

Writing Text Responses

A text response essay is a formal piece of writing. Therefore, it must be written using formal language. (No contractions!)

The text response sets out a position or argument in a logical and clear way.

How to **plan** a text response:

1. Consider the prompt (the question or the topic)

- What is being asked?** Do you understand?
- What are the main words and key terms?
- Do you understand all the words?
- Have you read **all parts** of the prompt?
- Can you rewrite the question in a different way (using your own words)?

There are two main types of questions:

1. How/Why questions* (you must answer how/why)
2. Discuss/Do you agree questions* (you must indicate whether you agree or disagree and support your contention by giving reasons)

*Both these types of questions are often preceded by a quote from the text. If a quote is included you must consider how/why it is relevant to the prompt.

2. Organise your thoughts

- What is your position? Why do you feel like this? (List all the main reasons and any part of the text that springs to mind)
- Go over your notes to find evidence
- Go through the text and locate evidence (quotations) to support your position
- How or what could the objections to your point of view be? If you address possible objections it can help make your argument even stronger.

3. Plan

- Sort through your information and select what you will include to support your viewpoint
- List your main ideas (you will need 3-5 main points) and group your information under those ideas/points
- Order your arguments into the paragraph order you will use in your essay. Your ideas need to flow logically leading up to your strongest argument at the end

4. Write a draft

-Make sure it has the following structure:

- ✚ Introduction
- ✚ Body paragraphs (3-5)
- ✚ Conclusion

-Introduction:

Does Introduction A or Introduction B contain the elements of a more effective introduction?

<i>Introduction A</i>	<i>Introduction B</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Precise vocabulary that clarifies the main terms of the prompt• Points out what will be discussed in the body paragraphs and the overall contention• Gives a sense of the complexities explored by the text	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Repeats the words and terms used in the prompt without further explanation• Provides a list of the paragraph topics in random order without a clear overall contention• Refers to the text but is somewhat simplistic, using definite terms

-Body Paragraphs

Use the **TEEL** formula

T (topic sentence) + **E** (evidence) + **E** (explanation) + **L** (link) = **body paragraph**

Make sure you develop your point by commenting on the quotation you've selected. Explain **how** it shows what you're saying.

Remember this process:

Point → **Quotation** → **Analysis**

-Links

Effective links mean your essay flows smoothly and your argument develops logically. One way to link is to use a term from the last sentence of the preceding paragraph in the topic sentence of the next paragraph. Another way to link is to use **connecting words**.

Similarly; equally; compared; an equivalent; in the same way; as with; likewise; also; another; furthermore; moreover; in contrast; on the other hand; whereas; unlike; conversely; nevertheless; alternatively; yet; on the contrary; the opposite; instead; otherwise; accordingly; but

-Conclusion

This brings your exploration of the prompt to a close. It includes a statement of your main argument and summarises the main points of your body paragraphs.

Which is better, conclusion A or conclusion B?

<i>Conclusion A</i>	<i>Conclusion B</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Interested variety of vocabulary that responds to different parts of the prompt• Relates back to what has been covered but does not repeat it• Makes a strong statement about the text that has developed from the points raised in the essay	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Repeats the words and terms used in the prompt• Almost repeats what was said in the introduction• Sums up by almost repeating what is in the topic sentence of each paragraph