

## Edition 2

Dear all

Although this week started with Blue Monday, described by some as the most depressing day of the year, I feel that it has ended more positively. There is a strong sense of new beginnings and optimism evident in the media: millions of people have received their COVID-19 vaccination; there is a new President of the USA; and the BBC has just announced that the R number is decreasing.

The new Vice-President of the USA is Kamala Harris. She is not only the first woman to hold this position, but the first Asian American and African American. No doubt she will be a role model to millions of people around the world.

Well done to all who sent in their role model entry for the weekly challenge. The role models included family, actors, teachers, musicians, cartoon heroes, sports stars and even TikTok celebrities. They were all interesting to read and it didn't feel appropriate to select a winner based on what was written alone so I selected a name at random and the winner of the £5 voucher is **Vincent Mills (8P2)**.

No-one managed to work out my role model, I think it probably was a bit tricky J! It was Katherine Johnson, who is someone I only found out about recently, thanks to the wonderful film *Hidden Figures*. She is however a really inspirational person, as she was one of the first women to play a key role as a mathematician and problem solver in the NASA space programme in the 50s and 60s. As an African-American woman in this period, she had to show determination in order to access education after the age of 13, as this was only available to white teenagers in her area, and also resilience to overcome gender stereotypes and be taken seriously in a world dominated by men.

In reading about students' role models, it has reinforced to me that people have very different viewpoints, and we must remember to work together to make changes to improve things for everyone. Respect for each other is the cornerstone of a successful community. Albert Einstein, the famous scientist is quoted as saying, *"I speak to everyone the same way, whether he is the garbage man or the president of the university."*

One of the highlights of the week for me was listening to Amanda Gorman's poem which was written for the inauguration of Joe Biden. It starts by capturing how many of us may have been feeling at the start of the week:

*When day comes, we ask ourselves,  
where can we find light in this never-ending shade?*

and ends by encouraging us to be optimistic and have the courage to change things for the better.

*When day comes, we step out of the shade,  
afame and unafraid*

*The new dawn blooms as we free it*

*For there is always light,*

*if only we're brave enough to see it*

*If only we're brave enough to be it*

Take care and keep safe

Dr C Cusick  
Head of School

## Message from Mrs Wager, Assistant Headteacher – KS4

With live lessons now taking place for all students, we find ourselves in a very new world of learning and there is a safeguarding element we wanted to highlight to you.

Unfortunately, we have been informed of a new 'TikTok' trend where some users (often adults) are contacting students asking them for log in details for live lessons so that they can enter the lesson and then record and share reactions.

Please can you have a conversation at home regarding this and make clear just how serious a breach of safeguarding this is. A good analogy is that it is essentially the same as inviting a total stranger into your house or the school building. Should this occur we would make the police aware but also have to block the user accounts of those responsible whilst we investigate.

I am hopeful all students are sensible enough to know not to do this, but we are also aware there is sometimes a temptation. With your support we are sure this concern can be avoided.



# House Competition

*WIN A £5 AMAZON VOUCHER!*

*ENTER THIS WEEK'S HOUSE COMPETITION*

Create a DVD cover for a movie called '2020'.

Entries can be hand drawn or created on a computer.

You can make your movie any genre you like: a rom com, a thriller, a drama. It can focus on positive or negative moments in 2020 – whatever you think would be the best movie!

The winning House will be the House with the most entries and the student who creates the best DVD cover will win a £5 Amazon voucher!

Good luck! We can't wait to see your ideas 😊

## Message from Miss Gee, Director of English & Media

Calling Year 11... each Wednesday at 3.30pm, we will be running a revision session for English Language. There will be a link to the live meeting sent to you via email on Tuesday. All you need to do is click on the link, and then you will be taken to the presentation. It isn't like a class meeting, because you won't have your photo on there, and you can't talk, but you can ask questions via the chat. The sessions will be led by Mrs Kirk, a teacher who has just joined us and who is also an examiner for AQA, so can speak from her experiences.

# Meet the Teacher

This week we are meeting our Deputy Headteacher, Mr Taylor

## **Favourite subject to teach?**

Physical Education

Mathematics

## **Why did you become a teacher?**

When I was young (a long time ago) I just loved playing sport and being active. I couldn't see myself working in an office. I enjoyed coaching and got a lot of satisfaction out of passing my knowledge on and helping people develop and learn. This has grown from just being about sport to everyday life and I really enjoy being a teacher and seeing the next generation thrive and flourish.

