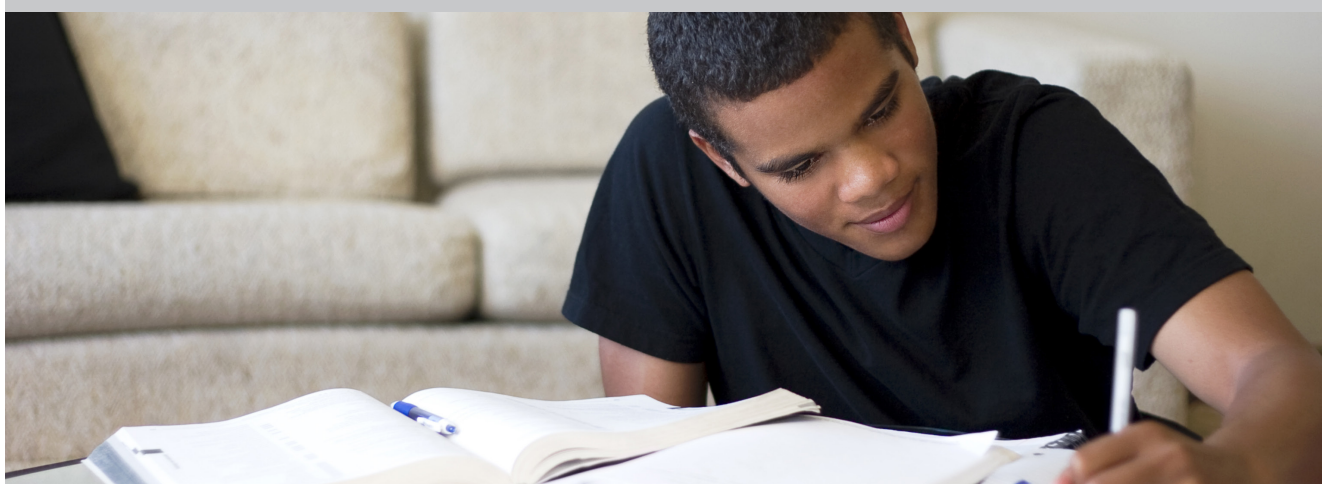


ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE A LEVEL

COMPONENT 03 SECTION B:



WRITING AS READER



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WRITING AS READER: ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES

COMPONENT 03, SECTION B: WRITING AS READER

Writing as a reader develops the understanding of narrative technique through a creative writing task (500 words) and a commentary (250 words).

This task requires the learners to draw upon their understanding of how narratives work as the basis for their own original writing in the genre of narrative. This is intended to develop further learners' understanding of how meanings are shaped.

The weightings for the assessment objectives are:

Narrative Writing: AO2: 2% AO5: 7%

Commentary: AO1: 4% AO2: 3%

Total: 16%

ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES (AOs)

Learners are expected to demonstrate their ability to:

	Assessment Objective
AO1	Apply concepts and methods from integrated linguistic and literary study as appropriate, using associated terminology and coherent written expression.
AO2	Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in texts.
AO3	Demonstrate understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts in which texts are produced and received.
AO4	Explore connections across texts, informed by linguistic and literary concepts and methods.
AO5	Demonstrate expertise and creativity in the use of English to communicate in different ways.

WRITING AS READER: ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES

In Section B, Narrative Writing, the dominant assessment objective is *AO5 Demonstrate expertise and creativity in the use of English to communicate in different ways*. Answers should also *demonstrate understanding of how meanings are shaped in their original writing (AO2)*.

A response that does not address one of the two assessment objectives targeted cannot achieve all of the marks in the given level.

NARRATIVE WRITING

Level 6: 18–16 marks	
AO5	Flair, originality and a high degree of control demonstrated in the use of English to communicate in different ways.
AO2	Excellent, fully developed and detailed demonstration of ways in which meanings are shaped in texts.
Level 5: 15–13 marks	
AO5	Control and creativity demonstrated in the use of English to communicate in different ways.
AO2	Clear and well developed demonstration of ways in which meanings are shaped in texts.
Level 4: 12–10 marks	
AO5	Competence and engaging effects demonstrated in the use of English to communicate in different ways.
AO2	Competent demonstration of ways in which meanings are shaped in texts.
Level 3: 9–7 marks	
AO5	Some accuracy and attempt to create effects demonstrated in the use of English to communicate in different ways.
AO2	Some demonstration of ways in which meanings are shaped in texts.
Level 2: 6–4marks	
AO5	Limited accuracy and some attempt to create effects demonstrated in the use of English to communicate in different ways.
AO2	Some limited demonstration of ways in which meanings are shaped in texts.
Level 1: 3–1 marks	
AO5	Little accuracy and little attempt to create effects demonstrated in the use of English to communicate in different ways.
AO2	Very little demonstration of ways in which meanings are shaped in texts.
0 marks:	no response or response not worthy of credit.

WRITING AS READER: ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES

In Section B, Commentary, the dominant assessment objective is AO1 *Apply concepts and methods from integrated linguistic and literary study as appropriate, using associated terminology and coherent written expression*. Answers will also be assessed for AO2 *Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in texts*.

A response that does not address one of the two assessment objectives targeted cannot achieve all of the marks in the given level.

COMMENTARY:

Level 6: 14–13 marks	
AO1	Excellent application of relevant concepts and methods from integrated linguistic and literary study as appropriate. Consistently coherent and fluent written expression and apt and consistent use of terminology relevant to the task and texts.
AO2	Excellent, fully developed and detailed critical analysis of ways in which meanings are shaped in texts.
Level 5: 12–10 marks	
AO1	Secure application of relevant concepts and methods from integrated linguistic and literary study as appropriate. Consistently clear written expression and appropriate use of terminology relevant to the task and texts.
AO2	Clear and well developed critical analysis of ways in which meanings are shaped in texts.
Level 4: 9–7 marks	
AO1	Competent application of relevant concepts and methods from integrated linguistic and literary study as appropriate. Generally clear written expression and mainly appropriate use of terminology relevant to the task and texts.
AO2	Competent analysis of ways in which meanings are shaped in texts.
Level 3: 6–5 marks	
AO1	Some application of relevant concepts and methods selected appropriately from integrated linguistic and literary study. Generally clear written expression with occasional inconsistencies and some appropriate use of terminology relevant to the task and texts.
AO2	Some analysis of ways in which meanings are shaped in texts.
Level 2: 4–3 marks	
AO1	Limited attempt to apply relevant concepts and methods from integrated linguistic and literary study appropriately. Some inconsistent written expression and limited use of associated terminology relevant to the task and texts.
AO2	Limited analysis of ways in which meanings are shaped in texts.
Level 1: 2–1 marks	
AO1	Very little attempt to apply relevant concepts and methods from integrated linguistic and literary study appropriately. Inconsistent written expression and little use of terminology relevant to the task and texts.
AO2	Very little analysis of ways in which meanings are shaped in texts.
0 marks:	no response or response not worthy of credit.

