Non-Fiction
Letter to Daniel by Fergal Keane
The following letter by Fergal Keane to his newborn son was broadcast on the BBC Radio 4 programme, ‘From our own Correspondent’.

As a BBC foreign correspondent, Keane has reported, first hand, from various international crisis areas including Northern Ireland, Southern Africa and Asia.

His reporting has been honoured with an Amnesty International Press award and an OBE for services to journalism.

His book on Rwanda, Season of Blood, won the George Orwell Prize for political writing.
Introduction
When writers plan their work, there are three basic questions they have to consider:

- **Who am I in this piece, myself or some other character?** *Persona*

- **Who am I writing for?** *Audience*

- **What effect do I want my writing to have on the reader?** *Purpose*

- **The answers to these questions help authors determine which form of writing or which genre they should adopt.**
Letter to Daniel is a non-fiction text and in non-fiction we would normally expect authors to write as themselves rather than to adopt a different persona.

However, audience and purpose in non-fiction will vary and are extremely important.

So, whether we are reading an extract from a longer piece in order to answer interpretation questions, or whether we are studying a complete work of non-fiction we should be thinking, as we read:

Who is this aimed at?
Why has the author written this?
Introduction

Activities 1 and 2 which follow, are designed to get you thinking about purpose and audience and, in doing so, come to an understanding of what Fergal Keane set out to achieve in his writing.

You’ll work in pairs or groups to begin with, before whole-class discussion on the issues.
ACTIVITY 1
ACTIVITY 1

The piece is addressed to "My dear son" and the narrative technique is that of a letter, speaking, at all times, directly to Daniel yet it was broadcast to the nation on a BBC radio programme.

Discuss the following statements about the audience for the letter, decide which one you agree with most and be prepared to report your conclusions.

1. The letter isn't really aimed at his son.
2. The letter form is a device to get the attention of the general public.
3. The letter is aimed both at his son and the general public.
4. Other?
ACTIVITY 2
ACTIVITY 2

Consider the following possibilities and decide which one you think is Fergal Keane’s main purpose for writing this letter.

Referring closely to the text, you should try to offer at least three reasons for your choice.

Fergal Keane wrote this letter in order to:

1. express his feelings of pride and joy at having a new-born son;
2. express wonder and delight at how his life has changed as a result of becoming a father;
3. reflect on the world his newborn son has entered;
4. use the letter as a sort of time-capsule for his son to open and read when he reaches maturity;
5. express his regret about never having known his own father;
6. other?
At its most basic it is a father’s expression of joy and hope at the birth of his first child. At deeper levels, it considers how fatherhood has changed the writer’s perceptions of the “rat-race” the horror he has witnessed as a war correspondent and the relationship — or lack of it — with his own father.

There are three sections to the letter, each with its own mood and tone. The opening section (paragraphs 1-5) is full of hope and joy at the birth of this precious son.

The next section reflects on the desolation visited upon children in war-torn countries — as witnessed by Keane reporting for the BBC from various war zones. In this section he expresses his feelings of fear for, and protectiveness towards, his son.

In the final section he tells a story — which is clearly about his own origins — but from an omniscient narrative stance. This section should allow you to consider the issue of the real and the imagined in non-fiction, perhaps agreeing that, in non-fiction it is the facts that are conveyed which matter, regardless of how the descriptive or narrative detail might have been manipulated to creative effect.

