

Critical Essay: Prose Features to Mention

<u>Prose</u>	<u>Poetry</u>	<u>Drama</u>
Characterisation	Word choice	Characterisation
Key incidents	Tone	Key scenes
Climax	Imagery	Structure
Turning point	Structure	Climax
Plot	Content	Theme
Structure	Rhyme	Plot
Narrative technique	Theme	Conflict
Theme	Ideas	Setting
Ideas		Foreshadowing
Description		
Foreshadowing		

Critical Essay: Introduction

Opening sentence

1. Recycle the wording of the question
2. The title of the text you have read.
3. The name of the author/poet/playwright.

Short summary

4. Briefly summarise the text in 2-3 sentences.

Mission statement

5. Give a clear indication of how you will approach the question.

Critical Essay: Paragraphs

- Point: Make a statement about the writer's technique.
Explain its relevance to the question.
- Context Describe where the quotation is from, and what is happening during it.
- Quotation Provide a quotation from the text.
If you can build it in to the sentence, use ' to open.
If the quotation is longer, open it with a colon :
- Explanation Analyse the effect of the quotation.
Tie your analysis to the topic of the essay.

Critical Essay: Conclusion

Summary: Quickly summarise your answer to the question.

Personal Response: The question will be designed to allow you to explain your reaction to the text: do this here.

Critical Essay: MUSTS

You must refer to the question constantly.

Each paragraph should begin with a topic sentence which re-uses the wording of the question.

You must not commentate on what you're doing: 'In this essay I will...'

You must refer to the writer appropriately.

You must refer to the text accurately (poem not play; short story not novel; novel not TV series)

Scottish Text

Remember: 14/20 marks derive straight from the excerpt in front of you.

6/20 marks derive from knowledge of the rest of it/them.

Learn: themes or techniques which are constant or shared.

First questions (2-4 marks)

- will always ask you to analyse the extract provided.
- generally speaking: quotation = 1 mark, explanation 1 = mark.
- some questions don't require quotations: make sure you read the question fully. If in doubt, quote.
- make sure your explanations are as full as possible.

Scottish Text

Final question

- 2 marks - Identifying and clearly stating the commonality/link between the excerpt and the rest of the text/texts.

- 1 mark - Appropriate quotation from excerpt.
- 1 mark - Appropriate comment.

- 1 mark - Appropriate quotation/evidence from elsewhere.
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Close Reading

1. Always read the **WHOLE** question.
2. Unless you are providing evidence - 'which you will enclose in quotation marks' - **USE YOUR OWN WORDS.**
3. Several questions will simply ask you to summarise the writer's points in your own words. Make sure you do not quote the writer. The key ideas must be expressed in your own way.
4. If the question tells you to '**give evidence**', '**give reasons**', '**show how**', '**select an example**', etc. you will receive 1 mark for appropriate evidence - a quotation, and 1 mark for the explanation.
5. If you are asked about the writer's 'use of language' or asked to explain why something is 'effective': word choice, imagery, sentence structure,

Close Reading

5. If you are asked about the writer's 'use of language' or asked to explain why something is 'effective', think about the writer's word choice, imagery, or sentence structure.

6. Sentence structure -

Sentence length (long = a sense of building up, short = emphasis, import)

Listing (a sense of quantity, of building up)

Repetition (emphasis, or a sense of action)

Parenthesis (adding extra information)

Word order (if unusual, is something being emphasised?)

Colons (used to open a list or to open an explanation) :

Semi-colons (used to divide items in a list)

Questions (used to make the reader think OR to make the reader appreciate how obvious the answer is).

Close Reading

7. Tone - tone refers to the emotion with which something is said:

sarcastic, reflective, exasperated, grave, passionate, happy, sad, regretful, mocking, humorous, conversational, skeptical, bitter, dismissive

8. Link questions: you may be asked why a sentence works as a good link.

Looking back: 'The word/expression _____ links back to _____, which was discussed in paragraph _____ .

Looking forward: 'The word/expression _____ introduces the idea of _____ which is going to be discussed in paragraph _____.