



# Situational Writing Crash Course

FOR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

INTRODUCTION & OVERVIEW

# OBJECTIVES

1. An overview of the paper
2. Rubrics and requirements
3. Essential skills and formats
4. Tips for exam preparation



# PENHILL NEWS

Date : Monday 25<sup>th</sup> January 2016      Written by: Miss R Smith

## Dangerous dragon on the rampage in local school!



Vesterday, Seven Fields Primary School, was attacked by a terrifying dragon in the middle of the night, while the caretaker slept soundly.

The vicious dragon left a trail of destruction in its wake. The school field bears the scorch marks of its powerful flames and the walls of the classrooms are smothered in cloy marks. Not only that, the classrooms were ransacked and furniture smashed to smithereens.

Chris, the school caretaker, was only roused to the situation when the school alarm sounded to which he rushed to the school immediately, only to be faced with the beast! Chris told Penhill News that he was feeling petrified about the near death experience. 'I never expected to be confronted with that, I was half expecting it to be some pesky lisd from the estate. I haven't slept a wink since the incident!' he said.

The kitchen fridges were emptied and a fire ripped through the school hall. Mrs McCormick, the school's head teacher, is saddened by the attack and the interruption to the children's learning. She told us earlier today 'The majority of our children rely on our delicious, hot school meals and now we have nothing to feed them. The children are missing valuable school time but we endeavour to open ASAP.'

Luckily, the caretaker's dog, named Rocky, barked and scared off the dragon which flew away hastily before the police arrived at the scene. CCTV from the school cameras clearly show the dragon, which is believed to be a Welsh Green, wrecking the outstanding primary school.

The school remains closed while the incident is investigated by the police and the repairs are carried out. Meanwhile, there have been no reported sightings of the dragon but a dragon slayer has been employed to exterminate it before any more havoc is caused.

WEEKEND BREAK  
**Asturias**

## A weekend of peak perfection



Northern Spain offers a very different landscape and you can fly direct from Malaga to Bilbao and travel by car along the coastal route through Cantabria to Asturias

**ANDREW FORBES**

a short break destination.

The coastal route that runs through Cantabria into Asturias affords regular glimpses not only of pristine beaches, but also the dramatic Picos de Europa, Spain's first National Park. Drive towards the end of the day and the evening light softens this rugged coastline and silhouettes the mountain peaks dominating the landscape: it is truly memorable.

On arrival head out into Oviedo's labyrinthine old town to relish some splendid northern Spanish tapas, cheeses and of course the local cider. Start in Calle Gascona where you'll find a myriad of bars serving the local beverage.

Like Malaga, the city is a candidate for European City of Culture 2016. It boasts a rich cultural heritage that has inspired artists and writers across the centuries. We most now come here to enjoy the great outdoors and recharge their spirits with its delicious regional cuisine.

MAJESTIC OVIEDO UNIVERSITY

**HOW TO GET THERE**

► **By Air:** Fly with Vueling Airlines direct from Malaga. Tel. 933 78 78 78. [www.vueling.com](http://www.vueling.com)

► **By road:** Take ESSA7 in direction of Mont/Antequera, take A45 towards A92 Granada road. Then

slightly over the rim, supposedly to add oxygen to improve taste and texture but also based on an ancient custom of cleaning glasses between use, when they were once shared!

limestone peaks which envelop tiny hamlets of stone cottages, many with characteristic lichen-clad "herreses" or wooden grain stores.

During a short break there is



# IDENTIFY THESE TYPES OF WRITING!

I thank you for the new pair of shoes because it is one of the best things I have ever recieved. You are the kindest woman in my life. See you soon!

Love, Shallenne.

**Formal Letter to Teacher Sample:**

(insert date)

Dear Mr/Mrs/Ms (insert name),

I am writing this letter to you at the end of the school year to show my appreciation for everything you have done the past few academic terms. I have thoroughly enjoyed being a part of your class and I think your work should be acknowledged.

All your classes have been extremely helpful and useful and I feel like I am learning so much thanks to your style of teaching. It is not a common thing to be able to have a teacher like you (enter name), because you manage to interact with us as a class on a different level than most other teachers.

I am really exciting to be moving into the next year this September, although I know that you no longer will be teaching me. Your dedication to us as students has not gone unnoticed and I thank you for always putting in that extra effort. I hope that I will still see you around school and that you continue being such a great teacher.

