

Wide Reading ~ A Guide

NCEA – Level 2

This year you must form written responses to six selected texts. This task can be quite daunting as it is about YOUR response to text you have read, viewed or listened to. No one can tell you how you respond so knowing where to start can be hard. This brief guide is designed to help you with a bit of clarification on the task and how to get started.

Reading, Viewing and Listening

To write a response to a text you need to have read, watched or listened to something that has a level of complexity appropriate for Level 2 NCEA. This year you are also to respond to texts that in some way deal with New Zealand Identity. Make sure you check your chosen texts with me before you begin a response. There are quite a few ways you could go with this:

- Texts written by a New Zealand author that are set in New Zealand giving the text a link to life in New Zealand or another aspect of New Zealand society, culture or identity.
- Non-fiction texts about New Zealanders. These could be about a Kiwi icon or notable New Zealander.
- Texts of New Zealand stories or settings that have a local flavour to them in terms of the language used or the style of the story/film etc.
- Songs or poems that feature New Zealand culture, society or commentary on a New Zealand situation or story.

Planning

Planning should be an important part of your preparation for writing your response. Before starting your response have a think about some of the following and write some brief notes for each.

- **Brief plot overview** – What are the main points of the plot. How would you summarise what happens for another person if telling them about it.
- **Character/s you found interesting** – Was there a character you found interesting or that you felt a connection to. Why? What about this character fit into an idea of NZ Identity?
- **Messages you took from the text** – What was a message you took from the text? How is this message developed and how did it make you feel? Can you relate this message to your experiences or another message familiar to NZ life and/or identity?
- **Challenges that the characters had to deal with**– Was there a challenge faced by the characters in the text? Was this challenge unique to or influenced by the New Zealand setting or situation? How did they deal with it and what is your response to this? Did their response reflect a ‘Kiwi’ way of doing things or something typical to NZ Identity? What would your response have been?
- **The title of the text** – There can be quite a lot in a title. How does the title fit with the content of the text? Was it appropriate for the text? Did it have a ‘Kiwi’ spin on it?
- **Who would you recommend the text to** – Would you recommend this text? Why? What did you learn from it? Did it give you insight into New Zealand and it’s unique identity?
- **Text appeal** – Did you like or dislike the text? Why?
- **Writer/Director** – Did the writer/director use devices that helped you respond to the text?

The Report

Your report is to be in the form of an essay. There are no set rules for the structure of your response, however you may want to use the template provided on the Blog (copy attached to the end of this file)

Introduction

- State the text title, author and text type.
- Outline the main point of your response. What is the central point that you will make in the rest of your response?
- Give a brief outline of the plot

Main Body Paragraphs

- Each of these paragraphs should develop one of your points and your response to it. Use the planning questions and the template to guide you. Think about your personal thoughts and feelings about the text (text and self).
- You should also consider how your points about the text relate to society, people's values, beliefs etc (text and world).

You should attempt to include at least one quotation per paragraph in this part of your response. Overall, you should include a minimum of two in the whole report.

Conclusion

- This should be a brief summary of your overall report. If you struggle with this consider the following questions
 - What are the main points that you want the reader to take away from your report? Why are they important?

Exemplar Material

The PDF attached to this post is an example of the type of report you should look to create when responding to your selected texts. The exemplars are from a range of themes not relevant to your theme so please use them for their structure and to see the depth to which the writer engages with the text on a personal level. Some things to look for:

- Moments in the report where the writer connects their ideas to the social context of the text. This means they are reflecting on the relationship between society, the world and the text.
- Moments in the report where the writer reflects on their own personal reaction to the text and how it presented the core idea.
- Moments where quotations are used to develop the point the writer is making about the core idea.