

GCSE English Language – Paper 2



In paper TWO, you will be given TWO texts – these are usually in the format of a non-fiction piece (article, letter, an extract from a non-fiction text)

This exam is split into two sections:

Section A will assess your reading skills

Section B will assess your writing skills

Section A: the examiner will want to know if you can:

- Locate information in a text
- Show understanding of meaning
- Synthesise (summarise) information
- Make comparisons between texts
- Identify and analyse the writer's use of language
- Recognise what the writer is trying to say and explain how this is conveyed

Section B: the examiner will want to know if you can:

- Put forward interesting points of view and arguments about a subject
 - Organise ideas into sentences
 - Organise ideas into paragraphs
 - Use impressive vocabulary
- Use a range of descriptive techniques to engage
- Use a range of punctuation and sentence structures for effect

No.	Question	Marks	Timing	% of Paper 2	% of whole GCSE
Reading time is essential – make sure you take the time to read the text and the questions thoroughly					
1	Locate the true statements	4	5 mins	5%	2.5%
2	Summarise and compare	8	10-12	10%	5%
3	Analyse Language	12	15	19%	9%
4	Compare writers' ideas and perspectives	16	20	20%	10%
5	Persuasive writing – putting forward a point of view	40	45	50%	25%

Look at the marks awarded for the different questions. Make sure you leave enough time to fully answer each question – especially questions 4 and 5.



Paper 2 – Section A – Reading

Question 1:

No.	Question	Marks	Timing	% of Paper 1	% of whole GCSE
Reading time is essential – make sure you take the time to read the text and the questions thoroughly					
1	Locate the true statements	4	5 mins	5%	2.5%

Q1 - What the examiner is looking for:

- ✓ Identify specific information and ideas
- ✓ Select information from different parts of the text

Q1 Top Tips:

- Only take answers from the section of the text mentioned in the question.
- Double check the statements with the text to make you sure you identify the correct TRUE statements.
- The bullet points will always be in order, go through them top to bottom as your read the text.
- If you are not sure, go through a process of elimination - do the ones you are sure of first and double check the rest.
- If you shade in the wrong box, draw a circle around it and cross it with an 'X'

Final thoughts:

Check the accuracy of your answers. Make sure you check your answers against the specific part of the text.

Question 2:

No.	Question	Marks	Timing	% of Paper 1	% of whole GCSE
2	Summarise and compare	8	10-12	10%	5%

Q2 - What the examiner is looking for:

- ✓ A clear understanding of both texts – summarising what the writers were trying to say
- ✓ Selects judicious quotations from both texts
- ✓ Can make inferences (read between the lines) about both texts
- ✓ Makes clear comparisons

Q2 TOP TIPS:

- Remember this exam looks at writers' viewpoints and perspectives. So, think about what you can infer (work out) about the writers' opinions on a subject.
- Aim to write at least two PEE paragraphs.
- Choose 'juicy' quotations that back up your interpretation.
- Explain what the quotation means.
- Make clear statements of comparison: this is similar . . . or this is different . . .
- You DO NOT need to mention methods.
- You DO NOT need to mention the reader.

How to answer question 2 . . .

Structure your ideas into 2 comparative PEE paragraphs:

Point -> Introduce the writer's main idea – from source A – linked to the question

Evidence -> Give suitable evidence to support your point (source A)

Explanation -> what is your personal interpretation of the quotation? What do you think the writer is trying to do or say?

Comparison -> State how this is similar or different to the writer's ideas from source B

Evidence -> Give suitable evidence to support your point/comparison (source B)

Explanation -> what is your personal interpretation of the quotation? What do you think the writer is trying to do or say?

