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KEY SKILLS *for* SENIOR ENGLISH

2nd edition

Robert Beardwood, Sandra Duncanson, Melanie Napthine and Claire Warr

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CONTENTS

SECTION 01 — Reading and creating texts / Reading and comparing texts

Assessment summary

The table below outlines the assessment tasks and mark allocations for VCE English across Units 1 to 4. It is likely that your school will also set a mid-year exam for Unit 1 and an end-of-year exam for Unit 2.

	Area of Study 1 Reading and creating texts / Reading and comparing texts	Area of Study 2 Analysing and presenting argument
Unit 1	**Outcome:** Produce analytical and creative responses to texts	**Outcome:** Analyse how argument and persuasive language can position audiences, and create point-of-view texts that position audiences
Unit 2	**Outcome:** Compare the presentation of ideas, issues and themes in two texts	**Outcome:** Analyse how argument and persuasive language are used in texts that attempt to influence an audience, and create a text that presents a point of view
Unit 3	**SAC:** Produce an analytical interpretation of a selected text, AND a creative response to a different selected text Mark allocation: 60 marks (30 for each task) out of a total of 100 marks for Unit 3 coursework	**SAC:** Analyse and compare the use of argument and persuasive language in texts that present a point of view on an issue currently debated in the media Mark allocation: 40 marks out of a total of 100 marks for Unit 3 coursework
Unit 4	**SAC:** Produce a detailed comparison that analyses how two selected texts present ideas, issues and themes Mark allocation: 60 marks out of a total of 100 marks for Unit 4 coursework	**SAC:** Present (in oral form) a reasoned point of view on an issue currently debated in the media Mark allocation: 40 marks (30 for the presentation + 10 for a written statement of intention) out of a total of 100 marks for Unit 3 coursework
Final exam	**Section A:** Write an analytical interpretation of one text **Section B:** Write a detailed comparative analysis of a pair of texts Mark allocation: 20 marks for each section, out of a total of 60 marks for the exam	**Section C:** Write an analysis of how argument and language are used in an unseen text(s) to persuade others to share the point(s) of view expressed Mark allocation: 20 marks out of a total of 60 marks for the exam

READING AND CREATING TEXTS / READING AND COMPARING TEXTS

Area of Study 1 overview

In Area of Study 1 of VCE English you will read texts selected by your school and develop analytical and creative responses to them. The responses in Units 1 and 3 are to single texts, while in Units 2 and 4 you will compare the ideas, issues and themes of two texts.

In this first section of *Key Skills for Senior English 2nd edition*, Chapters 1 and 2 lay the groundwork for the longer writing tasks. They show you how to study a text closely, from annotating the text and summarising key information through to understanding the text's deeper meaning. The activities will help you to improve your writing skills as well as your knowledge of a text, progressing from short answers requiring just a few words to short paragraphs on a particular feature or theme.

Your responses to single texts will take two different forms: analytical and creative. Chapters 3 and 4 explain the requirements of each kind of response, approaches you can take and how to improve your skills in each task.

In Units 2 and 4 you will write comparative analyses of a pair of texts – one pair in Unit 2, and a different pair in Unit 4. This involves many of the same skills as responding to a single text, but requires the additional ability to compare and contrast two texts. Chapter 5 gives you some key strategies for comparing texts as well as for writing a coherent, well-structured comparative essay.

STUDYING A TEXT

In this chapter

❱ Knowing your text

❱ Characters

❱ Narrative point of view

❱ Setting and context

❱ Plot and structure

❱ Themes

❱ Values

Whether you are writing an analytical response or a creative response, you need to have a thorough knowledge of the text you are studying and develop your own understanding of what the text means and what its creator is trying to convey to readers. You will think about the decisions made by the text's creator in relation to the characters, setting, narrator, plot, language choices and wider themes and ideas that the text explores.

This chapter guides you through the essential elements of texts that you will need to know and write about. Use the activities to identify these elements in your own texts and to build your confidence and skills in writing about them.

Knowing your text

In order to write well about your text, you need to know it thoroughly. Firstly, **read or watch your text** to get an overall idea of the storyline and characters.

After you've done this, **fill in the text information sheet** below to summarise key information about your text. You can set up a similar sheet in a computer file so that you can expand on and add to your answers.

Then **re-read or re-watch your text** at least once, and preferably several times, so that you know it well enough to analyse key aspects in depth.

---

1. Title and author/director of your text:

_____

2. What is the form or genre of your text? (Tick one.)

☐ Novel   ☐ Short-story collection   ☐ Film   ☐ Play

☐ Poetry   ☐ Graphic novel   ☐ Biography   ☐ Autobiography/memoir

3. What is the text about, in general terms?

_____

4. Name five important characters and briefly indicate how they are related to one another.

_____

_____

5. When and where is the text set?

_____

6. List three to five key events.

_____

_____

7. Comment on the structure. Are events described in chronological order?

_____

8. What are the ideas and issues (themes) that the text explores?

_____

9. Describe the language features, such as images and symbols.

_____

Note-taking

As well as gathering key information in your text information sheet, you will need to make more detailed notes in your workbook and (if possible) in the text.

- Highlight quotations and ideas that seem significant, even on a first reading. On subsequent readings, you can add more notes.

- Later, write these quotations in your workbook under appropriate headings for characters and/or themes. Include page references so you can easily locate the quotations later.

- Tag key passages and pages with sticky notes.

- Annotate your text. Jot down ideas and questions in the margins of each page.

Practise note-taking

Select a key scene in your text. Annotate the page on which it occurs by:

- highlighting two key quotations
- making a note identifying how the scene connects to a major theme of the text
- making a note about a character's words or actions in the scene, and what they reveal about the character
- underlining a significant statement made by a character
- highlighting two key words or phrases
- making a note about why the scene is significant.

If your text is a film, make notes on the above aspects in your workbook or in a computer file.

Characters

Characters drive the narrative. Usually the characters' actions or experiences engage our attention from the beginning. Then, as we read, we build up a relationship with the characters that keeps us reading (or watching) to find out what happens to them.

When we analyse a text, we go beyond 'what happens' to the characters and study how the writer explores key ideas and issues through the characters' actions and reactions. We learn about a character in four main ways, outlined below. Fill in the spaces with information about the main character in your own text.

- What the character says

  _____

  _____

- What the character does

  _____

  _____

- What other characters say about this character

  _____

  _____

- What the narrator says about the character

  _____

  _____

Main and minor characters

A text's plot revolves around the **main characters**. A central main character is sometimes called the **protagonist**. The protagonist usually develops or learns from their experiences over the course of the text.

Minor characters are less complex than main characters. In addition to helping to move the plot forwards, minor characters can serve several functions, including:

TIP: Main characters are almost always rounded characters – that is, they are complex, with both positive and negative qualities, just like real people.

- helping the main character

- opposing or hindering the main character

- showing qualities that are intended to gain the audience's approval

- showing qualities that are intended to gain the audience's disapproval

- giving background information on the main character

- acting as someone to whom the main character can tell their inner thoughts and feelings.

What do you need to know about characters?

Complete the table below with key information about three characters from your own text.

	Main character 1	Main character 2	Minor character
Personal details – their full name, their age and where they live			
Character and personality – their strengths, weaknesses and significant traits			
Background – their families; their social and cultural context			
Motivations – why do they act in certain ways and make the choices they do?			
Relationships – with other characters and with their surroundings			
Changes – in their relationships, circumstances or attitudes			

Vocabulary for describing characters

The left column of the table below lists some common words used to describe characters. To add interest and precision to your writing on texts, try describing characters by using some of the words in the columns on the right instead of the more common words. Make sure the word or words you use have precisely the right meaning for that character. Fill in the blank spaces with words of your own.

Common word	More specific words with similar meanings		
strong	domineering	powerful	resilient
weak	passive	submissive	subservient
good	honourable	noble	virtuous
bad	corrupt	immoral	malevolent
kind	compassionate	humane	sympathetic
nasty	cruel	heinous	malicious

Common word	More specific words with similar meanings		
quiet	introverted	reserved	reticent
loud	belligerent	boisterous	extroverted
honest	frank	genuine	trustworthy
dishonest	deceptive	duplicitous	manipulative
loyal	committed	devoted	steadfast
disloyal	faithless	treacherous	unreliable
greedy	avaricious	self-indulgent	self-seeking
generous	benevolent	magnanimous	selfless
smart	ingenious	intelligent	perceptive
silly	naive	unintelligent	unwise
rash	impetuous	impulsive	reckless
careful	cautious	circumspect	guarded
brave	courageous	fearless	intrepid
frightened	cowardly	fearful	timid
thoughtful	contemplative	meditative	reflective
practical	expedient	pragmatic	realistic

Write about characters

1. Work in pairs. Take turns to play the role of the interviewer and of a character in your text. (Instead of a fictional character, you could choose the subject of your nonfiction text or the speaker of a poem.) The interviewer should ask the interviewee between five and ten interesting open questions. (An open question is one that requires more than a short, factual answer.) The interviewee's responses should be as detailed and thoughtful as possible.

2. Complete the table on the next page for the protagonist (main character) of one of your selected texts.

   • Choose three words from the word bank on pages 6–7 that apply to the protagonist and write them in the left-hand column.

   • In the middle column, write an action or thought of the character that fits each descriptor.

   • In the right-hand column, write an appropriate quotation to illustrate each thought or action.

Repeat the process for other important characters in the text. An example has been done for you.

Protagonist's name: Eve Harrington (*All About Eve*, dir. JL Mankiewicz)		
Descriptors	**Character's thoughts and actions**	**Quotations**
deceptive	Eve changes her name from Gertrude Slescynski and invents a new identity.	'I've always considered myself a very clever girl – smart, good head on my shoulders.'
avaricious	She mimics Margo's behaviour in order to become as successful as Margo.	Eve studies Margo as if she is 'a play or a book or a set of blueprints – how you walk, talk, eat, think, sleep.'
treacherous	She blackmails Karen in order to get the part of Cora.	'Imagine: to know every night that different hundreds of people love you … They want you. You belong. Just that alone is worth anything!'

Protagonist's name:		
Descriptors	**Character's thoughts and actions**	**Quotations**

3. Identify three important actions or behaviours of one character and write them in the left-hand column below. An example has been done for you.

Action/Behaviour	Attributes
Tilly finds happiness and satisfaction in making beautiful dresses for the women of Dungatar. (*The Dressmaker* by Rosalie Ham)	talented, creative, generous

4. What attributes are revealed by each of these actions? Look back at the word bank of useful descriptors on pages 6–7 for vocabulary options, and write these attributes next to the actions, in the right-hand column above (Question 3).

5. Now present this information in complete sentences. Organise them as follows.

- Identify the quality or attribute of the character.
- Give an example from the text of a behaviour or action that demonstrates this quality.
- Support your statement with a suitable quotation.

Or you can change the order of ideas, offering an example of the behaviour first and then stating the character's qualities as in Example 2, below.

Example 1

Quality → Vicki is conflicted yet loyal when it comes to her family. ← Behaviour She travels across the world to her home town in Alberta, Canada to tend to her ill parents, even though they have disowned her: 'Blood calls to ← Supporting quotation blood. What can I say?' (*The Erratics* by Vicki Laveau-Harvie)

Example 2

Macbeth is determined to fight on at the end, despite being clearly ← Behaviour outnumbered. This demonstrates his physical courage: 'I will not ← Supporting quotation Quality → yield to kiss the ground before young Malcolm's feet'. (Shakespeare's *Macbeth*)

Now write an example of your own, following one of the models above.

_____

_____

_____

_____

Narrative point of view

The narrator of a text can be a character – usually the main character – who tells the story in the **first person** (using 'I'), or a 'voice' that narrates in the **third person** (using 'he', 'she' or 'they' and *not* using 'I').

First-person narration

A first-person narrator means that the writer presents everything in the text from the point of view of one character. This encourages the reader to empathise with the character – to 'get inside their head' and understand *why* this character behaves in a certain way.

> TIP: Remember that the narrator's voice is generally *not* the same as that of the writer – the 'I' is a character like any other.

Write about first-person narration

If your text is written in the first person, answer the following questions.

1. Give a quote showing the use of the first person (e.g. 'I', 'me'). For example:

    My name is Kathy H. I'm thirty-one years old, and I've been a carer now for over eleven years. (*Never Let Me Go* by Kazuo Ishiguro)

    _____

    _____

2. How reliable is the narrator? Do we believe everything this character tells us about themselves and the world around them? Why or why not?

    _____

    _____

    _____

3. Complete the following paragraph with details about the narrator of your text.

    _____ (name of your text) is narrated by _____.

    He/she is a reliable / an unreliable narrator, demonstrated by _____

    _____

    _____ (evidence from the text). _____ (name of narrator) is

    _____ and _____ (two qualities exhibited

    by the narrator), as shown by _____

    _____

    (evidence from the text: narrator's behaviour or action, another character's

    description of the narrator, a quotation from the text etc.)

Third-person narration

A text written in the third person tells the story from an outside, more detached point of view. Sometimes this narrator knows everything about the characters and the world of the text; we use the term **omniscient narrator** to describe this 'all-knowing' perspective.

However, sometimes an author will use the third person to show just a single character's perspective; we use the term **third-person limited** for this narrative point of view.

Write about third-person narration

If your text is written in the third person, answer the following questions.

1. Give a quote showing the use of the third person (e.g. 'he', 'she', 'they'). For example:

   Eilis Lacey, sitting at the window of the upstairs living room in the house on Friary Street, noticed her sister walking briskly from work. (*Brooklyn* by Colm Tóibín)

   _____

   _____

2. Choose a chapter or short section from your text. Is the chapter written from a completely objective perspective (third-person omniscient)? Or does the writer present events from the viewpoint of a particular character (third-person limited)? Explain your answer using an example or two from the text.

   _____

   _____

3. How does the narrative viewpoint influence your response to a main character in the passage you have selected? Complete the following sentences.

   The narrative point of view in this chapter is third-person omniscient / third-person

   limited. This narrative perspective influences the reader to feel sympathetic /

   admiring / understanding / critical / judgemental / _____

   (your term) towards the main character, _____ (character's

   name). It does so by showing _____ (character's name) to be

   _____

Setting and context

Setting refers to the *places* and *times* in which the action of a narrative takes place. A setting may be a natural or built environment. It may be vast or intimate, realistic or fanciful; it may be in the past, present or future. For example, Hannah Kent's *Burial Rites* is set in nineteenth-century Iceland.

Context refers to the events and circumstances outside the world of the text, including those that have had some kind of impact on the author. Three main contexts to consider are historical, social and cultural. For example, Jenny Erpenbeck's *Go, Went, Gone* is set in modern-day Germany and explores the deepening relationships between German academic Richard and a group of African asylum seekers. The recurring symbol of borders reflects the context of post-reunification Germany, the contemporary international refugee crisis, and Erpenbeck's own background as a Berliner who was born in the former East Germany.

Write about setting and context

1. What is the main setting of your text?

    _____

2. Give three words of your own to describe the setting. Is the environment depicted as generally positive or negative?

    _____

3. How is this setting described or depicted by the narrator or characters? Look for appeals to the five senses: sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch. Give two or three quotations from the text to support your answer.

    _____

    _____

    _____

4. Are there significant changes and contrasts in the settings? If so, what impact do these changes or contrasts have on the characters and their relationships?

    _____

    _____

5. What is the temporal (time) setting of the text? For instance, is it set in the present? The near future? Hundreds of years ago?

    _____

6. Are any actual historical events referred to? If so, why are they important? If not, how does the text create a sense of the time in which it is set?

    _____

    _____

7. Does the social context – the ways in which people interact and earn a living – restrict or enhance the opportunities of the characters? If so, how?

    _____

    _____

8. Complete the following short paragraph to describe the impact of setting or context on a protagonist in one of your texts.

    _____ (name of text) is set in _____ (time and/or place). _____ (main character) finds their environment to be _____. As a result, they decide to / realise that

    _____

Plot and structure

The **plot** of a narrative is essentially what happens in the story. In addition, authors give a shape to the story by creating key points or scenes that have rising and falling tension. This is referred to as the **narrative structure**.

> TIP: Authors and filmmakers carefully structure their narrative to create interest, drama and tension.

Become familiar with and practise using the metalanguage (specialised terms for discussing texts) for narrative structure in the following table. In the right-hand column, use each of the listed terms in a sentence about your own text.

Term	Definition	Your example
Exposition	The main characters and situation are introduced; the scene is set for a conflict of some kind.	
Crisis point	A character is presented with a problem or challenge that tests their values and beliefs.	
Turning point	A decisive change occurs; a character realises it is impossible to return to past circumstances.	
Climax	The tension rises to a peak; the main conflict between characters and/or ideas comes to a head and must be resolved.	
Denouement	The narrative threads are unknotted or unravelled, and questions are finally answered.	
Resolution	The tension relaxes; conflicts, issues and relationships are resolved.	

Mostly, narratives describe events in chronological order – the order in which they happen. However, many narratives vary this order to shape the narrative and influence the audience's response to characters and situations.

- The narrative can begin with a key event from somewhere in the middle of the time frame, drawing the reader in from the start. This is known as beginning **in medias res**. For example, *I Am Malala* (by Malala Yousafzai with Christina Lamb) begins with a prologue in which Malala describes being shot by the Taliban in a school bus, an event that leads to her receiving worldwide attention. The narrative then goes back in time to her early childhood and describes her life up to the time of writing.

- Earlier incidents in a person's life might be described through a **flashback** or a memory, to provide some backstory and add to the significance of a present situation. In *Flames* (by Robbie Arnott), the chapter titled 'Salt' begins with Karl angling on a beach, then a flashback describes an earlier time in which he and his seal hunted Oneblood tuna.

- Future events can be described in a **flashforward** (also known as prolepsis). For example, early in Emily St John Mandel's *Station Eleven* these sentences hint at the catastrophic events to come: 'Of all of them there at the bar that night, the bartender was the one who survived the longest. He died three weeks later on the road out of the city.'

- A **circular narrative** begins at a certain point in time, then moves back in time and tells the story of events up to the point at which the narrative had begun. There is often a short resolution that describes later events. Geraldine Brooks' *Year of Wonders* uses a circular narrative, beginning in autumn 1666 then going back to spring 1665 and narrating events chronologically, returning to autumn 1666 near the end of the book.

A short story produces a powerful effect within a few pages, so the use of language and structure is more concentrated than in a novel. In a short story you are likely to find a structural pattern similar to that shown in the graph below.

Problem or conflict identified; tension increases – Rebecca struggles to get over the break-up of her relationship.

Resolution – Rebecca accepts that a chapter of her life has ended, and her fantasy of training for (and beating her ex-partner in) a race is interrupted by a call from her boss.

