

ATARNotes

English 3&4

ATARNotes September Lecture Series

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Hi, I'm Sunny!

- Graduated in 2021 with an ATAR of 96.70
- Received a study score of 44 in English
- Received 40+ study scores in Legal Studies, Literature, English Language, Further Maths, Psychology
- Currently studying a Bachelor of Paramedicine at Monash University

- It isn't too late for effective study!
 - Play the VCAA game!
- Treat English like Maths (🧐)
 - Plan, plan, plan!

UNIT 3	UNIT 4	EXAM
Text Response	Text Response	Text Response
Creating Texts	Analysing Argument	Creating Texts
	Presenting Argument	Analysing Argument

The three sections of the exam

Section A: Reading and Responding

- Based on one of the texts you study (“List A”)
- The whole essay should be exclusively about that text!
 - no comparison, no external sources, minimal background info
- Respond to a choice of prompts (choice of two) and construct a contention/interpretation

Section B: Crafting Texts

- Writing a creative piece in response to your chosen Framework and one stimulus material
- No requirement to use your Mentor Texts on the exam

Section C: Analysing Argument

- Discuss how written and visual material contributes to an author’s argument and attempts to persuade readers
- Compare different author’s arguments and language choices



Make sure you are planning!

- It can be tempting to skip planning before you write your essay, in order to save time. But...
- **Planning makes a world of difference!** It allows you to collect your thoughts and ensures that, from the outset of your piece, you have a strong line of argument.
- Examiners know not to mark plans, so it's a great idea to create these before you start your essay!

Here is a sample plan →

Contention: Although Mary Shelley considers the moral and ethical implications of scientific advancement, the enlightenment of the creature implies that such curiosity is innate to mankind, and thus inextricable from the human condition.

BP1: It is in the nuanced references in Walton's letters that *Frankenstein* is understood as a cautionary tale, as the allusions to Coleridge's poem align both Walton and Frankenstein to the ambitious and hubristic Mariner.

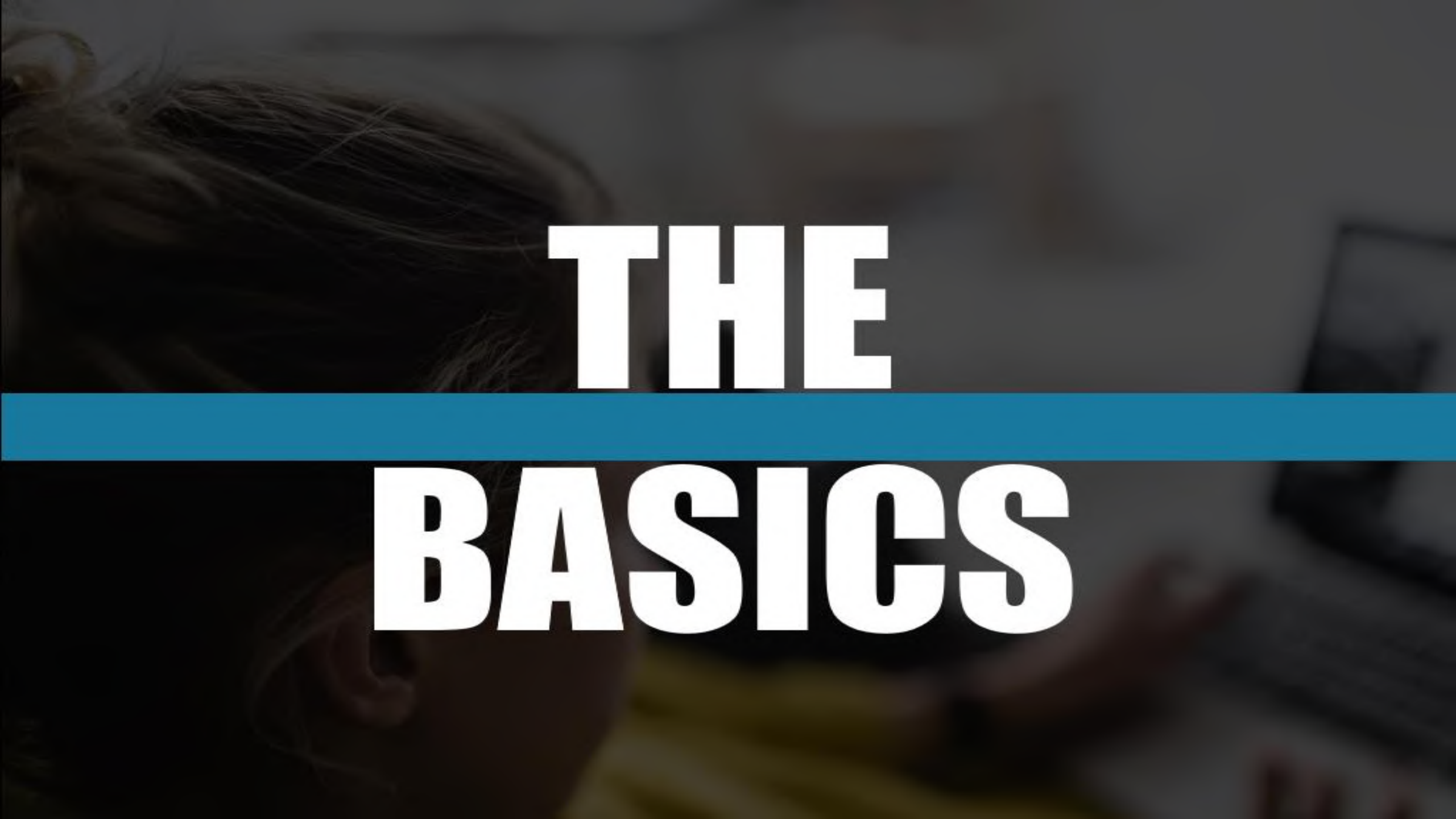
- *Rime of the Ancient Mariner*: "at the land of mist and snow... [he] shall kill no albatross"
- "Polar God's" → "Dash the cup of ambition.."

BP2: Shelley cautions against narcissistic motivations for the acquirement of knowledge, and explores the consequences of the usurpation of God on both the creation and the natural order.

- Self identification of "madness"
- *Paradise Lost*
- "Hideous progeny"

BP3: The inability of Frankenstein to assume the entirety of the nurturing maternal responsibility resulted in a "wretched" and "accursed" offspring, reaffirms Shelley's text as cautioning against the dangers of usurping women.

- Fire imagery
- "Care of a mother"



