



CHESSINGTON
SCHOOL

GCSE English Language Top Tips



Everyone valued • Every day an opportunity • Every moment focused on success

Time Management

Paper/Question	What to do?	Marks/ Minutes
LangP1, Q1	Find 4 quotes	4 marks/ 5 mins
LangP1, Q2	Language x3 MESSI	8 marks / 10 minutes
LangP1, Q3	Structure x3 MESSI	8 marks/ 10 minutes
LangP1, Q4	Agree! X5 MESSI	20 marks/ 25 minutes
LangP1, Q5	Creative Writing x5 Paragraphs	40 marks/ 45 minutes
LangP2, Q1	Find 4 TRUE statements	4 marks/ 5 mins
LangP2, Q2	Summary x2 PES/PES	8 marks / 10 minutes
LangP2, Q3	Language x4 MESSI	12 marks / 15 minutes
LangP2, Q4	Compare x3 MESSI/ MESSI	16 marks/ 20 minutes
LangP2, Q5	Non fiction writing x5 Paragraphs	40 marks/ 45 minutes

Underline key words and information

Always READ THE QUESTION FIRST before you read the source.

This saves time having to read something twice.

Use a pen or highlighter to make sure you know what the question is asking you to do.

Then use your pen or highlighter to look for evidence in the source/s.

Section A: Reading

Answer **all** questions in this section.
You are advised to spend about 45 minutes on this section.

0 1 Read again the first part of the source, from **lines 1 to 5**.
List **four** things about the motor-van from this part of the source. **[4 marks]**

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

4 _____

DO NOT WRITE
outside the
box

4

You must give yourself time to think/ plan!



Timings Grid

Question	AOs	Marks available	Weighting (within qualification as a whole)	Suggested Timing
Paper 1: Reading the extract	Reading and planning for questions			15 minutes
Paper 1 Q1	AO1	4	2.5	5 minutes
Paper 1 Q2	AO2: Language	8	5.0	10 minutes
Paper 1 Q3	AO2: Structure	8	5.0	10 minutes
Paper 1 Q4	AO4	20	12.5	20 minutes
Paper 1 Q5	Writing to describe/narrate (AO5 and AO6)	40 (24+16)	25.0	45 minutes in total (e.g. 5 minutes planning + 35 minutes writing + 5 minutes checking/editing.)
Question	AOs	Marks available	Weighting (within qualification as a whole)	Suggested Timing
Paper 2: Reading the two extracts	Reading and planning for the questions			15 minutes
Paper 2 Q1	AO1	4	2.5	5 minutes
Paper 2 Q2	AO1: Synthesis	8	5.0	8 minutes
Paper 2 Q3	AO2	12	7.5	12 minutes
Paper 2 Q4	AO3	16	10.0	20 minutes in total (e.g. 5 minutes planning + 15 minutes writing up.)
Paper 2 Q5	Writing to present a point of view (AO5 and AO6)	40 (24+16)	25.0	45 minutes in total (e.g. 5 minutes planning + 35 minutes writing + 5 minutes checking/editing.)

Spend the most time on the questions worth the most marks!

Texts for English Language papers

Paper 1 Texts

The texts will be extracts from literature prose fiction (such as novels and short stories) and will focus on:

- openings
- endings
- narrative or descriptive passages
- character development
- atmospheric descriptions
- and other appropriate and descriptive approaches.

They will be from the 20th or 21st century.

All texts will be unseen.

Paper 2 Texts

There will be two linked texts from different time periods which will be non-fiction and literary non-fiction, such as:

- journalism
- articles
- reports
- essays
- travel writing
- accounts
- letters
- diaries
- autobiography and biographical passages.

One source will be from the 19th and the second from either 20th or 21st century.

All texts will be around a **page** each in length. You must read regularly to speed up your reading!

It's not trying to **TRICK** you. This is what **WILL** come up. You can revise.