Dramatic tension in 'Cross-Country' from *Like a House on Fire* by Cate Kennedy

Climax – Rebecca realises that the name she'd thought was her boyfriend's in a list of runners in a cross-country race can't be his, as the list is for an under-14s group.

Start   End

Write about structure

Answer the following questions to analyse how your text is structured. The terms in bold are elements or features of structure that the creator of a text can use.

1. Do the main events unfold in **chronological order**?
   Y/N

2. Does the text begin in the **middle of the action**?
   Y/N

3. Does the text include **flashbacks** or **flashforwards**?
   Y/N

4. Is the plot **circular**, beginning and ending at the same point?
   Y/N

5. Is it divided into two or three – or more – **major parts**?
   Y/N

6. Does it use an **organising principle** (such as a recurring theme or image; stories or chapters grouped or sequenced according to a setting or time period)?
   Y/N

7. Does it have a **main plot** and **subplot/s**?
   Y/N

8. Is the plot built around a **journey** or **quest** (emotional or physical)?
   Y/N

9. You may have answered 'yes' to more than one of the above. Where the answer is 'yes', consider the *effect* of the author's choices about structure. For example, does the structure:

   • heighten the narrative tension or suspense?

   • make the opening more exciting, grabbing the reader's attention?

   • highlight connections between different characters or events?

   • ensure that the reader considers several different points of view on the action?

Underline any of the above options that apply to your text. Below, explain another effect the structure of the text has on the reader.

_____

_____

_____

_____

10. Complete the following sentences about the structure of your text.

One feature of the structure of _____ (name of text) is the use of

_____ (structural feature, e.g. 'a circular structure', 'flashbacks'). The

writer's decision to structure the text in this way creates an effect of _____

_____

(describe the impact this structural element has on the reader). The effect of this

structural feature in terms of how we see the main character is _____

_____

_____

(think about how new information about the character is revealed)

Themes

The themes of a text are its most general statements – its 'big ideas' – about human experience. Two main ways of stating a text's theme are:

- **in one or two words** (usually a noun or a noun phrase), such as 'jealousy' or 'growing up'

- **as a contention**, such as 'jealousy is destructive' or 'our experiences when we are growing up shape our adult identities'.

Some common general themes – expressed as a single word and then as a possible contention – are shown in the table below. In the final two rows, list two themes from your own text and a related contention for each.

Common themes	Contention
growing up	Growing up is painful but necessary.
gender roles	Women have been limited by their traditional role in marriage.
love	Love can help people to resolve conflicts.
family	Family is the basis of an individual's happiness.
injustice	Injustice is often perpetrated (carried out) by just individuals.
prejudice	Prejudice can be eliminated when people take the time to understand one another.
war	War always harms the innocent.
power	Power can liberate individuals to follow their dreams.
survival	Survival depends on luck as well as inner strength.

Explore a theme

1. The theme map below is for the novel *The Golden Age* by Joan London, and its central theme 'overcoming adversity'. Fill in the gaps with a theme and evidence from your text. You can create the theme map in your workbook or a computer document to allow more space for writing.

EVIDENCE FROM CHARACTERS

Frank writes poetry and becomes friends with Elsa, which helps him cope with polio.

Evidence from characters in your text:

_____

_____

EVIDENCE FROM PLOT

The Golds survive the war through determination and resourcefulness.

Evidence from the plot of your text:

_____

_____

THEME in *The Golden Age*:
OVERCOMING ADVERSITY

Theme in your text:

_____

OTHER EVIDENCE

Flashbacks to the Golds' experiences in Budapest during the war show the difficulty of surviving.

Other evidence in your text:

_____

_____

QUOTATIONS

'Sometimes he, Ida and Meyer said that they were a lucky family, because the three of them had survived and come to live in a free country.' (p.51)

Quotations in your text:

_____

_____

2. Now you have gathered some evidence of what your text is saying about a major theme. Read back over what you have written. Does this evidence give you more idea of what the creator of the text is saying about the major theme in your text? Fill in the gaps in the following sentences to form a simple statement about the theme.

A major theme of _____ (title of your text) is _____

(major theme). _____ (name of author or director) suggests that

_____

(author or director's point of view on the theme)

3. Next, show that you have evidence for your contention. Fill in the gaps in the sentences below to create a paragraph about the theme in your text.

He/she suggests this by _____

_____ (one piece of evidence from the Characters box in your theme map).

It is also suggested by _____

_____ (one piece of evidence from the Plot box in your

theme map) and by _____ (character's name)'s words,

'_____,'

(key quotation about the theme)

Values

Characters embody values through their thoughts, feelings, attitudes, relationships, beliefs, statements and actions. These values are often part of the character's cultural context; different cultures can place more or less emphasis on different values. It is also possible for a character to question or even reject some of the values of the culture or society they belong to.

> TIP: We respond to characters largely by responding to the values they hold – we are more likely to admire or sympathise with them if we share their values.

Some common general values are listed below.

- honesty
- loyalty
- integrity
- justice
- equality
- a fair go
- patriotism

- freedom of speech
- freedom of religion
- working hard
- taking responsibility
- tolerance
- compassion for others
- respect for others

Are any of the above values evident in the text you are studying?

Identify key values through characters

1. Use the table below to identify key values in your text.

Key value (e.g. doing what is right)	Characters who demonstrate this value and how

Opposite of key value (e.g. doing what is wrong)	Characters who demonstrate the opposite of the key value and how

2. Fill in the gaps in the following sentences, using evidence from your text to support your view. Look at how the characters think, the views they express and the decisions they make. Consider also the consequences of the characters' behaviour. Are they 'rewarded' by achieving their goals and finding happiness? Or are they 'punished' by being defeated or unsuccessful? Consequences and narrative resolutions can show the writer's approval or disapproval of characters' values, or of the values of their society.

- The key qualities associated with the protagonist, _____

   (name of character), in _____ (name of text) are

   _____

- He/she believes in _____ (key values)

- We know this because _____

   (quotes or actions that demonstrate this belief)

- The protagonist's values reflect / challenge the society's because

   _____

- One character who supports the protagonist's position / perspective is

   _____ (character's name)

- One character who opposes this position / perspective is _____

   (character's name)

- The writer endorses _____'s values by _____

   _____

- The writer is critical of _____'s position / perspective

   because _____

- The resolution of the text suggests that _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

SPECIAL FEATURES OF FILM, DRAMA AND POETRY

In this chapter

- ❱ Film
- ❱ Drama
- ❱ Poetry

Films and plays are narrative texts, and many of their important features are covered in Chapter 1, including:

- characters
- setting
- plot
- structure
- themes
- values.

In addition, there are features that are *particular* to film and drama texts. In both, actors perform the roles of characters, and a story is told through visual language and sound in addition to words. Characters can speak directly to the audience to share their own thoughts or feelings, or to describe a situation in the present or the past. Visual language is used to evoke mood, create suspense, contribute to characterisation and convey themes. In drama, the playwright's stage directions can include specific advice about how the play should be staged and performed.

Sometimes a poem or a song is also a type of narrative. However, many poems and songs do not tell a story and, even when they do, it is not always possible to discuss such texts under the usual headings of plot, setting and characters. Instead, these texts are more concerned with evoking a mood or creating an image. Like songs, poems are usually intended to be heard.

Film

The special features of film are generally referred to as elements of **film style** – the 'language' of images and sounds that a film uses to tell a story. The four elements of film style are shown in the following table.

Mise en scène ('putting on stage')	All the visual elements within the frame at any given point in the film: • setting • lighting • costumes (clothes, make-up, hairstyles, props) • acting style
Cinematography	The art of capturing images in order to tell the story and create the 'look' of the film. Key elements are: • camera distance • camera angle • camera movement
Editing	The selection and joining together of shots using techniques such as: • cuts • crosscutting • matching scenes • montages
Sound	All the sounds that can be heard by the audience, including: • dialogue • sounds of actions • music

Analyse the mise en scène

1. Choose an important scene in the film you are studying, such as the opening shots or a scene at the film's climax, and examine it closely. Do this with the sound turned off, so that you can just concentrate on the visual elements.

2. Complete the following sentences to describe the four elements of mise en scène: setting, lighting, costumes and acting style.

   • The scene is set in _____ (location)

   • The background details in this scene consist of _____

   • The characters are dressed in _____

   _____ (describe their clothes/costumes)

   • These details suggest that the characters are _____

   _____

   • The lighting in the scene suggests that _____

   _____

- This contributes to an atmosphere that is _____
- The main character/s in this scene is/are _____

  _____

  (describe what one main character or several characters are doing)
- The way in which one main actor is portraying their character suggests that

  _____

  (describe what the actor's facial expressions or body movements suggest

  about the character)
- The visual elements in this scene are similar to those in _____

  (another scene in the film) in that _____

  _____ (identify similarities between the two scenes)
- The visual elements in this scene are different from those in _____

  _____ (another scene in the film) in that

  _____

Film shots

The main types of film shots are created by using different distances between the camera and the subject, and by having the camera looking up, down or straight on at the subject. The images used in this section to illustrate the different shots are from Alfred Hitchcock's 1954 film *Rear Window*.

Close-up shot

A close-up shows the subject matter in detail. It is often used to show someone's face or an important object. An extreme close-up focuses on a small object in even more detail.

James Stewart as LB 'Jeff' Jefferies

Medium shot (or mid shot)

A medium shot is the most common shot: it shows the characters as well as some of the background. Relationships between characters can be highlighted in a medium shot.

James Stewart as Jeff and Grace Kelly as Lisa

Long shot / wide-angle shot

A long shot shows as much of the setting as possible, with the characters often placed in the background. They can appear small and insignificant as a result.

Judith Evelyn as Miss Lonelyhearts

Zoom shot

In a zoom shot the camera can be far from the subject but, by changing the focal length, the camera seems to move close to (zoom in on) the subject. This emphasises the subject's importance at that point in the story.

Raymond Burr as Lars Thorwald

Camera angles

By varying the angle at which the camera points at the subject, the audience can be put in the position of looking at the subject on the same level (straight on), from below or from above.

A **low-angle shot** looks up at the subject from underneath, emphasising their strength or power.

In a **high-angle shot** the camera points down at the subject, which can be made to appear weak or vulnerable.

Raymond Burr and James Stewart in a high-angle shot

Framing

The frame is the outside border of a shot. Framing is an aspect of all shots, and results from decisions made by the cinematographer and director about what each image will include and – just as importantly – exclude. Sometimes natural frames, such as door frames and window frames, are used to provide borders.

Alfred Hitchcock winding the clock and Ross Bagdasarian as the Songwriter

Analyse film shots

Complete this table with examples of various shot types in a film you are studying. In the middle column, give a brief description of the scene. In the right-hand column, explain the effect of using each particular shot (e.g. to show a character in a certain way, further the plot, create a mood or increase tension).

Film technique	Example in your text	Effect of this shot
Close-up		
Medium shot / mid shot		
Long shot or wide-angle shot		
Zoom shot		
Straight-on shot		
Low-angle shot		
High-angle shot		
Framing		

Camera movement

The camera can be moved in three main ways in order to follow the action and/or show more of the physical setting.

- **Panning** occurs when the camera rotates or pivots in a horizontal plane (i.e. from left to right or right to left).
- **Tilting** is when the camera rotates in a vertical plane in order to look up or down.
- **Tracking** refers to the whole camera being moved. It can move smoothly by being placed on a dolly (a mobile platform) or a crane; or it can move in an uneven, even jerky way by being handheld.

Editing

Editing is the process of selecting and combining the shots together to tell the story. The film's editor works closely with the director to edit the film.

A **cut** is the most common type of edit; one shot ends and the next begins, usually without the audience noticing. Other types of edits are a **fade** (the screen fades to black or white) and a **dissolve** (as one shot fades out it briefly overlaps with the next).

Here are three common editing techniques in which the ordering of shots helps to tell a story.

- **Crosscutting:** the film 'crosses' or cuts between two scenes in which events are occurring simultaneously.

- **Montage:** a series of very short scenes or shots, usually set to music, can show what happens over a longer period of time.

- **Flashback / flashforward:** the film cuts between different time periods to show the audience events that happened in the past (e.g. to fill in a character's backstory) or events that will occur in the future.

Analyse a key scene

1. Select a key scene from your film and watch it two or three times. Make notes about the elements of film style in the table below. In the middle column, briefly describe what happens in this scene. In the right-hand column, describe how the filmmakers' choices convey meaning (e.g. by creating a sense of time and place; increasing dramatic tension; making a character appear more sympathetic).

Key scene:		
Element of film style	**Notes**	**Effect**
Cinematography • close-ups, medium shots or long shots? • camera still or moving?		
Editing • many quick cuts or only a few? • use of special techniques (e.g. crosscuts, montages)?		
Sound • use of music? • how much dialogue? • sound effects?		

2. Below, create complete sentences from the notes you made in the table on the previous page. Write at least one sentence about each feature. Don't forget to include your notes on the *effect* of these features.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

For an explanation of how film techniques can be used to create a narrative point of view, see pages 196–7 of this digital book.

Drama

A play is a much more collaborative text type than a novel or a collection of short stories. The written play (script) is essentially the blueprint for the final product – a performance. One production of Shakespeare's *Macbeth* may be very different from another, even though the play scripts might be identical. That is why, ideally, you should see the play performed. This section looks at several key features of drama – stage directions, soliloquies, asides and dramatic irony.

Stage directions

Stage directions enhance your understanding of the characters and situations, so pay careful attention to these. They are usually written in italics within the text of the play, and can include instructions for / descriptions of:

- the set, including props, furnishings and lighting
- actors' appearances, including costumes and personal props
- actors' movements, including entries and exits, gestures and facial expressions
- the tone and/or pace with which an actor should deliver their lines
- sound effects, including music.

Analyse stage directions

Re-read the opening scene of your play and look closely at the accompanying stage directions. This information will be in italics and/or brackets. Fill in as many of the following gaps as you can for your play.

1. The scene is set at/in _____

2. This is significant because _____

3. The description of the opening setting tells us that _____

4. The characters in this scene are described as _____

5. They are wearing _____

6. The impression we receive of these individuals is _____

7. We also learn that the relationship between _____

   (character's name) and _____ (character's name) is

   _____

   (describe what you learn about the relationship between two of the characters)

8. For your answer to question 7, choose two quotations from the stage directions to support your view:

   _____

   _____

Soliloquies, asides and dramatic irony

A **soliloquy** is a significant speech in which a character, usually alone onstage, expresses their private thoughts and feelings. If there are other characters onstage, they do not hear what the character delivering the soliloquy is saying.

An **aside** is a short speech; other characters remain onstage but do not hear what is being said.

Soliloquies and asides give the audience an insight into a character's real personality, motivations and viewpoints, which are not fully understood or known by the other characters.

Both soliloquies and asides can create **dramatic irony**, which occurs when the audience (or reader) knows something that one or more characters onstage do not know. Dramatic irony can also arise simply from the movements of characters on and off the stage. For example, when Macbeth is greeted by the witches as 'Thane of Cawdor', the audience knows – though he does not – that he has already been granted this new title by King Duncan as a reward for his loyalty and courage. There is a further irony in this case, given that he is about to betray Duncan, just as the previous Thane of Cawdor did.

Analyse a soliloquy or long speech

Choose a soliloquy from the play you are studying and answer the following questions to enhance your understanding of it. If your play does not have a soliloquy, answer the questions for one of the longer speeches.

1. Who is speaking? _____

2. How does the speech add to your understanding of the character?

   _____

3. What do you learn about the other characters? _____

   _____

4. What information or ideas about a key theme of the play does the soliloquy or speech offer?

   Sample answer 1

   > Macbeth's soliloquy 'If it were done when 'tis done' (Act 1, scene 7) uses dramatic language and imagery to convey the destructive effects of ambition.

   Sample answer 2

   > In Reginald Rose's *Twelve Angry Men*, the speech by 3rd Juror near the end of the play uses blunt language, as well as short, emphatic statements and pauses to show the difficulty of putting aside personal beliefs and attitudes to form an objective, unbiased view.

   Your answer

   _____

   _____

   _____

Poetry

A poet or lyricist uses words not just for their meaning but to create rhyme and rhythm, drawing our attention to the sound of the words. When you analyse poetry or song lyrics, think about the different meanings that the words can have, and remember to discuss sound as a feature that contributes to the meaning and impact of the poem or song.

Poetic techniques

The following table shows you some common poetic techniques. In the right-hand column, write an example of the technique that you have found in the collection of poems you are studying.

Technique	Example	Your example
Alliteration: the use of words beginning with the same consonant or vowel sound	Wilfred Owen uses **alliteration** to evoke the sounds of gunfire, as in, for example, 'stuttering rifles' rapid rattle' ('Anthem for Doomed Youth').	
Connotation: extra meaning suggested or implied by a word	John Kinsella's reference to the 'fog of occupation' in 'Hawes – God's Intruder' alludes to the fumes from the superphosphate his father works with; it also carries **connotations** of war, evoking the violent takeover of Australian land from its Indigenous inhabitants.	
Free verse: poetry that doesn't follow any regular pattern of rhyme or rhythm	Oodgeroo Noonuccal's 'We Are Going' is written in **free verse**, helping to create a sense of fragmentation.	
Imagery: a 'mental picture'– often visual, but can appeal to the other senses; can be created through description or through the use of simile and metaphor	In 'Appointment: north-west' Peter Skrzynecki uses natural **imagery**, such as 'Rainbows grew / from the pond in our garden', to create a sense of place.	
Metaphor: a description that states that one thing is another, to show the similarities between them	Donne uses the **metaphor** of a compass with two points to describe the strength of his relationship in 'A Valediction Forbidding Mourning'.	
Personification: when human traits are given to non-human objects	Charmaine Papertalk Green **personifies** the Earth in 'Undermining', when she refers to its 'silver grey hair', a result of pollution.	
Rhyme: when words at the ends of lines sound the same	In 'The Solitary Reaper', Wordsworth uses a regular **rhyme** scheme that echoes the reaper's own song, which the speaker of the poem finds very moving.	
Rhythm: the pattern of beats or stresses in a line	In Bruce Dawe's 'Homecoming', the regular **rhythm** at the start of the poem suggests the purposeful movements of trucks and planes.	
Simile: a description using the words 'as' or 'like' to compare a thing to something else	Peter Skrzynecki uses the **simile** 'fins and tails / trailing like scarves' to describe goldfish, creating an image of their ornate, dignified appearance ('The Goldfish').	

