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Matric Transactional Writing Guide 2018

These are the possible transactional writing pieces that you will receive in Paper 2 this year.

1. Email
2. Blog
3. Eulogy
4. Editorial
5. Speech
6. Open Letter
7. Formal Letter

Remember these important aspects of ALL transactional writing:

- Who is your **audience**?
- What is the **purpose** of your communication?
-

Based on the answers to the above two questions make sure that you adopt

- The correct **REGISTER** (formal or informal)
- An appropriate **TONE** (the emotion you wish to convey)
-

Pay close attention to your **DICTION** (your choice of words)

1. EMAIL

Format

TO: Claire Baker <clebayka@gmail.com>
DATE: 12 December 2018
FROM: This would be you, however remember not to use your own name in the final exam; make up a name. (just ensure that you sign your email with the same name)
CC: Ms X <email address> (this is anyone else that is indirectly involved in the email and who needs to know the information being conveyed but is not required to respond directly)
BCC: Ms Y <email address> (this is if you want to send a copy to someone but you don't want the recipient to see who is getting the copy).
SUBJECT: A short description of the reason for the email. Should not be longer than 8 or 10 words max.

Content

Introduction : explain who you are and why you are writing.
Body : Provide further details about why you are writing.
Conclusion : suggest the action that you would like to see being taken as a result of your email.
Greeting : If you know the person well it can be an informal.
 Informal greetings = regards, thanks, cheers, love.
 If you do not know them well it must be formal.
 Formal greetings = Best regards, Kind regards, Thanking you in advance for your assistance in this matter,

2. BLOG

A blog is a personal website set-up and written by one person or group. It contains the writer's own experiences, observations or opinions.

FORMAT

- The blog itself – the website – must have a name.
- The individual blog entry must have its own catchy sub-title relating to that particular entry.
- The entry must be dated.
- Your name/pseudonym must be represented somewhere on the page – either in the blog's name, or at the end of the entry.
- Should have a short introduction that hooks the reader into reading the rest of the blog. May use devices like rhetorical questions or anecdote.

PURPOSE

- You must have a clear idea of what the **intention** of your blog-post is. What do you want to accomplish? Inform people? Influence their opinions? Compliment or complain? Review something?
- Your entry must be targeted at a specific **audience** and your tone, register and diction must be appropriate to that audience.
- **REGISTER** = usually informal or mixed.
- Blogs are often **controversial or thought-provoking** and attempt to encourage comment.
- The blog may be somewhat humourous, satirical, sarcastic or it may be serious.
- Blogs are usually topical. It may deal with issues that are of local importance or are of importance to the writer.
- Blogs are **subjective** and opinionated.
- Assertive but not aggressive.

3. EULOGY

A eulogy is a formal **speech** that pays tribute to someone who has died. It is usually delivered at the funeral of that person. Eulogies usually make that person sound a lot more impressive or nicer than they actually were because they focus on the deceased's strong points and positive characteristics.

FORMAT and CONTENT

INTRODUCTION: Because it is a speech it must start with a greeting of some kind. Bear in mind that the **greeting** must be appropriate to the setting (a funeral). Also, briefly introduce yourself and describe your relationship to the deceased.

TONE: A good eulogy does not have to be completely sombre, just appropriate. There can be some humour, especially if you relay anecdotes that cast the deceased in a positive light or that conveys the personality of the deceased. The tone will also depend on how the person passed away.

AUDIENCE: Keep the family and loved ones in mind. Be positive, but not fake. Do not say anything that would offend or shock the audience.

CONTENT: Give basic information about the deceased. Assume that your audience knows some things about the deceased so touch on key points about them or things that were notable about them. Remember your purpose is to celebrate their life and what they meant to people.

Do not read out a list of personal qualities. Rather illustrate their good qualities with a story about them.

You may refer to how they died, but this is not always advisable or necessary. If it was an old person who lived a long life you can mention that they died peacefully in their sleep of old age, but you wouldn't want to comment on the manner of death of someone who died violently or intentionally. It may well be advisable to use **euphemism**.

