

# Year 9

# English Revision

The exam will consist of a four questions focusing on an extract, plus some students will produce a piece of imaginative writing.

You will be expected to use the skills and techniques practised and developed in class.

## Contents

1. How to prepare
2. Revision Activities
3. Section B guidance

# How to prepare for your English exam.

1. Work through the tasks given in this booklet.

Use trustworthy web sites like:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/education/subjects/z3kw2hv>

Practice your weaker areas.

2. Use your time sensibly

Dedicate time for revising English

3. Make revision ACTIVE

Don't just sit and read through your notes –DO SOMETHING!

Write Key Words, make essay plans, do sample questions, make mind maps or draw pictures –to help you remember.

4. Work your way through this booklet.

Learn exactly what you need to do for each question.

Make flashcards for the techniques on the last page and create examples of each. Your teacher will check these if you are unsure.

## Reading Revision

In your exam, there will be one extract to read and 4 questions to answer.

**Question 1: 4 Marks** List four things from this part of the source about...

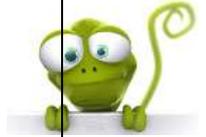
### Question One

List four things from this part of the source about...

This should be a fairly straight-forward question.

- Focus on the exact lines given in the question.
- Keep each of the things you list brief but it's best to write in full sentences.  
**Eg.**
  - 1) He has been in Brighton for three hours.
  - 2) He has bitten nails.
- **You no not need to analyse or explain the things you list.**
- Make sure you read the question correctly. Do not list things irrelevant to the question.

4 Marks – 5 Minutes



**Question 2: 8 Marks** How does the writer use language to...

### Question Two

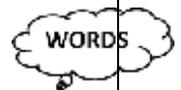
How does the writer use language to...

You need to –

- Pick words from the quote, identify the word class and discuss the effect it has in relation to the question.
- Make sure you explain the effect of the word within the sentence it is being used.
- Do the same for language features and techniques and maybe sentence forms.
- Make sure you use PEA paragraphs. It's the **A** bit which is most important.  
Eg. The writer has used the word, '\_\_\_\_\_' to suggest that .... (Try to write a few sentences about what the word suggests and the ideas it develops in relation to the question).

*\* Language: Vocabulary, specific words, figurative language (metaphors/similes/personification), imagery and use of language terminology e.g. adjectives/adverbs.*

8 Marks – 10 Minutes



**Question 3: 8 Marks** How has the writer structured the text to interest you as a reader?

### Question Three

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

You need to –

- Read the whole source again
- For part A, you must think about the order in which each of these events happen in the text. Put 1 next to the first event which happens, then 2 etc.
- For part B, you must think about why do you think the writer structures the events in this order?
- Discuss why changes in focus take place and how they make the extract more interesting.
- Make sure you link different parts of the extract and comment on how they interact and develop meaning.

Eg. Towards the end of the extract the sentence/line, ' \_\_\_\_\_ ' is interesting because it develops the idea about \_\_\_\_\_ which is introduced at the beginning. This builds on the idea of \_\_\_\_\_

- You only have ten minutes for this answer two part answer  
*\*\*Structure: Sentence structure, paragraph order, punctuation, order of narrative/ideas, repetition and how the text starts and ends.*

8 Marks – 10 Minutes

**Question 4: 15marks** To what extent do you agree...

### Question Four

**You will be given a statement about the text and then be asked – *To what extent do you agree?***

In this question you must make sure you do three things:

- Make it clear what your **own impressions** are in relation to the statement.
- Discuss specific examples of where the writer has achieved what the statement is addressing. Use **quotations**.
- Explain how these methods link to the statement and comment on how far they show that the statement is correct.

Remember:

- You don't have to agree completely with the statement.
- Use PEA paragraphs to evaluate your examples.
- Remember to use relevant words from the statement.

16 Marks – 20 Minutes

# Practice

From *Whispers in the Graveyard* by Theresa Breslin

I'm running. My chest is tight and sore. Breath rasping and whistling in my lungs.  
Branches whip against my face. Brambles tear at my legs and arms. There is a voice  
screaming. Out loud. The sound ripping through the trees, screaming and screaming.  
It's my voice

'Amy! Amy!'

5

Now I'm back at the back stream and the solid wooden fencing has been torn aside.  
Blasted apart as if some careless giant had passed by and trodden on it. I stare at  
the wood, not splintered or broken, but melted. Dissolved and warped. Curled aside  
to make a small space. Space enough for a child to walk through. What could do  
that? What power is there that would leave that mark? I hesitate, feeling the  
first great lurch of fear for myself.

