

LONGMAN Exams Dictionary
Writing a Discursive Essay
Topic: Books and Literature



You are going on a long journey and decide to buy a book to pass the time.

You enter a bookshop with no preconceived notion about which book to buy.

Which factors will determine your choice?

Write about 250 words.

Complete the sample essay below. Use one word or phrase in each gap.

alliteration, non-fiction, genre, clichés, biographies, preface, whereas, former, chapter, prose fiction

Which one?

When I choose a book for no purpose other than a few hours of entertainment, there are several factors which I will consciously or subconsciously take into consideration. Firstly, it is more likely to be light reading, in other words, a volume of _____ as opposed to a lengthy and more challenging novel. If, for some reason, I choose _____ over fiction, I would be more likely to buy _____ than autobiographies. I find it hard to explain this preference but, generally speaking, I find the _____, by definition, less subjective and egocentric. For me, the latter often smack of self-importance.

So as far as _____ is concerned, that would be my starting point. I would then be superficially drawn to the design of the cover and also the typeface. I find both very influential. Some will automatically appeal _____ others will discourage me from buying. Softbacks are less expensive too, so I would choose those over hardback copies.

I would then read either the foreword or scan the _____, then possibly the first page of the first _____ to give me an idea of the plot and writing style. I love the use of metaphor, assonance and _____. I should have been a poet; however straightforward the sequence of events in a story, I like them to be conveyed with a creative use of words and ideas. I find the use of jaded _____ and patent predictability off-putting.

So, in four or five minutes, the above considerations would all come into play. Whether I finish my book and recommend it to a friend is another matter.

Vocabulary

smack - иметь вкус, привкус; отдавать

typeface - начертание шрифта

assonance 1) созвучие 2) неполное соответствие, аналогия 3) ассонанс, неполная рифма (одних гласных) similarity in the vowel sounds of words that are close together in a poem, for example between 'born' and 'warm'

alliteration - аллитерация (вид повтора - совпадение начальных или начинающих ударный слог согласных в словах; встречается обычно в стихе (где может нести различную функциональную нагрузку), также в идиоматических выражениях и др.)

straightforward - прямой; движущийся или ведущий прямо вперёд, прямо вперёд

convey - выражать, передавать (мысль)

jaded - 1) измученный, изнурённый; обесиленный 2) пресытившийся, пресыщенный

patent - 1) открытый; доступный, беспрепятственный, свободный 2) очевидный, явный

off-putting - смущающий, сбивающий с толку; обескураживающий

Answer Key

Books and Literature

You are going on a long journey and decide to buy a book to pass the time. You enter a bookshop with no preconceived notion about which book to buy. Which factors will determine your choice? Write about 250 words.

Which one?

When I choose a book for no purpose other than a few hours of entertainment, there are several factors which I will consciously or subconsciously take into consideration. Firstly, it is more likely to be light reading, in other words, a volume of **prose fiction** as opposed to a lengthy and more challenging novel. If, for some reason, I choose **non-fiction** over fiction, I would be more likely to buy **biographies** than autobiographies. I find it hard to explain this preference but, generally speaking, I find the **former**, by definition, less subjective and egocentric. For me, the latter often smack of self-importance.

So as far as **genre** is concerned, that would be my starting point. I would then be superficially drawn to the design of the cover and also the typeface. I find both very influential. Some will automatically appeal **whereas** others will discourage me from buying. Softbacks are less expensive too, so I would choose those over hardback copies.

I would then read either the foreword or scan the **preface** then possibly the first page of the first **chapter** to give me an idea of the plot and writing style. I love the use of metaphor, assonance and **alliteration**. I should have been a poet; however straightforward the sequence of events in a story, I like them to be conveyed with a creative use of words and ideas. I find the use of jaded **clichés** and patent predictability off-putting.

So, in four or five minutes, the above considerations would all come into play. Whether I finish my book and recommend it to a friend is another matter.