

## Doing Better in GCSE English Literature

In the examination, you must write about what you have read. To achieve a grade C you need to be confident in most of these aspects.

Can I?	What can I do to improve?
<p>Show that I have not just red the texts, but thought and talked about them enough to give a personal response which is <b>honest, sensitive and uses evidence from the texts.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Practise <b>finding evidence to support my view</b> of a text in 5 minutes.</li> <li>• Use pattern notes to <b>practise planning answers within 5 minutes</b>, and identify the detailed evidence to back up each point I want to make.</li> <li>• Take plans that I have prepared earlier and try writing them in the time I will have in the examination.</li> <li>• <b>Think and talk with others</b> about what an author was trying to achieve.</li> <li>• Find examples of the range of techniques the author chose to use, and <b>practise explaining to others</b> the impact of them.</li> </ul>
<p>Show that I understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• what the question is asking;</li> <li>• the need to <b>base my answer on detailed evidence from the text</b>;</li> <li>• how to use <b>appropriate language for a critical essay.</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with a partner to <b>practise highlighting key words</b> in exam questions (eg <i>Compare, Explain why</i>) so that my answer is to the point. Check that we both really know what the question is about.</li> <li>• If there are bullet points in a question, answer each one separately.</li> <li>• <b>Make sure I understand</b> (and can spell) <b>key terms</b>, such as <i>imagery, character, author, description, alliteration, metaphor, simile.</i></li> </ul>
<p>Back up what I say by giving <b>examples</b> from the texts I have studied and <b>explaining their impact on a reader.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For each text I am using <b>find and try to remember brief quotations</b> that illuminate central characters and key themes.</li> <li>• If it fits the question, use the PEE formula:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- This is my <b>point</b>.</li> <li>- Here is an <b>example</b> from the text.</li> <li>- Here is a comment to <b>explain</b> the example.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>If I quote, make it as short as possible</b></li> </ul>
<p>Compare texts by <b>identifying similarities and differences and commenting on them.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with a partner to explain <b>key elements</b> of two texts, and check that neither of us is just describing one text and then the other.</li> <li>• Practise using helpful <b>connectives</b> to structure my answer. <i>Whereas, On the other hand,</i></li> </ul>

	<p><i>Instead of</i> are useful links if I am contrasting two texts. <i>Similarly, Likewise, In the same way</i> are useful if the texts are saying more or less the same.</p>
--	--

Can I?	What can I do to improve?
<p><b>Make comments about the way a writer has chosen:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to write in a specific form (especially in poetry);</li> <li>to use particular words and images;</li> <li>to organise (ie structure) the content with readers in mind.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explain to a partner the <b>conventions</b> of a particular literary form such as the sonnet or the short story.</li> <li>Read a short piece of text and explain to a partner the <b>effect</b> of the author's special use of words or presentation. For example, say: <i>The many adjectives make the description richer and more detailed so the reader can imagine the scene more easily. Don't just say It's a good description because there are lots of adjectives.</i></li> <li>Check that I can explain how the organisation of material influences its <b>impact on readers</b>.</li> </ul>
<p>Take into account <b>different approaches</b> to texts and alternative interpretations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Look at <b>different interpretations</b> of a play or story and make short notes on differences and similarities I find.</li> <li>Using a short piece of text <b>explain</b> to a partner <b>why</b> readers in different times could see things differently and <b>why</b> the meanings a text has depend on the readers as well as on what is written.</li> </ul>
<p>Relate texts to their <b>social, cultural and historical contexts</b> and literary traditions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Find out about <b>when</b> an author was writing, and work out with a partner what this meant in terms of language, style and how the author addressed the readers of the time.</li> <li>Try to find out <b>where</b> a text was written and what this meant in terms of language, style, ideas and the expectations of readers.</li> <li>Explore and discuss ways in which <b>writers are influenced by other writers</b>.</li> <li>Remember: examiners are looking for <b>my personal response</b> to what I have read.</li> </ul>
<p>Write about literature:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>using a form suitable to</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In class or as a group, <b>look at other students' answers</b> and identify the key aspects of a</li> </ul>

<p>the purpose;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• using appropriate style and structure;</li><li>• <b>legibly and accurately</b> in terms of spelling, punctuation and grammar.</li></ul>	<p>critical essay such as tone, terminology, how to frame an argument in response to a question and how to use quotes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Practise writing</b> effective opening and concluding paragraphs.</li><li>• Try to <b>identify my strengths and weaknesses</b> as a writer; and if I need it, seek help with things like spelling, expression or punctuation.</li><li>• Learn how to <b>spell key words</b> by finding a way of remembering (ie a mnemonic) that works for me.</li></ul>
---	--