Creative Writing Under Pressure

A presentation by James Abela

© 2006 All rights reserved, please do not reproduce without permission

Contents

Discursive essay
Exam planning strategy
Argumentative assignment

Argumentative essays

Particularly useful for IELTs & pre-university entry exams.

Argumentative – Opinion

Let's make students clean the toilets…
• Do you agree?
• Does anybody else think the same as you?
• Why do you think that?
• Can you understand the other side?
• Why are they wrong?

Argumentative – Order

Let’s make students clean the toilets…
• Introduce topic - agree / disagree
• Tell us why – ideas and examples
• Different opinions – not important or not true
• Brief summary
STRONG LAST SENTENCE

If you remember 1 sentence!

• "I find that the harder I work, the more luck I seem to have." Thomas Jefferson (1743-1826)
• "To accomplish great things we must not only act but also dream, not only plan but also believe." Anatole
• "Persistence is the twin sister of excellence. One is a matter of quality; the other, a matter of time." Marabel Morgan
• "There are two levers for moving men -- interest and fear." Napoleon Bonaparte 1769-1821, French General, Emperor
Building an Argument

Smoking should be banned from public places

Smoking is dirty.
- Leave ash
- Leave cigarette butts
- Smells bad
- Causes irritation to the eyes

Smoking is dangerous
- Careless smokers cause fires
- Causes throat & lung cancer
- Causes heart disease

Vocabulary
- First point - First of all / To begin with / To start with
- Connect points – And / Also / Furthermore / What’s more / As well
- Change sides – On the other hand / conversely / But / That said
- Conclude - In conclusion / Therefore
- Examples - For example / For instance

Quick Planning - Mindmaps
- Wide range of uses: from Internet site design to brainstorming in meetings
- Generate ideas about 30% faster

Steps to planning!
- Draw a Mindmap as fast as possible
- Select 3-5 ideas (In an exam, just choose by instinct)
- Each of those ideas can then be made into a paragraph
- Once complete – reread your work
- Write a conclusion…
- Check grammar and spelling
Discursive Essays

After you’ve reached university!

Discursive – Why?

• Used in Universities
• Academic Writing

Therefore:
• Strict Format rules
• Logical NOT emotional

Discursive – Formal Writing

• Don’t use Contractions
• No slang, mate…
• When in Rome do as the Romans Do (NO IDIOMS)
• We don’t use personal Pronouns.
• No Titles (See Above)
• I think you shouldn’t have any opinion

Discursive – Formal Writing

• Don’t use Contractions
• No slang, mate…
• When in Rome do as the Romans Do (NO IDIOMS)
• We don’t use personal Pronouns.
• No Titles (See Above)
• I think you shouldn’t have any opinion

Discursive Essay - Order

• Rephrase the quote/question in your own FORMAL words. Perhaps you can see what issues lie behind it. (1 paragraph max)
• Evidence that agrees
• Evidence that disagrees
• Implications or consequences
• Conclusion (Allowed some opinion here)

Should students choose Teachers?
**Weighing an Argument**  
**Weighing: On the one hand**  
**Pros**  
- Some teachers would work harder.  
- Some teachers would prepare more for class.  
- Some bad teachers wouldn’t get chosen.  
- Try to make their class more interesting.  

**On the other hand**  
**Cons**  
- Give every student good grades.  
- Choose teachers they like, not good teachers.  
- Teachers might teach what is interesting and not what is important.

**Planning It...**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>For</th>
<th>Against</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Discursive – How to ACE it**

- **Accurate**  
  Language and evidence

- **Clear**

- **Economical**  
  (Don’t try to make your essay appear longer by repeating etc.)

**Conclusion**

- Argumentative – Be Honest!
- Build an argument with examples
- Quick Planning Method – Mindmaps
- Discursive – Very formal, must be seen to be balanced.
- Plan it with Vs brainstorming
- ACE it!