



**English Language – Text  
Comparison Terms**  
Applicant Study Pack

Description of course	<p>Our A-level English Language specification offers opportunities for students to develop their subject expertise by engaging creatively and critically with a wide range of texts and discourses. Students will create texts and reflect critically on their own processes of production, while analysing the texts produced by others. The specification explores the study of English Language both as a medium of communication and as a topic in its own right, with an emphasis on the ability of students to pursue lines of enquiry, debate different views, and work independently to research aspects of language in use. Language is seen as a creative tool for expression and social connection, as well as for individual cognition. The study of language as a symbolic system used to assert power in society is also fundamental to the scope of this specification.</p>
Task 1	<p>You will need to analyse texts and compare them.</p> <p><b>Comparing literary non-fiction with non-fiction</b></p> <p>Non-fiction and literary non-fiction often use many of the same techniques, and share the same topics, so it makes sense that they can be compared.</p> <p>You might compare the <b>methods</b> the writers use to create effective texts, but you might also compare the <b>approach</b> of the writer to their subject. For example, you could be asked to focus on the writer's:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• viewpoint</li> <li>• perspective</li> <li>• attitude</li> <li>• ideas</li> </ul> <p>It might also be useful to think about the context of the non-fiction text - has it been written in the 19th century or the 21st century? How does this affect the <b>attitudes and viewpoint</b> of the writer?</p> <p><b>Example</b></p> <p>The two extracts below focus on the subject of swimming outdoors. One is a piece of non-fiction from the 19th century and the other is a piece of literary non-fiction from the 21st century. Think carefully about how the writers' present different attitudes towards their subject.</p> <p><b>Extract 1</b></p> <p>The best moment for a bath is high tide: at low tide, or when the tide is coming in or going out, there are certain drawbacks which it would take too long to explain here. One should never enter the sea unless</p>

three hours have elapsed since the last meal, so that the digestive organs may be in complete repose.

It is unwise to bathe if one happens to be very much excited, if one is suffering from any acute or chronic malady, if one has had a sleepless night, or if one has been undergoing any violent exercise. One should undress slowly, and, once in one's bathing costume, and wrapped in a cloak, it is a good thing to walk a little on the beach, so that the body may be warmed by exercise, and therefore better able to resist the shock on entering the cold water.

*Sea-Bathing, The Lady's Dressing Room, Baroness Staffe, 1983*

### **Extract 2**

A dark, dark day. After being up all night with diarrhoea and sickness, I felt rough as a dog before I even took to the water. Perhaps it was inevitable that I'd pick up a bug en route – and here it was. "Thames tummy" set in and set me back in a big way.

I just couldn't keep anything down, and dehydration was a serious risk. Burning about 8,000 calories a day meant it was almost impossible to swim with no fuel in my tank, and we had to keep stopping for the medics to check me over. I feared they'd pull the plug on the whole thing. Thankfully, despite coming close, they let me carry on.

*My Epic Thames Swim, David Walliams, The Telegraph, 2011*

Some key phrases can help you to compare texts.

<b>Similarities</b>	<b>Differences</b>
Similarly...	In contrast...
Equally...	However...
In the same way	On the other hand...
Just as... so does....	Alternatively...
Both... and...	In a different way...

	<p>When comparing texts, you are making a point about two different texts, backing up ideas with evidence and explaining the idea. Then using a linking statement, you can connect the two ideas together</p>
<p>Task 2</p>	<p><b>In A-level English Language you will need to be able to write an article in paper 2 of the exam based on a previous question and topic. You will also need to write fiction or non-fiction, which could include article writing, for part of your NEA Non- Examined Assessment /coursework.</b></p> <p><b>Introduction to writing non-fiction</b></p> <p>Texts that deal with facts, opinions and the real world are usually described as non-fiction. Different text types, or forms of non-fiction have particular conventions. These are the typical or expected features of a form and include structure, language and tone. For example, a newspaper article usually has a headline, uses formal language and takes a serious tone. A political speech usually addresses the audience directly, includes persuasive language and often has a rousing tone.</p> <p>With all writing tasks it is important to consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the conventions of the form</li> <li>• your intended audience (reader)</li> <li>• the purpose of your writing</li> </ul> <p>Your reader might be one particular person, as with an email or letter. Or it might be a broader group of people, as with an article or speech.</p> <p>Having a clear purpose will allow you to select language best suited to your task. For example, if your purpose is to entertain, your tone might be light-hearted. If your purpose is to persuade, you might include rhetorical devices.</p> <p><b>Writing an article</b></p> <p>An example of how to structure and write an effective article</p> <p>Here are a few places where you might expect to find an article:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a magazine</li> <li>• a website</li> <li>• certain sections of a newspaper (<i>NB an article is different to a news report</i>)</li> </ul> <p>An article is a piece of writing (usually around 800-2000 words) about a particular topic. Sometimes an article will offer a balanced view of a</p>