In the final paragraph, the letter reverts to its opening mood of love and joy, as well evoking a powerful mood of hope and reconciliation.
You are now going to analyse the text closely looking at the following:

- Structure
- Narrative stance
- Setting
- Sentence structure
- Imagery
- Word choice
- Tone
- Contrasts
- Theme
We will divide the letter into the following sections in order to do this:

- **Section 1**
  - (Paragraphs 1 - 5)
  
  **Daniel and his parents.** Mood of love, devotion and joy

- **Section 2**
  - (Paragraphs 6 - opening of para 11)
  
  **Fergal** - Life as war correspondent. How this makes him protective of his son

- **Section 3**
  - (A) (Paragraphs 12 - 15)
  - &
  - (B) (final paragraph)

  A) **Alcoholic father** - How this makes him even more protective
  B) **Link back to Daniel** - Return to love, joy but also gives tone of hope
**Section 1**
(Paragraphs 1 - 5)

Daniel and his parents.
Mood of love, devotion and joy.
In this first section Keane addresses his son directly and the mood created is one of paternal love and devotion.

It becomes evident how pleased, overjoyed indeed, both Keane and his wife are to finally have a child.
TASK 1
A. The mood in the first five paragraphs is one of love and joy.

1. Read over these paragraphs and identify all the ways in which Keane conveys his love for his new son and his joy at becoming a father.

(When doing this you should consider techniques such as word choice, use of imagery, use of setting . . .)

2. Choose one feature which you particularly like: be prepared to talk about this feature and explain why you feel it is effective.
TASK 2
We are now going to look at all examples of the extremely effective language that Keane employs in section 1 (Paragraphs 1 - 5) of his letter.

Consider the effect of the following quotes from section 1.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus of Analysis</th>
<th>Analysis/Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Narrative Stance – ‘You’</strong></td>
<td>1. Why does the writer have to learn “one-handed typing”?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tone &amp; Word choice – “cradled”</strong></td>
<td>2. The writer’s aim in this paragraph is to create a tone of calm and tranquillity – what does the word “cradled” suggest to you?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“More tired, yet more happy than I have ever known her…”</td>
<td>1. What feelings do the new parents have.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tone &amp; Sentence structure – repetition of “more”</strong></td>
<td>2. What do their feelings help cope with?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“a soft quiet in our apartment.”</td>
<td>1. What tone is created in the apartment?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Setting/Word choice – effect of “soft”</strong></td>
<td>2. What has the birth of his son brought Keane?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“days have melted into night and back again.”</td>
<td>1. What does the writer mean in his use of “days have melted into night”?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Word choice – “melted”</strong></td>
<td>1. Keane compares his new life to a long sentence – why is this appropriate given his occupation and how does he develop the idea?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“a long sentence whose punctuation marks are feeding and winding and nappy changing and these occasional moments of quiet.”</td>
<td>1. The optimism Keane feels about his son is obvious. Why does he include the information about his neighbours?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Metaphor</strong></td>
<td>2. The writer’s aim in this paragraph is to create a tone of calm and tranquillity – what does the word “cradled” suggest to you?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Word choice – effect of “occasional” and of “moments”</strong>.</td>
<td>1. Look at this sentence. Comment on the structure of this sentence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“the staff of our apartment”</td>
<td>2. Comment on the phrase “Wanted you and waited for you”.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Anecdote</strong></td>
<td>1. What feeling does Keane have for his son and the future?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“We had wanted you and waited for you, imagined you and dreamed about you…”</td>
<td>1. Why does the writer have to learn “one-handed typing”?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sentence structure – repetition of phrases containing “and”</strong>.</td>
<td>2. The writer’s aim in this paragraph is to create a tone of calm and tranquillity – what does the word “cradled” suggest to you?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“This glorious dawn sky makes me think we’ll call you Son of the Eastern Star.”</td>
<td>1. What feelings do the new parents have.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Word choice – “glorious”</strong></td>
<td>2. What do their feelings help cope with?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This glorious dawn sky makes me think we’ll call you Son of the Eastern Star.

Keane indicates how badly they wanted a child and how much this was on their minds.

The new day, and the sight of dawn breaking, are symbolic of hope and optimism.

The divides between periods of time are blurred or removed and time means nothing.

The writer’s profession and his daily routine are both entwined and connected: successful work depends on the quiet.

The word suggests the comfort and peace brought into his life by the son.

Setting - The word suggests the comfort and peace brought into his life by the son.