GCSE

ENGLISH LANGUAGE AOs SYMMETRY GRID

Paper 1	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5: Writing
	A01 List 4 things... Identify explicit information Identify explicit ideas 4 marks	A02 How does the writer's use of language... Explain, comment on, analyse 8 marks	A02 How does the writer structure... Explain, comment on, analyse 8 marks	A04 To what extent do you agree? Evaluate texts critically 20 marks	A05/A06 Descriptive or narrative writing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicate clearly Organise information Use a range of vocab and sentences Accurate spelling and punctuation 40 marks
Paper 2	A01	A01	A02	A03	A05/A06
	True/false statements... Identify and interpret explicit and implicit information and ideas 4 marks	Write a summary... Synthesis of explicit and implicit ideas and information 8 marks	A02 How does the writer's use of language... Explain, comment on, analyse 12 marks	A03 How the writers present... Compare writers' ideas and perspectives, and how they are conveyed 16 marks	A05/A06 Students write about their own views As above 40 marks
Assessment journey: Two equal demand papers which balance progression through the papers.	Reading AO1: P1 Q1 begins with explicit retrieval. This is mirrored in P2 Q1 through true/false statements and culminates in a summary task of both implicit and explicit reference as a pointer to P2 Q4.		Reading AO2: P1 Q2 provides a specific example for analysis. P2 Q3 requires students to select examples of their own.	Reading AO4/3: Evaluation of a section of text on P1 Q4 leads to comparison of two whole texts in P2 Q4.	Writing AO5/6: P1 reading source acts as stimulus for descriptive, and/or narrative writing. P2 reading sources support students to write their own views.

Paper 1: Question 1 (4 marks)

5 minutes

What is the *focus* of the question?
What precisely are you being asked to find from the article?

Section A: Reading

Answer **all** questions in this section.

You are advised to spend about 45 minutes on this section.

0 1

Read again the first part of the Source from **lines 1 to 7**.

List **four** things from this part of the text about the weather in Cornwall.

[4 marks]

1

2

3

4

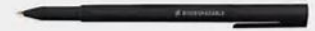
CS English Department Top Tips:

- ✓ Write in **short**, full sentences.
- ✓ 1 thing per bullet point.
- ✓ You can use quotes.

Paper 1: Question 2 (8 marks)

10 minutes

Think before you write.



0 2

Look in detail at this extract from **lines 8 to 18** of the Source:

The wind came in gusts, at times shaking the coach as it travelled round the bend of the road, and in the exposed places on the high ground it blew with such force that the whole body of the coach trembled and swayed, rocking between the high wheels like a drunken man.

The driver, muffled in a greatcoat to his ears, bent almost double in his seat in a faint attempt to gain shelter from his own shoulders, while the dispirited horses plodded sullenly to his command, too broken by the wind and the rain to feel the whip that now and again cracked above their heads, while it swung between the numb fingers of the driver.

The wheels of the coach creaked and groaned as they sank into the ruts on the road, and sometimes they flung up the soft spattered mud against the windows, where it mingled with the constant driving rain, and whatever view there might have been of the countryside was hopelessly obscured.

How does the writer use language here to describe the effects of the weather?

You could include the writer's choice of:

- words and phrases
- language features and techniques
- sentence forms.

CS English Department Top Tips:

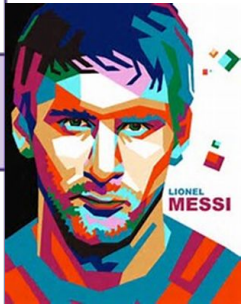
- ✓ Use subject terminology e.g. metaphor
- ✓ How does it make you feel?
- ✓ x3 MESSI paragraphs

Language

The Mark Scheme Skills needed for Question 2:

M E S S I

Level 3	Shows clear understanding of language
Clear, relevant explanation 5 – 6 marks	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Explains clearly the <u>effects</u> of the writer's choices of languageSelects a range of relevant textual detailMakes clear and accurate use of subject terminology
Level 2	Shows some understanding of language:
Some understanding and comment 3 – 4 marks	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Attempts to comment on the <u>effect</u> of languageSelects some appropriate textual detailMakes some use of subject terminology mainly appropriately



To get the best grade, you have to comment on the **EFFECT** of language.

