ENGLISH ATAR REVISION SEMINAR

ECU
September 2022

1

Me…

Susan Carrick

What I assume…

- That you know quite a lot
- That you want to do well – that's why you are here!
- That you might need help connecting all the dots

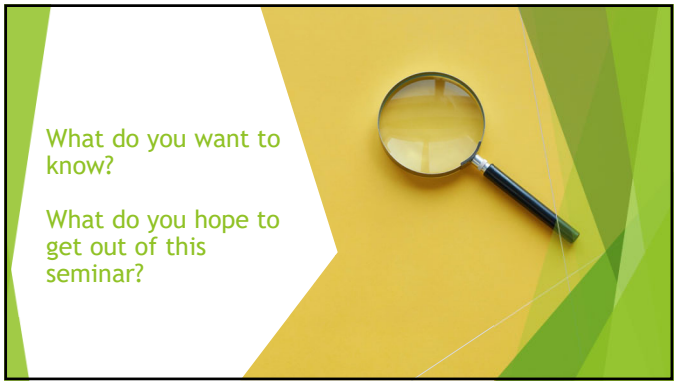
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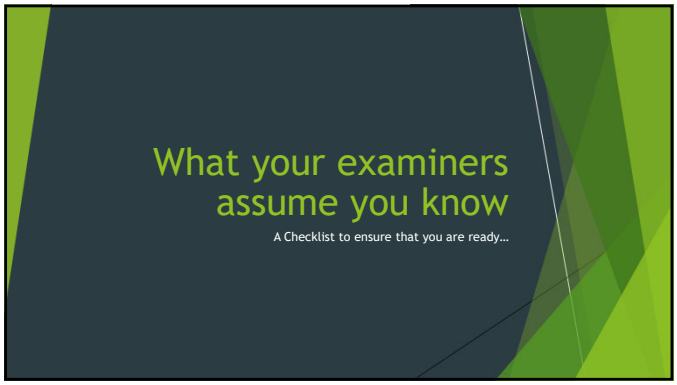
Seminar Overview

- Review of syllabus concepts
- Managing the examination
- Comprehending – a refresher on structured analysis
- A note on style
- The Responding Section
- Composing – voice, genre, structure and control
- The Responding Essay

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What do you want to know?
What do you hope to get out of this seminar?

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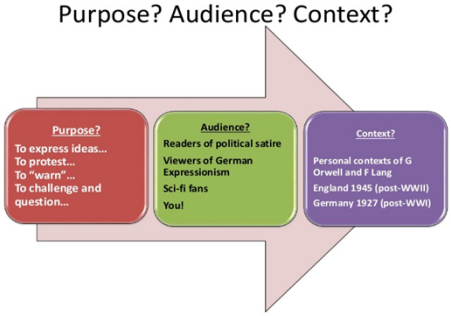

What your examiners assume you know
A Checklist to ensure that you are ready…

5


The Big 6
Context
Audience
Purpose
Genre
Representation
Conventions

6

Purpose? Audience? Context?



7

Text Context

The environment in which a text is created or responded to …

Context of Production or Context of Reception

Personal context

8

Context and Audience

The group of readers, listeners or viewers that the writer, designer, filmmaker or speaker is addressing.

INTENDED audience

ALTERNATE audiences (may change over time)

IMPLIED audience

Ask WHY this audience to create a link to context?

9

Purpose and Context

An author's **purpose** is the reason why a text is created.

- To inform
- To persuade
- To challenge
- To examine

PURPOSE determines medium, mode, language, structure, style…

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REPRESENTATION

- A way of thinking
- A version of reality
- ONE of many possible ways
- Contested

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Representation is linked to the WAY texts are constructed…

- The way people, events, issues or subjects are presented in a text.
- The term implies that texts are not mirrors of the real world: they are constructions of 'reality'.
- These constructions are partially shaped through the writer's choice and use of conventions and techniques.

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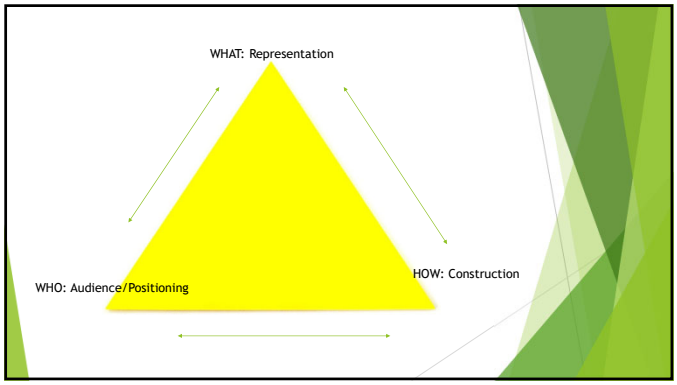
Three key words …

Represented = what

Constructed = how

Positioned = audience / response

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Thinking about representation

Let's watch a promotional film for the 2012 London Paralympics through the lens of representation.