10

'Amy?' I cry out.

Nothing. Beyond me the gaping dark of the cemetery.

There is a soft shudder in my head. A strange flicker which fastens on my fear.  
Nothing calling for me this time. No whispers in my face tonight. Why? Because  
Amy is in there. With one child captive, there is no need for two. Desperate, I  
hurl myself at the open space and barbed wire comes up to meet me, scratching  
through my skin, dragging at my clothes to pull me back. The thick bristles are  
embedded in my jacket and I am caught fast, struggling on the ground. Frantically,  
I unzip the front of my jacket, and draw out my arms. I leave it there and  
Scramble forwards to the foot of the stream.

15

20

Blood on my hands and fingernails, I scramble to the top. Then I leap over and  
sink down knee-deep on the other side, my legs heavy with clogged and slimy liquid.  
I raise one foot, looking down, expecting to see thick mud clinging there.  
Nothing. Then the next leg. Nothing. But I am sinking, the ground falling away  
beneath me. I am dropping down and it will close over my head and suffocate me.

25

**Question 1:** Read again the first part of the source, lines 1 to 4.

List **four** things from this part of the text that show running is difficult for the narrator.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.









## Section B Guidance

This section tests your skills in descriptive or narrative writing. You will have a choice of two tasks:

- To write a description in response to an image.
- Write a story or description in response to a statement or question.

### The examiner is interested in whether you can:

- Write clearly and accurately.
- Write in a style that matches the genre, audience and purpose suggested by the question.
- Organise your work effectively using a range of discourse markers and paragraphs.
- Engage the reader using a range of engaging vocabulary, language techniques, sentence structures and punctuation.

### Top Tips

1. For this question, being able to write in an engaging, controlled way is much more important than telling a story where a lot happens. Therefore, if you chose to write a story, perhaps structure your narrative like a novel opening, leaving it on a cliff-hanger and building up atmosphere. You could even use the extract in Source A for inspiration. On this note, avoid too much speech: it can make your piece read like a play-script and divert you from showing off your descriptive talents. Focus on **quality**.
2. If you are writing a description it still needs to have some kind of structure to avoid boring your reader. Try planning in four stages:
  - A beginning that grabs the reader's attention
  - A development that introduces some kind of conflict or unease
  - A second development that includes a change of perspective
  - A sense of an ending that brings your description together or ends on a cliff-hanger
3. Show off!
  - Use a range of language techniques in your answer: use the method list after question four.
  - Learn a small bank of engaging vocabulary that you can slip into your work.
  - Learn how to use the more complex types of punctuation accurately to impress the examiner (-- ; : ...)
4. Don't lose marks in silly ways: examiners will heavily **penalise you** for not using paragraphs for example, or forgetting to use apostrophes or commas. Many students also use direct speech without knowing how to punctuate or format it properly (new speaker, new line). If you know you struggle with certain elements of SPaG, work on them now. Websites like this



one can really help:

[http://www.bristol.ac.uk/arts/exercises/grammar/grammar\\_tutorial/page\\_41.htm](http://www.bristol.ac.uk/arts/exercises/grammar/grammar_tutorial/page_41.htm)

### Question 5 Improving your writing

There are some effective ways to improve your descriptive sentences by adding extra detail. The first is by adding adjectives.

Look at the image below and write down some adjectives that you could use.



Some of the adjectives that might come to mind are:

- bright
- dark
- huge
- big
- busy

#### Example 1

Now consider this sentence:

I went to the fair.

Add at least one adjective, maybe two and the sentence becomes much more descriptive:  
I went to the **bright** and **busy** fair.

Now, change the verb for a word that is more precise in its meaning, that is more descriptive than 'went':

I **skipped** to the bright and busy fair.

Now, can you link another sentence with 'and' to make the sentence into a compound?

