

Calday Grange Grammar School



A Level English Language

IF THE **GH** SOUND IN ENOUGHGH IS PRONOUNCED "F" &
THE **O** IN WOMEN MAKES THE SHORT "I" SOUND &
THE **TI** IN NTION IS PRONOUNCED "SH" THEN THE
WORD

Language is a uniquely human form of communication. We do, indeed, share other forms of communication with other members of the animal kingdom, such as paralinguistic modes (body language) and pheromonal communication (odours), but language is ours alone.

EVERYDAY LANGUAGE

Having decided to study English Language, you are no doubt already convinced of the central role it plays in your life. You will also be aware of its ubiquity. Not only does it offer us such fantastic examples as Hamlet's great soliloquies, or T.S. Eliot's Modernist masterpiece, *The Waste Land*, but it also covers our everyday chatting and gossiping. Your dreams, your moments of quiet reflection, your conversations – all are involved with language.

Depending upon which studies one looks at, an average day, language-wise, consists of anywhere between 80,000 and 120,000 words. Even when chatting, we can be using upwards of 250 per minute (this also counts when we are listening to others). Imagine that: a ten minute conversation could involve at least 2,500 words! All of this requires encoding, production, reception and decoding. It's an amazing phenomenon, the English language.

TEN TEXTS IN A DAY

In order to help you begin to focus on what AQA AS English Language entails, we have devised an enjoyable task that enables you to collect, contextualise, analyse and annotate your own 'texts'.

Essentially, over the summer, you will collect ten texts for inclusion in a portfolio. For the purposes of language study, a text can be spoken as well as written, so you may include transcripts (transcribing spontaneous natural talk accurately is difficult to do without proper instruction and guidance, so we suggest you choose something scripted – a short scene from a soap opera, or a section of dialogue in a novel). Your texts can come from anywhere, as long as they are in English. You may, for example, present a portfolio that includes a charity leaflet, a page from a GCSE science textbook, an extract from a diary, a text message, a newspaper article, a sandwich packet, a recipe, a web page, an advert from a glossy magazine and a passport application form.

YOUR PORTFOLIO

THIS TASK (1) MUST BE SUBMITTED at the beginning of your first full week in September, w/c Monday 9th September.

The task of compiling your portfolio can be helpfully sub-divided into the following tasks:

1. Collect ten texts.
2. Write a short paragraph contextualising each text (GASP (see glossary)).
3. Using the glossary at the end of this booklet, highlight and identify as many features as you can (don't worry, if you're not sure; have a go!).
4. Try to develop explanations of how a feature contributes to an aspect, or aspects, of GASP, e.g. "Medical jargon is used as the text has been written for nurses."
5. Mount your work in a portfolio format of your choice, although it would be convenient if it is kept to A4 booklet size.



Here's an example from my portfolio, man!

Genre: spoof children's comic

Audience: children (Bart Simpson et al)

Subject: the antics of Itchy and Scratchy

Purpose: to entertain (to inform(?))

Variable font sizes & typefaces – emphasis (graphology)

Bright colours & simple cartoons – appeals to younger reader (pragmatics)

Compound adjective – aids clarity or entertainment (lexis/syntax)

Block capitals, white-on-black – emphasis (graphology)

American spelling (orthography)

Short noun phrases for titles – easy to read and eye-catching (syntax & pragmatics)

Half-rhyme – appeals to aural sense; entertaining

Onomatopoeia – appeals to aural sense

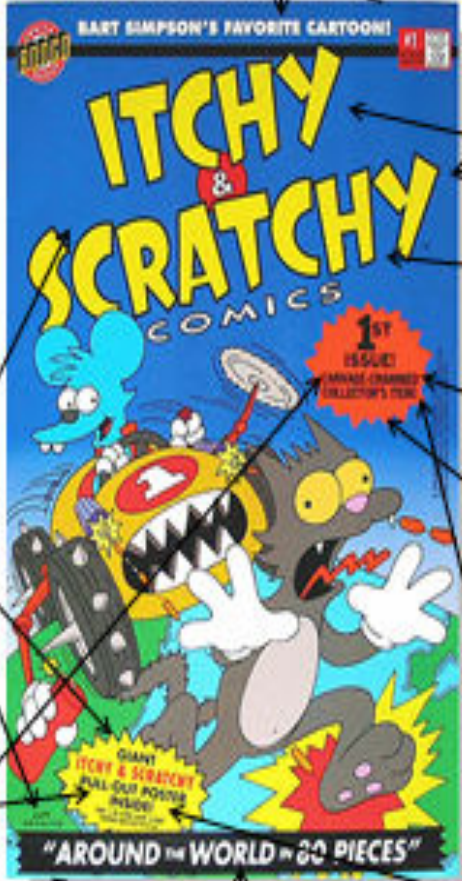
Emotive language – heightens drama; entertaining

Alliteration – appeals to aural sense; entertaining

Although a written document, the use of exclamatives, alliteration and onomatopoeia suggest this is a mixed-mode text, i.e. displays features of writing and speech.

