# Government of South Australia LogoSACE Board Logo2024 English Literary Studies Subject Assessment Advice

Overview

This subject assessment advice, based on the 2024 assessment cycle, gives an overview of how students performed in their school and external assessments in relation to the learning requirements, assessment design criteria, and performance standards set out in the relevant subject outline. It provides information and advice regarding the assessment types, the application of the performance standards in school and external assessments, and the quality of student performance.

The Subject Renewal program has introduced changes for many subjects in 2025; these changes are detailed in the change log at the front of each subject outline. When reviewing the 2024 subject assessment advice, it is important to consider any updates to this subject to ensure the feedback in this document remains accurate.

# School Assessment

1. For this assessment type, students produce up to five responses to their text studies; together, the response comprises a maximum of 5000 words. One of these responses can be oral or multimodal in form. Two of the shared studies texts must be from the text list. The poetry texts should include poems by at least three poets, with at least one of the poets selected from those on the text list. One text response must be a critical perspectives task in which students consider one or more texts (or a selection of texts in the case of poetry) from two critical perspectives.

Teachers can improve the moderation process and the online process by:

* thoroughly checking that all grades entered in school online are correct
* ensuring the highlighted performance standards on Schools Online match those on the Learning and Assessment Plan
* ensuring student work consists of clean copies that are not annotated with teacher comments
* ensuring all files, including audio and videos, are uploaded in the correct file format, with clear student identification number

Assessment Type 1: Responding to Texts

1. Teachers can elicit more successful responses by:

* requiring a range of text forms – including essays, considered paragraphs, multimodal pieces, annotated scenes, and, if suitable, comparative writing
* constructing tasks that allow students to explore the interconnection between literary conventions and stylistic features and how ideas, perspectives, values, attitudes, and emotions are conveyed in literary texts.

1. The more successful responses commonly:

* showed a strong analytical approach and established the development of an argument in terms of how authors position readers to develop ideas and viewpoints. Therefore, those students who could expand their analysis beyond how devices shape an understanding of theme and character to how ideas, values, and perspectives are developed achieved more highly against the performance standards
* demonstrated clear evidence in terms of connections between texts in comparative writing tasks, rather than writing paragraphs with ‘blocked’ discussion of texts
* showed a range of text forms — including essays, considered paragraphs, multimodal pieces, annotated scenes, and if suitable, comparative writing
* conveyed insight into the range of ways in which authors of different text types use such conventions and stylistic features to influence readers
* analysed the effect of language and stylistic features, unpacking how they convey meaning, character, tone, and so on
* used evidence appropriately and fluently to support observations
* communicated in a style and register that was clear, logical, and convincing
* demonstrated an understanding of literary metalanguage and used it effectively to support their responses
* often used a clear, individual voice, demonstrating a distinct and unique writing style and a lack of reliance on group scaffolding.

1. The less successful responses commonly:

* created formulaic texts that only included character analyses or theme discussions, which limited students’ ability to discuss their knowledge and understanding of how authors employ stylistic features and position readers to contend with issues within texts
* adopted a perceived academic style or ‘overwriting’ that served to make their work less precise and clear and often involved convoluted sentences or misused terms
* approached the critical perspective task as if the perspective in question was a device to only explore aspects of characterisation rather than a ‘lens’ through which to interrogate ideas, perspectives, and values
* attempted to answer questions that were limiting rather than challenging; for example, writing on a general theme without any requirement to analyse and develop a clear point of view
* included ‘blocked’ quotations rather than embedding ‘pithy’ quotations or did not integrate quotes into their own sentences
* examined only one perspective or two very similar ‘lenses’ in the critical perspectives task (e.g. moral and philosophical, or feminist and gender)
* examined more than two perspectives, which generally lead to less developed insights
* viewed a critical perspective through a narrow lens that became more a recount of character than an examination of how the position adopted in a critical perspective reflects a particular interpretation of a text, society, and culture
* created texts that often seemed ‘formulaic’ and were, in essence, only slight variations of the same response, with students following the same argument, discussion points, and conclusions
* attempted comparison that was either arbitrary in nature or too ‘blocked’ and without appropriate analysis of similarities and differences
* produced texts that required additional basic editing and formatting
* created multimodal responses (e.g. a discussion of critical perspectives over a shared meal) that were poorly executed in terms of creating a persona for the audience to suit the form and/or did not allow for close analysis but provided only more superficial comments on readings of texts.