WRITING AS READER: POINT OF VIEW



You can choose to write in the first, second or third person.

FIRST PERSON (I/WE)

This is the easiest way to convey a character's story from their perspective. F. Scott Fitzgerald writes in the first person as Nick in *The Great Gatsby*. Nick is a self-conscious narrator, drawing the reader's attention to the fact he is telling a story. He is also unreliable, allowing Fitzgerald to suggest that truth can be subjective. (Both are modernist concepts.)

Other first person options are the interior monologue, where a first person narrator voices their thoughts as they occur, and first person stream of consciousness, a more extreme version of the interior monologue where we feel we are in the writer's head, and where the grammar and structure suggest the random and fragmentary nature of thought.

The disadvantage of the first person is that it is difficult to express other viewpoints. Fitzgerald gets round this problem through dialogue, when other characters are given voices, and through eye witness accounts, such as when Jordan tells Nick the story of Daisy's marriage to Tom in chapter four.

SECOND PERSON (YOU)

This is a hard perspective to write from, as you have to use the second person pronoun throughout, and it is seldom used in literature. It can be very effective however, and if you are confident you can sustain it, it can work well. Here is an example of a second person narrative:

You left home early this morning. Later you ask yourself why? Was it a premonition? But at the time you just thought it would be a good idea to pop in and see Mum before heading for the office. You missed seeing her. It won't be long though Mum. The new house is big enough for all of us and you'll be safe there. You remind yourself that there's only thirty minutes to spare. You mustn't be late again or you'll be sacked.

The second person voice, because it is so unusual, creates mystery. By appearing to address the reader directly, it also invites us to see events through the character's eyes.

THIRD PERSON (HE, SHE, THEY)

This is the most common perspective to write from. You can move from one character to another and still convey their thoughts. You can also be a detached, omniscient narrator who describes events from afar, or a close third person narrator where you describe events from that character's perspective, much as you would in the first person (also known as free indirect style.) You can also use a first person stream of consciousness

When we're looking at the world through one character's point of view we have to remember that while they can see other people's expressions they can't see their own.

WRITING AS READER: POINT OF VIEW

Which of the following examples is an effective usage of the close third person narrator and which doesn't work?

Joe didn't know what to say or do. Helen looked furious. Her cheeks flared red as she spat out the words, 'I hate you.' He felt his jaw tighten in response as he stopped himself shouting back.

Joe didn't know what to say or do. Helen looked furious. Her cheeks flared red as she spat out the words, 'I hate you.' A muscle flickered along his jawline as he stopped himself shouting back.



Write a paragraph describing a character's feelings as he or she sits an exam, from a first person perspective. Rewrite it in the second and third person and consider the effect of the different perspectives.

PSYCHIC DISTANCE



Whichever person you use, you will need to think about the psychic distance, how far you are away from the character whose perspective you are showing. Read these extracts from *The Great Gatsby* and consider how close the narrator is to the character. Put them in order, from the closest to the furthest away.



On Sunday morning while church bells rang in the villages alongshore, the world and its mistress returned to Gatsby's house and twinkled hilariously on his lawn. (Chapter four).

Suddenly I wasn't thinking of Daisy and Gatsby any more, but of this clean, hard, limited person, who dealt in universal scepticism, and who leaned back jauntily just within the circle of my arm. A phrase began to beat in my ears with a sort of heady excitement: "There are only the pursued, the pursuing, the busy and the tired." (Chapter four).

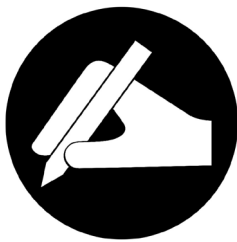
The lights grow brighter as the earth lurches away from the sun, and now the orchestra is playing yellow cocktail music, and the opera of voices pitches a key higher. Laughter is easier minute by minute, spilled with prodigality, tipped out at a cheerful word. The groups change more swiftly, swell with new arrivals, dissolve and form in the same breath; already there are wanderers, confident girls who weave here and there among the stouter and more stable, become for a sharp, joyous moment the centre of a group, and then, excited with triumph, glide on through the sea-change of faces and voices and color under the constantly changing light. (Chapter three)

In my younger and more vulnerable years my father gave me some advice that I've been turning over in my mind ever since.

WRITING AS READER: POINT OF VIEW

"Whenever you feel like criticizing any one," he told me, "just remember that all the people in this world haven't had the advantages that you've had."

He didn't say any more, but we've always been unusually communicative in a reserved way, and I understood that he meant a great deal more than that. In consequence, I'm inclined to reserve all judgments, a habit that has opened up many curious natures to me and also made me the victim of not a few veteran bores. (Chapter one).



Now produce your own examples of different psychic distances. You could use the exam scenario again. Write it as an omniscient narrator, a close third person narrator, then as a stream of consciousness, inside the character's head. Consider the effect of the different psychic distances.



WRITING AS READER: VOICE



If you are trying to imitate the way a character speaks (as you would in first, second and close third person viewpoints), you need to consider their speech style. Here are some questions to ask yourself:

What are my character's idiolect features? Do they have any verbal tics – such as when Gatsby calls people 'old sport'?

What is their register? Do they use a lot of formal, sophisticated lexis (often of classical or French origin)? Or do they prefer down to earth, informal words (often of Old English or Norse origin)?

Do they use idiomatic or figurative language? Do they have any favourite sayings?

Do they speak a lot or very little? Do they waffle or get straight to the point?

Have another look at Nick's voice at the beginning of *The Great Gatsby*, and analyse his speech style. Use the questions above to help you.



In my younger and more vulnerable years my father gave me some advice that I've been turning over in my mind ever since.

"Whenever you feel like criticizing any one," he told me, "just remember that all the people in this world haven't had the advantages that you've had."

He didn't say any more, but we've always been unusually communicative in a reserved way, and I understood that he meant a great deal more than that. In consequence, I'm inclined to reserve all judgments, a habit that has opened up many curious natures to me and also made me the victim of not a few veteran bores. The abnormal mind is quick to detect and attach itself to this quality when it appears in a normal person, and so it came about that in college I was unjustly accused of being a politician, because I was privy to the secret griefs of wild, unknown men. Most of the confidences were unsought — frequently I have feigned sleep, preoccupation, or a hostile levity when I realized by some unmistakable sign that an intimate revelation was quivering on the horizon; for the intimate revelations of young men, or at least the terms in which they express them, are usually plagiaristic and marred by obvious suppressions. Reserving judgments is a matter of infinite hope. I am still a little afraid of missing something if I forget that, as my father snobbishly suggested, and I snobbishly repeat, a sense of the fundamental decencies is parcelled out unequally at birth.



