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THE PRE-RELEASE BOOKLET

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GUIDANCE NOTES 2010

SECTION A – MEDIA TEXTS

This material is for Paper 1 in the exam.

There are 8 extracts, taken from a variety of media sources.

Question 1 will focus on TWO or THREE of these extracts.

Radical reforms to set China's farmers free	10 -12
Why retiring to the sun can come with a real dark side	13 -16
I adder lucky escape	17 -19
Little Miss Bliss's letterbox drama	20 -21
How to die 'the Oregon Way'	22 -24
Revealed: the Great Escape of 1918	25 -27
A family holiday in Cuba	28 – 29
The KGB's long war against Rudolf Nureyev	30 – 32

SECTION B**POEMS FROM DIFFERENT CULTURES AND TRADITIONS**

This material is for Paper 2 in the exam.

There are 8 poems.

Question 2 will ask you to compare an unseen poem with one or more a group of poems drawn from those below.

Waiting for the Barbarians	35 -38
Island Man	39 - 40
Synopsis of the Great Welsh Novel	41 - 42
Not my Business	43 - 44
Aunt Julia	45 - 46
Escape Journey, 1988	47 - 48
Remember	49 - 50
I, Too	51 - 52

Examinations and the Pre-Release Booklet for Specification B (Mature)

The examination papers for Specification B (Mature) will follow the same format as those for Specification B. The subject matter addressed by the questions will be more suited to mature candidates than that in Specification B.

In the pre-release booklet, Media material will be selected that is judged more suited to mature candidates than that used for Specification B. The Mature syllabus may use the same pre-released poems as Specification B.

Teaching Support

Within schools, teachers may work through the contents of the PRB during lessons but this is not so easy for external/private candidates working within a home study situation. But it is possible to offer *some* guidance on how to study each of the PRB texts, and that is the purpose of this document. Candidates will need to make the most of the opportunity, and devote plenty of time to studying and thinking about the texts so that they are ready for anything they will face in the examination.

A Reminder of the Exam Format

Paper 1 (1 hour 40 minutes)

Section A requires Reading responses to a non-fiction unseen article, feature or extract. There will be different pieces for Foundation Tier and Higher Tier. Questions will relate to understanding content, the effect of language and audience. There will also be questions in Section A which invite responses to a selection of Media texts in a booklet of pre-released material. Questions for Media will focus on two or three of the pieces in the pre-release booklet and will relate to presentation, different registers, audience, tone, language and the effect of any images.

Section B requires Writing in response to the “triplet”: argue, persuade, advise.

Candidates will be advised to spend 1 hour on Section A and 40 minutes on Section B. Candidates will be advised to spend 10 minutes at the start of the examination reminding themselves of the content of the pre-release booklet for Paper 1.

Paper 2 (1 hour 30 minutes)

Section A requires Reading responses to a single question comparing an unseen poem with one or more of a group of poems drawn from different cultures and traditions and issued to centres in the booklet of pre-release material previously circulated for Paper 1. The Foundation Tier unseen poem will be different from the Higher Tier unseen poem.

Section B requires Writing in response to the “triplet”: analyse, review, comment.

Candidates will be advised to spend 45 minutes on Section A and 45 minutes on Section B.

General Advice for Paper 1

Organising your Time

You should spend:

Section A – 1 hour

- 10 minutes reading the questions, the relevant passages in the pre-release booklet for question 1 and the passage for question 2
- 25 minutes answering question 1
- 25 minutes answering question 2

Section B – 40 minutes

- 5 - 10 minutes planning
- 20 – 30 minutes writing your response
- 5 – 10 minutes checking your answer

Section A

This section of the paper tests your READING.

You will need to answer TWO questions.

1. Media Texts

There will be ONE question which will focus on TWO or THREE of the pieces in the pre-release booklet.

The question will relate to some or all of the following:

- presentation
- different registers
- audience

- tone
- language
- the effect of any images in the text

2. Non-Fiction Text

There will be ONE question which will focus on a non-fiction text *which will be printed on the question paper*.

The question will relate to:

- understanding the content
- the effect of language
- audience

Marks available for Section A: 15%

Section B

This section of the paper tests your WRITING

There will be ONE question requiring a piece of writing which either:

- argues
- persuades
- advises

or, possibly, a combination of two of these.

It is important that you:

- spend the full 40 minutes on this question
- spend 5-10 minutes thoroughly checking your work.

Marks available: 15%

A Few Points to Remember

Section A

- don't just summarise the material, comment on it
- don't forget to mention the pictures
- don't just identify features in the material, say why they are there
- try to make points about the use of language
- make sure you give examples to support your points

Section B

- make sure you respond to the precise demands of the question
- don't repeat your ideas
- try to link your paragraphs
- make sure you develop your ideas
- *check carefully*, especially:
 - spelling
 - capital letters and full stops at the beginning and end of sentences
 - apostrophes

General Advice for Paper 2

Organising your Time

You should spend:

Section A – 45 minutes

- 10 - 15 minutes reading and planning
- 30 - 35 minutes writing

Section B – 45 minutes

- 5 - 10 minutes planning
- 20 - 30 minutes writing
- 5 - 10 minutes checking

Contents of the Paper

Section A

This section of the paper tests your READING

There will be ONE question which will require you to compare an unseen poem (printed on the question paper) with ONE OR MORE of the poems in the pre-release booklet.

You will need to comment on the cultural aspects of the poem.

Marks available: 15%

Section B

This section of the paper tests your WRITING

There will be ONE question requiring a piece of writing which either:

- analyses
- reviews
- comments

or, possibly, a combination of two of these.

It is important that you:

- *spend the full 45 minutes on this question*
- *spend 5 – 10 minutes thoroughly checking your work*

Marks available: 15%

A Few Other Points to Remember

Section A

- read the poems carefully and make sure you understand them. Don't guess or jump to conclusions
- read the bullet points in the question carefully
- make sure you support your points by referring to details in the poems or by quotation
- try to write the same amount about the unseen poem and the pre-release poem(s).

Section B

- avoid too much personal opinion
- avoid writing too much narrative
- make sure you respond to the purpose and audience required by the question
- try to use a variety of punctuation
- *check carefully*, especially:
 - spelling
 - capital letters and full stops at the beginning and end of sentences
 - apostrophes

Good luck!

MARGARET EARLEY

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Pre-release Booklet 2010

Section A: Media texts

This anthology of texts is for Paper 1 in the exam. Section A, Question 1 will focus on 2 or 3 of these pieces. It is therefore important that you spend as much time as possible preparing the material; obviously the more prepared you are, the more successful you will be.

You will not be allowed to take the booklet into the exam with you, or any other papers or notes. You will be issued with a new copy of the appropriate section for use in the exam.

You can therefore annotate your copy of the booklet when you do your preparation.

Annotation may include:

- underlining / highlighting key words / phrases;
- brief notes on content, language, structure, imagery, audience, layout;
- explanations of vocabulary.

It is important not to over-annotate the text.

If you add too much highlighting / underlining / notes you will find it very difficult to read the texts, which won't be very helpful. It may be useful to annotate in pencil first.

Question 2 in Section A of the exam will ask you to comment on a text / texts that you will not have prepared. The work you do on the pre-release material will help you to plan your response to this.

Finally, remember that these are **media texts**. It is important that you consider style, presentation and fitness for purpose as well as content.

BEFORE YOU START

1. Number the paragraphs in the article.
2. Read through the article twice.
3. Look up the meaning of any unfamiliar vocabulary and write it above the word in your booklet.

