



THE RAFFLES ENGLISH STUDIO · FREE RESOURCE

GCE O Level English Paper 1

Section C – Essay Hooks

Confident English. Powerful Results.

First lines win over examiners fast. Here are seven model hooks, one for each common mood in Narrative & Descriptive writing – study the technique, then write your own in your own voice.

Hooks by Mood

Match the mood of your topic, then adapt the imagery – don't copy the line as-is.

1

For Fear, Anxiety, or Tension

"A cold prickle of dread traced a slow line down my spine, rendering my limbs heavy and useless."

For: Narrative topics about making a big mistake, getting caught, facing danger, or confronting a phobia. Shows physical reactions to emotion instead of just saying "I was scared."

2

For Remorse, Regret, or Reflection

"The weight of unspoken words hung heavily in the air, a silent monument to a mistake I could never undo."

For: Essays about a ruined relationship, an argument, or a moment of poor judgment. It sets a solemn, reflective tone.

3

For Quiet, Atmospheric Descriptions of Night or Isolation

"Silence pooled in the narrow corridor, broken only by the rhythmic, hollow tick of a pendulum clock."

For: Descriptive topics about an abandoned place, late-night study sessions, or waiting for news. Focuses on sound imagery to build mood.

4

For Sudden Chaos or Disruption

"In a single, violent fracture of second, the tranquil stillness shattered into a symphony of screeching metal and splintered glass."

For: Narratives involving sudden accidents, unexpected news, or sudden disasters. Stark contrast from calm to chaos to grab the reader's attention.

5

For Bustling, Vibrant Environments

"A kaleidoscope of colors collided with a sensory onslaught of sizzling spices and deafening chatter."

For: Descriptive topics about night markets, busy hawker centers, festivals, or crowded streets. Pairs vivid visual verbs "kaleidoscope," "collided" with auditory and olfactory cues.

6

For Hope, Anticipation, or Relief

"A fragile thread of hope wove into the fabric of my chest beat steadily against the rising tide of doubt."

For: Stories about waiting for exam results, entering a competition, or starting a journey. Personifies internal conflict, contrasting hope with doubt.

7

For Melancholy or Sadness

"Grey, swollen clouds stretched across the sky like a bruised canvas, mirroring the heavy numbness in my chest."

For: Topics about grief, saying goodbye, moving away, or failure. Matches the weather/environment to the character's mood.

WANT MORE TIPS?

Email/WhatsApp Coach Carolyn for tips on Essay Writing -
[Coach@RafflesEnglish.com/65-8967-7685](mailto:Coach@RafflesEnglish.com)