Now write a first, second or close third person narrative in which you create a distinctive voice. Like Nick at the beginning of *The Great Gatsby*, you could write about a character's early life and attitudes. Swap with a neighbour and analyse the voices you have created, again using the questions above.

WRITING AS READER: STYLE



TENSE:

You can choose to write your text in the present, past, or future - or a mixture.

PRESENT:

This has become a very popular tense to use – Hilary Mantel uses it in her novel *Wolf Hall*, for example. It has the effect of making events appear vivid and immediate, even timeless. Although *The Great Gatsby* is mainly narrated in the past tense, F. Scott Fitzgerald changes to the present tense in chapter three when Nick is describing one of Gatsby's parties:



The lights grow brighter as the earth lurches away from the sun, and now the orchestra is playing yellow cocktail music, and the opera of voices pitches a key higher. Laughter is easier minute by minute, spilled with prodigality, tipped out at a cheerful word. The groups change more swiftly, swell with new arrivals, dissolve and form in the same breath; already there are wanderers, confident girls who weave here and there among the stouter and more stable, become for a sharp, joyous moment the centre of a group, and then, excited with triumph, glide on through the sea-change of faces and voices and color under the constantly changing light.

Suddenly one of the gypsies, in trembling opal, seizes a cocktail out of the air, dumps it down for courage and, moving her hands like Frisco, dances out alone on the canvas platform. A momentary hush; the orchestra leader varies his rhythm obligingly for her, and there is a burst of chatter as the erroneous news goes around that she is Gilda Gray's understudy from the Follies. The party has begun. (Chapter 3.)

What do you think is the effect of these two paragraphs in the present tense in the middle of a past tense narrative?

If you do decide to use the present tense in your own writing, remember to check it is consistent. It is very easy to slip back into the past as we are more used to using this tense.

If you want to use flashbacks when writing in the present tense, you would only need to use the simple past, (walked, ran, saw etc) rather than the remote past (had walked, had run, had seen etc.).

PAST:

The past tense is the preferred tense for narrative and it is the one Fitzgerald mostly uses in *The Great Gatsby*. It is the easiest to use as it feels most natural and there is less danger of slipping into another tense by mistake.

Sometimes a problem occurs when you want to use flashback when writing in the past tense as you have to use the pluperfect (had..), sometimes known as the remote past, in order to describe events that happened sometime previously. It would seem that you should use the 'had' construction all the time, but it can become a bit clumsy, as in this example.

WRITING AS READER: STYLE

*I thought back to the evening of the party. I **had** taken such care with my appearance. I **had** brushed my hair until it **had** shone; I **had** worn my favourite jeans, I **had** used my new nail varnish and I **had** borrowed Mum's best perfume...*

There are six 'hads' in three lines. It is already beginning to sound tedious. The way experienced writers get round this problem is to use the pluperfect at the beginning, to establish for the reader that we are in the remote past, but omit it thereafter:

*I thought back to the evening of the party. I **had** taken such care with my appearance. I brushed my hair until it shone; I wore my favourite jeans, I used my new nail varnish and I borrowed Mum's best perfume.*



We understand this is a flashback because the original 'had' positions us, but we are spared the monotony of frequent uses of the pluperfect. Another option is to use contractions (he'd, she'd etc) but even this can sound tedious after a while. Find an example of where Fitzgerald uses the pluperfect in the following passage and suggests how he avoids over-using it:



And as I sat there brooding on the old, unknown world, I thought of Gatsby's wonder when he first picked out the green light at the end of Daisy's dock. He had come a long way to this blue lawn, and his dream must have seemed so close that he could hardly fail to grasp it. He did not know that it was already behind him, somewhere back in that vast obscurity beyond the city, where the dark fields of the republic rolled on under the night. Gatsby believed in the green light, the orgastic future that year by year recedes before us.

FUTURE:

This is quite a challenging tense to use as it is difficult to sustain. It would also become tedious for the same reason as the pluperfect because you will need to use the auxiliary 'will' a lot (I will go home, I will have dinner.)

LANGUAGE:

Strong verbs are better than weak verbs with an adverb. Dawdled rather than walked slowly; punched rather than hit hard etc.

Similarly, strong nouns are better than weaker nouns with an adjective: skyscraper rather than tall building; monster rather than horrible creature etc. In a 1938 letter to his daughter, Fitzgerald writes:

About adjectives: all fine prose is based on the verbs carrying the sentences. They make sentences move. Probably the finest technical poem in English is Keats' "Eve of Saint Agnes." A line like "The hare limped trembling through the frozen grass," is so alive that you race through it, scarcely noticing it, yet it has colored the whole poem with its movement—the limping, trembling and freezing is going on before your own eyes.

WRITING AS READER: STYLE



Have a look at this passage from *The Great Gatsby*. Underline some of the strong verbs and nouns, then replace them with weaker verbs and adverbs, and weaker nouns and adjectives. Consider the effect.



In his blue gardens men and girls came and went like moths among the whisperings and the champagne and the stars. At high tide in the afternoon I watched his guests diving from the tower of his raft, or taking the sun on the hot sand of his beach while his two motor-boats slit the waters of the Sound, drawing aquaplanes over cataracts of foam. On week-ends his Rolls-Royce became an omnibus, bearing parties to and from the city between nine in the morning and long past midnight, while his station wagon scampered like a brisk yellow bug to meet all trains. And on Mondays eight servants, including an extra gardener, toiled all day with mops and scrubbing-brushes and hammers and garden-shears, repairing the ravages of the night before.

DESCRIPTION:

There is an old adage in creative writing, which is 'show don't tell.' Scenes are much more effective when the reader can work out what is happening for themselves, rather than just being informed about it. For example, what is Fitzgerald describing to us in the following description, and what device does he use to do this:



As my train emerged from the tunnel into sunlight, only the hot whistles of the National Biscuit Company broke the simmering hush at noon. The straw seats of the car hovered on the edge of combustion; the woman next to me perspired delicately for a while into her white shirtwaist, and then, as her newspaper dampened under her fingers, lapsed despairingly into deep heat with a desolate cry. Her pocket-book slapped to the floor.

"Oh, my!" she gasped.

I picked it up with a weary bend and handed it back to her, holding it at arm's length and by the extreme tip of the corners to indicate that I had no designs upon it — but every one near by, including the woman, suspected me just the same.

"Hot!" said the conductor to familiar faces. "Some weather! hot! hot! hot! Is it hot enough for you? Is it hot? Is it...?"

My commutation ticket came back to me with a dark stain from his hand. That any one should care in this heat whose flushed lips he kissed, whose head made damp the pajama pocket over his heart!



