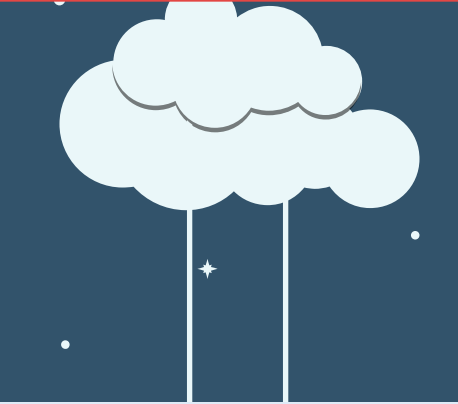




# AIMING HIGH IN GCSE ENGLISH



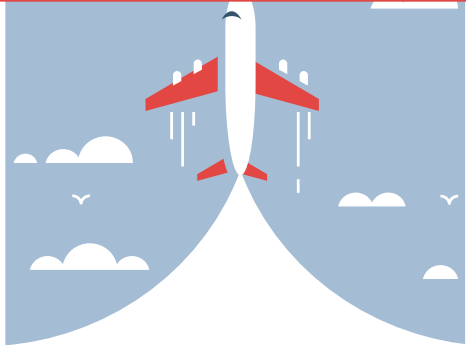
ACCESSING TOP  
MARKS IN  
ENGLISH




STRATEGIES TO  
RAISE YOUR  
GRADE

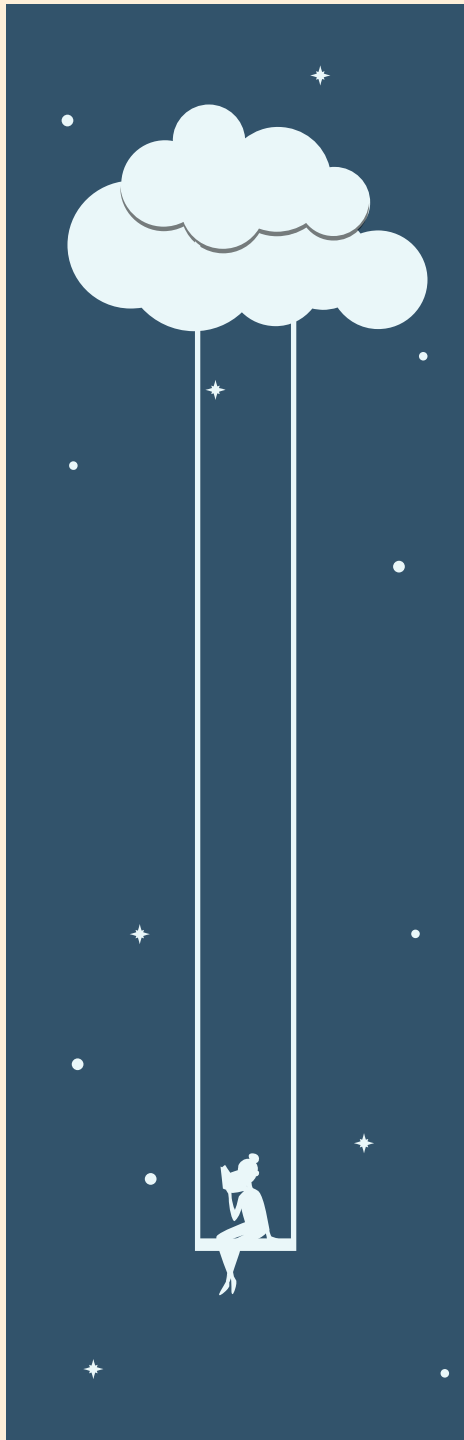


PLANNING FOR  
SUCCESS



REVISION AND  
EXAM  
TECHNIQUE





Grade profile	Reading descriptors	Writing descriptors
8-9	Convincing, critical analysis and exploration	Compelling and convincing
6-7	Thoughtful and developed	
4-5	Clear understanding	Consistent and clear
2-3	Explained, structured comments	Some success