Assessment Type 2: Creating Texts

For this assessment type, students create one transformative text linked to another text with a writer’s statement (1500 words, or 9 minutes, or equivalent in multimodal form), and one written or multimodal text (1000 words, or 6 minutes, or equivalent in multimodal form).

Teachers can elicit more successful responses by:

* requiring different text types for the two tasks to avoid repeated text types such as two persuasive texts. This can limit achievement in Ap1, KU2, and KU3
* dissuading students from choosing source texts in the transformational task that possess limited literary merit; for example, artwork such as paintings and photographs, or very popular songs, where the emphasis is more on musical effects and production values rather than lyrics with sophisticated and perceptive qualities.

1. The more successful responses commonly:

* demonstrated an in-depth awareness of the text type (its stylistic features and conventions), audience, and purpose
* demonstrated an understanding and analysis of devices in both texts within the transformation task
* showed breadth and creativity in the development of different text types across the assessment type
* conveyed skill in creating a persona and in identifying a target audience in oral text productions
* ensured there was the provision of evidence. Teacher grades and comments were supported, where possible, by videos, audio recordings, cue cards, transcripts, photographs, and other relevant artefacts
* conveyed an understanding of audience and purpose relevant to each text type
* showed thought to the ‘weighting’ of each section of the transformation task to enable sophisticated insights into the similarities and differences between the source text and transformation
* created transformation tasks where the text was clearly converted or reimagined from the source text but still explored a similar concept or idea
* discussed the contemporary issue investigated along with an evaluation of the group processes, including group life and group roles.

1. The less successful responses commonly:

* read notes in oral presentations without due consideration of the performance, audience, and purpose elements of a speech or presentation, or the relevant text type
* repeated text types, for example, two persuasive texts. This can limit achievement in Ap1, KU2 and KU3
* adopted a monotonal voice in presentations without considering register and audience
* created recounts where there was minimal evidence of thought given to the development of ‘voice’ or the skill of indirect observation
* were not clear in regard to the conventions of the text type they were creating
* resorted to a ‘retelling’ of the text types rather than comparative analysis in the transformational task
* wrote step-by-step statements of how they wrote their transformations, rather than analysing connections and ideas between the texts
* used source texts in the transformational task that lacked literary merit or devices; for example, artwork such as paintings and photographs, or very popular songs, where the emphasis is more on musical effects and production values rather than lyrics with sophisticated and perceptive quality
* created transformational tasks where the source text was too similar in text type and style to the transformed text
* created straightforward informational texts that contained minimal literary or aesthetic merit, thus limiting the opportunity to draw on their knowledge and experience of genre and literary devices
* wrote only brief or cursory comments in the writer’s statement.

The subject outline states that ‘students evaluate some of the literary conventions of the original and transformed text types’, but by employing photographs, artwork, or musical compositions, this reduces the students’ ability to achieve highly against KU2, KU3, An1, and An2. If students are passionate about these art forms, then these could be explored in the second AT2 task, for example, a short story in which a painter, musician, or photographer struggles to achieve their artistic vision.

# External Assessment

## Assessment Type 3: Investigation

### Part A: Comparative Text Study

This task involves the choice of one text that has been shared by the class paired with an independently selected text and results in an essay of up to 1500 words comparing both texts. The teacher may specify which shared text is to be used or provide opportunity for students to select from the range of text types studied: drama, prose, poetry, or film. When students select poetry as a text for the essay, it is advisable to narrow the study to the work of one poet and multiple poems, and a range of stories by one author if they select short stories. Please check the 2025 subject outline for changes to this assessment type.