When discussing poetic features such as those in the previous table, always think about the *effect* they are likely to have on the reader and how they contribute to the poem as a whole. Possible effects include:

- producing a certain tone or feeling
- contributing to the rhythm and/or rhyme pattern
- emphasising an idea or image.

How to analyse poetry

When you are analysing and discussing poetry, draw on the appropriate metalanguage and use the following four steps.

Step 1: Annotate the poem in detail.

- Circle any words, lines or images that stand out to you, whether you understand them or not.
- Look up any unfamiliar words in a dictionary and write down their definitions.
- Underline common poetic techniques that appear in the poem.

Step 2: Identify the effect of language choices and poetic techniques on you, the reader. Think about how they make you feel, what associations they have and other thoughts they stimulate.

Step 3: Identify the rhythm, mood and language style used in the poem. The following table contains useful words for describing rhythm, mood and language.

Describing rhythm	Describing mood	Describing language
bouncy	angry	conversational
irregular	bitter	earthy
jerky	excited	elegant
loose	gloomy	evocative
quick	joyful	formal
regular	regretful	sensuous
slow	serene	simple
steady	sorrowful	striking
strong	thoughtful	unusual

Step 4: Discuss how techniques, rhythm, mood and language all contribute to the poem's overall meaning. The list of verbs below is useful when describing what the poet is doing and the viewpoint they are trying to convey.

affirms	challenges	condemns	condones	contrasts	conveys	creates	elicits
emphasises	endorses	evokes	examines	explores	highlights	illustrates	implies
intensifies	questions	reflects	reinforces	subverts	suggests	surprises	undermines

Analyse a poem

1. Find three examples of poetic techniques in a poem you are studying.

_____

_____

_____

2. Choose one of these examples and answer the following questions to work out the effect of this particular technique.

   a. How does it make you feel?

   _____

   b. What does it remind you of? _____

   _____

   (Give at least two examples of the first things you think of when you read

   the particular word or phrase you are analysing.)

   c. Which sense or senses does it especially appeal to (sight, hearing, smell,

   taste or touch)? _____

   d. If you were reading this aloud, what tone of voice would you use?

   _____

3. Identify two of the more striking images in the poem, and explain their effects on you.

   Image 1: _____

   _____

   Image 2: _____

   _____

4. What do these images contribute to the poem's overall meaning and impact?

_____

_____

_____

5. Describe the rhythm, the mood and the language of the poem (write one sentence on each aspect).

_____

_____

_____

_____

6. Drawing on the notes and sentences you have created in response to the previous questions, write a paragraph analysing your poem. Use the following example as a guide.

Wordsworth's 'Lucy Gray; or, Solitude' uses four-line stanzas with a steady rhythm and *abab* rhyme scheme to tell the story of a young girl who went out one night into a storm and never returned home. The ballad form gives the poem the feel of a folktale, which is reinforced by the speaker giving the impression of retelling a well-known story: 'Oft I had heard of Lucy Gray'. Poetic techniques such as simile – 'the powdery snow … rises up like smoke' – and simple images ('the broken hawthorn hedge') create the desolate setting, while the repetition of the adjectives 'sweet' and 'solitary' to describe Lucy enhance the reader's sympathy for her and the powerful sense of loss conveyed by the poem.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

WRITING AN ANALYTICAL RESPONSE

In this chapter

❱ Breaking down the topic
❱ Brainstorming ideas
❱ Developing a plan
❱ Writing your response
❱ Common mistakes
❱ Drafting and editing your response
❱ Sample response

An analytical text response is a formal essay in which you show your knowledge and understanding of a text. It nearly always responds to a topic or question about the text, and your essay will present your point of view on the topic – that is, argue a case.

This chapter leads you through the process of writing an essay on a given topic. The steps in this process are:

- breaking down the topic
- brainstorming ideas
- developing a plan
- writing the essay in three parts – introduction, body paragraphs, conclusion
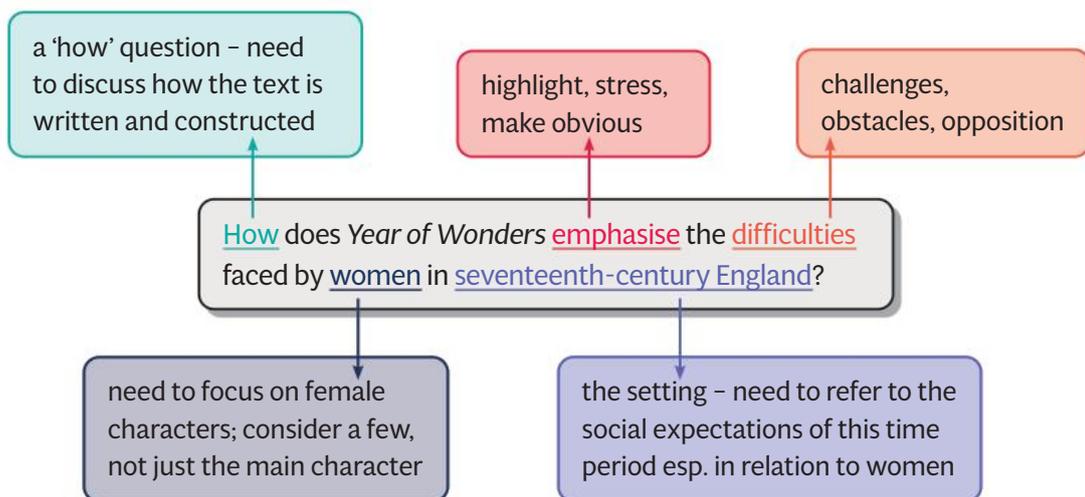- editing and rewriting your essay.

Breaking down the topic

Your first task in writing an analytical text response is to analyse or break down the topic so you have a clear understanding of what it requires you to do. Does it ask you to **discuss** a statement about the text, or ask **do you agree** with a statement? Does it ask **why** characters behave in certain ways, or **how** the author presents an idea? Use this two-step process to break down your essay topic and begin to work out how you will respond.

Step 1: Underline key terms and annotate the topic

Write down the topic on a blank sheet of paper or in a computer document, with space around it for you to write notes. Look up the meanings of any words you don't know, and any words you need some synonyms for. Underline the important words and phrases in the topic and write brief definitions and synonyms around it. Also jot down anything you will need to do in order to address this term in your response.

For example:

a 'how' question – need to discuss how the text is written and constructed

highlight, stress, make obvious

challenges, obstacles, opposition

How does *Year of Wonders* emphasise the difficulties faced by women in seventeenth-century England?

need to focus on female characters; consider a few, not just the main character

the setting – need to refer to the social expectations of this time period esp. in relation to women

Practise annotating a topic

Using the example above as a guide, annotate a topic on a text you are studying.

1. Write down the topic, allowing space to write annotations around it.

2. Underline all the key terms.

3. Write down three synonyms for each of the key terms.

4. Add brief notes on any terms that you will need to address or focus on in your essay.

Step 2: Analyse the topic

Carefully look at each key term and think about its meaning and implications. Many topics have two or three parts, and it is important that you address each one to decide what the topic is really asking you. Use the following table as a guide.

What to ask yourself	What to do
Are there adjectives or adverbs? Examples: limited, strong, essential, inevitably, only, never.	Use these terms and their synonyms in your response. Question whether you agree; e.g. is something really 'essential' or is it one of several important factors?
What verbs are used in the topic? Examples: shows, reveals, explores, emphasises, contrasts.	Think about the meaning of any verbs or verb phrases, including any that are used to describe character behaviours (e.g. defies, struggles, is motivated by). Use these verbs and their synonyms in your response.
Is there something in the topic that's not *always* or *completely* true?	You can partly agree or partly disagree with a topic statement by arguing 'yes, but …' or 'no, but …' This will help to show strong engagement with the topic and an understanding of the text's complexity.
Are there two or three parts to a topic? Example: 'The witches' prophecies are the main cause of Macbeth's downfall.' Do you agree?	Address all parts of the topic. For instance, this topic requires you to discuss (1) the witches' prophecies; (2) Macbeth's downfall; (3) the causal connection between the prophecies and Macbeth's downfall. You could also add (4) other reasons for Macbeth's downfall, as a response to the adjective 'main'.
Does the topic ask about *how* a story is told? e.g. 'The first-person narrative limits our understanding of the other characters.' Discuss.	Consider the text's construction – essential in answering a 'how' question – and also the *effects* of this. For instance, as well as discussing the reader's limited knowledge of characters other than the narrator, a response to this topic should relate this lack of information to the fact that it is a first-person narrative. The verb 'limits' is important here.

Practise breaking down a topic

Complete this table for a topic and text of your own choosing. Use the notes and examples in the table above to guide you.

What to ask	Examples from your topic
Are there adjectives or adverbs? If so, write down two synonyms for each.	

What verbs are used in the topic? What are some synonyms for these verbs?	
Is there something in the topic that's not *always* or *completely* true?	
Are there two or three parts to the topic? If so, use numbers to identify the parts.	
Does the topic ask about *how* a story is told? Can you incorporate elements such as structure, narrative voice and imagery into your response? Note some elements you could include.	

Next, you need to find some evidence and generate a few supporting ideas. The end result of this process will be your main contention or argument, as the next section describes.

Brainstorming ideas

A good way to brainstorm ideas for a text response is to write the topic in the centre of a page and make notes around it. If it is a long topic you could shorten it to the central idea or question, as shown at the centre of the brainstorm diagram opposite.

Your notes should include:

- examples and quotations from the text
- relevant textual features (e.g. narrative voice, structure, language and imagery)
- ideas, issues and values explored by the text that are relevant to the topic.

Ask yourself as many questions as you can about the characters and the issues: in particular, ask *why* and *how* questions. When discussing film, refer to visual and sound elements in addition to characters and plot.

Example

This example refers to Euripides' play *The Women of Troy*; the quotes and page numbers are from the translation by Don Taylor (Methuen Drama, 2007).

Topic:

'In *The Women of Troy* there is hope despite profound loss.' Discuss.

This is a straightforward topic about themes. It asks you to consider whether the women's experience of loss means the play expresses no sense of hope, or if some hope remains. It is important to consider *both* hope and loss in your response. The brainstorm might look something like this:

Losses include the deaths of men and children, and the destruction of the city of Troy.

There's possible hope for justice – the Greeks will experience losses on their return home, predicted by Athene.

'When a man sacks a town and destroys everything ... He's asking for trouble. The same destruction sooner or later, will fall on his own head.' (Poseidon, p.9)

The Greek characters Talthybius and Menelaus don't appear to suffer loss; they can rebuild their lives.

The Trojans will have a legacy – Hecuba refers to 'songs ... written in memory of our suffering'. (p.56)

Hecuba saw her husband, King Priam, 'hacked down on the altar steps'. (p.25)

Is there hope despite profound loss?

'I've lost my home. I've lost my children. Everything.' (Hecuba, p.30)

'The living at least have hope. To be dead is to be nothing.' (Hecuba, p.32)

The women of Troy are survivors – they have a future, therefore hope.

'to die is better than a life of agony'. (Andromache, p.32)

'The lucky ones are dead.' (Hecuba, p.26)

Cassandra is promised to Agamemnon, but she will 'destroy his whole family' (p.19) – is revenge a form of hope?

Andromache's husband, Hector, died in battle, and her son Astyanax is murdered during the play.

There is loss of dignity as well as emotional and material losses.

Organise your material

So far, your ideas are probably quite random. Your notes now need to be organised in a way that makes them easy to turn into an essay plan.

- **Colour-code your material.** Which ideas and evidence seem to go together? For instance, in the example on the previous page, the material on Hecuba could be highlighted in yellow.

- **Identify the main ideas in your brainstorm.** Key ideas could become topic sentences for your body paragraphs. In the example, the point about survival meaning there is some hope is a key idea; another key idea is that the Trojans' suffering will be remembered in songs.

Write your contention

Finally, what is your own opinion on the topic? If the topic contains a proposition, do you agree with it, disagree with it, or partly agree and partly disagree? Look at the notes from your brainstorm. What viewpoint does the evidence mostly support?

A good response acknowledges the complexity of the topic. You may challenge all or part of the topic statement.

Write your contention – your overall response to the topic – in one or two sentences. It should state your point of view and give a sense of *why* you hold this point of view. Remember, there is no right or wrong answer. For example, for the topic on *The Women of Troy* here are two possible ways to argue:

> Despite the profound losses experienced by the women, they have survived the war and there is some hope for the future.

Or

> The women have survived the war but have lost their families, their homes and their freedom, leaving them with no hope for the future.

Practise writing contentions

1. Write a one-sentence response to a topic of your choice.

   _____

2. Can you respond in a slightly different way that is still consistent with the evidence from the text? Write another contention on the same text and topic.

   _____

3. Which response do you prefer and why?

   _____

   _____

   _____

Select evidence from the text

Once you have decided on your contention, spend some more time thinking about **why**. Why do you hold this view and how can you prove it? Your reasons will form the basis for your argument. This is where your earlier groundwork comes in.

- Go back to your text. Your original highlighting and annotations should make it fairly easy to locate the information you need. Add evidence and ideas to your brainstorm material.

- Go back to your notes – the lists of significant events, character descriptions and quotations. What can you add to the points made in your brainstorm?

- Check that any quotations and other evidence you have included are accurate and correct.

Select evidence

1. List three passages (including page numbers) that are directly relevant to your essay topic and would be good sources of supporting evidence.

   _____

   _____

   _____

2. Briefly say why each passage would support your argument.

   _____

   _____

   _____

3. Identify three key quotations that support your argument.

   _____

   _____

   _____

Developing a plan

A plan is a valuable outline of your essay. If you are writing under timed conditions (as in an exam), the plan can be brief, but it is still worth doing as it will keep your writing on track and relevant to the given topic.

Your essay plan will include a **contention** and a **line of argument**. The line of argument consists of the **reasons** for your main contention and the **evidence** and **examples** that support these reasons. A strong line of argument will place the reasons in a logical order, so you can build towards the conclusion.

Sample plan

The following sample plan on *The Women of Troy* responds to the topic about hope and loss on page 37, and draws on the brainstorming notes on the same page.

Topic:

'In *The Women of Troy* there is hope despite profound loss.' Discuss.

Contention

Despite the profound losses experienced by the women, they have survived the war and there is some hope for the future.

Body paragraph one

Topic sentence: Loss in *The Women of Troy* is comprehensive, from the loss of loved ones to the loss of one's city.

Evidence:

- Focus on the characters of Hecuba and Andromache.
- Consider the impact of the deaths of Priam and Hector; the destruction of Troy.

Body paragraph two

Topic sentence: These terrible losses mean the women have nothing to look forward to, only continued suffering.

Evidence:

- The women face lives of slavery to men they detest, and the loss of dignity and status.
- The tragic deaths of children such as Polyxena and Astyanax mean the women will not be able to watch their children grow up.
- Andromache says 'to die is better than a life of agony' and Hecuba says 'the lucky ones are dead', although she later insists 'the living at least have hope. To be dead is to be nothing'.

Body paragraph three

Topic sentence: Nevertheless, there are sources of hope in the play, although for the women themselves these are limited.

Evidence:

- The women have survived and will leave a legacy through the 'songs' that will be 'written in memory of our suffering'.
- The Greeks will suffer on their return home – this retribution suggests justice can be upheld, as the Greeks have been brutal and inhumane.

Plan your essay

This activity steps you through the process of creating an essay plan. Use a topic you have been given in class or one that you have found yourself.

1. Write your topic here:

   _____

   _____

2. What is your short response to the topic?

   I think that _____

   because _____

3. Write your contention in more formal language.

   _____

   _____

4. Identify three main reasons, and list evidence from the text (e.g. character choices and actions, plot details, quotations) to support each reason.

   Reason 1: _____

   Evidence:

   • _____

   • _____

   Reason 2: _____

   Evidence:

   • _____

   • _____

   Reason 3: _____

   Evidence:

   • _____

   • _____

5. Now write your reasons as topic sentences, in a logical order.

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

Writing your response

This section explains how to develop each section of your essay – the introduction, body paragraphs and conclusion.

Introductions

An introduction lets your reader know what lies ahead. It should provide a **clear response to the topic** and give your reader clues about the direction the response will take.

Your introduction should include:

- **your main contention** – a clear and concise statement of your position in response to the topic

- **essential information about the text** – its title and author/ creator; possibly its form or genre (e.g. novel, play, film); possibly some contextual information (e.g. about setting)

- **key terms from the topic**, as well as any **key concepts** you introduce as part of your argument

- **signposts** to what you will discuss in the body paragraphs – the main reasons and brief references to the evidence you will use (e.g. characters, events, stories, poems or scenes to be analysed).

> TIP: In the introduction, keep the emphasis on your argument; avoid using detailed evidence.

Study the following sample introductions.

Example 1: A simple introduction

Text: *Nine Days* by Toni Jordan

Topic:

'The characters in *Nine Days* have limited choices in life.' Do you agree?

Toni Jordan's *Nine Days* describes key events in the lives of the Westaway family over several decades from the late 1930s through to the early twenty-first century. **1** The characters face choices and make decisions that shape their futures, in some cases with tragic consequences. **2** Yet their options are limited by hardship and by social expectations, meaning they have few choices available to them. **3**

1 Introduces text details and provides the historical context.

2 Addresses the topic using the key term 'choices'.

3 Responds to the topic with a main contention; includes two general signposts: 'hardship' and 'social expectations'.

This topic asks a direct question; the introduction must answer it. In this case, the contention is a straightforward 'yes, the characters' choices are limited'. The contention also offers a sense of *what* limits those choices – financial hardship and social expectations – suggesting that these two issues will be discussed in the body paragraphs.

This introduction allows for a simple but clear response to the topic, supported by textual evidence. However, the signposts do not outline specific characters or events, or indicate

how hardship and social expectations limit the characters' life choices. In addition, the argument does not allow for a discussion of the ways in which some characters overcome social and economic constraints to live happy and fulfilling lives.

Example 2: A more complex and detailed introduction

The challenges of war, financial hardship, social expectations and family tragedy mark the lives of the Westaway family in Toni Jordan's *Nine Days*. **1** The characters face difficult choices and make decisions that shape their future, in some cases with terrible consequences. However, while the characters may have few opportunities, their lives unfold in a variety of ways. **2** Financial circumstances force Connie to look after the household after her father dies, but she also finds fulfilling work as the photographers' assistant at the *Argus*. **3** When she becomes pregnant, her mother Jean seeks to overcome the social stigma facing unwed mothers by persuading Connie to have an abortion; the conservative society they live in gives them few options. **4** Kip and Annabel, though, overcome the limitations of their difficult childhoods and, together, create a close, loving family. **5**

1 Opening sentence introduces the text in a more interesting way, signalling some of the factors that limit the characters' choices.

