

## ENGLISH / ENGLISH LANGUAGE EXAM SECTION B (FOUNDATION & HIGHER TIER)

Section B follows the same format no matter which tier paper you are taking. Whether you are aiming for a C grade or an A\* you should aim to do everything I cover in this chapter in your section B answer.

Section B is the writing section of the exam, requiring you to write two long answers. You are recommended to spend around 25 minutes on question 5 and 35 minutes on question 6.

Around 1/3 of the marks available in this section are awarded for spelling, punctuation and grammar, so it is not just about what you write but how you write it.

I shall divide this chapter into 4 parts: purpose, audience, format and technical skills.

### PURPOSE

The section B questions are based on a number of purposes: writing to argue, persuade, inform, explain and describe are the most common ones. However, there is one great set of linguistic devices which applies to all of these: DAFOREST.

Here are some typical questions you might see in Section B of the exam:

**Write a letter to your head teacher arguing that you should be able to wear what you want to school.**

**Write an article for your school website which persuades prospective parents to send their children to your school.**

**Write a letter to your parents in which you persuade them to let you go on holiday with a friend this summer.**

**Write the text for a speech in which you argue for or against compulsory PE lessons.**

All of these questions would suit the DAFOREST linguistic devices.

## LINGUISTIC DEVICES: USING DAFOREST

<b>TECHNIQUE</b>	<b>DEFINITION</b>	<b>EXAMPLE</b>	<b>WHY WE USE IT</b>
<i>Direct address</i>	Referring to the reader directly using the pronouns 'we' or 'you'.	'You need to give up smoking'	Engages the reader to read on as they feel that, by being addressed directly, the text is relevant to them.
<i>Alliteration</i>	A group of words beginning with the same letter or sound.	'Smoking sucks'	Makes the text catchy – it sticks in the reader's head.
<i>Fact</i>	Something which can be proven to be true.	'60% of teens have tried smoking'	Make the text seem authoritative, accurate and therefore believable.
<i>Opinion</i>	A belief which cannot be proven to be true.	'Everyone hates people who smoke'	Sway the reader towards the writer's viewpoint.
<i>Rhetorical question</i>	Any question in a piece of writing which does not require an answer.	'Do you want to die young?'	Engages the reader to read on as they feel that, by being addressed directly, the text is relevant to them.
<i>Emotive language</i>	Words which elicit a powerful emotional response.	'Smoking is barbaric and torturous'	Makes the topic of the text seem overly good or bad, depending on the purpose of the text.
<i>statistics</i>	Numerical facts and data.	'8/10 smokers want to quit'	Make the text seem authoritative, accurate and therefore believable.
<i>(rule of) three</i>	Lists of three things in a sentence.	'smoking is expensive, harmful and anti-social'.	Makes the text catchy – it sticks in the reader's head.

When you use DAFOREST in your writing, it automatically hits the highest bands in the mark scheme for both section B questions. Below is an example of just how you can do that. This article argues that the elderly are to blame for today's problems (it's an old exam question I tried to answer). As you will see, you can use DAFOREST to make up the majority of your

answer. Everything that is highlighted is an example of DAFOREST – can you work out which bit is which technique?

## PENSIONERS POLLUTE

As current surveys show **75% of old people hold young people responsible for today's problems**, Andrew Bruff suggests **today's youth are not the key offenders**; the elderly had the planet ruined before they even arrived.

**Look around you. What do you see?** Do you, like me, see a world that is full to the brim of **rubbish, creating pollution by the bucket-load**? Do you see wasteful **consumerism gone crazy**, an **insane, insatiable** desire to have everything? **Now look up from this problem**; who are those doing these things? Is it, as a recent survey shows, young people's fault? No way.