Now, write your own scene, remembering to show rather than tell. Choose from one of the following:

1. A freezing winter's day (you are not allowed to use the adjective cold!)
2. A nightmare (you are not allowed to use the nouns dream or nightmare!)
3. A fairground at night (you are not allowed to use the words dark or ride).
4. A beach scene (without using the nouns sand or sea).

WRITING AS READER: STYLE

PACE:

Writing is a mixture of dialogue, action, description and thought (sometimes called interiority or interior monologue).

Which two of these do you think make the writing move faster and which slow it down?

You need a balance of all four to create an even pace. Too much action and dialogue may make the pace too fast and exhaust the reader; too much description and thought may make the pace too slow and bore the reader.



Take four highlighters, one for thought, one for description, one for action and one for dialogue. Colour code the following extract from *The Great Gatsby*. What do you notice? How do you think this determines the pace? How much white space is there on the page and how do you think that might affect the reader?



The other girl, Daisy, made an attempt to rise — she leaned slightly forward with a conscientious expression — then she laughed, an absurd, charming little laugh, and I laughed too and came forward into the room.

“I’m p-paralyzed with happiness.” She laughed again, as if she said something very witty, and held my hand for a moment, looking up into my face, promising that there was no one in the world she so much wanted to see. That was a way she had. She hinted in a murmur that the surname of the balancing girl was Baker. (I’ve heard it said that Daisy’s murmur was only to make people lean toward her; an irrelevant criticism that made it no less charming.)

At any rate, Miss Baker’s lips fluttered, she nodded at me almost imperceptibly, and then quickly tipped her head back again — the object she was balancing had obviously tottered a little and given her something of a fright. Again a sort of apology arose to my lips. Almost any exhibition of complete self-sufficiency draws a stunned tribute from me.

I looked back at my cousin, who began to ask me questions in her low, thrilling voice. It was the kind of voice that the ear follows up and down, as if each speech is an arrangement of notes that will never be played again. Her face was sad and lovely with bright things in it, bright eyes and a bright passionate mouth, but there was an excitement in her voice that men who had cared for her found difficult to forget: a singing compulsion, a whispered “Listen,” a promise that she had done gay, exciting things just a while since and that there were gay, exciting things hovering in the next hour.

I told her how I had stopped off in Chicago for a day on my way East, and how a dozen people had sent their love through me.

“Do they miss me?” she cried ecstatically.

“The whole town is desolate. All the cars have the left rear wheel painted black as a mourning wreath, and there’s a persistent wail all night along the north shore.”

“How gorgeous! Let’s go back, Tom. To-morrow!” Then she added irrelevantly: “You ought to see the baby.”

“I’d like to.”

“She’s asleep. She’s three years old. Haven’t you ever seen her?”

WRITING AS READER: STYLE

"Never."

"Well, you ought to see her. She's ——"

Tom Buchanan, who had been hovering restlessly about the room, stopped and rested his hand on my shoulder.

"What you doing, Nick?"

"I'm a bond man."

"Who with?"

I told him.

"Never heard of them," he remarked decisively.

This annoyed me.

"You will," I answered shortly. "You will if you stay in the East."

"Oh, I'll stay in the East, don't you worry," he said, glancing at Daisy and then back at me, as if he were alert for something more. "I'd be a God damned fool to live anywhere else."

At this point Miss Baker said: "Absolutely!" with such suddenness that I started — it was the first word she uttered since I came into the room. Evidently it surprised her as much as it did me, for she yawned and with a series of rapid, deft movements stood up into the room.

"I'm stiff," she complained, "I've been lying on that sofa for as long as I can remember."

"Don't look at me," Daisy retorted, "I've been trying to get you to New York all afternoon."

"No, thanks," said Miss Baker to the four cocktails just in from the pantry, "I'm absolutely in training."

Her host looked at her incredulously.

"You are!" He took down his drink as if it were a drop in the bottom of a glass. "How you ever get anything done is beyond me."

I looked at Miss Baker, wondering what it was she "got done." I enjoyed looking at her. She was a slender, small-breasted girl, with an erect carriage, which she accentuated by throwing her body backward at the shoulders like a young cadet. Her gray sun-strained eyes looked back at me with polite reciprocal curiosity out of a wan, charming, discontented face. It occurred to me now that I had seen her, or a picture of her, somewhere before.

"You live in West Egg," she remarked contemptuously. "I know somebody there."

"I don't know a single ——"

"You must know Gatsby."

"Gatsby?" demanded Daisy. "What Gatsby?"

Before I could reply that he was my neighbor dinner was announced; wedging his tense arm imperatively under mine, Tom Buchanan compelled me from the room as though he were moving a checker to another square.

WRITING AS READER: STYLE

PASSIVE CONSTRUCTIONS:

Another feature that can slow texts down, is the use of the passive voice. This is when the object of a sentence is promoted to the subject position, and the verb to be is used alongside the main verb in order to suggest the promoted subject is the recipient of the action. E.g The boy (subject) hit (verb) the ball (object.) Active voice. The ball (promoted subject) was hit (verb to be plus main verb) by the boy. Passive voice.



Here are some sentences from chapter nine of *The Great Gatsby* using the active voice. Turn them into the passive and consider the effect:

1. *Next morning I sent the butler to New York.*
2. *About five o'clock our procession of three cars reached the cemetery.*
3. *One afternoon late in October I saw Tom Buchanan*
4. *I ... looked at that huge incoherent failure of a house once more.*
5. *I went over and looked at that huge incoherent failure of a house.*

AUDIENCE:

Obviously your style will change according to your audience. Short sentences and words with few syllables suit younger readers; for older readers, vary the sentence length and type, and use more sophisticated vocabulary. You can also vary the register to your audience. Don't overdo it though: often simple words and expressions work best – for all age groups!

FIGURATIVE WRITING:

The use of metaphors and similes can enhance your writing, but use them sparingly. Too much imagery can be cloying and takes your reader out of the scene. Pick out the similes and metaphors in this description from chapter one of *The Great Gatsby*:

We walked through a high hallway into a bright rosy-colored space, fragilely bound into the house by French windows at either end. The windows were ajar and gleaming white against the fresh grass outside that seemed to grow a little way into the house. A breeze blew through the room, blew curtains in at one end and out the other like pale flags, twisting them up toward the frosted wedding-cake of the ceiling, and then rippled over the wine-colored rug, making a shadow on it as wind does on the sea.



What do you think the imagery is intended to show? Use similes and metaphors to describe one of the following:

1. A castle.
2. A dungeon.
3. A cathedral.
4. A shopping mall.

Fitzgerald also uses **motifs** that appear throughout the novel, such as flowers, the motor car, water, telephone calls, eyes, voices and the green light. These are unifying factors and act symbolically, sometimes in different ways, at different points in the novel. For example, trace references to 'the green light at the end of Daisy's dock' (Chapters 1, 4, 5, 7, 9) and see if you can work out how it functions in *The Great Gatsby*. Could you do something similar in your own writing?

