



Name: _____

Date: _____

O-Level Examination Revision Notes – Paper 1

Overview

The O-Level Paper 1 is worth a total of **70 marks** and comprises 3 key segments:

Section A: Editing (10m)

Identify and correct grammatical errors in a short text.

Section B: Situational Writing (30m)

Write 250-350 words on a given situation, involving viewing a visual text. You would be required to write a text that suits the purpose, audience and context of the given situation.

Section C: Continuous Writing (30m)

Write 350-500 words on one of four essay questions. The essay questions could require you to write a personal recount, descriptive or expository essay. It may also be a hybrid of two different questions.

Students are given **1 hr 50 mins** to complete the entire paper.

General Tips for Paper 1

1. **Efficient Time Management:** Plan your time wisely by allocating specific durations to each section. A recommended timing breakdown is as follows:

10 minutes	Editing
10 minutes	Analyse and Plan Situational Writing
30 minutes	Write Situational Writing Response
10 minutes	Analyse and Plan Continuous Writing
40 minutes	Write Continuous Writing Response
10 minutes	Review both writing segments

2. **Carefully Read Questions:** Take the time to thoroughly understand the questions before planning your response.
3. **Develop Ideas Fully:** Ensure that each idea in your writing is well-developed and articulated.
4. **Prioritise language accuracy:** Focus on grammatical correctness and clarity in your writing.

Section A: Editing

In the editing segment of the paper, there are **8 types of errors** to look out for.

No.	Type of Error	Identification Tips
1	Articles	Articles (the, a, an) indicate specificity. Use “ <i>the</i> ” for specific nouns and “ <i>a/an</i> ” for non-specific nouns. Use “ <i>an</i> ” before vowel sounds.
2	Subject-Verb Agreement	Ensure the subject and verb agree in number (singular/plural). Identify the main subject and verify the corresponding verb.
3	Singular/Plural	Recognise determiners indicating singular or plural nouns (e.g. this/that for singular; these/those for plural)
4	Pronouns	Use pronouns (I, you, he, she, it, they) appropriately to replace nouns. Be mindful of personal and relative pronouns.
5	Tenses	Tense should be consistent throughout the passage (past/present/future), unless referring to other events.
6	Connectors	Check that the appropriate connectors (and, but, because) are used to link ideas within and between sentences.
7	Prepositions	Identify relationships between words (e.g., in, on, at) to indicate direction, time and location.
8	Word Forms	Determine the correct form of a word based on its context (noun, verb, adjective and adverb).

Note: There are NO spelling or punctuation errors in the editing task.

Section B: Situational Writing

For the situational writing task, you may be required to produce one of the following text types:

- Informal email / letter
- Formal email / letter
- Speech
- Article

Regardless of the format, always be mindful of Purpose, Audience, and Context (PAC) of the situation, and ensure your writing reflects this awareness.

Assessment Criteria

There are two assessment criteria for situational writing:

Task Fulfilment [10 marks]	Language [20 marks]
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Addressing the required points <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Address required points explicitly ○ Develop all ideas in detail ● Showing awareness of the purpose, audience and context <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Purpose: the aim and intended outcome of the text ○ Audience: audience's expectations ○ Context: information that helps you understand the situation ○ Reflect awareness of PAC <u>throughout</u> your writing ● Using the given information <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Use given information strategically to support all ideas ○ Paraphrase and elaborate on as much given information as possible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Organisation of ideas <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Make use of signposts to create the flow in your essay and show the connection between your ideas ● Clarity of expression <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Use precise language to express your ideas, avoiding vague words ● Accuracy of language <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Check for SVA, singular/plural, tense and sentence structure errors

General Structure

Paragraph 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greet your audience <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ <i>e.g. I hope this email finds you well, I hope you are having a pleasant week, I hope you are having a great day, etc.</i> • Introduce yourself <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Provide information on your name, class, school, year, or designation depending on the context • Establish purpose <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ State your purpose in a direct and concise manner so your audience has a clear idea of what your email will be about
Paragraphs 2-4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Address each bullet point explicitly in separate paragraphs • Link between all ideas using signposts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Adding information <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <i>Furthermore, Additionally, In addition, Moreover</i> ◦ Highlighting key points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <i>I would like to emphasise that...</i> ◦ Sequencing ideas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <i>Firstly, Secondly, Lastly</i> ◦ Provide further explanation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <i>For example... / As a result... / This is because...</i> ◦ Contrasting ideas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <i>On the contrary, However, In contrast, On the other hand</i> ◦ Summarising ideas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <i>In conclusion, In summary,</i> • Try to connect each idea the main purpose of the task
Paragraph 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conclude by summing up all ideas <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ <i>e.g. In conclusion...</i> • State the follow-up action for your audience <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ <i>e.g. I hope you would take the time to consider my proposal... / (if a reply is needed) I look forward to hearing from you soon...</i> • Thank your audience for their time <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ <i>e.g. Thank you for taking the time to read through my email / letter... / Thank you for your attention to this matter.</i>

