

GET THAT C OR HIGHER IN GCSE ENGLISH

The 2 key ingredients for success:

(1) be accurate; (2) be interesting

5 writing skills:

1 structure; 2 vary sentences; 3 reject first word; 4 be sensuous;
5 self-monitor

2 reading skills:

1 what → who → how
2 Looking at language = formal/informal; personal/impersonal;
serious/comic; specialist/general; complex or simple

EXAM SUMMARY:

Section A – Reading response to non-fiction and media texts (1hr 15mins)

Higher – 4 questions

- Follow an argument in a text and select the key points
- Analyse structure and layout
- Explain and interpret a text
- Compare and analyse language

Foundation – 5 questions

- Select information from a text
- Follow an argument in a text and select the key points
- Explain and interpret a text
- Analyse the effect of language used by a writer
- Compare and analyse presentational features

Section B – Writing (1 hr)

Shorter writing task – writing to inform, explain or describe (25 mins)

Longer writing task – writing to argue or persuade (35 mins)

Mr B's Handy English Hints

Everything there is to know about GCSE English Success

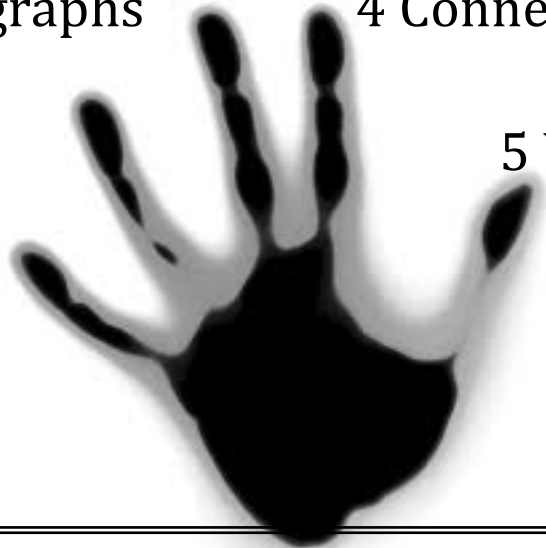
3 Sentence variety

2 Paragraphs

4 Connectives

1 Plan

5 Words



5 PLANNING TO PERSUADE hints:

1: Argument for (a) 2: Argument for (b) 3: Argument for (c) 4: Arguments against 5: "My view is ..."

5 PLANNING TO DESCRIBE hints:

1: Past 2: Present 3: Describe sound/smells/textures 4: Tell story 5: Future

5 SENTENCE VARIETY hints:

1: Short & long 2: 2-part starting with connectives 3: 2-part sentences starting with -ed / -ing
4: Think questions / statements / dialogue 5: Use "that/which/when/who"

5 CONNECTIVES hints:

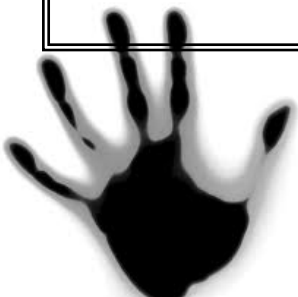
1: As 2: Although 3: Because 4: If 5: When

5 WORDS hints:

1: Reject your first word 2: Use power words, not "I / was / am / is" 3: Avoid starting sentences
"The ... / I ..." 4: Think senses (sounds, smells, textures) 5: Surprise us!

5 READING hints:

1: Informal/formal 2: Personal/impersonal 3: Serious/humorous 4: General/specialist
5: Accessible/inaccessible



DANGER



WORDS

Confident writers self-regulate as they write. In practice, this means:

1 We pause when we use these words:

- It's / its
- Their / there / they're
- Wear / where
- Here / hear

2 We know that a few spelling rules can help:

- 'i before e' (believe, not believe)
- every word ending in -ful only has one 'l' (thoughtful, beautiful)

3 We like short sentences

When we join ideas with 'and' and 'but' we wonder whether the sentence is going on too long. We try to use more short sentences. These make our writing clearer. They add authority. We like them.

4 We often reject the first word we think of

We know that we know a lot of words – probably more than 40,000 in total. So when we write, we pause and reject the first word we think of.

Instead of we might use
Bad	Unpleasant, repulsive, off-putting, wrong, inappropriate
Good	Welcome, attractive, satisfying, positive, helpful

We also try to avoid sentences that begin 'It was,' 'There was', 'I am' so that our writing is less predictable. We might use senses, details, questions, dialogue to add interest to our writing.