As you watch, ask yourself what ideas are represented in this text about -

- A particular group?
- A social issue?
- A subject?

What version of reality is presented? What other versions are available? What is the purpose of the text

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Over to you…

What ideas are represented in this text about –

- A particular group?
- A social issue?
- A subject?

What version of reality is presented?

What other versions are available?

What is the purpose of the text?

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Let's examine how representation is linked to context, audience and purpose…

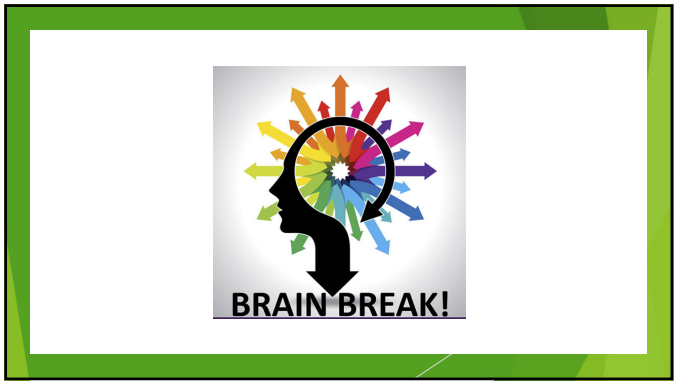
- The purpose of this text is to …
- The context in which it was produced was …
- The intended audience is … (add values)
- An alternate audience might be …
- My response was…(articulate your personal context)

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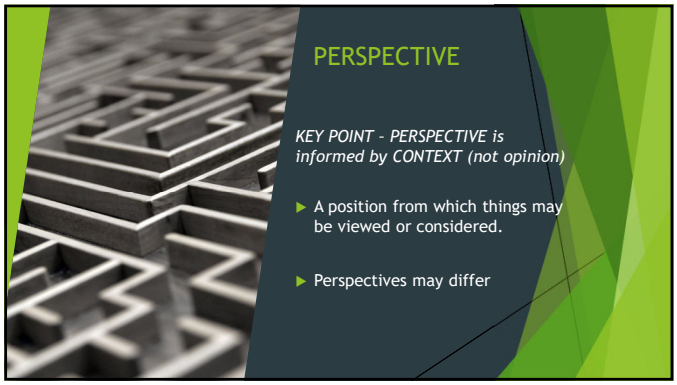


Would you be surprised to know that this film is called "Meet the Superhumans"?

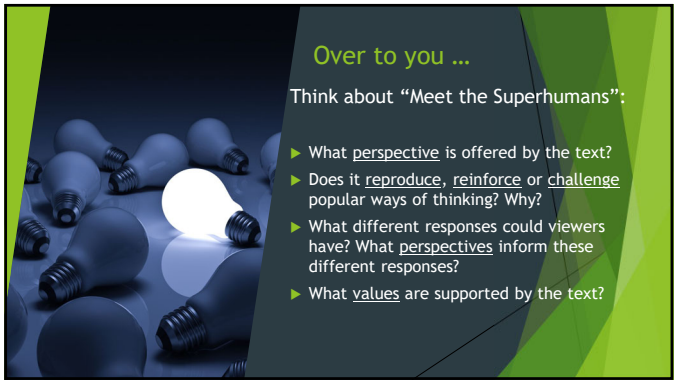
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BRAIN BREAK!

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PERSPECTIVE
KEY POINT - PERSPECTIVE is informed by CONTEXT (not opinion)
A position from which things may be viewed or considered.
Perspectives may differ

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Over to you …
Think about "Meet the Superhumans":
What perspective is offered by the text?
Does it reproduce, reinforce or challenge popular ways of thinking? Why?
What different responses could viewers have? What perspectives inform these different responses?
What values are supported by the text?

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VOICE - *used to represent perspective/s*

OUTSIDE THE TEXT – Author's Voice

How an author is related to a text (think behind the text) – their viewpoint.