All the best,

(your name)  
(enter class details)

### Incident Report Form

Use this form to report accidents, injuries, medical situations, or student behavior incidents. (Incidents involving a crime or traffic incident should be reported directly to the Campus Public Safety office.) If possible, the report should be completed within 24 hours of the event. Submit completed forms to the President's Office.

INFORMATION ABOUT PERSON INVOLVED IN THE INCIDENT			
Full Name			
Home Address			
Designation			
Phone Numbers	Home	Cell	Work

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INCIDENT		
Date of Incident	Time	Police Notified <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Location of Incident		
Description of Incident (what happened, how it happened, factors leading to the event, etc.) Be as specific as possible (attached additional sheets if necessary)		
Were there any witnesses to the incident? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If yes, attach separate sheet with names, addresses, and phone numbers.		

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School newsletter article

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Love, Shallenne.



Informal email/letter

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For a short break in northern Spain fly direct from Malaga to Bilbao and rent a car for this stunning two hour drive west to the Asturian capital, Oviedo. Thanks to its supporting role in Woody Allen's recent hit movie, "Vicky Cristina Barcelona", Oviedo has attracted substantial interest as a short break destination.

Like Malaga, the city is a candidate for European City of Culture 2016. It boasts a rich cultural heritage that has inspired artists and writers across the centuries. We most now come here to enjoy the great outdoors and recharge their spirits with its delicious regional cuisine.

On arrival head out into Oviedo's labyrinthine old town to relish some splendid northern Spanish tapas, cheeses and of course the local cider. Start in Calle Gascona where you'll find a myriad of bars serving the local beverage.

Surprisingly, in most places the cider is served by waiters holding the bottle high above the glass, splashing the alcohol

MAJESTIC OVIEDO

**HOW TO GET IT**

By Air: Fly wit direct from Ma 78 78. www. By road: Take 4 of Madrid/Antep wards A92 Gra motorway ESA autopista ESA/ follow signs for

which envelop stone cottages, characteristic lichen or wooden grain

rt break there is to discover the beaches and see you are never sonal restaurant heavy stews of h local scrumpti n coast delivers nce of Spain. It he familiar be f sandy beaches untains, yet in reshing and un-

Feature Article (website or news)

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All your classes have been a great experience and I feel like I am learning so much thanks to you. It is a wonderful thing to be able to have a teacher like you (enjoyed the opportunity to interact with us as a class on a different level than other classes).

I am really excited to see you in September, although I know that you no longer will be teaching us as students has not gone unnoticed and I thank you for your extra effort. I hope that I will still see you around school and that you continue being such a great teacher.

All the best,

(your name)  
(enter class details)

Formal Letter/ email



I want to earn your vote!

Speech

Yes ?

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE INCIDENT		
Date of Incident	Time	Police Notified <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Location of Incident		
Description of Incident (what happened, how it happened, etc.) as possible (attached additional sheets if necessary)		

Were there any witnesses to the incident?  Yes  No  
If yes, attach separate sheet with names, addresses, and phone numbers.

Factual Report

# GCE 'O' LEVEL ENGLISH SCHEME OF ASSESSMENT

(SOURCE: MOE 1128 EL  
SYLLABUS 2022)

## ENGLISH LANGUAGE PAPER 1 WRITING

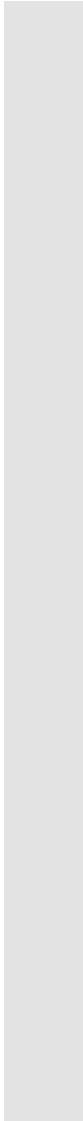
### SECTION B: SITUATIONAL WRITING [30 marks]

- Candidates write **250 to 350 words** on a given situation which will involve viewing a **visual text**.
- Candidates are required to write the text (an email, a letter, a report or a speech) to suit the **purpose, audience and context**.
- **RECOMMENDED DURATION: 30 to 40 minutes**
- Total time is **1 hour 50 minutes**, together with Section A (Editing) and Section C (Continuous Writing)



# RUBRICS

Source: MOE GCE 'O' Level English Language  
Syllabus 1128 for 2022



# TASK FULFILMENT

10 marks

Band 1

9 – 10m

- Good awareness of **P.A.C**
- Entirely appropriate **structure** and **format**
- **All points** developed in detail, fully amplified and well **organised**
- Given information and visual stimulus well used to **justify personal opinions and interpretation**

Band 2

7 – 8m

- Awareness of **P.A.C**
- Appropriate **structure** and **format**
- **All points** addressed but **not always developed, amplified and organised**
- Given information and visual stimulus used to **support personal opinions**

