Using Different Language for Different Situations

- **Standard English** refers to a FORMAL style of language used to suit a setting where the audience is large, not personally known to you, or in authority. It is usually used in any situation where a lot of people need to be able to understand clearly what is being said or written. For example, the news or an announcement by a politician or a headteacher. You would also need to use this kind of language when speaking to someone in authority like your headteacher or in a job interview.
- When you are writing an essay or speaking to an unknown audience, you should try to avoid shortened versions of words (abbreviations) and any use of slang words. You need to ensure that you do not write in quite the same way as you might talk to a friend.
- Using formal language doesn't mean that you have to sound dull. You can still sound lively and interesting by using words imaginatively but choosing carefully to avoid slang and incorrect grammar.

Do:
- Make your writing/speaking clear and to the point. Be very specific instead of general where you can
- Try providing 'signposts' to help your reader find their way through your writing. Words and phrases such as 'in addition', 'nevertheless', 'on the other hand', 'by contrast', 'although' and 'alternatively' are always helpful.
- Include a mix of sentence lengths and types in all writing, including some informative complex sentences. Try using semicolons in place of a full stop to link two sentences that share the same topic, but only if you feel confident about using them correctly.
- It is important to choose a style that fits in with the text-type or genre, the purpose and the audience of the task.

Avoid:
- Words and phrases typical of a friendly chat such as 'cool', 'you know' or 'like I said'.
- Try not to repeat words but think of alternatives (synonyms) that have similar meaning. Vary vocabulary as much as you can.
- Try to avoid stating sentences with "so", "but" or "and"
- Keep exclamation marks to an absolute minimum!!!
- Words like 'nice' and 'a lot' have a vague meaning. Try to think of more descriptive words, for example, 'delicious' or 'endless'. Use the synonyms sheet for more examples.

Some words to avoid:

good	amazing	boring	gonna	rubbish
bad	brilliant	a lot	get	okay/OK
nice	fantastic	loads of	kid/kids	guys
big	maybe	great	small	and (too often!)