INSIDE THE TEXT - Narrative Voice (Narrator's Voice)

How a narrator is related to a text (think in the text)

- *first/second/third person*
- *reliable/unreliable*
- *exterior/interior*
- *omniscient/restricted*

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Voice in Written Texts

Here you would describe the effects of what you can read or the words on the page…

- Narrative point of view
- Patterns of tonal words – connotative language
- Figurative language
- Sound imagery
- Syntax and sentence structures
- Grammar and punctuation choices (pace)
- Structure - space on the page

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Over to you…

Identifying and Analysing Voice

Through the frayed curtain at my window, a wan glow announces the break of day. My heels hurt, my head weighs a ton, and something like a giant invisible cocoon holds my whole body prisoner. My room emerges slowly from the gloom. I linger over every item: photos of loved ones, my children's drawings, posters, the little tin cyclist sent by a friend the day before the Paris-Roubaix bike race, and the IV pole hanging over the bed where I have been confined these past six months, like a hermit crab dug into his rock.

(from The Diving Bell & The Butterfly)

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Questions to ask to unpack WRITTEN voice…

- Whose voice? (characterisation)
- How does it sound? (register, syntax, tonal qualities)
- What does it say? (diction, dialogue)
- How much/often do we hear it? (structure, characterisation)
- Who hears/listens it? (characterisation)
- How many share this voice - Is it a lone voice or a shared voice?

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Identifying and Analysing Voice

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(from The Diving Bell & The Butterfly)

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Voice in Oral and Visual Texts

Audible Voice

(Describe what you hear)

- Inflection (emphasis)
- Tone of voice (attitude)
- Pace
- Pitch
- Volume
- Accent

Visual Voice

(Describe what you see)

- Facial expression
- Gestures/hand movement
- Costume
- Set
- Camera placement/shot

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Voice = POWER = positioning

Who has it? Who doesn't?

- Voice can allow advocacy – for self or others.
- Ask 'Who or what does the speaker represent'?
- This is how "Meet the Superhumans" works.

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33

Let's view our film again and apply some of this thinking about visual/audible voice…

34

01

Describe the voice constructed for disabled athletes.

02

Identify the key visual and audible elements used to promote this voice.

03

Consider the relationship between context, voice and power in this film.

Over to you…

35



36

Tone – the 'emotional driver' of voice

Find a tonal word to describe HOW it made you feel?

- Urgent
- Desperate
- Insistent
- Demanding
- Cynical
- Mocking
- Cautionary
- Impassioned
- Celebratory
- Admiring
- Patriotic
- Inclusive
- Awed
- Warm

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The 'problem' with voice…

- Texts foreground some voices and avoid others – they assist in objectifying or silencing others by making them unable to respond.
- Silencing – absent or on the margins/edges or misrepresented or misunderstood…
- Every voice inevitably silences another.

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Over to you…

- Which voice/s are foregrounded?
- Which voices are silenced?
- In what ways is the voice seen/heard selective?

To what extent is any of this a problem?



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Multiple Voices

A text can offer more than one VOICE (and therefore more than one perspective)

- *Can you think of any examples?*

Not all voices are equal in a text. Some voices are preferred or foregrounded; others are marginalised.

- *Ask yourself which voices are more powerful in a text you have studied and why…*
- *This takes us to purpose, context and audience (again)…*

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Putting it all together…

- The PURPOSE of the text
- The CONTEXT in which it was produced
- The INTENDED AUDIENCE
- Possible ALTERNATE AUDIENCES
- Its REPRESENTATION of groups, concepts, events, actions
- The PERSPECTIVE the text offers
- The way VOICE is used to represent particular perspectives
- The way TONE relates to purpose, perspective and voice

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Genre

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- The categories into which texts are grouped.
- The term is often used to distinguish texts on the basis of their subject matter, form and structure.
- Genre is linked closely to context, audience and purpose

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What you need to know about GENRE

The basics…

- That different genres have conventions (or *recipes*) – narrative, expository, film, still image etc.
- That texts can conform to or challenge expectation of how conventions will be used for particular effects.

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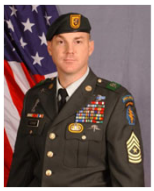
What you need to know about GENRE

Even more complex…

- The reasons why texts might conform to or subvert expectations of audiences – here's where you go to context…
- That genres can be blended and arguably are seldom distinct.
- The way that genre and conventions can change over time (the link between genre and context again).



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Familiarity – recognising genre

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Sgt. John Jones
Iraq War veteran
(2010)

Think about how this image deconstructs (or reconstructs) a genre…?

