

	DUNMAN HIGH SCHOOL Year 4 2022
	English Language Personal Voice in Writing

PERSONAL VOICE

1. What is personal voice in writing?

Let's take a look at what the writing assessment rubrics say. Highlight words and expressions that indicate what "personal voice" is.

Band 1 (14-15 m)

- Overall, the answer demonstrates a confident '**personal voice**' with assured control and range of expression throughout.
- Some errors may occur, but these are few and do not impede meaning in any way.
- Ideas are communicated with confidence and conviction.

Band 2 (11-13 m)

- Overall, the answer is well-controlled and expressed with some evidence of breadth of sentence structure and vocabulary.
- The degree of technical accuracy will determine the mark within the Band, but errors will be relatively minor.
- There is a coherent overall structure.
- Response is secure throughout and more than generally competent (Band 'C'), but lacking the quality and assurance of Band 'A'.

Band 3 (8-10 m)

- *Overall, the answer is characterised by a general level of competence.*
- *There may be some ambition, but errors detract from the overall clarity of expression.*
- *Answers awarded 8 will lack consistent clarity as a result of frequent errors and unsure or laboured expression.*
- *Ideas can still be discerned without the examiner having to construe the meaning.*

Band 4 (4-7 m)

- *Overall, the answer is characterised by general faults of expression, including spelling or grammar or punctuation.*
- *Not all of these may be present, but the meaning is not securely communicated.*
- *The degree to which this occurs will determine the mark awarded within the Band.*
- *Some re-reading may be required by the examiner, but ideas can then be deduced.*

Band 5 (0-3 m)

- *Overall, the answer is characterised by heavy incidence of errors, resulting in severe breakdown of meaning.*
- *The examiner may need to re-read the answer in order to understand any essential line of thought, but no ideas may be deduced.*
- *Award 0 mark if nothing in the answer meets any of the criteria.*

2. What is personal voice in a nutshell?

- **Assured Writing**

- Complete control of vocabulary, sentence structures, organisation of ideas and content, and accuracy of language.

- **Confident Writing**

- Confidence is demonstrated in your style of writing and the amount of knowledge you have about the topic you are writing about. Confidence is skilled argumentation.

- **Convicted Writing**

- You have chosen a topic and prompt you feel strongly about. There is personal investment in your writing, The essay you have birthed is not just a task you have completed. It is not a chore that has to be done. It is an extension of yourself.

- ***Unique Writing**

- It is writing that could have only been created by you.

**Not stated explicitly in the rubrics but something that all teachers of writing hope for their students 😊*

Text A

Read the sample of student writing below and identify evidence of (1) **assuredness**, (2) **confidence**, (3) **conviction**, and (4) **uniqueness**.

In what ways are major global crises affecting your society?	Observations
<p>According to US biologist Barry Commoner, 'the environmental crisis is a global problem, and only global action will resolve it'. This is applicable not only to environmental crises, but to global crises in various aspects. Global crisis is a time of intense difficulty or danger that affects countries around the world in economic, social, political, and many other aspects. Its impact on different groups of individuals may vary due to the different cultural, social and historical factors. My society, Singapore, has managed to discover more opportunities for innovations and unity in times of crisis, but it is also facing the challenge of deepening inequality.</p> <p>Global crises have boosted Singapore's innovative capability by forcing it to step out of its comfort zone. This can be shown in the current crises of energy shortage and global warming. As global warming has resulted in worldwide disastrous impacts, such as flood, drought and hurricanes, Singapore has taken up this challenge to jump onto the bandwagon of sustainable development. For instance, the Solar Energy Research Institute Singapore (SERIS) has embarked on research projects to develop photovoltaic modules that can be integrated on building surfaces apart from roofs, such as the facade. The project can reduce Singapore's reliance on fossil fuels and spur Singapore to the forefront of clean energy technology. This is also the case in the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, where Singapore actively used the crises as an opportunity to promote e-commerce and remote working. Local businesses also used it as a chance for technological upgrading. Hence, Singapore not only maintained its status as one of the most crucial economic hubs, but also managed to emerge from the global crises stronger through innovations and creativity.</p> <p>Global crises have also enhanced people's sense of belonging to Singapore. In times of crises, government responses are crucial in determining the rate of recovery of</p>	

