



AQA English Language Paper 1 – Explorations in Creative Writing and Reading (1hr45)

Reading time	ESSENTIAL	10 mins	Identify the 4Ws – Who? What? Where? When?
1	4 marks	4 min	List 4 things about...
2	8 marks	10-12 min	How does the writer use language to...?
3	8 marks	10-12 min	How has the writer structured the text to interest you as a reader?
4	20 marks	20-25 min	A student said “_____” To what extent do you agree?
5	40 marks	45 min	Creative writing – description/story – choice of 2 questions



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Reading time	ESSENTIAL	10 mins	Identify the 4Ws – Who? What? Where? When?
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Key steps

1. **Open up the source booklet** and **hold your highlighter** in your hand. Do not put your highlighter down until you have finished reading.
2. Draw a **2x2 grid** at the bottom of the source. Label it up with the headings
 - Who?
 - What?
 - Where?
 - When?
3. **Read through the box at the top of the source.** Can you **highlight** any of the **4Ws**? **Add ideas** in bullet points to your grid.
4. **Read through the source, paragraph by paragraph.** Can you **highlight** any of the 4Ws? **Add ideas** in bullet points to your grid.

Who?	What?
Where?	When?

Top tip!

It's easy to feel overwhelmed by the large amount of text. Use a spare piece of paper to cover over the text and reveal it line by line. Take your time!

**WHO**

- Who are the characters?
- What do we learn about them?

WHAT

- What are the 3-5 most important events?

WHERE

- Where does the text take place?
- Does it move location?

WHEN

- When does the text take place?
- Are there any flashbacks or shifts forward in time?



WHO <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Zoe – alone on the mountain, slow to react- Jake – Zoe’s husband – warns her to move	WHAT <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) Zoe standing alone on the mountain top – surroundings described2) Jake arrives and they begin to ski. Zoe slips3) There is a rumble in the distance4) Jake shouts at Zoe to get to the side. Zoe realises it’s an avalanche5) Avalanche hits – Jake wiped out, Zoe fades to “black” - cliffhanger
WHERE <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) French mountains2) Top of mountain3) Skiing down the mountain	WHEN <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) Early morning – before the other skiers arrive



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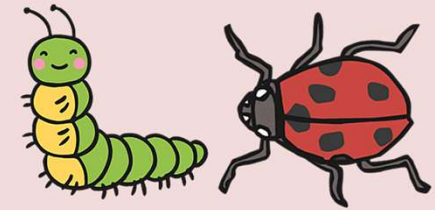
1	4 marks	4 min	List 4 things about...
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Key steps

1. Turn to question 1 and **BUG** the question
2. Draw a **box** around the **focus lines** on your **insert**
3. Read through the lines and **highlight** your 4 ideas. Double check that they **match the question!**
4. Write out your answers in **full sentences**. Normally, your sentences should include the words *is*, *has*, *was*, *did*, *had*.
5. **Re-read** and check your answers before moving on.

Whenever you see an exam-style question, don't forget to **BUG** it!

1. *Box the command words*
2. *Underline the question focus*
3. *Generate a plan*



0 1

Read again the first part of the source, from **lines 1 to 5**.

List **four** things about Zoe's surroundings from this part of the source.

[4 marks]

1	_____

2	_____

3	_____

4	_____



0	1
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Read again the first part of the source, from **lines 1 to 5**.

List **four** things about Zoe's surroundings from this part of the source.

[4 marks]

1 *It is snowing.*

2 *The snow has six-pointed flakes.*

3 *The air is icy.*

4 *The air smells of pine resin.*



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2	8 marks	10-12 min	How does the writer use language to...?
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Key steps

1. Turn to question 2 and **BUG** the question
2. Draw an **answer diagram** for Q2

Language
feature

Evidence

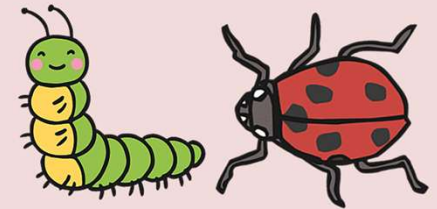
Effect on
reader

X3

3. Read through the **mini extract** and **highlight 3 interesting methods/phrases**. Annotate each one with at least 3 inferences.
4. In each phrase, circle a **zoom word** and annotate it with at least 3 inferences.
5. **Write 3 paragraphs** using the key phrases for Q2

Whenever you see an *exam-style question*, don't forget to **BUG** it!

