National 5 and National 6 Close Reading Formulas

Ensure you are familiar with the key command words and what they mean:
- **Identify**
- **Explain**
- **Analyse**
- **Summarise**
- **Evaluate**

Own words Question
1. Find the answer in the passage - LOCATE
2. Highlight or underline the answer.
3. Now reword it taking care **not** to use the words you have underlined - TRANSLATE
4. Bullet point your answer – use the number of marks on offer to dictate the number of points you make.

Context Question
1. Give the meaning of the word.
2. Quote a word or phrase or refer to a technique from the context that led you to this meaning.
3. Explain how this word/phrase/technique helps you understand the meaning of the original word.
NOTE: You should repeat steps 2 and 3 again for another word/phrase/technique especially at Higher level.

Linking Sentence Question
1. Quote the linking word or phrase (if there is one) and explain its function.
2. Quote the words that link back to the previous paragraph.
3. Explain what the previous point is.
4. Quote the words that introduce the next point.
5. Explain what point the writer goes on to make.

Summarising Question
This is usually a big mark question. Use the number of marks to work out how many points you should make. Bullet point your answer
1. Treat this as an extended own words question
2. Break down the chunk of text you are to look at into smaller chunks and work out the key idea in each
3. Ensure that you write out each point in your own words

Imagery Question
1. Identify the image (what is being compared to what?)
2. Give the literal meaning of the **image**.
3. Explain the connection between the two. (Just as…. so…. OR This suggests that…)
4. Explain the effectiveness of the comparison – ensure you have answered the question

Word Choice Question
1. Quote a word/phrase.
2. Explain the connotations of the word/phrase (what it makes you think of/what you associate with the word).
3. Explain what this suggests about what the writer is describing.
NOTE: You may be required to do this for 2 or 3 words/phrases depending on how many marks the question is worth.

Sentence Structure Question
   1. Identify/name/quote a technique of sentence structure
   2. Comment on the effects of its use and how this fits with/helps you to understand the point the writer is making in these lines.

To help you find relevant features to comment on, follow these steps:
1. What type of sentence(s) is/are being used?
   Statement
   Question/rhetorical question
   Exclamation
   Command
   Minor sentence
2. How is the punctuation used to divide up the sentence?
   Commas - a list or breaking a complex sentence into clauses?
   Colons
   Semi-colons
   Parenthesis
   Single dash
3. Is there anything unusual about the structure of the sentence?
   Inversion
   Repetition
   Climax or anti-climax
   Antithesis
4. Do the sentences form a pattern?
   Repetitive or balanced structure
   Contrast between complex and short sentences

NOTE: At Higher you get no marks for identifying a relevant feature. You must explain how this adds to your understanding or to the effect the writer was trying to achieve.

Language Question
Identify the language feature you will be dealing with. It could be:
   Word choice
   Imagery
   Punctuation
   Sentence structure
   Tone
Follow the formula for that type of feature (i.e. imagery question, word choice question, etc) to explain its effect.

Tone Question
   1. Identify the tone employed by the writer
   2. Quote a word/phrase/image which reveals the tone and explain how it does so

Effective as a Conclusion Question
1. Does it sum up the main points? Quote and explain what they are and quote or summarise where they were made earlier on in the passage.
2. Does it restate the writer's point to view? Quote and explain what it is, then quote from earlier in passage and explain the link.
3. Does it link back to the introduction? How? Quote and explain.
4. Does it use word choice/imagery begun in the introduction or used throughout passage? Quote and explain from both the conclusion and from earlier in the passage.

Does it conclude in some other memorable way? For example a rhetorical questions, repetition (x3), a appropriate image….

Effective as an Introduction Question
1. Does it introduce the main points? Quote and explain what they are how they are expanded upon in the passage.
2. Does it make clear the writer's point to view? Quote and explain how this makes clear the point of view.
3. Does it hook the reader with a clever technique – an image, a question, empahtic or dramatic word choice, a list….. Name the technique and explain why it is effective in hooking the reader

Final Question (Higher Only)
Read passage 2, looking for areas of agreement with passage 1
1. Identify one area on which they agree (Both writers agree that….)
2. Now provide evidence from both passages that prove they agree on this
3. Then identify a second area on which they agree (Both writers agree that…)
4. Then provide evidence from both passages that prove they agree on this
5. Then identify a third area on which they agree (Both writers agree that…)
6. Finally provide evidence from both passages that prove they agree on this