

SOUTHFIELDS ACADEMY
ENGLISH DEPARTMENT

GCSE ENGLISH LANGUAGE
MATURE



Southfields
Academy

Year 12 Level 2 Launchpad:
independent study booklet

Introduction to Level 2 English (GCSE Mature)

As part of the Level 2 English Language programme of study, you will follow the AQA English Language GCSE course. In November 2024, students who got a grade 3 in their English Language GCSE in summer 2024 exams will be entered for re-take examinations in Language Paper 1 and Paper 2. Students who got a grade 2 or below will be given an opportunity to re-sit their English Language papers in summer 2025.

In Week 3 of the new school year (the week beginning 16th September 2024) there will be a mini assessment on Section A (reading) of Language Paper 1. The tasks which follow in this booklet will help to prepare you for that assessment. Your performance in the mini assessment will also determine whether we decide to enter you for the November 2024 re-sit exams. Therefore, it is important that you complete all tasks to the best of your ability.

As Level 2 students in the sixth form, you are expected to attend **all** English lessons, completing all classwork and homework tasks to the very best of your ability. You will need to do this in order to achieve **at least** a Grade 4 (pass) in your re-sit examinations.

Course and Assessment Overview

Knowing how you will be assessed is key to your preparation for - and success in - English Language re-sit examinations. For AQA GCSE English Language, assessment will be comprised of the following aspects:

- **Spoken Language endorsement** – a speech or presentation on a topic of your choice to be delivered in class. You are allowed to carry forward your Spoken Language grade once. Therefore, if you sat your GCSEs in summer 2024 for the first time, you will not need to re-do your Spoken Language endorsement. Students must achieve either a Pass, Merit or Distinction grade.
- **Language Paper 1 Explorations in Creative Reading and Writing (1 hour 45 mins)**
 - Section A – one literature fiction extract. Answer questions 1-4.
 - Section B – one extended writing question. Answer question 5 (complete one creative writing task from a choice of two).
 - There are 80 marks available on this paper which equates to 50% of the English Language GCSE.
- **Language Paper 2 Writers' Viewpoints and Perspectives (1 hour 45 mins)**
 - Section A – one non-fiction text and one literary non-fiction text. Answers questions 1-4.
 - Section B – one non-fiction/literary non-fiction extended writing question (question 5 – no choice of tasks on this paper).
 - There are 80 marks available on this paper which equates to 50% of the English Language GCSE.

For more information, here is the specification for the course:

<https://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/english/specifications/AQA-8700-SP-2015.PDF>

Task 1: Literary Techniques and Terminology

Complete the table, looking up the definitions and providing an example for the following literary terminology and techniques:

Word	Definition	Example
Alliteration		Little liar
Ambiguity	Something with more than one meaning	
Atmosphere		
Adjective		
Adverb		
Genre		Tragedy, Comedy...
Hyperbole		
Imagery		
Metaphor	An expression that describes a person or object by referring to something that is considered to possess similar characteristic	
Narrative		
Noun		
Onomatopoeia		
Personification		
Simile		
Tone		
Verb		

Task 2: AQA Language Paper 1 revision videos and exam tips

Watch and take notes on the revision videos for Language Paper 1 (Questions 1-4) from the Mr Bruff Language Paper 1 playlist below. I have started the first video for you.

- *Language Paper 1* playlist – follow the link or search YouTube for ‘Mr Bruff Language Paper 1 playlist’: [AQA English Language Paper 1 - YouTube](#)

Revision Video (question)	Notes – summarise key information and revision tips in your own words. You can use bullet points.
Question 1	
Question 2	

Question 3

Question 4

Task 2: read the following extract and answer questions 1-4. You should spend one hour on this task. Write your answers on lined A4 paper.

Extract from *Norwegian Wood* by Haruki Murakami

Norwegian Wood (ノルウェイの森, *Noruei no Mori*) is a 1987 novel by Japanese author Haruki Murakami. The novel is a nostalgic story of loss told from the first-person perspective of Toru Watanabe, who looks back on his days as a university student living in Tokyo. Through Watanabe's reminiscences, we gain an insight into his past relationship with the beautiful yet emotionally troubled

I was thirty-seven then, strapped in my seat as the huge 747 plunged through dense cloud cover on approach to the Hamburg airport. Cold November rains drenched the earth and lent everything the gloomy air of a Flemish landscape: the ground crew in rain gear, a flag atop a squat airport building, a BMW billboard. So—Germany again.

Once the plane was on the ground, I could hear soft music flow from the ceiling speakers: a sweet orchestral cover version of the Beatles' "Norwegian Wood." The melody never failed to send a shudder through me, but this time it hit me harder than ever.

Eighteen years have gone by, and still I can bring back every detail of that day in the meadow. Washed clean of summer's dust by days of gentle rain, the mountains wore a deep, brilliant green. The October breeze set white fronds of head-tall grasses swaying. One long streak of cloud hung pasted across a dome of frozen blue. It almost hurt to look at that far-off sky. A puff of wind swept across the meadow and through her hair before it slipped into the woods to rustle branches and send back snatches of distant barking—a hazy sound that seemed to reach us from the doorway to another world. We heard no other sounds. We met no other people. We saw only two bright, red birds leap startled from the centre of the meadow and dart into the woods. As we ambled along, Naoko spoke to me of wells. Memory is a funny thing. When I was in the scene, I hardly paid it any mind. I never stopped to think of it as something that would make a lasting impression, certainly never imagined that eighteen years later I would recall it in such detail. I didn't care about the scenery that day. I was thinking about myself. I was thinking about the beautiful girl walking next to me. I was thinking about the two of us together, and then about myself again. It was the age, that time of life when every sight, every feeling, every thought came back, like a boomerang, to me. And worse, I was in love. Love with complications. Scenery was the last thing on my mind.

