

**Revision Checklist for AS/A Level
Literature in English 9695**
A Guide for Students



UNIVERSITY *of* CAMBRIDGE
International Examinations

Revision Guide for AS/A Level Literature in English 9695

A guide for students

How to use this Guide

The Guide describes what you need to know about your AS and A Level Literature in English examinations, and offers some thoughts about how you might revise the work you have done during the past year (AS) or two years (A Level).

It will help you to plan your revision programme for the examination and will explain what the examiners are looking for in the answers you write.

Your teachers will of course be the best guide to what the examination consists of, and to what you should be working on as your preparation for the examination, but this Revision Guide will point you towards the most important areas that you should be considering.

The Guide contains the following sections:

Section 1: How will you be tested?

This section gives you some information about the different examination papers that you will be taking. You have no choice at AS Level, but at A Level you will be able to choose, though of course by now you or your teachers will already have made the choice; however, you should make sure that you are completely clear about which papers you will be sitting at the end of your course.

Section 2: What is in each examination paper?

This section describes the areas of knowledge, understanding and skills that the Examiners will test you on in each of the papers that you will take.

Section 3: How should you revise for the examination?

This section suggests a number of ideas that you might find helpful when you have finished your course, and are preparing for the examination itself.

Section 4: Some terms that Examiners use.

This section lists a number of words and phrases that can appear in examination questions, with some ideas about what they are asking you to do.

Section 5: Some terms that you might use, and should certainly understand.

When you write answers in the examination, you might want to use some technical literary terms to help your argument; this section lists and discusses a few of the most common and most useful.

Section 6: The Assessment Objectives.

You may have heard of the five Assessment Objectives (AOs) and your teachers certainly will have done; this section explains what they are and why they are so important for you and for your examination.

Section 7: A final word or two.

Some last thoughts.

Section 1: How will you be tested?

1.1 About the examinations you will take

For **AS** Literature in English you will take **two** papers - Paper 3 and Paper 4; there is no choice.

For **A Level** Literature in English you will have to take **four** papers:

- Papers 3 and 4, unless you have already taken them
- Paper 5
- **one** of Papers 6, 7 and 8. Paper 8 is Coursework; you cannot really revise for this, but there are some notes and suggestions later in this Guide as to how you can present your work at its very best.

1.2 About the Papers

1.2.1

The table below gives you information about the Papers you will take for **AS Level**:

<i>Paper number</i>	<i>How long is this paper?</i>	<i>What will you have to do in each paper?</i>	<i>What is the % of the total marks?</i>
Paper 3 Poetry and Prose	2 hours	You must answer two questions, one on a prose text, and one on a poetry text. You will have a choice of questions on each text.	(50% of the AS total)
Paper 4 Drama	2 hours	You must answer two questions, one on each of the two plays you have studied. You will have a choice of questions on each play.	(50% of the AS total)

You will find some more detail about each of these two papers in Section 2 below.

1.2.2

The table below gives you information about the Papers you will take for **A Level**:

Paper number	How long is this paper?	What will you have to do in each paper?	What is the % of the total marks?
Paper 3 ¹ Poetry and Prose	2 hours	You must answer two questions, one on a prose text, and one on a poetry text. You will have a choice of questions on each text.	(25% of the A Level total)
Paper 4 ¹ Drama	2 hours	You must answer two questions, one on each of two plays. You will have a choice of questions on each play.	(25% of the A Level total)
Paper 5 ¹ Shakespeare and other pre-20 th Century texts	2 hours	You must answer two questions, one on a play by Shakespeare, and one on another pre-20 th Century text. You will have a choice of questions on each text.	(25% of the A Level total)
Paper 6 ² 20 th Century writing	2 hours	You must answer two questions, one on each of two texts. You will have a choice of questions on each text.	(25% of the A Level total)
Paper 7 ² Comment and Appreciation	2 hours	Three passages will be set, and you must write on two of them. You will not have seen them before the examination.	(25% of the A Level total)
Paper 8 ² Coursework	—	You must submit two essays, each on a different text; you must cover two of the three genres (prose, poetry, drama). In total, you must write between 2000 and 3000 words.	(25% of the A Level total)

¹ these three Papers are compulsory for A Level

² you must choose **one** of these three Papers

You will find some more detail about each of these six papers in Section 2 below.