The effect means how it makes the reader (YOU!) **FEEL**.

METHOD EVIDENCE SHOWS SUGGESTS IMPACT

MESSI: METHOD, EVIDENCE, SHOWS, SUGGESTS IMPORTANCE

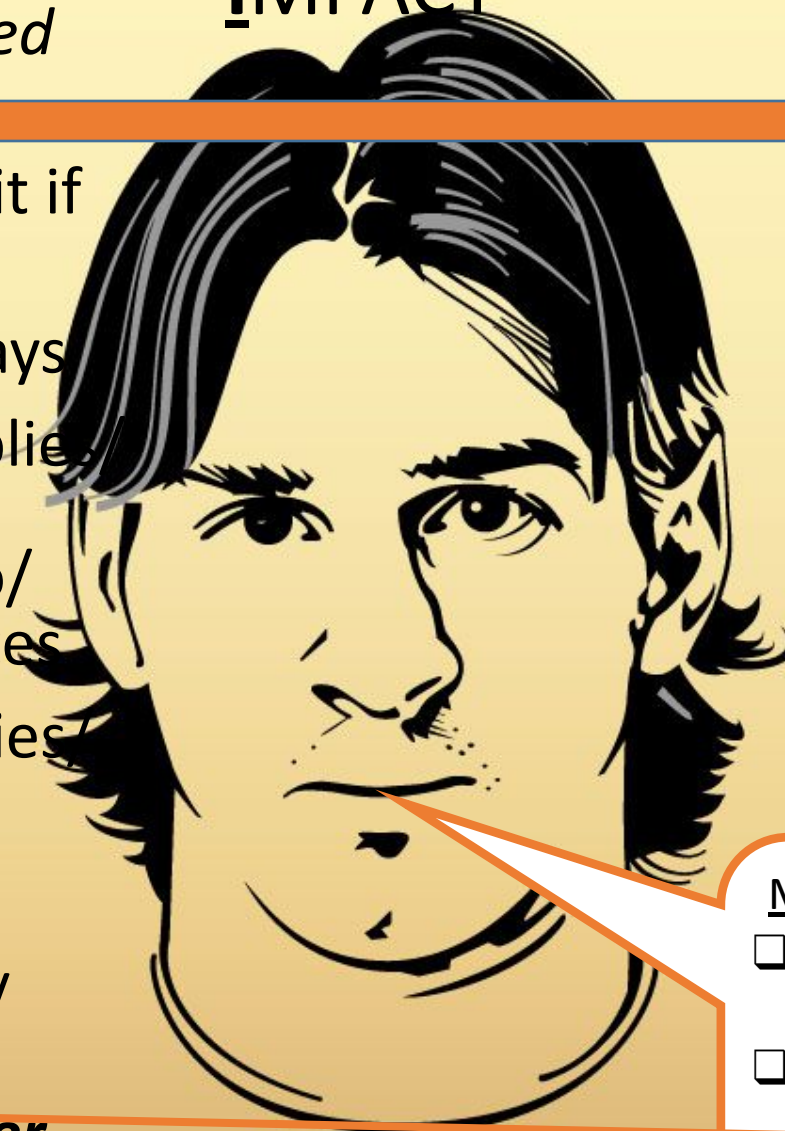
M: *The technique used is...*

E: '_____' Embed it if possible

S: *This* shows/ portrays

S: *This* suggests/ implies/ indicates/ conveys/ highlights/ alludes to/ exemplifies/ insinuates

I: *This* shocks/ horrifies/ disgusts/ surprises/ astonishes/ amazes/ confuses/ entices/ alienates/ frustrates/ angers/ inspires/ empowers *the reader...*



Methods:

- ✓ Interesting verbs and adverbs
- ✓ Adjectives
- ✓ Noun phrases
- ✓ Metaphor and simile
- ✓ The senses
- ✓ Personification
- ✓ Onomatopoeia
- ✓ Alliteration
- ✓ Listing
- ✓ Repetition

Messi's Top Tips:

- ☐ Find the **best** method (ones you can explore)
- ☐ Decide what it makes you feel
- ☐ Write your MESSI

Paper 1: Question 3 (8 marks)

0 3

Structure

You now need to think about the **whole** of the **Source**.

