

Higher English

Linlithgow Learns 2023-2024 Session

Course Structure

- The course is made up of 4 elements:
 - Reading for Understanding Analysis and Evaluation (RUAЕ) – worth 30%
 - Textual Analysis – worth 20%
 - Critical Essay – worth 20%
 - Folio Essay – worth 30%

Assessment

- Exam
 - Paper 1: RUAЕ (marked out of 30) 90 minutes long
 - Paper 2: Textual Analysis and Critical Essay (marked out of 40) 90 minutes long
- Course Work
 - Folio Essay is submitted to SQA in mark to be marked by SQA markers (marked out of 30) –

Deadlines and important dates

Prelim November 28th 2023

Creative folio due 9th January

Feedback due 9th February

Final draft of folio due early March (SQA to confirm date)

Study Support and Revision Help

- Scholar – has great RUAЕ resources
- BBC Bitesize – covers the textual analysis set texts well
- Teams – every class has a Teams page that contains detailed notes and annotations on all texts studied in class.
- SQA website for past papers – practice, practice, practice!

RUAE











In the RUAE element of the course pupils are given an unseen non-fiction text – usually a newspaper article – and are asked to answer a series of questions on this. Questions fall into several categories:

- **Understanding** – questions which rely on pupils explaining what point(s) are being made by the writer – generally pupils need to explain this in their own words rather than using those from the passage itself. Usually around half the marks of the paper are awarded for this type of question. In these questions one mark is awarded for each correct point made as long as pupils have used their own words.
- **Analysis** – these questions ask pupils to quote an example of language (such as word choice, imagery or sentence structure) and explain/analyse how it creates a particular effect. Pupils are taught a series of 'formula' type approaches to these questions to ensure they analyse fully. In these questions one mark is awarded for a correct quote combined with correct analysis.
- **Evaluation** – these questions ask pupils to analyse how effective introductions or conclusions are. In these questions one mark is awarded for a correct quote combined with correct analysis.

What the pupil must know and suggestions on home support

What they need to know	Suggested home support
The formulas	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Memorising the structures from the formula sheet.
Understanding questions (own words)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Synonym drills (give the pupil a word and see how many alternatives they can come up with).• Read newspaper articles and summarise into 5 key points.
Understanding questions (context)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Print newspaper articles, pupil underlines any words they don't know, tries to work it out from surrounding words.
Analysis (sentence structures)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Learn different sentence types and what they are commonly used for.
How to answer questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Past papers and timed practice
Good vocabulary	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• READ READ READ

Formula

<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Understanding</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Own words </p> <p>Show your understanding of the writer's main points & arguments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify the number of marks - Search for that many points - Use bullet points and rephrase those points 	<p style="text-align: center;">Context </p> <p>Work out the definition of the word from clues around it</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - "_____" means _____. This can be understood from context which refers to "_____", which suggests/ means/ implies that... 	<p style="text-align: center;">Link </p> <p>Identify how a sentence functions as a connection to previous & new ideas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - "_____" links back to the idea _____ discussed previously in... - "_____" introduces the idea of _____ which is introduced in... 	
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Analysis</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Word choice </p> <p>Choose words based on their connotations/ associations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - "_____" - word choice connotes _____, _____ & _____ which suggests that... and effectively reflects... <u>L to Q</u> 	<p style="text-align: center;">Imagery </p> <p>Similes, metaphors, personification...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - "_____" - technique <u>Just as</u>... explain the image, <u>so too</u>... explain how this adds to our understanding of subject, which suggests... effectively reflecting... <u>L to Q</u> 	<p style="text-align: center;">Sentence structure </p> <p>Examine the effect of type, pattern & punctuation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - "_____" technique explain function in context + effect/ why it has been used, which effectively reflects... <u>L to Q</u> 	<p style="text-align: center;">Tone </p> <p>Identify & explain the author's feelings/ attitude</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - "_____" - name tone is created through 2nd technique + brief analysis, which suggests the writer feels/believes/thinks... and thus reflects... <u>L to Q</u>
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Evaluation</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Effective introductions </p> <p>How is the opening paragraph effective in introducing the topic & engaging the reader?</p> <p>"_____" + technique + creates an effective intro because + explain function/ brief analysis + <u>L to Q</u></p> <p style="text-align: right;"> ...directly involves the reader ...creates a vivid image of... ...introduces the idea of/ emphasises... ...which effectively grabs the reader's attention </p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Effective conclusions </p> <p>How is the last paragraph effective in wrapping up ideas & leaving a strong impression?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - "_____" + technique + creates an effective conclusion because + (brief analysis) + <u>L to Q</u> <p style="text-align: right;"> (N5)...which links back to... *...emphasises the central idea that... reminds the reader of... ...leaves the reader feeling... ...links to & emphasises the central concerns of... </p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Effective Imagery </p> <p>How is an image effective in emphasising something?</p> <p>"_____" + technique + is effective because + <u>Just as</u>... explain the image, <u>so too</u>... explain how this adds to our understanding of the subject, + <u>L to Q</u></p> <p style="text-align: right;"> *...emphasises the central idea that... ...creates a vivid image of... </p>	

