



THE GL 11+ GUIDE BOOKS

English

for the GL 11+

Every kind of question on the GL English paper, one chapter each: reading for what the text says, for what it suggests, and for the writer's words; then spelling, punctuation, the best word, homophones and word classes. A method, a worked example, the traps, ten questions to circle, and a timed test with a passage of its own.

8

question types

80

practice questions

24

traps explained

WHAT IS INSIDE

- One chapter for every question type on the paper
- A method in five steps, written to be said aloud
- A worked example with every wrong option explained
- The three traps the setters rely on
- Ten practice questions a type, exam level from question 4
- A timed test with the real answer sheet, and a progress page
- Every answer at the back with the reason

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For Year 5, with an easier start in every chapter so a Year 4 child can begin.
Every practice question checked twice: by machine, and by a person reading it.

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BEFORE YOU START

The GL paper, explained

What the paper is

GL Assessment sets the 11+ for most grammar areas outside Essex. English is one of up to four papers, alongside Maths, Verbal Reasoning and Non-Verbal Reasoning; each area chooses which papers to use, and the school's admissions page says which.

The paper is multiple choice, with five options, A to E, marked on a separate answer sheet in pencil. About half of it is comprehension: a passage of a page or so, then questions with line numbers to point you to the evidence. The rest is short technical questions in blocks: spelling and punctuation mistakes to find, gaps to fill with the best word, and grammar.

Timing

Most versions allow around 50 minutes for 40 to 50 questions. The passage takes time to read well, and that time is worth spending: a child who reads it once properly answers the questions faster than one who skims and searches. The minutes at the top of each chapter are for one question of that kind.

What is in this book

Eight chapters. The first three are the three kinds of comprehension question, each with a passage of its own from the platform, the same passages the practice quizzes use, with every line reference computed rather than typed. Then spelling, punctuation, the best word, homophones and word classes.

The reading questions are written by hand and read by a person, because a machine cannot write a fair question about what a passage suggests. The spelling, punctuation and best-word questions are generated from the platform's banks and checked; the homophone and word-class banks were written for this book.

How to use this book

One chapter is one kind of question. Read parts 1 to 4 first. For a reading chapter, read the passage once through before the ten questions, then look back at the lines given. Mark from the answers at the back and write the score on the progress page.

Questions 1 to 3 in every chapter are easier than the paper. Questions 4 to 10 are exam level.

When every chapter has a score, sit the timed test at the end under exam conditions, with the answer sheet. It has a passage of its own, The Market, and eight questions on it, then three of each technical type.

Guessing

There is no penalty for a wrong answer. Never leave a question blank: cross out the options you know are wrong and choose from what is left.

TYPE 1 · READING

about 1 minute on the paper

Finding what the text says

1 WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE

The first kind of comprehension question asks for something the passage says outright: a number, a name, an object, the order things happened in. The answer is on the page, and the question tells you which lines to look at.

Example

What is Nan carrying as she climbs? (line 3)

- | | | |
|---------------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| A a lantern | B a rope | C an oil can |
| D a box of matches | E a bucket | |

Lines 2 to 3 say the oil can was knocking against her knee. The answer is there in the words. The answer is C. Circle it.

2 THE METHOD

- 1 Read the question and underline the thing it wants: how many, what colour, what did she do first.
- 2 Go to the lines the question gives. Do not answer from memory of the passage; go and look.
- 3 Find the exact words that answer it and put your finger on them.
- 4 Match those words to an option. The right option says the same thing as the passage, though it may use different words.
- 5 Check the options that are nearly right: a number that is close, or a thing that is mentioned nearby but is not the answer.

3 WORKED EXAMPLE

How many matches does Nan use before the flame catches? (line 20)

- | | | |
|---------------|----------------------|----------------|
| A one | B two | C three |
| D four | E a whole box | |

STEP 1 The question wants a number: how many matches.

STEP 2 Lines 20 to 21: “The match went out. So did the second. On the third she cupped her hands” and the flame caught.

STEP 3 First match: out. Second: out. Third: caught. She used three.

STEP 4 three is option C. Circle C.