society and the degree of disruption in people's life. In the case of Singapore, the government has evidently been highly effective and responsible in its reaction towards global crises. For instance, in the global recession following the terrorist attacks on New York's World Trade Centre on Sept 11, 2001, Singapore announced a \$2.2 billion package to help with business costs, including tax and rental rebates. In October 2001, the Government provided another boost: an \$11.3 billion package that included tax cuts and emergency cash for the poor and jobless. These measures helped to mitigate the impacts of global economic crisis on individuals, households and businesses and effectively helped Singapore society to bounce back from the recession. Similar examples can be found in the 2003 Sars pandemic, 2008 global recession, as well as the covid-19 pandemic. In many cases, Singaporeans found themselves to be more resilient to the crises compared to other countries in Southeast Asia, Europe and even America, where chaos and unwise decisions are prevalent. Hence, many Singaporeans can appreciate the effective governance more and be proud of their country during major global crises, which helps to build a more cohesive society.

However, global crises also exacerbated inequality and led to social divisions. As the poor are more vulnerable to financial fluctuations and social instability, many of them tend to be affected disproportionately by major global crises. For instance, during the Covid-19 pandemic, the trend of automation and e-commerce made many jobs obsolete in Singapore, mostly the low-end workers. Moreover, those in the lower social spectrum usually face poorer working and living conditions, and are less likely to be able to work remotely. This results in a disproportionately high risk of infection among the poor. The lower-end workers also bore an exceedingly high rate of being retrenched as compared to average workers. In other words, inequality in our society is exposed and exacerbated by major global crises.

In conclusion, major global crises help Singapore to become more innovative and cohesive. However, it also exacerbated underlying inequality. In the face of major global issues, governments and businesses cannot resolve all the problems alone. Thus, it is important for us to step in as individuals to support one another, advocate for structural changes and try our best to make a difference to our society and the whole world, so as to make the best out of global crises and build a more beautiful and livable world.

Text B

Read the sample of student writing below and identify evidence of (1) **assuredness**, (2) **confidence**, (3) **conviction**, and (4) **uniqueness**.

There is no place like home. Do you agree?	Observations
<p>It is painfully empty. Inside this...building, this construct I call home. Or should I say - called home? The cold of the marble floor seeps into the soles of my bare feet, and the air is frigid, stale, uninviting. The house has seen better days, where warmth and laughter used to permeate the air and brighten the now blank, expressionless walls. Once upon a time, the dining table was full - full of people, full of stories, and full of the comfort of food that tasted like home. Yes, home. There was a time when this unfeeling place was called home. Now, all it is a concrete structure that stands alone, devoid of the love it once harboured. Home is not exactly a tangible place, but rather more of a feeling or state of safety, comfort, belonging and love. Therefore, I agree that there is no place like home, as there is no other place where you can find or exactly replicate these feelings, except home.</p> <p>Home is the place where you can be your most true self, without the worry of being judged or scrutinised. When you are at the place or around the people you can most freely express yourself, you are at home, in your most comfortable state and surroundings, without having to be self-conscious of your actions. For example, when you are with the people you are most comfortable being around, you let down your guard and conversation flows more easily. On the other hand, when you are in an environment or around people you are not familiar with, or enjoy being around very much, you are more conscious of your actions and words, and conversation becomes more awkward and formal. This is because when you are around the people you care about, such as your closest friends or trusted family, you do not have to worry about putting on an act for the sake of your public image, or being polite and proper in order to maintain favourable relations with acquaintances. You feel as if you can say anything you want, act on your impulses or simply throw away any pretense of a facade, and yet, nobody will look at you any differently, because they accept you for who you are. Hence,</p>	

home is the place where we can be our truest selves, be it in the environment we find comfort in the most, or with the people we can be most comfortable around, home is the only place where we know, we are not judged for who we are.