Now, though, that meadow scene is the first thing that comes back to me. The smell of the grass, the faint chill of the wind, the line of the hills, the barking of a dog: these are the first things, and they come with absolute clarity. I feel as if I can reach out and trace them with a fingertip. And yet, as clear as the scene may be, no one is in it. No one. Naoko is not there, and neither am I. Where could we have disappeared to? How could such a thing have happened? Everything that seemed so important back then—Naoko, and the self I was then, and the world I had then: where could they have all gone? It's true, I can't even bring back Naoko's face—not right away, at least. All I'm left holding is a background, sheer scenery, with no people up front.

True, given time enough, I can bring back her face. I start joining images—her tiny, cold hand; her straight, black hair so smooth and cool to the touch; a soft, rounded earlobe and the microscopic mole just beneath it; the camel's hair coat she wore in the winter; her habit of looking straight into your eyes when asking a question; the slight trembling that would come

to her voice now and then (as if she were speaking on a windy hilltop)—and suddenly her face is there, always in profile at first, because Naoko and I were always out walking together, side by side. Then she turns to me, and smiles, and tilts her head just a bit, and begins to speak, and she looks into my eyes as if trying to catch the image of a minnow that has darted across the pool of a limpid spring.

I do need that time, though, for Naoko's face to appear. And as the years have passed, the time has grown longer. The sad truth is that what I could recall in five seconds all too soon needed ten, then thirty, then a full minute—like shadows lengthening at dusk. Someday, I suppose, the shadows will be swallowed up in darkness. There is no way around it: my memory is growing ever more distant from the spot where Naoko used to stand—ever more distant from the spot where my old self used to stand. And nothing but scenery, that view of the meadow in October, returns again and again to me like a symbolic scene in a movie. Each time it appears, it delivers a kick to some part of my mind. "Wake up," it says. "I'm still here. Wake up and think about it. Think about why I'm still here." The kicking never hurts me. There's no pain at all. Just a hollow sound that echoes with each kick. And even that is bound to fade one day. At the Hamburg airport, though, the kicks were longer and harder than usual.

Question 1:

List four things about Toru Watanabe from this part of the source:

I was thirty-seven then, strapped in my seat as the huge 747 plunged through dense cloud cover on approach to the Hamburg airport. Cold November rains drenched the earth and lent everything the gloomy air of a Flemish landscape: the ground crew in rain gear, a flag atop a squat airport building, a BMW billboard. So—Germany again.

Once the plane was on the ground, I could hear soft music flow from the ceiling speakers: a sweet orchestral cover version of the Beatles' "Norwegian Wood." The melody never failed to send a shudder through me, but this time it hit me harder than ever.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

[4 marks]

Question 2:

Look in detail at this part of the extract:

Eighteen years have gone by, and still I can bring back every detail of that day in the meadow. Washed clean of summer's dust by days of gentle rain, the mountains wore a deep, brilliant green. The October breeze set white fronds of head-tall grasses swaying. One long streak of cloud hung pasted across a dome of frozen blue. It almost hurt to look at that far-off sky. A puff of wind swept across the meadow and through her hair before it slipped into the woods to rustle branches and send back snatches of distant barking—a hazy sound that seemed to reach us from the doorway to another world. We heard no other sounds. We met no other people. We saw only two bright, red birds leap startled from the centre of the meadow and dart into the woods. As we ambled along, Naoko spoke to me of wells.

How does the writer use language here to describe the meadow?

You could include the writer's choice of:

- words and phrases
- language features and techniques
- sentence forms.

[8 marks]

Question 3:

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]

Question 4:

Focus this part of your answer on this part of the extract:

True, given time enough, I can bring back her face. I start joining images—her tiny, cold hand; her straight, black hair so smooth and cool to the touch; a soft, rounded earlobe and the microscopic mole just beneath it; the camel’s hair coat she wore in the winter; her habit of looking straight into your eyes when asking a question; the slight trembling that would come to her voice now and then (as if she were speaking on a windy hilltop)—and suddenly her face is there, always in profile at first, because Naoko and I were always out walking together, side by side. Then she turns to me, and smiles, and tilts her head just a bit, and begins to speak, and she looks into my eyes as if trying to catch the image of a minnow that has darted across the pool of a limpid spring.

I do need that time, though, for Naoko’s face to appear. And as the years have passed, the time has grown longer. The sad truth is that what I could recall in five seconds all too soon needed ten, then thirty, then a full minute—like shadows lengthening at dusk. Someday, I suppose, the shadows will be swallowed up in darkness. There is no way around it: my memory is growing ever more distant from the spot where Naoko used to stand—ever more distant from the spot where my old self used to stand. And nothing but scenery, that view of the meadow in October, returns again and again to me like a symbolic scene in a movie. Each time it appears, it delivers a kick to some part of my mind. “Wake up,” it says. “I’m still here. Wake up and think about it. Think about why I’m still here.” The kicking never hurts me. There’s no pain at all. Just a hollow sound that echoes with each kick. And even that is bound to fade one day. At the Hamburg airport, though, the kicks were longer and harder than usual.

A student said ‘This part of the story shows that Toru is struggling to cope with the memory of Naoko.’ To what extent do you agree?

In your response, you could:

- consider your own impressions of Toru
- evaluate how the writer shows that Toru is struggling to cope
- support your response with references to the text.

[20 marks]