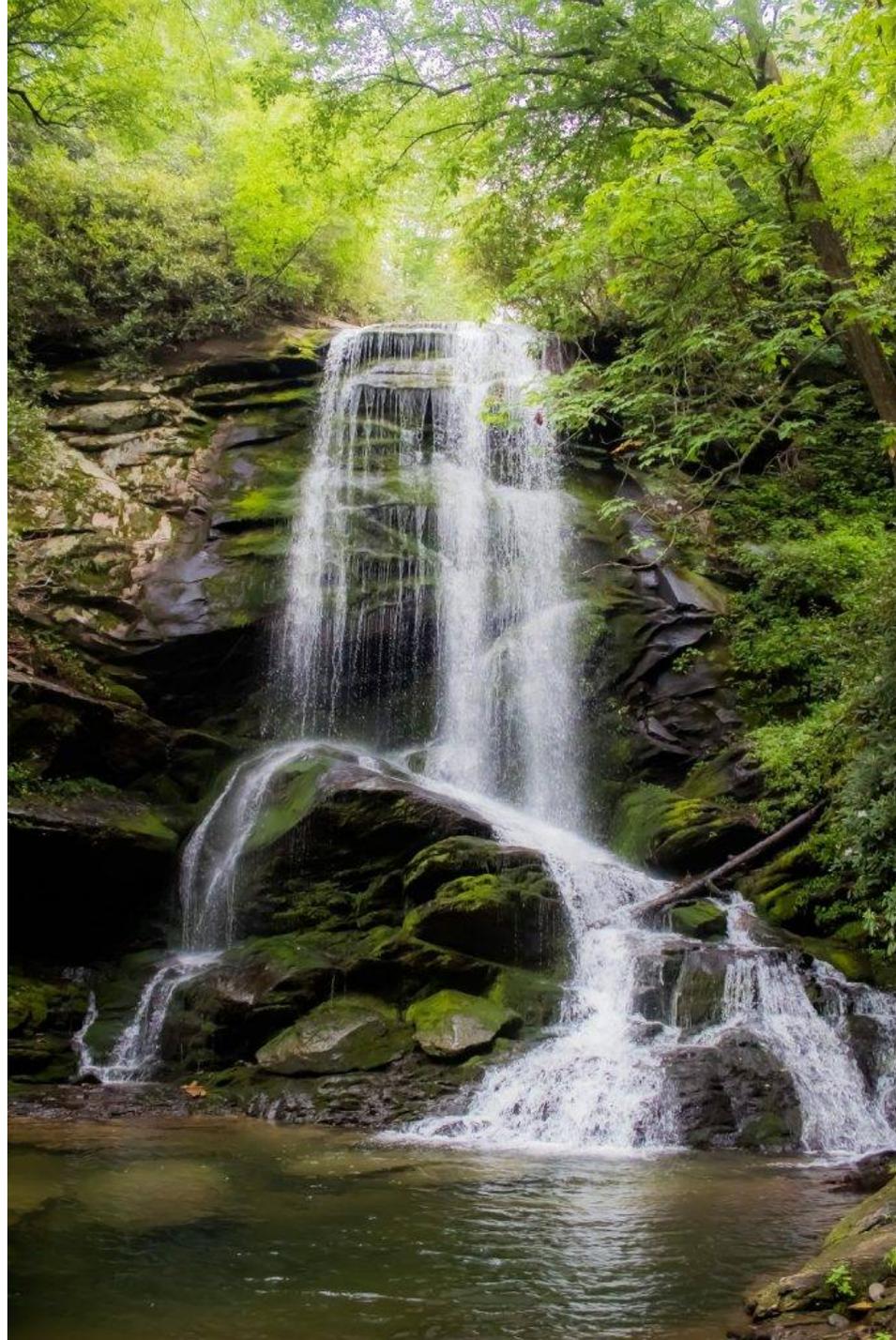


Teaching students to write with coherence and flow in OIB Geography and History

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In developing students as writers, it is important to help them understand that decision-making is at the heart of the writing process. Effective writers choose their words carefully to suit their intentions and to connect with the reader in certain ways. Yet, as teachers, we are often faced with texts written by our students that seem to miss the point, ramble and lose their way or, in the worst cases, barely make sense at all.

Helen Handford (2020) *'Knowing how to start a sentence – developing orientations in students writing'*.
3L: Language and Literacy in Learning, Lexis Education.

Geography

How useful are documents A and B for understanding the importance of maritime trade routes to the global economy?

Using documents A and B and your own knowledge, discuss the extent to which maritime canals and straits are a potential source of international tension.