2 Main contention – partially disagrees with the topic statement.

3 Signpost 1 – identifies Connie as a focus for discussion; notes her limited options due to hardship, as well as a positive choice.

4 Signpost 2 – identifies Jean as a focus; emphasises limitations due to social expectations.

5 Signpost 3 – identifies Kip and Annabel as a focus; emphasises their ability to overcome limited opportunities.

Here the writer is taking a 'yes, but' response to the topic. They recognise the complexity of the novel by arguing that, although there may be few choices available to the characters, it is the way the characters respond to those choices that shapes their lives.

Write an introduction

Select a topic on one of your texts, either from this book or one you have been given in class. Write it here:

_____

_____

Complete the steps outlined under 'Breaking down the topic', 'Brainstorming ideas' and 'Developing a plan'.

Now begin to write your introduction by putting each of the elements identified on the next page into a sentence. The signposts should correspond to main reasons you list in your plan. Use the annotated sample paragraphs above and on the previous page as a guide.

General statement introducing the text: _____

_____

Main contention: _____

_____

Signpost 1: _____

_____

Signpost 2: _____

_____

Signpost 3: _____

_____

Now organise the above in the order you think is best, including any appropriate evidence _briefly_, and write an introduction.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Body paragraphs

Body paragraphs develop the argument by expanding on the main reasons and using detailed evidence from the text. Remember the following guidelines.

- Your topic sentence is like a 'mini' contention. Start with the argument (the topic sentence), and then prove it using the evidence and analysis in the following sentences.

- Base your topic sentence on an idea, rather than a character or an example from the text. This helps you to avoid simply describing the action, rather than analysing it.

- _All_ of the discussion in the paragraph should follow from, and connect to, the topic sentence.

- Include short quotations and other textual evidence, but don't start retelling the story.

- Discuss the evidence, explaining _why_ it is significant and _how_ it supports your argument.

- Always keep the topic in mind, and link back to it near the end of each paragraph.

> TIP: Topic sentences in body paragraphs are extremely important – they state your supporting reasons and provide the skeleton or 'bones' of your essay.

A basic structure using TEEL

The acronym TEEL is a handy way to remember the key elements in each body paragraph. You can follow it strictly to ensure you include each element, but avoid a simple four-sentence paragraph, with one sentence per TEEL element – this won't flow well or develop your argument. After you become more confident you can vary your approach and introduce more complexity, as the following sections explain.

T   The **topic sentence** states the main point of the paragraph. It is usually the first sentence in the paragraph, and expands on one of the signposts from your introduction.

E   Your **evidence** from the text supports the main point of the paragraph. It can be quotations from the text and descriptions of situations, events, character attributes and so on.

E   The **explanation** of textual evidence shows why it is significant and how it supports the main point of the paragraph.

L   The **link** to the topic is a sentence (or two) that clearly relates the paragraph's discussion to the essay topic and reinforces the main contention. It usually occurs near or at the end of the paragraph.

Example 1: Basic TEEL paragraph

The following example shows how TEEL can be used to create a simple body paragraph. It could be the first body paragraph for an essay on *Nine Days*, following the introduction on page 43.

Financial hardship experienced by the Westaway family means Connie has few options available to her, but she does not let her limited opportunities define her. **T** Following her father's death, her mother takes on domestic work and Connie, forced to give up her place at art school, keeps house and looks after the boarder, Mrs Keith. **E** Yet she does not simply submit to others' demands and expectations: she stands up to Mrs Keith, calling her 'an old cow' when the boarder complains unfairly about Kip, and she gets a job at the *Argus* newspaper as the photographers' assistant. Connie's resourcefulness, resilience and strong work ethic are evident as she responds to and takes on new challenges. **E** Her choices are limited by her circumstances, but Connie's positive approach to life suggests that even a few opportunities can be enough. **L**

Topic sentence: the main point of the paragraph; expands on signpost 1 from the introduction.

Evidence: examples from the text showing Connie's limited choices, as well as her positive approach.

Explanation: how the evidence supports the main point.

Link back to the topic.

The elements of TEEL should be included in each body paragraph. However, if you feel confident with this model, look for ways to introduce complexity and variety into your essay. For example, you can:

- vary the placement of the topic sentence

- expand on the topic sentence

- combine evidence and explanation within individual sentences

- introduce two or more pieces of evidence in one paragraph that show different perspectives on a character or an idea.

Example 2: Adding complexity – TEEEL+

A TEEEL+ paragraph provides more supporting points and explanation than a basic TEEL paragraph, to develop a more comprehensive, detailed and complex discussion.

- **T**opic sentence

- **E**laboration (an explanation or unpacking of the topic sentence)

- **E**vidence and **E**xplanation

- **E**vidence and **E**xplanation **+** (further evidence and discussion that provides a different perspective on the topic sentence)

- **L**ink

Financial hardship experienced by the Westaway family means Connie has few options available to her, but she does not let her limited opportunities define her. Indeed, Connie's talent and determination mean further choices become possible. **1** Following her father's death, Connie is forced to give up her place at art school to keep house and look after the boarder, Mrs Keith. At this point, she appears trapped within the family home, with few possibilities to further her education or establish a career. **2** Yet she does not simply submit to others' demands and expectations: she stands up to Mrs Keith, calling her 'an old cow' when the boarder complains unfairly about Kip, and gets a job at the *Argus* newspaper as the photographers' assistant. Although this helps to address the family's need for additional income, Connie now faces the disapproval of those who question the suitability of the work: Ada Husting regards a newspaper as 'not a respectable place to work' and even Francis says, disdainfully, 'a girl photographer … That's stupid'. **3** Yet Connie's passion for photography is evident – 'the pictures … they last forever' – and Kip's story about the umbrella signals Connie's flair and potential. **4** Her resourcefulness, resilience and strong work ethic are evident as she responds to and takes on new challenges. Her choices are limited by her circumstances, but Connie's positive approach to life suggests that even a few opportunities might be enough.

1 A second sentence after the topic sentence elaborates on the main point.

2 Explains the significance of the first piece of textual evidence before moving on to the next.

3 Adds extra evidence that shows other limiting forces, as well as Connie's ability to make the most of her opportunities.

4 Interweaves evidence and explanation – these elements of TEEL do not always need to be separate.

Example 3: Varying the placement of the topic sentence

Another way to structure your body paragraphs is to begin with a sentence or two of textual evidence and then write your topic sentence. This can help you to connect body paragraphs more smoothly. It also creates the possibility of leading up to the 'big idea' in the topic sentence rather than just stating it without much preparation.

The example below is the beginning of a body paragraph that could follow Example 2 opposite.

However, Connie's challenges do not only come from the world of work and money. **1** They also arise from society's condemnation of unmarried women who become pregnant. Jean is determined that Connie's life will not be compromised by having an illegitimate baby, and convinces Connie to have an (illegal) abortion. **2** Connie's limited options, resulting from narrow and prejudiced social expectations, are much more constraining than those caused by financial hardship. **3** […]

1 The opening sentence flows on from the final sentence of the previous paragraph, maintaining the focus on Connie, and also signals that a different set of challenges will be discussed.

2 Gives some textual detail (evidence) to specify what these challenges are.

3 The topic sentence is the fourth sentence of the paragraph; it follows logically from the previous three sentences and also sets up the discussion (further evidence and explanation) for the remainder of the paragraph.

Write a body paragraph

1. Refer to the introduction you wrote on page 44. Select one of the signposts to use as the basis for a topic sentence. Write it here as a strong, clear statement – this will be your topic sentence.

   _____

   _____

2. Select evidence (such as direct quotations and detailed references to characters, setting, situations and events) to support the contention of the topic sentence. Write one or two sentences presenting this evidence. Remember to use inverted commas (quotation marks) for *exact* quotations.

   _____

   _____

   _____

3. Write one or two sentences explaining how your evidence is significant in relation to the topic sentence.

_____

_____

_____

4. Next, write a sentence that links the main point of this paragraph to the topic. Do this by explaining how the paragraph supports your main argument.

_____

_____

5. Now expand this basic TEEL paragraph by adding more explanation and evidence. You could add a new sentence after the topic sentence that expands on its central idea; you could add some further evidence and explanation that relates to a different character or gives a different perspective on the topic sentence. Write your expanded body paragraph below.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Conclusions

A conclusion draws your discussion to a close. It should always be included to ensure you submit a completed piece of writing. A conclusion should:

- **sum up** your supporting points and evidence
- **restate your main contention** (using different words from those in the introduction)
- **link back to the topic**.

TIP: Don't introduce new points or evidence in your conclusion. However, you may include a quotation you have not used before, provided it is only to sum up and support the main argument.

An effective conclusion will do all these things, and go further – by stating the wider, big-picture message being delivered by the text in relation to the central idea in the topic.

Example 1: An average conclusion

This concluding paragraph to an essay on *Nine Days* includes the essential features of a conclusion: a concise summary of the argument and supporting points, and a clear link to the topic. (See Example 1 on page 42 for the introductory paragraph of this response.) However, it is overly dependent on the key terms of the topic and repeats much of the introduction.

In Toni Jordan's *Nine Days* the characters' choices in life are limited by hardship and social expectations. **1** The Westaway family's limited income, especially in the war years, means that educational opportunities are limited, while the women face social pressures to conform to traditional gender roles. When faced with challenging circumstances they make crucial decisions with far-reaching consequences, but they have few possibilities for real change and improvement. **2**

1 Refers to the topic and restates the main contention, but several words and phrases are repeated from the introduction – more variation is needed.

2 Ends with an effective concluding statement, but the lack of textual detail means the conclusion is fairly general and adds little to what has already been said in the introduction.

Example 2: A strong conclusion

The following paragraph is the conclusion to an essay on *Nine Days*, whose introduction is Example 2 on page 43. Just as the introduction in Example 2 is more detailed and has a more complex argument than that in Example 1 (on page 42), this conclusion is more detailed than Example 1 above and shows a stronger knowledge of the text.

There are many challenges facing the Westaway family over the several decades depicted in *Nine Days*, and these challenges often limit the characters' choices. **1** Yet the characters find different ways of responding to the circumstances they confront, and their experiences range from tragic loss to happiness and fulfilment. Connie and Jean find themselves trapped by society's condemnation of unwed mothers, and the choice they make in response to Connie's pregnancy essentially ends both their lives. For Kip and Annabel, family love and loyalty come before all else, and over time the hardships of their teenage years are replaced by the comforts of a settled family life. **2** Toni Jordan depicts lives in which opportunities are few, and the forces that limit and constrain lives – such as war, poverty and prejudice – are many. Yet she also suggests that these factors do not themselves determine destinies; individual choices can also create possibilities and open up the future. **3**

1 Responds to the topic and summarises the argument without repeating exact phrases from the introduction.

2 Sums up the specific reasons and evidence presented in the body paragraphs, relating these to the main contention/argument. The points made are specific rather than general, giving the conclusion more impact.

3 Concludes with two strong final statements about the limited choices available to the characters (addressing the topic) that present an interpretation of the text's overall message.

Write a conclusion

1. Refer to the introduction you wrote on page 44. Write two sentences stating your main contention and responding to the topic. Avoid repeating exactly the same phrases you used in the introduction.

   _____

   _____

   _____

2. Write two or three sentences summing up your main reasons, corresponding to the signposts in your introduction. Include some textual details.

   _____

   _____

   _____

3. Write a final sentence responding to the topic with your overall view of what the text is saying about the topic idea.

   _____

   _____

Linking words

Strong essays are **fluent** and **coherent**. This means that the writing flows smoothly and logically, and all the elements work together in a consistent, purposeful way.

If the response has been carefully planned, then the ideas _should_ flow logically. Another way to create cohesion is by using appropriate linking words or phrases. The following words and phrases will help to show your reasoning and connect your points fluently.

TIP: Although 'also' and 'but' are effective linking words, they are best used to join phrases together _within_ a sentence, _not_ to start a sentence.

Terms to discuss a similar idea	Terms to present a different idea
additionally	by contrast / contrastingly
furthermore	conversely
just as … so too	however
likewise	nevertheless
moreover	on the other hand
not only … but also	whereas
similarly	yet

Terms to show a logical or causal connection	Terms to indicate an exception or variation
as a result	admittedly
consequently	occasionally
therefore	rarely
this is why / which is why	with the exception of

Quotes from the text should be incorporated smoothly into your sentences. The table below shows some sentence starters and structures for including quotes as evidence.

Sentence starters and model sentences for including quotes
As <character's name> says / asks, '<character's speech>', suggesting that ...
<Character's name> feels / thinks that '<quote showing feelings or thoughts>', which reveals ...
The characters' close / distant relationship is shown by '<quote showing nature of relationship>'.
The setting, which is '<quote describing setting>', affects the characters' lives through ...
The opening of the text creates a sense of mystery / drama / tension through phrases / images such as '<quoted phrase>' and '<quoted phrase>'.
The dramatic / reassuring / disturbing conclusion, in which '<quote showing what happens>', leaves the reader / audience with a sense of ...

For further explanations of how to include quotes in your essays, see pages 201–2 of this digital book.

Practise using linking words

1. For each of the four lists of linking words opposite and above, write one or two sentences about your text.

   Sentence(s) about similar ideas: _____

   _____

   Sentence(s) comparing different ideas: _____

   _____

   Sentence(s) showing a logical connection: _____

   _____

Sentence(s) showing an exception or variation to a rule or pattern: _____

_____

2. Use two of the sentence starters and model sentences in the table on the previous page to create sentences that incorporate quotes from your text.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Common mistakes

Two very common mistakes in analytical essays are **digressing** (going off on a tangent) and **retelling the story** (paraphrasing). Being aware of these errors can help you avoid them, especially if you have the chance to edit your response before handing it in for assessment.

Digressing

Read the following body paragraph, from a response to this topic on Alfred Hitchcock's film *Rear Window*:

'Jeff learns more from Lisa than she does from him.' Do you agree?

> Jeff cannot see, as Lisa can, the ways in which their lives will be enhanced by a long-term commitment to each other, and by each adapting to the other's needs. She wants them to get married and for Jeff to settle down. Jeff, however, wishes to return to his photojournalism career and a life of independence and adventure. His life has been full of danger and success: he won a medal for taking reconnaissance photos during the war, and his desire for risk-taking is evident in the photographs of dangerous events on the wall of his apartment. His broken leg is the result of taking a particularly spectacular photo of a racing car, but he shows no signs of wanting to change his ways, promising his editor that he will 'take pictures from a jeep or a water buffalo, if necessary'.

Can you see that the writer has lost the thread very quickly? The focus in this paragraph should be on the things that Jeff learns from Lisa. Instead, the paragraph is all about Jeff's lifestyle and risk-taking personality. The topic sentence sets up the discussion, but the evidence does not support it.

Retelling the story

Now read this paragraph, on the same topic, and beginning with the same topic sentence.

> Jeff cannot see, as Lisa can, the ways in which their lives will be enhanced by a long-term commitment to each other, and by each adapting to the other's needs. She tries to persuade him that he could have his own successful studio in New York, but he insists that this is 'nonsense'. She asks 'what's so different about it here from over there … that one person couldn't live in both places just as easily', but he argues that she could never accompany him on his travels because she would struggle to eat 'fish heads' or to live out of a single suitcase. Lisa declares that Jeff is 'too stubborn to argue with' but he insists that he is 'not stubborn' but 'truthful'. His stubbornness leads to Lisa leaving for the evening without their differences being resolved.

This begins in a more promising way: initially, the textual examples are relevant to the topic sentence. However, instead of offering several examples that show Jeff's inability to see what he might gain from a shared future with Lisa, and explaining their relevance to the topic, the writer falls into the trap of simply recounting a particular scene – in other words, telling the story. Although this does highlight how much Jeff has to learn, there is no discussion of what, exactly, he ultimately learns from Lisa.

Note the number of sentences that begin with a character's name ('Lisa declares') or a pronoun ('She asks'). Beginning your sentences like this is likely to lead you into a plot recount rather than an analysis. You might have one or two sentences like this, but then aim to begin sentences with phrases such as:

- This illustrates that ...

- It is clear that ...

- In this way, <name of author/filmmaker> explores ...

> TIP: Although it is always important to include textual evidence, it is equally important to *explain* how that evidence is relevant to your topic sentence and to the topic itself.

Correct a flaw

In pairs, work through the following steps to see how paragraphs can go 'off track' and how to fix that problem in your own writing.

1. Select a topic on your text and write a topic sentence for a body paragraph that responds to this topic.

2. Using this sentence as the starting point, each write a paragraph in which you deliberately stray from the task – either by digressing or by telling the story.

3. Swap with your partner and read your partner's paragraph. Can you identify the flaw in their paragraph? Check with them to see if you are correct.

4. Rewrite your partner's paragraph so that the flaw is corrected – either by using more relevant evidence from the text or by replacing some plot retelling with sentences that explain/analyse.

Drafting and editing your response

Drafting is an investment. Treating your first version as a draft (if time permits) allows you to review what you have written and do some editing – making changes and corrections that will produce a better essay.

When you are editing and rewriting, begin by focusing on the bigger picture, checking for structure and meaning. One way to check how well your essay flows is to read it aloud. Faults and weaknesses (such as digressing, telling the story, repeating words and phrases, and using too many long, complicated sentences) can become more apparent when you read aloud.

To edit and rewrite your text response essay use the following checklist.

- ☐ The introduction includes a clear contention that addresses the topic.
- ☐ The body of the essay presents a consistent line of argument.
- ☐ Each body paragraph contains a clear and relevant topic sentence.
- ☐ Statements about the text are supported by textual evidence and examples.
- ☐ Each paragraph contains a link back to the topic.
- ☐ Linking words are used to show a logical development of ideas.
- ☐ Sentence lengths and structures are varied, with some simple sentences and some complex sentences.
- ☐ The conclusion sums up the argument and is clearly still addressing the topic.

Once you have redrafted your essay to ensure that you have presented a clear and effective argument, the next step is to proofread it. This time, focus on the smaller picture, checking for appropriate language choices, and for errors in spelling, grammar and punctuation.

To proofread your essay use this checklist.

- ☐ The title of your text is consistently underlined (or italicised if typed).
- ☐ Names of characters and places are correctly spelled.
- ☐ Quotes from the text are correct, and are enclosed in quotation marks.
- ☐ The present tense is used throughout (with variations as required, e.g. past tense can be used to refer to events occurring before the narrative present).
- ☐ Punctuation is correct – sentences begin with capital letters and end with full stops; quotation marks and possessive apostrophes are used correctly.
- ☐ The language style is formal – there are no contractions, colloquial expressions or instances of the first-person 'I'.
- ☐ Vocabulary is precise and varied.