The "theme" of the articles seems to be "escape" of some form. It would be worth considering who is escaping and from what in each case.

RADICAL REFORMS TO SET CHINA'S FARMERS FREE

SOURCE

The Guardian – national daily broadsheet newspaper

- Think about the readership for this newspaper.
- How interested / knowledgeable would the readership be about world affairs?
- How do you think this could affect the way the article will be written?
- Why do you think the reporter's name and location is included?
- What is a broadsheet newspaper?

CONTENT

Headline – fairly long and straightforward; note the use of alliteration.

There are 2 further sub-headings, both in larger text and in bold.

- How do these further explain the focus of the article?
- Find another example of alliteration.
- What do you understand by "spur"?
- What is your reaction to the term "peasants"?

Paragraph 1 – introduces the subject of the article in a single complex sentence.

- Pick out and underline / highlight the facts.
- What is suggested by the use of the word "bold" to describe the proposals?
- Is this an opinion or a fact?
- What does "liberate" suggest about their possible effects?

Paragraph 2 – gives more information about the plans.

- What 2 actions may farmers be able to take?
- What do experts hope will be the 3 benefits of these plans?
- Make sure you know the meaning of "plenary" and "collateral".

Paragraph 3 – further reasons for the plans.

- What is the government anxious to do and why?
- How will "spreading wealth to the countryside" help?
- By "Beijing" the writer means the government which is based there. What government priorities are mentioned?
- Find an example of an opinion in this paragraph.

Paragraph 4 – comments on previous government policies.

- When was the government concerned with the Chinese countryside in the past?
- How did this change and how quickly?
- What is the meaning of “rejuvenate” as it is used here?
- What is suggested by describing the rural workers as “underemployed”?

Paragraph 5 – considers how the new proposals will help the country’s economy.

- What is meant by “unprecedented”?
- What effects did urban construction have?
- What does the use of “swallowed” suggest about the writer’s attitude?
- In what 3 ways do they hope the new measures will help?
- What is “the major component” of “recent inflation scares”?
- How does the use of “surging” support the idea of “inflation scares”?

Paragraph 6 – factual information about the rural inhabitants of China in a single complex sentence which puts the proposals into perspective.

- What is the effect of the statistics quoted here? What do they tell us about China?
- What is suggested by “heaving”?
- Is this a fact or an opinion?

Paragraph 7 – concludes by stating statistics about the urban / rural gap.

- Why is this relevant?
- Do you find it an appropriate concluding paragraph? What are your reasons?
- What comparison is made between the “urban rich” and the “rural poor”?
- What do you think are the implications for the proposals mentioned earlier?

STYLE

The article is mainly factual, including a number of statistics. A couple of opinions are implied, however.

- Do you feel the reporter has an opinion about this issue? He is reporting from Beijing so presumably has a sense of life in China.
- Does the article enable you to form an opinion about the proposals?
- Does it give you an idea of the situation in China?

The paragraphs are fairly short, despite their complex structure and content. This makes the article seem more accessible and may, perhaps be more encouraging to the reader.

- Do you think this is so? Why might this be the case?

The sentences are complex and lengthy. Paragraphs 1 and 6 consist of single sentences. There is some subject-specific vocabulary – eg - “collateral”, “consumer”, “productivity” etc.

- What does this suggest about the readers of this type of article?

PRESENTATION

There is one large colour picture above the headline.

- What impression does it create? (What is the woman doing? How is she dressed? What does a large-brimmed straw hat signify in many cultures?)
- What effect does this image have on your expectations of the article?
- How does it relate to the headline and the whole article?
- Having read the article, does the picture affect your response to it?
- Does the presentation help to convey the meaning of the article? Or does it distract from, or interfere with, the meaning?
- Do you think this is a front-page article? Why? What section of the newspaper might this article appear in?

EXAM PREPARATION

- Can you detect the writer’s attitude to these proposals? How impartial do you find the article?
- Summarise the reasons given for these changes in China.
- What impressions do you get of China today from the article?

WHY RETIRING IN THE SUN CAN COME WITH A REAL DARK SIDE

SOURCE

Manchester Evening News – regional, daily newspaper.

- What type of people do you think would read this newspaper?
- How might they differ from readers of *The Guardian*?
- The reporter's name is mentioned, but not location. Does that matter?
- How do regional, or local, newspapers differ from national newspapers?

CONTENT

Headline – long and with some information about the topic.

- What sort of ideas come to mind as to the meaning of “a real dark side”?
- How does this idea relate to the sun?
- How does the headline try to engage the reader?

Beneath the headline is a sub-heading that sheds light on the headline's meaning. However the real topic is still not completely clear.

- Note the wordplay on “cost” and “costas”.
- What is suggested by the phrase “jetting off”?

Paragraph 1 – introduces the subject.

- What reason is given for couples retiring abroad?
- How does the writer use contrast to explain this?
- What literary technique is used to further emphasise this? Highlight or underline this.

Paragraph 2 – an incomplete sentence provides another reason.

(This is no longer the case of course; you need to bear in mind that the article was published in 2008.)

- What is this further reason?

Paragraph 3 – more background.

- What may people need to do in order to live abroad?
- Which 2 phrases make this lifestyle sound appealing?

Paragraph 4 – more contrast.

- What is the effect of beginning the paragraph with a question?
- What is being contrasted here?
- Find and highlight / underline another example of alliteration.
- What is the effect of “glistening”?
- What does “ ‘des res’ ” suggest?

Paragraph 5 – begins to identify the “dark side”.

- What is the effect of placing “Sadly” at the beginning of the sentence?
- How is alliteration used here?

Paragraph 6 – introduces Jim Crook, a local man, who retired to Tenerife but does not explain why.

- Why does the article mention an individual example, or case in point?
- Is it significant that he comes from the local area where the newspaper is published?

Paragraph 7 – explains his significance.

- What has changed for Jim since moving?
- What problems has this caused and for whom?
- How do we know that this is a difficult problem for his daughter?

(Urmston is a town in the Greater Manchester area)

Paragraph 8 – further explains Jim and Jackie’s problem.

- Why is Jim’s Alzheimer’s more difficult to cope with in Tenerife?
- What is suggested by the word “Crucially” and its position?

Paragraph 9 – more details

- What is the effect of not being able to claim for Carer’s Allowance?

Paragraphs 10, 11 and 12 – a quotation from Jackie. Each part of her statement is in a separate paragraph.

- What is the effect of separating her words like this?
- What does she think would be the effect of bringing him home and why?
- What does she feel is unfair about her father’s situation and why?
- How adequate is the attention he is getting in Tenerife?
- How does her reference to the Lottery convey the extent of her problem?

Paragraphs 13 and 14 - introduces the views of Age concern.

- What points do they make?
- What does their view suggest about the problem?
- What is the effect of the statistics quoted?
- Which word quoted has an emotive impact?
- Why does the writer include the views of a known organisation?

Paragraph 15 – contains advice from Age Concern.

- What does Age Concern regard as essential for people retiring abroad?
- In what situations is this most important?

Paragraphs 16, 17 and 18 – raise other concerns.

- What other potential problem is mentioned?
- What 2 pieces of advice do they give?
- Why are Age Concern's remarks split into separate paragraphs?

STYLE

The article contains a mixture of fact and opinion; make sure you can pick out examples of each.

- What is the effect of this on the reader?

There is plenty of description used with some use of literary techniques, especially alliteration.

