

THEME: **DANGEROUS WORDS – DANGEROUS IDEAS**

Read through the articles and texts your teacher presents to you and do some research yourself to develop your own personal angle on an issue/ dangerous idea. There may be some thought-provoking issue that you would like to discuss. Your essay may be in response to one of the articles you have read or some other topic that is in the news at the moment or is something you have thought about.

SUGGESTIONS:

See articles and wiki links as well as class discussions. Write your ideas below:

TASK 1

- Choose an issue which has relevance for you from the topic as discussed and read about so far.
- Plan **three main points** you could make on this issue where you take the discussion **beyond the texts** you have reviewed
- Develop some points you could make that will extend your three basic statements. Consider how you will support these ideas.
- Realise that three is the **basic minimum** and you may think of another two or three central points to make.

TASK 2 - CRAFTING

The major aspect of writing besides the content is the way you express yourself. Apart from being fluent and grammatically correct, you should demonstrate how you can play with language to create effects.

For instance we all know that saying “and then” about ten times in a paragraph is not effective, not to mention some other problems.

EXAMPLE

We climbed to the top of the hill and then we were amazed by the nice views we could see. We walked around a bit and then we sat down and then we got out the refreshments and then we ate and drank them. And then we decided to walk down again.

If I deliberately chose **better links, rearranged the sentence structures** and used more **original vocabulary**, a bit of **dialogue** and **detail** as well as some **visual imagery**, I could improve the impact of my description.

EXAMPLE IMPROVED

The hard slog to the top of the hill left us panting and exhausted. “Never again,” I thought to myself.” Even thinking the words made me feel breathless. Then I turned and gazed out to sea. Now my breath truly left me as I saw the vast, glittering ocean spread out before me. The sheer power and size of the natural elements, the fusion of sunlight, sky and water burned a vision into my brain that I will never forget. Volcanic islands – smudges of green, and brown hardened rock, reared out of the water at intervals. As we walked along the ridge, we kept our eyes fixed on the panorama laid out before us. Millions of years of nature at work had created this. Now here we were, puny little beings, with our tea flask and ‘sammies’, come to gawk at something so big and so ancient we could barely begin to appreciate it, or appreciate how tiny our moment of existence on this earth really is. On our journey back down the track, we moved in silence.

Can you identify any techniques used in the paragraph above?

What has been added to the original description apart from extra detail and these language techniques?

What has the writer avoided doing?

TASK 3 - INTRODUCTION

Choose a topic to write on and spend some time creating your introductory paragraph, deliberately doing the following:

- Craft **an introduction** that will grab the attention of the reader and indicate where your essay is heading without explaining everything in detail.

Consider the following techniques:

- ❖ Asking a rhetorical question
- ❖ Painting a scenario
- ❖ Quoting
- ❖ Making a statement
- ❖ Using a minor sentence
- ❖ Listing
- ❖ Using figurative language (metaphor, simile, alliteration, personification)
- ❖ Repetition for effect
- ❖ Parallelism

Look at the Excellence exemplar introduction below and see if you can identify the use of any of the above. Explain where and what effect these have:

What matters to some teenagers today? This stereo, those clothes, that car, where's the party? What about, "Should I go and fight for my country?"? To many teenagers in 1914, going to war was an exciting prospect. It mattered, just like the clothes and car matter in 2007. Would today's young New Zealanders react in the same way if they suddenly faced the prospect of sacrificing their lives for their country? Not likely. We should learn from the sacrifices of the older generations. Anzac day is not a feeble excuse for a public holiday. It is a time for teenagers to acknowledge some important lessons about what really matters.

Annotate the above to see where the techniques are being used. Consider which could work for you

TASK 4

The paragraphs that follow may well use the same sorts of techniques.

- Each paragraph should contain one central point. (As soon as a new point is made or a new substantial aspect of the original develops, it must go into a new paragraph.)
- The rest of the paragraph, explains and expands on the point, developing a full discussion of this aspect.
- Evidence and support should be provided throughout.
- What will lift your writing is if you ensure you include some commentary or evaluation for each section. You need to go beyond mere explanation to discussion and judgement.
- Take your original three points and follow this plan for each.

TASK 5

A conclusion is essential and this is where the ideas are summed up with clarity regarding your final judgments on the points raised. You may return to some of the original words used in the introduction but this should not be a repeat of the introduction. It should be a **convincing comment** on the material and viewpoints covered.

TASK 6

- Re-work your rough draft created thus far to incorporate good techniques for effect.
- Crafted writing is required so attention must be paid to vocabulary choices, avoiding repetition unless for a purpose, varied sentence lengths and styles, deliberate use of simile or alliteration etc
- Check for correct paragraph divisions, clear explanations, support for your statements, is there some commentary?
- Spelling and punctuation must be accurate – use the dictionary to check even those words you think are correct.
- Hand to the teacher for some feedback

TASK 7

- Read the feedback.
- Develop and change paragraphs and comments to your satisfaction.
- Read the marking criteria again and decide whether you have done the most you can to reach the top level. Change what needs changing.
- Proofread **very** carefully.
- Write out a good final draft for marking. Hand in.