1. *Box the command words*
2. *Underline the question focus*
3. *Generate a plan*



Firstly, when considering how the writer uses language to describe [question focus], the reader is first struck by the [method] “_____”. This conveys the impression that _____ because... In particular, the use of the word “[zoom word]” which refers to..., suggests.... Alternatively, the fact that “[zoom word]” also refers to... conveys...

Secondly, the reader is also struck by...

Finally, the reader is struck by...

Language
feature

Evidence

Effect on
reader

X3

Language feature

The reader is struck by the simile / metaphor / personification of adjective / verb / semantic field phrase / word / image / description

Evidence

Zoom in + Explain

This conveys the impression that / paints a picture of / indicates / suggests / presents / insinuates / highlights /

In particular, the use of the word “___” which usually refers to... suggests...

Alternatively, the fact that [zoom word] also refers to... conveys..

Firstly, when considering how the writer uses language to describe how Zoe feels, the reader is first struck by the personification of the mountain as a living being that “breathed back at her” This conveys the impression that Zoe has a deep connection to nature, because it is almost as if Zoe and the mountain are communicating with one another and are in sync. In particular, the use of the word “breathed” which refers to a moment of reflection and calm suggests just how peaceful and calm Zoe feels in her situation. Alternatively, the fact that “breathing” also refers to a silent action conveys just how quiet and still Zoe feels, alone and isolated on the mountaintop.

Secondly, the reader is also struck by the metaphor “I am an eagle.” This conveys the impression that, as she is standing atop the mountain, Zoe feels confident, strong and fearless. In particular, the use of the word “eagle” which refers to a strong, predatory bird known for its skill as a hunter, demonstrates just how powerful Zoe feels, almost as if she is also a hunter, ready to attack the mountain. Alternatively, the fact that “eagles” also refers to flying rapidly and effortlessly through the air conveys just how Zoe, like a bird, will fly rapidly down the mountain as she skis.

Finally, the reader is struck by...

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3

8 marks

10-12 min

How has the writer structured the text to interest you as a reader?



Key steps

1. Turn to question 3 and **BUG** the question
2. Draw an **answer diagram** for Q3

Structural
feature

Evidence/
Reference

Effect on
reader

X3
Beginning,
Middle, End

3. Re-read the **extract** and **put a star** next to 3 important structural moments – beginning, middle, end

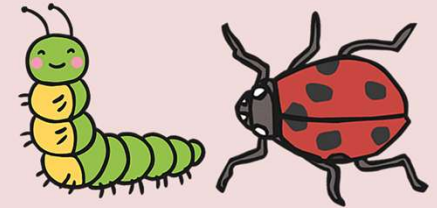
4. Next to each star, label a **structural feature** and at least **3 reader effects**

5. Write your response to the question



Whenever you see an **exam-style question**, don't forget to **BUG** it!

1. Box the command words
2. Underline the question focus
3. Generate a plan



Structural feature

*The writer **focuses on***
*The writer **shifts focus to***
*The writer **provides a flashback***
*The **pace quickens/slow**s down*
*The writer **introduces***
*The writer **juxtaposes***
*The writer **shifts forward to***
*The **character** ___ is **introduced***
*The writer **reveals***
*The writer **moves inside / outside***

Reader effect

The reader feels
sympathy / sad /
empathetic / tense / unsure
/ sorry / suspicious /
doubtful / calm / relieved
The reader now realises
why / how / what / who / when
The reader questions
why / how / what / who / when
The reader learns

Structural feature	Evidence/ Reference	Effect on reader	X3 Beginning, Middle, End
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Structural feature

focuses on / shifts focus to
/ provides a flashback / pace quickens
/ pace slows down / introduces /
juxtaposes / shifts forward to
/ reveals / moves inside / outside

Evidence / key moment in the text

Effect on the reader

The reader feels
sympathy / sad / empathetic / tense /
unsure / sorry / suspicious / doubtful /
calm / relieved

The reader now realises
why/how/what/who/when

The reader begins to wonder
why/how/what/who/when

The reader learns
intensifies builds adds to the sense of

At the start of the text, the writer focuses in on Rosie. We learn that she is feeling overwhelmed by the tasks ahead of her, which instantly creates a bond between the reader and Rosie, and makes us feel sympathy towards her. The writer then shifts focus to the description of her children playing in the garden, which creates a sense of peace and joy. The reader feels a sense of relief for Rosie as they realise that she can finally relax after her difficult few days.

