Writing for Results:

A practical guide to developing sophisticated writing & applying it under exam conditions

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Introduction

When I was at school, English always seemed like a real mystery. I'd either get a disappointing mark and not know how to get a better one, or get a good mark and have no idea how I got it! So, either way, I was unable to consistently get the marks I wanted, and the people who were good at English just seemed to 'know' what to do!

I have now been teaching English to students from years 4 to 12 over the last 13 years, and in that process, I have transformed English into being accessible, easy to understand, and something that any student can excel at with the right tools. And now, I've taken all these tricks, and written this book.

It is a book for the student that is struggling, the student that is average, and even the student that is already excelling. Through it, you will discover just how straight forward English can actually be, and consistently attain the marks you want in class and in particular, under exam conditions.

Enjoy!

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Supporting film notes: https://vimeo.com/243619053

Introduction:

Ever wondered what is meant when you hear things such as: 'your writing needs greater sophistication', 'write formally for an essay', 'do not use colloquial expression', or 'sentences and expression is unclear'? While essay writing can seem challenging, this chapter gives you specific tips to make your writing clear and concise – making it easy for sophisticated (formal) writing style.

<div align="center">Writing formally: turn writing from casual to formal</div>

1.Vocabulary

Words to use instead of "show" and "seen" include:

- Illustrate
- Exemplify
- Reflect
- Demonstrate
- Convey
- Portray
- Exhibit
- Highlight
- Reveal

- Depict
- Explored
- Typify
- Crystallise
- Illuminate
- Encapsulate
- Apparent through
- Echoed
- Envisaged

A few examples:

> Before: this metaphor shows the need for society to overcome prejudice.
> After: this metaphor **illustrates** the need for society to overcome prejudice.

Before: the composer tells us that prejudice is harmful in society.

After: the composer **reveals** how prejudice is harmful in society.

2. Transitional phrases

These words are when you want to effectively join your sentences together and create a persuasive argument:

- In addition
- Furthermore
- Conversely
- Moreover

- However
- Correspondingly
- Due to the fact
- On the other hand

Some examples of use:

Before: The composer depicts how the character has transformed. During the beginning of the film, various other characters demonstrate the need to change. The director achieves this effectively through a low-angle shot.

Corrected: The composer depicts how this character has transformed. **In addition**, during the beginning of the film, various other characters demonstrate the need to change [Note: adding "in addition" increases the flow of the sentences, rather than just listing points one after the other].

Before: The composer depicts the character's immaturity at the beginning of the novel. This alters throughout the text.

Corrected: Consequently, the composer depicts the character's immaturity at the beginning of the novel. **However**, this alters throughout the text.

2. Concluding words

Words to sum up your points, end paragraphs and begin conclusions include:

- Thus

- Therefore

- Hence
- Consequently
- As a result
- Clearly

Examples:

As a result, the need for society to overcome prejudice is portrayed.

Clearly, it can be argued that prejudice is detrimental to the harmony of society.

Sophisticated words to use in essays, particularly when exploring the themes in a text:

- Embedded – integrated within
  Example: Victorian paradigms are **embedded** within the text.

- Paramount – important
  Example: The exploration of prejudice is **paramount** within *To Kill a Mockingbird*.

- Permeates – integrated within
  Example: Themes of racism and injustice **permeate** the novel *The Book Thief*.

- Elicits – evoke or draw out
  Example: Harper Lee illustrates how prejudice can **elicit** the experience of violence and conflict.

- Culmination – coming together of ideas or techniques
  Example: Through the **culmination** of various techniques, the composer thus exemplifies that…

- Entrenched – established, integrated
  Example: Values of unity and acceptance are **entrenched** in the text.

- Pervade – integrated throughout
  Example: A need for justice **pervades** the text.

- Ramifications – consequences
  Example: The composer depicts the harmful **ramifications** of science and commercialisation on humanity.

- Asserts – proposes idea about, says it
  Example: Thus, the orator **asserts** the necessity for understanding and acceptance to achieve harmony in the community.

- Encompass – surround, enclose
  Example: The motif of the "mockingbird" **encompasses** the notion of acceptance and understanding.

- Proliferate - propagate, flourish, spread ideas about
  Example: Yann Martel **proliferates** values of reliance and courage within his novel *Life of Pi.*

- Salient - prominent, important
  Example: In the image, the factories are the **salient** image, emphasising how it is overpowering nature and destroying the environment.

- Resonates – evokes, impacts on
  Example: Themes of acceptance and unity **resonate** with the reader, suggesting that a more harmonious world is possible.

- Pertinent – evident, important
  Example: Themes of acceptance and unity are **pertinent** within the novel.

- Manifest – evoked
  Example: This metaphor **manifests** the need for unity and acceptance within society.

- Generate – create
  Example: This technique **generates** an image of acceptance.

- Canvass – portrays

  Example: The painter **canvasses** their ideas through various colours and shades.

- Facilitates – enables, allows for

  Example: The author **facilitates** an understanding of acceptance as being crucial to achieve a harmonious society.

- Poignancy – emotional effectiveness

  Example: This emotive imagery has a **poignant** impact, allowing the responder to sympathise with the character.

- Clarify – made clear

  Example: This idea is **clarified** through personification.

- Collaborate – combined, joined together

  Example: Through the **collaboration** of these ideas, Lee implies that a greater level of acceptance and understanding is needed within society.

- Augmented – increase, enhance

  Example: The rise of multinational corporations **augmented** the need to address the accelerated destruction of the environment.

- Spawn – create, give

  Example: Such issues **spawn** the need for change in society.

- Suggests – puts forward

  Example: Through this, the composer **suggests** that belonging is a crucial need.

- Renders – makes

  Example: The experience of prejudice often **renders** an individual depressed or devalued.

- Infuses – instilled, integrated with

  Example: Metaphors **infuse** the text with rich imagery and vivid ideas.

- Exhibit – portray

  Example: The composer **exhibits** an acute sense of compassion for the less fortunate.

- Yield – produce

  Example: The text **yields** meaning and relevance throughout time and context.

Rules for editing and clarity

Many students prefer to write their essays or English responses in one go, and then think they're finished. But to convey your answer in the most effective and clear way, you must edit. Split your time to be 50 per cent writing and 50 per cent editing because it's during the editing process when you can sharpen your argument further. This means no pressure when writing your first draft – so don't think it needs to be perfect straight away!

The below rules will assist you in the editing process to ensure your answers are formal and sophisticated:

1. Do not repeat words close together.

   Before: Zusak **illustrates** the harmful impacts of prejudice in society. He **illustrates** this impact through the use of metaphors.

   Corrected: Lee illustrates the harmful impacts of prejudice in society. This is **depicted** through the use of metaphors.

2. Do not abbreviate in formal writing.

   Before: Although the migrants **haven't** assimilated into Australian society, they still experience a sense of belonging.

Corrected: Although the migrants **have not** assimilated into Australian society, they still experience a sense of belonging.

3.   Do not repeat what quotes say (paraphrase).

Before: The writer conveys how the Aborigines are "strangers here now". This illustrates how the Aborigines are strangers here in their own land.

[Note: notice how no new information or analysis has been given about the quote.]

Corrected: The writer conveys how the Aborigines are "strangers here now". Ironically, by referring to the Aborigines as "strangers" in their own land, the writer highlights their disconnection from their native Australian environment.

4.   Do not use metaphors or similes in your formal writing.

Before: Novels are like telescopes.

[Note: this statement is too interpretive, you need to be clear and concise.]

Corrected: Novels enable an understanding of a composer's historical period, as well as their personal values.

5.   Do not ask questions (rhetorical or normal) in formal writing.

Before: Harper Lee asks her readers, why does prejudice occur in the United States?

Corrected: Harper Lee poses questions about why prejudice exists within the United States.

6. To maintain clarity in your writing, do not use more than two commas per sentence. If you do, it is usually too long.

Before: Water is a motif in the text, emphasising the importance of the natural environment to Pike, acting as a catalyst for the "unlikely trio", Pike, Loonie and Sando's, connection to one another.

[Note: imagine a sentence is like taking a breath, the longer you make it, the more difficult it is to follow. If it is too long, your idea will lose its effectiveness.]

Corrected: Water is used as a motif in the text to emphasise the importance of the natural environment to Pike. Thus, through the natural environment, a connection between the "unlikely trio" is generated.

7. Don't use the words 'but' or 'because'. Instead, use 'however', 'as' or 'due to the fact'.

Before: The protagonist is loving, **but** also childish at times.

[Note: This can sound more sophisticated by simply substituting 'but' with 'however'.]

Corrected: The protagonist is **loving**, however also childish at times. ⌞SEP⌟

Before: Bandler's speech is significant **because** it highlights issues within the orator's society.

[Note: 'because' is too conversational, replacing it with 'as' or 'due to the fact' will increase sophistication.]

Corrected: Bandler's speech is significant **as** it highlights issues within the orator's society. OR Bandler's speech is significant **due to the fact** that it highlights issues within the orator's society.

8. Do not to use first person such as 'we', 'I' or 'us'.

Before: In this scene **we** learn about...

[Note: notice how colloquial this is in tone; too conversational.]

Corrected: 'This scene **demonstrates**... '

9. Do not use second person, such as 'you'.

Before: In the novel, the police force is portrayed as a corrupt institution, and if **you** knew the right people **you** could escape the law.

Corrected: In the novel, the police force is portrayed as a corrupt institution, allowing connected individuals to operate outside the law.

Before: The novel constantly compares his old life and his new and **shows us** that if **you** have a positive perspective then **you** will be able to change and move forward.

Corrected: Within the novel, the composer **exemplifies** the character's transformation, thus **facilitating** an understanding of how a positive perspective can enable change and development.

10. Do not use the word 'like', use 'such as'.

Before: The composer uses various techniques **like** metaphors and similes to communicate their ideas.

Corrected: The composer uses various techniques **such as** metaphors and similes to communicate their ideas.

11. Understand how to apply the 'apostrophe rule'.

Apostrophes are used for two reasons:

1.   For abbreviations. For example, 'can not' is shortened to 'can't'.
2.   To indicate ownership. For example, 'Suzie's jumper' or 'society's values'.

[Note: I always ask whether the first object owns the second object. Does Suzie own the jumper? Does society own the values? If the answer is yes, then it needs an apostrophe.]

Where the apostrophe goes will depend on whether there is a plural involved. For singular items, it would be inside of the 's', e.g. Suzie's jumper. For plural items, it would be on the outside of the 's', e.g. the groups' jumpers.

12. Do not end sentences with conjunctions or 'joining words' such as 'is', 'in', 'but', 'with', 'to'.

Before: The author depicts where the characters are going **to**.
Corrected: The author depicts where the characters are going.

Before: The author uses various techniques that he demonstrates the need to belong **with**.
Corrected: The author uses various techniques **with which** he demonstrates the need to belong.

13.   Restrict your use of adverbs in essays.

Before: This idea is **specifically evident** through a metaphor.

[Note: using extra words is ineffective in English writing, try to be as concise as possible.]

Corrected: This idea is evident through a metaphor.

14. Never end a paragraph with a quote. If you do, then write a sentence to link back to the question.

15. Don't tell the story, analyse it.

In teacher's comments on English, you may have heard two seemingly contradictory statements for writing:

1. Don't tell the story.
2. Don't assume the marker has prior knowledge of the text.

To satisfy both comments, you need to tell the details of the story in relation to your key idea.

For example, this would be 'telling the story': Harper Lee's novel *To Kill a Mockingbird* **is about** an African American man who is wrongfully convicted of rape.

[Note: notice that there are only details of the story, with no link to a key idea or argument.]

Corrected: Harper Lee's novel *To Kill a Mockingbird* demonstrates the injustice that can result from prejudice through an African American man who is wrongfully convicted of rape.

[Note: in this example, something about the story has still been stated (the theme of justice), but because it is linked with a key idea or argument, it is not classified as "telling the story".]

[Hint: statements indicating that you are 'story telling' include:

The narrator talks about...

The story is about...]

17. Integrating quotes into sentences.

Rules for quotations:

Integrating quotes into the sentence makes them grammatically correct. (Hint: imagine you have removed the quotation marks, if the sentence still makes sense, then it is correct). Often, if you just add a bit of context before the quote, it will help you introduce it. [SEP]

Before: The hyperbole "swept its paths, ten times around the world" illustrates Feliks' connectedness with his garden.[SEP]

After: Through the hyperbole depicting how Feliks "swept its paths ten times around the world", the composer illustrates Feliks' connection with his garden.

[Note: notice how by adding a little bit about **who** or **what** this quote relates to in the text, it can be integrated better. If the quotation marks are now removed, the sentence still makes sense.]

Things to remember when quoting:

- **Never start a sentence with a quote.**
- **Do not quote in clumps. Quotes should only be a maximum of one or two sentences long.**
- **Never make a quote its own sentence.**
- **Do not put quotes back to back.**

Before: "It was hard for me to believe that I, plain old Ellie, nothing special about me, middle of the road in every way, had probably just killed three people. I felt that my life was permanently damaged, that I could never be normal again, that the rest of my life

would just be a shell." This **quote** is said by Ellie as she states her feelings towards her guilt.