This text is from the opening of a novel.

How has the writer structured the text to interest you as a reader?

You could write about:

- what the writer focuses your attention on at the beginning
- how and why the writer changes this focus as the Source develops
- any other structural features that interest you.

[8 marks]

- sequence through a passage
- movement from big to small – ideas or perspectives
- internal cohesion and topic sentences
- taking an outside to inward perspective, or vice versa
- introductions and developments
- reiterations, repetitions, threads, patterns or motifs
- connections and links across paragraphs
- summaries and conclusions
- narrative perspective
- shifts of focus
- foregrounding of certain objects, characters to draw the reader's attention to them
- paragraph shifts
- end focus – has a particular word/phrase/idea been left to the end of the text for dramatic impact?

CS English Department Top Tips:

- ✓ Use subject terminology e.g. narrative perspective
- ✓ How does it make you feel?
- ✓ x3 MESSI paragraphs

Whose views?

Who is telling the story? What *perspective* is it from?

What time is it?

How is time ordered in it? What sort of *sequence* do I see?

Where am I?

What's the place, *location, setting*? How did I find out?

Who is here?

What *character(s)* have I met and how were they introduced?

What's it made of?

What shapes, styles and patterns can I see in the sentences?



Question 3: This student got 6/8

The writer **zooms** in on the character's situation at the **start**, 'Alex Cold awakened at dawn', in order to **introduce** us to them. This gives us an **insight** about who they are, as he was 'startled by a nightmare'. The nightmare could be **foreshadowing** what would happen later on in the text, as his 'mother got sick' or it could be a **flashback** to something horrible that happened when Alex was a child. **The text then changes** to talk about 'the storm' in paragraph 2. The use of **long complex sentences**, 'wind lashing the trees, rain on the rooftop...' **shows** there is a lot of things going on at once, which overwhelm the **protagonist**.

Method

Evidence

Suggests

Method

Evidence

Suggests

Why hasn't this been given an 8/8? What is it missing?

METHOD EVIDENCE SHOWS SUGGESTS IMPACT

Paper 1: Question 4 (20 marks)

04

Focus this part of your answer on the second part of the Source from **line 19** to the **end**.

A student, having read this section of the text said: “The writer brings the very different characters to life for the reader. It is as if you are inside the coach with them.”

To what extent do you agree?

In your response, you could:

- write about your own impressions of the characters
- evaluate how the writer has created these impressions
- support your opinions with references to the text.



CS English Department Top Tips:

- ✓ Plan your answer, choose quotes that will really answer question
- ✓ Use subject terminology e.g. listing
- ✓ Use lots of embedded quotes
- ✓ Agreeing with the statement is probably easier.

Question 4: Example of top band

I agree completely that Alex is struggling to cope with his mother's illness, which is especially noticeable during this part of the story. This is evident during Alex's outburst at his sisters' predictions about his mother dying, where he says, 'you two are just kids. You don't know what you're talking about.' This shows a sense of denial from Alex which could suggest he is looking for a sense of normality from his past. This may not come true, as predicted by his sister. This can be linked to the storm as it is impossible to stop a storm, just by denying its existence, just as Alex is doing with his mother's illness. The storm could also represent the chaos within the house if his mother dies as 'each of them ate whenever and whatever they pleased' and referring to the situation as 'almost like a party.'

Evaluation is a top band skill. The student thinks of lots of possible things that the evidence could mean. This is evaluation.

METHOD EVIDENCE SHOWS SUGGESTS IMPACT

Paper 1: Question 5 (40 marks)

0 5

You are going to enter a creative writing competition.

