

Commentary

Not every teenager is elated with a greenhouse for her 15th birthday. But I was! My love of plants has since grown and working at Botanical Gardens inspired my writing to show the benefits and beauty of plants yet the destructive, myopic ways of humans. Environmental issues fit into the topic of society and the individual as it needs to be a global and personal responsibility. I was inspired by two main stimulus texts *The Kite Runner (TKR)* by Khaled Hosseini and *Cupcakes and Kalashnikovs (Cupcakes)* edited by Eleanor Mills. My TED Talk - *Our Mightiest Ally Has Switched Sides (Ally)* - raises awareness of deforestation to sixth former students and will be delivered at the annual TED talk school competition. *Desperate* - my dystopian piece to be published in an anthology of short stories - is about an old lady watching her garden die in a drought due to climate change. It similarly aims to raise awareness of environmental issues and promote action.

A01
personal + engaging reasons for the topic covered - expressed effectively

A03
secure awareness of the forms/audiences + purposes of each piece

In *Desperate* the extended metaphor personifies the plants as patients through medical lexis, 'remedies', 'ward', 'casualties.' Here the apocalyptic tone signposts the dystopian piece as images of suffering enables us to feel more emotionally attached to the plants, hyperbolising the state of the garden. Similarly, in *Ally*, an extended metaphor presented through the lexical field of battle - 'warrior', 'ally', 'forfeiting' - foregrounds the severity of deforestation in amplifying climate change. Moreover, with the extended metaphor of battle, a tone of comradeship is later exemplified, 'Let's add to the list: Deforestation Ended 2024'. This final declarative motivates the audience to unify as a specific goal is given. The colon implies a pause, allowing the audience to reflect on their capability and achievements as a nation, and the contraction 'Let's' concludes the talk in low register to inspire collective, immediate action.

A01/2
critical application of language analysis + evaluative understanding of how/why choices were made.

A03/A02
analysis of nuances in the text to shape responses.

Furthermore, the extended metaphors compliment in both, conveying the preciousness of nature. The repetition of 'our mightiest ally has switched sides' brings cohesion, instilling a tone of urgency and the superlative 'mightiest' suggests a saving omnipotent force, conveying the importance of the rainforest, reemphasized through the noun 'Ally'. Contrastingly, in *Desperate* the superlative in the reported speech 'sweet as if she was the most wonderful sunset for the nose,' portrays nature's vulnerability. Here, the simile links to the motif of the sun (inspired by the cohesive motif of kites in *TKR*) creating a sense of awe as the synaesthesia demonstrates the sensual delight of the flower. Moreover, the past tense encapsulates a voice of grief like a respectful obituary.

AO1
sophisticated
style +
judicious
use of
terminology.

The aim of both texts is for readers to feel emotionally invested in environmental issues. In *Desperate*, pathos is evoked when plants are associated with a 'hospice,' whereas in *Ally* it's the colloquial language that allows students to connect. The satirical tone in the opening phrase: 'Our belching out of climate change spiel is distracting us from actually acting', utilises the onomatopoeic verb to create humour and convey an audacious voice through the abrupt sound 'belching', subtly indicting the media's coverage of climate change whilst being engaging to the teenage audience. The repetition of a similar phrase at the end also creates a cyclical structure, bringing cohesion. The ambiguous noun 'spiel' is vague language portraying an image of nonsense; comically ridiculing the volume of news given about climate change. The slang 'flex' and 'skiving' presents the talk colloquially, capturing teenagers' attention, whilst the esoteric reference in the parenthesis, '(sorry, no excuses for skiving school here)', links to the student strikes, highlighting a cutting undertone and mocking voice.

AO1/2
sustained
examples -
academic
and
detailed.

AO3
evaluative
recognition
of
context
and (AO2) how
these have
been utilised.

