

These tasks will help you prepare a piece of writing to enter the Orwell Youth Prize 2025, on the theme of 'Freedom is...'



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 freedom?* Not bad.

Another question might be: *How should I plan purposefully and write imaginatively about freedom 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: Plan your work. Writing is a creative exercise, and your ideas may change along the way, but having a plan in place before you start will make sure you have a sense of where you're going, and keep you on track if you get stuck. You could perhaps write a good piece without proper planning – but remember, this is a competition, and someone who has planned will probably write a better one!

Rule 2: 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. Whatever form you write in, your piece should have a beginning, middle and end, to take your reader on a journey.

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 freedom – it doesn't matter if it's not great writing, it doesn't even need to be full sentences, you could start by just listing everything that comes to mind when you hear the word 'freedom' – 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 – these might just be words or short phrases, or full sentences which could form an opening to your piece. A solid idea will start to emerge.
2. **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.
3. **Copy and complete one** of the two boxes below to test out your structure.

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?

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?