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Practice Questions

Reading for Understanding, Analysis and Evaluation

Question type	Command word(s)	Approach	Practice questions in this book
Identify	Identify	Find and translate	1, 2
Explain	Explain how	Find and translate	3, 4
Link-type questions	Link/function/development	Look for what comes before the section you are directed to, what comes after it and explain how they are related.	5, 6
Use of language	Use of language, word choice, sentence structure, tone, contrast, imagery	Identify techniques (these may be explicitly asked for or not) and then say how they answer the question.	7, 8
Word choice	Word choice, use of language	Find the words that answer the question and explain what the connotations are.	9, 10
Sentence structure	Sentence structure, use of language	Find the techniques of sentence structure that answer the question and explain why they are effective.	11, 12
Imagery	Imagery, use of language	Look for metaphors, similes or personification and explain what these mean literally and in the context of the passage/question.	13, 14
Tone	Tone, use of language	Find the words that indicate the tone and explain how they do so.	15, 16
Contrast	Contrast, use of language	Identify both sides of the contrast and explain why they contrast, in relation to the question.	17, 18
Usefulness	Effectiveness, content, ideas, language	In relation to the question, pick examples of content, ideas or language and explain how these work.	19, 20
Comparison question	Agree or disagree	Read both passages carefully. A good way to approach this is to draw a grid outlining areas of agreement or disagreement (as appropriate); give quotes from each text to back up your 'areas' and explain why you picked these quotes.	21, 22

Critical Reading

Question type	Command word(s)	Approach	Practice questions in this book
Short questions	Explain, analyse how	Find the information in the text that answers the question. Quote and then explain in your own words why you have picked it.	23a), 23b), 24, 26, 27, 28, 30, 31, 32, 34, 35, 36, 38, 39, 40, 42, 43, 44
Ten-marker	Discuss how	Include: 2 marks' worth for commonality; two for extract and six for elsewhere	25, 29, 33, 37, 41, 45

Practice Papers

Reading for Understanding, Analysis and Evaluation

Question type	Command word(s)	Approach	Practice questions in this book	
			Paper A	Paper B
Identify	Identify	Find and translate	7	1
Explain	Explain	Find and translate	1, 3a), 5	4a), 5
Link-type questions	Link/function/development	Look for what comes before the section you are directed to, what comes after it and explain how they are related.		
Use of language	Use of language, word choice, sentence structure, tone, contrast, imagery	Identify techniques (these may be explicitly asked for or not) and then say how they answer the question.	2, 3b), 4, 6	2, 3, 7
Word choice	Word choice, use of language	Find the words that answer the question and explain what the connotations are.	2, 3b), 4, 6	2, 3, 7
Sentence structure	Sentence structure, use of language	Find the techniques of sentence structure that answer the question and explain why they are effective.	2, 3b), 4, 6	2, 3, 6
Imagery	Imagery, use of language	Look for metaphors, similes or personification and explain what these mean literally and in the context of the passage/question.	2, 3b), 4	2, 3, 4b)

Question type	Command word(s)	Approach	Practice questions in this book	
			Paper A	Paper B
Tone	Tone, use of language	Find the words that indicate the tone and explain how they do so.	2, 3b), 4, 6	2, 3, 7
Contrast	Contrast, use of language	Identify both sides of the contrast and explain why they contrast, in relation to the question.	7	4a)
Usefulness	Effectiveness, content, ideas, language	In relation to the question, pick examples of content, ideas or language and explain how these work.	8	
Comparison question	Agree or disagree	Read both passages carefully. A good way to approach this is to draw a grid outlining areas of agreement or disagreement (as appropriate); give quotes from each text to back up your 'areas' and explain why you picked these quotes.	9	8

