

# Tips for improving your writing

Any piece of writing that we do will depend on three things:

1

## Content

We must think about **what** we are actually going to write.

### *Where do I start?*

You can't write anything if you haven't got anything to say! Obvious, right? But it's easy to start writing and then run out of steam. To avoid this make sure you **choose** the question you are going to answer carefully and **plan** your answer before you start to make sure you've got enough to say about the topic. If you can't think of at least five points to make, choose a different question.

### *How can I make the content good?*

- Follow the bullet points in the question and keep looking back at the question so you don't wander off the subject!
- Use the techniques you've learnt for making writing persuasive, exciting, powerful, emotive...e.g., rhetorical questions, lists of 3, similes and metaphors, alliteration, emotive language, descriptive language, argument markers, varied sentence lengths etc.

2

## Audience

We should always consider **who** we are writing for.

A letter starting 'Alright mate!' would be fine for a friend, but not for your local MP! Similarly, you wouldn't write 'Dear Sir / Madam' to your best friend! You need to use the right tone and language - it may be formal (Standard English, no slang) or informal (chatty, colloquial, friendly).

3

## Purpose

We also need to think about **why** we are writing.

Are you writing to entertain, interest, argue, persuade, frighten, create tension, give information...?

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## Beginnings

**First impressions matter!**

***You should try to make your beginnings interesting and attention grabbing!***

The examiner's first impression of you as a writer will depend on your first paragraph, even your first sentence. Here's how you could make a GREAT first impression:

**You could start your writing with:**

- ❖ A rhetorical question;
- ❖ A dramatic, unexpected remark or statement;
- ❖ An intriguing comment to make the reader wonder what is happening or has happened.

**Which of the above techniques has been used in these 6 beginnings?**

- 1) Is school uniform an old-fashioned convention or does it help to prevent unpleasant competition?
- 2) I believe most teenagers want to wear school uniform.
- 3) As the fear crept over me, I wondered whether I would live or die.
- 4) How would you feel coming face to face with your worst nightmare?
- 5) When a person goes through an experience like mine last year, it changes their view of life completely.
- 6) I will never, ever set foot inside a hot air balloon again!