Section 2: What is in each examination paper?

This section gives further details about what each of the Papers will consist of. No information is given about set texts, because these change regularly; your teacher will know which ones are on the syllabus relating to the year you will be taking the examination, so you do not need to worry that you are studying the wrong ones!

Personal Response to what you read is tremendously important in each Paper; you will of course need to show that you “know the story” of each of your texts, but much more than that you will be expected to show the Examiner that you understand *how* each writer has created this response in you – you will need to look at the language that he or she uses, at the imagery, at the form and structure of each piece that you are discussing, and how whichever angle you are taking (or the question makes you take) relates to the themes and ideas of the text as a whole. More will be said about this later, but it is crucially important!

Incidentally – but very importantly – you are **not** allowed to take any books or other materials into the examination room with you. This includes copies of the set texts and dictionaries – you **cannot** take any of these in.

Paper 3 (Poetry and Prose)

This paper has two sections, Section A (Poetry) and Section B (Prose), and you must answer **one** question from each section.

There will be two questions on each text; an essay question and a passage-based question on each text. You choose one question to answer for each text. You will be expected to show a good knowledge and understanding of the whole text, not just part of it.

Poetry does need some special care, and must be treated as the separate genre that it is; poets use rhyme, rhythm, stanza forms, line lengths, and of course stylistic devices such as alliteration, assonance, onomatopoeia, similes, metaphors, for very particular reasons, not just for their own enjoyment, and you must be sure that you explore *how and why* they do this in your answers. It is not enough simply to list any or all of the techniques that are used; you must make a real attempt to say what effects they are creating at each relevant moment in the poem, and in the poem(s) as a whole. The same is true of prose; writers again use particular techniques, and again it is the purpose and effect of these that you must explore, and it is your understanding of these that Examiners will be looking for in your answers.

You will not be expected to have read other works by the same writers, or to have any detailed knowledge of the period in which they were written. You will however be expected to show clearly and confidently that you understand each text in real detail, so quotations and references will be essential in order to support what you say and to prove that you have a real and secure knowledge. Obviously you should try your best to ensure that everything you quote is as close to exactly what the writer actually wrote, but because this examination is not a test of memory the Examiners will not mind a few misquotations – provided that there is never any doubt about what you mean, and about which part of the text you are quoting, a few incorrect words will not cost you any marks, though *seriously wrong misquotations* may do so!

Paper 4 (Drama)

There will be two questions on each text; an essay question and a passage-based question on each text. You choose one question to answer for each text. You will be expected to show a good knowledge and understanding of the whole text, not just part of it. This is a literature examination, not a theatre studies one. You will not be expected to show any knowledge of how your plays might be produced, it is *essential* that you show an understanding that they are drama, and meant to be seen rather than just read. You should not write about drama as if it is simply prose printed in a curious way, and you must make reference in your answers to the dramatic or theatrical effects that the writer is creating, and the impact that these have upon you as a reader or as a member of an audience. If you have been lucky enough to see a live theatre production, or a film/video/DVD version, you may want to refer briefly to this, but you must spend most of your time writing about the text itself and the dramatic effects within it.

As in all the other Papers you will be expected to show clearly and confidently that you understand each play in real detail, so quotations and references will be essential in order to support what you say and to prove that you have a real and secure knowledge. Obviously you should try your best to ensure that everything you quote is as close to exactly what the writer actually wrote, but because this examination is not a test of memory the Examiners will not mind a few misquotations – provided that there is never any doubt about what you mean, and about which part of the text you are quoting, a few incorrect words will not cost you any marks, though *seriously wrong misquotations* may do so!

Paper 5 (Shakespeare and Other pre-20th Century Texts)

This paper has two sections, Section A (Shakespeare) and Section B (other pre-20th Century texts), and you must answer **one** question from each section.