4. EDITORIAL

POINTS TO REMEMBER:

- The editor is the head of a newspaper – therefore, s/he has some authority and their opinion carries some weight.
- The editor always needs to consider her/his readership when writing. (Remember, this links to tone).
- An editorial usually comments on a **topical or controversial issue**.
- The editor always links **the current issue** with **the bigger picture** and does not get bogged down with trivial detail.
- Editors need to **take a stance** on the issue under discussion, and offer some **thought-provoking statements**.
- There is an element of responsibility in an editorial. An editor can encourage action with regards to an issue – for example encouraging readers to vote in an election, or to protest a particular policy, or to obey the rules of the road – but cannot incite violence or disobedience.

FORMAT AND STYLE

- Must have a striking **heading**
- Must include a **date**.
- Register = academic and **formal**
- Assertive but never aggressive.
- Rhetorical questions can be used to get readers to think.
- The difference between journalism and an Editorial is that journalism (news articles) report facts whereas an Editorial offers the point of view/opinion of the editorial committee.
- Close, tight structure.
- NEVER use bullet points, slang or colloquialisms.

5. SPEECH

Speeches can vary greatly in content and purpose so pay very close attention to the instructions given to you in the question.

Take note of these two important things:

1. Who are you speaking to?
2. What is the purpose of your speech? (to entertain, persuade, inform, educate etc)

Your speech must start with a **greeting** (*Welcome everyone, and a good day to you all...*) and a brief **introduction** (*I stand here before you as a member of the South African Dental Association...*).

Use **signposting** : tell your listeners what you are going to talk about throughout the speech (*Today I am going to talk to you about why it is important to brush your teeth. I am going to explain clearly both the aesthetic and the hygiene reasons for such a practice. Firstly, hygiene:...*).

Other good speech writing techniques:

- Support simple statements with research or stories. Personal or humorous anecdotes are acceptable in speeches. (*Just the other day I forgot to brush my teeth in the morning and it prevented me from kissing a really hot guy*).
- You may use quotes, but do so sparingly. Not more than two in a speech.
- Use rhetorical questions at strategic points. (*Have you ever felt self-conscious about having bad breath?*)
- Make sure your speech has a good logical progression.
- End memorably.

6. OPEN LETTER

An open letter is a letter that is addressed to a particular person or group of people but is intended for public circulation. It is usually published in a newspaper or on a website.

INTENTION:

There are many reasons why one would choose to write an open letter. Once again, pay close attention to the instructions that you have been given in the question.

- As a last resort to ask the public to judge the letter's recipient. (see for example, Ahmad Kathrada's open letter to then-President Zuma)
- To state the author's position on a particular issue (often used by public figures)
- As an attempt to begin or end discussion on a particular issue.
- To focus the public attention on the recipient of the letter.
- For humour.
- To communicate publicly something that has to take place as a matter of formality.

FORMAT:

- There must be a salutation (Dear...) and farewell. The farewell can be adjusted to fit the tone and content of your letter. (Yours in striving for a better future, John Dlamini or Hopefully awaiting your response, Lindi Langenhoven)
- Date (usually on the top right of the page)
- Formal. Even if it is humorous, the register will still be formal.
- Stick to the topic.
- Be as factually accurate as possible (you can't lie in an open publication).

7. FORMAL LETTER

FORMAT:

	(YOUR ADDRESS HERE) 15 Eckstein Street Observatory Johannesburg 2198
	<i>Skip a line</i>
	12 June 2017
	<i>Skip a line</i>
(RECIPIENT ADDRESS HERE) The Principal St Barnabas School for Brave Boys 42 King James Street Kensington 3532	
	<i>Skip a line</i>
Dear Mr Booysen (If you don't know the name of the person you are writing to, use Dear Sir/Madam)	
	<i>Skip a line</i>
<u>Request for permission to address pupils about sexual harrassment</u>	
Paragraph (introduce who you are and why you are writing)	
Paragraph (provide relevant information or motivation to enable the recipient to make a decision)	
Paragraph (describe the action that you hope will be taken as a result of your letter)	
Yours faithfully (or sincerely)	
	<i>Skip three lines (and sign in the gap)</i>
Ms G.Girl	

NOTE: Formal letters are always formal and polite.