Paragraphs are short, with few complex sentences and mainly straightforward vocabulary.

- What impact do these style choices have on the reader?

There are several quotations, from a family member and the charity, Age Concern.

- Why do you think these have been included as direct quotations?

PRESENTATION

One large colour picture illustrates the article. A quotation from Age Concern is positioned centrally within the text, in bold on a shaded background. The first letter of the main text of the article is greatly enlarged. There is a lengthy sub-heading following the headline. Next to the colour image is a caption with a heading in red above a sentence that summarizes the article.

- How appropriate do you find the picture? Does it reflect the purpose of the article? Decide on the reasons for your views.
- What does the quotation in bold text on a shaded background suggest about the purpose of the article? What effect would this have on the reader?
- What is the effect of the greatly enlarged letter M at the beginning of the article?
- How is this message reflected in the headline and sub-heading below it?
- Why do you think the caption next to the image is in red?
- Does the sentence in the caption accurately summarize the article?
- What is the overall impact of the layout? Does the presentation help to convey the meaning of the article? Or does it make it harder to understand?
- What section of the newspaper might this article appear in?

EXAM PREPARATION

- Summarize the advantages and disadvantages of retiring abroad.
- Write a letter to an elderly friend or relative who is considering moving abroad to live and who has asked for your advice.

EXAM TYPE QUESTION

- Both “Radical reforms...” and “Why retiring to the sun...” are articles about different kinds of escape. Compare and contrast how these articles are presented.

You should refer to:

- The use of fact and opinion
- The use of quotations
- The layout and presentation
 - The use of examples of individual people.

I ADDER LUCKY ESCAPE

SOURCE

Daily Mirror – daily national tabloid newspaper.

- What do you know about the readership of the *Daily Mirror*?
- How might this differ from *The Guardian*?
- What differences would you expect in the content of the two newspapers?
- How do you think their style would differ?
- What is a ‘tabloid’ newspaper?
- What are ‘red top’ newspapers? How do they differ from broadsheet newspapers?
- Two reporters names are included, together with an email address. Why do you think two people reported on this story? Why is an email address given for one of them?

CONTENT

Headline – there are 3 headlines here. The main one is the largest; the other two add further detail. We are also told that this article is an “exclusive”.

- What is the purpose of these headlines?
- What is a strapline?
- Explain the wordplay in the main headline.
- How does “Paul’s relief...” expand on the earlier line “Star in drama...”?

Paragraph 1 – begins to give the facts in a single simple sentence.

- What is the effect of positioning “Relieved” as the first word of the article?
- Pick out the facts; can you find two opinions?

Paragraph 2 – gives a little more information and Paul O’Grady’s reaction to his experience.

- Pick out the facts.
- What is Paul’s attitude to what happened?

Paragraphs 3, 4, 5 and 6 – continue O’Grady’s story by quoting him.

- Explain exactly what happened.
- Pick out and underline / highlight the facts and opinions. (Use one colour for fact and another for opinions.)
- How is Paul O’Grady presented? Which words are important in this?

- What is the effect of the following words: “streaming”, “gushing”, “cool-headed” and “ushered”?

Paragraphs 7 and 8 – continue to report further events.

- Who did O’Grady contact?
- What advice was he given?
- Pick out and underline / highlight the facts and opinions.
- How is the contrast between “anxiously” and “merely” used? Which one seems to support the impression of these events given earlier?

Paragraphs 9, 10 and 11 – supply facts about the danger of adders.

- What effects can an adder bite cause?
- What reassuring fact is included?

Paragraph 12 – back to Paul O’Grady.

- What was the outcome of the “attack”?

Paragraphs 13, 14 and 15 – a statement from O’Grady’s spokeswoman.

- How does she describe his reaction?
- How does this support the earlier description (para 2)?
- How does she explain the attack?

Paragraphs 16 and 17 – the views of a snake expert.

- How does she add to the story? Fact or opinion?
- What 2 reassuring comments does she add?
- What is the significance of adders not being aggressive?

Paragraph 18 – more factual information, O’Grady has been forgotten.

- What else are we told about adders?

STYLE

The article reports this “attack” but also includes input from an expert and general information about adders. It contains a mixture of fact and opinion throughout.

Paragraphs are short; all but 2 contain a single sentence. Most sentences are simple or compound; there are only 4 that are complex.

There are a number of adjectives and adverbs; most of these refer to O’Grady and his wound.

- Why do you think adjectives and adverbs have been used in this way?
- Pick out 2 or 3 and decide on their effect.

There is a mixture of quotation from 3 people, and the article was written by two people. What is added by using quotations?

PRESENTATION

Over half of the space is occupied by pictures and headlines, which rather dominate the page, together with the 2 blocks of white text on a bright red background. One of the headlines is in yellow; another in white on a black background, and the third in heavy black bold font on a white background.

- How appropriate do you find the pictures?
- What do you notice about the caption?
- What is the effect of the way “exclusive” is presented?
- Why has one quotation been highlighted in a red speech bubble?
- What section of the newspaper might this article appear in?

EXAM PREPARATION

- What have you learnt about Paul O’Grady from this article?
- Write a factual account about the dangers of adders based on the facts in the article.

LITTLE MISS BLISS'S LETTERBOX DRAMA

SOURCE

Liverpool Echo – regional daily newspaper.

- Readership will be similar to that of the *Manchester Evening News*.
- The reporter is female. Why do you think the newspaper sent a female reporter to cover this story?

CONTENT

Headline – gives a little information, use of rhyme, assonance and alliteration. The sub-heading adds some more detail.

- How does this headline try to attract the reader's attention?

Paragraph 1 – explains the main facts of the story in a straightforward style.

Paragraphs 2 and 3 – expand on the main facts.

Paragraphs 4, 5, 6 and 7 – Bliss's mother gives her account of the incident.

- Why have her words been split into 4 paragraphs?
- What do you notice about the vocabulary used by the mother?
- What does this add to her account?

Paragraph 8 – 3rd person account of what happened next.

- Why are we told she "is about to become a student nurse"?

Paragraph 9 – continues the mother's account.

Paragraph 10 – how Bliss was rescued.

- Underline / highlight the facts and opinions.

Paragraphs 11 and 12 – Ms Heskin's response.

- What is the effect of describing Bliss's arm as "little"?

Paragraph 13 – mainly background information.

- How suitable do you find the phrase "escaped unscathed"?

Paragraphs 14 and 15 – continues Ms Heskin's comments.

- What are we reminded of in her final words?

STYLE

The article is written in a straightforward style, in short paragraphs and mainly simple and compound sentences. Except for the headline, there are no literary techniques used. Much of the content is factual, but there are a few opinions included in the second half.

- The style is much simpler than that of “I Adder Lucky Escape”; why do you think this is?
- Why are the paragraphs so short?
- Why is the language so straightforward?
- Why does so much of the article consist of reported speech from Ms Heskin?
- What is the effect of this ‘story within a story’ technique?

PRESENTATION

Again the pictures and headlines dominate the page. The captions are long and similar in structure. The headlines and one caption are in white text on a black background. One caption is in black text on a white background. The first paragraph quoting from Ms Heskin’s account is in bold.

- How effective do you find the pictures? Why do you think they have been chosen?
- What proportion of the page is headline space? Picture-filled? Written text?
- In what way are the 2 captions similar? In what way are they different?
- Why is one of the captions formatted in the same way as the story (i.e. in black text on a white background.)
- Why is the first paragraph of Ms Heskin’s account in bold?
- How successful do you think the layout would be in persuading the reader to read the article?
- What section of the newspaper might this article appear in?

