

Essay Skills



SARACENS
HIGH SCHOOL

Silent do now:

1. What are some top tips for practice papers.
2. Why should you use the mark scheme?
3. Why should you go back to the exam paper?

16 school days to go!
21 actual days to go!

Discipline

Hard Work

Honesty

Humility

Essay Skills



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Many subjects have essays.

For each essay question you must.

- Read the question carefully.
- Read the text or source all the way through
- Check you know how to answer the question.

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PLAN

What is important in your answer.

Don't spend too long planning

Jot down your main ideas

Work out your structure (how many paragraphs, intro, conclusion)

Link by topic or themes

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Structure

Use paragraphs to organise your points and link ideas.

Link your paragraphs using phrases such as- 'on the other hand' and 'in addition'.

Short introduction
End with a summary/
conclusion that clearly reminds the reader of your main argument.

Despite...
Ultimately...

Write clearly

Don't make sentences too long or complicated

Check your argument is easy to understand

Use specific exams and precise quotes

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Make sure you write properly

Avoid informal words (Romeo's mate Mercutio)

Steer clear of slang (the poem made me LOL)

Don't use filler words (Pollution is, like, bad)

Explain things clearly using phrases like:

phrases like:

This signifies that...

This highlights...

This suggests...

Furthermore...

These will keep your answers easy to follow.

Linking words

Link ideas and points with words such as:

However

In contrast

Similarly

Alternatively

They will make your answer flow nicely.

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SPAG



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Important notes:

Avoid common spelling mistakes (there/ their/ they're)

Use punctuation properly (remember to check!)

Don't change tenses (it's confusing)

Double negatives (avoid!)

Start a new paragraph for a new point (don't just write in 1 block)

Leave time to quickly check your answers (5 mins to fix and silly mistakes)

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Exam questions



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Charles Dickens: *A Christmas Carol*

Read the following extract from Chapter 3 of *A Christmas Carol* and then answer the question that follows.

In this extract, the Ghost of Christmas Present shows Scrooge the Cratchit family's Christmas celebrations.

Oh, a wonderful pudding! Bob Cratchit said, and calmly too, that he regarded it as the greatest success achieved by Mrs. Cratchit since their marriage. Mrs. Cratchit said that now the weight was off her mind, she would confess she had had her doubts about the quantity of flour.
5 Everybody had something to say about it, but nobody said or thought it was at all a small pudding for a large family. It would have been flat heresy to do so. Any Cratchit would have blushed to hint at such a thing. At last the dinner was all done, the cloth was cleared, the hearth swept, and the fire made up. The compound in the jug being tasted, and
10 considered perfect, apples and oranges were put upon the table, and a shovel-ful of chestnuts on the fire. Then all the Cratchit family drew round the hearth, in what Bob Cratchit called a circle, meaning half a one; and at Bob Cratchit's elbow stood the family display of glass. Two tumblers, and a custard-cup without a handle.
15 These held the hot stuff from the jug, however, as well as golden goblets would have done; and Bob served it out with beaming looks, while the chestnuts on the fire sputtered and cracked noisily. Then Bob proposed: "A Merry Christmas to us all, my dears. God bless us!" Which all the family re-echoed.
20 "God bless us every one!" said Tiny Tim, the last of all. He sat very close to his father's side upon his little stool. Bob held his withered little hand in his, as if he loved the child, and wished to keep him by his side, and dreaded that he might be taken from him.

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Starting with this extract, explore how Dickens uses the Cratchit family to show the struggles of the poor.

Write about:

- how Dickens presents the Cratchit family in this extract
- how Dickens uses the Cratchit family to show the struggles of the poor in the novel as a whole.

[30 marks]

Activity:

1. Plan an answer for this exam question.

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Humility