

**Questions to ask about a text**

**Lexis -**  
Are there any archaisms?  
Are there words (or phrases) that are no longer Standard, but which are still used in dialect or jargon?  
Are there words (or phrases) which are still in general use, but which have been affected by semantic change? Can you compare the original meaning / use of a word with the current one?

**Register**  
Passages from earlier periods tend to seem more formal than Modern English ones (e.g. in literary texts or journalism) Can you explain this change in register?  
In more modern passages - are there forms of old slang or colloquialism?

**Spelling (pre-1800) & Graphology**  
Are there any non-standard spellings - single examples or patterns?  
Are there any alphabet letters that are no longer used?  
Is the punctuation modern Standard? Look at speech marks and Apostrophes.

**Grammar**  
Are there any old suffixes (e.g. on verbs)?  
Are there any archaic pronouns?  
Are there different ways of creating negatives, questions or orders?  
Is the word order different from Modern Standard?  
Are conjunctions used to begin sentences?  
What is the verb "to be" doing?

**Cohesion & Discourse**  
Are the texts structured or joined together in different ways from similar modern writing? E.g. the time sequence in older journalism.

**Audience, Purpose & Context**  
Does the historical context of the texts lead to different styles of language?  
Were the audience / readers for older texts different from typical modern readers, and does this affect the language used?  
Have the purposes of similar old and modern texts changed^ (e.g. historical adverts were more 'informative')