



Key stage 2 English writing standardisation exercise commentaries

Pupil A – working at greater depth

This collection includes:

- A) a Viking saga
- B) a guide
- C) a news report
- D) a webpage
- E) a review
- F) a narrative

All of the statements for ‘working towards the expected standard’, ‘working at the expected standard’ and ‘working at greater depth’ are met.

The pupil can write effectively for a range of purposes and audiences, selecting the appropriate form and drawing independently on what they have read as models for their writing (for example, literary language, characterisation, structure)

Across the collection, the pupil writes very effectively with assured control in a range of forms for different purposes and audiences, choosing and using a variety of texts as models and drawing on their wider reading and independent research.

In the compellingly written Viking saga (piece A), the pupil shows sophisticated awareness of the form, structure and language of such narratives. The first sentence sets the scene (*secret hideout nestled between the trees*), introduces one of the main characters (*Captain Madara of the Uchika clan*) and creates a sense of anticipation (*had summoned a meeting*). A tense atmosphere and sense of heightened emotions are quickly established through deliberate use of short sentences (*Tension filled the air, palpable.*), Captain Madara’s speech (“...*Today we avenge. Kill or be killed...*”) and reference to the warriors’ preparation for battle (*they had been training for this day for many months*).

An account of what happened (*Raising their weapons in agreement, his men quelled any fear*) is interspersed with dialogue (“*Show no mercy – except for Hashitama...*”), which builds up to the battle scene and the final confrontation (*He and Hashitama stood face to face in the centre of the battlefield.*). Throughout, the pupil

sustains the historical setting, manages the chosen narrative form and adopts a deliberately formal style with assurance (*Madara was a seasoned leader, all respected him and dutifully followed any command he set forth.*). The characters of the two protagonists are skilfully revealed through the use of dialogue – and an impression of the gruesome battle scene is captured in a few well-handled and convincing descriptive details (*The grass, now a sea of red, was more a mortuary than a field.*).

Understanding is shown of the Viking background (*a Viking was always prepared for a battle to some degree, such was life living in such a hostile and unpredictable environment*) and the piece has a well-planned structure, evidenced by an engaging opening, tightly-managed development and unexpected ending – the victory of Hashitama over Madara (*Hashitama lifted his fist into the air as the realisation that victory was his washed over him.*). The use of stylistic features such as alliteration (*ferocious fighters... laying limp and lifeless*), similes (*doubt still tried to creep its way into their minds like mold*), metaphors (*a viking was ready to be catapulted into action... sea of red... Words spilled out... bubbling rage... washed over him*) and an ambitious selection of elevated vocabulary (*palpable... seasoned... dismantled... slaughtered... burden... velocity*) helps to create an authentic and engrossing piece in the style of a saga.

In the knowledgeable and confident guide (piece B), a clear introduction and conclusion are used to frame mature and considered advice, organised into coherent paragraphs, each one introduced by a topic sentence and explaining a different piece of advice (*It is likely that as students approach the end of key stage 2 and the SAT tests loom, there will be an increase in homework expectation... Listening skills are vital in year 6.*). It is written from the perspective of an expert, based on research (*with recent studies indicating*) and adopts a formal and authoritative tone throughout (*This guide is written with children about to experience year 6 in mind.*). The piece reflects the pupil's reading, understanding and appreciation of features of such guides, which are authentically replicated here.

Sensible advice is selected to aid a parent with supporting their child (*Parents should include dinner table talk to model speaking and listening,*) and the writer acknowledges different viewpoints (*playing with friends at primary school is a treasured memory for many adults... Children frequently become awash with revision guides, spelling lists, online learning and worksheets*), while maintaining a clear focus on the target audience. The guide includes information, advice and reassurance. The choice of language is subject specific (*higher education... apprenticeship... curriculum... formalised activities... communication*) and also incorporates appropriate use of abstract nouns (*fun... potential... engagement... freedom... expectation... skill... love... guidance*) and one or two idioms deliberately chosen to engage and persuade (*suffering burnout... nuggets of wisdom*).