Secondly, home is the place where we can feel absolute safety, and that feeling cannot be found anywhere else. Safety can be found in many places - we feel safe when we walk along the streets of Singapore, even at night, knowing that Singapore has a low crime rate. We feel safe at school, knowing that there will be teachers around to prevent accidents and intervene should anything happen. However, home is the one and only place that offers absolute safety, from both the physical and metaphysical elements around us. For example, when there is a thunderstorm incoming, or when it is raining heavily outside, the place we all wish to be most is at home. Home, where we are sheltered from the elements that rage outside, where we are kept warm and comfortable, with everything we need to distract ourselves from the outside world, away from the violence of nature. Home is also the place we look forward to going back to, where we wish to be in, when we encounter a hard day at work where we have had to face the scoldings of superiors and the complains of clients, or when it has been a terrible day at school, with the ceaseless nagging of teachers, the judgement of classmates, and the constant reminder of test scores. When we are home, all these things fade into the background, and we are protected from the harsh batterings of life. Therefore, we are able to find solace and that familiar feeling of safety in being at home, where the words, the actions of people cannot harm us. Home is the only place where we are able to truly feel protected, and hence, there is no place like home, that can give us absolute safety.

However, some may argue that home is not always a safe, comfortable place where you are loved for who you are. Some households are abusive, and people live in an environment where they are in constant anxiety, fear and pain. Some relationships might be abusive as well, and people find themselves dreading the company of that person, or even contacting them, even though that person is supposed to be someone close to them, someone they should be able to call their "home". While this is true, if a place or a person causes you to feel this way, then it is not "home". As defined earlier, home is a place where one should feel completely safe and loved, it is a place where one feels like they belong. Home is a

feeling, and therefore, if what you feel is not security, comfort and love when you are in that environment or with that person, then you are not home - rather, you are homesick. For example, for someone who lives with abusive parents, their home might not be the place they live in, or with their parents, but rather school, where they are away from the hell that is their house, where they are surrounded by friends who care about their well-being. When they go back to their house, to where their parents are, they start missing the safety of school, and the company of their friends - they are homesick. Hence, home will always be the only place where you can fully feel loved, cherished, and secure, as that is exactly what home is - those feelings attached to a certain place or person, are what makes a home, home. As a result, there can never be another place like home.

Home, is where your heart belongs. There will only ever be one place where you will be able to be true to your heart and most be yourself. There will only ever be one place your heart seeks out when it longs for shelter and security. That is home - and there is no place like it.

Discussion

1. Which text has a stronger personal voice?
2. Which text has a superior personal voice?
3. Based on what you have read and discussed, can you find evidence of personal voice in your writing?

Additional Texts for Exploration and Discussion

Text C

Social movements divide people more than unite them. What is your opinion?	Observations
<p>Jared Leto's Joker was a bane upon society. In fact in our collective hatred of him many people overcame the divides of values and geography. However, he once infamously imparted an invaluable gem to us. "We live in a society." Our societies are ever shifting, giving rise to new ideas and opinions on how we should exist in the same collective. As a natural part of this shift comes social movements to propagate these ideas. These loosely organised but sustained campaigns support a particular social goal, with the intention of preventing or implementing changes in a society's structure. They may potentially permanently change the foundation of many lives and hence be very polarising. In their pursuit of change, people may begin to form into separate factions based on where they stand, thus leading them to see others as disparate from them and forming tensions between these groups. However, they can also bring people together with a common purpose or action. The question of course is, do these social movements accomplish one over the other? I personally believe they do more to bring people together and form strong bonds than they do to create rifts. Social movements can bring together people with common ideals from multiple countries, and strengthen a community's sense of identity and camaraderie for years beyond its insurgence. However social movements can be complex to understand, leading to infighting and separate goals even within its supporters. In spite of that, they can awaken a sense of togetherness between people who were formerly separated through the ideas they propagate.</p> <p>Firstly, social movements signal the presence of like-minded individuals to people with common ideals all over the world thus bringing them together for a common</p>	

