DP English A-Dr. Bates

Commentary Guidelines and Practice

The following are basic guidelines for commentary writing. Remember the *purpose* of commentary is to use close reading to explore the literary features ***and*** effects of an extract.

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| Summary of events/action; importance to the overall work | Briefly summarize what is happening in the extract:  Why is it important to understanding the whole work? |
| Main theme(s)/  elements in the extract | Theme:  Explanation:  Evidence (in the form of a quotation): |
| Analysis of literary features (such as imagery, figurative language, alliteration,  assonance,  personification,  etc.) Focus **only**on the extra ct itself. | Who is the speaker:  Who or what is the intended audience:  What key literary features/elements/techniques/devices are used? |
| -Point of View  -Voice  -Tone/mood/  atmosphere | What is the narrative point of view? How does it affect the reader/audience?  Describe the voice used by the author. How does it affect the reader/audience?  Describe the tone, mood and atmosphere of the extract. How do they affect the reader/audience? |
| Techniques of language and sound (such as  word choice, syntax, verb tense, alliteration, assonance, onomatopoeia,  rhyme, rhythm, meter, etc.) | Technique:  What is its effect on the extract and reader/audience?  Technique:  What is its effect on the extract and reader/audience?  Technique:  What is its effect on the extract and reader/audience? |
| Structure  -Overall ‘look’  -Stanzas or paragraphs  -Length of lines or sentences  -Caesura, enjambment or end stop  -Sonnet, free verse, blank verse | What is the overall ‘look’ of the extract? Is it significant to the meaning?  Explore the other elements of structure. How do they contribute meaning? |
| Essential quotations. This is the *evidence* in the **P**oint, **E**vidence, **E**xplanation chain | Quotation & location  Quotation & location  Quotation & location  Quotation & location |
| Key points to restate in your conclusion | Key point:  Key point:  Key point: |