

GCSE

WJEC Eduqas GCSE in
ENGLISH LANGUAGE

GCSE English Language
Component 1 Reading:

Approaches and ideas



COMPONENT: 1

EXAM LEVEL: GCSE

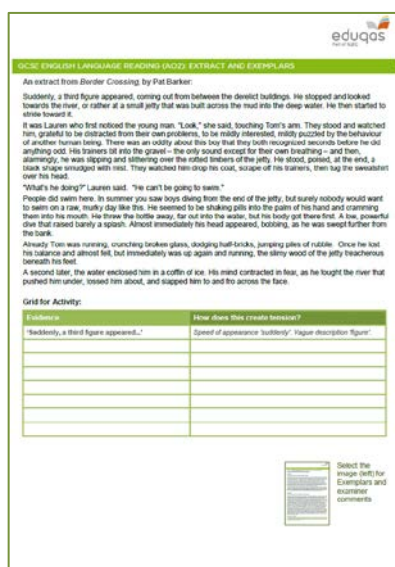
AREA OF STUDY

Reading: Analysing Writers' Techniques (AO2)

Key Points:

- Learners should be given opportunities to read and analyse extracts from 20th century literature as part of their preparation for this area of study
- As part of the reading assessment, learners will be asked to consider how writers use language to create certain effects, e.g. to create tension
- Learners should comment on, explain and analyse how writers use language, using **relevant** subject terminology to support their views
- Learners should track through the section of text carefully and aim for a range of points
- Remind learners to focus on the question **throughout** their answer

INSPIRATION FOR TEACHING



GCSE ENGLISH LANGUAGE READING GRIDS EXTRACT AND EXEMPLARS

An extract from *Border Crossing* by Pat Barker:

Suddenly, a third figure appeared, coming out from between the derelict buildings. He stopped and looked towards the river, or rather at a small jetty that was built across the mud into the deep water. He then started to shiver toward it.

It was Lauren who first noticed the young man. "Look," she said, touching Tom's arm. They stood and watched him, grateful to be distracted from their own problems, to be mildly interested, mildly puzzled by the behaviour of another human being. There was an oddity about this boy that they both recognised seconds before he did anything odd. His trainers sat into the gravel – the only sound except for their own breathing – and then, alarmingly, he was slipping and skidding over the rotting timbers of the jetty. He stood, poised, at the end, a cloak draped snugly over him. They watched him drop his coat, scrape off his trainers, then tug the sweatshirt over his head.

"What's he doing?" Lauren said. "He can't be going to swim."

People did swim here. In summer you saw boys diving from the end of the jetty, but surely nobody would want to swim on a raw, misty day like this. He seemed to be shaking pills into the palm of his hand and cramming them into his mouth. He threw the bottle away, far out into the water, but his body got there first. A low, powerful dive that created barely a splash. Almost immediately his head appeared, bobbing, as he was swept further from the bank.

Already Tom was running, crunching broken glass, dodging half-bricks, jumping piles of rubble. Once he lost his balance and almost fell, but immediately was up again and running, the silty mud of the jetty beneath his feet.

A second later, the water enclosed him in a coffin of ice. His mind contracted in fear, as he fought the river that pushed him under, tossed him about, and sucked him to and fro across the face.

Grid for Activity:

Evidence	How does this create tension?
"Suddenly, a third figure appeared..."	Speed of appearance 'suddenly', vague description 'figure'

Exemplar 1 gained 5 marks. Ask the learners in their pairs to read the answer closely and discuss how it could be improved.

Exemplar 2 gained full marks (as can be seen from the examiner's comments). You could annotate this response with the learners to highlight good practice.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

[Eduqas](#) > [GCSE English Literature](#) > [Specification from 2015](#)

[Eduqas](#) > [GCSE English Literature](#) > [Specimen Assessment Materials](#)

[Eduqas Resources](#) > [20th Century Literature Reading Resources](#)

READING AO2: EXTRACT AND EXEMPLARS

Based on the extract from *Border Crossing*, by Pat Barker, answer the following question:

"What makes this part of the story tense and dramatic? "

Exemplar 1

The following answer to this question gained 5 marks.