# Examiners' report

## Creative and real world writing

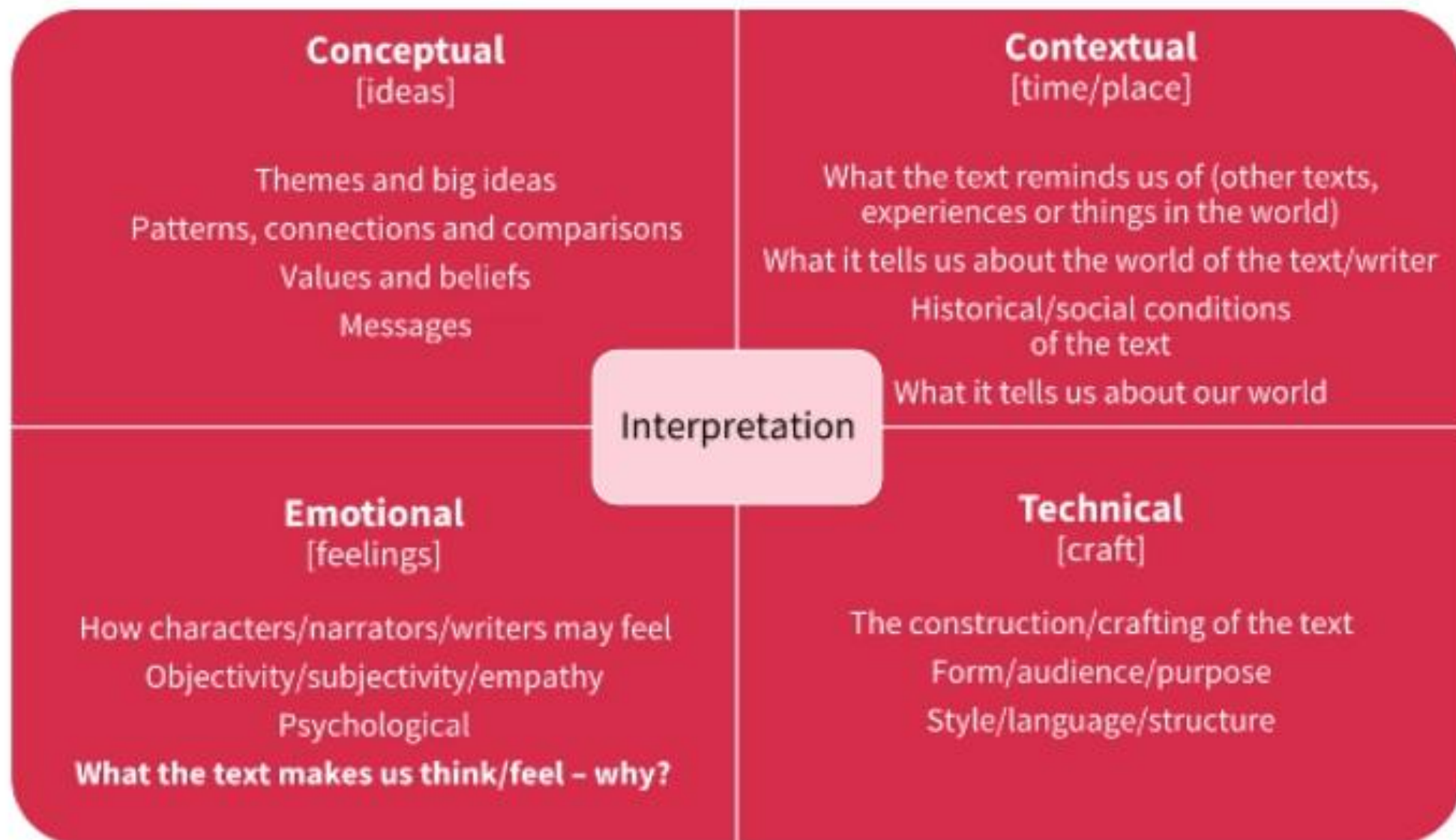
- Avoid overly long narratives and description.
- Minimise use of direct speech.
- Vary sentences and punctuation for impact.
- Avoid pre-learnt vocab/phrases.
- Focus on audience and purpose.
- Strong tone and voice with conscious crafting of structure.

## Essay writing

- Use thesis statements.
- Embed argument in contextual understanding
- Avoid regurgitating social media content.
- Show insight without prescriptive structure/method e.g. PEE.
- Avoid technique spotting – explore writers' methods and meanings fully.
- Focus on insightful interpretation and explore deeper meanings; it's not a memory test.



# Interpretation grid



Abstract



Concrete

- Big ideas (themes etc.)
- Writer's concerns
- Writer's methods
- Narrative importance
- Quotations
- Things that happen in the text

Indeed, the whole passage might be Nesbit commenting ironically on the paranoia and ignorance of English travellers abroad.

However, by investing simple events with perilous undertones, Nesbit might be concerned with depicting her own youthful naivety and innocence.

The harsh, abrupt sensation of the verb 'jolted' conveys an impression of being deliberately knocked, as if the laughter of the others creates a feeling of discomfort that adds to her unease.