Question 3:

No.	Question	Marks	Timing	% of Paper 1	% of whole GCSE
3	Analyse Language	12	15	19%	9%

Q3 - What the examiner is looking for:

- ✓ A clear understanding of language
- ✓ Analyses the effects of the writer's choices of language
- ✓ Selects judicious quotations
- ✓ Accurate use of subject terminology

Q3 TOP TIPS:

- Revise all of the language methods
 - Aim to write at least two PEE paragraphs
 - Identify one of the writer's methods in your point
 - Make sure you have used subject terminology
 - Choose 'juicy' quotations that contains more than one language feature
 - Explain what the quotation means
 - Zoom in on key words/ methods to explore in more detail
 - Explain why the writer has used this language
 - how does he want the reader to respond?
- Think FIT (Feel, imagine, think)

You will need to know the following language devices:

A	Alliteration	M	Metaphor
F	Fact	A	Adjective; adverb; alliteration
O	Opinion	S	Simile; sibilance
R	Rhetorical Question; repetition	S	Sensory language
E	Emotive Language	I	Imagery (simile, metaphor, personification, onomatopoeia)
S	Statistic; second person	V	Vocabulary
T	Three Trick	E	Emotive language



Other techniques:

Nouns
Verbs
Abstract nouns
Contrast

Some useful sentence starters:

The writer suggests . . .	This (method) makes the reader question . . .
This word/ technique implies . . .	The writer wants the reader to imagine . . .
This word/ technique symbolises . . .	The writer deliberately uses (method) to make the reader think/ feel . . .

Question 4:

No.	Question	Marks	Timing	% of Paper 1	% of whole GCSE
4	Compare writers' ideas and perspectives	16	20	20%	10%

Q4 - What the examiner is looking for:

- ✓ Clear comparisons of writers' ideas and perspectives
- ✓ Clear understanding of writers' methods (language and structure) used to convey ideas
- ✓ Selects judicious examples/quotations
- ✓ Can explain clearly what the writers are trying to say

Q4 TOP TIPS:

- Revise all of the language and structural features
- Aim to write three PEE paragraphs
- Identify one of the writer's methods in your point
- Make sure you have used subject terminology
- Choose interesting examples from the text; 'juicy' quotations that contains more than one language feature
- Try to explain what the writer was trying to do - what viewpoint or idea does he want to get across?
- Makes clear comparisons between the texts
- You DO NOT need to mention the reader.

How to answer question 4 . . .

Start with a brief introduction summarising the ideas in both texts:

Both writers regard _____ in different ways: in source A, the writer shows _____ whereas in source B, the writer conveys _____.
(Remember to focus on the writers' ideas)

Then structure your ideas into comparative PEE paragraphs:

Point -> In source A, the writer purposefully shows that he feels/ thinks _____ (the writer's viewpoint linked to the question) about _____ (link to the question) by using a _____ (method).

Evidence -> Give a judicious and juicy quotation

Explanation -> what is your personal interpretation of the quotation – do you have more than one? What do you think the writer is trying to do or say? How does the writer's methods communicate this to the reader? Zoom in on key words. How does this link to the statement?

Comparison -> How is this similar or different to source B?



Question 5:

No.	Question	Marks	Timing	% of Paper 1	% of whole GCSE
5	Persuasive writing – putting forward a point of view	40	45	50%	25%

Q5 - What the examiner is looking for:
Context and structure (24)

- ✓ The piece of writing clearly matches the purpose, audience and format stated in the question
- ✓ Uses a wide variety of interesting **vocabulary**
- ✓ Uses language techniques (A FOREST, MASSIVE)
- ✓ Effective use of structural features
- ✓ Writing is engaging with a range of connected ideas
- ✓ Clear and effective paragraphs

Q5 - What the examiner is looking for:
SPaG (16)

- ✓ A range of punctuation is used for effect
- ✓ Different sentence structures are used for effect
- ✓ Spelling is accurate
- ✓ Sophisticated use of **vocabulary**

Top Tips

- ⇒ **Focus** on what the question asks you to do
- ⇒ Be sure that you are writing in the **correct form** (letter, article, speech, blog)
- ⇒ **Plan and sequence** your answer so you know what you are going to write
- ⇒ **Check** your answer to avoid errors in SPaG
- ⇒ Make your writing **formal, but lively and interesting**. Use lots of language techniques for effect.
- ⇒ Think about your **structure** – powerful introduction (question, statistic, controversial statement) – three-four paragraphs outlining your arguments – powerful conclusion. Try to include a one word or one sentence paragraph for effect.
- ⇒ Be sure that you **express your point of view clearly** and back it up with good reasons.
- ⇒ You do not have to believe what you say. Just be interesting.