There will be two questions on each text; an essay question and a passage-based question on each text. You choose one question to answer for each text. You will be expected to show a good knowledge and understanding of the whole text, not just part of it. You should note what is said about drama in this guide as Shakespeare's plays should be treated as drama. Your answers must look for exactly the same kinds of things as you do in other plays. Bear in mind, too, that a great deal of Shakespeare's drama is also written in verse, so many of the techniques mentioned in regard to poetry are also crucial here.

You will not be expected to have read other works by the same writers, or to have any detailed knowledge of the period in which they were written. As in all the other Papers you will be expected to show clearly and confidently that you understand each text in real detail, so quotations and references will be essential in order to support what you say and to prove that you have a real and secure knowledge; obviously you should try your best to ensure that everything you quote is as close to exactly what the writer actually wrote, but because this examination is not a test of memory the Examiners will not mind a few misquotations – provided that there is never any doubt about what you mean, and about which part of the text you are quoting, a few incorrect words will not cost you any marks, though *seriously wrong misquotations* may do so!

Paper 6 (20th Century Writing)

There will be two questions on each text; an essay question and a passage-based question on each text. You choose one question to answer for each text. You will be expected to show a good knowledge and understanding of the whole text, not just part of it.

As in all the other Papers, you will be expected to show clearly and confidently that you understand each text in real detail, so quotations and references will be essential in order to support what you say and to prove that you have a real and secure knowledge; obviously you should try your best to ensure that everything you quote is as close to exactly what the writer actually wrote, but because this examination is not a test of memory the Examiners will not mind a few misquotations – provided that there is never any doubt about what you mean, and about which part of the text you are quoting, a few incorrect words will not cost you any marks, though *seriously wrong misquotations* may do so! Everything that has been said earlier about the way you should approach each of the three genres must also apply in this Paper; you may find some unusual and occasionally difficult styles and techniques, but the Examiners will expect you to be well aware of these, and to be making the same kind of closely critical comments that you have in other Papers.

Paper 7 (Comment and Appreciation)

Three unseen, and therefore unprepared, passages will be set, of which you must write answers on **two**. There will always be at least two of the three genres (prose, poetry, drama), but if the Paper has two passages from one genre you are quite free to do both if you wish. One of the three questions may ask you to write a comparison of two shorter passages. All the passages will come from works originally written in English, and at least one will have been written after 1900.

You will be expected to show more than just an understanding of what your chosen passages are about. You will need to show that you understand *how* each writer has created his/her effects, and how the language, form and structure of the passage has helped in doing this. Personal response, supported by close and detailed discussion, is what is required. Just listing literary devices will gain very few marks.

If you are given a complete poem to discuss, you will not be expected to show any knowledge of other works by the same poet, or to know anything about the time when the poem was written. The same is true of prose and drama passages, and if these are extracts from longer texts you will not be expected to have any knowledge at all of where they come from, or of what is written outside what you are given. You will not gain marks by referring to the outside text or time in which it was written.

Paper 8 (Coursework)

If you decide to take this Paper, your teacher will have to obtain permission from Cambridge International Examinations before you start any work. This is not nearly as frightening or difficult as it sounds, and in fact it may be that your teacher will have done it long before talking to you about it. This permission is needed just to make sure that the texts you plan to use are suitable, and that the essay titles that you are

going to write on are not too easy, or indeed too difficult. If you want to use your own title, or to change what the teacher has given you, do make sure that he or she knows what you are doing.

You must write on **two** texts, one from each of two genres (prose, poetry, or drama), and they must be texts that are not set anywhere else in the Syllabus (another reason for making sure that your teacher knows what you are doing). You should aim to write about 1000 – 1500 words on each text, so that the two essays together come to between 2000 words (the minimum expected) and 3000 words (the maximum allowed). If you write more than 3000 words altogether, you must try to reduce the length, as you will probably find that you have wasted words or repeated yourself too much, and even worse your Coursework might not be accepted.