The first word of the 14th sentence creates the image of shock as it makes the reader think that something has just appeared out of nowhere. The way the writer started to describe some of the background, paints an image in the reader's head who then starts to set the scene. Reading on we start to get images of the strange boy, the writer then says that there was an oddity about the boy meaning that he doesn't seem like a normal boy.

Descriptive words like, alarmingly, slipping and slithering makes the readers think that this boy is just an accident waiting to happen. On lines 26 and 27 we find out that the oddity about the boy is that he is on drugs, so he might not be in full control of his own actions. The writer then distracts the reader with the empty pill bottle saying "He threw the bottle away, far out" making the reader imagine a bottle flying through the air, but then the reader adds the line "his body got there first" adding suspense and tension.

The writer then starts to describe Tom's actions saying that he was running, dodging and jumping. A single sentence is then added creating the thought that Tom has just jumped into his own coffin. The lines that follow describe Tom's feelings while he's under the water making the reader feel that Tom has no chance of saving the boy or himself, which reflects back to the sentence referring he's just jumped into an icy coffin.

Exemplar 2

The following answer to this question gained full marks.

We feel tense and feel the drama as we read "Suddenly, a third figure appeared, coming out from between the derelict buildings". The word "suddenly" adds suspense. The idea of a third, unknown figure is dramatic. The description of two derelict buildings suggests a scene that is eerie and mysterious. The author writes that the boy's trainers "bit" the gravel, as though he was fast paced and dramatic in his movements. The word "alarmingly" is used to describe the way the boy is awkwardly clambering and slipping over the timbers. We feel tense and wonder what is happening as there is a build up to understand the boy's intentions. "...a black shape smudged with mist" makes for dramatic effect and a tense moment as the weather seems to reflect the mysterious individual further. "He can't be going to swim" Lauren says as she watches the boy on the jetty; we see she is shocked and worried so we are also feeling the same, making it dramatic. The writer explains people swim here, but only "in summer", it increases the tension that someone may try to swim here alone in bad weather. The boy is described as "cramming" pills into his mouth. The verb 'cramming' suggests swift and rushed actions, it seems like he is uncontrolled and desperate. We hear how Tom is dodging, running, jumping and generally moving frantically to avoid some treacherous obstacles like "broken glass" and "half-bricks" with urgent movements which would increase tension for the reader. This is tense and dramatic as we wonder if Tom will make it in time, especially as he then loses "balance" and "almost fell". "A coffin of ice" is the metaphor used to describe the water covering Tom. The metaphor has connotations of death and horror – dramatic and tense as we fear for Tom's safety in the water. We know Tom is scared as "his mind contracted in fear" which increases the reader's tension. He is described as having to fight the river so again the obstacles for him to battle are immense. The river is personified and said to be tossing Tom about and slapping him in the face, again we fear for both Tom and the boy's safety.

Examiner's Comments:

This candidate is clearly engaged with the question throughout. A range of points are covered showing insight into technique and the use of language. Specific detail is clearly combined with an overview of the passage and question as a whole. Full marks should be awarded.

READING AO2: EXTRACT AND EXEMPLARS

An extract from *Border Crossing*, by Pat Barker:

Suddenly, a third figure appeared, coming out from between the derelict buildings. He stopped and looked towards the river, or rather at a small jetty that was built across the mud into the deep water. He then started to stride toward it.

It was Lauren who first noticed the young man. “Look,” she said, touching Tom’s arm. They stood and watched him, grateful to be distracted from their own problems, to be mildly interested, mildly puzzled by the behaviour of another human being. There was an oddity about this boy that they both recognized seconds before he did anything odd. His trainers bit into the gravel – the only sound except for their own breathing – and then, alarmingly, he was slipping and slithering over the rotted timbers of the jetty. He stood, poised, at the end, a black shape smudged with mist. They watched him drop his coat, scrape off his trainers, then tug the sweatshirt over his head.

“What’s he doing?” Lauren said. “He can’t be going to swim.”