[Note: notice how this is difficult to follow as it is too long, and does not make grammatical sense.]

Corrected: Ellie's guilt is demonstrated as she states, "I felt that my life was permanently damaged... that the rest of my life would just be a shell". This **metaphor** compares Ellie's feelings to an empty "shell", thus portraying the disturbing impacts of war.

[Note: cutting this quote down and integrating it into the sentence to illustrate a point makes it a lot more sophisticated. Also, the word 'quote' in your explanations prevents fluency. Instead, replace the word 'quote' with the actual name of the *technique* you are using.]

19. Do not repeat quotes, or paraphrase what they say.

Before: This is shown in the quote "we've only got one world" telling us that if we destroy our world then there will be nothing left and no place for us to live.

[Comment: this sentence simply repeats what the quote says, it does not analyse it.]

Corrected: The text exemplifies how people are united despite differences in race and culture. This is exemplified as the composer states that "we've only got one world", as the example allows the responder to feel connected by the fact that humans all share "one world" in common.

Sample paragraph and corrections - Belonging

Question. How is the experience of belonging or a lack of belonging illustrated in Skrzynecki's poem "Migrant Hostel"?

Pre-edit:

Throughout Peter Skrzynecki's poem "Migrant Hostel", exclusion is illustrated through the migrants who are unable to adapt to their new surroundings. Alliteration is used to create sound "partitioned off by night/by memories of hunger and hate". This technique emphasises their "hate and hunger". To create a sense of instability, juxtaposition is used by placing two opposing words together, "comings and goings". This provides the reader with knowledge of the migrants not having a safe haven or a stable home. Homing pigeons are associated with being trained to find their home; similes are used to show that the migrants are able to find a sense of home by seeking out similar nationalities within the hostel. "Nationalities sought out/each other instinctively/like a homing pigeon." The migrants' disconnection from the rest of society is symbolised through, "a barrier at the main gate/sealed off the highway". It often takes time for someone to feel comfortable and their past can regularly interfere with how they belong with the wider community.

Corrections/feedback:

Original: Throughout Peter Skrzynecki's poem "Migrant Hostel", exclusion is illustrated through the migrants who are unable to adapt to their new surroundings.

How it can be improved: Each topic sentence needs to highlight a key concept that will be explored in the paragraph (not yet mentioning the actual text). For example, "When social barriers hinder one's ability to belong within society, this can result in feelings of distress or instability. This is represented in Skrzyencki's "Migrant Hostel".

Original: Alliteration is used to create sound "partitioned off by night/by memories of hunger and hate". This technique emphasises their "hate and hunger".

How it can be improved: Notice that "alliteration is used to create sound" is not an effective explanation of the technique. What sound is created and why? Replace "create sound" with "create a sense of instability and struggle as they were "partitioned off by night/by memories of hunger and hate" ". This technique emphasises their "hate and hunger". Ensure you explain the *effect* of any technique you use (Note: further guidance

on analysing the effectiveness of techniques can be found in Chapter 2). Here, you need to explain the effect of the alliteration, or the repetition of the harsh 'h' consonant. Suggestion: reiterates the pain they experienced.

Original: To create a sense of instability, juxtaposition is used by placing two opposing words together, "comings and goings". This provides the reader with knowledge of the migrants not having a safe haven or a stable home. Homing pigeons are associated with being trained to find their home; similes are used to show that the migrants are able to find a sense of home by seeking out similar nationalities within the hostel. "Nationalities sought out/each other instinctively/like a homing pigeon." The migrants' disconnection from the rest of society is symbolised through, "a barrier at the main gate/sealed off the highway". It often takes time for someone to feel comfortable and their past can regularly interfere with how they belong with the wider community.

How it can be improved: Sentences need to connect with each other. Using the quote, "nationalities sought out/each other instinctively/like a homing pigeon" as a stand-alone sentence doesn't illustrate or further your analysis of the text. As a general rule to paragraph structure, start with your main point. For example, "In the poem, the migrants illustrate the inherent human desire to belong, as they seek out commonalities with those around them."

Second, talk about technique: "This is illustrated through a simile detailing how "nationalities sought out each other instinctively, like a homing pigeon."

Finally, talk about the effect: "Here, this simile compares the migrants to a "homing pigeon" who are innately training to find their homes in order to exemplify that belonging is a human need. Although developing a home after several years, the migrants' disconnection from the rest of society is symbolised through, "a barrier at the main gate/sealed off the highway". It often takes time for someone to feel comfortable and their past can regularly interfere with how they belong with the wider community. You can be a bit more contextually specific towards the fact that they're in Australia – during the White Australia Policy. In sum, the last sentence should link to the question.

Final paragraph after edit:

When social barriers hinder one's ability to belong within society, this can result in feelings of distress or instability. This is represented in Skrzynecki's "Migrant Hostel," where alliteration is used to create a sense of instability and struggle, as they were "partitioned off by night/by memories of hunger and hate". This technique emphasises their "hate and hunger", as the use of the harsh 'H' consonant reiterates the pain they experienced. To further create a sense of instability, juxtaposition is used by placing two opposing words together, "comings and goings". This provides the reader with knowledge of the migrants not having a safe haven or a stable home. In addition, the migrants illustrate the inherent human desire to belong, as they seek out commonalities with those around them. This is illustrated through a simile detailing how "nationalities sought out each other instinctively, like a homing pigeon." Here, this simile compares the migrants to a "homing pigeon" who are innately training to find their homes in order to exemplify that belonging is a human need. Although developing a home after several years, the migrants' disconnection from the rest of society is symbolised through, "a barrier at the main gate/sealed off the highway". The context of Australia at this time is palpable in the poem here, as the segregating impact of White Australia policy still remains for the migrants. Thus, the instability and distress that can result from an individual's inability to belong is exemplified in the poem.

Sample paragraph and corrections – Discovery

Question: Discuss the central ideas evident in the "Discovery Channel" advertisement "Boom de ya da" and how these are depicted visually in the text. (200 words)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NVP4l2dSyYw

Pre-edit:

Discovery is when something is found out that wasn't previously known. The documentary shows many things about discovery. Firstly it's a text that has lots of different discoveries in it. And also show's how happy and excited people are when they disavower things. I think that discovery and exploring are great things that people should do alot of to learn about the world. This is shown in the documentary through the earth, the song, and the different things the people discovery. Its also shown through the fact that its the "Discovery Channel". The African man who's really excited when he says "Boom de ya da" also echoes the happiness that can be had when people discover things because he's really cheerful. The different discoveries that can be made are also symbolised through the quotes "I love tornados" "I love hot lava" since the repetition of these symbolic ideas represent the love the people have towards finding things out and discovering new things and also how lots of different ways people can make discoveries is shown which is also true when there's another scene where the man jumping from the plane into the ocean where the shark is also says that discovery's can be dangerous and people can risk their lives to discover different things. "I love the whole world no place I'd rather be" is another thing they mention in the text. Discovery is a really important idea and the film provides a telescope into the world of the discovery channel and what sort of adventures people have when they discover things.

Corrections/feedback:

Original: Discovery is when something is found out that wasn't previously known. The documentary shows many things about discovery. Firstly its a text that has lots of

different discoveries in it. And also show's how happy and excited people are when they discover things.

How it can be improved: Do not just generically define what discovery is. Be specific right from the outset by explaining exactly what idea of discovery you will be exploring in the text. For example, "The process of discovery is one which involves excitement and wonder; often resulting in an expanded view of one's self and the world around them." Also, do not abbreviate in formal essays – 'its' needs to change to 'it is'. The line, "The documentary shows many things about discovery" is a vague statement. *What* does it show about discovery? Also, vary your vocabulary – there are many words you can replace with the word 'show'. There is a misused apostrophe in the word "show's"; there is no ownership to indicate how happy and excited people are when they discover things.

Original: I think that discovery and exploring are great things that people should do alot of to learn about the world. This is shown in the documentary through the earth, the song, and the different things the people discovery. It's also shown through the fact that its the "Discovery Channel".

How it can be improved: Do not use first person in formal essays. The discovery and exploring exploration are "great things" is too generic. Remember, you need to be specific and convey how your point is illustrated in the documentary. What is actually great about them? Note that "alot" is actually two words. Again, vary your vocabulary. Words such as 'revealed', 'explored' or 'highlighted' creates a more sophisticated tone to your essay. You also need to detail the techniques the film uses and their effect. For example, what film shots, music, or lighting reveal aspects of discovery? Are these discoveries scientific, intellectual or exploratory?

Original: The African man who's really excited when he says "Boom de ya da" also echoes the happiness that can be had when people discover things because he's really cheerful. The different discoveries that can be made are also symbolised through the

quotes "I love tornados" "I love hot lava" since the repetition of these symbolic ideas represent the love the people have towards finding things out and discovering new things and also how lots of different ways people can make discoveries is shown which is also true when there's another scene where the man jumping from the plane into the ocean where the shark is also says that discovery's can be dangerous and people can risk their lives to discover different things. "I love the whole world no place I'd rather be" is another thing they mention in the text. Discovery is a really important idea and the film provides a telescope into the world of the discovery channel and what sort of adventures people have when they discover things.

How it can be improved: ==The line, "==The African man ==who's really excited== when he says "Boom de ya da" also echoes the happiness that can be had when people ==discover things" is== great! But end the sentence with "when people make discoveries"versus "==because he's really cheerful" as it== is unnecessary.

Avoid using the word 'quotes'. Instead say 'lyrics' to expand on the lines "I love tornados" and "I love hot lava" in the anaphora. Be careful with your choice of words and grammar. It's more sophisticated to say "the repetition of these symbolic ideas represent the love the people have towards exploring the natural world", as opposed to " ...towards finding ==things out".== "==Discovery's" isn't about ownership here; "discoveries" is the correct word.==

Be wary of extremely long and complicated sentences. Break it up into a few sentences and then work on improving the actual wording and vocabulary. The line, =="I love the whole world no place I'd rather be"== is starting a sentence with a quote. Make sure you integrate quotes into the sentence to illustrate the actual nature, experience or process of discovery. Also, don't use metaphors in formal writing as in "==Discovery== is a really important... as it ==provides a telescope".== Be literal: perhaps say, "provides insight into the world". Synonyms for discovery are really needed here to improve sophistication.

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Varying your terminology will make a big difference to your writing and prevent it sounding from being casual.

<u>Final paragraph after edit:</u>

The complex process of discovery is one that elicits a broad range of different experiences that can both enliven and challenge an individual. [Note how the key idea has been clearly stated]. In the Discovery Channel promotional clip "Boom De Ya Da", the invigorating nature of exploration is depicted in the opening long and close up shots of the astronauts staring at the Earth. [Here, a specific shot has been selected for analysis]. In the extreme long, wide-angle shot, the two astronauts are suspended in space's atmosphere, looking at a portion of Earth's surface that is included in the shot. In this image, the immensity of the earth is juxtaposed with the insignificant size of the men, symbolising the vastness of discovery available to individuals both on earth, and well as in space travel. [Clear visual examples have been used, and linked with specific ideas about discovery.] This shot cuts quickly to an extreme close up of the astronaut's shielded face which reflects the entire globe in his visor to reiterate the infinite possibilities that discovery can provide to explore and transform one's view of themselves and the world. [Again, the technique has been linked clearly back to a key idea of discovery]. In addition, the quick paced shots of different scenarios depicting discovery as well as the non-diegetic, fast tempo music generates a strong energy to the text to imply the liveliness and excitement that can result from the world of discovery. This is accentuated in the anaphora continued throughout the advertisement, where many different scientists and explorers state that "I love tornadoes … I love hot lava … I love the whole world" which implies the passion that is ignited in the human experience of new expeditions. Thus, the visual text depicts the expansive, transformative benefits of engaging in the process of discovery. [Last sentence links clearly back to the question].

Chapter 2 – How to use language techniques

Supporting film notes: https://vimeo.com/244952582

Before even starting a response to an essay or question, it is important to put together your quotes first. Ideally, decide on the key points for your argument, and then start collating the quotes that will support and illustrate those points.

For sophisticated responses, the quotes you select should <u>always</u> be language techniques. Many students have the misconception that it is the quantity of techniques and quotes that is necessary for a good response. However, higher band responses will have less examples, but engage with the *effect* of techniques in their explanations. This is key to building a strong argument.

You need to follow these steps to use quotes effectively:

1.   Identify the technique
2.   Using the definition of the technique, analyse the *effect* it has

Below are the definitions of techniques, an example and the effect of the technique.

Simile – method of comparison. Likening one thing to another using the words 'like' or 'as'.

Example: The stove glowed like the sun.

Effect: The effect of this simile is that by comparing the stove to "the sun", the composer generates an image of how bright and hot it is.

Metaphor – another method of comparison. Saying something IS something else.

Example: After finishing his whole meal so quickly, I decided that the boy was a pig.

Effect: By likening the boy to "a pig", he is depicted as messy and greedy.