The behaviour of the other passengers reinforces the narrator's sense of being out of place and of exclusion.

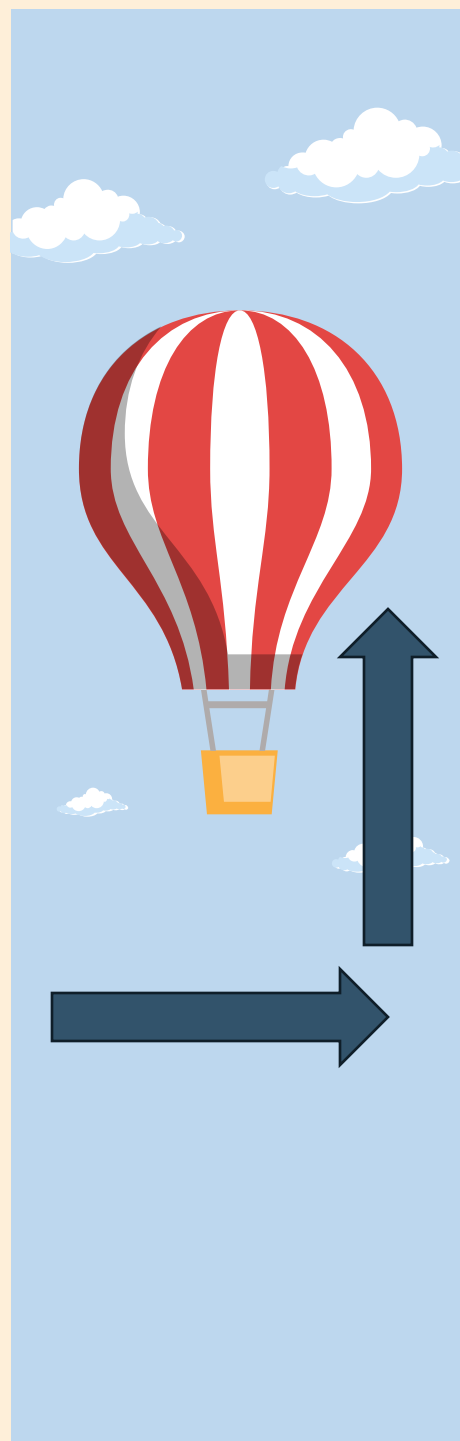
"These new passengers laughed and jolted in a language wholly unintelligible to us."

Nesbit describes how the other passengers in the carriage behave towards her.



# Moving up the level descriptors

Level 4	Typical Features
AO1 TASK	Clear, explained response to task and whole text
AO1 REFS	Effective use of references to support explanation
AO2	Clear explanation of writer's methods with appropriate use of relevant subject terminology
AO2	Understanding of effects of writer's methods to create meanings
AO3	Clear understanding of ideas / perspectives / contextual factors shown by specific links between context / text / task



Level 6	Typical Features	These responses tend to...
AO1 TASK	Critical, exploratory, conceptualised response to task and whole text	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Focus on the text as conscious construct</li> <li>Present a coherent argument</li> <li>Use references from the text dynamically to develop an argument / interpretation</li> <li>Analyse aspects of writer's craft: really look closely at the effects of a writer's choice, linked closely to meanings</li> <li>Present a clear overview of the text in terms of writer's purpose and context.</li> </ul> <p>This is a student who might have a clear thesis or 'concept' to explore in terms of the task and the text, and therefore the response is an illustration of their concept – they are using the text as illustration of their interpretation of the text. A convincing, critical argument will be driven by a 'concept' – something they want to say and explore about the text in relation to the task. Basically, a 'conceptualised' response is an answer to a question that is driven by a clear point of view about the text. Their 'concept' or their 'idea' is driving their response. Also, responses at this level might take more of an analytical approach to the text, looking closely at elements of method and selecting very precise, fine-grained references to illustrate their argument. Responses at this level are 'exploratory' in terms of ideas and/or writer's purpose, and sometimes 'analytical' in style.</p>
AO1 REFS	Judicious use of precise references to support interpretation(s)	
AO2	Analysis of writer's methods with subject terminology used judiciously	
AO2	Exploration of effects of writer's methods to create meanings	
AO3	Exploration of ideas / perspectives / contextual factors shown by specific, detailed links between context / text / task	
Level 5	Typical Features	These responses tend to...
AO1 TASK	Thoughtful, developed response to task and whole text	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Start to really think about ideas in the question in a developed way</li> <li>Go deeper / broader than 'this is what it means' and start to explore layers of meaning / readings, using elements of the text to illustrate their ideas</li> <li>Start to focus in a thoughtful way on specific elements of writer's craft, linked to meanings</li> <li>Focus clearly on the abstract: themes and ideas, writers' purpose and intention, context.</li> </ul> <p>Responses at level 5 start to go a bit deeper, or a bit wider, than the abstract of 'this is what it means'. Perhaps they are looking at elements or ideas from different points of view, considering layers of meaning / interpretations, or starting to consider ideas in a more developed, deeper way than level 4. There will be clear connections between methods and ideas at this level. Level 4 tends to have a clear 'this is what it means' approach, whereas level 5 often starts to be more tentative in approach. There is more of a sense of thoughtful consideration of ideas and of methods used to present ideas at level 5.</p>
AO1 REFS	Apt references integrated into interpretation(s)	
AO2	Examination of writer's methods with subject terminology used effectively to support consideration of methods	
AO2	Examination of effects of writer's methods to create meanings	
AO3	Thoughtful consideration of ideas / perspectives / contextual factors shown by examination of detailed links between context/text/task.	