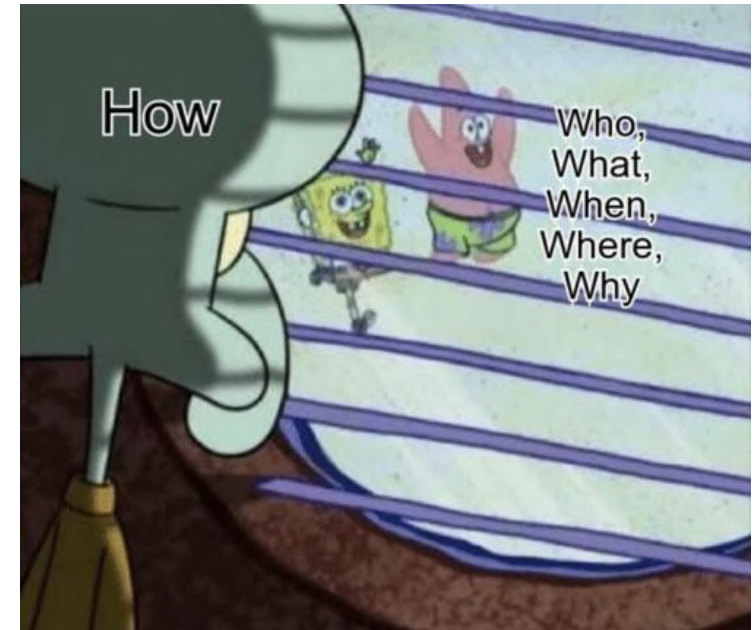
THE BASICS

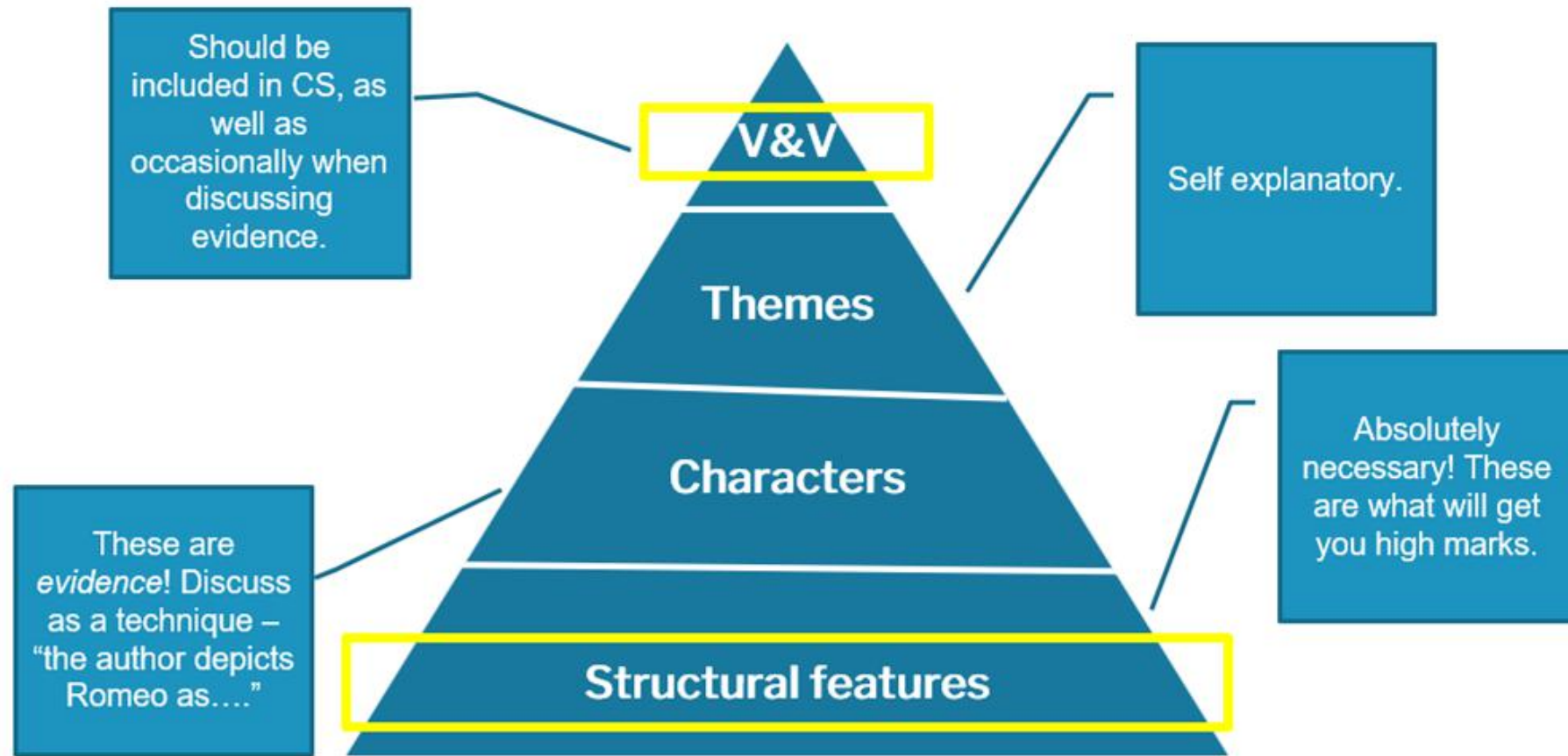
Three step process

Three stages

What - **How** - **Why**

- **What** language is the author using?
- **How** does it position the audience?
- **Why** does it support the author's argument?





Look for text-specific structural features!

- **Films:** mis-en-scene, costume, lighting, sound (diegetic and non-diegetic)
- **Poetry/ Novels:** literary devices (e.g. metaphors, allusions, irony, oxymorons, imagery, foreshadowing, rhyme, enjambment)
- **Plays:** stage directions, chorus, props, lighting, sound

“In the play Medea, the crucial conflict is between reason and passion.”

- “She is described as “**not a woman, but a lioness**, with the nature more savage than a Tuscan Scylla’s”, **conveying her dehumanisation** as a result of her actions.”
- **Animal imagery** is also employed when the Nurse sees her “**glaring at them like a bull.**”
- All the animals used to describe her are unpredictably dangerous and aggressive **paralleling Medea’s own savage temperament.**

Authorial intent gets the ‘A’s

What is Authorial Intent?

- The author’s intention behind their words
- What message they are trying to convey
- Endorsing/condoning/idolising/lamenting...

For Example (in general)

1. **Structural feature:** “a metaphor”
2. **Analysis:** discuss what the metaphor represents
3. **Authorial intent:** what is the author’s message in utilising that metaphor to represent that idea?

Example from an English text:

Quote: Description of the reflections of the Palast der Republik as “bent and brown”

Analysis: The intriguing nature of the description and linking it to the Palast’s history in East Germany

Authorial intent: Through this, the **author is suggesting that** even after their demise, the Stasi are still bending facts and fabricating fictions in order to seek control over East Germans.

Author: “I chose the colour of the curtains randomly there is no deeper meaning”

English teacher:



If you're looking to score highly...

- Address **all four elements**: views and values, themes, characters, structural features
- Quote often
- Integrate and blend **quotes** *into* your sentences
- Focus on **structural features**, rather than characters and the plot of the text
- **Authorial intent**
- **Don't** memorise essays
- **Answer** the prompt; do not deviate from the core of the prompt
- Explore the **complexity** of the prompt; do not be too one-sided
- Centre your arguments on **ideas**, rather than characters or examples

Differentiating yourself!

- Don't *just* use dialogue, the plot, characters, etc. as evidence, focus on the structural features!
- Connect everything to how the author deliberately chooses to portray it
 - **Everything is a construct!!!**
 - **Not ‘Character A is ugly’**
 - **but rather, ‘The Author portrays Character A as an ugly being in order to...’**



From now on until the rest of your VCE English life...

Characters are **not** people. Characters are **constructs**.

i.e. Not: “Victor does not want to do this”

But rather: “Shelley depicts Victor as unwilling to do this”

The **author** is **creating** a character.

Therefore...

Make occasional references to **the way the author portrays** them.

Link Character to Theme or V&V.

- Focus your arguments on the **broader** ideas
- Rather than having ‘one character per paragraph’

‘The characters in I for Isobel have suppressed their emotions.’ Do you agree?

Don’t write:

- BP 1: [Character 1] successfully suppresses their emotions
- BP 2: [Character 2] also suppresses their emotions
- BP 3: However, [Character 3] has not suppressed their emotions

Instead focus on the broader ideas:

- BP 1: The characters find it **difficult** to suppress their emotions because their past experiences have wounded them beyond repair
- BP 2: Different **approaches** characters take to triumph over their emotions
- BP 3: Many characters are able to suppress their emotions to different **extents**, though none actually 100% succeed



SECTION A

Reading and Responding (Text Response)

What's it about?

- analytical essay on **one** chosen text
- can choose **either** one of your Unit 3 texts (meaning you can choose to write on the text you used for your creative!)
- worth $\frac{1}{3}$ of exam marks
- your essay is marked by two assessors who both give it a mark out of 10.

