

Purposeful Practice

“Purposeful practice is serving the tennis ball 20, 35, or 50 times until the serve is “near perfect”. It is working on a piano scales every day without fail until the fingering is so automatic, the fingers fly across the keys. It is committing to something so many times that it becomes a purposeful routine that gets you closer to mastery.”

“Anyone can achieve mastery with purposeful practice. With considerable, specific, and sustained efforts over time, you can do most things you struggle with. You can only turn into the expert you want to become by deliberate, purposeful practice.”



Recall not Recognition



Purposeful Practice

- We are always tempted to do what feels easy and therefore we create feelings of success.
- Re-reading your notes or reading over model answers and realising the facts, and knowledge is familiar may make us feel like we 'know' it.
- However, this is just recognition – if you put the notes away and tried to recall it without any prompts – you realise this is more difficult.
- Unfortunately, you have to put yourself in a situation where you are failing in order to, eventually, be able to recall.

- During exams, students don't get marks for just recalling facts. They get marks for answering questions.
- This means you shouldn't study for an exam by never testing yourself on writing full answers in exam conditions. For any test, we need to rehearse exactly the thing we'll be required to do.



Why is Purposeful Practice so important?

- Maths – 30 questions (80 marks) in 90 minutes
- English – 40 mark question on An Inspector Calls in 45 minutes

“Purposeful practice is serving the tennis ball 20, 35, or 50 times until the serve is “near perfect”. It is working on a piano scales every day without fail until the fingering is **so automatic, the fingers fly across the keys**. It is committing to something so many times that it becomes a purposeful routine that gets you closer to mastery.”



Purposeful practice should follow these steps:

- 1. Break the overall process down into parts**
- 2. Identify your weaknesses**
- 3. Focus learning on the weaknesses**
- 4. Repeat the whole process**



1. Break the overall process down into parts

Paragraph 1: The big stuff

Calm, tranquil, still: the forest barely moved in the breeze but was awash with the noise of humming, buzzing, and chirping. The whole forest sounded alive to my ears, a cacophony of sound: a symphony of noise. The warm, melodious air sat mildly on my skin, clung to my clothes; it smelt of pine and leaves and grass- smells which hung heavy in the air. Peeking through the tops of the trees, the sky dabbled colour through the leaves, a delicate, soft, powder blue. Playfully, the light danced through the trees and threw straight shadows onto the forest floor. The light of the sun heated and prickled my skin which is striped with zebra shadows from the trees. Slightly swaying, the trees stood like a silent army waiting for a command in the soundless landscape.

Paragraph 2: The smaller stuff

As I strolled forward into the standing trees the ground crunched and crackled under my feet; it was strewn with tiny twigs, dry leaves, bracken, and the roots of trees. I stared into the distance; the trees line up in an oddly ordered fashion, as though they were planted by some unknown being hundreds of years ago. The trees have grown so straight, so tall, so formidably. As I moved among them, I began to notice how (in the distance) when you tried to see what lay beyond the forest, the trees had created a protective wall and seemed to create a cushioning barrier to the harshness of the outside world. Their leaves- soft, feathery, deep emerald- had formed doorways that locked you into the forest. Safe. Alone.

Paragraph 3: The even smaller stuff

Looking up, I examined the ceiling of leaves and branches which curled together and blocked out the sky. My eyes travelled down to the intricate knots of the bark: dark brown, mottled with green moss. Carefully, I brought my hand onto the trunk of the tree. No leaves, just brittle branches: springy, sharp, dry. But, around the base of the trees there were little bursts of life. Bright green, lush, damp: small clumps of greenery flourished at the foot of the mammoth trees. All over the floor, in this greenery, life also flourished: silky black forest ants with their large bulbous eyes, dull grey woodlice with their shiny armoured backs, frilly, chocolate coloured millipedes. This life teemed around the base of the tree, sustaining the forest, making the floor appear alive with skittering movements.