cause. While most well known and historical social movements appear to be self contained, the issues they address may transcend the borders of nationality and language. To name a few points of focus, women's suffrage and the rights of disabled people affect people all over the world as there are women and disabled people most everywhere on earth. While multiple social movements of similar causes may be ongoing across the globe, when the proponents of their cause find each other, they can form solidarity with allies from different cultures. This sense of allyship can be stronger than the sense of separation formed from opposers as it creates the sense of a larger community and shared experiences to rely on. As previously mentioned, the Autism Rights movement is one such movement. While it is most well known in the United Kingdom and United States of America, the rise of the internet has allowed autistic people more opportunities to connect. Overcoming the barriers of geographical distance or communication issues, the message of the movement can reach many more people than if spread by word of mouth. Thus bringing together many autistic and non-autistic people to someplace they can achieve their goals together. Furthermore, this new found connection has also deepened the movement's resolve and goals as it seeks to aid in the issues of specific autistic groups such as autistic women. Autistic Pride Day which is held every June 18 allows autistic people to feel seen and accepted by a community who understands them. This creates a strong sense of connection with others all across the world. Hence, social movements are able to bring people together more than they separate them.

Secondly, social movements can strengthen or add upon a preexisting sense of identity within a community. Social movements tend to start from the collective desires or musings from within a particular group being affected. This dissatisfaction with society creates a sense of identity within those who share the same experience and dissatisfaction. Especially in social movements centred around specific cultures, these social movements can become an important part of their history and collective identity, therefore having long lasting impacts in tying people affected together. For example the Black is Beautiful movement in the 1960s was focused on countering the long held belief in the United States that

black people were naturally less attractive and inferior. With its frontmen mostly being black, the movement advocated for acceptance of black culture and identity. This has undoubtedly solidified black identity in America, such as how people take pride in themselves being told otherwise or embracing art created by fellow black people. The impact of this movement was that more black people began to embrace their culture and uplift their peers. The movement strengthened the solidarity within the black community in spite of their deterrers and added on to the identity of black people. Hence social movements can overcome the divide they experience on the inside by strengthening the bonds and bringing people closer within a community.

However, those who lean more on the skeptical side may question that the infighting common to social movements may bring greater separation from the inside and ultimately is not able to be overcome. Most social movements have multiple goals in mind and may stem from complex academic theory that the average and majority of supporters may misunderstand. Additionally, the implicit biases everyone experiences affects how much one is willing to support the range of actions carried out during a social movement, causing splits between the more and less radical inside a group of supporters. As misunderstandings rise and misinformation is perpetuated, a group of people initially on board with the same movement may split into different antagonistic factions. Co-opting of certain terms, conflicting interests and questioning of fundamental values may lead to large rifts. The multiple feminist movements have been subject to this over the last century. Recently during fourth wave feminism, the racism and lack of inclusion of transgender women has been a particular point of contention. In fact, feminist groups have even split into radical feminists who consider themselves gender critical and exclude transgender women and those who accept them in the movement. This has caused a lot of stress in the movement as the biases behind one's actions have to continually be reexamined and there is a distinct separation between these groups. In response, one might realise differing opinions is natural in any group of people whether brought together by social movements or otherwise. These separations can be overcome through cooperation between people who fundamentally share the

<p>same ideals. This separation and divide is not only temporary but can actually be useful in uniting people. By being presented with something to consider and rethink about, the people invested in a social movement can gain a deeper understanding together and from the shared experience feel closer. A social movement must inevitably confront issues in its ideology and doubts of its followers. Likewise, social movements can also overcome these inevitable issues. Hence, this separation is only temporary and does not overcome the sense of togetherness formed through a social movement.</p> <p>All social movements are polarising. In the wake of possible change that could shake the foundation of our lives, it is unavoidable that there should be people who oppose this change for better or for worse. At the same time even without social movements humans have always been capable of forming separate groups and turning against each other. One believes that human beings instinctively seek to come together and survive, therefore no social movement can truly divide human beings beyond repair. They will always come together and strengthen the bonds between each other. The best we can do is to be hopeful and stand for what we believe in, embracing both the separation and unity that may come with changing times.</p>	
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Text D

Social movements divide people more than unite them. What is your opinion?	Observations
<p>Social movements have the power indubitably to unite people with a common goal to challenge the status quo of society, or resist societal change. However, does this necessarily mean that social movements increase the cohesion of societies? If one were to dig deeper, they would discover the ugly, and rather ironic side of social movements. Divide. Although social movements may rally people together to fight for a common cause, it is myopic to come to the conclusion that social movements unite people more than they divide them. Instead, looking at this from a societal level will allow us to realise how</p>	

social movements have given rise to a greatly fragmented society. As such, I believe that social movements divide people more than unite them.