WRITING AS READER: STRUCTURE

You only have to produce 500 words in the exam, so structure is not such a key issue as it would be in a longer piece. Having said that, there are still some decisions to be made:

1. Are you going to have a 'frame narrator' who introduces and concludes the story – like Nick whose narrative frames *The Great Gatsby*? Although Nick is a character in his own right, it is still really Gatsby's story – Nick offers us a commentary on it.
2. *In media res*. Are you going to start your story in the middle (*in media res* literally means 'in the middle of things') and then backtrack and tell us the prior events. Eg. *So there I was penniless, lost and frozen, with no idea who I was or where I lived*. Starting in the middle provides a 'hook' to get the reader's attention. Then you go back and explain what happened: *It all began one cold night in February, when I had a row with my mum....*
3. A chronological, linear narrative. This is simply telling the story from beginning to end in the order events happened. Some stories work better this way, and that is fine. If your structure is straightforward, perhaps you can be more crafted in your approach to other aspects of your text, such as voice or style, which will give you something to write about in your commentary.
4. You might like to use a modernist technique, like F. Scott Fitzgerald and write episodically - short scenes with gaps in between. Look at the end of Chapter two of *The Great Gatsby* to see how this works in practice. What do you think Fitzgerald is telling us about Nick and the nature of time here?
5. Flashback. You might like to start with a scene of your story then flash back to an earlier event. This can be helpful in sketching in the back story but too much flashback prevent the narrative from progressing, so can be frustrating.
6. You could start with some dialogue to involve the reader and give a sense of character. This is often a vivid and immediate way to start.



Look at the practice scenarios in the revision section of this booklet and plan out some different ways to structure your response. Which method do you think works best and why?

MORE ON BEGINNINGS:

From David Lodge: *The Art of Fiction*, 1992

There are, of course, many ways of beginning a novel.

A novel may begin with a set-piece description of a landscape or townscape that is to be the primary setting of the story, the mise-en-scène as film criticism terms it.

A novel may begin in the middle of a conversation. It may begin with an arresting self-introduction by the narrator.

A novelist may begin with a philosophical reflection – or pitch a character into extreme jeopardy with the very first sentence.

Many novels begin with a frame story which explains how the main story was discovered or describes it being told to a fictional audience.

WRITING AS READER: STRUCTURE

Categories identified and discussed by Blake Morrison in an article in *The Independent on Sunday* in 1999:

a) *The plunge* – in which the reader is thrust straight into the middle of things – almost as though they knew the story already (see *in media res*, above.)

b) *The shocker* – in which the attention of the reader is grabbed by a shocking, astonishing or outrageous event, idea or statement.

c) *The intriguing narrator* – in which the reader is engaged through their interest in the person telling the story.

d) *The epigram* – a concise, often witty, statement capturing an idea that the novel will explore or develop.

e) *The promise* – in which the reader is told what they can look forward to (for example, that the story to follow will be the saddest, most horrific, funniest ever told).

f) *The omen* – in which the reader is told from the beginning that something bad is going to happen.

g) *The particulars* – in which the story is rooted in detail, as though the author were a reporter rather than a novelist.

h) *The self-referral* – in which the narrator refers in some way to their telling of the story – or their difficulty in doing so.



Which of these beginnings (above) describes the start of *The Great Gatsby*?
Which would you choose if you were writing a novel?



WRITING AS READER: GENRE

Read the following extracts and decide which genre you would categorise *The Great Gatsby* as:

Genre one:



"I don't know a single —"

"You must know Gatsby."

"Gatsby?" demanded Daisy. "What Gatsby?"

The silhouette of a moving cat wavered across the moonlight, and turning my head to watch it, I saw that I was not alone — fifty feet away a figure had emerged from the shadow of my neighbor's mansion and was standing with his hands in his pockets regarding the silver pepper of the stars.

When I looked once more for Gatsby he had vanished, and I was alone again in the unquiet darkness. (Chapter one.)

Genre two:



It was dark now, and as we dipped under a little bridge I put my arm around Jordan's golden shoulder and drew her toward me and asked her to dinner.

I drew up the girl beside me, tightening my arms. Her wan, scornful mouth smiled, and so I drew her up again closer, this time to my face. (Chapter four.)

She was just eighteen, two years older than me, and by far the most popular of all the young girls in Louisville. She dressed in white, and had a little white roadster, and all day long the telephone rang in her house and excited young officers from Camp Taylor demanded the privilege of monopolizing her that night. "Anyways, for an hour!"

When I came opposite her house that morning her white roadster was beside the curb, and she was sitting in it with a lieutenant I had never seen before. They were so engrossed in each other that she didn't see me until I was five feet away. Wild rumors were circulating about her — how her mother had found her packing her bag one winter night to go to New York and say good-bye to a soldier who was going overseas. (Chapter four.)

Genre Three:



No telephone message arrived, but the butler went without his sleep and waited for it until four o'clock — until long after there was any one to give it to if it came.

I have an idea that Gatsby himself didn't believe it would come, and perhaps he no longer cared. If that was true he must have felt that he had lost the old warm world, paid a high price for living too long with a single dream. He must have

looked up at an unfamiliar sky through frightening leaves and shivered as he found what a grotesque thing a rose is and how raw the sunlight was upon the scarcely created grass. A new world, material without being real, where poor ghosts, breathing dreams like air, drifted fortuitously about . . . like that ashen, fantastic figure gliding toward him through the amorphous trees.

The chauffeur — he was one of Wolfsheim's proteges — heard the shots — afterward he could only say that he hadn't thought anything much about them.

It was after we started with Gatsby toward the house that the gardener saw Wilson's body a little way off in the grass, and the holocaust was complete. (Chapter eight.)

WRITING AS READER: GENRE

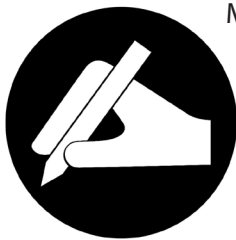
Genre Four:



And as I sat there brooding on the old, unknown world, I thought of Gatsby's wonder when he first picked out the green light at the end of Daisy's dock. He had come a long way to this blue lawn, and his dream must have seemed so close that he could hardly fail to grasp it. He did not know that it was already behind him, somewhere back in that vast obscurity beyond the city, where the dark fields of the republic rolled on under the night.

Gatsby believed in the green light, the orgastic future that year by year recedes before us. It eluded us then, but that's no matter — to-morrow we will run faster, stretch out our arms farther. . . . And one fine morning —

So we beat on, boats against the current, borne back ceaselessly into the past. (Chapter 9)



Make a list of the features which define each genre in the extracts above. What can we conclude about genre from this?