The divides between periods of time are blurred or removed and time means nothing.

The writer’s profession and his daily routine are both entwined and connected: successful work depends on the quiet.

The word suggests the comfort and peace brought into his life by the son.

The divides between periods of time are blurred or removed and time means nothing.

The writer’s profession and his daily routine are both entwined and connected: successful work depends on the quiet.

The divides between periods of time are blurred or removed and time means nothing.

The writer’s profession and his daily routine are both entwined and connected: successful work depends on the quiet.

The word suggests the comfort and peace brought into his life by the son.

The divides between periods of time are blurred or removed and time means nothing.

The writer’s profession and his daily routine are both entwined and connected: successful work depends on the quiet.

The word suggests the comfort and peace brought into his life by the son.

The divides between periods of time are blurred or removed and time means nothing.

The writer’s profession and his daily routine are both entwined and connected: successful work depends on the quiet.

The word suggests the comfort and peace brought into his life by the son.

The divides between periods of time are blurred or removed and time means nothing.

The writer’s profession and his daily routine are both entwined and connected: successful work depends on the quiet.

The word suggests the comfort and peace brought into his life by the son.

The divides between periods of time are blurred or removed and time means nothing.

The writer’s profession and his daily routine are both entwined and connected: successful work depends on the quiet.

The word suggests the comfort and peace brought into his life by the son.

The divides between periods of time are blurred or removed and time means nothing.

The writer’s profession and his daily routine are both entwined and connected: successful work depends on the quiet.

The word suggests the comfort and peace brought into his life by the son.

The divides between periods of time are blurred or removed and time means nothing.

The writer’s profession and his daily routine are both entwined and connected: successful work depends on the quiet.

The word suggests the comfort and peace brought into his life by the son.

The divides between periods of time are blurred or removed and time means nothing.

The writer’s profession and his daily routine are both entwined and connected: successful work depends on the quiet.

The word suggests the comfort and peace brought into his life by the son.

The divides between periods of time are blurred or removed and time means nothing.

The writer’s profession and his daily routine are both entwined and connected: successful work depends on the quiet.

The word suggests the comfort and peace brought into his life by the son.

The divides between periods of time are blurred or removed and time means nothing.

The writer’s profession and his daily routine are both entwined and connected: successful work depends on the quiet.

The word suggests the comfort and peace brought into his life by the son.

The divides between periods of time are blurred or removed and time means nothing.

The writer’s profession and his daily routine are both entwined and connected: successful work depends on the quiet.

The word suggests the comfort and peace brought into his life by the son.

The divides between periods of time are blurred or removed and time means nothing.

The writer’s profession and his daily routine are both entwined and connected: successful work depends on the quiet.

The word suggests the comfort and peace brought into his life by the son.

The divides between periods of time are blurred or removed and time means nothing.

The writer’s profession and his daily routine are both entwined and connected: successful work depends on the quiet.

The word suggests the comfort and peace brought into his life by the son.

The divides between periods of time are blurred or removed and time means nothing.

The writer’s profession and his daily routine are both entwined and connected: successful work depends on the quiet.

The word suggests the comfort and peace brought into his life by the son.

The divides between periods of time are blurred or removed and time means nothing.

The writer’s profession and his daily routine are both entwined and connected: successful work depends on the quiet.

The word suggests the comfort and peace brought into his life by the son.

The divides between periods of time are blurred or removed and time means nothing.

The writer’s profession and his daily routine are both entwined and connected: successful work depends on the quiet.

The word suggests the comfort and peace brought into his life by the son.

The divides between periods of time are blurred or removed and time means nothing.

The writer’s profession and his daily routine are both entwined and connected: successful work depends on the quiet.

The word suggests the comfort and peace brought into his life by the son.

The divides between periods of time are blurred or removed and time means nothing.

The writer’s profession and his daily routine are both entwined and connected: successful work depends on the quiet.