Critical Reading

Question type	Command word(s)	Approach	Practice questions in this book	
			Paper A	Paper B
Short questions	Explain, analyse how	Find the information in the text that answers the question. Quote and then explain in your own words why you have picked it.	1, 2, 3, 5a), 5b), 6, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14, 16, 17, 18, 20, 21, 22, 24, 25, 26, 28, 29, 30, 32, 33, 34, 36, 37, 38, 40, 41, 42, 44, 45, 46	1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15, 17, 18, 19, 21, 22, 23, 25, 26, 27, 29, 30, 31, 33, 34, 35, 37, 38, 39, 41, 42, 43, 45, 46, 47
Ten-marker	Discuss how	Include: 2 marks' worth for commonality; 2 for extract and 6 for elsewhere	4, 7, 11, 15, 19, 23, 27, 31, 35, 39, 43, 47	4, 8, 12, 16, 20, 24, 28, 32, 36, 40, 44, 48

Critical Essay marking guidance

	Marks 20–19	Marks 18–16	Marks 15–13	Marks 12–10	Marks 9–6	Marks 5–0
Knowledge and understanding The critical essay demonstrates:	thorough knowledge and understanding of the text perceptive selection of textual evidence to support line of argument which is fluently structured and expressed perceptive focus on the demands of the question	secure knowledge and understanding of the text detailed textual evidence to support line of thought which is coherently structured and expressed secure focus on the demands of the question	clear knowledge and understanding of the text clear textual evidence to support line of thought which is clearly structured and expressed clear focus on the demands of the question	adequate knowledge and understanding of the text adequate textual evidence to support line of thought which is adequately structured and expressed adequate focus on the demands of the question	limited evidence of knowledge and understanding of the text limited textual evidence to support line of thought which is structured and expressed in a limited way limited focus on the demands of the question	very little knowledge and understanding of the text very little textual evidence to support line of thought which shows very little structure or clarity of expression very little focus on the demands of the question
Analysis The critical essay demonstrates:	perceptive analysis of the effect of features of language/filmic techniques	detailed analysis of the effect of features of language/filmic techniques	clear analysis of the effect of features of language/filmic techniques	adequate analysis of the effect of features of language/filmic techniques	limited analysis of the effect of features of language/filmic techniques	very little analysis of features of language/filmic techniques
Evaluation The critical essay demonstrates:	committed evaluative stance with respect to the text and the task	engaged evaluative stance with respect to the text and the task	clear evaluative stance with respect to the text and the task	adequate evidence of an evaluative stance with respect to the text and the task	limited evidence of an evaluative stance with respect to the text and the task	very little evidence of an evaluative stance with respect to the text and the task
Technical accuracy The critical essay demonstrates:	few errors in spelling, grammar, sentence construction, punctuation and paragraphing the ability to be understood at first reading					significant number of errors in spelling, grammar, sentence construction, punctuation and paragraphing which impedes understanding

Question type: sentence structure

>> HOW TO ANSWER

Sentence structure often causes students issues, but this does not have to be the case.

All you have to do is learn the basic techniques and how they work, then connect them to the meaning of the sentence(s).

You would answer the same way as above, only replace the technique you are using, so:

- ▶ Technique (list, for example)
- ▶ Quote or explain where it is (you need to choose what is most appropriate – you cannot quote great big sentences for example)
- ▶ Explain the function of the technique *in relation to the context of the sentence/sentences*.

The table below outlines the different '**sentence structure**' techniques that may appear in the text. It is unlikely you would be asked separately about these techniques, but you need to know them because these are the ones you draw on to answer the **sentence structure** questions.

Top Tip!

Sentence structure questions, like **word choice** ones, often come at the end of a 'use of language' question as part of a list, but they can also appear as a stand-alone question in their own right.

Technique	What to look for	Function	How to answer/ questions to ask
Repetition	Words or phrases that appear over and over again.	To emphasise a particular point	What is being repeated and why? Refer to the context of the text.
Parallel structuring	Parallel structuring is really just an advanced way of saying repetition, but it is more to do with structure, rather than just words. Structure means how the information is positioned. Sentences can repeat themselves in structure. It might be that several sentences start with the same word, or that the way the sentences are written follows a pattern. For example, 'They came, they saw, they conquered' follows a pattern of repetition.	For emphasis To build tension To build to a climax	What is being repeated and why? Make sure you cover what the words/phrases that are being repeated mean, as well as how they work.
Lists	Look for commas and semicolons. Lists can be three-part (where there are three items in a list) or longer. Lists may consist of words or phrases. If you see semicolons, the likelihood is it will be a list of phrases (but not always).	To show 'how many' there are (range or variety) To build to a climax	What is in the list and why would the writer put a list here?

