
COMPREHENSION PACKAGE *NARRATIVE TEXTS*

SEC 3 EXPRESS 2022

ST ANDREW'S SECONDARY SCHOOL

NARRATIVE PASSAGE

You are expected to demonstrate your understanding of the writer's choice of words, style and his/her intended meaning. These include various literary devices such as simile, metaphor or personification and other uses of such aural and visual imagery.

You also need to demonstrate your understanding of the following:

- The meaning and connotations of words
- How they are used in context
- The writer's purpose in choosing to use these words.

These are some questions that are likely to appear in this section:

a) **Inferential questions** which focus on:

- The effect of certain words on the reader
- The attitude of the narrator and the rationale for this particular attitude and/or response.
- The overall tone/mood of the passage
- The character's/reader's impression of another character
- The writer's/character's attitude towards an event or situation
- Analysing the author's writing style

b) **Structure of the text** – identification of ***main ideas*** or supporting details within the paragraphs.

The table below provides some examples of the types of questions in this section and the skills you need to tackle them.

Type of question	Sample question	What you must do
Literal – Identifying specific information from the paragraph	<i>What were the two reasons behind Liverpool's decision to participate in Super League?</i>	Identify two examples from the paragraph that indicate why Liverpool decided to participate in Super League.
Language use – justification	<i>Explain how the language use in the paragraph conveys the atmosphere of panic.</i>	Identify key words or phrases in the paragraph. Think of the connotations of these words in the context of the passage. Explain how these words contribute to the atmosphere.
Language use – vocabulary	Identify the words and phrases which suggest that the main character Gabriel was losing his patience.	Think of words, synonyms or phrases related to the idea of impatience. Locate the words and phrases which are related to the key words 'losing his patience'.
Language use – Evaluating writer's intent	How is the phrase 'only time will tell' effective?	Read the lines which come before and after the phrase used. Think about the message that the writer intends to convey with that phrase and the impact that he wishes to have on the reader.

Language use – Testing your understanding of literary devices	Identify one simile and one metaphor in paragraph 2	Locate the use of a simile and a metaphor in the paragraph, based on what you have understood about these two instances of literary devices.
Analysis and justification of writer's intent	Why does the writer describe the event in this manner? What does he intend to achieve through it?	Think about the feelings and/or reactions you have after reading the event. This question requires you to make connections to the text by ascertaining the writer's intention.
Evaluative – consider the point of view and justification	Is Ancel's view of his predicament accurate? Give reasons for your answer.	Compare and contrast the character's view of his predicament with the information provided in the passage. Decide whether the character has a biased or objective point of view. After that, use the information provided to explain your position.
Structure – identifying main ideas	What is the main reason for Ashwin decision?	Identify the main reason for the decision.
Structure – identifying supporting ideas	Support your ideas with three details from paragraph 2	Identify the supporting details.

UNDERSTANDING LITERARY DEVICES (FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE

Literary devices such as similes, metaphors, idioms and personifications can be examples of imagery. A writer uses imagery in order to link two ideas and to create a vivid or life-like image in the reader's mind. These features add depth to writing and make the experiences during reading come alive – engaging readers in thinking more deeply about an idea or provide amusement or entertainment for them.

What are the possible questions?

Question Type 1:

Identify the **words** in the passage which suggest the idea given in the figurative phrase.

Question Type 2:

- Explain what **idea is suggested** in this figurative phrase.
- Explain **why** the writer describes the subject in this way? E.g the effect the writer wants to create.

What is the common mistake?

Some students may use their general knowledge of the figurative language to understand how it is used. While some general knowledge is required, it is advisable to always think about how the writer uses figurative language to achieve their purpose. E.g students should **contextualize the language** within the passage.

Use the table below to understand the definition and examples of the different literary devices, and identify how they are used.

