

This document contains examples of typical questions from the N5 RUAЕ paper. They have been taken from the SQA Understanding Standards site which can be found here:

<https://www.understandingstandards.org.uk/Subjects/English/national5/>

For each question type there is an exemplar question, the section of the passage in which the answer can be found, 2 exemplar answers along with SQA commentary which details the marks given and how they were awarded.

At the end of the document, you will also find a guide to the types of questions and the structure for answering.

We hope you find this resource useful!

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WC Example.

Question:

Look at lines 1–5. By referring to two examples of word choice, explain how the writer gives a clear impression of the fast food experience. 4 marks

Lines 1-5:

It is over thirty years since McDonald's opened its first UK drive-thru — 1986 being a year of firsts for a brand that now has 1,200 restaurants across Britain. The figures show today's consumers really are "lovin' it", yet the fast food experience is also ubiquitous — familiar, disposable and repeatable. So, how was it for customers when such places were still new? Was what is now commonplace ever thought a thrill?

Example 1.

1.	"disposable" gives a clear impression of
	the fast food industry as it suggests it's
	quick and fast, easy to get rid of and
	convenient.
	"repeatable" suggests the customers
	enjoyed their experience and want to
	go back again. It's not that expensive
	so it is easy to do so.

The candidate was awarded full marks – 4.

The correct reference of 'disposable' was given 1 mark, and the associated comment of 'easy to get rid of' also gained 1 mark.

In the second part of the response, the candidate offered the word 'repeatable,' which was given 1 mark, and the comment 'want to go back again' was also awarded 1 mark for the idea that a visit to a fast food restaurant can be done again and again (bullet point 9 of the marking instructions).

Example 2.

QUESTION	MARGIN
<p>1) The word "repeatable" has connotations of redo, revisit and re ^{return} repeat. The effects it has within this piece show that ^{the writer has} people ^{have} a positive impression of the fast food experience and would find themselves able to revisit it.</p>	
<p>The word "ubiquitous" has connotations of new and different. The effects it has within this piece show that ^{the writers} people's impression of the fast food experience is is that it is new and innovative on the way we eat out.</p>	

The candidate was awarded 3/4 marks.

The candidate was awarded 1 mark for the selection of the word 'repeatable'.

The comment: 'redo, revisit and return' was also given 1 mark

The candidate's second selection: 'ubiquitous' was awarded 1 mark, but the associated comment was given 0 marks as it did not offer sufficient, relevant analysis of the word 'ubiquitous.'

Understanding Example

Question:

Look at lines 12–20. Summarise, using your own words as far as possible, how McDonald's developed in Britain in the 1980s. You should make four key points in your answer. 4 marks

Lines 12-20:

Then 1986 rolls around and three things happen to boost our acquaintance with fast food empires. In Middlesex, the first franchises are given out by McDonald's to allow individuals to run their own stores. Another introduction is the Happy Meal, the very title of which suggests things have moved on from buying food to buying emotions — “eat this to feel like this.” Things are now about experience. The stand-out concept in late-86, though, is the drive-thru: the missing “o”, “g” and “h” letting Brits know things are different. Or at least in Manchester, where the first one opened, followed before the end of the year by drive-thrus in London and the West Midlands.

Example 1

3)	During 1983 McDonald's was still a small restaurant in the UK but gained a following from positive feedback. In 1986 McDonald's began to allow people in the UK to maintain their own establishment. Within 1986 McDonald's also began producing happy meals to allow individuals to buy a way to feel in different ways. Nearing the end of 1986 McDonald's also began to introduce drive-thru that was an a way to allow people to know that McDonald's is able to offer other ways to get food rather than the normal sit in.	
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The candidate was awarded full marks – 4/4.

The candidate's first point: 'was still a small restaurant' was given 1 mark

The next point made: 'McDonald's began to allow people in the UK to maintain their own establishment' was also given 1 mark

The candidate's third point: 'McDonald's also began producing happy meals' was awarded 1 mark. Note here that a lift of 'Happy Meal' was acceptable.