Both texts have a consistent voice of exigency. In *Desperate* the one-word declarative 'desperate' connotes utter helplessness, whilst the repetition creates cohesion and a countdown effect mirrored in *Ally*: 'another three hectares have been cut down'. This magnifies a voice of anger and urgent call to action like *The Right to Life* by Alice Walker (*Cupcakes*) where the repeated rhetorical question punctuates the speech, giving it rhythm. The determinative 'another' enforces the reality of the enormity of deforestation and exaggerates the tone of exasperation. Also, the statistic here is coupled (just like some are in Julie Flint's *Mountains of Hell – Cupcakes*): '1/3 of our carbon emissions', 'dropped 66%' as this TED Talk convention builds a voice of authority and credibility that galvanises people to educate themselves on the rainforest.

A01.
Sophisticated
comparison
of texts
and
their
impacts.

A04
brief yet
effective
link to
stimulus
text.

In *Ally*, the field specific lexis of rainforests - like 'cocoa' and 'animals' - creates integrity (like India Night's medical lexis in *Thank God I Let My Baby Live – Cupcakes*) aiming to educate students about the imminent problem of deforestation and motivating them in the salvation found in the rainforest. Similarly, in *Desperate*, the interjections of horticultural field specific lexis - 'drooping', 'dew drops', 'turgidity' implies a knowledgeable tone, demonstrating the lady's experience but also seeks to warn readers by contrasting images of horticultural beauty with images of ugliness. Inspired by the juxtaposition between winning and losing in *TKR*, this connotes the antagonistic force of climate change, building tension as the garden is destroyed. The triplet, 'precious lime, fuchsia and gold' and 'wonderful fiesta of rich magenta,' utilises colours and euphony to enable sensory imagery. Moreover, the pre-modifiers 'precious' and 'rich' imply luxury and invaluable beauty, reminding readers of the visual joy gardens can bring. This is contrasted by the images of blandness, 'baked beige' 'hideous slash', 'barren,' with the voices of disgust enhanced by the bilabials.

A02
Incredibly
detailed
analysis
of the
fiction
piece here.

A01
sophisti-
cated use
of terms.

The onomatopoeia of the adjective phrase 'hideous slash' creates disturbance, implying pain and violence as readers are cautioned about the reality of climate change. This is intensified when the fricatives and fragmentation foreground the tension used in the climax when describing the aphid attacks. *Ally* also uses fricatives - 'futile'; 'frivolous fulfilment' - to portray a similar voice of disgust but at mankind's attitude.

AO2
evaluates
how
meanings
have been
shaped

Desperate follows dystopian genre conventions, as inspired by Ray Bradbury's short stories. A futuristic tone is established in the subheading: 'East Sussex, Nimble Cottage, June 2026.' Inspired by the temporal marker used in the exposition of Bradbury's *The Pedestrian*; not only does the location give verisimilitude but the phonology of 'Nimble Cottage' is soft, creating an initial setting of serenity, intriguing the reader. There is a book end change (inspired by Yann Martel's *We ate the children last*): omnipotent third person, allowing an omniscient view of the character and reflection on the moral state of our world before a more emotive viewpoint. The

AO4
highly
effective
links to
stimulus
texts;
evaluative
and
exploratory
throughout.

shift to first person is emphasised through the sudden voice of fear presented in the low frequency lexis 'condemnation', 'reconcile', 'foolishness,' producing a tone of desperation and foreboding, compounded by religious lexis which is later repeated: 'My joy. My life. My strength.' Here, the anaphoric triplet of abstract nouns portrays the plants as integral to the women and the biblical allusion to Jesus, (inspired by the intertextuality in *TKR*) foregrounds the magnitude of climate change. *Ally* then seeks to rouse an 'international' responsibility, as collective address is used to unify and self-deprecate to prevent audience alienation. However, the deliberate shift to direct address is utilised in the repeated fact 'by the time you...' and the triplet of rhetorical devices in the middle of the speech including '...your grandchildren can deal with it anyway'. This rebukes carelessness and selfishness whilst the relation

AO1/2
critical
+
evaluative
analysis.

to family triggers higher responsibility. A shift to collective responsibility is immediately reinstated as the pronoun 'we' is utilised to avoid antagonising the audience.

Both texts therefore cooperate to drive their audience to self-evaluate and take culpability of the current environmental destruction worldwide; evoking reaction to redeem it.

