

**Delivery guide – Component 1 Communicating information and ideas (Non-fiction texts)**

Version 1

# Contents

[Introduction 3](#_Toc33777564)

[Curriculum Content 3](#_Toc33777565)

[Thinking Conceptually 4](#_Toc33777566)

[Introduction: The Student Profile 4](#_Toc33777567)

[Introduction to Non-Fiction Texts 5](#_Toc33777568)

[Nineteenth Century Non-Fiction Texts 5](#_Toc33777569)

[Twentieth/Twenty-first Century Non-Fiction Texts 5](#_Toc33777570)

[Thinking Contextually 6](#_Toc33777571)

[Engaging with non-fiction texts 6](#_Toc33777572)

[Analysis of language and structure 6](#_Toc33777573)

[Comparison 7](#_Toc33777574)

[Comparing ideas and perspectives 7](#_Toc33777575)

[Critical evaluation 7](#_Toc33777576)

[Writing skills 7](#_Toc33777577)

[Activity: Building confidence with non-fiction texts 9](#_Toc33777578)

[Activity: Analysing language and structure 9](#_Toc33777579)

[Activity: Comparing ideas and perspectives 10](#_Toc33777580)

[Activity: Recognising bias 10](#_Toc33777581)

[Activity: Exploring writers’ ideas 10](#_Toc33777582)

[Activity: Developing critical evaluation skills 10](#_Toc33777583)

[Activity: Writing for specific purposes 11](#_Toc33777584)

[Activity: Giving writing a structure 11](#_Toc33777585)

[Activity: Thinking about sentence structure 12](#_Toc33777586)

[Activity: Precise but ambitious vocabulary 13](#_Toc33777587)

# Introduction

Delivery guides are designed to represent a body of knowledge about teaching a particular topic and contain:

* Curriculum content: a clear outline of the content covered by the delivery guide;
* Thinking Conceptually: expert guidance on the key concepts involved, common difficulties students may have, approaches to teaching that can help students understand these concepts and how this topic links conceptually to other areas of the subject;
* Thinking Contextually: a range of suggested teaching activities using a variety of themes so that different activities can be selected that best suit particular classes, learning styles or teaching approaches.

# Curriculum Content

In Component 1: Communicating information and ideas, students read a range of non-fiction texts drawn from the 19th and either the 20th or 21st century. This may include for example, essays, journalism (both printed and online), travel writing, speeches and biographical writing.

This guide focuses on developing the skills to:

* read and analyse texts that are designed, for example, to persuade, inform, instruct or advise
* explore how effectively texts achieve their purposes by comparing and evaluating the usefulness, relevance and presentation of ideas and information
* engage with texts, developing independent viewpoints and recognising different interpretations
* develop knowledge and understanding of linguistic and literary terminology to support their analysis of texts
* students will also produce one piece of non-fiction writing which may include writing to explain, inform, instruct, argue or persuade
* organise ideas and information clearly and coherently
* select and emphasise key ideas and information to influence readers and reflect the purpose of the writing
* make considered choices of vocabulary and grammar to reflect particular audiences, purposes and contexts
* adapt tone, style and register as appropriate
* use the knowledge gained from wider reading of non-fiction to inform language choices and techniques
* use a range of sentence structures for clarity, purpose and effect, with accurate punctuation and spelling.

# Thinking Conceptually

## Introduction: The Student Profile

This delivery guide has been created specifically to support the delivery of GCSE (9-1) English Language J351 Component 1 for post-16 students.

This is a cohort that brings with it certain challenges, but which also presents some opportunities with regard to the nature and breadth of material they can be offered.

The majority of post-16 students will have already attempted the GCSE in the past. They may have done so either with OCR or with a different exam board. Regardless of which specification they have previously attempted, they may bring to their post-16 course a degree of disenchantment, a lack of confidence, and an anxiety about completing their studies successfully. Teaching groups may well contain students from different centres and/or teaching groups, so that there is a diversity of shared experience which is not present to the same extent within the 11-16 context.

