

Exam Revision and Top Tips – FOUNDATION

Before you do anything else:

- Remind yourself of the timings. Make a quick note of when the 1 hour mark will pass
- Spend 2-3 minutes skimming and scanning each of the non-fiction texts.
- **BEGIN WITH SECTION B! Do not leave questions 5 and 6 for the end!**
- I would also not recommend leaving question 4 for the end – Q1 can go last.

Section A: Reading

Question 1: Retrieval (4 marks):

Type of question: List 4 things... Identify 4 points... Give 4 pieces of information...

What the question wants you to do: Exactly what it says!

How to answer the question: Just pick out and write down 4 examples. Nothing else.

Timing: 5 minutes reading, 12 minutes writing for this **AND** question 2 together

How to revise:

- find newspaper articles about events, travel, news, opinions etc, and practise reading in 5 minutes, then identifying 4 basic facts, followed by 2 explanations of reasons or opinions

Question 2: Retrieval / inference (4 marks):

Type of question: What do we learn about? What reasons are given for?

What the question wants you to do: Show you can read between the lines and explain ideas in a bit more detail, plus give evidence for your points.

How to answer the question: GAP the text. Then: One point per 2 marks (i.e. 2 points in total.

Make 3 points if time, in case one is wrong); Point, Evidence; Explanation (PEE).

Timing: 5 minutes reading, 12 minutes writing for this **AND** question 2 together

Question 3: Retrieval / selection / inference (8 marks):

Type of question: What do we learn about... What reasons are given for... What was the reaction to...?

What the question wants you to do: Show you can read between the lines and explain ideas in a bit more detail, plus give evidence for your points.

How to answer the question: GAP the text. Then: At least one point per 2 marks (i.e. at least 4 points in total – aim for at least 5 to allow for errors); Make a point, **short** quote to support it, explain effect on the reader (PEE). Remember to read the question carefully and link points to **exactly** what it's asking

Timing: 5 minutes reading, 12 minutes writing

How to revise:

- look at targets on the pieces in your books and in your mocks;
- find any text with a point of view, stick in portfolio, invent a question like the ones above, practise reading and identifying points in 5 minutes, writing in 10-12 minutes

Question 4: Language features (12 marks):

Type of question: How does the writer use language to suit their purpose (purpose should be named, e.g. to advise... to shock...)

What the question wants you to do: Show you can 'zoom in' on specific words and phrases and explain how they are used to suit purpose and audience

How to answer the question: GAP the text. Then: At least one point per 2 marks (i.e. at least 6 points in total – aim for 7 to allow for errors); name the language feature (or just say ‘the writer uses the word...’); **short** quote showing the feature; explain the effect of the feature, linked to the **purpose** in the question

Timing: 5 minutes reading, 15 minutes writing

How to revise:

- learn language and grammar devices from the list in your books;
- look at mock mark scheme for this question in your mock pack;
- find a text with good language features, stick in portfolio, practise reading and identifying points in 5 minutes, writing in 15 minutes

Question 5: Comparing presentation (12 marks):

Type of question: Choose 2 items and compare the presentational features

What the question wants you to do: Show you can identify presentational features, and link them to the purpose and audience of the text. Show you can **compare** presentational features across 2 different texts

How to answer the question: At least one **comparative** point per 4 marks (i.e. at least 4 points in total – aim for at least 5 to allow for errors); name the feature; describe the feature; explain the effect of the feature, link to the second item, PEE second item: i.e. PEELPEE

Timing: 5 minutes re-reading for presentational features, 15 minutes writing

How to revise:

- Learn presentational devices from the list in your books;
- Find 2 texts with good presentational features and practise reading and identifying features in 5 minutes. Explain the specific effects they create (10 minutes if you’re looking at them for the first time), writing in 15 minutes

Section B: Writing

You will be asked 2 questions, one shorter and one longer.

Question 6: the shorter question (16 marks):

• Type of question: Some combination of inform, explain and/or describe. Likely to be a slightly more personal or informal writing type than the next question

• How to answer the question: GAP the question. Plan a response, aiming for a brief introduction, 3 main sections and a conclusion or signing-off

• Timing: 5 minutes planning, 15-20 minutes writing, 3 minutes proof-reading

• How to revise:

- look at your targets from mocks and other writing pieces;
- learn the techniques for writing to describe in case this comes up;
- practise planning;

Question 7: the longer question (24 marks):

• Type of question: Writing to argue and/or persuade. Likely to be a slightly more formal writing type than the shorter question

• How to answer the question: GAP the question. Plan a response, using the ‘master plan’ for writing to persuade: introduction, point 1, point 2, attack, point 3, conclusion

• Timing: 5 minutes planning, 25 minutes writing, 5 minutes proof-reading

• How to revise:

- Learn the PERSUADES techniques; practise using the techniques for different topics;
- learn to plan and practise using them on topics of your choice;
- look at your targets from mocks and previous practice pieces;