

# Writing up Essays – Literature

Planning essays is super important, but you can't beat writing up the full essay (in timed conditions if you're really trying to improve). You may think practicing writing up full essays is a waste of time but it helps you with the following:

- **Timings** – knowing how long it takes you to plan + write it
- Knowing how to use the structure **PETATACWL/ PETAETACWL** and link it to the question
- **Clarity in your writing** – how clearly can you communicate your point
- **Confidence** – feeling confident that when you go in the exam you've done this plenty of times before

## Should I time myself every time I write up an essay?

- The first few essays you write up in full, don't time them but just be aware of **roughly how long it takes you**. Try set it up in exam conditions where you have **no phone and no distractions**
- As you get closer to exams, try be strict with timings and **mimic an exam as best as possible**. This will honestly make the world of difference before you go into your exam as your brain will be like **"ohhhh, we've done this before. I know what we're doing"**

## Can I use my notes to help me write up my essays?

- Again, the first few essays you can do this to help you remember the content. But if you're going to use your notes, **try look away at points and remember it as you're writing it up** in your essay as this will count towards your revision
- After the first few essays, do it in **exam conditions with no phone**, notes or distractions and see how you get on. Remember, this is just a practice and if you can't remember everything that is totally fine (it's kind of the point of practicing!)

# Step by Step of Writing Up Essays

## Step 1: Exam conditions

- Set up your surrounding area to mirror an **exam condition** as much as possible. Remove your phone (unless you're using it as a timer, if so, put it on do not disturb), sit in a quiet area, get your pen and paper ready

## Step 2: Choose your exam question

- You can choose a **past paper question** from The Lightup Hub or a **Lightup style practice question**. Pick a questi

## Step 3: Set your timer

- **Set a timer** to the length of time you would be given in the exam to complete this question and begin to start planning

## Step 4: Plan your 3 points

- Check out our other lesson on '**how to plan your essay**', and then you can write your brief plan at the top of your page.
- You can even jot down **any quotes** here that you would like to include in case you're scared you'll forget them

## Step 5: Write PETAETACWL/ PETATACWL on your page

- Either write it down the side or somewhere visible on the page
- Every-time you do a bit of the structure, tick it off so you can make sure you're utilising a high level structure and hitting all the criteria

## Step 6: Write up essay and use words from the question

- Constantly be referencing the **word from the question** whilst using PETAETACWL/ PETATACWL
- If the question is speaking about '**personal responsibility**' make sure that the majority (if not all) sentences have these words in it as they're the words from the question

## Step 7: Conclusion

- **Summarise your three points with a conclusion**
- Make sure it references the word from the question and summarises the points you've made
- To know how to write a conclusion, go to [essay skills > Writing a conclusion](#)

## Step 8: Reflection + Checks

- Note down the time it took you and how well you think you did. See if you begin to see some **correlation between time spent and quality of work** (you can then next time improve on the time ever so slightly whilst maintaining the quality of work)
- **Highlight the word from the question** (e.g. personal responsibility) and see how many times you used it in your whole essay. If it is **below 20**, you know straight away for next time that you need to use it more!
- Before you give it to someone to mark, **see if you can gage what you did well and what you need to improve on**. By doing this, it will allow you to more easily spot your own mistakes for next time