[Tip for effectively analysing metaphors and similes. Follow these three steps:

1. What is being compared to what?
   - Answer: The boy is being compared to a "pig".
2. What are the qualities of the comparative object?
   - Answer: A pig is an animal usually likened to being greedy, messy and fat.
3. How does this create an image of the initial object or person?
   - Answer: It creates an image of the boy to be messy and greedy.

Motif – recurring metaphor or symbol. By repeating this metaphor or symbol, its importance as a key part of the text is emphasised.

Example: In a text such as Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, a motif used would be the "stars". Two examples from the play would be that Romeo and Juliet are referred to as "star-crossed lovers" (1: Prologue). Later in the play, Romeo also fears that there is "some consequence yet hanging in the stars" (1:4).

Effect: In the play, the stars represent fate, and since the reference to them is recurring, particularly in a negative manner, this emphasises the fact that Romeo and Juliet can not escape their doomed fates.

Alliteration – the repetition of consonant sounds, usually at the beginning of the words. [Hint: it MUST be the same sound – e.g. 'sad shimmer' is not alliteration.]

Example: Small spaces of silence (also known as 'sibilance' when the 's' sound is repeated.)

Effect: The effect of this might be to generate a peaceful image through the repetition of the smooth 's' consonant. With alliteration, the effect often depends on the context used.   Sometimes it's used to create a rhythm or enhance the harmonious flow of the writing. Other times, it could be creating dramatic impact. [Hint: Be very careful when attempting to use alliteration as a technique. It is a very easy technique to identify, but it is often a lot more difficult to explain the effect of it. Therefore, it is not always a recommended technique to choose.]

Assonance – the repetition of vowel sounds, usually within the words in a similar place.

Example: A stitch in time saves nine.

Effect: This technique often has a similar effect as seen in alliteration. Students often face a similar difficulty in explaining the effect, so just be careful with this.

Personification – giving living characteristics to non-living things or objects. The purpose of personification is to elevate the status of a particular object, making it a living presence.

Example: The trees whispered through the forest.

Effect: To elevate the status of the trees, giving them human characteristics to suggest that they are more than just an object; they are alive. This technique often demonstrates a strong connection between writer and the personified object. [Hint: think about why males often refer to their cars as 'she' or even give them names. This portrays the cars to be more than objects to them, it illustrates a relationship between the car and the person.]

Repetition – the repeated use of particular words create emphasis on the word or phrase.

Example: Alone, alone, all, all alone.

Effect: To place emphasis on the persona's alienation.

Onomatopoeia – words used to describe sounds.

Example: "bang", "crash"

Effect: To characterise the sound of the noise to enhance its dramatic effect.

Symbolism - when an image is used to represent ideas, themes or attributes.

Example: As I stared out the window, the last leaf dropped from the skeletal branch, settling gently on the cold, hard ground. I looked over at my grandmother, and knew she had now passed on.

Effect: The "skeletal" tree here is used to symbolise death.

Colour symbolism - colours are often used to symbolise the tone or atmosphere of a particular situation. There are a lot of notions about what colours symbolise, such as green representing envy, but stick to the colours below for English analysis.

White – represents innocence, purity, hope

Example: She wore a white dress at her wedding.

Effect: To symbolise the purity and innocence of the bride, traditionally being a symbol of virginity.

[Hint: with colour symbolism, make sure what the symbol actually matches with the tone of the situation in the text. For example, it doesn't make sense to suggest that white symbolises innocence and hope when everyone is wearing white at a funeral. Some cultures wear white at funerals, and in this situation white symbolises the death and purity - so be sure to match the situation with what you're trying to symbolise].

Black – represents death, evil, possibly depression

Example: Dim lighting used in a film which is a dark or dystopic movie.

Effect: dim lighting generates an ominous mood, symbolising the evil of the situation.

Red – Symbolises the human passions particularly such as love and anger. It may also symbolise something being wrong or violent/bloody.

Example: My blood boiled, as my cheeks heated to a burning red glow.

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Effect: To enhance the protagonist's emotions of anger.

Any other colours in English can basically be categorised as either light (positive) or dark (negative).

Example: In an image where yellow is used in the background.

Effect: By using the warm, yellow shading in the background, the composer creates an image of hope and optimism for the protagonist.

Imagery – conveys a scene or scenario through vivid description.

Example: She looked over the landscape, as the sun's rays shone brightly over the lush, green hills.

Effect: This imagery creates a vivid picture in the reader's mind, allowing them to experience the location along with the character.

Hint: If you use imagery correctly, it can be a very versatile technique. Just pick an appropriate adjective for the scene you are discussing, then put it in front of the word 'imagery'. For example:

If the scene in the text is happy or lively, you can say that 'lively imagery' or 'optimistic imagery' is used.

Effect: The effect of this may be to generate a vibrant atmosphere.

Other more mainstream examples of imagery are:

- Morbid imagery – description about death
- Natural imagery – description about nature
- Tactile imagery – description to do with touch
- Seasonal imagery - these are basic notions of symbolism revolving around seasons, but they are always contextual based on what is happening in the text.

Summer – symbolic of life, positivity

Example: I stood on the warm sand, feeling it crunch between my toes as the hot sun gently heated my shoulders.

Effect: To generate a warm, positive atmosphere and thus an optimistic view on whatever is taking place in the text at that moment. [Hint: Remember to consider the context of the situation. If the heat is oppressive or very strong, this may produce the opposite effect. It may create an overwhelming impact on the character or reader.]

Winter – symbolic of cold, death

Example: Now is the winter of our discontent. - (Shakespeare's Richard III 1:1)

Effect: This technique usually embeds a sense of sorrow within the scenario, often either alienating the reader or creating sympathy for a persona in the text. [Hint: once again, this depends on context. For example, if a text is describing Christmas during winter, a festive, comfortable atmosphere may be created if people are inside, from the cold, in front of a fire.]

Spring – symbolic of rebirth, new opportunities

Example: The cold had finally cleared, and I went to sit on the swing seat that had been gently warmed by the sun. Around me, a few flower buds had begun to form and I smiled. Soon, the whole garden would be breathing of life again.

Effect: Often suggests a new hope or optimism within the text.

Autumn – moving out of the warmth, towards winter

Example: The final coloured leaf detached itself from the skeletal branch.

Effect: Can signify the coming of death, or something coming to an end.

[Hint: autumn can be a beautiful season as the leaves change colour - so it can still represent something optimistic in a text.]

Cliché – a repeated or well-known phrase.

Example: Slow and steady wins the race.

Effect: The effect is that by using a well-known phrase or saying, the composer can resonate the moral with the audience: that patience will often reap more rewards that being hasty.

Contrast – two opposite things that are placed next to each other for a particular effect.

Example: Life is an alternate of light and dark at all times.

Effect: By using a contrasting image, the composer symbolises how life can be full of both opportunities, as well as difficulties.

Juxtaposition – positioning two things that are different close together. (Hint: doesn't necessarily need to be opposite.)

Example. In a text, if two characters have distinctly different characteristics from one another.

Effect: The effect of this may be to accentuate the differences between the two characters, perhaps highlighting the faults or good traits of one or the other.

Rhetorical question – questions that have an implied answer.

Example: The boy couldn't speak the language in this foreign country. So if he didn't talk to himself, who would he talk to?

Effect: The implied answer of 'no one' emphasises the alienation of the character, and their inability to communicate.

Tone: The emotions behind a text. The tone and atmosphere of a text are very similar. [Hint: similar to 'imagery', you can just put emotion in front of 'tone' e.g. happy, sad, tense, nostalgic, fearful etc.]

Example: "Sudden departures" left the migrants "wondering who was coming next" (Peter Skrzynecki, "Migrant Hostel").

Effect: The ambivalent tone here through words such as "sudden" and "wondering" generates an atmosphere of instability, suggesting the uncertainty faced by the migrants at the hostel.

Other examples of tone:

- Ambivalence: to have an uncertain attitude.
- Nostalgia: the desire for one to return to a prior time in their lives. Longing for, or missing, the past.
- Melancholy: sad, depressed.

Oxymoron – two words next to each other that are directly opposite for effect.

Example: "It's a bitter-sweet symphony that's life" (Lyrics: The Verve).

Effect: The oxymoron here enables an understanding of life to have both optimistic as well as difficult experiences.

Paradox – An idea that seems to contradict itself.

Example: "A gift designed to kill" ("How to Kill" Keith Douglas).

Effect: A gift is usually considered to be beneficial or positive. However, in being linked with something "designed to kill", the author suggests an unfortunate misconception has taken place in the protagonist's mind, as their perspective on the object as being a "gift" is now facilitating death.

Example 2: Women were "offered an ideal of femininity that undermined their potential truly to be women" (*Romulus, My Father* by Raymond Gaita).

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Effect: This contradiction implies that in this situation, women are denied the ability to develop feminine capabilities.

Satire – when an issue is mocked usually to make a social or political commentary.

Techniques of satire:

Irony – what happens is opposite to what is meant to happen or saying one thing but meaning the opposite. It usually contradicts what you would expect.

Example: "In the crowd of people, she felt completely alone."

Effect: This is ironic as although this person is surrounded by people and is not physically alone, this statement implies they are emotionally alienated. [Note: A situation could also be considered ironic. For example, if a very public figure wanted to sue the paparazzi for invading their privacy, this might be seen as ironic if they had chosen to have an extremely public profile. Princess Diana was often viewed as an example of this.]

Sarcasm – a cynical tone of voice where similar to irony, the speaker means the opposite of what they say.

Example: When it's terrible weather, if a person says "We're having great weather don't you think?"

Effect: In this example, the speaker's sarcastic tone will clearly indicate that they feel it is anything but good weather.

Stereotyping – making generalisations about a person or groups of people, classifying them with certain qualities without necessarily having a specific knowledge of the individual person or group.

Examples: Jewish people are good with money, people with glasses are smart.

Effect: By stereotyping, responders will often make their judgements of a character or situation based on preconceived notions.

Humour - using comedy or a comical situation. Often, when something is made humorous, it may also be to mock or challenge it.

Black humour - creating comedy through a morbid idea, such as death.

Example: "A little girl is reported to have died happily in hospital singing an advertising commercial" (Bruce Dawe).

Effect: Black humour is created through the image that a little girl "died happily" in the comfort of commercials as opposed to her family or friends. The effect of this is to illustrate the vast influence of commercialism in society which has led to the breakdown of relationships.

Hyperbole – exaggeration; to represent as greater than is actually the case; overstate.

Example: They were drunk with tiredness.

Effect: To exaggerate the character's fatigue.

Allegory – metaphorical story.

Example: "The boy who cried wolf."

Effect: To portray some kind of moral in the story. In this example, it is to portray that if a person complains something is wrong repeatedly as a trick or for attention, when they actually really do need help, no one will help them.

Anthropomorphism – Animals behaving as people or given human characteristics.

Example: A very famous example is George Orwell's *Animal Farm*. (Another example is the painting "Dogs Playing Poker" by C.M Coolidge).

Effect: Orwell takes personalities from real life such as Napoleon, and recreates them as animals such as pigs. This could be to suggest his view of their nature as being greedy and possibly selfish. Creating people as animals can also allow a

more innocent portrayal of human experiences that may be appropriate for children as well as adults, while still conveying the realities of human behaviour.

Allusion – reference (can also be subcatagorised into religious/biblical allusion).

Example: "…the serpent that did sting thy father's life now wears his crown" (William Shakespeare, Hamlet).

Effect: This biblical allusion likens the murderer of King Hamlet to a serpent or devil from the Garden of Eden. This exemplifies the profound evil of Claudius in murdering the king.

Intertextuality – referring to another text within a text.

Example: If a Shakespeare quote is used in another text. E.g. "Lady Macbeth was spotted, Ophelia unspotted; both came to sticky ends, but there's a world of difference" (Margaret Atwood, 'Spotty Handed Villainesses').

Effect: Here, Atwood is drawing on Lady Macbeth from Shakespeare's *Macbeth* as an example of a well-known "spotted" or evil woman. Conversely, Ophelia from Shakespeare's Hamlet represents a virtuous or metaphorically "unspotted" woman. Atwood uses these intertextual references to illustrate the historically opposing portrayals of women in literature as either being completely evil, or completely virtuous.

Diction – an effective selection of word choice to produce a particular effect.

Example: This photo was taken few miles away from the camp were thousands of Jews and other victims were being murdered (USHMM.org).

Effect: By intentionally selecting words such as "murdered", the composer generates sympathy for victims of the Holocaust and emphasises the immorality of the Nazis.

Anaphora – the repetition of a phrase after the end of clauses (e.g. after a punctuation mark). This is used especially in speeches.

Example: Paul Keating's "Unknown Soldier"; he often repeated the phrase, "We do not know".

Effect: The effect of this in speeches is to build up a rhythm or momentum with the responders, in this case to reiterate the sad reality of how little was known of the men that sacrificed their lives for their country.

Antithesis – when a parallel structure is used, but the second half of the sentence contradicts the first half.