The well-researched news report (piece C) is presented as a live blog, with a summary of main events offered first (*Round up of latest news*). This is followed by sections posted at different times (*6 seconds ago... 5minutes ago*) identified by a 'subheading'

(*Zelensky directs speech at UN*) and given in reverse order, with the most recent first. Some of the content is delivered in note form as befits a fastmoving news blog. This is a sophisticated and authentic approach to devising such a report, showing understanding of the way news events are delivered 'live' on websites.

The selection of content reflects real life events and demonstrates the considerable research undertaken by the pupil to complete this task. It includes appropriate features such as facts and figures (*with a further 300 civilians injured... is thought to have killed at least twenty people... The UK has provided over 300 missiles*) and comments from relevant people (*"We must continue to fight against evil for Ukraine ..."*... *Analyst Jacob Jones explains, "This is a significant development..."*... *Michael Robinson, Warfare expert, explains, "Russia is inherently secretive..."*). The style incorporates both impersonal features suitable for a report (*on what was thought to be... in retaliation for the financial sanctions imposed against his country*), emotive language appropriate to the topic (*fight against evil... future of democracy... The callous act... wave of devastation*) and informal expressions relevant to a blog (*To be clear... so to speak... war does turn nuclear*). The use of questions (*How have different countries responded to the horror scenes witnessed so far in Ukraine?*) and a link to make a donation (*To donate, click [here](#)*) are small details that add authenticity and show awareness of the reader.

The persuasive webpage (piece D) mimics the style, tone and use of language of such promotional texts, from the dramatic name of the hotel used as a headline (*THE ONE*) to the accompanying tweets that endorse its excellence (*Exceptional stay @theonedubai*). The opening sentence, with the key word deliberately placed first, emphasises the full-blown opulence of the hotel (*Luxury awaits you*). A careful selection of information (*world class spa... 24 hour concierge... 10 different types of pillow... French and Indian cuisines*) and features designed to persuade, such as direct address to the reader (*you would expect*), commands (*Unwind... dine... take a trip*), alliteration (*glitz and glamour... lavish lifestyle*), rule of three (*chandeliers, fast cars and out-of-this-world experiences*) and deliberate use of hyperbolic language (*Every inch of this hotel... Sumptuous, unforgettable stays... have your world opened up*) are combined to create a realistic and impressive webpage. Also included are recognisable clichés, appropriate to this kind of text, used sparingly and with assurance (*there is something for everyone... guaranteed relaxation waits... courtesy of our award-winning chefs*), showing a sophisticated appreciation of the features of such texts.

Similarly, the elements of a Trip Advisor review are faithfully replicated in the entertaining review (piece E). There is an authentic three-word summary (*Scam! Avoid! Lies!*), accompanied by a date and the social media handle of the poster (*Owleyes 2244*). The piece is organised clearly into paragraphs, with the first setting out the writer's expectations based on the promotional material (*Looking at the pictures, anyone would get a bolt of excitement*) and also lulling the reader into false expectations. Subsequent paragraphs provide shocking contrast by detailing the ways in which the hotel has failed to live up to these expectations, supported by relevant anecdotes

emphasising the difference between what was advertised and the actual experience of the writer (*Valet parking – sounds great – until you realise the driver could not care less about your car*).

The style adopted is informal, appropriate to purpose and audience, with the use of the first person sustained throughout (*I thought why not... I have never experienced... I had specified on the booking... I clasped eyes on... we weren't even able*).

Conversational expressions, suitable for a personal review, are used (*Well, what can I say? ... I wasn't holding out much hope... on one of the worst, no – THE worst... my family and I had had enough*) and asides to the reader (*What's not to love you wonder?... As you can imagine... (NOTHING platinum about this place!)*). There is deliberate contrast between what was expected (*warm welcoming arrival*) and reality (*utter shambles*), and exaggeration (*only to find a BEETLE wreaking havoc under a lettuce leaf*), capital letters (*such RUDE customer service... It was a MESS*), and multiple exclamation marks (*I thought wrong!!!... she just walked off!!!*) are used deliberately, in keeping with online writing behaviour, and judiciously to emphasise the writer's outrage and to create humour.