Criteria for Section A

- **knowledge and understanding** of the text, and the ideas and issues it explores
- development of a **coherent analysis** in response to the topic
- use of **textual evidence** to support the interpretation
- control and effectiveness of **language use**, as appropriate to the task

Prompt Actions

- How?
- Discuss?
- Do you agree? / To what extent do you agree?
- Why?

Prompt Content

- Thematic
- Views and Values

BIG PICTURE

You usually tend to get one big picture idea and one specific idea on the exam!!!

- Structural Features

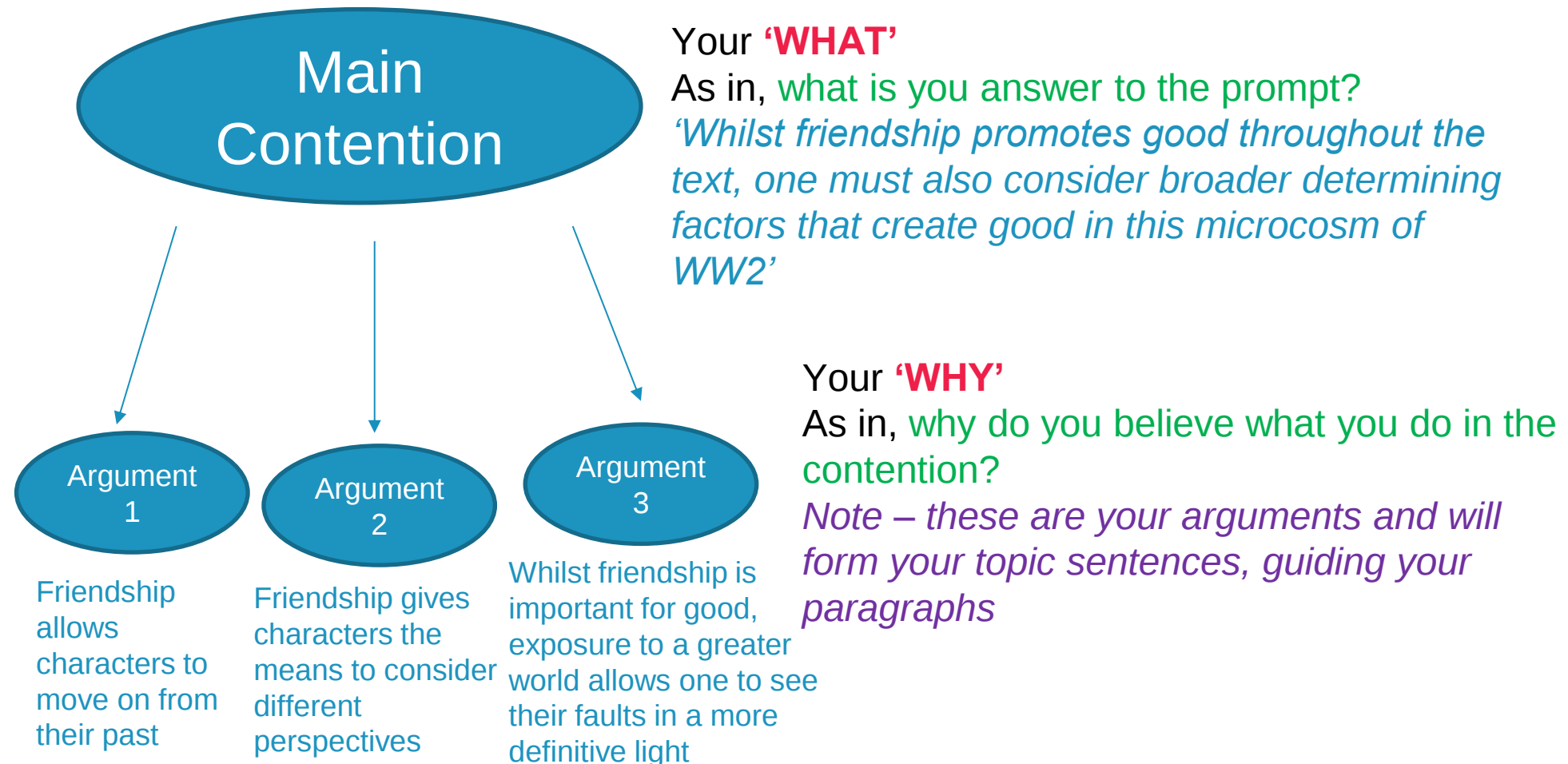
SPECIFIC

- Rote learning is great and all but if your essay doesn't match the prompt then what is the point?
- Assessors can smell a memorised essay a mile away!
- Your essay **must** answer the prompt

... that doesn't just mean sprinkling the key terms every so often!

Piper, Christine, *After Darkness*

'In *After Darkness*, friendship is the primary powerful force for good'. Do you agree?



4 things to do to break down the prompt:

Highlight key terms → So you understand what needs to be discussed

- Don't leave out an important area of discussion

Turn the prompt into a question → Makes it easier to frame than a statement

- If it's a question, turn it into a statement

Answer that question → Figure out whether you agree or disagree

- Develop your **contention** based on answering this question

Play devil's advocate → Question everything- *Is this theme really the central one?*

- Consider every implication/consequence of that question being true or untrue- *If this is true, then...*
- This is incredibly important!

‘Despite Atwood’s portrayal of Gilead as **soulless and destructive**, she has nevertheless succeeded in giving the reader a sense of **optimism**.’

To what extent do you agree?

‘Despite Atwood’s portrayal of Gilead as **soulless and destructive**, she has nevertheless succeeded in giving the reader a sense of **optimism**.’
To what extent do you agree?



Despite Atwood’s portrayal of Gilead as soulless and destructive, does she succeed in giving the reader a sense of optimism?

‘Despite Atwood’s portrayal of Gilead as **soulless and destructive**, she has nevertheless succeeded in giving the reader a sense of **optimism**.’

To what extent do you agree?



Is Gilead completely soulless?

Does Atwood *succeed* in giving the reader optimism?

Is this what Atwood even set out to do?

Despite Atwood’s portrayal of Gilead as soulless and destructive, does she succeed in giving the reader a sense of optimism?

What optimism is afforded?

Why is there optimism?

Is the optimism due to Atwood’s portrayal of Gilead or in *spite* of it?

‘Despite Atwood’s portrayal of Gilead as **soulless and destructive**, she has nevertheless succeeded in giving the reader a sense of **optimism**.’
To what extent do you agree?

Overall contention: Atwood’s *Handmaids Tale* is a harsh admonition of regressive theocracy and patriarchal hegemony, offering a sense of optimism only its reformation.

1. Atwood celebrates the endeavor of the human spirit.
2. Yet, Atwood portrays a powerfully dismal state of humanity.
3. Ultimately, Atwood *does not* succeed in affording a sense of optimism, as she did not set out to do so. Rather, she warns of the fatality of certain socio-political values.

I like to follow the standard body paragraph structure of:

BP1: Agree with the prompt, showing ways it is correct

BP2: 'However...' Show complexity in not blindly acknowledging the prompt

BP3: Zoom out: consider views and values or other themes. This is where you want to flex!

If a character prompt: is there another character that better represents what the prompt is discussing

If a thematic prompt: Is there another theme that is ultimately more central to the text, or another reason for why a theme or idea is represented?

One structure to follow is:

- (1) Answering the prompt itself (tunnel vision)
- (2) Considering a different perspective (However...)
- (3) Exploring nuanced views and values (Ultimately...)

Views and Values =
what the author is
trying to get across 😊



What **not** to do...

Do not divide body paragraphs by characters!

