

ABOUT THE STANDARD

- ◆ Unfamiliar texts at level 3 is a bit different to unfamiliar texts at level 2 and level 1. However, you do still use the same skill-set for analysing texts, identifying language features, annotating the text, and thinking about the author's purpose. So if you think you need a bit of a refresher on those skills, check out our videos for unfamiliar texts at level 1 and 2, because this video will mostly focus on the bits that are different.

STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS

- ◆ At level 2, they want you to analyse the texts in terms of the author's purpose and the language features that the author uses to communicate the big ideas of the text. But at level 3, you need to go further.
- ◆ For the first two questions you're required to **present a discussion** on the way the writer does something, like exploring change or reflecting on their childhood. Then for the third question, you have to **compare the two texts**.
- ◆ First up, let's have a look at what **presenting a discussion** actually looks like.
- ◆ Let's say the question asks you to "*discuss the way the writer reflects on their own development.*"
 - ◆ The first step is to prepare your answer, spend five minutes reading and annotating the text and then do a quick brainstorm of how the writer's development is shown in the text and what parts of the text show it best.
 - ◆ **Presenting a discussion** basically just means exploring an idea or a concept. Rather than arguing one specific thing about the idea, you're trying show that you've noticed lots of different ways that idea is shown through the text and why it might be important.
 - So in this example, you would be exploring the different ways the writer see their own development, and then reflecting on why this might be important, or what it might teach us
 - ◆ To make things clear for the marker, the first couple of sentences of your answer should introduce the idea that you're planning to discuss and give a bit of a clue as to how you think the writer reflects on their *own* development.
 - ◆ Now, it's time to bring in some examples of **aspects of the text**. Your two examples should be on different aspects.
 - In previous years, you would have just used language features as your examples, but at level 3, there are other aspects of the text you should be using: remember, aspects of the text is just a fancy term that means different types of examples. One type of example is language features, but aspects of the text can also be things like audience, author's purpose, ideas, or how the text is structured.
 - ◆ Introduce the example and explain exactly how and what it tells you about the way the writer reflects on their development. Maybe it tells you that the writer eventually came to understand how lucky he was, or how she came to appreciate his parents.
 - ◆ If you include a long direct quote, then narrow down what exact bit or bits of it help you to understand something about the idea you're discussing. It's okay to spend two or three sentences analysing a seemingly simple word such as "that" or "but".

- ◆ So once you've explained how these aspects of text, as shown by your examples, fit into your discussion, then you should reflect further on your discussion. This might look like drawing links to other books, films, or current affairs that you know about, or you could add in a personal touch to show you've got good awareness of the idea you're discussing.
- ◆ If you're wanting the top grades, you should also make sure you've got a sentence or two addressing how the idea you're discussing might change or develop throughout the text.
- ◆ Make sure you've got examples that are from different parts in the text and then just say why one example shows something that might be slightly different than the other.
- ◆ So, that's how you present a **perceptive** and **critical** discussion.
- ◆ For question three, you can again use a lot of the same skills. Except this time your discussion needs to be **comparing the two texts**.
- ◆ For example, you might be asked to present a discussion comparing the ways the writers view the people who are important in their lives.
- ◆ In terms of the structure of your answer, it's actually pretty similar to the first two questions, except each of your two examples should come from each of the two texts.
- ◆ For the third question, when you're discussing the way the writers do something, make sure you're looking for things they do **similarly** and things they do **differently**.
 - ◆ For example, you might be asked to compare the ways the writers relate to people of another generation.
 - ◆ In your answer, you might discuss how the intergenerational relationships in the text are similar, in that the writers are both fond of the other generation, but that the writers create different moods.
- ◆ Lastly, to get excellence on the third question, you should spend a sentence or two writing about why you think the idea you've discussed is significant and important, either to the author or to wider society. This final linking is really important and you can also tie it in with some personal reflection to secure a higher grade.

OVERALL

- ◆ In order to pass unfamiliar texts at level 3, you need all the skills of level 1 and 2 unfamiliar texts, combined with your new skills of comparing and discussing an idea that is bigger than a text itself.
- ◆ We've covered some important strategies and things to remember, but we haven't covered everything.
- ◆ As we said at the start of this video, we really recommend going through the last few years of exam papers, and also using the StudyTime Walkthrough Guide and Checklist to really check and consolidate your knowledge to feel 100% prepared!