Work with a partner to improve each other's essays

1. Swap the first draft of an essay with a partner. Check each other's work using the checklist for editing and rewriting (page 54). Note down at least three ways in which your partner's essay could be improved.

    _____

    _____

    _____

2. Rewrite your essay according to your partner's feedback, then swap drafts again.

3. This time, check your partner's work against the proofreading checklist (page 54). Make a note of any errors or areas for improvement.

Sample response

This essay is a mid-range response to a topic on the novel *Flames* by Tasmanian author Robbie Arnott. It uses the main elements of essay structure outlined on pages 42–50 but has a few weaknesses, as the comments explain.

Topic:

'Despite its fragmented narrative, *Flames* is ultimately about connection.' Discuss.

Robbie Arnott's novel *Flames* consists of linked chapters or stories which have only weak connections, and its various characters are often isolated and disconnected from others. **1** Yet the characters are in fact connected **2** in different ways, often through family ties and friendships that grow during the novel. These relationships reflect the deep human need for connection. **3** There are also links between several chapters, such as the Esk God and the location of Notley Fern Gorge. **4** In the end, the novel shows that connections between people can be stronger than the things that separate them. **5**

The chapters in *Flames* have different narrators and tell stories that often seem to have little to do with each other. **6** The novel begins with Levi's narrative but the second chapter is in the voice of Karl, who is unrelated to Levi, **7** although Levi appears near the end of the chapter. Charlotte's chapter

1 Signpost 1 – addresses the first part of the topic.

2 The repetition of 'connected' and 'connection' throughout the response weakens the writing. Some synonyms would have made the writing more varied and precise.

3 Signpost 2 – indicates one form of connection.

4 Signpost 3 – another form of connection within the novel.

5 States the main contention.

6 Topic sentence picks up on signpost 1.

7 Introduces evidence to support the topic sentence.

→ introduces an element of connection since she is Levi's sister, but in fact she wants to go as far away from him as possible: 'I want to go south'. Her chapter ends abruptly, then the next chapter is narrated in third person from the perspective of the Esk God who, apart from having slept against Charlotte's belly for one night, is again not connected to the other characters. **8** The characters Thurston Hough, the private detective, Mavis Midcurrent and the ranger are also very disconnected from the others and their stories begin and end suddenly. Although the first and last chapters are narrated by Levi, who also appears in letters to Hough, he is isolated from other characters and heavily focused on death. All of these factors combine to make the narrative of *Flames* fragmented and with few obvious connecting threads. **9**

Despite this fragmented structure, though, many of the characters are linked. **10** Nicola, for instance, is the daughter of Karl, who meets Levi briefly on a beach before later coming to know him as the brother of Charlotte, Nicola's partner. After being briefly mentioned in Karl's chapter, Nicola appears much later in the novel and becomes a main character. Furthermore, a number of the characters are isolated but seek stronger connections with others. Nicola falls in love with Charlotte, leading to their relationship as well as a connection between their families. At the end of the novel a friendship between Levi and Karl is beginning, as Levi forms a connection with a seal just as Karl had years earlier. The connection with the seal prevents Levi from drowning, as 'something ballooned inside me … As it expanded I rose up, high on the wake'. **11** Jack also seeks a personal relationship despite being fire in a human form, and his love for Edith leads to their marriage and their children Levi and Charlotte. Not all relationships are successful: **12** Edith forced Jack to leave, for instance; the detective has been hurt by the betrayal of a former fiancé and Charlotte sees 'flames of rage and loneliness' in her face. There is also the disturbing connection formed between Allen Gibson and the cormorant: 'I will be with him, hand in feather'. People's desires for strong connections with others, even when these are challenging, are central to most of the characters' lives.

In addition, the novel shows internal connections in a number of ways. **13** It is fragmented, but only on the surface; there are elements of the text that establish deeper connections between the chapters and the characters' lives. **14** One of these is the Esk God, who takes the form of a water rat. He is introduced

8 Continues to present evidence of the fragmented narrative; however, there is little explanation of how this evidence supports the topic sentence. Also, the list of characters simply makes the same point over and over, rather than developing an analysis.

9 Final sentence of the body paragraph links to the topic.

10 Topic sentence picks up on signpost 2, indicating that character connections will be the focus of this paragraph.

11 Evidence presented with a quote; further explanation of this evidence would have made the argument stronger.

12 Adds complexity – relationships are not always positive.

13 Topic sentence picks up on signpost 3 – other types of connection.

14 This sentence elaborates on the topic sentence.

as 'a ball of brown fur nuzzled against' Charlotte when she sleeps beneath a boat one night; he is killed by Hough and then floats up to the sky towards his beloved Cloud God. The pelt of the water rat, in turn, is treasured by Hough and then Levi, both of whom adore its warmth and softness. **15** When this pelt is destroyed in the fire at Notley Fern Gorge its smoke goes up to the cloud, which releases so much rain it not only puts out the fire (saving the lives of Nicola, Charlotte, Levi and the detective) but causes Launceston to flood. The motif **16** of the Esk God, and its bodily form of the water rat, thus connects several characters and chapters. The location of Notley Fern Gorge has a similar connecting role: it is where Jack first sees Edith and where her ashes are scattered, where Nicola's family had holidays, and where the novel's climax occurs. These connections help to tie together the various chapters and characters of the novel, giving it a stronger sense of being a single narrative rather than a collection of separate stories. **17**

The narrative of *Flames* is fragmented, split between various narrators and describing short episodes in their lives. Yet the characters are shown to be more connected to each other than it first appears, and their strong wishes for relationships also show the importance of connections, even if these relationships sometimes fail. **18** Despite its sudden endings and disconnections, *Flames* suggests that the human capacity to create new relationships can be a means of overcoming the separations that life inevitably involves. **19**

15 The discussion tends to tell the story, rather than analyse the evidence.

16 Use of metalanguage (motif) enables some explanation of how the evidence is relevant to the argument – more explanation would have improved the response.

17 Final sentence draws together the evidence and provides a link back to the topic.

18 Conclusion sums up the evidence presented and uses key topic terms 'fragmented' and 'connection'.

19 Final sentence gives a broad statement about the novel's overall meaning.

WRITING A CREATIVE RESPONSE

In this chapter

❭ Approaches to the task
❭ Forms for your response
❭ The written explanation
❭ Sample response

A creative response to a text, just like an analytical response, will show a thorough understanding of the world of a text: its settings, contexts, plot lines, characters and themes. There are several possible approaches to responding creatively to a text. These include adding to your text, for instance by writing a prologue or an epilogue; and transforming part of your text, by, for example, retelling a scene from a different point of view. Whichever approach you take, you should write in a form you are familiar with, and use the conventions of that form appropriately and effectively.
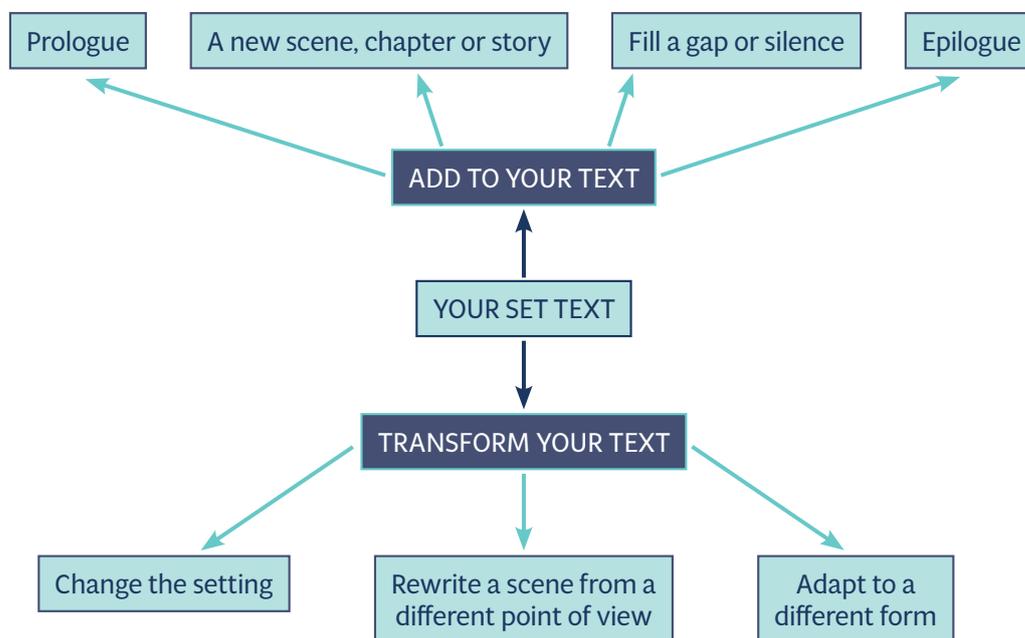
A written explanation also forms part of this task. It explains the choices you made in developing and writing your creative piece, and the ways in which it is connected to the original text.

This chapter provides practical guidelines for:

• deciding on an approach
• writing in different forms
• producing the written explanation.

Approaches to the task

This diagram shows two main approaches to a creative response: adding to the original text, and transforming it.

```
Prologue   A new scene, chapter or story       Fill a gap or silence       Epilogue
                              ↖    ↑        ↑    ↗
                            ADD TO YOUR TEXT

                              YOUR SET TEXT

                            TRANSFORM YOUR TEXT
                     ↙              ↓              ↘
      Change the setting   Rewrite a scene from a    Adapt to a
                           different point of view   different form
```

Adding to the original

Use the following guidelines to help you plan and develop a response that adds to a text.

- **Prologues and epilogues** show what happened before or after the events in the original text. You can make connections with the original by showing *causes* (in the case of a prologue) or *consequences* (for an epilogue). Use the same narrative voice and style as in the original, and at least some of the same characters.

- **A new scene, chapter or story** also needs to be written in the same voice and style as the original. Look for characters, events or encounters in your text that are implied or alluded to, but not described in detail. Use the text's setting and make sure any elements of historical and social context are correct.

- **Filling a gap or a silence** can be done in various ways. You could write a new scene to be inserted in the original. Alternatively, you might write a piece in a different form, such as a letter, monologue or sequence of diary entries, that shows the perspective of a character whose voice is not heard in the original.

Transforming the original

When you transform a text you use mainly existing content, but present it in a different way. Here are some options and guidelines.

- **Rewriting a scene from a different point of view** can show how different people sometimes perceive the same events very differently. Key moments in relationships provide good opportunities for this kind of response.

- **Changing the setting** (place and/or time) can allow you to examine the importance of context in shaping attitudes and values. A text set in the past could be moved forwards to the present, or a text set in another country could be relocated to an Australian setting. These options would explore the relevance of the text's themes and values to a contemporary and/or Australian context. Remember to include characters and events from the original.

- **Adapting the text to another form** can allow you to explore the connection between form and meaning. For example, a scene from a novel or short story could be rewritten as a play or film script, or a scene from a play or film could be turned into prose fiction. Look for a transformation that enables you to show understanding and insight. For example, you could use a first-person narrative to show a film character's unspoken thoughts.

Prepare your creative response

Complete these steps to prepare and plan your response.

1. Decide how your response will add to or transform the original text. _____

   _____

2. Decide on the form. _____

3. Decide on the main character in your creative piece. _____

4. List some words and phrases to describe the main character. _____

   _____

5. Decide on one or two other characters who will also be important in your response. _____

6. List some words and phrases to describe the relationships of these characters with the main character. _____

   _____

7. Make notes on the basic plot details, settings and events you will include in your response. _____

   _____

   _____

8. Make notes on the main ideas and issues you will explore in your response.

   _____

   _____

Forms for your response

The table below shows some of the main forms that can be used for creative responses. It also indicates the audience and typical language used for each form.

Form	Audience	Language
Short story	A general audience, probably similar to the audience of the original text	Written in prose; describes characters and situations to draw in the reader
Eulogy	People who attend a funeral	Usually formal but with a personal tone
Diary entry	The writer – not intended to be read by another character	Depending on the writer's personality, usually informal, in a confiding, personal tone
Personal letter	One reader who is well known to the writer	Personal tone, descriptive, directly addressing the recipient
Personal reflection	The audience of the original text	Reflective, thoughtful, calm
Monologue	The audience of the original text – not intended to be heard by another character	Varied – reflects the character's personality; shifts of tone within the monologue show mood changes
Play or film script	Various – can be for a niche audience (e.g. art-house cinema) or a mainstream audience (e.g. Hollywood cinema)	Written as dialogue; some stage directions (play) or description of action, setting, cinematography (film)

Whichever form you choose to write in, you must use the conventions appropriate to that form. The following sections explain the conventions of the forms in the table, and include guidelines for writing in each one.

Short story

The aim of a short story is to produce a powerful effect in a few pages. A conflict should be introduced almost immediately. The resulting tension builds towards the climax, then the tension relaxes as the conflict is resolved.

One way to quickly introduce the conflict at the heart of a short story is to start in the middle of the action. This immediately engages the reader by raising questions about the situation. Consider this sample opening to a short story.

> Not again! Her heart rate increased as she calculated the effort required for the next hurdle. But she couldn't stop now … they were close. So close …

Some of the questions this opening might raise in the reader's mind include the following.

- *What* is happening 'again'?
- Does her heart rate increase due to fear? Excitement? Something else?

- What kind of 'hurdle' is it? A physical obstacle or some other sort of problem?
- Are 'they' friends or foe?

Now write some questions that arise from the following opening.

> It was hard to get it right. Slipped again and now it was scratched. He looked around. Good – he was still on his own.

_____

_____

_____

_____

The following activity steps you through the process of planning a short story. It uses the most common narrative structure for a short story – a **linear structure**, in which events are in chronological order. You can also use other narrative structures. For example, you can use flashbacks to create **shifts in time**, or a **circular structure** in which the story begins and ends at the same point in time.

Plan a story

Choose a **key idea** from your text that could be explored in a short story.

_____

Decide on an appropriate **message**. _____

What is your **purpose**? _____

Choose a **setting**. _____

Briefly describe your **protagonist/s**. _____

_____

Complete the table below to provide a story outline. You could also use this outline if you are creating a new chapter or section for your text.

1. Engaging opening: write it in full.	2. Set the scene; introduce characters and conflict.

3. Build tension with a complication.	4. Build tension with a further complication.
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
5. Crisis: bring the tension to a climax.	**6. Resolution: resolve the conflict.**
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Eulogy or obituary

A eulogy is the speech given at a person's funeral. It reflects on the person's life and highlights their most memorable achievements. It is biographical in style and focuses on the positive aspects of the deceased's life.

- A eulogy is delivered by a close friend or relative, so you must take on an appropriate persona.
- Identify yourself to the audience at the beginning of the speech.
- Make some personal comments about the role of the deceased in your life.
- Also acknowledge the impact the deceased had on other people gathered at the funeral.

An obituary is like a eulogy, but is a written piece intended for publication in a newspaper or magazine rather than delivered as a speech. The subject (the deceased) is usually a well-known member of the community who is of interest to the general public.

Write the eulogy for a character

Complete this table to explore the possibilities for writing a eulogy for a character in your text. Your selection of the character who gives the speech is almost as important as your selection of the subject of the eulogy, as your response will depict qualities of both.

Deceased character	Who might deliver the eulogy?	Highlights from the character's life

Diary entry

A diary entry, or series of entries, is a private record of events as experienced and remembered by the writer. It is not intended to be read by anyone else, and thus is very personal, expressing the raw emotions and private thoughts of the writer. Each entry is also usually limited to very recent events, over the past few hours or days.

Write a character's diary entry

Choose a scene in your text in which a character experiences something life-changing. Imagine it is the evening of the same day and you are that character, reflecting on this experience. Write a diary entry that includes a recount of the experience and its impact on your thoughts and feelings. Consider the structure of your piece; as it is reflective and private, events do not have to be chronological or as logically sequenced as in a memoir or autobiography.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Personal letter

In personal letters a character's thoughts, feelings and reactions are revealed to one other person, usually a trusted friend or relative. A letter often contains questions the sender would like answered, reflecting issues and ideas that are important to them.

The style of a letter can be informal and conversational, but this will depend on the purpose and intended recipient of the letter. The writing style of a letter between two lovers who have been separated by war will be different from a letter of apology and explanation sent by a father to a son. Letters can convey information, or they can express a point of view in a forceful or even persuasive style.

If you are writing a personal letter as your creative text response, make sure it is consistent with the world of your text. In historical fiction, for instance, some characters would not have been literate; and in our own time, letter writing is becoming much less common than electronic forms of communication such as emails, text messages and social media.

The following elements are typical of a personal letter.

- The date and place of writing (traditionally placed in the top right-hand corner) help to place the letter in a context.

- A salutation (e.g. 'Dear _____') indicates who the recipient is, and can signal the kind of relationship that exists between writer and reader.

- Recent news is often included in the opening paragraph; it should be of interest to the recipient.

- The first or second paragraph often explains the purpose or reason for writing the letter, e.g. to explain, question or apologise.

- Other hopes or plans (e.g. a request for a reply, a plan to meet or a reassurance of friendship) can be revealed in the following paragraphs.

- A sign-off (e.g. 'Yours sincerely') concludes the letter, and its tone and style also reflect the nature of the relationship between writer and recipient.

Personal reflection / internal monologue

A personal reflection or internal monologue allows you to write in a thoughtful, considered manner from the perspective of a character in the text. You can reflect on particular events and situations (consistent with the character's involvement and their likely attitudes and feelings), and also make broader links to the text's ideas and themes.

- Choose a significant moment or point of crisis in the text as the springboard for your reflection.

- Write in the first person and mostly in the past tense; use the present tense when the speaker is describing their current feelings or intentions.

- The language may be informal and conversational; it should be consistent with the character's use of language in the original text.

- To conclude, you can refer back to your opening comments, or build to a new realisation or decision.

Writing a reflective piece from the point of view of a minor character in your text can be a good creative option. It enables you to add detail and interest to a character, and to present events and situations in the text from a different perspective.

Plan a personal reflection

Select a character whose thoughts on and feelings about the text's events are not expressed in the text but are worth exploring. Answer the following questions to plan a personal reflection from that character's perspective.

1. Which character will you use as the narrator of your reflection? _____

2. Which moment in the text will you use as the springboard for the reflection? Why have you selected this? _____

    _____

3. Which key events will your narrator reflect on in detail? _____

    _____

4. Name one or two characters your narrator will focus on. _____

5. How will your character's point of view on events and characters contrast with the points of view (of other characters, or of the narrator) in the original text?

    _____

6. What personal qualities of the character will be shown by your reflective piece? How will you reveal these (e.g. language choices; attitudes and values)?