Textual Analysis

For this element of the course, schools are given a selection of Scottish texts/texts by Scottish authors that have been identified by the SQA. At Linlithgow Academy the texts that have been chosen are listed below. Pupils study the text throughout the year – focusing particularly on key themes. In the exam one of the poems /an extract from the play is printed in the paper and pupils are asked to answer 10 marks worth of questions on that poem/extract and then a further '10 mark question' comparing the poem/extract from the exam with another poem or another part of the play.

Texts studied

Teacher	Scottish set text
Miss Weddle	Poetry – Norman MacCaig
Mrs Carney	Drama - Men Should Weep
Miss O'Hara	Poetry – Liz Lochhead
Mrs Ryan-Campbell	Drama - Men Should Weep
Mr Watson	Poetry – Norman MacCaig
Mrs Campbell/ Ms Stewart	Poetry – Liz Lochhead
Ms Wright	Poetry – Liz Lochhead

10 mark formula

Poetry	Drama
<p>Commonality 2 x statements (no quotes) one for the poem on the exam, and one other they wish to compare to. Statements should identify the poem and answer how the question asked applies to each poem individually.</p> <p>Extract Quote and explain twice from the poem in the exam</p> <p>Other Quote and explain three times from the poem mentioned in commonality, and three times from an additional, third poem.</p>	<p>Commonality: The issue looks like this in the play..... This is caused by The result of this is</p> <p>Extract Quote and explain twice from the extract in the exam</p> <p>Other Quote (or make reference to an event in the text) six times from the rest of the play and explain how each answers the question.</p>

What the pupil must know and suggestions on home support

What they need to know	Suggested home support
Quotes	Test learner 'can you write down 5 quotes from... about...'
Detailed annotation and analysis	Question learner using their annotations - *read quote* - can you tell me about this?
Detailed knowledge and understanding of the texts	Can you tell me 5 facts about *inset character*?
10 markers	Practice past 10 markers from the SQA past questions
How to answer 10 marker	Learn the structure

Critical Essay

Each class at Higher will study one or two texts (from a variety of genres) which they will use to develop critical essay writing skills. Each teacher can select their own choice of text and so we see a wide variety of choices across the department. In the exam, pupils do not have access to their text and are presented with a choice of essay questions from which they should answer one. It is important that pupils know their critical essay text and key quotes and analysis really well before they get to the final exam. Pupils will be given lots of opportunity to practice essay writing throughout the year.

Texts studied

Teacher	Critical essay text
Miss Weddle	The Great Gatsby
Mrs Carney	A Hanging and The Yellow Wallpaper
Miss O'Hara	A Hanging and All My Sons
Mrs Ryan-Campbell	An Arundel Tomb and Church Going
Mr Watson	The Yellow Wallpaper and A Hanging
Mrs Campbell/ Ms Stewart	A Street Car Named Desire
Ms Wright	The Yellow Wallpaper

Example critical essay – A Grade (19/20)

