We have put together this collection of essays for students from the SECONDARY 3 classes.

The essays have been classified into different types to allow easy reference. We have stuck to simple language at about the same level as the students for whom we have written these essays.

To help students get the best out of the essays, we begin with SUGGESTED APPROACHES on how each essay could be tackled. In the margin of each essay, we also write short COMMENTS on why the essay is well written.

Using this book as a guide, students would do well to master the art of essay writing in the early stages of secondary school. Once mastered, the skill of essay writing will serve them throughout their school and university days, and beyond as well.

To this end, we hope this book is helpful.

The Publisher
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NARRATIVE ESSAYS (STORIES)

INTRODUCTION

Essay titles which require you to narrate stories often give explicit instructions to write an imaginative story. But then again, in some cases only the essay title is given — leaving the writer to write the type of essay he chooses. For example in essay number 1, you are asked to write a story. But if you take a look at essay number 66, 'A lonely spot' you will see that you could narrate a story, narrate an incident or perhaps write a descriptive essay. In other words, the title does not tell you what type of essay to write. In such circumstances, the writer is entirely privileged to write whatever he chooses. Our advice: Choose what you are best at.
THE COUSINS

When John met Alice, the two took an instant dislike for each other. They were cousins, because their mothers were sisters. They had been living at opposite ends of the world. John had always lived in Singapore. Alice's mother had married and gone to live in Canada. Alice's father had died suddenly and the family had become poor, so they had come back to Singapore. Being kind people, John's parents invited them to live with them. So that was how the two cousins met.

Having been the only child, John was not used to sharing anything so, he resented the fact that now he had to share everything with his cousin. She was eighteen years old, two years older than John, and seemed to tell him what he should do all the time. His father and mother too, suddenly seemed to be closer to her than him. Strangely enough, his aunt seemed to like him very much and spent a lot of time talking to him. This comforted him a little.

The quarrels between the two cousins became very serious after a time. They were always bickering and each found fault with the other at the slightest excuse. Most of the time, it was John who found fault. One day he told Alice that it was his home and that they had taken pity on them and that if she became too much, he would chase her out of the home. This really upset her and she locked herself in the room and cried for the whole day. John was not happy either. He wished he had never said anything of the kind. When Alice's mother came home that evening, Alice must have told her everything. John felt miserable when he saw his aunt come out of her room looking very sad. He wanted to run to her...
and tell her that he was sorry but he did not have the courage. That night he could not sleep at all.

Next morning, when he came out of his room he saw his aunt standing there with all her bags packed. Alice was with her and she looked sad too. Then John’s mother came out. Alice’s mother said nothing; she just hugged her sister and cried and cried. In between sobs, she told her sister that they were leaving. Then John’s mother started to cry and Alice joined in. Then John’s father came out. He said nothing but stood there and looked hard at John. It seemed to John that somehow, he had guessed he must have had something to do with it. John felt ashamed.

He walked up to his cousin and held her by the shoulders, “I didn’t mean what I said. I am sorry,” he said softly. Then he hugged his cousin and consoled her. Then he took out his handkerchief and wiped her tears. “From today, you are not my cousin anymore, you are my elder sister,” he said, and started to cry. Then it was Alice’s turn to wipe his tears. The adults just looked at the two of them. John’s mother just took all the bags into the room and Alice’s mother followed her. Still holding his ‘sister’, John looked at his father.

His father stared at him for a long time and then said, “My son has grown up today. He is now an adult.” Then he turned and went into his room. John took Alice back to her room to help her unpack.

(530 words)