



**SQA NATIONAL 5 ENGLISH**

# **READING FOR UNDERSTANDING, ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION**

**SECOND EDITION**

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Answers and mark schemes for the activities and Practice Paper questions can be found at:

[www.hoddergibson.co.uk/answers-N5-English-RUAE](http://www.hoddergibson.co.uk/answers-N5-English-RUAE)



# Introduction



Pupils are often heard to say, 'You can't really study' for the Reading for Understanding, Analysis and Evaluation paper. This book shows how you can do just that! Although the passages you get in the exam will always be different, the questions will follow a particular style and format, and you can be taught strategies to tackle those questions.

Pupils often ask 'What is the point of the Reading for Understanding, Analysis and Evaluation paper?' The paper requires you to develop various skills, which are important for a number of reasons:

- Having a good command of written language is a vital skill for life, work and learning – you will need to be able to read a range of things and also to understand them fully. You need to be able to work out if there are any hidden meanings, implied messages or opinions suggested.
- The work you do in preparation for this paper will help you to develop critical skills, allowing you to spot when something you read (or hear) is biased, if it is a spoof or an example of propaganda or 'spin'. A strong set of reading skills will enable you to spot if someone is excited, enthusiastic or emotionally engaged in a topic, and to read someone's anger, temper or frustration in the words they have used.
- Academic studies have shown that good reading skills improve attainment levels in other subjects too – not just in English. These skills let you access the information presented in other school subjects more easily.
- In addition to all these benefits, strong reading skills develop your knowledge of the world, of people around you and of society in general.

What is Reading for Understanding, Analysis and Evaluation?

- This book aims to develop the reading skills you have used in the BGE phase of Curriculum for Excellence and to prepare you for the National 5: Reading for Understanding, Analysis and Evaluation paper.

- This book covers the part of the National 5 English exam which candidates often find the most challenging.
- The exam asks candidates to read an unseen passage and answer questions on that passage. The paper is worth 30 marks (30 per cent of the final mark) and lasts for one hour.
- In this paper, candidates are asked to show they can **understand** what is written – by summarising what they have read, using their own words.
- Candidates are also asked to ‘read between the lines’ and use their skills of **inference** to work out what the writer means, even if it’s not explicitly stated.
- Candidates are asked to identify features of **language** and **structure**, to **analyse** them and also to **evaluate** how successful these techniques have been.

## ○ Get the most from this book

- **Part One** focuses on the skills you need to demonstrate understanding, to analyse ideas, structure and language, and to evaluate writers’ techniques. This section uses small passages, with a range of activities, to develop your reading skills.
- **Part Two** builds on what is taught in Part One and provides structured practice in tackling a range of question types in shorter extracts, using active learning approaches as well as individual activities. While it is important that you can identify and analyse specific examples, it is, of course, vital that you also focus on the bigger picture – the gist and content of the passage as a whole.
- **Part Three** provides full-length practice papers which work as preparation for the final exam.

**Answers and mark schemes** for the activities and practice paper questions can be found at:

**[www.hoddergibson.co.uk/answers-N5-English-RUAE](http://www.hoddergibson.co.uk/answers-N5-English-RUAE)**

Knowing and using **critical terminology** is an important part of the course so this is included throughout the book. The glossary on page 135 gives definitions of all terms highlighted in red.

### Dictionary

**Critical terminology**: the specific words we use to describe language techniques, e.g. simile, semi-colon, repetition. Further examples are available in the Glossary on page 135.

## ○ Tips for studying

This book aims to develop your skills and your confidence in applying them. In addition, we recommend that you should:

- Read to develop your vocabulary, knowledge and speed/fluency of reading.
- Read newspaper articles – particularly opinion pieces. These are the kinds of articles used in the exam so it’s good to be used to reading them.
- Learn how to ‘deep read’ a passage – read it slowly, taking in all the information. While the exam is timed, you are being tested on how well you read, not how fast you read.

