MATURA WRITING TASKS
LITERARY ESSAY

Level B2 · set texts: About a Boy (Hornby) & Foster (Keegan)

Your goal at B2: Write a focused literary essay with a clear argument. Integrate short quotations, analyse how the writer creates meaning, and organise ideas with the P–E–A method.

B2 · PHASE 1 – FROM RETELLING TO ANALYSIS

An essay analyses, it does not just retell the story. Rewrite each 'retelling' sentence as an analytical point.

1 Will buys nice things and doesn't work.
2 Marcus wears strange clothes to school.
3 The girl goes to live with the Kinsellas.
4 Mrs Kinsella cuts the girl's hair and buys her clothes.
5 At the end of Foster, the girl runs to the man.
6 Will meets Marcus and his mother.

B2 · PHASE 2 – ANALYTICAL VOCABULARY

Replace the underlined word with a more precise, literary alternative.

Weak	Stronger (your ideas)
The writer shows…	portrays / presents / conveys
This tells us…	reveals / implies / suggests
A big theme	central / recurring / significant
The character changes	develops / matures / is transformed
The ending is sad	poignant / moving / ambiguous

B2 · THE STRUCTURE YOU ARE BUILDING TOWARDS

Study this plan before you start. A literary essay makes an **argument** about a text and proves it with **evidence** from the book. The heart of it is the **P–E–A** method: make a **Point**, give **Evidence** (a short quotation or detail), then **Analyse** how it works. Write about literature in the **present tense**.

A LITERARY ESSAY — STRUCTURE



B2 · PHASE 3 – INTEGRATING QUOTATIONS

Weave short quotations smoothly into your sentence. Rewrite each so the quotation fits the grammar. (Invent a plausible short phrase in quotation marks if you need to.)

1. Marcus is an outsider. Quote: 'he was different'.
2. Will avoids real feeling. Quote: 'a blank'.
3. The girl notices everything. Quote: 'I watch'.
4. The Kinsellas' home feels safe. Quote about warmth or light.

Model: Marcus is presented as an outsider who feels ‘different’ from his peers.

B2 · PHASE 4 – THE P–E–A PARAGRAPH

Write one full P–E–A paragraph for each prompt: Point, then Evidence, then Analysis.

1. How Hornby presents Will's selfishness early in *About a Boy*
2. How Keegan uses silence in *Foster*
3. How the theme of family is explored in either text

B2 · PHASE 5 – ANALYSING TECHNIQUE

Good essays discuss how the writer writes. Write one sentence about each technique.

- narration / point of view (dual narrators in About a Boy; first-person child in Foster)
- symbolism (e.g. the well, light, water in Foster)
- contrast (Will's world vs Marcus's; the girl's two homes)
- the ending (open or ambiguous endings)

B2 · PHASE 6 – FORMAL LITERARY REGISTER

Rewrite each casual sentence in a formal, analytical register.

1 Will is basically a lazy guy who does nothing.
2 The girl is super happy at the farm, it's great.
3 Hornby makes Marcus really weird and awkward.
4 Foster is kind of sad and quiet, you know?
5 This bit shows Will is starting to care, which is nice.

B2 · PHASE 7 – GRAMMAR & PHRASING RANGE

Write one sentence of each type about a set text.

- a present-tense analytical claim (Hornby presents…)
- a sentence with an embedded quotation ('…', which suggests…)
- a comparison between the two texts (Whereas…, …)
- a concession (Although…, the writer also…)
- a sentence beginning with a linker: Furthermore / However / Ultimately

B2 · PHASE 8 – DRAFT INTRODUCTION & CONCLUSION

Introduction: name the text and author and state a clear argument in response to a question (2–3 sentences).

Conclusion: sum up your argument and point to its wider meaning (2–3 sentences).

B2 · FINAL WRITING TASK

Choose ONE question and write a literary essay.

Either: How does Hornby present the change in Will's character in *About a Boy*?
Or: How does Keegan explore the theme of belonging in *Foster*?

Write a **literary essay of 170–180 words** in which you:

- state a clear argument in your introduction
- develop it in P–E–A paragraphs, integrating short quotations
- analyse how the writer creates meaning
- conclude by drawing your argument together.

Use the present tense and a formal, analytical register throughout.