The candidate then makes a point that the introduction of Happy Meals was a way to 'allow individuals to buy a way to feel.' However, this was awarded 0 marks because 'buy' and 'feel' are taken from the passage.

Finally, the candidate goes on to note that 'McDonald's also began to introduce drive-thru.' This was given 1 mark.

Example 2

3.	• It slowly began building up its total of restaurants in the UK.	
	• They began using words to describe someone's feelings in their food to make it seem more appealing and to hopefully bring in more customers.	
	• They began spelling things differently to stand out from all the other food franchises.	
	• Many McDonalds gave many people jobs and new experiences.	

The candidate was awarded 2/4 marks.

The candidate's first point: 'It slowly began building up its total of restaurants in the UK' was given 1 mark for demonstrating an understanding of the idea that there was a fairly small number of restaurants at that time.

The candidate's second point: 'describe someone's feelings in their food' was also given 1 mark for a sufficient understanding of food being now associated with feelings

The candidate's third bullet point relies too heavily on words from the passage, and therefore was given 0 marks.

The candidate's fourth point does not show any relevant understanding – 0 marks awarded.

Writer's Language Example

Question:

Look at lines 21–27. By referring to two examples of language, explain how the writer makes it clear that a visit to McDonald's could have seemed strange. 4 marks

Lines 21-27:

"It seemed a wacky idea and one with technology my family didn't trust." This is the memory of a present-day McDonald's customer Chris Hammond — a West Midlands man born in the 70s and raised in the 80s. These were halcyon days for those who remember the brand when it was new and Britain was a thinner and, some would say, healthier nation. Chris gives an estimate of "mid-80s" for his first McDonald's visit, but it was not until as a teen in the 90s that he used a "space age" drive-thru, with its electronic ordering of goods via disembodied dialogue, overseen by teens in caps.

Example 1

4.	"wacky idea" this suggests that it was very strange and out of the ordinary, as well as unusual yet it had an element of fun.
	"electronic ordering" in the 80's technology was fairly new and expensive, making it strange for those using it as they may have never seen things like it before.

The candidate was awarded full marks – 4/4.

The candidate's first reference: 'wacky' was given 1 mark.

The comment: 'out of the ordinary' gained 1 mark, but it is worth noting that 'it was very strange' would not be given a mark as it is a direct repeat of the question.

The candidate's second reference: 'electronic ordering' was awarded 1 mark, and the accompanying comment of: 'never seen things like it before' was also awarded 1 mark.

Example 2

4)	The word "wacky" has connotations of words
	such as stupid, odd, ^{unfamiliar} new and different. The effect
	this word has on this piece is that McDonald's
	was strange and different by using new technology it
	was confusing for people

The candidate was awarded 2/4 marks.

The candidate's first selection: 'wacky' was given 1 mark. The identified connotation of 'odd' was also given 1 mark.

They offered no other reference or comment

Link Question Example

Question:

By referring to any part of the sentence in line 28 ('The futuristic nature . . . , he says'), explain how it helps to provide a link between the writer's ideas at this point in the passage. 2 marks

Line 28

"The futuristic nature of it meant that we didn't understand what was meant to happen,"

Example 1

5.	"futuristic nature" links back to the
	previous paragraph where we are told
	about the brand new technologies as
	well as linking in with the phrase
	of "space age" suggesting that
	the new changes were out of this
	world, just like the future. Out of our control.

The candidate was awarded full marks 2/2.

The first part of the candidate's response: "'futuristic nature" links back' was given 1 mark (correct identification plus direction). The candidate then goes on to pinpoint what this links back to: 'brand new technologies' and this too was awarded 1 mark.

Example 2

S)	"technology my family that didn't trust" This
	is able to provide help to the writers statement
	"The futuristic nature" as it shows people were
	unfamiliar with the new nature of technology and
	that didn't trust it-
	"
	new environment environment scrambled people's brains"
	This links to the writers statement "The
	futuristic nature" as it shows how as the new
	fast food chain chain came in people were confused
	at the new nature within the restaurant environment-

This candidate was awarded 0/2 marks.

