

NAME: _____ DATE: _____
EXAMS: English Junior Certificate

EXAMS

Junior Certificate

English

It is not necessary to carry out all the activities contained in this unit.

Theme	Exams: English	
Level	A1 – B1	
Language focus	Key vocabulary for exam questions, type and structure of questions, capitalisation, recognising different fonts/sizes	
Learning focus	Understanding the instructions on an exam paper, reading questions for detail	
For the teacher	It is recommended that teachers examine the keyword lists as it may be appropriate for students taking Ordinary Level examinations to familiarise themselves with some of the vocabulary from Higher Level papers.	
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Keywords

The keywords which are found in English exam papers are as follows:

Both Ordinary and Higher Level

Types of text/genres

poem
scene
story
novel
dialogue
film
caption
paragraph
play

Instructions in questions

Think
Answer
Imagine
Describe
Say
Give

People

poet
character
writer
listeners
audience
author
hero

Adjectives

exciting
ordinary
unexpected

best
short

Nouns

adventure
reasons
thing
words

what
said
adapted
what's
like
about
going
studied
something
got
must
head
looking
happened
back
reading
anyway
any
started
thinking

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Keywords

Additional keywords for English Higher Level

Text/genres

extract
reference
text
narrative
poetry
advertisement
prose
passage
composition
title
essay
scene
style
media

Instructions in questions

Write
Support
Choose
Think
Suggest
Select
Must

Answering questions

basis / basing/ based on

bear as in “bear in mind”
attempt
spelling
grammar
capitals
punctuation
background
reasons
impression
supporting
suppose (why do you suppose?)

Nouns

channel
version
feelings
quotation

Adjectives

short
dramatic
descriptive
edited

Other words

thee
thou
anyone

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SECTION A. Understanding the language of questions

You must read exam questions very carefully. Here are some typical instructions from English exam questions. Read the text carefully and do the activities. If you are not sure about any words, check them in your dictionary and make a note of them in your own language.

YOU MUST ANSWER SECTIONS 1, 2, 3, AND 4
YOU MUST ALSO ANSWER ANY TWO OF
SECTIONS 5, 6, AND 7

1. How many sections must you answer? (✓) 4 ___ 7 ___ 5 ___ 6 ___
Are you allowed to choose from sections 1, 2, 3, and 4? Yes No

YOU HAVE, ON AVERAGE, 25 MINUTES
FOR EACH SECTION

2. What does on average mean? _____
Do you have 25 minutes for each question? _____
- Read this passage carefully and answer the questions which follow it.
 - Read this piece and then answer the questions which follow it.
3. What is a passage? _____
What does piece mean in this question? _____
Where will you find the questions? _____

According to the passage,

4. What does according to mean? _____

What is the chief difference between

5. What does chief mean in this question? _____

Read this scene

6. Where would you find a scene? _____
Do you find one person speaking in a scene? Yes No

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Explain any two of the following in your own words.

7. How many things do you have to explain? _____
What does in your own words mean? _____

the MAIN IDEA of this piece

- 8 What does this mean? _____

CHOOSE ONLY ONE TOPIC

You may find this type of instruction in the composition section of the paper.

9. What does ONE TOPIC mean? _____

Examine carefully

10. What does examine mean in this instruction? _____

Which picture do you consider

11. Write do you consider in another way. _____

Using ONE of the following headings

12. Explain the word headings. _____

How many headings must you use for your answer? _____

Explain your answer with reference to the story.

13. What does with reference to the story mean? _____

Which of these ideas is, in your opinion, the most important?
Give reasons for your answer.

14. There are two parts to this question. What are they?
a) _____ b) _____

What evidence do we have

15. What does evidence mean in this question? _____

SECTION B. Understanding question types

16. Reading text and answering questions.

Remember!

- Many of the answers to the questions are **in the text**.
- For some answers you have to use **your own ideas/imagination**.
- Be careful not to spend all your time **reading** the text.
- Look at the **marks** for each question.

What do we discover about the way people travel to work? (paragraph 1)

a) When you see (paragraph 1) in a question what will you do?

Is the main idea in this piece to:
advertise cheap clothing?
or
show us how clothes are made in a factory?
or
tell us about young children working for long hours every day?

b) How many answers are there to this question? (✓) 1____ 2____ 3____

(Personal Writing)

Write a composition on ONE of the following topics.

17. How many topics must you choose? _____

The composition is a section of the exam paper. How long, approximately,
do you have to write your composition? _____

(Functional Writing)

You disagree strongly with the writer of the article in **Section 1**,
Write a letter to the editor of a newspaper stating your point of view.

18. What is this question based on? _____

What does your point of view mean? _____

This question is a section of the exam paper. How long, approximately do
you have to write the letter? _____

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Look at **Picture 8 on page 4 of Paper X**. You are a resident in this street and you are very upset by the lorries and vans that are passing your home .

Write a letter to your local council about the situation.

In it, you should:
describe the problem
state your annoyance
make suggestions for dealing with the situation.

19. Where do you get the information for this question? _____

What do you describe in your letter? _____

What does state mean? _____

What does make suggestions mean? _____

(Fiction)

Think about a **NOVEL** or **SHORT STORY** you have studied in which people have suffered cruelty. Describe the story briefly in your own words and say why you think it is important for young people to read such stories.

