English-Studies-Understanding the 2019 HSC examination section IV part 5 transcript

(Duration: 16 minutes 12 seconds)

Welcome to the HSC hub students support session for English Studies. This resource can be used by teachers with their classes or by students revising in their own time. If you are a teacher using this resource in a classroom context, you may like to view the recording and pause to discuss key ideas with students, add your own ideas, resources or sample questions to the resource booklet, use this resource for flips learning by allocating sections for students to view prior to class, and then during the lesson, construct modelled guided and independent responses. If you are a student using this resource at home, you will need a copy of the student booklet. This can be either hard copy or digital, access to the 2019 examination paper and the sample paper, all found by searching NESA English studies on the NESA website.

This resource is Part 5 of the Section IV series. In this part of the resource, students will be revising the definitions of audience, purpose and context, looking closely at the success criteria for this section of the examination and exploring examples of imaginative, informative and persuasive responses to exam style questions. Let's begin by revising the definitions of purpose, audience and context. These definitions come from the glossary contained within the English studies syllabus. Audience is the intended group of readers, listeners or viewers, that the writer designer, filmmaker or speaker is addressing. For example, the audience for a school captain speech at an assembly would be the staff and students of the school. The purpose of a text, in very broad terms, is to entertain, to inform or to persuade, different audiences in different contexts. Composers use a number of ways to achieve these purposes. Persuading through emotive language, analysis or factual recount, entertaining through description, imaginative writing or humour, and so on. For example, the purpose of an online news article is to inform the audience of a recent event or occurrence. Context is the range of personal, social, historical, cultural and workplace conditions in which a text is responded to and composed. For example, the context of Shakespeare's play, "Romeo and Juliet" is that it was written in the 1590s, but set around 200 years earlier.

Now that we've revised the definitions of purpose, audience and context, we're going to move on to examining the success criteria for this section of the examination. These success criteria are found at the top of the page in the examination booklet, just above the question. They give you general guidelines of what is expected in your response. These are the success criteria from Section IV of the 2019 HSC English Studies exam. They are also available as Activity 1 in your student booklet. The success criteria for each section of the exam will change from year to year, as they are connected to the question that is being asked. However, there are elements of the success criteria that remain similar from year to year. We can see that the success criteria from the 2019 question would apply to any type of text and form of text. The students were being asked to organise, develop and sustain their ideas. What does this mean? It means that you need to write a piece in which you clearly express your ideas in a logical order. These ideas need to remain consistent until the very end of the piece. For example, if the main idea in an imaginative piece is courage and perseverance, then this needs to be clear and consistent within the story. The focus on the characters and their feelings is just as important as the obstacles they face, and both of these need to be carried right to the end of the story. What about control language appropriate to audience, purpose and context? This means that the markets are looking to see whether the purpose of the text is clear and that it engages the audience through the way it uses form and language features.

In this section of the paper, you are required to attempt one question and it is advised that you take about 30 minutes to write your response. The examples in this resource come from the 2018 NESA sample paper. Example A asks students to write an argument, a persuasive text. Example B requires an email, an informative text with some persuasive elements. And example C asks for a creative piece, an imaginative text. What these highlights is that you may be asked to write in any style. The other thing to take notice of, is that each example is worth 15 marks. A 15-mark question requires an extended response. This means you need to think about both the quality and quantity of your response.

Let's look more closely at example A. This question is, "Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world," Nelson Mandela. Present an argument in response to this quotation. You may write in any form. This question doesn't state the form in which you are required to respond, but we do know, through the word argument, that it is persuasive. You could choose to write a speech or a hybrid style text. However, it is important that you decide on the form before you start planning and writing. There is no point in writing a speech if you do not use any speech conventions. This is where we should remind ourselves of the success criteria we were examining earlier. The first point was that you need to organise, develop and sustain your ideas. This means you need to think about the structure of your response. Your ideas must be ordered in a way that is logical and makes sense for the audience. You would include an introduction, body paragraphs and a conclusion. All of these paragraphs would support your view about education and how it can change the world. The second dot point was control language appropriate to audience, purpose and context. This is referencing the conventions of the form in which you are writing. Speech conventions, such as rhetorical questions and personal anecdotes, are needed if you're going to write a persuasive speech and convince your audience. Your use of language is also dependent on the purpose of your piece and your audience. Pause this presentation and complete activity 2 in your resource booklet. This is an introduction that has been written in response to the question in example A. It reads, weapons can be destructive in our society. When we think about guns or knives, we only think about violence. But education as a weapon can be used to destroy, but not in a violent way. It destroys old stereotypes and values and uplifts its people to better ways of life. For a society to grow, it's people need to be educated. As Mandela states, it is this powerful weapon that can change the world. The introduction of your text is where you address your audience and make your purpose clear. The language used here is controlled and the writer does not use many colloquial terms. This suggests that the audience for this speech is a young adult or adult audience and that it is being delivered in a fairly formal context. The purpose of the speech is made clear through introducing the two main ideas conveyed in the speech. They are shown here in red. By stating that education can destroy old stereotypes and values and lift people to better ways of life, we can see that the purpose is to convince the audience of the power and impact of education. Remember that second success criteria? Control language appropriate to audience purpose and context? Circle or underline the words and phrases that have been used in its introduction, that tells us the purpose of this text and the audience of this text. You have a copy of this introduction in your resource booklet, under the heading Resource 3. Pause this presentation and complete activity 3, understanding language in the resource booklet.