- Highlight key ideas, vocabulary and important techniques used in a passage – develop your skills in ‘technique spotting’.
- Practise summarising articles using your own words, showing you understand what the author is telling you and what they might be thinking about the topic. It’s really important to keep focused on what the author is trying to say – what their argument is and what they want to make you think.
- Learn how to answer the different types of questions you can be asked.
- Read and understand questions fully so you know what is being asked of you.

Once you feel confident using these skills, you could move on to analysing passages on your own. A good quality opinion piece in a newspaper can be an excellent tool for study at this point.

## ○ How do you read?

This might seem like an obvious question but it’s really important to work out *how* you read when you’re going to have to do it as part of an important exam.

Some people don’t read the passage fully before attempting the questions. Don’t be one of those people. Bear in mind – the name of this paper is ‘Reading for Understanding, Analysis and Evaluation’. The clue to the important skill being assessed in this paper is clearly stated in this title!

## Skimming, scanning and deep reading

- **Skimming** – reading only the sections in a text that are most likely to provide the answers/information you are looking for.
- **Scanning** – quickly reading through a text to find specific information/a particular answer.
- **Deep reading** – reading every word of the passage, thinking about the pace of the words, the **tone** of the writing, how the punctuation works, and the ideas and the impact of the language used.

### Skimming



Some people try to read the passage at super-speed in order to get on to answering the questions more quickly. There is a time pressure, it’s true, and skimming is a great skill to have – there is a place for its use in the exam. Once you have fully read a passage, it

can be useful to skim through a section just to remind yourself of its content. However, if *all* you do is skim the passage, you can miss out in many ways. You may not notice:

- important features of the language
- the tone the writer is using
- the impact of the punctuation.

## Scanning

Some people approach reading in this paper by not reading the full passage at all – they skip to the questions because they think that's a good way to save time. In reality, it does not save time – if you don't read the full passage in detail, you are more likely to have to go back and read it again. Although scanning is a useful tool to have, it should only be used to help you find the answers after you've read the full passage.

If you only scan through a passage, focusing on small sections in order to find a specific piece of information, you can miss out on a great deal of key information:

- how **links** are used in the passage
- the tone the writer has created
- the big picture – the main point, message or moral of the passage. One of the most important skills in this paper is to understand the main ideas – the 'gist' – of a passage.

## Deep reading

Deep reading a passage in the exam is likely to take more than ten minutes. People who read regularly may get through it more quickly.

Imagine the passage was being read to you by a teacher. They would:

- read slowly, with some variation according to the content of the passage
- take pauses where there is punctuation
- place emphasis on certain words, phrases or **expressions**
- change the tone of their voice to create humour, **irony**, sarcasm, criticism ...

When you read a passage, you should read it as if it's being read aloud to you.

As you read, you should also:

- Think about what the writer is saying. Do you agree? Are you persuaded?
- Look at the evidence presented. Is it reliable? Is it convincing?
- Look at the use of language. What is the writer trying to do? What does the writer want you to think or feel?

You might also think about highlighting some of the ideas or language features that catch your attention while you read.



## For practice

## Types of reading

Look at the following situations. Copy the table and then identify the best type of reading for each situation.

Situation	Skim	Scan	Deep read
Looking for a word in the dictionary			
Finding an article in a newspaper that interests you			
Finding useful websites for research			
Analysing a poem in class			
Finding a section in a novel where a character first appears			
Looking for particular question types in a past paper			
Reading a textbook/chapter to revise a topic you know well			
Reading through a text to find a particular quotation			
Reading a text in order to understand/remember what you have read			
Looking quickly through a study guide to see if it is useful before deciding to read it			

## Context clues

What happens if you're not sure of what a word means?

Sometimes when you're reading, you will find that there are words you don't understand. This can be worrying when it happens in a question or in a section where you are told to look for answers.

When you're not in an exam situation, you can easily use a dictionary to work out the meaning of a word.

## Tools of the trade

There are many ways you can build your vocabulary so that there is less chance you'll come across unfamiliar vocabulary.

