GrindSpot
ONLINE GRINDS PLATFORM

LEAVING CERT 2027

LEAVING CERT ENGLISH

Exam Ready

Dyslexia friendly
large, clear text · room to write

Ordinary Level · Paper 1 · Workbook A

Built from 9 years of real Leaving Cert papers: what comes up, how it's marked, and the practice to nail it.

- **9** years of exam trends, question by question
- **36** exam-style drills with model answers
- **1** full practice paper, 200 marks
- ✓ marking guide for the practice paper



Know what's coming.
Walk in ready.

Original GrindSpot material written in the style of the Leaving Certificate examination. Not an official SEC paper.

What comes up

2017 to 2026

We read every Ordinary Level Paper 1 from the last 9 exams (no exam in 2020) and noted the task in each question. Each number is how many questions in that year's paper asked for it. We counted tasks, not subjects: a Question A counts once for each task its parts set, a Question B or composition once for its form.

	2017	2018	2019	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	Years
Question A: personal response	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	**9/9**
Question A: understanding the text	3	3	3	2	3	3	3	3	3	**9/9**
Composition: personal essay	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	**9/9**
Composition: short story	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	**9/9**
Question A: visual image	1	1	3	1	3	3	2	1	1	**9/9**
Composition: article or opinion piece	1	1	2	2	1	1	2	1	2	**9/9**
Composition: speech or talk	1	1	1	1	2	2	1	2	1	**9/9**
Question A: style and language	–	3	–	–	–	2	2	2	2	**5/9**
Question B: letter or email	1	1	1	–	1	1	–	1	1	**7/9**
Question B: other task	–	–	–	–	1	1	1	2	1	**5/9**
Question B: article	1	1	1	–	–	–	1	–	–	**4/9**
Question B: diary, blog or personal account	–	1	1	–	–	1	1	–	–	**4/9**
Question B: speech or talk	1	–	–	2	–	–	–	–	1	**3/9**
Question B: report, review or proposal	–	–	–	1	1	–	–	–	–	**2/9**
Composition: other	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	**1/9**

Darker = more questions. Source: State Examinations Commission papers, 2017 to 2026, read and grouped by GrindSpot. Every question we counted is listed at **grindspot.ie/exam-trends**. A guide to what has come up, not a prediction of what will.

Question A keeps its shape: what the text says, then your own opinion and experience.

Images every year. 16 Question As in 9 years asked about an image.

Style questions are back: in 2018 and every year since 2023.

At least two personal essays and two short stories in every paper.

TOPIC 3

Visual images

Worked answers →

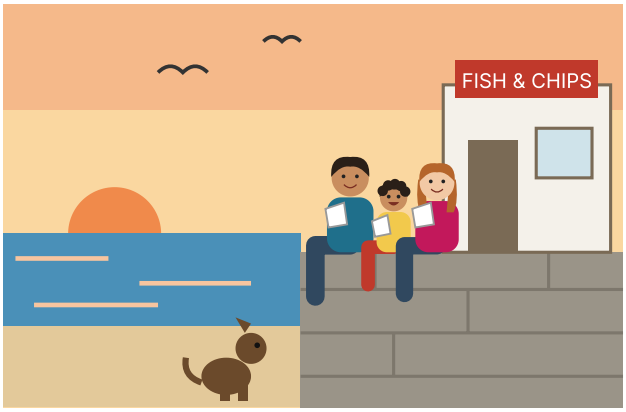
In the real exam

In 16 of the 27 Question As, 2017 to 2026: every year.



Fionn's tip: Describe what you see as if the reader cannot see it: who or what, where, colours, light, expressions, mood. Then explain why you chose it, linking it to the question or theme.