*The more successful responses commonly:*

* involved the selection of an independent text with literary merit that provided ample scope for detailed analysis
* involved a focus on a manageable concept that was able to be explored within the limit of 1500 words
* were the result of well-developed questions that included a comparative element, a sense of the role of the author, and an element of tension that led to a well-considered answer
* involved an argument that was clearly comparative and involved an exploration of the similarities and differences between texts
* involved a line of reasoning within and between paragraphs so that each unit of thought was logically structured and the whole essay involved a carefully organised argument
* involved an appropriate introduction that foregrounded the central thesis and argument of the essay
* involved well-considered paragraphs that started with clear topic sentences and were structured cohesively with logical transitions
* involved final paragraphs that avoided repetition and instead took a ‘big picture’ approach to the question, finalised the argument, and drew convincing conclusions that supported the overall thesis of the essay
* involved fluently incorporated references to a range of stylistic features and conventions
* involved the exploration of the features of the text types being analysed and drew attention to the contrast between stylistic features when the text types differed
* congruently connected the stylistic features identified with appropriate evidence and a valid effect (positioning the reader or viewer; presenting an idea)
* kept devices at the forefront of their analysis, supporting their overall argument or line of reasoning
* involved evidence that was fluently embedded into the line of reasoning so that quotations, for example, were naturally incorporated into sentences
* when selecting a television series, more successful responses focused on an episode or a shorter arc than an entire series
* were polished responses in which students had checked spelling, particularly of key words such as authors’ names and terms central to the metalanguage being used; had appropriately used punctuation, particularly of problematic elements such as apostrophes, colons and semi-colons, and the delineation of titles; had applied the correct techniques of quoting from texts; had carefully checked the accuracy of word choices, particularly in ensuring the correct use of verbs; and had been careful in the use of synonyms, realising that words have particular nuances and choosing an uncommon or unfamiliar word might inadvertently result in using it out of context.

*The less successful responses commonly:*

* had a question that was either too general or that limited the scope of their response or did not have a comparative stem
* did not have a structured argument and were, instead, a collection of observations about texts that lacked a holistic line of reasoning
* involved a sequential, non-comparative exploration of texts
* involved only a few very lengthy paragraphs in which a logical structure was not sustained, or involved many small paragraphs that skimmed over the texts
* sometimes were written in a convoluted or overly wordy style that lost clarity
* paraphrased or incorporated quotations without acknowledgement into their response
* quotations involved large slabs of quotation that were not integrated into the line of reasoning
* were a recount of events, or descriptions of characters, rather than an analysis of thematic concerns and stylistic features
* focused on a descriptive discussion of author biography rather than textual analysis
* involved the labelling of stylistic features without analysis of the way in which these features were used to reinforce or present ideas, or provided examples that were not clearly connected to that device or explanations about the effect of the feature that were illogical
* focused on an individual poem or short story as one of the texts that did not provide students with ample material to construct in-depth arguments
* were unbalanced, giving much more attention to one text than the other
* included images from films that did not add to their analysis but rather distracted from it, and often meant the reader was left to infer meaning.

Assessment Type 3: Examination

### Part B: Critical Reading

The texts displayed a rich range of language, stylistic features, and conventions, and both literal and figurative meanings. This allowed access for less able students to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding. However, the level of analysis possible in these texts also provided opportunities for more able students to demonstrate higher order thinking and sophisticated performance, particularly in relation to the level of depth they provide in their analysis and the ways they structure their responses.

The quality of student responses was pleasing, and there were few short answers and unfinished papers. Students seemed confident and comfortable working and communicating in this medium, and teachers had clearly prepared their classes for the task. In further developing responses to the examination, it is worth noting the following:

* Students who planned and organised their responses developed more successful answers than those who may have written a lot of material but allowed responses to become unstructured and repetitive. Very long paragraphs became convoluted and lost focus. It is important that students understand that quality, not quantity, attracts better marks.
* While there is some facility to copy and paste sections of text within the electronic platform, students who integrated quotes and examples into the line of reasoning fared better than those who used the copy-and-paste function to insert material without wisely incorporating it.
* Practicing editing electronic responses to tasks during the year is highly recommended. It would be good advice to students to ‘reflect before you write’ and/or certainly to review and edit what has been written, even if the time put into this means writing fewer words in each answer.