Convincing,  
critical  
analysis and  
exploration

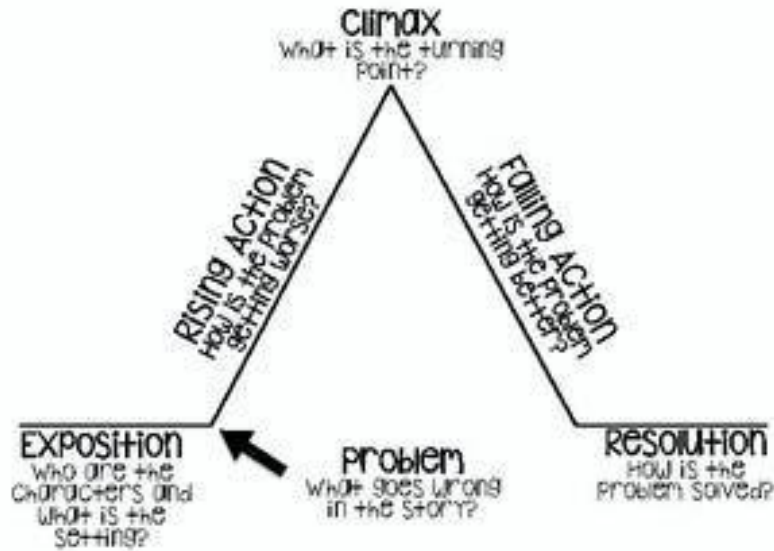


Both poets are challenging the control that inherited power has over the less fortunate in society. Browning indirectly via his persona, and Blake directly through his visceral imagery. They use the characters featured in their poems to highlight the plight of the powerless, to justify their political standpoints and to criticise this is society that abuse their power.

Blake, an early Romantic poet, uses 'London' to illustrate the harms caused by capitalism and the industrial revolution and the corruption and neglect as a result of institutionalised religion. Browning, an abolition activist, uses the figure of the Duke of Ferrara to mock those responsible for violent injustices.

# Structures to support success

## STORY ARC



## 5 point planning

### 2. Main paragraph: symbolism pre-empting change

P: 'Leaving behind her still, on either side/ Small circles glittering idly in the moon'

K: 'arcing in swathes like a huge flag waved first one way then the other in a figure of eight'

### 1. Introduction: thesis statement

In both poems, the speakers experience a significant change in response to observing nature. The awe-inspiring qualities of the nature world impact on the protagonists' emotions and choices.

### 3. Main paragraph: description of darkness denoting fear

P: 'A huge peak, black and huge'.

K: 'a tuna, the dark prince, muscular, dangerous'

### 4. Main paragraph: language of thought and reflection

P: 'moved slowly through the mind/ By day, and were a trouble to my dreams'

K: 'he must have wondered which had been the better way to die'

### 5. Conclusion: link to intentions/context

Wordsworth's autobiographical poem's gives an insight into the sublime and how awe-inspiring nature is for Romantic poets, whereas Garland imagines how nature may play a part in decision making and man's conscience.

Nature's power has a profound effect on man.



Engage...

Because...

And...

But...

So...

# Top tips for revision and exam preparation

1. Move from revising content to practising exam technique.
2. Don't be tempted to cram before the exam – build confidence with little and often revision of literature texts.
3. Expose yourself to high quality writing to practise responding to unseen texts and to inspire your own writing.
4. Rehearse exam skills by building timed responses into your revision.