subject. At other times an article might be biased towards a person or political standpoint.

An article might also be flavoured by the writer's style. Depending on the purpose of your article, you might use very direct informative language or more poetic language to create a sense of the subject matter.

Here are some typical subjects covered by article writers:

- travel
- sport
- history
- hobbies/home/craft
- music
- celebrities/famous figures (eg an article about an actor's life and career)

### **Structure**

The basic structure of an article for a newspaper, magazine or website, is usually in three parts:

- **opening** – engaging the reader, or outlining the main point of the article
- **middle** – a series of paragraphs that go into more detail
- **end** – a concluding paragraph that draws the points together

Within this structure you could also create a circular structure in which the conclusion connects back to the opening idea.

For example, an article about Kerala in India **opens** with the writer describing the view from a train. The **middle** section describes Alappuzha, the place the writer is travelling away from and goes into details about a boat trip they took there. In the **concluding paragraph**, the writer brings us back to the train and muses on the highlights of his trip.

### **Language**

The language of an article depends upon the **purpose** and **audience**. The language of the article will fit the content and the intended readers. For example, an article about a recent film release would include language that deals with actors, scripts and performance and is likely to include the writer's opinions of the film.

Articles usually have a catchy, memorable **headline**. This helps to grab the reader's attention and entice them to read the whole article.

Articles are usually written in Standard English, but colloquial sayings or phrases might be used to emphasise a point. **Literary techniques** such as metaphor and simile make your writing more interesting and engaging. **Persuasive devices**, such as rule of three, rhetorical questions and hyperbole can encourage the reader to agree with your point of view.

### **Example**

Here's an extract from an article that tries to persuade the reader to eat a more balanced, healthy diet:

#### **Eat Right: Live Longer**

It has been scientifically proven that the less junk food a person consumes, the longer they are likely to live. So why isn't everyone dumping the junk? Jordan McIntyre investigates.

#### **Fast food equals fat**

A staple part of twenty-first century British home-life is the weekly takeaway treat: finger-licking burgers, sticky ribs and crispy chicken wings are, for many, the normal Friday night feast. The average national calorie count in the UK is a whopping 4500 a day, a key factor in the obesity cases that are soaring. Fast food is packed with fat and obesity contributes to a range of health issues - most significantly heart disease and depression. So why aren't we changing our lifestyles?

#### **Short on time**

Families these days are spending less and less time at home during the working week. School commitments, work meetings and extra curricular activities mean that time is short and fewer people are prepared to put in the effort to prepare fresh, healthy meals.

And when time is tight, it seems we are even more willing to compromise our waistlines for a little bit of what we fancy – fast fatty food.

#### **Eat yourself healthy**

However, Georgia Thomas of the University of Food says, 'I am convinced that it is possible to live a busy lifestyle AND prepare healthy, satisfying meals. It seems that people have simply got out of the habit of cooking. We are busy people; how do we reward

ourselves? You guessed it - food.' Britain clearly needs to shift the stodge, and fast.

The headline grabs the reader's interest and introduces the article. The writer uses parallelism by using two imperative or command phrases 'Eat well' followed by 'live longer'. **Alliteration** is also used with the repetition of 'l'.

The **rhetorical question** in the opening paragraph encourages the reader to engage with the topic. The **subheadings** direct the reader through the text, and act as mini headlines. The writer uses colloquial sayings such as 'a little bit of what we fancy' and 'shift the stodge' to create a lively, conversational tone.

The final paragraph uses quotations from an expert to add credibility to the argument. You would expect the article to go on to explore how we can eat healthily and to conclude with an explanation of how easy it is to do this.