Example: Had you rather Caesar were living and die all slaves, than that Caesar were dead, to live all free men? [Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*].

Effect: By using this contradictory statement, Brutus suggests Caesar's power would have led to the public's enslavement, while Caesar's death has secured their freedom. In doing so, he gains the support of the crowd by appealing to their human desire for autonomy.

Chapter 3 – Visual literacy: analysing films

A common mistake when analysing films is trying to cover too much of the film in a single paragraph or analysis. The trick to analysing film effectively is to focus on specific frames (a frame is any time you press pause on a shot), and how every part of the image creates meaning in some way. Ideally, you want to be able to freeze-frame only a few parts of the film (two or three) per paragraph analysis, and then use the below techniques to illustrate how meaning has been created.

In particular, markers want to see that you have an understanding of 'mise-en-scene'; all the elements that come together to create a frame. This includes camera angle, sound, blocking, lighting, and many elements listed below).

Film Techniques - vocabulary, definition and effect

Mise-en-scene: Every element that can be seen within the frame. This includes:

- Sound
- Colour
- Costume
- Make up
- Setting
- Lighting
- Character behaviour
- Movement

- Props
- Framing
- Camera angles
- Aspect ratio
- Choices of film stock
- Blocking
- Voiceover

Let's look at some of these elements in detail:

Sound

Sound is vital in creating the mood or atmosphere of a scene.

- Diegetic sound: natural sounds in the picture. Creates a sense of realism in the image.
- Non-diegetic sound: superimposed music or noises in the background; the type of music that creates atmosphere or emotion within a scene. Before deciding what emotion is created, you must clarify what the sound actually is.

To determine the atmosphere or tone created through sound, follow these two steps:

1. Decide whether the music is two out of the three following options:

    Pitch: high/low
    Volume: loud/soft
    Tempo: fast/slow

    Example: low, fast-paced music. Soft, slow paced music.

2. Link these to the atmosphere or mood it creates.

    Example: low, fast-paced music can create suspense in a scene. Soft, slow music can generate a romantic or peaceful atmosphere.

    [Hint: it will not be as effective to just say that the music in the scene creates tension, as you have not stated *how*. But by adding in how the pitch, volume and/or tempo actually generate this mood is more sophisticated.]

- Crescendo: a climactic part of the music. Can often signify a dramatic incident.
- Silence: even a lack of sound can be a technique. The effect is often to create emphasis on the words being spoken, or the pictures in the scene. Silence can even build tension such as if music is very loud and then stops suddenly.

<u>Lighting</u>

- Low-key lighting: sharp contrasts between light and dark. Often adds meaning through lighting certain areas. Creates a shadowy atmosphere which often builds tension and can heighten the viewer's sense of alienation.

- High-key lighting: bright, with low contrast between dark and light areas. Unlike low-key, it does not add any sort of tension to a scene. Instead, the shot is uniformly lit, which usually indicates a positive or optimistic atmosphere.

- Backlighting: illuminates an object or actor from behind, creating a silhouette or halo. Can be used to separate the object or person from the background.

- Soft and harsh lighting: can manipulate the audience's perception by making objects, people and environments look appealing or unattractive, soft or harsh, authentic or false. Harsh lighting can be used to elicit a negative reaction from the audience towards a character, object or setting. Soft lighting "softens" or reduces shadows, often imbuing a positive reaction from the viewer.

<u>Camera angles</u>

- Extreme close-up: this shot fills the frame with one detail, such as a character's hands or eyes, removing any focus on the background. Often used to build tension and draw the audience's attention on something in particular. Can be used to invade the personal space of a character to unsettle the audience.

- Close-up: this shot is used to draw the viewer's focus, to can convey more detail. Close-up shots, particularly of facial expressions, will enhance the impact of the emotion exposed on the face, enabling a connection between the viewer and person in the frame. If close-ups are deliberately avoided, it could be to create an emotional distance between the character and viewer.

- Medium-shot: a wider shot that displays more of the background, as well as the chest and stomach of a person in the frame. Useful when directors wish to draw focus on both facial features and body language simultaneously. With clever blocking, a medium-shot can display a character's power or importance relative to the other character's in the frame.

- Long-shot: the setting dominates the frame as characters appear in full body. Often used to draw attention to the character or object in relation to its surroundings.

- Extreme long-shot: can be used as an establishing shot to set the scene for the viewer. Very little detail can be seen as it is often used to give the audience a perspective on the surroundings.

- Tilted shot: camera is tilted on its axis, either left or right. Used to disjoint the viewer, build tension and create a sense of uneasiness.

- Reaction shot: a cut away shot, normally a close up, from the main point of action to display the reaction of a character. Displays the emotional reaction of characters. If a reaction shot is avoided, then the character's reaction is masked from the audience, thus potentially building suspense, mystery or even alienating the viewer from them.

- Tracking shot (Dolly shot): a smooth movement where the camera moves towards or away from the character through a space. If the tracking is fast, it creates excitement. If the tracking is slow, it can build tension.

- Point-of-view shot: the shot displays a character's perspective as if the camera is their eyes.

- Low-angle shot: camera looks up towards the character or a setting and thus establishes a sense of importance or power to the subject.

- High-angle shot: camera looks down towards a subject, establishing the subject's weakness or lack of power and importance.

- Panning: a pan shot is when the camera leads, not the subject. There are several types of panning, however most often panning is used to build to a climax as the camera searches through a space (surveying pan) or a fast pan can create a sense of urgency or imminent danger.

- The use of a hand-held camera: the camera produces an unsteady or jerky image. This can unsettle the audience or create an almost realistic feel to the setting. And it can also envelope the viewer into the action.

Editing

- Jump cut: an abrupt cut which is discontinuous on screen. Jars the audience as the viewer becomes aware of the camera. Can be used to portray an unrealistic film experience, rather than using common camera conventions that make it 'invisible' to the audience.

- Cutting rhythm: the rhythm is important as the faster the cutting between shots, the greater is the sense of urgency, excitement, tension or shock.

Blocking

Refers to the arrangement and the movement of the actors in relation to each other. The effect is usually to illustrate the position of the characters, such as whether they are in a position of power or inferiority.

Voiceover

Narration over the film's images; provides a personal connection with the individual speaking, as they are giving an insight into the situation, often from their own perspective.

<u>Application of film techniques in commonly studied movies:</u>

Romeo + Juliet **directed by Baz Luhrmann**

Prologue:

[Insert still shot 1:16]

- **Technique**: Long-shot of the Verona cityscape, depicting the two buildings 'Capulet' and 'Montague'.
  Effect: By establishing this shot to depict two corporate buildings of equal height, Luhrmann visually illustrates the families' similar status as "two households, both alike in dignity".

- **Technique**: In this setting, advertisements parodying 'Coca-Cola' have been altered to 'L'amour' (meaning love in French).
  Effect: The overwhelming presence of commercialism and corporate power is symbolised through the advertisements scattered on the screen, particularly the 'L'amour' billboard which suggests that in this modern context, love has been replaced by a greed for money and power.

- **Technique**: The background diegetic music is loud and fast paced.
  Effect: The effect of this music is to heighten tension, and increase the dramatic impact of the rivalry between the two families.

- **Technique**: Cutting rhythm.
  Effect: The fast cutting rhythm between shots here heightens the sense of urgency and tension, particularly between the feuding families.

[Hint: as you can see, if you select an effective still shot, you can get quite a few different techniques from the single frame which both demonstrate your understanding of the film's themes and ideas, as well as displaying knowledge of mise-en-scene].

Insert still shot 1:30-1.31

- **Technique**: Voiceover "two households, both alike in dignity". The prologue is narrated with a deep, serious voice.
  Effect: The effect of this voiceover is to narrate the story and establish the social standing of the two feuding families. The deep, serious voice used establishes a sombre atmosphere and suggests the severity of the conflict.

- **Technique**: Close-up shot of a newspaper article depicting the Capulet and Montague family trees headlined "Montague vs Capulet".
  Effect: In this close-up shot, the families are established as feuding with one another through the title of the article; made more significant through the large and bold text type used. In addition, the fact that the story has been printed in 'The Verona Beach Herald' illustrates the impact the violence and conflict has had on society, causing it to be a newsworthy issue.

- **Technique**: Background of fire. As the first shot of the newspaper article fades out, fire replaces its presence.
  Effect: Fire is used as a motif in the film to represent the heat, violence and aggression raging between the Capulet and Montague families; a rage which causes the suffering of so many and particularly their only children who take their own lives as a result.

- **Technique**: Low, steady music.
  Effect: Although the volume of the music has dropped in this scene, the tension between the families is still generated through the low pitch and steady beat of the music.

An example of a paragraph that may be written on this still shot from *Romeo + Juliet*:

Within the opening prologue of Baz Luhrmann's film *Romeo + Juliet*, the use of mise-en-scene facilitates an understanding of the conflict between the Capulet and Montague families. A voiceover narrates the prologue, establishing the social standing of the two feuding families as they are "two households, both alike in dignity". The deep, serious tone establishes a sombre atmosphere and suggests the severity of the conflict. Simultaneously, the close up shot of a newspaper article on the screen depicts the Capulet and Montague family trees and the rivalry between them. The headline of the newspaper "Montague vs Capulet" communicates the feud between the families, while the large, bold text type captures the viewer's attention and conveys the centrality of this conflict within the story. The fact that the story has been printed in 'The Verona Beach Herald' also exhibits the impact of this violence on society, causing it to be a newsworthy issue. In addition, when the newspaper shot fades out, only fire is visible on the screen to represent the nature of the dispute as being heated, violent and aggressive. The repetition of this symbol throughout the prologue, as well as the film, illustrates the vastly detrimental impacts this rage has had on society as well as members within the family. Music is a central feature of the prologue, and in this particular shot, it has a low pitch and steady pace. This creates an ominous atmosphere, enhancing the serious impacts of the battling families as well as heightening the tension within the scene; tension which is further enhanced through the fast cutting rhythm between shots.

Blade Runner directed by Ridley Scott

Below is an analysis of the extreme close up shot of an eye and extreme long shot of the city in the establishing scene of Ridley Scott's film *Blade Runner*:

Insert still shot:

- **Technique:** An extreme close-up shot.
  Effect: Scott focuses the viewer's attention a single eye, introducing this as a motif of humanity in the film. Within this shot, the urban Los Angles city skyline in 2019 is mirrored in the iris, revealing explosions spewing from factories below. These explosions symbolise the loss of humanity - something Scott warns may occur when society becomes obsessed with commercial and scientific progress.

- **Technique**: Extreme long-shot.
  Effect: Sets the scene of the film, establishing Los Angeles in 2019 as a post-apocalyptic, industrialised city where nature has been completely destroyed.

- **Technique:** Low, off tune harmonics.
  Effect: Creates an eerie atmosphere, enhancing the unnatural nature of this world.

- **Technique**: Harsh and low key lighting:
  Effect: There is no visible natural light, the city is portrayed in darkness; having only artificial lights illuminate the city below.

- **Technique**: Mise-en-scene.
  Effect: This variety of techniques combine to emphasise how the dystopic, futuristic portrayal of a city over run by artificial structures with a complete loss of the natural world has begun to impinge upon humanity.

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Life of Pi directed by Ang Lee and 'Discovery'

Below is a deconstruction of several short scenes in Ang Lee's *Life of Pi* in relation to the Area of Study: Discovery.

Sample topic sentence:

Spiritual discoveries can be fresh and intensely meaningful. An individual's spiritual discovery can vary according to personal, cultural, historical and social contexts and values.

Screen shot 17.27

After Pi discovering Christianity:

- **Technique**: Mid-shot behind Pi's head of him staring out into the river. In the foreground, the side of his face in a pensive expression is visible.
  Effect: This illustrates his curiosity for Christianity sparked through his visit to a church.

- **Technique**: Setting - the blurry water in the background.
  Effect: Represents his initial confusion for the religion and thus the experience of displacement, "the unknown" can have in the process of discovery.

- **Technique**: The metaphor, "but this son, I couldn't get him out of my head" emphasises his infatuation with understanding Christianity.
  Effect: The voiceover and metaphor illustrates his infatuation with wanting to understand the Christian faith.

- **Technique:** Vibrant, traditional sitar music played in the background.
  Effect: generates an energetic atmosphere to demonstrate his enthusiasm to discover this religion.

[Note: every technique is linked DIRECTLY to an idea or aspect of discovery. If it doesn't, take it out.]

Screen shots 17:52-17.54

- **Technique**: Panning, extreme close-up shot of Pi's hand touching the feet of Lord Vishnu's statue,

Effect: Illustrates his dedication to the Hindu faith.

- **Technique**: Irony, juxtaposition of the shot with the dialogue "thank you Vishnu, for introducing me to Christ".
- **Effect**: Humour is evident here as he still remains loyal to his original faith, yet discovers a way to collaborate it with other religion and thus discover different spiritual pathways.