EXAM TYPE QUESTION

- Both “I Adder A Lucky Escape” and “Little Miss Bliss’s Letterbox Drama” are reports about accidents in which no serious harm is done. Compare and contrast how these events are presented.

You should refer to:

- The use of fact and opinion
- The use of quotations
- The layout and presentation
- The presentation of the “victims”

HOW TO DIE “THE OREGON WAY”

SOURCE

The Guardian – refer back to article one for information on this

- The journalist’s name features prominently in the sub-heading. Why might this be?

CONTENT

Headline – short and quite intriguing.

The sub-heading below explains what the headline means. Note the use of alliteration.

Paragraph 1 – introduces the subject of death and, in particular, our concern about it by listing a number of situations in which we might die. The style is emotive and aims to engage our attention.

- The article begins by posing a question; what is the effect of this?
- List the six possible types of death that are mentioned.
- Adverbs are used to influence our reaction to these; highlight / underline them.
- What is the effect of the verb choices “screaming” and “croaking”?
- The final scenario (“Or in hospital...”) aims to influence the way we respond; what response does the writer want to achieve? Which details contribute to this effect?
- What is the meaning of “intravenously”?
- What does Whitehorn (the journalist) assume about the reader’s attitude in the final sentence?
- Who is Woody Allen?
- Why does Whitehorn include a reference to Woody Allen? How does this affect the emotional tone of the first paragraph?

Paragraph 2 – gives an overview of the attitude of other countries towards assisted suicide and comments on that of Britain and the US. The final sentence leads into the following paragraph.

- Why does she use the phrase “tried to bring death more under our control”?
- What does she mean?
- Which countries are mentioned as allowing “assisted suicide”?
- Why does she say she has always thought this “wouldn’t work in Britain” and the US? (1 reason for each.)
- How does her example of “a sad old woman” reflect the opening paragraph?
- What is your reaction to this phrase?
- What does she mean by “the clued up and determined” and why does she use this phrase?

Paragraph 3 – deals with the concerns in Oregon when physician-assisted suicide was legalised there.

- There are 5 main concerns; underline / highlight these and number them.
- Note the use of lists of 3 (triadic structure) and of pairs.
- Comment on the effectiveness of the following words as they are used here: “dire”, “tiresome”, “pour in”, “nightmare”, “maverick”.
- Why does she give details of Jack Kevorkian?
- Make sure you know the meaning of: “implemented”, “maverick”, “palliative”.

Paragraph 4 – deals with problems and safeguards put in place.

- What was reported in the *British Medical Journal*?
- Which word tells us that this has not been proven?
- Underline / highlight the 4 safeguards and number them.
- How and why does the phrase “shunt mom into her grave” contrast with the rest of the paragraph? Why “mom” not “mum”?
- Make sure you understand: “lethal”, “barbiturates” “avaricious”.

Paragraph 5 – continues to detail the safeguards.

- Add to your list from para 4.

STYLE

The style is fairly complex, with lengthy paragraphs and mostly complex sentences. Occasionally very short sentences are used for effect. There are also some colloquial expressions.

- Make sure you can identify these and can explain the effect they have and why.

The vocabulary is also quite demanding and speaks to a reader who is familiar with the words used.

Although no opinion is stated, the report is clearly supportive of assisted suicide arrangements.

- Pick out words and phrases which illustrate the writer’s attitude.

PRESENTATION

The article is presented simply using neutral tones as background. The picture of the open bottle of pills and white pills in the foreground is hazy and out of focus. The first word of the article (How) begins with an enlarged letter H.

- Why is the illustration in the foreground but out of focus?
- How do the colours affect our mood?
- Why is the range of tones fairly neutral? Why do you think the page designer stayed away from bright colours and sharply focussed pictures?
- Why do you think the first letter (H) is enlarged?
- Explain how effective you find the presentation of this article and why.
- What section of the newspaper might this article appear in?

EXAM PREPARATION

- Explain, in your own words, the risks of legalising assisted suicide. How can these problems be overcome?
- What is the attitude of the writer to this issue? Support your answer by close reference to the text.

REVEALED: THE GREAT ESCAPE OF 1918

SOURCE

The Observer – national daily broadsheet.

- Which of the newspapers used so far in the booklet would have a similar readership?

CONTENT

Headline – fairly straightforward but also dramatic in impact, note the use of capital letters. Explained by the sub-heading beneath.

- What are we told about the escape?
- What aspect of these events is the writer focussing on here?

Paragraph 1 – introduces the topic and explains why it is being featured.

- Which words emphasise the importance of these events?
- Explain the remark about Steve McQueen.
- What is suggested about the significance of these events? Which word tells us this?
- Make sure you understand: “pioneered”, “subterfuge”, “counterparts”

Paragraph 2- continues the same points, but in more detail.

- Why are we perhaps not aware of this “escape”?
- Where and why is the exhibition being shown?
- What is the meaning of “eclipsed” as used in the article?
- What is suggested by “audacious”?
- What is the “Armistice”?

Paragraph 3 – gives details of where the escape took place.

- Find out about “The Great Escape” and Colditz.
- What are we told about Holzminden?
- What do you think the writer means by “brutal”?

Paragraph 4 – begins to relate what happened. This is very factual.

- What are we told about the camp in the first sentence?
- Note the shortness of the second sentence; what is the effect of this?
- How did these prisoners plan to escape?
- What is a “perimeter fence”?
- List the 3 Germans who helped them.

- Why did the female typist assist?

Paragraph 5 - details the preparations for escape.

- What 3 items did the prisoners make?
- How was the tunnel dug?
- How difficult do you think this would have been and why?

Paragraph 6- problems and some success.

- Why did some of the prisoners almost ruin the plot?
- What facts are we given about the final tunnel?
- How successful was the escape?

Paragraph 7 – the results of the plan.

- How many men managed to escape?
- What happened to them?
- What happened to those who didn't make it?
- What is meant by "neutral"?

Paragraph 8 – aims of the exhibition.

- What are these?

Paragraph 9 – more about the exhibition.

- Who was Wilfred Owen? What was the name of his most famous poem?
- What is the Military Cross?
- Why was the exhibition called "In Memoriam"? What does this mean? Who wrote the famous poem called "In Memoriam"?

Paragraph 10 - finally we are given details of the dates of the exhibition and details of its website.

- Where is the exhibition being held?
- How can you find out more about the exhibition?

STYLE

The article is written in a straightforward style straightforward vocabulary. Despite fairly lengthy paragraphs it would be accessible to the average reader. It is mainly factual but there are some opinions.

- Underline / highlight these opinions.

The account is logically organised, explaining clearly how the escape was planned and carried out. There are few adjectives and adverbs.

- What effect does this have?

Note the lack of opinion about those who did not succeed.

- This story could easily have been sensationalised or made much more dramatic; why do you think the writer has not done this?
(You need to think about the nature of the publication too.)

PRESENTATION

There is only one black and white photograph; the central position of this makes it stand out. The headline runs across the entire article. The sub-heading is in grey. The picture caption identifies the man in the picture and explains his significance in the story of the escape. Beneath the caption there is an acknowledgement to the maker and owner of the source image.

- Why do you think this photograph has been chosen?
- Why is the image maker's name acknowledged?
- What section of the newspaper might this article appear in?

EXAM PREPARATION

- Write a factual account of the escape from Holzminden.
- What impressions have you formed of the prisoners? Support your answer by referring closely to the text.

