

Review: *Your Extended Essay Guide: Language B* – Aude Paulin

One of the challenges I regularly see when students begin research is not a lack of ideas, but knowing what to do with them. Turning an area of interest into a focused research question, and then understanding how that question guides what comes next, is a skill that takes time to develop. This was one of the things I particularly valued about Aude Paulin's *Your Extended Essay Guide: Language B*.

Paulin does not simply give students examples of good research questions. She shows how an initial idea can be narrowed and refined into something focused, manageable and genuinely researchable. The explanations accompanying the examples are particularly useful because they help students understand why a question works rather than simply giving them a model to follow. Being able to ask purposeful questions, find appropriate information, assess its credibility and use evidence to reach conclusions are skills that go well beyond the Extended Essay. They are skills students will need in further education and the workplace.

I was also pleased to see the attention given to generative AI. AI is already a reality for students and will increasingly be part of the environments in which they study and work. Simply telling students not to use it does little to prepare them for that reality. Paulin instead presents AI as a tool that can work alongside the student during the research process, while making it clear that the thinking and ownership of the work must remain with the student.

This is an important message for students. They are encouraged to question what AI produces, evaluate its suggestions and recognise its limitations rather than simply accepting its responses. The examples show how AI might help students test an idea, ask further questions or refine their thinking without replacing them as the researcher. This is a far more useful approach than focusing only on whether AI should or should not be used. Students need to learn how to use these tools critically, responsibly and with purpose.

I really think that a highlight is that the guide is accessible and straightforward to use. The language is encouraging while still respecting the academic expectations of the Extended Essay. There is plenty of support, but it does not do the thinking for the student. Students can return to different parts of the book as their Extended Essay develops, particularly when they need clarification or guidance.

This is where the real value of Paulin's guide lies. I would readily recommend this resource to both Language B students and the teachers supporting them through the Extended Essay process. It will certainly help students navigate the Extended Essay, but it also helps develop skills that extend well beyond this particular task. Learning how to ask worthwhile questions, investigate them effectively, make judgements about information and use emerging technologies intelligently are skills that students can carry into further study and the workplace.

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