## **What is your favourite football team?**

I actually have two teams (a difficult concept to grasp I know). My premiership team is West Ham United (who are currently above Arsenal and Chelsea...just saying!!) I also follow the tractor boys (Ipswich Town).

## **What are your hobbies?**

When I was a teenager, my hobbies were all sport related. I was passionate about football, tennis and table tennis...in that order. I presently still play tennis competitively and with my daughter.

## **What would you like to learn or be able to do?**

I have a terrible voice and can't play a musical instrument...so it would be good to be able to pick up a guitar and blurt out a song.

I would also like to improve my limited French GCSE skills.

## **What's your favourite food?**

Love a burger...but my go to snack is fruit. If I could only eat one type of fruit for the rest of my life it would have to be strawberries...but maybe raspberries.

## **What's your favourite sweets/chocolate bar?**

It has to be Cadbury's fruit and nut and those gummy strawberries!

## **What's your favourite movie or TV programme?**

This is a difficult one as through all the lockdowns I have been revisiting movies and watching a number of Netflix series. I'm going to say I really enjoyed Money Heist on Netflix.

## **Favourite book?**

Probably enjoyed completing the Twilight trilogy the most as it was the first time that I had managed to read a set of books before my wife!

**What would you be doing if you were not a teacher?**

I am a PE teacher so obviously I would have loved to have been a professional sportsman...first choice would have been footballer with a tennis player being a close second.

If I wasn't a teacher, I would probably have been a coach - once again either football or tennis.

**What have you been doing to survive the lockdown?**

Like I said in my assembly last week, I have tried to challenge myself and keep physically and mentally active. I've learnt how to play table tennis left-handed, a bit of yoga with Ellie Goulding (Nike app not in person) so I can now touch my toes!

This lockdown I have really got into walking...I have recently moved near the coast so walks along the beach have been great for my fitness and walking in nature always seems to give me a lift. I have revisited taking my camera out instead of going for my phone.

I am still trying to keep fit, getting into cooking with my daughter and playing ping pong with my son.



### What is your favourite motto or affirmation?

I have a number of motivational sayings I like to try and live by. Some of my favourites are:

*It's nice to be important but it's important to be nice*

*Your attitude influences your altitude*

*You win or you learn*

I often talk about 'controlling the controllables' which I think is really important in this period we are going through. In everything we do there are many things out of our control so I like to think about focussing on what we can control.

I think about **EAR**

**E = Effort – you can control your effort. Effort is a choice.**

**A = Attitude – Having a positive attitude – are things problems or possibilities?**

**R = Respond/react – how you choose to respond to what happens to you.**

I think having a growth mindset is important and is something I have spent many years looking into and trying to develop within students.

'Train ugly' is a website (<https://trainugly.com/portfolio/growth-mindset/>) but I think this sums up things nicely. If you want to improve at anything you have got to be able to train ugly – you can't always look good...you have to go through difficult bits where you struggle to ensure you push yourself and get better! (lecture over!!).

### **Carpool karaoke – who are you enjoying listening to on your way to work at the moment?**

I normally listen to talkSPORT on my way to work as this keeps me updated with the news and what's happening in the world of sport. However recently I have just had a bit of Ed Sheeran

### **Last question. What would you put in room 101?**



Well, I really hate needles – I faint when I have injections...but they are vital so they can stay. I'm going obscure...tinned tuna!!!

### **Finally, can I just add...**

Most students ask me for a joke...If I am honest, I am running out, but:

**What is BNAG?**  
**Bang out of order!!!**



## Information from Colchester Institute

For students who are considering an apprenticeship we have our eagerly awaited **Apprenticeship Virtual Evening on Tuesday 2 February, starting at 5pm and 6pm** where you can speak directly with tutors and assessors about our wide range of apprenticeships. By speaking to our highly experienced professionals, you can be guaranteed of receiving information, which is practical, current, and highly beneficial.

Where possible, we will also ensure that you have the opportunity to speak with an apprentice directly where you can gain first-hand knowledge of what life's really like as an apprentice. Opportunities such as these are so valuable in giving a greater insight into this pathway from the very people that have already taken this route.

