

Section B: Writing

You are advised to spend about 45 minutes on this section.

Write in full sentences.

You are reminded of the need to plan your answer.

You should leave enough time to check your work at the end.

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Your local newspaper is running a creative writing competition and they intend to publish the winning entries.

Either

Describe a journey by bus as suggested by this picture:



or

Write a story about two people from very different backgrounds.

(24 marks for content and organisation
16 marks for technical accuracy)

[40 marks]

Grade 9 response

The deafening silence was ripped into by the infinitesimal squeal of a gunshot, like a pup ripping into the flesh of a bigger, thwarted prey, watching the blood spray out like a fountain before settling into the razor-sharp rocks below its paws. A fulgent flash of light disrupted the blinding darkness, searing the horizon: a stain on the sky. Desperate, I stood there, my raw face streaked with tears: a mere pawn on a chess board. Locked inside the mesmerising tranquillity of my house, the deceptive safe haven of my bedroom, I watched in shock as my mother fell to the ground, first writhing, then twitching, then still. My mind was ordering my body to go out there, but my limbs rebelled. A duel of guts and fear. My mind was blanketed by consternations resulting from my initial trepidation when it all began.

Hollow breaths: wheeze, splutter.

8:01am. 06 June 2007. Ten years since that horrific event. I was older now. More aware, more able, more willing. Tainted by the death of my mother, my upbringing had been rough. 'John, let's go now or we'll miss it,' hissed my closest friend, Arthur. At that moment, I was snapped out of the nightmare and back into reality. He was dressed in denim jeans, a t-shirt and a jacket. All designer clothes. The lapels were made of silk, perfectly tailored to exquisitely match his athletic build. I was surprised that he stayed with me all these years, actually – what with my ripped shorts and scarred face.

'You're right; it's about to start,' I whispered nervously.

Quick breaths: huff, huff.

Looking into his eyes, I once again noticed the astounding differences between us. His sclera swirled around his iris, the colour of an ocean. You could almost hear the soft lapping of the waves; smell the ocean air; taste the sea salt; feel the cooling breeze ruffle your hair; see the ships on the horizon, teetering on the edge of a blackened world, ready to fall off at any moment. Paradise? As if.

Calm breaths now.

My dream is Arthur's reality – his parents have a second house in Bali for the winter. Yet he wasn't oblivious to the harsh reality of our pitiful society. He wanted change, too. And I wasn't about to stop him. 'We gotta do this, mate, now,' I declared firmly. With that, I sprinted off into the distance, with Arthur in close pursuit.

Some people might argue that I'm not particularly punctilious in my attention to the rules of etiquette. My mother told me never to fight; it's bad. Well, look where that got her. I wouldn't make the same mistake. Bounding like a bloodhound over the rooftops, I saw Arthur gracefully dance like a nimble cat over any obstructions. We may be different in the way we move and dress and speak, but we want the same thing. And we're both prepared to fight for it.

Staring through that dull, dusty window was the hardest thing I have ever done. Seeing that same face I saw ten years ago, the one behind the trigger. Outside, rain lashed against the trees, trying its hardest to overwhelm any resistance it encountered. I had found him. Sat asleep in his chair, oblivious to our presence. Thunder rumbled through the sky, but he didn't stir. Aiming the muzzle at his head, I felt the bitter cold trigger bite into my finger. I had to end it. My brain sent an electrical impulse through my synapses; my muscles contracted in unison...

One long, deep breath.

Click.