Literary device	Example	Question Types
1. Simile A comparison of two seemingly unlike objects which uses the words 'like' or 'as'. The comparison points out a similarity between the two which allows us to understand the first object better.	'The late afternoon sky bloomed in the window for a moment like the blue honey of the Mediterranean' ("The great Gatsby" by F. Scott Fitzgerald) <u>Likening the late afternoon sky to the blue honey of the Mediterranean makes the sky seem inviting and calm.</u>	i. What is the sky compared to? Blue honey of the Mediterranean ii. What does this comparison suggest? The afternoon sky is calm and inviting.
2. Metaphor An implied comparison between two seemingly unlike objects. By identifying one thing as another, the use of metaphor points out similarities between two dissimilar things.	Love is a rose. <u>The nature of love is compared to the fragrance and beauty of a rose.</u>	My love is a rose with thorns i. Identify the phrase that describes the characteristic of love. 'a rose with thorns' ii. What does this image/comparison suggest about love? Love is a beautiful experience but can also be painful.
3. Personification When objects, concepts or animals are human characteristics, emotions or abilities.	"Time races by when we are having fun." <i>Time passes very quickly as it has been given human qualities such as the ability to race.</i> "Caught in fear's icy grip, she performed poorly during the piano examination." <i>Fear is personified as having an 'icy grip'. The phrase 'icy grip' suggests that the examination candidate was terrified. Hence, she was unable to do well in the examination.</i>	"The moon smiles at the secrets she sees." Which two words suggest the moon is a person. - 'smiles' and 'sees'. What atmosphere is created when the moon is described as smiling? - It creates a happy atmosphere. What is unusual and effective about the sentence 'He did not realize that his last chance was walking out of the door?' The phrase 'walking out of the door' suggests that the opportunity he had was slipping away and that he would never have another opportunity such as this one again.

4. Hyperbole A figure of speech that involves great exaggeration to make an idea memorable. It is not intended to be taken literally.	"I am so hungry I could eat a horse." <i>The exaggeration in the phrase 'eat a horse' tells us that the writer is ravenous.</i>	Identify the phrase which is an over-exaggeration. - "eat a horse" Why does the writer describe his hunger in this way? To emphasis how great his hunger was.
5. Pun A play of words. It is a word or a phrase which 1. Has a double meaning or both literal and figurative meaning 2. Sounds similar to another word with a different meaning	A. In Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet, at one point, Romeo asks for a torch, saying , ' being heavy [sad], I will bear the light'. <i>The word 'light' refers to its literal meaning (the torch) as well as its figurative meaning (Something that is light)</i> B. I bet the butcher the other day that he could not reach the meat that was on the top shelf. He refused to take the bet, saying that the steaks were too high. <i>When there are high stakes involved in a gamble or event, this means that the people involved have a lot to lose in terms of either money or opportunities. In the above example, the butcher did not want to take the bet as the risks were high and the actual steaks were out of reach as well. Note that 'steaks' and 'stakes' are pronounced the same way.</i>	
6. Irony A contrast between what something appears to be and what it really is. There are typically three types of irony.		
<u>A. Verbal irony</u> Occurs when the literal meaning of what someone says contrasts with the intended meaning. Can be seen in a character's comment on a situation or on another character	i. Sarcasm It's terribly kind of you to usher us into a room without central heating in the dead of winter. <u><i>It is certainly unkind of the host to usher the quests into a freezing room.</i></u>	ii. Understatement Mother Teresa was a rather remarkable woman. <i>The use of the modifier 'rather' downplays Mother Teresa's achievements. Yet the sentence emphasizes that Mother Teresa was a remarkable individual.</i>
Effect/impact on readers: Verbal irony can take the form of a sarcasm or understatement. <i>It engages the readers in thinking about the actual idea or key messages that the speaker or writer emphasizes.</i>		
<u>B. Situational irony</u> Occurs when something that happens is contrary to what is expected or intended.	Joshua sighed. Why had he agreed to tag along with Haizal, his best friend to the auditions for the Team Idol Singapore competition? He wasn't the one who dreamt of becoming the next singing sensation. In a distressing turn of events, he instead of Haizal had been shortlisted for the singing competition.	

