**National 5 and National 6 Close Reading Formulas**

**Ensure you are familiar with the key command words and what they mean:**

* **Identify**
* **Explain**
* **Analyse**
* **Summarise**
* **Evaluate**

**Own words Question**

1. Find the answer from the lines you are directed to in the passage - LOCATE
2. Highlight or underline the answer.
3. Now reword it taking care not to use the words you have underlined - TRANSLATE
4. Bullet point your answer – use the number of marks on offer to dictate the number of points you make.

Formula

Locate and Translate

**Context Question**

1. Give the meaning of the word.

2. Quote a word or phrase from the context.

3. Explain how this word/phrase helps you understand the meaning of the original word.

NOTE: It is good practice to repeat steps 2 and 3 again for another word/phrase especially if the question is worth more than 2 marks.

Formula

The word ‘…..’ means……………..

The context helped me to work this out because…

**Linking Question**

1. Quote the linking word or phrase (if there is one) and explain its function.
2. Quote the words that link back to the previous paragraph.
3. Explain what the argument in that paragraph is.
4. Quote the words that move the argument forward.
5. Explain what the author is now talking about.

Formula

* The linking word ‘…’ shows the writer is …(moving his/her argument forward or changing direction/introducing a contradictory point)
* “…”
* Links back to the writer’s previous point about….
* “…”
* Links introduces the writer’s next point which is….

**Summarising Question**

This is usually a big mark question. Use the number of marks to work out how many points you should make. Bullet point your answer

1. Treat this as an extended own words question
2. Break down the chunk of text you are to look at into smaller chunks and work out the key idea in each
3. Ensure that you write out each point in your own words

**Imagery Question**

1. Identify the image (what is being compared to what?)

2. Give the literal meaning of the **image**.

3. Explain the connection between the two. (Just as…. so…. OR This suggests that…)

4. Explain the effectiveness of the comparison – ensure you have answered the question

Formula

Just as…….. so this suggests that……..

**Word Choice Question**

1. Quote a word/phrase – no more than two words together

2. Explain the connotations of the word/phrase (what it makes you think of/what you associate with the word).

3. Explain what this suggests about what the writer is describing.

**NOTE**: You may be required to do this for 2 or 3 words/phrases depending on how many marks the question is worth.

Formula

The word ‘…..’ means……

In this context it suggests…….

**Sentence Structure Question**

1. Identify/name/quote a technique of sentence structure
2. Comment on the effects of its use and how this fits with/helps you to understand the point the writer is making in these lines.

To help you find relevant features to comment on, follow these steps:

1. What type of sentence(s) is/are being used?

Statement

Question/rhetorical question

Exclamation

Command

Minor sentence

2. How is the punctuation used to divide up the sentence?

Colons/Semi-colons/Parenthesis/Ellipsis

3. Is there anything unusual about the structure of the sentence?

Inversion

Repetition

Climax or anti-climax

Antithesis

4. Do the sentences form a pattern?

Repetitive or balanced structure

Contrast between complex and short sentences

NOTE: At Higher you get no marks for identifying a relevant feature. You must

explain how this adds to your understanding or to the effect the writer was

trying to achieve.

**Tone Question**

Formula

The writer uses …….

This is effective because…..

1. Identify the tone employed by the writer
2. Think:
   1. Serious/Impersonal/Unemotional
   2. Chatty/Conversational/Light-hearted
   3. Emotive
   4. Humorous
   5. Reflective/Thoughtful/Nostalgic
   6. Ironic/Tongue in cheek/Ironic
   7. Persuasive/Rhetorical
3. Quote a word/phrase/image which reveals the tone and explain how it does so

Formula

The writer uses a …….tone.

He/She conveys this through the use of…….

**Language Question**

Keep your WITS about you when you see the word ‘language’ in the question.

This is asking you about the writer’s use of techniques

Think:

Word Choice

Imagery

Tone

Sentence Structure

**See above**

**Effective as an Introduction Question**

1. Does it introduce the main points? Quote and explain what they are AND how they are expanded upon in the passage.

2. Does it make clear the writer’s point of view? Quote and explain how this makes clear the point of view.

3. Does it hook the reader with a clever technique – an image, a question, emphatic or dramatic word choice, a list….. Name the technique and explain why it is effective in hooking the reader/why it is appropriate to begin in this way

**Effective as a Conclusion Question**

1. Does it sum up the main points? Quote and explain what they are and quote or summarise where they were made earlier on in the passage.

2. Does it restate the writer’s point of view? Quote and explain what it is, then quote/refer to earlier in passage and explain the link.

3. Does it link back to the introduction? How? Quote and explain effectiveness.

4. Does it re-use word choice/imagery from the introduction or used throughout passage? Quote and explain from both the conclusion and from earlier in the passage.

5. Does it conclude in some other memorable way? For example a rhetorical question, repetition (x3), an appropriate image….

**Final Question (Higher Only)**

Read the final question then read passage 2, looking for areas of agreement or disagreement with passage 1.

1. Identify one area on which they agree/disagree (*Both writers agree that….*)
2. Now provide evidence from both passages that prove they agree on this. Try to comment on/summarise the point exemplified by that evidence
3. Then identify a second area on which they agree/disagree (*A second thing the writers agree on is*…)
4. Then provide evidence from both passages that prove they agree/disagree on this. Try to comment on/summarise the point exemplified by that evidence
5. Then identify a third area on which they agree/disagree (*A third thing the writers agree about is that*…)
6. Finally provide evidence from both passages that prove they agree/disagree on this. Try to comment on/summarise the point exemplified by that evidence

Keep points of agreement/disagreement big and general. Keep specific examples for evidence.

3 points of agreement/disagreement = 3 marks

Basic evidence from both passages to support all 3 areas = 1 additional mark

More insightful use of evidence to support all 3 areas = 2 additional marks