

A Parent's Guide to English Language GCSE and English Literature GCSE

At HTA, students study for 2 English GCSEs – English Language and English Literature. They will get 2 separate grades for this.

English Language

For English Language, students sit 2 exam papers (the qualification is 100% exam).

Paper One

For Paper One, students are given one hour and 45 minutes to read one piece of 20th or 21st century fiction and answer 5 questions:

Q1) Select 4 piece of information from a specific part of the text (4 marks)



How can I help?

Get your child reading part of a story, e.g. the first page of an opening chapter. Then test them on what they can remember from the first two paragraphs.*

Q2) Explore how the writer uses language to create/ develop setting/ character/ mood (8 marks)



How can I help?

Get your children reading part of a story, e.g. the first page of an opening chapter, and highlight or underline 3-4 interesting words or phrases that tell them about the character or setting. Ask them to explain reasons for their choices.*

Q3) Explore how the writer structures the text to interest the reader (8 marks)



How can I help?

*Get your child to print off** one of the practice papers on Show My Homework and cut up the chapters before they attempt to put them in order. Talk to them about why they have chosen that particular order of paragraphs.*

Q4) Students are given a statement, e.g. ‘A student, having read this section of the text said: “The writer vividly conveys how Simon feels and moves. It is as if you are there with the narrator.” To what extent do you agree with this statement? (20 marks)



How can I help?

*Get your child to print off** one of the practice papers on Show My Homework and ask them to highlight any words/phrases that a) describe a person in detail, b) describe a place in detail, c) build tension, or d) make them feel sorry for someone. Talk about why those words and phrases might have been chosen.*

Q5) Write a story based on this picture OR write a story about... (e.g. a time you felt really happy/ a time you tried something new, etc.)



How can I help?

Ask your child to log onto Show My Homework (at home or in school) and view and/or print off one or two pictures for inspiration for creative writing. They should aim to write a plan for a story or an exciting opening chapter, based on the picture. Talk to them about what could happen in the story and who could feature in it.

Try to widen their vocabulary- there are lots of marks available for word choices on this exam. Give them a list of 5-10 words and get them to use a thesaurus on their phone or laptop to find more exciting/powerful synonyms).

Paper Two

For Paper Two, students are given one hour and 45 minutes to read two pieces non-fiction – one from the 19th century and one from the 20th/ 21st century - and answer 5 questions:

Q1) Shade the boxes next to the 4 true statements (from a list of 8 statements about the first part of the text) (4 marks)



How can I help?

Get your children reading part of a story, e.g. the first page of an opening chapter. Then test them on what they can remember from the first two paragraphs.*

Q2) Using details from both sources, write a summary of the differences (8 marks)



How can I help?

*Use the sources** on Show My Homework for this question. Ask your child to read them through highlighting any interesting details about the focus of the article, e.g. surfboards, bicycles, weather, etc. Then ask them to draw arrows between their highlighted sections, making links (pointing out similarities and/or differences) between what is described in each article.*

Q3) You now need to refer only to Source B. How does [the writer] use language to [for a specific effect]? (12 marks)



How can I help?

Get your children reading part of a story, e.g. the first page of an opening chapter, and highlight or underline 3-4 interesting words or phrases that tell them about the character or setting. Ask them to explain reasons for their choices.*

Q4) For this question, you need to refer to the whole of Source A, together with Source B. Compare how the two writers convey their different [theme given]. (20 marks)



How can I help?

Get your children reading part of a story, e.g. the first page of an opening chapter. Then test them on what they can remember from the first two paragraphs.*

Q5) Question 5 [24 marks for content and organisation 16 marks for accuracy] – [40 marks]

Example:

'Homework has no value. Some students get it done for them; some don't do it at all. Students should be relaxing in their free time.' Write an article for a broadsheet newspaper in which you explain your point of view on this statement.



How can I help?

Give your child a list of 5-10 topics that they might have an opinion on, e.g. homework, length of the school day, computer games, celebrities as role models, etc. Ask them to note down arguments for and against the topics – at least 3 each side. Try to widen their vocabulary- there are lots of marks available for word choices on this exam. Give them a list of 5-10 words and get them to use a thesaurus on their phone or laptop to find more exciting/powerful synonyms).

*Examples of fiction and non-fiction texts can be found on Show My Homework for all Year 11 students to use. **Students are reminded that they can use the computers in room 214 (Mrs Woodvine's room) to print work off and study quietly; this is available every lunchtime, Monday to Thursday.

English Literature

For English Literature, students sit 2 exam papers (the qualification is 100% exam). Please remember that students are **not allowed** to take copies of the text into the exam so the onus is on them to learn key quotations to use here.

Paper One: Shakespeare and the 19th century novel

For this paper, students answer two questions: one on William Shakespeare's 'Romeo and Juliet' and one on Charles Dickens' 'A Christmas Carol'. They get **one hour and 45 minutes** to answer both questions. There are 4 extra marks available for spelling, punctuation and grammar for the 'Romeo and Juliet' question.

This exam is worth 40% of the final Literature grade.

Each question will be in the format of an extract and a question relating to the extract and whole text.

Paper Two: Modern texts and poetry

Paper Two is divided into 3 sections; students will answer one question on the play 'An Inspector Calls' by J.B.Priestley; one question on the AQA Love and Relationships poems and two questions on unseen poetry.

In Section A, students must choose to answer one of two questions on 'An Inspector Calls'. There is no extract provided for this question. There are 4 extra marks available for spelling, punctuation and grammar.

In Section B, students must answer one question on two poems from the Love and Relationships cluster in the AQA poetry anthology. They will be given one poem and asked to choose another poem to compare it to.

In Section C, students will be given 2 unseen poems to analyse and write about, focusing on content, use of language, structure and themes. The first question (27.1) will ask them to analyse the first poem; the second question (27.2) will ask them to compare the first poem to the second.



How can I help?

On Show My Homework, your child should be able to access a series of 'knowledge organisers' for 'Romeo and Juliet', 'An Inspector Calls' and 'A Christmas Carol'. These contain key ideas about the plot, themes, quotations and character. They also contain a series of tasks for you to test your child on, e.g. remembering some of the most important quotations.