Writing 1 (Paper 2 Part 1: Essay)

Summarising and evaluating

➤ EXPERT STRATEGIES page 169

1 Read the strategy and the exam task below, then answer the following questions.
1 What type of writing task is it?
2 Which two tasks must you include in your answer?

EXPERT STRATEGY

For this type of writing task, make sure your answer contains the following:
- key points of the two texts (a summary)
- your opinion of their content (an evaluation).

Also, use your own words, not 'chunks' from the texts.

Write an essay summarising and evaluating the key points from both texts. Use your own words throughout as far as possible, and include your own ideas in your answers.

You should write **240–280** words.

1 Performing techniques: stage vs. screen

Gesture, movement and physicality are vital on stage. Whereas tiny gestures can be magnified in close-up film shots, as a stage actor you will use your body very differently. You will need to communicate a physical energy and develop a 'stage presence'. The film close-up permits subtleties of facial expression and movement that don't work on the stage.

Camera work and editing achieve effects on the screen that the stage actor must create largely by using the body. In film, props and settings are also used extensively to convey meaning and atmosphere. On the stage, it's down to you to do that work.

2 Acting: finding your voice

Consider the actor's voice for a moment. Vocal expression is as much about movement and emotion as sound, and nowhere is this more noticeable than on the stage. Achieving resonance in your voice requires physical as well as vocal effort. For the screen, the emphasis may be on perfecting a range of accents rather than pitch, yet even here embracing cultural body language makes the accent sound more authentic. Interestingly, in the recording studio many voice actors imitate the movements of their animated characters to achieve better vocal results. The right training can help you develop such skills to find work in any medium.

2 Read the model answer to the question in Exercise 1. Does it address the two tasks successfully? Why/Why not?

The two texts **(1)** *discuss / assess* techniques required for different styles of acting. Firstly, the first text **(2)** *examines / evaluates* the use of physical expression on stage as opposed to film and **(3)** *conveys / compares* the value of facial expression in close-up film shots with the need to use the whole body on stage to **(4)** *exemplify / communicate* feeling. It **(5)** *suggests / asserts* that whereas film actors are supported by the setting and camera work, the stage actor is unaided, and must therefore exude stronger physical energy to achieve the same result.

There is no doubt that the two media **(6)** *demand / need* different styles of acting but now that technology has entered the theatre, set designers and directors are able to make use of special effects and more sophisticated props to create atmosphere. So, while it may have been true 50 years ago, I feel it is a gross exaggeration to suggest that the stage actor is totally unsupported today.

The second text, on the other hand, looks at the importance of the voice in acting, and emphasises the need for aspiring actors to **(7)** *acquire / achieve* a range of vocal skills to be able to sustain a career in any medium. It **(8)** *assumes / acknowledges* the relationship between vocal expression and body movement and **(9)** *advocates / concludes* following a training course to develop such skills effectively.

To my mind, the two texts examine specific skills needed for different types of acting but we should not ignore recognising the essential connection between vocal and physical expression, and the value of gaining the proper kind of training in order to become a versatile performer, capable of working on both stage and screen.

3 Circle the most suitable verb in *italics* in the model answer. Explain your choices and say why the other options do not work.

4a Look at how the essay is organised. Underline the paragraphs which summarise the two texts. Has the candidate used their own words effectively?

b Highlight the paragraph(s) in which the candidate evaluates the texts.

5 Discuss. Do you agree with the candidate's evaluation of the texts?

6 Do the extra writing task on page 192. Use the writing strategy to help you.

LIVEWORKSHEETS