Technique	What to look for	Function	How to answer/ questions to ask
Length	Sometimes sentences are either very long, or very short. You can identify these by looking for where the sentences start and end.	Short sentences are usually for impact Long sentences could be to emphasise a particular point and sometimes relate to the context of the sentence; for example, if a sentence is long and flowing and about a river, it could be that the river is also long and flowing	Why does the short sentence add impact? What is the relationship between the sentence and the context of the prose?
Colons	Colons are two dots like so (:))	To introduce a list For balance To explain a point To provide an explanation of what came before	What is the point of the colon? What does it do? How does it add to the meaning of the text?
Semicolons	Semicolons are a dot and a comma (;)	To separate phrases in a list To indicate a longer 'pause' in a sentence than a comma For balance	What is the purpose of the semicolon? How does it add to the meaning of the text?
Commas	,	Indicate a list Used as parenthesis (see below) To indicate phrases that are out of normal sequence	Why are the commas being used here? How does this help to clarify the meaning of the text?
Dashes	– or - -	A single dash is usually used to provide extra information A double dash is used as parenthesis (see below)	What is the information provided and what does it add to the meaning of the sentence?
Parentheses	Brackets (()) or dashes (–) or commas (,)	To provide additional information in a sentence; the information could be a sentence on its own, but it is put in parenthesis to clarify something	What is the information in the brackets and how does it help clarify the writer's point?
Questions	May be just one question or a series of questions	A question may or may not need an answer. If the answer is already known, then we call this a rhetorical question. If there is a series of questions, the aim is to provoke the reader to think	What are the questions that are being asked and why is the writer asking them?

Note: It is important not just to identify the function of the technique – so do not just say 'dashes add extra information'. Say what the extra information is and why it has been added to the sentence.

MARKS

- 11 Paper A, Passage 1. Read lines 10–14. By referring to at least one example, **analyse** how the writer uses **sentence structure** to emphasise his point.
- 12 Paper B, Passage 1. Read lines 38–53. By referring to at least two examples, **analyse** how the writer uses **sentence structure** to emphasise the benefits of her new way of farming.

Answers can be found on page 34.

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Question type: tone

>> HOW TO ANSWER

Tone questions are very similar to word choice questions. They can appear on their own or as a 'use of language' question. **Tone** means 'what the prose sounds like'. So, if your teacher was praising the class for working hard, they would probably be speaking in an enthusiastic and celebratory tone. If the class had not done homework, the teacher may speak disappointedly or perhaps even in a **tone** of irritation!

Approach tone questions as follows:

- ▶ Technique (write **tone** here)
- ▶ Write the **tone**
- ▶ Write the words that tell you the **tone**
- ▶ Explain how you know this is the **tone**: for example, the repetition of 'on and on and on' suggests the teacher droned continuously, giving a tone of monotony.

Top Tip!

To answer **tone** questions, you need to understand what the sentences would sound like if you read them out loud. You get your answer from analysing **word choice** and **punctuation**.

- 15 Paper A, Passage 1. Read lines 1–18. By referring to at least two examples, **analyse** how the writer's language creates a light-hearted **tone** in this part of the passage.
- 16 Paper B, Passage 1. Read lines 7–12. By referring to at least one example, **analyse** how the writer creates a **tone** of exasperation.

Answers can be found on pages 35–36.

MARKS

4

2

Question type: contrast

>> HOW TO ANSWER

A **contrast** question will probably appear under a 'use of language' question. In this case, you use the structure below.

- ▶ Bullet point the technique (**contrast**)
- ▶ Explain what the **contrast** is
- ▶ Choose a quote for one side of the **contrast**
- ▶ Explain what this first quote means/what side of the **contrast** it refers to
- ▶ Choose a quote for the other side of the **contrast**
- ▶ Explain what this first quote means/what side of the **contrast** it refers to.

- 17 Paper A, Passage 1. Read lines 41–46. **Analyse** how the writer uses **contrast** to develop his argument.
- 18 Paper B, Passage 1. Read lines 58–64. **Identify** the writer's main point of **contrast** in these lines.