The more successful responses commonly:

* addressed the question, ensuring that all material was relevant to the answer provided
* answered the question immediately rather than beginning with generic observations that were largely irrelevant
* avoided the repetition of material, and organised the responses around clear ideas that were logical and accessible or around a concept, creating a more focused response and allowing them to develop a complex and thought-provoking stance
* ensured that the stylistic feature being explored clearly connected, in a logical and demonstrated way, to an idea or ideas
* avoided didactic explanation of stylistic features that relied on discussion about an implied audience (e.g. ‘the metaphor makes the reader think about …’)
* avoided exploring the effect of stylistic features as generalised emotional and/or cognitive outcomes (e.g. ‘helps the reader be more interested in the text’; ‘makes the text more enjoyable’, etc.)
* used specific labels of the stylistic features that revealed an appreciation of the metalanguage appropriate to the text type
* were aware that authors are in control of the text; authors use, explore, construct, and so on
* used sophisticated metalanguage and appropriate examples when discussing conventions and stylistic features, and clearly connected these with an effect (in positioning the reader and emphasising ideas)
* provided detailed evidence from the texts to support points and ensured that these references supported the idea being explored
* chose succinct quotations that were integrated into the line of reasoning and avoided copying large slabs of text
* understood the conventions of the text type represented in the examination, particularly features of opinion pieces, narratives, and memoirs
* made connections and contrasts between texts when comparing, discussing texts in an integrated way
* understood that ‘How’ in each question implied what stylistic and language features have been used by the authors
* appropriately divided their time, paying heed to the recommendations of length as an indication of the relative ‘weight’ of the question
* selected key stylistic features of the texts about which to write, rather than following a formula that would lead to the exploration of peripheral techniques
* avoided slipping into recount by centring the answer on the question and ensuring – when appropriate – that a particular stylistic feature was at the forefront of the analysis
* were written with accuracy, precision, and an appropriate application of terminology.

The less successful responses commonly:

* struggled with structuring their answers; they wrote topic sentences that simply repeated the question and did not provide a thesis statement in answer to the prompt
* used a list-like approach to organise the response (‘also …, additionally …, furthermore …, also …’) and slipped into recount by not maintaining a focus upon the central idea at the start of points
* struggled with sentence structure where the sentences ran on, or in which the subject-verb agreement was inaccurate, or in which word choices made the meaning obscure
* showed poor verb choices which also affected these responses, particularly when describing the actions of the author/s (‘the author transcribes the characters’; ‘the author elucidates the plot’, etc.)
* colloquial or non-conceptual adjectives inhibited the sophistication of the writing (describing ‘strong imagery’ or ‘heavy metaphors’, etc.)
* often relied on quotations without explaining or ‘unpacking’ them, or did not provide evidence to support their claims
* discussed characters as if they were real people, not constructs of the authors
* listed techniques but did not provide examples or when they did, they did not show how this information helped to address the question; paragraphs often became observations about stylistic elements without a logical connection to a concept
* used metalanguage incorrectly, mislabelling devices and leading to incorrect evaluations and analysis
* tended to repeat the ideas and/or devices that had been explored in previous questions
* separated the two texts in the comparative question into individual paragraphs and therefore did not address the comparative requirement of the question
* may not have proofread their work, as they often had grammar and spelling errors such as incorrect spelling of authors’ names, no capital letters, wrong there/their, and so on.