- Read regularly. Read a range of **genres** of text.
- Make a note of new vocabulary you encounter. Look the words up in a dictionary. Use them in your own writing and speaking.
- Use a thesaurus to find new words – and then use the new words.
- Identify words you over-use and try to find alternatives you can use to replace them.
- Do crosswords and word puzzles.
- Edit your own work to improve the words you use. Be an author – choose your words carefully.
- Learn how words are built using roots, prefixes and suffixes. Once you know how a prefix or suffix changes the root words, you can break words down into smaller parts to help you.



## Focus on...

### Context clues

If you come across a word in a passage and you can't use any of these strategies, you can use clues from the **context** to help you. Often, if there is a tricky word in a passage, the author will have rephrased that word or expression elsewhere in the passage – usually within a few lines of the word/expression.

#### Dictionary

**Context:** the immediate surroundings of a word or phrase; or the precise place in which it is used

For example:

Each Saturday is treated like a festival. The young women dress in all their finery for the afternoon – silk dresses, bonnets adorned with bright blossoms and home-made jewellery of scarlet flowers.

If you weren't sure of what the word 'finery' meant, you could look around at the context to find clues.

- The dash after 'afternoon' is used to show additional information has been added. This information is given as an explanation or expansion of what came before the dash.
- We understand 'young women' and 'afternoon'. The descriptions of the silk dresses, hats, flowers and jewellery don't link directly to the words 'young women' and 'afternoon'.
- By process of elimination, the description must link to the word 'finery'.
- 'Finery' must then mean the pretty things the girls wore; their special outfits.
- You could back that idea up as 'finery' includes the word 'fine' which can mean good quality, superior, excellent or pleasant.

### For practice

#### Context clues activity

Look at the extracts below. Using the context, explain what the underlined words mean.

##### Extract 1

Ahmed's investments could be unpredictable. One day they made him a bucket-load of cash – more than he could ever imagine. At other times, he spent his whole day biting his nails, wondering if he would be bankrupt by the next.

## Extract 2

The miners lived a largely subterranean life. They went below ground before the sun rose; they drank their tea below ground; they ate lunch in the bowels of the earth. They sweated and bled and prayed that this cave, deep below the town, would stay strong and keep them safe from a burial so deep no one would ever be able to dig them out.

## Extract 3

Sarah's scientific discoveries were causing her some issues. Despite leaving university at a sensible hour, eating her dinner with friends and family and getting herself off to bed at a reasonable time, she spent night after night staring at the ceiling, playing equations over and over in her head. She wasn't counting sheep, she was counting molecules, but they didn't help her insomnia at all.

## Extract 4

Inequality is quickly growing in our society. The way the government protects the older, rich people by providing them with benefits they don't actually need is well known: votes attract bribes. For those younger, poorer folks, they lost the education maintenance allowance and the child trust fund. Parents of young children lost child benefit, tax credits and even the cheaper travel younger people could access shrank. To top it all off, an average £40,000 of university fee and student loan debt was piled on to the backs of our young.

## Extract 5

It takes frighteningly little to dehumanise immigrants; to make other humans look like trash; to make them barely human. The many days crushed together in the sun or a camp or a cattle truck without the basic needs we take for granted, make them seem disgustingly like 'others' – not like us any more – victims no longer look like themselves when they're desperate and in need.

Progress review	Yes	Evidence
I can skim and scan when trying to locate information in a passage.		
I know when to skim, scan or deep read, depending on my reason for reading.		
I can work out what a word or phrase means using its context.		

# Part One

## Types of questions

Introduction to types of questions

Command words

How questions are worded

### **Section 1:** Understanding questions

1.1 Selecting and understanding information

1.2 Understanding fact and opinion

1.3 How to practise reading skills

1.4 Understanding identification and summary questions

1.5 Understanding inference

1.6 Understanding explanation questions

1.7 Understanding text structure questions

### **Section 2:** Analysis and evaluation questions

2.1 What is 'language'?

2.2 Word choice

2.3 Figurative language and imagery

2.4 Sentence structure

2.5 Tone

## ○ Introduction to types of questions



In the Reading for Understanding, Analysis and Evaluation paper there are three main types of question – the clue is in the title of the paper. You will be asked to show **understanding**, to **analyse** and to **evaluate**:

**Understanding** questions test your understanding of ideas from the passage by asking you to rephrase them in your own words. You may have to show understanding of words and phrases in **context** or the overall impact of the text. Often, you may have to infer meaning from what you read or show your understanding of the writer's ideas by identifying and selecting key points or main ideas from the passage and rephrase those, showing your knowledge of any underlying message, judgements or opinions the writer may hold.

