

GCSE Equivalency Tests

Advice for those taking the English test

Timing

The paper is 90 minutes long.

- Reading section: 45 minutes (25 marks)
- Writing section: 45 minutes (25 marks)

Outline of content

Reading section

This consists of two text passages (fiction and/or non-fiction), with a series of questions testing reading skills areas such as comprehension, retrieval of key information and summarising skills. One question will require comparisons to be made between the two texts in terms of content, structure and the language used.

Ten minutes reading time is recommended (as part of the overall 45 minutes allowed).

Writing section

One task is to be chosen, from a choice of two tasks. Each task will require a different form of writing (e.g. letter, webpage) and will have a different purpose (to persuade, to inform).

The written response will be assessed both for composition skills (e.g. structure, clarity, appropriacy) and for accuracy (e.g. grammar, punctuation and spelling).

Ten minutes planning time is recommended (as part of the overall 45 minute allowed).

Preparation guidance

In order to prepare for this paper, candidates are recommended to consult English papers from the major examination boards. The exam boards provide access to past papers, mark schemes and guidance materials.

You are recommend to consider the specimen assessment materials for reading and writing questions, in particular, for

- 1) WJEC GCSE English Language in Wales

<http://www.wjec.co.uk/supporting/english-language-gcse-in-wales.html>

Other helpful sources are:

- 2) WJEC/Eduqas GCSE English Language in England

<http://www.eduqas.co.uk/qualifications/english-language/gcse/>

3) AQA GCSE English Language

<http://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/english/gcse/english-language-8700>

4) OCR

<http://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/gcse-english-language-j351-from-2015/>

5) Edexcel

<https://qualifications.pearson.com/content/demo/en/qualifications/edexcel-gcses/english-language-2010.html>

6) CCEA

http://www.rewardinglearning.org.uk/microsites/english_language/gcse/index.asp

In addition, you may find helpful advice and exercises at

- BBC Bitesize
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/education/subjects/zr9d7ty>
- EnglishBiz
<http://www.englishbiz.co.uk/>