49

Let's revisit what you should understand…

- That you can recognise a genre and its conventions.
- That you can see that the image both conforms to or challenges expectations of its genre for particular impact/reasons.
- That you can articulate some reasons why this might subvert the expectations its audience - you know context…
- That you can discuss the way that two genres have been blended and why.
- That you could discuss that way that this genre and its conventions have changed over time (making the link between genre and context).

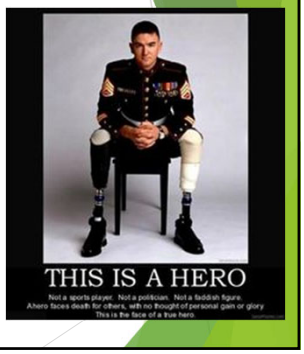
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Now add written voice…

THIS IS A HERO

Not a sports player. Not a politician. Not a faddish figure. A hero faces death for others with no thought of personal gain or glory.

This is the face of a true hero.



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Over to you to analyse…

Tip - go back to the slides on written and visual voice

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'This' - definite, declarative

THIS IS A HERO

Repetition of 'HERO' - focus on the stereotype and its values

Not a sports player. Not a politician. Not a faddish figure. A hero faces death for others with no thought of personal gain or glory. This is the face of a true hero.

Repetition of 'Not' - comparative of what is inferior

Short syntax - definitive, declarative

Active verbs, present tense - 'is', 'faces' - real, present, immediate

Voice is strong, certain, definite, defiant

Perspective - values the traditional idea of the soldier as 'other' - better that the average man. Responds to an erosion of this image; attempts to make re-centre this representation…

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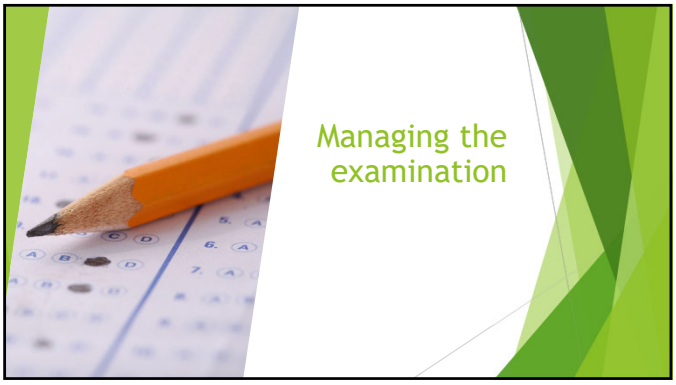
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BRAIN BREAK!

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The Big 6
Context
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Representation
Conventions

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Managing the examination

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Tips

You need to have a plan and stick to it!

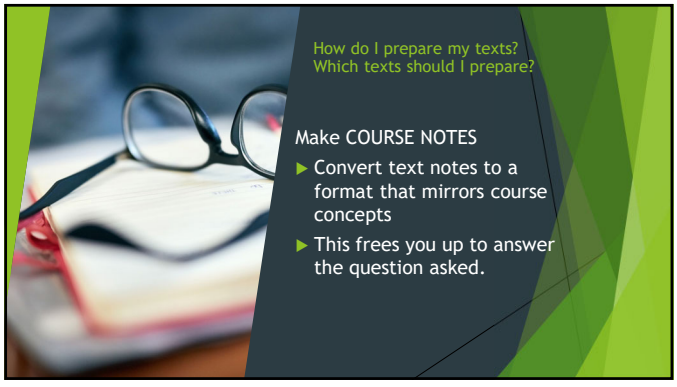
- What you can do in Reading Time
- Order of completion - options
- Time management
- Editing and proof reading
- Where, when and how to plan
- Amending and adding afterthoughts as you work
- CAP statements

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Getting Ready

- Know your texts and how you will use them for different concepts and questions.
- Be able to control the written forms you need for comprehending, responding and composing.
- Understand key syllabus concepts.

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How do I prepare my texts?
Which texts should I prepare?

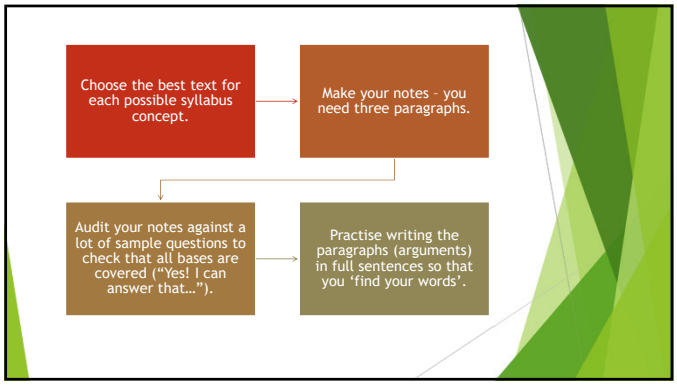
Make COURSE NOTES

- Convert text notes to a format that mirrors course concepts
- This frees you up to answer the question asked.

