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ENGLISH REVISION AID (1)

LITERARY TERMS:

Adjective – A word to describe a noun, or object.

Example: The *loud* dog was *happy*.

Adverbs – Something you use to change a verb, adjective or a noun by adding an extra little detail.

Example: They marched *quickly* and *silently*.

Alliteration – The repetition of the same letter at the beginning of two or more consecutive words.

Example: The *happy* horse ate *his* hay, the *bouncy* baby with *blue* eyes.

Metaphor – Using a word or phrase to describe a similarity without using “like” or “as” in the image.

Example: *The puffy clouds, sunshine dancing on the waves.*

Noun – A person, place or thing.

Example: *The cat, Paris, computer.*

Prepositions – Words typically used with a noun or pronoun to show the relationship of one thing to another.

Example: *at, about under, with, over...* Jimmy swam *under* the bridge

Pronoun – A word used instead of a noun. It is used to save the repetition of a noun.

Example: Kevin hit the ball. *He* hit it very hard.

Proverb – A short and often memorable saying for an everyday truth or advice.

Example: *The journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step.*

Quotation – A passage or information that is given in reference.

Example: *He asked, “Who’s afraid of the big, bad wolf?”*

Simile – Comparing one thing to something totally different, usually using “like” or “as.”

Example: *I wandered lonely as a cloud* (Wordsworth)

Verb – A ‘doing’ or an action word.

Example: He *ran* home, we *played* tennis.

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ENGLISH REVISION AID (2)

GRAMMAR HELP:

Commas – Useful in lists, to avoid using ‘and’ too much
Example: My favourite colours are red, green, pink and blue

Capital Letters and Full Stops – When a sentence reaches a natural end, there needs to be a full stop and every sentence after that must begin with a capital letter.
Example: *Rachel's cat was happy. This was because he had caught a mouse.*

Apostrophes – A little mark to indicate abbreviation or possession.
Example: The book was *Ian's*, she *couldn't* do it.

Brackets – These are used for enclosing information in a text.
Example: The cat (*which was ginger*) prowled the gardens at night.

Colon – A punctuation mark that is used to separate the text from another piece of information, usually before a list.
Example: *There are some things you should always avoid: getting run over by a car, lions and not trying hard for your 11+ exams!*

Dash – Often used in words which have been joined together.
Example: *in-line* skating, it was a *tie-break* situation

ENGLISH 11+ COMPREHENSION TIPS:

Read through the short story or extract you're given carefully, and at least twice.

Read the question carefully and make note of any special instruction or things you have to find, such as: ‘circle the correct answer’ ‘underline the odd one out.’

Make sure you haven't missed a question page.

During multiple choice tests, if you don't know the answer guess instead of leaving the question blank – you can't lose and you never know, it could be right!

Revise words such as ‘metaphor’ and ‘simile’ and make sure you know the difference between them.

Make sure you can spell certain words like ‘because’, ‘sentence’ and ‘definitely’ properly.

Homophones are words which sound the same but have different spellings and meanings and can often catch you out in exams. So, know your ‘would’ from ‘wood’, ‘which’ from ‘witch’, ‘there’ from ‘their’ etc.

The Golden Rule: THE ANSWER IS ALWAYS IN THE TEXT!

You may need to look carefully, but you will find that whether it's a multiple choice exam or not, the wording in the question always refers to some part in the text.



ENGLISH REVISION AID (3)

Antonyms – these are pairs of words which have opposite meanings to one another.

Examples: a) loud....quiet
b) hard....soft
c) dark....light
d) summer....winter

Homophones – these are words which have the same sound but different spelling.

Homonyms – these are words which sound the same and perhaps share the same spelling but have totally different meanings to one another.

Examples: a) ball...bawl
b) cereal...serial
c) here...hear
d) feint...faint

Synonyms - these are pairs, or groups, of words which are similar in meaning.

Examples: a) large...big, oversized
b) bright...luminous, shining
c) difficult...hard
d) stacked...piled

Prefix – little pairs of letters which are added onto the beginning of words to give it a new meaning.