**In a recent article it was argued that the make do and mend generation knew something about how to save the environment.** Of course, what the writer failed to mention was why they were make do and mending in the first place: World War 2. Oh yes, whilst grandma was washing her tin-foil, grandad was being shipped off the Poland, **destroying natural landscapes with tanks, clogging up the Polish air with fuel emissions from the machinery of war (not to mention the killing).**

I am a young person. I care. **I care about the environment, I care about pollution, I care about recycling.** Old people don't seem to realise that **80% of members of Greenpeace are under 25**; young people care. **Old people are to blame** – take my granddad for example.

**Roger Bruff is 81 years old. He lives alone,** but refuses to downsize from the three bedroom house that he brought his family up in. **This is common of many of the elderly** – you don't need a big house unless you have a family! I visit granddad once a week. I often check his green and brown bins, but the recycling one is always empty. His argument is that he's too weak to be sifting through his rubbish, yet he's not too weak to get to the pub every week. In granddad's driveway is a car – **a big beast that guzzles** fuel. Like all old people, he's stubborn, and refuses to walk anywhere, but drives. My granddad is not a rare case, **he is a typical old person: selfish.** His house is always bathed in heat with his radiators kicking out toxic waste 24/7.

**What's my point? It isn't young people who are to blame.** We are not **the homeowners, the car drivers, the consumers.** We are not those who fly around the world on holiday. **What do we do?** We go to school, we see our friends. It is the elderly who do these things – they torture and destroy the world. They **crucify** nature in their desire for satisfaction. Yes, all young people have mobile phones, but we use them for **music, phone calls and internet**, not like the wasteful elderly who make a call once a year.

**The youth of today are the most educated people in the world; our conscience does not allow us to be wasteful.**

## PLANNING DAFOREST:

For these long answers you need to spend a few minutes planning before you begin writing. A great idea is to write DAFOREST down the side of your page and actually plan the sentences you will write for each one. It might look something like this:

**D: 'You need to give up smoking'**

**A: 'Smoking sucks'**

**F: '60% of teens have tried smoking'**

**O: 'Everyone hates people who smoke'**

**R: 'Do you want to die young?'**

**E: 'Smoking is barbaric and torturous'**

**S: '8/10 smokers want to quit'**

**T: 'smoking is expensive, harmful and anti-social'.**

Everyone plans in different ways, so I won't prescribe any set way of doing it. However, you must make a plan – examiners have to read them, and they give off a great first impression if you've got things like DAFOREST in your plan. If you do not plan your answer, the likelihood is your work will begin strong (with your best ideas) but get weaker and weaker as you write. A well planned answer, on the other hand, can stay strong throughout the entire piece.

## AUDIENCE

For questions 5 and 6 you need to think very carefully about your audience. Consider the two very similar tasks:

**Write a letter to your head teacher in which you argue for the abolition of school uniform.**

**Write a letter for the student newsletter in which you argue for the abolition of school uniform.**

The purpose of both of these texts is exactly the same: arguing for the abolition of school uniform. A good answer would be riddled with DAFOREST and all the other topics in this chapter. However, the difference in target audience – the head teacher or fellow students, will make both pieces very different.

The first thing to think of is the tone and level of formality you write in. To the head teacher you would write with a formal and polite tone, whereas there would be room for a more relaxed tone in the student newsletter. You have to consider the person reading the text and how you can best communicate with them to achieve your purpose.

The second thing to be aware of is the art of second guessing. This is an often overlooked area which basically means this:

**Anticipate your reader's response and argue against that.**

So, when writing to your head-teacher arguing that he / she should abolish school uniform, you would anticipate these responses:

- School uniform encourages good behaviour
- Some students couldn't afford the expense of smart clothes for school
- It's a time honoured tradition

With this as your starting point, you then argue against these ideas e.g.

I know you will say that school uniform encourages good behaviour, but I disagree. At the moment, students are using their poor behaviour to express their individuality. Allow students to wear what they want to school and their clothing choices will become their expression of self, resulting in better behaviour across the school.

By pre-emptively striking against your audience's response you are effectively winning the argument before they even have a chance to make their points: it's a very clever technique and the examiners love it!