In addition, there may be students in the group who have not taken the GCSE before, perhaps having come from other countries or having suffered difficult personal circumstances. Some of these students may be far more able than others within the same teaching group, and the grades for which they are aiming could, correspondingly, be much higher. Students for whom English is a second or third language face a further set of challenges. In addition to this, because of the age profile of these students, there may be demands on their time, such as part-time jobs, which they have to reconcile with the requirement to study; also freedoms such as driving, or simply the pressures of family finances (as well as the reduction of restrictions on working hours for older students), may give them an incentive to have a more substantial external employment commitment than younger students; this may also put pressure on their energy and will to study.

The educational context too is likely to be a different one, relying more on self-motivation and students’ ability to commit to their learning. Educational organisations are likely to be under pressure to maintain retention rates, which exerts a further influence on the way these students are accommodated and viewed.

These factors are likely to influence the ways in which teachers and students approach the GCSE English Language course.

The GCSE English Language course lends itself to a one year, post-16 delivery. Assessment is based entirely on unseen texts which means that teachers and students need to focus on skill development (basic comprehension, inference, language and structural elements, comparison, evaluation, extended writing skills) and applying skills to a range of texts and extracts, as opposed to the study of whole novels. There is freedom in the range of texts and themes that can be chosen for these purposes and teachers are encouraged to think about the types of themes that students would find appealing and go from there.

The movement to untiered exams means that differentiation is particularly important. This delivery guide includes some suggestions of differentiation strategies, recognising that some of the post-16 cohort may not expect to achieve the very highest marks available. Having said that, there may well be students within the group for whom achievement at the highest end of the mark range is a real possibility, so this guide does also contain some suggestions in terms of how these students could be catered for.

## Introduction to Non-Fiction Texts

Component 1 will always include two non-fiction texts (each approximately 350-650 words). One of these texts will always be a 19th century text, the other could be from either the 20th or 21st century. Non-fiction texts could include articles, reports, letters, speeches and travel writing. Students will need to become familiar with a range of non-fiction texts during the course.

Post-16 students tend to have experience of a wider range of real-world experiences (whether these relate to the workplace, to travel, to experience of different cultures, to driving, and/or to familial responsibilities) which means that potentially a much richer wealth of non-fiction texts will be meaningful to them, both in terms of reading and writing.

The structural parity between Component 1 and Component 2 will support students by giving them experience in the process of comparing and critically evaluating two texts, which is common to both papers, but the non-fiction basis of Component 1 will also provide clarity for them; this is the ‘real world’ paper; Component 2 relates to the realms of the literary and the imaginative. Hopefully this is a distinction that all students will be able to grasp, and one which will help them to feel confident or, at least, secure in their approach to each exam paper.

## Nineteenth Century Non-Fiction Texts

The area of the specification that all students, post-16 and otherwise, are likely to find most challenging is the 19th century texts; because these will always appear on Component 1 (i.e. they will always be non-fiction), it should be possible to tackle them in ways that feel manageable. Teachers may find it useful to take a thematic approach to the study of 19th century non-fiction looking, for example, at working conditions in the nineteenth century and in the modern world. This enables students to draw on their first-hand experiences directly. It gives them an anchorage in precisely the part of the exam paper which they are likely to find most challenging, balancing what is highly familiar to them with what is likely to be least familiar, culturally and linguistically.

Post-16 students are likely to have a wider experience of contemporary culture, and issues such as finance, work and, hopefully, politics, will be more visible to them than to younger GCSE cohorts. This in turn will mean that there may be wider scope in terms of linking 19th century texts to 21st century equivalents; health and safety abuses and restrictions, for example, are more likely to resonate with a seventeen-year-old who has undergone an induction at their part time job than with a fifteen/sixteen year old who has not.

In the exam, students will always be provided with some contextual information that will help them to navigate both the of the unseen non-fiction texts.

