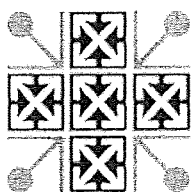


Llantwit Major School  
English Department



GCSE English Language:  
Supporting Your Child

## GCSE English: Key Features

Pupils will sit two English language papers, each worth 30% of the overall GCSE mark. Both exams are 1hour 45mins in length.

Unit one will require pupils to read an extract from a fictional text by a major writer and answer 3-4 questions on the text. At least one of these questions will involve explaining how the writer uses language and other devices to create meaning. Pupils will then be asked to produce one piece of imaginative writing, choosing their title from a selection on the paper.

Unit two has a non-fiction focus, with pupils reading two non-fiction texts and answering questions on them. The final question in this section will ask pupils to compare the two texts. For the writing element of the paper, pupils will be asked to write a non-fiction text for a specified audience and purpose. They will need to know and be able to use the key features of all major non-fiction text types such as letters, articles and speeches.

*Please note: this is the first year of this examination format and therefore past papers, although invaluable for preparation, will look slightly different, containing four rather than three questions.*

### Important Dates

12th November (am)	Mock English language unit 1
13th November (pm)	Mock English language unit 2
9th January (am)	English literature unit 1 (resit opportunity)
13th January (am)	English language unit 1
21st January (pm)	English language unit 2
19th February	Speaking and listening extended individual contribution
6th March	January series exam result published
20th May (am)	English literature unit 1 (resit opportunity)
22nd May (pm)	English literature unit 2
3rd June (am)	English language unit 1 (resit opportunity)
5th June (am)	English language unit 2 (resit opportunity)

## Writing

50% of marks are awarded for content and organisation.

50% of marks are awarded for sentence structure, punctuation and spelling.

- For both pieces, to succeed, pupils must plan.
- For Unit 2, pupils must demonstrate an understanding of **purpose** (e.g. to persuade), **audience** (e.g. Year 11s or the local council) and **format** (e.g. letter or speech). These will all be identified in the question.

### Top Tips

- ✓ Get your son/ daughter to read their work aloud/ read it to them.
- ✓ Use exercise books to identify common spelling errors.
- ✓ Work with them to identify punctuation mistakes. Get them to highlight where they've used apostrophes/ capital letters etc. correctly.
- ✓ Get them writing under timed conditions.
- ✓ Use teacher targets in their book to help them focus- pupils should be able to label where they have met these targets.
- ✓ Create exam style fiction tasks (e.g. The Arrival, The Visitor, A time I was ashamed) and get pupils planning to ensure they have a logical structure and/or writing the story under timed conditions.
- ✓ Get pupils writing different non-fiction texts such as a letter to the newspaper about an issue such as compulsory PE.

### Ways to vary writing

- Openers:
  - Connectives: Then, All of a sudden, In addition
  - 'ing' verbs: Hurrying, Jumping, Running
  - Adverbs: Suddenly, Happily, Miserably
- Connectives:
  - Moreover, furthermore, in contrast, therefore, as a result
- Vocabulary:
  - Collect some more sophisticated words pupils could use in their writing.
  - Encourage them to identify three words to change in every written piece.

### Reading Top Tips

- Get pupils to highlight the key words in the question- explain the question in their own words.
- Create sample questions using non-fiction texts such as leaflets and magazine articles.
- Get them to label the TQE/ PEE sections in their answer.
- Get pupils to count how many different points they've made in their answer (answers are worth 10 marks).
- Encourage them to read- both literature texts and also for pleasure.
- When reading, encourage them to look up difficult words in the dictionary.

### Types of Questions

- Locating information (list details, what evidence..?)
- What do you learn about...?
- What are the writer's thoughts and feelings about...?
- What impression do you get of...?
- How does the writer persuade...?
- Compare how both texts...

## Q2

Davidson uses many techniques throughout the first half of the internet article in order to prove that Manchester is a 'perfect place for a city break.'

Firstly, in the caption below the title, Davidson says that Manchester is the 'perfect place' to go and the alliterative phrase entices the reader and somehow makes Manchester seem appealing. This positive vocabulary to describe the city such as 'great' is also continued throughout the article, constantly giving the reader this positive attitude to Manchester. Davidson also uses repetition to enforce certain messages about Manchester such as it 'never blows its own trumpet', making Manchester seem modest and not ostentatious.