WIN! A FAMILY HOLIDAY IN CUBA

SOURCE

Take A Break – weekly puzzle magazine which offers prizes.

- What type of people do you think would buy this magazine?
- Where does the name of the magazine appear?

CONTENT

This informs readers about the prize they could win in this edition of the magazine. The textbox in the bottom right hand corner is an advertisement for the same trip with *First Choice*, a holiday company. This means that the main text is not simply trying to persuade the reader to enter the competition, but is also advertising holidays that can be purchased. You should therefore be looking for advertising techniques.

Heading – colourful, dramatic, and splashed across a large picture. The sub-heading: “Star Prize” appears above the article text.

Paragraph 1 – uses a question and answer format to entice the reader.

- How does the opening question make the prize sound appealing?
- What type of person would it appeal to?

Paragraph 2 – continues to describe the prize

- What attractions are mentioned?
- Why is the verb “flying” used instead of “When you fly”? What does it imply?

Paragraph 3 – details of the hotel

- What facilities does the hotel have?
- What is meant by “eco-friendly”?
- What is the effect of “dedicated”?
- Who would it appeal to?

Paragraph 4 – further details

- What else does the prize include?
- What else does the hotel offer?
- How does the final sentence try to persuade the reader? What is the implication?

Paragraph 5 – gives factual information about the holiday

- Are there any limitations to the prize?

Textbox – informs about *First Choice* holidays in Cuba

- How do these details try to include a wider appeal than the prize being offered?

STYLE

The main text is written in a simple, straightforward style with lots of everyday adjectives. Paragraphs are short and each focuses on a single aspect. It is persuasive in tone. There are several exclamation marks. Throughout the piece the reader is spoken to directly by the use of “you”.

- Why do 3 of the paragraphs end in an exclamation mark?
- What is the effect of addressing the reader directly?

The textbox is more factual with only a little description.

- Underline / highlight the adjectives.

PRESENTATION

The whole page is eye-catching and colourful. The main features of the prize are listed centrally in a colour that stands out and also reflects other items on the page.

- Is there anything missing from this list?

There is a selection of pictures all brightly captioned positions on a background of an empty beach.

- What is suggested by this background?
- Which details in the text does this relate to?
- Why has pale blue been chosen for the text background?
- What section of the magazine might this advertisement appear in?

EXAM PREPARATION

- Explain how the details here and the layout of the page may influence the reader to enter for the prize. How successful do you think it would be? Give reasons for your answer.

THE KGB'S LONG WAR AGAINST RUDOLF NUREYEV

SOURCE

Telegraph.co.uk – website of *The Daily Telegraph* – national daily broadsheet.

- Who might use this website?
- How do we know which section of the website this is from?
- Does the journalist's name appear? Where?
- Who was Rudolf Nureyev? When was he born? When did he die?
- What is the date this article was published? Why was Nureyev in the news then?

CONTENT

Headline – very straightforward

- Why is the font size smaller here than in a newspaper?

Paragraph 1 – gives a synopsis or summary of the article in bold text.

- What seem to be the main elements of the story?
- What 2 details are we told about Nureyev?
- Pick out an example of informal language.
- The writer uses a metaphor here; underline / highlight this. Where is it repeated later?

Paragraph 2 – basic details about Nureyev's defection to the West.

- What was the reaction of the KGB?
- What else are we told about Nureyev?
- Find another example of informal language.

Paragraph 3 – gives some of the reasons for the KGB's response.

- What is added to our picture of Nureyev?
- Note the alliterative effect of "flouting" and "flirting"; what is the effect of these word choices?

Paragraph 4 – the KGB's reaction.

- What measures did the KGB take to try to keep Nureyev in the Soviet Union?

Paragraph 5 and 6 – give details of his defection.

- How did the KGB attempt to stop him leaving for London?
- How are they described?
- What ideas about the KGB are being referred to by "the inevitable raincoats"?

- Note the repetition of a phrase from the opening paragraph.
- Why is Nureyev’s defection called a “leap to freedom”? Why is “leap” an appropriate choice for Nureyev?
- What is the ominous note in the final sentence?

Paragraph 7 – the reaction in the Soviet Union.

- Why was this event “particularly embarrassing” for them?
- What had Gagarin achieved? (You will need to explain “pioneering”.)
- What is suggested about their attitude for Nureyev? Find a quotation to support this.
- What effect did this event have on the Soviet Union? What is “propaganda” and how would this have affected it?
- How did the West react?

Paragraph 8 – comments on the West’s reaction.

- In what ways is Nureyev’s defection “practical” rather than “ideological”?
- To what extent had he planned to defect?
- Pick out another metaphor. Why is this an appropriate choice to refer to Nureyev?

STYLE

The article is straightforward in content and is easy to follow. Paragraphs are generally short.

- Why would this be appropriate for a web article?

There are several informal phrases throughout the article which you may not expect if you read the *Telegraph* newspaper.

- Why do you think this informal style has been adopted? Use examples to explain its effect.

Throughout the article there are references to the KGB’s “revenge” which seems to be building up slight suspense.

- Pick out and underline / highlight these.

Unfortunately this is only page 1 of 3, so we don’t find out how the KGB’s “long war” ended!

PRESENTATION

The article is from a newspaper website. As access to the website is free, the newspaper uses advertising to help pay for the website’s costs. The article is surrounded by

information and advertising. What do these tell us about the Western culture Nureyev defected to?

- Does this detract in any way from the article, or does it add something? Say what you think.
- Is the layout helpful and clear, or does it get in the way of the content of the article?
- Is the article on a webpage, or is it from a blog? How do you know? What does a newspaper use **pages** for?* What does it use **blogs** for?*

There is a small black and white photograph and a caption.

- How appropriate do you find these in supporting the article?
- Why do you think a black and white image was chosen? What sort of image is it? How would you describe its mood or atmosphere? Does it convey information that Nureyev was a ballet dancer? Does it suggest anything about his character or personality? Do these fit with the caption, and/or with what is said about Nureyev in the article?
- Make sure you understand “capricious”. Can you find other words in the passage which create the same impression?

EXAM TYPE QUESTION

- Both “The KGB’s war against Rudolph Nureyev” and “Revealed: the great escape of 1918” concerns people whose escapes were bids for freedom. How is this presented in each article?
- You should include:
 - the use of fact and opinion;
 - the nature of the escape and what we learn about the escapee;
 - the presentation of the articles.

* On a newspaper website, web **pages** are mainly used for reporting news items. **Blogs** (which tend to be longer, and include much more in the way of discussion and opinion) often relate to an item of news, and may link to the webpage containing the main item of news. The main news item here was almost certainly the fact that, in September 2007 (when this blog on Nureyev appeared), Russian historians began to publish KGB documents online. See:

<http://irzikevicius.wordpress.com/2007/09/04/kgb-documents-on-line-welcome-to-the-baltics/>

Nureyev’s status as a famous Russian who had slipped through the KGB’s fingers and defected to the West is one that many people would want to check in the KGB’s files. His case is therefore one that can be used effectively to publicize the new website that gives online access to KGB documents.

The article can be identified as a blog both by its content (long and discursive), and by the fact that it includes a dateline under the headline.

Section B – Poems from Different Cultures and Traditions

The eight poems in this section are either written by English-speaking writers from different cultures and traditions. Some are serious, some humorous, some are both.

The information above the poem is there to help you, read it carefully.

