



LEARNING MATERIALS

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Course: IGCSE English Language Specification A (4EA1)

Unit 2: Paper 1

Topic: Sample Materials




Recommended reading:

Recommended reading for this topic is listed in the back pages of these learning materials.



Further resources:

Further resources to deepen your learning on specific aspects of this topic are listed throughout these learning materials.

If you see this icon  you will be able to listen to how the word is pronounced



Read and make notes:

Making notes turns reading into studying. Notes should be brief, clear and helpful.

To help your understanding:

- rewrite or summarise what you have learned (avoid copying what you have read);
- note down any questions your studying has raised, either to ask your tutor, or to develop into further research.

To help you to remember:

- sum things up to improve long term memory;
- write things down to aid motor memory;
- use colour, images or patterns to help visual memory.

To help you in your assessments:

- record where you will find information (e.g. page numbers);
- keep your notes organised and easy to navigate;
- highlight where further reading and research are needed, including any recommended or further reading;
- use your notes to help you to get started when answering a question.



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1. Writing for a purpose



Ready, steady, go!

In this section we will look at the different purposes for writing.

We will study the anthology text:

The Explorer's Daughter by Kari Herbert

Note: What you will learn in this section is applicable to Paper 1

1.1 What is transactional writing?

Transactional writing is non-fiction writing for a purpose. The purposes could be to:

INFORM:	to pass on information (this includes descriptive writing)
EXPLAIN:	to make clear how or why something is, as it is
REVIEW:	to outline a piece of work, or an event, and comment on it
ARGUE:	to produce an organised sequence of reasons to support a point of view
PERSUADE:	to convince an audience or reader to think or act in a certain way
ADVISE:	to give useful suggestions and ideas to help someone or some people

A piece of transactional writing should have a **main purpose** from the list above, but should also use the other writing purposes to add clarity, interest, and to make your writing compelling and 'un-put-down-able'.

We're going to jump straight into your first anthology text now – consider what you have just read about purpose, and don't forget to have a separate section in your folder for each anthology text that you will study (see Clever Cat advice in the Introduction).

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The Explorer's Daughter, Kari Herbert



Things to do:

We will now read through *The Explorer's Daughter* – as you read this, consider the purpose(s) of the piece and how it affects you as the reader.

► Turn to page 6 of the [anthology](#) and read the text along with the recorded version:



[Anthology Part 1: From *The Explorer's Daughter*, Kari Herbert](#)

Background and context

Kari Herbert's father was a polar explorer. She lived as a child with her family in northwest Greenland in the Arctic. She was so fascinated by the place that she returned there later as an adult to write about it.

The book from which this extract is taken is partly a memoir (a form of autobiography) and partly a travel book. It informs the reader about this strange and beautiful place, its people and animals. She found that the traditions and cultures of the Inughuit people of Greenland were changing due to the impact of the modern world. However they still managed to retain aspects of their traditional ways of life, such as hunting for food and driving teams of dogs.

A major part of the extract is an account of a hunt for narwhal. Hunting is a very emotive issue and many conservationists agree that whales should be protected. Kari Herbert's feelings on this topic are divided. She sympathises with both the narwhal and the hunters, who face incredible danger whilst hunting, and she acknowledges that banning hunting could cause a potential loss of their culture and history.



Activity 1: *The Explorer's Daughter*

Conduct some research to deepen your understanding.

1. Learn more about the narwhal:

You can start your research at [WWF's narwhal page](#)

2. Find some more information about Herbert and her writing:

You can visit her website: <http://www.kariherbert.com/>

Read an article that has been written about her family and early childhood in Greenland by Juliet Rix in *The Guardian*: [My arctic childhood \(2008\)](#)

And read a review of *The Explorer's Daughter* by Hugh Thomson in *The Independent* (this is a good way to start applying your

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understanding of the writing purpose **to review**): [The Explorer's Daughter by Kari Herbert: a magnetic return to the polar people \(2004\)](#)

3. Learn more about the Inughuit (Inuit, Inugguit or Polar Eskimo) people of Greenland and their way of life:

You can start your research by watching and reading about Dr. Stephen Leonard's year long research project '[Living with the Inugguit \(2011\)](#)

In the short film there are some images of a polar bear between 4.25 and 5.08 that you may wish to skip

Understanding the text

Kari Herbert sympathises with both hunter and hunted in this extract. The author's central purposes are to convey the tension of the subject but also its beauty. You need to examine the different ways in which the writer does these things within the same text.



SAQ 1: The Explorer's Daughter

Copy and complete the following table with answers and evidence from the extract:

QUESTION	ANSWER AND EVIDENCE
Why do the Inughuit hunt the narwhal? Find as many reasons as you can.	1. Narwhal meat provides food – 'a valuable part of the diet for both man and dogs'. 2. 3.
What details show the difficulties and dangers faced by the Inughuit in the hunt?	1. 2. 3.
What details show the writer's respect and sympathy for the narwhal?	1. 2. 3.



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Exploring the language


When we explore the language, we look at the words, the imagery and the dialogue and the effects they have on the reader.

The extract has many purposes and the writer uses language in different ways to fulfil them. She uses description to convey the beauty of the setting, gives the reader information about the Inughuit people and the narwhal, dramatises the hunt and gives the reader an insight into her own thoughts and feelings.

For instance she **describes** ‘the plumes of spray from the narwhal catching the light in a spectral play of colour’ and she also **informs** the reader that the ‘mattak or blubber of the whale is rich in necessary minerals and vitamins’.

Herbert uses very descriptive language to make her writing come to life, and to give personality and character to the animals and the people she is describing. By doing so, Herbert is engaging the reader to understand and empathise with her **argument**.

