## C or higher in English: Guaranteed!

## A: Know what good writing looks like ...

- 1. Don't be predictable (avoid "The room is ...")
- 2. Use short and long sentences. Short sentences are especially good at the start and end of paragraphs. (see overleaf)
- 3. Use more interesting connectives than "and" and "but" (see the list overleaf)

## B: Know how to writing different text types.

Think LAYOUT (L) - SENTENCES (S) - WORDS (W)

#### Leaflet

- L heading, subheading, image box, short paragraphs, bullet-points
- **S** short and long; questions and statements; bullets; varied connectives
- **W** impersonal tone (avoid "I"/"me"); power words (amazing / crisis / risk / explore)

## Article

- L Heading and by-line (ie say who it's by); short paragraphs; subheadings
- **S** short and long; questions and statements; varied connectives
- **W** Don't use "I"/"me" too much; use details / facts / statistics; use emotive words (truth / fairness / fear)

#### Letter

- L your address; date; Dear X; topic sentence saying what the letter is about; short paras; Yours sincerely if you know the person's name, Yours faithfully if not)
- **S** short and long; varied connectives
- **W** Clear, direct, a few emotive words

#### **Describe**

- L 3-5 paragraphs to an A4 page
- **S** short and long; varied connectives
- **W** Use detail; use dialogue; describe the senses (textures, colours, smells etc) do all you can to avoid being predictable

#### Speech

- L Heading; longer paragraphs than an article
- **S** short and long; rhetorical questions on their own for effect ("Is this really fair?"); use repetition of three ("We must think; we must decide; we must act"); varied connectives
- W Emotive words (truth / fairness / fear); sometimes use "I", sometimes "we", sometimes "you"; use adjectives to add description (massive crisis; enormous cost)

PS: You're already a better writer than you think you are. Good luck!

#### **Next steps:**

Practise writing; send a sample to Mr B for feedback; read a lot, especially some good stories. Email: geoffbarton@mac.com

# A quick guide to sentence variety

## **Simple** sentences are short and punchy:

Macbeth is a villain. Lady Macbeth wields huge influence. The mood now changes.

**Compound** sentences link ideas with "and" and "but". Don't use too many.

At the start of the play Macbeth is a hero but by the end he is a villain.

## **Complex** sentences might use posh connectives:

- Although Macbeth begins as a hero, he ends the play as a villain.
- AS I read the play, I noticed the increasing feeling of menace.
- We know that he will die because of all the hints in the language.
- Whilst Macbeth agonises about his future, Lady Macbeth takes her own life.
- However much we sympathise with Macbeth at the start, by the end we despise his ruthlessness.
- Macbeth is a fascinating play despite its demanding language

### They might have subordinate clauses using which, who and that:

- Macbeth, WhO begins the play as a hero, concludes it as a villain.
- It is a play that many people have enjoyed reading.
- The character **WhO** most interests me is Banquo.

## They might be 2-part sentences:

- Reading the play again, we are aware of its deep menacing tone.
- Thinking about his future, Macbeth is filled with despair.
- Frustrated by her husband's weakness, Lady Macbeth decides to act.

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