The piece builds up a sense of indignation and fury to the final paragraph, where the poster recounts their decision to leave and their current actions against the hotel (*I demand a full refund from the owner*). The choice of vocabulary includes technical language related to the hotel industry (*customer service... cleaner... receptionist*) and to making a complaint (*full refund... lawyers... trading standards*) and also reflects the sense of personal grievance and disgust of the writer (*Dry, mouldy and completely inedible*).

In the well-controlled mystery story (piece F), the pupil draws on their knowledge of similar stories, and of narratives generally to create an unnerving thriller which engages from the start. The opening paragraph signals that something negative is going to happen (*Such a close call – but it wasn't quite as lucky as I'd thought ...*) but information is deliberately withheld about the coach's destination and the events that follow. Details are gradually revealed (*I'd never heard of the theme park before*) and there is deliberate foreshadowing of events with reference to aspects that are curious (*it didn't have a website... "Bit unusual to organise a last-minute school trip the night before*) providing clues about what happens later in the story.

Characters are deftly brought to life in a few brief details (*she was the type to read stories all day long, even during her own birthday... who usually acts like the class clown*) and the plot, tightly structured, builds up tension with the increasingly bizarre behaviour of the teachers (*She's been banging her head against the seat in front for the last ten minutes.*) and the reactions of the narrator and her friend (*She frowned and leaned closer... An eerie, uncomfortable feeling of dread was beginning to form.*). The suspense is increased by the fact that initially only Susie and Megan are aware of what is happening (*none of the other pupils had noticed a thing*). An atmosphere of suspense and impending doom is further developed through the description of the theme park

(*The entranceway displayed an ancient, yellowed and peeling poster*), the contrast between the enthusiasm of the other children to have a go on the rides (*several of our group climbed up and started messing around on top of them... "This is my kind of thing, let's make the most of being off school!"*) and the narrator and Megan's growing anxiety at what is happening (*"Something bad's going to happen, it doesn't look safe!"*). As pupils are eliminated, the increasing horror of the situation is well-managed, building up to the clever cliffhanger ending, which suggests the two main protagonists have 'won' but also face another deadly challenge (*"Congratulations, you are the final two! Make your way to the ticket office for the final round..."*).

Short, sometimes single-sentence, paragraphs (*Then the music started and the wheel began to turn*), terse dialogue scattered throughout for effect (*"You get in the next one!" she yelled*), use of well-chosen verbs (*herded... whipping... shoving... jostling... creak... spinning... scrambled... dashed... corrode... quelled... froze*) and adjectives (*ancient, yellowed and peeling... metallic... spine-chilling... crumbled... growling... open-mouthed... high-pitched*) and alliteration (*rusted, rickety old rollercoaster*) help to sustain the well-paced narrative and engage the reader. There is occasional use of cliché (*A shiver ran down my spine*) but this does not detract from the overall success of the piece.

The pupil can distinguish between the language of speech and writing and choose the appropriate register

Throughout the collection, the pupil can distinguish between the language of speech and writing, choosing the appropriate register to suit context, purpose and audience.

In the Viking saga (piece A), a formal register is mostly used for the narrative and also for the dialogue, appropriate to the purpose and chosen style of the writing, with the characters of Madara and Hashitama distinguished by Madara's utterances being more formal and noble (*I know not if they are alive or deceased*) and Hashitama's less so (*it's too bad that you chose the wrong path.*), reflecting his youth and lower rank. In contrast, the mystery story (piece F) is written in a less formal style, reflecting the contemporary Y6 narrator (*arriving in the nick of time... her nose was buried in a book... Plus, the last thing I wanted... heading towards a theme park, that was for sure*) and makes effective use of convincing dialogue to convey character (*"This is my kind of thinking..."*) and advance the action (*"We need to get somewhere up high..."*).