Band 3

5 – 6m

- Some awareness of **P.A.C**
- Some appropriate **structure** and **format**
- **Most points** addressed but not developed or organised
- Given information and visual stimulus **not well used**

# TASK FULFILMENT [FOCUS]

- Awareness of **Purpose, Audience and Context**
- Relevance to the task
- **Development** and organisation of information and ideas
- Able to use information and **interpret** it well

## Band 1 Answer (9-10m)

- Good awareness of P.A.C
- Entirely appropriate **structure** and **format**
- **All points** developed in detail, fully amplified and well **organised**
- Given information and visual stimulus well used to justify personal opinion and interpretation

Copying ideas is not the same as using them!  
Credit is given to developing given ideas with **ORIGINAL** details.



# LANGUAGE

## 20 Marks

Band 1&2  
16 – 20m

- Highly accurate
- Varied sentence structures used for effect
- Correct verb forms and appropriate, consistent tenses; sequence of ideas are clear throughout
- Wide and precise vocabulary
- Punctuation accurate and helpful
- Accurate spelling
- Unity of paragraphs, well linked and planned
- Tone and register appropriate

Band 3  
13 – 15m

- Mostly accurate to convey meaning
- Some varied sentence structures; some repetitive structures
- Some errors in verb forms; some errors in tenses but sequence of ideas are clear
- Simple vocabulary; some errors in ambitious words/idioms
- Punctuation generally accurate; some errors
- Mostly accurate spelling; errors in spelling of ambitious words
- Some unity of paragraphs, absent links at times
- Tone and register usually appropriate

Band 4  
11 – 12m

- Sufficiently accurate
- Some variety sentence structures used for effect
- Errors in verb forms; some inconsistent tenses that hinder meaning
- Simple vocabulary and some errors in word choice/idioms
- Punctuation errors in sentence separation
- Some accurate spelling; errors for more ambitious words
- Little unity of paragraphs, absent links
- Tone and register not consistent

# LANGUAGE [FOCUS]

- Accurate use of English and appropriate style
- Variety of vocabulary
- Tone and register
- Linking and arrangement

## Band 1 Answer

- Highly accurate
- **Varied** sentence structures used for **effect**
- Correct verb forms and appropriate, **consistent** tenses
- **Wide** and precise vocabulary
- **Punctuation** accurate and helpful
- **Accurate** spelling
- **Unity** of paragraphs, **well linked** and planned
- **Tone** and register appropriate

**Use your  
OWN  
WORDS!**

## Types of Situational Tasks

- Letter/Email
  - Speech
  - Report
  - Article
  - Blog



# P.A.C.F.L

Purpose determines everything else



# ESSENTIAL SKILLS P.A.C.F.L

## 1. WHAT IS THE PURPOSE?

- Persuade
- Inform / educate
- Describe
- Report facts

## 2. AUDIENCE

## 2. WHO AM I WRITING TO?

- Students
- Teachers/Principal
- Employer
- Minister

## 3. WHAT IS THE CONTEXT?

- School event
- Sports competition
- Job fair, etc

## 5. LANGUAGE

## 1. PURPOSE WHY AM I WRITING THIS?

## 3. CONTEXT

## 5. WHAT LANGUAGE TO USE?

- Tone: Formal or Informal
- Persuasive/factual
- Vocabulary
- Transition words
- Active / Passive

## 4. FORMAT

## 4. WHICH FORMAT?

- Email
- Letter
- Speech
- Report
- Article

# SAMPLE VISUAL STIMULUS

Calling all Secondary Three students! The school holidays are approaching and it is time to consider how you will spend your free time. Rather than being hooked on computer games, why not spend the time meaningfully by volunteering at one of our community care organisations? Make a difference to someone and see them smile!

Dates available: December 10 to 17 2021

## 1. **Happy Home for Elders**

At the Happy Home for Elders, we care for the elderly and their mental and physical health. We organise simple games for them and teach them music appreciation. Volunteers will be required to interact with the elderly by playing games with them and teaching them simple songs in English and Mandarin. Register at [Volunteer@happyhome.org.sg](mailto:Volunteer@happyhome.org.sg)



## 2. **Cheerful Children's Home**

Experience the exuberance of children ages 4 to 10 as you read to them and expose them to imaginative literature. At Cheerful Children's Home, we nurture the hearts and minds of underprivileged children. Volunteers need to be patient teachers and good at communicating with young children. Register at [Volunteer@cheerfulhome.org.sg](mailto:Volunteer@cheerfulhome.org.sg)



# SAMPLE QUESTION

## Situational Writing [30 marks]

You are to write between 250 to 350 words for this section.

