in this sentence?

What is the writer’s intention in using repetition of ‘No more...’?

Explain how this sentence is effective in engaging a reader.

Identify three techniques used in this sentence and explain their impact upon a reader.

How is the writer effective in engaging the reader here?

Explain the impact of the imperative statement here.

What technique is the writer employing here and to what effect?

Explain how this short sentence persuades the reader.

**Assessment comment**

This is a strong Level 5 response which shows evidence of using language for effect. The student is making choices about their use of language in order to make their writing interesting and convincing. They successfully connect with their audience.