

## Revising Paper 1 Question 5

### Step 1: Know what is expected of you in this question.

This question is worth 40 marks. It is well worth spending the time on getting it right. Spend around 45 to 50 minutes planning, writing and perfecting your response.

You have a choice of two tasks. DO NOT TRY TO DO THEM BOTH!! You will be asked to either **describe** or **narrate**. Be careful to check what is being asked of you for this question.

The examiner will be asking:

Content and organisation:

1. Is the way you're writing matched to the audience?
2. Is what you're writing a clear narrative or clear description?
3. How effective is your vocabulary, phrasing and use of language features?
4. How clearly is your writing structured?
5. Is the writing engaging? Are the ideas clearly connected?
6. Are the paragraphs clearly linked and well-organised?

Technical accuracy:

1. Is the sentence demarcation accurate?
2. Is there a range of punctuation? Is it accurate?
3. Are there a range of sentence forms?
4. Is the language and grammar secure?
5. How accurate is the spelling?
6. How broad is the vocabulary?

**Step 2: Gather examples of each writing type.** The more you read, the more you will understand how each type should look and sound.

Can you spot the description and the narration below?

**Description:** Fog everywhere. Fog up the river, where it flows among green aits and meadows; fog down the river, where it rolls defiled among the tiers of shipping and the waterside pollutions of a great (and dirty) city. Fog on the Essex marshes, fog on the Kentish heights. Fog creeping into the cabooses of collier-brigs; fog lying out on the yards, and hovering in the rigging of great ships; fog drooping on the gunwales of barges and small boats. Fog in the eyes and throats of ancient Greenwich pensioners, wheezing by the firesides of their wards; fog in the stem and bowl of the afternoon pipe of the wrathful skipper, down in his close cabin; fog cruelly pinching the toes and fingers of his shivering little 'prentice boy on deck. Chance people on the bridges peeping over the parapets into a nether sky of fog, with fog all round them, as if they were up in a balloon, and hanging in the misty clouds.

**Narration:** Eight o'clock every Tuesday morning I showed up at the vet's hospital in Menlo Park, ready to roll. The doctor deposited me in a little room on his ward, dealt me a couple of pills or a shot or a little glass of bitter juice, then locked the door. He checked back every forty minutes to see if I was still alive, took some tests, asked some questions, left again. The rest of the time I spent studying the inside of my forehead, or looking out the little window in the door. It was six inches wide and eight inches high, and it had heavy chicken wire inside the glass.

Gather more examples of descriptive and narrative writing. Use them as inspiration for writing your own.

### Step 3: Learn to plan!

Students who are good writers but do not plan, will be very unlikely to get top marks!

Your plan does not need to be huge but you do need to think carefully about the arrangement of your ideas.

Just like the writers from questions 1, 2,3 and 4 you need to plan to create effects for your reader. How will you make them feel? What do you want them to think? Understand? How will this develop from the beginning to the end of your work?

You have less than an hour to plan and write this piece. Whichever planning style you choose, it should be quick and effective.

Here are some examples:

1. Using prepositions to plan description. Simply list the prepositions that you will use in each paragraph. Connect them with a noun and add the description as you write it.

For example, you are describing an old church. Here is the plan for paragraph one:

**Beneath** – the countryside sky – sounds of birds

**Between** – the old houses – bricks like...

Turns into:

Beneath the countryside sky, where birds were circling and playing out beautiful formations with their brothers, stood the church. Between the rickety old houses, it stood out. Its crumbling bricks barely holding onto one another.

2. Starting with a plot twist for narrative and working out how you will get there.

For example, the main character turns out to be a ghost/ The title makes you think one thing when another thing is true and this is only revealed in the final sentence

3. A simple beginning, middle and end structure is also okay

For example (description), Beginning – the outside of the school house/ Middle – the windows/ The end the inside of the school house

For example, (narrative), Beginning – Girl is thinking back over an incident at school/ Middle flashback to that moment/ End – Revealed that the girl is dead

#### Step 4: Get good! Get accurate!

- Reading is the best way to learn how words are used and of course developing a good vocabulary.
- Avoid using words that you do not know! Instead, learn new words through reading and practice with them.
- Use the spelling section of this programme to record all of your spelling errors (no matter which subject they happen in). use the spelling strategies to help you learn specific spellings and practice!
- If you are unsure how to use specific punctuation, revise it! You should be able to use all of the following accurately and have practised using them for effect:

Full stop .

Exclamation mark !

Question mark ?

Comma (there are many reasons to use a comma – not just one) ,

Brackets ()

Hyphens -

Speech marks “ ”

Colon :

Semi colon ;

Apostrophe ‘

Inverted commas ‘ ‘

- Find examples of the above punctuation being used for effect. Create your own definitions for how and why you might use each of the punctuation types above for specific effects. Practice using them in your writing!

You should be able to describe what makes each of the following sentence types:

Simple

Compound

Complex

Find and make sure that you understand the definition of each. Find examples of these sentence types in texts that you are reading. How and why have they been used for effect? Practice creating effects with them in your own writing.

**Step 5: Practice, Practice, Practice!**

Use the following images to practice writing either a description or a narrative. Remember to review your teacher's comments about what you need to do to improve your writing. Spend no longer than 50 minutes on each practice.

Find your own images to practice with!