- **Technique:** Soft lighting on his face, and calm tone of voice.
  Effect: this illustrates the peace Pi gains from having discovered an eclectic form of religion and spirituality.
- **Technique**: Dialogue and antithesis "I came to faith through Hinduism, and I found God's love through Christ".
  Effect: Reiterates his amalgamation of different religions, and the outcome of 'faith' and 'love' he gains from this harmony.

Students could also mention the resistance Pi faces in his discovery, yet when an individual rejects the expectations of society, they can discover new worlds of spirituality and understanding of their environment.

Examples of resistance from his environment:

Shot 20:30

- **Technique**: Dialogue; sarcasm "are you going to Mecca this year Mecca Swami Jesus".
  Effect: Illustrates the lack of acceptance his family have for his commitment to differing religions.

- **Technique**: Mid-shot of Pi sitting with his family, where through blocking, his father is positioned as dominant. This is enhanced through his low, authoritative tone of voice "you can't follow three different religions at the same time".
  Effect: Similar to above; it depicts Pi's discovery occurs outside of the 'typical' expectations of religion and spirituality, yet this path gives him much freedom and strength.

Topic sentence sample: Physical discoveries can enable the evolution of an individual's perceptions of themselves and the world, this is depicted through the primacy of survival.

[Hint: when developing a topic sentence, ensure you focus on a broad aspect of discovery that can be relatable to different situations, yet is still specific enough to link clearly with the text you engage with next. As you'll see in later chapters, this enables you to alter your response more effectively to a new question].

Pi's fear, and his discovery of courage

Screen shot 56:52

- **Techniques:** Low angle shot of Richard Parker aboard the life boat, placing Pi in an inferior position to him.
  Low-key lighting casting dark shadows on his face.
  Soft, eerie music creates an ominous, tense atmosphere.
  Effect: These techniques create a dangerous, threatening image of Richard Parker, instilling the audience with a sense of fear.

Screen shot 56:59

- Technique: Reaction close-up shot of Pi in tears, as he looks up at the tiger. His contracted body language.
  Effect: This shot and body language accentuate his fear, as his shoulders are hunched inwards and his distressed expression is palpable. In addition, the lighting accentuates the placement of tears on his cheeks, as well as his terrified facial expression.

- **Techniques**: Long-shot of Pi standing on the boat over Richard Parker who is struggling to stay afloat in the water beneath him.

  Pi's aggressive body language as he brandishes an axe to threaten and instil fear in the tiger

  Loud volume and intensity of Pi's screams at the tiger.

  Effect: This reflects a dramatic role reversal as Pi has discovered the courage to challenge Richard Parker, illustrating his transformation from a timid boy to a strong man with an inspiring will to survive.

Sample Film Analysis link (The Butterfly Circus)

https://vimeo.com/239035378

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1S66RxSRVIlTupID4M2qm_W2IWOQLXe7vTYDM9avDsWk/edit

Chapter 4 – How to answer 'Area of Study' questions

A significant amount of time can be lost if you've left the Area of Study questions to the last minute. Here are a few tips to ensure you get it done in time:

- Do not *passively read* texts. There is a difference between reading *passively* or *leisurely* and actually **analysing**. When you're analysing something, you will be *looking for* techniques and how they link to the topic rather than just reading a nice story or looking at a pretty picture! Begin this mental process **in your reading time**.

- While analysing the texts, **think ahead** and start planning for the final question.

  [Hint: You don't want to come to this final question (that always asks you to refer back to two or more texts again) and start re-reading the texts – it is a waste of valuable time.

  Do this by annotating your texts as much as possible when you first read them (in relation to identifying techniques and their links to the topic).

- Find techniques quickly and effectively. Your ability to do well in section one depends on the amount of techniques you can find in the texts that link to the topic. Make sure you are really familiar with all the mainstream techniques (as outlined in Chapter 2). However, you will not be marked higher for having more complex techniques; so do not waste time searching for complicated examples! Techniques such as 'repetition' may not always be the most sophisticated, but will get you easy marks in this section if you can effectively link them to the topic.

  A little trick: There are three techniques that are extremely simple to find and explain quickly for this section:

  1. Symbolism

Example: The road that extends off the page in the image.

Effect: The continuous and unlimited potential of humans to make discoveries.

2. **Imagery**

   For imagery, just select a word to *describe* the imagery to make it more effective and have it link to an effect.

   Example: Bright imagery, dull imagery, optimistic imagery, natural imagery.
   Effect: The bright imagery of the "light that illuminated the ocean before him" illustrates the opportunities of discovery and transformation that is available through exploration.

3. **Tone**

   This works for any emotion being communicated, so just put an emotion in front of 'tone' and it will be effective.
   Example: Pessimistic tone, excited tone, sorrowful tone. [Note: This works well for the topic discovery, since certain feelings will be associated with the experience and process of discovery.
   Effect: The excited tone in the statement "Wow! I can't wait to get started", illustrates the enlivenment that can be experienced in the process of discovery.

FAQs for Area of Study papers:

Q. *What order should I do the exam in?*

A. Do the section you are most comfortable with first. Do either the Essay or Unseen Text section first, because if you are running out of time, you can cut down on your creative writing piece without compromising it.

Q. How long should I spend on each section?

A. You should spend 40-45minutes on Section 1 (Unseen text), 30 minutes on Section 2 (Creative Writing) and 40-45 minutes on Section 3 (Essay). [Hint: you can still get a Band 6 result for writing a shorter creative piece, roughly 600-800 words, so don't waste time by spending more than 30 minutes on it.]

Q. Can I repeat the same quotes/examples in the final question of Section 1?

A. Ideally, you should not be repeating yourself in the final question; you should be using *new* techniques and examples. If you are running out of time, you may need to.

Final tips:

- Remember, for 'how' or technique based questions, one mark always quantifies to: a technique, an example, and an explanation about how this illustrates an idea about the topic and links back to the question.
- Practice, practice, practice before the exam! Ensure you can do ALL THREE SECTIONS under restricted exam conditions – with no peaking at notes! Do this at least three times before the proper exam to gain the confidence you need on the day of the actual exam.

Annotated Answers for the 2010 HSC Belonging Paper

Text one — Image

'Family Sculpture' by John Searles
© John Searles

Question 1 continues on page 4

(a) Describe how the image depicts the idea of belonging or not belonging to a family. (2 marks)

Commented [KS1]: How means you need to explain the techniques.

Commented [KS2]: Two techniques are needed for 2 marks.

The idea of belonging to a family is depicted through the unified body shapes of the family members, indicating similarities they share. However, a lack of belonging is clear through the contrasting colours; implying that a uniqueness still exists amongst the family members.

Text two — Nonfiction extract from *Like My Father, My Brother*

. . . I have this dream sometimes, that I am small and standing at a door. The door is orange and has a window above it. Through this window, which is slanted open, I can hear my brother and my father. I am outside the door. They are playing a game on the other side. I am calling out, trying to get their attention, but the door remains closed.

My brother often sold me his old clothes. He would dangle them in front of me and offer them at a price. There was never any negotiation. If I refused to pay the price, he threw them out with a mocking, regretful expression. I bought many of his clothes but they never sat on me properly. I was taller than him, but skinnier, and his clothes were already worn by the time they got to me, so that I looked like a lost scarecrow. I rarely saw myself wearing them though. I made a point of not looking at myself. Instead I focused on the way I had seen my brother wear them, the ease with which he moved inside his skin. I was fascinated by his surface.

All of my brother's friends used to call me by his name. They added *junior* at the end as if I were his son, and so I was known, but apart from the history we shared, I was more aware of our difference. My brother has a broad Australian accent that he had acquired within a year or so of our arrival, and he blended in at school in every way. My own accent still carried the thick, stumbling textures of Holland. I was much taller than the people around me and solitary.

My brother could pick up any sort of sporting equipment and act like he had been using it for years and he had an easy contempt for those who didn't have that natural ability.

When he was eighteen he said to me, 'Have you ever actually stopped to *look* at yourself?'

There was such derision in his tone that I flew into a rage. I described in great detail how he had always put me down, how he had oppressed me, made my life hell despite the fact that I had only ever admired him. He turned white, as if all of this was news to him. After that, he'd sometimes find ways of praising me. He'd tell me that I was better with words than he was, that I was the clever one.

I was used to admiring my brother because it was all that I had ever seen other people do . . .

MICHAEL SALA

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(b) " ...I was more aware of our difference." Explain the reader's relationship with his brother. (**2 marks**)

The reader's relationship with his brother is one of admiration and resentment. The admiration he has for his brother is evident through juxtaposition, as although his "brother has a broad Australian accent", the persona's "accent still carried the tick, stumbling textures of Holland". In addition, the persona's angry tone indicates his resentment for his brother, as "he had always put me down" he "had oppressed me". Thus, the persona admires his brother, but feels excluded from him.

Commented [KS8]: You need two examples here. Although they're not explicitly asking for techniques, it can be safer to still use them.

Commented [KS9]: Give two things to describe their relationship since it's two marks.

Commented [KS10]: Idea.

Commented [KS11]: Technique.

Commented [KS12]: Example.

Commented [KS13]: Technique.

Commented [KS14]: Idea.

Commented [KS15]: Example.

In families, is nothing private? Too much is private. Too much cannot be spoken. Too much hangs on whose version prevails . . .

In Sydney I have a friend . . . She has sky-blue eyes and the loveliest sun blessed hair. And although she looks nothing like me, there have been times when we've been asked if we're sisters . . . She is the same age as Phoebe, but while Phoebe remains for ever a little sister across an impenetrable rift of experience, Beth and I are of one skin; there's not a sliver of difference between us. When I consider that I've known her for less than ten years I feel a little faint . . . as if I can no longer imagine the life I lived before, a world without the most perfect of sisters.

Beth has a sister of her own but, as with May and Phoebe and me, their present is hobbled on childhood narratives, ancient rivalries and expulsions. With real sisters friendship must always be struggled for, and on those few occasions when the cog between us slips, I breathe with the shallowest of breaths and barely sleep until all is restored and the tiny lines around her eyes smooth out again and she tells me her secret jokes . . .

May and Phoebe say that while I felt expelled and exiled, they felt abandoned and bereft. They say I left them behind; they say they lost me, their big sister, gone without them. They were stuck at school with the fragments of our parents' marriage waiting for them in the holidays, while I crossed the world to a country where even the moon is upside down. I had a life brimming over with sparkling stories which I sent to them on the back of postcards of shining harbours and bright reefs. They had drizzle, and guinea pigs to bury, and dogs to drag out of the river. But I say they grew up to each other and with each other. They know their way around streets and lanes that are strange to me; and of the three of us it is they who come closest to being friends. I am an exotic traveller whose return is looked forward to and invariably disappoints.

It is Beth, not May or Phoebe, who understands my exile. It's not that my sisters don't understand being squeezed out; that's the problem, we all understand it far too well . . . But I say I was the one who crossed the world and must cross it again to be with them. Was that what I wanted? I am the one for whom return is repeated but never complete, so that the grief of exile is felt not in absence, but in the presence of those to whom I cannot be restored. Is that what I wanted?

All this Beth knows, and knowing it we need barely speak of it, though it is to her that I turn when the ground slips, just as she turns to me when it happens to her and blood sisters confront each other in their mismatched memories. But at the time, when May, Phoebe and I face each other across the flood plain of our incomprehension, I turn away wounded. It's only to Beth I can say that we represent to each other the paths, taken and not taken; no wonder it's difficult.

DRUSILLA MODJESKA

(c) "It is Beth, not May or Phoebe, who understands my exile." How does this text portray friendship as an alternative source of belonging? (3 marks)

The text portrays friendship as an alternative source of belonging through repetition, metaphor and simile. Through the repetition that in families "too much is private. Too much cannot be spoken", the persona emphasises her inability to communicate with her family and thus the lack of belonging experienced. However, the metaphor comparing her and her friend Beth to be "of one skin" exemplifies the unity and understanding between the two friends. In addition, the simile that she feels "as if I can no longer imagine the life I lived" before Beth was in her life, also illustrates the connection and dependency between the friends which she does not share with family.

Commented [KS16]: Although listing techniques isn't necessary, saying the techniques you're using will keep you on track as well as clearly showing the marker that you have the three techniques for three marks.

Text four — Poem

Looking in the Album

Here the formal times are surrendered
to the camera's indifferent gaze: weddings,
graduations, births and official portraits taken
every ten years to falsify appearances.
Even snapshots meant to gather afternoons
with casual ease are rigid. Smiles
are too buoyant. Tinny laughter echoes
from the staged scene on an artificial
beach. And yet we want to believe
this is how it was: The children's hair
always bore the recent marks of combs;
that trousers, even at picnics, were always
creased and we travelled years with the light
but earnest intimacy of linked hands or arms
arranged over shoulders. This is the record
of our desired life: Pleasant, leisurely on vacations,
wryly comic before local landmarks, competent
auditors of commencement speakers, showing
in our poses that we believed what we were told.
But this history contains no evidence
of aimless nights when the wilderness of ourselves
sprang up to swallow the outposts of what
we thought we were. Nowhere can we see
tears provoked by anything but joy. There
are no pictures of our brittle, lost intentions.
We burned the negatives* that we felt did not give a true
account and with others made this abridgement of our lives.

