

Writing Feedback

DAY 3 | 23rd of April | HOLIDAY WRITING HOMEWORK

Section 1:

#1 (Paragraph 2: "It began on my typical walk along Sydney Harbour...") Strengths: Your vivid sensory details effectively create an immersive atmosphere. The juxtaposition of the vibrant surroundings with the solitary figure creates a compelling emotional contrast. Weakness: Overloaded description. → The paragraph contains excessive descriptive elements that dilute the impact of your central observation. Phrases like "filled with the saltiness of the sea, blended with the sweetness of coffee" and "vibrant with the cacophony of laughter, seagulls, and the occasional ringing of boat bells" create sensory overload that distracts from the significant encounter you're building toward. Exemplar: *I strolled along Sydney Harbour, the salt air mingling with coffee aromas from nearby cafés. Amid the bustling scene, one figure stood out—a solitary person sitting slumped on a bench, seeming to carry invisible weight on their shoulders.*

#2 (Paragraph 5: "They pointed in the direction of the skyline...") Strengths: The metaphor about tallness effectively communicates the theme of success redefined. This moment marks a significant turning point in your reflection. Weakness: Undeveloped insight. → The profound realisation about success lacks sufficient development to fully resonate with readers. The statement "That small realization was a grand revelation, one which dissipated my own confusion on success and calling" tells rather than shows how this insight affected you. The connection between the stranger's perspective and your own transformation feels rushed and underdeveloped. Exemplar: *"Do you see the tallest one?" they asked, gesturing toward the gleaming skyscrapers. "I once believed success meant reaching that height. Now I understand success is about standing tall wherever you are." Their words reorganised my thinking—I'd been measuring achievement by external standards rather than internal growth.*

#3 (Paragraph 8: "Walking away from him...") Strengths: The concluding reflection effectively ties together the physical setting with the emotional journey. Your use of the harbour waves as a metaphor for life's message shows thoughtful symbolism. Weakness: Inconsistent character reference. → You abruptly shift from using "they/them" pronouns throughout the piece to "him" in this paragraph, creating confusion about the stranger's identity. Additionally, the concluding insight feels somewhat clichéd and could benefit from more specific, personal reflection on how this encounter changed your perspective. Exemplar: *As I left the harbour, my conversation with them lingered in my thoughts.*

The gentle waves seemed to underscore what I'd learned—that meaningful connections, however brief, often teach us more about ourselves than years of solitary striving.

→ Your diary entry presents a heartfelt encounter but would benefit from more focused development of key moments. The piece introduces a promising narrative about human connection but relies too heavily on descriptive language rather than emotional depth. Your reflection touches on important themes of purpose and connection, yet these insights need more specific development to fully resonate with readers. Parts of your writing contain beautiful imagery, particularly in descriptions of the harbour setting, but this sometimes overshadows the emotional journey you're documenting.

■ I recommend focusing on fewer sensory details and allowing more space for exploring your internal response to the encounter. You might consider expanding on specific moments of connection rather than broad philosophical statements. Also, maintaining consistency in how you refer to the stranger throughout would strengthen your narrative. Try to balance your descriptive prowess with more concrete reflection on how this experience specifically changed your outlook. Remember that powerful writing often emerges from precise, authentic details rather than sweeping generalisations about life's meaning.

Score: 43/50

Section 2:

Diary Entry Date:

April 25, 2025

Today was nothing less than remarkable—it was as if the universe gave a brief pause, allowing me to witness its subtle beauty. Although this was a mundane encounter in so many ways, it left me wondering at the vast potential of human connection and generosity.

#1 It began on my typical walk along Sydney Harbour. The fresh air was filled with the saltiness of the sea, blended with the sweetness of coffee wafting from the

crowded cafes along the promenade. The city was alive, vibrant with the cacophony of laughter, seagulls, and the occasional ringing of boat bells. But amidst all the fun, I noticed a serious-looking individual sitting by ~~himself~~ [themselves] on a bench with ~~his~~ [their] shoulders slumped as if ~~he was~~ [they were] carrying the world on ~~his~~ [their] shoulders. Drawn by a mix of curiosity and concern, I hesitated for a moment before crossing over. Their face, half-hidden by the brim of a battered hat, wore an expression of loneliness that struck deep within me. I recognized the look—it was my own expression on days when doubts clouded my sense of direction.

Summoning courage, I sat beside them, offering a soft, "Hello." Silence hung in the air like a fragile thread. Before I could second-guess myself for intruding, they glanced my way, and their eyes spoke a thousand words. We started talking—about the harbor, the beauty of the day, and life's twists and turns.

Their story unfolded slowly, each sentence carrying the weight of past trials. They had come to Sydney years earlier with dreams as vast as the sea, and ~~as~~ [like] the waves, been hit by unexpected calamities that left them lost. Yet as they told fragments of their journey, I was bolstered by the resilience embedded in their speech—the ability to continue ~~traveling~~ [travelling] forward in the waves of life.

#2 They pointed in the direction of the skyline, its skyscrapers shining with sunlight. "Do you see the tallest one?" they asked. "I used to believe that success is reaching that point. But nowadays, I think that real success is being tall, even when you're not the tallest among others." That small realization was a grand revelation, one which dissipated my own confusion on success and calling.

The most poignant moment came when I handed them a small present—a little bracelet that I had created during a recent art class. It was nothing really, just a simple weave of strings in varied ~~colors~~ [colours]. Yet when they received it, their eyes lit up with a flash of surprise and gratitude that left my heart filled. In this instant, it was clear that sometimes the smallest acts of kindness are the most important.

As the sun began to set, illuminating the water in a palette of amber and pink hues, we said our goodbyes. Though brief, our time together seemed to leave an indelible mark, as though I had glimpsed a kindred spirit—a fleeting reminder of the shared humanity that binds us all together.

#3 Walking away from ~~him~~ [them], I realized that this moment wasn't about comforting a stranger; it was about finding purpose and definition within. The ~~harbor~~ [harbour] waves appeared to be sending me a message—beauty in life isn't found by reaching the peak of the greatest mountain, but in the relationships we build in the process.

This night, as I am writing these musings, I'm overwhelmed with fresh hope and gratitude. The world, though filled with tumultuous storms and challenges, gives us moments of transcendent beauty that make us understand we are never solitary. Something which I would carry close to my heart and attempt to share with others as well.

Your inspired companion,

Yashree