**1. Character-based prompts :**

Cosi is more than an entertaining comedy. It reveals the sadness of the lives of the characters. Discuss. (Cosi, Louis Nowra)

These prompts focus on one or more characters. In this case, you would most likely structure your essay paragraphs based on particular characters or something in common with a set of characters. Essays can become quite repetitive if each paragraph is based around one character so try to add in discussion about themes or the character’s relationships with other characters. Remember that minor characters can be just as important as major characters.

**2. Theme-based prompts :**

To what extent is love an escape from the horrors of war in A Farewell to Arms?*(*A Farewell to Arms, Ernest Hemingway)

Usually your paragraphs will be based around particular themes. For example in this case, paragraphs may be based on ‘love’, ‘escape’, ‘horrors of war’ etc. These paragraphs can have character discussions embedded within them in order to demonstrate how the characters represent each theme. Discussion of the author’s choice of language such as symbols or imagery can be essential to the analysis of a theme.

**3. Quote prompts :**

Terry says to Charley: “I coulda been a contender. I coulda been somebody, instead of a bum. Which is what I am”. Does the film support Terry’s judgment of himself?*(*On the Waterfront, Elia Kazan)

These prompts can be character- or theme-based. However, it differs from other essay topics because it includes a direct quote from the text. Remember that the quote is part of the prompt, so ensure that you address it. One of the best ways of doing so is to incorporate the quote into the essay itself.

**4. Question prompts :**

To what extent does Pi’s imagination help him in his quest to survive both physically and emotionally.*(*Life of Pi, Yann Martel)

These prompts are usually structured, ‘how does the character do this.’ Since it is often focused on one main character, your essay will be rather monotonous. Try to weave in the main character’s interactions with other characters and how other characters influenced them.

**5. Analysis prompts :**

In her foreword to this collection of poems, Judith Wright states: “I think poetry should be treated…as a way of seeing and expressing not just the personal view, but the whole context of the writer’s times”. How does her own poetry reflect this?*(*A Human Pattern – Selected Poems, Judith Wright)

Analysis prompts are the rarest of the 5 prompts but don’t be surprised if you’re asked one. They focus more on the language part of the text; rather than the plot, themes or characters. Your discussion will revolve around the author’s use of language (metaphors, prose, syntax etc.). These discussions are typically viewed as ‘harder’ prompts because you need to think about how the author achieves a particular message about character or theme through their choice of words.