	The irony is that Joshua did not want to participate in the auditions. However, in the end he was selected for the singing competition.	
Effect/impact on readers: <i>Situational irony engages readers in thinking about the issue presented.</i>		
<u>C. Dramatic irony</u> Occurs when certain information not known to a character is known to the readers.	In the short story Lamb to the Slaughter, the police officers investigating a murder are unaware that the murderer is someone they trust and the murder weapon (in this case the leg of lamb) is in front of them and they are in fact consuming the weapon as they speak. Readers, however, are aware that the murderer has manipulated the police officers' perception.	
Effect on readers: Readers will appreciate the significance of what is happening better than the character.		
7. Oxymoron It combines contradictory terms which appear in a phrase. The contradictory terms produce surprise and provoke thought.	Eg: a) Dark light b) Mad wisdom c) Dull brilliance	In what way is the phrase 'deafening silence' effective in conveying the degree of silence? The phrase is effective in conveying the idea that the situation was so quiet that it creates an uncomfortable atmosphere.
8. Onomatopoeia It makes use of sounds to give a characteristic or create an atmosphere	EG: The wind howled all night	Identify the word which describes the sound of the wind. 'howled' What does this expression tell you? It tells us that the wind was very strong.
9. Alliteration It makes use of sounds (repetition of consonants) to give a characteristic or create an atmosphere	Eg: The big black bomb exploded on impact.	Identify the words with repetitive sounds. 'Big black bomb' What is effective about the repetition of sounds in these words? It brings out the force of the bomb because of the forceful 'b' sound.

Let's examine how to arrive at answers

Example 1

It was Rahim Khan who first referred to him as what eventually became Baba's famous nickname, Toophan agha, or "Mr. Hurricane." It was an apt enough nickname. My father was a force of nature, a towering Pashtun specimen with a thick beard, a wayward crop of curly brown hair as unruly as the man himself, hands that looked capable of uprooting a willow tree, and a black glare that would "drop the devil to his knees begging for mercy," as Rahim Khan used to say. At parties, when all six-foot-five of him thundered into the room, attention shifted to him like sunflowers turning to the sun.

An excerpt from 'The Kite Runner by Khalid Hosseini'

Qn: In paragraph 2 Baba is described as "Mr Hurricane" (line 10). Explain how the language used in the paragraph shows how Baba lives up to his nickname.

Support your ideas with three details from paragraph 2.

Step 1:

- Identify the characteristic of the effect word – Mr Hurricane

Step 2:

- Identify the phrases/words related to the effect word

Step 3:

- Write the answer using the answer template
- The word/phrase.....means/suggests/....

Answer:

His "wayward crop of curly brown hair" suggests his hair was very messy, which showed how uncontrollable he was. Next, his hands "looked capable of uprooting a willow tree" implies he was very strong like the destructive power of a hurricane. Lastly, he had "black glare that would drop the devil to his knees begging for mercy" showing he was very much feared, just like a hurricane.

Example 2:

The excerpt below describes the writer's experiences during his journey to London

As I walked along on this seemingly endless journey, I felt a sense of great discomfort due to the weather. The heat had been painfully oppressive all day. Moisture escaped our bodies so quickly that our skin stayed clean of perspiration. Even at night, the weather was sultry. Furthermore, the moon seemed to throw scorn at me, and the ground of the heath looked wild enough in the mysterious light to be hundreds of miles away from the city

In this paragraph, the writer 'felt a sense of great discomfort due to the weather' (lines 5-6). Explain how the language used in paragraph 2 makes the weather seem uncomfortable for the writer.

Support your ideas with two details from paragraph 2.

.....

Answer

1. 'The heat had been painfully oppressive all day' suggests the weather is very/extremely hot (with no movement of air) the entire day such that it makes the writer feel suppressed/suffocated/ unbearable/overwhelming. (Idea of 'extremely hot' and 'suppression' must be conveyed).

X Unacceptable: "... suggests how the sun's heat hurts/tortures/ causes suffering to the writer.

This doesn't convey suppression. Too generic. "oppressive = heavy/burdensome

You must use synonyms of 'painful', 'oppressive', 'heat, uncomfortable' in your explanation of quote. Do not use key words (nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs) from question and quote to explain your quote.

2. 'Moisture escaped our bodies so quickly that our skin stayed clean of perspiration' suggests the rapid evaporation of sweat on our skin/bodies (feel dry) due to the very hot weather.

You must use synonyms of 'moisture', 'perspiration' in your explanation of quote

3. 'Even at night, the weather was sultry' suggests very/ extremely hot and humid weather at night.