VERN RUTSALA

* 'We burned the negatives' = *destroyed the original images*

(d) "This is the record of our desired life." Explore the speaker's attitude to the family photo album as a record of belonging. (3 marks)

The speaker's attitude to the family photo album is one of resentment, as he feels it represents a false image of the family as belonging together; conveyed through personification, listing and a sorrowful tone. The personification of the "camera's indifferent gaze" indicate that even an inanimate object that is given living characteristics can see the disunity or 'indifference' between the family. This attitude is continued through listing, as photographs only depict the family being "pleasant, leisurely on vacations, wryly comic". Here, accumulative listing emphasises the many times where they falsely appear happy, therefore continuing his resentful attitude towards this. However, their true lack of connection is clear through the sorrowful tone as "tears" are "provoked" in reality where no camera is present.

Texts one, two, three and four - Image, nonfiction extracts and poem

(e) Analyse the ways distinctive perspectives of family and belonging are conveyed in at least TWO of these texts.   (5 marks)

Distinctive perspectives of family and belonging are conveyed through the nonfiction extract and the poem. The nonfiction extract conveys how connections can be shared more strongly with friends than with family; a distinctive perspective since typically family is considered to have stronger bonds than friends. The use of isolating imagery repeated by both the composer and her sisters illustrates the distance between them, as "I felt expelled and exiled, they felt abandoned and bereft". In contrast, the belonging she experiences with Beth is clear through the statement that, "it is to her that I turn when the ground slips". Through this metaphor, a comparison is drawn between the difficulties the composer experiences and the ground "slipping", indicating that she gains support from her friendship with Beth. Thus, her connection with her friend is distinctive, as it is stronger than the one she has with her sisters.

The poem also illustrates distinctive perspectives of family by suggesting that family portraits represent only a false vision of happiness and belonging, while in reality, the persona does not have these connections. The specific reference to photos being taken "every ten years to falsify appearances" creates a perception of the photos as clinical, taken at organised times to create a favourable representation of the family. Accumulative listing illustrates all the many happy experiences in the photos, being "pleasant, leisurely on vacations, wryly comic before local landmarks". Yet this is ironic as these are not happening in reality, but only in the photos. These false family images are juxtaposed to reality, where the composer refers to "aimless nights" where "tears provoked anything but joy". Thus, a distinctive perspective of family is evident here as the lack of belonging experienced within the family unit is hidden within family portraits.

Consequently, both these composers effectively illustrate a distinctive perspective of family and belonging.

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Commented [KS23]: This answer needs to be a 'mini' extended response. Still stick to the rule of one example/ technique = one mark. You'll need two techniques for one text, three for the second.

Commented [KS24]: Don't call it text three – name it by its text type.
No need to say the techniques you're using for this question.

Commented [KS25]: Link to the question.

Commented [KS26]: Technique.

Commented [KS27]: Idea.

Commented [KS28]: Example.

Commented [KS29]: Link to the question.

Commented [KS30]: Having this 'effect' here means that the example has not been entirely repeated from the previous question (d), as irony makes it different. But try not to repeat examples.

Supporting film link: https://vimeo.com/238590175

Writing creatively can be an experience once you learn the tips and tricks for generating a story idea and fleshing it out in such a way that conveys convincing imagery and emotions.

1. Coming up with an idea

What can be frustrating about creative writing, however, are the two seemingly contradictory statements:

    1. Don't write about something you can't relate to; try to write about personal experiences, and

    2. Don't write about 'teen issues' or school.

It might seem ridiculous when you're at school and many of your experiences have revolved around being a student!

So, if you don't have a story idea you can really relate to, or an engaging, authentic narrative to write about, here's a great tip:

Do some research on an historical persona, event, or someone that has actually experienced something that you would like to write about. Many writers even go and experience what they will be writing about, such as visiting an area they will be describing, or speaking to or reading about stories of interesting people that have actually met or know about. You just need a story that is relatable and realistic for a good narrative. Being simplistic or uninformed about a situation or event will make your story unrealistic.

An example of this for 'Discovery':

- A story on Galileo Galilei who made discoveries that supported heliocentrism, or the notion that the earth and planets revolve around the sun – a highly

controversial proposition during his period where it was considered that the Earth was at the centre of the Universe.

- A story on the scientist Marie Curie who discovered radiation.

[Hint: no realistic scenario is ever a cliché, as each real experience is unique. So still stay away from 'school stories' as much as possible, but the more real the story is, the better it will be.]

2. Plotting your idea

- When plotting your story, you need to keep it as simple as possible.

- Define three key scenes. Keep the amount of events to a minimum so you can fill up the rest of your writing with description. Restrict physical movement so you can focus on the imagery.

- Watch your word count. It is best to aim for around 600-800 words so that you can write your story effectively within 30 minutes. [Hint: good creative stories do not need to be long to attain a Band 6.]

- Use flashbacks if you'd like to demonstrate a lapse of time.

- Throw your reader straight into the scene; don't spend time introducing the story. The most effective way to begin a narrative is to establish the setting (and the way you describe it will enable an understanding of mood or atmosphere).

Sample story scenes:

A very simple example of how to plot a narrative is the following story about a son going to see his elderly mother who has had an operation due to a serious health problem:

Scene 1 - around 200 words

Establish setting in the hospital. Make the setting unfriendly and alienating. The smell could be chemical and sterile, the nurses and doctors bustling past focused on their tasks with no eye contact made. Persona or man could be standing outside a door, contemplating the closed door before them. Describe his fear of opening it.

Scene 2 - around 200 words

Flashback to the man receiving a phone call about his mother. He explains what has actually happened to her. Describe how the room changes and his world alters upon receiving the phone call.

Scene 3 - around 100-200 words

Back to the door in the hospital; the man is gathering strength to open the door. Character feels the cool metal against the palm of his hand. Heart beating. Slowly turns the knob. Sees his mother in the bed, perhaps goes to her and places her limp hand in his.

Finish.

Example of a plot for Marie Curie in relation to 'Discovery':

Scene 1 – around 200 words

Marie Curie lying in a bed, in France, suffering from the poisonous effects of leukaemia. For example, common physical effects of leukaemia include: fever or chills, persistent fatigue, weight loss, easy bleeding or bruising, tiny red spots on the skin. [Hint: for assistance on describing things in a realistic manner, looking up images of it can be useful.]

Scene 2 – around 200 words

A scene where Curie is awarded the Nobel Prize for her discovery of radium and polonium in France. Back then, the dangers of these elements were largely unknown, and the discovery she made was considered only positive and also amazing for a woman and foreigner.

OR

Marie Curie working tirelessly in her laboratory making the discovery.

Scene 3 - 100-200 words

Curie back in her room, perhaps looking at her 'Nobel Diploma' reading 'MARIE SKLODOSKA CURIE'. She had intended to cure cancer, but was far from it.

Finish.

[Hint: it's evident there are strong themes of discovery in this story. It has a strong historical foundation, but plenty of room to be creative in your writing as well.]

3. Writing descriptively

When writing a story, show; don't tell the story. What does this mean? Imagine you're an actor in your story. As the person experiencing the story and feeling what the character(s) feel, be as descriptive as possible (that is, show an image) when detailing what is happening. Pretend you are behind a camera writing about what you see in a way the reader can see it - with emotion, colour or anything else that is central to that scene. Starting with the actions that display emotions is a good start. Below are a few examples to illustrate some emotions.

Sadness:

An example of 'telling' sadness would be you writing 'I felt sad' or 'I feel depressed'. These statements are not effective because they do not create any image in the reader's

mind. So, imagine how you would behave if you actually were sad. If you literally acted this out, here are some examples of what you might do:

- Head down
- Eyebrows furrowed
- Tears in your eyes
- Shoulders slumped

Once you've got these images, then you can get a bit more creative describing them.

An image that displays sadness:

"My chin rested limply on my hand, as I stared to the ground and saw a salty tear drop from my eye splash in a small puddle on the ground."

[Hint: See how you don't need to be told this person is sad? You can just understand it from their body language. Similarly, we can often just tell how a person feels by looking at them, so describe what you see that indicates how they feel.]

Anger:

Dramatic actions you might take to display anger:

- Redness of face, hot cheeks
- Clenched jaw
- Teeth grinding
- Twitching temples
- Tensed eyebrows
- Tight fists

An image that displays anger:

"Listening to his sharp words, I felt blood flow into my cheeks. My fingers slowly curled together, forming a tight fist."

[Tip: sometimes one or two images is enough, don't overdo it. Putting too many can seem forced or unrealistic.]

Excitement:

Dramatic actions you might take to display excitement:

- Posture straight
- Head up
- Grinning
- Heart thumping

An image that displays excitement:

"I listened eagerly on the other end of the telephone, as the news spilled through my mother's voice into my ear. My heart thumped rapidly in my chest, and as I looked in the reflection of myself in the glass before me; the grin on my face spreading from ear to ear."

Using the five senses: smell, sight, taste, touch and sound

Creating the five senses can formulate a very powerful atmosphere or help create the tone of your writing. Again, the more senses you can evoke in your writing, the more vivid and alive the story will be for your reader.

Smell:

Let's say you were tense, standing in a hospital and concerned about the health and wellbeing of a friend or family member. An effective use of smell could portray an image of hostility, alienation or discomfort.

For example: As I stood at the door of her ward, the sterile scent seeped through my nostrils; the stench of methylated spirits dizzying my senses.

Sound:

To create a peaceful atmosphere say at a beach, you might describe the sound of the waves.

For example: "Sitting on the powdery sand, the gentle crash of waves before me soothed my mind. The ocean breeze hummed softly in my ears."

Taste:

If you'd like to create a sense of belonging somewhere, such as at home, taste could be used here.

For example: "Biting into the silky pasta infused with tomato, basil and spices invigorated my senses; the texture and flavours bursting in my mouth. It was the taste I had missed for so long. The taste of home."

Touch:

To indicate that a character has changed, you could use touch to achieve this.

For example: "I grazed my fingertips over the lines now etched deep into my forehead. The once smooth, supple skin had hardened; now calloused and thin as paper."

Using language techniques to generate an image

In the examples above, there are several language techniques that have been used:

"The ocean breeze was humming lightly in my ears."

Language technique: Personification. This gives the breeze living characteristics to enhance the persona's connection with it and their natural surroundings.

"The once smooth, supple skin had hardened; thin as paper yet calloused and rough."

Language technique: Simile. "Thin as paper" creates an image of frailty, in this case to exemplify old age and fragility.

[Hint with techniques: exaggeration is often a technique which, if used incorrectly, can jar the flow and realism of the writing.]

Example of ineffective exaggeration: "I stormed into my room at a fast and tempered pace. I busted open the door as if I was doing a F.B.I raid on a drug dealer who was wanted in the whole country.

[Note: the reason this simile is ineffective is because it doesn't really give much of an image in the reader's mind. It also appears melodramatic.]

Corrected: "Storming to my room, I flung the door open, grabbed the inside handle, and violently slammed it behind me with all my strength. I smiled with satisfaction as the door smashed into its frame, echoing loudly throughout the house like a terrible bolt of thunder.

[Note: comparing the sound through a simile to a "bolt of thunder" is a much more realistic image, creating a sense of drama, but not being melodramatic.]

Other tips for creative writing:

1.   Minimise your use of dialogue.

Students often end up spending too much time on dialogue or conversations in their narratives, and not enough time on description. This is not ideal when you want to do a 600-800 word narrative. Plus, when using dialogue, you're not describing anything or creating an image in the reader's mind. A way to do this could be to reflect on a conversation, rather than directly write it, this way you could include description too:

For example: He told me in an icy tone that I was no longer welcome here.

2.   Attempt to write in past tense.

There is nothing worse in a narrative than taking away the realism of the story by confusing your tenses. I've found that writing in past tense is the safest and least likely to get confused. But you should play around with adapting your story from first to third person, and present to past tense to link to the stimulus if necessary.

3.   Integrate a motif.

Having a key symbol or motif in your narrative is often very effective. Usually this works for an object (such as a childhood blanket, a pet or a place).

"Once my father was bushwalking and found a rainbow lorikeet on the floor of the bush track. It had been kicked out of its nest because it was not able to develop its wings properly. This is 'the survival of the fittest' in the animal world. My dad wrapped the bird (who was most likely to die) in his shirt and brought it home. It became our pet, but was never able to fly."

Incorporating something simple like this into a story can be really effective. For example, it can be used to have a character illustrate their feeling of weakness or alienation.

"When I was eleven, I was bushwalking and came across an abandoned birds nest. It was strewn across the path, a cluttered ball of sticks and bark. Curiously, I made my way over to the nest, discovering an injured bird. An infant; the bird's wings were not fully developed. It limped pitifully, trying to climb out of the labyrinth of twigs. But it was futile. I knew it would die if I left it there. Dad, of course, was furious. He said that the bird was deserted by its family for a reason and that I should have left it there. He thought that it was nature's way of weeding out the weak. Just like me, I thought."

