

Your summer English exam will be comprised of one section with multiple questions, will last 40 minutes and will test your reading ability. You will read a passage and answer some questions on it.

Section A: Fiction Comprehension

You have been analysing ‘Hero and Villains’ themed fiction all term, and your exam will be similar to the style of questions you have been doing. Lots of the skills you have picked up when writing about your texts will be useful for this exam.

You should be able to:

- Read and understand the passage
- Recognise commonly used language devices
- Answer in full sentences
- Comment on how the writer makes the passage interesting
- Use P.E.E. to show that you understand the text, can find the appropriate evidence and explain your choices.
- Use linking phrases like *in addition, moreover, also, furthermore* to build on your points in an answer
- Use a sophisticated vocabulary to analyse the text

Key components to look out for in a fiction text:

- Use of the first person 'I' 🧑 or the third person he/ she
- Descriptions of people
- Detailed description of place and circumstance 👁️ 👂 🏠
- Experiences that are unique and informative 😲 OR experiences that feel familiar to the reader 😊
- Use of direct speech to add to the story 🗣️
- Occasional use of humour 😂, exaggeration or other emotive language 😭
- Effective use of similes, metaphors, verbs, adverbs, adjectives to maintain the readers' interest 🤔

Look at this extract from ‘The Other Side of Truth’ by Beverly Naidoo:

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Verb — They shuffled slowly through the airport looking for exit signs but wishing fervently that their uncle would magically appear. As they approached the giant automatic doors they began shivering. It had been possible to ignore the wintry air in the café but now the chill seeped through their flimsy cotton coats, down to their bones. When they left had left Lagos the temperature had been balmy and they had felt overdressed but when the pilot announced on the place that the temperature was six degrees in London she knew they would need warmer clothes. Maybe Uncle Dele would have some for them. Sharp gusts of even colder air struck them as they reached a large archway leading to the street. It felt like they were stepping into a thousand-piece jigsaw puzzle. ——— Simile

Adjective —

Adverb —

Pathetic fallacy —

Verb — Sade grasped Femi's hand and leaned against a shop window to keep out of the stream of passers-by. Lagos was full of huge buildings but they were surrounded by light, air and space. Here each was packed against the next. Together they loomed over the narrow pavements like a thick forest of brick, concrete and glass. ——— Simile

Imagery/ metaphor —

Verb/ personification —

In your exam you will be asked to identify some methods and provide evidence:

1) Give an example of a simile. (1 mark)

Answer: An example of a simile is 'like a thick forest of brick, concrete and glass.'

You will be asked to infer (or read between the lines):

2) How do Femi and Sade feel as they arrive in London? (2 marks)

Answer: I think Femi and Sade feel afraid as everything feels so alien to them. The writer lets us know that they 'wish their uncle would appear' and the character action of Sade 'grasping' Femi's hand shows she is nervous and afraid. The verb 'grasping' also suggests she is desperate.

You will be asked to paraphrase (explain in your own words):

3) Why does London seem so strange to Femi and Sade? (1 mark)

Answer: London feels strange to Femi and Sade because they are used to a warmer climate. The freezing air of London is a shock to their system. London is one of the busiest cities in the world so it is likely that they have come from somewhere that is not as populous and fast-paced.

You will also be asked to use P.E.E:

4) How does the writer create a negative atmosphere in this passage?
(6 marks) * 1 PEE = 2 marks so you need 3 for this answer.*

Answer: The writer make the atmosphere negative in this passage by using pathetic fallacy to make the weather seem unwelcoming. Femi and Sade are nervous and the 'sharp gusts of wind' and 'wintry air' makes the cold 'seep into their bones'. These adjectives, 'sharp' and 'wintry' create a tense atmosphere as the children seem uncomfortable and unhappy. In addition, the writer uses contrast to create a negative atmosphere. London is described using the metaphor 'a stream of people' and the personification of the buildings 'looming over' the two children; it is very busy whereas Lagos had been full of 'light, air and space'. The fact they arrive at London at night, in the cold creates a negative contrast to 'balmy' Lagos. Finally the writer uses similes to create a negative atmosphere. The children are lost and confused, well described by them feeling like they were 'stepping into a thousand piece jigsaw puzzle'. We understand from this simile that they are confused and find London daunting, adding to the negative atmosphere.

Although it will be an unseen passage, it will be similar to the reading work you have done all year. Read carefully and work quickly and you will do well!