20. Where do you get the information for this question? _____

What do these mean:

briefly _____

in your own words _____

such stories _____

(Drama)

How would you describe the behaviour of Jones in this scene?
What does he say or do in this extract which leads you to your opinion of him?

21. What are the two parts in this question?

1 _____

2 _____

(Poetry)

Read stanza 3 of the poem. Describe the speaker's feelings in this stanza.
What words convey this feeling?

22. Where would you find the answer to the question, 'What words convey this feeling?'. _____

What does convey mean in this question? _____

(Media Studies)

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Examine carefully Pages 1, 2, 3 and 4 of Paper X.
Then, answer the questions.

23. a) Where do you find the information for the questions in the Media Studies section? _____

Look carefully at pages 4 and 5 of Paper X. Now, match the cartoons lettered A - F with the captions numbered 1- 6.
One match has been made for you as an example.

B → 2

Write the remaining five matches in your answerbook.

b) Where do you write your answers? _____

What is a cartoon? _____

What is a caption? _____

Is there a caption for every cartoon? Yes _____ No _____

SECTION C. Preparing for sample questions

(Writing a letter)

24. A letter may appear on your exam paper in one or another section. It is not always in the same section.

Write a letter to a newspaper in another country in the hope of finding a pen pal. In your letter, introduce yourself giving some detail about your daily life, likes and dislikes, and hobbies and interests. Explain why you are interested in corresponding with a pen pal from the country you have chosen.

Read this question carefully.

- a) What is the purpose of the letter? _____
- b) How will you begin the letter? _____
- c) How will you organise the information in your letter?

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

4 _____

- d) What adjectives will you use to describe yourself? _____

Say which country you have chosen and note some of the reasons for your choice:

- e) Country you have chosen: _____

- f) Reasons: _____

25. You may be asked to choose a word, slogan, picture or other image and explain why you think it is good or the best.

For example:

Examine the slogans on all four posters on **Page 1**.

Which is the best slogan?

Say why you think it is the best.

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Read the three slogans below. They are all related to anti-racism campaigns. Which one do you think is the best? Explain your choice.

Racism, it's all in your head.

Unite against racism in European football

RACISM: SPOT IT AND STOP IT!

- a) The best slogan: _____
- b) Why I think this is the best slogan: _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

26. You may be asked to identify your favourite word or image in a text.

Example:

What is your favourite word or image in this text?

Read a poem in your textbook and find a word that you like.

- a) What is the word? _____
- b) Why do you like this word? _____
- _____

27. You may be asked about a poem and why the poet has written it.

Example:

Who is the speaker in this poem and who do you think he/she is speaking to?

Is the speaker the same person as the poet? _____

Give some words that you might use to describe a speaker's feelings:

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28. Writing a description.

Example:

Look at picture 2 on page 2 of **Paper X**.

It shows that there has been an accident in a city street.

Write a headline and a description of the accident for the front page of your local newspaper.

a) Write a headline about an accident:

b) Think about how you would describe the scene following an accident.

Suggest some verbs you could use:

Suggest some adjectives you could use:

Answer key

Section A. Understanding the language of questions

Page 4

1. 6
No
2. You have approximately 25 minutes
No, 25 minutes for each SECTION
3. a short text
a short text
after / below the text
4. as it is in the text
5. main, most important, principal
6. in a drama or film
usually you have more than one person in a scene

Page 5

7. 2
describe this using your words not the words on the exam paper
8. the most important idea in the text
9. one composition from the titles that are on the paper
10. read carefully
11. do you think
12. title
1
13. you must give examples from the story
14. a) the most important idea
b) why you think this is the most important idea
15. a reason for believing something – the reason is in the text

Section B. Understanding question types

Page 6

16. a) read paragraph 1 carefully to find the answer
b) 1
17. 1
25 minutes
18. The article that is printed in Section 1 of the exam paper.
your opinion or way of seeing the problem
25 minutes

Page 7

19. from picture number 8 on page 4 of the paper with the images

- what happens when the lorries and vans use the road that you live on.
express, make it clear (that you are annoyed)
give some ideas
20. a story that you have read either in school or at home
briefly - describe it in a short piece of text
in your own words - using your own way of telling the story
such stories - stories like this
21. 1. When you read this scene how do you think Jones is behaving?
2. What does he say in this scene that makes you think this?
22. In the third verse / part of the poem
pass / transmit the feeling from the speaker or poet to the reader

Page 8

23. a) on pages 4 and 5 of the paper with the images
b) in the answerbook
a drawing that tells a joke or shows a funny situation
a short piece of text that explains what is in a picture or cartoon
Yes

Section C. Preparing for sample questions

Page 9

24. a) to find a penpal in another country
b) Dear Sir or Madam
c) Example: 1 *describe myself, age, gender, why I am writing*
2 *describe family, school*
3 *talk about what I like doing after school / weekends*
4 *explain why I want a penpal from ******

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27. The poet may be speaking for somebody else, not for himself.
Examples: *angry, sad, amazed, happy, satisfied, tired, hungry, lonely, uncertain*