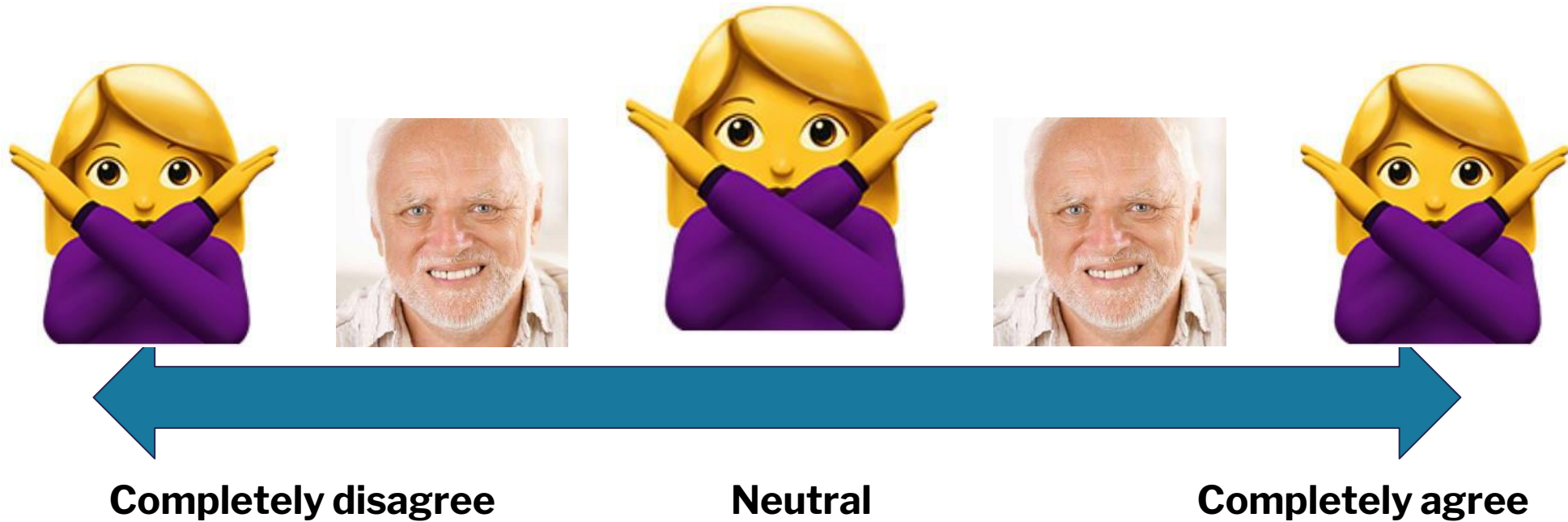
—Instead, divide by ideas and how characters embody them

- **NOT:** B1-Vladek, B2- Anja, B3- Art
- **INSTEAD:** B1- Family assists in dark times, B2- Family can hinder progress/survival, B3- One cannot rely on family as a crutch but family are nevertheless a powerful support network

Hint – characters are constructs

Completely agreeing or disagreeing

- Never write 3 body paragraphs completely agreeing or disagreeing!
- Shows a lack of complexity and ability to critically think and engage



Introductions

- Context sentence

Address the socio-political context of the text – DO NOT talk about the author's life or summarise the text

- Contention

Needs to encompass all your ideas and resolve the prompt

- Outline of Arguments

Keep these as clear as possible – make sure it's really clear how each links to the topic

- (Views and Values/Authorial Intent)

Try and work this through your arguments and contention – but also works very well as a final linking sentence for your intro

- **Tip: Try and stick with one structure for your intros so that you can hit the ground running**

Introductions

HOW DO THE CHARACTERS IN PERSEPOLIS DEMONSTRATE THE IMPACT OF THE CONFLICT BETWEEN TRADITION AND MODERNITY?

As 20th century Iran underwent violent and rapid government changes from the Shah's 'Westernising' autocracy to the Ayatollah's strict theocracy, a divorce between tradition and modernity began to accelerate and permeate all aspects of Iranian life. Throughout 'Persepolis', Satrapi's characters either provide commentary on or examples of the struggle to reconcile "2500 years of" Persian civilisation with modernity, resulting in a confusing identity crisis for Iranians on the individual, national and global scale. Satrapi ultimately concludes that as long as there is an absolute separatism between the familiarity of Eastern tradition and the freedom offered by Western modernity, conflicts and suffering will continue to arise, and therefore encourages her Western audiences to sympathise with Iranians' painful experience on a humanitarian level rather than fearfully judge an "entire nation...by the wrongdoings of a few extremists".

CONTEXT
SENTENCE –
REVEALS THE
SOCIO-
POLITICAL
CONTENT OF
THE TEXT

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CONTENTION –
CLEARLY
ANSWERS THE
HOW
'CHARACTER
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AND EXAMPLES'

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VIEWS AND
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Body Paragraphs

- Understand that TEEL is not just a basic structure used by people who don't understand – you've been learning it since primary school because it actually works
- Don't fear using structure that everyone else uses – set yourself above the state by ensuring that the content in that structure is complex and sophisticated

Topic sentences = your sub-arguments

- Must coincide with outline of arguments in introduction
- Do not copy word for word from introduction - Reword it!
- Make sure they are **relevant** to your prompt

General rules:

- No quotes
- No specific evidence e.g. symbols, plot, try avoiding character names too
- **TS is an ARGUMENT, not just a statement**

Remember: An argument is something that can be proved in the rest of your paragraph

Tip – If the assessor can respond to your TS with ‘ok, tell me how?’, you’re on the right track

Body Paragraphs

Topic sentences vs concluding sentences

T.S. 'This is a key idea'.

C.S. 'This is what the author says about this idea.'

T.S. 'Although some characters seek to overcome their social disadvantages, many of them struggle to improve their lives in the face of prejudice.'

C.S. 'Thus the text reveals the perilous and often emotionally taxing journey the characters must undertake before being able to triumph over society's expectations.'

Remember: This is an opportunity to discuss authorial intent and views and values so ensure you make the most of it

Burial Rites:

“I am run through and through with disaster, I am knifed to the hilt with fate”.

To what extent is Agnes responsible for her own suffering?

Kent contrasts the archival documents in the novel with rich, saga-like imagery and symbolism to reinforce the challenges placed upon Agnes. As Agnes rides up the hill to her execution, the wind – previously a “sinister sound” – becomes a voice for her. It “screams and screams” - it “screams because [her] tongue cannot”. Kent uses the wind to offer a metaphorical voice to Agnes, who in her fleeting final moments hopelessly seeks to “mimic the wind’s loneliness”. Thus, as Agnes becomes progressively more panic-stricken, the chaos of her thoughts and the wind coalesce into a cloud of meaningless lyricism and anxiousness. In direct contrast to Agnes’ rich, first-person narration, Kent offers the apathetic voice of Commissioner Blöndal through the interwoven historical documents. In a bureaucratic manner, Blöndal describes how “the lifeless heads” were “set upon stakes” and the bodies “buried in unconsecrated ground”. Hence, by contrasting the sterile epigraphs with Agnes’ first-person narration, Kent prompts her readers to feel that Agnes’ fate was largely due to outside societal influences.

TOPIC
SENTENCE –
GIVES A
CLEAR IDEA

AUTHORIAL
INTENT
ABOUT THAT
IDEA

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QUOTES ARE
SHORT AND
SHARP

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DISCUSSION
OF
STRUCTURAL
FEATURES

Conclusions

A straightforward wrap-up! As simple as three/four sentences!

1. Restate contention

Do not just reword from your intro – by this stage you have explored the topic in much more detail so your contention can be more refined and specific

2. Message of the text

Think about: what the author aims to teach, how they aim to challenge their readers, what they want us to notice etc.