AO1 + AO2 are particularly strong, with exploratory analysis throughout. There is ~~an~~ evidence of wider reading and clear + evaluative recognition of the ways that the texts have been influenced by both contextual factors and other texts. Sophisticated throughout. (24)/24

Very good, level 5 commentary.
critical approach taken to her own texts and influences.

Fiction

Audience: Aimed at older students to be used in schools as part of an anthology of educational short stories.

Form: Dystopian Short Story.

Purpose: To entertain and provoke thought about the imminency of environmental issues and personal impact they will bring.

Desperate

East Sussex, Nimble Cottage, June 2026

✓ Immediately indicates the genre.

Awakening with the wrens and turning in just as the owls soared over the setting sun, she nurtured her patients tenderly, with the utmost care and respect. Her cotton bonnet sat scruffily but securely in a nest of her grey and white hair. Her hands were plastered in dusty dirt, clutching anxiously at remedies and equipment - cutting, covering, mending, comforting- each a wild attempt to treat the latest victim. And her eyes were tired. Tired and desperate. Desperate but diligent.

Character is described effectively.

✓ Crafted use of anadiplosis. ✓ Very good crafting here!

Desperate.

✓ Effective use of short - one word - paragraph.

Callous condemnation is hanging over humanity, haunting every mindless action repeatedly taken. Taunting, like a grand finger pointing at us, mocking our previous foolishness, and smirking at our current futile attempts to reconcile. I hear its haughty laugh every time I wake to the merciless sunrise. It fractures the silence of what used to be content blackbirds pottering around and bees quietly muttering to each other.

✓ Evocative use of personification.

Muttering to myself I eased out of bed, squinting at the glare of the heightening sun. I pulled my cotton bonnet on, plastered the protective cream over my face with my painfully half scrunched hands, opened the patio doors and tried to blur out the hideous slash progressively tearing its way through my ward in the hospice. It had been inflicted by the latest water ban.

✓ Still unsure about who the patients are - deliberately mysterious.

CUMULATIVE WORD COUNT: 221/1012

Slowly, I made my way over to the beds and peered at the rows of casualties. As always, it was tragic. ✓

✓ Tragic and desperate.

A few of my friends had faded in the night. Some patients were drooping dreadfully, clinging onto the supports I had got for them yesterday. Numerous others had mustered the strength to decorate the place with a few splashes of precious lime, fuchsia and golden bunting; it sat above their increasingly flaccid bodies. But they were all critically dehydrated. Dew drops and turgidity was a distant memory of many dawns ago. ✓

Inspecting further, I hobbled over to a corner where my most beloved patient sat in her bed. Lathyrus Odoratus or 'Sweet Pea' as most people commonly knew her. ✓

Hunching over, my knees grinded as I ignored the moaning arthritis and gave her the respect she deserved. After all my many years, she was within and throughout, interwoven within the pages of my life, a motif within the memories: the first scent I smelt after I came back from hospital after having Lillian, a descendent of the seeds I'd collected with her son, my first ever grandson.

I carried out her usual obs. She was weaker. Disfigured. Thinner. Fainter. Moving. ✓

Something was moving. Moving within her - over her - inside her. Grotesquely. ✓

The next biblical plague sent by The Master. ✓

Aphids. ✓

Sprawling 'vampire- like' menaces embraced her, each fatal kiss injecting thousands of murderous microbials into her tubes. She transported them helplessly around her organs. I couldn't bear to look. She frothed. Foam poured out of her. She could have

CUMULATIVE WORD COUNT: 486/1012

Good cohesion

sophisticated + crafted throughout.

Excellent word choice language.

Beautiful description

highly effective.

lovely! Highly crafted

well controlled! Assined.

fought them before. I flinched. She faltered, frail like my fingers that tried to flick the filthy flies off. I sprayed, squished, cursed – desperately. She wasn't even finished yet, but they already came before she was gone.

It all felt wrong. She'd always been my joy. My life. My strength.

Triplet enhances the voice of the old lady - adds to its sincerity.

"As sweet as if she were the most wonderful sunset for the nose," my friends would marvel.

It was true; although she always dressed beautifully with linens delicately draped over her elegant figure, her real charm was the angelic scent that settled, always, in a two-meter radius around her, blessing the dear person who walked past her that day. I fell in love with her grace and understated blooms each year. She always came alive in the summer; her countenance would light up and her clothes would erupt into a wonderful fiesta of rich magentas and soft violets.

engaging description.