X 'Unacceptable: "the moon seemed to throw scorn at me" as this means the moon is mocking/jeering the writer. (nothing to do with discomfort due to the weather)

Any 2 of the above 3 quotes with attendant explanation of quote and how it makes the weather appear uncomfortable = 2 marks. Quotation marks must be present to show language taken from the paragraph, and to differentiate this quote from explanation of quote.

Example 3:

“It’s getting really bad now,” exclaimed the man, mortified. “I hope it passes quickly.” It did not pass quickly. For an hour the “coins” rained on the house, the garden, the hillside, the cornfield, on the whole valley. The field was coated in a sea of salt. The trees lay tattered and torn. The corn was totally destroyed. The flowers had fallen from the kidney bean plants. When the storm had passed, Lencho’s soul lay bare and empty like his trees. He stood in the middle of the field feeling crushed and forlorn like the rest of his crops. His heart bled as he gazed upon his livelihood and his world fell apart.

Q1: The writer uses metaphors ‘was coated in a sea of salt’ and ‘lay tattered and torn’ (line 19). What do these metaphors suggest about the state of the fields?

Metaphors	State of the fields
‘was coated in a sea of salt’	covered by a thick layer of sea salt
‘lay tattered and torn’	trees were uprooted/destroyed

Q2: In this paragraph, the storm destroys Lencho’s crops. Explain how the language used in this paragraph expresses the devastation that Lencho felt. Support your ideas with three details from paragraph 4.

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Answer:

“Lencho’s soul lay bare and empty like his trees” shows that Lencho felt that he had lost everything that had mattered to him.

He was “feeling crushed and forlorn” as his confidence of harvesting his crops was destroyed / He felt helpless.

“His heart bled” suggests he felt immense sadness and grief because of his loss / He felt sorry for himself / Self-pity.

“his world fell apart” indicates Lencho felt that there was no hope left / his world was bleak.

Strategies for understanding a narrative passage:

Strategy 1: Step 1

- Analyse the main point
- Analyse the cause-effect relationships
- Analyse how the five senses are used to figure out the atmosphere, characterisations and emotions in the story.

Exercise 1: identify the main point for each excerpts

No	Excerpt from <i>The Kite Runner</i> by Khaled Hosseini	Main Point
1	We ate in silence that night. After two bites, Baba pushed away his plate.	Amir and baba were having dinner but Baba did not want to eat.
2	I glanced at him across the table, his nails chipped and black with engine oil, his knuckles scraped, the smells of the gas station – dust, sweat and gasoline – on his clothes.	Amir noticed how grimy Baba looked after working at the gas station
3.	Baba was like the widower who remarries but can't let go of his dead wife. He missed the sugarcane fields of Jalalabad and the gardens of Paghman. He missed people milling in and out of his house, missed walking down the bustling aisles of Shor Bazaar and greeting people who knew him and his father, knew his grandfather, people who shared ancestors with him, whose pasts intertwined with his.	?

Strategy 1: Step 2

To further understand the story, it would also help to analyse the cause-effect relationships:

- How one character affects the feelings, thoughts and actions of another
- How the place makes the character feel, think or act.

Re-read the excerpts in Exercise 1, the writer chooses words that bring out one or a few of the five senses of sight, smell, sound, taste and touch. These senses often create the atmosphere, i.e the overall feeling we get from the event, situation, people or place. It can also be used by the writer to characterize the people/event/place and show the feelings of the people.

For example, in the first excerpt, the lack of sound in the word silence brings out the sad atmosphere. In the second excerpt, the phrase '*black with engine oil*' helps the reader to visualize with the help of colour, it emphasizes the pathetic state the father is in.

Another example would be the sentence...'*missed the sugarcane fields...gardens...*' which is associated with the green colour and the smells of nature. The writer wants to convey the atmosphere in Afghanistan as being peaceful and happy. Also, Baba is feeling sadly nostalgic.

Strategy 2: Using text structure

You will find it easier to understand comprehension passages if you can:

- Identify the type of text you are reading, and
- Recognize (i) the kind of structure such texts have and (ii) the way in which such texts deal with the subject matter.

Use your knowledge of the text type to tell you what to expect for the structure and details.