    _____

7. Identify one or two major ideas in the text that your piece will explore, and your narrator's perspective on these. _____

    _____

Monologue (speech)

A monologue or soliloquy is a speech by one person or character directly to an audience. Although it might reflect on past events, a monologue can also be focused on the present, as a soliloquy in a play often is. When creating a monologue or soliloquy for a character in your text, follow these guidelines.

- Write in the first person, conveying a strong sense of the character's personality.

- Select a minor character as the speaker, as this will lead to greater insight and less repetition of what is already said in the original text.

- As with a personal reflection (discussed on pages 65–6), start with a crisis point or turning point that might prompt the character to reassess their situation.

- Include contrasting moods and changes of pace to create interest and drama.

- A monologue is a performance piece (whether or not you actually perform it), so think about how the performer might deliver the lines and use the stage. Include some stage directions to indicate performance elements such as pauses, volume, pitch and possibly hand gestures or facial expressions.

You might create a dramatic monologue purely as a written piece, or you might have the opportunity to deliver it to your class as an oral presentation. In either case, remember that it is a dramatic piece that needs to hold the audience's attention from start to finish.

Play script or screenplay

These are interesting forms for a creative response, especially if you would like to adapt a prose narrative into a short play or film. However, they require close attention to the conventions of the relevant form. Both kinds of text are written as dialogue between characters, but also include directions related to visual and sound elements.

A **play script** is the text for a dramatic performance on stage before a live audience. It should include **stage directions**, indicating performance elements such as character entries and exits, lighting, sets, props, costumes and the characters' physical appearance. Stage directions are usually written in *italics*.

A **screenplay** is the script for a film. It should include some directions for the mise en scène, indicating elements such as the setting, acting style, costumes and lighting. You can also include some directions for cinematography, such as the angle and framing of shots.

Whether your script is for a play or a screenplay, the bulk of your piece should be dialogue. Do not simply copy the dialogue from your set text – rather, write dialogue for a new scene or an existing scene that currently has no dialogue.

Screenplay format

Below is a simplified format for a screenplay. It is based on an early scene in *Pride and Prejudice* in which Mr Bennet reveals he has visited the Bennets' new neighbour, Mr Bingley, for the first time. Here the dialogue is reproduced from the original, but in your creative response your script will need to introduce new elements and dialogue not explicitly described in the text.

```
INTERIOR — A SMALL BUT COMFORTABLE DRAWING ROOM,
LATE 1700S ENGLAND — EVENING

The BENNET women are seated, doing various sewing
tasks, except for MARY who is reading. ELIZABETH,
trimming a hat, is sitting next to MRS BENNET.
MR BENNET is standing, seeming thoughtful; he looks
at ELIZABETH.

                    MR BENNET
          I hope Mr Bingley will like it, Lizzy.
```

```
MEDIUM SHOT of MRS BENNET and ELIZABETH

                  MRS BENNET
                 (resentfully)
      We are not in a way to know what
    Mr Bingley likes, since we are not allowed
                   to visit.

                  ELIZABETH
     But you forget, mama, that we shall meet
    him at the assemblies and that Mrs Long has
              promised to introduce him.

                  MRS BENNET
    I do not believe Mrs Long will do any such
     thing. She is a selfish, hypocritical woman,
             and I have no opinion of her.

CLOSE-UP of MR BENNET

                  MR BENNET
     No more have I, and I am glad to find that
        you do not depend on her serving you.

WIDE SHOT of the room, suddenly quiet. The BENNET
daughters continue with their work, but MRS BENNET,
irritated by her husband's indifference to her
needs, looks around the room as KITTY coughs.
```

And so the dialogue continues …

The written explanation

As well as producing a creative response, you will need to explain and justify the choices you made and the connections between your response and the original text.

Your written explanation should be a detailed, fluent and coherent paragraph (or possibly two short paragraphs). It is usually written in first person and past tense ('I decided to …').

Include discussion of how you have used or addressed the following elements.

- **The form**, e.g. letter, diary entry, personal reflection or a new section of the original text. Aim to refer to one or two conventions of this form (e.g. dialogue and rising tension in a short story).

- **Connections between your response and the original text.** These can be quite specific, such as events, places and characters you draw from the original, and also more general, such as themes and issues explored by both the original text and your response.

- **Language**, including comments on tone, style and any features of characters' speech you have incorporated. If aspects of the language have been transformed from the original (e.g. due to a change in setting or genre), explain these changes.

- Your **purpose** in creating this piece. For example, do you intend the reader to experience a certain emotional response, or to consider a particular point of view?

- Your **intended audience** and the **context** for the piece. For example, where would it be located in the original text, or where might it be published? Explain how you have used form and language to suit the audience, purpose and context.

Plan your written explanation

- Use the following planning sheet to make notes on each of these elements for your written explanation.

Element of your creative response	How you have used or addressed this element
Form	
Connections to original text	
Main ideas/themes explored	
Language	
Purpose	
Audience	
Context	

Sample response

This creative response was written by a Year 12 student under timed conditions. It is based on Toni Jordan's novel *Nine Days* and takes the form of part of a new chapter, drawing on characters and events in the novel.

Prompt: Compose a day for Kip soon after the inquest into Connie's death.

15 August 1941

Light bleeds through the curtain and the sting of the cold as I rise out of bed makes it feel like today shouldn't come. I have to get going. I step out the back, quiet as a mouse. As my hand pushes the screen wire door, the depths of winter hit almost as strongly as the stench from the tannery down near the Yarra. **1**

> **1** Creates a strong sense of time and place, consistent with the novel's setting; uses sensory imagery to draw the reader into Kip's world.

There's not a stir in the house, and since Connie passed I've been sleeping in the camp bed in the laundry. Demoted from the real bedroom on account of Francis holding the family together and being the one who will pull us further up the hill, along to Bridge Road.

It's barely as if we're halfway up the hill **2** when the biting wind carries the smell so far. Ma doesn't care so much for where we live when she barely leaves the street, only to go to St Ignatius on Sundays. **3**

> **2** Idea of social mobility subtly introduced, as in the novel.

> **3** Textual details woven into the narrative; Jean's reluctance to go out after Connie's death locates this piece within the novel's time frame.

I come back up the laneway to Rowena Parade. The great white house of the Hustings looms above us, even now, in the fog of August. There's rustling from out the back of their house. A new local scallywag attending to Charlie. Gone are the days when I was one of the proper workers, seeing to the Hustings' upkeep.

I hear the wooden door leading from our backyard close behind me. It's hardly worth it, everyone within calling distance is on the way to work. Anyone with half a brain will be headed home early, or going straight from work to see Richmond play South Melbourne. **4**

> **4** Language choices ('scallywag', 'half a brain') reflect Kip's colloquial language and sense of humour.

But I lock the door anyway, it's what Ma would expect. As I do, I see the twitch of red and white, out of the corner of my eye. I send my gaze up and there's a shadow of a woman, hanging back from the pulled curtains, head turned down.

No time to carry on like a fishwife. Ma would be chiding me to get a wriggle on. I sling the camera, Connie's camera, round my neck. I walk down Lennox Street to get on the tram at Swan. Men, older and rounder than last I noticed, and some women, follow me in the tide of workers.

I can't shake the feeling of an icy grip on my shoulder as I catch the tram into town.

The connie nods to me as I spring off the tram at Russell Street, while there's still room to breathe. I skirt the crowds, fingers of one hand gripped tightly around the base of the Pentax. The other hand folds into my pocket, fingers creasing against the couple of coins. The cold metal clings to my skin. **5** I can feel the embossed image of a ram's head against the back of my palm. Rowena Parade seems all at once far away, a speck, even from the *Argus* offices.

I walk up the flights of stairs to the *Argus* photographic department. Even as I push through the door into the small space, I can smell the dank warmth of the dark room.

Before I can walk much further into the office, Mr Ward's voice lands, warm but hollow against my ear.

"Kip, young man, I think you should come into my office." **6**

"Yes, sir."

Mr Ward looks pale, even against the cold grey filing cabinets, stocked with past issues of the paper and rolls of film.

"I know the case … with your sister is moving forward." He looks down and wrings his hands together, mottled fingers clutching at each other. **7** "I think you deserve to see this, before everyone in your side of Richmond does. It's the least I can do, son. You've been honourable to a fault as this has moved forward."

He slides a drafted copy of tomorrow's *Argus* towards me. The first page is blank. My hand leafs through the paper and I see the headline.

"You can have the next few days off, son."

My throat feels dry. "Thank you, it's time I got going, I think." **8**

Written explanation

Within this creative response, I wished to highlight the sense of rumour and the dynamic world that underpins Jordan's novel. **9** I used the image of Kip locking the door to the back behind him as another means of indicating a wish for secrecy, much like Mrs Husting drawing the curtains after receiving the telegram outlining Jack's death. **10**

I also wanted to highlight how Connie's inquest likely puts pressure on the situation of social mobility at Rowena Parade, and how Jean's actions are likely to have wide ramifications. I wanted to indicate this through Mr Ward's hesitations, as well as the resurgence of pride from Mrs Husting, twitching the curtains again. I have layered my narrative with a number of Jordan's preoccupations. These include the concepts of loss and legacy, secrets and their exposure, and the presence of the past. **11**

5 Continued use of sensory imagery makes the world believable; frequent references to cold ('icy grip', 'cold metal') suggest a challenging physical environment, reflecting the emotional and social challenges facing Kip and his family.

6 Dialogue reveals the nature of the relationship between Kip and Mr Ward – professional and distant, yet respectful. Speech tags (e.g. 'he said') are not used as it is clear who is speaking.

7 Mr Ward's emotions are not described explicitly but suggested through hesitation (indicated by the ellipsis in his speech) and hand movements – an effective example of 'showing' rather than 'telling'.

8 The serious implications of the inquest findings for the family are not stated – reflecting the taboo nature of abortion at this time, and reinforcing the shock Kip experiences.

9 Explains the central ideas and concerns being explored in the creative response.

10 Comments on an effective image, linking it to the writer's purpose and making a connection with the novel.

11 Identifies further ideas being explored and textual elements used to suggest them.

WRITING A COMPARATIVE RESPONSE

In this chapter

❭ Preparing for reading

❭ Locating similarities and differences in texts

❭ Presenting ideas through characters

❭ Planning your response

❭ Writing your response

❭ Sample response

When comparing two texts it is essential to know each text thoroughly and individually, and to understand how the texts explore similar ideas, issues and themes. You also need to understand the differences between the two texts, as well as the similarities between them.

There are many ways to compare the presentation of ideas in two texts. These include:

- a comparison of characters' experiences of and responses to an issue or situation

- a comparison of the impact of an issue on people in different places, times and communities

- a comparison of the different ways creators of texts use the conventions of forms (such as novels, short stories, plays, nonfiction texts and films) to address an issue or idea.

This chapter provides you with a range of strategies for reading, analysing and writing about two texts. The discussion and examples will draw on the ideas, issues and themes of the four text pairs summarised opposite.

Text pairs	Ideas, issues and themes
The 7 Stages of Grieving 1996 play by Wesley Enoch and Deborah Mailman *The Longest Memory* 1995 novel by Fred D'Aguiar	• Facing adversity • Prejudice and discrimination • Loss • Family loyalties • Colonialism's violence and its legacies • The powerful and the powerless
Year of Wonders 2001 novel by Geraldine Brooks *The Crucible* 1953 play by Arthur Miller	• Responses to crises • Role of the individual and the community • Social hierarchy and patriarchal authority • The sacred and the secular • Conflict • Authority of the Church, state and courts • The powerful and the powerless
The Queen 2006 film directed by Stephen Frears *Ransom* 2009 novel by David Malouf	• Leadership • Responsibility • Service to one's people/country • Facing and seeking to resolve conflict • Dealing with change • Sacrifice • Role of the individual and the community
The Hate Race 2016 memoir by Maxine Beneba Clarke *Charlie's Country* 2013 film directed by Rolf de Heer	• Racism • Prejudice and discrimination • Personal journeys • Outsiders • Encounters with institutions • The powerful and the powerless

If you are studying any of these pairs, you will be able to add ideas, issues and themes to the ones listed above. If you are studying a different pair, create your own list of ideas, issues and themes.

Preparing for reading

You should research and become familiar with the important historical, cultural, political and social contexts and ideas in your two texts. For example, if you are studying Geraldine Brooks' *Year of Wonders* you need some knowledge of the impact of the bubonic plague on the English population in the 1660s.

These contexts often lead directly to a text's central ideas and issues. Also, they are usually very relevant to your comparison of these ideas and issues as your texts will generally draw on contrasting contexts. Consider questions such as those on the following page before launching into the close analysis of your texts.

Text	Questions to consider
The 7 Stages of Grieving	What were the policies that caused First Nations peoples in Australia to be dispossessed of their land and cultures, and separated from their families? What is the reconciliation movement? What was the Walk for Reconciliation that took place in 2000?
The Longest Memory	How did slaves come to be in North America? What led to the end of slavery in the United States? What were the differences between the slave states and the free states in the US around 1800?
Year of Wonders	What is the bubonic plague and how is it spread? What was the Restoration? What is a Puritan?
The Crucible	Where is Salem and what is it most famous for? What is Puritanism? Who was Senator Joseph McCarthy and what was McCarthyism?
The Queen	When did Queen Elizabeth II become Queen of England and for how long had she been Queen when Tony Blair was elected Prime Minister? What is a constitutional monarchy? Why did Diana become known as 'the people's princess' and what events led up to her death?
Ransom	What and where is Troy? Who is Homer and what is *The Illiad*? What is Greek mythology and who were the major Greek gods?
The Hate Race	What was the slave trade and why were African people transported to the West Indies? What was the White Australia policy and when did it end? What laws exist in Australia to prohibit racial discrimination?
Charlie's Country	What was the 'intervention' in the Northern Territory in 2007? Why are there high rates of imprisonment for First Nations peoples? What are the living conditions for First Nations people in the Northern Territory?

Research contexts and ideas

1. For each of your texts, write three or four questions similar to those in the table above. If you are studying one or two of the texts in the table, create some different questions to explore other ideas.

Text 1:	
Text 2:	

2. Do some research to find answers to the questions you have created. In a computer document or a workbook, write a short paragraph for each answer.

3. What shared ideas in your two texts can you identify from your answers?

    _____

    _____

4. What differences between your texts can you identify from your answers?

    _____

    _____

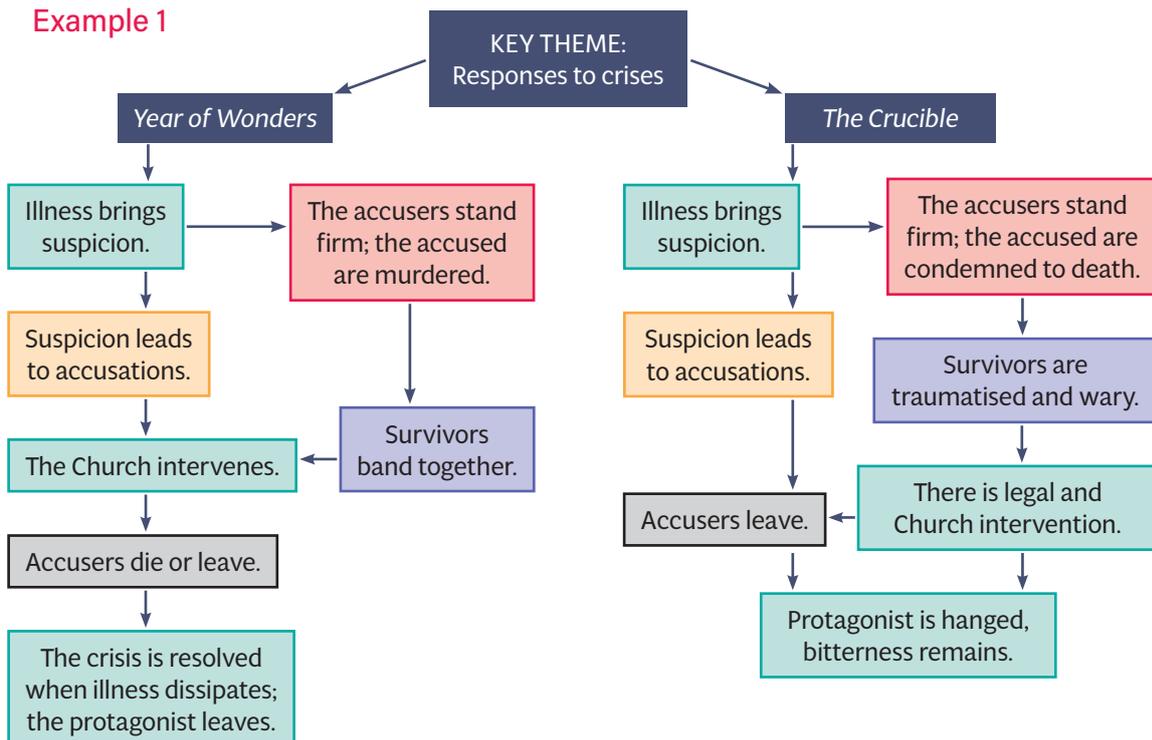# Locating similarities and differences in texts

Once you have a sense of the general ideas that connect the two texts, you need to find specific similarities and differences between them. Although the texts will explore broadly similar ideas, they will present different points of view on these ideas. They will also use textual elements (such as characters and plot) in contrasting ways, since the texts will likely have different forms.

The two strategies in this section enable you to locate similarities and differences between two texts, and to identify situations, events and characters used to explore a key theme.

Create a mind map

Mind-mapping is a useful way to begin exploring *how* similar ideas and issues are presented in two texts. Below is an exploration of a key theme in *Year of Wonders* and *The Crucible*.

Example 1

KEY THEME: Responses to crises

Year of Wonders

- Illness brings suspicion.
- The accusers stand firm; the accused are murdered.
- Suspicion leads to accusations.
- Survivors band together.
- The Church intervenes.
- Accusers die or leave.
- The crisis is resolved when illness dissipates; the protagonist leaves.

The Crucible

- Illness brings suspicion.
- The accusers stand firm; the accused are condemned to death.
- Suspicion leads to accusations.
- Survivors are traumatised and wary.
- Accusers leave.
- There is legal and Church intervention.
- Protagonist is hanged, bitterness remains.

Looking at the mind map on the previous page, what can you see that is similar in the two texts?

- Illness brings suspicion.
- Suspicion leads to accusations.
- The Church intervenes.

What is different in the two texts?

