

Crafting Introductions

Task One

What are the qualities of a 'good' introduction?

Task Two

Look at the following examples. What advice would you give these students in order to improve their introductions?

Example 1

Using integrated literary and linguistic approaches, explore the presentation of marriage and relationships in Emily Bronte's *Wuthering Heights* with wider reference to Anne Bronte's *Agnes Grey* and Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*.

Wuthering Heights can be seen as a novel full of gender ambiguity. Traditional ideals of feminine weakness can be found in both Isabella and Linton and masculine qualities of strength and power are represented in the characters of both Catherine and Heathcliff. However, despite this androgyny, women are often degraded and bound by the conventions of a patriarchal society - a society which had bound the author herself as she published under the sexually ambiguous pseudonym of Ellis Bell. The pressures placed on women to conform to social expectations can also be seen in Bronte's sisters' work and particularly in Anne Bronte's *Agnes Grey* where the central character Rosalie Murray marries for financial rather than emotional reasons, similar to Catherine Earnshaw. Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* also explores the pressures placed upon women through the juxtaposition of the various Bennet sisters and their differing attitudes to love and marriage.

Example 2

With detailed discussion of the role of Jane and wider reference to the role of Antoinette, explore the position of women in Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* and Jean Rhys' *Wide Sargasso Sea*

Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* can be described as a social commentary, revealing the prejudices against females in the Victorian Era. One of Jane's greatest obstacles is her classless, orphan state, which is only rectified at the end of the narrative. Antoinette too faces a number of obstacles as she struggles with her outsider status as the daughter of an ex slave owner and a "Martinique girl". Both, however, try to reject the silence which society seems to want to them to conform to as they try to resist the many patriarchal attempts to, quite literally, silence them and prevent them from becoming educated. This struggle against oppression has different outcomes for the two women. Jane is independent and equal to Rochester at the end, although only through discovering her class and gaining wealth. Antoinette's fate is much different as she loses everything, even her mind and name, and is ultimately locked away when too wild to be tamed by the patriarchal society.

Example 3

Using integrated literary and linguistic approaches, explore the presentation of obsession. You should make close reference to Ian McEwan's *Enduring Love* and wider reference to *The Sea*, *The Sea* by Iris Murdoch.

Ian McEwan's *Enduring Love* is one of the most chilling books on obsession. It centres on Jed Parry's growing obsession with Joe Rose which ultimately has destructive consequences. Iris Murdoch's *The Sea*, *The Sea* also looks at the insidious Charles Arrowby's obsessive desire to destroy his ex-girlfriends's new marriage. The motives for each of their obsessive behaviours are very different as Parry's mental weakness leads him to imagine a relationship with Rose that does not exist, whereas Arrowby's intention is to make his ex suffer because he is bitter that she is now happy. Obsession is also interesting in terms of the impact that it has on the victims, resulting in them having a complete lack of power over their own lives. The romance genre does not always deal with happy relationships and these texts subvert the stereotypical loving relationships which often exist within the genre.