A formal register, appropriate to purpose and audience, is used for the guide (piece B) with impersonal constructions (*it can from time to time be challenging*), the passive voice (*This guide is written*) and elevated, sometimes deliberately grandiose, vocabulary (*seeking... cuminating... fruitful... frivolity... treasured*) supporting the convincing and authoritative tone. The tone shifts in the concluding paragraph to reflect the fundamental role parents play, with references to 'love and guidance' being the primary elements in supporting children, and the informality of 'follow the nuggets of wisdom' nestled into the conclusion gives it a warm and accessible tone.

The news report (piece C) has a similarly formal register, appropriate to the seriousness of the subject, again supported by impersonal constructions (*it is no surprise*), use of the passive voice (*what was thought to be*) and formal language (*demonstrating... stated...consequence*) with occasional idioms and more conversational expressions used deliberately to provide contrast and engage the reader (*Boris Johnson has taken to Twitter... Putin has given the green light... knowing what they have up their sleeves*).

The webpage (piece D) is written in a persuasive style, which combines formality to convey the impressiveness of the hotel (*has been meticulously designed... Exquisite oil paintings line the walls... French and Indian cuisines are available*) with informality created by the use of the first person (*our luxurious marina suites... stay with us*) and second person (*you can visit over your stay with us*) to make a connection with the reader. The very informal language of the Twitter reviews offers deliberate engaging contrast to the main text (*Exceptional stay @theonedubai Thank you so much— see you guys again next year!*).

In contrast, the review (Piece E) is deliberately written in a more conversational style, including use of punctuation, typical of similar writing and appropriate to purpose and audience, as though the poster is talking to the reader (*Beach hotel, Well, what can I say?... to make matters worse... I was right to keep my expectations at rock bottom*).

The pupil can exercise an assured and conscious control over levels of formality, particularly through manipulating grammar and vocabulary to achieve this

Levels of formality are carefully controlled, in each piece, according to context, purpose and audience. Grammatical structures and vocabulary are deliberately selected and manipulated to convey different degrees and styles of formality, from the elevated and archaic register of the Viking saga (piece A) to the more contemporary and informal tone of the hotel review (piece E).

In the Viking saga (piece A), long, multi-clause sentences (*Before the first glimmers of morning light hit the earth's surface, Captain Madara of the Uchika clan had summoned a meeting in the secret hideout nestled between the trees... As Madara went in for the kill, Hashitama made an intelligent move – crouching, creating an opening for himself to cut off Madara's legs*) and short, single-clause sentences (*It was a horror scene... Hashitama stood, angered*) are juxtaposed to create prose with an old-fashioned cadence. Balanced sentences (*Approach this battle with as little care for the wellbeing of Hashitama's men as he himself had shown my brother... Others preferred to let their men do the work, take the risk and then claim victory afterwards but not him, he was a well experienced fighter in his own right*) create rhythmical flow, while passive constructions (*has been mercilessly murdered... their plan could be foiled... ready to be catapulted*), parallelism (*Target practice, strategic planning, training regimes and sleepless nights – they knew what was to come and they were ready*) and modal verbs (*We would make... We could never*) all contribute to the sense of considered formality and gravitas.

The distinctions between the age and rank of the two protagonists is reflected by the formal speech of the elder, Madara, contrasting with the Hashitama's more informal way of speaking.

The choice of vocabulary and phrases also supports the chosen register, with ambitious (*momentary... steely... strategic... permeated... poised... furrowed... riled*) and deliberately archaic (*forth... quelled... foiled... awaiting... strewn... awash... befell*) language deployed in both narrative and dialogue. Concrete nouns (*battle... fists... weapons... warriors... blade... axe... blood... body*) are used to convey the reality of the battle and abstract nouns (*wellbeing... fear... determination... mercy... satisfaction... victory... anger... cowardice... defeat*) the values and ideas examined in the story.

Multi-clause sentences are used in the guide (piece B) to explain complex points and create a formal register (*Innocuous fun with classmates may not be as harmless as it seems, with recent studies indicating that children who engage in frivolity during lesson hours are almost six times less likely to pass the Statutory Assessment Tests (SATs) that assess the skills learnt throughout key stage 2*). Passive verb forms (*Parents are advised... Support should be offered... workload is spread out*) and other impersonal constructions (*it can from time to time... there is an extremely high correlation... It is likely... Listening skills are*) help to create a confident and commanding academic tone. This is further accentuated by the use of expanded noun phrases (*the necessary basics in reading, writing and mathematics... The final year of primary school... inattentiveness of males in class... the 'handsup' technique seen lower down the school*) that add precision, and fronted adverbials (*Within a person's lifetime*) and parenthesis (*Statutory Assessment Tests (SATs)*) that emphasise and clarify key points.