If you're undecided whether to pursue a full-time course or an apprenticeship, why not book onto both events to help decide? These free events can be accessed by career professionals, students and parents/carers alike and are a great chance to receive answers to any questions you may have. To book a place at our apprenticeship event: <http://www.colchester.ac.uk/events>



Make Happen are teaming up with the educational motivational speaker, Mr Beezy, to help you get your teenager motivated and thinking about their next steps. In this webinar, Mr Beezy will talk through how you can be part of your teenager's education and demonstrate types of practical support you can offer. The Make Happen team will also provide you with information on options after Year 13/college.

This free event is a great opportunity to explore new ways of supporting your child and discovering future possibilities in their educational journey.

Date: Tuesday 2 February 2021 Time: 6pm -7pm

Where: Zoom online session.

Sign up link: <https://www.makehappen.org/event/2-february-2021-motivate-your-teenager/>



[RateMyApprenticeship](#) is hosting a virtual event on 3 and 4 February 2021, 1pm - 5pm.

#### **What will the event entail?**

There will be live presentations from employers, as well as the opportunity to chat to them in a virtual meeting booth. Employers confirmed so far include:

- Aldi
- BDO
- CMS
- Dyson
- FCA
- Goldman Sachs
- Lloyds Banking Group
- Marsh & McLennan
- Pearson
- PwC
- Standard Life Aberdeen
- University of Law
- Vodafone Group

Further information can be found here [Meet Apprentice Employers at RateMyApprenticeship's Virtual Event](#)





# GCSE Media Studies

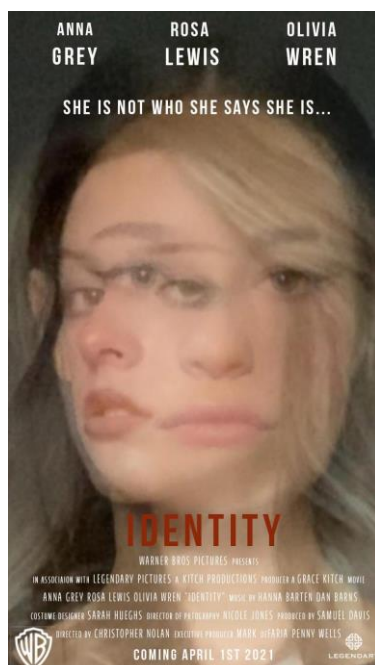
GCSE Media students have been doing their coursework remotely – creating thriller film posters. They are unable to access school software such as photoshop, so have been using any programs available at home. We have been really impressed by their resilience and have seen some fantastic work which shows real effort and dedication. Here are some examples:



*Charlie Nicholl*



*Tom Sawyer*



*Grace Kitchenside*

# Year 10 Music

Music students in Year 10 have been completing work on Indian classical music and Bhangra

Here are some excellent pieces of work from Joshua Hooks

## History and Background

- Originated in the Punjab region of India.
- "Bhangra" referred to a type of Punjabi dancing.
- People would take part in dancing every year around harvest time to celebrate it.
- It was originally created by Indian farmers who would sing to entertain themselves as they worked on the land.
- "Bhangra" now refers to both a dance and a type of music.
- Though traditional bhangra started hundreds of years ago, contemporary is a fusion of different influences from different times.
- Contemporary bhangra developed in the UK in the 1970s and 1980s.
- British-Asian musicians fused Bhangra rhythms with popular British styles – creating a pop feel to the traditional music.
- Bhangra is often heard at celebrations (e.g. weddings and parties).
- Artists include Punjabi MC and Alaap.

## Key Musical Features

- 4/4 time signature
- Fast tempo (140 – 195 Beats Per Minute)
- Verse – Chorus structure used
- Melody and accompaniment texture
- Diatonic harmony
- Primary chords used
- Music technology used
- Repeated riffs heard (often on the

## Instruments

- Some traditional instruments are heard (e.g. sitar, table, tanpura).
- Lots of technology and pop instruments are also used (e.g. drum machine, synthesizers, keyboards, bass guitar, bass drums).
- Dhol drums are a very important instrument in the music (double-headed drum with different tensions and thicknesses so that one sounds deeper than the other).



- Tumbi (a plucked instrument with only one string).



- Dholak (a smaller version of the Dhol that is only played with hands, it plays more complex rhythms along with the Dhol).



## Music Technology

- Play a large role in creation of modern Bhangra.
- Samples often used (e.g. bass line, vocals, riffs).
- Drum machines/ electronic drumbeats are very popular.
- Dhol will often perform alongside the drumbeats.