You should plan the work. You can also discuss it with your friends and your teacher, and draft it carefully before preparing a final version. However, once you show the finished version to your teacher, or once s/he makes any detailed or written comments on it, then *you must not re-write it*. It must be entirely your own work. You can of course refer to other material, from books or from Internet websites, but every time you do so you *must* indicate that you have done so, and you *must* say exactly where it has come from, in footnotes or a bibliography (ideally both).

Most candidates now use word-processors for Coursework, and doing so can certainly make things easier for you, and it can also make your work look more attractive for the Moderator. You can use your own handwriting, if you wish, and you will be given exactly the same marks as if the work was word-processed.

Your teacher will mark your essays, and then send them to Cambridge International Examinations. A Coursework Moderator will then read it (or a sample if your Centre has lots of students taking this paper), to make sure that your teacher's marking is correct and the same as the marking done by every other teacher throughout the world. If necessary, your marks *may* be changed slightly so that every candidate is treated fairly and to the same standard.

Section 3: How should you revise for the examination?

You may sometimes find this hard to believe, but Examiners are not out to trick you in any way. They are all human beings, and they all have many years of experience as AS and A Level teachers; they know very well what difficulties you have when studying and revising, and they do not want to make things even more difficult for you. However, they know how very important these examinations are, and must be absolutely fair to every candidate, including you, so the questions that they set will always be designed to help you to show yourself at your very best. They will mark and reward what you say, and will not automatically penalise you for what you do *not* say (unless of course you simply fail to answer the question that they set, in which case you will of course gain few marks, or in an extreme case none at all!)

The Examiners will always set questions about what is really important and central in each of the texts you are studying. It is obviously essential that you look again at all the *main* ideas, themes and characters in your texts when you revise. It is possible that one of the two questions on each text may ask about something that you have not studied in so much depth, or which you thought was less important. If this does happen you can be sure that the Examiners will believe that what they are asking *is* important, and that it can and should be easily related to the main topics that you have studied. Whatever you do, don't panic – if you know the texts well and thoroughly, you will certainly be able to answer either of the two questions well and confidently. The worst thing you can do (apart from writing nothing at all, which is a sure-fire guarantee that you will get no marks at all) is to write on a subject that you *wish* the Examiners had set, or one that you have prepared and are determined to write about whatever is actually asked; again. This is very likely indeed to get you very few marks.

So – how can you revise properly, and make sure that you *do* know each of your texts really well? The answers are really much the same for each of Papers 3, 4, 5 and 6, so this Guide will deal with all four together. No references will be made to specific set texts or poems – the revision suggestions can apply to any text at all that you are studying. Papers 7 and 8 are different, and for obvious reasons no clear revision strategies can be offered for them, except to say that whatever you are doing in your work for the other papers will have huge and rewarding benefits if you are taking either of these two.

First of all, it is worth bearing firmly in mind that if you have attended all your English Literature lessons, if you have completed all the work that has been set, and if you have kept some organised and careful notes, then you will already have done a great of the work that revision entails. The word 'revision' means that you are looking at the work again (the prefix *re* means 'again'), so that what you are doing is simply making sure that you really have understood and absorbed everything that you have been taught and that you have learnt before. If, of course, you have *not* been quite so efficient as this, then you may not altogether be *re*-vising

To begin the serious task of revision, sort out all the lesson notes that you have made and kept, and if you find that you have missed some out because of illness or other absence then ask your teacher if he or she can give you a little bit of late help, or perhaps ask one of your friends if you can borrow their notes for a day or two.

Make yourself a revision timetable; this will be very valuable, and provided that you stick to it then you will complete everything that you need to do in plenty of time. Start this several weeks – perhaps five or even six – before the date of your first examination, and list every day between now and then, including Saturdays and

Sundays. Work out what you will need to do, break it down into small and sensibly managed parts, and write what you plan to do every day – six days each week. Obviously you will have other AS or A Level subjects to revise, but you should try to spend at least a couple of hours each day on your English Literature. Leave one day free each week – perhaps Sunday – so that you can have a regular ‘day off’ to relax and do other things, and also so that if for any reason you fall behind your planned schedule then you will have some time to catch up.

