Glossary of Terms for National 5 and Higher English

Unsure of some of the terms used in your child’s Senior Phase report? Want to understand them as fully as possible in order to support your child as best you can? Then look no further! Here is a table filled with commonly used terms with accompanying explanations.

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| Term | Explanation |
| Reading for Understanding, Analysis & Evaluation (RUAE) | An element of the final exam (worth 30 marks) where pupils are presented with an article to read then answer a range of questions on. The purpose is for pupils to show their understanding of the writer’s points and how the language can be used to achieve a particular effect. |
| Critical Essay | An element of the final exam (worth 20 marks) in which a pupil must write an extended essay about a text they have studied in class. They independently select which text to write on and the question from a small selection. |
| Textual Analysis | An element of the final exam in which a pupils answers a small number of questions on part of a text they have studied in class (or one poem if studying poetry), then write a mini essay exploring the whole text (or more than one other poem if studying poetry). |
| Folio of Writing | This is a two-piece folio of writing submitted to the SQA prior to the final exam (worth 30 marks). It is worked on by pupils in class and at home and must be their own work, word processed and emailed to the teacher. One piece is discursive / persuasive and the other piece is creative / personal reflective. |
| Discursive Essay | A piece of writing which explores a topic in a balanced way. It is an objective piece which explores both sides of the argument. It should be a well-researched essay containing facts, statistics, opinions and quotations to lend authority. It should contain a bibliography. |
| Persuasive Essay | A piece of writing in which the writer must convince the reader to agree with their point of view on a topic. It is a subjective piece of writing which is passionate and convincing on one side of the argument. It should be a well-researched essay containing, for example: facts, statistics, opinions and quotations to lend authority. It should contain a bibliography. |
| Bibliography | This is a list of sources consulted when acquiring supporting detail for a persuasive or discursive essay and includes, for example: websites, newspaper articles, encyclopaedias, podcasts, online content, radio interviews, etc. |
| Creative Essay | This is an imaginative piece of writing which can explore different writing styles and is largely created in the mind of the writer. Here will be creation and development of a storyline, character(s) and setting. The writer will use an array of language tricks and techniques to enhance the reader’s experience. |
| Personal Reflective Essay | A piece of writing in which the writer explores a personal experience of some kind. This could be a memory, a relationship or even an element of themselves and their personality. The writer share their thoughts, feelings and emotions with the reader, and will use an array of language tricks and techniques to enhance the reader’s experience. |
| Text | This is the type of written piece that your child has read and been taught in class. It can be a poem, novel, short story, non-fiction essay or film / TV drama. |
| Introduction | The first paragraph in any piece of writing. |
| Conclusion | The final paragraph in any piece of writing. |
| Topic sentence | This is the first sentence of a paragraph and should contain a link to the task and outline what the rest of the paragraph is about. |
| Language techniques | These are a range of tricks used by a writer to achieve a particular effect, for example: similes, metaphors, repetition, |
| Signposts / openers / linking phrases | These are words / phrases at the beginning of sentences to give a piece of writing direction and flow. For example: Firstly, Secondly, Furthermore, In addition, However, On the other hand, In spite of this, Consequently, As a result, Nevertheless, etc. |
| Google Classroom | A virtual classroom environment which all pupils have access to. Resources, support materials, homework / task reminders can all be shared in this space. Pupils can communicate with their teacher and peers here and ask questions, too. |