

Cracking Question B

A step-by-step guide to mastering the Introduction to a Collection of Essays for the Leaving Cert.

CONFIDENTIAL: QUESTION B

Collection of Essays

Essential Leaving Cert English
Notes | Enda's English Notes

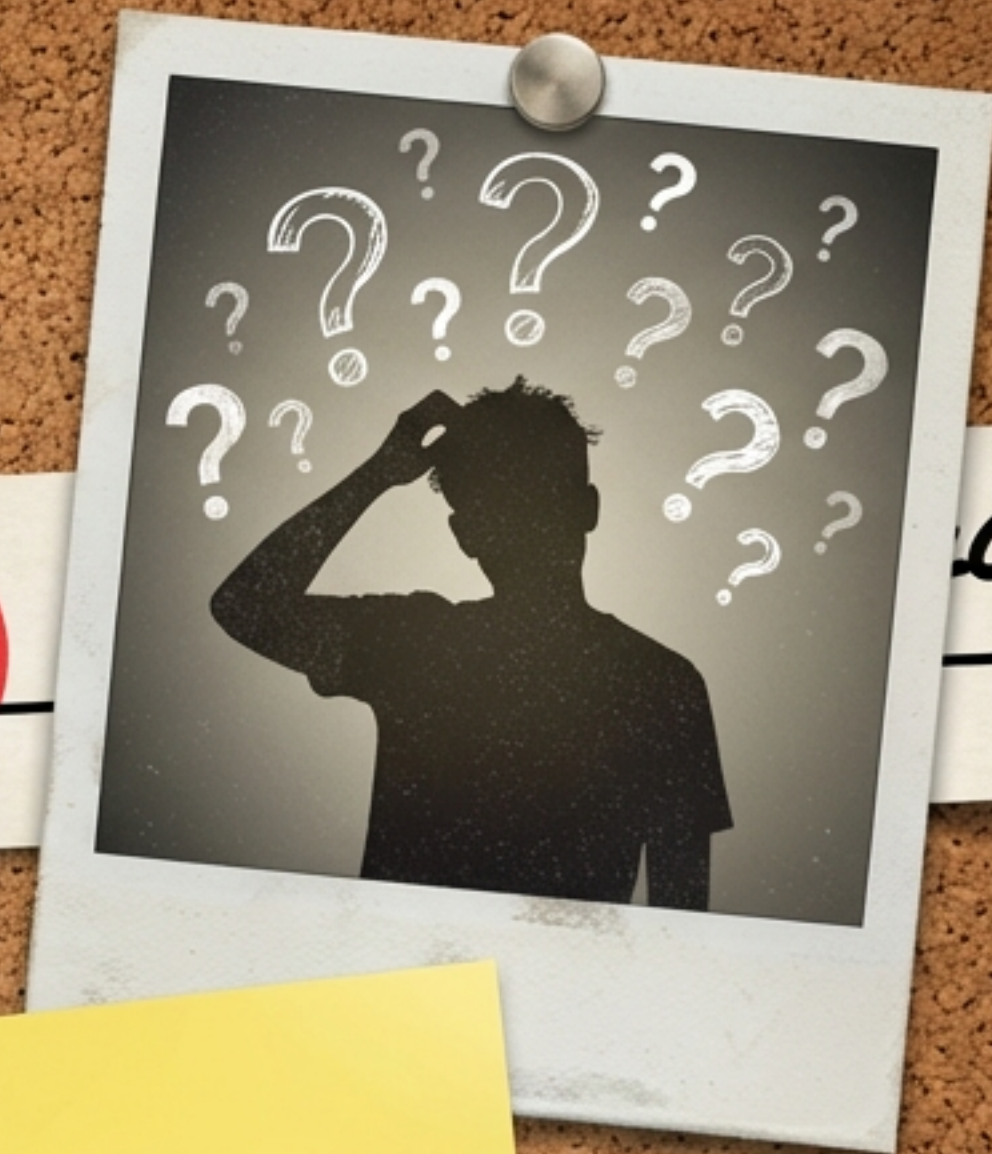
Demystifying the 2020 Curveball

2017

2018

2019

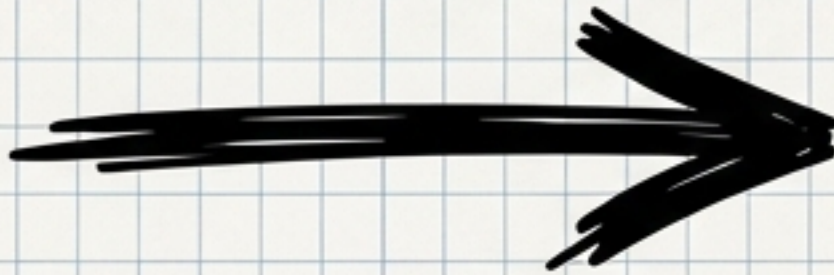
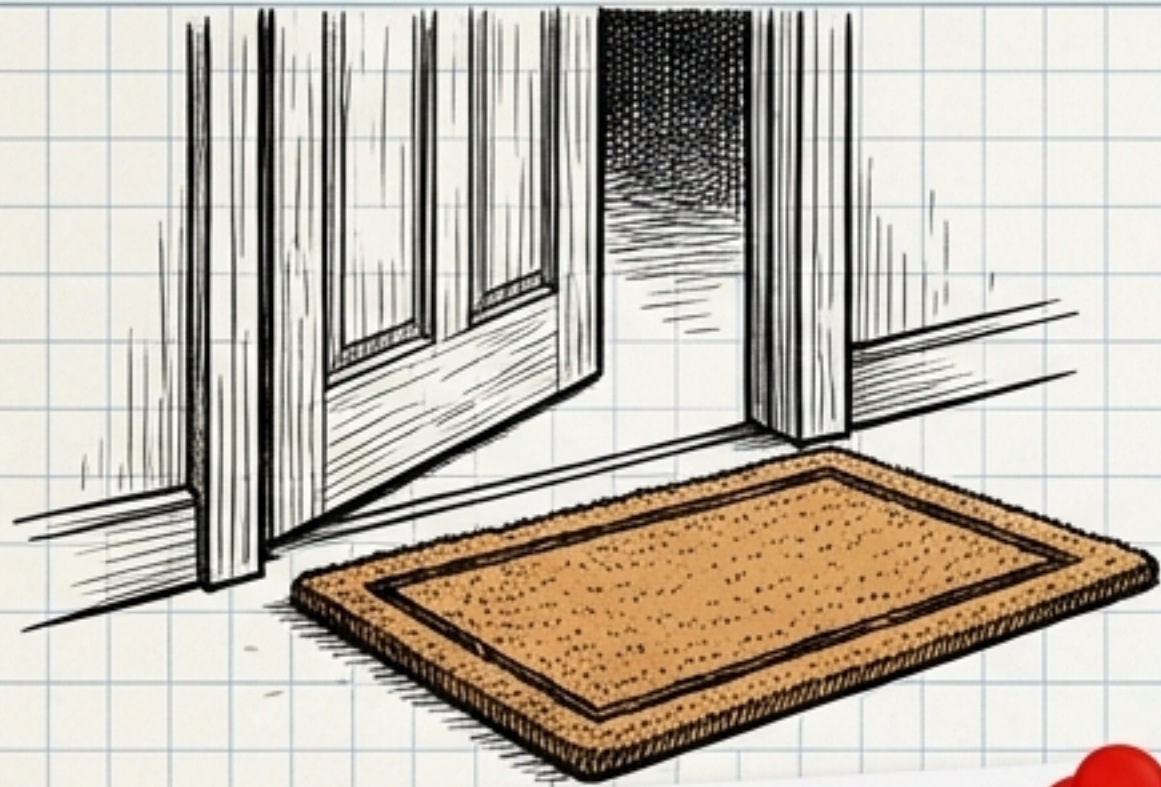
2020



When this question first appeared in the 2020 exam, students panicked. Writing an introduction to an imaginary collection of essays felt entirely new and completely unstructured.

*The Secret:
It is actually a very simple, formulaic question once you break it down properly.*

You Are Writing the Welcome Mat, Not the Book



- The Premise: You are introducing an imaginary book filled with essays on a specific topic.
- Your Role: You are the editor/curator greeting the reader at the door.
- Your Goal: Welcome the audience, explain the book's overarching purpose, and tell them exactly what to expect inside.