Davidson also tries to make Manchester appeal to almost any audience, making it sound like a 'perfect city break for all.' He uses lists to say that Manchester is 'accessible, reasonably compact, but blessed with a bewildering variety of attractions.' This triplet and use of alliterative language builds on the idea of Manchester being 'perfect' each time. Davidson says that it is great for families, giving examples to prove this such as 'Legoland Discovery Centre' He describes it as a 'complete package' which is ideal for families as they don't have to worry about transport and costs. He also says Manchester is great for young people, using informal and colloquial language such as a 'funky' restaurant and a 'seriously cool' hotel to appeal to a more juvenile audience. Alliterative language such as 'couples canoodling' also gives the impression that Manchester is perfect for couples as it makes it sound great. It even turns a negative into a positive by saying that the rain actually adds to the 'cosiness of the setting.' Lastly, he gives examples of the buildings and sights in Manchester that would appeal to tourists such as 'architectural masterpieces' and famous names such as L.S Lowry. The use of rhetorical questioning and counter-argument also makes Manchester sound unbeatable.

Q5

The magazine article

In the magazine article you are able to see the side of Simon which you don't see on television. Simon shows he is a kind and friendly person. Also Simon shows he is generous towards Sian and will pay for an operation if she needs it. Simon's attitude of generosity and care is due to the good, friendly relationship he has with Sian.

In Simon Cowell's autobiography you mainly see the personality Simon shows on television. Simon is portrayed as a rude person on television but it is revealed that he is only being honest. In the autobiography you can see the business part of Simon's life and that he is only interested in the talent and not telling people they're good if they're not. Also you can see how Simon has become such a successful businessman because of his honesty, and he shows that he knows how people can become a success with his guidance, which he claims is "the right guidance".

Q5

The magazine article

This article shows the softer side to Simon Cowell, as it shows how he helps and cares for one young girl, Sian. He has become a good friend to her and they get on well together. I also get the impression that he can have a joke with people, as Sian's mum says he is "at ease and comfortable with everybody". In the magazine article it shows that he does like some people, like Sian, and because he's got a good friendship with her he invited her to his birthday party, where she became "the belle of the ball". It also gives you the impression that he has "enriched people's lives" by just being himself and being friendly to everyone. His mother (Julie Cowell) says she is most proud of his manners and warmth, how he stops for pictures and autographs and is polite, so my thoughts are that this article shows him as a warm, polite and caring person that cares for a young girl with problems.

Simon Cowell's autobiography

In his autobiography he gives a clear impression that he is rude and doesn't mind, that he can be quite blunt, telling people that they are ugly and being deadly honest, which often gives the impression that he doesn't care at all

about people's feelings and is harsh. He also even says that he is bigheaded and he is the only man on earth to give you guidance to become a successful pop star. In the autobiography it shows a different side of Simon because in this it gives an impression of a rude, blunt and to the point Simon, who is only concerned about being successful and making a lot of money.

Home address included

Newspaper address included

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing in complaint of the plan to build a supermarket on land which is currently being used by local youngsters to play sport. I have three main reasons why I feel the need to complain about this plan. Firstly, it will put local shops out of business, it is also going to destroy a valuable amenity for youngsters and finally I believe we already have enough supermarkets in our town.

First of all, I would like to focus on the fact that if the plan goes ahead, it will put many local shops out of business. Many of these small shops have been here for years and local people like the service they get. If a supermarket is built on this land, the local people will shop in the supermarket because of the cheap offers, and our local shops will make no money and have to close. This has happened in other parts of the town and it just leads to lots of empty shops. At the moment, people are happy to use local shops in our part of town and lots of older people would rather shop in a small corner shop because it isn't as big and doesn't get so chaotic. It's true that supermarkets get more shoppers because they sell more things and there is more variety, but I'm sure many people would not like one if it means all their local shops end up closing down.

Secondly, if the supermarket chain continues with this plan and the plan gets confirmed, they will be destroying a valuable amenity for youngsters. Most parents would rather their children to be in a park playing sport or with friends than out on the street where something dangerous could happen. By going ahead with this plan they are putting young children at risk of being in danger because they would have nowhere to play, and therefore would have to play on the streets. How would you feel if it was your child being put at risk of danger because a supermarket chain have built a supermarket over the childrens playground? 70% of children prefer to play on a playground than in a street.

My final point is that there are already enough supermarkets around the local area, so why do we need another one? With too many supermarkets and shops around, it is making it hard for the locals that live in the area and shop in these shops because they have to choose which shop to shop in. Many people would rather have one local shop or supermarket in the area instead of a couple alongside other empty shops.

I hope that with this letter I have got my opinion across very clearly and that this issue is thought about very strongly.

Yours faithfully,