What other genres might classify *The Great Gatsby*? List the features of other possible contenders. Why do you think we can't pin the novel down to one genre?

As a class, each write one paragraph about your journey to college. It doesn't matter if it is boring! Now pass your paragraph to the person next to you until everyone has a new sheet of paper. Read each other's paragraphs. Now turn their account into a paragraph of a children's story. You are allowed to alter some details slightly. Pass the paper on as before. Each time, read the original account, then turn it into a new genre as follows:

1. Horror story
2. Sensational tabloid article.
3. Romance
4. Detective story
5. Moral fable.

Read out some of the best examples. Now make a list of things you had to do to write in each genre. Share your response.



WRITING AS READER: SETTING

Setting is used in novels:

- as a backdrop to events
- to evoke place and create a sense of realism
- to establish mood/atmosphere
- to signal genre
- to structure the novel
- to act symbolically
- to set up themes
- to create expectations in the reader
- to convey contrasts of character (Source: EMC coursebook)

Have a look at the following description, from chapter two of the novel. Which of the above functions do you think it is fulfilling and why?



About half way between West Egg and New York the motor road hastily joins the railroad and runs beside it for a quarter of a mile, so as to shrink away from a certain desolate area of land. This is a valley of ashes — a fantastic farm where ashes grow like wheat into ridges and hills and grotesque gardens; where ashes take the forms of houses and chimneys and rising smoke and, finally, with a transcendent effort, of men who move dimly and already crumbling through the powdery air. Occasionally a line of gray cars crawls along an invisible track, gives out a ghastly creak, and comes to rest, and immediately the ash-gray men swarm up with leaden spades and stir up an impenetrable cloud, which screens their obscure operations from your sight. But above the gray land and the spasms of bleak dust which drift endlessly over it, you perceive, after a moment, the eyes of Doctor T. J. Eckleburg. The eyes of Doctor T. J. Eckleburg are blue and gigantic — their irises are one yard high. They look out of no face, but, instead, from a pair of enormous yellow spectacles which pass over a nonexistent nose. Evidently some wild wag of an oculist set them there to fatten his practice in the borough of Queens, and then sank down himself into eternal blindness, or forgot them and moved away. But his eyes, dimmed a little by many paintless days, under sun and rain, brood on over the solemn dumping ground.

The valley of ashes is bounded on one side by a small foul river, and, when the drawbridge is up to let barges through, the passengers on waiting trains can stare at the dismal scene for as long as half an hour. There is always a halt there of at least a minute, and it was because of this that I first met Tom Buchanan's mistress.



Choose one or more of the functions of setting as listed above. Write a description of your own setting, making sure the function is also addressed. Swap with a neighbour and see if you can work out what each other's settings were intended to achieve.

WRITING AS READER: CHARACTERS

CHARACTER DESCRIPTION:



Fitzgerald was known for creating emblematic characters, but he said it was accidental. "I had no idea of originating an American flapper when I first began to write," he said in a 1923 interview for Metropolitan magazine. "I simply took girls who I knew very well and, because they interested me as unique human beings, I used them for my heroines." In the opening sentence of his 1926 short story, "The Rich Boy," Fitzgerald explains the principle:

Begin with an individual, and before you know it you find that you have created a type; begin with a type, and you find that you have created—nothing.

When you create characters, try to avoid clichés or generalisations. Give your characters memorable and unusual features. Here is F.Scott Fitzgerald's description of Tom Buchanan:

*Now he was a sturdy straw-haired man of thirty with a rather hard mouth and a supercilious manner. Two shining arrogant eyes had established dominance over his face and **gave him the appearance of always leaning aggressively forward**. Not even the effeminate swank of his riding clothes could hide the enormous power of that body — **he seemed to fill those glistening boots until he strained the top lacing, and you could see a great pack of muscle shifting when his shoulder moved under his thin coat**. It was a body capable of enormous leverage — a cruel body.*

***His speaking voice, a gruff husky tenor, added to the impression of fractiousness he conveyed**. There was a touch of paternal contempt in it, even toward people he liked — and there were men at New Haven who had hated his guts.*

The sections in bold are particularly effective. Fitzgerald often characterises people by their voices. Daisy's for example is, 'full of money.' In chapter five Fitzgerald observes, 'The exhilarating ripple of her [Daisy's] voice was a wild tonic in the rain.'

Here are Fitzgerald's descriptions of three more characters. Underline the sections you think work particularly well.



The younger of the two was a stranger to me. She was extended full length at her end of the divan, completely motionless, and with her chin raised a little, as if she were balancing something on it which was quite likely to fall. If she saw me out of the corner of her eyes she gave no hint of it — indeed, I was almost surprised into murmuring an apology for having disturbed her by coming in. (Jordan. Chapter 1.)

I looked back at my cousin, who began to ask me questions in her low, thrilling voice. It was the kind of voice that the ear follows up and down, as if each speech is an arrangement of notes that will never be played again. Her face was sad and lovely with bright things in it, bright eyes and a bright passionate mouth, but there was an excitement in her voice that men who had cared for her found difficult to forget: a singing compulsion, a whispered "Listen," a promise that she had done gay, exciting things just a while since and that there were gay, exciting things hovering in the next hour.

(Daisy. Chapter one.)

A small, flat-nosed Jew raised his large head and regarded me with two fine growths of hair which luxuriated in either nostril. After a moment I discovered his tiny eyes in the half-darkness. (Meyer Wolfsheim. Chapter four.)

WRITING AS READER: CHARACTERS

CHARACTERISATION THROUGH INFERENCE

Much better to *show* us what your characters are like than *tell* us.

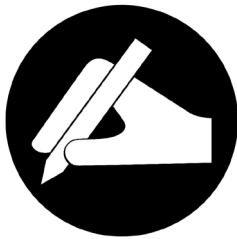
Use actions, speech style and word choice to suggest characterisation.

Sometimes you can tell something about character through apparently unrelated description. For example, what do we learn about Jordan, Daisy and Tom from this description?



The only completely stationary object in the room was an enormous couch on which two young women were buoyed up as though upon an anchored balloon. They were both in white, and their dresses were rippling and fluttering as if they had just been blown back in after a short flight around the house. I must have stood for a few moments listening to the whip and snap of the curtains and the groan of a picture on the wall.

Then there was a boom as Tom Buchanan shut the rear windows and the caught wind died out about the room, and the curtains and the rugs and the two young women ballooned slowly to the floor.



Write a description in which inanimate objects or scenery tell us something about a character or characters.



