



ENGLISH

PSLE ENGLISH CONTINUOUS WRITING GUIDE

CRUCIBLE EDUCATION CENTRE

Sharing our 'PARAS' Technique

Throughout our time at NUS Law, we were swarmed with the sheer content of the syllabus. Thankfully, we managed to survive using **'PARAS' - short for paragraphs**. Given the large amount of black letter law and case law required for each exam, we could bring in summary sheets. These summary sheets were literal lifesavers. They were pre-made and crafted for any scenario. In the exam, we would just apply these paragraphs and fill in the factual scenario. The PARAS also saved us from having mental blocks; just copy the PARAS and apply the factual scenario.

Similarly, this method can be utilised for PSLE English composition writing. By mastering a single storyline, a student will be able to **cover a few different possible topics**. This method of preparing a templated answer also **prevents writers' block**, a common problem that parents shared with us.

While there are many ways to structure an essay, we generally follow the following structure:



Regardless of whatever structure a student follows, it would behoove students to know that they should reiterate the main theme of a question in the resolution. This ensures that they are not marked down for being irrelevant and not answering the question.

Here, we attempt to show how our PARAS have helped many students achieve excellent results with minimal effort in their composition examinations. *The italicised portions are the templated answers while the underlined portions are the parts students are expected to apply and create during the exam.*

<h1 style="color: blue; text-align: center;">ESSAY 1</h1>	<h2 style="text-align: center;">Techniques Applied</h2>
<p>A Regret.</p> <p><i>All was quiet.</i></p> <p><i>The sound of my footsteps reverberated softly as I quickly covered the length of the open pathway. Before me, shadows of myself transformed in length as I paced across the evenly placed streetlamps. I forgot if there was a full moon but it felt as though a spotlight was cast on me.</i></p> <p><i>What was that?</i></p> <p><i>I glanced around, my eyes darting back and forth, scanning the area around me. I could hear my shallow, fast breaths quicken. Immobilised, a sudden deafening clasp of thunder struck and brought me back my wits. I refocused my attention to getting home as soon as possible; just a street to cross before I'm at the void deck of my apartment. I hastened forward, eager to be in the safety of my home before a drop of rain could be felt. I tightened my grip on the plastic bag I had. Its contents were chocolate ice-cream cones.</i></p> <p><i>These were not just any chocolate ice-cream cones though; they were Meiju's limited edition dark chocolate ice-cream cones from Japan. Artisanal made with Varlhona dark chocolate, these</i></p>	<p>Setting is used to create tension.</p> <p>A mixture of short and long sentences is used to invoke excitement.</p> <p>Descriptive writing at play.</p>

decadent treats were supremely hard to find and priced out of reach for any normal student. Each cone promised to contain generous amounts of 70% Valrhona dark chocolate infused into thick, creamy ice cream made from the best Hokkaido milk. It had a three-layer core: mandarin-yuzu, chunky peanut butter and mint. The idea was that the ice cream subtly changed in flavour as you consumed it so the consumer would remain intrigued throughout the treat.

At \$20 a cone, this was probably the most expensive ice-creams they ever sold at 7/11. A clear juxtaposition from the cheap \$1 dollar Mr. Softy soft-serve ice cream that was ubiquitous with 7/11s nationwide. I looked inside my bag. 5 cones. That was a \$100 dollars' worth of ice cream. Did I feel bad for stealing it? Yes, but there was no way I could have afforded it and my parents often chastised me for wasting money so I know they would not have indulged me if I asked them for it. There was no other way.

"Excuse me girl, can I look at the contents of your plastic bag?" commanded a burly police man standing in front of me. Next to him, a slenderer man dressed in the unmistakable navy blue police uniform. He was holding a flashlight and gestured towards my plastic bag. I was so lost in thought I did not even realise they were near me. A wave of panic shot throughout my body. My heart started to race and my mind started to blank. Questions started to pop in my mind. Would I go to jail? Would I be expelled? Will my parents abandon me? How will my friends react? Will they even by my friends again?

Alas, the gig was up. "I'm sorry I stole the ice creams," I blurted out before even showing the contents of the plastic bag. "Please don't send me to jail!" I yelled. I could send my eyes becoming teary as I reached an epiphany: No matter what, I should not steal. The policemen took down my details and escorted me back to the nearby 7/11 where I returned the ice creams.

Contrast is used to highlight the extent of the deed later.

Climax

Listing technique used to incite a sense of helplessness

Resolution

"Sir, I am so sorry for stealing. I know it is wrong and I don't know what came over me!" I apologised to the shopkeeper. He stared at me intensely. I could feel my cheeks go red with embarrassment and I wanted to be swallowed up by the ground but it was time to own up for my mistake.

"Okay, I'll give you a chance and will not lodge an official police report but make sure you never steal again," replied the shopkeeper. I nodded in full agreement. I was dismissed after a final debrief from the policemen.

As I trundled home deep in contemplation, I realised how foolish I was. I deeply regretted my actions. Although there were no serious repercussions today, I realised how easily the kind shopkeeper could have taken further action. Besides the consequences of my folly, I examined the morality of my actions. To steal is clearly wrong and I was overcome with guilt that I resorted to common theft.

In an act of pathetic fallacy, the skies opened and the rain started to pour. Despite getting drenched, I continued to walk home. The heavy drops of rain hitting my face was almost cathartic.

"Never again Joelle..." I muttered beneath my breath.

Reflection of the author. Refers back to the question theme to ensure relevance.