Your entry will be judged by a panel of people of your own age.

Either:

Write a description suggested by this picture:



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Tips:

- ✓ Plan your answer (P1, P2)
- ✓ Use SPRAWLED and ACCESSED
- ✓ Use as many of the techniques you have come across in the rest of this paper.

Or:

Write the opening part of a story about a place that is severely affected by the weather.

(24 marks for content and organisation
16 marks for technical accuracy)

[40 marks]

To plan: Draw 4 circles in the picture. These are the 4 paragraphs. The 5th is back in the 1st circle again.

Mrs Massey says: Writing a **description** is an easier way of showing off your language techniques.

Structure

Paragraphs x5

Register (tone/ voice)

Audience

Words

Language

Engaging ideas x5

Discourse markers

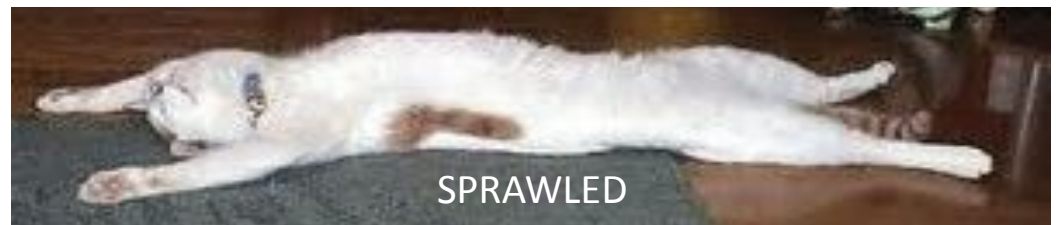
Hints and tips:

STRUCTURE: Use flashbacks (analepsis) or revisit your first idea in your last paragraph.

REGISTER: Create a character's voice OR choose words to set the right tone.

AUDIENCE: read the question – who are you writing this for?

DISCOURSE MARKERS: Begin paragraphs clearly, linking your ideas together.



Sixty seconds. That's how long we're required to stand on our metal circles before the sound of a gong releases us. Step off before the minute is up, and land mines blow your legs off. Sixty seconds to take in the ring of tributes all equidistant from the Cornucopia, a giant golden horn shaped like a cone with a curved tail, the mouth of which is at least twenty feet high, spilling over with the things that will give us life here in the arena. Food, containers of water, weapons, medicine, garments, fire starters. Strewn around the Cornucopia are other supplies, their value decreasing the farther they are from the horn. For instance, only a few steps from my feet lies a three-foot square of plastic. Certainly it could be of some use in a downpour. But there in the mouth, I can see a tent pack that would protect from almost any sort of weather. If I had the guts to go in and fight for it against the other twenty-three tributes. Which I have been instructed not to do.

We're on a flat, open stretch of ground. A plain of hard-packed dirt. Behind the tributes across from me, I can see nothing, indicating either a steep downward slope or even a cliff. To my right lies a lake. To my left and back, sparse piney woods. This is where Haymitch would want me to go. Immediately.
(Extract from *The Hunger Games* by Suzanne Collins)

Apostrophes ‘

Commas ,

Colons :



I ordered the following supplies: potatoes, sugar, flour, eggs, and coffee.

I ordered these supplies: potatoes, sugar, flour, eggs, and coffee.

Theories which try to explain the secrets of fire walking fall into three categories: physical, psychological, and religious.

Exclamation marks !

Semi colons ;

Stops .

Enquiry marks ?

Dash -

How

How do I use a semicolon?

If you have two independent clauses, meaning they could stand alone as their own sentences, it's ok to use a semicolon. For example:



“ My aunt also had hairy knuckles; she loved to wash and comb them. ”

This is an independent clause, meaning it could stand alone as a complete sentence.

This is also an independent clause; it could exist without being attached to its predecessor.



apostrophe.me How To Use An Apostrophe



Is it plural?

Plural means more than one.



