

This photocopiable is intended for those students who are preparing for the *B2 First for Schools* version of the exam and intending to take the set book option.

1 If you have read the set book, you may decide to answer the relevant question in Part 2 of the Writing paper. You may be asked to write an article, an essay, a letter or a review. Rank questions 1–7 below, from the one you would most like to answer about the set book you have read (1) to the one you would least like to answer (7).

- 1 Write a **review** for your school's English magazine about the book you have read. Tell readers what you did and did not enjoy about the book and say whether you would recommend it.
- 2 Write an **essay** explaining how the beginning of the book you have read is important to the development of the rest of the story.
- 3 Your school magazine has asked students for articles on unpopular characters in literature. Which character in the book you have read did you like the least? Write an **article** saying who the person is and giving reasons for your choice.
- 4 Write an **essay** briefly describing a place or building which appears in the book you have read and explaining its importance to the story.
- 5 A friend has written to you asking about the book you have read. Write a **letter** to your friend explaining what you learnt from your reading about the time and/or place in which the story is set.
- 6 'The ending of a story is crucial to the reader's enjoyment of a book.' Write an **article** for your college magazine briefly describing the ending of the book you have read and explaining how much it contributed to your enjoyment of the book as a whole.
- 7 Write an **essay** describing the development of the relationship between two of the characters in the book you have read. Explain how the relationship affects the events of the story.

2 Look at the following example answer. Which of the above questions is it answering?

Animal Farm

After overthrowing Jones at the beginning of 'Animal Farm', the animals enter the farmhouse quietly and carefully. They are amazed at 'the unbelievable luxury' of the rooms and the furniture, such as the horsehair sofa and the soft feather beds. They decide never to live there and it is turned into a museum as a symbol of the terror and oppression of Jones's reign.

However, the pigs eventually move into the farmhouse, and it soon symbolises the inequality between themselves and the other animals. They grow fat there, drink whisky and even sleep in the beds, while the others do all the work. As in Jones's time, the leaders live comfortably, whereas the workers suffer.

Furthermore, Napoleon spends most of his time in the house, waited on by dogs in his own private apartments. In this way, the new dictator separates himself from the other animals, including the pigs.

At the end we see him talking to the humans as equals in the dining room. It is in the farmhouse, then, that we see best how Napoleon occupies Jones's position.

3 Read the answer in Exercise 2 again. Answer the following questions.

Has the writer answered both parts of the question satisfactorily?

What is the purpose of each of the four paragraphs?

Which words are used to link ideas?

Has the writer quoted directly from the text?

4 Choose one of the example questions and write your answer in 140–190 words, with reference to the set book you have read.

How to go about it

- Underline the key words in the question to make sure you write a complete and relevant answer.
- Write down as many ideas as you can which will be relevant to the question.
- Check in the book that your information is correct and add any further ideas which might be useful. If you notice any short, relevant quotations, make a note of them too.

NB You will not be able to refer to the set book in the exam.

- Decide which of your ideas you will include in your answer. The word limit is 190 words, so be selective.
- Organise your ideas into a paragraph plan which is relevant to the task type.
- If you are writing an essay, four paragraphs should be enough.
- If you are writing a letter, decide how you will begin and end it.
- If you are writing an article, interest the reader from the very beginning.
- If you are writing a review, make sure there is a balance of information and opinion.

Teaching notes

This photocopiable is only relevant to those students who are preparing for the *B2 First for Schools* version of the exam and who have read a set text. Apart from the wealth of language benefits students gain from the reading itself, doing a set text with your students can provide a welcome change of pace and focus. In the exam, it gives students an extra choice in Paper 2 Writing. If necessary, reassure students that the examiner's judgement is based on the student's control of language in a specific context and is not based on literary criticism.

Preparing students for this question

Here is a possible plan to follow, much of which students can do on their own with an occasional class discussion based on different features of the book. Ideally, students should read the book three times.

- › Tell your students to read the book quite quickly the first time to understand the general storyline and familiarise themselves with the story and the characters. They should use their dictionary very little, if at all, at this stage.
- › The second time, they should read it more carefully and take notes under headings, e.g. *events, setting, characters and relationships, ideas*. They should write down short, easily remembered quotations. They should use their dictionary for the words they cannot guess from context. Students could compare and discuss these notes in class.
- › They should read the book quickly a third time before the exam, together with the notes they have made during their second reading.