She'd been there at my wedding day too. She gave me the confidence to walk down the aisle. She held my hand the whole way, her soft perfume drifting up my nose. She was more loyal than any friend could ever be. Friends.

Friends wouldn't watch as the other slowly faded away. They would do something.

The thought repeatedly panged in my mind. If only I could have given her a drink this morning – maybe it would have given her strength to fight them; given her a few more days.

But my darling Sweat Pea was now no more than aphid sustenance. They were the finale of the massacre sent from The Master. She lay grotesquely and hot. "Too hot." A final petal lay on the bed, and I watched as the colour swiftly faded like being sucked through a plastic straw.

Effective simile.

The Master had won again. ✓

He claimed yet another one of his beige trophies; one of the last to be claimed in England but nevertheless claimed. ✓

And all desperately dry. ✓

I hoped the water falling from my eyes might offer just a hint of life; bring back my friend's vigorous vitality and the outstanding oasis she'd gifted me with. Bring back the pure, sweet air that gently caressed my lungs. Bring back the symphony of harmonious variety and red spotted warriors who'd valiantly fought the consistent aphid attacks. Bring back my Sweet Pea, my Lobelia, my Rose, my Sunflower, my friends. And banish the beds of patients and the fiendish fracture that scarred the barren hospice- an open wound of ugly baked beige - The Master's trophy. ✓

Clever use of anaphora.

Bring back everyone's wonder, 'A sunset for the senses.' ✓

Effective structure - main voice framed by the third person description.

The frail lady sat down. She re-adjusted her cotton bonnet, yanking it to hide the anguish that trickled from her eyes and immediately evaporated in the dizzying heat of the setting sun. They'd always said The Master wouldn't reach her, that it would only affect her grandchildren's children. But it grew in power a lot quicker than they had expected. And its servants were strong. Stronger than one old lady desperately trying to save her beloved garden. She squinted at The Master in utter indignation. Her eyes were desperate and defeated. ✓

Good assured structure.

She'd lost the most treasured sunset of her life. ✓

Evocative ending.

An unusual, highly original storyline. Sophisticated descriptions and a convincing, engaging character. Fits dystopian genre effectively. Definitely worthy of

TOTAL WORD COUNT: 1012/1012

18/18 ✓

C.T. 24/04/2024 18/18

9 mod. ✓

A gripping twist at the end that is built on excellent imagery. The dystopian features have been weaved

Non- Fiction

Audience: Sixth Former Students at my school.

Form: TED Talk

Purpose: To educate people on the environmental problem of deforestation and the negative impact this is having on our current climate change crisis.

Ted Talk: Our Mightiest Ally Has Switched Sides

Our belching out of climate change spiel is distracting us from actually acting.

And now, our mightiest ally has switched sides.

Nine years ago, I wrote an article about 'Saving the Rainforest'. It was the typical year four adjective-embellished exclamation-mark-excessive column that somehow came top 10 in a Stabilo Young Journalist of the Year Competition. (Big flex, I know!)

I really believed that nearly a decade later we would simply have solved the problem.

By the time you finish listening to this sentence, three hectares of forest have been cut down.

The problem remains.

We are *still* demolishing our own life support by cutting down rainforests.

In simple terms, rainforests are richly erupting with abundant gifts: animals, cocoa, potentially lifesaving cancer drugs. They supply us with oxygen; exchanging it to store huge amounts of carbon - (twice the amount of carbon than they emit in respiration) acting as a crucial carbon sink.

But things have changed...

By the time you finish listening to this sentence, another three hectares of forest have been cut down. (Three hectares is equal to over four football pitches!)

CUMULATIVE WORD COUNT: 183/966

Establishes student voice effectively

Asymmetrical severe or crafted voice

deliberate tone changes briefly to shock

Use of facts enhances the voice's sincerity

App for genre

Our mightiest ally has switched sides: now, 1/3 of our carbon emissions are *caused* by deforestation. In continually forfeiting our rainforests by hacking and burning them down for our own futile and frivolous fulfilment, we surrender the ultimate warrior in our battle against climate change.

strong use of fricatives

In COVID 19 scientists worked tirelessly day and night to provide a vaccine that would combat the deadly virus. It was an international emergency.

hardly emphatic stress.

