

1 Introducing Analysis

This course is exactly what its name implies: it is the study of both English Language and Literature, and the specification has been designed with the total integration of these two aspects of the subject in mind. Consequently, you will be asked to study a range of writing representing a variety of genres, including the main literary types of prose, poetry and drama, from both literary and linguistic viewpoints.

You will also be expected to study a selection of non-literary texts, especially those that could feature as part of the unseen analytical comparison in Section A of Unit 3 and those that will appear as part of your adaptation of language in Section B of the same paper.

You will furthermore be required to study features of speech and be expected to analyse a range of speech situations, including transcripts of spontaneous speech; coupled with this, there will also be representation of speech in Unit 2 and it may also crop up in the unseen analysis of Unit 3. This topic may well be one that is new to AS students of English Language and Literature, but it is an integral part of the specification and this is reflected in the weighting of the Assessment Objectives at both levels. However, it is likely you will find that this new departure is both interesting and rewarding, as well as enhancing your analytical skills and fostering your critical faculties.

Aims of the course

This course aims to cultivate a deeper understanding of both English Language and English Literature than that gained at GCSE level, by examining **texts** from both literary and linguistic viewpoints.

Text

A text is simply a piece of writing or a piece of speech. Michael Halliday famously outlined the possible range of texts as being 'prose or verse, dialogue or monologue, it may be anything from a single proverb to a whole play, from a momentary cry for help to an all-day discussion on a committee'.

By examining a variety of texts in this way, you should be able to see whether a literary, linguistic or integrated analytical approach helps you to understand a text more fully. You will be encouraged to do this by applying differing analytical **frameworks**.

Framework

A framework is a critical skeleton around which you can build the body of your analysis. Different frameworks may be more suited to different texts and it will be up to you to learn which one best serves your analysis.

Frameworks can be made up of a variety of critical ‘bones’, and this book will help you learn the most effective ways of constructing your own frameworks for analysis, when to apply them and how to review their effectiveness.

However, it is also necessary for you to be able to apply the detail of the frameworks to different texts; to do this, it is necessary for you to know about the different ‘bones’ that join together to make different frameworks. You will have learned some of these ‘bones’ at GCSE level (alliteration, imagery and metaphor, for instance), but there will be many more that you need to become familiar with so as to increase the breadth and effectiveness of your analytical interpretations and responses. The most notable difference from your GCSE studies is that you will need to become familiar with linguistic terms; all aspects of the course require you to understand this terminology.

The advantage of engaging in combined literary and linguistic study is that you will have the best of both worlds: you can seamlessly use terms from both disciplines to inform your analyses, and you will learn which terms and which frameworks help you to deconstruct texts most effectively. It is essential that you do this, as Unit 3 of the specification will test your ability to adopt an individual approach to unseen textual analysis. Similarly, you will have the opportunity to study two texts in Unit 4 and construct your own question, and by definition your own approach to the answer, in the coursework unit.

There are other points that must be taken into account before we begin the study of the content relevant to each part of the course. There are certain underlying principles that you need to be aware of when you are engaged in either AS or A2 study. You will need to study a minimum of six set texts across the course, supplemented by the study of shorter texts to help with your textual analysis. At AS level for AQA Specification A, Unit 1 requires you to study two texts, which could be two drama texts, two prose texts or one from each genre. For Unit 2 you will study a third text, again either prose or drama. The advantage of this is that you can specialize in one genre if you so wish, or if you prefer to study the different genres more widely, you can cover both genres. You will also need to work on unseen texts, particularly examples of writing which contain the representation of speech so as to help with the comparison that you will need to do between the speech texts given in your Unit 2 examination.

At A2 level, your studies will become more penetrating and be solely based on **comparative study**, except for the textual recasting task. You will need to study a poetry text, a genre not included at AS level. This will need to be compared to another text (from a given list) which may be poetry, prose or drama. You will also need to do a detailed study of the non-fiction set text to help prepare you for the textual recasting paper.

We will guide you through these sections which will require you, at all times, to consider the **purpose, audience and context** of each piece of writing you study, as well taking other points into consideration, such as comparison, textual adaptation and authorial attitudes. These principles will be pointed up at each opportunity in this book and we will show you how they fit into the study and assessment of the course. This book is organized to help you become familiar with the particular genres and topic areas that you will encounter; consequently, it is organized by genre and topic rather than unit by unit. This reflects the integrated nature of the course; however, to help you practise the types of question that might apply to specific genres, you will find appropriate questions at the end of each relevant chapter.

Textual analysis

Because textual analysis is a skill that you need to learn from the outset, we will spend a little time first building a framework for analysis which you can then apply throughout this book, adapting it and refining it as you see fit. Textual analysis lies at the heart of this subject, and the application of it (through whichever framework or method you choose) will enable you to become a more confident, informed and skilful critic of English Language and Literature.

As you will see, all texts whether written or spoken have a **purpose, audience and context**; these terms are all dealt with in much greater detail in the rest of the book. Essentially, the terms refer to what a text does, who it is written for and where it appears. When you are engaging in textual analysis, it is always a good idea to start with these three areas as they help you to find a route into the text. When you have identified these, you can continue by examining the text at a variety of levels, moving from individual words through phrases, sentence structures and other grammatical and syntactical issues, to how the text is put together, and finally on to what it looks like as a whole.

Use the flow chart below to help you use one method of deconstructing any text you are studying; once you have become accustomed to the methodology, you can adapt it for your purposes.

