

Cambridge International AS & A Level Literature in English 9695

Introduction to Literature – Lesson 9: Structuring an essay		
Learning objectives:	By the end of this lesson learners will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • produce personal opinions and interpretations of a text. • answer questions on an issue or issues central to the text. 	
Lesson objectives:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners will display detailed knowledge of a text. • Learners will show awareness of how the author conveys a central message and ideas in their writing. • Learner will construct a relevant and supported argument appropriate to a specific question focus. 	
Vocabulary:	thesis statement, topic sentences, embedded quotations, close analysis, introduction, conclusion, contextual support, personal response.	
Previous learning:	Learners have explored aspects of context, character, plot, themes, language, narrative aspects, drama texts and close analysis in earlier lessons.	
Plan		
	Activities	Guidance
Beginning	<p>Discuss with learners:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the essential features of an essay-based question? • What approach is needed to meet the challenge of this type of exam question? <p>Consider structure, paragraphing, topic sentences, developing ideas, using evidence and conclusions.</p> <p>In pairs or small groups, learners list the common features of essay-based questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an opinion to be argued for or against. • thematic concerns or character and role focus. • directed focus: language, tone, imagery, narrative techniques etc. • key words in the question: ‘presentation of’, ‘contributes to your understanding of’, ‘close attention to’, ‘refer to’, ‘critical appreciation of’. 	Learners will need a good deal of support when writing an extended essay for the first time. Provide some generic phrases for learners to use which will help them to initially structure their work and to express what they wish to say. In addition, learners will need the vocabulary and terminology to write about a text they are studying.
Middle	<p>Give learners an extract or short story that they have read in an earlier lesson.</p> <p>Learners write a statement about the text relating to character, theme or setting. Share the statements with the rest of the class and choose one or two for the class to plan a response to. Add a question focus to the statement: ‘To what extent do you agree with this view?’ or ‘Do you share this opinion?’</p> <p>Learners add the statement, question focus and their thesis statement to the planning grid.</p> <p>Learners share their thesis statements and</p>	A thesis statement sums up the learner’s point of view in relation to the question and establishes the main idea or line of argument that they wish to get across.

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	<p>comment on how these could be expanded upon or reworded to be more precise.</p> <p>In pairs or small groups, learners add initial thoughts to the planning grids on key themes, narrative aspects, context, or anything else that they consider to be relevant to the question focus and their thesis statement.</p> <p>Learners underline words and phrases that support their point of view. Share views with the group. Learners consider four (or five) key points that they would like to make in response to the question (each forming a paragraph in their response). Learners craft these as topic sentences that link directly to the question and their thesis statements.</p> <p>Learners arrange their topic sentences in a sensible order and add these to their planning grid.</p> <p>As a class, discuss the use of embedded quotations and remind learners that these should be precise and focused, using single words or short phrases (two to five words). Give learners a couple of examples of embedded quotations.</p> <p>In pairs, learners select three or four key quotations from the text which support the point they have made in their first topic sentence. Learners then share these in pairs or small groups, explaining why they think they are useful. What new insights do they provide on character, language, theme, structure, etc.?</p> <p>Learners select supporting quotations for remaining topic sentences and add to their planning grid. They then add brief notes for each chosen quotation on the effects of language, structure, style, etc.</p> <p>Learners complete the activity by drawing up some concluding points that link to the question, thesis statement and topic sentences.</p> <p>Resources: Extract or short story from an earlier lesson. Essay planning grid – print or copy onto large sheets of paper.</p>	<p>Topic sentences are sentences that express the main idea of the paragraph the learner intends to write. This underpins their personal response and original thinking, as well as answering the question.</p> <p>Teach learners to think about the effects of the literary techniques a writer uses, so that they are not just technique-spotting but are actually analysing the techniques they find.</p> <p>Ensure learners understand the difference between using direct quotes and paraphrasing.</p> <p>Planning offers learners a chance to plot their findings in a detailed essay plan and should allow you to see how insightful they are being about their set texts whilst also showing you how well they are able to structure their ideas on paper.</p>
<p>End</p>	<p>Display the planning grids and allow learners to walk around adding comments, or suggestions, on post it notes to each other's plans.</p>	

Additional information

Differentiation	Assessment
Provide scaffolding in the form of sentence starters to support learners initially. 'This invokes...', 'this suggests that...', 'the author initially...', 'moreover...', 'it cannot be denied that...', 'it is clear that...', 'as the plot unfolds...'	Referring to their planning grid, learners write out a response to the question in full.
Follow-up work	
It is important that learners practise writing essays on the set texts in timed, exam conditions.	

Planning grid

Question:	
Thesis statement:	
Contextual aspects:	
Key themes:	
Any significant narrative aspects:	
Topic sentence:	
Quotation:	Language effects:
Quotation:	Language effects:
Quotation:	Language effects:
Topic Sentence:	
Quotation:	Language effects:
Quotation:	Language effects:
Quotation:	Language effects:
Topic Sentence:	
Quotation:	Language effects:
Quotation:	Language effects:
Quotation:	Language effects:
Topic Sentence:	
Quotation:	Language effects:
Quotation:	Language effects:
Quotation:	Language effects:
Concluding points:	