History

Explain how the policy of appeasement affected international relations in the 1930s.

How far do you agree that the economic factors were the most important underlying cause of the slide towards WW2?

Teachers' comments about some of the less successful aspects of students' writing

too descriptive

arguments are
circuitous

disjointed and
clumsy

arguments not
convincing

conclusion is short
and weak

repetitive points

rambling

lacks
development

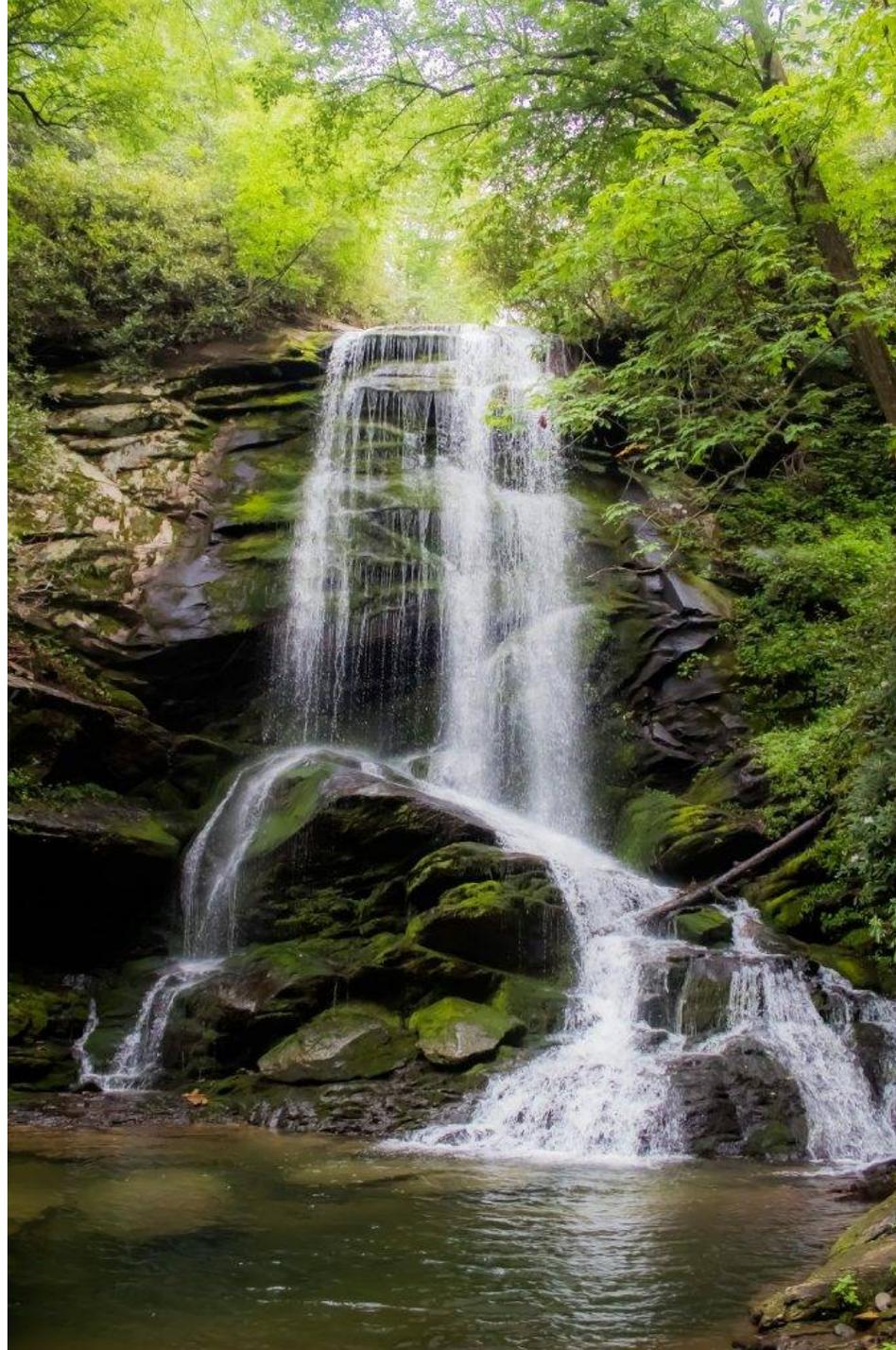
restricted and
muddled

ineffective
structure

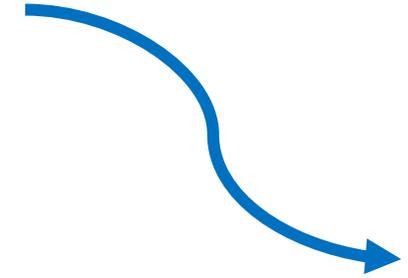
lacks a clear
analytical thread

no sustained attempt to respond to the fundamental
demands of the question

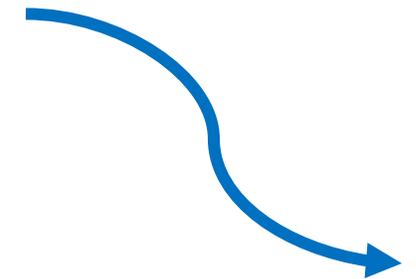
A writer orients the reader by choosing what to foreground, in other words, what to bring to the front of sentences and paragraphs, within the broader context of the purpose of the whole text.