The word suggests the comfort and peace brought into his life by the son.

The divides between periods of time are blurred or removed and time means nothing.

The writer’s profession and his daily routine are both entwined and connected: successful work depends on the quiet.

The word suggests the comfort and peace brought into his life by the son.

The divides between periods of time are blurred or removed and time means nothing.

The writer’s profession and his daily routine are both entwined and connected: successful work depends on the quiet.

The word suggests the comfort and peace brought into his life by the son.

The divides between periods of time are blurred or removed and time means nothing.

The writer’s profession and his daily routine are both entwined and connected: successful work depends on the quiet.
Section 2
(Paragraphs 6 - opening of para 11)

Fergal
- Life as war correspondent
- How this makes him protective of his son
Paragraph 6 marks a new direction in the letter:

Keane takes a **critical look at himself** and **his views on life** before Daniel’s arrival.

As a war correspondent **his values were radically different to what they are now** that he is a father.

In this section he also considers **the suffering he has witnessed in his job**.

This **suffering** is experienced by **children alone** and Keane is acutely aware of **Daniel’s vulnerability**.
TASK 1

Paragraphs 6 & 7
TASK 1

- Read paragraphs 6 & 7 carefully.

- As you do so, make notes on the following:
  - Imagery,
  - Word choice,
  - Ideas presented

- By close reference to the above, explain how Keane indicates that his view on living has changed.
I wonder how I could ever have thought that glory and prizes and praise were sweeter than life.

What people say about us is reason enough to gamble with death.

I know, I have lived a life that, on occasion, has veered close to the edge: war zones, natural disasters, darkness in all its shapes and forms.

What is the source of Daniel’s view of life?

Narrative Stance – ‘me’

Narrative Stance – ‘I’

Word choice - ‘veered’

Sentence Structure

Metaphor

His ego and need to please and receive praise outweighed his own safety previously. He now finds this ridiculous notion.

No longer recognises the person he was. Realises the need to put his son before everything else. Will this impact on how he does his job?

Focus of Analysis

Analysis/Evaluation

Narrative – Focus changed from Daniel to father.

Narrative – Focus changed from Daniel to father.

Word choice -‘veered’ gives the sense he has been inches away from death due to the risks he takes, like a car on the edge of a cliff

Structure – lists most dangerous places he has been to emphasise the risks he once took

Word choice -‘veered’ gives the sense he has been inches away from death due to the risks he takes, like a car on the edge of a cliff

Structure – lists most dangerous places he has been to emphasise the risks he once took

Theme – sense of responsibility

Theme – sense of responsibility

No longer recognises the person he was. Realises the need to put his son before everything else. Will this impact on how he does his job?

No longer recognises the person he was. Realises the need to put his son before everything else. Will this impact on how he does his job?

Metaphor

Idea that his view of life has totally changed. Is this wholly positive?

Metaphor

Idea that his view of life has totally changed. Is this wholly positive?
TASK 2

Paragraphs 8, 9 & 10
TASK 2

Read paragraphs 8, 9 & 10 carefully.

As you do so, make notes on the following:

- Setting,
- Word choice,
- Ideas presented

By close reference to the above, explain how he also considers the suffering he has witnessed in his job.

This suffering is experienced by children alone and Keane is acutely aware of Daniel’s vulnerability.

Q: How to recognize a war correspondent?
A: By his badge.
The children had died holding on to their mother, that instinct we all learn from birth and in one way or another cling to until we die.

There is one last memory of Rwanda … beaten to death.

He was nice before but now he has the hunger.

Growing ever more faint as the wind blew dust on to his wounds

I am pained, perhaps is a better word, by the memory of each suffering child I have come across.

Suddenly the birth of child has made his memories much more painful as he can now imagine the same pain being inflicted on his own son. His detachment as a professional reporter has been lost.

Here Keane gives detail about the wounds and hardships the children in war torn countries are suffering. The detail of this anecdote and image makes the text more emotive and engaging.

