These tasks will help you prepare a piece of writing to enter the

Orwell Youth Prize 2024, on the theme of ‘Home’

LESSON 6: START WRITING

Now that you have decided on a topic, started to research it, and chosen a form to write in, you are ready to plan and write your entry to the Orwell Youth Prize.

One question to ask yourself could be: *How can I best express my thoughts and feelings about home*? Not bad.

Another question might be: *How should I plan purposefully and write imaginatively about home to interest and challenge my readers*? This is a longer and wordier question. But it is also a better one. Why? Because it reminds you that good writing is not simply about telling people what you think, it’s about taking your reader on a journey that they will enjoy.

**Rule 1**: Structure is king! You can alter your expression as you go along and get feedback from others. But a well organised piece will always be a satisfying piece.

**Rule 2**: Plan your work. You could perhaps write a good piece without proper planning but remind yourself of this fact: someone who has planned will write a better one!

**Tasks**: carry out the three planning tasks below and then write your piece. Good luck!

1. Conquer your blank page. Start with a **free write:**
* Set a timer for 5 minutes
* Write whatever comes into your mind on the topic of home – it doesn’t matter if it’s not great writing, it doesn’t even need to be full sentences, all that matters is you **keep writing for the full 5 minutes**.
* Don’t read back what you’ve written or make any edits until the 5 minutes is up.
* When the 5 minutes is up, have a look back at what you’ve got. Highlight/underline anything which seems interesting. A solid idea will start to emerge.
1. **Plan**. Looking at these notes, decide on the key points/ideas you are going to cover and put them in a number order – the order the reader is going to find out about them.
2. **Copy and complete** **one** of the two boxes below to test out your structure.

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| **Beginning** | **Middle** | **End** |
| What do I do first to engage my reader? | How will the piece develop in interesting ways? | What feelings, conclusions or questions do I want to leave my reader with? |

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| **Hook** | **Initial Problem** | **Developing Problem** | **Climax** | **Resolution** |
| How am I grabbing the reader – taking them into the world of the piece? | How am I setting up the main idea or challenge that the piece will explore? | How am I complicating that challenge, taking it in a new direction? | How am I taking the piece to the most important point – of conflict or revelation or decision? | How am I going to end the piece? With answers or more questions?  |