Exclamatives - suggest/create excitement; speech feature(?)

Play on words (Around the World in 80 Days) – humorous; entertaining (pragmatics)



GENERAL GLOSSARY

? **GASP**

- Genre – the form of text, e.g. drama script, leaflet, conversation, news article, etc.
- Audience – the target reader of a text, e.g. adults interested in football, teen-gamers, etc.
- Subject – the topic of a text, e.g. smoking, the economy, holiday destinations, etc.
- Purpose – the aim of a text, e.g. to persuade, to inform, to entertain, to instruct, etc.

? **Noun**

- Concrete noun – a label for an object, e.g. car, table, woman, grass, etc.
- Abstract noun – a label for a concept or idea, e.g. love, society, freedom, justice, etc.
- Collective noun – a label for a group of things, e.g. a crowd, a flock, a herd, a team, etc.
- Proper noun – names of people, places, festivals, e.g. Christmas, Jack, London, etc.
- Pronoun – nouns that stand in place of the other four kinds above, e.g. it, they, she, him, something, etc.
- Gerund – a verb acting like a noun, e.g. **Running** is good for you.

? **Verb**

- Primary verbs – verbs that convey most of the action, e.g. running, thinking, shouting, etc.
- Auxiliary verbs – verbs that support primary verbs, e.g. are, is, have been, will be, etc.
- Infinitive tense – the base form of a verb, e.g. to do, to love, to drive, etc.
- Present tense – a verb indicating a current action, e.g. runs, shouts, thinks, etc.
- Past tense – a verb indicating a past action, e.g. ran, shouted, thought, etc.
- Progressive tense – a verb indicating an on-going action, e.g. running, shouting, thinking, etc.

? **Adjective**

- Superlative adjectives – adjectives that indicate absoluteness, e.g. best, biggest, worst, etc.
- Comparative adjectives – adjectives that indicate a comparison, e.g. better, bigger, worse, etc.
- Descriptive adjectives – the “basic” descriptive words, e.g. blue, hard, tall, fast, etc.
- Evaluative adjectives – adjectives that express some value or opinion, e.g. beautiful, awful, etc.
- Gerundive – a verb used as an adjective, e.g. the running man, the thinking woman, etc.

? **Preposition**

- Single-word prepositions – words that relate actions/objects to places, e.g. into, on, under, etc.
- Multi-word prepositions – as above, but consisting of more than one word, e.g. near to, etc.

? **Slang** - a kind of language occurring chiefly in casual and playful speech, made up typically of short-lived coinages and figures of speech that are deliberately used in place of standard terms for added raciness, humour, irreverence, or other effect, e.g. sick (meaning excellent or good), etc.

? **Colloquialism** - a word, phrase, or expression characteristic of ordinary or familiar conversation rather than formal speech or writing, e.g. “She’s out” for “She is not at home.”

? **Conversational language** – generally, informal language used in speech, but also found in writing.

? **High prestige language** – language associated with formality and intelligence.

? **Low prestige language** – language associated with informality, closeness.

? **Jargon/specialism** – language relating to specific areas, e.g. medical jargon, cricketing jargon, etc.

? **Standard English** – the form of English language most printed books follow. Standard English is considered the high prestige sociolect of British English.

? **Dialect** – a sub-division of language associated with a region, e.g. Scouse, Geordie, Cockney, etc.

? **Sociolect** – a sub-division of language associated with socioeconomic class.

- ❓ **Politeness features** – language used to maintain good relationships between interlocutors, e.g. Yes, sir. Sorry for bothering you, but could you tell me the way to...
- ❓ **Persuasive language** – language devices used to manipulate a reader/listener.
- ❓ **Imperative** – a direct command or instruction, e.g. Call this number, give way, etc.
- ❓ **Interrogative** – a question, e.g. How can I...? Do you like this?
- ❓ **Declarative** – a statement, e.g. I am typing this definition. Most of our utterances and sentences are declaratives.
- ❓ **Exclamative** – usually a short expression of surprise or shock, e.g. Wow! Goodness me!
- ❓ **Rhetorical question** – a persuasive device in which the answer to a question is obvious, e.g. Do you want to live in a world where millions of young children suffer malnutrition?
- ❓ **Minor sentence** – usually a short sentence that does not contain a finite verb, e.g. Superman: man of steel.
- ❓ **Language triplets** – a device that groups words/ideas into threes, e.g. We want a world of caring, selflessness and helpfulness.
- ❓ **Repetition** – words, phrases or sentences appearing more than once in a text. Often repetition is used for its emphatic or persuasive power.
- ❓ **Chronological text** – a text following the time order of events, e.g. a novel, travel writing.

