



WESTMINSTER SCHOOL

English Department

16+ English Entrance Examination Factsheet

What you can expect from the paper, and what we hope to see from you.

Format of the paper 'at a glance'

1. You will be given an extract (≤ 1 page) from a work of fiction, with ample time to read and annotate.
2. You will then, typically, be required to respond to a series of short questions delving into the implicit meaning of the text, allowing us to understand what *you* interpret in the extract.
3. You will then complete a short essay that requires you to showcase your analytical skills by focusing on character or thematic development.

What we are looking for:

- **Depth of reading over quantity of writing:** Take your time to really get to grips with the material. Ask yourself – what is happening to the characters here? Why might the author have been compelled to write this?
- **Thematic rather than device-led responses:** we would rather hear about how the main themes of a piece are drawn out and elaborated upon than read an essay focusing on literary techniques listed without mention of 'effect'.
- **Moments of 'bravery'/original thought when it comes to interpreting literature:** Interpretations should be *reasonable* and always backed up, of course, but do feel free to 'take a leap' if you see one to take.

How can I prepare?

The best preparation for this examination is to *read widely*. Being an avid consumer of literature, working on expanding vocabulary and broadening your literary horizons will all strengthen your powers of analysis.