Examples: a) ‘a’ meaning on; aboard, ashore
b) ‘bi’ meaning two; bicycle, bicentennial
c) ‘in’ meaning without or into; inability, influx
d) ‘pre’ meaning before; prearrange, prefix

Suffix – more little groups of letters, but this time at the end of the word to change its meaning.

Examples: a) –able, -ible meaning able to be; suitable, edible
b) –ous, meaning full of; famous, fictitious
c) –ling, indicating smallness; duckling, sapling
d) –fy, meaning to make; simplify, purify

Abbreviation – a word or a phrase which has been shortened, it can also be initial letters pronounced separately.

Examples: a) math – mathematics
b) Brit – British
c) KG – kilogramme
d) RAF – Royal Air Force



ENGLISH REVISION AID (4)

Tenses

It's always helpful to know the past, present and future versions of verbs...

Verb	Past Tense	Present Tense	Future Tense
To Be	I was	I am	I will be
	You were	You are	You will be
To Do	I did	I do	I will do
	She did	She does	She will do
To Go	I went	I go	I will go
	We went	We go	We will go
To Say	I said	I say	I will say
	He said	He says	He will say
To Tell	I told	I tell	I will tell
	You told	You tell	You will tell

Alphabetical Order

Putting words alphabetically means arranging the words in the order of the alphabet by using the first letters of the words.

When the first letters are the same, you use the second letters, and if they are the same use the third, and so on.

Example:

- a) By the first letter: arch, baby, cat, dwarf, elephant
- b) When the first letter is the same: abseil, adore, ailment, ant, artistic
- c) When the first two letters are the same: pink, pioneer, pirouette, pitch, pixie

Colloquialisms

These are expressions which are used in everyday conversation, but can also be used when writing speech.

- i. Lion-hearted – somebody who has much courage
- ii. Heavy-eyed – somebody who is sleepy
- iii. Down in the mouth – when somebody is feeling sad, or is low in spirit
- iv. Pull up short – stop suddenly
- v. Make both ends meet – to be able to manage financially



ENGLISH REVISION AID (5)

There are many tools we can use in speech and writing to give what we are saying greater emphasis.

Doubles

- 1) **By repeating a word:** again and again, by and by, over and over, round and round
- 2) **By repeating a meaning:** beck and call, part and parcel, safe and sound
- 3) **By using alliteration:** fast and furious, rough and ready, one and only
- 4) **By using opposites:** thick and thin, on and off, in and out, high and low
- 5) **By using words which sound similar:** out and about, high and dry, wear and tear
- 6) **By using related words:** body and soul, lock and key, hammer and tongs
- 7) **Other examples:** hard and fast, rough and tumble, touch and go, over and above

Colour

By using colour in speech or writing, we can make things so much more interesting. This could be a very useful tool for writing stories.

We can use colour to sound more elaborate;

Blood-red, brick-red, coal-black, milk-white, pea-green ruby-red, sea-green, shell-pink, sky-blue, slate-grey, snow-white

Or we can use colour as metaphors;

- It was in **black and white** (it was in print/writing)
- The boy was **feeling blue** (he was feeling sad)
- The shop was a **white elephant** (it was a failure)
- She was the **black sheep** of the family (she was seen as a disgrace to her family)
- My grandmother is in **the pink of health** (she is in the best of health)
- He was a **yellow-belly** scoundrel (he was a cowardly scoundrel)
- He suddenly **saw red** (he suddenly became very angry)
- She was **green fingered** (she was very good at gardening)
- The old man was **purple** with rage (he was so angry that his face had changed colour)
- The book was **yellow-paged** (the book was so old that the pages had turned yellow)
- The little girl **turned white** with fear (she was so scared that all the colour had drained from her face)

We can even have 'I'm **feeling off colour**' to mean 'I'm not feeling very well'



ENGLISH REVISION AID (6)

Colloquialisms are expressions which can be used in everyday conversation, but also when writing direct speech to make things more interesting.

