

“By focusing on the linguistic and literary techniques used, explore the dramatic significance of this extract from...”

AO1: Use coherent written expression. Apply relevant linguistic and literary terms.

AO2: Analyse the ways in which meaning is created.



1. Select a passage from the play about 30-35 lines long. It should make sense on its own (look at past papers for examples of this, if in doubt).
2. Look up any words you don't know (e.g. “dowle”, “massy”, “perdition” from 3iii ll.64-77).
3. Now ask yourself:
 - How does this extract relate to what has gone before (e.g. Caliban's language in his 3ii “the isle is full of noises” speech contrasts with his earlier rants and curses)? Only mention other parts of the play briefly, in passing, where necessary.
 - Who is on stage? How does this extract reveal their character? If there is more than one character, what is their relationship at this point? What is going on between them? And how do we see all this in the language?
 - Are there any striking visual effects (e.g. someone kneeling, someone on a balcony, someone brandishing a sword in threat)? If so, how do they relate to the language?
 - Any dramatic irony? What effects does it have?
 - Speech types (e.g. prose or verse, soliloquy, stichomythia)? Effects?
 - Tone? Any contrasts?
 - Conversation analysis: Is there a dominant speaker? What does it tell us?
 - Grice's maxims: Are any being flouted or broken? What effect do they have?
 - Imagery and lexis? Effects?
 - IMPORTANTLY: If there is high emotion, does it use the grand style? Details of this? Effects?
4. Now write your response (24 minutes total). If you have a study partner, get them to check it. If not, come back to it in 24 hours and reassess it.



The Grand Style

Intensified lexis: compounds, such as “sight-outrunning” (1ii), “never-surfeited”, “bemocked-at” (3iii), “cloud-capped” (4i); also polysyllabic/latinate lexis: “instrument”, “invulnerable”, “perdition”, “ensuing” (3iii).

Metaphors and similes: “to the welkin's cheek” (1ii), “the ivy which had hid my princely trunk” (1ii), “then like reeds, not hair” (1ii).

Sound patterns: alliteration (“wild waters” 1ii, “midnight mushrooms” 5i), assonance (“I flamed amazement”, “seem to besiege” 1ii), consonance (“men of sin”, “bass my trespass” 3iii), reverse rhyme (“sun sucks up” 2ii), pararhyme (“I have made you mad” 3iii), rhyme (“hair up-staring” 2ii, “kill the still-closing waters” 3iii).

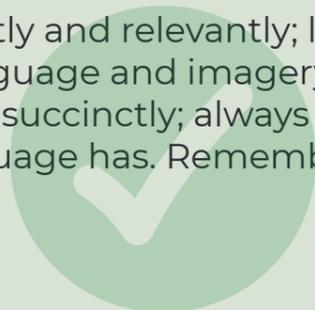
Epithets: “the never-surfeited sea”, “the still-closing waters”, “good Prospero”.

Metrical features, such as: disruption (where the iambic pentameter is changed), as in spondees (“noontide sun”, “green sea” 5i), trochaic line starts (“Bury it”, “Holy Gonzalo” 5i); but also caesuras, enjambments, short or long lines...

Periodic sentences: where a long sentence delays the main finite verb until the end, for climax (e.g. “so with good life...their several kinds have done.” 3iii l.86).

Rhetorical features: for example antithesis, apostrophe, articulus, personification, chiasmus, metonymy, etc.

DO: start directly and relevantly; look for patterns of language and imagery; make and support points succinctly; always say what effect the language has. Remember it's a play!



DON'T: write lengthy and redundant introductions e.g. “This is from Act 3 Scene 3 of *The Tempest*, written in 1611...”; make extended references to context; try to take account of other readings or interpretations; use overlong quotations or copy out large portions of the text.

