

Sample Question A ('Style Question')**Leaving Certificate Higher Level 2009****Text 2**

(iii) Identify and comment on **four** features of narrative and/or descriptive writing evident in this text. Support your answer by illustration from the text.

Malouf evocatively captures rural Brisbane, Australia in this text. He skilfully uses the techniques of narrative and descriptive writing throughout. In particular, he creates an evocative setting, memorable characterisation, strong narration and use of vivid imagery brought this short story alive for me and made the passage highly descriptive.

- Addressed keywords from the question
- Uses writer's name
- Indicate points to be discussed

To begin with, Malouf painstakingly creates the setting for his short story. Malouf takes great care to use the senses in order to evoke the sights, smells and sounds of Brisbane, Australia. As a result, he creates an evocative, authentic, credible atmosphere. In addition to this, he makes great use of imagery to bring the page and setting to life. His choice of particular words also helps to capture the life of the surrounding area. As I read the text, I felt as if I could be there, and as if I wanted to be there. His attention to the small details of his surroundings and setting brings Brisbane to life: "the McGowans' truck would be waiting, piled high with tarpaulins, bedrolls, cook-pots, and Braden settled among them with two Labrador retrievers at his feet."

- Use of topic sentence
- Use of S.E.Q.

Malouf also creates memorable, interesting characters. As is to be expected, major characters are featured such as the teenager's father but minor characters are also mentioned such as Matt Riley and his nephew, Jem. Such minor characters add depth to the story. Malouf's characterisation is effective. He does not cling to stereotype. Just when we may assume that he will not allow the boy to go on the hunting trip, he allows him to make up his own mind. Malouf skilfully shows us his characters as opposed to telling us about his characters. He allows me to make my mind up about the characters for myself and I enjoyed that. The text also left some questions unanswered about the characters. The teenager's father is presented as an outsider and I want to know why. By not telling us everything, Malouf's characterisation in my opinion, is even more effective. Malouf also uses credible dialogue for each of his characters in order to add to the realism of the piece: "As the town's only solicitor, he was a respected figure. He was liked. My mother too was an outsider and, despite heavy hints, had not joined

Malouf's choice of narrator is a choice which I particularly enjoyed. As a teenager, I can very much relate both to the first person narrator and to what is happening to the narrator i.e. making a decision. I always find it more interesting and engaging when reading a text if I can relate to the story and Malouf's choice of narrator and plotline helps me to do this: "The break came in the year after I turned sixteen".

Malouf's also makes use of vivid imagery throughout the passage which brings the page to life. Malouf conveys the fact that the rural Brisbane that surrounds the teenager of the story is full of life. He breathes life in to the pages with his use of metaphors and similes: "the big rain-swollen streams that begin in a thousand thread-like runnels and falls in the rainforests, then plunge and gather and flow wide-banked and muddy-watered to the coast".

This short story written by Australian novelist David Malouf is distinctly descriptive and narrative in its style. As a result, it fulfils its sole function to entertain. I long to read on and find out more about these characters.

Leaving Certificate Higher Level 2007**Text 1**

(iii) What features of the writer's style help to make this an interesting piece to read? Support your answer by reference to the text. (20)

Simon Cropper's article '1,000 Films to Change your Life', is an extremely interesting article to read. I believe the features of the author's writing style which make this piece so engrossing are his detailed points, his allusions to popular culture, use of anecdotes and his use of simple language and informal tone.

It is an interesting piece because it is very detailed. Cropper supports all of his statements with examples. This helps to verify his points and also makes his points clearer for the reader. For example, when he mentions political films, he describes how they affect people and he also makes reference to 'Syriana' and 'Erin Brokovitch'.

Another aspect of his writing which is interesting is Cropper's extensive use of allusions to aspects of popular culture. This makes the article more interesting and accessible as the majority of people will have seen at least some of the films that he is discussing. Indeed, even if one has not seen the films Cropper is discussing, Cropper has included a brief background. For instance, he remarks: "Ben Stiller's fashion spoof, 'Zoolander', is a wonderful satire on the vanity and corruption of the fashion industry".

A third aspect and compelling aspect of Cropper's writing style is his extensive use of anecdotes. Such anecdotes make the piece much more personal and realistic, thus making it more interesting to read. He refers to his own personal film experiences, detailing when he saw 'Bicycle Thieves'.

The article is also interesting to read because Cropper uses a very informal tone as he writes. His language is very friendly and personal. It seems almost as if he is talking to a friend discussing film. He also does this by using the collective pronoun "us": "But cinema doesn't just make us think. It makes us laugh too." This makes us feel as if he too is a layperson like us and not an arrogant film critic. I believe that this makes the article more accessible and interesting.

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In conclusion, Simon Cropper's article is a very interesting one. This is due to his particular writing style which consists of varied and detailed descriptions, numerous allusions to popular culture, use of interesting anecdotal evidence and his informal tone.

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