**Analysis** questions ask you to identify language techniques that are used by a writer and explain how they are used and why they are used. Sometimes questions will specify the language technique you should look for: **word choice**, **sentence structure**, **imagery**, **tone**, etc. However, often the question will simply say 'feature of language', leaving it up to you to decide which technique (or techniques) you want to analyse.

**Evaluation** is often worked into analysis questions, asking you how effective an example, a technique or an idea has been.

Section 1 focuses on **understanding** questions.

Section 2 looks at **analysis** and **evaluation** questions.

Before you get on to answering questions, though, a key skill to learn is to identify what the question is asking you. Exam-style questions will help you with this by using **command words**.



## ○ Command words

Command words are used in all SQA (Scottish Qualifications Authority) exams. They help you work out what the question is asking you to do. In this paper, the command words you are likely to see are:

- **Identify** Used when you are being asked to pick out the main points or ideas a writer is making. It is always followed by 'in your own words'. Sometimes, the word 'summarise' may appear instead of 'identify' but both words are asking you to put the writer's main ideas into your own words.
- **Explain (what)** Used when you are being asked what you believe the writer is trying to say. It is always followed by 'in your own words'.
- **Explain (how/why)** Used when you are being asked how and why language techniques have been used.

Questions that ask you to identify key ideas are quite obvious! These are the most obvious type of understanding questions. You may need a bit of practice in deciding whether an 'explain' question is understanding or analysis, though.

## ⊕ Taking a closer look...

From these examples, identify which questions are **analysis** questions and which are **understanding** questions.

- 1 Explain how the writer's use of language shows her opinion of the city.
- 2 Explain what the writer says about problems faced by the residents of the city.
- 3 Explain how one example of sentence structure makes the writer's argument clear.
- 4 Explain how the writer's word choice illustrates his negative attitude towards town developers.
- 5 Explain what the writer believes are the key strategies that town planners should use when deciding on new developments.

## ○ How questions are worded



Questions in the National 5 (N5) paper will always start by telling you where you should look for the answer. You will be given a line reference or the start and end of the specific lines you should look at.

The next part of the question will include the command word.

If the question asks you to use your own words, this will be stated and will be highlighted in bold.

The question will also say how many points you should make to get the total number of marks available.

Look at the following examples:

- Look at lines xx–xx, and then, using **your own words** as far as possible, identify **five** reasons why ...
- Look at lines xx–xx, and explain how **one** feature of the writer's sentence structure is used to highlight an important point.
- Look at lines xx–xx. Summarise, **in your own words** as far as possible, how ... You should make five key points in your answer.
- Look at lines xx–xx. By referring to **two** examples, explain how the writer makes effective use of contrast in these paragraphs. You could refer to sentence structure, tone or word choice.
- Look at lines xx–xx. Explain how **two** examples of the writer's word choice make it clear that ...
- By referring to the sentence in lines xx–xx, explain how it helps to provide a **link** between the writer's ideas at this point in the passage.
- Look at lines xx–xx. By referring to **two** language features, explain how the writer makes clear his view about ... You could refer to features such as word choice, imagery or sentence structure.
- Look at lines xx–xx. Explain what **two** reasons the writer gives for believing ...
- Select any expression in lines xx–xx, and explain how it contributes to the passage's effective conclusion.

## For practice

Read the passages that follow.