Social movements exacerbate existing social divides. A fundamental aspect of social movements is to convince fence-sitters to advocate for their cause. These people who are unsure of their stand towards these movements are much easier to sway than people who strongly oppose them. Through strategically pressuring fence-sitters to join in on their bid to incite change in society, social movements inadvertently force people to take a definite stand for or against these movements. As a result, society becomes increasingly polarised. Furthermore, people may be influenced by their friends to support social movements when they were initially ambivalent. For example, LGBTQ supporters have voiced their opinions on social media countless times. Many have expressed that there is no such thing as “accepting, but not supporting” LGBTQ persons. If one is not a supporter, one is simply a homophobe. If they claimed to be an acceptor but not a supporter, they are simply trying to disguise their homophobia. Such messages cause people who are not hardcore supporters or resisters of the LGBTQ movement to feel that they have to take a side. In this way, social movements sharpen the divide between social movements and their countermovements, making this rift more prominent than ever.

Within a society, there are many people of different views and backgrounds. Social movements can unearth pre-existing cracks in society brought about by different beliefs and values of people of different cultures and generations. Due to their difference in thinking, people of different upbringings and cultures may have contrasting outlooks on life and the way society should function. It is very probable that people from each viewpoint think that they are right, but fail to understand the opinions and reasoning of people with dissimilar perspectives. Although unspoken, these divides still exist. These divides may be brought to light by social movements, as persons with different schools of thought will fight for what they deem just. As such, the cracks in our society that have been swept under the rug for a long period of time become much more conspicuous, dividing people along the lines of differing ideology. Take environmental conservation as an example. It is a well-known fact that we have to sustainably develop our world in order to ensure the survival of future

generations. As such, there are many climate change activists who have urged people to save our environment. However, this social movement has caused the pre-existing issue of science denial to resurface. Climate change and global warming denialists have appeared, and they try to convince others that these environmental problems are not happening. As such, this clash in beliefs can divide people as they try to convince each other on whether climate change and global warming exists. Science denial is also applicable in the context of the anti-vax movement. With the advancement of technology, vaccines for many diseases are widely available around the world. This has caused the anti-vax movement to become increasingly prominent in society nowadays, where people try to persuade others that vaccines are a dangerous threat to one's health and wellbeing. In these cases, people still get together to advocate for a certain cause. However, this instead causes clusters of people with clashing interests and opinions on recent events to crop up, creating more divide in our society

Some may contend that social movements rally people together for a common cause to unite them. Social movements serve as a platform for people to voice their opinions and beliefs, allowing them to discover like-minded individuals that they will be able to work together with to achieve a common goal. For example, the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement has allowed people all around the world to speak up about racism and defend the rights of black people. It allows people to find strength in numbers to effect positive change in society by promoting racial equality. People of all races join in this movement to show their support for this cause. As such, it can be said that social movements such as BLM have united people of different races. While it is definitely true that social movements can help people to find others with similar views and aims, allowing them to build on one another and strengthen the cohesiveness of society, this is a highly idealistic and unlikely case of social movements. More often than not, rallying people together for a common cause will simply create new dividing lines in society through creating clusters of people with the same views. Especially for controversial issues, as these clusters are further differentiated from one another, a deepening rift will appear in society due to this social movement. This intra-societal clash in ideology is prevalent in social movements such as feminism. Feminism is the advocacy of women's rights on the basis of gender equality. This includes eradicating gender

stereotypes, which can be viewed differently by different people. For example, feminists assert that we should not rigidly categorise men to be breadwinners, and women as homemakers. However, conservatives may not be so willing to accept this new concept as they cling on to their old beliefs. As such, the new concepts that social movements introduce to society may create divides between among people that did not exist previously.

It is definitely admirable that social movements strive to ensure the better good of society, whether through resisting or advocating for change. However, all these seemingly positive social movements inevitably produce the same by-product, segregation of disagreeing parties within societies. It is difficult for a society to move forward with different groups of people playing this metaphorical game of tug-of-war, and immense effort may only bring about minimal change. If we allow these social movements to continue to deepen and lengthen the cracks in our society, the society we know may eventually shatter one day. Will this happen? Only time will tell.