4. Although students are often frustrated with the level of natural subjectivity involved in marking creative writing (think about how many critics will like a book, and how many will hate the same exact book), as long as you have the elements of plot and description discussed here, you can be guaranteed a solid Band 5 or 6 result. But make sure you hand as many narratives into the teacher for marking as possible, just to ensure that if they have different ideas about what you should be writing, you can adjust your work accordingly.

5. Make sure there's some sort of conflict or difficulty in your story. Completely happy stories are not particularly engaging.

1. You need to make sure you have at least two or three good ideas or plots constructed in preparation for your creative section in exams. You might like to create one key character, then develop a couple of different story ideas around them.

2. Again, do not make them too long. Having around 600 words is ideal. This will allow you the space to modify your story and add things to fit in with the stimulus given.

3. When they give you a stimulus, trying to integrate it into a motif is the most effective way of incorporating the stimulus.

For example, in 2009, the HSC stimulus was:

"Human beings, like plants, grow in the soil of acceptance, not in the atmosphere of rejection."

Integrating a plant as a motif into the story would be really effective here.

> For example: If a person feels alienated, they might compare themselves to a plant, wilting in the soaring hot sun, slowly dying away. However, if the person attains a sense of belonging in the story, they could liken the connection they've achieved to refreshing water, nourishing them as if they were a dying flower being rejuvenated by the moisture rain brings.

So, your link to the stimulus must be clear, and also used **in a meaningful way** to get high marks. Simply slapping it on the beginning or end of your narrative without it having much connection to your story will not be effective. Also, make sure you link to the stimulus clearly two or three times throughout the response (which is why making it into a motif is most effective).

Chapter 6 – Writing an essay under exam conditions

The key to making essay writing easier in exam conditions is identifying the key words within the question. Knowing what is expected from you will bring clarity and purpose to your writing. Below are some useful definitions that should help clear what is being asked from you.

1. Theme

Many students already know examples of themes, such as love, hate, good versus evil, justice, revenge, power, belonging, and discovery. But many students do not know what they actually are!

Simply, a theme is:

A key experience that reflects aspects of **human nature** and the **human condition**. It is universal. Although the way they are perceived may shift (e.g. who had power in the 18th century will be very different to who has power today), the actual theme of 'power' is still relevant to human experience.

Themes reflect key aspects of the human condition, which is why many essay questions will revolve around a text being 'relevant' throughout time. The way themes are presented is also largely impacted by the personal and social context of the composer, however the central theme will remain constant.

2. Thesis

A thesis is your **key argument** for the essay. But as I like to put it, it's just your **answer to the question**; your argument for or against the question.

Your thesis needs to be clarified in four key places:

1. Your introduction

2. Your topic sentences

3. The concluding sentences of your essay

4. Your conclusion

<u>Writing an essay to answer the question</u>

Many students attempt to memorise essays or texts, thinking it saves them time in an exam. While memorising an introduction, topic sentences and a conclusion can provide a good framework to what you think you should write, what really counts is if you have answered the question.

So how can you be in a situation where you learn the correct material but also answer the question?

Here are a few misconceptions students have about preparation that hinders their effectiveness in exams:

1. Students think they need to memorise everything in the text. But since this is practically impossible, they struggle to understand what exactly to learn.

2. Students think examiners can ask 'anything' in an exam. Therefore, students do not know how to learn the correct material and this makes preparing for and sitting the exam overwhelming.

3. Students think they cannot prepare an essay or body of work because it might not fit the question.

The real story:

1. Memorising the whole text is unrealistic, as well as ineffective.

2. Examiners cannot ask you 'ANYTHING' in an exam for an essay, particularly when they've specified an 'area of study' such as 'discovery', 'conflicting perspectives', 'distinctive voices' etc. They can only ask you about that actual topic. This is especially the case when you have to discuss related texts. In reality, the text itself also does not change, therefore the examples you discuss in

relation to the set topic shouldn't really change either - the key lies in the way you *tailor* or *adapt* your learnt material to the question.

3. Yes, it is true that students shouldn't prepare an essay. You cannot memorise and regurgitate an introduction, topic sentences or a conclusion and expect to get a high mark. So, again, it's more about tailoring your introduction, topic sentences and conclusion to answer the question rather than changing all your prepared content around.

How to tailor your essay to answer the question:

1. Be clear on what is expected

   Students need to be realistic on how much they can write in 40 minutes. There are *always* more points and great examples that could be discussed if you had plenty of time, but 40 minutes is extremely limiting. So learning too much information will be counter-productive. Here are the word lengths of prepared material that students should be aiming for:

   Year 7 - 600 words

   Year 8 - 700 words

   Year 9 - 800 words

   Year 10 - 850-900 words

   Year 11 - 900-950 words

   Year 12 - 1000 -1100 words

It is certainly possible to physically write more in 40 minutes, but if you want to answer the question, you will need planning time.

Remember: **it's more effective to *answer* the question better than to write more content!**

2. Learn the right content

Pick about eight to ten good quotes from the text you're analysing. This will be about four to six quotes for the set text, three or four for related texts. You should then split them into one or two main concepts to discuss in the essay.

Using the poem "Migrant Hostel" by Peter Skrzynecki to create a 250-word paragraph, below is an example.

Step 1

Select the best six examples/quotes from your text that link to the idea being discussed. Below are two samples:

1. Quote: "Sudden departures", "comings and goings"

   Technique: Ambivalent tone; atmosphere of instability

   Effect: Illustrates the feelings of uncertainty and instability experienced by the migrants upon first entering Australia.

2. Quote: "Nationalities sought each other out instinctively, like a homing pigeon"

   Technique: Simile, allusion

   Effect: This simile compares the migrants to being like a "homing pigeon", suggesting that they are naturally trained to find or re-establish their home. This implies that humans have an innate desire to regain connections when they are lost. The allusion towards them "instinctively" seeking belonging with similar groups and nationalities enhances this notion.

Ask yourself the following questions about your points:

1. Do they link to the topic/prove something about the topic?

2. Do they have a technique?

3. Can you link the technique back to the main idea?

If your answer to any of these questions is 'no', then you either need to further analyse the quote you've selected, or find a new one.

Step 2

Formulate one or two key ideas that you'd like to prove with these examples (these will become your topic sentences).

For example:

Belonging: Since belonging is a natural human need, when an individual does not belong, this can result in them feeling alienated and distressed.

Journeys: Humans are constantly journeying physically, mentally and emotionally and this progress often results in various challenges, but can also transform an individual's perspective of themselves and the world.

Discovery: The complex process of discovery is one that elicits a broad range of different experiences, yet often enables an individual to broaden their perspective of themselves and the world.

For "Migrant Hostel":

1. When individuals are alienated, they may experience instability and distress.

2. The natural response to exclusion is often for people to seek connections with familiar people or places.

Step 3

Write out your paragraphs, fleshing out and proving the topic sentences with strong examples. Each paragraph should be roughly about 200-230 words.

Some teachers suggest the **PEE** or **PEEL** structure:

- Point
- Example
- Elaboration/Effect
- Link

Basically, you need to elaborate on how the evidence (that is, the quote or example from the text) relates back to the point you are making or question given.

Example from *To Kill a Mockingbird* :

P - Point: An individual must consider another person's point of view before judging them.

E - Example: "You never really understand a person until you consider things from his point of view… until you climb into his skin and walk around in it." [*To Kill a Mockingbird*]

E - Elaboration: Through this metaphor, Atticus illustrates the need for Jem to understand another person's perspective by comparing the experience to climbing "into his skin". This suggests that once considering another's point of view, he may sympathise with them rather than be resentful.

L - Link: How does the point relate back to the question? Usually, these questions are asking students to explore the concept of prejudice. So a 'link' could be: Thus, Harper Lee exhibits a need for empathy within society to dissolve prejudice and hatred.

Helpful hints when using PEEL:

- Select a strong quote (ideally a language technique) for the example so you have something to write for the 'elaboration'.
- Even though you might have covered many different ideas in class, the only ones relevant are the ones you can ***link to the set topic*** - although the others may be great points, they are irrelevant if they don't link to the question or core topic.
- Don't forget the difference between analysing a text and 'telling the story' - make sure you are always analysing your text by linking everything you say and prove to the topic set.

Sample paragraph on "Migrant Hostel":

Throughout Peter Skrzynecki's poem "Migrant Hostel" belonging is perceived in different ways. Alliteration is used to create sound "partitioned off by night/by memories of hunger and hate". This technique emphasises their "hate and hunger". Homing pigeons are associated with being trained to find their home, similes are used to show that the migrants are able to find a sense of home by seeking out similar nationalities within the hostel. "Nationalities sought out/each other instinctively/like a homing pigeon." The migrants' disconnection from the rest of society is symbolised through, "a barrier at the main gate/sealed off the highway". It often takes time for someone to feel comfortable and their past can regularly interfere with how they belong with the wider community.

Corrections:

Each topic sentence needs to highlight a key concept that will be explored in the paragraph (not yet mentioning the actual text).

> Example 1:

> A social barrier can make someone feel like they do not belong in a society.

Feedback: This could still be improved by adding something about the consequences of not belonging, rather than just the superficial statement that someone does or does not belong.

Example 2:

When social barriers hinder one's ability to belong within society, this can result in feelings of distress or instability.

3. Throughout Peter Skrzynecki's poem "Migrant Hostel" belonging is perceived in different ways.

Feedback: This statement is far too broad. Something specific must be said about the actual and poem how it relates to the key idea belonging.

Corrected: Throughout Peter Skrzynecki's poem "Migrant Hostel", the difficulty of exclusion is illustrated through the migrants who are unable to adapt to their new surroundings.

3. Alliteration is used to create sound "partitioned off by night/by memories of hunger and hate". This technique emphasises their "hate and hunger".

Feedback: Alliteration is a tricky technique to choose, as you must explain how the repetition of the 'h' consonant has exemplified the difficulty the migrants experience in attaining belonging. Stating it 'creates sound' is not sufficient enough, the marker wants to know how and *why* this has been created. Also, while the attempt to explain 'effect' has been made, it is merely re-stating the quote rather than explaining anything about how it relates to the point about exclusion.

Corrected: A sense of instability and struggle is created through alliteration, as they were "partitioned off by night/by memories of hunger and hate". Through the repetition of the harsh 'h' sounding consonant, the pain they experienced is reiterated.

4. Homing pigeons are associated with being trained to find their home, similes are used to show that the migrants are able to find a sense of home by seeking out similar nationalities within the hostel. "Nationalities sought out/each other instinctively/like a homing pigeon."

Feedback: As a rule, don't isolate your quotes into one sentence; they need to be integrated. Starting the point with 'Homing pigeons' isn't going to be an effect structuring of the sentence. See how the above stated 'PEEL' structure can apply:

P - Point: In the poem, the migrants illustrate the inherent human desire to belong, as they seek out commonalities with those around them.

E - Example/technique: This is illustrated through a simile detailing how "nationalities sought out each other instinctively, like a homing pigeon."

E: Effect: Here, this simile compares the migrants to a "homing pigeon" who are innately trained to find their homes.

L - Link: This exemplifies that belonging is a human need.

Corrected:

In the poem, the migrants illustrate the inherent human desire to belong, as they naturally seek to establish connections with those around them. This is illustrated through a simile detailing how "nationalities sought out each other instinctively, like a homing pigeon." Here, this simile compares the migrants to a "homing pigeon" who are innately trained to find their homes, thereby proving that belonging is a human need.

5. The migrants' disconnection from the rest of society is symbolised through "a barrier at the main gate/sealed off the highway". It often takes time for someone to feel comfortable and their past can regularly interfere with how they belong with the wider community.

Feedback: Much better integration of quotes but this point needs to be contextualised (explaining where this quote comes or what is happening at this point in the poem, but do not re-tell the story).   For example: "Although developing a home after several years, the migrants' disconnection from the rest of society is symbolised through, "a barrier at the main gate/sealed off the highway". The effect of this symbolism needs a bit more clarity - in this case, actually referring to the historical context of the poem would be effective. [Note: this barrier is also representative of the cultural segregation in Australia during this context with the 'White Australia Policy'.]

Corrected:

When social barriers hinder one's ability to belong within society, this can result in feelings of distress or instability. Throughout Peter Skrzynecki's poem "Migrant Hostel", the difficulty of exclusion is illustrated through the migrants who are unable to adapt to their new surroundings. A sense of instability and struggle is created through alliteration, as the migrants were "partitioned off by night/by memories of hunger and hate". Through the repetition of the harsh 'h' sounding consonant, the pain they experienced is reiterated. In addition, the migrants illustrate the inherent human desire to belong, as they naturally seek to establish connections with those around them. This is illustrated through a simile detailing how "nationalities sought out each other instinctively, like a homing pigeon." Here, the simile compares the migrants to a "homing pigeon" who are innately trained to find their homes, thereby proving that belonging is a human need. This barrier is also representative of the cultural segregation in Australia during this context, particularly as a result of the 'White Australia Policy' which caused many different racial groups to be isolated from mainstream society. Thus, humans will often struggle when they excluded socially, and will naturally seek to regain a sense of belonging.