- The accused die from different causes.
- The survivors have contrasting responses to the crises.
- The protagonists have opposing fates: one dies, while the other leaves and creates a new life.
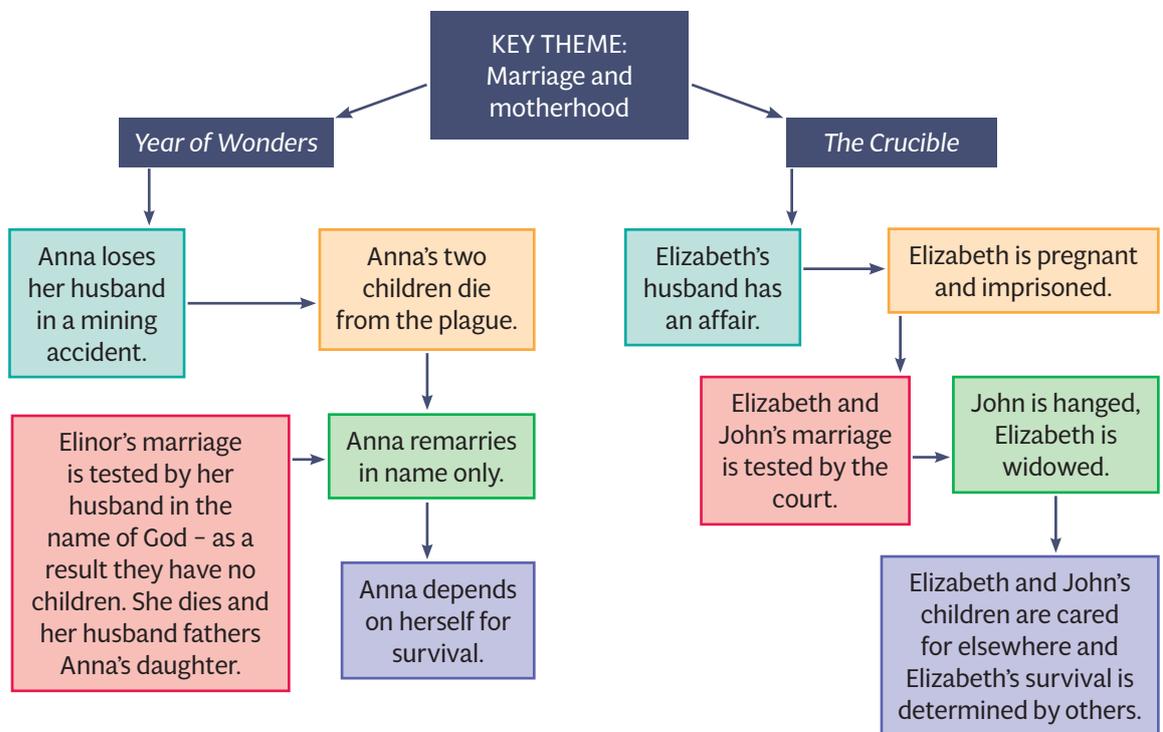
> TIP: Discussing the differences between texts – as well as their similarities – will give your essays more complexity and depth.

What do you think the novelist and playwright are saying about responses to crises?

- Crises happen in many places and times but responses to crises can be very different. Some individuals help others to survive, while some prioritise their own safety.

Example 2

The following mind map shows how marriage and motherhood are presented in *The Crucible* and *Year of Wonders*, and highlights how the authors offer different perspectives on marriage and motherhood through a main character.

KEY THEME: Marriage and motherhood

Year of Wonders

Anna loses her husband in a mining accident.

Anna's two children die from the plague.

Elinor's marriage is tested by her husband in the name of God – as a result they have no children. She dies and her husband fathers Anna's daughter.

Anna remarries in name only.

Anna depends on herself for survival.

The Crucible

Elizabeth's husband has an affair.

Elizabeth is pregnant and imprisoned.

Elizabeth and John's marriage is tested by the court.

John is hanged, Elizabeth is widowed.

Elizabeth and John's children are cared for elsewhere and Elizabeth's survival is determined by others.

Identify similarities and differences

1. In the mind map opposite, what can you see that is similar in the two texts?

   - _____
   - _____
   - _____

2. What is different in the two texts?

   - _____
   - _____
   - _____

3. What do you think the authors are saying about marriage and motherhood?

   _____

   _____

   _____

4. Create a mind map in your workbook or in a computer document for a key theme in the pair of texts you are studying.

Ask questions about a theme

Sometimes it can be difficult to locate the similarities between two texts. For instance, you might initially consider a film about the British Queen and Prime Minister set in 1997 to be far removed from a novel about the Trojan War set thousands of years in the past. Yet, when we look more closely at the experiences of the characters, the dilemmas they face and the values they stand for, *The Queen* and *Ransom* start to reveal similarities in their approaches to several ideas, issues and themes.

If we apply a series of questions to each text about a key theme, it can be easier to see more specific points of similarity and difference.

Key theme: tradition		
Questions	*The Queen*	*Ransom*
How is this theme explored in the text?	• The monarchy wants to repeat what has happened in the past. • Interactions between the Queen and the Prime Minister follow tradition. • Diana's death exposes how the traditions of the Royal Family have not evolved and no longer reflect the expectations of ordinary people.	• As king, Priam has little interaction with his citizens. • Achilles' treatment of Hector's body defies tradition. • Priam needs to defy tradition to change Achilles' behaviour, but he also wants to keep the tradition of burying the dead and honouring their memory.

Who exemplifies this theme in the text?	• Queen Elizabeth II • Prince Philip • the Queen Mother	• Priam (though he wishes to depart from tradition in one way) • Hecuba
How do the social, political, cultural or historical elements contribute to the theme?	• The Labour government elected in 1997 was interested in reform and modernisation. • Public affection for Princess Diana and grief over her death leads to questioning of the monarchy and tradition. • Mounting pressure from Blair as well as public sentiment forces the Queen to reflect on the role of tradition.	• Ancient societies of Greece and Troy were hierarchical and resistant to change; they had established codes of behaviour. • The wartime setting involves routines and limited freedoms, though Achilles challenges these by mistreating Hector's body.
Which key quotes demonstrate this theme?	• 'That's how I was brought up. That's all I've ever known.' • 'It's just no one seems to value tradition or constancy any more.' • 'You sit on the most powerful throne in Europe. Head of an unbroken line that goes back more than a thousand years.'	• 'My role was to hold myself apart in ceremonial stillness …' (p.53) • 'You have done this because you are still thinking in the old way. I told you, I *tried* to tell you, that my vision was of something new.' (p.92)
How does the author/director/playwright utilise the form or genre of the text to explore the theme?	• The film begins with the Queen in formal robes for an official portrait. • The Queen is shown mostly in formal rooms and clothes. • Her dialogue is formal and restrained, even with other family members. • Tony and Cherie Blair's domestic settings are more informal, and their conversations are more relaxed and open, reflecting their more modern outlook. • Archival footage and images of newspaper headlines highlight the role of the media in challenging tradition.	• Malouf's use of third-person limited narration gives the reader insight into Priam's dilemma – commitment to tradition on the one hand, and desire to try something new on the other. • The division of the narrative into five sections, with shifting narrative points of view, enables different perspectives to be presented. • The crossing of the Scamander river symbolises a departure from tradition into a new way of communicating and resolving conflict (if only temporarily).

Ask and answer questions about a theme

1. Use this template to explore a key theme in your own texts.

Key theme:		
Questions	**Text 1:** _____	**Text 2:** _____
How is this theme explored in the text?		
Who exemplifies this theme in the text?		
How do the social, political, cultural or historical elements contribute to the theme?		
Which key quotes demonstrate this theme?		
How does the author/ director/playwright use the form or genre of the text to explore the theme?		

2. In your workbook, expand on the notes you made in Question 1 and write one sentence about each of your texts for each row of the table above. These sentences and ideas can be used as the basis of body paragraphs in your comparative essays. Use the examples and cloze sentences below as a guide.

The theme of tradition is explored in *The Queen* through the monarchy's wish to follow the conventions and practices of the past.

The Queen Mother exemplifies tradition in *The Queen* through her support for her daughter and her insistence on doing things in the established ways.

The theme of _____ is explored in _____

(title of your text) through _____

_____

_____ (use notes from the top row of your table) ➡

> The character of _____ (character name) exemplifies
> _____ (theme) in _____
> (text title) through _____
> _____
> _____ (use notes from the second row of your table)

Presenting ideas through characters

Writers create characters who can exhibit a range of responses to ideas, issues and themes. While you are reading the texts, underline or highlight quotes and make notes about individual characters.

For each character, select five key moments from the narrative that:

- define the character
- represent a change in the character.

Here is an example for the character of Anna Frith in *Year of Wonders*.

Key moments that define the character	Key moments that represent change in the character
Takes in a boarder, George Viccars, after the death of her husband, Sam	Steals the poppies from Elinor to sleep
Loses her two sons to the plague	Helps Merry Wickford in the mine, despite her fear, and confronts the miners' court
Delivers the baby lamb and Mary Daniels' baby son	Refuses to support her father, Joss Bont
Learns to read with Elinor Mompellion	Has a brief relationship with Mompellion and loses her faith
Learns about plants and medicines from the Gowdies and Elinor	Defies the Bradfords, leaves the town of Eyam in England and makes a new life in Oran, North Africa

The next step is to connect these character observations with a theme being explored by the text.

Examples

- Anna's loss of her sons makes her aware of the fragility of life and eager to do what she can to help when others are in danger.
- When Anna steals the poppies, she reveals that she is having trouble dealing with trauma.
- Anna's refusal to support her brutal father, Joss Bont, demonstrates her rejection of his selfish behaviour and her compassion for victims of the plague.

Explore key moments

1. Complete the table for a main character in one of your texts, using the example opposite as a guide.
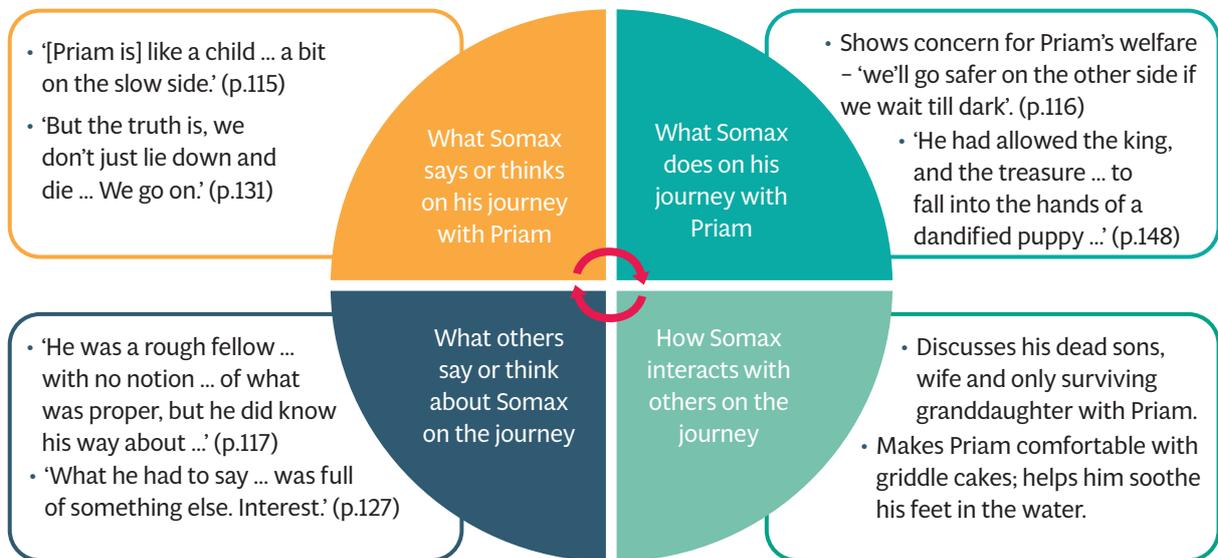
Character name:	
Text title:	
Key moments that define the character	Key moments that represent change in the character

2. Choose two key moments that define the character and write a sentence for each, explaining what these moments reveal about the character.
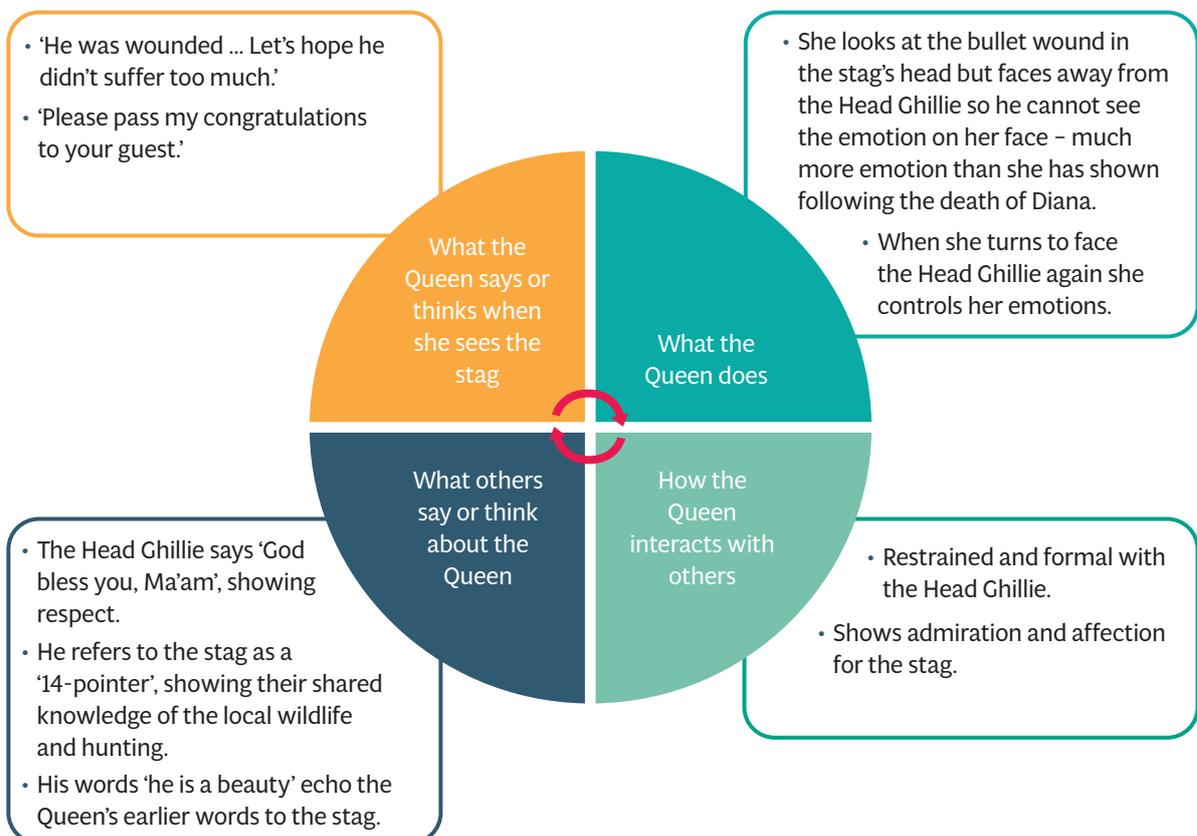
_____

_____

_____

3. Choose two key moments that represent change in the character and write a sentence for each, explaining what these moments reveal about the character.

_____

_____

_____

4. Out of the sentences you wrote for Questions 2 and 3, which ones make a connection between the character and a theme in the text, and how?

_____

_____

_____

_____

The diagram below shows a visual way of organising evidence about a key moment for a character. It is based on the character Somax from *Ransom*, focusing on his important journey with King Priam across the Scamander river into enemy territory.

- '[Priam is] like a child ... a bit on the slow side.' (p.115)
- 'But the truth is, we don't just lie down and die ... We go on.' (p.131)

What Somax says or thinks on his journey with Priam

What Somax does on his journey with Priam

- Shows concern for Priam's welfare – 'we'll go safer on the other side if we wait till dark'. (p.116)
- 'He had allowed the king, and the treasure ... to fall into the hands of a dandified puppy ...' (p.148)

- 'He was a rough fellow ... with no notion ... of what was proper, but he did know his way about ...' (p.117)
- 'What he had to say ... was full of something else. Interest.' (p.127)

What others say or think about Somax on the journey

How Somax interacts with others on the journey

- Discusses his dead sons, wife and only surviving granddaughter with Priam.
- Makes Priam comfortable with griddle cakes; helps him soothe his feet in the water.

For comparison purposes, the diagram below is for a key moment in *The Queen*: the Queen visits a neighbouring estate to see a stag that has just been shot. She is shown the stag's body by the Head Ghillie, an attendant who assists with hunting on the estate. Unlike the scene in *Ransom*, which is full of Somax's chatter and activity, the scene with the stag has little dialogue; much is conveyed by facial expression and body language.

- 'He was wounded ... Let's hope he didn't suffer too much.'
- 'Please pass my congratulations to your guest.'

What the Queen says or thinks when she sees the stag

What the Queen does

- She looks at the bullet wound in the stag's head but faces away from the Head Ghillie so he cannot see the emotion on her face – much more emotion than she has shown following the death of Diana.
- When she turns to face the Head Ghillie again she controls her emotions.

- The Head Ghillie says 'God bless you, Ma'am', showing respect.
- He refers to the stag as a '14-pointer', showing their shared knowledge of the local wildlife and hunting.
- His words 'he is a beauty' echo the Queen's earlier words to the stag.