## Twentieth/Twenty-first Century Non-Fiction Texts

When considering different non-fiction texts, students would benefit from recognising shifts in attitudes and values relating to key ideas between the 19th and 21st centuries. The two texts in the exam will be thematically linked and therefore the same theme or idea will be presented either similarly or differently in each text. Recognising how the ideas/attitudes/values are presented in each text is key to being able to respond to the range of reading questions in the exam. Students should also be encouraged, when approaching each text, to identify a range of genre characteristics, ideally they should do this as a matter of course.

# Thinking Contextually

## Engaging with non-fiction texts

The activities below aim to increase students’ confidence and competence in reading and engaging with a range of non-fiction texts. The teacher’s own experiences can also be very valuable in bringing some aspects of the 20th and/or 21st centuries to life; as well as major historical events, such as the commercial launch of the internet, there is also a wealth of material about the smaller changes and their impact on day-to-day living during the last few decades which may be of interest to students. Teachers may have personal first-hand memories of these or have heard others’ accounts of them. Certainly, in the writings across all the centuries examined in Component 1, materials concerning everyday experience are likely to provide a rich source of topics and themes to which students will, hopefully, be drawn.

## Analysis of language and structure

The language and structure of texts is a particular focus in GCSE English Language. It is specifically assessed in Question 3 of each exam paper, as well as in Question 2 of Component 2. Understanding of language and structure is assessed via AO2.

*AO2: Explain, comment on and analyse how writers use language and structure to achieve effects and influence readers, using relevant subject terminology to support their views.*

In order to reach the higher levels of the mark scheme (or to boost their performance within the lower/mid-levels) students will need to have some command of subject terminology to support their textual analysis. This is an opportunity reviewing the basics (nouns, adjectives, verbs and adverbs fall under subject terminology) and for teaching some relatively sophisticated terminology and giving students the opportunity to practise using it effectively. One of the challenges of delivering the post-16 course is that students may (understandably) feel bored and resentful about a course that seems to repeat material that they have already attempted to cover. Importing new terminology may provide a small way of giving the post-16 delivery its own distinctive flavour, drawing on three important considerations:

* It will enable students to feel that the course is more challenging/more sophisticated than their earlier experience of GCSE, transforming it into something that moves beyond the repetition/revision of ‘old’ material.
* These students will have had more experience than their younger counterparts of learning and using technical terms in other subjects, hobbies, and/or occupational dialects outside of education. There is nothing inherently different or difficult about English Language terminology that precludes them from learning it effectively, and they can draw on strategies and contexts where they have had some success in order to support themselves in doing so, e.g. the use of flashcards and other memory aids. These could be adapted versions of resources that they may have used for other subjects.
* Some post-16 students may seek to progress onto an A Level route. This may be true, particularly, of those whose previous studies have not given them an opportunity to do themselves justice in GCSE English, either due to personal circumstances e.g. health or school-refusal, or because they may have been studying abroad and did not have the opportunity within a different educational context to sit the GCSE English exam.

Providing students with a manageable and carefully chosen selection of terminology can be a valuable way of giving them a sense of purpose and achievement; potentially they are creating a foundation for further study in English. This may well be relevant for only a small number of students, but those to whom it does apply should benefit significantly.

While students are likely to be relatively familiar with language analysis, they may be less experienced in examining structure, and this is an area in which practice and explicit teaching are likely to be useful. A visual approach can be particularly helpful when looking at the structure of a text; metaphors of construction can be useful in the consideration of how a text has been ‘built’. This is an area that can also be returned to very usefully when tackling the writing tasks for both papers.

## Comparison

A key feature of the new specification, examined in both papers, is that of comparison. Comparison skills are assessed (along with critical evaluation) in Question 4 of each exam paper, via AO3: Compare writers’ ideas and perspectives, as well as how these are conveyed, across two or more texts. Students are required then, not just to compare the writers’ views, but also the ways in which they present those views, for example what form is used; how intimate or detached is the tone; is it autobiographical? Informative? Persuasive? Both of these requirements, i.e. the comparison of ideas and the comparison of how those ideas are conveyed, do present their own challenges.

