**IMAGINATIVE WRITING**

Weaker IGCSE English response:

Let’s take a look at a sample exam prompt:

*“You return to your old school, to find it abandoned.”*

Here is an example of what some IGCSE students might produce for this imaginative writing task:

*The school was huge. I stared at its empty front as I walked towards it and through the gates. I pushed open the big doors and made my way into the reception. It was filled with papers, mess and dust. The piles of paper looked like old parchment in a forgotten castle. I could smell stale coffee and the dust as I crept through the corridor, not wanting to make a sound.*

Why is this response considered weak for IGCSE English?

What this response is missing:

Though there is some use of basic linguistic techniques such as simile and sensory imagery, and structural devices such as short sentences, these will have to be considerably more sophisticated for top marks in imaginative writing.

The narrative lacks inner monologue and has no indication of depth of setting and connection to history and subject matter.

The sentence structure is mostly repetitive with ‘I’ starting lots of sentences, indicating that the writer struggles with sentence structure.

Improved IGCSE Imaginative Writing response

Now consider this alternative imaginative writing response:

*The grand, old, Victorian façade gazed down at me as I tottered, shrinking before it. It was both imposing and inspiring. It reminded me of times past, the ring of the school bell and the chatter of children chasing memories down the halls. The prodigious double doors creaked open as I pushed my way through into the reception foyer. Stacks of office paper spilled over the edge of the reception desk and seemed crammed haphazardly into drawers beside a trophy cabinet long since last locked. The dim gleam of an old trophy whispered of glories gone, and of students long since signing their names on their final exam papers. A waft of burnt coffee, dry and earthy, seemed to crawl, tingling up my nose. As quietly as a mouse, I crept through the deserted corridor, the paintings of old headmasters and mistresses gazing at my intrusion disapprovingly.*