

Cambridge International AS & A Level Literature in English 9695

Introduction to Literature – Lesson 10: Passage-based questions	
Learning objectives:	<p>By the end of this lesson learners will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> produce personal opinions and interpretations of the text. construct a relevant and supported argument appropriate to a specific question focus on a passage from a text.
Lesson objectives:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learners will comment on particular aspects of a passage. Learners will explore how a section of a text relates to the wider text.
Vocabulary	climax, crisis, turning points, resolution, denouement, catastrophe.
Previous learning:	Learners have explored aspects of context, character, plot, themes, language, narrative aspects, drama texts, close analysis and structuring an essay in earlier lessons.
Plan	
Activities	Guidance
<p>Beginning</p> <p>Ask learners: What do you think are the specific requirements of both types of question (essay and passage-based)?</p> <p>Learners discuss both essay and passage-based question types. Learners then consider the requirements of passage-based questions.</p> <p>In pairs or small groups, learners list some of the ways in which they could make a point about an extract and then talk about this point in the wider text. The list may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> characters narrative viewpoint contextual issues use of language, structure other interpretations use of imagery, plot, dialogue. 	<p>Passage-based questions have an extra focus – discussing the extract and then relating the extract to the whole text.</p> <p>Remind learners that they should rehearse both kinds of question types during their period of study, so that they can confidently approach all the available question material in the examination.</p>
<p>Middle</p> <p>Learners write their own openings for a short story (four to five sentences). They then share them with a partner and ask their partner to plot where the story could be heading.</p> <p>Remind learners that the opening of a text is important to establish character, tone and concerns. In pairs or small groups, learners explore the opening to a textual extract from the beginning of a novel, short story, or drama text. In pairs, or small groups, learners discuss the way the writer establishes voice, character, tone and future concerns.</p> <p>Ask learners whether any key themes arise in the opening. In pairs, learners choose quotations that represent a key theme or character trait and explore the language chosen by the writer and the effects of these choices.</p>	<p>This enables learners to prepare for their study of a set text as this activity can model the way learners make notes on each section for themselves.</p> <p>At this stage, it is useful for learners to begin bullet-pointing certain aspects of their text under headings such as</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Theme Character development Plot devices Symbols <p>A list of quotations can be added to these lists to use later in essay plans for revision purposes.</p>

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Learners list different kinds of sentences. The simplest distinction will be between long or short. This can be developed into a discussion of simple, compound, or complex sentence types, declarative, imperative, interrogative and exclamatory. Explore the idea of unusual syntax. Explain the idea that sentence variety and word order add impact to writing, e.g. a short sentence after a complex sentence can add emphasis. Punctuation shapes meaning.

Learners identify different types of sentences or unusual syntax in the opening extract and think about the impact these choices have. In pairs, ask learners to play with the syntax. What effect does it have on meaning if the word order is changed? Share the results as a group.

Repeat this activity examining the writer's use of tense. Make sure learners understand the use of basic tenses, including the present continuous and the subjunctive. Remind learners that modal verbs are vital in suggesting, rather than prescribing, ideas and effects.

Learners discuss the following questions in groups and then present their findings.

- Why does a writer choose to write in a certain tense?
- Why are fewer texts written in the present than in the past, etc.?
- What effect would a change of tense have on the extract you are considering, for example?
- What effect does this have on the narrative?

Discuss what is meant by a crisis, turning point, climax, or moment of tension in a text.

Learners may come up with the idea that a climax is a moment of great intensity and that a crisis is a decisive moment upon which the remaining action depends. They may also be able to recognise that a turning point or moment of tension may be quite subtle and not necessarily dramatic, or action packed.

In pairs, learners decide which are the climactic moments or crisis moments in texts that they have studied previously (they could also refer to a film they have watched). Learners share their views with the rest of the class. Ask learners: Can you identify a turning point or moment of tension in the opening extract we have been reading today?

The habit of looking closely at sentence structures and syntax is useful for passage questions, but it is important to always consider the effect of these choices by the writer.

Learners must use several different tools to approach passage questions so that they do not run out of things to say. While their focus should always be a literary one and not linguistic, learners should have the skills to analyse the ways in which the structure of language (sentence structures, different verb classes, punctuation) impact on the pace of a passage, its outcome and portrayal of characters and themes.

These terms are to a certain extent subjective, so accept any reasonable suggestions that are supported with evidence.

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	Resources: Opening of a novel, short story, or play.	
End	<p>Learners choose a short story, novel or play that they are familiar with. They should consider the ending of the text and answer the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has there been a twist at the end? • Is there some kind of epiphany (moment of revelation or realisation)? • Has there been a denouement (final resolution)? • Is the ending particularly effective? 	

Additional information

Differentiation	Assessment
Provide scaffolding in the form of sentence starters to support learners initially. 'This invokes...', 'this suggests that...', 'the author initially...', 'moreover...', 'it cannot be denied that...', 'it is clear that...', 'as the plot unfolds...'	Using the planning grid from Lesson 9, plan a response to one of the extracts that you have studied in these lessons. Answer the question: 'How is the theme of [...] presented?' OR 'How is the character of [...] presented?'

Follow-up work

It is important that learners practise writing responses to passage questions in timed, examination conditions.