

Hello S1, hopefully you have been working through these tasks and building up your skills in personal writing.

Now I want you to choose one of the suggested essays near the end of the unit and write your own! Email any completed essays to me at Haley.1.Russell@whec.edin.sch.uk. Also email me with any questions you may have.

Ms Russell

Splish

Splash Splosh

A Personal Writing Unit

IN THIS UNIT I WILL:

Reading:

- Recognise how writer's language choices can enhance meaning
- Identify features of language such as simile, metaphor, effective

word choice and the way sentences are written

- Read extracts which effectively describe personal experiences

Writing:

Make notes to help me recall information

Generate, develop and recall ideas

Recreate a personal experience for my reader, describing my thoughts and feelings in detail

BY THE END OF THIS UNIT YOU WILL:

- ✓ Have analysed a range of extracts based upon personal experiences
- ✓ Planned and produced a piece of personal writing

Splash, Splash, Splish

Splash! It was freezing cold. The water covered me before I surfaced again. Liam nearly jumped on top of me. For the third time I had fallen off the inflatable and into the water. Not my fault... Liam had pushed me off. We both laughed together.

We struggled aboard the inflatable again. This time, I softly pushed him in front. He pushed me back, kicking me right off the edge. I was furious!

I heard the lifeguard's whistle. A sharp ear-piercing sound that echoed through the pool area.

I could feel myself blushing the colour of dark, red blood. I stood out in the water like a bobbing buoy in the middle of the ocean. Liam did not care about how I felt, nor about the lifeguard striding up to the edge of the pool like an angry giant. I aimed a punch at Liam, but he was too quick for me and lashed out with his feet. He hit me square in the stomach and I went under again.

I coughed and spluttered while Liam held my head under. I struggled for breath. I had had enough. I lashed out like a blinded animal, not caring where my fists landed. I felt my knuckles hit something soft and then my head was clear and I kicked up to the surface, greedily gasping for air.

Now Liam was spluttering, and trying to catch his breath. I had obviously winded him. He coughed and coughed while I just lay back in the water smiling at him. The lifeguard hauled us in by our necks and we both squeaked like mice. Liam walked in front of me. The walk from the pool was awful. The other swimmers cheered and clapped as we were marched out.

In the locker room I kept my head down, embarrassed. I felt ashamed and empty at the same time. Why did I hit out like that? I gathered together my towel and swim bag and headed for the exit. Liam was waiting for me. He had a smug satisfied look on his face. I walked past him pretending not to notice him at all.

But he stuck out his leg and I clumsily tripped over it. My anger rose again to the surface but when I picked myself up all I could see was his outstretched hand. We shook hands, and laughed together. Then we walked home as if nothing had happened.

I now know from that experience that nothing is solved by fighting and violence. Liam and I have never fallen out since that day. And, if we ever did start to squabble we would both remember the undignified scene in the swimming pool and how it proved absolutely nothing!

Setting

You must ensure that your story has a clear setting. This means that you must describe where the experience takes place in an interesting way. The reader should be able to picture the place you are describing.

Activity One

Look again at the story the pupil has written. Pick out the words and phrases from each paragraph which tell us something about the setting of the story.

| <i>Paragraphs</i> | <i>Phrases which describe the setting</i> |
|-------------------|---|
| 1 | |
| 4 | |

| <i>Paragraphs</i> | <i>Phrases which describe the setting</i> |
|-------------------|---|
| 6 | |
| 7 | |

In your group, discuss how the pupil has described their setting. What makes it a good description? Notice that they do not begin in the usual way, 'One day my friend and I were at the swimming pool...'

Activity Two

On your own re-write the following paragraph and try to make it sound much more descriptive and interesting.

One day my friend and I went to the beach. There were a lot of people there. They were sitting on towels and deckchairs. There was lots of water and sand. It was a sunny day.

Personal Response

When you write a personal experience essay you must include lots of PERSONAL RESPONSE. This means you should describe your thoughts and feelings throughout your essay. It is important to describe how you REACTED to what happened to you.

Activity Three

Copy out the table below and draw a line matching up the pupil's personal response to the feeling he is trying to describe.

Personal Response

Feeling

'We both laughed together'

embarrassment

'I was furious'

happy

| | |
|--------------------------------------|------------|
| 'I could feel myself blushing' | anger |
| 'I lashed out like a blinded animal' | humiliated |
| 'The walk from the pool was awful' | infuriated |

These descriptions tell us how he felt about and how he reacted to what happened to him. REMEMBER TO DO THIS IN YOUR ESSAY!

Reflection

Another way you should describe your feelings is to reflect upon what happened to you. You can sometimes begin your essay by reflecting back on a time or you can reflect on important moments throughout the essay. You must, at the very least, include some reflection at the end of your essay.

REFLECTION tells us what someone has learned from their experience or how they feel about it, looking back.

Activity

Read the following final paragraphs. In your jotter:

- Identify the statements which reveal reflections
- Try to explain what each person has learned in each extract

Extract One

I now know from that experience that nothing is solved by fighting and violence. Liam and I have never fallen out since that day. And, if we ever did start to squabble we would both remember the undignified scene in the swimming pool and how it proved absolutely nothing.

Extract Two

But the very next day we made up and were the best of friends again. At the time we were both very angry, but when I look back it all seems so trivial now.

Extract Three

Now, when I think back to the argument, I realise how silly it was. To think I shook with rage and said what I did all because of a silly lollipop! I laugh now when I think about how childish I was in primary school. But I also learned a very important lesson. Friends are too precious to lose over trivial little disagreements.

Extract Four

Looking back, I realise how childish it was for me to get so angry over such a little thing. If I had calmly explained how I felt rather than losing my temper and having a tantrum then my mum would probably have taken my point of view much more seriously. It was a difficult lesson to learn but at least now I'll know how to behave if a situation like that ever crops up again.

Now, working with your group, read the following two essays based upon the titles below. Highlight the words or phrases which effectively describe setting in one colour and the words or phrases which show reflection in another colour

- A time when I felt angry
- A time when I got was accused of something I did not do
-

Planning Your Essay

When preparing to write an essay it is very important to PLAN. This helps you to organise your ideas before you concentrate on describing what happens. In your plan you should note down what you are going to focus on in particular parts of your story.

The 'Splish, Splash, Splosh' story is made up of nine paragraphs. Below is part of the plan that the pupil prepared before writing their story. Look back at the story and fill in the missing parts of the plan.

Paragraph 1: Describe my setting. Make this sound interesting.

Paragraph 2:

Paragraph 3: Describe how the lifeguard blew his whistle. Mention the sound it made.

Paragraph 4:

Paragraph 5: Describe how scared I was when I was under the water. Explain how I got free.

Paragraph 6:

Paragraph 7: Describe what happened when we got back to the locker room. Explain how I felt.

Paragraph 8: Describe how we made up.

Paragraph 9:

This pupil's paragraph plan was very detailed and you do not always have to plan every paragraph!

Choose an essay title from those listed below. When you have chosen, write out a plan for your essay. You are then ready to begin writing.

- A time when I felt angry
- A time when I got was accused of something I did not do

Good luck!