In the exam you will be given another copy of these poems. On the exam paper you will find another, unseen poem from a different culture. You will be asked to write about that poem and **one named poem** from the booklet.

The question will ask you to consider some of the following:

- the way of life in the poems
- the poet his / her feelings towards the events in the poems
- the settings of the poems
- the language and form used in the poems.

PREPARATION

- You should annotate the poems as you did the articles in the previous section.
- You will find it useful to number the lines of the poems – maybe every 5 or 10.
- Look up the meaning of any unfamiliar words and write it down.

Look for the following:

Language and Form

- length regularity of verses (stanzas)
- length of lines; are they similar?
- use of full-stops and other punctuation
- use of rhyme
- refrains
- poetic devices – similes, metaphors, alliteration, assonance, personification
- any noticeable rhythm
- choice of words, especially dialect / local words
- use of repetition.

Content

- type of poem, e.g. narrative, lyric
- what happens in the poem
- who is mentioned / described how?
- details of the lives presented in the poems how they differ from your own

- any “message” the poet is trying to convey to the reader.

Finally, you need to decide what **you** think of the poem:

- Do you like it? Why / why not?
- Does it surprise you? If so, how and why?
- Have you learnt anything from it about the people / place it features?
- Does it affect the way you think about your life?

When you read the unseen poem in the exam ask yourself the same questions.

WAITING FOR THE BARBARIANS

Cavafy relates events using a question and answer format; through questions and answers the situation unfolds.

At first glance it seems as if there are 2 speakers; however, as the poem progresses we realise that there is only one and that we are listening to the internal dialogue of an intelligent observer who has a clear grasp of what ought to be happening, but isn't.

The setting, ancient Rome, is very different from our world today, but its government was based upon the democratic process of ancient Greece that is also the foundation of our modern society. As we are told in the introduction, ancient Greece and Rome were often at war with outsiders. The final lines of the poem suggest an unusual way of looking at a society that was constantly being invaded. Cavafy is interested in the question of how such powerful civilizations as ancient Greece and Rome came to be overcome by barbarians. The decline and fall of Rome in about 480 AD happened after three hundred years or so of recurrent invasions from outsiders to the north, generally known as barbarians. He questions its leadership, government, and attitude of the people themselves that allowed this to happen. What makes a great civilization fall?

In the last two lines of the poem the 'we' of the first line has become 'us': 'what's going to happen to us ... ?' This includes the reader and extends the poem's reference to modern democracies. In the poem, the people are expecting the barbarians to invade and rule over them. Their attitude to this is passive; expectant but submissive. Is this what happens when great civilizations fall? Do people eventually give in to the barbarians? And if there were no barbarians, what would keep a society together? In Israel and Northern Ireland, for example, what kept democracy alive internally was the threat of war or violence from external forces. Once the external threat is removed, internal problems arise and democracy is threatened from within. So the outsiders, in a strange way, provide a 'solution' for keeping democracy alive within a society.

There are 35 lines in total, divided into sections of varying length. These correspond with the questions and answers which reflect natural speech rhythms. Although the poem seems to be irregular, there is some sense of a pattern. There is a lot of repetition which seems like a refrain at times. Notice the change in tone in line 27.

You will find a glossary at the end of this section.

Title

- What does the word "barbarians" suggest to you?
- What type of person do you think of?
- What is people's usual reaction to them?

- Can you think of any people who we might regard as “barbarian” today? Is Cavafy using the term literally, or is he suggesting an attitude or state of mind? Are there barbarians within individual societies, or are they always outsiders?

Lines 1 – 2 – a simple Q and A, setting the poem.

- What is suggested by “assembled”?

Lines 3 – 7 – outlines the democratic process

- Who else is there?
- What are they doing? What would they normally be doing?
- What reasons are given for them not doing this?
- What is suggested by the rhetorical question “What’s the point...?”?

Lines 8 – 14 refer to the emperor.

- What 3 questions are asked about his behaviour?
- What does the answer tell us about the emperor?
- What do “loaded” “imposing” tell us about his attitude to the barbarians?
- What is suggested by “enthroned”?
- Is the emperor showing good leadership?

Lines 15 – 22 – refers to figures of state.

- How are they dressed and decorated?
- What does this tell us about their position in society?
- Which words tell us that they look impressive?
- What reason is given for their appearance?
- “Dazzle” refers to the sparkling jewels; who is intended to be dazzled? How does this confirm our view of them?
- Note how the speaker is gradually noticing more detail. What is he beginning to realise about the government figures he sees?
- Do these officials demonstrate good government?

Lines 23 – 26 – the orators are missing.

- What would they usually be doing?
- What is suggested by “distinguished”?
- How does this differ from the barbarians’ views?
- How does this confirm our opinion of this type of person?
- Who are the orators in our society?

Lines 26 – 30 – the climax of the poem

- How do the questions change in this section?
- What is happening?
- How are people behaving?
- Why is line 28 in brackets?

Lines 31 – 33 – what has happened?

- What is the reason for this change in people's behaviour?
- What else are we told about them?
- Why does this make the people's reaction surprising? How would you expect them to feel?
- What does the phrase 'night has fallen' suggest?

Lines 34 35 – a final question and comment

- What is the speaker's response to this news?
- What is the tone here?
- What does line 35 suggest about their attitude towards the barbarians?
- How were they "a kind of solution"?
- Note that the poet does not tell us how the emperor and government react. What does this suggest?

LANGUAGE STYLE

- Plain style simple language
- Direct language
- Underlying sense of irony; where do we begin to notice this?
- Internal monologue
- Use of single adjectives
- Almost child-like nature of the early questions
- Change in the nature of the questions as realisation begins.
- Question answer format
- Use of rhetoric as a device in the poem.

OVERVIEW

- The lack of any sense of relief at the end when they realise the barbarians aren't coming may seem surprising at first. What do the barbarians represent to the people, and to the government? Why might they be anxious?
- Does it matter who the barbarians are?

- The poet seems to be suggesting that every empire / country needs to have enemies; why might this be so? How can enemies / figures of terror be used by government? Can you think of an example of this in recent times?
- Explain how the development of the questions and answers gradually reveal the speaker's attitude.
- How does Cavafy want us to respond to the question: 'what's going to happen to us?'

GLOSSARY

Forum – assembly place for public business

Senate – supreme council of state

Consul – chief magistrate

Praetor – as above but lower in rank

Amethyst – purple gemstone

Orators - public speakers

Rhetoric – a style of public speaking, usually for a persuasive purpose

ISLAND MAN

Grace Nichols clearly sums up the poem in her one-line introduction: island man dreams of his home in the Caribbean but wakes up to the sounds of morning in London, where he now lives. The first 10 lines describe the Caribbean; line 11 is the point of transition and lines 12 – 18 focus on the reality of London.

The poem vividly describes the two different places and brings out the contrast between them, making it very clear which the island man prefers.

Title – by referring to him as “island man” we understand that this is where the man feels he belongs.

Lines 1 -10 – describe the Caribbean.

- What is the effect of the single word in the first line?
- Which words tell us that the man is imagining this scene?
- Nichols paints a very natural picture; what items does she mention?
- What senses does she appeal to?
- Find examples of alliteration; what is their effect?
- What is the effect of the rhyme in line 5?
- “Wombing” is an unusual choice of word; what does it refer to?
- What does it suggest to you and how does this relate to the “island man”?
- Why does the sun rise “defiantly”?
- Pick out the colours mentioned; what do you notice about them?

