

Higher English

Reading for Understanding, Analysis and Evaluation (Close Reading)

Word Choice

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- **The first step is to pick out / identify the most important words.**
- **Quote the words in your answer**
- **Analyse the words in detail –the connotations / associations the word has, sound or tone etc.**
- **Discuss the effect of the word.**
- **Explain how the word helps you to understand the writer's ideas/opinion.**

Structure of answer

Use **bullet points** – this will save time and help focus your answers.

Use the following structure:

- “...” **suggests** ...
- “...” **suggests** ...

N5 mark allocation

At N5 level, you will be awarded one mark for a correct quote and one mark for a suitable comment.

Therefore, if the question is worth 4 marks, you should quote twice, but make sure you follow the structure from the previous slide, ie. comment after each quote.

Higher mark allocation

At Higher, there are no marks for quoting alone. You get **one** mark for your quote **and** comment.

Therefore, give the same number of points as marks available, even if question seems to suggest otherwise. (If it's worth 4 marks and asks for "at least 2 examples", still give 4! At Higher level it is very hard to get 2 marks for one comment)

- “The precious secret was unearthed - a glittering nugget - that was to prove invaluable.”
- What key word(s) did the writer use?

glittering nugget

- What do you associate with this word (s)? What does the choice of word suggest?

nugget suggests gold – something really valuable - Suggests something precious like gold

- What is the purpose /effect of the image?

Describes how valuable the secret was –how important –it was great find - like finding gold.

- “Oil prices have rocketed in recent years.”
- What key word(s) did the writer use? >
rocketed
- What does the choice of word suggest?
rocket –firework –exploding –going up really fast, etc. Suggests speed – the writer wants to emphasise the sudden, dramatic , explosive rise in prices
- What is the purpose /effect of the word(s)? >
Describes how dramatically prices have risen – suggests prices have exploded – soared – increased rapidly.

- Public service broadcasting means a network that produces a range of well-made programmes, particularly in less popular genre, which are financed according to their intrinsic needs and not the size of the audience. Chasing ratings is not what the BBC should be doing. Yet the BBC schedules are stuffed with cheap populist rubbish, which can hardly be said to be needed since commercial producers make them with even greater enthusiasm and vulgarity. Intoxicated with the popularity of such genre, the BBC have allowed them to run rampant like some nasty kind of pondlife and crowd out other programmes.
- How does the writer's word choice make clear her disapproval of BBC schedules?

- ‘stuffed’ suggests filled to overflowing in a careless, thoughtless way.
- ‘Cheap’ suggests not just inexpensive but low quality.
- ‘Populist’ suggests indiscriminating, appealing to lowest common denominator
- ‘rubbish’ suggests totally valueless, no better than junk waste
- ‘pondlife’ suggests unpleasant destructive, parasitic, lowest of the low
- ‘crowd out’ suggests aggressive, bullying, disregard for others.

- **The boy was interrogated about his actions by his parents.**
- *What word(s) would you pick out to discuss?*
- *Why?*
- *What do you associate with this word?*
- *What connotations does the word have?*
- *What does the word make you think of?*
- *Does the word(s) create an image for you?*
- *Why did the writer choose this word?*

- **We have been bombarded with numerous images. The attack of the advertisers is relentless. The barrage is almost endless and disorientating.**

- *What word(s) would you pick out to discuss?*
- *What do you associate with this word(s)?*
- *What connotations does the word have?*
- *What does the word make you think of?*
- *Does the word(s) create an image for you?*
- *Why did the writer choose this word?*

- **The Christmas season is now packed with marketing gimmicks as parents are compelled to buy junk and goodwill has been discarded in favour of the pressurised selling of furry “gonks” and plastic clutter.**
- *What are the key words in this example?*
- *Do the words create a contrast?*
- *Why did the writer use this “word group”?*
- *What point does the writer make in this example?*