What you find at the start of the Passage	What you expect to find later in the text
Passage A starts with a general statement announcing the writer's opinion on a topic. Skimming through, you decide that this is an exposition text .	1. How are the points likely to be ordered? a. In chronological sequence b. By interest level c. According to importance 2. What will topic sentences show? a. The points in the argument b. What happen next c. A general statement on the topic 3. What type of discourse markers are you most likely to find? a. Reason, condition and choice b. Time and sequence c. Cause and effect 4. Which of the following is most likely to appear at the end? a. The last point, perhaps with some surprise element b. A clear conclusion c. No particular conclusion
Passage B starts with a short piece of dialogue Your skimming reveals that this is a <u>narrative</u>	1. How are the points likely to be ordered? a. In time sequence b. By interest level 2. Which of the following are most likely to appear later in the text? a. Description of characters or locations b. Examples to support argument c. Definitions 3. What type of discourse markers are you most likely to find? a. Reason, condition, choice b. Time and sequence c. Cause and effect 4. Which of the following is most likely to appear at the end? a. No particular conclusion b. A clear conclusion c. The last point with some surprise element
Passage C starts with a general statement of the topic	5. How are the points likely to be ordered? a. In chronological sequence b. By interest level c. According to importance 6. Which of the following are most likely to appear later in the text? a. Description of characters or locations

Your skimming reveals that this is an <u>information report</u>	b. Examples to support argument c. Definitions 7. What type of discourse markers are you most likely to find? a. Reason, condition, choice b. Time and sequence c. Cause and effect 8. Which of the following is most likely to appear at the end? a. No particular conclusion b. A clear conclusion The last point with some surprise element
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Strategy 3: Using the Question to select details

Type of Comprehension Question - Selecting the Answer

A question that requires you to select an answer that is in the passage is the simplest type of comprehension question. This section aims to help you to select the required information.

Exercise 2: Read the short passage. Remember to skim the first sentences to find out what the passage is about before you read all of it.

1	The world has traded across the seas for as long as we have records. However, at no time in the past has the world been so interdependent on trade between nations. Hardly any country is now self-sufficient and almost everything that Singaporeans buy, for example, has travelled over water to reach them.	
2	There has been a huge increase in the movement of goods around the world. One of the most amazing things about this is that, apart from those who work at the docks or on ships, we see less of this traffic than we used to do. Years ago, many Singaporeans visited, lived or worked near the Singapore River and saw for themselves goods being unloaded from the bumboats into the warehouses that lined the river. All this activity now happens out there somewhere, behind dock gates, beyond where we live, every day.	
3	Singapore is not alone in this respect. The working docks in London were moved years ago from the city itself, with the area visible from Tower Bridge. In 1965, when Winston Churchill's funeral barge left Tower Pier, the cranes in the docks dipped their jibs out of respect. These cranes are long gone. Ships are now bigger and call at docks away from the centre. This is also true of Los Angeles, New York and most other old shipping ports.	

From Paragraph 1

What key features of trade in today's world is illustrated by the example of Singapore?

Suggested Steps:

- Highlight the key words in the question and the question word. (*key features, example of Singapore*)
- Unpack the meaning of the key word – e.g key : main features

- Use close and active reading, identify the relevant sentences to the question. (You might be tempted to explain that *is shows that everything we buy has travelled over water to reach us*. However, attentive reading reveals that this is the **example itself** and not the key features. A clue to the answer is the connecting phrase, 'For example.' This must follow the general point – what the example shows. You must look at the sentences that came before the connecting phrase to find the general point which is the answer.
- The answer is **The Singapore example shows that countries depend on trade with one another for almost goods these days.**

From Paragraph 2

There is movement of ships now that in the past. Explain in your own words what the author sees as 'amazing' about this.

Suggested Steps:

- Highlight the key words in the question and the question word. (*amazing,..*)
- Unpack the meaning of the key word – e.g amazing : surprising
- Understand what is the requirement from the question. (You are to explain/infer the reason for the writer to see it as amazing)
- The first thing to notice with a question that specifies you to answer 'in your own words' is that the answer will be direct/obvious from the passage. You can only rephrase something that is already there.
- The second clue to selecting the answer is that it probably follows both the previous answers and any lead in to the question itself. In this case, the first sentence of the question paraphrases the first sentence of the paragraph. The second sentence refers to 'amazing'. The information for the answer will come next 'We see less of this shipping business than in the past'.
- The **Answer**: What amazes the writer is (**Use the question to craft the answer**) that although there is much more shipping activity (**Sentence 1**) ordinary people see less of this shipping business than in the past. (**Sentence 2 and relevant section of paragraph**)

From Paragraph 2

Identify **one** word that implies that there were many places for storing goods alongside the Singapore River.