Emphasises pain and suffering in the world. Helps explain protectiveness of his son.

This reflects Keane’s own life. His mother was left alone to bring him up as his father became victim to alcoholism.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus of Analysis</th>
<th>Analysis/Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Word Choice</strong> – ‘Pained/Haunted’ Setting - contrast</td>
<td>Suddenly the birth of child has made his memories much more painful as he can now imagine the same pain being inflicted on his own son. His detachment as a professional reporter has been lost.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Anecdote/Imagery - Shocking</strong></td>
<td>Here Keane gives detail about the wounds and hardships the children in war torn countries are suffering. The detail of this anecdote and image makes the text more emotive and engaging.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tone - suffering</strong></td>
<td>Emphasises pain and suffering in the world. Helps explain protectiveness of his son.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sentence Structure – Climactic/ emotive language</strong></td>
<td>Sentence structure – building to shocking climax. The use of emotive language ransacked/ beaten/ huddled emphasise shocking violence/affect reader</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Theme – Prelude to next paragraph</strong></td>
<td>This reflects Keane’s own life. His mother was left alone to bring him up as his father became victim to alcoholism.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Daniel, these memories explain some of the fierce protectiveness I feel for you, the tenderness and the occasional moments of blind terror when I imagine anything happening to you.’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus of Analysis</th>
<th>Analysis/Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tone, narrative voice, personal anecdote.</td>
<td>How does the first sentence act as a link between the two paragraphs 10&amp;11?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Section 3a
(Paragraphs 11 - Paragraph 15)

Fergal’s Father
- Alcoholic ï

How this makes him even more protective
But there is something more, a story from long ago that I will tell you face to face, father and son, when you are older.

This sentence acts as a **turning point**, with Keane telling Daniel that another reason why he feels so protective towards his son is that he never really knew his **own** father who had died, an alcoholic, separated from his wife and family.

This section should allow you to consider the issue of the **real** and the **imagined** in non-fiction, perhaps agreeing that, in non-fiction it is the facts that are conveyed which matter, regardless of how the descriptive or narrative detail might have been manipulated to creative effect.
TASK 1

Paragraphs 11 - 15
TASK 1

Read paragraphs 11 - 15 carefully.

As you do so, make notes on the following:

- Narrative Stance
- Word choice,
- Ideas presented

By close reference to the above, explain how Keane fears his son having a similar childhood to his own and his determination to never let this happen.
### Analysis/Evaluation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus of Analysis</th>
<th>Analysis/Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Change in Narrative Stance</td>
<td>The narrative changes from second to third person. The change removes or distances him from the action initially. We expect a story told in third person by a neutral and omniscient author; but it becomes clear – through convincing detail - that he is telling his own story.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Setting</td>
<td>This sentence acts as a turning point, with Keane telling Daniel that another reason why he feels so protective towards his son is that he never really knew his own father who had died, an alcoholic, separated from his wife and family.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiction/Non-Fiction?</td>
<td>People criticise Keane for being melodramatic in these paragraphs. He “overdoes” the drama and emotion of the moment. Keane was not there and has made some of his narrative up (based on facts) for dramatic effect. So is the setting made to seem worse to emphasise his mother’s struggles and hardships?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If the facts are accurate but the detail faulty, does this make these paragraphs less reliable as a non-fiction account?
The cancer of alcoholism ate away at the man and he lost his family. This was not something he meant to do or wanted to do, it just was.

On his own, in a one roomed flat, living and dying for the bottle.