- **Beside oneself** – out of one's mind (with grief, worry, anger)
- **Carried away** – over-excited
- **Down on one's luck** – not having much luck with anything
- **To nip in the bud** – to cut something short in its early stages
- **A peppery individual** – a hot-tempered person
- **Sit on the fence** – avoid taking sides
- **Burn the candle at both ends** – overdoing oneself by working too much
- **Make no bones about it** – to be outspoken
- **Have a feather in one's cap** – to have something to be proud of

Proverbs may sound like colloquialisms, but they are actually popular sayings expressed in a clever way.

- Absence makes the heart grow fonder
- Birds of a feather flock together
- Don't carry all your eggs in one basket
- Every cloud has a silver lining
- From little acorns mighty oak trees grow
- He laughs best who laughs last
- Look after the pennies and the pounds will look after themselves
- None so deaf as those who will not hear
- Once bitten, twice shy
- When the cat's away, the mice will play

Replacing words very often there will be more useful and original words that we can use in writing than the ones which first pop into our heads, so it's worth spending an extra moment or two thinking about an alternative word – you never know, it may even get you that extra good mark!

Instead of using....	Try using....
Nice	Lovely, pretty, pleasant, fine
Good	Excellent, fair, splendid, kind
Sad	Blue, crestfallen, dispirited, glum
Fun	Enjoyable, amusing, pleasurable,
Bad	Beastly, dreadful, terrible, unfortunate
Wrong	Mistaken, in error, dishonest, faulty
Very	Greatly, highly, particularly, especially
Said/to say	Announce, comment, mention, exclaim, express, come out with, declare
Thought/think	Brood, concentrate, dwell on, deliberate
Before	Already, earlier, previously, sooner



ENGLISH REVISION AID (7)

Conjunctions

Conjunctions are little words which connect different parts of a sentence or a phrase together. The simple, little ones are called *coordinating conjunctions*, try using the acronym FABNOSY to remember them:

For And But Neither...nor Or So Yet

It may also help to remember that all of these words have fewer than four letters.

The most common of these coordinating conjunctions are AND, BUT and OR. Here are just a few examples of the ways it is possible to use these little words:

1) AND

- a. When one action or idea follows another: *Paul kicked the ball and scored a goal.*
- b. When an action or an idea is the direct result of another: *Claire saw the accident and immediately phoned the ambulance.*
- c. When an idea is in contrast to another (sometimes *and* is replaced by *but* here): *my cat is clever and my dog has a friendly personality.*
- d. When one part of a sentence (usually the second) is dependant on another: *don't do your homework and you'll soon find yourself at the bottom of your class.*

2) BUT

- a. When there is an unexpected contrast in the second part of the sentence: *Billy was an extremely poor man but he was very honest.*
- b. When you want to connect two ideas with the meaning 'with the exception of': *all the girls but Sarah had finished their homework.*

3) OR

- a. When only one of the two possibilities can be realized: *Gregg can study for his vocabulary test or he can fail.*
- b. When there are alternatives: *we can play cricket or just stay indoors.*

The Others . . .

- Neither...nor: although this pair does not come up often in speech, it is a useful when using negative expressions: *that is neither what James said nor what he meant.*
- Yet: a distinctive way of saying 'nevertheless' or 'but': *Rachel plays tennis extremely well yet her favourite sport is netball.*
- For: this is used as a conjunction when giving a reason for something: *the children were happy to be running around for it had been a long journey in the car.*
- So: using this as a conjunction usually means that the second part of a sentence is a consequence of the first: *Helen raised her voice so that she could be heard.*



ENGLISH REVISION AID (8)

Prepositions

A preposition is one of a group of words used to define a relationship to a noun or a pronoun by being placed in front (pre) a noun or a pronoun.

Here are the most common prepositions you'll find:

about	along	before	into	underneath	until
above	amid	except	of	up	unto
across	among	for	near	with	
after	around	from	until	within	
against	at	in	unto	without	

Sometimes it is difficult to know which is the correct preposition to use. The following list should help (note all the differences when referring to an object or a person):