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COVER ALL
OF YOUR
BASES

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Choose the best text for each possible syllabus concept.
Make your notes – you need three paragraphs.
Audit your notes against a lot of sample questions to check that all bases are covered ("Yes! I can answer that…").
Practise writing the paragraphs (arguments) in full sentences so that you 'find your words'.

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The Comprehending Section



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What does it mean to comprehend?

Some ways to think about what you are doing when you comprehend and analyse are:

- You are interpreting a text by examining its representation of concepts or ideas.
- You are discussing the particular ways a text is constructed to invite response or how readers use these ways to construct meaning.
- You are aware that the text as part of something bigger – that it represents a wider voice, a broader context or a larger concern.

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The Task in Comprehending (1)

Interpretation - the WHAT

1. You find the meaning and the words to explain it.
2. It is not 'hidden' in the text or 'under the surface'. You work it out.
3. There is no single correct interpretation.

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The Task in Comprehending (2)

2. Analysis - the HOW

- You have a knowledge of -
  - text types
  - generic features
  - conventions
  - text structures
  - language devices.
- You know how these elements work in different texts.

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Open & closed questions

OPEN

Explain how a Text 1 represents a particular attitude.

PARTIALLY OPEN

Explain how two language features in Text 1 represent a particular attitude.

CLOSED

Explain how two language features in Text 1 represent an attitude towards childhood.

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Over to you…

- Find the WHAT and the HOW of each comprehending question in the workbook.
- Check if the questions are open or closed. This tells you what you are reading for...
- TIP: There are six questions - which one DOESN'T require a discussion of conventions?

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What you would have highlighted….

- Explain how voice is used in Text 1 to construct a particular perspective.
- Explain how Text 2 constructs an unequal relationship.
- *Use your knowledge of visual language conventions to explain your response to this image.*

71

What you would have highlighted….

- *Compare the representations of soldiers in Text 3 and Text 4.*
- *Explain how Text 5 challenges particular views about those who seek asylum in Australia.*
- *Compare how Text 5 and Text 6 effectively convince their audience about the need to accept refugees and asylum seekers.*

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Questions that ask for 'response'…

- You will find this question a lot…

"Use your knowledge of visual language conventions to explain your response to this image."

- *This is a TRAP as part of the question is ELLIPSED. It should read…*

"Use your knowledge of visual language conventions to explain your response to the ideas/representation in this image."

- *Explaining response = emotion ⇨ thinking/ideas*

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Structuring a Comprehending Response

- Aim for 250-300 words.
- Start only with the WHAT – the interpretation – the one sentence *complete answer*.
- The HOW is not needed as part of the opening statement – unless you say something specific or you can write fast/a lot.

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Structuring a Comprehending Response

- You are not required to use paragraphs, but these may help with readability by making your structure clear.
- Structure the response using the question as topic sentences to ensure focus and relevance.
- Use obvious transition markers – *additionally, however, consequently, finally…*

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Writing units of analysis

IDENTIFY a device (use meta-language)

Offer EXAMPLES or EVIDENCE

Explains the EFFECTS of these examples in the text – *This shows/implies/ suggests…*

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Writing units of analysis

Another approach is **SQA**…

- Make a STATEMENT about what you are trying to prove (use meta-language)
- Use one or more QUOTATIONS
- ANALYSE its relevance – how it works in relation to your interpretation

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Sentence markers that get you to analyse…

- This implies that…
- This suggests…
- This works to…
- This clearly shows…
- This highlights…

78

Now onto the HOW…

Analysing the ways language features, text structures and stylistic choices shape perspectives and interpretations



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Text Structure

- The ways in which information is organised in different types of texts.
- Structure is best understood through patterns -
  - Comparisons and contrasts
  - Repetitions
  - Parallels

  (This includes language patterns)

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Language Features

- Examples of language features are sentence structure, noun group/phrase, vocabulary, punctuation, figurative language, framing, camera angles etc.
- Choices in language features and text structures together define a type of text and shape its meaning.
- These choices vary according to the purpose of a text, its subject matter, audience, and mode or medium of production.