'A Hanging' by George Orwell is a skillful, provocative essay where Orwell effectively presents a strong opinion of the issues of capital punishment and colonialism being wrong and never justified. This essay depicts an unflinching first person account of the ruthless execution of a powerless Hindu man by the British Imperial Police Force in 1920s Burma. Whilst the essay gives a literal account of the hanging, it also acts as an extended metaphor of the injustice of the totalitarian regime of colonialism that Burma was ruled under at the time. Orwell, who worked as a member of the police force assisting these brutal hangings, developed a very strong anti capital punishment and anti-colonialism stance which he conveys powerfully and strongly throughout this essay. Orwell expresses his views on these vital matters through creating a heavy, foreboding atmosphere through the use of setting, using contrasting characterisation to show how the colonial structure has resulted in vulnerable prisoners being oppressed by the guards, using symbolism of key incidents and a turning point to show how disturbing it is to take a fellow human's life and implementing irony to convey a strong human repulsion for capital punishment and the oppressed society the Burmese prisoners and citizens are forced to live in. This leaves the reader in no doubt that capital punishment is a truly heinous, immoral crime that is unjustifiable and that shows them how wrong the colonial tyranny present in Burma is.

At the start of the essay, Orwell creates a strong, foreboding, sickly atmosphere to shine a light on the inhumanity and brutality of keeping human's locked up in the prison in Burma. Orwell starts by describing the light in the prison as "a sickly light, like yellow tinfoil". This effectively shows the distressing conditions whilst displaying the sombre mood present in a place which essentially fights any violence carried out by the prisoners with more extreme violence in the form of taking their lives. The pathetic fallacy of "sickly" which connotes frailty and decay conveys the sense that Burma is a sickly place, dominated by colonial rule. This highlights that the prison is morally sick to impose the death penalty and that

society is sick for allowing the oppression and killings of the most vulnerable in society to continue without any thought to their lives, wellbeing or potential. The addition of “tinfoil” which connotes an unnatural substance and “yellow” which connotes cowardice shows that the act of execution is unnatural to anyone and is used to convey Orwell’s guilt at being complicit in such barbaric practices, being able to use his power as a dominating white, British male to oppress the Burmese citizens and aid their deaths. This shows the complete wrongness of capital punishment, lifting some humans up whilst depleting the prospects of others based on social rank. Orwell continues his attack on colonialism and capital punishment by describing the prisoners inhumane cells. Orwell writes the cells were “like small animal cages” which only measured “about ten feet by ten”. This shows a further dehumanisation of the prisoners. Just as animals are locked away as they are seen as a danger to society, so too are these ‘condemned men’ locked away, seen as nothing more than violent, frail convicts. The men are being denied their human rights and left to mentally and physically waste away in a tiny, claustrophobic cell which gives them the dignity of zoo animals. They can’t even have the dignity they deserve as humans in the last days before their deaths. Overall, this setting shows that capital punishment is a truly barbaric act and imposing such brutal, totalitarian regimes on a society diminishes any love in the place, leaving Burma to be seen as a sick, decaying country.

Orwell furthers his attack on colonialism and conveys the horrendous impact capital punishment is having on the prisoners subjected to it by using contrasting characterisation to convey how vulnerable and oppressed the prisoners are as well as how brutally and inhumanely the guards are treating them. Orwell first describes the Burmese men as “brown silent men” who were “squatting” at the bars of their cells. Depicting the men as “silent” shows the oppression they’re facing, their voices mean nothing just as their lives are seen as disposable and not mattering. Saying they were “squatting” gives further reference to the colonial presence in Burmese, these men are literally bent over at the feet of their oppressors like slaves, too weak to get up and fight for their lives, dignity and country back. This highlights the subjugation of an entire society which has no say over how the country they live in is run. There is no fight left in these men or society. Orwell also calls one Hindu man who has been taken out of his cell to be executed “a puny wisp of a man”. “Puny” suggests he is small and weak whilst “wisp” connotes he is barely there, very malnourished, mistreated and mentally and physically broken by the thought of his impending execution. In contrast, the tall guards who are responsible for aiding this man’s execution “lashed his arms tight to his sides”. The word choice of “lashed” which connotes forcefully thrashing and intending to cause harm highlights the complete lack of respect these men have for the prisoners, these fellow humans. Even before they experience the immense torture of execution the prisoners are still being harmed by the guards for fun. The guards have been brainwashed to truly believe that they are more ‘superior’ than the frail men they are intentionally harming, just because of their societal rank or title. This highlights the inhumanity of capital punishment, it pits fellow humans against each other and leaves some feeling like they have the right to hurt a fellow human because of their position in society, which Orwell evocatively shows he believes is extremely wrong. This leaves the reader to question Orwell’s stance on the matter, he is clearly against the executions and conveys this powerfully but is still a sympathetic executioner, an ironic position which shows the contradictory morals he holds.

