GCSE AQA GCSE English Language
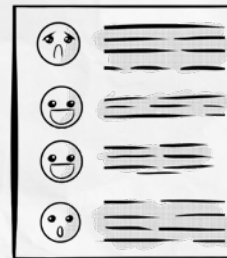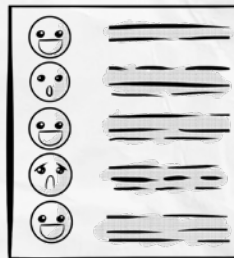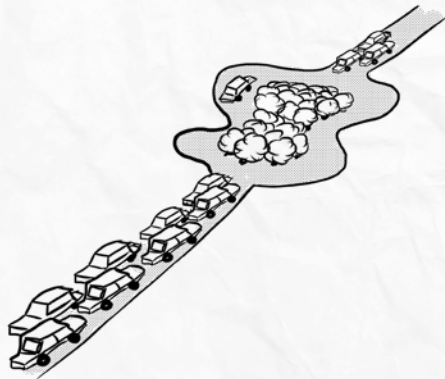
Paper Two, Question Four

Question Fact File

How many marks is this question worth?

How long (approximately) should you spend on this question?

Which texts will this question be on?

What is the focus of this question?

Showing a Clear Understanding of the Different Ideas and Perspectives in Both Texts

To get into the higher mark levels you must firstly ensure that you are dealing with **both** of the texts.

Then you need to look carefully at the **viewpoints** being expressed in these texts. Remember that to have a clear understanding you should be on the look-out for any humour or sarcasm – don't always assume that you can read a text literally.

In addition, be aware that someone's ideas and perspectives can change throughout the text. Just because the text begins with a writer expressing sadness it does not necessarily mean it will end that way too.

Take an exam paper and read through question four. Then, read through the texts.

List all the words you could use to describe the writers' **perspectives** on the focus of the question in both texts.

Comparing Ideas and Perspectives in a Clear and Relevant Way

Once you have decided on the **opinion** of the writers in the two texts, this question then wants you to decide on what is similar or different or both about the writers' perspectives.

However, one of the key words here is: **relevant**.

There is no point spending time discussing the writer's point of view on an issue that you have not been asked about.

Read through question four and highlight what the focus of the Q is.

Now read through both of your texts and highlight any paragraphs where you see the writers' perspectives on this focus.

As discussed previously this perspective may not be straight forward and it may change. There may be similarities at times but there may also be dramatic differences.

Write a sentence that clearly sums up the **similarities** between the writers' perspectives and then a sentence that sums up their **differences.**

Writers' Methods

Once you have a clear understanding of what the writers' viewpoints are in each text, you then need to explore the **methods** that the writers have used to show their points of view.

Writers' methods are any techniques **(language or structure)** that they have used deliberately to help support their ideas. They are the tools a writer uses to build a piece of writing.

Methods can be anything from something as simple as a **rhetorical question to a particular semantic field.**

To get into the higher marks on this paper you must be able to identify and name methods used by the writer.

To help revise the names of methods think of the name of your favourite band, singer or celebrity. Try to come up with a method that starts with the first letter of each of the letters in their name.

Selecting Relevant Detail to Support from Both Texts

When you have spotted similarities or differences in the writers' viewpoints you have then got to find **relevant quotes** that show the methods that the writers have used to express this viewpoint.

Again, the key word here is: **relevant**. If you are saying that a writer feels angry about something then the method that you select and quote must be relevant.

For example, it might be that the writer has used humour in their work. However, if you are looking to prove they are angry it would not be relevant to use this method and then quote it.

Go back to your exam question and re-read your clear explanation of what is similar or different about the writers' perspectives.

Now, look at the texts in the sections where you have highlighted the relevant material.

Label any methods that you can see that the writer has used.

Select the most **relevant** and underline the quotes that you are going to use.

Check – are these methods relevant to your writers' points of view?

Check again – have you chosen the relevant section of text that shows this method clearly?

Explaining Clearly how Writers' Methods are Used

You have clearly identified and compared the writers' perspectives in both texts and found and quoted a relevant method that the writer has used to help them express their opinion.

In order to secure your marks you must now clearly explain why the writer has used that particular method.

You may know that emotive language is used to make the reader feel a certain emotion. However, simply making this general kind of statement is not clearly explaining why this writer has used that technique in this text to express their opinion.

You must ensure that your explanation relates to the text and to the writers' perspective.

Now return to your methods that you selected from the two texts.

Explain clearly: has this writer used this method in particular to help him express his opinion in this text?

Bringing it all Together

You will need a new exam paper for this one.

Using the skills that you have practised, you are going to have a go at answering Q4 on your own. If you use these skills accurately you should be able to write a clear and relevant answer and get 9 – 12 marks.

1. Explain **clearly** what the writers' **perspectives** (from both texts) on the question's **focus** are.
2. Explain **clearly** why the writers' perspectives are **similar or different.**
3. For each similarity or difference name the **relevant method** used (and use a relevant quote) that the writer has used to help them to **express their opinion**.
4. Explain **clearly** why these methods have been used by this writer, in this text and to express this **point of view**.

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AQA English Language *GCSE* *Paper 2: Question 4*