Remember: This is the last thing your assessor will see so you want to make sure it's a strong, impactful ending

- Don't make the mistakes listed in the examiner's report

This seems kind of obvious and yet every year the examiner's report reads as essentially the same

- Read critical articles

Lots of the state will have read Shmoop or Spark Notes – if you want to be better you need to choose better/less obvious evidence – academic articles are a great source of ideas and can often help develop analysis of authorial intent (State Library Website) - reading the abstract is a great place to start!

- Develop a strong interpretation

Your response to the topic will be hard to articulate if you don't already have a clear understanding of the messages of the text – a strong interpretation naturally lends itself to hearty discussion of authorial intent which makes for a high scoring essay

- Add analysis into your quote banks

Your quotes are merely a vessel for your analysis, that's what we want to see you flex. So add analysis of each quote in your quote bank based on feedback from your teacher. This will also assist in not summarizing.

- Practise planning your essays

Examiners know not to mark paragraph plans! Practise planning out your essays so you develop skills of thinking on your feet!

HOW TO PLAN:

STEP 1: Pick the topic you'd like to do at *the beginning of reading time*

STEP 2: Decide on your main contention and, *as soon as reading time is up, write it down* (the exam will have pages at the beginning you can use for planning; you can even just put it in the margins!)

STEP 3: Write down your 3~4 main arguments that will eventually become your paragraphs.

STEP 4: Underneath each of those arguments, write down the evidence from the text you know that you'll be using to support your arguments. Don't worry about going into depth too much; a character's name or a quick note will suffice.

This should take about 5 minutes at the beginning of writing time, just before you start your argument analysis. Don't skip this step as exam pressure means having stuff written down will be incredibly useful!



CRAFTING

TEXT

Creating Texts criteria

- ☒ develop meaningful ideas
- ☒ create a purposeful text for a specific context/audience
- ☒ experiment with vocabulary and text structures
- ☒ explore and employ a sustained and individual voice
- ☒ apply standard and non-standard conventions of language

- Your creative text should have a clear and stated purpose
 - Is your text designed to express a certain point, reflect on a part experience, to explain something or to argue something
- When you decide to write a text, there should be a goal or aim in mind that you want to achieve through the text.
 - Your purpose must align with the specific context of your creative framework and the audience that you are intending to target
- This criteria can be achieved by effectively planning and refining your piece

Creating Texts

Creating Purposeful Texts

Simple idea	Complex idea
Protest is hard.	Protest is hard because it involves clashes in ideologies and strongly held beliefs, meaning that for one side to succeed, another often has to fail.
Country is important.	Country is important because it is the foundation of our cultural identity and shapes our understanding of who we are and where we belong, meaning that without a connection to country, we cannot forge a clear sense of self.
Personal journeys are rewarding.	Personal journeys are rewarding because they require us to exercise autonomy and decision making even if it means straying from an ideal path, meaning that journeys teach us lessons by allowing us to learn from our own mistakes and experiences.
Play is fun.	Play is fun because it allows us to engage in an activity purely for personal fulfilment and not to satisfy other people or receive a tangible reward, meaning that the value of play is that it only has intrinsic value, not extrinsic value.

- This criteria involves the selection of key words and phrases (authorial intent) to create a certain effect
- You will need to consider the audience you are targeting
 - This will determine the language and structural choices you employ
 - Different audiences will respond differently to certain text structures and language choices.
 - Your choices will impact the reception of the key ideas and messages
- This criteria will be met if you have effectively planned and done your research
 - Consider how your mentor/supplementary texts position a similar audience

- Exploration of **place and belonging**.
- Explorations of physical land and country, local and international, loss of country and dispossession, remembering country and nostalgia, migration, the power of connections with land, climate change and the changing landscape, and imagined countries.
- Engage with experiences such as farming and land management, and cultural expressions like country music. Could also explore traditional understandings of Country through Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge and perspectives.



Creating Texts

- Explorations of **conflict and contest**, what it means to protest, the value of protest, the outcomes of protest, personal stories of protest, struggle and war.
- There could also be explorations of the success and failure of protest – and the prescient protests that gained ground after the original protest had faded. Students could also consider individual protest and group protest.

Writing About Protest



- **Explorations of 'life' or biographical explorations** – telling our stories, telling others' stories, the problem of telling stories, appropriation of stories, who tells the stories and our history, missing stories, marginalised and elevated stories. Students could explore personal milestones, the effects of key events on their lives, or explore these ideas through the eyes of others.
- Students who have migrated can explore their stories of movement and disruption. They can explore the expectations of change, and the language of a new place and culture.





- Explorations of experiences and traditions of play and playing in many cultures and through history.
- Students could explore play as it is applied to games, sport, acting and make-believe, music, language and images. They could also explore concepts of collaboration and connection, digital vs analogue, rules and rule breaking. There is scope to consider the ways play and play acting can represent the ‘real’ world, and to explore issues associated with using play or play acting to minimise or mitigate against events or actions.

- All writers need to consider for whom they are writing, under what circumstances, and for what purpose – VCAA
- **Purpose, Audience** and **Context** form the foundation of any piece of writing. In the absence of these elements, the writing will not be effective or cohesive.



- You might choose to explore a single holistic purpose in your writing or a multitude of purposes
 - **To express:** an author seeking to express would explore recounts, storytelling, and/or narratives of imagination to engage with actions, events, experiences, and/or ideas.
 - **To explain:** an author seeking to explain would explore cause and effect and the significance or possible consequences of actions, events, experiences and/or ideas.
 - **To reflect:** an author seeking to reflect would explore past experiences of personal discovery that shape their understanding of actions, events, experiences, and/or ideas.
 - **To argue:** an author seeking to argue would explore a point of view, take a stand, and propose solutions to convince others of actions, events, experiences, and/or ideas.

- Context refers to the social, historical, temporal and political environment in which a text is situated or constructed
- The context of a text significantly shapes the views and values of the writer and ultimately the way in which the key messages of the text will be constructed and delivered
- For the purposes of your creative writing, you may choose to be writer from the contemporary modern society or an author from Ancient Greece. However, in either case your writing must be consistent with the context that you are writing it in.

- Audience is formally defined by VCAA as "the group of readers, listeners, or viewers that the author, including a writer, film director, content developer, or speaker, is addressing."
 - Essentially, it is the demographic of readers that you are writing your piece for or you hope will be reading this.
- Writers have very deliberate audiences for who they write for and this is linked very closely to the **context** they are writing in and their **purpose** for writing this piece
- You will also have to select a target audience for your creative piece (and it's not your teachers/assessors). The more specific that you can get about your target audience, the greater the quality will be of your creative piece.

- Now that you have a purpose, context and audience for your writing, it is crucial to decide on the style of writing which will then determine the textual form that you choose.

Imaginative

Informative

Persuasive

- **Short story:** least structure, possibly the easiest, needs a few characters and dialogue, lots of flexibility here
- **Letter:** need to structure like a letter, no dialogue, needs a writer and a recipient and a reason for writing the letter
- **Poem:** probably the most difficult, each word has to be meaningful. Do not recommend choosing this if there is a minimum word count that is substantial.
- **Diary entry:** a popular genre, one of the easier ones, can just be a stream of consciousness
- **Play/film script:** one of the harder ones, lots of dialogue, don't forget stage directions, lighting, etc.
- **Interview:** again, a tricky one. Consider whether you want it to be Q&A style or a conversation accounting for setting, mood, etc

- **Podcast Transcript:** easier than play/film transcript, usually do not include stage directions, only dialogue and speakers. Lots of flexibility as it can follow the style of an 'unstructured conversation'
- **Blog post/opinion piece:** relatively informal and easy to implement, must have a significant amount of information on topic, can include personal opinion, can use 1st person (but may use 3rd person, too), must follow a logical flow of information and arguments
- **Monologue:** a series of thoughts an individual makes to themselves, may include memories, lots of creative flexibility, however it may be easy to experience 'writer's block' or end up with a 'purposeless/boring' piece
- **Article:** more formal and complex than a blog post/opinion piece, should not include bias or personal opinion, evidence and expert-opinion based, requires even more information on a topic, and arguments must be structured carefully