[Note: Once putting all the points together, sophistication can be increased between the sentences by adding 'in addition' etc. to increase the overall flow of the sentences. Also, don't forget to add a concluding sentence. However these will just be samples as the topic and concluding sentence will always change for the new question.]

Step 4

Get a sample question to practice adapting your response with:

Belonging

Question: "Understanding nourishes belonging... a lack of understanding prevents it."
Demonstrate how your prescribed text and ONE other related text of your own choosing
represent this interpretation of belonging. (HSC Paper 1, 2009)

Discovery

Question: Discoveries can both enrich and challenge an individual. To what extent do
you agree with this statement? In your response, refer to you prescribed text and at
least one other related text of your own choosing.

How to form your thesis for the questions above:

1. Define the key words.

Underline the key words of the essay question and DEFINE them even just through
giving synonyms. This step is often overlooked, but many levels of meaning that will
appear once you do this simple task. It will also give you a broader vocabulary to use the
question, rather than just repeating the same words in the entire essay.

Key words for this Belonging question:

Understanding - having knowledge of something

Nourishes - heightens, improves, enhances

Belonging - a sense of comfort and satisfaction attained through forming connections
with other similar people. One can also belong within a place.

Lack of understanding - ignorant, unaware, uninformed

Prevents - restricts, hinders

Key words for this Discovery question:

Discovery – exploration, investigation, realisation, epiphany, revelation

Enrich – inspire, improve, invigorate

Challenge – hindrance, difficulty

To what extent – the degree to which, how much

2. Write your topic sentences out

Write your topic sentences based on what you want to prove in your text. For the Belonging question, you may have prepared statements such as:

1. When an individual belongs, this may enable them to experience security and comfort.
2. Since belonging is a natural human need, when an individual does not belong, this can result in them feeling alienated and distressed.

Now, looking at the topic sentences above, it doesn't look like they answer the question. But looking at the new statements below, a bit of re-shuffling can do the trick:

1. Through feeling **understood** by their social surroundings, an individual can attain a sense of belonging, which will leave them **nourished** through an experience of comfort and security.
2. Since belonging and being **understood** is a natural human desire, when an individual feels **misunderstood**, this can result in them lacking emotional **nourishment** and experiencing alienation.

For the Discovery question, you may have prepared statements such as:

1. The complex process of discovery is one that elicits a broad range of different experiences, yet often enables an individual to broaden their perspective.
2. Physical discoveries can enable the evolution of an individual's perceptions of themselves and the world.

New statements:

1. **To a large extent**, the complex process of discovery is one that elicits a broad range of different experiences that can both **enliven** and **challenge** an individual.
2. Physical discoveries can inspire and **enliven** an individual such that their perceptions of the world and themselves are transformed.

[Tip: a lot of students ask if they should be using the exact words of the question, or if they should be using synonyms. Students need to do both. Use the exact words to start off with, such as in the introduction and the first topic sentence, but then later in the essay you can start substituting synonyms so it is not repetitive. However, it is extremely important that you **DO** use **their** words because then you are making it very clear that you are answering **their question**, and not just regurgitating information.]

4. Introduction

Many students believe that the place to begin an essay is at the introduction. Yet in fact, the introduction is ideally the place you *finish* an essay, since it sums up all the key points of argument made throughout the essay. However, many students feel uncomfortable with the idea of leaving an introduction to the end during an exam, so below is a method of how to take the topic sentences (now tailored to the question) and create an excellent introduction with a strong thesis that **answers the question**.

Your introduction has two purposes:

a) It answers the question.

b) It introduces how your texts will relate to the question. [Note: for 'Area of study' essays e.g. 'belonging', 'journeys', 'discovery', your introduction must focus on the key ideas you will be discussing about the topic.]

Introductions should be roughly 100 words and structured in the following way:

a) Two or three sentences answering the question and introducing your key points of argument.

b) Two sentences introducing texts. [Hint: Many students spend too long introducing their texts, which is a waste of time since you'll be repeating all that information again later in the paragraphs.]

To continue with the method started above, take the new sentences and insert them into the introduction:

<u>Belonging</u>

Through feeling understood by their social surroundings, an individual can attain a sense of belonging which will leave them nourished through an experience of comfort and security.

Since belonging and being understood is a natural human desire, when an individual feels misunderstood, this can result in them lacking emotional nourishment and experiencing alienation.

Now here is the sample Belonging introduction:

Through feeling understood by their social surroundings, an individual can attain a sense of belonging which will leave them nourished through an experience of comfort and security. In addition, since belonging and being understood is a natural human desire, when an individual feels misunderstood, this can result in them lacking emotional nourishment and experiencing alienation. [All you need to do now is add two sentences introducing how your texts link to these ideas].

Sample Discovery introduction:

To a large extent, the complex process of discovery is one that elicits a broad range of different experiences that can both **enliven** and **challenge** an individual. When an individual engages in learning either by accident or through their curiosity, the excitement of this can **enliven** them in such a way as to transform their view of themselves and the world. However, this process can also be fearful and **challenging**, as it may be particularly confronting when shocking or unexpected discoveries occur. [All you need to do now is add two sentences introducing how your texts link to these ideas].

An introduction that does not work and why:

Question. Belonging involves acceptance and understanding. Do you agree?

Belonging is the feeling of acceptance, adapting to a place, to fit in or to have a sense of security.   In the following texts belonging is explored. "Migrant Hostel" is a poem written by Peter Skrzynecki and explores the emotions of the migrants once they had arrived to Parkes and the way in which they belonged to the hostel, Australia and one another. "10 Mary St" also written by Peter Skrzynecki illustrates the concept of belonging to a place by having ownership. Woolvs in the Sitee is another text that depicts how not belonging can be very difficult for a young boy.

Feedback/comments:

This student has used a word from the question in their opening sentence, which is good. They have also started to analyse how their texts have a link to belonging, rather than telling the story. But while the question has been somewhat addressed in the opening sentence, it is extremely brief. The student also has not addressed whether or not they agree with the statement. In addition, the texts have not been directly linked to the question. Rather, they have just been linked to belonging in general.

This introduction also displays the common mistake of placing too much information on the texts, and not enough on the actual thesis/argument towards the question. There

should be at least two or three conceptual statements that outline their 'thesis' or key arguments for or against the question.

The statement, "In the following texts belonging is explored" is superfluous. That is obvious, otherwise you should not be writing about them! The author and text type of every text must also be clearly stated.

Corrected introduction:

Having an **acceptance** and **understanding** of groups and places can enhance one's ability to form connections with them. Therefore, the given statement is true as by **understanding** the values and attitudes of a particular group, as well as **accepting** them, one can attain a sense of belonging. Conversely, if one feels **misunderstood** and is not **accepted** by those around them, this can result in feelings of animosity or hardship. In Peter Skryzkecki's poems "Migrant Hostel" and "10 Mary Street", the migrants struggle to adapt to a new environment where they experience alienation through a difficulty to **understand** their physical and cultural surroundings. The picture book *Woolvs in the Sitee* by Margaret Wild also depicts the difficulty a boy faces through his own lack of **understanding** and **acceptance** for his physical surroundings.

[Hint: try not to overdo it with using the words from the question, but be sure they're in there clearly. Also, remember to always identify a text using either inverted commas or underlining. Teachers do not really mind which you choose, but just make sure that whether you put a text in inverted commas or underline it, you are consistent throughout your essay.]

5. Conclusion

A conclusion is only a few sentences, and a way to finish off your essay by reiterating your thesis statements. It is basically an abbreviated version of the introduction, and does not need information from the text. In fact, the text(s) should not even be mentioned. A sample for the Belonging question could be:

Example of an incorrect conclusion for the question 'a sense of belonging can change over time':

The experience Raimond Gaita as a migrant to Australia through his memoir and the experience of Sarah Ashley in the movie <u>Australia</u> and <u>Woolvs in the Sitee</u>, it is clear that there are a number of important elements of belonging through identity, acceptance, relationships and understanding. Each of the texts show a strong will to belong and that the ways people achieve belonging emerge from all these elements. Therefore it can be said that the texts have provided a wide range of ideas on belonging that support the statement that "a sense of belonging can change over time".

Feedback/comments:

This conclusion is far too long. A conclusion should only be around 50 words, that is, two or three sentences long, that answers the question clearly. It is just a reiteration of your thesis statement as outlined in the introduction. You do not need to mention your texts again in a conclusion - and you certainly don't need to say anything about them. The question needs to be the first thing addressed in the conclusion, not the last thing. It is not effective to answer 'generic' notions of your topic (in this case belonging) rather than the question. This was done here when referring to 'identity, acceptance, relationships and understanding'.

Corrected conclusion:

Thus, **a sense of belonging may change over time**, particularly when external surroundings shift, relationships evolve, or an individual themselves grows and develops. However, regardless of whether a sense of belonging **shifts**, humans will have an innate desire seek the experience of belonging as it often results in feelings of comfort, connectivity and even happiness.

[Hint: Do not end conclusions with 'in conclusion'. Other words to use instead are: thus, therefore, as a result, consequently, hence.]

Sample conclusion for belonging:

Therefore, **nourishment** of the mind and body can result from feeling **understood** by one's social surroundings. However, when an individual experiences exclusion and a **lack of** acceptance, they will often struggle which can result in hardship and even depression.

Sample conclusion for discovery:

As a result, the complex process of discovery is one that evokes a vast range of experiences that can both **enliven** and **challenge** an individual. While they can be inspiring and result in growth, discoveries can also be shocking and confronting which elicits the **challenge** that may also be involved in the process.

Marking your own work:

Below are the steps to follow to mark your own work. This is an excellent exercise to practice answering essay questions effectively.

<u>Introduction</u>

1. For the first sentence of the introduction, have you directly created an argument for the question (this will look very similar to your answer in comprehension tasks – somewhat repeating the question but then adding something about your response to it)?
2. Have you used the words of the question to create your argument in the introduction?
3. Does your integration of the words of the question make sense in these opening sentences?
4. Have you introduced your text (including composer, text type and text name) and stated briefly how it links to the question?
5. Have you introduced your related text as above (if necessary)?

<u>Paragraphs</u>

1. Have you used the words of the question to write your topic sentences? Does the sentence actually flow and make sense? (Hint: reading it aloud makes a huge difference with this – you will hear if it does!)
2. Have you followed on from your topic sentence to give sufficient, effective evidence to prove what you have said in the topic sentence?
3. Have you used some words or synonyms for words from the question in your paragraph?
4. Have you linked your texts together (Related text linked back to set text etc.)? (Hint: This should again be done using words or synonyms for the question).
5. Have you linked your final sentence of the paragraph back to the question using either the words of the question or direct synonyms for it?

Conclusion

1. Have you summed up the key argument created in your opening sentences of the intro and your topic sentences in the conclusion?
2. Is it only a few sentences in length? (Note: No need to re-state texts again.)

Your 'cheat sheets':

Answering the Question

1. Underline all <u>individual</u> key words of the question.

2. Think of two or more synonyms for each word.

3. Link key words to the texts/paragraphs.

4. (Optional: Using the key words of the question, write all the topic sentences for the essay <u>from scratch</u>.)

5. Use the points from the topic sentences to create your thesis/introduction.

Vocabulary List

Words to help connect sentences/create an argument:

- In addition
- Furthermore
- Conversely
- Moreover
- However
- Correspondingly

- Due to the fact
- Clearly
- On the other hand
- As a result
- Thus/therefore

Words to use instead of "show" and "seen":

- Illustrate
- Exemplify
- Reflect
- Demonstrate
- Convey
- Portray
- Typify
- Highlight
- Depict

- Explored
- Crystallise
- Illuminate
- Encapsulate
- Apparent through.
- Echoed
- Reveals
- Exhibits

Concluding words:

- Thus
- Therefore
- Hence

- Consequently
- As a result
- Clearly

Senior vocabulary for essays:

- Culmination – coming together of ideas of techniques.
- Epitomised – made important (show)
- Envisaged – seen (show)
- Enmeshed
- Shrouded – covered
- Embedded – integrated within
- Paramount – important
- Permeates – integrated within
- Elicits - reveals
- Entrenched – integrated within
- Pervade – integrated within
- Ramifications – consequences
- Asserts – proposes idea about, says it
- Purview (insight/understanding)
- Encompass
- Proliferate (propagate, flourish) – spreads ideas about
- Crystallised – make clear
- Salient (prominent, important)
- Resonates – reflects within/throughout the text

- Pertinent – evident, important
- Manifest
- Generate
- Expound
- Canvass
- Compounded (solidified/reiterated)
- Facilitates (enables/allows for)
- Poignancy – emotional effectiveness/impact
- Clarify
- Collaborate
- Augmented
- Pontificate
- Forged
- Punctuated
- Demarcate
- Spawn (create/give)
- Suggests
- Renders –makes
- Infuses
- Exalt
- Perplexed
- Cultivate
- Sustained