

Process: How to Approach a question

1. Read the question and highlight / underline key words.
2. Think carefully about what you might write about. You could mind map possible points / quotations / ideas to include.
3. Plan your answer. Arrange your ideas into a sensible order, considering different ideas in separate paragraphs.
4. Write your answer.
5. Check through for SPaG.

What does an analytical question look like?

You will be asked to explore HOW a writer has achieved a particular effect.

You will write in What / How / Why paragraphs to explain your ideas about the text.

This will require you to analyse the effects of the writer's choices and explain the writer's intentions.

Write a clear and relevant point, linked to the question

- Use words from the question
 - Use the writer's name
 - Use specific and precise vocabulary
- At the start of "TEXT", the writer presents...
- The writer develops the idea of... by...
- The writer creates the impression that ... is a ..., ... and ... character
- It is clear that WRITER'S CHARACTER...is motivated not only by... but also by ...
- By the close of TEXT, the once ... has developed into....
- Our first impressions of ... are that he/she is..., ... and ...

Use appropriate quotations

- Show you know who says it / what it's about
 - Show you know where it comes from in the text, i.e., before/ after key events
 - Be as close to the original as you can
 - Keep them as short as possible
- When describing..., the poet writes: "..."
- After EVENT, the reader learns...
- At CHARACTER'S first entrance, the writer...

Analyse writer's craft

- Think about the choices the writer has made on purpose
 - Consider synonyms for words: why didn't the writer choose an alternative word?
 - Look for patterns in the language
- The writer's use of ... connotes
- The choice to use "... " rather than "... " intensifies the impression that ...
- The writer uses language associated with... which serves to highlight...
- The use of "... " alongside the word "... " suggests...
- Here, the writer cleverly employs... to...

Use subject terminology appropriately

- Which methods has the writer used?
- Avoid simply identifying word class, e.g., noun. Consider the quality of that language, e.g., animalistic nouns

Offer alternate interpretations

- Think about how different readers may respond and why
 - Think about how impressions develop over the course of the text
- Initially, it seems... However, as the text develops...
- Some readers might propose that...; yet it is more convincing that readers might think... because...
- On the exterior..., yet on the interior we can infer...

Explore the reader / audience's response

- Think about what the writer intends for the reader
 - Consider what he/she wants the reader to think / feel / understand about the characters and their situation
- The reader is forced to appreciate...
- The reader is caught between...
- WRITER positions the reader/audience in favour of /against ... by....

Explore writer's intentions and context

- Avoid simply retelling historical information
 - Link context to the interpretation
 - Use verbs of intent
- The writer criticises / celebrates / explores / questions / critiques / praises / rejects...
- Because..., the writer...
- At this time, there was a commonly held belief that... Therefore...
- Perhaps, (writer's name) was hinting that ...
- Throughout the novel/poem/play, the writer reveals her/his belief in ...through her/his description of...

Accurate SPaG

- Check your spelling of the names of characters and writers from the question
- Use "... " around all quotations
- Check capital letters and "... " around titles

Don't forget, across your essay responses, you must:

- Show awareness of what happens in the whole text
- Give a range of ideas
- Avoid repeating yourself.