

Answering Questions

A brief guide

Make sure you address all parts of the question – it is a good idea to number the separate parts to make sure you do not miss anything.

Look beyond the face value of the question – it may be asking something deeper.

Read the question carefully and state how you are going to deal with it in your introduction.

If a question is broad and woolly, then define it and keep to your definition.

If the question asks for two operas do not write about three or more as you will not gain any marks for this and you will use up your word count. Of course you can allude to other works, but do not spend time writing about them at length.

Use footnotes and appendices for additional relevant material that does not fit within the flow of your answer.

Always be clear about the points you are making and their relevance to the question – do not leave the reader to make the connections themselves.

An answer should be like a meal – complete in itself with all the necessary condiments added. If the reader has to go searching for the condiments in order to complete it then you have not completed the task.

With regard to punctuation and spelling, these should be as accurate as you can make them – but the argument is paramount. Provided spelling and punctuation do not interfere with the reader's comprehension, they will not be penalized.