In the middle of the essay, Orwell uses the seemingly insignificant key incidents of a dog interrupting the hanging and the prisoner stepping aside to avoid a puddle to truly showcase the humanity of the prisoner and convey the distress he must be going through due to the inhumane sentence imposed upon him. Orwell describes a dog “bounding” into the hanging procession “wagging its tail, wild with glee at finding so many human

beings together". This is symbolic as it shows the dog views all of the men as equals, not taking note of the men grasping the weak prisoner tightly. The dog doesn't care what the prisoners proposed crime is, a crime Orwell never mentions to show he believes capital punishment is never justified, and he doesn't know what is about to happen. The dog is just happy to see all the men and wants to play with them. However, the disturbing reactions of the prisoner who looked on "incuriously" and the guards who "stood aghast" then quickly leashed the dog shows the awful issues at play here. The prisoner being described as 'incurious' which connotes not caring, shows he is so mentally broken by his fate of capital punishment that he can't even enjoy his last moments on earth and the love this beautiful animal has to offer him. For the guards, the dog emphasises a freedom that all living things should have but that they and the prison system are cruelly denying the Burmese man. It shows them how despicable their actions are, which they can't handle and so leash the dog so they don't have to contemplate what it is that they are doing and the impact their actions will have on all of society. After this, as the dog is detained and the prisoner continues to be led to the gallows a symbolic incident occurs which creates an epiphany for Orwell where he finally sees just how barbaric his job is. The prisoner steps slightly aside to avoid a puddle on the path and avoid getting wet feet, something which should be the least of his worries given his neck is about to be snapped. Orwell reflects "it is curious, but till that moment I had never realised what it means to destroy a healthy, conscious man". Calling the man 'healthy' and 'conscious' shows that despite him being broken by the inhumane prison system this man is still living breathing, able and has a life which is worth something, but will all be taken away. For Orwell and us readers this highlights the "unspeakable wrongness of cutting a life short when it is in full tide." Just as a tide is a living moving body of water, so too can this man live and move, he has so much more to give to this world. This highlights how barbaric it is to take this life away from him.

At the end of the essay, the man is standing on the ledge praying and is then executed taking his life away with a 'sudden snap', This evokes an outpouring of ironic reactions from the guards trying to deal with what they have just done. Orwell reflects on the "relief" that came upon the men after the man's life was taken, something which contrasts greatly with their faces going 'grey like bad coffee' just before the man was executed. This shows the men, with the exception of Orwell whom the executions have greatly affected, cared more about the effect the execution was having on their conscience than the man who was killed. Orwell reflects on the disturbing, jovial scene saying "we all had a drink together... the dead man was a hundred yards away". The juxtaposition of these two images together creates a disturbing scene and shows the unnatural nature of colonialism. Whilst the dead man is dangling, unable to ever live or see his family again, these men push him to the back of their minds trying to grapple with the moral effects of what they've done by forgetting it. This shows that these men can go back to normal life without any repercussions for their actions, yet the man they killed can never forget what they've done, his last moments will forever be tainted by the cruelty inflicted on him by the guards, Government and British Empire, who will never be held accountable for his death in the way he was for his unknown crime.

In conclusion, 'A Hanging' is a powerful essay which intelligently captures the brutal execution of a powerless Hindu man in an extremely oppressed society which couldn't care less about him. Orwell effectively uses structure, symbolism, setting, characterisation and irony to convey a strong human repulsion for the act of taking a fellow human being's life and show that execution can never be justified. Orwell conveys his strong negative opinion for the act of capital punishment and Britain taking over Burma to show he believes it is never okay to take a human's life especially not for the sake of

maintaining social order and keeping an innocent society oppressed by those more powerful than them. This leaves the reader in no doubt that capital punishment and colonialist practices should be explicitly condemned and stopped.