### Suggestions about possible answers to the questions

The texts are accessible but also display a range of language and stylistic features and conventions, and both literal and figurative meanings. This allows access for less able students to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding. However, the level of analysis possible also provides opportunities for more able students to demonstrate higher order thinking and sophisticated performance, particularly in relation to the level of depth they provide in their analysis and the ways in which they structure their responses. Some examples of differentiators may be how they explore the nuances of each question, how they organise their responses, and how they compare texts in Question 3.

**Note**: It is *not* required that students address everything in the suggestions below. These are a guide to *possible* responses students may provide. Equally, students may write about concepts or devices *not* covered in these notes.

### Notes on the questions

Question 1

Q 1. Compare the concerns and aspirations the authors explore in their texts (200–250 words)

There is a comparatively short answer required for Question 1, but it does require students to compare – to consider the ‘similar and different concerns’ evident in the texts. In effect, responding to this question at the start requires students to come to some understanding of what each text is ‘about’ and in what ways the texts are similar and different in terms of the ‘concerns and aspirations’ explored by each writer. This understanding then sets students up for responding to Questions 2 and 3, which require students to consider how the ideas are presented in each text.

Students might consider:

* These very different texts – the poem and the speech of the guest speaker at a valedictory event – have much in common in terms of the encouragement of the *personal and spiritual renewal* of the audience.
* Both texts reveal the authors’ intentions to inspire their audience to *tend to their own needs and well-being* in positive and creative ways: ‘May this be the year that you delight / in seeing how much joy you can extravagantly spread’ (Asbo) may be compared with the call to students by Popova to resist ‘cynicism’ as ‘the sewage of the soul’ and cultivate ‘vigorous, intelligent, sincere hope’.
* Both writers are concerned with *new beginnings*. In Asbo’s poem, such blessings encourage [breaking] ‘the yardstick of impossible expectations’ to achieve an enriched and fulfilling personal life. Popova, however, demands that the graduate students resist ‘self-comparison [that] becomes inevitable’, resist ‘[growing] embittered about the goodness of the world’ in order to contribute in a positive way to making the world a better place. While the speech at the valedictory event clearly has a different function from that of the reflective poem, Popova is demanding that students seek fulfilling lives (‘nourish the soul’) but, more importantly, seek to make a positive impact on their world – ‘strive to be uncynical, to be a hope-giving force, to be a steward of substance’.
* Both authors express the *aspiration of hope*, with both seeing this as being contained within creativity. Popova states that ’Whatever your specific vocation ends up being, your role as a creator of culture will be to help people discern what matters in the world’ and to ’be a hope-giving force’. Likewise, albeit in a more implicit way, Asbo suggests that the reader ‘turn off the television … / in order to pick up the writing pen, the paintbrush’. This, when followed by a stanza about ’seeing how much joy you can extravagantly spread’ and ’discover just how much beauty you can recklessly shower’, implies that the creative spirit results in joy and beauty.
* Relatedly, both authors share *concerns regarding ’self-comparison*’ (Popova) and ’impossible expectations’ (Asbo), both of which arise when, to use Popova’s metaphor, we ’waste energy on those who pass you by on their electric bikes’.

Question 2

Q 2. In her poem, how does Kayleen Asbo encourage readers to embrace life? (200–300 words)

Question 2 asks the student to analyse the stylistic features that Asbo uses to reinforce her thematic message. A survey of possible features is provided below. It is not expected that the student will cover all these points and there may be other devices that the student will consider, too.

Students might consider:

* Asbo begins her poem with her take on the *trope* of Spring as the time of spiritual and physical renewal – ‘may your own courage blossom to open more brightly to truth and love’.
* As the *title* of the poem suggests, this text is structured as a blessing, using *repetition* of the *modal verb* ’may’ throughout the poem to capture the blessings that the author wishes to see visited upon the reader.
* The language conventions of the ‘blessing’ sustain the religious and sacramental *tone* of the poem throughout – ‘May this be the year that you delight / in seeing how much joy you can extravagantly spread’, ’Let this be the year that you turn off the television …’, and so on.
* Asbo uses *contrast* between what she wishes for the reader and the alternative possibility, such as in the first stanza where ‘the hours of darkness’ and ‘the fearful places of your heart’ are contrasted with ‘the presence of light’ and ‘your own courage’. Asbo provides a real sense of urgency reflected through a *time motif*, where, within the first stanza, she guides us from those ‘hours of darkness’to ‘each passing day’*,* where ‘fear’is vanquished and with ‘courage, light grows’. Through this structure, Asbo conveys a choice for the reader between a negative situation and the clearly more favourable, and blessed, positive situation.
* The sustained *anaphora* provides the structure, but the variations in line length and lines per stanza enable the poem to take on both the religious formality of the ‘blessing’ but also the more informal cadences of the speaker’s voice. The reader is surprised and comforted by the ordinary nature of the blessings conferred when you ‘silence the talk radio chatter’, etc. The reader is drawn in by the combination of the formal structure of the poem and the simplicity of what the blessings may bestow on the reader being directly addressed.
* Further *imagery* of the ‘dusty piano’ and the ‘care-worn heart’ (both images of neglect) as ‘play[ing] in harmony with the chorus of creation’ allows the reader to recognise the joyous experience that embracing life can offer.
* Such *euphonous* language, brought about through the *alliteration* of the ‘chorus of creation’ allows the reader to experience the uplifting nature of embracing life.
* Using *second person pronouns*, Asbo also constantly engages with the reader and there is an intimacy within this connection. The fact that Asbo asks the reader to ‘wrap your arms … around your life … and hold it close’*,* furthered by the *kinaesthetic image* of having once done that, ‘do the tango’*,* *symbolically* inspires the reader, with passion and energy, to abandon the constraints of societal norms and embrace the ‘messy wonder’this one shot at life that we have.
* *Personification* in how the world is described by Asbo as ‘thirsty’ and ‘hungry’ suggests that an embrace of life extends beyond the personal to the general, as if the world too needs the beauty and truth that the individual reader can offer – a need that is physical and therefore urgent.
* It is within the *resolution* of the poem that Asbo distinctly reveals to the reader that life itself is a sacred commitment, through not only suggesting that one could elope (*symbolic* of a lifelong union) but with somewhat of an *imperative*, stating that one should ‘marry their soul to its deepest longing’,and through the majestic image of a grand ‘wedding feast’share this celebrated and cherished union with a world that is hungry and craving for sustenance. Even the word ‘forsaking’, with its allusion to the marriage vows of ‘forsaking all others’ furthers the conceit and suggests the solemnity of the message that embracing the needs of the self can be transformative.

Question 3

Q 3. – In her speech, how does Maria Popova inspire her listeners to live with purpose? (400–600 words)

Question 3 asks the student to analyse the stylistic features that Popova uses to reinforce her thematic message. A survey of possible features is provided below. It is not expected that the student will cover all these points and there may be other devices that the student will consider, too.

Students might consider:

