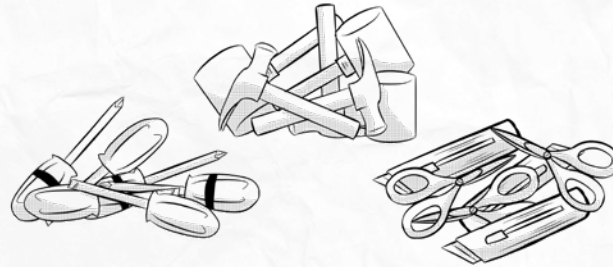


GCSE AQA GCSE English Language

Paper Two, Question Four



ThinkIT

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 Detailed Understanding of the Different Ideas and Perspectives in Both Texts

To get the top marks in this question it is imperative that you are working with both of the texts.
Then you need to look carefully at the **viewpoints** being expressed in these texts.
Consider what the tone of the text is. Is the writer serious? Are they using humour to make a serious point?
Once you have established the **tone** remember that you are not being asked what the text says. You are being asked what the writers' opinions are.
The key word in this top band is: **detailed**.
There is an assumption that you will identify a **change in tone or opinion** throughout the piece. It is likely that a piece will have some **subtleties** that you are expected to identify and write about.
Take an exam paper and read through the Q4. Then, read through the texts.
What is the tone of the piece and how does this change?
What perspective does the writer have and how does this alter as the piece develops?

Comparing Ideas and Perspectives in a Perceptive Way

Once you have decided on the **perspectives** 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: **perceptive**.
There will be some very obvious similarities and differences between the two texts. There is nothing wrong with using these as a starting point but to be more perceptive you need to think again. What else could you write about – what might other people miss?
Create a mind map for yourself that starts with one very obvious similarity. Then: think again. Within that similarity what else is similar or even different?
Search for the tiny details other people will miss.
Do the same again, but this time start with a very obvious difference.

Writers' Methods

You must be able to identify a range of methods that the writers use to help them express their opinion.
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.
To help revise the names of methods try to come up with a method that starts with the first letter of each letter of the alphabet.

Analysing how Writers' Methods are Used

You have identified and compared the writers' perspectives in both texts and found and quoted the methods that the writer has used to help them express their opinion.
In order to secure your marks you must now **analyse** why the writer has used that particular method.
Analysing means that you are looking again at tiny details but looking at them in the **context** of the wider text.
Think about the words that the writer has used, what connotations do you have with these words and how do these connotations help the writer of this text to express his opinion?
Think of yourself as a cameraman or camerawoman, you need to zoom right in on the methods/words/phrases used but you then need to be able to zoom back out so we can see how that method/word/phrase fits into the text.
Now return to your methods and quotes that you selected from the two texts.
Zoom in. Are there any words/phrases that you can explore in more detail, link with other words and phrases, link to the tone of the text...?
Now, zoom out. Why has the writer used these words/phrases/methods in particular in this text to help him express his opinion?

Selecting a Range of Judicious Supporting Detail from Both Texts

When you have spotted similarities or differences in the writers' viewpoints you have then got to find **judicious** details that show the **methods** that the writers have used to express this viewpoint.
However, to get into the top marks it is useful for you to be able to spot any patterns that the writer uses.
Are all the metaphors from a particular semantic field?
Is all the alliteration of fricative sounds?
If you do not know what judicious means get a dictionary and look it up.
Go back to your exam question and your mind map.
For each of your similarities or differences write down a method that the writer has used and the judiciously selected detail that best shows this method.
Now, can you begin to group these methods in any way?

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 a Q4 on your own. If you use these skills accurately you should be able to write a detailed and perceptive answer and get 13 - 16 marks.

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