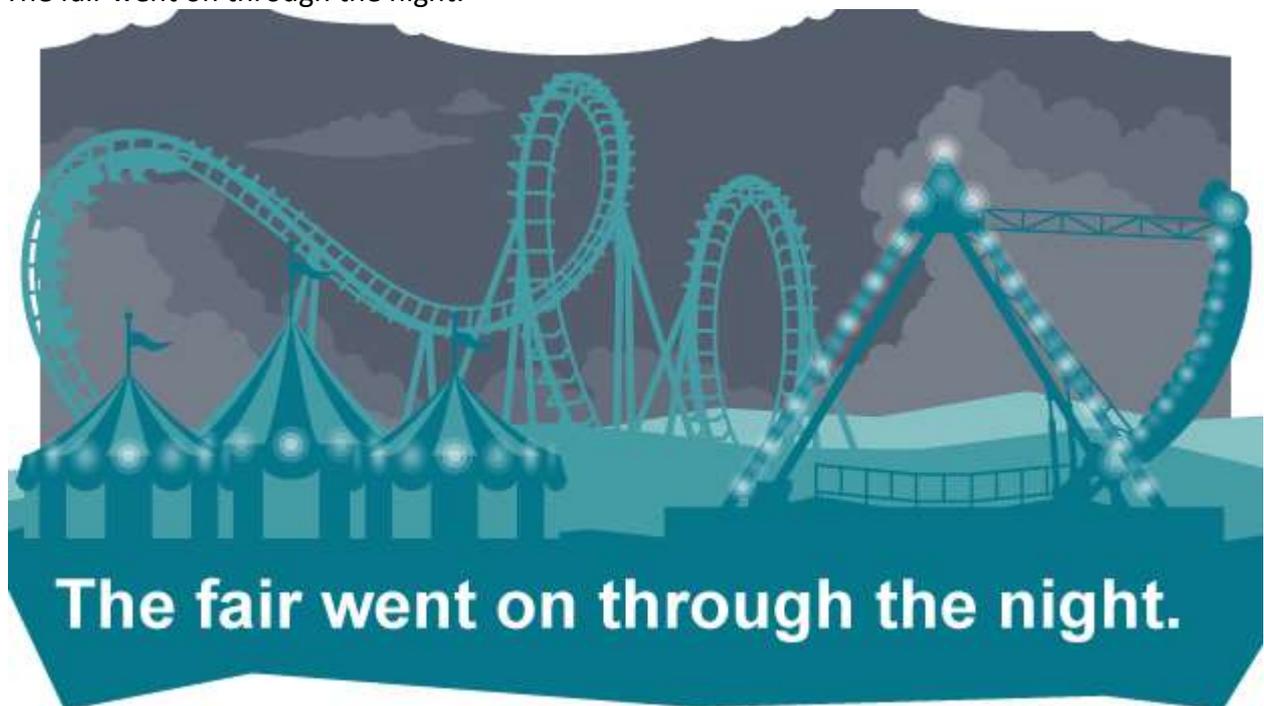
I skipped to to the bright and busy fair **and gazed at the amazing rides.**

### Example 2

Can you improve this sentence by adding detail to the verb and by using similes?

Look at the image again. See if you can come up with some ways to add detail to verbs - the words that tell what is happening at the fair.

The fair went on through the night.



Now add at least one adjective:

The fair went on through the **dark** and **starry** night.

Changing the verb by making a more precise vocabulary choice will give the reader an even better feel for the fair.

The fair **screamed** through the dark and starry night.

Can you add extra detail to make it a compound or even a complex sentence?

