



Pearson

Y12: starting your coursework for A level English Language

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A Level English Language



Specification

Pearson Edexcel Level 3 Advanced GCE in English Language (9EN0)

First teaching from September 2015

First examination from 2017

9EN0-0

What we're going to look at

- 1) Overview of what you need to do for coursework
- 2) Step 1: choosing a genre
- 3) Step 2: doing an initial outline of your coursework
- 4) Step 3: research and how to use your style models
- 5) Step 4: planning & writing 1st drafts of your 2 pieces
- 6) Step 5: First draft of commentary - do's and don'ts

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What we're going to look at cont'd

- 7) Good working habits
- 8) Referencing
- 9) What your teacher can and can't help you with
- 10) Where you can find help on our website

Why am I speaking to you today?

To reinforce the instructions your teacher has given you.

To help you work on your coursework independently.

All the tips given in this presentation are **ways** you 'could' approach your coursework. I am not saying this is '**the way**'.

What do I need to do for the coursework?

1. Research a genre and find style models
2. Craft 2 texts from the same genre with different purposes and/or audiences (1500-2000 words across the 2 texts)

Assessed for AO5, 30 marks

3. Write 1 commentary explaining how your texts link to your research (1000 words)

Assessed for AOs 1-4, 20 marks

Coursework makes up 20% of your A level.

Step 1: choosing a genre

Choose a kind of writing that you are interested in.

You can use learning from your other A levels, such as History, Psychology or Modern Foreign Languages for a non-fiction piece or Music or Drama for fiction, or you might want to write about a current issue.

You are going to write 2 differentiated pieces in the same genre.

The differentiation is by:

Purpose/function: for example, to inform, advise, instruct, entertain, or persuade.

And/or audience: by age, gender or interest area.

Remember that most texts have multiple purposes.

As you research, you'll become more aware of how to shape writing within a genre for a particular purpose or audience. You will need to explain in the commentary, why your text 1 is like it is and why your text 2 has different features.

Step 1: choosing a genre

What genres are possible?

Non fiction	Fiction
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Opinion journalism (articles or columns such as those by Charlie Brooker or Caitlin Moran)• Music, TV, book and film reviews• Feature articles• Journalist interviews (must be based on real interviews with real people)• Speeches• Scripted presentations• Travel writing and blogs (often best if based on personal experience, or use an interview with a member of the public who has had the experiences)• Biography/autobiography• Blogs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dramatic monologues• Short stories• Split and fragmented narratives (these are likely to be a first chapter, for example, because of the word count available)• Play (again, a scene, not a whole play)• Screenplay (a scene)

Step 2: doing an initial outline of your coursework

Take a look at the examples in the [Getting Started Guide](#).

Use the template to plan out the basics: the genre, the audience/purpose of each piece, what texts you might use as style models.

Get your teacher to confirm that the basic idea is OK.

Example of an initial outline

Genre: Travel	Details & effects you're aiming for	Purpose/function	audience	Which publication might this appear in? Style models?
Piece 1 Travel article for a quality newspaper	Positive and negative aspects of a family holiday on the Isle of Wight Inclusion of factual information	inform	Those booking family holidays with children	Travel section of a 'quality newspaper'
Piece 2 An account of a travel experience	Engaging account of a trip to Tankerton (little known English coastal destination) Hyperbole satire	entertain	General audience/those interested in travel	Collection of travel writing on English destinations in the style of Bill Bryson's 'Notes from a Small Island'

Example of an initial outline of coursework

Example 1: travel writing

Students should begin by researching travel journalism in a range of journals and periodicals (see below for suggestions). They should identify different audiences and make notes on how their language choices and discourse strategies are influenced by contextual factors.

Students could then consider the *Guardian* newspaper's 2013 Travel Writing competition (www.theguardian.com/travel/2013/sep/13/guardian-travel-writing-competition-2013). This competition offered the following categories for entries:

- A Big Adventure
- A Journey
- Historic Site
- Culture
- Wildlife
- UK Holiday
- Family.

These categories from the competition could be used as a starting point for writing a piece or pieces of travel journalism.

Differentiation by purpose

As above, students should study various forms of travel writing where the primary purpose is to inform readers who may be considering travelling to the areas being covered (eg the examples given above from the broadsheet press and similar journals).

They should also look at examples of travel writing where the primary purpose is to entertain rather than to inform potential visitors.

Piece 1: writing primarily to inform. A travel piece for a specific audience chosen from the list above, informing them about the positive and negative aspects of travelling to a particular part of the world.