Situational Writing Structures**Informal Letter**

Structure of Format	Example
Name of writer	John
Address of writer	Block 123 Woodlands Ave 1 #09-107 Singapore 123456
Date of letter	3 October 2024
Salutation	Dear Tom
Content of letter	XXX
Valediction	Love
	John

Formal Letter

Structure of Format	Example
Full name of writer	John Tan
Designation of writer	Head Prefect
Address of organisation writer belongs to	ABC Secondary School 1 Bishan Road Singapore 123456
Date of letter	3 October 2024
Name of recipient	Mr. Edwin Lau
Designation of recipient	Principal
Address of organisation recipient belongs to	ABC Secondary School 1 Bishan Road Singapore 123456
Salutation	Dear Mr. Lau
Title of Letter	<u>Suggestions for Recreational Area in School</u>
Content of letter	XXX
Valediction	Yours sincerely
Signature	<i>John</i>
Full name of writer	John Tan

Email

Structure of Format	Example
Email address of recipient	To: <edwinlau@gmail.com>
Email address of sender	From: <john.tan@gmail.com>
Subject	Subject: <u>Suggestions for Recreational Area in School</u>
Date	3 October 2024
Salutation	Dear Mr Lau
Content of letter	XXX
Valediction	Yours sincerely,
	John Tan

Speech

Structure of Format	Example
Introduction	<i>Good morning...</i>
Content of speech	XXX
Closing	<i>Thank you for your kind attention.</i> State call to action.

Article

Structure of Format	Example
Title of Article	<u>Visiting A Career Fair</u>
Content of article	XXX

Continuous Writing

For the continuous writing task, you will write one of the following types of essays, or a hybrid form combining two:

- Personal Recount
- Descriptive Essay
- Expository Essay

Each of them have their own distinctive features that must be reflected in your essay.

Assessment Criteria

There are two assessment criteria for continuous writing:

Content [10 marks]	Language [20 marks]
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addressing the task <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ All points of the task are skilfully addressed through close attention to the keywords of the question ○ Ideas are fully developed to support the task 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organisation of ideas <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Make use of signposts to create the flow in your essay and show the connection between your ideas • Clarity of expression <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Use a range of vocabulary and precise language to express your ideas, avoiding vague words • Accuracy of language <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Check for SVA, singular/plural, tense and sentence structure errors

Tips for Continuous Writing

1. Analyse the keywords of each question to fully understand the task requirements.
2. Plan your essay before beginning to write. This will ensure that your essay is focused on the task requirements.
3. Avoid overly complex plots and ideas. Remember that you are only required to write 350-500 words within a short amount of time.
4. Prioritise clarity and accuracy. Leave enough time at the end of your essay to check your work.

