



WJEC GCSE

ENGLISH SKILLS AND PRACTICE

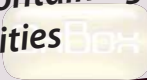
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WAYNE POWELL

Advance Material

Uncorrected sample pages

Total book: 64 pages

OXFORD
One Skills & Practice book for each specification containing
invaluable extra practice, support and activities 

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- Boost your grades

Glossary

Preparing for your GCSE

Preparing for the speaking and listening assessment

For GCSE English, the speaking and listening assessment makes up 20% of your total mark.

The skills you will need to demonstrate are:

- presenting and listening to information and ideas
- responding appropriately to the questions and views of others
- making a range of effective contributions
- reflecting and commenting critically on your own and others' use of language
- participating in a range of real-life contexts in and beyond the classroom; adapting your speech appropriately to situation and audience
- selecting and using a range of dramatic techniques and creative approaches to explore ideas, texts and issues in scripted and improvised work.

1 The assessment tasks

You will need to complete three different tasks:

- an individual presentation
- a group discussion
- a role-play activity.

The individual presentation will last up to five minutes, although there may be extra time for questions afterwards.

There is no time set for group discussion and role-play, as these will depend on the tasks themselves.

2 Top tips for speaking

- Be enthusiastic about the topic or task.
- Keep to the topic! Try not to stray from what is being discussed.
- Do not repeat points that have already been made, unless you have something new to add.
- Always try to make at least one relevant contribution in a discussion. If you are nervous, try to get a comment in early.
- Vary the tone of your voice; try not to speak in a monotone.
- Do not interrupt other speakers. Always be polite.
- Let other students speak. Monopolizing a discussion will not score higher marks.
- When you talk to an audience, make sure that your body language is positive. Do not lean or slouch.
- Do not stare at the floor or out of the window. Establish eye contact with your audience.
- Do not place your hand over your mouth when speaking.

3 Top tips for listening

- Always be involved in discussions, even if you are just listening carefully to what is being said.
- When listening to a speaker, consider your body language. Face the speaker, give them your full attention and show you are listening; for example, by leaning forward attentively.
- When someone else is speaking, do not yawn or look bored.
- Encourage other nervous speakers by means of the occasional nod and smile.

4 Aiming for A*

To achieve a top grade, you must be able to:

- highlight important details when talking about complex subject matter
- use a sophisticated range of speaking strategies
- use a range of Standard English vocabulary and grammar in appropriate contexts
- listen carefully and show that you understand what has been said by asking questions
- shape the direction of a discussion and respond with flexibility to develop ideas and challenge assumptions
- encouraging participation from other students, resolving differences and achieving positive outcomes in your discussion
- create complex characters and fulfil the demands of challenging roles
- explore and respond to complex ideas and issues in both formal and informal scenarios.

Spelling and grammar skills

Plot summary

Errors with spelling and grammar can cost you precious marks and prevent many candidates from achieving a grade C. In this section we will look at some common problem areas and revise the basic skills necessary to fulfil your potential at GCSE.

1 Pronouns

Many students confuse their pronouns. Use the grid below to revise the different types of pronoun and when to use them.

	Objective	Possessive	Reflexive
Singular			
I	me	mine	myself
you	you	yours	yourself
he	him	his	himself
she	her	hers	herself
it	it	its	itself
Plural			
we	us	ours	ourselves
you	you	yours	yourselves
they	them	theirs	themselves

2 Punctuation

Exclamation marks

Exclamation marks can be used very effectively to signal a command or to give emphasis or emotion to a statement. But be careful to use them correctly!

- Use a single exclamation mark, not two or three in a row.
- Don't include a full stop as well as an exclamation mark.
- Exclamation marks are best used sparingly to have the most effect. Try not to over-use them in your writing.

Question marks

Many students forget to include question marks at the end of their sentences, especially long ones. When you check your work, look out for missing question marks. Remember, don't use a full stop as well as a question mark!

Speech marks

- Similarly to question marks, many students forget to signal the end of a quote using speech marks. Look out for this when checking your work.
- Other punctuation (such as question marks, full stops and exclamation marks) goes inside the speech marks.
- When you are writing a dialogue between two or more people, remember to start a new line when someone else speaks.