## Vocal Melody

- Lead singer and backing vocals – interplay between the two
- Sung in Punjabi language
- Usually only male singers
- Shouts of "Hoi" often heard in background
- Singers bending notes
- Microtonal intervals
- Intervals of a minor third
- Melodies use a limited/narrow range of notes – lots of repeated notes
- Ornamentation and grace notes can be heard

## Chaal rhythm

- The most important rhythm in Bhangra.
- Played on the Dhol.
- Each crochet beat is divided into three – like a triplet.
- Swing rhythm.
- "dha" = both ends of drum played – which accents the notes; "na" = higher-pitched end is played.



Rhythms of the World: Bhangra

#### Background and Artists:

- Started around 1700BC and was played in palaces and temples.
- All of the music was learned by ear – **oral tradition**.
- Students would belong to a group of musicians learning from a particular master – **master-student tradition**.
- Artists include **Ravi Shankar**, **Anoushka Shankar**, and **Alla Rakha**.

#### Structure:

|                                      |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| Alap (opening)                       | Slow, improvised introduction<br>Free time (no fixed tempo)<br>Only melody instrument and drone<br>Usually gets faster |
| Gat (tabla enters)                   | Tabla enters playing the tala<br>Clear Pulse<br>Fixed phrases played<br>Improvisation                                  |
| Jhala (fast, exciting final section) | Music builds in intensity<br>Virtuosic, complex playing of the raga and tala are heard                                 |

#### Instruments:

- Sitar
- Tabla
- Tanpura
- Sarod
- Sarangi
- Dhol
- Bansuri



### Rhythms of the World: Indian Classical Music

#### Melody (Raga/ Raag/ Rag):

- Uses a specific set of notes (like a scale):



- Each **raga** is associated with a **different time of day, season, mood, or special occasion**.
- **Raga** is played by the **sitar**.
- **Improvisation** is **very common** and uses **features** such as:
  - Pitch Bends
  - Runs (Fast Scales)
  - Glissandos
  - Ornamentation

#### Drone:

A **repeated note (or set of notes)** or **long-held note** that forms the **harmony** – usually played on the **tanpura**.

#### Texture-3 layers:

- **Raga** (Left)
- **Tala** (Right)
- **Drone** (Above)

#### Rhythm (Tala):

- **Tala** – A **repeating rhythmic pattern** played by the **tabla** drum.
- Each **tala** has a certain number of **beats per cycle** (some have 4 as we are used to, but they can have up to 100!)
- There are **over 300 different talas** and they have names.
- The **first beat** marks the **beginnings and ends** of **improvisations**, so it is **often accented**.
- A piece of music will usually be based on **one tala**.
- The **tabla** played can also **improvise more complex rhythms over the top** of the main tala.

# Wellbeing

We will send some isolation wellbeing and mindfulness ideas to you each week. Please do send us details of anything that you find helpful via [enquiries@notleyhigh.com](mailto:enquiries@notleyhigh.com)

| Isolation Wellbeing & Mindfulness                              |   |  |  |  |
|--|---|--|--|--|
| Monday   | Tuesday   | Wednesday  | Thursday                                       | Friday   |
| Draw a view.<br>Look outside any window and draw what you see. | Do something kind for somebody.<br>Make them something, help with a task/chore. | List making.<br>Write a list of things that make you happy, grateful for or good at. | Write a song/rap about your favourite subject. | Get building.<br>Build a Lego model, playing card tower or something else. |

## eventbrite

Talking to young people about their sexual health can be a challenging experience. To help this conversation at home, sexual health organisation Brook are offering free online training workshops on Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) for parents/carers. All sessions are delivered live online and are free of charge. In the training, Brook will draw on over 55 years of expertise of talking to young people about their sexual health and provide a comprehensive overview of the information that you need to know.

The session, led by Brook Education and Wellbeing Specialists, will explore:

- **How the new legislation will impact on your young person**
- **What it means for secondary school students**
- **What is taught and why**
- **How you can continue those conversations at home**

To find out more and book your place please visit the website below:

[RSE at Home with Parents - Secondary \(ESSEX ONLY\) Tickets, Thu 25 Feb 2021 at 12:00 | Eventbrite](#)





Are you concerned about child's safety on the internet and would like advice and support on how to keep them safe?