Paragraph 4: A change

It is difficult to imagine what could destroy such a placid and protective a place. Yet, suddenly, as the though the sky opened the floodgates, thick, heavy and painful bullets of water began pelting down through the trees. I'd never seen rain with such menace! It seemed to attack the leaves, violently pounding the vulnerable, supple undergrowth. It ripped through the green feathery leaves of the forest, streaking the space in between the trees with silver flickers. Water pooled on the forest floor, churning the earth, muddying the once crackling ground. The wildlife on the forest floor scurried into burrows in the trees, avoiding the certain death of staying in the rain. Some floated away still and immovable. Menacingly, thunder roared where there was once the silence and stillness of the forest;

English Language Paper 1 Section B Write a description inspired by the picture. (40 marks)

1. Write 4 paragraphs
2. Paragraph 1 - wide angle; Paragraph 2 (medium angle); Paragraph 3 (close up); Paragraph 4 (change)
3. Choose items to describe in each paragraph
4. Decide on the tone for each paragraph
5. Use imagery and vocabulary to achieve the tone
6. Start with a '3 adjective : detail' sentence
7. Ensure a range of sentence types is used



2. Identify weakness

Paragraph 1: The big stuff

Calm, tranquil, still: the forest barely moved in the breeze but was awash with the noise of humming, buzzing, and chirping. The whole forest sounded alive to my ears, a cacophony of sound: a symphony of noise. The warm, melodious air sat mildly on my skin, clung to my clothes; it smelt of pine and leaves and grass- smells which hung heavy in the air. Peeking through the tops of the trees, the sky dabbled colour through the leaves, a delicate, soft, powder blue. Playfully, the light danced through the trees and threw straight shadows onto the forest floor. The light of the sun heated and prickled my skin which is striped with zebra shadows from the trees. Slightly swaying, the trees stood like a silent army waiting for a command in the soundless landscape.

Paragraph 2: The smaller stuff

As I strolled forward into the standing trees the ground crunched and crackled under my feet; it was strewn with tiny twigs, dry leaves, bracken, and the roots of trees. I stared into the distance; the trees line up in an oddly ordered fashion, as though they were planted by some unknown being hundreds of years ago. The trees have grown so straight, so tall, so formidably. As I moved among them, I began to notice how (in the distance) when you tried to see what lay beyond the forest, the trees had created a protective wall and seemed to create a cushioning barrier to the harshness of the outside world. Their leaves- soft, feathery, deep emerald- had formed doorways that locked you into the forest. Safe. Alone.

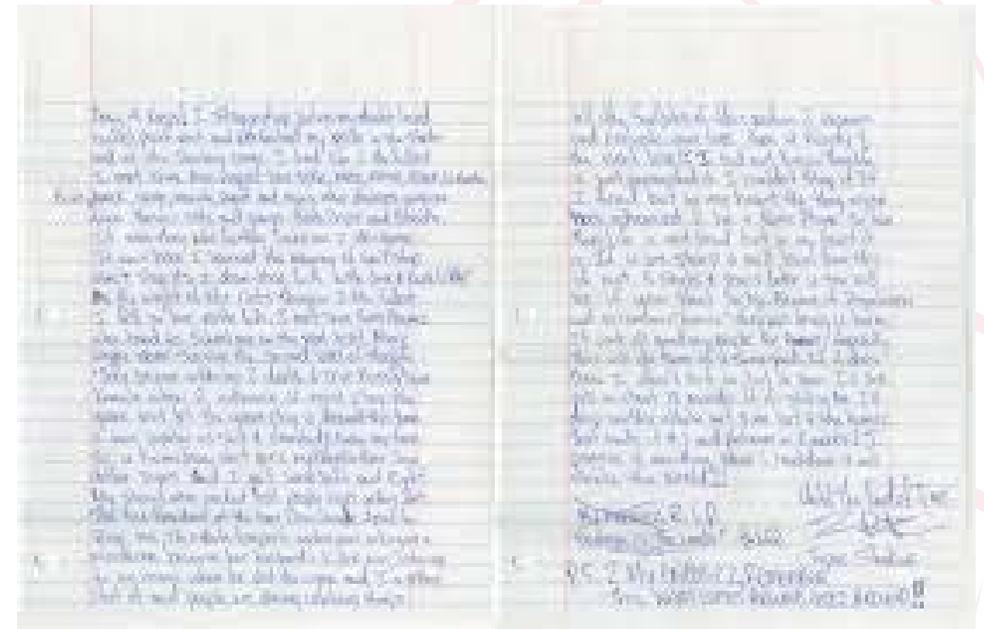
Paragraph 3: The even smaller stuff

Looking up, I examined the ceiling of leaves and branches which curled together and blocked out the sky. My eyes travelled down to the intricate knots of the bark: dark brown, mottled with green moss. Carefully, I brought my hand onto the trunk of the tree. No leaves, just brittle branches: springy, sharp, dry. But, around the base of the trees there were little bursts of life. Bright green, lush, damp: small clumps of greenery flourished at the foot of the mammoth trees. All over the floor, in this greenery, life also flourished: silky black forest ants with their large bulbous eyes, dull grey woodlice with their shiny armoured backs, frilly, chocolate coloured millipedes. This life teemed around the base of the tree, sustaining the forest, making the floor appear alive with skittering movements.