Literary devices used to show superior literary skills.

This exact same essay could easily be modified by students to answer themes like "A moment of Truth, A moment of folly, A dishonest act, A lesson learnt or Second Chances".

Basically, any 'negative' theme could easily be covered with minimal modifications. Next, we apply the same storyline to a 'positive theme'.

ESSAY 2

Techniques Applied

A Generous Act.

All was quiet.

The sound of my footsteps reverberated softly as I quickly covered the length of the open pathway. Before me, shadows of myself transformed in length as I paced across the evenly placed streetlamps. I forgot if there was a full moon but it felt as though a spotlight was cast on me.

What was that?

I glanced around, my eyes darting back and forth, scanning the area around me. I could hear my shallow, fast breaths quicken. Immobilised, a sudden deafening clasp of thunder struck and brought me back my wits. I refocused my attention to getting home as soon as possible; just a street to cross before I'm at the void deck of my apartment. I hastened forward, eager to be in the safety of my home before a drop of rain could be felt. I tightened my grip on the plastic bag I had. Its contents were chocolate ice-cream cones.

These were not just any chocolate ice-cream cones though; they were Meiju's limited edition dark chocolate ice-cream cones from Japan. Artisanal made with Varlhona dark chocolate, these decadent treats were supremely hard to find and priced out of reach for any normal student. Each cone promised to contain generous amounts of 70% Varlhona dark chocolate infused into thick, creamy ice cream made from the best Hokkaido milk. It had a three-layer core: mandarin-yuzu, chunky peanut butter and mint. The idea was that the ice cream subtly changed in flavour as you

Setting is used to create tension.

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Descriptive writing at play.

consumed it so the consumer would remain intrigued throughout the treat.

At \$20 a cone, this was probably the most expensive ice-creams they ever sold at 7/11. A clear juxtaposition from the cheap \$1 dollar Mr. Softy soft-serve ice cream that was ubiquitous with 7/11s nationwide. I looked inside my bag. 5 cones. That was a \$100 dollars' worth of ice cream. It literally took me weeks to save up that amount. The weeks of skipped recesses were about to pay off. Before I knew it, I reached the traffic junction and was that much closer to savouring the ice cream.

"Hey Joelle!" I turned in astonishment. My mind was so focused on the ice cream I didn't notice that my classmate, Kyra, was just behind me. She spotted a very slender figure, almost malnourished in my opinion, but had a big grin every time I saw her. Kyra lived in the block of rental flats just opposite my apartment. Her uniform was slightly tattered and aged and I suspect it was a hand-me-down piece. I know Kyra was on the school financial assistance scheme as I used to sit next to her in class and unintentionally spotted her registration form before.

"Hey Kyra, just ended your CCA too?" I asked. Kyra nodded with a big toothy smile. In her hand was a generic red plastic bag.

"What's that in your hand?" I curiously asked.

"Oh, it's some ice cream I got from the minimart. It's my grandmother's birthday and she loves chocolate ice cream so I thought I'd get this to celebrate her 93rd birthday!" she chirped. Through the translucent plastic bag, I could see that it was a 1 litre tub of KNG'S ice cream. At 10 dollars per tub, this was the cheapest ice cream available. As a self-proclaimed ice cream connoisseur, I knew that KNG's ice cream contained mostly artificial flavours and

Personification

Climax

they did not even use real chocolate in their ice cream; instead, they used a chocolate-flavoured syrup substitute. Horrendous stuff!

Wait! How could Kyra possibly use this as a birthday celebration? It suddenly dawned upon me that Kyra did not have the financial means to afford anything more. I swallowed hard. Kyra is a good friend.

"Hey Kyra, I just got some of those limited-edition chocolate ice creams from Japan. How about we swap our ice creams and you share them with your family?" I offered.

I could see Kyra immediately glance down and up. "It's alright! I couldn't do that! Those are really expensive and it wouldn't be right!" she replied sheepishly.

"Oh no! I actually got them all for free. My father's company is the importer of this brand and he had a few coupons for free ice creams. We actually have too many coupons so you'd be helping me clear them before they expire!" I lied. Just a small white lie thought. I did not want Kyra to feel bad.

"Really? Wow that would be so wonderful! Thank you so much!" Kyra beamed and her eyes lit up as we swapped bags. We soon waved goodbye to each other and I was soon in my dining room at home. In front of me, KNG's Chocolate-flavoured ice cream. If one scrutinises the cover, you would see the words "Artificially flavoured" in tiny font.

I ventured a bite. It was not as bad as I thought it would be. As I reflected on my act of generosity, I realised that a good deed often brought a different kind of reward. As though on cue, my phone

Resolution

Reflection.
Refers back to the question's theme to maintain relevance.

lighted up. A picture from Kyra and her grandmother in awe of Meiju's ice cream cone. The caption read: Best Ice Cream Ever!!

Indeed, this was the best ice cream I ever had. Artificially flavoured, but a wholesome feeling.

A play on "best ice cream ever" to show examiner deeper understanding of the language

Therefore, you can see that with a single storyline, students can answer almost any question. This particular essay could also cover other themes like "A dilemma or A good deed". Of course, some storylines are more suited for certain themes.

Under our program, we teach 5 overarching storylines that will cover all possible exam questions for the PSLE composition writing.

With the use of our PARAS technique, students can quickly achieve better grades.

Weaker students will see immediate improvement as the templated paragraphs help solve their grammar and vocabulary issues.

Stronger students will begin to see extraordinary results as their writing skills are polished and refined.