However, in the middle of the text, the writer shifts focus to the garden, portraying it as a mysterious and dark place with "gnarled" growth and "choking ivy," which creates a sense of darkness and begins to build up tension.

Then, the writer switches focus to suddenly focus on the child, zooming in on her unusual features such as her "tense hunch". The fact that reader knew that the garden was previously empty builds a sense of fear and tension as we, like Rosie, begin to wonder who the child is.

At the end of the text, the writer builds the text to a climax as we end with a short one sentence paragraph as the stranger child disappears. This intensifies the sense of mystery and creates shock and fear for the reader as they wonder who the child is, and where she has gone.

Structural
feature

Evidence/
Reference

Effect on
reader

X3
Beginning,
Middle, End

Structural feature

focuses on / shifts focus to
/ provides a flashback / pace quickens
/ pace slows down / introduces /
juxtaposes / shifts forward to
/ reveals / moves inside / outside

Evidence / key moment in the text

Effect on the reader

The reader feels
sympathy / sad / empathetic / tense /
unsure / sorry / suspicious / doubtful /
calm / relieved

The reader now realises

why/how/what/who/when

The reader begins to wonder

why/how/what/who/when

The reader learns

intensifies builds adds to the sense of

At the start of the text, the writer sets the scene by focusing on Zoe's surroundings as she stands on top of the mountain, and the fact that it is "snowing again." This immediately causes the reader to feel a sense of tranquility and peace, as the reader, like Zoe, appreciates the mystery and beauty of the scenery.

As the source progresses, the writer starts to introduce a different landscape as the source develops, one where Zoe isn't completely in control as a "small slab of snow slips" from beneath her. Here, the reader's feelings take a turn, as we realise for the first time that Zoe's surroundings may not be completely secure. This establishes a sense of foreboding and tension for the reader, and we begin to wonder whether peaceful nature of the opening scene is a false impression.

As the text progresses, the pace quickens and the writer reveals a "rumble" starting to overtake the "silence", where the white "snow" is covered by "grey smoke". We know something completely opposite to the peaceful atmosphere described at the start is going to happen, and thus, the reader's sense of fear and panic begins to build as we wonder whether Zoe and Jake will remain safe.

Towards the end of the text, the writer reveals that the noise was the fatal avalanche that will wipe Zoe and Jake out. The writer builds the "rumbling" to a "roaring" before everything "fades" to "black." The fact that the writer ends the text on this cliffhanger builds the reader's sense of anxiety, and makes us now realise that the peaceful atmosphere was in fact a warning of the dangers to come.

AQA English Language Paper 1 – Explorations in Creative Writing and Reading (1hr45)



4	20 marks	20-25 min	A student said “_____” To what extent do you agree?
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Key steps

1. Turn to question 4 and **BUG** the question
2. Draw an **answer diagram** for Q4

Opinion on
statement

Evidence/
Reference

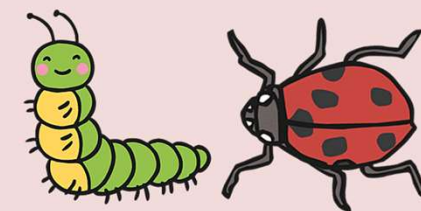
Methods

Explain +
Zoom

3. Create a planning table with two columns. Split the statement into two parts.
4. Find at least **3 phrases/methods** to match each part of the statement.
5. Write a **thesis** that summarises your overall viewpoint.
6. Write at least **6 mini paragraphs** about each of your pieces of evidence.

Whenever you see an *exam-style* question, don't forget to **BUG** it!

