

# 2.4 The function of specific words and phrases

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ **Total: 12 marks**

**KEY WORDS** antecedent 先行词 • alliteration 头韵 • affects interpretation 影响阐释  
• words and phrases 词语

## Objective

Build the skills to explain **words and phrases** 词语 at work.

**You must be able to:**

- define an antecedent and a referent
- state what makes a referent ambiguous and why it matters
- state why words or phrases are repeated
- define alliteration and its purpose

## 1 Worked examples

Study these first. Each one shows the method for a task used later.

### ■ Antecedent and referent

**An antecedent is a word, phrase or clause that precedes its referent.** Referents may include pronouns, nouns, phrases or clauses — the referent points back, the antecedent is what it points to.

### ■ Ambiguity

**Referents are ambiguous if they can refer to more than one antecedent, which affects interpretation.** Ambiguity is not an error here: an unresolvable “it” may be doing work.

### ■ Repetition

**Words or phrases may be repeated to emphasise ideas or associations.** The second occurrence is read against the first.

### ■ Alliteration

**The repetition of the same letter sound at the beginning of adjacent or nearby words to emphasise those words and their associations or representations.** The point is the emphasis, not the pattern.

## 2 Practice

**2.1** Define an antecedent and a referent. [2]

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**2.2** State what makes a referent ambiguous and its consequence. [2]

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**2.3** Define alliteration.

(a) State the definition. [2]

(b) State its purpose in the CED’s terms. [1]

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## 3 Exam-style questions

**3.1** An ambiguous referent is one that [1]

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| A | B |
| C | D |
- A** can refer to more than one antecedent  
**B** has no antecedent  
**C** is alliterative  
**D** is repeated

**3.2** Repetition is used to emphasise ideas or [1]

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| A | B |
| C | D |
- A** associations  
**B** page numbers  
**C** rhyme schemes  
**D** dates

**3.3** A poem uses “it” where two nouns could be meant.

(a) State what this creates. [1]

(b) Explain why this is not necessarily a fault. [2]

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