1. Look at this image. Describe what you see in four or five sentences.



2. Explain how the image above shows the theme of summer holidays.



Image A · Rowing on the River Corrib

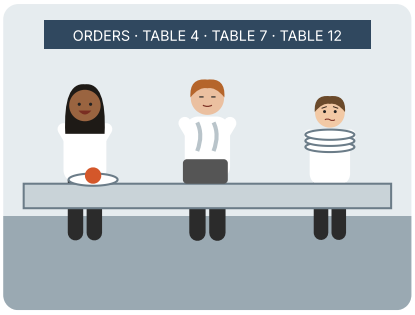


Image B · Saturday night in a restaurant kitchen

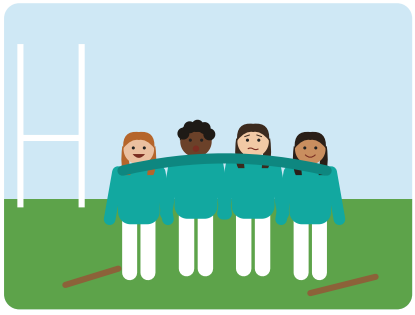


Image C · The team talk before the final



Image D · Tidy Towns volunteers with newly planted trees

TEXT 3 · Question A (50 marks)

(i) Which two of the sayings in TEXT 3 do you think give the best advice about teamwork? Explain your choices. Which one saying do you agree with least? Explain why. 15

(ii) Which two images in TEXT 3 do you think show teamwork best? In both cases, describe what you see and explain your choice. 15

(iii) **(a)** Describe a person you know who is a good team player. Explain what makes them good at it. 10

(b) You have been asked to add one more image to TEXT 3. Describe what it would show and explain why you would add it. 10

TEXT 3 · Question B (50 marks)

Your school is starting a Tidy Towns group. Write the text of a talk you would give at assembly to encourage students to join. In your talk you should: explain what the group will do, describe the benefits for the town and for the students who take part, and tell students how to sign up. Your talk may be serious or light-hearted.

There is no single right answer in English. For each question this guide gives **what a good answer would include** (the kind of points examiners look for, not a full list), then **the marks** and a guide to how marks are awarded, in the style of the SEC marking schemes (our guide, not an official scheme). Longer answers are marked on **P** Clarity of Purpose, **C** Coherence of Delivery, **L** Efficiency of Language Use (30% each) and **M** Accuracy of Mechanics (10%). Answer the question asked, make the number of points it asks for, and back each one up with the text.

TEXT 1 · Question A (50 marks)

(i) Three points, each with a reference. A model answer: *Mrs Dunne is a calm, quiet person. The writer tells us she "never once raised her voice" and that she "didn't need to". She is also respected and a little feared: the girls are "terrified" of her on Saturdays, and one look from her makes a player lift her head. Finally, she is wise. Her words, "Nobody wins on her own", sound like a fridge magnet at first, but the team learns that she was right.* Other good points: Mrs Dunne is **calm and quiet** ("never once raised her voice"); she is **strict and respected** ("terrified us on Saturdays"; one look makes you lift your head); she is **wise** ("Nobody wins on her own"); she is **supportive**, standing by the road with the torch "like a referee" while the girls push.

15 marks (P + C 9, L + M 6) · *Good answer (12 to 15):* three clear points, each supported · *Middle (8 to 11):* three points, thinly supported · *Weaker (1 to 7):* two points or fewer, or no reference to the text

(ii) Most students will say "very well". Reasons: the build-up (losing badly, silence, rain through the crack); the simile of the engine "like an old man clearing his throat"; the detail of no phone signal and the cold; the shy goalkeeper starting it; the dialogue "One, two, three, PUSH!"; the loud cheer at the end.

15 marks (P + C 9, L + M 6) · *Good answer:* a clear view and two or three reasons, each linked to a detail in the text · *Weaker:* retells the story with no comment

(iii) (a) A real or realistic moment (a school musical, a Gaisce hike, a group project, a match), described clearly, with honest feelings at the time. **(b)** She means a team shares both success and failure: no single player deserves all the credit or all the blame, so players should support each other. Link to the bus: they only got over the hill together.

10 marks each (P + C 6, L + M 4) · *Good answer:* clear, developed and personal · *Weaker:* one or two short sentences