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The question of style…



84

Two ways of approaching style…

The ways in which aspects of texts (such as words, sentences, images) are arranged and how they affect meaning.

Style can distinguish the work of individual authors, the work of a particular period or of a particular genre or type of text.

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Stylistic features

In a written text, style is created by elements such as

- Diction (or word choice)
- Syntax (or sentence structures)
- Tone/mood
- Imagery/figurative language
- Narrative viewpoint
- Use of symbolism
- Choice of structure – stanzas, paragraphs, juxtaposition
- And…

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Stylistic features

In a visual text, style is created by elements such as –

- Use of camera – angle, distance, movement, filters, lens
- Choice of music
- Diegetic and non-diegetic sound
- Editing choices
- Lighting
- Setting
- Use of symbolism
- And…

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Over to you…



Let's think about "Meet the Superhumans" again.

- Describe the style of the film.
- Identify the key stylistic elements that contribute to its style.

88

Over to you…

Four years later the same production company made a second film to promote the 2016 Paralympic games in Rio.

This 2016 film is called "We're the Superhumans"

- Describe the style of this film.
- Identify the key stylistic elements that contribute to its style.

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Over to you…

"We're the Superhumans"

- The style of this film is…
- The key stylistic elements that contribute to its style are…

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When style changes

Compare the film styles.

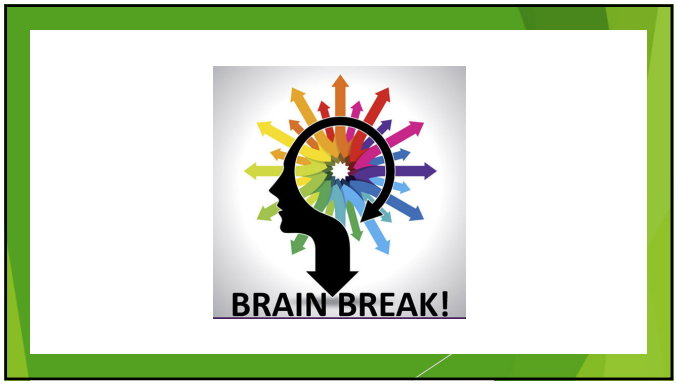
How does the difference reflect a change in context purpose or audience?



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The Responding Section

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Three types of questions…

Compare and Contrast…

*Compare the ways in which **two studied texts** have been effective in bringing important issues to the attention of an audience.*

One text…

*Evaluate the impact of language conventions on your interpretation of **at least one text** you have studied.*

Two texts…

*Reflect on how **two texts** have challenged your perspective on a social or cultural issue.*

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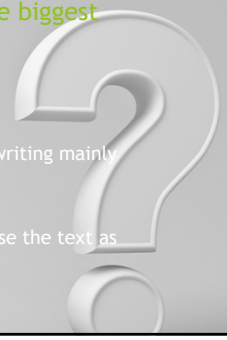
There's only three concepts…

- **Context** - Questions that ask you to make connections between the text and the world. These might include context, audience, purpose or representation.
- **Conventions** - These focus on how a text presents its ideas and will direct you to one or more specific elements – character, setting, language devices, symbolism, structural patterns etc.
- **Genre** - Questions that ask you to discuss genre and changes over time.

Let's look at some sample questions to see how this works…

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Answering the question: the biggest mistake…



Do you…

Generally discuss the question by writing mainly about the text?

OR

Directly discuss the question and use the text as evidence?

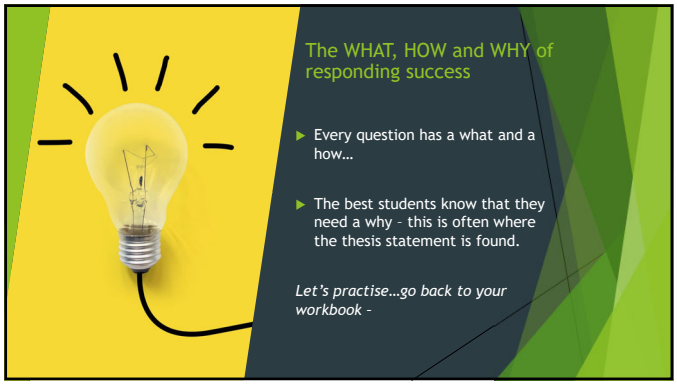
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Study tip: Practise answering the question…

- Find the key words and the task.
- Plan to answer the question (not just what you will use from the text).
- Use the key word/s of the question repeatedly in the structure of the essay – in the thesis statement, the topic sentences, the end of body paragraphs, the conclusion.