Text type: blog post

Message/Purpose: travel as a form of play as it provides opportunities to unwind, explore different cultures and places, expand our understanding of the world. There are different forms of travel that people can consider - it is not necessarily international travel, but can be in the form of local (e.g. hiking) and interstate travel

Audience: young adults who want to explore/travel while they are younger - uni students/future uni students considering taking a gap year to travel

Context: modern

Persona: uni student that has done a gap year

BPs:

- introduction: hook e.g. 'are you thinking of travelling/taking a gap year to travel?' → benefits of travel → connections to Play
- different forms of travel - accessible to everyone - doesn't have to be international
- anecdotal evidence: persona had no money but still wanted to travel, and spent the year travelling Australia, living and driving around in a van.
- engaging & fun aspects of their travel - van broke down in the middle of nowhere, they obtained a travel license to work in different parts of the world, wildlife, 'cultural' shocks → 'bogans', compare impressions of major cities e.g. Sydney vs Melbourne - humour - which one did they find better and why?
- to a uni student - why should they take a gap year? Audience specific: burn-out (persona was experiencing), realising that after grad, if you work full-time, you will never be able to have these experiences → as it provides opportunities to unwind, explore different cultures and places, expand our understanding of the world.

Stimulus 2



Seven years old

I think astronauts are the coolest people in the world. They get to go to outer space and everyone thinks they are heroes. Yesterday, I made a space helmet with Mum, and I've also been creating blueprints of what my own spaceship is going to look like when I'm older.

But then I realised that spaceships cost a lot of money so I asked around what job will make me the richest when I'm an Adult. I found out that neurosurgeons make a lot of money and decided to become a neurosurgeon. But then I realised that neurosurgery was really boring and decided I could just be a pilot instead. Mum says it is easier to become a pilot than an astronaut and I really want to learn to fly a plane. When I do it in video games, it's so much fun and easy, so I know I'll be good at it.

Seventeen years old

I'm in year 12 now, so close to finally finishing school. Now I need to decide my future. What degree am I gonna do? Which uni do I want to be at? What job do I want? When I was younger, I was looking forward to the moment that school would finally be finished, but now it all seems a bit scary and overwhelming. Ever since I was little I always wanted to make my own money, so I could buy whatever I wanted. It wasn't easy to find a job that I would enjoy but also provide the opportunity to earn a high income. I've always been interested in business, the way it's operated and the skills required, but most importantly how to make a profit. When I had just started high school, I had come across a YouTube video telling me I could make money by investing in the stock market. Ever since I've been intrigued by the field of Finance, and hope I get to invest other people's money for a living. I was also inspired by the many depictions of the lavish and luxurious lifestyle of people in Finance, their fancy cars and ability to spare no expense. I was so impressed that I could choose something I was not only interested in, but that would allow me to live comfortably and provide for myself. I can't wait until I get to start my studies, network with other people and get some valuable work opportunities.

Thirty Years Old

For a long time, I loved my job so much. It provided me with the lifestyle I had dreamed of, the fancy car, the Toorak mansion with a huge pool and a view of the city skyline. I never had to worry about money, I could do almost anything I wanted. I've stayed with the same company since uni, and they truly show that they value hard-working and loyal employees like myself. Last year, they even promoted me to Managing Director. I was thrilled, I would be receiving a pay rise and finally be able to add another car to my collection. It felt that my years as a junior had paid off, all the hard work and overtime got me to where I am today. But what I didn't realise I'd also be signing up for, was, you guessed it, even more overtime. I now had more responsibilities, I was also required to supervise the Junior Bankers ensuring they complete their work. The Junior Bankers needed to be trained, they were slow and under-equipped. I had to constantly work to ensure these bankers were guided and trained, ensuring all business operations ran smoothly at all cost, otherwise I would lose my job.

Forty Years Old

I realized I hated my job; the industry wasn't for me. The long hours, stressful environment and the hustle culture. I'd missed out on birthdays, weddings and holidays all just for work. So I said enough is enough, and made the decision to quit. I wanted to do something good in the world, make an impact. What impact did I make as a Senior Managing Director? I don't know myself. I had earned a lot from my job in finance, but did I really need so much money? There are people who need help in this world, even right on my doorstep here in Melbourne. I don't need fancy cars or a mansion, I need to help people and be able to give back. I've started a charity called HelpingHands, here to provide a "helping hand" to communities in Melbourne doing it though. Since creating HelpingHands, I've downsized to a small apartment in the CBD and own no vehicle. This money saved helps me to help fund the charity and its services, including a food bank and job-seeking assistance. The thousands of people the charity and its volunteers have helped make this operation all worth it, finally putting my business skills to good use. I now live a fulfilling life that I enjoy, improving people's lives. The lavish lifestyle was good, but this was better.

Section B – Creating a text

Instructions

- In this section, you must create **one** written text (**not** including song, poetry or verse).
- In your text, you must include meaningful connections with ideas drawn from
 - **One** of the Frameworks of Ideas.
 - The title provided for your selected Framework of Ideas.
 - **At least one** piece of stimulus material provided for your selected Framework of Ideas.
- You must develop your text with a clear purpose, incorporating **at least one** of the following: to explain, to express, to reflect, to argue.
- You must write an effective and cohesive text that demonstrates fluency through your selection of vocabulary, text structure(s) and language features.
- Refer to the assessment criteria on page 16.
- This section is worth one-third of the total marks for the examination.

Framework 1: Writing about country

- Write a text that explores ideas about country.
- You must use the title provided.
- You must use **at least one** of the following stimuli.

Title: 'My country is calling'

Stimulus 1

'We do not inherit the earth from our ancestors, we borrow it from our children.'

Stimulus 3

'My country is too far to reach,
But it will forever be
A part of me.'

Stimulus 2



Framework 2: Writing about protest

- Write a text that explores ideas about protest.
- You must use the title provided.
- You must use **at least one** of the following stimuli.

Title: 'Listen'

Stimulus 1

'Mighty oaks from small acorns grow.'

Stimulus 3

'It is not about
If we want, or
If we can
Because
If we won't, and
If we don't
A time may come, when
We can't.'

Stimulus 2



Framework 3: Writing about personal journeys

- Write a text that explores ideas about personal journeys.
- You must use the title provided.
- You must use **at least one** of the following stimuli.

Title: 'This is me'

Stimulus 1

'Life isn't about finding yourself. Life is about creating yourself.'

Stimulus 3

'My story is ready
There's enough to share
As I have made plenty
Come, sit at my table
Listen and learn
And you will see me.'

Stimulus 2



Framework 4: Writing about play

- Write a text that explores ideas about play.
- You must use the title provided.
- You must use **at least one** of the following stimuli.

Title: 'Time well spent'

Stimulus 1

'Play the game as well as you can and that's what you're judged on.'

Stimulus 3

'Child, I have forgotten the art of being absorbed in sticks and mud-pies.

I seek out costly playthings, and gather lumps of gold and silver.

With whatever you find you create your glad games, I spend both my time and my strength over things I never can obtain.

In my frail canoe I struggle to cross the sea of desire, and forget that I too am playing a game.'

Stimulus 2



If you're looking to score highly...

- Decide on your preferred text type by practicing writing different pieces and ensuring you adopt **genre features** into your piece
 - You can effectively do this by annotating your Mentor Texts/pieces you like and aiming to replicate their style & how they incorporate genre features
- Ensure you have a **meaningful message** to your piece that links to the stimulus and your Framework
- **Audience, Context & Purpose** must be clear in your piece
- Making sure that your piece matches the stimulus you have chosen is KEY – practice planning!



