

ENGLISH EXAM GUIDE

understanding of the real meaning of the text. Avoid it if you can.

A good structure for a paragraph in a literature essay is to start with a sentence which mentions the question and contains an idea.

Example

Sir Thomas Moore is a man isolated from the rest of the society in which he lives.

● Then make your point:

The writer uses him to illustrate the way in which 20th century society has lost such rigid moral certainty.

● Then quote to support your argument:

"When a man takes an oath, Meg, he holds his own life in his two hands. Like water If he opens his fingers, then he may never find it again."

● Then discuss what this means to you and to the text as a whole:

Here Bolt illustrates the certainty Moore has and how, even with the pleas of his family ringing in his ears, he cannot break his word to God.

The critical essay is an essay about ideas and techniques. Do not let the techniques drown the ideas. This applies to Media essays too. If you are writing about a film, the analysis will reflect the teaching of mis-en-scene and representation but they should never be seen as the reason for the study; they are techniques used to convey something bigger and that should dominate your answer.



Finally some general tips on setting out your essay:

- Lay out your essay clearly.
- Avoid clumsy inserts and arrows
- Follow quotations with a new sentence
- Use paragraphs effectively to keep your essay organised.

- Separate out your quotations so that they don't get mixed up with your commentary.
- Write neatly: it doesn't have to be beautiful but if I can't read it I can't mark it.
- Avoid using commas and words like **however** and **but** instead of taking a new sentence.
- If you don't write in sentences you cannot pass.
- If you have not studied Language or Media don't try these questions – they are for candidates who have studied these.

Remember, if you intend to use your Personal Study text in the exam, you will need to know it as well as anything you have been taught; it is highly unlikely that the question you set yourself for the NAB will be sitting waiting for you in the exam.

Leave 42 minutes for each essay and six at the end to check your sentence structure, spelling and to make sure what you have written makes sense.

So start re-reading the texts as well as your notes; have deep original thoughts and talk to yourself; pin quotations to the bathroom door and annoy all your friends by discussing *Sunset Song* on the bus home.

Amaze your parents by reading a quality newspaper every day and you will have a good chance of passing, even if you have no friends left at the end.

After all, it's worth it.

ENGLISH EXAM TIMETABLE

WEDNESDAY, MAY 5

LEVEL/PAPER	TIME
F/G/C writing	9.00-10.15am
Foundation reading	10.35-11.25am
General reading	1.00-1.50pm
Credit reading	2.30-3.30pm

FRIDAY, MAY 12

Higher	
Critical reading	9.00-10.30am
Higher	
Critical essay	10.50am-12.20pm
Intermediate 1	
Close reading	1.00-1.45pm
Intermediate 1	
Critical essay	2.05pm-2.50pm
Intermediate 2	
Close reading	1.00-2.00pm
Intermediate 2	
Critical essay	2.20-3.50pm
Advanced Higher	1.00-4.00pm*

*Candidates who have submitted a Creative Writing folio should leave the exam at 2.30pm