Answers can be found on pages 36–37.

MARKS

2

2

Hint!

You may also draw on the technique of onomatopoeia, which is when a word sounds like its noise (for example, 'bang') or alliteration (when words start with the same letter in a sequence). If you do so, modify the approaches outlined above.

Critical Reading

Paper 2 of the exam is split into lots of different sections, but you only need to do two parts. Part 1 is the Scottish Text section. You need to find the questions that are based on the Scottish text that you have been studying in class. Remember that you cannot answer on the same genre in the essay question.

This section is worth 20 marks and is usually divided into four questions. The first three questions are short questions, asking about your understanding of the language used in the text you have chosen. These questions are usually worth 2, 3 or 4 marks. The fourth question is worth 10 marks and assesses your understanding of the text as a whole.

Group 1: Short questions on the Scottish Text

Question type: use of language questions and/or explain questions

»» HOW TO ANSWER

These questions are simply language questions like those outlined in the RUAE section above, but this time they are focused on the text you have been studying in class. They will usually have the words 'analyse how' in them. Sometimes, there may be a question asking you to 'explain' or 'evaluate'. Asking about techniques is more common in poetry questions and drama questions, although this can appear in prose questions too. You may also be asked about character or theme.

To answer these questions, use the techniques outlined in the section above. So, quote the 'language' you want to use and then explain how it answers the question (why you chose it). Make sure you use the marks as your guide, so if the question is worth 4 marks, it is advisable to give four points, even if the question says 'at least two'.

Top Tip!

To get full marks by answering with only two points, you would need to give two in-depth answers. It is much easier to pick up single marks than in-depth marks.

Group 2: The ten-marker

Question type: 'discuss how' questions

»» HOW TO ANSWER

This is the question that people always seem to fear, but actually, if you know what you are doing with this question it is quite straightforward. The question will always ask you to 'discuss how' the 'extract' or the text in front of you is related to a specific theme, character or technique in a book, short stories or poems you have studied by the same author.

Follow these steps:

- ▶ Write '**commonality**' as a heading – then explain how the question can be answered in relation to the extract and the rest of the text(s) you have studied. This part is worth 2 marks.
- ▶ Write '**extract**' as a heading – then look at the extract and identify two points, or one detailed and insightful point, using quotes and/or examples to answer the question. This part is worth 2 marks.
- ▶ Write '**elsewhere**' as a heading – show how the question connects to the rest of the text or poems/short stories. Do as above, where you give examples or quotes from the text that back up the ideas in the question. You need to write 6 marks' worth. You can make six small points, or three more detailed points to get your marks. Sometimes the question lends itself more easily to writing detailed points, but always write six if you are in doubt.

Top Tip!

Use headings and bullet points. Your three headings will be *commonality*, *extract* and *elsewhere*.

We will now look at some sample questions. Below, you will see six extracts on the most popular texts used in the Higher, with questions underneath. These mimic the structure of the paper.