You have heard the question in resource 2 and the sample introduction in resource 3. It's now your turn to complete one of the body paragraphs for this response. Your body paragraph will be based on one of the two ideas in the introduction. Either, that education can destroy old stereotypes and values, or it uplifts people to better ways of life. Remember that the success criteria requires you to control language and use language appropriate to purpose, audience and context. As your body paragraph forms part of a larger piece, that is arguing for the positive impact of education, you may wish to include some of the following features: use of data or statistics, use of persuasive devices, high modality words, such as must and definitely. Remember to use the paragraph structure you have learned at school. You could include a topic sentence, a sentence to explain your ideas, supporting examples or information, and a concluding sentence that tries to persuade your audience. Spend approximately 10 minutes on this activity. Pause the presentation and complete activity 4 in your resource booklet.

Let's move on to a different example. This is example B. 2018 is the international year of reading. Your local council has asked the community to suggest how people could be encouraged to use the local community library and read more. Write an email to the council, explaining how the library could be more useful for all the people in your local community. In your response, include specific examples of collections and services that should be offered by the library. Your email will contain ideas on ways that the library can become more useful. Even in an email, the way we structure these ideas is important. Remember that first success criteria? We need to organise, sustain and develop our ideas. We should also include an introductory sentence that states our belief in the library and its potential. We will probably include between three to four ideas in this response. Each of these should be explained in a body paragraph. We also want to include a concluding paragraph where we summarise our position and make direct reference to the question. The second success criteria, reference language appropriate to purpose, audience and context. This email has a clear purpose and audience, and the question also provides us with some context. We also know that we have to use the conventions of an email, so we must include an appropriate greeting and sign off. Pause the presentation and complete activity 5.

This is the introduction of your response to example B. Good morning, Mr. Sample. The Greenhouse local library has been my hideout for years. The library has wonderful online and hard copy texts that you can escape into these magical worlds. However, the library really needs more opportunities for all members of our wonderful Greenhouse community. There are many examples I could list, but I have come up with four that I believe the council could easily apply into our already wonderful library to expand its use to all community members. We can see in this response, that the writer has used the conventions of an email, through including a polite greeting, the name of the person to whom they are writing and clear paragraphs. The purpose of the email has been made clear through the phrases highlighted in red on this slide. The library really needs more opportunities, and I have come up with four examples that I believe the council could easily apply. Language used is formal, but still personal. The writer opens with why the library is significant to them and uses first person. They use I, and this is appropriate here.

Now, it's your turn. On the slide is the body paragraph that follows on from the introduction on the previous slide. It reads, the library could expand the use of this space to include children's story time for families of young children. They could have a senior citizens reading day with interactive group reading activities, specifically on that day for our elderly community, giving them an opportunity to gather and meet with others. Not only will this share and extend the love of reading but to give them their own community to feel safe with and less isolated. Complete the rest of the email to the council. Think about one other way the council could become more useful to the local community. Develop one more body paragraph explaining this idea. State why it's a good community activity and how it spreads the love of reading. Finish the email with a brief summary of your ideas and then sign off with the farewell and your name. You may wish to use a phrase like yours sincerely or yours faithfully. Pause the presentation and complete activity 6. Pause the presentation and complete activity 6.

This is end of Part 5, exploring sample questions for Section IV of the examination, writing skills. Remember to view the last part of the series on Section IV, the writing skills section of the English Studies examination.

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