

THE WRITING CLUB

Sydney's writing specialist

FREE GUIDE

Selective School Writing Guide

How to prepare a confident, high-scoring
writer for the NSW Selective High School test.

Thornleigh · Online

WHAT YOU'RE PREPARING FOR

Understanding the writing task

The NSW Selective High School Placement Test is sat in Year 6 for entry into Year 7. The writing component asks students to respond to a prompt — often persuasive, narrative or imaginative — under strict time pressure. Markers reward clear structure, controlled language, and ideas developed with genuine thought, not just length.

The single biggest differentiator is not vocabulary or handwriting speed — it is a student who knows exactly what structure they will use before the clock starts, and who can plan in ninety seconds.

WHAT MARKERS REWARD

- **A clear position or storyline** stated early and sustained to the end.
- **Deliberate structure** an opening that earns attention, developed body paragraphs, a deliberate ending.
- **Controlled language** precise word choice and varied sentence length — not the longest words a student knows.
- **Evidence of thinking** an original angle, a counter-argument addressed, a detail that shows insight.

PUT IT TO WORK

The plan-first method

Under exam conditions, planning feels like wasted time. It is the opposite. A ninety-second plan is the difference between a piece that drifts and one that lands.

01 Decode the prompt

Underline the key words. Decide the text type and your angle before writing a single sentence.

02 Skeleton in the margin

Jot a one-line plan: hook, three points (or beginning/middle/turn), ending. Thirty seconds.

03 Write with pace

Spend the bulk of your time drafting to the plan. Don't stop to perfect the first line.

04 Two-minute edit

Reserve the last two minutes to fix sense, punctuation and any dropped words.

PRACTISE THIS WEEK

A four-week preparation rhythm

- ☐ Week 1 — One timed persuasive piece; review structure only.
- ☐ Week 2 — One timed narrative; focus on a strong opening and a deliberate ending.
- ☐ Week 3 — Alternate text types; introduce a counter-argument in persuasive writing.
- ☐ Week 4 — Full timed conditions twice; edit against the checklist below.

BEFORE YOU SUBMIT

- ☐ Does my opening make the marker want to keep reading?
- ☐ Does every paragraph do one clear job?
- ☐ Have I varied sentence length for effect?
- ☐ Is my ending deliberate, or does it just stop?
- ☐ Are spelling and punctuation clean?

NEXT STEP

See it work for your child.

Our Selective preparation programs build exam-ready writers with weekly timed practice and line-by-line feedback. Book a free assessment and we'll show you exactly where your child stands and what to work on next.

Book your free assessment
thewritingclub.com.au

Talk to us
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