One method of textual analysis

What? Who? Where?	
1 What is the text trying to do?	➔ Purpose
2 Who is it trying to communicate these ideas to?	➔ Audience
3 Where will the text appear?	➔ Context
4 What does it look like?	➔ Form
↓	
How?	
5 Use of specific words or terms from a certain area	➔ Semantic field/ Field-specific lexis
6 Use of certain types of words and word classes	➔ Grammar
7 Use of other constructions in phrases and sentences	➔ Syntax
8 Use of sound features and style devices	➔ Phonology and stylistic features
9 How the text fits together	➔ Cohesion
10 What the text looks like and how it is laid out	➔ Graphology
↓	
Effect?	Evaluation of...
11 Does the text do what it sets out to?	➔ Purpose
12 Does it hit its target readership?	➔ Audience
13 Does the place where it appears help the text?	➔ Context
14 Does its layout help?	➔ Form

Of course, analysing a text in such a way does not construct an argument for you. A simple and effective way to do this is simply to chain your points together by using a three-point critical sentence. In this you would:

- 1 identify the point you want to discuss
- 2 give an example from the text
- 3 comment on how it works within the text in terms of purpose and audience.

This is a tried and tested method that helps you to focus on each example that you choose to discuss. You may have been taught a variation of this at GCSE level (one such version is PEE: point – evidence – explanation). Use the version you have been taught if it is easier for you and has worked in the past. You will be able to practise textual analysis at many points in this book, which will help you to engage with the unseen textual analysis required in Unit 3.

Activity

Read the following texts; they are all short examples of the different types of written genre you will come across in the course. You will be familiar with each as you will have studied all four of these genres at GCSE level. Choose one of them and then follow the task outlined below to write your first piece of short textual analysis.

- 1 Identify the range of examples and ideas that you could use in a textual analysis.
- 2 Tabulate your findings: this will give you a series of points that you can use as the basis for your response.
- 3 Using the flow chart on page 3, organize your findings into relevant sections.
- 4 Write out your textual analysis of the piece you have chosen.

Prose non-fiction

The Perfect Storm

A soft fall rain slips down through the trees and the smell of ocean is so strong that it can almost be licked off the air. Trucks rumble along Rogers Street and men in t-shirts stained with fish blood shout to each other from the decks of boats. Beneath them the ocean swells up against the black pilings and sucks back down to the barnacles. Beer cans and old pieces of styrofoam rise and fall and pools of spilled diesel fuel undulate like huge iridescent jellyfish. The boats rock and creak against their ropes and seagulls complain and hunker down and complain some more. Across Rogers Street and around the back of the Crow's Nest Inn, through the door and up the cement stairs, down the carpeted hallway and into one of the doors on the left, stretched out on a double bed in room #27 with a sheet pulled over him, Bobby Shatford lies asleep.

He's got one black eye. There are beer cans and food wrappers scattered around the room and a duffel bag on the floor with t-shirts and flannel shirts and blue jeans spilling out.

Sebastian Junger

Prose fiction

The Cure for Death by Lightning

When it came looking for me I was in the hollow stump by Turtle Creek at the spot where the deep pool was hidden by low hanging bushes, where the fishing was the very best and only my brother and I figured we knew of it. Now, in spring, the stump blossomed purple and yellow violets so profusely that it became something holy and worth pondering. Come fall, the stump was flagrantly, shamefully red in a coat of dying leaves from the surrounding trees. This was my stump, where I stored my few illicit treasures: the lipstick my mother smuggled home for me in a bag of rice; the scrap of red velvet that Bertha Moses tucked in my pocket as she left the house on the day of my fifteenth birthday; the violet perfume I received as my gift at the Christmas pageant the year before; and the bottle of clear nail polish my father threw into the manure pile after he caught me using it behind the house, the bottle I had salvaged, washed, and spirited away.

I was in there, hiding, my knees up to my nose, listening to the sound of it rushing, crashing through the bush, coming for me. A cobweb stretched over my face, an ant roamed over the valleys in my skirt, spiders invaded my hair, and an itch started on my nose and traveled to my arm, but I stayed still.

Gail Anderson-Dargatz

Poetry

A Poison Tree

I was angry with my friend:
I told my wrath, my wrath did end.
I was angry with my foe:
I told it not, my wrath did grow.

And I water'd it in fears,
Night & morning with my tears:
And I sunned it with smiles,
And with soft deceitful wiles.

And it grew both day and night,
Till it bore an apple bright.
And my foe beheld it shine,
And he knew that it was mine.

And into my garden stole,
When the night had veil'd the pole;
In the morning glad I see,
My foe outstretch'd beneath the tree.

William Blake

Drama

The Tempest

Miranda: If by your art, my dearest father, you have
Put the wild waters in this roar, allay them.
The sky, it seems, would pour down stinking pitch,
But that the sea, mounting to the welkin's cheek,
Dashes the fire out. O, I have suffered
With those that I saw suffer: a brave vessel,
Who had, no doubt, some noble creature in her,
Dash'd all to pieces. O, the cry did knock
Against my very heart. Poor souls, they perish'd.
Had I been any god of power, I would
Have sunk the sea within the earth or ere
It should the good ship so have swallow'd and
The fraughting souls within her.

Prospero: Be collected:
No more amazement: tell your piteous heart
There's no harm done.

Miranda: O, woe the day!

Prospero: No harm.
I have done nothing but in care of thee,
Of thee, my dear one, thee, my daughter, who
Art ignorant of what thou art, nought knowing
Of whence I am, nor that I am more better
Than Prospero, master of a full poor cell,
And thy no greater father.

William Shakespeare