**Higher Persuasive Folio-Example Openings**

**“There’s Just No Telling How Far I’ll Go”-Is Disney Becoming More Feminist?**

Once upon a time, there was a young idealistic girl. This young girl dreamed of one day marrying a handsome prince, becoming a princess and living happily ever after. But does that girl still exist in 2019? In Disney’s first feature length film in 1939, Snow White lamented that “one day” her prince would come, but in their more modern offerings, the heroines don’t appear to have time to wait around for a man to save the day. These damsels are no longer in distress, but actively seeking out adventure and leadership roles outwith their so-called “destinies”. Despite having a long track record of female lead characters, Disney has often been critiqued for portraying their leading ladies as one-dimensional female stereotypes, obsessed with appearance and finding true love. However in recent years, films such as ‘Brave’, ‘Frozen’ and ‘Moana’ demonstrate that there is an appetite for a different type of female character; presenting young audiences with headstrong, opinionated and adventurous girls with no interest in romance. With fourth-wave feminism creating a strong online community for young feminists, this change has been praised by millions: “Disney’s attempt at rebranding is displayed in their embracing of a society where females can be in positions of power and make their own decisions.” (English 105) Is Disney finally rewriting the fairytale?

**A Force For Good**

Not long ago, in a city fairly far away (although culturally, it may as well be galaxies…), an epic deal was struck in Los Angeles between two behemoths of the entertainment industry. A deal that would spark joy in the hearts of millions of man-children around the world, and an epic eye-roll from long-suffering partners. Yes, The Empire had struck back: Lucasfilms had signed an agreement giving Disney the rights to the Star Wars franchise. Fans waited with baited breath to see how Disney would use their new-found Force: after a series of prequels that were more Skyflopper than Skywalker, they were right to be apprehensive. However, what Disney has created has been a true testament to what is truly at the heart of Star Wars: not sci-fi, fantasy escapism, but a celebration of diversity, inclusion and progression.

**Plastic Lives**

The plastic bubble was burst in Scotland of the 20th of October 2014 with the introduction of a mandatory plastic bag charge in a bid to tackle Scotland’s litter problem. A staggering amount of 1 trillion plastic bags are used world-wide each year. Plastic bags blowing in the wind are a dishearteningly familiar sight-and one with environmental repercussions, taking up to hundreds of years to decompose. They often end up in the water courses and are catastrophic when they reach the marine environment. Each year Scotland, alone, currently works its way through more than 800 million bags-that’s more bags per head than England, Wales or Northern Ireland. The United Kingdom as a whole gives out at least nine billion plastic bags per annum. This charge is a starting point in raising awareness of the impact our presence is creating in our world.

**Is History becoming history?**

Imagine you are sitting in a History class. The teacher painting a vivid picture in your impressionable mind of knights in shining armour; the giants of history: Julius Caesar, Robert the Bruce, Winston Churchill. Think of the childlike wonder you feel when you hear about these great people, of how they astounded the world with their achievements. Just take a moment to do that…

‘Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.’-George Santayana

For hundreds of years, schools have existed in the United Kingdom and History has always been taught in them. Over the years, the subject has found itself being demoted from a core and essential subject to, in some cases, not worthy of the curriculum at all. Think of how many children do not know the basics of history nowadays, and how many children who could not give even a trickle of information about WWII. History has been put on the side-lines, shoved aside in place of subjects that “matter”. Yet what many seem to forget is that History is a vital subject. It teaches us about catastrophes (and how to stop them); about the way we used to deal with things and about how we used to act and behave. It seems to have been forgotten how much of a multi-tool History is-teaching us strong analytical and thinking skills that are transferrable in other subjects. Therefore, the question arises-should History be taught as a core subject in all schools?