How to structure your argument paragraphs . . .

Boxing is nothing short of barbaric. It's brutal beyond any definition of sport. A sport is something that anyone can be a part of, it's safe, it has rules, it has winners and the losers get the chance to have another go. Too many times boxing falls foul of these principles. Only last month, Chris Eubank Junior put a man in a coma in the boxing ring and he will never fight again – that's his career, his livelihood and his life goal smashed to smithereens like a boxing glove to the jawline. Any victory gained by the relentless smashing of ones skull must surely feel hollow – where is the genuine intelligence and skill in this? Yet this happens night after night in the lit up theatres of pain across the globe. It's like roman gladiator fights never stopped – we just replace daggers with hands and pretend that it's all a game.

Start with a short, powerful statement of your point of view

The main body should fully develop your opinion from your opening sentence. Try to give specific examples and use A FOREST techniques to fully explain it

Conclude your paragraph with a powerful, emotive statement: try to use a metaphor, simile, hyperbole or imagery

;	Semi-Colon Use to link major elements of a sentence. Betty likes ice cream; James likes pizza. I have lived in Melbourne, Australia; London, England; and Rome, Italy.
:	Colon Use before a list. These are my favourite colors: Blue, Orange, Pink and Yellow.
“”	Quotation Marks Use to show the beginning and ending of what someone is saying. "I love playing sport" said Jenny.
-	Hyphen Use to join words together. My eight-year-old boy loves reading. I work part-time.
'	Apostrophe Use when showing ownership or to show a missing letters. Jimmy's dog is called Spot! They're going to the movies tonight.



You're = You are
Your = It belongs to you
They're = They are
Their = It belongs to them
There = A place
We're = We are
Were = Past tense of are.
Where = A place.
Then = A point in time.
Than = A method of comparison 'more than'
Two = 2
To = Indicates motion 'go to'
Too = Also or excessively



Super adjectives!

adjectives are words which describe

People

adorable
adventurous
aggressive
annoying
beautiful
clumsy
confident
considerate
excitable
glamorous
grumpy
helpful
important
intimidating
obnoxious
odd
talented
thoughtless
timid
handsome

Objects

bright
clear
distinct
drab
elegant
filthy
gleaming
grotesque
long
magnificent
muddy
precious
sparkling
spotless
strange
unsightly
unusual
valuable

Good feelings

brave
calm
cheerful
comfortable
courageous
determined
eager
elated
encouraged
energetic
enthusiastic
excited
exuberant
fantastic
fine
healthy
joyful
pleasant
relieved

Bad feelings

angry
annoyed
anxious
ashamed
awful
bewildered
bored
clumsy
confused
defeated
defiant
depressed
disgusted
disturbed
dizzy
embarrassed
envious
frightened
hungry
lonely

Size

big
colossal
enormous
gigantic
great
huge
immense
large
little
long
mammoth
massive
mini
minuscule
puny
short
tall
teeny
tiny

Time

ancient
brief
early
fast
late
modern
old
quick
rapid
short
slow
swift
young

Sample Paper: GCSE English Language

Paper 2: Writers' viewpoints and perspectives

Time allowed: 1 hour 45 minutes

- The marks for questions are shown in brackets.
- The maximum mark for this paper is 80.
- There are 40 marks for Section A and 40 marks for Section B.
- You are reminded of the need for good English and clear presentation in your answers.
- You will be assessed on the quality of your reading in Section A.
- You will be assessed on the quality of your writing in Section B.