Refer to the visual stimulus above and then plan your answer before beginning to write.

Recently, there has been a push by schools to encourage more volunteering by students. The elderly poor and underprivileged children are two groups of people that require more help and attention. As a Secondary Four student who has volunteered at one of the homes stated in the visual stimulus, you have been asked to deliver a speech to all the Secondary Three students. You are to persuade them to sign up at one of the homes during the end of year school holidays.

In your speech, you should:

- Appeal to students to select **one** of the homes stated
- Describe your volunteering experience at your chosen home and what you did there
- Explain how volunteering helps both the recipients and the volunteers
- Give your advice on how to plan and carry out the activities stated

Write your speech in clear, accurate language and in an engaging and persuasive tone, adding any other details that you may find appropriate. Use your own words as much as possible.

# SAMPLE P.A.C.F.L

## PURPOSE

- To describe your experience volunteering and persuade students to volunteer at one community home

## AUDIENCE

- Sec 3 students in your school

## CONTEXT

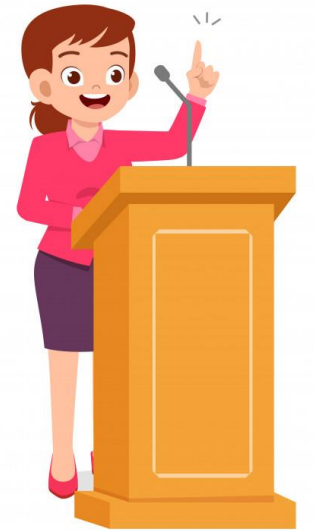
- After exams, apply school values, help the community

## FORMAT

- Speech

## LANGUAGE

- Informal and persuasive, use of rhetorical devices, active voice





## 2 MAIN TYPES OF WRITING

### 1. Informal

Examples of purposes:

- Wish someone well
- Thank them
- Request for help / advice
- Suggest ideas / solutions
- Promote an activity/event
  
- Email/letter to family/friend
- Speech
- Blog

### 2. Formal

Examples of purposes:

- Present information
- Request for something
- Recommend someone
- Apply for a job
- Report on an event
- Permission to carry out an activity
- Propose a change / solution
  
- Email/letter to authority
- Speech , Blog
- Reports, Articles

# Language use – differences and similarities

LANGUAGE	INFORMAL	FORMAL
<b>PERSUASIVE OR FACTUAL</b>	<p>A mix of facts and information And persuasion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Speech</li> <li>- Letter/email</li> <li>- Blog</li> </ul>	<p>Can be entirely factual or A mixture of facts and persuasion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Report</li> <li>- Letter/email</li> <li>- Article</li> </ul>
<b>TONE</b>	<p>Can be affectionate "I miss you..."</p> <p>Emotive vocabulary e.g. "love to" "fantastic weekend"</p>	<p>Detached "This event will be..."</p> <p>Objective "Based on the feedback..."</p>
<b>LINGUISTIC FEATURES</b>	<p>Active voice "They can visit..."</p> <p>Use of contractions "I'm" / "Let's"</p> <p>Modals: will, can, may</p>	<p>Some passive voice "This place can be visited by"</p> <p>No contractions allowed</p> <p>Modals: would, should, might</p>
<b>TRANSITIONS</b>	<p>Informal transitions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- also, so, but, because</li> <li>- What's more, plus</li> <li>- However, although</li> </ul>	<p>Formal transitions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Conversely</li> <li>- Furthermore</li> <li>- On the flipside</li> </ul>

# FORMAT AND STRUCTURE

The format/structure typically includes:

## Introduction

- Who you are
- Your purpose

## 3 PEEL Paragraphs

- Main Points
- Development of ideas
- Examples

## Conclusion

- Summary of ideas
- Sign-off

### Exceptions:

Blogs, news articles and feature articles:  
no self-introduction required, no sign-off

# EXAM TIPS



1. Study the **Visual Stimulus (VS)** carefully, noting down important points
2. READ the **question** carefully, noting down the **P.A.C.F.L**
3. **Choose** an option from the VS (if required)
4. Take note of the **bulleted points** in the **question** and use them as a guide to structure your answer
5. **Plan** each PEEL paragraph before writing