Ideas are linked through a range of effective cohesive devices, including repetition (*Primary school... The final year of primary school*), substitution (*nine years... This period of time*), adverbs (*Instead*) and topic (*develop speaking and listening skills...the ability to speak and listen*) to create fluency. The choice of language is formal and ambitious (*advances... fundamentals... formalised activities... cuminating... distinguish... frivolity... correlation... social interaction... formulating*) with a number of words and phrases from the lexical field related to education and primary schools (*curriculum... parents' evenings... optional activities... structured timetable*) adding to the formality and realism of the piece.

The news report (piece C) is also largely formal in register, though the style is more journalistic than academic, with passive constructions used to support an impersonal reporting style (*to be put on... was hit... have been forced... has been issued*) and verb forms manipulated carefully to show the timeframe of different events, for example in the third section there are secure shifts between the present perfect (*have shared... has given*), the present (*claims... explains... is*), the present progressive (*are becoming*) and the simple past (*prohibited*). Multi-clause sentences are used to show the relationship between events (*Approximately 5 million civilians have been forced to flee Ukraine over the past two weeks as war wages on and their livelihoods are torn apart*).

Nominalisation is deployed for succinctness (*the true volatility of the situation... Preparation of the missiles... the unexpected ferocity... its support for Ukraine*) and modal verbs to convey possibility (*How would Russia's military aggression... could do more*) and necessity (*We must continue... the west will have to...*). Vocabulary choices underline the gravity and formality of the style and are adventurous (*addressed... demonstrating... consequence... instigate... unjustifiable... callous... realisation...*) and terms, including abstract nouns (*volatility... democracy... evil... safety...*), and words specific to the political topic of the war in Ukraine (*military aid... presidential office... full-scale nuclear attack... direct military action... financial sanctions... united powers...*) contribute to the authenticity and gravitas of the piece.

In the webpage (piece D), a degree of formality, intended to impress prospective guests, is conveyed in the use of passive verbs (*has been meticulously designed*) and impersonal constructions (*guaranteed relaxation awaits*) and is combined with informality in the use of second person (*you can visit over your stay*) and commands (*Devour succulent steak*) to address the reader directly and make them feel the text is personal to them. Expanded noun phrases (*A lavish lifestyle of chandeliers... luxurious marina suites, each designed by world-renowned designer, Florence De-Zuma... 10 different types of pillow to suit all posture preferences*) emphasise the exceptional experiences on offer, and vocabulary, including nouns (*luxury... glitz glamour... chandeliers... splendor*), adjectives (*lavish... out-of-this-world... world class... fully equipped... sumptuous... unforgettable... luxurious world-renownedExquisite ...private... famous triple-Michelin-starred... award-winning... tantalising succulent... freshly-made*) and alliteration (*lavish life-style*) is deployed to create an impression of excellence, uniqueness and grandeur. The tweets provide contrast, written in an informal, chatty style to convey previous guests' enthusiasm for the One Hotel (*Thank you so much– see you guys again next year! ... Absolutely amazing – so sad to be leaving today*).

A range of sentences are used in the review (piece E) to convey the writer's fury at their experience of the One Hotel and create an informal tone. This includes questions (*Beach hotel? Well, what can I say?*), statements (*The windowsills were rife with dead bugs and dust, and when I managed to find a cleaner and demanded it be cleaned, she just walked off!!!*) and commands (*DO NOT DO IT*). Elements of formality are conveyed through passive and subjunctive constructions to suggest the powerlessness and frustration of the writer (*we had been promised... demanded it be cleaned*). Expanded noun phrases are used to describe aspects that were included on the website (*diamond-dust beaches lapped by idyllic crystal clear ocean... Stunning hotel rooms complete with a whole host of unrivalled, top quality amenities*) contrasted with the reality (*RUDE customer service from a receptionist... print outs from the internet stuck onto bits of cardboard!*) and long sentences to explain the issues (*Valet parking – sounds great – until you realise the driver could not care less about your car and proceeds to scratch the entire side of it on a lamppost!!!*) are alternated with short ones to express the writer's viewpoint (*I thought wrong!!!... As you can imagine, I was livid*). Informal, conversational

