

Boost Free Lessons - Year 10 English

Lesson 20: Writing with Intertextual Reference

Name: _____ Grade: _____ Date: _____

Your task: Write a piece of about 400 to 500 words that deliberately refers to another text.

You may write imaginatively or discursively. Your reference may be to a story, poem, film, song, myth or well-known phrase, and it may be direct or indirect.

Then explain, in three or four sentences, what your reference adds that the piece could not achieve without it.

You will be assessed on how well the reference is integrated, and on what it contributes to meaning.

Worked Example 1

Making an intertextual reference earn its place

1. **Intertextuality** is a deliberate reference to another text, used to add meaning.
2. The test is simple: does the piece gain something a reader who knows the reference will see, without confusing one who does not?
3. A reference can work by **parallel**, inviting the reader to map one situation onto another.
4. It can work by **contrast**, where the difference from the original is the point.
5. A reference that only shows off your reading adds nothing. If the piece works identically without it, cut it.

Parallel or contrast, and it must add meaning rather than decoration.

Remember: An intertextual reference must **add meaning**, not display reading. Test it by removing it: if the piece works identically without it, it was decoration.



Question 1: Plan your response before you begin writing.

1. The text I will refer to, and why

2. Whether my reference works by parallel or by contrast

3. How I will make the reference (direct quotation, echo, situation)

4. What a reader who knows the reference will see

5. How the piece still works for a reader who does not

6. What the reference adds that I could not achieve otherwise



Question 2: Write your piece below. Continue on the next page.

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Continue your piece here, then write your explanation.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.



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Model Response and Self-Check: Writing with Intertextual Reference**Model Response****Waiting Room**

The clinic gives you a ticket with a number on it and a screen that counts, and everyone in the room watches the screen instead of each other. Forty-one. Forty-two. A man near the door has been holding the same folded paper for an hour without opening it.

My mother says the trick is to bring something to do, and she has brought her crossword, and she has not filled in a single square. She is on the same clue she was on when we arrived. Six letters, a river in Egypt, which she knows, which everybody knows, and which she has not written down.

Two men opposite us have clearly come together and are not speaking. One checks his phone, puts it away, and checks it again eleven seconds later. I know it is eleven seconds because I have started counting.

Nothing is happening. That is the whole of it. We are waiting for somebody to come through a door and say a name, and until they do there is nothing to be done and nowhere to go, and so we sit, and the screen counts, and my mother does not write down the river in Egypt.

Forty-three.

The man by the door unfolds his paper, looks at it, and folds it again along the same creases.

I think about how much of a life is this. Not the news, but the room before the news, where everybody is certain something is coming and unable to make it arrive.

Forty-four.

My reference is to Waiting for Godot, which I never name. The parallel is in the situation: two people who cannot leave, an arrival that structures everything and never occurs, and small repeated actions filling the time. A reader who knows the play reads the clinic as larger than a clinic. A reader who does not still has a complete scene. The reference adds scale, letting a short piece suggest something about waiting in general.

Check your own response

1. My reference is deliberate and adds meaning.
2. The piece works for a reader who does not know the reference.
3. The reference is integrated rather than announced.
4. I have used parallel or contrast purposefully.
5. My own writing is strong independently of the reference.
6. I have explained what the reference adds.
7. My explanation identifies the text and the relationship.
8. I have checked my spelling and punctuation.