**The Essex Child and Family Wellbeing Service presents  
Virtual eSafety Parent Workshops with**



**eSafetyTraining**  
'The 2 Johns'

**Thursday 28th January 2021 3:30pm-5:00pm**

**or**

**Thursday 4th February 2021 starting at 8.00pm-9:30pm**

*These free parent's workshops will look at the online world and how our young people are using it. How they are navigating around restrictions and using the internet without the parent's knowledge.*

This includes :

- Favourite apps and games.
- Dangers they face
- How young people are being influenced online
- Solutions that parents can adopt to help keep their children safe.
- Stranger Danger message that parents are familiar with and make it ready for 2021



To book your place now please call us on **0300 247 0014**  
Monday – Friday 9am-5pm

Services commissioned by:

[www.essexfamilywellbeing.co.uk](http://www.essexfamilywellbeing.co.uk)



Working / Achieving  
**Together**

# Message from...

## Miss Murdoch,

### Raising Standards Leader – Year 7

Well done for making it to the end of week three! Thank you to all those who sent me video clips or performed live (via Teams!) their counting to 10 in another language. We had a huge number of people joining in. We had lots of Spanish and French, then Polish, Italian and even Persian! A particular well done to 7F2 who had 7 students perform theirs in tutor time. I didn't hear Mrs Dixey or Mrs Bird perform anything though?

My weekend challenge for you this week is to either bake or cook something for your family. I don't mind if it's baking a sweet treat or helping with a meal, you decide. There is one condition though (or I may not be your parent's/carer's favourite person!) you **MUST** also clear up afterwards! I'm joining in on this one with an attempt at an 8-year olds birthday cake! Please send me photos and be as creative as you like!

I know online learning is tough, but we have managed to support lots of you this week and hopefully come up with some solutions to help you out. If you are struggling with anything at all, please do let me or your tutors know. We are here to help!

Have a lovely weekend.

# Message from...

## Mrs Swan,

### Raising Standards Leader – Year 8

With week 3 of online lessons complete, I am starting to get into a routine now and I hope you are too. This weekend, it would be a great idea to make yourself a timetable with the new times of the day and your lessons on. You can colour code it (who doesn't love colouring?!) and stick it up somewhere so you always know what lessons you have and at what time. I would love to see some pictures of colourful timetables please!

I am really pleased to see more of you developing the confidence to speak up in lessons by typing into the chat or unmuting when the teacher says it's ok to do so. I am certainly missing seeing you at school and I know your teachers are too, so we really appreciate it when you talk to us in lessons and tutor time.

The winner of the attendance award for last week is **Olivia Hill**. A huge well done to the 104 students who achieved 100% attendance in their lessons last week.

Have a great lockdown weekend – I don't think we are in for any snow (or should I say slush!) this time but I hope you manage to get out for some exercise and fresh air. This weekend I think I am going to have a go at making some chocolate brownies.



Here is a recipe for chocolate brownies

[https://www.bbc.co.uk/food/recipes/richchocolatebrownie\\_1933](https://www.bbc.co.uk/food/recipes/richchocolatebrownie_1933)



# Message from...

## Mr Harrington,

### Raising Standards Leader – Year 9

I would like to thank the parents/carers and students for attending the Year 9 virtual parents'/carers' consultation evening, and thank the staff involved. There was an extremely high turnout, which is fantastic. Despite there being a technical problem midway through, I hope that it was informative, and the feedback received was valuable to all of you.

The feedback from teachers about Year 9 has been very positive, and I would encourage you to try to continue to actively participate in your online lessons and keep up the good work. I know that many of you are working very hard.

The number of students with 100% attendance last week increased from the week before; there were 108 students. Well done to all of you!

This week's winner of the 100% attendance reward is **Lucy Chilver**. Congratulations Lucy! Enjoy the weekend, try and get some fresh air and try not to have too much screen time!



# Message from...

## Mrs Greatrex,

### Raising Standards Leader – Year 10

Hello again

Another week still in lockdown. But on the positive side, I now know 2 people who have got the first dose of the vaccine, so I feel like slowly, I can see the beginning of the end.

This week, the Year 10 tutor team are suggesting top comfort foods to bake in lockdown:

- Chelsea buns
- Grilled ham and cheese sandwiches
- Cookies
- Cakes
- Stir fries
- Banana bread
- Thai curry
- Spaghetti Bolognese
- Roast dinners and casseroles
- Macaroni cheese

Look a recipe up online (I always go for Jamie Oliver's) and get baking!