WRITTEN TEXT GLOSSARY

- ❖ **Typeface** – the style of lettering, e.g. T, T, T, T, etc.
- ❖ **Font** – this refers to the various sizes of typeface in a text.
- ❖ **In/formal typeface** – some typefaces (Times New Roman) are employed in official texts to convey the importance of the information; other typefaces (Bradley Hand ITC) are used because they look more informal.
- ❖ **Heading/(Banner) headline** – a large headline/heading often used in newspaper articles, adverts, etc.
- ❖ **Strapline** – a more detailed headline supporting a headline.
- ❖ **By-line** – the name of the writer.
- ❖ **Stand first** – the first few sections of a newspaper, article, advertisement that contain key information.
- ❖ **Column** – a layout feature in most newspaper, magazines and newsletter.
- ❖ **Image** – photographs, diagrams, cartoons, etc.
- ❖ **Caption** – a phrase connected with an image for illustrative, humorous or rhetorical purposes.
- ❖ **Pull quote** – this refers to enlarging key quotations from the body of an article to highlight information.
- ❖ **Sub-heading** – a division within a text, often allowing ease of ‘navigation’ by separating different aspects of information.
- ❖ **Paragraph** – a further division usually focused a sub-topic, within a text.
- ❖ **Quotations** – others’ words used within a text. Often quotations are used as a way of proving or supporting a proposition.
- ❖ **Boxed text** – usually key points separated from the main text.
- ❖ **Bullet-points** – usually summarising the main points in an argument, process, etc.

SPOKEN TEXT GLOSSARY

- **Micro pause:** (.) this indicates a very brief pause in a conversational flow.
- **Timed pause** in seconds: (3) this indicates a longer period of pausing.
- **Non-fluency features:** “erm, uh, um, etc.” These are often found in spontaneous speech, as a way of gaining time whilst composing the next utterance.
- **Adjacency pairs** – this refers to when an utterance and an appropriate response has occurred, e.g. “How are you?” “I’m fine, thanks.”
- **Interruption** – a speech act in which one speaker’s flow is stopped by another speaker starting an utterance.
- **Overlap** – this refers to when two, or more, speakers speak at once.
- **Hedge** - a speech feature that conveys uncertainty, e.g. “Perhaps, it’s over here.”
- **Topic management** – this refers to features used to control the topics of conversation. For instance, you may open a conversation with a friend by asking about his/her plans for the weekend because you want to arrange a date with him/her.
- **Phatic communion** - this refers to language that is used to bond with people, rather than to communicate for specific reasons.
- **Phatic utterance** – this refers to specific instances of language aimed at achieving the above. For instance, we often ask others how they are feeling, but we rarely want detailed feedback.
- **Feedback** – this refers to responses by listeners that help to keep a conversation going, e.g. yep, uhuh, go on, etc.
- **Conversational repairs** - this refers to when errors in speech are corrected – either by the speaker or another interlocutor, e.g. “I is going... I am going to town.”

REMEMBER: YOUR PRE COURSE TASK MUST BE SUBMITTED IN YOUR FIRST ENGLISH LANGUAGE LESSON during w/c. Monday 9th September.

This is the pre course reading list from AQA

<http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/english/AQA-7702-READING-LIST.PDF>

YOU and YOUR LANGUAGE: A Level Language Autobiography

Pre-course material assignment

This task, Part 2, must be ready to deliver w/c. Monday 23th September 2024

Presentation

*In this assignment I would like you to reflect on your own experiences and observations on language. Try to offer responses to some (maybe all!) of the prompt questions and write up your findings into a **speech to deliver to the class (PowerPoint to help if you wish)** using what you consider to be an appropriate **REGISTER**.*

What varieties of language are spoken in your family, and how have they come about? Use a family tree/map to illustrate your response. (N.B. variety can include different accents, dialects, languages and registers).

Does your family remind you of any funny stories about things you said when you were a small child?

What are your earliest memories of listening to stories and/or learning to read and write?

How easy/difficult did you find it at school to learn to speak, read and write? How, and when, did you start to discover you were quite good at or enjoyed English? What did you most enjoy?

How successfully have you tried to learn another language? Successful or not, what has the experience taught you about how languages differ from each other?

How would you describe your own accent and dialect of English? Are you aware of changing the way in which you speak in different circumstances? If so, why do you think this happens?

Most people report that they find certain linguistic things annoying/appealing – it may be that you find a particular word or phrase that has come into use annoying/appealing or a particular accent? You may find certain kinds of coarse swearing particularly unpleasant? What annoys/ upsets you? What is it you like about particular aspects of language?

It is sometimes said that “language is power”. In what ways do you think this is true and in what ways do you hope to become more “powerful” as your language skills and knowledge develop?

Finally, try to explain (honestly!) what tempted you to embark on an A Level devoted to the study of English Language!