

Top tips for analysing texts

You will need:

- highlighters
- a ruler

1. Read the whole text once.
2. Ask 'What was the text about?'
  - Make quick notes at the side.
  - Draw a box at the end and summarise.
  - Read again if you need to.
  - Reread bits you didn't understand first time.
3. Identify GAP: genre, audience, purpose.
  - Remember - there is possibly more than one audience or purpose!
4. Chop the text into sections:
  - Can you see different 'sections'?
  - Are paragraphs enough to help you see structure?
5. Brainstorm a list of possible representations.
6. Find evidence and features to support your ideas (annotation time!).
7. Look for patterns and trends:
  - e.g. pronoun use, lexical fields ...
8. Of everything you find, ask 'Why was it used?'
9. Decide on the four to five **hotspot** topics to discuss: one should be sentence and clause analysis.
10. Start writing!

**Reading and planning**

Use this grid to plan your written response:

Q1 - 30 minutes' writing	Q2 - 30 minutes' writing
Q3 - 20 minutes' writing (comparison)	

Method of analysis					
Phonetics	Graphology	Lexis and semantics	Grammar and morphology	Pragmatics	Discourse
How speech and sounds are articulated.	The visual aspects of the text's design and appearance.	The vocabulary, its meaning and the groups it belongs to.	The structural patterns and shapes of the sentence, clauses, phrases and word levels.	The contextual aspects of language use and the implied meaning.	The genre, mode and contexts.
Questions to ask yourself about the text					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How might sounds represent groups of people?</li> <li>• How do dialects might vary?</li> <li>• How dialects and/or accents might represent class, job, group of friends etc.</li> <li>• If words are spelt as they sound, what might this show?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why does the text look the way it does?</li> <li>• Is the text successful in relation to its audience and purpose?</li> <li>• What ideas and beliefs does the text present in its images?</li> <li>• How do the images and text work together to make the text cohesive?</li> <li>• Is the text accessible?</li> <li>• Are there are features that are typical of the discourse, e.g. hyperlinks?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What do the words denote and connote?</li> <li>• Are there any new words (neologisms)? What might this suggest about the text and its context?</li> <li>• What is the register like and how does the text show this?</li> <li>• How do the words and groups of words link to audience and purpose?</li> <li>• How formal is the text and which groups might this fit to?</li> <li>• Why have certain words been chosen over others?</li> <li>• How is gender conveyed through lexical choices?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What tense is the text in and what other tenses are used? Why?</li> <li>• How do clause lengths and word order reveal the register?</li> <li>• How are ideas expressed and represented with phrases e.g. noun phrases?</li> <li>• How is the text grammatically cohesive?</li> <li>• How is the grammar characteristic of the text, i.e. is it different in spoken discourse compared to written discourse?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the implications of certain words, patterns and ideas?</li> <li>• How is the idea of face communicated by participants of the text?</li> <li>• How might context influence meaning?</li> <li>• How is language used to build relationships between participants?</li> <li>• What is the author's position? Consider participants and the text author.</li> <li>• Are there any shared assumptions/ common ground?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How is the whole text constructed?</li> <li>• How do words, phrases, clauses and sentences work together towards the purpose and aim?</li> <li>• Is there a question and answer format?</li> <li>• Is there a narrative structure?</li> <li>• Are there any repeated structures? Are these typical of the discourse?</li> <li>• Is the text cohesive? How?</li> </ul>

Features you might want to analyse					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The use of sounds for effect</li> <li>• Phonemes</li> <li>• Studies that are related e.g. Martha's Vineyard, Gary Ives' study in Bradford and London.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Layout on the page</li> <li>• Space</li> <li>• Typographical features (e.g. font type, size, colour)</li> <li>• Orthographical features (e.g. spelling, capitalisation, punctuation)</li> <li>• Multimodal texts (e.g. combining images, writing to create meaning)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vocabulary levels</li> <li>• Figurative language e.g. metaphor, imagery</li> <li>• Synonyms/antonyms</li> <li>• Hypernyms</li> <li>• Hyponyms</li> <li>• Connotation/denotation</li> <li>• Register - occupational, high or low</li> <li>• Semantic fields of words</li> <li>• Slang, colloquialisms</li> <li>• Taboo/legalistic/informal lexis</li> <li>• Neology: blends, compounds, acronyms, initialisms and eponyms</li> <li>• Semantic narrowing, broadening, pejoration, amelioration</li> <li>• Writing style of the text, e.g. journalistic</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Morphemes - e.g. to negate;</li> <li>• Syntax - e.g. word order;</li> <li>• Active or passive voice;</li> <li>• Nouns, head nouns, noun phrases;</li> <li>• Verbs, head verbs, verb phrases;</li> <li>• Coordination between clauses;</li> <li>• Word classes, e.g. verb, noun, adjective, adverb, determiner, pronoun;</li> <li>• Clause types, e.g. relative, subordinate, Latinate</li> <li>• Modality, e.g. deontic (permission) or epistemic (future idea - certainty);</li> <li>• Sentence functions, e.g. declarative, interrogative, imperative and exclamative.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is said and what is not said in the text (and what the implications of this might be)</li> <li>• Deixis - this, that, those, these</li> <li>• Politeness - positive politeness and negative politeness</li> <li>• Face - the 'face' of the readers and how it might be affected</li> <li>• Cooperative principles, e.g. how participants interact with each other</li> <li>• Irony and attitudes to what others have said</li> <li>• Speech acts, e.g. how apologies and promises might be conveyed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discourse markers e.g. Ok, So, Firstly, Secondly, As I said;</li> <li>• Adjuncts (non essential elements, usually adverbial clauses)</li> <li>• Disjuncts (adverbs that express an attitude or stance, e.g. Sadly, she died)</li> <li>• Events, actions and processes within a story/narrative structure</li> <li>• Anaphoric references to earlier in the text (The woman smiled. She was nice)</li> <li>• Cataphoric references to things that come later (She smiled. It was a woman)</li> <li>• Exophoric reference to elements outside the text e.g. look at that</li> <li>• Intertextual elements e.g. a sci-fi novel</li> </ul>

**Task:** Analyse how Text A (and B) uses language to create meanings and representations.

Mark scheme	A01	A03
<b>What is the AO asking you to do?</b>	<p>Analyse how the text uses language</p> <p>Apply appropriate methods of language analysis, using associated terminology and coherent written expression (10 marks)</p>	<p>Create meanings and representations</p> <p>Analyse and evaluate how contextual factors and language features are associated with the construction of meaning in the texts (15 marks)</p>
<b>What does this mean?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use terminology to discuss language use.</li> <li>• Have a clear line of discussion.</li> <li>• Write in clear accurate English.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluate and analyse language use.</li> <li>• How is meaning constructed?</li> <li>• How do you interpret the features you found in the text for A01?</li> </ul>
<b>What might you include?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• correct identification of technical details</li> <li>• a persuasive argument</li> <li>• a clear line of discussion</li> <li>• clear use of paragraphs to organise ideas</li> <li>• a clear introduction and conclusion</li> <li>• identify patterns in English usage</li> <li>• analyse language without errors</li> <li>• demonstrate how different features of language are used in the text.</li> </ul>	<p>Questions you might ask</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How are opinions and experiences described and represented through language?</li> <li>• How are different or shared viewpoints presented?</li> <li>• What contextual factors affect meaning?</li> <li>• How does the text represent itself as a trusted authority?</li> <li>• How are the different participants represented?</li> </ul>