

GCSE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

(8700)

Marked responses
8700-1 Q3 Levels 1-4

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EXAMPLE RESPONSES



You now need to think about the **whole** of the Source.

This text is taken from the beginning of a novel.

How is the text structured to interest you as a reader?

You could write about:

- what the writer focuses your attention on at the beginning
- how and why the writer changes this focus as the Source develops
- any other structural features that interest you.

[8 marks]

At the beginning of the source, the writer focuses your attention on the blackbird by describing what it did in Alex's dream, however as the source develops, the writer begins to focus your attention on the reality of Alex's life. This is when he says shown in from lines 12 to 15 when he starts talking about the fact that Alex is going to have a bad day.

This makes you interested because it makes you feel intrigued as to what actually happens during the day. This makes the reader continue reading because they want to know what happens next as the source progresses.

Level 1: 2 marks

Simple awareness of structural features; simple references; simple use of subject terminology.

Simple reference

Simple use of subject terminology

Simple reference

Simple comment on the effect of structure

Towards the end of the source lines 28-44 the writer talks about the old-timer bobie the mother was ill & how they used to cook food but now just order chinese or pizza & he also talks about how much their mother is needed & how painful her absence is. The ending of the text made me feel emotional the way the writer described the pain the family was in had a massive effect on me.

Simple comment on the effect of structure

Level 2: 3 marks

Some understanding of structural features; attempts to comment on the effects of structure in one place; some appropriate use of subject terminology - grasps the idea of beginning/middle/end.

The response fulfils all of the skill descriptors in Level 1, with the comment on the effect of structural features moving the mark just into Level 2.

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[8 marks]

The writer **zooms in on** the character's situation at the start in order to introduce us to them. This gives us an insight ~~to~~ of who they are. The **nightmare** could be foreshadowing what could happen later on in the text or it could be a **flashback** to something ~~that~~ horrible that had happened when Alex was a child. The text then **changes** to talk about a storm in paragraph 2. The use of long, complex sentences ^{shows} ~~shows~~ that there is a lot of things going on at once which overwhelm the protagonist.

The text keeps **changing focus** throughout ~~the~~ because it's the beginning of a novel and it has to introduce everything to set the context. We can tell that Alex has strong feelings towards his mum due to the listing of what he misses about her ~~from~~ from line 37 to line 39. The long ~~list~~ list shows how Alex has thought this through many times before hence the length.

Some use of subject terminology

Attempt to comment on the effect of structural features

See comment in summary

Some use of subject terminology

of his life. The last two paragraphs contradict each other in order for the writer to show the contrast between Alex's mother and father. ~~The last paragraph~~ This has an effect on the reader because it causes a biased view on the mother and how great she was. ~~The last para~~

Attempts to comment on the effects of structural features, but lacks textual detail

Relevant example

The last paragraph juxtaposes itself because it talks about how Alex's mother ~~was~~ ~~was~~ ~~was~~ off 'affection' ~~that~~ impacted him, how much he loved her but then he compares her to 'not a little more than a silent ghost' showing how she has changed.

Clear explanation of the effects of structural features

The juxtaposition could imply the huge change to Alex's every day life, and this makes the reader see the impact ~~it~~ ^{it} has had on Alex, especially when the writer zooms in to describe Alex's mother in the last paragraph.

Level 3: 5 marks

Clear understanding of structural features in the final paragraph; one clear explanation of the effects of structural features is just enough to secure the lower mark in level 3.

This response could have been improved by including a range of relevant examples and greater consistency in offering clear explanations of the writer's choice of structural features.

The comments about sentences in this response would be more appropriate in a response to Q2. In Q2, credit is given for the effect on the reader of sentence forms - length of sentence, word order, use of multiple clauses, etc - whereas in Q3, it is the positioning of the sentence and the contribution it makes to the structure as a whole that is important.

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[8 marks]

The text focuses on a character called Alex Cold, and the reader gets to see him from two different angles.

At the beginning he is alone in his bedroom and waking up from a nightmare where his mother was carried off by 'an enormous black bird'.

In the second half of the text the writer changes the focus to Alex being with the rest of the family downstairs at breakfast time. He is snappy with his sisters when Sandra says 'Mamma's going to die'.

This links the two halves of the text together because the fear Alex experienced in the earlier nightmare is now manifested in his behaviour at the breakfast table. Shouting at his sister makes it seem like he disagrees with her, but because the reader has already had an insight into Alex's subconscious mind, we understand at this point that really it's the opposite. He shouts at his sister because secretly he fears what she is saying is true and his mother might really die.

In the final two paragraphs, we are deliberately

Clear and accurate use of subject terminology

Range of relevant examples

Perceptive analysis of structural features

<p>Sophisticated use of subject terminology</p>	<p>presented with a direct contrast between Alex's parents.</p>
<p>Judicious range of examples</p>	<p>First, the focus narrows from the whole family onto Alex's father who is struggling to look after the children. There is 'nothing in the refrigerator but orange juice' and they are living on take-away food. Then the final paragraph zooms in on both them and now versions of his mother. It begins with the sentence 'Alex had realised during those weeks how enormous their mother's presence had been and how painful her absence was now.'</p>
<p>Detailed and perceptive analysis of structural features</p>	<p>This structure is effective because by first showing how inadequate his father is, even though it's not his fault, it therefore emphasises how wonderful the mother is, or at least used to be. In a way, this also makes us re-evaluate the nightmare at the beginning because we have seen for ourselves the close bond between Alex and his mother and now understand why it 'started' him so much and why he experienced 'pounding in his chest'; a physical reaction to that the fear of losing her.</p>

Level 4: 8 marks

Detailed and perceptive understanding of structural features, with judicious examples and sophisticated and accurate use of subject terminology.

This response offers an overview of the whole text, as well as close examination of several pertinent structural features: a typical approach for a very able candidate.

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You can talk directly to the GCSE English subject team

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