sentences (*Let's start with the greeting... It was a MESS!!!!*), interjections (*no – THE worst, piece of steak*) and asides to the reader (*you only live once... (NOTHING platinum about this place!)*) add to the colloquial impact of this piece. There are secure shifts between verb forms, including modals (*would get... could not... would need*) to convey experiences combined with comments and suggestions.

In the mystery story (piece F), the writer moves confidently between levels of formality as the story unfolds, using ellipsis (*Such a close call... Bit unusual*), asides (*that was for sure... (well, muddy field)*) and contractions (*as I'd thought*) to create a conversational tone, as well as more formal constructions (*There was nothing we could do for the rest of the journey but dwell on the seriousness of our situation*) in the narration. Extended, multi-clause sentences allow the pupil to develop essential details in the plot (*The crowd were jostling around us, and before I knew it, we were standing in front of a carousel*), while short sentences are deployed to vary the pace and for dramatic effect (*It was too late... When the ride stopped, they were gone*). Expanded noun phrases add precise and well-observed detail, but are not over extended (*ancient, yellowed and peeling poster... rusted, rickety old rollercoaster... a screeching metallic sound*). The dialogue not only helps to convey character, but varies in register, with more formal utterances from the teachers (*Move along now, move along... Make your way to the ticket office for the final round*) contrasted with more informal ones from pupils (*ain't it?... Hey, you're not allowed*). Vocabulary is carefully chosen to create vivid images and build up an unsettling and threatening atmosphere (*eerie... Feeling of dread... violent outbursts... deserted... peculiar... spine-chilling... tinkle*). In some cases, the vocabulary itself is not particularly ambitious, but is used with skill and deftness to convey precise and striking details (*Open-mouthed, eyes wide, a cold sweat on our necks*).

The pupil can use the range of punctuation taught at key stage 2 correctly (for example, semi-colons, dashes, colons, hyphens) and, when necessary, use such punctuation precisely to enhance meaning and avoid ambiguity

A range of punctuation is used correctly – for example:

- **commas to clarify meaning**
 - *Raising their weapons in agreement, his men quelled any fear, reflecting back at Madara their own determination...* (piece A)
 - *As the soldiers filed in, Hashitama appeared, signalling to his own army...* (piece A)
 - *With love and guidance, the odds of your children achieving highly...* (piece B)
 - *From the world class spa, complete with three infinity pools and eight saunas, to the fully equipped gym...* (piece D)
 - *The crowd were jostling around us, and before I knew it, we were standing in front of...* (piece F)

- **punctuation to indicate parenthesis**
 - *The grass, now a sea of red, was more a mortuary than a field* (piece A)
 - *Statutory Assessment Tests (SATs)* (piece B)
 - *Enrolling a child in clubs, particularly if they are a boy, can provide them...* (piece B)
 - *The number of deaths as a consequence of attacks on several Ukrainian buildings, including a primary school, has now risen to 96...* (piece C)
 - *The UK, a member of the UN and a country with a substantial military budget given its size, has publically expressed...* (piece C)
 - *The car park (well, muddy field) was deserted* (piece F)

