

## Answers and advice for English 11+.Paper A.

1. Make sure that you read the question properly. You are being asked why **you** think that many of us want it to snow at Christmas. It is not asking you what the author of the extract thinks, so you should not just be taking the information from the text.

Try to write in full sentences and make sure you use capital letters and full stops.

I think that many of us want it to snow at Christmas because snow is fun. You can make snowmen, have snowball fights and go sledging.

2. If you read the text then you will see that this refers to the period 1550-1850 when Britain had severe winters. It was not a real ice age as an ice age is much more extreme.

A “**Little** Ice Age” means that it was not a real ice age as it was not as extreme as that. However, it refers to a period of time when Britain had extremely cold weather.

3. You can get the answer to this from the text. You need to make sure that you answer the question. It is not asking what the effect of the change of calendar was, but is asking what difference it made to the chances of there being a White Christmas. We are told that White Christmases were more frequent before the change of calendar, so we know that they are less frequent after. This means the probability of a White Christmas was reduced.

The change of calendar meant that the probability of a White Christmas was reduced.

4. Rhetorical questions address the reader and so they draw you in. They make you want to read on as they grab your attention.
5. You could take the reason from the text or from your own knowledge. You should write in a full sentence. You need to be specific in your answer. It is not enough to say that it snows more in the Scottish Highlands because of height above sea level.

It is more likely to snow in the Scottish Highlands than in London, because the Scottish Highlands are higher above sea level than London.

6. If you read the sentence after the one that talks about there “being no guarantee that snow will 'stick'”, then you will be able to work out what 'stick' means.

Snow 'sticking' means that it will settle. The air temperature above the ground is below freezing and so the snow does not melt as soon as it lands on the ground.

7. Notably, particularly, mainly. Choose two out of these words.
8. Likelihood, chances.
9. Widespread.

10. Alliteration is when you use the same letter, or sound, at the beginning of words that are close together. Your sentence for this needs to be effective and it needs to make sense. My advice is to keep it simple and do not try to be too clever.

The soft snow fell silently from the sky.

11. A metaphor is when we describe a person, or an object, as something else, without using “like” or “as”. Your metaphor needs to make sense. The reader needs to see a connection between snow and what you are describing it as. If you describe it as a white blanket then I know you mean that the snow is flat and stretches out uniformly.

The snow was a white blanket.

12. A simile is when you compare two things using the word “like” or “as”. Your simile needs to make sense. The reader needs to understand why snow is like what you are saying it is like. You need to make sure that snow is your subject. If you wrote: “The icing was as white as snow” then icing is the subject and you have not followed the task.

The snow was as white as a swan.

13. Personification is when you give human characteristics to something that is not human. For example, trees are not human but you could describe them by writing: “The trees complained when the wind blew them”. Trees can’t complain as they can’t speak, so this is personification. It can be very effective. You are writing a short paragraph so your work should flow. I did not want four sentences that were not connected to each other.

The snowflakes danced and twirled in the wind. They were very happy to have been released from the clouds. When they landed on the ground, they took a quick bow before having a rest. However, they were soon disturbed from their rest by children grabbing them to make snowballs.

14. This was quite difficult. It was important to follow the task. The task was not asking you to describe how the weather makes you feel. If you wrote about how sunshine makes you feel happy then you were not following the task. The task was asking you to write about the mood you are in, why you are in that mood and have weather that matches your mood. So, if you wrote about being happy because you had just won a football match and described the weather as being sunny, you would have been following the task. It is basically when you use weather to emphasise whatever is happening. You could be in a very bad mood because your brother has broken your favourite toy and have a thunderstorm going on at the same time. The bad weather emphasises your bad mood.

I was incredibly happy because we had just won our first football match. The sun shone brightly as my friends and I re-lived the amazing goals we had scored. Our parents bought us ice-creams as a way of saying congratulations. We eagerly gobbled them up, sitting on the grass beneath the clear blue skies.

15. My advice for this is to keep it simple. You do not need to pretend that you have no idea what snow is. Just because you have not seen snow before does not mean you do not know what it is. You need to:

- Be consistent with the tense you use-do not switch between past and present. It is easier to write in the past tense.
- Set your work out in paragraphs.
- Make sure that you have a clear ending to your work.
- Try to use a wide and interesting vocabulary.
- Make sure that what you write makes sense.
- Try to include some language techniques.
- Follow the task-you should include a description of the snow, how it makes you feel and what you did. Do not include irrelevant information-there is not time for this.

I woke up, looked out of the window and saw the most amazing sight I have ever seen. SNOW! It was incredible. It stretched like a white blanket for as far as I could see. The snowflakes fell softly and silently. I was completely captivated.

One hour later, my brother and I were wrapped up warmly and outside making a snowman. The dazzling whiteness of the snow hurt my eyes a little, but I did not let that stop me having fun. We carefully patted snow together to make the snowman's body and then made a large snowball for his head. An old wrinkly carrot became his nose and his eyes were stones.

As the hours passed, I started to get cold. The snow had seeped through my gloves making my fingers tingle uncomfortably. When my brother threw a snowball straight in my face I decided that I was definitely not having fun anymore. I headed inside for a delicious mug of hot chocolate. Overall, it had been a fantastic day.