5 Sometimes we just have to learn stuff

We know that some spellings are tricky, but that people will judge us if we get them wrong, so we simply learn them – eg by asking someone to test us on them until we get them right. Some of the most misspelt words are overleaf

Correct spelling	Spelling advice	Common misspelling
accommodation	two cs , two ms	acomodation
achieve	i before e	acheive
across	one c	accross
aggressive, aggression	two gs	agressive, agression
apparently	-ent not -ant	apparrantly
appearance	ends with -ance	appearence
argument	no e after the u	arguement
beginning	double n before the -ing	begining
believe	i before e	beleive, belive
bizarre	one z , double -r	bizzare
business	begins with busi-	buisness
calendar	-ar not -er	calender
colleague	-ea- in the middle	collegue
coming	one m	comming
completely	ends with -ely	completly
definitely	-ite- not -ate-	definatly
disappear	one s , two ps	dissappear
disappoint	one s , two ps	dissapoint
embarrass	two rs , two s's	embarass
environment	n before the m	enviroment
existence	ends with -ence	existance
finally	two ls	finaly
forty	begins with for-	fourty
forward	begins with for-	foward
friend	i before e	freind
government	n before the m	goverment
guard	begins with gua-	gaurd
happened	ends with -ened	happend
humorous	-mor- in the middle	humourous
immediately	ends with -ely	immediatly
independent	ends with -ent	independant
interrupt	two rs	interupt
knowledge	remember the d	knowlege
liaise, liaison	remember the second i : liais-	liase, liason
necessary	one c , two s's	neccessary
noticeable	remember the middle e	noticable
occasion	two cs , one s	ocassion, occassion
occurred, occurring	two cs , two rs	occured, occuring
persistent	ends with -ent	persistant
piece	i before e	peice
possession	two s's in the middle and two at the end	posession
preferred, preferring	two rs	prefered, prefering
publicly	ends with -cly	publically
really	two ls	realy
receive	e before i	recieve
referred, referring	two rs	refered, refering
remember	-mem- in the middle	rember, remeber
separate	-par- in the middle	seperate
successful	two cs , two s's	succesful
surprise	begins with sur-	suprise
tomorrow	one m , two rs	tommorrow, tommorrow
truly	no e	truely
unfortunately	ends with -ely	unfortunatly
until	one l at the end	untill

**30 ESSENTIAL TIPS ON ENGLISH USAGE
FOR GCSE GRADE C OR HIGHER**

A quick guide to the words people often use incorrectly

1. A lot, not 'alot'
2. All right, not 'alright'
3. All sorts, not 'alsorts'
4. Basically: this word is unnecessary in most contexts
5. Continuous/continual – a continuous noise never stops; a continual noise is frequent but with interruptions
6. Comprise or consists of (but not 'comprises of')
7. Different from, not 'different than'
8. Disinterested = neutral/objective; uninterested = not interested
9. Due to = say 'because of'
10. Formally – being formal; formerly – in the past
11. Imply/infer – I imply that you are mad; you infer that I am being rude
12. It's (=it is/it has); its (= 'the work was completed ahead of its deadline')
13. Like – use 'as if' – 'it looks as if he will be late'
14. Led – past tense of to lead; lead – rope for a dog and heavy element
15. Less / fewer: less for quantities (I'll have less water); fewer than for items that can be individually counted (fewer than 10 bottles)
16. Meet – not 'meet with'
17. Momentarily – 'he stopped momentarily', not the Americanism 'I'll be there momentarily'
18. More than – better than 'over' (it cost more than £27)
19. No one, not 'no-one'
20. Practice – noun ('I have football practice'); practise – verb ('I need to practise'). If in doubt, test it out with 'advice' and 'advise' ('I must advise', not 'I must advice' = 'I must practise', not 'I must practice')
21. Principal – head of a school; principle/principles = beliefs
22. Program – runs on a computer; programme – something we watch on television or buy at a theatre
23. Theirs (no apostrophe)
24. Try to, not 'try and'
25. Under way, not 'underway'
26. Until, not 'up until'
27. Upcoming – avoid using this word
28. While, not 'whilst'
29. Yours (no apostrophe)
30. Outside, not 'outside of'