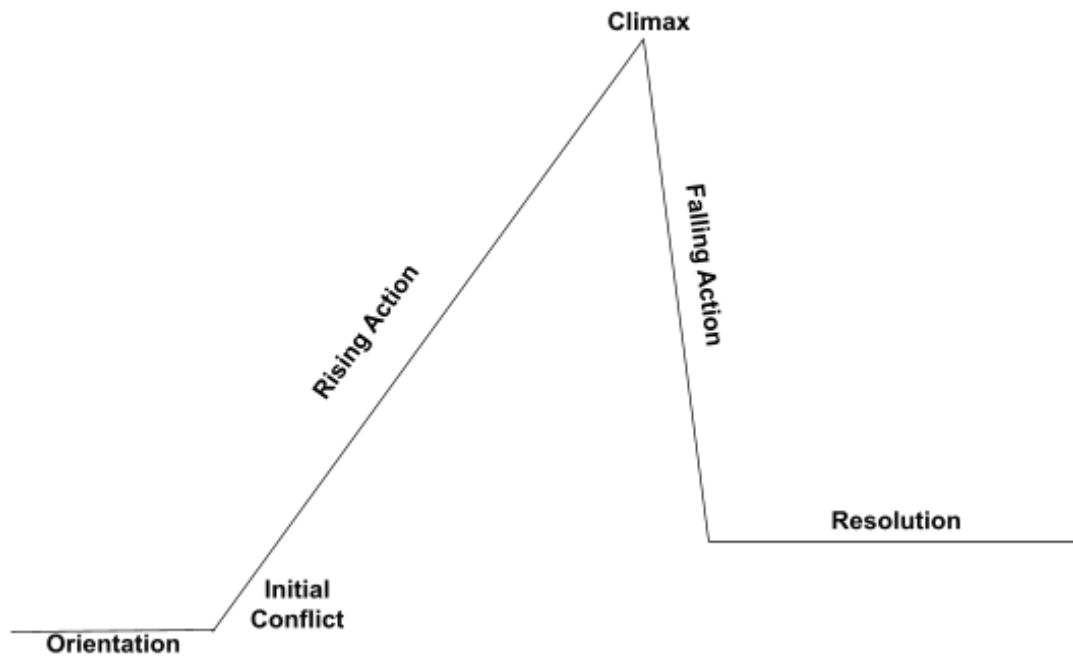
Personal Recount

A personal recount is a description of an event or experience that the writer has previously gone through, and is told from the first-person perspective.

Characteristics of Personal Recount:

- Narrates an event or experience the writer was directly involved in
- Uses first-person pronouns “I”, “me”, “my”, etc.
- Includes personal thoughts and feelings within the narrative
- Written in past tense

Structure of Personal Recount:



1. Orientation

- Introduces the main characters, sets the scene with details about time and place and presents the **initial situation or conflict**.

2. Rising Action

- Describe the events that lead to the climax.
- Include any challenges or obstacles faced by the narrator.

3. Climax

- Highlight the turning point of the story.
- This is the most intense moment of the recount.

4. Resolution

- Explain how the conflict was resolved
- **Reflect on the significance** of the experience and what was learned.

Descriptive Essay

A descriptive essay aims to provide a detailed and vivid image of a person, object, place, event or experience. The essay should enable the reader to visualise and emotionally connect with the subject of the essay.

Characteristics of Descriptive Essay:

- Includes sensory details that appeal to the five senses
- Includes imagery and figurative language like similes and metaphors to enhance the description
- Description should be about 3 distinct aspects of the subject, e.g. when describing a hawker centre, you could describe the variety of food, the skill of the hawkers and the entire atmosphere of the hawker centre.

Structure of Descriptive Essay:

Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide context about the subject • Introduce the three aspects of the subject you will be describing
Body Paragraphs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin writing about each aspect in a new paragraph • Write descriptively about each aspect of the subject, making use of sensory details, imagery and figurative description
Conclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summarise the three aspects of the subject you previously described • Conclude with your final thoughts towards the subject

For essays that require you to **describe** AND **explain**, you should explain the significance of each aspect of the subject in relation to your own personal experiences in life. The explanation should be substantial, including supporting reasons and specific examples, to fulfil the task requirement.

The body paragraphs of a hybrid describe and explain essay can adhere to the following structure:

Body Paragraph	
Description	Describe using sensory details, imagery and figurative language.
Explanation	Explain the significance of the subject to you, relating it to specific aspects of your life.

Expository Essay

An expository essay aims to explain an idea or present points of view about a topic in a clear and objective way. The two main types of expository writing are **discursive writing** and **argumentative writing**.

	Discursive Writing	Argumentative Writing
Purpose	Presents multiple perspectives on an issue to provide a balanced view on an issue. No stand is required.	Presents a claim or an opinion on an issue to convince the reader to agree with you. A stand is required.
Points to consider	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Varying perspectives of stakeholders involved • Causes and effects • Problems and solutions 	
Structure	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduction (hook, linking sentences, outline of viewpoints) 2. Viewpoint 1 3. Viewpoint 2 4. Viewpoint 3 *at least one should be an opposing view 5. Conclusion (summary of viewpoints and concluding thoughts) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduction (hook, linking sentences, thesis statement comprising your stand, supporting views, counterargument and rebuttal) 2. Supporting argument 1 3. Supporting argument 2 4. Counterargument & Rebuttal 5. Conclusion (reiteration of thesis statement and concluding thoughts)

Planning the Essay

Identify task words, content words, and limiting words and analyse them to have a clearer understanding of the question.

- **Task words** indicate whether you should approach the question in a **discursive** or **argumentative** manner.

Common discursive task words:	Common argumentative task words:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Discuss...</i> • <i>What are your views...</i> • <i>What are your opinions...</i> • <i>... advantages and disadvantages...</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Do you agree...</i> • <i>How far do you agree...</i> • <i>What is your view...</i> • <i>What is your opinion...</i>

- **Content words** tell you the **topic** of the essay, e.g. education, technology, personal values, career, etc. .
 - Consider **multiple perspectives** in relation to the content word using the following perspectives:
 - **Multi-domain** (Society, Environment, Economy, Moral, Scientific)
 - **Multi-scale** (Individual, Family, Community, Global)
- **Limiting words** narrow the topic and make it **more specific**
 - Pay attention especially to **absolutes**, **comparatives**, **intensifiers**.