

English Language Paper 1 Section A

Section A - Reading

You will be given two passages from non-fictional texts that you are unlikely to have studied before. Questions 1-4 assess your reading of these texts by concentrating on different sections/skills.

General Exam Tips

- Use your initial reading time wisely. Actively underline and annotate the passage with the questions in mind. If you notice an interesting example of personification, for instance, underlining it when you read it for the first time could save minutes of skimming later on.
- Understand the skill expectations of different questions. There is no point in analysing key words in question 1 or effect of language in question 2 etc.
- Underline the passage constraints that are specified in each question. With the exception of question 3, the questions follow a chronological reading of the passage e.g. question 1 will typically ask about the opening sentences whereas 4 is on the closing paragraphs. Answer each question based on the lines that are specified because else you will not receive marks for that part of the answer.
- Most students will answer the questions in the order that the paper is written but this does not have to be the case. 1, 2, 4, 3 (5) makes more sense as a chronological reading of the passage, whilst also maximising your chance of spending more time (and therefore getting more marks) on the vitally important question 4.
- Unlike with the Literature paper, you do not have time to write introductions. For question 2 onwards, get stuck in to your analytical paragraphs immediately.
- There are no marks available for SPaG on section A (questions 1-4) so there is no need to proofread for accuracy. Save that for section B (question 5)!

Timing

- Approximate time to spend on each question:
 - Initial reading - 10 minutes
 - Question 1 - 5 minutes
 - Question 2 - 10 minutes
 - Question 3 - 15 minutes
 - Question 4 - 20 minutes
- Practice specimen papers under timed conditions to ensure that you are able to put these timings into practice.
- Since question 4 is worth 20 marks, you should spend a lot of time developing your response to it, whereas question 1's 4 marks only need a list that can be completed quickly.
- Even if you have not finished answering a specific question, it is better to move on to the next one so that you can get through the entire paper.

Question 1 - Identify four true statements

- Typical question format: 'Read again the first part of the source from lines [...] to [...]. Read list and identify four true statements.'
- Number of marks: 4.
- Approximate time: 5 minutes (could easily take less).

- Always on the start of the passage. Generally only a few lines.
- The question paper will have eight options A-H for you to choose from.
- There will always be one 'almost' true option to trip you up.

Question 2 - Summarise

- Typical question format: 'You need to refer to Source A and Source B for this question. [...] in both sources are very different. Use details from both sources to write a summary of the different ways [...].'
- Number of marks: 8.
- Approximate time: 10 minutes.
- Top band mark scheme: 'Shows perceptive synthesis and interpretation of both texts: • Makes perceptive inferences from both texts • Makes judicious references/use of textual detail relevant to the focus of the question • Statements show perceptive differences between texts.'
- The mark scheme rewards your 'inference' so look for the more subtle difference between the two texts. Textual detail is crucial, so ensure you embed your micro quotations into your analytical comparisons.
- Be aware of the fact that the question asks for a summary- not for reasons why the writer has written about them differently. Do not get distracted into the reasons why the writers have written about these things differently/similarly.
- Aim to write about 2-3 differences or similarities (more likely to be differences) and when using quotations, you must use words such as "implies" or "suggests" to find the layers of meaning.

Question 3 - Analyse how language has been used for effect

- Typical question format: 'You now need to refer only to Source A from lines [...]. How does the writer use language to [...]?'
- Number of marks: 12.
- Approximate time: 15.
- This is the only question to ask you to specifically analyse the language of a given subject.
- You will be penalised if you take your answer from elsewhere in the text- you should use your highlighter in the exam to mark out the section of the text the question asks you to analyse.
- The mark scheme for question 3 describes the top band as: 'Shows detailed and perceptive understanding of language: • Analyses the effects of the writer's choices of language • Selects a judicious range of textual detail • Makes sophisticated and accurate use of subject terminology'.
- You still need 'accurate use of subject terminology'. Technically, even 'adjective' or 'alliteration' are language features that can count but we have also covered more sophisticated examples e.g. oxymoron, pastoral imagery, anthropomorphism.
- Ensure that, when you refer to the effect of a language feature, it is specifically related to the specified effect in the question. Never use overly generalised comments like 'it makes me want to read on' or 'it helps me picture it better'.
- Like question 2, aim to write two detailed paragraphs, both of which should explore different language features.
- If you're stuck for ideas, begin by exploring how and why the language convey a specific feeling. What is it about the word or phrase that implies the person has that feeling? How would the reader respond to this emotion (sympathy, distrust, disapproval?) and then link

to the device that has been used- how does the language give us a deeper understanding of the person or situation?