Copyright: Sample material

ANSWERS TO PRACTICE QUESTIONS

Question number	Question text	Marks available	Commentary, hints and tips
1	<p>Read lines 25–30.</p> <p>Identify two problems with having too much choice.</p> <p>No marks for straight lifts from the passage.</p> <p>1 mark for each point from the 'Commentary, hints and tips' column.</p>	2	<p>Possible answers include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Problem 1 – time: we spend too much time deciding what we want which means we have less time to do more important things. ▶ Problem 2 – being unhappy: 'constant disappointment' – because of the extent of choice, we worry we could have chosen something better.
2	<p>Read lines 7–12.</p> <p>Identify two ways the writer believes people can grow 'sustainable forms of meat and dairy'.</p> <p>No marks for straight lifts from the passage.</p> <p>1 mark for each point from the 'Commentary, hints and tips' column (up to a maximum of 2).</p>	2	<p>Possible answers include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Way 1 – use farmland in circular (old) ways: 'traditional rotational system'. ▶ Way 2 – don't involve all fields in rotation and let crops grow as they will: 'permanent pasture'. ▶ Way 3 – use animals to help with land maintenance: 'conservation grazing'.
3	<p>Read lines 34–40.</p> <p>Using your own words as far as possible, explain the way different types of people, according to Schwartz, react to choice.</p> <p>For full marks, different types of people should be dealt with.</p> <p>No marks for straight lifts from the passage.</p> <p>2 marks may be awarded for detailed/insightful comment.</p> <p>1 mark for more basic comment.</p> <p>(Marks may be awarded 2+2 or 2+1+1 or 1+1+1+1.)</p>	4	<p>Possible answers include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ the 'maximiser' believes it is possible to find the ideal choice; spends time and energy looking for it and worries that they have not made the right choice ▶ the 'satisficer' accepts that this is not possible and chooses quickly, accepts that the choice might not be ideal, lives with his/her choice and is content.
4	<p>Read lines 26–37.</p> <p>Explain what farmers can do to reduce soil erosion.</p> <p>No marks for straight lifts from the passage.</p> <p>1 mark for each point from the 'Commentary, hints and tips' column.</p>	2	<p>Possible answers include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ 'let arable land lie fallow' – allow the fields to rest periodically ▶ 'return ... grazed pasture' – let animals live in fields as naturally as possible, which helps the soil recover.

Section 2 – Critical Essay – 20 marks

Attempt **ONE** question from the following genres – Drama, Prose Fiction, Prose Non-Fiction, Poetry, Film and Television Drama, or Language.

Your answer must be on a different genre from that chosen in Section 1.

You should spend approximately 45 minutes on this Section.

Part A – Drama

Answers to questions on Drama should refer to the text and to such relevant features as characterisation, key scene(s), structure, climax, theme, plot, conflict, setting.

- 1 Choose a play which explores **one** of the following themes: revenge, betrayal, sacrifice.
By referring to appropriate techniques, discuss how the dramatist explores your chosen theme and discuss how this contributes to your appreciation of the play as a whole.
- 2 Choose from a play an important scene which you find amusing **or** disturbing **or** moving.
By referring to appropriate techniques, explain how the dramatist makes the scene amusing **or** disturbing **or** moving and discuss how this contributes to your appreciation of the play as a whole.
- 3 Choose a play in which a character makes a crucial error.
By referring to appropriate techniques, explain what the error is and discuss to what extent it is important to your understanding of the character's situation in the play as a whole.

Part B – Prose Fiction

Answers to questions on Prose Fiction should refer to the text and to such relevant features as characterisation, setting, language, key incident(s), climax, turning point, plot, structure, narrative technique, theme, ideas, description.

- 4 Choose a novel **or** short story which explores the cruelty of human nature.
By referring to appropriate techniques, explain how the writer explores this theme and discuss how the exploration of the theme adds to your appreciation of the text as a whole.
- 5 Choose a novel **or** short story in which a conflict between a central character and at least one other character is of central importance in the text.
By referring to appropriate techniques, explain the circumstances of the conflict and discuss its importance to your appreciation of the text as a whole.
- 6 Choose a novel **or** short story which ends in a way you find particularly satisfying.
By referring to appropriate techniques, briefly describe the ending and discuss why you find the ending satisfying in terms of your appreciation of the text as a whole.

Part C – Prose Non-Fiction

Answers to questions on Prose Non-Fiction should refer to the text and to such relevant features as ideas, use of evidence, stance, style, selection of material, narrative voice.

Non-fiction texts can include travel writing, journalism, autobiography, biography, essays.

- 7 Choose a non-fiction text in which the writer expresses outrage **or** shock about an issue which you feel is important.
By referring to appropriate techniques, discuss how the writer conveys this emotion.
- 8 Choose a non-fiction text in which the writer brings one **or** more than one key incident vividly to life.
By referring to appropriate techniques, discuss how the writer achieves this and how it adds to your understanding of the text as a whole.
- 9 Choose a non-fiction text which, in your opinion, deals with a fundamental truth about human nature.
By referring to appropriate techniques, discuss how the writer explores this fundamental truth and to what extent your understanding of it is enhanced.

Part C – Scottish Text – Poetry

Text 1 – Poetry

If you choose this text you may not attempt a question on Poetry in Section 2.