* After the declaration about the ‘soul’ (and the somewhat obscure reference to ‘chicken soup’) and the nod to spring as the time of physical and spiritual renewal (‘blistering to balmy’), Popova slips straight into the *anecdote* about the bike, which enables her to present some information about her own immigrant background and her struggle to achieve an education. More importantly, this *anecdote leads into the point about the damaging effects of ‘self-comparison’*, acknowledging, what the audience all know, that comparison and competition are at the core of the education system: ‘I felt like everyone else was on a motorized bike and I was just pedalling myself into the ground’.
* The bike *anecdote,* which becomes an *extended metaphor,* and the *brief summary of her own experiences* lead directly to her main argument and the theme of her address: that if one surrenders to a loss of agency and ‘the most toxic by product of this helplessness … cynicism’, you not only diminish your own life but that of others as well.
* Popova’s many *metaphors* connect her message to the *language of science*, using that discipline of irrefutability within her argument, to emphasise the indisputable nature of her idea of the importance of living with purpose. Indeed, there is a ‘livingness’ and ‘deadness’ to the contrasting metaphors she uses. Popova speaks of the ‘calcification of the soul’ that is brought on by cynicism, and contrasts this with ‘hope’ as ‘a stretching of ligaments’, suggesting vitality. She then states that the students ‘are about to enter the ecosystem of cultural production’, where being a ‘creator of culture’ will offer them the chance to ‘[steer] them away from meaninglessness and toward the meaningful’. She further suggests that these students must ‘Develop an inner barometer for your own value’, another scientific metaphor that implies how living with purpose equates to living according to a code that is a measurable as weather conditions, as opposed to ‘all those silly-sounding quantification metrics that will be obsolete within the decade’.
* Popova also considers *artistry within her contrasting metaphors*, discussing the difference between a ’vandal’ and a ’sculptor’, and between a ’buzz’ and a ’symphony’. Of course, Popova’s most powerful metaphor comes in the form of the electric bike ’that makes you feel if only you could pedal faster … you’d be worthier of your own life.’ Through each of these metaphors she presents to her listener a strong case for the choices available to them, and strongly suggests the choice that must be made: to live a life with meaning and purpose, one in which they ’Choose to lift people up … and in doing so you lift yourself up.’
* One of Popova’s main contentions for her speech is that cynicism is nothing more than ‘sewage of the soul’. This short, sharp sentence heightened with *olfactory imagery*, clearly elucidates this point, but then, this point is compounded through her use of consistent *contrasts* ofnegative verses positive connotations, which leaves the audience in no doubt about the path that needs to be taken, the one filled with purpose and ‘being good to one another’*.*
* Popovaalludes to the eloquent and insightful E.B. White, who said that the role of a writer is to *‘*lift people up’. This simple *visual image* is inspiring to carry forward into a world where often writers ‘lower [people] down’.
* Popova sustains the *direct address* of the audience — ‘your role as a creator of culture will be to help people discern what matters in the world and why’ and noticeably uses *imperatives* and direct address for much of the speech: ‘strive to be uncynical, to be a hope-giving force, to be a steward of substance. Choose to lift people up, not lower them down’.
* In the latter part of the speech, Popova focuses on the *dichotomy* – ‘construction versus destruction’ – and advises students to reject social media and, drawing again on ‘the stability of your soul’ and the *metaphor* of the ‘electric bike’ as reminders to the audience of the coherence of the structure and message of the talk.
* The entire latter part of the address focuses on this imperative to be positive and creative in your ‘inner life’ and in ‘your outer contribution to public life’. The speech *concludes with the warning* ‘never let the temptation of marketable mediocrity and easy cynicism rob you of the chance to ennoble public life and enlarge the human spirit’ – and what is good for society is good for the ‘soul’.
* Using second person pronouns throughout much of the text, she urges her audience to ‘Never let the temptation of marketable mediocrity and easy cynicism rob you of the chance to ennoble public life and enlarge the human spirit’, telling them directly both of the dangers the world offers and the role that these young people have to play within it. Her emphasis through *repetition* of ‘you’ in ‘But you – you – are in a very special position’, encourages the audience to see this as a very personalised message for the graduates of Annenberg, and thus aids them in recognising Popova’s desire to inspire them to live a life of purpose as they seek to make their mark on the world.
* There is a *carefully crafted unity to this speech* – starting and ending with the ‘soul’ reference with its relevance fleshed out. Popova also returns to the bike metaphor: ‘So, as you move through life, pedal hard …’ but ‘don’t waste energy on those who pass you by on their electric bikes … the moment you focus on that you vacate your soul’.
* Because Popova has chosen to identify the point of graduation not as an achievement or endpoint per se but a starting point in a life that should be dedicated to personal engagement with the world and social improvement, the speech she has delivered comes across as *more hortatory than congratulatory* and this is inspiring to readers, and presumably to the original audience. ‘Pedal forth’!

## Criteria for Assessment

* Knowledge and understanding — KU1, KU2, and KU3
* Analysis — An1, An2, and An3 (not An4)
* Application — Ap2 and Ap3 (not Ap1)