Suggested Steps:

- Highlight the key words in the question and the question word. (*many places for storing goods, implies*)
- There is only one section of the paragraph that refers to the river in detail. 'goods being unloaded from the bumboats into the warehouses that lined the river.' The answer must be one of those words.
- 'Warehouses' is plural, but it does not tell us that there were many – only that there was more than one.
- The other possibility is 'lined'. This means that there were warehouses in a line along the banks of the river. While this does not state 'many', notice that the question tells us that the fact is **implied, not stated.**
- **Answer:** The word that implies that there were many places is 'lined'.

From Paragraph 3

What generalization can be made about shipping and cities based on this paragraph

Suggested Steps:

- Highlight the key words in the question and the question word. (*generalization and what. The question word 'What' suggest you will need to infer from the relevant section.*)
- There are three clues to the answer: you are looking for a **generalization**, not a specific example; the answer is within **paragraph 3**; it concerns '**shipping and cities**'
- In all the examples noted (Singapore, London, Los Angeles, New York), ships no longer bring goods into the city. Instead, the goods are unloaded at ports some distance away.
- **Answer:** **Ship no longer bring goods to the centre of cities, but to ports a distance away from the cities.**

From Paragraph 3

What reason is suggested for ships no longer docking close to cities?

Suggested Steps:

- Highlight the key words in the question and the question word. (*reason, no longer*)
- The word 'reason' suggests this question is a **cause and effect question**. The effect is ships no longer dock close to cities. You need to identify/infer the reason using the information from the relevant section.
- The three clues are: You are looking for a reason; this reason may not be stated but suggested; you need to **explain why** ships no longer dock close to cities. The answer must be in the paragraph. You cannot make one up and say 'because they are too noisy and messy to be allowed in city centres'. Do not use your prior knowledge to answer this question.

- The answer is not that the cranes are no longer there. (**Apply close and active reading**) We are only told that the cranes can no longer be seen in one place: London. The cranes would have been taken away only after the ships no longer came.
- In many cases, there is a grammatical clue. In this case, 'the docks away from the centre' is a fact linked by the word 'and' with 'ships are bigger now.' That is where the suggestion lies.
- **Answer:** The reason suggested (**Use question to craft answer**) is that rivers close to city centres can no longer cope with the massive size of modern ships.

Strategy 4: The Rephrasing Clue

Often the question will lead you to the answer if you realize that it paraphrases something in the passage. If you find 'something', then the answer usually appears nearby – especially in the first half of the questions.

Exercise 3: Skim before reading the passage, then find the place in the passage that the question paraphrases. Remember: you are not asked to answer the question in this exercise.

1	Many people in the business complain about the widespread ignorance of shipping. They despair that large ships only read the general public's awareness when there is a disaster and drama. A cruise ship sinks or capsizes and the cameras are on the scene within hours, taking pictures for that evening's news programme. Later, they will make the film. Or there is an oil spill and the nasty sea-farers have caused hundreds of birds to become blackened with oil, with these poor creatures unable to believe or understand what has happened to them. Instead, the shipping bosses would like us to know that the Wec Vermeer(not just the Exxon Valdez and the Titanic) has arrived from Shanghai and is headed for Rotterdam.	
2	Shipping experts provide telling statistics that show how the dark days of oil spills are long past. Between 1972 and 1981, there were 223 spills. Over the last decade, there were only 63. Each year, they say more oil is disposed of by car mechanics changing engine oil that is spilt by the whole of the world's fleet of oil tankers.	
3	The shipping business enjoys its invisibility, though. Even offshore bankers have not developed a system that is as intricately elusive as the flag of convenience. This is a marvelous system if you want anonymity. A ship can fly the flag of a state that has no connection whatsoever with its owner, cargo, crew or route. If you look through your binoculars at the sterns of the ships at anchor, you will see that they appear to come from Liberia or Panama, Larnaca or Athens. The chances are that no one on board the ship has ever been to any of these places – and the ship itself certainly has not. The International Chamber of Shipping sees nothing wrong with this. A former US Coast Guard commander preferred to call it 'managed anarchy'.	

