**Spider and Fly**

**EA Practice – Planning an Essay and Writing Introductory Paragraphs**

**Plan** a response and **write an opening paragraph** in response to “*The Spider and Fly*” (below)

**Follow these planning strategies**

1. Note **the title** of the text. Make a **prediction** before you read. **Ask:** Is the title likely to be a key to meaning? Could it be symbolic?
2. Read the text at least twice. Ask:
* How am I being **positioned to view characters**? Who am I being positioned to sympathize with?
* What **concepts** are explored? This is where you should **brainstorm synonyms for concepts**.
* What is a **main, universal idea** promoted? What **supporting ideas** are conveyed?
* **How has meaning in the text been constructed** in order to position me in this way? Annotate the text using a code (e.g. b for binaries, n for narration and so on) for evidence related to **t-c strategies**. (genre, binaries, narration, representation, symbolism and metaphor, stylistic features.) (Note the verbs used in the QCAA strategies document: **genre:** conform or challenge; **binaries**: underpin, privileged, marginalized, stabilize, undermine; **narration**: position audience; **symbols and metaphors:** significantly contribute to meaning; **stylistic features and literary techniques:** shape meaning. Try to use these verbs in your analyses.)
* **How do I apply w-c-c strategies?** First up, use the word **ideology in the introduction and when you unpack the binaries**. Show how ideologies clash in the text. For example, you could use the words**values, attitudes and beliefs** in conjunction with **ideology and characters** in your binaries paragraph.  Secondly, when showing how characters, groups, places or ideas are constructed in order to convey meaning and position the reader, use the words **represented** and **constructed** quite freely. Thirdly, devote **a whole paragraph to the ideology** underpinning the text. Bang on a bit more generally about ideology in the conclusion. Finally, if a **cultural idea** (gender, race, class, age, sexuality, and environment) is activated in your reading of the text you could devote a paragraph to that or integrate references to the cultural idea throughout your response, especially where ideology is being analyzed. (You need to brush up on what is meant by ideologies and be able to name and discuss some (e.g. humanism, capitalism, materialism etc. Writing knowledgeably about ideology is very evident and highly valued in the two QCAA exemplars for "Survivor" and "Dear Mother and Father".)
1. This is the point at which you can begin to construct your main theme statement and supporting theme statements.
2. Write **your introductory paragraph**:
* Begin with universal theme statement. (Also name text and identify genre.)
* Provide 1-2 sentences on content of text in relation to theme statement.
* Introduce one or more supporting ideas.

You will thus establish the main points/ideas/interpretations you will develop in the body of your essay. The essay must be structured primarily around ideas which are expressed in topic sentences.

**The Spider and the Fly**

Up in the dusty corner of the room where the dim light of the fading day hardly reached, a spider sat utterly unmoving at the centre of its intricate web. A fly, tired of buzzing against the dirty, cracked window pane, started to explore the room, and moved towards the dark corner.

Down below, a wasted man stirred feverishly on an unmade bed. He tried to say something, but the words wouldn’t come out of his parched lips. Not that it would have made any difference – there was no-one to listen to him. He’d been a bright young man, born in the countryside, surrounded by groves of coconut palms and the emerald green of rich paddy fields. His family had worked hard and never had much money but, looking back, life had been happy. Everyone in the village was his friend, and he’d fallen in love with the sweetest girl, his neighbour’s daughter with whom he had grown up.

Then the blow had struck; drought and some terrible disease that had got the few poor rice plants and turned them black and rotten, reduced the village to utter poverty. He was an ambitious young man. He wanted money and he wanted it fast so that he could marry his girl and take her away from this suffering. He thought the streets of the great city were paved with gold, so off he set, a young man eager to make his fortune.

Of course, the great city was not as he had thought. Life there was hard. Too many people driven from the countryside were fighting to make a living. They survived – just – in dirty little rooms or even on the streets, doing an odd job here or there. The descent was easy and fast. Misery led to mixing with the petty criminals who found it easier to make a living by illegal than legal means. This in turn led to an underworld of drugs, and sadly, inevitably, to sickness and desertion.

A last great spasm shook the body of the man. His life’s troubles were over.

The fly flew into the corner. It hit something. It couldn’t move. It struggled wildly but the foul sticky substance held it.

The spider moved slowly from the centre of its web.

**Relevant genre terms:**

* allegory - the expression by means of [symbolic](https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/symbolic) fictional figures and actions of truths or generalizations about human existence
* framed narrative - a story within a story