We are shown both her respect for the ‘intelligent’ narwhal and the ‘brave’ hunters’, the women ‘clustered’ together with ‘binoculars pointing in every direction’ and ‘spinning round at a small gasp or jump’ as one of them spots a hunter near a narwhal. Finally the piece ends with the author **persuading** the reader that ‘Hunting is still an absolute necessity in Thule’.

 SAQ 2: <i>The Explorer’s Daughter</i> Copy and complete the following table with answers and evidence from the extract:	
LANGUAGE USE	EVIDENCE
Language to convey the effects of light	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A ‘glittering kingdom’. 2. 3.
Language to give information: factual, scientific, other specialised language	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Precise scientific language makes the information more authoritative – for example, ‘[Its] mattak or blubber ... is rich in necessary minerals and vitamins’. 2. 3.
Language to create tension	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The way the women react suggests their nervousness – for example, ‘spinning round at a small gasp’. 2. 3.
Language to show the conflict in the writer’s	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2.



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personal feelings and thoughts

3.



SAQ 3: The Explorer's Daughter

**What do you think is the main purpose of Herbert's writing?
Try to justify your answer.**

2. Putting it all together: exam question



Ready, steady, go!

In this section we will look at how to put everything that we have learned together to successfully answer a transactional writing exam question.

Note: What you will learn in this section is applicable to Paper 1 (transactional writing).

2.1 Planning

For all questions that expect extended answers (such as the reading questions about the anthology and unseen texts, as well as your writing questions), you will be given marks for how well-organised your writing is, so always **write a plan** before you start to help you to think about the different points you want to make.

To ensure that you construct your writing effectively, it is really important to plan. You may think that you won't have time to plan in your exam, but the answer is, make time. A response will **always** be better if you have thought through how it will work before you start – the examiner will be able to tell if a piece of writing has no real purpose. With planning you will have confidence in your ideas, and that confidence will show in your writing. For your transactional writing question, aim to spend 5-10 minutes planning.

How you plan is completely up to you – practice planning throughout your studies so that you can hone your skills and see what works best for you. Here are some ideas:


2.1.1 Spider diagrams

In a spider diagram, put the question in the middle with 'legs' coming off it where you write down main ideas or concepts, and brief notes organised under each 'leg'. Spider diagrams are an excellent way to get quick ideas down on paper.


For transactional writing, each 'leg' could be a paragraph that you will develop in your response. Link the paragraphs together so that you can see how they can flow from each other. You could always number them, so the order can be clearly followed in your writing.

Don't forget to include audience, purpose and form in your plan, so that they are at the forefront of your mind when writing. Think SLAP.


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Further resources:




[Spider diagrams - How spider diagrams can help you organize your best ideas](#)



[Creately: Spider diagram - template](#)

2.1.2 Bullet points

A great way to fill out what you will discuss in each paragraph/section of your writing. Consider key words, linguistic features (such as rhetorical questions, metaphors, use of voice) and form in your notes. Again, seeing your ideas jotted down like this will keep you on track, and will help you to plan how your ideas will flow and connect to each other. This is a really good way of creating structure and for making sure that your beginning, middle and end are all clearly linked to each other.



Essential reading – planning:


▶ Turn to pages 202-203 of the textbook: read and make notes

2.2 The question

We will now work through the type of transactional writing question you may get in your exam, putting into practice what you have studied on this topic.

Your writing needs to meet two assessment objectives – the examiner will use these to assess your writing and award marks:

WRITING	AO4	Communicate effectively and imaginatively, adapting form, tone and register ¹ of writing for specific purposes and audiences.	Maximum available marks = 27
	AO5	Write clearly, using a range of vocabulary and sentence structures, with appropriate paragraphing and accurate spelling, grammar and punctuation.	Maximum available marks = 18



Activity 15: audience

Read the question carefully.

‘The government is going to introduce a new law making it illegal to take part in dangerous sports and other such dangerous activities.’

¹ Register = the language style (e.g. formal or informal)



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Write an article in a travel magazine giving your views.

Your response will be marked for the accurate and appropriate use of vocabulary, spelling, punctuation and grammar.

(Total for Question = 45 marks)

Notice that the question is not directing you to say whether you are in favour of the new law or not. It is entirely up to you.

You may even have mixed views (this is good, it will give you contrasting approaches to answering the question. This usually leads to a well rounded and considered piece of writing).

What you must do is explain your views, whatever they might be.

Before we begin to write, we first need to plan our writing, at least using SLAP:

S = Subject	government deciding the legality of dangerous sports and activities.
L = Language	the piece needs to explain your views. The language needs to be persuasive and compelling. The form is an article. The language will inform , explain , it may imagine the consequences of this law and seek to persuade the reader to agree with the writer.
A = Audience	the audience is the readership of the travel magazine.
P = Purpose	to explain .

An article can be constructed in a number of ways. Consider the approach that you will take, and the other purpose(s) that you may utilise in your writing. Will it:

- be an **informative argument**?
- **describe** in order to evidence what you're saying?
- **persuade** the audience to support your view?
- **explore** the pros and cons of becoming a prescriptive nanny-state?
- use a creative approach to **entertain**?
- **imagine** different scenarios to highlight how these laws would be policed?
- **advise** to conclude and consolidate your views?

Let's go through an answer to this question together. As you work through it, keep coming back to SLAP, using the assessment objectives (AOs) to assess whether the writing is successful.

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Clever Cat says:

“Doing this now will practise the analytical skills that you need to assess your own writing in your exams. Make sure that you are always critical and analytical of your own work so that you can adjust and edit it successfully.”



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Sources and credits

Sources for these learning materials

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