

# Annotating the sources

**Highlight**, **annotate** and **circle** parts of the source that you can use to support your answers.

## When highlighting quotes...

- ✓ note down the effect on the reader
- ✓ identify the technique used to achieve the effect
- ✓ try to use the correct technical language.



Imagine you have been asked to answer this question:

*How does the writer use language here to create an impression of Manderley?*

What annotations would you add to the following highlighted quotes?

Nettles were everywhere, the **vanguard** of the army. They **choked** the terrace, they **sprawled** about the paths, they leant, **vulgar** and **lanky**, against the very windows of the house. They made indifferent sentinels, for in many places their ranks had been **broken** by the rhubarb plant, and they lay with **crumpled** heads and **listless** stems, making a pathway for the rabbits. I left the drive and went on to the terrace, for the nettles were no barrier to me, a dreamer. I walked enchanted, and nothing held me back.

And the answer is ...

Yellow highlight: choice of word 'vanguard' – represents the power and dominance of the nettles.

Blue highlight: use of powerful verbs – paints a destructive picture of Manderley.

Pink highlight: use of adjectives – presents Manderley as a decaying, damaged place.



Using the correct technical language, such as 'powerful verbs' and 'adjectives' makes this a strong answer. Also, the effects discussed answer the question well and don't go off-topic.

**Watch out**



Make sure you annotate your highlighted quotes. If you don't, you might forget why you highlighted it in the first place!

**If you only remember two things...**



- Annotate your highlighted quotes.
- Use technical language whenever you can.

# Atmosphere

Writers use a wide range of language techniques to create a particular **tone** or **mood**. This is the **atmosphere** of the writing. The writer may also create a particular mood through their description of the **setting**.

Atmosphere can be created using...

- ✓ descriptive language
- ✓ figurative language
- ✓ action words.

## Taking an overview

When you have identified the language techniques used, look at whether the techniques work together to create a particular mood or tone. This is sometimes called taking an '**overview**' and can help to show that you fully understand the extract.



Read the extract below. Comment on the overall tone of the writing.

The drive was a ribbon now, a thread of its former self, with gravel surface gone, and choked with grass and moss. The trees had thrown out low branches, making an impediment to progress, the gnarled roots looked like skeleton claws.

And the answer is ...

The overall tone of the extract above is one of danger and decay.



This answer could be improved with some examples and the naming of specific features that help to create the tone.

### Writing about tone

You could start your answer with an overview, using phrases like...

- Overall, the writer creates...
- The predominant tone of the extract is...

You could also use an overview at the end of your answer using phrases like...

- Subsequently, the tone created is...
- These language techniques combine to create the atmosphere of...

**If you only remember two things...**



- Identify the language techniques that create the atmosphere of the text.
- Give an overview of the tone or mood of the text, to sum up the effect of the writer's language.

# Audience

You need to make your writing appealing, appropriate and accessible to your **audience**.

## Identifying the audience

The audience may be clearly stated:

- Write a letter to your local MP...

...or implied:

- Write an article for your local newspaper...

### Adult audience

- ✓ **Do** use a formal style.
- ✓ **Do** use standard English.
- ✗ **Don't** use non-standard English: texting language; slang; double negatives.

### Teenage audience

You should still avoid non-standard English, but some informal language may be appropriate if you choose carefully.



Why is this article opening not appropriate for a school website?

You reckon you've got ages until your GCSEs?  
You've already bagged a job? I'm telling you,  
those exams are coming round quick!

And the answer is ...

This opening is far too informal. The text should be appropriate for students and parents – and formal enough to suggest the information is reliable.

Think carefully about who your audience is, and choose language that is appropriate.

### **Formal language and standard English**

For most audiences, you will need to use formal language and standard English, particularly in writing. If you need to revise this, see cards 48 and 49.

**Watch out**



Make sure you know the difference between formal language and standard English. A text can be informal but still be written in standard English.

**If you only remember three things...**



- Read the question carefully to identify the audience.
- Avoid using informal language for an adult audience.
- You can sometimes use informal language for a teenage audience, if you think it's appropriate.

## Paper 1, Question 2

**Source 1:** *Rebecca* (see card 81)

Look in detail at **lines 32–53** of the source.

How does the writer use language here to present Manderley as somewhere to be feared?

You could include the writer's choice of:

- words and phrases
- language features and techniques
- sentence forms.

**(8 marks)**

If you need to do more revision before you tackle this question, look again at cards 3, 6, 9–12, 14 and 17–18.

Turn over for example student response.

## Example student response

It describes the drive which goes to Manderley. It says it is 'choked with grass and moss.' 'Choked' is a violent word so it makes the grass and moss sound scary and frightening and violent like it is trying to kill the house. This is also similar to the description of the roots of the trees: 'the gnarled roots looked like skeleton claws.' 'Skeleton' makes me think of death and 'claws' makes it sound like the trees are trying to scratch and hurt the ground. It all sounds quite threatening and frightening.

In the same way, it also describes the shrubs 'rearing to monster height' which sounds like they are monsters attacking someone. The narrator describes how she feels: 'my heart thumping in my breast, the strange prick of tears behind my eyes' which makes me think she is frightened and upset.

### Examiner's commentary

The student has identified relevant textual evidence and commented on the connotations and effects of specific language choices. However, there is no comment on language techniques or sentence forms and some comments are limited to the student's immediate response with little analysis. This response merits a mark at the lower end of Level 3.

To develop the response, the student needs to consider:

- commenting on sentence forms and language techniques, for example, the personification of the drive 'choked' by grass suggesting the aggression of the vegetation
- exploring the wider implications of the writer's language choices more fully, for example, the presentation of vegetation as an aggressive creature.