

RAISING ACHIEVEMENT • LANGUAGE PAPER 2 • DRILL 1

The rope broke on the Matterhorn

Question 3: language

Today: analysing how a writer uses language to describe a disaster

30 minutes

Do Now

Know

- 1 Paper 2 Question 3 is worth how many marks?
- 2 Which source does Question 3 ask about?
- 3 What is a verb?
- 4 Is a mountaineer's account of a real climb fiction or non-fiction?
- 5 Give one way a writer can make a sentence feel fast.

Do Now: answers

Know

1

Paper 2 Question 3 is worth how many marks?

12 marks.

2

Which source does Question 3 ask about?

Source A only, and only the lines it gives you.

3

What is a verb?

A word for an action or a state, such as fell, slipped or held.

4

Is a mountaineer's account of a real climb fiction or non-fiction?

Non-fiction: it tells what really happened.

5

Give one way a writer can make a sentence feel fast.

Short clauses, lists of actions, or a sentence that rushes on with commas and colons.

Focus reminder

Know

What Question 3 asks you to do

Stay inside the lines the question names, in Source A only.

Quote a few words, then zoom in on one: name its word class with an adjective, such as the violent verb.

Write about sentence forms too: a long sentence that rushes, or a short one that stops the reader.

Say what the reader sees or feels, and why the writer wants that.

Scrambles Amongst the Alps (1 of 2)

Read

Edward Whymper · 1871 · Project Gutenberg #41234, Chapter XXII

1 Michel Croz had laid aside his axe, and in order to give Mr. Hadow greater security was absolutely taking hold of his legs and putting his feet, one by one, into their proper positions.

As far as I know, no one was actually descending. I cannot speak with certainty, because

5 the two leading men were partially hidden from my sight by an intervening mass of rock, but it is my belief, from the movements of their shoulders, that Croz, having done as I have said, was in the act of turning round to go down a step or two himself: at this moment Mr. Hadow slipped, fell against him and knocked him over. I heard one startled exclamation from Croz, then saw him and Mr. Hadow flying downward: in another moment

10 Hudson was dragged from his steps, and Lord F. Douglas immediately after him.

All this was the work of a moment. Immediately we heard Croz's exclamation, old Peter and I planted ourselves as firmly as the rocks would permit:

the rope was taut between us, and the jerk came on us both as on one man. We held, but the rope broke midway between Taugwalder and Lord Francis Douglas. For a few seconds we

15 saw our unfortunate companions sliding downward on their backs, and spreading out their

Scrambles Amongst the Alps (2 of 2)

Read

hands, endeavoring to save themselves. They passed from our sight uninjured, disappeared one by one, and fell from precipice to precipice on to the Matterhorn gletscher below, a distance of nearly four thousand feet in height. From the moment the rope broke it was impossible to help them.

- 20 So perished our comrades! For the space of half an hour we remained on the spot without moving a single step. The two men, paralyzed by terror, cried like infants, and trembled in such a manner as to threaten us with the fate of the others. Old Peter rent the air with exclamations of “Chamounix!—oh, what will Chamounix say?” He meant, Who would believe that Croz could fall?
- 25 The young man did nothing but scream or sob, “We are lost! we are lost!” Fixed between the two, I could move neither up nor down. I begged young Peter to descend, but he dared not. Unless he did, we could not advance. Old Peter became alive to the danger, and swelled the cry, “We are lost! we are lost!” The father’s fear was natural—he trembled for his son; the young man’s fear was cowardly—he thought of self alone.

Check your understanding

Know

1 How many people are falling by the end of line 10?

2 What broke?

3 How far did the men fall?

4 How did the two guides react afterwards?

Check your understanding: answers

Know

1

How many people are falling by the end of line 10?

Four: Croz, Hadow, Hudson and Lord Francis Douglas.

2

What broke?

The rope, “midway between Taugwalder and Lord Francis Douglas”.

3

How far did the men fall?

“nearly four thousand feet”.

4

How did the two guides react afterwards?

They were “paralyzed by terror” and “cried like infants”.

Zoom in

Apply

Pick three of these words. For each, write the connotations, then one What–How–Why sentence.

startled line 8

flying line 9

dragged line 10

jerk line 13

taut line 13

sliding line 15

precipice line 17

paralyzed line 21

Zoom in: connotations

Apply

startled line 8
sudden, shock, no warning

flying line 9
speed, no control, weightless

dragged line 10
force, helpless, pulled against your will

jerk line 13
sudden, violent, painful

taut line 13
tight, strain, about to snap

sliding line 15
slow, no grip, out of control

precipice line 17
sheer drop, edge, danger

paralyzed line 21
frozen, unable to move, terror

Sentences that speed up

Technique

Whymper's sentences are long, but they move fast: action follows action, joined by commas and colons, so the reader has no time to breathe. Then one short, flat sentence stops everything.

I heard one startled exclamation from Croz, then saw him and Mr. Hadow flying downward: in another moment Hudson was dragged from his steps, and Lord F. Douglas immediately after him.

Your task Count the people who fall in this one sentence. Then find the short sentence that comes straight after it and say why Whymper makes it so short.

The question

12 marks

**03 You now need to refer only to Source A from lines 1 to 19.
How does the writer use language to describe the accident? [12 marks]**

12 marks • about 12 minutes in the exam

Plan it

Plan

Plan

1. Today: write one developed paragraph of about 150 words in 10 minutes.
2. Pick three short quotations from lines 1 to 19, from the start, the middle and the end of the fall.
3. Name a word class with an adjective for each, such as the violent verb “dragged”.
4. Add one comment on a sentence form, then end with what Whympy wants the reader to feel.

Top tips

- Follow the order of the fall: what happens first, then next, then last.
- Quote two to five words. Never copy out a whole sentence.
- Explain the effect on the reader every time: what do we see, hear or feel?

Your turn

10 minutes

Today: write one developed paragraph of about 150 words in 10 minutes.

Model answer

Master

Whympers describes the accident as something terribly quick and impossible to stop. The violent verb “knocked” and the phrase “flying downward” show that one slip turns into a fall in an instant, and “flying” makes the men seem weightless and out of control. One long sentence then lists the falling men, joined by colons and commas, so the reader is swept along as each man is pulled off in turn: Hudson is “dragged from his steps”, and the forceful verb “dragged” makes him seem helpless. Whympers then stops everything with a short, flat sentence: “All this was the work of a moment.” The final image is the worst. The men are “spreading out their hands, endeavoring to save themselves”, a pitiful detail that the reader can picture, before they fall “from precipice to precipice”. The repeated noun makes the drop seem endless, and the last sentence, “From the moment the rope broke it was impossible to help them”, leaves the reader as helpless as Whympers.

How did you do?

Check

Level 4 (10–12) Detailed, perceptive analysis

I analyse several well-chosen words and sentence forms in detail, with accurate terms, and explain subtle effects on the reader.

Level 3 (7–9) Clear, relevant explanation

I explain clearly how the language creates effects, with relevant quotations and accurate terms.

Level 2 (4–6) Some understanding and comment

I comment on some words and their effects and use some terms, not always accurately.

Level 1 (1–3) Simple, limited comment

I pick out a quotation and make a simple comment, but say little about its effect.

Have a go

Practise

Now look at the second part: lines 20 to 29.

How does Whymper use language to show the guides' fear? Write two What-How-Why sentences, one about "cried like infants" and one about the repeated cry "We are lost! we are lost!"

Green pen

Check your work and improve it in green pen.



Did I stay inside lines 1 to 19?



Did I name a word class with an adjective at least twice?



Did I write one sentence about a sentence form?



Underline your best Why. If there is no Why, add one now.