Climate change is an international emergency! It's not a mild inconvenience to be dismissed for future generations or a topic to be perpetually pushed away by facts and facades of progress.

Follows conventions of a speech - short paragraphs indicate longer pauses.

It is an international emergency.

And a battle we are deemed to loose, especially when we insist on pushing our mightiest ally to abandon us.

With Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva back in office in Brazil, our ally is not completely lost.

There is hope for the Amazon rainforest at least. Hope that he will continue to dramatically drop deforestation levels (it's already dropped 66% compared to August 2022!), hope that he might possibly push to achieve targets of no deforestation.

Hope to negotiate our greatest ally back on side.

But, by the time you finish listening to this sentence, another three hectares of forest have been cut down.

use of direct address to challenge views.

Maybe this doesn't resonate with you: it's a problem which is too far into the future?

Your grandchildren can deal with it anyway.

But we didn't leave our grandchildren to deal with the problem of COVID. It was an international emergency!

Is this a fair comparison?

Well so is this.

well captured!

We are reaching a tipping point with our rainforests. We are on the edge, where every crucial action and counter move has an impact on our future; one wrong move and there will be irretrievable loss.

Clever use of esoteric reference.

Now let me get this straight, I'm not the next Greta Thunberg urging you to skip school and protest for the rainforest (sorry, no excuses for skipping school here) but I am warning you that our problems will not just go away.

As I wrote this, I contemplated whether or not there is anything we can really do. I'm not going to shove a list of unrealistic top tips in your face; of course, it's heroic to use less loo roll and poke around at public protests about the rainforest. But let's be honest, the loo roll is going to keep coming whether you use two or three squares; the majority of the population will continue to indulge in a luxurious four-square wipe and trees will still be cut down. And yes, a public protest might give you a hot two seconds of Tik Tok fame but check in the next day and it's old news.

Advised Voice

Deliberate use of colloquialisms to engage with audience.

However, we are the new generations -- we are the brains; the creativity; the problem-solvers; the future -- and we need to see the worth and value in the one thing that freely and joyfully provides us with so much.

We must educate ourselves on the rainforests.

The optimist in me hopes in 9 years' time when I reach the distant old age of 27, I will live in a world where we don't sabotage our own air. I hope that we won't be destroying the one thing we need to survive in a world that can facilitate us. Perhaps I know deep down this won't be so.

But think about it, in 9 years:

- The Curiosity Rover discovered water on Mars in 2014.
- Multi use reusable rockets were landed successfully on earth in 2015.
- Facial recognition technology was released in 2016.
- Hamilton was unleashed at the West End in 2017!
- The first photo of a black hole was taken in 2019.
- Lionesses won the euros in 2022. (whoop, whoop!)
- There became 3D-bioprinted human livers and kidneys!
- And Taylor Swift released more songs than I can ever listen to.

lots of examples that the audience will appreciate!

We have the capacity to do great things!

So, pay attention.

crafted use of short sentences and repetition of the start

Our belching out of climate change facts and stats and policies is distracting us from being proactive, the rainforest is our mightiest ally but - handled badly - our biggest threat. Look at all we have accomplished in the last nine years. If we can do all this then surely, we can spend more effort, resources, and research on saving our rainforests? It's simple. The costs of action annihilates the cost of inaction.

Effective triplet

By the time you finish listening to this sentence, another three hectares of forest have been cut down.

repetition of this line creates cohesion + is a stark reminder of the serious nature of the topic

Our mightiest ally has switched sides: 1/3 of our carbon emissions are caused by deforestation. There is no bigger emergency than to save our rainforests. It couldn't be more urgent!

strong bold ending

Let's add to the list: Deforestation Ended 2024.

Another highly effective text; form, audience + purpose are targeted successfully with a strong, persuasive voice throughout. (18)/18

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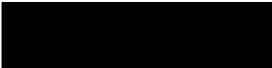
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