Her husband comes that night and weeps with joy.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus of Analysis</th>
<th>Analysis/Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Change in Narrative Stance</td>
<td>He describes his mother as &quot;a woman&quot;, to distance himself from his own background as he now sees how similar his parents are to him and his wife. Here he refers to his father as “her husband”. This is because the father’s experience mirrors Fergal Keane’s own life and the fears that he has about how good a parent he will be.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tone - Loss</td>
<td>Sadness – never got to speak to his father before he died. Feelings of regret</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imagery, word choice, sentence structure.</td>
<td>By distancing himself from his father, he also makes it easier for him to forgive as his dad has been made out like any other man and his unfortunate circumstances could have happened to anyone.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Section 3b

(Paragraphs 16)

Final Paragraph

- Link back to Daniel -

Return to love, joy but also gives tone of hope
The tone is one of joy and love, which pervaded the early paragraphs.

You are now going to note down any examples of language employed by Keane (and name the technique) to achieve this effect.
24. Keane finishes off in a positive and optimistic fashion. How does he achieve this? What does he write in the final paragraph to suggest optimism?

Look at the final paragraph.

The tone is one of joy and love, which pervaded the early paragraphs.

Note down any examples of language employed by Keane (and name the technique) to achieve this effect.

Keane ends his letter with a more hopeful tone. He is looking forward more to the future as he thinks about how his own father would be proud to hear his grandson. "The sound of hope and new beginnings that you and all your innocence and freshness have brought to the world"
I thought of your grandfather.’

"The sound of hope and new beginnings that you and all your innocence and freshness have brought to the world"

Keane ends his letter with a more hopeful tone. He is looking forward more to the future as he thinks about how his own father would be proud to hear his grandson.

Because Fergal Keane has used very precise detail in his letter to his son, the reader is given much more powerful imagery and a real sense of what Keane writes about.
PREPARING FOR ANSWERING QUESTIONS IN THE EXAM
This part of the programme is intended to focus on answering EXAM QUESTIONS on the NON-FICTION text you have just studied.

This questions on the following slide are eminently suitable for an answer on 'A Letter to Daniel'.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Choose a non-fiction text or group of texts which interests you because of its detailed and vivid description of scenes, events, people.</strong></th>
<th><strong>2009</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Show how the detailed description makes the scenes, events, people vivid for you and increases your understanding of what is happening.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Choose a prose work (fiction or non fiction) in which setting is an Important feature.</strong></th>
<th><strong>2010</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Explain how the writer creates the setting, and then go on to show how this feature contributes to your understanding of the text as a whole.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Choose a prose work (fiction or non fiction) in which the writer uses a memorable style/voice/narrative technique.</strong></th>
<th><strong>2011</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Explain in detail how features of the writing style/voice/narrative technique contribute to the effectiveness of the text.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Choose an essay or a piece of journalism in which you feel that the writer’s style is a key factor in developing a persuasive argument. Show how the writer’s presentation of the argument is made persuasive by his or her use of techniques of non-fiction.</td>
<td>2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Choose a non-fiction text which exploits the humour of particular situations and/or incidents. Show how the writer’s use of humour creates interest in the subject matter.</td>
<td>2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Choose a non-fiction text in which the writer’s use of structure makes a significant impact. Describe the important structural features of the text and show how these enhance the impact of the writer’s message.</td>
<td>2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Choose a non-fiction text in which vivid description is an important feature. Discuss in detail how the vivid description is created and go on to explain how it contributes to your appreciation of the text as a whole.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Choose a non-fiction text in which the writer expresses outrage or shock about an issue which you feel is important. Show how the writer conveys the emotion and discuss to what extent this emotional approach enhances your understanding of the issue.</td>
<td>2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Choose a non-fiction text whose tone is either very optimistic or very pessimistic. Show how the tone is created and discuss to what extent it is effective in developing the theme of the text.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Writing a CEL

As the letter is organised into 4 sections (including the final paragraph), it makes sense to organise your essay in a similar way.

You will be planning your essay in groups and will have to come up with your own topic sentences, quotations, analysis and personal response.

It is crucial that you focus on the essay task throughout.
• Writing a plan
Your plan should be very detailed and should indicate...