Orientation to the whole text



Orientation to each paragraph



Orientation to sentences/clauses

OIB History-Geography generic marking criteria for the written examination

/8	/12	max /20	Performance descriptors
8	11–12	20	Very good <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Extensive, detailed and well-directed knowledge• Very good understanding with a “big picture” approach• High ability to analyse, evaluate and provide evidence-based judgements• Highly skilled interpretation and use of document(s)• Devises and structures response very effectively



What genre are they asking students to write?

Being clear about purpose: what's it **asking** me to do?

How useful are documents A and B for understanding the importance of maritime trade routes to the global economy?

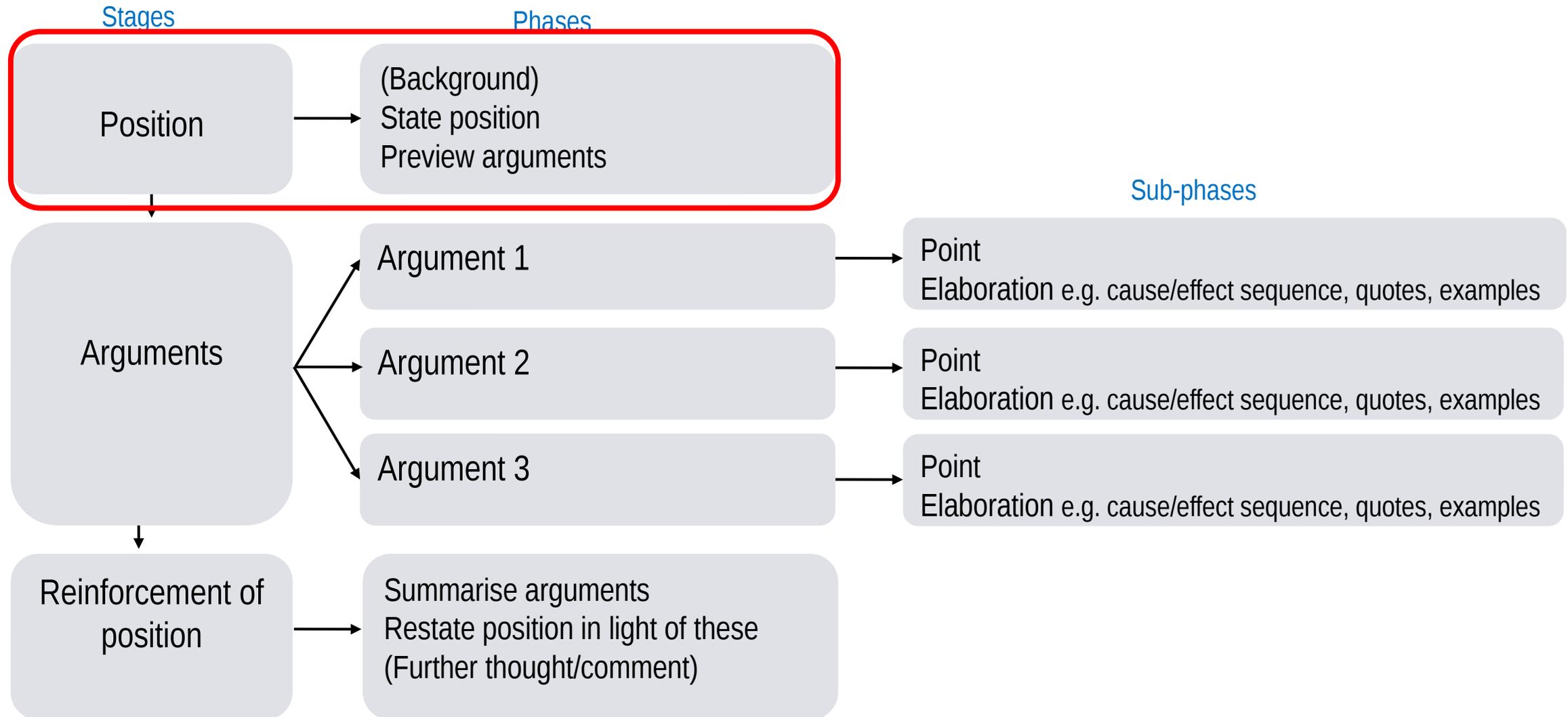
To what extent are maritime canals and straits a potential source of international tension?