## Comparing ideas and perspectives

The first step is encouraging students to identify what the writers’ ideas and perspectives actually are, and this in itself might be prove challenging. It relies on a capacity for thinking critically and for considering a range of details in order to come to a conclusion about a writer’s beliefs. For example, if a writer describes feelings of annoyance about being told what they could or could not say in a particular situation, adult readers would readily infer that they have a belief that freedom of speech is important, but this implication may be less visible to students. Before looking at the specific language features or qualities of texts with students, it would be useful, therefore, to get them to practise identifying the underpinning beliefs, and developing a sense of the writer’s perspective.

The key challenge is to move beyond the details of the event to identify implications and underlying suggestions, relating to what happened and also to those concerned. Once students become more confident at identifying ideas and perspectives, having practised on a number of examples, it should then be possible to move them on to exploring the ways in which these are conveyed. (This should also feed into the other aspect of Question 4, i.e. evaluation.)

## Critical evaluation

The final skill to be assessed in the Reading section of Component 1 is that of critical evaluation. This assesses AO4: Evaluate texts critically and support this with appropriate textual references.

Students need to be encouraged to look at the impact of the text, and different interpretations, considering their personal responses but also recognising the possibility of different readings.

## Writing skills

The focus of writing skills in this component will be functional, both in terms of form and content. Although tasks are likely to be broadly similar to previous iterations of GCSE English Language, it is hoped that the focus on non-fiction will provide students, in preparation for the exam, the opportunity to practise producing texts that will benefit them within a real-world context. For post-16 students, this can draw on scenarios from a range of real-life situations – potentially ones that they can provide themselves or with which they can, at least, identify.

The choice of two writing tasks provides some flexibility, and a really important aspect of preparation will be to teach students how to scan and assess the relative merits (in terms of their own strengths and weaknesses) of each of the questions, in order to select the one which will enable themselves to do themselves justice most fully.

As older and, hopefully, more reflective students, an active exploration of pairs of tasks would be a useful way of leading into preparation for the written part of the exam; unlike their 16 year-old peers they will have a wider set of experiences on which to draw. This cohort could take advantage of their greater confidence and the breadth of their real life experiences to help them, for instance in making speeches, for example, seem authentic.

Although technical accuracy is important in the writing tasks, the ability to adapt style and content to the needs of a specific context, purpose and audience, and to structure and organise ideas effectively, carries more marks. The work that students have done on analysing the ways in which texts are structured (including the employment of structural devices) could be usefully revisited here, in order to help them focus on creating a structure for their own writing.

Writing questions 5 and 6 are designed to test AO5; one aspect of this is the effective adaptation of writing for specific forms, purposes and audiences.

Focusing specifically on the start and endings of written work becomes more meaningful when students have a clear sense of the context, purpose and audience for which they are writing. Visualising – or remembering – the real world experience of specific texts may protect students from producing exam responses that sound stilted and artificial. For example, a genuine speech delivered to an audience will not sound like an essay simply being read aloud. The post-16 cohort will be in a position to know this intuitively; the task of the teacher is to make the linguistic knowledge gleaned from this wider experience explicit, and to help students develop strategies to help them integrate it into the writing they produce.

As well as adapting what they write for the specific purposes and so on already discussed, students are also assessed on the extent to which they structure and organise their ideas. This is where their previous preparation for the reading part of the paper is likely to be useful.

Given the relatively high number of marks that structure and organisation carry in the writing part of the exam (as well as the fact that any activities which involve considering structure from the writer’s perspective will, hopefully resonate with students’ ability to articulate structural features from the point of view of the reader – i.e. for Question 3 in Section A), it is worth emphasising the importance of structure not just while they are writing, but also while they are checking their work. Within the context of exam responses in particular, inserting clear discourse markers (or even signalling the start of new paragraphs retrospectively) is more likely to have an impact on the mark awarded.