Why the others are wrong

- A **one** the first match went out
- B **two** the second went out too; it was the third that caught
- D **four** the passage stops at the third
- E **a whole box** nothing says so; it is a guess

4 THE THREE TRAPS

Answering from memory. After one read, a child remembers “lots of steps” and guesses a hundred. The number is on the page: ninety-eight. Go and look, every time.

Taking a nearby detail. Options mention things that ARE in the passage, just not the answer to this question. The oil is in the passage; it is not what she does first after lighting the lamp.

Picking “the passage does not say” too quickly. It is sometimes the right answer, and the paper uses it, but only when you have looked at the lines and the answer is genuinely not there.

WORKING SPACE for the ten questions on the next page: notes and underlinings

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SAMPLE CHAPTER

10 questions, 15 minutes with the passage

5 TRY IT

Questions 1 to 3 are a little easier than the paper. From 4 on they are exam level. Circle your answer.

Nan has been left in charge of the lighthouse while her grandfather is away on the mainland. The storm has been building since morning.

The Lighthouse

The lamp had to be lit by dusk, and dusk was coming on faster than Nan liked. She climbed the ninety-eight steps with the oil can knocking against her knee, counting as she went, because counting kept her from
5 thinking about the wind. It had been rising all afternoon. Now it leaned against the tower with the patience of something that had nowhere else to be. At the top she set down the can and looked out. The sea was the colour of an old coin. Far off, where the water
10 met the cloud, she could make out a smudge of sail, and she watched it a moment before she understood what she was watching. A boat. Out there, in that. Her grandfather had a rule about the light: never late, never dim, never for one moment unattended. He had said
15 it so often that it had stopped being a rule and become a kind of weather, something that simply was. Nan had never once thought to ask what would happen if she failed. Standing there with the wick in her hand, she found she could imagine it perfectly well.
20 The match went out. So did the second. On the third she cupped her hands the way she had been shown, and the flame caught and steadied and grew, and the great lens above her began to gather it up and throw it out across the water in long slow arms of light. She did not cheer.
25 She simply stood, breathing, and watched the beam sweep out to the place where the sail had been. It was still there. It had not moved much, and it was lower in the water than before, but it was there, and now it was lit. Nan wound the clockwork, checked the
30 oil, and sat down on the cold iron floor with her back against the wall, where she could see the sea and the sea could see her. She stayed until morning.

1 How many steps does Nan climb? (line 2)

- A ninety-eight
- B eighty-nine
- C ninety-nine
- D a hundred
- E the passage does not say

2 What is Nan carrying as she climbs? (line 3)

- A a lantern
- B a rope
- C a box of matches
- D a bucket
- E an oil can

3 By when must the lamp be lit? (line 1)

- A by noon
- B by dusk
- C by midnight
- D before the boat arrives
- E before the storm

4 What colour does the writer say the sea is? (line 9)

- A the colour of the sky
- B the colour of slate
- C grey-green
- D the colour of an old coin
- E the colour of iron

5 What does Nan see far off, where the water meets the cloud? (line 10)

- A a lighthouse
- B a rock
- C a smudge of sail
- D the mainland
- E a flash of lightning

6 Which of these is NOT part of her grandfather's rule about the light? (lines 13 to 14)

- A never lit before dusk
- B never late
- C never dim
- D never unattended
- E all of these are part of the rule

7 How many matches does Nan use before the flame catches? (line 20)

- A one
- B two
- C four
- D a whole box
- E three

8 What does Nan do with her hands to light the wick? (lines 20 to 21)

- A she rubs them warm
- B she cups them round the flame
- C she holds the lens
- D she covers her eyes
- E she waves them at the boat

9 After the lamp is lit, which of these does Nan do first? (lines 29 to 30)

- A checks the oil
- B sits down
- C goes back down the steps
- D winds the clockwork
- E cheers

10 How long does Nan stay at the top of the lighthouse? (line 33)

- A** until the boat is safe
- B** until her grandfather returns
- C** until morning
- D** until the storm passes
- E** for an hour

WORKING SPACE for the questions above: notes, underlinings, a plan

SAMPLE CHAPTER