People did swim here. In summer you saw boys diving from the end of the jetty, but surely nobody would want to swim on a raw, murky day like this. He seemed to be shaking pills into the palm of his hand and cramming them into his mouth. He threw the bottle away, far out into the water, but his body got there first. A low, powerful dive that raised barely a splash. Almost immediately his head appeared, bobbing, as he was swept further from the bank.

Already Tom was running, crunching broken glass, dodging half-bricks, jumping piles of rubble. Once he lost his balance and almost fell, but immediately was up again and running, the slimy wood of the jetty treacherous beneath his feet.

A second later, the water enclosed him in a coffin of ice. His mind contracted in fear, as he fought the river that pushed him under, tossed him about, and slapped him to and fro across the face.

Grid for Activity:

Evidence	How does this create tension?
‘Suddenly, a third figure appeared...’	<i>Speed of appearance ‘suddenly’. Vague description ‘figure’.</i>



Select the image (left) for Exemplars and examiner comments

COMPONENT: 1

EXAM LEVEL: GCSE

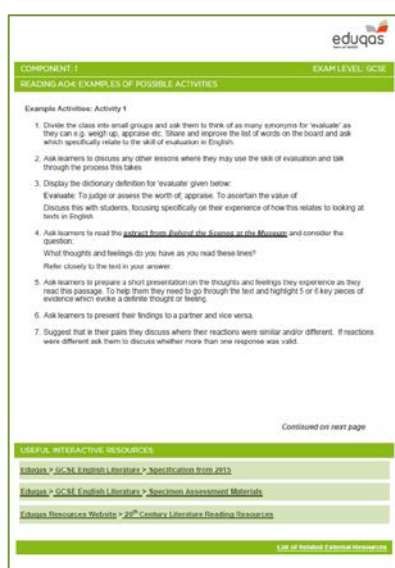
AREA OF STUDY

Reading: Evaluating Texts (AO4)

Key Points:

- As part of the reading assessment, learners will be asked to critically evaluate a text
- Learners should be given opportunities to consider what evaluation means e.g. to judge or assess the worth of; to appraise
- Any personal judgement should be supported by appropriate textual references
- Remind learners to focus on the question **throughout** their answer

INSPIRATION FOR TEACHING



Select the image (left) for suggested examples of activities related to evaluation.

Learners' responses to evaluation questions will require a considered personal judgement, which is informed and evidenced through apt references to the text

At higher levels, responses will also require a degree of critical overview and summation

The following are generic question types that may develop learners' evaluation skills:

- What do you think and feel about a subject?
- How successful are these lines as an end to the passage?
- Look at the character of How important do you think he/she is in the story?
- To what extent do you agree with...?

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

[Eduqas](#) > [GCSE English Language](#) > [Specification from 2015](#)

[Eduqas](#) > [GCSE English Language](#) > [Specimen Assessment Materials](#)

[Eduqas Resources](#)

[List of Related External Resources](#)

Example Activities: Activity 1

1. Divide the class into small groups and ask them to think of as many synonyms for 'evaluate' as they can e.g. weigh up, appraise etc. Share and improve the list of words on the board and ask which specifically relate to the skill of evaluation in English.
2. Ask learners to discuss any other lessons where they may use the skill of evaluation and talk through the process this takes.
3. Display the dictionary definition for 'evaluate' given below:
Evaluate: To judge or assess the worth of; appraise. To ascertain the value of
 Discuss this with students, focusing specifically on their experience of how this relates to looking at texts in English.
4. Ask learners to read the **extract from *Behind the Scenes at the Museum*** and consider the question:
 What thoughts and feelings do you have as you read these lines?
 Refer closely to the text in your answer.
5. Ask learners to prepare a short presentation on the thoughts and feelings they experience as they read this passage. To help them they need to go through the text and highlight 5 or 6 key pieces of evidence which evoke a definite thought or feeling.
6. Ask learners to present their findings to a partner and vice versa.
7. Suggest that in their pairs they discuss where their reactions were similar and/or different. If reactions were different ask them to discuss whether more than one response was valid.