1. *Box the command words*
2. *Underline the question focus*
3. *Generate a plan*



*Old man is widely seen as
a failure*

*Boy still has faith / they
respect each other*

*Boy's papa "made" him
leave*

"we always have faith"

"serve in some way"

*"many fishermen made
fun"*

"I wish you were my son"

*"older fishermen looked at
him and were sad"*

Opinion on
statement

Evidence/
Reference

Methods

Explain +
Zoom

Opinion

I agree / partially agree / disagree
It is clear that
However, it can also be said that

Evidence / key moment in the text

Method

The writer's use of the simile / metaphor /
personification of / adjective / verb /
semantic field / phrase / word / image /
description / focus on / zoom in / flashback
/ cliffhanger

Zoom in + Explain

This conveys the impression that / paints a
picture of / indicates / suggests / presents /
insinuates / highlights /

In particular, the use of the word “___” which
usually refers to... suggests...

Alternatively, the fact that [zoom word] also
refers to... conveys..

I partially agree that the old man is widely seen as a failure, because some people do have sympathy for him, but most do not. It is clear that the boy does have faith in him despite this, and him and the old man care for one another greatly.

Firstly, it is clear that many people see the old man as a failure, including the boy's father. The boy's papa 'made' him leave. Here, the writer's use of the forceful verb 'made' suggests that the father felt very strongly about this, and so forced his son not to spend time with him.

Furthermore, it is clear that it's not only the boy's father who feels like this, but the other fishermen too. The writer reveals that 'many fishermen made fun of the old man'. Here, the writer's use of the quantifier "many" emphasises that the old man is viewed widely as a laughing stock by the people. Furthermore, the fact that the man is 'not angry' but instead simply sits and accepts the comments suggests that he is used to this treatment, and simply accepts it.

However, it can also be said that not everyone sees the old man as a 'failure' as the 'older fishermen looked at him and were sad.' This may suggest that there is something more to the fisherman's story; perhaps he was not always a failure, and rather a victim of bad luck, which is why he is treated more humanely by some.

Opinion on
statement

Evidence/
Reference

Methods

Explain +
Zoom

Opinion

I agree / partially agree / disagree

It is clear that

However, it can also be said that

Evidence / key moment in the text

Method

The writer's use of the simile / metaphor / personification of / adjective / verb / semantic field / phrase / word / image / description / focus on / zoom in / flashback / cliffhanger

Zoom in + Explain

This conveys the impression that / paints a picture of / indicates / suggests / presents / insinuates / highlights /

In particular, the use of the word “___” which usually refers to... suggests...

Alternatively, the fact that [zoom word] also refers to... conveys..

I partially agree that Zoe is slow to react to the dangers of the avalanche, however, when she does realise, she tries everything to escape it. It is clear that the avalanche is extremely dangerous, and Zoe and Jake have little power against it.

In many ways I do agree with the statement as Zoe has a very poor reaction to the avalanche and puts herself in danger due to this. She does not immediately react to the 'rumble', which should have been a clear alert to her but instead her desire to ski overrules her and instead she is just 'irritated' by the fact she can't ski, not worried in the slightest that an avalanche could be coming down in seconds. Even when grey smoke is described by the metaphor 'unfurling in silky banners' and the simile 'like the heraldry of armies', this is still not enough for Zoe to understand the gravity of the situation. An army being summoned coming down towards her is not a positive image, it should be a terrifying one. Yet instead she sees it as 'beautiful' and even goes so far as to making her 'smile'. This is just irresponsible and dangerous.

Furthermore, we then see how dangerous the avalanche is as it is described using animalistic language, as 'rumbling' and 'roaring' in her ears. The image of a large predator can be seen, said as a lion 'roaring' before it eats its prey. The way Zoe is 'punched off her feet' shows the gravity of the situation, this avalanche is powerful and will be out there to take her down. The fact that this avalanche is personified as having the ability to punch her, relates to how strong it is in human terms, rather than being just an inanimate large quantity of snow. To compare the avalanche with the simile 'like a tsunami at sea', shows just how bad a situation Zoe is in, this avalanche is a real danger and Zoe has gone from being happy to being completely smothered by the snow.

The images of sound and colour by the writer enables the reader to further understand that this is a dangerous situation for Zoe and Jake. Jake's words are completely drowned by the terrible din created, which means that Zoe is unable to hear his shouts on how to be safe. This idea of how loud it is is created once again when the avalanche is described as creating a 'deafening noise' and the simile 'like the amplified jaws of a million termites' implies to the reader that this is a tremendous sound. Colour is also mentioned as the snow goes from being white, to more being 'grey smoke' to eventually where being 'black cracks' and everything being 'black'. This rapid change in colours is a reflection of how Zoe is feeling going from white and calm to black and panic. All this supports the statement and shows that the situation was very dangerous very quickly.

