



Exam command words

Command words are words in exam questions that give you clues on what the examiners are looking for.

Depending on the command word, your answer to a question will be very different.

There are four main ones you'll come across; give, describe, explain and evaluate.

Give what is in the picture.

For this answer, you simply need to state using one or two words what is in the picture

A dress

Describe what is in the picture.

For this answer, you need to tell the examiners what it looks like, or recall an event or process

An orange halter neck dress with a pale band around the waist.

Explain what is in the picture.

For this answer, you need to give reasons why something is the way it is

The dress is a summer dress so it has a halter neck, it is from the 1950s and shows the style at the time.

Evaluate what is in the picture.

Here you need to give good points, bad points, your opinion and justify your opinion

- This dress is good because it is made from a light fabric so will be cool in summer
- This dress is bad because the colour is too bright
- Overall, I think this is a good dress...
- ... because it is well suited to the purpose of being a summer dress.





Glossary of exam command words

Calculate/ Determine use maths to work out the answer

Choose circle the answer from the selection

Compare what are the similarities and differences

Complete fill in the gaps - pay attention to any given words, some may be used more than once some not at all

Define what does the word mean?

Describe what it looks like, or recall an event or process

Design/ Plan plan something

Draw draw a scientific diagram, not an arty sketch

Estimate give a sensible guess

Evaluate give good points, bad points your option and justify your opinion

Explain give reasons why something is the way it is

Give/Name a short answer

Identify/Label name a part

Justify give an answer and support it with a reason

Measure you might need to get your ruler out for this one

Plan write a method, don't forget your variables, controls and risk assessment

Plot mark points on a graph using an x

Predict/suggest what do you think is going to happen, you may need to use information from the question and knowledge from class

Show give evidence and come to a conclusion

Sketch a rough drawing, a graph doesn't always need number labels on the axis, but it must be an accurate representation