Language Paper 1 – Cheat Sheet

What is it all about?

This paper has five questions to answer and you will need to complete all of them to achieve your target grade. Questions 1-4 are based on a fiction text and is worth 25% of your overall GCSE English Language grade (40 marks). Question 5 is a writing task where you will be instructed to write a narrative or descriptive text. Again, it is worth 25% of your overall grade (40 marks).

Timing

You should spend 60 minutes on the reading section and 45 minutes on the writing section.
Start by **reading the blurb** for each text and then **read and highlight** the key information in the questions.

- **5 minutes:** Question 1
- **12 minutes:** Question 2
- **12 minutes:** Question 3
- **25 minutes:** Question 4

Question 2 – Language analysis   8 marks

You need to analyse the language the writer has used and the impact that it has on the reader in the given extract.

Top tips:

➢ Focus on the WHY. Try to question the text by using the question stem: "Why did the writer…?"
➢ Identify the key focus of the question and refer to it throughout
➢ Include the writer's name in your answer
➢ Use short , embedded quotes (preferably no more than five words)
➢ Explain why the writer has chosen to use particularly methods or language techniques and refer to them using the correct terminology.

Good way to structure your answer:

1. Respond to the question
2. Embed a quote
3. Refer to a method the writer has used
4. Explain why the writer made that language choice and what the impact was.

Question 4 – How far…   20 marks

This will give you an opinion statement about the text and you will be asked to what extent you agree with it.

✓ Start by unpicking the statement – there will often be two ideas in it to explore
✓ Aim to make 3 points in your answer – look at both sides of the argument but have a final response that explicitly states how far you agree/disagree.
✓ You can focus on language AND structural methods and analyse their impact on the reader in relation to the statement.
✓ Remember that you need to back everything that you say up with a quote.
✓ Link every paragraph back to the statement in the question.

TOP TIP: Prove it! Think of this question as an extended question 2 or question 3. You are analysing writer's methods but doing it to respond to a specific statement this time.

Question 1 – Finding information   4 marks

You'll be asked to find four pieces of information from a specific part of the text. E.g. List four things about the weather.
- ✓ Make sure you're selecting from the right lines. **Box this area off before you start.**
- ✓ **Don't infer – use direct quotes.**
- ✓ **Reword the question e.g. "The weather is…"**
- ✓ Include an extra piece of info for good measure.

Question 3 – Structural analysis   8 marks

You need to read the WHOLE text and analyse how it's organised – 'what happens where and why?'

Key question: How does reading about this at this point add to my understanding of the text as a whole?

✓ Follow the 'top tips' for question 2 but this time focus on structural devices such as:

Setting   Time   Opening   Perspective   Shifts

Ending   Character

✓ There will always be a shift in mood/tone/atmosphere – aim to spot that and discuss why it happens.

TOP TIP: Write the order of events down the side of the extract so you can track the shifts and changes in focus.

Question 5 – Narrate or describe   40 marks

There will be a choice of two tasks but you <u>only</u> complete one of them! You will be asked to write a narrative or a description.
You are marked on SPAG (16 marks) and Content and Organisation (24 marks).
Make sure you:
✓ Plan your work – examiners can award marks to plans.
✓ Build a character as part of your revision, ready for any scene or scenario.
✓ Write in paragraghs.
✓ Write in sentences that make sense, begin with a capital letter and end with a punctuation mark.
✓ Use the most ambitious, effective words you can. Take care to spell them accurately (use 5+ language devices).
✓ Use a range of sentence types and make sure you vary your sentence openers (use ISPACED).
✓ Use a range (5+) types of punctuation but only use 3 lines of dialogue max.
✓ Proof read your work before you finish and edit any mistakes.

Language Features (Q2 and 4)

- Similes – Comparing something to something else using the word 'like' or 'as' e.g. My sister eats like a pig.
- Metaphor – Comparing something to something else using the word 'is' e.g. My sister is a pig.
- Personification – Using a verb to give something that's inanimate human characteristics e.g. The leaves danced happily in the breeze.
- Onomatopoeia – Words that mimic sounds e.g. Crash, boom, bang.
- Sensory imagery – Using all 5 senses to create an image in the reader's head.
- Prepositions – Words that tell you the position of something e.g. under, near, behind, next to.
- Hyperbole – exaggeration.
- Semantic field – Describing something using words that are all connected to one theme e.g. Describing cutting the grass using a semantic field of war: battle, chop, fired, bullets, ricochet, ranks
- Repetition – repeating a word of phrase for emphasis.

Structural features (Q3 and Q4)

Remember, when the question asks you about 'structure'. It's actually asking you about how the text is organised and why the writer might have made those choices.

- The order that information is given or characters are introduced – is this significant for the reader?
- Any shifts in focus or perspective – does this make the reader think or feel certain things?
- Effective openings or closings (look at the first and last few lines and think about the impact that they have on the reader).
- Narrative voice (is it 1st, 3rd, dual, omniscient etc. and why is this the case?).
- Narrative structure (is is non-linear, circular, epistolary etc. and why is this the case?).
- Repetition of sentence types, pronouns or types of words throughout the whole text – do these help to build a certain mood?

NB: Be careful not to start analysing individual words or phrases as this is for question two!

Prepositional connectives (Q5)

Next to	Between
Behind	Among
In the distance	Over
Parallel to	Before
Underneath	After
Directly	Nearby

The 'five' method (Q5)

The Five Method

- 5 paragraphs
- 5 language devices
- 5 types of punctuation

Narrate = These five paragraphs in any order:

1. Setting
2. Characters (no more than 3)
3. Action
4. In Media Res
5. Resolution

Describe = Five paragraphs in any order:

1. Describe **setting** and weather - big picture.
2. **Zoom** in on something; describe it in detail (something that is animate).
3. Make some **action** happen and describe that.
4. Short paragraph reflecting on the **mood**/feelings – include some short speech to include some noise or onomatopoeia.
5. **Leaving** the scene - best answers would show a shift in the mood by the end.

A choice of 5 language devices.

A choice of 5 punctuation marks (not full stops or commas!).

Helpful glossary to revise

- **nouns**: objects / things (concrete or abstract).
- **verb**: an action or doing word.
- **adjectives**: describes a noun (thing).
- **adverbs**: describes a verb (action).
- **pronouns**: words used to replace the noun / proper noun, such as he, she, it
- **proper noun**: a noun that requires a capital letter
- **imagery:** when the writer creates a strong image in the reader's mind.
- **alliteration**: where 2+ words start with the same letter / sound.
- **sibilance:** repetition of an s or z sound.
- **assonance:** repetition of a vowel sound (e.g., moving towards the blue moon she swooned.).
- **dehumanisation**: when a human is described as an animal or object.
- **anaphora**: sentences that begin with the same word.

ISPACED to help you vary sentence openers (Q5)

Try starting with:
I – and **ing** word such as 'Screaming,...'
S – a **simile** such as 'Like a thunderstorm I...'
P – a **preposition** such as 'Behind..'
A – and **adverb** (ly word) such as 'Savagely...'
C - a **connective** such as 'Meanwhile...'
E- an **ed** word such as 'Panicked I...'
D – **dialogue** such as '"Shut up!" I screamed.'