



WRITING DEVELOPMENT GCSE

Purpose

These videos are designed to help you build the **skills, confidence, and exam awareness** needed to succeed in the GCSE English Language Paper 1 and Paper 2 writing tasks. By watching and engaging actively with the videos, you'll become a more effective, reflective, and mark scheme-aware writer.

How to Use This Video Series

1. Prepare

What happens:

You'll be introduced to key topic knowledge and vocabulary. These are often based on themes, genres, or common exam contexts.

Your role:

- Make notes on new or powerful vocabulary.
- Create a "word bank" or "sentence stem" page for use in your writing.

2. Model Together

What happens:

You'll read a high-quality model response together with the instructor, identifying what makes it effective.

Your role:

- Follow along.

- Notice successful techniques (e.g., varied sentence structures, tone, figurative language).
- Link examples back to the AQA mark scheme (AO5/AO6).
- Ask yourself: *Why does this work?*

3. Apply

What happens:

You will be asked to write a piece of writing using the techniques and vocabulary you've learned.

Your role:

- Use the word bank and sentence stems.
- Try “borrowing” a technique from the model (this is called “read and steal”).
- Aim for accuracy and ambition — be mark scheme aware.

4. Review

What happens:

You'll revisit your writing, identifying strengths and areas for improvement.

Your role:

- Tick where you have successfully hit the mark scheme.
- Identify one improvement (e.g. more precise vocabulary, better punctuation).

5. Revise and Reuse

What happens:

You're given access to the model.

Your role:

- Reread the model and highlight useful phrases or techniques.
- Add them to your “Writer's Toolkit”.
- Re-draft your own work or attempt a new paragraph on the same theme.

The Importance of Being Mark Scheme Aware in GCSE Writing

Success in GCSE writing isn't just about creativity or having good ideas, it's also about understanding how your work will be assessed. Every GCSE exam is marked using a *mark scheme*, a clear set of criteria that examiners follow to award marks. Being *mark scheme aware* means knowing what the examiners are looking for and tailoring your writing to meet those expectations.

| Content and organisation | Technical |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Register is matched to audience and purpose Form matches purpose Developed ideas High level vocabulary (HLV) Successful Linguistic devices Linked paragraphs, stand alone lines for effect, integrated discourse markers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A range of punctuation used accurately ., : ; ! ? " " ... - Range of sentence types used for effect and correctly demarcated High level vocabulary (HLV) Accurate Spelling |
| <p>Must have an impact on the reader!</p> <p><small>THINK, FEEL, KNOW, DO, THINK, FEEL, KNOW, DO, THINK, FEEL, KNOW, DO, THINK, FEEL, KNOW, DO, THINK, FEEL, KNOW, DO, THINK, FEEL, KNOW</small></p> | |



Example 1 shows a learner who has written a lot, but the content lacks focus and precision.



Example 2 shows a learner who has run out of things to say and squashed all their ideas into one page/ Their ideas will be underdeveloped.



Example 2 shows a learner who is very mark scheme aware. This means they are earning lots of precious marks all of the time, THIS IS OUR GOAL.

Session 1 - Smoking

Topic knowledge and vocabulary:

Read and steal moments:

Target for next time:

Session 2 – Overprotective parents

Topic knowledge and vocabulary:

Read and steal moments:

Target for next time:

Session 3 - Prison

Topic knowledge and vocabulary:

Read and steal moments:

Target for next time:

Session 4 - AI

Topic knowledge and vocabulary:

Read and steal moments:

Target for next time:

Session 5 - Education

Topic knowledge and vocabulary:

Read and steal moments:

Target for next time:

Session 6 - Environment

Topic knowledge and vocabulary:

Read and steal moments:

Target for next time:

Session 7 – Young people facilities

Topic knowledge and vocabulary:

Read and steal moments:

Target for next time:

Session 8 – Travel

Topic knowledge and vocabulary:

Read and steal moments:

Target for next time:

Session 9 – Homelessness

Topic knowledge and vocabulary:

Read and steal moments:

Target for next time:

Session 10 – Celebrities

Topic knowledge and vocabulary:

Read and steal moments:

Target for next time:

Session 11 – Healthy Living

Topic knowledge and vocabulary:

Read and steal moments:

Target for next time:

Session 12 – Commercialisation of religious festivals

Topic knowledge and vocabulary:

Read and steal moments:

Target for next time:

Session 13 – Monarchy

Topic knowledge and vocabulary:

Read and steal moments:

Target for next time:

Session 14 – Social media

Topic knowledge and vocabulary:

Read and steal moments:

Target for next time:

Session 15 – Volunteering

Topic knowledge and vocabulary:

Read and steal moments:

Target for next time:

Session 16 – Voting

Topic knowledge and vocabulary:

Read and steal moments:

Target for next time:

Punctuation for Power

Sharpen your writing. Boost your mark. Control your sentence craft.
(Supports AQA AO6 – Technical Accuracy)

◆ Using Colons (:)

What is it for?

A colon introduces extra information – often a list, example, or dramatic statement.

Examples:

- She had one aim: to survive.
- Three things matter: loyalty, truth, and courage.
- He left me with one sentence: "This isn't over."

✔ Your Turn:

Complete the sentences using a colon:

1. There's one thing I'll never forget _____
2. I opened the box and saw _____
3. She made a decision _____

📝 Extension Challenge:

Write a sentence that builds suspense using a colon. Then explain how the colon affects the pacing or emphasis.

◆ Using Semi-Colons (;)

What is it for?

A semi-colon joins two closely linked main clauses without using "and".

Examples:

- He had a choice; he made the wrong one.
- It was late; the street was empty.

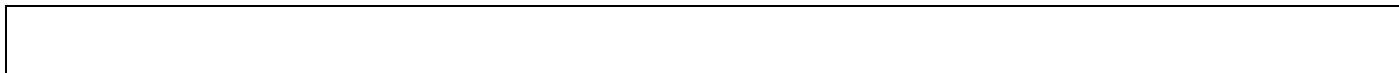
✔ Your Turn:

Combine each pair of sentences using a semi-colon:

1. The room was silent. Everyone was waiting.
2. I missed the train. I had to walk home.
3. We packed up. The trip was over.

📝 Extension Challenge:

Write a sentence that uses **three short clauses** separated by semi-colons for impact. Try it in a dramatic moment or paragraph opening.



Punctuation for Power

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◆ Using Dashes (—)

What is it for?

A dash adds extra info, emphasis, or creates interruption.

Examples:

- He had one weakness — fear.
- She said nothing — just turned and left.
- We thought it was over — it wasn't.

✔ Your Turn:

Add a dash to create emphasis:

1. He never listened it was always about him.
2. They knew the rule no phones.
3. I turned the corner and froze what was that?

📝 Extension Challenge:

Use a dash to show a **change in tone or mood**. Try starting calm and ending with something dramatic.

◆ Using Commas to Separate Clauses

What is it for?

Use a comma to separate an **introductory** or **subordinate** clause from the main part of the sentence.

Examples:

- Even though it hurt, he smiled.
- When the bell rang, everyone cheered.
- If you listen closely, you'll hear it.

✔ Your Turn:

Insert commas where needed:

1. When we reached the top we could see everything.
2. Although she was late nobody minded.
3. If you train hard you'll improve quickly.

📝 Extension Challenge:

Write a sentence that includes **two subordinate clauses**, each separated with a comma. Then underline the main clause.