However, Zoe does actually understand how bad the situation has become and does attempt to get herself to safety. The reader sees her realisation when 'her smile iced over' and that is the moment she truly clicks into gear and survival mode had been activated. Verbs such as 'pasted' and 'scrambling' show the immediacy in which she is trying to get away and this is backed up by the attempts 'to accelerate away'. Though Zoe is slow to react, she is making an effort to get safe, even though it is inevitably too late.



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5

40 marks

45 min

Creative writing – description/story – choice of 2 questions

Key steps

1. Look at the **image** that you have been given. You should always write about this.
2. Make a 4Ws mindmap around the image. Pretend it is a photo that belongs to you. Who is in the photo? Where was it taken? When? What was happening? Why is it important?
3. Make a plan. Imagine that the **image is a photograph** that you are holding in your hand
 - **PHOTO** – describe the photo (not the image) – what does it look like?
 - **HANDS** – zoom in on the hands holding the photo. What do they do and why?
 - **FLASHBACK** – flashback to the day the image was taken. What was the weather like? What could you see? hear? touch? Smell? Taste?
 - **RETURN** – return back to the photograph. What do you do with it?



Slowly, tentatively, I prize the ragged photograph from its usual hiding place, inside my wallet. The edges, torn and tattered with age, are stained and yellowing with touching. The photograph's faded image and timeworn surface are so familiar to me, yet every time I take it out to look at it, it's like I'm seeing it again for the first time. Never has a photo conjured up such powerful memories as this one has. What wouldn't I give to return to that place once again? I flip the photograph over and read the single phrase scribbled on the back in my scrawly handwriting: *St. Ives, Cornwall*.

Creative sentence types

Sophisticated vocabulary

Range of punctuation

Language features
e.g. – simile,
metaphor



Gnarled, age-marked and wrinkled, my hands tremble with age as I gently stroke the photograph. Lovingly, I run one finger around the edge as I think back to that place that means so much to me. Soft and slow, a solitary tear rolls down my cheek; it drips onto the picture, staining the image dark, like rain. I wish I could return there, to relive one of the happiest days of my life once again.

Creative sentence types

Sophisticated vocabulary

Range of punctuation

Language features
e.g. – simile,
metaphor



I remember that day as if it was yesterday. It had been raining all morning, and the sky was still covered with slate-grey clouds, as if they were nature's army, ready to attack once more. As I walked towards the seafront, I splashed through the silver puddles that shone in the golden sunlight like winking eyes, excited and joyful to be free from the darkness of the storm. Cutting across the sky above me, a dazzling rainbow soared from one edge of the horizon to the other. To me, it signified hope and the promise of adventure. Slapping, fierce and pounding, the waves, still defensive against nature's attack, slapped against the harbour wall. Never had I seen the water so agitated. It rocked the little fishing boat in the distance - Grandfather's boat - from side to side like a child's spinning toy. Up above me, seagulls swirled and swarmed, their eyes roaming the crowds below hungrily, desperate to swipe any morsel of food dropped to the floor. As I walked closer to Grandfather's tug, I could see him standing proud astride the deck. His sun-scorched face beamed at me with a giant grin as I approached him. I raised my camera to my face. Snap! The scene was immortalised forever.

"Are you ready, my boy?" I remember him saying, his gruff voice booming in my ear. "Let's get you out onto the ocean! Don't be afraid! The first time is always the worst." Eager and terrified in equal measure, I clambered aboard.

"Let's go!" I said.

And with that, we sailed out, onto the ocean. My first day catching fish.

Creative
sentence types

Sophisticated
vocabulary

Range of
punctuation

Language
features e.g. –
simile,
metaphor



With a sigh, I lift my finger, now weakened with age, and wipe away the solitary tear that is rolling down my face. How I long to be back there, with the wind in my hair and my Grandfather by my side.

"Happy sailing, Pops." I whisper.

Creative sentence types

Sophisticated vocabulary

Range of punctuation

Language features e.g.
– simile, metaphor