What should you put into this revision plan? This Guide must assume that you have in fact done all the work that you should have done during the course, so what you do now really is *re*-vising. Divide each of your texts into smaller parts – if it is a play, then take one Act, or a few scenes, at a time; if it is a novel, then two or three chapters; if a collection of poetry, then 4 – 5 poems. Each of these small bites is what you should look at during each revision day. Allow enough time at the end of your plan for further revision of larger parts – maybe half of each text, and finally one last session for a whole-text revision. You can then be quite sure that you have missed nothing out.

What should you look at each day? Well, to some extent this will depend upon what the text is, how long it is, and what work you have already done on it. But the essential thing first is to make absolutely sure that you know – really know – what is in each part of each text, so that if you decide to tackle a passage-based question in the examination you can remember very quickly where it comes, what happens before and after it, and what is important in it. If you do a more general essay question, you can sift very quickly through your memory for material to use in answering it, because you will know the text so thoroughly.

So – re-read your section(s) fully and carefully, and make some more notes as you go to help you retain the information and ideas that you will have. What do you learn in each section about the characters, about the themes, about the writer’s style and methods? What features are particularly striking or important? How does each section relate to the rest of the text? Are there any lines or short sentences that you feel might be useful to remember as quotations? To answer many of these points, go back to your earlier work and notes, to see what your teacher said about this section – what he/she said will certainly have been worth noting and remembering.

When you move on to the next section of each text, think about how (or perhaps if) it helps you understand what you looked at the day before. Does any earlier section help you to appreciate what you are now studying? Or does what you are now studying add to what you read earlier, and possibly make that a little bit clearer? Can you find examples of the writer’s use of language, of images, of similes or metaphors, that have been used elsewhere in the text? Are there any common ideas or themes in these images (this is particularly likely in some poetry and drama) – if so, does this help you to see what the writer is saying, and how he or she is saying it here?

In prose and drama look at how you learn more about the main character(s) in each section. Does the section you are looking at now add anything to what you already know, or does it perhaps simply reinforce what you know? Does it possibly complicate what you thought about the character(s) earlier, and if so why has the writer done this? Is there any speech or description in this section that seems to you especially helpful in understanding the character(s)?

In poetry, try now to see each poem as part of the whole collection, rather just as isolated and individual poems, and see what connections or links you can find between them. Can you ‘pair off’ or ‘group’ each poem with others? If so, what do they have in common, and what similarities can you find in their ideas and styles?

What differences are there? What effects do these similarities and differences create?

As you work through each section that you have chosen, you will find yourself gaining an increasingly strong and confident understanding of each text, and of how each writer has created them and the effects and responses that you have noticed. You will be putting together a growing understanding of the writer's methods and concerns, and of how each small part – each word, each phrase, each image, each scene, each chapter – contributes to the whole piece of writing. You may in fact be developing as a literary critic, and you will certainly be becoming a more confident examination candidate.

As you reach the end of this part of your revision plan, you should move on to look at larger parts of each text, and work in exactly the same way as has been outlined. You will almost certainly find parts of this boring and repetitive, but it will without any doubt at all pay major dividends, in that your knowledge and memory will keep growing, and you will find that increasingly you can talk with real confidence about all aspects of each text, and find that you can face the examination with growing security.

The very last phase of revision, perhaps during the final week before the examination, should be to undertake a speed-reading of each text. This sounds alarming, but all it amounts to really is a skimming through of each novel, reminding yourself of what happens in each chapter, and looking in more detail at those pages you found of especial importance, or perhaps ones that you found difficult. You may be able to read the whole of each play, but if not you should do exactly the same as with the novels. You should certainly re-read some of the poetry, choosing those poems – probably 8 or 10 – which you and your teacher feel are of greatest importance (though you must bear in mind that the Examiners may choose one or two outside your personally chosen group).