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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

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An extract from *Behind the Scenes at the Museum*, by Kate Atkinson:

In this passage adapted from 'Behind the Scenes at the Museum' by Kate Atkinson, Jack Keech is seen to experience trench life during World War One. He is engaged to a woman called Lillian who lives in York.

On the day of the attack, Lillian was taking fares on a tram in the middle of Blossom Street when she felt a sudden cold shiver pass her through her. Without thinking, she pulled her ticket machine over her head, left it on a seat, rang the bell and stepped off the tram, much to the amazement of her passengers. Breaking into a run before she reached the Ouse Bridge, she was running as if the dead were at her heels by the time she turned into Lowther Street. Nell was waiting for her, sitting on the doorstep. Lillian hung on to the gate, holding her sides and retching for breath, but Nell just sat there, not moving. She hadn't run home, she had just left the factory where she stitched uniforms and strolled slowly home along Monkgate.

Lillian was the one who finally broke the silence. 'He's dead, isn't he?' she gasped, walking slowly up the path until she sank down next to Nell.

By the time she opened the telegram – 'regret to inform you that Jack Keech was killed in action on July 1st, 1916' – Lillian had already been in mourning a week.

A mortar shell had killed Jack. He had been killed within moments of leaving the trench. The only mark on him had been a line of blood on his cheek and you would have wondered what had killed him until you lifted him up and saw that the back of his head was missing.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

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Example Activities: Activity 2

1. Read the introduction to the **passage adapted from *The Use of Irony* by Deborah Moggach**, (given in italics below) and encourage learners to speculate on what will happen next:

In this passage adapted from 'The Use of Irony' by Deborah Moggach, Paula is trying to write an essay entitled 'The use of Irony in 'Cold Comfort Farm'. She decides to study at her friend Kate's house because her own house is chaotic and filled with the noise of her stepmother and younger brother Barnaby. Kate persuades her mother to go out to enable the girls to complete their essays.

2. Read paragraphs 1-3 of the **passage adapted from *The Use of Irony* by Deborah Moggach** aloud, then encourage learners to discuss their reactions to Paula's decision to leave.
3. Read the remainder of the extract aloud. Earlier in the passage Paula was irritated by her family, how does she feel about them now?
4. Ask learners to read the passage and consider the question:
How effective do you find these lines as an ending to a story?
Refer closely to the text in your answer.
5. In order to answer the question above successfully learners need to have a clear understanding of the passage. Ask them to track through the text and bullet point the series of events that take place. This will help them when trying to provide an overview which is a top band skill.
6. Ask learners to complete the following table, the first line is provided as an example:

Evidence	Reaction	How effective?
'...it didn't turn out as expected.'	Surprise.	Sense that something went wrong – 'trouble' suggests didn't go according to plan.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Eduqas > [GCSE English Language](#) > [Specification from 2015](#)

Eduqas > [GCSE English Language](#) > [Specimen Assessment Materials](#)

Eduqas Resources

Passage adapted from "*The Use of Irony*"

The trouble was, it didn't turn out as expected. The moment her mother was out of the house, Kate started telephoning and within an hour the house was filled with her friends.

'While the cat's away...' laughed Kate.

You think you know your best friend and suddenly you realise that her motives were completely different from your own. Nobody noticed when Paula, clutching her notes, let herself out of the front door and went home.

Her house was quiet. Simone, her step-mother, was out at her Inner Healing evening class. Her Dad lay snoring on the settee, Barnaby asleep on his stomach. Now Barnaby was unconscious he looked so sweet she wanted to wake him up. Ironic, she thought. Then she pulled out a dictionary to look up the word.

She sat down at the kitchen table and leafed through the pages. 'Irony,' it said. 'An unexpected turn of events which seems to contradict or mock the expected outcome'.

Suddenly she was filled with a deep peace. She uncapped her pen and started to write her essay.

Deborah Moggach

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

[Eduqas > GCSE English Language > Specification from 2015](#)

[Eduqas > GCSE English Language > Specimen Assessment Materials](#)

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