Answer the questions by highlighting or underlining the phrases in the passage that the question paraphrases. Remember, you are not asked to answer the question in this exercise.

Example: What do shipping magnate **grumble** about?

Answer: Many people in the business **complain** about.....

From Paragraph 1

1. When does the shipping make the news?
2. What does the writer say happens when a passenger liner runs into difficulties?
3. How do oil slicks upset people?
4. What do the examples of the Wec Vermeer and Titanic show about what shipping bosses would like us to appreciate?

From Paragraph 2

1. In what two ways do nautical specialists claim that the situation has improved?

From Paragraph 3

1. Which word suggests that those who transport goods by sea are not always unhappy that people are unaware of their business?
2. In what way is the flag of convenience a wonderful arrangement for the shipping industry?
3. What is odd about the names you will observe on the rear of ships?

STRATEGY 5: LANGUAGE EFFECT QUESTION

Language effect can be defined as the use of language to affect the readers' thoughts and feelings about the subject in the passage. The writer chooses very specific vocabulary and figurative language to lead the readers towards the main idea that they want to convey in the story about the place or the people. It can be used to create an atmosphere that would provoke an emotional reaction in the reader.

How to analyse it?

Step 1: State the characteristic of the effect word which the writer wants to achieve in their writing. The table below provides a list of some effect words and their characteristic.

Effect word	Characteristic
effective	Works well to <u>produce the effect</u> that the writer intended on the reader's thoughts and feelings.
Unusual	<u>Contrasts</u> with common experience in real life
interesting	Describes something different, mysterious, exciting or unusual that attracts attention
memorable	Describe something special, very enjoyable, emotional or different
vivid	Describes a story with very clear details, using the five senses.
frightening	Makes the reader feel afraid, anxious, nervous or worried about getting hurt.
powerful	Describes a story which has a strong emotional effect because of the extreme ideas.
serious	Describes a situation which is important and deserves a lot of attention
amusing	Describes a story which is funny, over-exaggerated to the point of being ridiculous, unrealistic
moving	Describes a story which makes the reader feel a strong emotion, such as sadness or pity towards the subject
sad	Describes a situation that will lead to bad consequences causing the character to suffer innocently.
enjoyable	Makes you feel pleasure and positive, nice feelings, a story that is fun and light hearted.
tense	Makes the reader feel nervous or frightened or worried that something bad is about to happen, not relaxed because it is serious.

dramatic	Describes a situation which is sudden and surprising, exciting, exaggerated or has extreme emotions or actions
exciting	Describes a passage with lots of fast action, noise and is thrilling
threatening	Describe a situation where danger is approaching soon
horrifying	Makes the reader feel upset and afraid because of the violence, gory images or images of death
pitiful	Describes a character who is sad because they are in a bad situation through no fault of theirs, which makes the reader feel sympathy and sadness for them.

Step 2: Find the words or phrases which share the same characteristic as the effect word. Do not generalize the story.

Step 3: Explain how the characteristic of the effect word can be seen in the story. This requires you to infer what the writer wants you to think or feel about a character, place or situation in the story.

Some suggested sentences you can use in your answers are:

- The phrase..... suggests that....(characteristic)
- The word...provides an image of.....(characteristic)
- The phrase.....uses the image of....to emphasis.....(characteristic)
- The word....gives the idea that.....(the characteristic)
- The contrast in the words....and...emphasis that.....(characteristic)

Example 1:

But at the moment, I watched with horror as one of the chapandaz (riders) fell off his saddle and was trampled under a score of hooves. His body was tossed and hurled in the stampede like a rag doll, finally rolling to a stop when the melee moved on. He twitched once and lay motionless, his legs bent at unnatural angles, a pool of his blood soaking through the sand.

An excerpt from "The Kite Runner" by Khalid Hosseini

Qn: How does the writer make the passage appear horrifying?

Step 1: Identify the characteristic of the effect word horrifying. Language which horrifies the reader would require characteristic like **gory images, extreme violence or death** through conventional images.