If you can, have a look at some old examination questions – your teacher will probably have some examples of these. Do not panic or worry if they seem difficult, but equally do not relax if they all look very easy. What you should be doing is just to try to become familiar with the kind of questions that have been asked in the past, and to think about how you might have addressed them if you had been taking this exam earlier. Do *not* try to work out from them what the questions in your own examination might be. Have a look, though, at the next section in this Guide – terms that Examiners may use – and see where they appear in past papers; what do you think the Examiners were expecting you to do in response to each question? Discuss this with friends or your teacher, so that you can feel as certain as possible about what each kind of question really means and requires.

Remember – as this Guide says several times – the Examiners are not trying to trick you. They do not want to make things difficult for you, or to catch you out about what you do *not* know or do *not* remember, but to help you produce answers which show fully and clearly what you *do* know and remember. If you have worked hard and thoroughly, and then revised hard and thoroughly, this is exactly what you will do.

Section 4: Some terms that Examiners use

There is of course no way of forecasting what any examination question will be about, nor how it will be worded. People who believe that they can “question-spot” by looking through past papers may sometimes be lucky, but it is very unwise indeed to rely upon such guesswork. What you can be reasonably certain about, however, is that many questions will contain some of the following expressions; they are very commonly used by Examiners, and it is worth doing two things:

- ensure that you know what these terms mean, and how you should write in response to them if they appear in your exam paper;
- look for them when you see the paper itself, and feel confident that you know how you should react to them. When you open your examination question paper, you may find it helpful to underline these terms, so that they are firmly in your mind as you write your answers.

The list is not exhaustive, and you may find that not all these terms (or possibly even none of them at all) will in fact appear in your examination, but the chances are high that at least some of them will.

4.1 Some words and phrases that might open a question:

Comment on . . .

Compare . . .

Consider . . .

Discuss . . .

Discuss the importance of . . .

Discuss the effects of . . .

Discuss the writer’s treatment of . . .

Discuss your response to . . .

How does . . . ?

How effective is . . . ?

How far do you agree that . . . ?

Show how . . .

What does this extract contribute to . . . ?

What is the significance of . . . ?

What might be the thoughts of an audience . . . ?

What uses does the writer make of . . . ?

Write about . . .

Write a comparison of . . .

Write a critical appreciation of . . .

Write an essay on . . .

You should not be frightened by any of the above words or phrases; nor should you worry if your examination questions introduce some other words or phrases. In a very simple sense, most of them are really just pointing you towards the same direction – they are inviting you to look closely at what the rest of the question says, and then to apply that idea or instruction to what you know about the text. You are not being asked simply to write everything you know about it – that would be far too difficult in just one hour – but to think hard and quickly about a particular aspect, and then to write with focus and detail about just this.

4.1.1 Comment on . . . ; Discuss . . . ; Consider . . .

These really mean very much the same thing and are just ways of asking you to think about a particular view or angle, and to write about your own thoughts, but with careful and detailed supporting illustration from the text itself.

4.1.2 Discuss the importance of . . . ; Discuss the effects of . . . ; Discuss the writer's treatment of . . . ; Discuss your response to . . . ; How does . . . ? How effective is . . . ?

Each of these instructions appears to be more exact and specific, but again the thrust is similar – the Examiner is asking you to look at one particular aspect of the text, and to write about it, and about how you react to it. If it asks about 'the importance', it is really much the same as if it said 'what you think is important'.

4.1.3 What does this extract contribute to . . . ? What is the significance of . . . ? What might be the thoughts of an audience . . . ?

These expressions tend to be used in passage-based questions, where you are expected to show how well you can explore the passage in very close detail, but also how far you can then relate it and its methods and concerns to the text as a whole. In other words, what can you see in the passage which you can find elsewhere in the text? Are there things in the passage which do, or do not, appear anywhere else? Do you find the writer's style or technique in the passage to be similar to the writing elsewhere in the text, and if so where?

