

A Level English Language & Literature

Glossary – this needs to be in your folder and you need to learn these terms.

General Terms

Term	Definition
Audience	
Purpose	The reason a text is produced
Mode	Medium of communication e.g. poetry, prose, monologue, conversation, drama
Genre	The type or category of text e.g. comedy, horror, tragedy
Multimodal text:	Texts that combine word, image and sound to produce a meaning
Context of reception:	The situations in which a text is read and factors that might influence a reader's interpretation
Demographic:	Another word for target audience
Hybrid text:	A text with more than one purpose
Idiolect:	An individual's style of speaking
Sociolect:	A use of language as a result of membership to a particular social group
Dialect:	The language variety of a geographical region or social background
Accent:	The way words are pronounced due to geographical region
Standard English:	Universally accepted dialect of English carrying a degree of prestige
Register:	Level of formality appropriate to the text's purpose and context
Jargon:	Specialist terminology that may exclude others
Colloquialism:	Established set of terms used in everyday language
Slang:	Colloquial language particular to individuals or groups
Intertextuality:	References to other texts within another e.g. in 'Naughty But Nice' and 'Titus'
Pejoration:	To reduce a word to a lower/ less respectable meaning e.g. bitch
Borrowing:	The process by which a word is absorbed into another language e.g. cuisine
Blending:	A word made by putting together parts of other words e.g. brunch
Compounding:	Joining together two words e.g. loudspeaker
Etymology:	The origins of a word
Personification:	Giving human qualities to a non-human object
Hyperbole:	Exaggeration
Rhetorical question:	A question that does not require an answer
Anthropomorphism:	Giving an animal human-like characteristics
Litotes:	An example of where something has been reduced to less than its value

Lexis and Semantics

Lexis:	Deals with the vocabulary system in English language
Semantics:	Deals with meaning and how that is generated within texts
Textual cohesion:	Describes how a text is logically structured to create a coherent sense of meaning
Noun	Names of objects, feelings, attitudes, people and places e.g. Cottage, love
Verb	Shows actions, events or states of being, feeling or thinking e.g. Seems, run
Adjective	Adds detail to nouns e.g. Bleak
Adverb	Adds detail to verbs e.g. Extraordinarily
Determiner	Positioned in front of nouns to add detail or to clarify e.g. The, a, an

Conjunction	Links words, phrases and clauses together e.g. And, but, or, although, because
Preposition	Shows relation in terms of time or place In, at, by, on
Pronoun	Replaces nouns and can also refer forwards and backwards to them in longer stretches of text I, me, you, his, her, our

Types of Pronoun	Examples
Person	I, you, she, they
Possessive	My, his, our, their
Reflexive	Myself, himself, themselves
Demonstrative	Those, this, these, that
Relative	Who, whom, which

Types of Noun	Function	Examples
Proper	Refers to names of people or places	Paris, London
Abstract	Refers to states, feelings and concepts without a physical existence	Pain, happiness
Concrete	Refers to objects that have a physical existence	Countable: table Non-countable: furniture

Types of Verb	Function	Examples
Material	Describe actions or events	Hit, run, eat, push, read, hold
Relational	Describe states of being or used to identify	Be, appear, seem, become
Mental	Describe perception, thought or speech	Think, speak, believe, love
Dynamic	Processes where there is a change in state over time	Paint, eat, remove
Stative	Processes where the state remains constant	Love, hold, believe

Comparative:	The form used to compare two items, adjectives using <i>-er</i> or combined with 'more' e.g. smaller, more beautiful
Superlative:	Adjectives using <i>-est</i> or combined with 'most' e.g. smallest, most beautiful
Ellipsis:	The missing out of a word or words in a sentence
Denotation:	A strict 'dictionary' meaning of a lexical item
Connotation:	An associated, symbolic meaning relying on culturally shared conventions
Semantic/Lexical field:	Lexical items that are similar in meaning and properties
Coinage:	A new/made-up word
Loan word:	A word taken from another language e.g. magnifique
Epithet:	Labelling someone or something with a feature or quality they exhibit e.g. 'villains'
Monosyllabic:	Only one syllable in a word
Polysyllabic:	More than one syllable in a word
Phatic language:	Small talk
Antithesis:	Words or phrases that directly contrast with each other
Emotive language:	Language that encourages readers to respond emotionally rather than rationally. Many words have emotive connotations and readers may respond to these rather than their denotations
Metaphor:	Use of a term to describe something that it does not denote, to suggest similar qualities between the two
Simile:	A comparison of one thing with another, using the words 'like' or 'as'

Grammar and Syntax

Passive voice:	Omits an actor or agent or includes the agent as part of a prepositional phrase after the verb e.g. "Gag order is issued on armed forces"
Subordinate clause:	A clause dependent on another to complete the full meaning of a sentence e.g. " <i>Although he was tired</i> , he kicked the ball"
Adjectival phrase:	A phrase with an adjective as its head-generally appear after the verb 'to be' e.g. "He is <u>very intelligent</u> ", "very big"
Utterance:	A group of spoken words, roughly equivalent to the sentence in written terms
Modal auxiliary verb:	A verb which never appears on its own and is used to express possibility, probability, certainty, necessity or obligation e.g. will, would, can, could, shall, should, may, might, must
Fronting:	Moving a word/phrase to the start of a sentence for a specific purpose
Parallelism:	The repetition of a pattern or structure in related words, phrases or clauses