What the pupil must know and suggestions on home support

What they need to know	Suggested home support
Quotes	Test learner 'can you write down 5 quotes from... about...'
Detailed annotation and analysis	Question learner using their annotations - *read quote* - can you tell me about this?
Detailed knowledge and understanding of the texts	Can you tell me 5 facts about *inset character*?
10 markers	Practice past 10 markers from the SQA past questions
How to answer 10 marker	Learn the structure

Folio

In pre-covid times the folio comprised of two pieces of writing (one broadly creative and one broadly discursive) that would be drafted in class, marked by the class teacher, redrafted and finally submitted to the SQA for marking in early March. However, as a covid mitigation this has been reduced to one piece – although the marks available remain the same – the piece is marked out of 15 which is then doubled. To this end, we ask pupils to write a first draft of both types of writing and then, in conjunction with the class teacher, we will select the most 'promising' piece which will be closely marked. Pupils should receive this marked piece around the start of the new year and will then work to redraft this as fully as possible. The final deadline for submission of this piece is the 21st March. We do not decide on the marks for the folio essays and do not find these out until results are released in August.

Example persuasive folio – A Grade (28/30)

Brides of Christ or Harlots of Satan: the paradox of 'nunsploitation'

The 'brides of Christ' have a long history in cinema, whether they were dying or dancing, compassionate or cruel, lifelong virgins or recent converts. Oppression and suffering go together well in the context of religious devotion and nuns have always been cinematic. Nunsploitation isn't a word we often hear but we should. 'Nunsploitation' is a type of exploitative cinema which peaked in Europe during the late 1960s, but which is still prevalent today. In this piece, I am not referring to the classic family film 'The Sound of Music' (although the idea that a middle-aged father of seven can pluck a virginal young woman from a convent for her to abandon all her beliefs is...questionable). In these nunsploitation movies, convents are the major setting. The primary tension in the narrative is typically religious or sexual, such as emotional or religious repression brought on by practicing celibacy. These movies portray nuns and women as tempestuous or even hysterical, implying that women cannot control sadomasochistic, and often sexual, urges. Directors

of exploitation movies like these imagine worlds that are violent and oppressive as the default, worlds in which humans are defined by their most base tendencies. These movies suggest that a nun's moral code must involve repression of those basic instincts, so it is seen as inconceivable that a vow of celibacy can be upheld.

In the film industry, nuns are most often portrayed as seductive, young, attractive girls – which is ironic since, as a recent study shows, less than 1% of nuns in America are under 40 and the average age of a sister is 80 years old. As widespread as Catholicism is, these deliberately 'blasphemous' exploitation films are a cross-cultural, box office sensation. There are iconic portrayals in other media too, for example Madonna performing with "sexy nuns" in the video for the song 'Like a Virgin'. It is common to regard a woman's decision to control her own body and ideas without male involvement as a bold act of feminism when that should be the norm. However, modern media broadcasts the strong message that not being interested in sex – and celibacy – is a 'problem'. Statistically, between 2009 and 2018, the proportion of adolescents reporting no sexual activity, either alone or with partners, rose from 28.8 percent to 44.2 percent among young men and from 49.5 percent in 2009 to 74 percent among young women. Despite this, the 'pathetic loser virgin' cliché is astoundingly popular, whether it is used to describe a shy 'dork' or strict, nun-like prudishness. Throughout the media, the idea of sex is promoted to children everywhere, from movies to marketing campaigns, even as recently as 2022 with the 'Balenciaga' controversy in which the brand posed child models with S&M teddies and a court document referring to child pornography. As nuns are supposed to give their lives to God – taking a vow of celibacy that is for a lifetime – this idea of them not having sex runs against these powerful media trends. It is this resistance that makes them a target for sexualisation. The significance that modern society places on sex is threatened by choosing celibacy. In today's world, individuals often seem to associate their sexual lives with their sense of self-esteem so we see these traditional gender stereotypes being amplified in nunsploitation movies, where the nun's desire to abstain from childbearing is undermined when nuns are seen engaging in hypersexual behaviour. Whenever nuns are viewed indulging in over-sexualised behaviour, gender stereotypes are reinforced.