Read the extract below and then attempt the following questions.

From *Tam o' Shanter* by Robert Burns

In this extract Tam manages to outrun the witches.

- As bees bizz out wi' angry fyke,
 When plundering herds assail their byke;
 As open pussie's mortal foes,
 When, pop! she starts before their nose;
- 5 As eager runs the market-crowd,
 When 'Catch the thief!' resounds aloud;
 So Maggie runs, the witches follow,
 Wi' mony an eldritch skriech and hollo.
- Ah, Tam! ah, Tam! thou'll get thy fairin!
 10 In hell they'll roast thee like a herrin!
 In vain thy Kate awaits thy comin!
 Kate soon will be a woefu' woman!
 Now, do thy speedy utmost, Meg,
 And win the key-stane o' the brig;
- 15 There at them thou thy tail may toss,
 A running stream they dare na cross.
 But ere the key-stane she could make,
 The fient a tail she had to shake!
 For Nannie far before the rest,
- 20 Hard upon noble Maggie prest,
 And flew at Tam wi' furious ettle;
 But little wist she Maggie's mettle –
 Ae spring brought aff her master hale,
 But left behind her ain grey tail:
- 25 The carlin claught her by the rump,
 And left poor Maggie scarce a stump.
- Now, wha this tale o' truth shall read,
 Ilk man and mother's son, take heed;
 Whene'er to drink you are inclin'd,
 30 Or cutty-sarks run in your mind,
 Think! ye may buy the joys o'er dear –
 Remember Tam o' Shanter's mare.

	MARKS
29 Look at lines 1–8. By referring to at least two examples, analyse how the extended simile in these lines creates a vivid picture of what is happening.	4
30 Look at lines 9–26. By referring to at least two examples, analyse how Burns makes this part of the poem dramatic.	4
31 Look at lines 27–32. Analyse how far these lines can be read as a warning to the reader.	2
32 Referring to this poem and at least one other poem by Burns, discuss the way his poetry passes judgement on people and/or institutions.	10

Practice Paper 1

Reading for Understanding, Analysis and Evaluation

Passage 1

Question number	Question text	Marks available	Commentary, hints and tips
1	<p>Read lines 1–8.</p> <p>Using your own words as far as possible, explain the key points made in these lines about our attitudes to animal life.</p> <p>No marks for straight lifts from the passage.</p> <p>2 marks may be awarded for detailed/insightful comment; 1 mark for more basic comment.</p> <p>(Marks may be awarded 2 or 1+1.)</p>	2	<p>Possible answers include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ human life is always given priority over animal life ▶ we will go to any lengths to preserve human life regardless of the impact on the animal world ▶ we treat animals in captivity with contempt ▶ we respond violently when a captive animal poses a threat, despite the fact that it is only obeying instinct.
2	<p>Read lines 9–14.</p> <p>By referring to at least two examples, analyse how the writer's use of language makes clear her disapproval of zoos.</p> <p>For full marks there should be comments on at least two examples.</p> <p>2 marks may be awarded for detailed/insightful comment plus quotation/reference; 1 mark for more basic comment plus quotation/reference; 0 marks for quotation/reference alone.</p> <p>(Marks may be awarded 2+2, 2+1+1 or 1+1+1+1.)</p>	4	<p>Possible answers include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ exclamatory tone of 'What a travesty is a zoo' suggests contempt ▶ 'travesty' suggests perversion, corruption ▶ question 'How can it still exist ...?' suggests disbelief that it does still exist ▶ 'legacy' suggests a relic, something left over ▶ 'gentlemen collectors and capricious kings' suggests zoos belong in a bygone age of upper-class dilettantes, detached from ordinary life ▶ 'animated taxidermy' – dark humour in the idea that the animals are as good as dead and merely brought to life artificially for our entertainment ▶ 'exposed' suggests thrown open against his will, at the mercy of the onlookers ▶ 'gawping crowds' suggests stupid, mindless, prepared to stare at anything ▶ structure of 'Stand up, bend down, turn around' replicates the simple, limited, repetitive movement of the captive bear ▶ 'quite mad' shows deep sympathy for the result of the bear's treatment in the zoo.