Paragraph 4: A change

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Use **imagery** and **vocabulary** to achieve the tone



3. Focus learning on weakness

Which words will help create musical imagery and a relaxed tone?

Melodious
Harmonious
Soulful
Score
Hymn
Acoustic

Which words will help create violent imagery and a dramatic tone?

Bullets
Regiment
Army
Battle
Squadron
Troop

Use **imagery** and **vocabulary** to achieve the tone



4. Repeat the process

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Calm, tranquil, still: the forest barely moved in the breeze but was awash with the noise of humming, buzzing, and chirping. The whole forest sounded alive to my ears, a cacophony of sound: a symphony of noise. The warm, melodious air sat mildly on my skin, clung to my clothes; it smelt of pine and leaves and grass- smells which hung heavy in the air. Peeking through the tops of the trees, the sky dabbled colour through the leaves, a delicate, soft, powder blue. Playfully, the light danced through the trees and threw straight shadows onto the forest floor. The light of the sun heated and prickled my skin which is striped with zebra shadows from the trees. Slightly swaying, the trees stood like a silent army waiting for a command in the soundless landscape.

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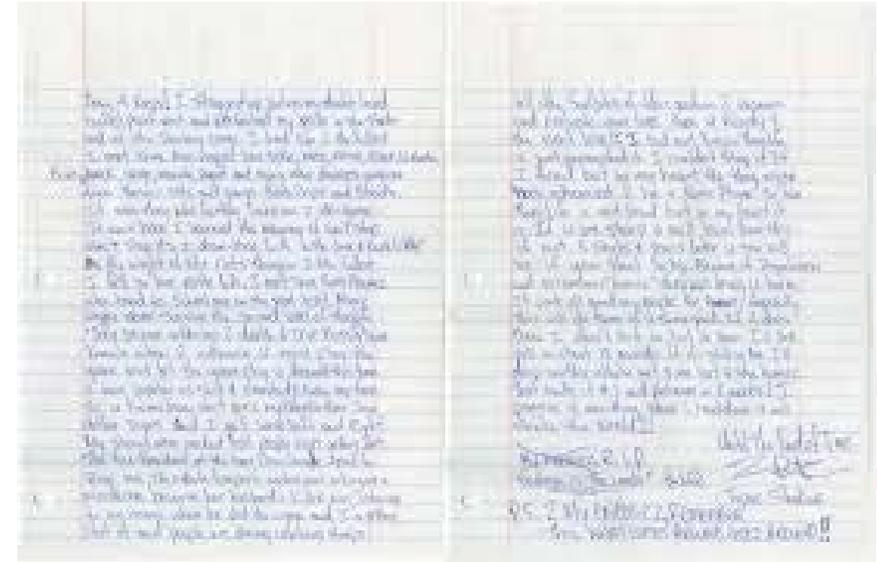
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Use **imagery** and **vocabulary** to achieve the tone – improved?



But after never reaching for the right people I found several people from different states who I consider my most loyal and trustworthy friends. In some people this book will be just another scandalous piece of fiction. But when you are done I think you will think otherwise. I always felt my brother deserved to live and what better way to let him live his life than to end mine. I was lonely, depressed, in bad health and my sociology class said that this was the time for it to come to end. Anyone who studies sociology will understand those who don't may want to look into it. All of the facts (and there are many) even the experts will say they are more than considerable. (over)



Ensure a range of sentence types is used



Look, cover, write, check sentence types section of Knowledge Organiser.



“Landing on your
butt twenty thousand
times is where great
performance comes
from”

-Geoff Calvin



Think of an example exam question in your subject

1. What would your model answer look like? Should you differentiate them depending on the ability of the class?
2. How would you break it down into steps for your students?
3. Which gaps would you expect them to find in their answers?
4. How could you help them improve those particular gaps?