Over the past decades, the success of this subgenre of exploitative movies, which typically misrepresent or twist the image of nuns, has only grown and it's not just because of the theme of sexuality. The way nuns are presented in cinema have become more and more extreme...why is the image of an evil nun so commonly used in horror films? Satanic nuns tend to be unsettling but plausible since nuns are typically private, veiled in mystery. Since most individuals have no personal relationship to nuns, they are free to create any visual picture they choose. The demonic nun trope is also applied because, as previously noted, nuns are archetypal representations of virtue, and their downfall shows that good can be corrupted, amplifying the potential to frighten. A popular film called 'The Nun', made in 2018, follows a demon 'representing' itself as a nun who resembles an undead man with penetrating amber eyes. Even 'Black Narcissus', a 1947 Powell and Pressburger film based on the 1939 novel by Rumer Godden, is founded on repression. In it, a group of Anglican nuns, led by Sister Clodagh, are sent to a mountain in the Himalayas where they work to establish a school and a hospital. Sister Ruth falls for a government worker, Mr. Dean, and starts to regret her celibacy. While the tensions and dynamics are skilfully presented, the drama focusses on the effects of sexual repression, and the conflicted Ruth becomes increasingly unhinged, reinforcing the sense that sexuality and madness are linked in the female mind. Why should nuns trying to lead a fulfilling life of dedication be reduced to demonizing stereotypes?

Nuns themselves have protested against how they are often portrayed: "The American memory is attached to the nun of yesteryear. It's very hard for us now to kind of be breaking through those stereotypes that were established," said Sister Jane Aseltine. "We are still fighting that battle as younger, religious women to say this is what a typical American nun looks like in today's world." In September 2021, members of the Catholic Church protested outside the New York Film Festival premiere of writer-director Paul Verhoeven's 'Benedetta', calling it a "blasphemous lesbian nun movie". Benedetta follows a novice nun in the 17th century who joins an Italian convent and has a love affair with another nun. It is so over-the-top that it borders on comedy. It takes a certain amount of guts in 2021 for an old man of 82 to direct a film that claims to support women's liberty in a repressive male hierarchy by featuring female-only nudity. 'Benedetta' is an artistic descendant of

'The Devils', a 1971 film written, directed and produced by Ken Russell, which revolves around a 17th-century Catholic priest accused of witchcraft after the possessions in Loudon, France, and which features Sister Jeanne de Agnes, the sexually repressed nun who sparks the accusations.

Sultry nuns have percolated into culture more widely in the form of popular Halloween costumes. Religious figures who devote their entire lives to their faith find the costumes inappropriate and outrageous. If you quickly search for "nun costume" on the Internet, you will see that the majority of the image results are of nun costumes that resemble lingerie. Sister Julie wrote about her own outrage on the matter and said "I'd like to tell these people to "grow up" but "even children have better sense than these folks". 'Funny' and 'harmless' nun costumes appropriate religion: elements of the Catholic culture are taken out of context for the sake of entertainment. An example of this comedy costuming is when people dress up as pregnant nuns. Moreover, these costumes result in and support the objectification of women and their bodies more generally. These costumes show women as purely sexual individuals rather than as complex, multifaceted people.

In conclusion, nuns are unfairly represented and over-sexualised. The stereotypes may be driven by having negative views of the Church, or by being ill-informed about the rich and complex lives nuns can lead. By focusing so much on their sexuality, we are not learning about the beautiful culture that convents can grow. Nuns have an aura of peacefulness about them that makes me think of the ocean; similarly, the quiet of the sea may inspire feelings of inner stillness and meditation, offering a haven of peace in this noisy and chaotic world. If you encounter a real nun, you'll be far less likely to consider nuns a cliché or a joke. My knowledge of nuns before this school year was limited to the uncomfortable conviction that they tend to use rulers to punish children. However, after looking into the exploitation of nuns in the media and how they are often portrayed as evil, seductive, manipulative women (when, in reality, they are considerate, friendly, committed women who devote their life to something that they are passionate about), I have decided to believe that Sisters should be left in the peace that they have found. I am determined to refute the unfair stigma that Hollywood has perpetuated for decades.

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Parent check-list – persuasive essays

Title and introduction

- ✓ Does their essay have a clever title (perhaps using a pun or question)?
- ✓ Have they captured the reader's attention in an interesting way in the first paragraph (e.g. a quotation, a question, a scenario)?
- ✓ Have they included some background information about the topic?
- ✓ Have they made it clear why the topic is relevant and important in today's world?
- ✓ Have they made their overall stance clear and the opening carries a sense of persuasive conviction?

