

Leaving Certificate English OL October Assessment

You will be asked to respond to a composition question from Paper 1 and a comparative question from Paper 2.

Composition Question Paper 1

When you are asked to **write a composition**, the exam may give you a choice of:

1. Personal Essay

- **Purpose:** Share your own thoughts, memories, and opinions.
- **Features:**
 - Written in **first person** (“I”).
 - Honest and personal voice.
 - Mix of storytelling and reflection.
 - Can be serious, funny, or thoughtful.
- **Tip:** Think of it as “writing about life as you see it.”

2. Narrative / Short Story

- **Purpose:** Entertain by telling a story.
- **Features:**
 - Characters, setting, plot (beginning, middle, end).
 - Tension or conflict (something goes wrong, problem must be solved).
 - Use dialogue (speech) for realism.
 - Descriptive detail (show, don’t just tell).
- **Tip:** Plan a clear ending so your story doesn’t fizzle out.

3. Article (for a newspaper / magazine)

- **Purpose:** Inform or persuade readers.
- **Features:**
 - Catchy headline and sub-headings.
 - Written in a clear, direct style.
 - Mix of facts, opinions, and examples.
 - Sometimes light and conversational, depending on audience.
- **Tip:** Imagine real readers – what do they need to know?

4. Speech / Talk

- **Purpose:** Address an audience (e.g. classmates, community).
- **Features:**

- Direct address (“Ladies and gentlemen...” / “My friends...”).
- Persuasive language (rhetorical questions, repetition, emotive words).
- Clear structure: greeting, 2–3 main points, conclusion.
- Sometimes humour or personal anecdotes to connect with audience.
- **Tip:** Imagine reading it out loud – does it sound natural?

5. Formal / Informal Letter

- **Purpose:** Communicate clearly in writing.
- **Features of a Formal Letter:**
 - Address, date, greeting (e.g. *Dear Sir/Madam*).
 - Polite, clear tone.
 - Well-structured paragraphs.
 - Close with *Yours sincerely* / *Yours faithfully*.
- **Features of an Informal Letter:**
 - Written to a friend or family.
 - Casual, chatty tone.
 - Can include jokes, feelings, personal stories.
 - Close with *Best wishes* / *Take care*.

Composition Question Paper 1

Remember the key modes

Relationships

Social Setting

Hero/ Villain

- **Themes:** (e.g. friendship, justice, freedom, betrayal).
- **Characters:** strengths, weaknesses, challenges.
- **Setting:** where and when the text is set, and how this affects the story.
- **Relationships:** friendships, families, conflicts.
- **Vision/Viewpoint:** overall outlook – hopeful, bleak, tragic, inspiring?

Structure:

- Intro: Name texts and authors.
- Body: Compare texts (similarities and differences). You should have at least 3 developed PEALs
- Conclusion: Which text left the strongest impression and why.

Connectives

- **To add:** also, in addition, moreover, another example.
- **To contrast:** however, on the other hand, in contrast, whereas.
- **To explain/example:** for example, this shows that, this can be seen when.

- **To conclude:** therefore, overall, in conclusion, finally.

PEAL Reminder for Paragraphs

- **P – Point:** Make your point clearly.
- **E – Evidence:** Support with example/quotation.
- **A – Analysis:** Explain how it proves your point.
- **L – Link:** Back to the question or move to next idea.