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O LEVEL ENGLISH LANGUAGE NOTES

Paper 1 Situational Writing

Key Considerations

'Purpose', 'Audience' and 'Context' are elements to bear in mind when working on your situational writing. To fulfil the O Level English Language Syllabus Assessment Objectives, these are the points to take note of in your course of crafting your situational writing response.

Question and Visual Text Considerations

- Pay attention to the question and the information on the visual text
- Infer ideas based on what is stated -> identify specific reasons and consequences
- Evaluate the points based on their implications

Planning Considerations

- Before beginning, brainstorm on how you would want to organise the structure of your response
- Briefly pen down a few points beside the question on what you would write in each paragraph

Writing Considerations

- Use internationally acceptable English, not slangs or informal phrases
- Use the good vocabulary, appropriate register and tone in your writing to suit the context
- Use varied sentences (of varying lengths and structures) instead of following the same structure
- Do not write in a boring fashion by stating things robotically with no creativity at all
- Be mindful of using correct grammar, punctuation and spelling
- Time management (do not be too carried away by a paragraph and have no time for the next)

Sample Structure of Formal Letter or Email

INTRODUCTION: Introduce yourself to the recipient and state the purpose of your letter

CONTENT PARAGRAPH 1: Explain why you think the course will be relevant for the students

CONTENT PARAGRAPH 2: Elaborate on how the course will help the students

CONTENT PARAGRAPH 3: Describe how you think the students will respond and why

CONCLUSION: Reiterate your stance and thank the recipient for their time

- Do note that CONTENT PARAGRAPH 1 and CONTENT PARAGRAPH 2 are very different.
- CONTENT PARAGRAPH 1 is about the reasons for the relevance and importance for the students. This means talking about the current lack of the students' abilities, their prominent weaknesses or the stronger students' keen enthusiasm for such a language course which makes the course meaningful.
- CONTENT PARAGRAPH 2 is about the details of the course. These include how the course is conducted, what are the detailed aspects of the programme, who are the facilitators, what are the credentials of the facilitators, as well as any highlights of the programme. While describing, try to weave in the benefits that can be gained by the students.

Sample Structure of Informal Letter or Email

INTRODUCTION: Mention a bit of personal conversation (e.g. ask how the recipient is doing / talk about how you have been / reminisce about your past interaction with the recipient). State the intended purpose of your letter and briefly state the reason for it too.

CONTENT PARAGRAPH 1: Suggestion 1 pros and cons

CONTENT PARAGRAPH 2: Suggestion 2 pros and cons

CONTENT PARAGRAPH 3: Suggestion 3 pros and cons

CONCLUSION: Reiterate your stance on which suggestion you recommend the most and thank the recipient for their consideration

Do note that while writing the pros and cons, you should try to evaluate... whether the cons are serious or negligible and can be easily addressed... whether the pros are significant or minimal.

Sample Structure of Informal Letter or Email

INTRODUCTION: Mention a bit of personal conversation (e.g. ask how the recipient is doing / talk about how you have been / reminisce about your past interaction with the recipient). State the intended purpose of your letter and briefly state the reason for it too.

CONTENT PARAGRAPH 1: Suggestion 1 as a recommendation but not ideal due to serious flaws

CONTENT PARAGRAPH 2: Suggestion 2 as a recommendation and its flaws can be addressed

CONTENT PARAGRAPH 3: The suitability of Suggestion 2 in line with the key objectives, its suitability for the target audience and its extended benefits

CONCLUSION: Reiterate your stance on choosing Suggestion 2 and thank the recipient for their consideration

Sample Structure of Speech

INTRODUCTION: Introduce yourself and bring in the topic of your speech, as well as brief reasons for your speech

CONTENT PARAGRAPH 1: Idea 1

CONTENT PARAGRAPH 2: Idea 2

CONTENT PARAGRAPH 3: Idea 3

CONCLUSION: Reiterate your points and thank the audience

Sample Structure of Report

INTRODUCTION: Introduce yourself and state the intended purpose for your report

CONTENT PARAGRAPH 1: Outline the issue you wish to report about and why it is important to look into it.

CONTENT PARAGRAPH 2: Describe the issue and the consequences of it. Be systematic in your points.

CONTENT PARAGRAPH 3: Provide possible suggestions and explain why they are effective or not.

CONCLUSION: Summarise your points and thank the recipient for looking into the matter.