Well done to all the students who attended 100% of your lessons last week. **Evie Dawes** is the winner of the Amazon voucher – hooray!



# Message from...

## Mrs Wallace,

### Raising Standards Leader – Year 11

It has been another busy week with you all working hard in remote lessons and I am really pleased to see more of you making it to lessons every day. Last Friday, the list of students entered into the draw for 100% attendance was much longer, so well done, Year 11, I am so proud of your efforts!

The winner of the £5 Amazon Voucher for this week is **Daniel Toombs**. Well done Daniel and keep up the good work!

A few of you have said you are finding motivation difficult, and it is certainly much harder at home without your class and teacher keeping you on your toes. I have been having a look out for tips for motivation and one of the useful things I have read this week is that motivation starts when you make a start. In other words, getting started is the hardest thing!

The advice for this was to have a ritual you use to get going – something that is easy and achievable e.g., to get running, it might be to put on your gym clothes and trainers, fill up your water bottle and step outside on a familiar route. The idea is you take the thinking out of getting started as this takes up lots of brain power and can stop you actually doing the thing. So, for lessons, try planning a morning routine – e.g., choose your clothes and your breakfast the night before so you can get up, washed, dressed and sit at your workspace to join your lesson without thinking too hard – and then you are there! I'll keep looking for useful tips – let me know if they have helped!

Have a wonderful weekend, do something you enjoy and stay safe. I am hoping I might finish the skirt I have been making (it even has pockets!).

# Message from...

## Eddie Harrison, Head Boy

Hello everyone!

Happy New Year. Welcome to Notley@Home – I hope everybody is doing ok in online lessons. Attendance has been improving, which is always good to hear.

I know it is hard to stay motivated in these difficult times, so it is important to find something relaxing to do in your spare time. With all the time we spend in front of screens at the moment, I recommend you get away from them and exercise, or read a book. Try to stay in contact with any friends or people you may know who are alone during lockdown. It is critical that we all support each other at this time.

## Attendance

If your child is unwell and unable to log in for their online lessons, please do continue to notify us via the attendance function on EduLink One. This will enable us to inform staff and then they will not expect students to log in that day for their online lessons.

A link to a user guide can be found via:

<https://www.notleyhigh.com/files/EdulinkParentGuide.pdf>



# Word of the Week

**Definition:** (noun) a person who pleads for a person, cause, or idea or a lawyer who pleads cases in court.

(Verb) to speak, plead, or argue in favor of or push for something.

**Marcus Rashford uses his platform to advocate for the improvement of the quality of free school meals in lock down- what a guy! 😊**

**Sentences by subject:**

**In History:** Martin Luther King was an advocate for equal rights for all people. During the civil rights movement, he advocated nonviolent protest methods and organised countless marches and boycotts.

**In PER:** Buddhists advocate that suffering is a part of life, but it can be tempered by following the eightfold path.

## Advocate

**Synonyms:**

Champion  
Support  
Back  
Uphold

**Antonyms:**

Reject  
Critique

**Word Family?**

Advocate: Advocates    Advocated

**Similar words?**

From Latin word: *advocare*, to “add” a “voice.”

‘ad-’ to/ towards

‘vocat’ call/called upon

**Ask your family:** How many words can you think of that start in ‘ad-’?

What cause could you advocate?

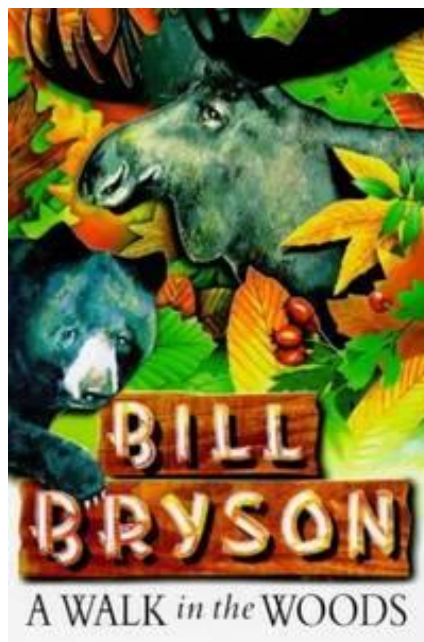
# Examples of Recent English Studies

## Year 8 English

Here is an example of a very good SQuAD paragraph, written by a student in Year 8

In the book 'A Walk in the Woods' the writer shows that they are not in control of nature and that they are scared, which is implied when the writer tells us they are "dashing around frantically like ants". The noun "ants" could show that they were energetic and that they were panicking. It could also be the writer's intention to show that they were small and insignificant compared to the bear. The verb "dashing" and adverb "frantically" both show panic and that their actions are done with fear. The simile "like ants when you disturb their nest" shows that they are filled with fright and are unsure of what to do. The verb "disturb" shows that they don't want the bear there, and that they want to get rid of it.

