English- Advanced, Standard and Studies - CM- Preparing for the personal response Part one transcript (Duration: 14 minutes 00 seconds)

Welcome to the HSC hub student sessions. This resource is designed to support students and their understanding of the types of questions required in Paper One, Section Two in order to develop their own personal response. As this is for Section Two of this paper, the material provided is relevant for English Advanced, Standard and Studies. This is part one of three parts. This series of resources builds on the learning delivered within the resource. ‘Unpacking the module statement’ and it's a great idea to explore that introductory module before you dive into the personal response. In this presentation, we will focus on developing your approach to writing a response for the Common Module. A Common Module response is unique because in it you're writing a personal response. However, the skills you build here will carry into what you write for Module B. That's a different conversation. For now, let's focus on the Common Module.

[Slide reads: Advice for teachers and students

Teachers in a classroom context you may like to:

* view the recording and pause and discuss key ideas with the students during designated times
* add your own ideas, resources and or sample questions to the resource booklet
* allocate sections for students to view as flipped learning and then co-construct modelled, guided and then independent responses.

A student at home independently will need:

* a copy of your previous assessment for this module
* a copy of the student booklet either hard copy or digital
* time to explore the activities suggested here. This resource works best if you follow all instructions and complete the thinking routines, reflection activities and written tasks. Make sure you take adequate breaks.]

Advice for teachers and students. This information is in the student booklet so please make sure you have read this content about how to use a resource. Note, if you're a student using this on your own and find any of it confusing, you should consult a peer or your teacher for support.

This resource has three parts. This is part one. As you can see, they work together to build an understanding of how to structure the personal response for this module. ‘Unpacking a sample question’, ‘Understanding the structure - the introduction’, moving on to ‘the body’ and then part 3 ‘the conclusion’.

Just before we move to unpacking a sample question, let's remind you of the focus areas in the module statement. These are: representation, how the composer constructs a text. Reader response, how we respond to the text. Responding and composing is what you will do during the examination and as you studied the text, and of course the ideas about human experiences and the text will tell us about when they are listed throughout the module statement. There is a copy of this in your student booklet.

This sample question is similar to the example three question from the NESA samples. The stimulus for this question says, “stories draw us in with the shock of recognition, where you see yourself reflected in another's words.” The question then asks you to, “drawing on the stimulus above, evaluate how your prescribed text invites a responder to make connections between their world and the world of the text. In your response, make detailed reference to the text you studied in the Common Module.” This question has multiple layers for you to address and instructs you to evaluate, so the expectations are high. To write a synthesised response, you will need to connect the stimulus statement to the phrase in the command sentence “invites the responder to make connections between their world and the world of the text”. Interestingly, the keyword in the stimulus above our engagement is ‘shock’, yet the keyword in the next part is ‘invites’. Did you notice this? What will you do with this? These are types of quick enquiry questions you need to shift through when you first meet a question for the Common Module.

Here is the breakdown of the question. You can read this in a moment as you have a copy in your student booklet. This type of question breakdown is possible as you prepare or rehearse, as I like to say to my students, for the HSC. You won't be able to go into this much depth in an examination under time conditions, but you will be better prepared to mentally shift through the language of a question if you practise doing this kind of breakdown more often. You are looking for the key terms in the question, how they linked to the module statement, and ideas to consider or the approach that you can take. Pause the presentation now and read the table before we discuss it more closely. There is a copy in your student booklet.

You will notice that the table is broken up over the next two slides, so we can look closely and discuss the important aspects. This section shows the key terms in the stimulus. Let's unpack column one first. This is where you are identifying the key terms in the stimulus part of the question. Are they asking you to connect to the stories being told or how the text has drawn us in? Is there a shock of recognition you made to the text and can you see yourself reflected? Can you connect to another's world? Now let's move on to the second column. What specific connections are we required to make with the module statement? Here there is representation, reader positioning as well as the human experience itself. In the third column are ideas, or an approach to consider for each part of the stimulus? Why do this? Well, this approach helps you to keep focused on the requirements of a Common Module response and also allows you to see any overlap. This then emphasises what is potentially important when answering this question.

Here is the second part of the table, and this section relates to the question being asked. Again, the key terms, the link to the module and any ideas to consider. Notice after the unpacking of the sample question that a key aspect of the module keeps popping up, reader positioning. Obviously, this will be a large feature in the response. To elaborate on this unpacking, you could then ask yourself some provocative questions. How dos stories draw us in? How does the prescribed text invite us to? Why are we shocked by the reflection of ourselves in this fictional world? What are the main ideas represented that challenge society when the text was composed, and these will lead you to your thesis. Now let's look at the various parts of a personal response. Before we unpack the essentials of the introduction, read this resource as a reminder of the features of a personal response you may have read this explanation in a previous resource. Pause the recording and review it.

