

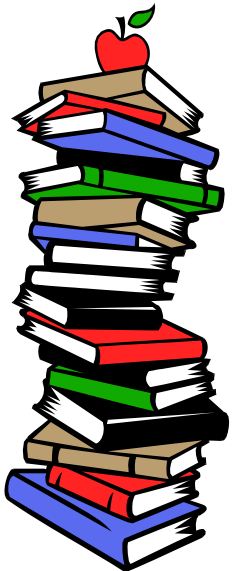
ENGLISH EXAM



Top tips and revision checklist

There will be two parts to your English exam: a reading test and a writing test.

TIPS:



WRITING

1 Put it in paragraphs

The easiest thing to get your score up is to remember to use paragraphs. If you are aiming above level 4, you *have* to do this. Start a new paragraph when you change the topic, time or viewpoint. If you forget, go back and put in a paragraph punctuation mark (//). You will still get the credit.

2 Plan your writing

- a) Take time to plan your writing but don't take too long.
- b) Think about the purpose of your writing: is it entertainment, information or persuasion?
- c) Think of the type of writing you need to produce - is it a story, a newspaper article or an advert?
- d) Think of your audience - who is to be aimed at? Is it children, adults or perhaps a precise group like holidaymakers?
- e) Write down *key words* and ideas in the space on the writing question paper.
- f) Draw a flow chart or spider diagram if it helps.
- g) Think how to organise your writing to achieve the impact you need - what sort of paragraphs. How does it begin and end?
- h) Cross off ideas in your plan as you write to make sure you have covered all of them.

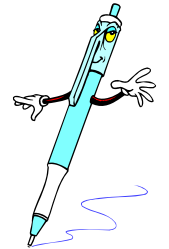
Remember:

In the writing tasks there may be bullet points to help you. Cover them but remember they are not the task. The question you must answer is in bold type.

3 Vary your sentences

Here's how. Instead of starting in the same old way with the noun and then saying what happened, try starting with:

- a preposition, for example: *In the lounge, Lisa was ...*
- a verb, for example: *Feeling sleepy, Matt lay down and ...*
- an adverb, for example: *Instantly, the cats jumped onto ...*
- an adjective, for example: *Cold and weary, the climbers pitched into ...*



This extends your sentences and makes them sound more sophisticated.

READING

4 Read the text first

- For each section, read the questions first so you know what you have to do.
- Then pick up your pen and start reading. As you read, highlight any relevant bits, and make a special mark against words you might be able to quote.
- Remember to look carefully at the bullet points for guidance - but remember - they are there to help you but they are not the task. The question you must answer is in bold type.

5 Support your answers with evidence

Double your marks in the reading paper by giving evidence for each of your points.



- Mention an example or incident.
 - Point out some hints or clues in the passage.
 - Quote a few words as evidence; this is what they mean when they say '*refer to words and phrases in the passage.*'
- Use the 'PEE' method:
 - P = state your point clearly
 - E = explain what you mean in more detail
 - E = give an example from the text

6 Pick out revealing words *and phrases*

Pick up marks by pinpointing 'powerful' words and phrases, for example:

The landlady is presented as a witchlike creature with her 'pale pinched cheeks', 'hands like claws' and 'grasping her broom'.

A good way to find the words is to hunt them down with your highlighter pen.

7 Summing up

Find a few good words to sum up what you think at the end of each bit.

- If you are asked about a character, think of the best word to describe them.
- Then think of other words which mean the same e.g. witchlike - sinister, malign, brooding, malevolent, evil, inhuman.
- Use them to sum up, for example:

Mia is a sinister and inhuman character, with an air of brooding evil.



8 The big DON'T DO IT!

The biggest of all the big DON'T DO ITs is: Don't just say what happened. It will bore the pants off the examiner. The examiner knows the story and doesn't want to hear it again. The idea is to show off:

- a) How well you understand the way writers use language to create their effects.
- b) How well you can 'read between the lines' to understand what the writer is suggesting about themes and characters.



9 Keep your eye on the time and weed out your weaknesses

- a) Essential - Leave at least 5 minutes for checking.
- b) Check for mistakes you often make.
- c) If you have forgotten to use paragraphs put in the sign //.
- d) Ensure you have used quotations.
- e) Be sure to check punctuation!



Revision checklist

Year Eight

- I know the difference between a noun, verb, adjective and adverb.
- I know when and how to paragraph my work.
- I have learnt all the spelling corrections in my exercise book.
- I know when to use capital letters, commas and full stops.
- I know the difference between a simple, compound and complex sentence.
- I know some more interesting alternatives for the words 'bad', 'good', 'nice', 'thing'.
- I know the differences between types of writing: imagine, persuade, argue, analyse.
- I know what a quotation is and how to use quotation marks.
- I can use the PEE formula: Point, evidence, explain.
- I have looked at my reading comprehensions and know how I could have improved my marks.
- I can spot the following: similes, metaphors, alliteration, rhyme, emotive language.
- I can spot and use persuasive techniques: rhetorical question, list of three, second person, imperative verbs etc.
- I can use a counter-argument when I write to argue.