The last one ('**What might be the thoughts of an audience . . . ?**') is a little different, but again it expects you to look closely at the given passage, always of a piece of drama. This time, however, you are asked to imagine that you are part of an audience actually watching the play, and to think about how you might react to what is happening, and to the words and actions of the characters involved. Do remember at all times that a play is intended to be seen and heard, not just read. You must concentrate particularly upon the given passage, of course, but never forget that the way you are reacting now is influenced by what has happened earlier in the play – unless of course the passage is the very beginning of the play.

4.1.4 Write a comparison of . . . ; Write a critical appreciation of . . .

These will almost certainly appear in passage-based questions, and in Paper 7 (Comment and Appreciation). They are asking you to explore in real and careful detail, and to show that you have the ability to understand what is written, and how effectively the writer has made it for you. You will probably want in such questions to introduce your knowledge of some critical terms, but as will be said later do not do so just to show off this knowledge – use them sensibly, appropriately, and sparingly.

4.1.5 Write about . . . ; Write an essay on . . .

These are rather abrupt instructions, but they do appear from time to time. As always, do not be alarmed, and certainly do not fear that they mean something special, or something different from anything else. What the Examiner is requiring as always is that you look carefully at whatever aspect of the text is mentioned, and that you write a thoughtfully argued response to it, bringing in your own response, and

supporting it with sensibly chosen references and quotations. Provided that you concentrate upon the topic selected by the Examiner, you will almost certainly be on the right track, and hopefully will be awarded a good mark.

4.2 Here are a few phrases which might appear inside a question:

Characteristic of the text as a whole

Concerns and methods

Dramatic effects/effectiveness

Style and concerns

With close reference to

These should be fairly self-explanatory, particularly in the light of what has just been said. '**Concerns**' may be an unfamiliar word, but it simply means whatever it is that the writer is writing about in the text – his/her ideas, topics, themes, problems, interests, characters and so on. '**Methods**' and '**style**' mean much the same – they refer to *how* the work is written, and expect you to look at the language, images, structure and so on. '**Characteristic of the text as a whole**' has really been explained above in Section 4.1.3; you will need to discuss how far you consider the given passage to be similar to (or possibly different from) what is written in the text generally, both in terms of its ideas and in the way it is written – obviously you will be expected to give some quite detailed illustrations here, to show how well you know the text. Which leads neatly into the last phrase – '**With close reference to . . .**' – which very clearly reminds you to use as much reference and quotation as you can from the passage or wider text.

Section 5: Some terms that you might use, and which you should certainly understand

The terms that are listed below are ones that you might want to use from time to time in your examination answers. The Examiners will be looking for personal response, for real and detailed understanding, and for you to show that you can explore and explain how in your view the writers create their particular effects. The Examiners will emphatically *not* be impressed if you simply use these terms, or any others, just to show that you know them – no marks will be awarded just because you know the words! They can often, though, be a useful shorthand way of explaining something that can otherwise take a long time. Use them if they are helpful and point your argument towards a valuable focus, but do not use them just to show that you know them.

Above all, do not just list examples of where and how they occur; you will again be given no credit for simply saying 'There is alliteration in line 25', or 'The writer uses much onomatopoeia in stanza 4'; if you can show *why* some type of image or technique is used, and *what effect* it has, then you will be given credit.

You should by now be familiar with most of the following words, but if you are not sure about any of them, ask your teacher to help explain and illustrate them. Best of all, try to find some examples of where and how they are used in your own set texts, so that you can if necessary make sensible use of them in the examination.

5.1 Some general critical terms:

Alliteration
Assonance
Atmosphere
Imagery/images
Language
Metaphor
Onomatopoeia
Setting
Simile
Tone