Apostrophes

Apostrophes are used for two reasons:

- to show where a letter or letters have been left out (for example, in *you're* the letter 'a' has been left out of *you are*)
- to show that something belongs to someone or something (for example, *Rachel's chocolates* are the chocolates belonging to Rachel).

Mistakes are often made with the following contractions:

it is	it's
we are	we're
you are	you're
we had	we'd
cannot	can't
will not	won't
are not	aren't
could not	couldn't
do not	don't
does not	doesn't

Pay special attention to your use of **its** and **it's**. Remember:

its means something belong to it, for example: *The boat has slipped its mooring.*

it's means 'it is' or 'it has', for example: *It's a great opportunity* or *It's been raining.*

Apostrophes are NOT used in plural nouns where there is no possession. For example: *TVs, Hondas, VIPs.*

Writing for a specific purpose, audience and format

In this unit you will be examined on your writing skills. As well as the technical accuracy of your writing, the examiners will be testing you on your ability to write in an appropriate way to suit a particular **purpose** and **audience**. You will also have to write in a particular **format**. The purpose, audience and format will all be specified in the question.

Purpose – What’s the point?

Before you write anything, it’s vital that you know why you are writing. The exam question will provide this information for you so make sure you read it carefully. For example, you might be asked to write a job application, to review a film or to write a campaign leaflet about reducing pollution. Each of these tasks asks you to write for a different purpose. What is the main purpose of each one?

The purpose of what you write will affect **how** you write, which means the language you use, the way you structure your text and the tone you take. Try to be as authentic as possible. You may have read similar texts yourself. What features did they have? You will gain good marks if you can incorporate these elements into your own writing.

Use the table below to match the text to the purpose.

Text	Main Purpose
1. a letter of complaint about a faulty product	A. Encourage people to visit soon to buy something.
2. a newspaper article about a recent archaeological discovery	B. To inform other people about good and bad points, before giving an overall verdict.
3. a review of skate park	C. To persuade people to make a donation or support a cause.
4. a campaign leaflet for a local charity	D. To provide interesting facts and information.
5. a leaflet about the dangers of driving dangerously	E. To demonstrate that you are unhappy about something and that you want something doing about it.
6. an advertisement for a new designer shop	F. To shock people and make them aware of risks involved; to persuade them to act more responsibly.

For each text listed, identify one way that the purpose will influence what you write. The first two have been done for you:

1. I will need to make it clear exactly what is wrong with the product.
2. I will need to say when and where the discovery was made.

Audience – Who’s it for?

The style of your writing will also be heavily affected by **who** the piece of writing is for. You would write an email to your local councillor, for example, in a different way to how you might write an email to your best friend.

Here is a checklist of features that are likely to be affected by audience:

1. **Form of address** – E.g. Dear Sir; Ladies and gentleman; Hi mate; Attention all shoppers!
 2. **Choice of vocabulary** – Colloquial, technical, concise, emotive
 3. **Sentence structure** – Short simple sentences, long complex sentences or a variety?
 4. **Layout** – use of subheadings, bullet-point lists, tables, headlines, fact boxes
 5. **Choice of pronoun** – 1st person (I), 2nd person (you) or 3rd person (he/she/they)
 6. **Tone** – humorous, objective, friendly, emotive, energetic, angry
- Remember that you may need to use different forms of each within the same piece of writing.

Format – What are the rules?

The question will also tell you what **format** you should write in. A good way to prepare for this exam is to familiarize yourself with the conventions of writing in different formats. These are easy to learn. Here is a list of different types of format that you might face in the exam. Some of the features have already been listed for you. Try looking at some real examples of these texts and then add other features that you identify.

Newspaper article

- headline
- quotes

Letter

address in the top left-hand corner, Yours Sincerely/Faithfully

Speech

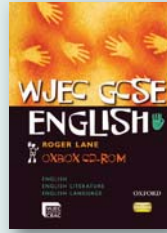
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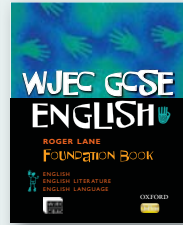
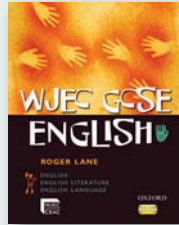
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