Main Body Paragraphs (there should be between 3-4)

- ✓ Does each section begin with a clear topic sentence?
- ✓ Have they stated the broad, main point they wish to make in each paragraph?
- ✓ Have they included relevant, up-to-date evidence (studies, reports, quotes, statistics or facts?) which supports their point?
- ✓ Have they explored the implications of this evidence fully – what does it show?
- ✓ Have they closed the paragraph by summing up the significance of each thread of their argument?
- ✓ Have they used at least one persuasive language device (alliteration, facts, opinion, rhetorical questions, emotive language, opposing view etc) in each section?
- ✓ Is their overall stance is clear throughout and the main body carries a sense of conviction?

Conclusion

- ✓ They have revisited the main points made and views expressed in their essay?
- ✓ Have they used fresh wording which does not simply repeat their introduction?
- ✓ Have they not introduced any new material at this stage?
- ✓ Have they made clear, again why this topic is of importance to them (e.g. its importance to the world, to human happiness, to society...)?
- ✓ Does their conclusion convey an overall sense of credibility and conviction?
- ✓ Have they created closure by referring to a specific earlier point, image or question?

Expression and layout

- ✓ Have they listed their sources at the end under the heading 'bibliography'?
- ✓ Are the words and images they use accurate, impressive and effective?
- ✓ Have they used linking words and phrases throughout their essay?
- ✓ Have they punctuated, sentenced and paragraphed correctly – and, on occasion, for effect?
- ✓ Is their spelling and grammar sound throughout?
- ✓ Is their essay 1,300 words long (excluding bibliography)? NB – there is a 10% tolerance either way so essay must be between 1,170-1430 words so avoid being penalised.

Parent check-list – reflective essays

Opening

- ✓ Does their essay have a clever title (perhaps using a pun or question)?
- ✓ Have they captured the reader's attention in an interesting way in the first paragraph (e.g. a descriptive opening, sense writing, use of imagery)?
- ✓ Have they included some background information about why this experience was important to them and why they chose to write about it?

Main Paragraphs (creative reflective essays have a more fluid structure)

- ✓ Have they discussed their thoughts and feelings fully? With a strong degree of mature reflection and insight?
- ✓ Is the experience or topic dealt with sensitivity along with self-critic, self-praise and self-awareness?
- ✓ Have they used reflective language and vocabulary?
- ✓ Have they explored the implications of this experience and what it has taught them?
- ✓ Have they ensured that they are not being too descriptive? (80% reflective, 20% description)
- ✓ Have they chosen a structure which enhances the purpose and meaning of the piece?
- ✓ Have they continually used creative techniques (simile, metaphor, personification, alliteration, rhetorical questions etc) in each section?
- ✓ Have they linked their own experiences to wide themes and concerns, perhaps looking at society as a whole?
- ✓ Is their overall tone reflective and carries clear sense of purpose?

Closing

- ✓ Have they used fresh wording which does not simply repeat their early thoughts and points?
- ✓ Have they shown a deeper learning and understanding of the experience?
- ✓ Have they looked forward, as well as back, to discuss how this experience has resulted in self-improvement?
- ✓ Have they considered, if this were to happen again, what they would do differently?
- ✓ Have they made clear, again why this topic is of importance to them (e.g. its importance to the world, to humanity, to society...)?
- ✓ Does their conclusion convey an overall sense of credibility and conviction?
- ✓ Have they created closure by referring to a specific earlier point, image or question?
- ✓ Have they left the reader on an interesting motif, image, or thought to consider?

Expression and layout

- ✓ Is there a strong sense of self and personality throughout the whole essay?
- ✓ Are the words and images they use accurate, impressive and effective?
- ✓ Have they used reflective language and creative writing techniques throughout?
- ✓ Have they punctuated, sentenced and paragraphed correctly – and, on occasion, for effect?
- ✓ Is their spelling and grammar sound throughout?
- ✓ Is their essay 1,300 words long? NB – there is a 10% tolerance either way so essay must be between 1,170-1430 words so avoid being penalised.