Some things to consider in a close reading:

Style: vocabulary, rhythm, content, imagery, pace, rhetorical devices\*; what the preceding reveal about character, theme, and the agenda or concerns of the story. *How* does the writer convey what she conveys? Does this passage develop and/or set up themes, issues or topics in relation to what has come before and what will come afterwards? What are they, and how exactly (with what words) do we see them being developed or changed here? Voice: what attributes of the narrator do you see here and how do they that affect our understanding of the passage? **This is as about ‘how’ more than ‘what’. F f f**

\* “Rhetorical devices” include figurative language of any sort (simile, metaphor, imagery etc.), phrasing, syntax, repetition, rhythm, alliteration & other sound-play, punctuation, etc. Think about why the author has constructed the passage exactly as s/he has; the effect of literary/rhetorical strategies can tell you something of the passage’s function.

**Passages**: write 200-300 words on ONE of the following:

1. From *Howl’s Moving Castle,* ch. 6 “in which Howl expresses his feelings with green slime”, pp. 79-80. From “Howl was equally patient…” through to “… ‘Now take this spell…’”

In the beginning of the passage Jones uses the price of spells as a device for illustrating how Howl’s behaviour often results in unintended outcomes, despite his intentions, exposing his lack of control over his emotions and actions. Michael is always anxious and concerned about Howl so Jones sets him up as a reflective character for Howl. Jones uses Michael as a sort of physical conscience for him to bring his mistakes and flaws out into view, and in turn, allows Michael to be distracted from his criticisms of the spell pricing in the same way he would distract himself from his conscience when “Howl eluded Michaels arguments by giving him a magic lesson”. Jones uses Sophie in this passage as a sort of embodiment of the reader; “Sophie sewed buttons on Michaels shirt and listened to Howl going through as spell with Michael.” Using her as our medium for this conversation between Howl and Michael. Jones Then uses Michael as a reflection of Howl to emphasize his extreme and volatile personality; “ I know I’m slapdash… But there’s no need for you to copy me.” Also to show what Howl might prefer to have as a reproduction of himself, giving Michael specific instructions of how to properly read a spell; “Always read it through carefully…” Implying that Howls approach may not be best. In Howls description of spells she may be referencing literature in it obscurity and depth. Ending the passage Howl tells Michael “You’re getting on to more powerful kinds now.” Accepting his maturity, but ends the passage in the imperative; “Now take this spell…” reinforcing his authority and ending his lesson. This passage gives much insight into Howls motives and emotions, and how Jones uses to Michaels and Howls relationship to embody Howls character.