Piece 2: writing primarily to entertain. An account of a place in which the objective is to interest and amuse a general audience rather than to outline the facilities on offer to tourists. The place described may not necessarily be an exotic destination but could be a little-known place which the writer is able to present in an interesting and engaging way.

Potential style models

Writing primarily to inform:

- *Daily Telegraph* – www.telegraph.co.uk/travel/
- *The Times* – www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/travel/
- *The Guardian* – www.theguardian.com/travel
- *The Independent* – www.independent.co.uk/travel/
- The Lonely Planet – www.lonelyplanet.com/

Writing primarily to entertain:

- Bill Bryson: *Bill Bryson's African Diary*
- Bill Bryson: *Notes from a Small Island*
- Karl Pilkington: *An Idiot Abroad*

Step 3: do the research and think about how to use your style models

Find suitable style models: you will need several. They have to contain writing that is 'doing something' that interests you and which you want to try out or adapt in your own writing.

Good style models=good original writing!

Actively read and annotate your style models, making notes on:

What techniques are the writers using?

What effects are they having?

How could I use similar effects or how could I achieve my chosen purpose using the techniques on show?

Do I want to subvert expectations about the genre?

Step 3: do the research and think about how to use your style models

Refine your initial outline plan and sketch in what you anticipate being able to discuss in your commentary:

What kind of publication would your piece be published in? (this can help to plan the style of your piece more precisely).

More precise details about what you want to achieve with the writing and who it is aimed at.

Step 4: planning & writing first drafts of your 2 pieces

1. Do a short plan for each of the pieces thinking about:

- The content (ideas, facts) you'll include
- Structure – remember your word count. Can you write the kind of text you're thinking about in that many words?
- Style features you plan to use

2. Write a first draft of each piece

- Have they turned out as you expected?
- Are they clearly differentiated by audience or function/purpose?
- Have they given you the chance to show off your writing skills?
- Will you have enough to say in your commentary?

No, to any of these?

You might want to go back to your plan for the coursework or your plans for each piece and make some adjustments.

Step 5: First draft of commentary - do's and don'ts

DO

- keep within the word count
- give an overview of both coursework pieces and establish the specific contextual features surrounding both texts, including purpose and audience
- provide an outline to the relationship between producer and receiver of each text and what effect that this has on the language chosen
- discuss specific genre features and link these to purpose and audience. You should be analysing your writing rather than describing it
- exemplify points made about the above from the style models, as well as your own writing
- include appropriate linguistic terminology and refer to relevant ideas from language study (theories, concepts) if appropriate.

DON'T

- write a line by line account of the text. Instead pick out the aspects of your writing which is most significant
- make claims about the writing which cannot be supported by evidence
- identify language/linguistic features without commenting on their relevance to the overall nature of the text.

Good working habits

1. Your teacher is likely to provide you with a set of rules, how to work & when to get to certain stages: follow them.
2. You must carefully reference all the secondary materials you use in your work right from the start to avoid plagiarism. See p. 24 & 25 of the [Getting Started Guide](#) for help.
3. You must save your coursework carefully in more than one place as you work, to avoid losing it all if your laptop dies, for example.
4. Use the spell and grammar checker on your work as you go.

Referencing

See p. 24 & 25 of the [Getting Started Guide](#).

You need to **consistently** apply a recognised referencing system such as Harvard.

You can, for example, use bracketed references in the body of the text to secondary material (Smith, p. 25) and provide full details of the text referred to in the bibliography.

What your teacher can and can't help you with

Usually, your teacher will only read your coursework **once** and provide **general feedback** once before you hand your final work to them for marking. The 'you' here is your teacher.

The [JCQ rules](#) (p. 8) state:

'If you give any assistance which goes beyond general advice, for example:

- provide detailed specific advice on how to improve drafts to meet the assessment criteria;
- give detailed feedback on errors and omissions which limits candidates' opportunities to show initiative themselves;
- intervene personally to improve the presentation or content of work;

then you must record this assistance and either take it into account when marking the work or submit it to the external examiner.'

Where you can find help on our website

Generally, the documents on the website are designed for teachers who use them to help you, but there is guidance you can look at to see if it helps you.

1. [Getting Started Guide](#): see p. 24 &25 for how to do a bibliography.
2. [A guide to issues, concepts and themes](#).
3. [A guide to language frameworks and levels](#).
4. If you're writing fiction, this [terminology list](#) may be helpful for your commentary.

Contact

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ALWAYS LEARNING