Paper 1 Continuous Writing

Types of Continuous Writing Questions to Expect

- Narrative Writing
- Argumentative Writing
- Expository Writing
- Discursive Writing
- Descriptive Writing
- Personal Recount

Key Considerations

- Your response should be well-organised with a neat structure and coherent writing development.
- You should have **1 introduction + 3 content paragraphs + 1 conclusion**

Planning Considerations

- Before beginning your writing, brainstorm on how you would want to organise the structure of your response
- List out bullet points 1-5 (representing each paragraph) and briefly pen down what you would write about in each paragraph

Writing Considerations

- Be creative in your style and language. Use sophisticated expressions. Some students assume that creativity should only be in narrative writing and descriptive writing. This is not true - it will be an excellent idea to weave in creative expressions even in expository writing.
- Use internationally acceptable English, not slangs or informal phrases
- Use good vocabulary, the appropriate register and tone in your writing to suit the context
- Use varied sentences (of varying lengths and structures) instead of following the same structure
- Do not write in a boring fashion by stating things robotically with no creativity at all Be mindful of using correct grammar, punctuation and spelling
- Time management (do not spend too much time planning the outline as it should be very brief for you to remember what to write next; do not be too carried away by a paragraph and run out of time)

Idea Considerations

- Be relevant in your points - always remember that every part of your content should relate to the question. This is especially important for argumentative and expository / discursive writing where you must always link your ideas back to what the question is asking for.
- Be coherent in your writing - the points should flow systematically in a logical step-by-step manner. Think of yourself as someone knowledgeable explaining your ideas clearly and incrementally to a less informed person.

Content Paragraph Structure

P - Point (also known as topic sentence)

E - Elaboration of point

E - Example(s)

E - Elaboration of examples

L - Link

(step-by-step guidance, samples and explanations on what each element entails are found in the Full Notes available for purchase)

Introduction Writing Techniques

HOOK

+

BACKGROUND FACTS

+

ARTFUL DEFINITION

+

THESIS

+

ARTFUL QUESTION (OPTIONAL)

(step-by-step guidance, samples and explanations on what each element entails are found in the Full Notes available for purchase)

'Point (Topic Sentence)' Writing Techniques

The constant (ADJECTIVE) advancement of telecommunication technology (SUBJECT) proves to be of significant (ADJECTIVE) relevance and necessity in this globalised age (CONTEXT) so as to facilitate effective communication across private and corporate spheres (LINK POINT TO SOCIETY) through continuous innovation in this field.
(EXTENSION OF METHOD)

HOW TO START OFF EACH CONTENT PARAGRAPH

The constant advancement of scientific technology

Continuous developments in the field of science...

Additionally, long-term scientific research...

HOW TO BEGIN A 'FOR' ARGUMENT: Proponents / vindicators / supports / advocates...

HOW TO BEGIN A 'COUNTER' ARGUMENT: Critics / dissenters / opponents / contenders...

'Elaboration' Writing Techniques

- Adding adjunct clauses to extend the ideas in your sentences
- Adjectival pre-modification of ideas
- Post-modification of nouns with: by / through / when / which / that / in / at / via / during
- Using nominalisation / process phrases: e.g. "The development of..." VERSUS "Scientists develop..." more frequently instead of only verbs
- Using connectors and conjunctions in your sentences where there are similar ideas or contrasting ideas
- Use words such as additionally / furthermore / moreover when ideas are similar or built upon one another
- Use words such as however / yet / contrastingly / comparatively when ideas are dissimilar or contrasted against one another

'Examples' Writing Techniques

- For instance / For example,
- Prominent examples include...
- Clear examples such as.....show that...
- This can be **seen from**...
- This can be **witnessed** in...
- This can be **testified / justified by**...
- This can be **showcased / evidenced / exemplified by**...
- This is **clearly visible** in...
- (Your example) is testament to...
- From (example 1) to (example 2), it is visible that...

Conclusion Writing Techniques

1. **SUMMARISE** your aforementioned arguments

2. **ASSESS and REINFORCE** the validity of your arguments

3. **EVALUATE, QUALIFY and REBUT** your counter argument

3. **PROPOSE** a course of action, a solution to an issue, or long-term considerations

(step-by-step guidance, samples and explanations on what each element entails are found in the Full Notes available for purchase)

Paper 2 Comprehension Answering Skills

Factual / Literal Question Type

The answer can be found in the passage. You must use the information provided in the passage and not infer any idea beyond it.

Inference Question Type

The answer is a deeper meaning or indirect idea that is not explicitly stated in the passage. Read the surrounding sentences or entire paragraph for better understanding of the context to help you infer better.

Quotation Question Type

State the quote (as provided in the question) and explain that it refers to ____, then explain how that quote leads to a certain inference, for instance, by giving the idea that ____.

Paper 2 Summary Writing Skills

- Read the question and take note of what points they are asking you about
- Highlight points in the passage that answer the question
- When writing your summary, you may follow the chronology of the passage.
- Paraphrase all points and key words with good and accurate vocabulary (avoid writing longer than the point itself in the passage)
- Do not write in a manner that resembles simply writing out bullet points of ideas in a prose form
- Weave similar ideas together in the same sentence
- Move on to a new sentence when introducing another idea
- Use connectors and conjunctions to group similar ideas together or to differentiate between ideas
- Be very well-versed with synonyms, especially the commonly-used ones (suggested list is found in the Full Notes available for purchase)

Hardcopy full set of O Level English Language Notes is available for purchase.

For more notes & learning materials, visit:
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