WRITING AS READER: CHARACTERS

CROWD SCENES

In her book, *Writing Fiction, A Guide To Narrative Craft*, Janet Burroway writes:

"Sometimes it's necessary to introduce several or many people in the same scene, and this needn't present a problem, because the principle is pretty much the same in every case, and is the same as in film: pan, then close-up. In other words, give us a sense of the larger scene first, then a few details to characterise individuals.... We will believe more thoroughly in large numbers of people if you offer example images for us...."

F. Scott Fitzgerald does this with his description of one of *Gatsby's* parties:



From East Egg, then, came the Chester Beckers and the Leeches, and a man named Bunsen, whom I knew at Yale, and Doctor Webster Civet, who was drowned last summer up in Maine. And the Hornbeams and the Willie Voltaires, and a whole clan named Blackbuck, who always gathered in a corner and flipped up their noses like goats at whosoever came near. And the Ismays and the Chrysties (or rather Hubert Auerbach and Mr. Chrystie's wife), and Edgar Beaver, whose hair, they say, turned cotton-white one winter afternoon for no good reason at all. (See also chapters two, three and six for other party scenes.)

This is the panning that Barroway describes. Yet even through an apparently random list of characters, Fitzgerald is making a point. Many of the characters' surnames are those of animals. A civet is a cat-like animal, blackbucks are antelopes and a beaver is a large rodent. Perhaps Fitzgerald is using the names to satirise society, in suggesting these people behave in less than human ways, or that they are predatory or parasitical in some way. He also uses the close-up technique to characterise individuals, such as the family who, 'flipped up their noses like goats at whosoever came near.' Even the simile comes from the animal kingdom!



Describe a crowd scene. Choose from: a party, a beach scene, people on a train station platform. Following Fitzgerald's example, 'pan' around your scene first then focus in on a few individuals with some memorable details.



WRITING AS READER: CHARACTERS

MINOR CHARACTERS:

In his book, 'Revision', David Kaplin warns against ghost characters, ' .. characters who are never described, so that readers have trouble forming an imaginative picture of them.' Kaplin observes, 'some writer once said that you need at least three unique, vivid details to make even the most minor character seem real.' Fitzgerald is very good at giving minor characters distinctive features, such as Meyer Wolfsheim who wears, 'finest specimens of human molars' for his cufflinks and whose nose is so large that his nostrils function as eyes:



'His nostrils turned to me in an interested way. "I understand you're looking for a business gonnegtion."'

Note how Fitzgerald has created a unique speech style for Wolfsheim, which forms another memorable part of his characterisation.



Invent a character. Describe them, giving them three memorable characteristics. Remember you can use how they speak or how they behave as distinguishing features.



WRITING AS READER: DIALOGUE



Although dialogue should give the impression of real speech, it doesn't completely replicate it. When we talk we make mistakes; we correct ourselves, use fillers (um and er), go off the point and repeat ourselves. And a lot of what we say isn't actually very interesting! So a novelist's task is to make dialogue sound real, whilst it is actually quite crafted. Dialogue in novels is usually fluent and coherent, revealing aspects of character, opinion or relationships. There are exceptions, however, such as in chapter five of *The Great Gatsby*, which is discussed below.

Dialogue should be indented, with a new line for each speaker. Try to avoid too many different speech tags (*he muttered, she exclaimed*, etc.) Said is fine. It may seem repetitive but after a while it becomes invisible. If you are alternating speech between two characters, and it is obvious who is speaking, even the saids can be omitted – or just inserted occasionally so the reader can keep track. Another option is to use actions, so it is obvious which character is speaking from what they do. These also avoid the necessity for adverbs. Instead of 'he shouted angrily', you could have the character doing something that represents his anger, such as throwing a cup against the wall or slamming his fist on the table.

Here is a conversation between Nick and Gatsby at the beginning of chapter 5 of the novel:



"Your place looks like the World's Fair," I said.

"Does it?" He turned his eyes toward it absently. "I have been glancing into some of the rooms. Let's go to Coney Island, old sport. In my car."

"It's too late."

"Well, suppose we take a plunge in the swimming-pool? I haven't made use of it all summer."

"I've got to go to bed."

"All right."

We know already who the characters are as Fitzgerald has established that at the beginning of the scene (*I [Nick] saw Gatsby walking toward me across his lawn.*) Fitzgerald puts in one speech tag at the beginning (*"Your place looks like the World's Fair," I said*) in order to establish that Nick speaks first. The next piece of dialogue has an action instead of a speech tag (*He [Gatsby] turned his eyes toward it absently.*) From there on there is only speech – the reader can work out who is talking and the lack of speech tags or actions keep the focus on the dialogue.

Fitzgerald also uses speech to show, rather than tell us how a character is feeling. Take this scene from later on in scene five for example:

"There's another little thing," he said uncertainly, and hesitated.

"Would you rather put it off for a few days?" I asked.

"Oh, it isn't about that. At least ——" He fumbled with a series of beginnings. "Why, I thought — why, look here, old sport, you don't make much money, do you?"

"Not very much."

This seemed to reassure him and he continued more confidently.

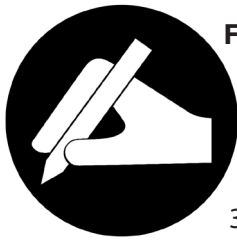
"I thought you didn't, if you'll pardon my — You see, I carry on a little business on the side, a sort of side line, you understand. And I thought that if you don't make very much — You're selling bonds, aren't you, old sport?"

A linguistic analysis of Gatsby's speech reveals hesitations, false starts and repairs. Locate these for yourself and try to work out what Fitzgerald is showing us about Gatsby's feelings here. Remember

WRITING AS READER: DIALOGUE

he is trying to pluck up courage to ask Nick to invite Daisy to tea.

Dialogue works best when there are underlying tensions. Characters might be saying one thing but thinking another. Or having a banal conversation where what is not said is more telling than what is.



First Exercise:

- 1) Choose two characters. Name them.
- 2) Imagine the characters are in the kitchen sharing a task. For example: washing the dishes together, making drinks, preparing food, clearing up after a party.
- 3) Imagine what they would say to each other and write a short scene.

NOTE: Focus on the dialogue. Deliberately try to keep the dialogue very banal and straightforward. For example: "Is there any more ice?" or "Wait a minute, I'll need to put these glasses in the dishwasher."

As you re-read your scene, you think it feels flat. And you would be right! A good rule of thumb for spotting flat, unengaging writing might be this: If a scene is about what a scene is about, then you're in trouble!

Flat, surface level dialogue is called writing 'on the nose'. This is when characters say exactly what they mean. This may be fine when a character says, "Pass the salt." But when it comes to more complex emotional issues, people in the real world rarely say exactly what's on their mind. In fact, people almost never explicitly talk about their problems. Instead, they misdirect, threaten or negotiate to avoid dealing with the issue head on.