How did the policy of appeasement affect international relations in the 1930s?

How far do you agree that the economic factors were the most important underlying cause of the slide towards WW2?

The analytical exposition genre

from Latin meaning 'to set out a position'



Establishing a position

How useful are documents A and B for understanding the importance of maritime trade routes to the global economy?

very useful
indeed

mostly useful but
with some limitations

many limitations but
useful in some respects

not useful
at all

Establishing a position

To what extent are maritime canals and straits a potential source of international tension?

a potential source of tension

mainly a source of possible tension with some positive aspects

mainly a source of positive relationships with some possible tensions

not a potential source of tension

Establishing a position

How far do you agree that the economic factors were the most important underlying cause of the slide towards WW2?



agree

mainly agree

somewhat agree

disagree

Establishing a position

How did the policy of appeasement affect international relations in the 1930s?



a lot

It is clear that the pursuit of appeasement in the 1930s had a profound and disastrous impact upon international relations.

quite a lot

Although/ whilst it can be argued that...., In some respects, it might be said that.... However,...

somewhat

not at all

There is little doubt that the pursuit of appeasement in the 1930s had a negligible and short-lived impact upon international relations.

Write a position statement for this question.

To what extent are maritime canals and straits a potential source of international tension?

a source of tension

mainly a source of tension with some positive aspects

mainly a source of positive relationships with some tensions

not a source of tension

Although cooperative alliances between countries have been created, maritime canals and straits are mostly sources of international tension brought about for economic, religious, environmental and political reasons. (Student M – rephrased)

If this is the answer, what's the question?

The policy of appeasement's goal was to satisfy the Nazi regime with conceded land in order to avoid another war.

Student text J

In the 1930s, the United Kingdom and France (to a certain extent) followed the foreign policy known as 'appeasement' as a diplomatic approach to foreign conflict and political tensions.

Student text H

It is clear that the pursuit of appeasement in the 1930s had a profound and disastrous impact upon international relations.

Teacher text

Explain how the policy of appeasement affected international relations in the 1930s.

The pursuit of appeasement in the 1930s had a profound and disastrous impact upon international relations.

Explain how the policy of appeasement **affected** international relations in the 1930s.

It is clear that the pursuit of appeasement in the 1930s had a profound and disastrous **impact** upon international relations.



Words before	Thing/concept (nominalisation)	Words after
a profound and disastrous	impact	

Where next?

What kind of impact?

It is clear that the pursuit of appeasement in the 1930s had **a profound and disastrous impact** upon international relations.

Impact 1 - facilitated **an era of aggressive militarism**

Impact 2 - exposed **the bankruptcy of the world order**

The teacher's position paragraph

It is clear that the pursuit of appeasement in the 1930s had a profound and disastrous impact upon international relations. In attempting to avoid a future war, Britain and France merely facilitated an era of aggressive militarism and exposed the bankruptcy of the world order they had created at Versailles.

The teacher's position paragraph

It is clear that the pursuit of appeasement in the 1930s had a profound and disastrous impact upon international relations. In attempting to avoid a future war, Britain and France merely facilitated an era of aggressive militarism and exposed the bankruptcy of the world order they had created at Versailles.

Using nominalisations to set up the argument

Words before	Thing/concept (nominalisation)	Words after
a profound and disastrous	impact	
an	era	of aggressive militarism
the	bankruptcy	of the world order

Using nominalisations to pack a lot of meanings into a small space



Denominalised language

when countries were making their armies stronger and stronger and in a very forceful way in order to make sure that...



Nominalised language

an era of aggressive militarism

the bankruptcy of the world order



Students' nominalisations: student text J

The policy of appeasement's **goal** was to satisfy the Nazi **regime** with conceded land in order to avoid another **war**. Indeed, countries such as France and Britain were still in shock after the **violence** of the First World War and tried their best not to repeat **history**. Although, Germany did not adopt the same **theory**, and international **relations** were very tense. Benito Mussolini said that "We (Italy) must try to build ourselves up so that we can look Germany in the eye, if and whenever that need arises." This shows that even between future allies, **relations** were tense.