### **Sample task and responses**

#### **Task**

'Libraries are relics from the past. Everything we need to know these days can be found online. Library buildings could be put to better use as community spaces.'

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

#### **Attempt one**

##### **Go to the library**

*We shouldn't get rid of libraries because they are places where a lot of people like to go. For example students. The books are free which means no one has to waste their money on more books and can just borrow them and have them on loan. This is useful if you're skint. Teachers keep going on about how the Internet isn't really the best place to get your information for research and stuff. They say if you use books it's more trusting. So we should keep libraries so we can use books and double check the things we read online or find out more about it all. It's like we're trying to put everything from books onto the internet, so maybe one day it will all be online anyway and then we won't need libraries after all. For now though, they are good.*

#### **Feedback – basic**

- Makes a **clear argument**.

- Attempts to use formal Standard English.

#### **To improve**

- Paragraphs would help to make this piece easier to follow.
- Some sentences run on and would be better split into shorter sentences.
- Avoid using slang: 'skint', 'going on'.
- Develop each point in more detail.

#### **Attempt two**

##### **Books are Better**

*Libraries are places of learning and have been used by students for many centuries. They are valuable to society and let people have access to books without having to buy them. For many of us they are the place we develop a love of books.*

*A lot of the information on the Internet is untrustworthy. Some sources that students use, such as Wikipedia, can be edited and have often been changed by members of the public just for a laugh.*

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##### **Feedback – improving**

- Alliteration in the headline is effective.
- Establishes a clear and increasingly convincing **argument**.
- Language mostly appropriate for audience and form – Standard English used throughout.
- Personal pronouns include the readers.

#### **To improve**

- Include more **sophisticated vocabulary**.
- Include literary techniques to make the writing more engaging.
- Develop the argument more thoroughly.

#### **Attempt three**

##### **Bring on the Books!**

*It seems that more and more people are glued to their screens these days. You see them walking through the streets, phones in hand, barely even noticing the world around them. They're like zombies, not*

*really present in the real world at all. And their brains are rotting away because rather than relying on books for information and memory, they outsource their minds to the Internet.*

*This is a potentially dangerous habit. In fact, for many people, their dependency on the Internet is bordering on serious addiction.*

*What they need is bibliotherapy – and the library is just the place to get it!*

*Libraries are storehouses of books. And books are more reliable than websites. They have been through a process of checking and editing that doesn't always happen online. Our libraries are valuable resources. Rather than trading them in for social spaces, we should find ways to make more of them.*

*In fact, destroying libraries in favour of social spaces would be criminal. There are already plenty of places where people can go to socialise: coffee shops, leisure centres and parks, to name a few. The beauty of the library is that it is a sanctuary. It is a place of peaceful focus and learning.*

*Let's make use of our libraries...and our brains!*

#### **Feedback – even better**

- A convincing and lively argument.
- Appropriate language used throughout.
- Some sophisticated vocabulary choices: 'dependency', 'sanctuary', 'bibliotherapy'.
- A memorable headline using alliteration and imperative to engage the reader.
- Emotive language used persuasively: 'destroying libraries...would be criminal'.
- Uses a simile: 'like zombies'.

#### **To improve**

- The points could be clearer, but overall this is very good.

#### **You may want to write a short story for part of your coursework:**

1. Choose a starting line
2. Choose a title for your story
3. Write your short story/piece of flash fiction about 200 words

#### **List of possible story starting lines:**

Choose **one** of the following story starters for your short story:

- It was the day the moon fell...
- She watched as the stranger crawled out, his eyes wild...
- He didn't want to leave town but he knew he didn't have a choice...
- A shrill cry echoed in the mist...
- She had missed the last train...

Further reading / links

Language term	Know it ✓ Don't know it X	Definition	Example
Verb			
Modal Auxiliary verb			
Adverb			
Preposition			
Noun			
Pronoun			
Adjective			

**Find out what the following terms mean:**

Linguistic Frameworks

Lexis

Semantics

Grammar

Phonetics / Phonology

Pragmatics

Discourse

Graphology

Related Concepts

Register

Mode

Idiolect

Sociolect

Dialect

Accent

Representation

Call to action

Visit our website – [www.clarendon.ac.uk](http://www.clarendon.ac.uk) for more information.

Attend the New Students Day

Join us for enrolment in August. Letters will be sent to all applicants at the end of July with more details.