Step 2: The characteristic of violence is found in the phrase in the passage 'like a ragdoll'. Gory images are found in 'legs bent at unnatural angles' and 'a pool of his blood soaking through the sand'.

Why are these students answers wrong?

Answer: It is horrifying because of the extreme violence on the rider's body

Mistake: This student has left out the necessary quotes from the passage. The question word is **HOW** and this requires the students to identify the use of language to illustrate the effect word 'horrifying'

Answer: The phrase ‘blood soaking through the sand’ is horrifying because it is gory.

Mistake: This student did not explain in what way it is gory or how it is horrifying.

Step 3 (suggested answer)

The phrase ‘like a ragdoll’ suggests that the physical force on the rider’s body was very violent. The word ‘unnatural’ provides a **gory image** of the legs bent. The phrase ‘blood soaking through the sand’ uses the conventional image of blood to emphasis the **gore** associated with **death**.

Example 2

Baba migrated from Afghanistan to America, and the writer describes him ‘like the widower who remarries but can’t let go of his dead wife.’

What is unusual and effective about this sentence?

Step 1: Identify the characteristic of the effect word **unusual** and **effective**. Something which is unusual is unexpectedly different from normal behavior. It is effective if it helps the writer bring across what happens to Baba after he migrates from Afghanistan to America.

Step 2: Find similar words or phrases in the passage that links to the effect word. The phrase ‘can’t let go’ is unexpected. The word ‘remarries’ refers to Baba migration.

Step 3: The phrase ‘can’t let go’ is unusual because normally a person would only remarry if he can let go of his old wife. **However**, Baba ‘can’t let go’ which is **effective** in suggesting that although baba has adapted to his new life in America, he still wishes he had his old life in Afghanistan back

STRATEGY 6: STRUCTURE OF A NARRATIVE PASSAGE

You could be tested on your understanding of the structure of a narrative passage such as the common ideas found in the paragraph. You will be given a group of ideas and a group of paragraphs with the accompanying paragraph numbers. You will need to write down which idea is found in which paragraph. The question will give you a clue on the type of common idea you need to analyse such as feelings, reactions, moods or character.

Step 1: Focus on the **clue** in the question and underline specific words/phrases in the paragraphs which help you figure out the feelings, reactions, character, mood or others.

Step 2: You must not look at the whole story but focus on the specific words and phrases in the paragraph that could help you to figure out the answer.

Example

The following excerpt is about Amir wanting to show his father, Baba the story that he had written

- 1 'What is it Amir?' Baba said, reclining on the sofa and lacing his hands behind his head. Blue smoke swirled around his face. His glare made my throat feel dry. I cleared it and told him I had written a story. Baba nodded and gave a thin smile that conveyed little more than feigned interest. 'Well, that's very good, isn't it?' he said. Then nothing more. He just looked at me through the cloud of smoke.
- 2 I probably stood there for under a minute, but to this day, it was one of the longest minutes of my life. Seconds plodded by. Each separated from the next by an eternity. Air grew heavy, damp, almost solid. I was breathing bricks. Baba went on staring me down and didn't offer to read.
- 3 As always, it was Rahmi Khan who rescued me. He held out his hand and favoured me with a smile that had nothing feigned about it. 'May I have it, Amir jan? I would very much like to read it.' Baba hardly every used the term of endearment jan when he addressed me.
- 4 Baba shrugged his shoulders and stood up. He looked relieved as if he too had been rescued by Rahim Khan. 'Yes, give it to Kaka Rahmi. I am going upstairs to get ready.' And with that, he left the room. Most days, I worshipped Baba with an intensity approaching the religious. But right then, I wished I could open my veins and drain his cursed blood from my body.

An excerpt from The Kite Runner by Khaled Hosseini

The structure of the text reflects Amir's feelings when he tried to get his father to read his story. Complete the flowchart by choosing one word from the box to summarise each experience as described in each part of the text. There are some extra words in the box that you do not need to use.

disgusted	angry	worried	nervous	stressed	relieved
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Paragraph 1 _____ (made my throat feel dry)

Paragraph 2 _____ (breathing bricks)

Paragraph 3 _____ (rescued me)

Paragraph 4 _____ (drained his cursed blood)