**Revising for English**

English is very unlike other subjects when it comes to planning revision because there are no easy to learn tick lists of topics to remember and quite often there are no right or wrong answers.

When you answer a comprehension question it is very often what you THINK that counts. What the examiner is looking for is that you are able to explain your answer clearly and support your conclusions by making direct and appropriate reference to the text.

**The best way to prepare and revise for comprehension tests is to read lots of different types of texts**: novels, factual books, newspapers, magazines, instructions, autobiographies, persuasive writing, speeches and lots of different types of poetry.

When you read each one try to focus on both the content and meaning of the text. Try also to decide how you feel about it and what the author is hoping to achieve. What was his or her purpose in writing the piece? How does he or she want you to feel?

You then need to think about how you might respond to each individual passage. You can do this by writing some notes in a revision note book or by highlighting key parts and phrases that mean something to you. It might also help to read the material with someone at home and then discuss the content and meaning with them.

Recommended reading lists – and much more - can be found at:

<http://www.scottishbooktrust.com>

[https://schoolreadinglist.co.uk](https://schoolreadinglist.co.uk/)

Timed reading and writing

One of the hardest things to do is to write ’to time’ A good way of preparing for examinations is to complete written exercises in a set time.

Comprehension texts

Allow yourself 35 minutes to complete comprehension exercises. **Start by reading the text at least twice before looking at the questions.** Then focus carefully on the demands of each question, before committing your thoughts to paper. It may be useful to 'highlight' key words within each question to help you stay focused and on track.

Remember to answer the questions in full sentences and pay close attention to the value of each question as this will determine the depth of answer that is required. Where possible make direct reference to the text in order to support your conclusions.

Creative writing

Use a character or setting, a poem, a photograph, a painting or a piece of fiction as a ‘launch-pad’.

Try and write in a particular style and create a specific mood or atmosphere in your writing.

Remember to time yourself – 40 minutes is a good guide - **but remember also, that it is very important to plan your ideas before you begin to write** – planning is very important as it gives your writing structure and purpose.

Remember to structure your story carefully. It should have: a powerful opening, an interesting plot with twists and turns, an exciting and where possible original climax and conclusion, interesting characters and a believable and imaginative setting.

Discursive writing

Look at newspapers or magazines for discursive writing ideas. **Spend at least five minutes making a detailed plan** – if you can’t think of anything to write in your plan then choose a different subject/question!

Paragraph 1 should be an introduction and state why you chose to answer the question. Paragraph 2 should enable you to put forward one side of the argument. Paragraph 3 should give you the opportunity to counter this and offer the other side of the argument. In paragraph 4 you should try to outline your own opinion based on the evidence you have discussed and in paragraph 5 you should offer your final thoughts and conclusion.

Studied Literature

If you are studying a particular text be sure to annotate/ highlight the important areas of the story or use post – it notes to draw your attention to key aspects of the story.

Look closely at the key characters and consider how their relationships develop throughout the book.

Consider if there are any key themes within the text and if you can learn anything from the text.

Understanding and enjoying poetry

Find an anthology of poetry that appeals to you. There are many available to choose from. Pick out a poem that catches your eye. Vary the type of poem you choose. Read the poem at least twice and see if you can understand the meaning. Make notes where appropriate or discuss with someone at home.

Then look carefully for more depth in the poem and see if you can F.L.I.R.T. with the content.

Look at its **FORM** and shape, consider the type of **LANGUAGE** that the poet uses, look closely for any examples of **IMAGERY** within the poem, check to see if the poem has a **RHYME** scheme or a particular **RHYTHM** and consider if the poem has a particular **TONE** throughout.

As you consider all of these things ask yourself: Why has the author chosen to do this? What is s/he hoping to achieve? What is s/he hoping the reader will gain from this? Is there a deeper meaning to the poem than you might first think? What do you think of the poem?

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