Not nouns

violent
theorise
relate
aim for
fight



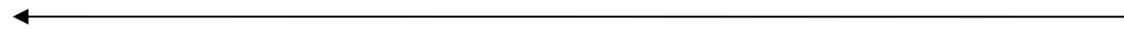
More straightforward nominalisations



Nouns

violence
theory
relation
goal
war

Complex nominalisations



regime
history



Explain how the policy of appeasement affected international relations in the 1930s.

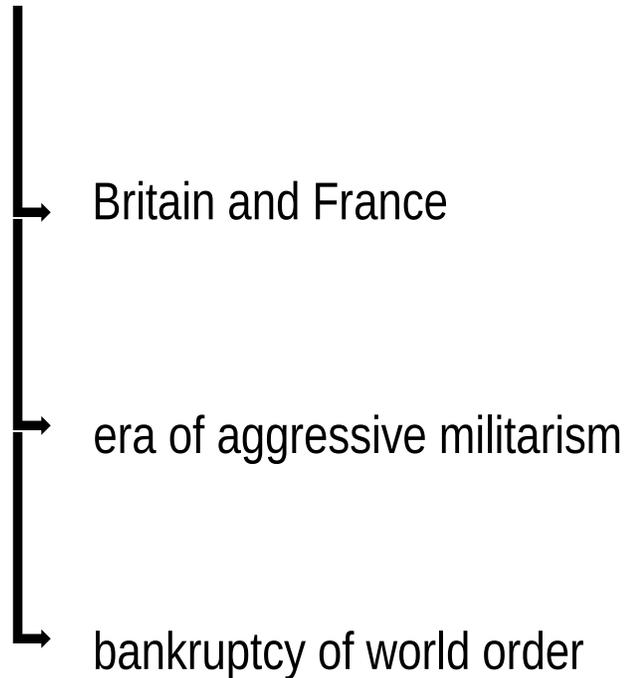
It is clear that the pursuit of appeasement in the 1930s had **a profound and disastrous impact** upon international relations. In attempting to avoid a future war, Britain and France merely facilitated **an era of aggressive militarism** and exposed **the bankruptcy of the world order** they had created at Versailles.

Where next?



Explain how the policy of appeasement affected international relations in the 1930s.

It is clear that the pursuit of appeasement in the 1930s had a profound and disastrous impact upon international relations. In attempting to avoid a future war, Britain and France merely facilitated an era of aggressive militarism and exposed the bankruptcy of the world order they had created at Versailles.



Explain how the policy of appeasement affected international relations in the 1930s.

It is clear that the pursuit of appeasement in the 1930s had a profound and disastrous impact upon international relations. In attempting to avoid a future war, Britain and France merely facilitated an era of aggressive militarism and exposed the bankruptcy of the world order they had created at Versailles.