5.2 Some terms that are used mostly about poetry:

Rhyme
 Half-rhyme
 Eye-rhyme
Rhythm
Blank verse
Free verse
Stanza

5.3 Some terms that are used mostly about prose:

Dialogue
Paragraph
Section
Sentence
Phrase
Clause

5.4 Some terms that are used mostly about plays:

Act
Audience
Dialogue
Monologue
Scene
Set
Stage directions

Section 6: The Assessment Objectives

These may sound terribly alarming and forbidding, but they need not be so at all; the five Assessment Objectives (usually just called the AOs) are simply a means by which the Examiners make sure that you have covered everything that the syllabus requires of you, and that you have shown all the skills that are demanded of you. Your teachers will have had the AOs in mind while teaching you, and the Examiners will measure what you write against each of them when marking your answers. It is important that you know a little about each of them, but there is no need whatsoever to learn them, or to try to remember them when you are revising or writing your examination. If you have studied your texts properly, and know how to write about them thoughtfully, you will almost certainly be fulfilling all the AO requirements automatically, without even being aware that you are doing so. Anyway, here they are:

Assessment objective	What the full AO actually says that you must show	What you need to be able to do in reality
1: Responding to different texts	- an ability to respond to texts in the three main forms (Prose, Poetry and Drama) of different types and from different cultures.	The syllabus and the question papers make sure that you do in fact study the three main forms (genres), and works from different periods and backgrounds.
2: Understanding of a writer's methods	- an understanding of the ways in which writers' choices of form, structure and language shape meanings.	Provided that you answer the questions properly, and do what is asked of you, you will fulfil this AO; it requires you to show that you can discuss in detail <i>how and how effectively</i> the writers have created their effects.
3: Informed opinions	- an ability to produce informed, independent opinions and judgements on literary texts.	Again, you will do this by answering the questions set; these will always want you to show that you have an opinion about the texts you have studied; provided that you support your argument sensibly and fully, you will do what this AO requires.
4: Understanding and insight	- an ability to communicate clearly the knowledge, understanding and insight appropriate to literary study.	Once more, you will be unable to avoid fulfilling this Objective, provided only that you answer each question thoughtfully and with close reference to the texts and to the ways in which they are written, and provided too that you write in a thoughtfully and carefully argued way.
5: Different opinions (NB This AO applies to A-Level only)	- an ability to appreciate and discuss varying opinions of literary works. (NB This AO applies to A-Level only)	In Papers 5, 6, 7, and 8 you are expected make reference to some other possible view(s) or interpretation(s) of your texts, so that you can show the Examiners that you have reached your own response and view only after careful thought and discussion. You can of course do this in your AS papers too, but it is not essential in these.

Section 7: A final word or two

If you have covered everything that this Guide contains, and if you have spent the past year or two years really working hard, you will know your texts well and thoroughly, and should be able to face the examination with confidence that you will do your very best.

Remember that the Examiners are not your enemies – you may sometimes think of them like this, but they are not. They want you to do well, and they want to read good and interesting examination answers, if only because it makes their own lives and work so much happier! They will give you as many marks as they possibly can, and will reward every good and thoughtful point that you make, provided of course that it is relevant to what the question asks. They will *not* take marks off simply because they do not agree with what you say – provided that you say it well and carefully, and support it with material from the texts themselves, they will reward what you write. If you say things which are manifestly and unarguably *wrong*, then marks will not be awarded, but your careful and sustained opinion will certainly be welcomed and valued

Make yourself a revision timetable, preferably starting several weeks before the day of your first examination; write this timetable out, perhaps pinning it up somewhere in your room at home; make sure that it covers every text and every aspect of this text that you know you must cover; write out a few important quotations, and try to remember them (but don't spend more time learning them than reading the texts!); make sure that you do some revision every day; keep up to your own schedule, and don't let yourself get behind; but do allow some time off to relax as well – this is essential; do *not* over-revise the night before any examination – if you do not understand the text by then it is probably too late!

Get to the examination room on time, so that you are fully prepared and – hopefully – quite relaxed; read the questions carefully; do not panic if they seem difficult – look out for the words that are listed in Section 4, and think about what they are asking you to do; make a few notes before you start, to remind yourself of what you need to say; then write *and enjoy what you are writing* – if you enjoy it, the Examiner will too.

Finally, once a Paper is finished, forget it as quickly as you can! Do not let yourself worry about what you could have said, or what you think you may have left out. It is too late now, and you need to begin thinking about your next examination

A truly final note now - GOOD LUCK, AND ENJOY YOUR REVISION!