DON'T

USE AN APOSTROPHE



For Example:

I saw two **kittens** riding a goat.
Goats are great for transportation.



Two Exceptions

1 Is it a single letter word? For example:
There are two t's in "kittens."
Then it's ok, but you can also do this:
There are two "t"s in "kittens."

2 Is it a number or abbreviation? For example:
90's fashion was a bit awkward.
just say **no to hammer pants.**
Then do this:
I attended college in the late '90s and early 2000s.

Is it indicating possession?

Possession means to own something.

For Example: **Bob's** hat was made out of jelly beans.

USE

AN APOSTROPHE



But Watch Out

Is it plural and possessive? For Example:
The **soldiers'** rifles were no match for Bob's amazing lightning pants.



Then put the apostrophe after the "s."



I USED A SEMICOLON;



IT WAS CORRECT

Paper 2: Question 1 (4 marks)

5 minutes

Section A: Reading

Answer **all** questions in this section.
You are advised to spend about 45 minutes on this section.

What is the *focus* of the question?
What precisely are you being asked to find from the source?

0 1

Read again the first part of **Source A** from lines 1 to 21.

Choose **four** statements below which are TRUE.

- Shade the boxes of the ones that you think are true.
- Choose a maximum of four statements.

[4 marks]

- A Aberfan was a well-known place in Wales.
- B The village did not have a chapel or a pub.
- C Pit waste had been building up for at least 100 years.
- D Village life centred around the coal pit.
- E Mining was a new and thriving industry.
- F Life for miners and their families was tough.
- G There wasn't much good news in Aberfan.
- H The men lived long and healthy lives.

☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

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Tips:

- ✓ Shade the box
- ✓ Choose 4 that are TRUE

Paper 2: Question 2 (8 marks)

10 minutes

0 2

You need to refer to **Source A** and **Source B** for this question.

Both Sources give details about the places where the events occur.

Use details from **both** Sources to write a summary of the differences between Aberfan and London.

[8 marks]

Question 2: Use details from both sources to write a summary of the differences...

AO1: Identify and interpret explicit and implicit information and ideas. Select and synthesise evidence from different texts.

How to approach the question

1. What is the main focus of the text?

2. What might be in the text?

Find quotations to support

How to structure your response

Point- make a point about the source

Evidence- embed a quote to support

Inference- give your own interpretation

In Source A...whereas in Source B...

An example of this is, '...'

This suggests/implies...

Discourse Markers

Whereas
On the other hand
In contrast
Whereas
On the contrary
Alternatively
However
Nevertheless

Step by Step

- ☐ Make a **POINT** about Source A (use key words from the question)
- ☐ Embed relevant **EVIDENCE (2-3 words)**
- ☐ Provide **INFERENCE**
-use sentence stems, for example: 'This implies...'
- ☐ Use appropriate **discourse markers** to show differences between the sources
- ☐ Follow the same steps for Source B (**PEI**)

Summary

Paper 2: Question 3 (12 marks)

15 minutes

0 3

You now need to refer only to **Source A** from lines 27 to 40.

How does the writer use language to describe the coal tips?

[12 marks]

MESSI: METHOD, EVIDENCE, SHOWS, SUGGESTS
IMpACT

M: *The technique used is...*

E: '_____' Embed it if possible

S: *This* shows/ portrays

S: *This* suggests/ implies/ indicates/ conveys/ highlights/ alludes to/ exemplifies/ insinuates

I: *This* shocks/ horrifies/ disgusts/ surprises/ astonishes/ amazes/ confuses/ entices/ alienates/ frustrates/ angers/ inspires/ empowers **the reader...**

Methods:

- ✓ Interesting verbs and adverbs
- ✓ Adjectives
- ✓ Noun phrases
- ✓ Metaphor and simile
- ✓ The senses
- ✓ Personification
- ✓ Onomatopoeia
- ✓ Alliteration
- ✓ Listing
- ✓ Repetition

Messi's Top Tips:

- ☐ Find the **best method** (ones you can explore)
- ☐ Decide what it makes you **feel**
- ☐ Write your **MESSI**

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Tips:

- ✓ Method = Use subject terminology e.g. metaphor
- ✓ Impact = How does it make you feel?
- ✓ x4 MESSI paragraphs

This is very similar to P1, Q2

Paper 2: Question 4 (16 marks)

0 4

For this question, you need to refer to the whole of **Source A**, together with the whole of **Source B**.