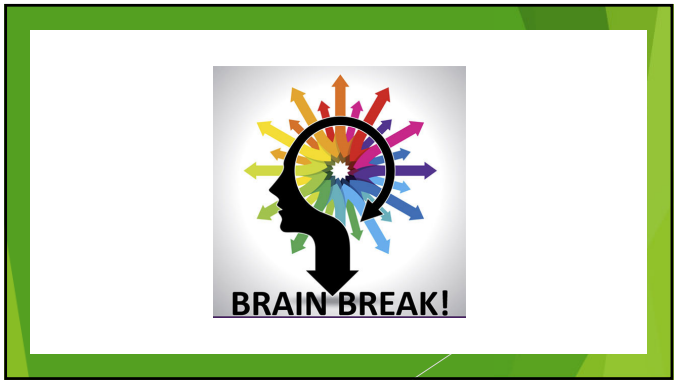
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The WHAT, HOW and WHY of responding success
Every question has a what and a how…
The best students know that they need a why - this is often where the thesis statement is found.
Let's practise…go back to your workbook -

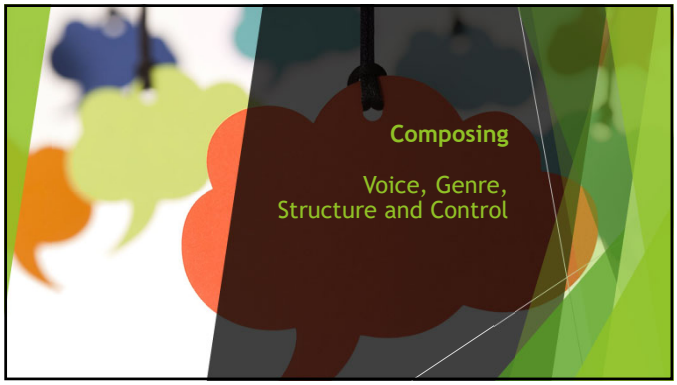
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BRAIN BREAK!

102



103

What is composing…

- Telling a story
- Looking at the world in a particular way
- Exploring human folly or moments of joy and wonder
- Finding a voice – POV? Perspective?
- Appropriating, transforming, manipulating, experimenting
- Structures, styles, forms.
- Playing with words

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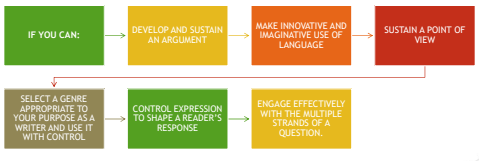
Successful Writing

Your answer is marked on the quality of the writing.

A key discriminator will be how well you control, adapt, transform or manipulate the text structures and language features of your chosen form for particular effects.

105

What is rewarded in composing…



106

Writing a 'successful' text

Ask yourself - Why would anyone want to read this?

You are NOT writing for yourself.

You are writing for a *stranger* - use their time carefully so that they will not feel the time was wasted.

107

Tips…

- Give readers something or someone they care about.
- Every character should want something.
- Every sentence must do one of two things – reveal character or advance the action.
- Start as close to the end as possible.
- Know exactly how the text ends before you start.

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Composing is about writing skills.

- control of language
- sense of audience
- knowledge of generic conventions
- the ability to shape them in relation to the examination questions.

Tip #1

110

Length?

Aim for approximately 1200 words or 3-4 pages as this allows you to demonstrate the ability to *sustain* a mood, style, structure, voice etc.

Tip #2

111

Persuasive Texts

- convincing understanding of the chosen topic.
- balance of logos, pathos and ethos.
- range of persuasive/rhetorical devices.



112

Control the genre you select.

It is ESSENTIAL to know before you write the context, audience and purpose of your piece.



113

Do not write a CAP statement. Your intent should be apparent within the text itself.

Voice is an essential consideration for success in this section.

Be authentic.

Be passionate.

Write out of your gut.



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Tips #8 and #9

Every question has 2 – 4 parts and the degree to which you address each part of the question is a discriminator.

Take the time to frontload vocabulary to control mood or atmosphere. Build patterns of language.

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Tip #10

Don't overwrite – if anything underwrite.