You are advised to spend about 15 minutes reading through the **Source** and **all five questions** you have to answer. You should make sure you leave sufficient time to check your answers.

Source A: 20th century nonfiction

Extract taken from Bill Bryson's travel book *Notes from a Small Island*.

Blackpool – and I don't care how many times you hear this, it never stops being amazing – attracts more visitors every year than Greece and has more holiday beds than the whole of Portugal. It consumes more chips per capita than anywhere else on the planet. (It gets through forty acres of potatoes a day.) It has the largest concentration of roller-coasters in Europe. It has the continent's second most popular tourist attraction, the forty-two-acre Pleasure Beach, whose 6.5 million annual visitors are exceeded in number only by those going to the Vatican. It has the most famous illuminations. And on Friday and Saturday nights it has more public toilets than anywhere else in Britain; elsewhere they call them doorways.

Whatever you may think of the place, it does what it does very well - or if not very well at least very successfully. In the past twenty years, during a period in which the number of Britons taking traditional seaside holidays has declined by a fifth, Blackpool has increased its visitor numbers by 7 per cent and built tourism into a £250-million-a-year industry - no small achievement when you consider the British climate, the fact that Blackpool is ugly, dirty and a long way from anywhere, that its sea is an open toilet, and its attractions nearly all cheap, provincial and dire.

It was the illuminations that had brought me there. I had been hearing and reading about them for so long that I was genuinely keen to see them. So, after securing a room in a modest guesthouse on a back street, I hastened to the front in a sense of some expectation. Well, all I can say is that Blackpool's illuminations are nothing if not splendid, and they are not splendid. There is, of course, always a danger of disappointment when you finally encounter something you have wanted to see for a long time, but in terms of letdown it would be hard to exceed Blackpool's light show. I thought there would be lasers sweeping the sky, strobe lights tattooing the clouds and other gasp-making dazzlements. Instead there was just a rumbling procession of old trams decorated as rocket ships or Christmas crackers, and several miles of paltry decorations on lampposts. I suppose if you had never seen electricity in action, it would be pretty breathtaking, but I'm not even sure of that. It all just seemed tacky and inadequate on rather a grand scale, like Blackpool itself.

What was no less amazing than the meagreness of the illuminations were the crowds of people who had come to witness the spectacle. Traffic along the front was bumper to bumper, with childish faces pressed to the windows of every creeping car, and there were masses of people ambling happily along the spacious promenade. At frequent intervals hawkers sold luminous necklaces and bracelets or other short-lived diversions, and were doing a roaring trade. I read somewhere once that half of all visitors to Blackpool have been there at least ten times. Goodness knows what they find in the place. I walked for a mile or so along the prom, and couldn't understand the appeal of it - and I, as you may have realized by now, am an enthusiast for tat. Perhaps I was just weary after my long journey from Porthmadog, but I couldn't wake up any enthusiasm for it at all. I wandered through brightly lit arcades and peered in bingo halls, but the festive atmosphere that seemed to seize everyone failed to rub off on me. Eventually, feeling very tired and very foreign, I retired to a fish restaurant on a side-street, where I had a plate of haddock, chips and peas, and was looked at like I was some kind of southern pansy when I asked for tartare sauce, and afterwards took yet another early night.

Source B: 19th century literary nonfiction

Extract taken from Charles Dickens' travelogue *Pictures from Italy*.

Pleasant Verona! With its beautiful old palaces, and charming country in the distance, seen from terrace walks, and stately, balustraded galleries*. With its Roman gates, still spanning the fair street, and casting, on the sunlight of to-day, the shade of fifteen hundred years ago. With its marble-fitted churches, lofty towers, rich architecture, and quaint old quiet thoroughfares, where shouts of Montagues and Capulets* once resounded. [...] With its fast-rushing river, picturesque old bridge, great castle, waving cypresses, and prospect so delightful, and so cheerful! Pleasant Verona!