According to	Differ from (opinion)	Opposite to
Agree to (something)	Differ with (person)	Part from (something)
Agree with (somebody)	Disagree with	Part with (somebody)
Aim at	Disappointed in(something)	Prevail on
Angry at (something)	Disappointed with (somebody)	Protest against
Angry with (somebody)	Disgusted at (something)	Pursuit of
Ashamed of	Disgusted with (somebody)	Recoil from
Attack on	Dislike for	Regard for
Blame for	Divide among (many)	Rely on
Change for(something)	Divide between (two)	Similar to
Change with (somebody)	Equal to	Suffer from
Comment on	Filled with	Tired of (something)
Compared with	Full of	Tired with (action)
Complain of	Good for	Thirst for
Compared with	Guilty of	Vexed at (something)
Complain of	Indignant at (something)	Vexed with(somebody)
Confer with	Indignant with (somebody)	Victim of
Conscious of	Inspired by	Wait for (person, thing)
Defiance of	Interfere with	Wait upon (somebody)
Despair of	Invasion of	Write about (something)
Die of	Meddle with	Write to (somebody)



ENGLISH REVISION AID (9)

Compound and Complex sentences

Short sentences can be useful as a writing tool to make something sound more effective, but many times it feels odd to read if there are too many short sentences all together.

To make your writing more interesting, you can use either compound or complex sentences. To make a compound sentence, all you need are two or more simple sentences joined together by a conjunction. You can tell that it is a compound sentence by taking away the conjunction and seeing if the two clauses by themselves still make sense:

I love reading, but I hate horror stories → ***I love reading + but + I hate horror stories***

Both sentences here make sense by themselves as they are complete.

Complex sentences, however, depend on the conjunction to bring together **clauses** – groups of words containing a verb and a subject. With these sentences, if you take away the conjunction, one or more of the clauses will not make sense by themselves:

She read the book because it was interesting.

- **she read the book = complete short sentence**
- **because = conjunction**
- **it was interesting = subordinate clause.** By itself this sentence does not make sense – what was interesting? Because it depends on the rest of the sentence, we call it a subordinate clause.

Whenever it gets dirty, John cleans his car.

- **Whenever = conjunction.** Yes, they can go at the beginning of sentences too!
- **It gets dirty = subordinate clause.** By itself this sentence does not make sense – what was dirty? Because it depends on the rest of the sentence, we call it the subordinate clause.
- **John cleans his car = complete short sentence**

Be careful!

Commas **cannot** be used as conjunctions in this case because they can't be used to 'stick' short sentences and clauses together:

Incorrect – *she read the book, it was interesting.*

Correct – *she read the book **because** it was interesting.*

This is a rule for both compound and complex sentences.



ENGLISH REVISION AID (10)

Personal Pronouns

A **noun** is another name for a place or thing, for example: a chair, Rita, telephone Big Ben.

We use **personal pronouns** to replace nouns which are people or things.

Personal pronouns for people: I, me, my, you, yours, he, him, his, she, her, hers, we, us, ours, they, them, theirs

Personal pronouns for things: it, they, them

These personal pronouns are useful when writing as it means you can use them to talk about things in more detail without repeating words you have already used.

When Sally wants a cup of tea, Sally puts the kettle on.

To make the sentence sound better, it should really be written as

*When Sally wants a cup of tea, **she** puts the kettle on.*

The word 'she' has replaced the word 'Sally' in the sentence, making it more interesting to read.

Personal pronouns can be divided into groups:

- **Subject Pronouns:** the 'who' or 'what' the sentence is about.

I, you, he, she, it, we, they

Eg: ***I*** (*subject*) **ate the cake**

- **Object Pronouns:** the 'who' or 'what' the verb was directed at

Me, you, him, her, it, us them

Eg: **the ball** **hit** ***me*** (*object*)

In the sentence *Sally put the kettle on* 'Sally' is the subject and is doing the action (putting on) 'the kettle' is the object, or the thing the action is done to – it is the thing which she puts on.

You could repeat this sentence by saying *she put it on*.

- **Possessive pronouns** show us that something belongs to someone:

This pencil is *yours* → *your* pencil

The cat sat on *my* mat → the mat is *mine*

Common mistakes:

- When *that* is used for *who*: 'It was her, not me *that* spilt it' (wrong)
- Using *me* instead of *I*: 'It's you and *me* who lose' (wrong)
- Thinking 'everyone' is a plural: 'Everyone must pay *their* fair share' (wrong)