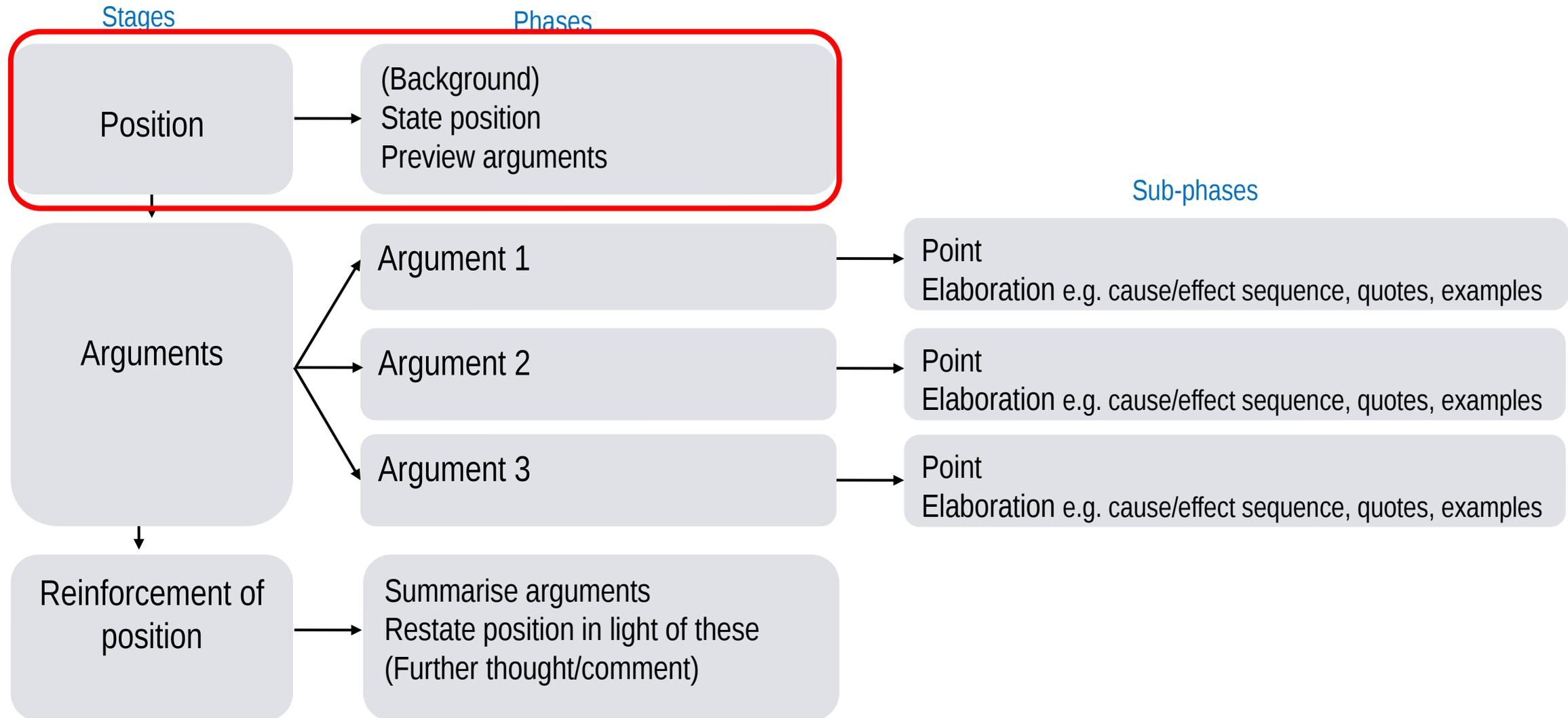
Point

Elaboration

e.g. cause/effect
sequence, quotes,
examples, statistics

The policy of appeasement was first and foremost a reflection of the overwhelming sense of weakness, which beset both countries in the 1930s. The socio-economic fallout of the World-Wide Economic Depression fused with the psychological scars of the 1914-18 to create a mindset in which the prospect of war became unthinkable. This is best illustrated by the military spending of both countries in the period. In France, the state committed 26% of its state revenues to the renewal of an archaic military machine in the 1930s. This contrast sharply with the 62% state revenue commitment by a far wealthier Nazi government over the same period. Britain's response to the 'blank cheque' offered by Hitler to the Wehrmacht, was similarly limited. In 1934, a five-year plan of renewal with a total budget of £71 million was deemed adequate to modernise an army, whose weaponry had not changed since 1918. In the light of this, it is little wonder that in 1934, the French foreign Ministry ruled out all military action in the event of any violation of the Versailles Treaty. In Britain, similar sentiments would be expressed by Neville Chamberlain in 1937, when he stated 'if only we could sit down at a table with the Germans and run through all of their complaints with a pencil, this would greatly relieve tensions'. From this it is evident that whilst both countries clung to each other in the hope of mutual protection, neither possessed the political will or economic muscle to confront the dangers they were facing.

Let's compare the teachers' 'position' stage with those written by students



Let's look at the teacher's text: which phases of the position paragraph have been included?

Position

(Background)

State position

Preview arguments

Explain how the policy of appeasement affected international relations in the 1930s.

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Let's look at student text J: which phases of the position paragraph have been included?

Position

(Background)

State position

Preview arguments

Explain how the policy of appeasement affected international relations in the 1930s.

The policy of appeasement's goal was to satisfy the Nazi regime with conceded land in order to avoid another war. Indeed, countries such as France and Britain were still in shock after the violence of the First World War and tried their best not to repeat history. Although, Germany did not adopt the same theory, and international relations were very tense. Benito Mussolini said that "We (Italy) must try to build ourselves up so that we can look Germany in the eye, if and whenever that need arises." This shows that even between future allies, relations were tense.

Let's look at student text M: which phases of the position paragraph have been included?

Position

(Background)

State position

Preview arguments

Using documents A and B and your own knowledge, discuss the extent to which maritime canals and straits are a potential source of international tension.

The main tensions created by maritime canals and straits come from the will to monopolise certain routes. For example, the Strait of Hormuz, detaining 17 million of oil traffic in barrels per day, is home to great international tension. From being able to shut down its passage is an extreme preoccupation internationally. Tensions have been growing in the Persian Gulf due to opposing religions and political powers surrounding the strait. These tensions have then preoccupied powerful countries such as the USA, Russia, or even Saudi-Arabia as tensions could affect "this vital chokepoint" and alliances have been made, one supporting Iran and another entering in conflict against its government.

