

English Language A-Level - Preparatory Work 2025

Activity 1:

English Language involves learning linguistic terminology, and there is a big focus on grammar. It is therefore important to address this before starting the course.

- 1) Make sure you know the meaning of the following words. Jot down the definition and an example of each word type. Don't copy from google – please use your own wording and own examples!

- a) Verb
- b) Noun
- c) Adjective
- d) Adverb
- e) Preposition
- f) Pronoun
- g) Definite article
- h) Indefinite article
- i) Conjunction

- 2) Label the sentence below using the correct grammatical word class. The first word has been done for you.

He	slowly	looked	up	and
<i>PRONOUN</i>				
saw	the	sparkling	stars	twinkling
in	the	dark	sky	

Activity 2:

The coursework is the only opportunity on this course for you to be creative. It is worth 20% of the qualification; the other 80% is based on exams and written analysis. For your coursework, you will be writing two short stories that are differentiated via audience and/or purpose. To prepare for this, complete the following:

1. Read 'I used to live here once' by Jean Rhys, found here: <https://www.caribbean-beat.com/issue-12/i-used-live-here-once#axzz7VRNY7M5n>
2. On the next page, jot down 3 literary / language techniques the author uses **and explain the effect**. Avoid 'one word' annotations. Instead, you might find it useful to use the table on the next page. To help develop your annotations, consider: linking the language feature to the effect upon the reader; how the language feature links to the entertaining and emotional purpose/function of the story; how the text achieves typical narrative conventions (e.g. a metaphor is a typical genre convention associated with stories). Look overleaf to see an example of mystery code.

Language feature	Quotes	Analysis
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Mystery code	<p>‘She was standing by the river looking at the stepping stones and remembering each one.’</p> <p>‘That was the first time she knew.’</p>	<p>Mystery code is achieved via the third person pronoun ‘she’. The name of the protagonist is never revealed. The absence of this noun might be symbolic for it could be the author’s way of inferring that the protagonist is a ghost and is revisiting a place she used to call home.</p> <p>The mystery code carries throughout the story and the author does not reveal the identity of the protagonist by the story’s resolution. The last line requires the audience to infer, alongside the protagonist, that she is a ghost. Mystery code like this helps to entertain the reader as they work out what has happened; this, is a common genre convention associated with narrative based texts.</p>
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Now have a go at finding 3 of your own. To give you some help, you may find examples of the following features: *foreshadowing, imagery, past tense effect, cultural language, themes associated with loneliness and change, symbolism, metaphorical language, repetition, the omniscient narrator, pathetic fallacy, foreboding, connotations, etc.*

Language feature	Quotes	Analysis
1.		
2.		
3.		

Turn over

If you want to get further ahead, read as many short stories as you can. As you are reading them, jot down a language feature for each story in the same way you have done above. Make sure you write down the author’s details, the story’s title, and where you found the story, as you will need this information when compiling your coursework bibliography.

Activity 3:

One module we look at is 'Language Change' and how the language has evolved since the 16th century. For your final task, read the text below. After you've finished reading, jot down **three inferences** you have learnt about 16th century health. An inference is something you deduce from the data presented to you.

Text C is an extract from Levine Lemnie's, The touchstone of complexions. It was translated from Latin into English by Thomas Newton and published in 1576. It contains rules and advice for maintaining a healthy mind and body.

What maketh good digestion. Now, there is nothing more effectually to make good & perfecte digestion and to stirre vp the Spirites, then sleepe, exercise, and wyne, so ye same be pure, good, and moderatlye vsed, as the other also must bee. For so doth it stirre vp & make syncere, liuely and cleare Spirites, from whence proceedeth cheerefulnes, ioy, quicknes and myrth of the minde. For the meates & nourishments (which by nature are laboured into humours) being eaten and washed downe wyth good and holsome wyne, haue freer passage into all the parts of the body, and distribute their nourishment into them more effectually. There is nothing therefore yt so much banisheth phāsyēs & sorrow out of a mans minde, Eccle. 31. as pleasaunt merye companye, and moderate vse of wyne. And of this, What maketh a man merie. did that precise and sterne natured Zeno, giue a notable example: whose minde was so muche estraunged from all pleasaunte conceites & ordinarye curtesies of cōmon humanitye, that hee was neuer at all moued wyth any affections, no not such as be naturallye incident and engrafted in euery man. And yet when he was a litle whittled wyth wyne, he began to change his cōpye, and to be as mery and as bone a companion as who was best. And beinge on a time asked by one of his merye mates, how it happened, that he beinge otherwyse so wōderfully seuer and crabbed, yet at the wyne was so pleasaunt and conceituous: hee merelye aunswered, that he was like to a kinde of Pulse called Lupines. The nature of Lupines. Which kinde of Pulse, although they be naturally bitter, and by their bitternes, of force to kill wormes, yet the same beinge steeped & soaked in water, renounce and leaue all bitternes and become both sweete & pleasaunt. And this is naturallye giuen to all men, that when the body is refreshed wyth meate and drinck, al bitternes, sorrow and heauines is expelled, and banished. And therfore my fashion is to aduise and counsell, Melācholique folkes and sullen natured personnes, to vse banquetting and good cheere amonge honest and mery cōpany.

Glossary

humours – fluids of the body that were thought to determine a person's physical and mental qualities

Eccle. 31 – reference to Bible verse

Zeno – Greek philosopher

crabbed – bad tempered

Pulse – the edible seed of a plant

Lupines – a plant of the pea family

Use of macron (line above a word), e.g. 'cōpany', indicates the missing letters 'm' or 'n'

We look forward to meeting you soon. If you have any questions about the preparatory work, please contact Emma Mansell elm@hereford.ac.uk