This is especially true when comes to expressing physical attraction. Flirtation is all about the subtext: you want to drop heavy hints without explicitly describing your desire. The same is true of a relationship breaking up. Most arguments are triggered by surface level things like hanging up the bathroom towels, while the real issues of anger, betrayal, disappointment or emotional projection are not explicitly addressed.

Now, let's add the second layer to the scene you wrote: the subtext.

Second Exercise:

1) Take the two characters from the scene you wrote in the First Exercise and decide what kind of physical attraction exists between them. Make notes about what is going on within each character. For example:

- A and B are attracted to each other and are hoping to kiss for the first time
- A has a crush on B and is trying to find out if the feeling is mutual
- A and B used to go out together but they now despise each other.

2) Without changing the dialogue, re-write the scene from the First Exercise while suggesting the attraction between the characters.

NOTE: Focus on the character's movements and on how they say their lines of dialogue. Explore ways to reveal the character's inner worlds without naming any emotions. Make the readers feel what the characters are going through.

WRITING AS READER: REVISION

HERE IS A REMINDER OF SOME OF THE TIPS IN THIS BOOKLET:

1. *Decide on which person, point of view and tense to write in. Remember to consider voice, tone, genre and audience.*
2. *Choose strong verbs rather than weak verbs plus adverbs.*
3. *'Show don't tell!'*
4. *Dialogue and action quicken pace; description and interiority slow it down.*
5. *Avoid passive constructions.*
6. *Don't overdo figurative writing.*
7. *Think about where you are going to start your story.*
8. *Use setting and description to help convey your message.*
9. *Dialogue should appear realistic.*
10. *Make characters individuals not types.*

EXAM PRACTICE:

Choose one of the storylines below to develop as the opening of a narrative.

Write your narrative, making your own choices about the story's starting point and linguistic techniques.

You should write approximately 500 words.

Either

Storyline 1

1. *A poor fisherman and his wife lived in a little hut near the sea.*
2. *One day the fisherman caught a talking fish.*
3. *The fish said he was really a prince who had a spell cast on him and begged to be released back into the sea. The fisherman did so.*
4. *The fisherman's wife said he should have asked for a wish.*
5. *The fisherman went back to the sea and asked for a decent cottage for the couple to live in, which the fish granted*
6. *But the greedy wife wasn't satisfied. She kept asking for more and more things.*
7. *Eventually she asked to be equal with God. At this air was filled with thunder and the fisherman and his wife are returned to their little hut, all of their wealth and power gone forever.*

Or

Storyline 2

1. *A soldier said farewell to his sweetheart in 1915 and boarded a train for France.*
2. *He was taken first to a camp near Arras and then on to the front line.*
3. *He made friends with a soldier who was younger than him, homesick and finding it very hard to cope. He looked after him.*

WRITING AS READER: REVISION

4. *He wrote letters home, telling his sweetheart about the young man.*
5. *The men were asked to go out, over the trenches, to bring back some guns and ammunition from bodies of soldiers who had been killed.*
6. *On this expedition, the young man was injured.*
7. *The soldier risked his own life to drag his young friend back to the safety of the trenches.*
8. *When they got back, the young man was taken to a makeshift hospital behind the lines.*
9. *Later someone came to tell the soldier that his young friend had died.*

Outline the key narrative and linguistic techniques you have used in your writing. You should write approximately 250 words.

COMMENTARY WRITING:

The commentary is a short, explanatory piece of writing to accompany your narrative and the examiner will use it to help them understand what you were aiming for and give them a sense of whether you were drawing on knowledge about narrative technique and language in your own writing. In other words, writing as reader. Your commentary should:

- *Draw attention to some of the key features of narrative technique and language that you have chosen.*
- *Engage the reader by letting them into your thinking and your reasons for making the choices that you did.*

Here are a few openings of commentaries that take different approaches, to give you some ideas of alternative ways in which you might begin to write about your own choices. There is no single, correct way of doing it. The most important thing is to reveal your thinking in an interesting way.

To practise writing a commentary, go back to one of the pieces of writing you have done earlier in the booklet. Try writing a short 250 word commentary on it, explaining your choices, drawing on any of the approaches taken in the examples below.

Example one:

One of the most important elements in my narrative was the way I chose to play with time. I decided to start the story at the end when...

Example two:

Whodunnets often follow a very conventional structure. I wanted to subvert this, so I chose to start by revealing the murderer and work back, to show how she was trapped....

Example three:

Starting with a bit of dialogue allowed me to leap straight into the story and arouse the reader's interest. Setting the scene comes later with ...

Example four:

I chose a first-person narrator, a character who would go on to witness the main events and come to know the main protagonist, rather than being the central character herself.

WRITING AS READER: REVISION

Example five:

I spent a lot of my opening setting the scene, with a long descriptive passage, because the place is so important to the narrative. I used lots of minor sentences, just with noun phrases and no verbs, to paint the picture rapidly and in a strikingly direct way.

Example Six:

I've chosen to write my narrative using a first person narrative voice, from the perspective of the student. Rather than setting the scene, I've launched straight in, in media res, at a point after the incident with the car driver. I wanted to create suspense, so that the reader wonders why the narrator has all the signs of having been beaten up. I've used language features that suggest a conversational voice, such as minor sentences, rhetorical questions, starting sentences with 'And' and colloquial lexis, such as 'big fat purple bruise', 'mate', 'creep', 'pasting', to give a flavour of the narrator's spoken voice. However the voice remains quite a conventional one, rather than trying to create an experimental or edgy, contemporary style of narrator etc.

TIP:

You are asked to write 500 words for your story and 250 words for your commentary. Make sure you know approximately how much that is in your own handwriting so you can see at a glance whether you have met the word counts.

Useful Books

Wannabe a writer - Jane Wenham-Jones

Writing Fiction – Janet Burroway

The Art of Writing Fiction – Andrew Cowan

The Art of Fiction – John Gardner

Websites

<http://sarahduncansblog.blogspot.co.uk/>

<http://www.dailywritingtips.com/creative-writing-101/>

<http://www.julie-cohen.com/blog/2005/04/16/blog-envy/>

FINAL THOUGHT:

If you want to be a writer, and your teachers think you have talent, follow F. Scott Fitzgerald's example in persistence:

In February 1918, he submitted the first full draft of his first novel to a publisher, only to have it rejected. In October of 1918, he submitted a revised version to the publisher. It was rejected again. Finally, the third version was accepted and published.

The novel, entitled *This Side of Paradise*, made Fitzgerald a literary celebrity before his twenty-fourth birthday. The book sold out in twenty-four hours and would go on to sell more than 49,000 copies by the end of 1921, just after its twelfth printing.

Definitely worth the effort, I would say!