MANDATORY

The Golden Rule: Let the Prompts Dictate Your Content

You **cannot just write whatever** you want about the topic. Your content is strictly dictated by the exam question.

The examiner will always give you three main points to cover in your introduction. Your final grade depends entirely on dedicating space to all three.



The Step-by-Step Blueprint



Step 1: Envision. Think about the topic and imagine the specific stories that will appear in the book. **STORIES**



Step 2: Welcome. Greet the reader, create a title, and set the tone. **tone**



Step 3: Execute the Prompts. Dedicate specific, separate paragraphs to the three exact tasks asked in the question. **EXACT TASKS**



Step 4: Sign-Off. Close the introduction by wishing the reader well. **WISH WELL**

Executing Steps 1 & 2: Creating the World

Point 1: Always
invent a
realistic title
for the book!

Point 2:
Establish a
warm, inviting
tone directly
addressing
the reader

Welcome to this latest installment of Detectives on the Beat, where you will find hours of intrigue. This book of contemporary detective fiction is up there with the best we have produced and I hope you have as much fun reading them as our writers had creating it.

The Evidence: Isolating the Three Prompts

You have been asked to write the introduction to a new collection of contemporary detective fiction. In your introduction you should:

- ...outline the reasons why you think detective stories have enduring appeal
- ...discuss some of the personal qualities you believe are essential in a memorable fictional detective
- ...explain why you recommend this particular collection of stories to readers.

Nailing Task 1: The Enduring Appeal

...outline the reasons
why you think
detective stories
have enduring appeal

We, as a species, are enthralled
with the world of crime, a world far
removed from our humdrum lives...
One only has to look at the popularity
of true crime...

Notice how the writer
directly addresses 'appeal'
by focusing on human
curiosity and the escape
from daily life.
Citing the real-world
popularity of 'true crime',
the point beautifully.

Nailing Task 2: Personal Qualities

....discuss some of the personal qualities you believe are essential...

The best detectives... are lone wolves, who go against the accepted norms... decisive, determined and not scared to ruffle a few feathers... like Harry Bosch, Roy Grace or Jimmy McNulty.

The writer doesn't just say they are 'smart.' They list specific, engaging traits (flawed, rule-breakers, lone wolves) and drop famous fictional names to demonst a deep understanding of the genre.

Nailing Task 3: The Recommendation

...explain why you recommend this particular collection...

This particular collection will appeal to all readers, as there is a mixture of old style murder mysteries, while the pitfalls of social media and cat-fishing play a central role...

The writer reels the reader back to the imaginary book itself. They justify the recommendation by detailing exactly what diverse stories are inside, contrasting old-style mysteries with modern cyber-crimes.

Executing Step 4: The Final Word

Always finish by directly addressing the audience one last time. Wishing them well with a simple phrase like 'Happy Reading!' is a basic courtesy that perfectly frames your composition as a true introduction.

We hope that you enjoy these stories and that they offer you a chance to test your own detective skills on some of our gruesome crimes.

Happy Reading!

APPROVED

The Golden Thread: Architecture of a Perfect Answer

The Exam Prompt

Prompt Requirement 1

Prompt Requirement 2

Prompt Requirement 3

The Essay Structure

Para 1: The Welcome

Para 2: Executing Prompt 1

Para 3: Executing Prompt 1

Para 4: Executing Prompt 2

Para 5: Executing Prompt 3

Para 6: The Sign-off

Insight: The structure does the heavy lifting. Map your paragraphs exactly to the prompts, sandwich them between a welcome and a sign-off, and you guarantee maximum marks.

Your Pre-Exam Checklist

- Understand the core concept: I am the editor introducing an imaginary book.
- Invent a title for the collection and write a welcoming opening.
- Identify the 3 mandatory prompts hidden in the exam question.
- Dedicate distinct paragraphs to answering each prompt fully.
- Sign off with a polite "Happy Reading!"

Essential Leaving Cert and Junior Cycle
English Notes | Revision guides by
Enda's English Notes

Mystery Solved

CASE CLOSED



Question B is not a test of pure imagination; it is a test of structure. Follow the prompts, welcome your reader, and claim your marks.