As well as AO5, each of the writing questions is assessed for AO6; students need to *“Use a range of vocabulary and sentence structures for clarity, purpose and effect, with accurate spelling and punctuation”*.

Structure is therefore emphasised here too. Students also need to focus on word choice and accuracy. A key word within the mark scheme is ‘range’, and this needs to manifest itself on different levels; students often find the idea of including a range of vocabulary easy to grasp, but are usually less confident about varying sentence length and even less confident with regard to varying their sentence structure.

While it is useful to flag up to students the areas where the variety in terms of their writing could be increased they should also recognise that they are not aiming for a formulaic mix of sentence lengths or types. This could be a useful discussion point, e.g. that minor sentences, for example, lose their effectiveness if over-used; the same is true of exclamatories.

## Activity: Building confidence with non-fiction texts

Students need practise engaging with a variety of non-fiction texts. A useful way into this is to carry out some very basic comparisons between texts from the 19th, 20th and 21st centuries, gathering data about key features such as average number of words per sentence; average number of syllables per word, any unrecognisable words and so on, just as an introduction and as a means of de-mystifying the differences between some of the characteristic features of writing of these three periods. (See the Delivery Guide on [Approaching unseen 20th and 21st century literary texts](https://ocr.org.uk/Images/170386-approaching-unseen-20th-and-21st-century-literary-texts-delivery-guide.pdf) for further strategies for achieving this.)

Because this is likely to be a task that some students find challenging, it may be useful to offer short sample text to begin with, e.g. [Learner Resource 1](https://www.ocr.org.uk/Images/577311-building-confidence-with-non-fiction-texts-learner-resource-1.docx).

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A further useful initial activity (and one which potentially enables students to draw from their studies in other areas of the curriculum) is to create a timeline to help provide a sense of historical perspective. This would involve research which could itself be a means of generating a bank of non-fiction texts to work from; different groups could be allocated different sections of the specified time-span and each could report back on key events, important legislation that was passed (e.g. laws to do with education/work etc.) and well-known people. It might be interesting to compare the basis of this influence across the centuries, and to explore the 19th century equivalents of today’s so-called celebrities!

Alternatively, different groups or pairs could select a particular theme, e.g. conflict or the rights of children, and could track its different manifestations from the start of the 19th century up until the present day.

Websites such as those provided are likely to be helpful in this.

A British 19th century timeline

<http://www.localhistories.org/19thtime.html>

20th century Britain timeline

<http://www.britain-magazine.com/features/history/20th-century-britain-timeline/>

Events of 20th century

<http://history1900s.about.com/od/famouscrimesscandals/u/events.htm>

History timeline of the 20th century

<http://history1900s.about.com/od/timelines/tp/timeline.htm>

Most important events of the 21st century

<https://www.timetoast.com/timelines/most-important-events-of-the-21st-century>

## Activity: Analysing language and structure

Resources needed for this activity: As well as a range of sample texts, students will also need highlighter pens.

Present students with a text of approximately the same length as for the Sample Assessment Materials available of the GCSE English Language webpage (350 – 650 words).

Read the text (either individually or as a class, depending on student confidence/ability).

Ask students to highlight the different sections, listing the main topics in the text, and filling in the first column of the table in [Learner Resource 2](https://www.ocr.org.uk/Images/577313-analysing-languages-and-structure-learner-resource-2.docx).

Ask students to identify the discourse used at the beginning and end of each section and record these in the table. A list of discourse markers is given in [Learner Resource 2](https://www.ocr.org.uk/Images/577313-analysing-languages-and-structure-learner-resource-2.docx).

## Activity: Comparing ideas and perspectives

Gather three relatively short newspaper articles (or websites linking to articles) all dealing with the same topic. (If preferred, students could select the articles themselves.) After they have read the articles, get students to describe the way that the particular topic/person/event/organisation is represented in terms of the writer’s ideas and perspectives. Is the representation broadly positive? Negative? Fairly neutral? What are the implications of the statements the article is making? Which of the representations do they feel most closely aligned to as a reader themselves?