To score highly in this section...

- You should be coming into the exam with a **planned piece** (or even a memorised piece) that you have perfected and wish to use for this section.
 - This is because the prompts outlined by VCAA (as we have just seen) are **broad enough** that students seeking high marks in English will NOT be coming into the exam expecting to write the perfect piece from scratch, and will come in with a prepared response, or at least a rough draft.
- This does not mean you should write a generic pre-memorized response, rather, alter what you bring into the exam and adjust your piece to make sure it still matches the stimulus!
 - Even if you are a great writer, it is not realistic to write a perfect creative piece in 60 minutes!



ANALYSING ARGUMENT

Criteria for Section C

- Understanding of the argument(s) presented and point(s) of view expressed
- Analysis of ways in which language and visual features are used to present an argument and to persuade
- Control and effectiveness of language use, as appropriate to the task

- Contentions need to include a bit of information, so it can be helpful to develop a formula.
- In general, a good contention identifies:
 1. The Issue
 2. How the writer approaches their argument (tone)
 3. Whether the writer sees the issue as good/bad
 4. The justification for the writers view
 5. The solution proposed
- Which results in:
- The author **tone word** [ly] contends that [the issue] is [word for good/bad] because [justification] and therefore [solution].

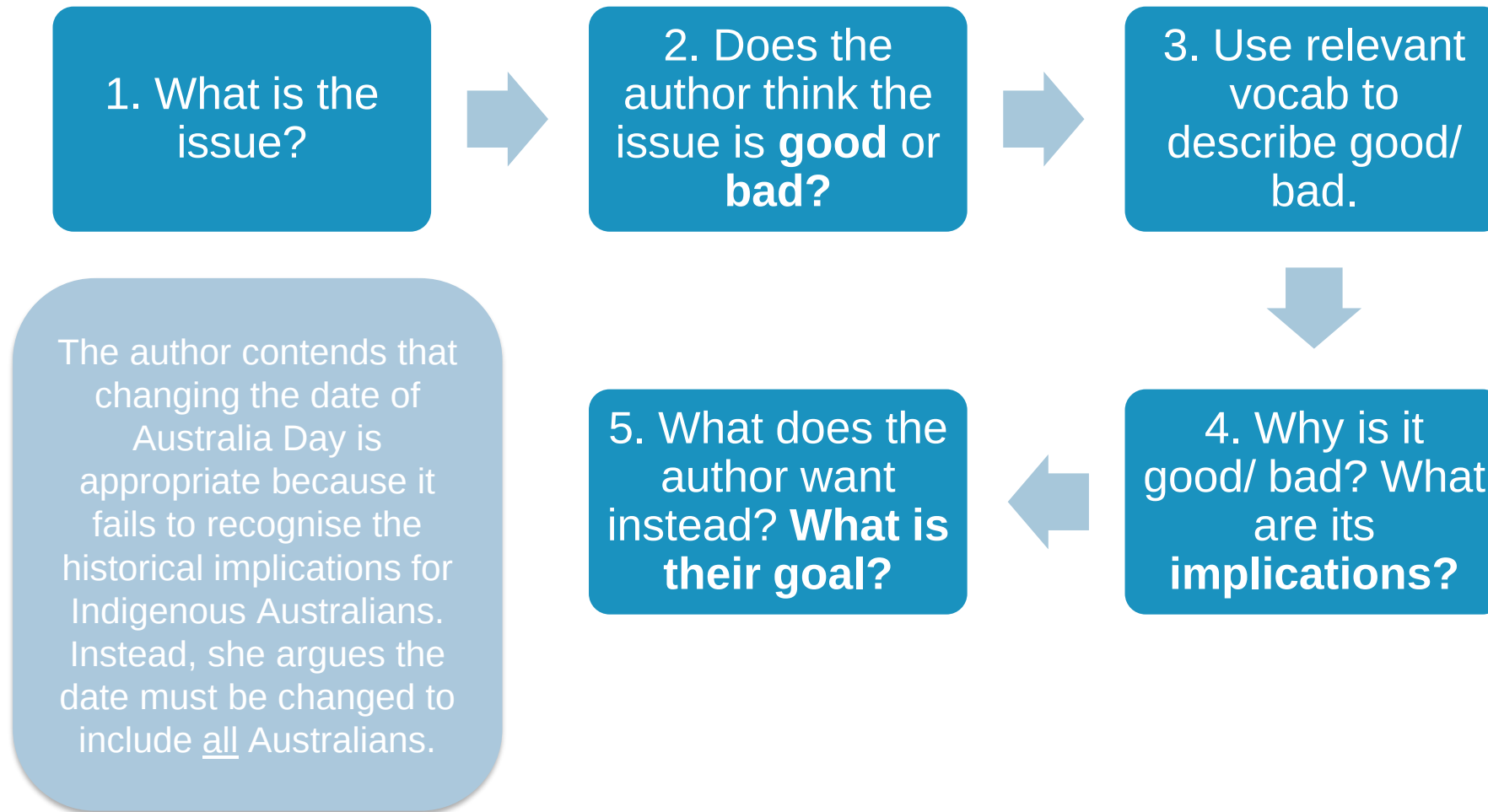
Let us find a more inclusive date

What does Australia Day mean to me? Hoons tearing around in their bright blue utes with the Australian flag draped across their shoulders, loudly voicing their patriotism. Ask any of them about Australia's original inhabitants and be met with a blank stare. Isn't it time we considered a more inclusive date?

- **Helen Choy, Altona**

Analysing Argument

Contention Flowchart



Three step process

Three stages

What - **How** - **Why**

- **What** language is the author using?
- **How** does it position the audience?
- **Why** does it support the author's argument?



What – How – Why

PLT = the “what”

Key question to answer: **What** is the author doing?

- **What** language is being used? → You must QUOTE

*The author makes use of overtly negative language such as “**terrible human being**” to establish Chris Brown in an unfavorable light.*

*By describing his actions as “**brawling**” with a “**crew**”, the author employs language reminiscent of gang violence and brutal street fights.*

*The author employs language that plays to the idea of naivety and youthfulness, through describing Brown as a “**stupid 19-year-old kid**”.*

What – **How** – Why

Key question to answer: **How** is the audience positioned?

- Remember, it is the **intended effect**, not the actual effect.

*Thus the author **invites readers** to consider how their support of Brown might endorse his harmful behavior.*

*... through which the author seeks to **engender a sense of fear amongst her readership**, of the misogynistic behavior that Brown could inflict in Australia.*

*...which **seeks to marginalise readers** against her proposition by way of implying they fail to uphold the principles of gender equality.*

Intended effect vs Actual effect

Look at how the author **intends** for the readers think/feel rather than what they **actually** think/feel.

i.e. **not** 'this PLT makes the reader feel sad'
rather this PLT is intended to elicit feelings of sadness'
or 'positions readers to feel sad'

Do **NOT** evaluate the strength of the author's effects or arguments.

What – How – **Why**

Key question to answer: **Why** does this support the author's argument? Relate it back to their contention.

As such, the author creates a comprehensively negative image of Brown, furthering the idea that he should not be allowed into Australia.