Sentence Mood	Feature	Example
Declarative	Telling	Before Easter, she had driven over to Paris
Interrogative	Asking	Is it done yet?
Imperative	Inviting, demanding	Look at the evidence

Phonetics and Phonology

Consonant Group	Examples
Plosives	b, p, t, d, k, g
Fricatives	f, v, s, z, sh
Africates	ch (church), dj (judge)
Nasals	m, n, ng
Approximants	r, j, w

Phoneme:	Basic unit of sound from which language is created
Alliteration:	A sequence of words beginning with the same sound e.g. "The silence surged softly backward"-Use of the fricative, 's' in an alliterative line creates an eerie atmosphere
Assonance:	Repetition of vowel sounds for effect
Consonance	Repetition of consonant sounds for effect
Sibilance:	Repetition of 's' sound

Deixis: Lexical items that 'point' towards something and place words in context e.g. "I am here now"-relies on the centre from which the lexical items have come. 'I', 'here' and 'now' are deictic because they point towards a person, a place and a time relative to the immediate context

Graphology

Typography: Font size, type, colour, boldening, italicising, underlining and any other modifications to font types

Convention: An agreed or shared feature

Parenthesis: Adding in additional information through the use of brackets

Discourse

Discourse structure: The method that explains how texts are put together

Discourse Structure	Key Features	Examples
List/instructions	Logical progression through stages, use of imperatives to instruct, guide	Recipes, instructions, guides
Problem-solution	Identifies a problem	Product advertisements
Analysis	Breaks down key ideas into constituent parts, evaluates and explores	Academic articles, newspaper editorials
Narrative	Details a series of events, can be chronological or non-chronological	Novels, witness accounts

Didactic: To-the-point tone of voice, often used when giving advice or instruction

Transactional speech: There is a purpose to the conversation e.g. giving order at a restaurant

Interactional speech: Just people talking; small talk/everyday language use

Discourse analysis: How texts present information in order to create identities for particular individuals or institutions, and the ideologies that are often inherent in these

Narrating: When a speaker talks for an extended period

Adjacency pair: Two utterances by different speakers which have a natural and logical link, and complete an idea together e.g. A: "Hello, how are you?" B: "Fine thank you!"

Turn-taking: The sharing or speaking roles, usually cooperatively

Initiation-response-feedback: Triadic structure in speech that allows the first speaker to feedback on the response of a second speaker

Taciturn: When a speaker is quieter in a conversation/doesn't contribute as much

Juxtaposition: Placing two or more things together, especially in order to suggest a link between them or emphasize the contrast between them e.g. "This goodly summer with your winter mix'd"

Rapport: A friendly relationship between people; 'building rapport'

Anecdote: A short, personal reference to a story/memory

First person: Discourse that uses 'I' or 'We' etc.

Second person: Discourse that uses 'you' etc.

Third person: Discourse that uses 'she' or 'they' etc.

Discourse feature	Description	Examples
Back-channelling	A feature of speaker support; non-verbal utterances to show	<i>Mmm, yeah, OK</i>

attention or agreements		
Discourse marker	Signal a shift in conversation and topic areas	<i>OK, right then, so, but</i>
Fillers	Non-verbal sounds which act as pauses in speech. May signal speaker uncertainty	<i>Er, um</i>
Hedging	A strategy used to avoid directness or to minimise a potentially face-threatening act. Commonly features epistemic modality	<i>Kind of, sort of, maybe, perhaps, possibly</i> <i>Modal verbs such as: will, could, might</i>
False starts/repairs	When a speaker begins to speak, pauses then recommences. A repair return to correct a previous utterance	<i>It began er Arsenal kicked off the second half (false start It began)</i> <i>He sorry she broke the vase (repair she from he)</i>
Skip connectors	A return to a previous topic of conversation	<i>Anyway coming back to our original discussion</i>
Vague expression	Similar to hedging, deliberately non-committal expression in informal contexts	<i>Anything, something, thing</i>
Ellipsis	Omissions of words for economical purposes or to avoid awkward repetition	<i>Just seen Jack (ellipsis I've)</i> <i>Tonight, 8pm (ellipsis I'll meet you...at...)</i>
Tag Questions	Consist of an auxiliary verb, a negative particle and a pronoun	<i>You did really well didn't you?</i> <i>It was tomorrow wasn't it?</i>
Deixis	Pointing words in a perceptual, temporal or spatial dimension	<i>I, you, me, they</i> <i>Now, yesterday, today</i> <i>Here, there, this, that, these, those</i>
Non-fluency features	Non-verbal occurrences	Pauses, hesitations and repetitions which occur in spontaneous speech