## SATIRE

If you are trying to hit the A / A\* grades in your exam then it is important to use satire or humour in your writing. Satire is the use of humour to attack injustice. On TV, the best example is the show 'Have I Got News For You'. In writing, the Irish satirist Jonathan Swift (1667 – 1745) wrote some very popular satire. In his essay 'A Modest Proposal' he suggested that poor Irish people should sell their children as food to rich Americans. Of course he wasn't serious, but he laid his essay out in a very formal way. The point was to mock heartless attitudes towards the poor.

Let me show you an example of how you can use satire in your own writing. Imagine the following question:

**Write a letter to your fellow school students in which you inform them of the benefits of school uniform.**

Now consider the following response:

The current school uniform gives us a sense of community and belonging. Because we wear the same clothes there is no room for bullying over appearance; we all look the same, so we all treat each other the same.

This is a very acceptable paragraph, but it fails to jump off the page and grab the reader's attention. The next two examples use humour to engage the reader. See what you think:

By wearing the shirt, tie and blazer, we are preparing ourselves for the world of work and our future careers. Dressing up for school today shows you how to dress up for McDonalds tomorrow or, maybe for the lucky few of us, even Primark.

It is a well known fact that imposing a school uniform results in improved behaviour from students. Indeed, since introducing the blazer last year, we have been able to completely dispose of the behaviour system completely. One Year 7 student even told me "wearing a tie makes me want to be a better boy". Other have said that just slipping on school shoes stops them from swearing.

Indeed, school uniform makes us behave so well, I suggest we start wearing it at home too. The magical effect will mean we never back chat our parents again!

As you can see, the use of tongue in cheek humour makes the piece far more engaging. If you are naturally a funny person, then attempt to use some of that humour in section B of the exam.



## ARTICLE FORMAT

If you are asked to write an article of any kind (newspaper, magazine, web-page etc.) then you should use the following format:

Your subheading (first paragraph) should summarise the whole article in a few sentences.

Your headline should be short, snappy and alliterative. It should hint at the topic of the story but not give too much away.

### **PENSIONERS POLLUTE!**

As current surveys show 75% of old people hold young people responsible for today's problems, Andrew Bruff suggests today's youth are not the key offenders; the elderly had the planet ruined before they even arrived.

Look around you. What do you see? Do you, like me, see a world that is full to the brim of rubbish, creating pollution by the bucket-load? Do you see wasteful consumerism gone crazy, an insane, insatiable desire to have everything? Now look up from this problem; who are those doing these things? Is it, as a recent survey shows, young people's fault? No way.

In a recent article the writer argued that her make do and mend generation knew something about how to save the environment. Of course, what she failed to mention was why they were make do and mending in the first place: World War 2. Oh yes, whilst grandma was washing her tin-foil, granddad was being shipped off the Poland, destroying natural landscapes with tanks, clogging up the Polish air with fuel emissions from the machinery of war (not to mention the killing).

I am a young person. I care. I care about the environment, I care about pollution, I care about recycling. Old people don't seem to realise that 80% of members of Greenpeace are under 25: young people care. Old people are to blame – take my granddad for example.

Richard Smith is 81 years old. He lives alone, but refuses to downsize from the three bedroom house that he brought his family up in. This is common of many of the elderly – you don't need a big house unless you have a family! I visit granddad once a week. I often check his green and brown bins, but the recycling one is always empty. His argument is that he's too weak to be sifting through his rubbish, yet he's not too weak to get to the pub every week. In granddad's driveway is a car – a big beast that guzzles fuel. Like all old people, he's stubborn, and refuses to walk anywhere, but drives. My granddad is not a rare case, he is a typical old person: selfish. His house is always bathed in heat with his radiators kicking out toxic waste 24/7.

The rest of your article should go into more detail about the topic. It should ideally include quotations from interviews with relevant people (you make these up).