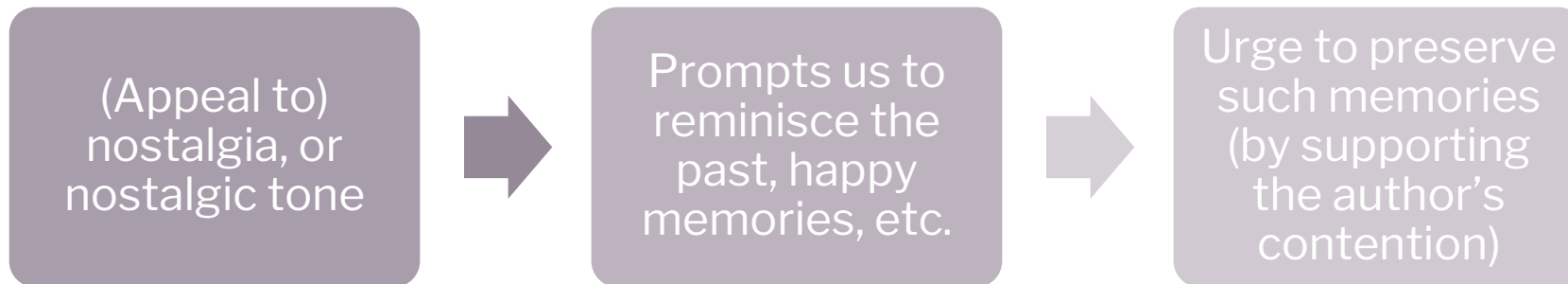
Thus the author seeks to inspire a unity amongst her readers to ensure they all criticize how celebrities get a 'free pass' when it comes to misdemeanours.

Consequently the author seeks to reduce the importance of Brown and other celebrities in the context of the entire "music scene".

“The author appeals to nostalgia in order to inspire audiences to support her contention.”

How does one appeal to nostalgia?

How does nostalgia = we now support her contention?
Explain!



“The author begins with a nostalgic tone which is designed to prompt her audience to reminisce the past and picture the happy memories of their childhood at the local park. In doing so, she urges the community to see that, in an attempt to preserve such memories, they should *not* demolish the local park.”

Analyse...

How the **language** (visual *and* written) is used and...

How these specific authorial choices **shape meaning**
and **argument**...

So as to **position** the **audience** in a particular **way** for
a particular **reason**.

What are the problems here?

The author uses a variety of persuasive devices to show that plastic supermarket toys are bad. She says that the "objects are no doubt a seven-day wonder", which makes readers agree with her contention.

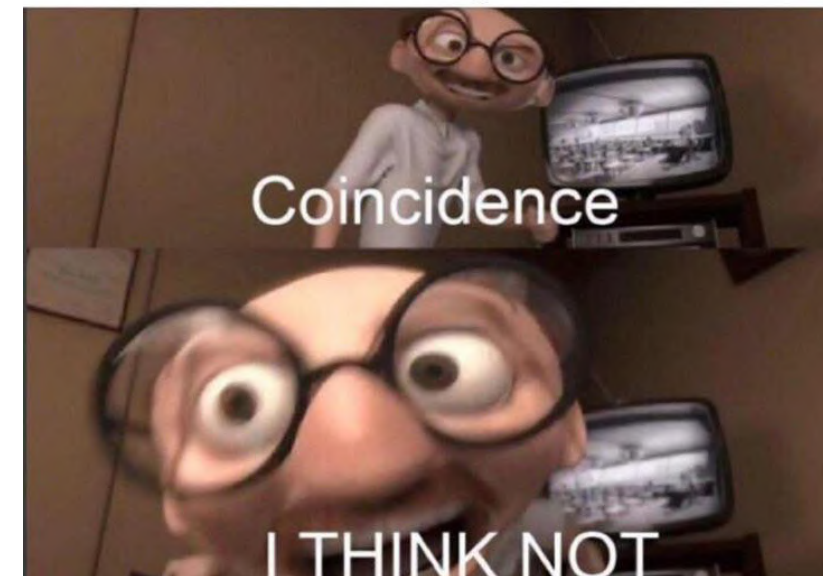
- 'Show' 'bad' and 'says' are quite simplistic words to choose
- Way too broad overall, especially the first sentence
- Quote isn't being analysed
- NEVER say '*which makes readers agree with the contention*'

Closely analysing language:

e.g. The author ~~uses a variety of persuasive devices to show that~~ *ardently condemns* plastic supermarket toys ~~is bad. She says that~~ ~~Australians have~~ through her description of the promotional toys as mere “objects”. *The language of “objects” carries connotations of worthlessness, stripping them of personality which attempts to make the reader disregard their value.* ~~which makes readers agree with her contention.~~ In doing this, the author seeks to charge her parental audience to avoid collecting the toys.

- Connotations
- Prolepsis (framing the argument)
- Sentence structure
- High and low modality
- Parallels and associations
- Juxtapositions
- Tonal shifts
- Appeals

Argument Analysis:



Look for the specific LINK between the written and visual material

Find a ‘gateway’ = directly quoting from the text

1. Describe what the visual is **literally depicting**
2. Consider the **symbolic meaning** of the visual
3. Discuss how it adds to/detracts from the writer’s argument

Just remember: DISCUSS AND ANALYSE YOUR VISUAL!!!

What to analyse in a visual?

- Symbolism
- Size/ scale
- Juxtaposition
- Facial expressions
- Speech
- Labels
- Caricature
- Background/foreground
- Links between visual and written text





PART FOUR

EXAM PREP AND YEAR 12

How do you plan on 'structuring' your exam?

ALWAYS START ON SECTION C

You have 15 mins of reading time - use it wisely!

Should I do section A or B next?

This is largely up to you! I recommend starting with the section you're less confident with and then saving your better section for your last essay.

Many students will prefer to work completely backwards (C-A-B) and leave their creative piece for last!

The writer shows/says/makes

**These are
overused!**

Try these instead:

The writer ~~shows/says/makes~~

The writer suggests, indicates, implies, inspires, reveals, represents, argues, contends, expresses, articulates, shows, creates a sense of, intends, makes the reader feel, is designed to, provokes, leads the reader to believe, asserts, impugns, denigrates, criticizes, belittles, lampoons, rejects, promotes, derides, praises, denies, puts forward, attacks, downplays, trivialises, questions, refutes, condemns, undermines, reveals, mocks, exposes, dismisses, disputes, casts doubt on, advocates, condones, proposes, emphasises, highlights, repeats, supports, appeals, establishes, evokes, generates, includes, seeks, urges, alludes to, fosters a sense of...

- Analysis focuses *just* on **listing techniques**
- **Empty analysis** that's just **textbook phrases/definitions** to describe the effects rather than injecting relevance and specificity by considering the material in light of the issue, argument and audience.
- **Paraphrase** what the author is saying ***rather*** than actually analysing what the author is doing, how his/her language is being used and why (for what outcome)

- Go beyond the scopes of the text and discuss the author's views and values, and authorial intent
- Use intent verbs and metalanguage
- Prompt breakdowns need to address the complexity of the prompt
- Don't just answer it simplistically; draw on those implications
- Analyse structural features, not just what literally happens
- **Specificity** is key!



- Know when to break up your studies with other subjects
- Opt for more passive or less stressful exercises if you're tired or not in an 'English mood'
 - Reread essays, quote banks, or other resources
 - Go through past exams or assessor's reports
 - Make paragraph plans using a prompt
- Change up your routine; try something easier or more difficult
- Find ways of studying that aren't tedious to you
- Be pragmatic about what actually *needs* to be done so that you feel prepared



The exam is a week away! How can you do some last-minute study?

- If you haven't already, now is a good time to do a full practise exam

Yes, three hours is a long time but it will give you a good idea about your pace!

- Hone your ideas. What are some ways to improve your creative writing? Or what is some nuance you can analyse in section A?

Use resources for this! Academic articles are a great place to start.

- Your teachers may have a cut-off point for submitting writing - it doesn't mean you stop studying!

Use past exams for writing prompts. If you feel you've written enough - make a mind map of quotes relating to themes!

- Don't study when you're tired or when you're too stressed, its not effective study
- Reading through stuff and making summary will only get you so far! Application is the key!
- Find a designated study place that works for you
- Don't get lazy and leave things to the last minute, be proactive
- Sit down with your teacher if you feel like you need to

ATARNotes

Thanks for watching!

Good luck with your studies! :)