A) what you will write about in the **Introduction**
B) **Topic Sentences** for each paragraph
C) **Main Body**: What you will deal with in each paragraph (There is no need to copy out all the information from the tables as long as you have indicated that this is where you will find the information).
D) what you will write about in the **Conclusion**

Remember you must…

1) show **Understanding** (of the central concerns/themes of the text
2) **Analyse** and **Evaluate** the **techniques** used by the writer
3) make your **Personal Response** to the features of writing very obvious in each paragraph
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intro</th>
<th>Opening line?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>The subject</strong> - Summary - hope/optimism (for a better future), love, responsibility - the central idea</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Para 2</th>
<th>Topic Sentence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Look back at Section 1 - What quotes will you use?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Para 3</th>
<th>Topic Sentence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Look back at Section 2 - What quotes will you use?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Para 4</th>
<th>Topic Sentence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Look back at Section 3 and Conclusion - What quotes will you use?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conclusion</th>
<th>Sum up what you have written in your essay. (Use words of task and Topic Sentences from the body of your essay.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Personal Response should be restated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• There should be no ‘new’ ideas in the conclusion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Quotes should not be used in the conclusion.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• Writing an Introduction
A useful structure to use when writing an introduction is TAGLT.

T – text/title
A – author/poet
G – genre  (Summary of what the text is trying to do)
L – link to task + key points

P.S Remember to use the wording of the question in the opening line.
"Letter to Daniel" by Fergal Keane is a non-fiction text that interests me because of its detailed and vivid description of scenes, events, people. The text takes the format of a letter from a new father to his newly born son. Keane uses this to reflect on his life experience as not only a new father but also a war correspondent. It also reflects on the horrors of child suffering he has witnessed, his relationship with his alcoholic father and how fatherhood clearly changes his outlook on life. Keane uses effective language, word choice, structure, setting and tone to reflect on his own personal experience which he uses to address the wider themes of the importance of family, forgiveness and the weakness of man. Keane effectively uses language and structure in the opening paragraphs to interest the reader.
• Writing the Main Body of your Essay
Following on from that, you should continue to develop your response. **REMEMBER STRUCTURE** for each point you make, you should have:

- **Topic sentence** what is this particular paragraph going to be about? **Remember the wording of the original question**

- **Context:** Introduce the quotation.

- **Evidence** how can you support the point you have made?

- **Explanation** analysis - HOW does the writer reveal theme? Techniques and effects

- **Comment** evaluation how has the theme/character/conflict/setting etc been introduced/developed? Relate to task
The fact that the text is written in letter format highlights that it is something personal for the reader. Keane gives a vivid description of events by writing in the opening paragraphs, giving a unique insight into his thoughts and feelings which are usually meant for the person the letter is addressed to only. Keane's use of the vocative "My Dear Son" at the beginning of the first paragraph immediately emphasises the feelings he has towards his son and it makes the reader think that the letter is written from the heart. Throughout the letter Keane uses repetition. He says,

"We had wanted you, and waited for you, imagined you and dreamed about you".

Repetition of the word "you" reinforces the personal aspect of the letter and it also highlights Keane's feelings of joy and pride towards his son. The impact of his son's arrival is clearly shown when he says,

"your coming has turned me upside down and inside out ... So much that seemed essential to me has ... taken on a different colour."

Keane now sees his life from a new perspective and things that he used to think were important to him, aren't as important to him now. The tone of happiness and joy reinforces the universal theme of fatherhood effectively and the closeness of the bond between father and son is clearly established in the opening paragraphs. The detailed description of setting also has a significant role to play in interesting and triggering an emotional response from the reader in the opening paragraphs. Keane creates a peaceful and tranquil setting in the opening paragraphs through his word choice. He says "there is a soft quiet in our..."
• Writing a conclusion
To conclude/ In conclusion.

Summarise each point you made (Topic Sentences) and how it relates to the question.

Personal response to each point and the text overall.

Evaluate effectiveness and relate this to the task.