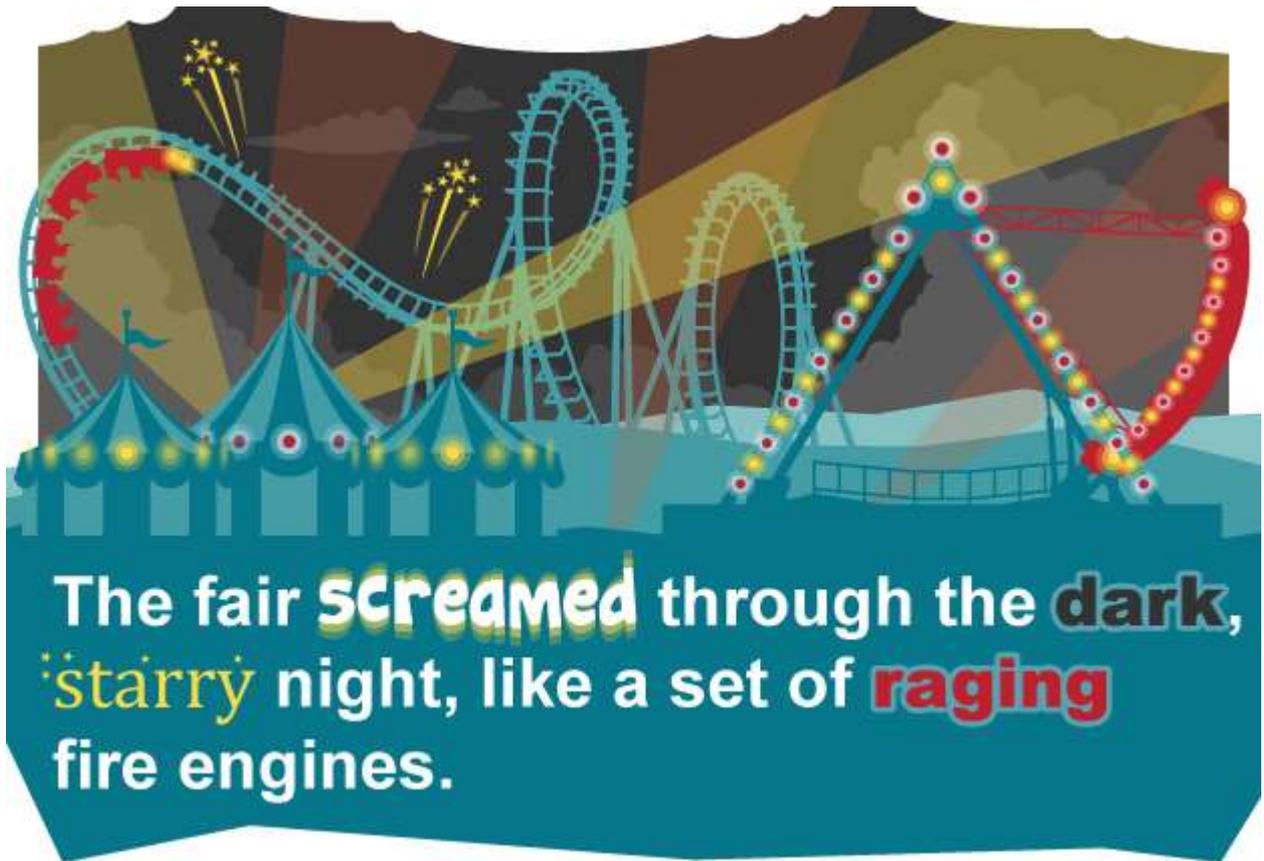
The fair screamed through the dark and starry night, **as if it couldn't be stopped.**

Better still, can you add an adverb to add detail to the action?

The fair screamed **noisily** through the dark and starry night, as if it couldn't be stopped.

The new detail could even be changed to make the whole sentence a simile:

The fair screamed through the dark and starry night, **like a set of raging fire engines.**



The difference between the first sentence and this last is obvious.

The fair went on through the night.

or

The fair screamed through the dark, starry night, like a set of raging fire engines.

When you are writing your own descriptions, always think as you proceed, or go back to your sentences in the first draft, to see how you can improve them by adding to them in these various ways.

## Writing to describe – some Ingredients

*Here are a list of language techniques you can use to make your writing interesting and engaging. Know why you are using them.*

Look carefully at the following techniques:

- Adjectives - describing words that describe a noun. Used to help create a more vivid picture in our minds about the named object.
- Adverbs - words used to describe verbs. They help to create a more vivid picture in our minds about how something is being done.
- Alliteration - repetition of connected words beginning with the same letter. Used to highlight the feeling of sound and movement, or to intensify feeling or to bind words together.
- Connotations - an idea or feeling that a word invokes for a person as well as its literal meaning. Connotations evoke reactions in the reader based on their experience of certain words. For example, words like ghost and death can evoke strong negative connotations.
- Pathetic fallacy - where the weather in the story mirrors the emotion of the scene or the people in it. For example, when it is very hot the characters are agitated or when it is foggy, mystery is evoked. This adds atmosphere to the writing and gives clues to the reader as to what is to come, especially if the weather is described before the event.
- Personification - the technique of presenting things which are not human as if they were. This can make inanimate things seem as if they are alive and able to do the things that a person can.
- Repetition - the action of repeating something. This will either add emphasis to the words being repeated or create a rhythm within the writing.
- Onomatopoeia - use of words which echo their meaning in sound. For example, 'whoosh' or 'bang'. This techniques can give the reader a real sense of the noise that is happening within the writing.
- Simile - a comparison based on a similarity between two things, which suggests one object shares features with another but is not identical. This technique helps to create an image in the mind of the reader so that the reader can identify with how things appear or may be happening. Hint - 'like' or 'as' are key words to spot.
- Symbolism - when a word, phrase or image stands for or evokes a complex set of ideas. For example, a red rose can symbolise romantic love. Writers will sometimes use symbols in their writing so that they can suggest things without actually explaining them.