### Extract 1

It is a discussion that causes no end of debate – whether or not it is justifiable for footballers to earn the wages they do. Have we totally lost our sense of perspective when it comes to this issue? Listening to a radio sports programme recently, the pundit defended a player who was moving from £100k a week to £300k a week as 'just looking after his family'. Yes, £30 million a year is needed to do that – a mere £5 million couldn't possibly be enough! This pundit believed that 'only' paying £30k a week showed a 'lack of ambition' on behalf of the club. This is just another sign that the top flight of football has normalised paying outrageous sums to their players.

- 5** from £100k a week to £300k a week as 'just looking after his family'. Yes, £30 million a year is needed to do that – a mere £5 million couldn't possibly be enough! This pundit believed that 'only' paying £30k a week showed a 'lack of ambition' on behalf of the club. This is just another sign that the top flight of football has normalised paying outrageous sums to their players.
- 10** On average, an English Premier League player earns about £200k a month – working out at £2.5 million a year. Some are on £400k a month. In the real world, the average wage is £29k a year. Yes, a year. In many areas of the country, the average is more like £16k – or less. What nurses earn for saving lives per year works out at the amount an average earning English
- 15** footballer earns in 8 hours. A neurosurgeon, with skills in science and biology, saving your life with pioneering surgery, has a yearly salary equivalent



to what these players earn in around 2–3 days. Even pop stars, authors and film stars don't have a guaranteed income like this – they're paid on royalties, song-to-song, book-to-book and film-to-film.

- 20 One of the reasons we're told footballers should be given this kind of payment is that their careers are shorter than others. Why are footballers the only people who get to retire in their mid 30s and expect not to get a job after that? What about athletes, gymnasts, rugby players ...? They don't earn anything like the same amounts as footballers and yet have a similar expectation for
- 25 fitness levels. And don't get me started on women's football wages! The early-ending career may have been the case back in the old days, but it's not that way now. In the 80s, there was only one player who earned more than £50k a year (a modern-day equivalent of £220k) and the football was fast and entertaining and British clubs did well around the world. These players didn't
- 30 often have the benefit of education in the same way as modern footballers do; they didn't have the same options to become coaches or pundits or fitness coaches or trainers or managers or jobs with advertising roles ...

## Activity 1

- Using what you now know about how questions are worded in the exam, create some questions for someone else to answer on the passage.
- These questions should be **understanding** questions and should ask candidates to answer **in their own words**.
- In pairs or small groups, use the command words 'identify' or 'explain'. You may also use 'summarise'.
- Once you finish, ask someone else to try to answer the questions.

## Extract 2

In Moulmein, in Lower Burma, I was hated by large numbers of people – the only time in my life that I have been important enough for this to happen to me. I was sub-divisional police officer of the town, and in an aimless, petty kind of way, anti-European feeling was very bitter. No one

5 had the guts to raise a riot, but if a European woman went through the bazaars alone, somebody would probably spit betel juice over her dress. As a police officer, I was an obvious target and was baited whenever it seemed safe to do so. In the end, the sneering faces of young men that met me everywhere, the insults hooted after me when I was at a safe

10 distance, got badly on my nerves. The young Buddhist priests were the worst of all. There were several thousands of them in the town, and none of them seemed to have anything to do except stand on street corners and jeer at Europeans. All this was perplexing and upsetting. For at that time I had already made up my mind that imperialism was an evil thing and

15 the sooner I chucked up my job and got out of it the better. Theoretically – and secretly, of course – I was all for the Burmese, and all against their oppressors, the British. As for the job I was doing, I hated it more bitterly than I can perhaps make clear.

## Activity 2

- In pairs or small groups, use what you now know about how questions are worded in the exam to create some questions for someone else to answer on the passage.
- These should be **analysis** questions and ask the candidate to explain the writer's use of language.
- You should use the command word 'explain'.
- Once you finish, ask someone else to try to answer the questions.

Progress review	Yes	Evidence
I understand what command words are.		
I understand what is expected in a question that asks me to 'identify'.		
I understand the difference between the two types of question that ask me to 'explain'.		
I can tell the difference between understanding and analysis questions.		
I understand how questions are worded in the exam.		



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