

## 3 defining features of A\* GCSE work

### What A\* students characteristically do:

- 1** **In reading:** relentless attention to language – WHY the writer may have chosen a word, phrase, sentence, tense, figure of speech, structure, and HOW this affects or influences the reader
- 2** **In writing about reading:** short embedded quotations; a tentative tone ('this suggests', 'there may be a hint of..'); an authoritative impersonal but not complicated style.
- 3** **In writing:** a confidence to take risks; an understanding of the conventions of polemical articles, letters, leaflets, speeches; a balance of formal and colloquial language; polished use of punctuation, including parenthetical commas, semi-colons for balance and contrast, and colons; the sense of a 'voice'

### How they do it:

They read a lot – fiction, history, books about ideas, and articles by people who write well (eg Andrew Rawnsley, Jeremy Clarkson, Melanie Philips, Oliver Burkeman, Christopher Hitchens, Nigel Slater, Polly Toynbee, Allison Pearson).

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