Let's look at the teacher's text: which phases of the position paragraph have been included?

Position

(Background)

State position

Preview arguments

Using documents A and B and your own knowledge, discuss the extent to which maritime canals and straits are a potential source of international tension.

Maritime canals and straits, that is to say restricted access sea routes to trading centres, are undoubtedly a possible source of ongoing conflict and tension between nations. Tensions can arise due to their immense economic and strategic importance globally, particularly in relation to the transportation of crude oil, which as Dartnell notes 'fuels our modern world'.

Let's look at the teacher's text: which phases of the position paragraph have been included?

Position

(Background)

State position

Preview arguments

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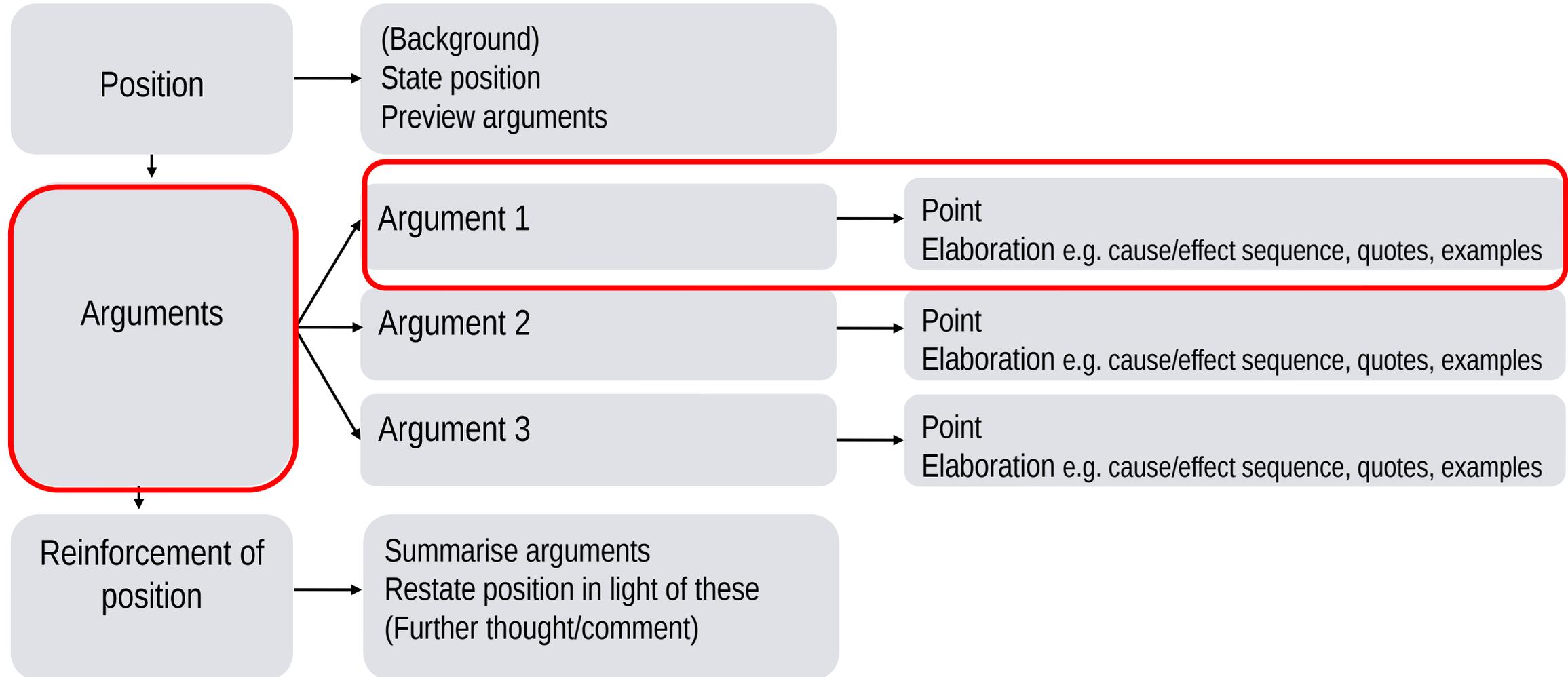


Using documents A and B and your own knowledge, discuss the extent to which maritime canals and straits are a potential source of international tension.