Hyperbolic, histrionic, overblown and melodramatic language are like yelling at your reader. Less is more. Be subtle – show don't tell…

116

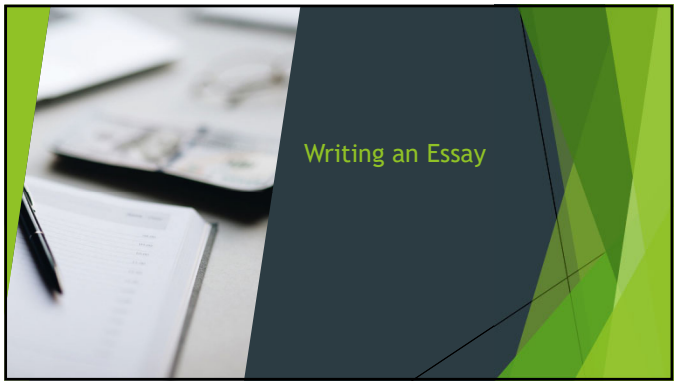
Get organised and plan to mimic …

- Research an issue/topic under the headings of logos, pathos and ethos
- Plan to use a range of rhetorical devices
- Find compositions -
  - A persuasive text
  - An imaginative text
  - An interpretive text

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What is an essay?

An argument carefully explained in detail.

It works from a thesis or proposition and carefully unfolds its proofs in a series of paragraphs.

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What is an essay?

It has an introduction that establishes all of the 'bits' that a reader needs to know:

- The **thesis** or approach to the question
- The **text/s** and what they are about
- The **series of proofs** that form each body paragraph

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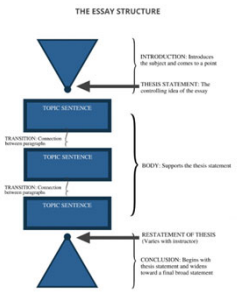
What is an essay?

It has carefully structured paragraphs that are cyclical – question/argument – text – question/argument

It concludes with an observation, not a summary.

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It looks like this…



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The What-How-Why approach to essays

WHAT – The text, the subject, the concept, the approach

WHY - The value, the context, the importance, the function of the text, the reason

HOW – The proofs, the analysis

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The What-How-Why approach to essays

To break this down…

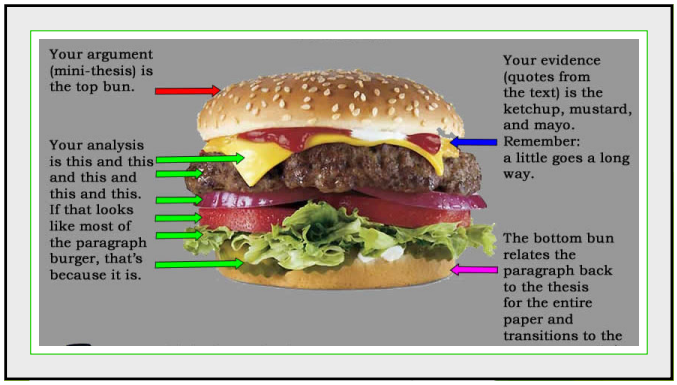
- The INTRODUCTION is the WHAT and the THESIS is the WHY
- The BODY PARAGRAPHS follow a WHAT-HOW-WHY structure
- The CONCLUSION focuses on the WHY only

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Body Paragraph

1. **Topic sentence** [supporting sentence]
2. **PEA** – point, evidence, explanation
3. **PEA** - point, evidence, explanation
4. **PEA** - point, evidence, explanation
5. **So what?** Draw together and link to question directly

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Answering the question

- The question leads the introduction, frames the thesis, and drives the topic sentences and the conclusion.
- It should be visible in EVERY part of the essay through key words.
- Essays are repetitive and cyclical.

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Answering the question

- Judgment questions - *To what extent… justify…, all… most… every…*
- Key words - *repetition vs synonyms?*
- Creating a thesis
  - Ask *why* the question or premise is true…?
  - Add *because* or *in order to*
  - Work from the *judgement* or the *pivotal key word/s*

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Planning

- Working time vs writing time
- Use *TSO* - Think – Select -Organise
- TIP - You only need to plan your THESIS and the TOPIC SENTENCES.

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How long?

- Aim for four pages minimum
- Breadth – different points across the paragraphs
- Depth – at least two 'proofs' within each paragraph
- Two or three paragraphs? It depends…

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STRUCTURE IS EVERYTHING!

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Comparison

UNIT 2 - Compare texts in a variety of contexts, media and modes by:

- explaining the relationship between purpose and context
- analysing the style and structure of texts

UNIT 4 - Compare texts from similar or different genres and contexts by:

- analysing language, structural and stylistic choices
- analysing and evaluating how similar themes, issues, ideas and concepts are treated in different texts.

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