Compare how the writers convey their different ideas and perspectives of the events that they describe.

In your answer, you could:

- compare their different ideas and perspectives
- compare the methods they use to convey their ideas and perspectives
- support your response with references to both texts.

[16 marks]

Comparing Words

When you compare one subject to another, you show how the two are **alike**.

like
similar to
same
in the same way
too
both
have in common
the same as
similarly
as well as

Contrasting Words

When you contrast two subjects, you show how they are **different**.

although
yet
however
but
while
differ
instead
unlike
on the contrary
contrary to
even though
on the other hand
the reverse

CS English Department Top Tips:

- ✓ Plan your answer
- ✓ Use SUPER MESSI to compare different ideas and perspectives
- ✓ Use subject terminology e.g. simile
- ✓ Use lots of embedded quotes

Question 4: Example of SUPER MESSI

***M.A)** The writer of Source A seems dispassionate at first as he paints the picture of gloomy, isolated Aberfan as it lies ‘tucked away’ from sight and mind. **M.B)** In contrast, the writer of Source B mocks the idea of the earthquake, which seems so minor it was hardly noticed in London. **E+S.A)** In Source A the verb ‘tucked’ is more usually associated with being tucked up in bed and tends to have more positive connotations of safety and warmth. But here, the writer uses it differently, perhaps to imply complacency. **E+S.B)** In Source B, One method he uses is exaggeration where he describes where it merely ‘broke crockery’. The reference to broken crockery is hardly momentous yet through it, the writer cleverly understates the threat at this point. **S.A)** He reinforces this view when he creates the sense of a malevolent ‘killer’ stalking its victims. He sees this disaster as ‘cruel’ and a ‘shame’ on ‘God and man’. This time, the emotive connotations of shame link with God to suggest a biblical connection as with the shaming of sinners. **S.B)** In source B he seems to suggest that next time a similar earthquake might lead to loss of lives and so should be taken more seriously. **I.A)** This would make the reader feel angry that this happened, **I.B)** Whereas in source B, the reader would feel the concern that this could happen again.



A	B
M	M
E	E
S	S
S	S
I	I

Quick tip: You can also group the evidence/shows together, as I have in the example.

*M.A = METHOD, SOURCE A

Paper 2: Question 5 (40 marks)

Section B: Writing

You are advised to spend about 45 minutes on this section.

Write in full sentences.

You are reminded of the need to plan your answer.

You should leave enough time to check your work at the end.

0 5

'Floods, earthquakes, hurricanes and landslides – we see more and more reports of environmental disasters affecting the world and its people every day.'

Write the text of a speech for a debate at your school or college in which you persuade young people to take more responsibility for protecting the environment.

(24 marks for content and organisation
16 marks for technical accuracy)

[40 marks]

Only a fool would think that...

A sensible idea would be to...

We ALL know that...

Doesn't everyone know that...?

It wouldn't be very difficult to...

The REAL truth is that...

Are we expected to...?

Naturally I feel that...

The fact is that...

EVERBODY knows that...

Surely you would agree that...

Here are two reasons why...

This clearly shows that...

We can see from the evidence that...

- A Alliteration
- F Facts
- O Opinion
- R Repetition / Rhetorical questions
- E Emotive language
- S Statistics
- T Triples (Three, rule of)

CS English Department Top Tips:

- ✓ Plan your answer (P1, P2 x 5)
- ✓ Use SPRAWLED and ACCESSED (p15/16)
- ✓ You may need to use **persuasive** techniques, like AFOREST
- ✓ Use as many of the techniques you have come across in the rest of this paper.