Line 11

- What is the effect of “always”?
- How does the repetition “groggily groggily” convey the man’s awakening?
- Why is there a longer gap before these words?
- What does it suggest?
- How do lines 11 and 12 link the two sections of the poem?

Lines 12 – 15 – describe the sounds of London.

- The sounds here are very unnatural; what does he hear?
- Why are “sands” mentioned? How does this word choice relate to his dream?
- What is the effect of the rhyme in this section?

Lines 16 – 18

- What effect do these sounds have?
- Why is “muffling” repeated?
- What is being muffled?
- Explain the metaphor in line 16; how does it remind us of his dream?
- What is suggested by “surge”?
- How does the repeated use of “to” reflect that he is waking up?
- What is suggested by “heaves”?

Line 19

- Why is this a single line?
- What is the effect of “another”? How is this emphasised by its position?

LANGUAGE AND STYLE

- Only one punctuation mark is used right at the end of the poem. What effect does this have on the rhythm?
- Irregular length and arrangement of lines
- Appeals to the senses
- Use of repetition
- Use of natural / unnatural imagery
- Use of contrast
- Use of metaphor, alliteration, assonance, rhyme and rhythm changes
- 3rd person

OVERVIEW

- How does the use of description and contrast convey the island man’s feelings?

SYNOPSIS OF THE GREAT WELSH NOVEL

In the poem, Webb lists a number of aspects of life in Wales as perhaps he knew it, as if these might be included in “the great Welsh novel”. The tone is light-hearted, humorous at times. Is the title to be taken seriously, or is it ironic? What is a synopsis? Could all the cultural elements of the Welsh mining valleys that Webb mentions indicate that Welsh culture has been destroyed?

The poem is written in a single stanza; make sure you number the lines of the poem; you will also find it helpful to circle the full-stops.

- The first detail mentioned is a “valley”. What may have happened to it?
- What is suggested about family life in lines 2 and 3? Note the Welsh names.
- What moral decline is mentioned in lines 4 and 5?
- What is a “Revival”?
- What are we told about religion?
- How does the preacher’s name contribute to this? Is there any other reason for this name?
- How do they spend Saturday nights?
- What type of “no good” do you think the “Free Wales Army” is up to?
- Who visits the village? What effect does he have? Why is he called “God”?
- What is happening to the railways?
- What 3 events are listed in lines 14 – 16? What is the effect of listing them without any detail or comment?
- What role would the “sensitive boy who never grows up” play in the novel?
- In lines 18 and 19 Webb mentions people leaving; where do they go? Is he being completely serious here? Why are the husbands “foolish”?
- Who and what is left?
- What do Morris’s actions suggest about the effect all these events / changes have had on Wales?
- What do you understand by the final sentence?
- What note is added by the repetition of “One is not quite sure”? Does this phrase sound as if it is an authentic part of Welsh culture? If not, what does it convey?

LANGUAGE AND STYLE

- Series of statements
- Little description, restricted to single adjectives
- Simple, straightforward language
- Written as a monologue, to be spoken. Find phrases which sound as if they’re meant to be spoken aloud.

OVERVIEW

- What can we gather about life in Wales before the poem was written?
- Is the poet suggesting that certain aspects of Welsh cultural life have disappeared? Make a list of them; what is the impact of these losses on the Welsh people and their culture?
- How realistic / far-fetched do you find the details in the poem? Could you imagine them being included in a novel (or soap opera)?
- What may Webb be suggesting about the relationship between real life and fiction?
- Consider how the poet raises serious issues by presenting them in a humorous way?
- What is the relevance of the poem to the anthology?
- If Webb is not suggesting that the culture of the Welsh mining valleys is in decline, then what else might be the message of the poem?
- You could compare the poem with Dylan Thomas's radio play, *Under Milk Wood*. (You can find this online if you search under the term 'under milk wood text'.) This is not essential for your exam, but it makes an interesting point of comparison if you would like to explore further.

NOT MY BUSINESS

The poem is about people who take no notice of injustice when it doesn't affect them, not realising that it might be their turn later. It seems very simple, like a song with a chorus. All the stanzas consist of 4 lines which form a single sentence, followed by a 3-line refrain, except for the last one which has 5 lines and no refrain.

- What happens to Akanni and Danladi?
- Is any reason given?
- How are they treated? Underline the words that show violence.
- Find a simile and a metaphor in stanza 1.
- What happens to Chinwe? Does she deserve it?
- What is the effect of the list in line 17?
- In line 18 the word “sack” could mean 2 things – her losing her job and perhaps what she finds when she goes to work, holding her possessions.
- What does “stainless record” suggest about how she did her job?
- What do all 3 have in common?
- What is the narrator in the poem concerned about?
- What does “savouring” suggest?
- What is the narrator's attitude to what has happened?
- How do you feel towards him at the end of stanza 3?
- How does he react in stanza 4 when he hears a “knock on the door”?
- Why is there an extra line and no refrain?
- “Hungry hand” and “bewildered lawn” are examples of personification. A hand cannot be hungry and a lawn cannot be bewildered. Who is “hungry” and “bewildered”?
- What is the effect of repeating “waiting”?
- How do you feel about the speaker at the end?

LANGUAGE AND STYLE

- Use of repetition
- Selective use of metaphor and simile
- Use of personification
- Rhetorical questions

OVERVIEW

- What is the message of the poem?
- What impact does the structure of the poem have on this message?

AUNT JULIA

The poet is remembering his aunt who lived in the Scottish Highlands. He conveys many details about her character and life, together with his memory of her.

Stanza 1 – his main memory seems to be of the way she spoke in Gaelic: loud and fast. Note the use of monosyllabic words in lines 1 and 2.

- How do lines 1 and 2 capture the way Aunt Julia spoke?
- How well did he cope with this?
- What is the effect of the dash in line 2?
- What impression do you get of his feelings here?
- Why are lines 3 and 4 repeated?

Stanza 2 – describes the details that he remembers about his aunt. Lines 7 – 11 describe her spinning; note the lack of punctuation in lines 9 -11.

- What does he tell us about her?
- Why does he choose these details?
- What is the effect of the dash in line 7?
- What impression do you get of her lifestyle?
- What is the effect of “paddling” in line 9?
- What effect is achieved by placing “marvellously” at the beginning of line 11?
- What does it suggest about his attitude to his aunt?

Stanza 3 – describes the experience of sleeping at Aunt Julia’s. A box bed is a bed built into a recess in a room in the cottage, separated from the room by a curtain or panel.

- Which word emphasises the darkness?
- What other memories does he have?
- Why does he include this detail? What does it tell us about how he felt staying there?

Stanza 4 – uses a series of metaphors and a repetitive structure to describe her life.

- Find examples of alliteration and onomatopoeia; what is their effect?
- How do these details contribute to the picture we already have?
- What does “flouncing” suggest about her character?
- What is the effect of the enjambment in lines 21 – 23?

Stanza 5 – begins by repeating the opening 2 lines. By the time he had learnt some Gaelic it was too late; his aunt had died. Her “silence” is emphasised by the word’s position in line 28.

- How does this description of her contrast with the first stanza?
- What is added by the alliteration (sibilance) in lines 28 and 29?
- What do you imagine by the metaphor “a seagull’s voice”?
- What emotion is suggested by the repetition in line 35?
- Who are the unanswered questions directed to?
- How does the mood / tone change in this stanza?

LANGUAGE AND STYLE

- The language varies from being plain and factual to very descriptive. Note where and when it changes. What reason can you find for this?
- Use of repetition
- Use of metaphor and alliteration
- Use of dark imagery; what does this add to your impression of Aunt Julia?