Let's work through the essentials of the structure of the introduction. The body and conclusion will be discussed in parts two and three of this resource. The introduction opens your response and establishes your thesis. It is important part of the response, but it should not drag on for too long. To help you keep the introduction concise, use this checklist. Start with the question and immediately apply it through the lens of representation. Synthesise the multiple parts of a question, if there are parts, and be careful not to alter the question by leaving parts out or paraphrasing it too much. Specify the texts you have studied, and provide the full name of the composer, the full title of the text, and possibly the year it was composed, as well as the literary form or genre. Then outline the main ideas. There is a copy of this information in resource three in your student booklet.

Now think about putting this altogether. Here is a sample introduction divided up into the essential parts of an introduction. There is a copy of this in your student booklet. You get an opportunity to read it in a minute. As you read through, look for three things. Firstly, take note of the strong diction. For example, a word like ‘cautionary’. Secondly, aspects that convey representation, for example. ‘prose fiction represents’. And thirdly, phrases that show reader response, for example, ‘alluring for readers’. Pause the presentation now and see if you can highlight words or phrases that convey these three elements. Strong diction, reader response and representation, on your copy of the introduction in table two.

Let's focus on the strong diction first. Did you highlight the words here in red? ‘Cautionary’, ‘provocative’, ‘unravel’, ‘decipher’ and ‘alluring’ all create a more effective, personal voice. Now let's focus on the other effective characteristics of this sample. The writer is aware of the module statement and is referring to aspects of representation and reader response in an explicit way. The words or phrases that do this are highlighted here in blue. ‘Prose fiction represents’, ‘invites responder's’, ‘world of a text’, ‘characterisation’, ‘compositional tool to shape the reader’s response’, ‘reading experience’, ‘dystopic prose fiction novel’, ‘novel’s plot’, ‘for readers’, ‘characterisation carries readers towards’ and ‘leaving readers’. When we put all these aspects together, it reads as an effective personal response.

[Slide reads: Great characters serve multiple roles; they lure a reader, inviting them into the world of the prose fiction to share the experience of the ‘everyman’; they challenge the reader, inviting them to reflect personally on the motives of the characters and perhaps their own motives; they ignite new ideas, inviting the reader to assess the inconsistency and paradox in the behaviour and thus outcome of collective experiences. This is notably the reading pathway through George Orwell’s dystopic novel “Nineteen Eighty-four”, featuring an arguably dislikeable Winston Smith in a world of equally unlikable characters. Through personal assessment of this protagonist’s motives and associated behaviours, readers come to the alarming realisation that a totalitarian world will breed a collective human experience where autonomy is lost alongside the will to fight for basic rights or even to live.]

Here is example two. This is your opportunity to demonstrate what we have just realised about the essentials of an introduction. In a minute, as you read through this introduction, think about what makes it an effective response. Pause the presentation now and highlight words or phrases that convey strong diction, reader response and representation on your copy of this introduction, which is example two in your student booklet.

How did you go? Did you come up with the words and phrases highlighted here in red? They ‘lure a reader’, ‘inviting them into’. ‘They challenge the reader’, ‘inviting them to’, ‘they ignite new ideas’, ‘inviting the reader’, ‘featuring in arguably dislikeable Winston Smith in a world of equally unlikable characters’, and the phrase ‘readers come to the alarming realisation that a totalitarian world will breed a collective human experience where autonomy is lost’. Did you notice that the samples both achieve all of the expectations of an introduction? They both include the language of personal response, representation, and reader response. Is one of the introductions more effective than the other? In my opinion, this introduction is better. The modality is strong and the language is opinionated. All the right ingredients for a fully effective response. To achieve this kind of writing, you will need to use the right words and say what you have to say with a genuine sense of authority.

[Slide reads: Example three- use this one for the next activity

In dystopian literature the world – and by default humankind – is significantly imperfect. The plots of these narratives feature one calamity after another. Regardless of the protagonist’s resilience, nothing goes according to plan. In these texts, the composer’s intention is to shock. To alarm. Possibly even to horrify. Responder, aghast at the ordeals of the characters like Winston Smith from George Orwell's’ 1984 and his futile existence, are left questioning the purpose of his existence. In turn, readers are positioned to reflect on the current state of the world and humankind. As such, responders find themselves inspired – to not become like the fallen characters in these narratives – to stop, before it really starts, the unbridled control governments have of their civilians and of our relationships.]

As you read this final sample, make some notes outlining what you think this sample does. You have a copy in your student booklet as example three. In a moment, you'll be asked to use these notes to complete the final activity for this part of the presentation. Pause the presentation now and read example three and make some notes about what it does well.

At the end of this presentation, think about the three introductions you have just read and rank them in order of most effective to least effective. This should be based on how much it engages with the question and the degree to which the ideas are outlined. Then go back to example three and deconstruct it in this way. Number one, highlight in yellow the words that create the voice or perspective of the writer. Hint, these are usually colourful words may not be how you'd normally refer to something may include metaphors. These are the words that are building the personal response in the essay. Two which phrases implicitly or explicitly engage with the concept of representation. And three, then have a go writing your own in the space provided.

This is the end of part one of a three-part resource. Be sure to work through the presentation for part two about the body of a personal response and part three the conclusion. All three parts are in the same student booklet. Thank you.

End of transcript