Maritime canals and straits, that is to say restricted access sea routes to trading centres, are undoubtedly **a possible source of ongoing conflict and tension between nations**. Tensions can arise due to **their immense economic and strategic importance globally**, particularly in relation to the transportation of crude oil, which as Dartnell notes 'fuels our modern world'.

Where next?

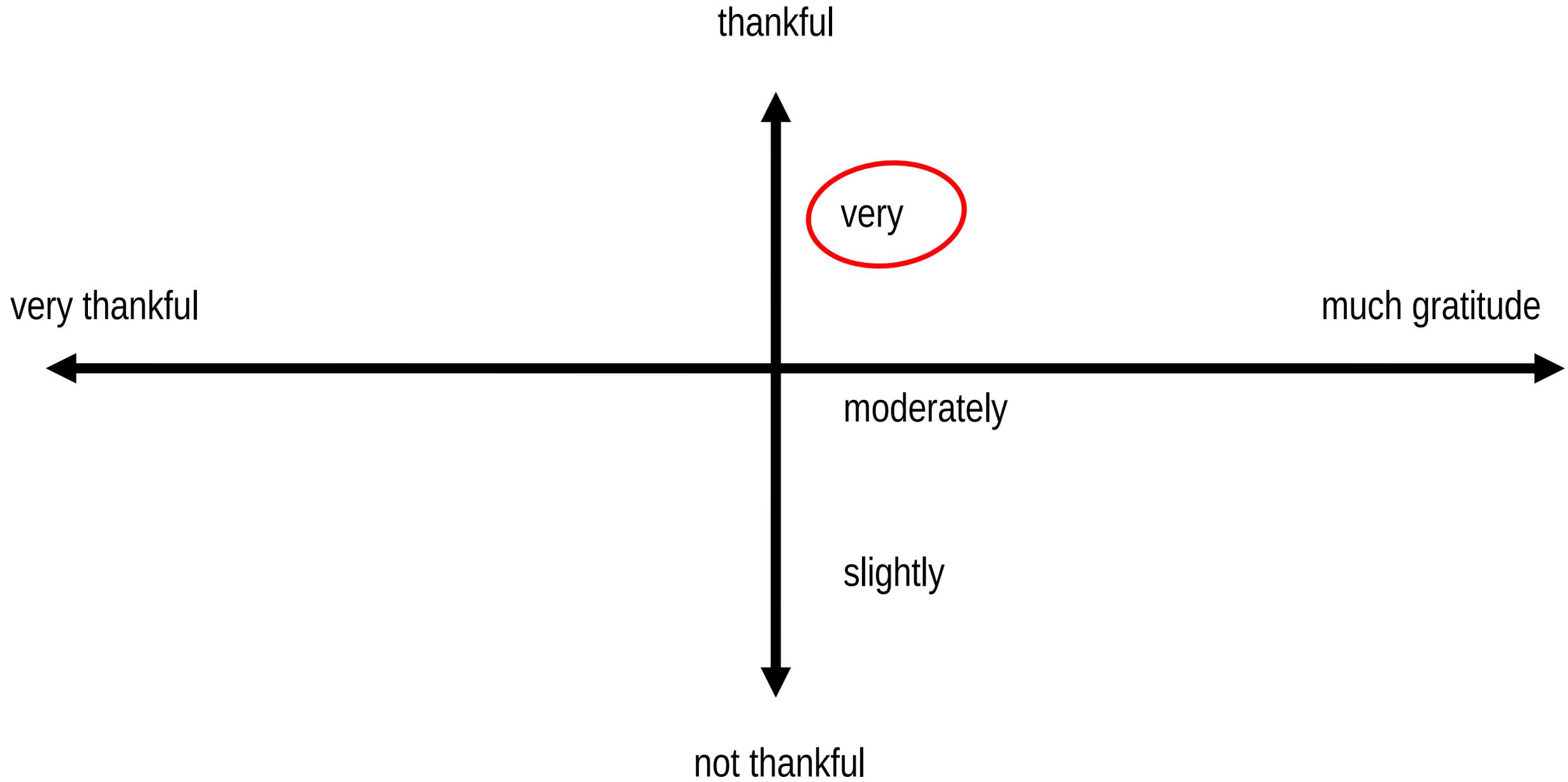
The analytical exposition genre





Successful teaching strategies

1. Reading and deconstructing model answers to show explicitly how the text is structured and language organised to achieve its purpose
2. Using 'where next and why' activities that require predictions and decisions about what to write next
3. Creating a visual framework for an answer and using it to reconstruct the text first collaboratively and then independently
4. Performance reading out loud of the text to hear the flow
5. Agreeing and using explicit success criteria when constructing answers



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