- **colons, semi-colons and dashes to mark the boundary between independent clauses**
 - *This had come as no surprise to the men; they had been training for this day for many months.* (piece A)
 - *This provides an additional layer of challenge; a child cannot sit complacent, comforted by the knowledge that formulating an answer is optional.* (piece B)
 - *The British Red Cross has warned that tensions are continuing to rise and violence is increasing – they are urgently seeking supplies...* (piece C)
 - *Despite this new wave of devastation, it is thought that Russian plans to take the capital are severely behind schedule due to the unexpected ferocity shown by Ukrainian fighters – a realisation sure to have angered Putin.* (piece C)
 - *Unwind on our own private stretch of sugar white beach or engage in activities Dubai is famous for: pick up designer fashion on a shopping trip...* (piece D)
 - *Devour succulent steak or crunch into freshly made salad – the choice is yours.* (piece D)
 - *As usual, her nose was buried in a book; she was the type to read stories all day long...* (piece F)
 - *I realised none of the other pupils had noticed a thing: they were chatting away without a care in the world.* (piece F)

- **colons to introduce a list**
 - *they are urgently seeking supplies such as: clothing, money to provide shelter, medical supplies and toiletries...* (piece C)
 - *anyone would get a bolt of excitement at the prospect of staying here: diamond-dust beaches lapped by idyllic crystal clear ocean; enchanting rose blossoms lining the promenade...* (piece E)

- **speech punctuation/inverted commas and other punctuation, for example comma after a reporting clause, and punctuation inside inverted commas**
 - *“Show no mercy – except for Hashitama himself. Leave him to me,” Captain Madara continued... (piece A)*
 - *“We must continue to fight against evil for Ukraine but also for the future of democracy,” he stated... (piece C)*
 - *She continued, “I’ve read about things like this happening – adults’ behaviour changing, violent outbursts, losing the ability to speak. It’s dangerous Susie.” (piece F)*
- **hyphens to avoid ambiguity**
 - *stay-at-home order (piece C)*
 - *triple-Michelin-starred restaurants (piece D)*
 - *award-winning chefs (piece D)*
 - *last-minute school trip (piece F)*
 - *spine-chilling piano music (piece F)*
 - *high-pitched voice (piece F)*

Throughout the collection, apostrophes are used with accuracy both for contractions, for example in piece E (*What’s... Let’s... wasn’t... aren’t... I’ve... weren’t*) and for singular possession, for example in piece C (*Ukraine’s... NATO’s*) and for plural possession, for example in piece F (*adults’... boys’*). Commas are skilfully deployed to avoid ambiguity, for example in piece A (*His men stood poised, awaiting his signal, brows furrowed, fists clenched around weapons*) and to control long, multi-clause sentences, for example in piece B (*This period of time is the first stage of a child’s education, designed to equip them with the necessary basics in reading, writing and mathematics so they may go on into high school to hone their skills before seeking higher education or an apprenticeship*) and in piece C (*The school, closed to pupils but being used as a medical centre to provide care for civilians caught up in attacks, was hit in a coordinated attack on several buildings*).

There is also assured use of dashes in place of commas to emphasise the end of a sentence, for example in piece A (*“Show no mercy – except for Hashitama himself...”*) and in piece B (*At such a time as this where technology use is wide spread, the ability to speak and listen is wavering within the population – and yet it is such a vital skill at school*). Inverted commas are used for quotations, for example in piece C (*promising ‘Unlimited assistance to the country’*) and to denote the specific use of an educational term, for example in piece B (*‘hands up technique’... ‘no hands up’*).

There is also evidence of a combination of punctuation being used deliberately and adroitly to achieve particular effects, for example in piece E, the use of quotation marks, brackets, capital letters, a dash and exclamation marks are effectively deployed to indicate the writer’s disgust (*Entering the restaurant with my ‘platinum’ card (NOTHING platinum about this place!), I clasped eyes on one of the worst, no – THE worst, piece of*

steak I've ever seen in my life!). Similarly in piece F, ellipsis, along with other punctuation, is used to add to the sense of tension and menace (*"It's not just that" she whispered, pausing for effect. "The teachers are all acting strange. Look at Miss Shaw..."*... *"Congratulations, you are the final two! Make your way to the ticket office for the final round... Ready to play hook a duck?" I froze in shock – it was Miss Shaw, her voice laced with evil...*). There are occasions when punctuation is not completely accurate, for example instances of comma splicing, or where long, multi-clause sentences would benefit from some additional commas, but these do not impede the clarity of the writing or detract from the overall achievement of the pupil.