For example, an account of a football match in which the score was 4-1 may represent the winning team as deserving their triumph through their own excellent play (i.e. their victory was well-deserved) or it may suggest that a series of flukes made victory possible (implying the result was based on luck not skill). Alternatively, there may be an underlying belief that the losing side ‘gave’ the game away by playing badly.

## Activity: Recognising bias

Collect examples of texts containing different degrees of bias. Students may struggle to recognise bias (unless it is pointed out to them) because when confronted with the written word they may have a tendency to comply rather than question. In terms of Question 4, though, it is important that they do recognise what is being inferred as well as what is being stated; [Learner Resource 3](https://www.ocr.org.uk/Images/577314-recognising-bias-learner-resource-3.docx) has been designed to support students with this.

## Activity: Exploring writers’ ideas

This activity supports the preparation for Question 4, identifying a range of ideas that students can then match to sources. Rather than starting with texts and then identifying the key ideas within them, [Learner Resource 4](https://www.ocr.org.uk/Images/577316-exploring-writers-ideas-learner-resource-4.docx) presents students with a selection of ideas, and their task is to find texts in which these ideas are particularly prominent. This activity could be presented in the form of a competition (if this would be compatible with student and teacher preferences). Another option would be for groups to be designated to find a collection of texts linked to one of the ideas. Some of these texts could then, in turn, be used for teaching resources; meanwhile, the process of reading a series of texts in order to identify ideas rather than content makes the activity potentially useful as preparation for Question 4.

## Activity: Developing critical evaluation skills

This activity has been designed with the purpose of highlighting that being able to recognise different interpretations of a text is an important aspect of evaluation. Starting off with a consideration of brief statements, it could then be applied to longer texts, as a way of facilitating the more conceptual aspect of the comparison process.

Resources: A list of reasonably contentious statements to be written on the board (students could come up with these, one statement per pair); copies of [Learner Resource 5](https://www.ocr.org.uk/Images/577317-developing-crticial-evaluation-skills-learner-resource-5.docx).

Students should ‘plot’ their responses, as directed on [Learner Resource 5](https://www.ocr.org.uk/Images/577317-developing-crticial-evaluation-skills-learner-resource-5.docx), in order to get them used to the process of gauging their own reactions, both in terms of positivity/negativity and in terms of intensity.

They can then apply the same principle to texts, i.e. read an article or speech and ‘plot’ their response along the same pair of axes. Once they have done this, they could then, using the same graph, ‘plot’ what they perceive to be the writer’s own feelings about the topic, as a way of underlining possible variety of response.

Adding their perception of, for example, a 19th century reader/listener’s reaction to a speech about women’s rights, and comparing them with what they perceive to be the writer’s view, and their own view, will encourage them to recognise contextual factors and the impact these may make.

## Activity: Writing for specific purposes

Help students to produce three separate lists, one for the different forms their writing may need to take in the exam (newspaper/ magazine article, report, speech, autobiographical text, a piece of travel writing, letter, diary entry etc.); one for the different purposes (i.e. to describe, explain, inform, instruct, argue and persuade), and the last for potential audiences.

Select a theme or topic and discuss which language features would/would not be appropriate for different contexts, then get them to practise writing an introductory paragraph (or more) using different combinations of elements from each of the three lists, e.g. a formal letter to persuade a head teacher to ask canteen staff to provide more vegetarian options; a speech aimed at younger students providing them with information about being a vegetarian.

## Activity: Giving writing a structure

Resources: access to word processing/printing, scissors.

Get students to produce a text of a reasonable length for exam practice for Writing Question 5/6, ensuring that they paragraph it. (If they are likely to find a task based on structure challenging, a formal letter is probably the easiest text-type to start with.) Students will need to word process their work, either in their original drafting or afterwards.

Print the text out, and cut it up into separate paragraphs, which should then be shuffled together in a random order.

In pairs, exchange these paragraphs.