- The use of pastoral (nature) morbid (death) or comic imagery is also worth considering. How has the writer used language to create this image? In what way does this image fit with the specific effect named in the question?
- When using terminology, do not simply feature spot, you must always comment on effect created through its use: "The writer uses (term) to show (link to Q) shown by (evidence). This suggests/implies etc (meaning) creating the effect of/makes the reader/suggests the writer..."
- There are many other language features that you could consider: similes, metaphors, alliteration, harsh consonants, anaphora, personification, hyperbole, imperative verbs, modal verbs etc. Be flexible and analyse language in a way that is most relevant to the specific source.

Question 4 - comparing attitudes

- Typical question format: 'For this question, you need to refer to the whole of Source A, together with Source B. Compare how the two writers convey their different [viewpoint/perspective/ideas/attitudes] to [...]. In your answer, you could: • compare their different attitudes • compare the methods they use to convey their attitudes • support your ideas with references to both texts.'
- Number of marks: 16.
- Approximate time: 20.
- This is the only question where you are required to compare the whole of the two texts.
- Top band mark scheme: 'Compares ideas and perspectives in a perceptive way • Analyses how writers' methods are used • Selects a range of judicious supporting detail from both texts • Shows a detailed understanding of the different ideas and perspectives in both texts.'
- What does 'judicious' mean? Macmillan Dictionary defines it as 'having, showing or doing good judgement'. For this exam, judicious means that you need to carefully select your quotations in order to demonstrate a sensitive understanding of the content of the text.
- The examiner will be looking for you to compare the differences or similarities in the two texts, there is more emphasis on the comparison of ideas, rather than methods. This is because there is more analytical depth to the comparison of ideas.
- Methods could mean tone, narrative voice, language or structure.
- You can refer to 'the reader' in a general, detached sense or by talking from personal experience as 'I' as long as you base your opinions on clear evidence.

Key Information Table

Question	Skills	Marks	Time	Tips to remember
1				
2				
3				
4				

Language Terminology List (Questions 2 and 4)

Term	Definition	Example
Noun		
Proper noun		
Concrete noun		
Abstract noun		
Pronoun, especially personal pronouns		
Verb		
Dynamic verb		
Stative verb		
Modal verb		
Adjective		
Adverb		
Metaphor		
Simile		
Personification		
Anaphora		
Alliteration		
Sibilance		
Onomatopoeia		
Hyperbole		
Juxtaposition		
Oxymoron		
Asyndeton		
Polysyndeton		
Simple sentence		
Compound sentence		
Complex sentence		
Fragment sentence		
Declarative		
Interrogative		
Imperative		
Exclamatory		

Language Annotation Practice ('The Coming of the Fairies' by Arthur Conan Doyle)

It was early in this year, 1920, that I heard from a friend of photographs of fairies having been successfully taken in the North of England. I made some inquiries, and these led to prints being sent to me with the names and address of the children who were said to have taken them. The correspondence that followed seemed so innocent and promising that I begged the loan of the actual negatives--and two quarter-plates came by post a few days after. One was a fairly clear one, the other much underexposed.

The negatives proved to be truly astonishing photographs indeed, for there was no sign of double exposure nor anything other than ordinary straightforward work. I cycled over to Harrow to consult an expert photographer of thirty years' practical experience whom I knew I could trust for a sound opinion. Without any explanation I passed the plates over and asked what he thought of them. After examining the "fairies" negative carefully, exclamations began: "This is the most extraordinary thing I've ever seen!" "Single exposure!" "Figures have moved!" "Why, it's a genuine photograph! Wherever did it come from?"

I need hardly add that enlargements were made and subjected to searching examination--without any modification of opinion. The immediate upshot was that a "positive" was taken from each negative, that the originals might be preserved carefully untouched, and then new negatives were prepared and intensified to serve as better printing mediums. The originals are just as received and in my keeping now. Some good prints and lantern slides were soon prepared.

In May I used the slides, with others, to illustrate a lecture given in the Mortimer Hall, London, and this aroused considerable interest, largely because of these pictures and their story. A week or so later I received a letter from Sir A. Conan Doyle asking for information concerning them, some report, I understood, having reached him from a mutual friend. A meeting with Sir Arthur followed, and the outcome was that I agreed to hasten my proposed personal investigation into the origin of the photographs, and carry this through at once instead.

Now, start practicing all of these skills by doing the attached mocks under timed conditions.