In the midst of it, in the Piazza di Bra — a spirit of old time among the familiar realities of the passing hour — is the great Roman Amphitheatre*. So well preserved, and carefully maintained, that every row of seats is there, unbroken. Over certain of the arches, the old Roman numerals may yet be seen; and there are corridors, and staircases, and subterranean* passages for beasts, and winding ways, above ground and below, as when the fierce thousands hurried in and out, intent upon the bloody shows of the arena. Nestling in some of the shadows and hollow places of the walls, now, are smiths with their forges, and a few small dealers of one kind or other; and there are green weeds, and leaves, and grass, upon the parapet. But little else is greatly changed.

When I had traversed all about it, with great interest, and had gone up to the topmost round of seats, and turning from the lovely panorama closed in by the distant Alps, looked down into the building, it seemed to lie before me like the inside of a prodigious* hat of plaited straw, with an enormously broad brim and a shallow crown; the plaits being represented by the four-and-forty rows of seats. The comparison is a homely and fantastic one, in sober remembrance and on paper, but it was irresistibly suggested at the moment, nevertheless.

[...]

I walked through and through the town all the rest of the day, and could have walked there until now, I think. In one place, there was a very pretty modern theatre, where they had just performed the opera (always popular in Verona) of *Romeo and Juliet*. In another there was a collection, under a colonnade*, of Greek, Roman, and Etruscan remains, presided over by an ancient man who might have been an Etruscan relic himself; for he was not strong enough to open the iron gate, when he had unlocked it, and had neither voice enough to be audible when he described the curiosities, nor sight enough to see them: he was so very old. In another place, there was a gallery of pictures: so abominably bad, that it was quite delightful to see them mouldering away. But anywhere: in the churches, among the palaces, in the streets, on the bridge, or down beside the river: it was always pleasant Verona, and in my remembrance always will be.

*Glossary

balustraded gallery = a type of balcony

Montagues and Capulets = the two families from Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, which is set in Verona

Amphitheatre = an open, circular building with a central space for the presentation of dramatic or sporting events surrounded by tiers of seats for spectators

subterranean = underground

prodigious = impressive, extraordinary

colonnade = a type of walkway with a row of columns supporting a roof

Section A: Reading

Answer **all** questions in this section.

You are advised to spend about 45 minutes on this section.

Q1. Read again the first part of **Source A** from **lines 1 to 14**.

Choose **four** statements below which are true.

[4 marks]

- A. More people visit Blackpool than Greece each year.
- B. There are more holiday beds in Blackpool than there are in the whole of Portugal.
- C. Blackpool has the highest rollercoasters in Europe.
- D. More people visit Pleasure Beach than the Vatican.
- E. Pleasure Beach covers over 40 acres.
- F. The number of people going to Blackpool each year has declined by a fifth.
- G. Blackpool's tourism industry has become more successful over the past twenty years.
- H. The attractions in Blackpool are expensive and upmarket.

Q2. You need to refer to **Source A** and **Source B** for this question.

Use details from **both** sources. Write a summary of the differences between Blackpool and Verona.

[8 marks]

Q3. You now need to refer to **lines 8 to 21** in **Source B** only.

How does Dickens use language to describe his impressions of the Roman Amphitheatre?

[12 marks]

Q4. You need to refer to **Source A** and **Source B** for this question.

Compare how the two writers convey their different attitudes to the places they have visited.

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

[16 marks]

Section B: Writing

You are advised to spend about 45 minutes on this section.

Write in full sentences.

You are reminded of the need to plan your answer.

You should leave enough time to check your work at the end.

Q5. 'These days, there is no point in travelling to see the world: we can see it all on TV or on the Internet.'

Write an article for a teenage magazine in which you explain your point of view on this statement.

(24 marks for content and organisation

16 marks for technical accuracy)

[40 marks]