The task is to see how easy it is for the recipient to reassemble the original. The first and last paragraph are likely to be the easiest; the ease with which the rest can be restored to the original sequencing is likely to depend on how successfully the students have used structural devices throughout.

After feedback, return to the original version and amend it (probably by inserting more signposting in the form of discourse markers).

Re-print and repeat.

Exchange feedback on the difference between the two versions. If the task has been completed successfully, the second version should have been much easier to re-assemble and there should have been no confusion at all about the sequencing of the paragraphs; the order should have been logical, clear, and should have guided the reader in a way that felt consistently purposeful. In a weaker piece of writing, the paragraphs could be assembled in a number of different sequences without causing any disruptions to the reader’s experience – suggesting weaknesses in organisation and/or a lack of purpose and direction.

In order to build on this activity, it may be helpful to offer students the metaphor of a journey, as a way of helping them understand the importance and value of structure. [Learner Resource 6](https://www.ocr.org.uk/Images/577319-giving-writing-a-structure-learner-resource-6.docx) is designed to help with this.

## Activity: Thinking about sentence structure

Ask students to produce a practice response for Writing Question 5 or 6, ideally so they have an electronic version of their work.

Ask them to save two versions – Version A and Version B.

Remind them of the need to try and vary sentence lengths in their writing.

Assign a different colour for highlighting each sentence length, and then get them to highlight their Version A fully so they can see at a glance which sentence types they may be:

* using
* over-using
* neglecting.

For example:

Hello everyone. I am here to talk with you today about an issue I think is really important: peace, and why peaceful solutions to conflict are better than violent ones. We live in a world that sometimes seems to be full of violence. Why?

**Key**

One word sentences

Short sentences

Medium length sentences

Long sentences

Revise the differences between simple, minor, compound and complex sentences.

Ask students to review their tasks and have a go at re-working Version B.

For an alternative to this activity students could analyse examples of well-crafted texts that are available electronically in the same way as above. This would also feed into students’ awareness of the ways in which writers shape their work for effect.

They could compare their findings with analysis of their own work; this might give them insight into ways in which adjustments could be made (always allowing for individual variation between task and writer – this is not an exact science, but may open students’ eyes to examining their own writing and the writing of others in a different way, and anything that heightens awareness of crafting is useful).

As a way of following up on work with sentence types, [Learner Resource 7](https://www.ocr.org.uk/Images/577320-thinking-about-sentence-structure-learner-resource-7.docx) requires students to focus specifically on comma-splicing (or, more precisely, how to understand/avoid it). This is important as it affects accuracy as well as range of punctuation/sentence structure.

## Activity: Precise but ambitious vocabulary

Choice of vocabulary is an area of focus for AO6. Use of ambitious vocabulary will help students to move up the bands in the mark scheme, but they need to aim for precision as well as ambition. This activity has been designed to support them in achieving this.

Resources: [Learner Resource 8](https://www.ocr.org.uk/Images/577321-precise-but-ambitious-vocabulary-learner-resource-8.docx) (or the activity could be done on A3 paper).

Give students a pair of antonyms to work with. On the board (or individually if preferred) get them to come up with all the synonyms for each that they possibly can. Once their own ideas are exhausted they can supplement the list by using a thesaurus. They should then use [Learner Resource 8](https://www.ocr.org.uk/Images/577321-precise-but-ambitious-vocabulary-learner-resource-8.docx) to rank order these in terms of intensity/degree. An example is provided in [Learner Resource 8](https://www.ocr.org.uk/Images/577321-precise-but-ambitious-vocabulary-learner-resource-8.docx).

Follow-up activities could involve talking about precision of use of these words and looking at examples based on what they’ve produced. The focus should be on the fact that certain synonyms might have the right meaning but would still not work in specific contexts, e.g. we’d talk about a puppy being ‘tiny’ but not ‘microscopic’ – again, this highlights the importance of not sacrificing precision of word choice for ambitious vocabulary.

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