The candidate does make an appropriate selection with 'The futuristic nature.' However, no identification of direction is made and 0 marks were awarded.

The candidate does go on to offer more material, but it pertains to a reference outwith the frame of the question so 0 marks.

Final Question Example

Question:

Look at line 63–66. Select any expression from these lines and explain how it contributes to the passage’s effective conclusion.

Lines 63-66:

It was typical of those early fast food experiences: confusion, newness and thrill all at once. It sounds like love. Or at least “lovin’ it.” But “lovin’ it” now in a different century, where eating habits have certainly changed, has brought with it another cultural shift — a growing awareness of how and what we eat.

Example 1

9.	"growing awareness of how and what we eat", this is an effective end to the passage as it sums up the main points of the passage as a whole. It touches on the eating styles and habits developed by eating fast food as well as summarising the fact that it has brought changed peoples lifestyle around food.
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The candidate was awarded full marks – 2/2.

This candidate offers a correct reference: ‘growing awareness of how and what we. This was given 1 mark.

The candidate then goes on to say (this is) 'summarising the fact that it has changed people's lifestyle around food.' Here the candidate notes the structural effect of 'summarising,' but then goes on to explain what a main idea of the passage is. Therefore 1 mark was awarded.

Example 2

9	"Confusion, newness and thrill" the ^{use of} rule of three Captures the readers attention as the writer recaps the three main points that were spoken of throughout the article in a short, easy concise and clear phrase, making an appropriate conclusion.
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The candidate was awarded 1/2 marks.

The candidate was awarded 1 mark for a correct reference selected: 'confusion and thrill'. However, 0 marks were given for the explanation: 'the writer recaps the main points' because the candidate does not specify what the main points are.

Question Type	Tips	Formula
Understanding		
Own Words	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't try to translate word for word • You do not need to start the sentence by repeating the question – this just wastes time. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sum up your answer in your own words • 1 point per mark
Context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sometimes you will be asked to use your own words to explain the meaning of a word you might not know. • To do this you need to look at the context of the sentence. • In other words – what clues are there to help you understand the meaning? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “ _____ ” • Explain what you think the word means based on the quoted word/phrase (how they helped you come to your conclusion)
Linking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These questions ask you to identify the link between two paragraphs/ideas. • You need to show how a logical line of thought is developed between them. • Basically, you're asking yourself: How did the writer get from one idea to the next? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “ _____ ” • Links back to “ _____ ” <p style="text-align: center;">OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “ _____ ” • Links forward to “ _____ ” <p>*You can quote or paraphrase the “link to” section of your answer</p>
Analysis		
Word Choice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A writer will choose particular words and phrases to get across a particular meaning. • Focus on the ideas that we associate with certain words (their connotations), in order to explore the meaning created. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “ _____ ” • This suggests... (explain connotations of word and answer the question)

Imagery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This refers to similes, metaphors and personification (the techniques that create an image). • Use "Just as... so it is...". This will explain both the literal (actual) and figurative (creative) for you. Always start with the literal image. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • " _____ " • Just as...so too...
Tone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A writer's tone is the attitude that they have towards the subject that they are writing about • Some tones: Mocking, sarcastic, inspirational, enthusiastic, serious, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • " _____ " • Identify the tone and analyse how those words/phrases create the tone
Sentence Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You must identify an example of sentence structure that creates a specific effect. For example, repetition and/or a list could emphasise a point to the reader. • Punctuation • Sentence Types • Sentence Patterns • Sentence Length 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • " _____ " • Identify type of sentence structure and explain its effect on the reader (link to question)
Evaluation		
Effective Conclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain how effective you find the conclusion to be in terms of the whole passage • Consider: does it link back to the beginning of the passage? Does it sum up the writer's argument? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • " _____ " • Explain what the writer does here and how effective you found it in conveying the writer's purpose