OVERVIEW

- In what ways is this poem about a different culture? How does Aunt Julia’s life differ from your own? What does Aunt Julia symbolize?
- What is the poet’s attitude to his aunt? Find evidence in the poem to support your views.
- What is the poet’s attitude to this way of life? Has it completely disappeared or do you get the impression from the poem that it still lives on?

ESCAPE JOURNEY, 1988

The poem concerns Hardi's family's journey from Kurdistan after their homeland was attacked using chemical weapons in 1988. She focuses on the physical difficulties of this journey and her feelings about them. The change of focus in the final stanza puts these into perspective.

Stanza 1 – begins during the journey, immediately introducing the difficult conditions.

- What is forcing her to crawl? What is the effect of the personification here?
- How is the struggle to cross the mountains emphasised in line 2?
- Lines 3 and 4 contain rhetorical questions; why is she asking them? What does the tone of them convey?

Stanza 2 – as the journey progresses it becomes more difficult.

- What assistance do they have?
- What sort of “smuggled goods” do you think they would have taken with them?
- What does the word “smuggled” add to our understanding of their problems?
- Why does she feel “safer” when climbing the mountain than when she is going down?
- What do we learn about the terrain? What does the last line tell us?
- What is the effect of repeating “safer” in this stanza? What is she referring to? What else does it remind us of?

Stanza 3 – describes the valley they can see below.

- In line 15 she uses a metaphor to describe the valley; pick this out and explain its effect.
- The mule owner is more down to earth; what is the whiteness? How does this add to the difficulties of their journey?
- What is she feeling in lines 17 and 18?
- What does “being rescued” tell us about how she feels?
- Why might “the rushing water” be appealing?
- What device is used in line 20; what is its effect?
- What do the 2 examples of personification (lines 1 and 20) tell us about her feelings about the difficulties of the journey?
- Which 2 words in this stanza remind us of the dangers of their journey?
- What do the descriptions here tell us about Hardi?
- What is the effect of repeating “I cannot imagine”?

Stanza 4 – moves away from Hardi to her father.

- The mule owner’s remarks seem harsh at first; what makes us realise what he means?
- How does the punctuation help?
- What 2 things does she notice about her father?
- What might have made it difficult for her father to breathe?
- What effect do they have on our understanding?
- The final line is ambiguous; in what different ways can we interpret it/?
- Note how the comma adds emphasis to the final words.
- How do you respond to this line and the poem as a whole?

LANGUAGE AND STYLE

- Use of narration, description and some direct speech
- Use of personification and metaphor

OVERVIEW

- What does the poem tell us about Hardi?
- Can you imagine making a journey like this one at the age of 14?
- Why does Hardi give the year of the journey in the title of the poem?
- Why doesn’t she mention in the poem itself what they were escaping from?

REMEMBER

The poem is written in a single stanza but can be divided into sections by content. Most of the sentences are imperatives, and begin with the title word; “Remember”. The poem therefore has a repetitive structure and is like a chant. This suggests that the poem is meant to be heard, rather than read. Throughout the poem the speaker talks directly to the reader / listener.

Lines 1 – 6 – refer to the universe – the sky, stars, sun and moon, suggesting the significance they have on our lives. Lines 5 – 6 suggest the continuation of time, controlled by these elements.

- How does the opening line relate to the reader / listener?
- What different imperative verb is used in line 2? Why?
- What is the effect of the statement in lines 4 and 5?
- Why does this sentence begin mid-line?

Lines 7 – 13 – focuses on our birth and our relationship to our parents, ancestors, and the earth. Lines 11 – 13, in the middle of the poem, are central to its message.

- What is the effect of “struggled” in line 7?
- What is suggested in lines 8 and 9?
- What is the effect of the enjambment in these lines?
- Why is “your father” mentioned separately?
- What point is made in lines 11 – 13?
- Why is this central to the poem’s idea?
- What is the effect of the repetition of the word “earth”

Lines 14 – 18 – consider the world of nature and its relevance to us. In what ways are these kinds of life similar to ours?

- Note the use of triadic structures (lists of 3).
- What is the significance of this?
- What does she want us to do? Note the change of imperative verb.
- What type of sentences are used in lines 15 and 16?
- What does the metaphor in line 16 mean?
- In what ways is the wind special?
- What type of sentence starts at the end of line 17?
- What is the effect of personifying the wind in line 17?

Lines 19 – 26 – a series of imperatives; each is a single sentence. Lines 19 – 23 briefly re-emphasise the points made earlier in balanced sentences which continue the repetitive effect of the poem. Lines 24 and 25 ask us to think about the importance of language.

- What is meant by lines 19 – 20 and 21 – 22?
- Which earlier lines do these relate to?
- Where else is the sense of motion mentioned?
- In what way are the lines balanced?
- How does “language come from this”?
- What is language compared to in the metaphor in line 24?
- What does this suggest about how we should see life?

LANGUAGE AND STYLE

- Use of repetition
- Use of imperatives
- Selective use of metaphor personification
- Direct address – “you” “your”
- Fairly simple description
- Monosyllabic words

OVERVIEW

- What is the message of the poem?
- What is the significance of the poem in this collection?

I, TOO

The poem concerns the struggle of black Americans to gain the same rights as whites; something Hughes himself had experience of. The repetition in the first AND last lines gives it a circular structure, but there is a difference which may suggest some progress. Through the use of an extended metaphor Hughes hints at the changes to come. The speaker is talking directly to us.

Stanza 1 – a single line.

- In what way can he “sing America”? Is this a reference to the national anthem? If so, what line, or lines, might he be thinking of?
- What is the effect of “too”?

Stanza 2 – introduces the idea of inequality.

- How does he describe himself? Why does he use the word “brother”?
- How is he treated differently? What is this called?
- Hughes here begins a metaphor he is to continue into the next verse. What two things are being compared; how effective do you find this?
- What is achieved by placing “But” at the beginning of line 5?
- Lines 6 and 7 continue the eating image and can be taken literally; how else could you interpret them?

Stanza 3 – continues the same image.

- Does he mean us to read “tomorrow” literally? What wider meaning could it have?
- What will have changed?
- How is the metaphor continued?
- What is suggested by “dare”
- The structure reflects that of stanza 2 but with an extra line; what is the effect of this?
- What is the effect of line 14?

Stanza 4 – introduces another aspect.

- What do you think is the most important word in this stanza? Why?
- What is he suggesting about racial inequality?
- Why is there a dash after “ashamed”?

Stanza 5 – a single line which echoes the opening of the poem.

- Note the punctuation; how does this link the 2 stanzas?

- What has changed from the opening line?
- What does this signify?

LANGUAGE AND STYLE

- Use of repetition / echoing
- Use of extended metaphor
- First person – use of “I”
- Direct address
- Circular structure
- Careful positioning of punctuation.

OVERVIEW

- How would you describe the tone of the poem: aggressive, optimistic, determined, angry, resigned?
Choose one or more of these words, or decide on words of your own and explain why you feel they describe the mood of the poem.
- How does Hughes suggest that change will occur?

EXAM TYPE QUESTION

Both “Aunt Julia” and “Synopsis of the Great Welsh Novel” give us an evocation of life in an earlier time. Compare how these poems present the past and the way of life in a particular place.

You should write about:

- What each poet tells us about the lifestyle of the people
- Their attitudes to this
- How these lifestyles compare with your own.