In the book it also says that "A skunk had plodded through our camp and it had sounded like a Stegosaurus" which again implies how small they are and that they know it. In the simile "sounded like a Stegosaurus" the fact they think a skunk is like a dinosaur shows that they are fearful and know that they have no power in the woods. The noun "skunk" implies filth, so maybe the writer uses this word to show that it was unpleasant and wasn't a nice time. The verb "plodding" shows that the skunk was calm and relaxed and wasn't very scared of the humans. This is ironic because it is the complete opposite of how they are feeling. The writer included this to show that it is the skunk's home and that it isn't the mans.



## Year 13 English Language

Here is a great example of writing from a Year 13 English Language student.

In the exam, students are given 6 bullet points to help structure a story, then given 1 hour to write a piece and a commentary to explain their choices.

This was therefore completed in 45 minutes in timed conditions, with prompts that students did not know before the start time.

### Storyline 1

*“Responsibility is the price of freedom”- Elbert Hubbard*

It was only as he fell to his death that he finally felt alive. A rush of inertia washed over him as he descended, the glare of the sun filling his wide eyes with a blinding light. For the first time, he was truly, unequivocally free. Free from the persecution of the king, the inane notion of gravity, the unrelenting force of melancholy that’d pinned him down in that little room. Turning back, he caught a glimpse of that lanky tower he called ‘home’.

“Impossible to break out of” he whispered to himself, as he chuckled lightly. “You did it Dad”.

The wind whistled through the open windows, the kind of wind that chills down to the bone. The boy sat docile, knees pressed against his chest, watching on as he shivered.

“Daddy” he called out inquisitively, “When can I see mummy?”

His father didn’t reply, and continued to fiddle at his bench, tongue in cheek. The boy repeated his query, slightly louder and a touch more desperate this time.

“We’ve been through this son” the man snapped irritably, “mummy can’t see us right now”.

“But why?” the boy groaned, tilting his head and seeking a glance at what his father was working on.

The man sighed. “because...”, he began with vague interest, “the king needs us to stay here where we are safe” he said bitterly. He was lying, of course, the king had locked him away after the death of his wife, as he feared the invention that almost saved her may have undermined his power as a man chosen by God. He turned back to his craft, hoping to finish without interruption. Despondently, the boy buried his head in his chest and rocked, nursing a tear in his eye.

As the days turned to weeks and the weeks turned to months, little changed in that tower. The more the man worked, the more drained he was, and the more he tried to be hopeful, the less hopeful he became. Eventually the pair found themselves in a perpetual cycle of melancholy, slowly coming to terms with the thought of eternal incarceration. Then, one day, it all changed.



An idea, so brilliantly senseless that it made complete sense, so audacious that none would dare to attempt it, infested the inventor's mind, feasting on his every thought, plaguing everything he did. It was so complex, yet so simple. His son had been watching the sun set on a golden Greek horizon one evening, as they often enjoyed doing together, when he nonchalantly said one sentence that would come to define the rest of their lives:

"Why can't we fly, Daddy?" "just like those birds. I wish I could jump off the roof and go wherever the wind took me". From that moment, the man worked tirelessly day and night to make that idea reality. And, eventually, after many, frustrating and painstakingly long years, he did it.

Now, as the duo soared among the clouds, chasing the horizon in the limitless sky, something dawned on him. Some intangible yet undeniable sense of failure in his success, deep within him. He'd won, but at what cost? They may have been liberated from the tower, but they were imprisoned by human potential. Where would they fly to? How would they know where to go?

It was at this moment that the smile ran away from his face. The unending girth of sky suddenly seemed impossibly claustrophobic. Frantically, his eyes darted about in search of his son. But it was too late. The sun's warm, inviting rays had lured him into its clutches and spat him out, sending the charred figure into a tailspin.

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