What others say or think about the Queen

How the Queen interacts with others

- Restrained and formal with the Head Ghillie.
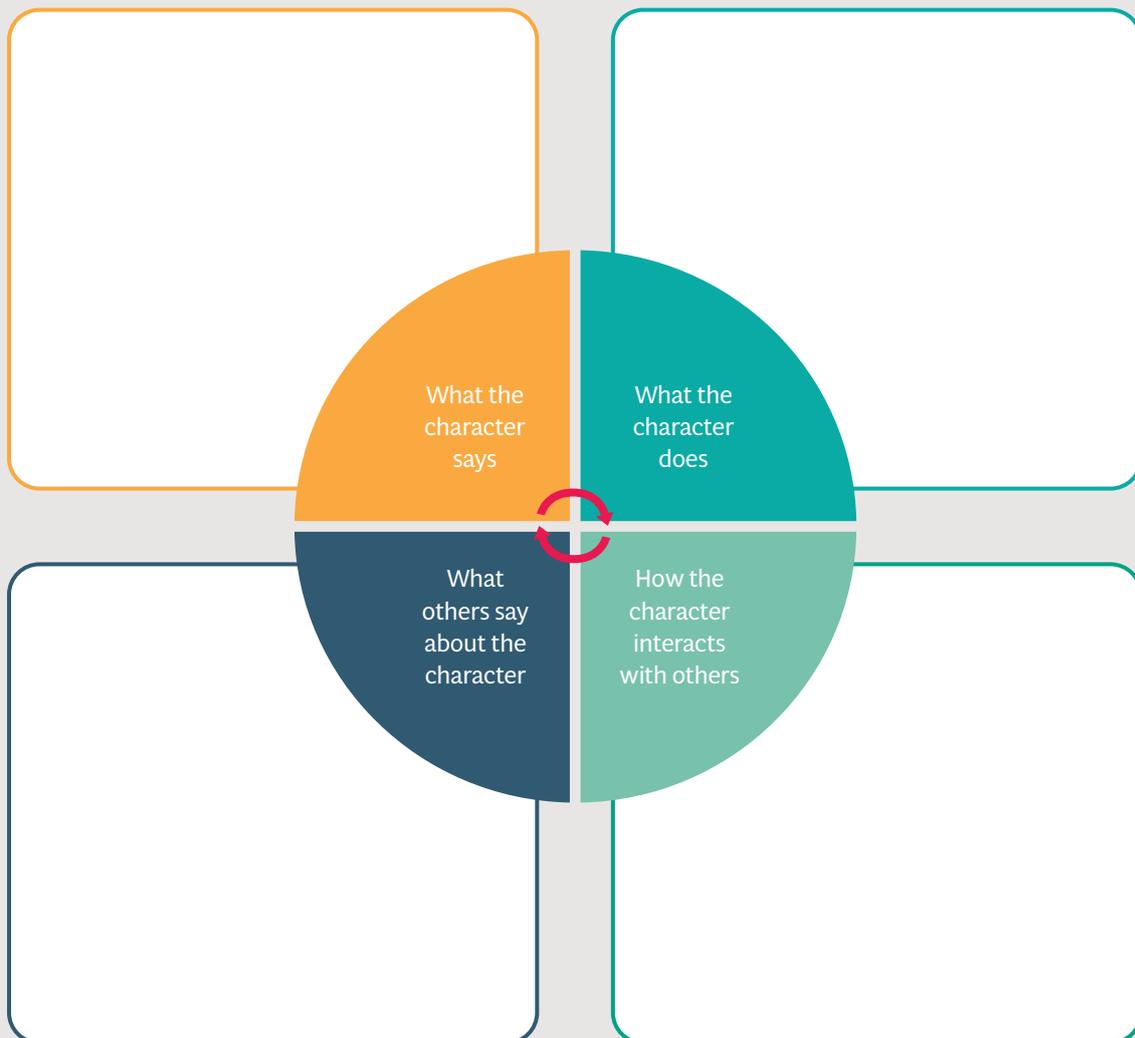- Shows admiration and affection for the stag.

These two scenes contrast in many ways – the scene from *Ransom* is full of movement and dialogue, while that from *The Queen* is still and quiet. Yet they each show a leader confronted with ordinary emotions, taken out of their official role for a short time.
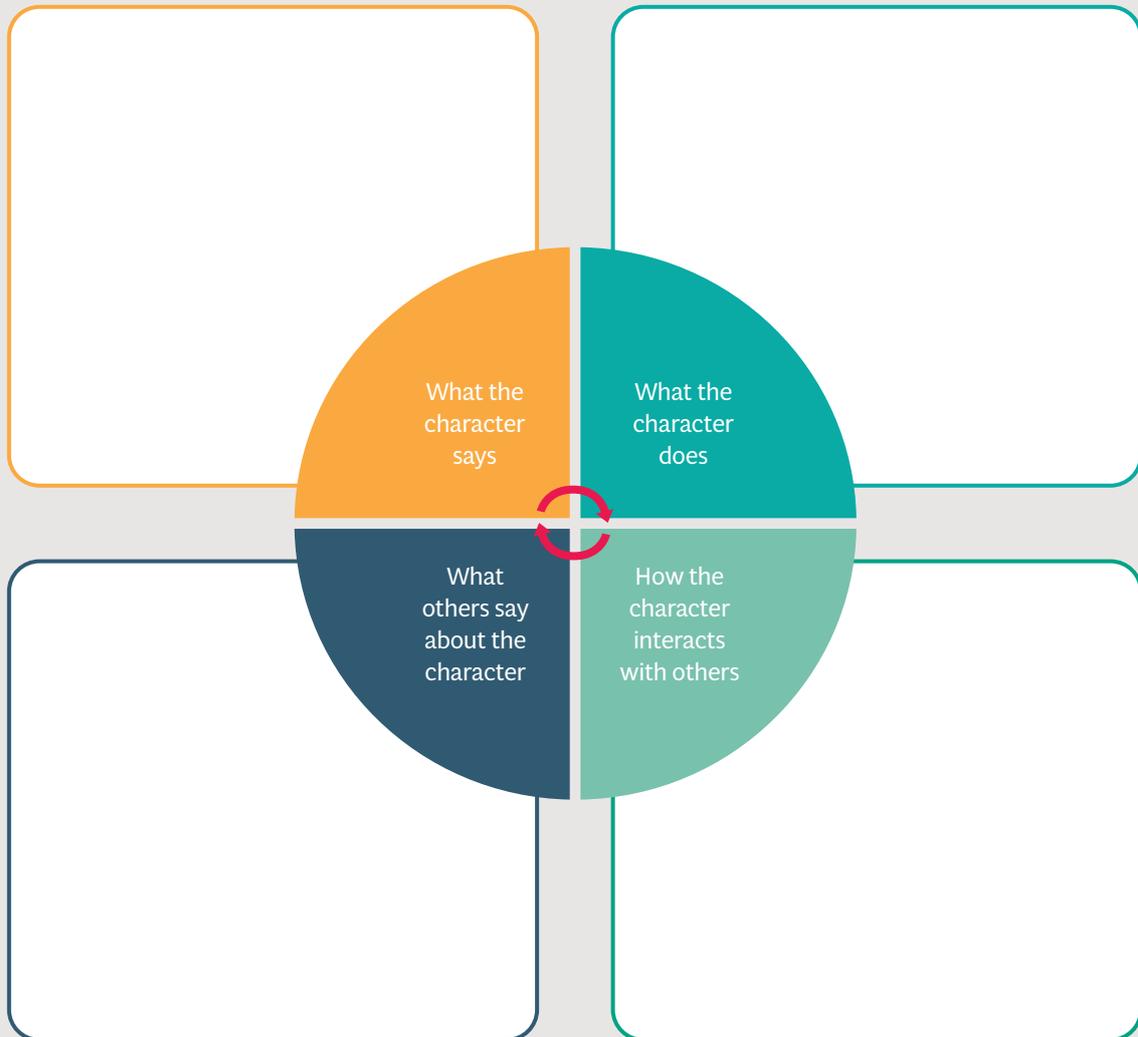
Collect evidence about characters

1. Select one of the key moments you identified in the previous activity. Complete the diagram below to collect evidence and quotations that show how this moment highlights an idea, issue or theme.

What the character says

What the character does

What others say about the character

How the character interacts with others

2. Identify a key moment for a character in the other text in your text pair. Describe this key moment here.

_____

_____

_____

3. Complete the diagram below to collect evidence and quotations for this key moment in your second text.

What the character says

What the character does

What others say about the character

How the character interacts with others

4. Write a short paragraph discussing one similarity and one difference between the two key moments you have identified.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Planning your response

This section shows you a three-step process for responding to an essay topic on a pair of texts. It begins with your initial thinking about the topic and ends with you having a clear structure and plan for your essay.

- **Step 1:** Write a brief outline explaining how you will respond to the topic and the main ideas and examples you will use.

- **Step 2:** Gather and organise evidence that supports your overall response.

- **Step 3:** Structure your response by deciding which evidence and which texts you will discuss in each paragraph.

Write a brief outline

A brief outline explains, in two or three sentences, *how* you will respond to a topic. It includes a selection of three or four significant moments or events that illustrate your response or overall argument.

Here is an example of how you could create an outline, using the text pair *The Hate Race* and *Charlie's Country*.

Topic:

Compare how *The Hate Race* and *Charlie's Country* show the harmful effects of racial prejudice.

The key terms here are 'harmful', 'effects' and 'racial prejudice'.

Consider some examples of the impact of racial prejudice on characters in both texts.

Effects of racial prejudice in *The Hate Race*

- As a child, Maxine feels excluded at school and by society in general.
- She is insulted and bullied by her school peers, causing hurt and unhappiness.
- She bullies Baghita in order to experience a feeling of power – although regrets doing so.
- She asserts her identity through debating and acting.

Effects of racial prejudice in *Charlie's Country*

- The police take Charlie's gun and spear, making it difficult for him to hunt for food.
- Charlie's health deteriorates due to poor medical care and living conditions; Albert is dying from kidney disease.
- Charlie is jailed for relatively minor crimes.
- Eventually he reasserts his Indigenous identity through dance.

When we look at the examples on the previous page, we need to find similarities and differences between the experiences of the individuals in the two texts. Similarities could include the following.

- Both Maxine and Charlie identify strongly as black and wish to be treated more fairly and equally.
- Both Maxine and Charlie feel excluded from mainstream society.
- Ultimately they find ways to be respected and to express themselves through forms of storytelling – debating and acting for Maxine; traditional dance for Charlie.

There are also some differences:

- Maxine grows up in middle-class suburban Sydney, while Charlie is an older man who lives in a remote community in the Northern Territory.
- Prejudice mainly affects Maxine psychologically and emotionally, whereas the impact on Charlie is more financial and material.

If we use these similarities and differences as the basis for the main ideas, we can write a brief outline for the response.

Sample outline

Both *The Hate Race* and *Charlie's Country* show the damaging effects of racial prejudice on individuals. Maxine and Charlie feel excluded from mainstream society, with effects ranging from psychological hurt to poor health and living standards. Both wish for a more just and caring society, and find ways to express themselves and their identities through forms of storytelling.

The brief outline comprises only three sentences, which show the reader *how* the essay will address the topic. It only gives the main ideas; the next step is to add specific textual examples and evidence.

Write an outline

Using the guidelines above and the sample outline as a model, write a brief outline for your response to a topic on the pair of texts you are studying.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Gather and organise evidence

When you gather evidence for an essay you need to organise it so that similar sorts of examples are grouped together. The table below shows how you can organise evidence in table form by creating a column for each text, and headings to show similar kinds of evidence.

Topic:

Compare the ways in which the characters in *The 7 Stages of Grieving* and *The Longest Memory* find strength in the face of adversity.

The 7 Stages of Grieving	*The Longest Memory*
Strength from outlook and attitudes	
Laughter helps to make difficult things more bearable.	Whitechapel finds satisfaction and optimism in being a good slave – for others, being a slave only leads to unhappiness.
Strength from relationships	
The Woman's family members are sources of meaning and love: 'I've got my family'. Collective action, such as the march in Musgrave Park, enables Indigenous voices to be heard.	Lydia and Chapel's love leads them to believe in a future in which they can be together. Even after Chapel's death, Lydia writes to the newspaper in the hope of changing attitudes and beliefs.
Strength from storytelling	
Storytelling enables sharing and understanding: 'These are my people's stories. They need to be told.'	Lydia and Chapel's relationship begins with, and is strengthened by, their reading to each other.
Strength from external factors	
The Walk for Reconciliation symbolises a more just and harmonious future.	Lydia and Chapel gain courage from the idea of the North, where there is more racial equality and a future relationship between them might be possible.

Gather evidence

Create a table of evidence for a response to a topic on your text pair. Look carefully at the key terms in the topic, and decide on three or four types of evidence that you will need to consider.

If your topic contains a statement, think about evidence that might be used to disagree with the statement as well as evidence that supports it.

If the topic begins 'Compare how …' or 'Compare the ways in which …', think about the *different* ways as well as *similar* ways the texts show an idea.

Structure your response

There are various possible structures for a comparative essay. Here are two structures you can use.

Structure A – the alternating approach

In this structure you switch between the texts, changing with each new paragraph. You begin by discussing an idea in relation to one text, then in the next paragraph you consider how the second text is similar or different in its presentation of this idea. Include sentences in each paragraph that directly compare and juxtapose the two texts. For more detail on how to write introductions, body paragraphs and conclusions, see pages 90–4.

> TIP: There is no right or wrong structure for a comparative essay. Ensure there is a balance between the two texts, and frequent direct comparison of the two texts.

Section	What to include
Introduction	• Show the reader you understand the topic by putting it into your own words: one or two sentences. • Introduce the names of the texts' creators, text titles and genres: one sentence. • Tell the reader how you will respond to the topic by offering a brief outline of your key points: one or two sentences.
Body paragraph 1	Discuss text 1 in relation to the first idea or key point. Include brief references to text 2.
Body paragraph 2	Discuss text 2 in relation to the same idea, explaining similarities and differences between the texts.
Body paragraph 3	Discuss text 1 in relation to the second idea or key point. Include brief references to text 2.
Body paragraph 4	Discuss text 2 in relation to the second idea or key point, explaining similarities and differences.
Conclusion	Conclude with statements about both texts and provide a clear response to the topic.

Structure B – the integrated approach

In this structure, you devote roughly equal space to each text in each paragraph. You directly compare and juxtapose the two texts throughout the discussion.

Section	What to include
Introduction	Address the topic (as in Structure A).
Body paragraph/s on first idea (one or two paragraphs)	Discuss the first idea or key point in relation to both texts, explaining similarities and differences.
Body paragraph/s on second idea (one or two paragraphs)	Discuss the second idea or key point in relation to both texts, explaining similarities and differences.
Body paragraph/s on third idea (one or two paragraphs)	Discuss the third idea or key point in relation to both texts, explaining similarities and differences.
Conclusion	Conclude with statements about both texts and provide a clear response to the topic.

Sample plan

The following sample plan uses structure A (alternating) opposite. It responds to the topic for *The 7 Stages of Grieving* and *The Longest Memory* on page 87, and draws ideas and evidence from the table on the same page. The plan shows the key ideas and textual evidence you could include in each paragraph or section.

> Introduction: statement about kinds of strength; playwright's and novelist's names; text titles and forms; brief outline of characters and evidence to be discussed.

↓

> In *The 7 Stages of Grieving* the Woman finds strength through laughter and stories. Her sense of humour enables her to cope with the pain caused by prejudice, while stories give her a sense of identity and purpose that help balance loss and grief.

↓

> In *The Longest Memory* characters also draw strength from storytelling. The love between Lydia and Chapel begins with, and is strengthened by, their reading to each other. Unlike the Woman in *7 Stages*, Lydia and Chapel must keep their storytelling a secret.

↓

> Family relationships are a source of strength in *7 Stages*, bringing happiness through shared experiences and memories, as well as a sense of identity. However, due to the loss of so many family members, and her father and brother facing uncertain futures, family relationships are also sources of grief and loss for the Woman.

↓

> In *The Longest Memory* the relationship between Lydia and Chapel gives both of them the strength to hope and plan for the future. Even after Chapel's death, Lydia writes to the newspaper to argue against prejudice and discrimination. In *7 Stages*, a similar strength comes from collective public action.

↓

> Conclusion: statements about sources of strength; summary of individual examples discussed; conclusions about similarities and differences.

See pages 95–7 for a complete sample response based on this plan.

Create your own plan

- For a topic you are writing an essay on, create a plan similar to the one on the previous page. Use three to five body paragraphs. Write down one main idea and two or three pieces of evidence for each body paragraph. Also write a summary of points to include in the introduction and conclusion.

- Use the activity on page 86 to develop a brief outline of your response, and the activity on page 87 to gather and organise evidence in table form.

Writing your response

Having a clear, well-structured plan is an essential first step to writing an essay. The following sections explain how to develop your plan into a complete essay with a strong introduction, effective body paragraphs and a convincing conclusion.

Writing an introduction

The function of an introductory paragraph is to:

- show the reader you understand the topic by putting it into your own words (one or two sentences)

- introduce the names of the texts' creators, text titles and forms/genres (one sentence)

- tell the reader how you will address the topic by offering a brief outline of your key points (one or two sentences).

> TIP: Take care with your introduction – it sets up the whole essay by stating your overall argument and the main evidence you will use.

Strategies for writing an introduction

- Put the topic into your own words – this provides the opportunity to introduce the names of the texts' creators and the text titles.

- Select synonyms that show your understanding. Use a dictionary or thesaurus to create a list of synonyms for key words. See the table opposite for ideas.

- Keep your brief outline of key points short and succinct; avoid long quotations and detailed examples. The key word here is 'brief'.

Vocabulary for an introduction

Create and build your own synonym word bank. The following words have been chosen from English examinations over a number of years. Make sure you understand each one and write a synonym for each to help with your responses. If you create this table in a computer document you can add to it as you write practice essays during the year.

Word	Synonym	Word	Synonym	Word	Synonym
affirm		eventual		power	
approval		examines		prevents	
authorities		expectation		promotes	
catalyst		experience		reflects	
challenge		explores		relationships	
concern		fate		response	
confront		human spirit		responsible	
constructs		humanity		society	
contrasts		illustrates		story	
creates		impact		success	
damaged		indicates		survival	
demonstrates		insights		sympathise	
destructive		journey		transformation	
determine		narrative		triumph	
emerges		nature		understanding	
endurance		opportunity		validates	

Practise using these synonyms by rewriting essay topics. Consider the example below.

Topic:

'Outsiders often have valuable viewpoints on the societies in which they live.'
Compare how *The Hate Race* and *Charlie's Country* present points of view on Australian society.

Reworded topic:

How do *The Hate Race* and *Charlie's Country* make helpful observations of Australian society, using Maxine's and Charlie's outsider perspectives?

OR

Discuss similarities and differences between the views given of mainstream Australia by individuals who are excluded and marginalised.

Put topics into your own words

1. Topic: 'Compare the ways in which *The Crucible* and *Year of Wonders* show the damaging effects of fear.'

   Reworded topic: _____

   _____

2. Topic: 'Compare how *The 7 Stages of Grieving* and *The Longest Memory* demonstrate the importance of having something to hope for.'

   Reworded topic: _____

   _____

3. Now find or create a topic on your own pair of texts. Swap topics with a partner and rewrite each other's topics using synonyms.

   Topic: _____

   _____

   Reworded topic: _____

   _____

Writing body paragraphs

The function of a body paragraph is to:

- discuss one idea or topic through a unified group of sentences
- provide evidence and quotes to support the discussion
- explain how the evidence and reasoning in the paragraph support the main contention and overall argument about the texts.

> TIP: Aim to develop and explore the idea in the topic sentence, using evidence from different parts of the text or texts.

Strategies for writing body paragraphs

- Include a topic sentence that contains an idea, not a sentence that just asserts a fact.
- The quotes and other evidence must illustrate what you are trying to prove.
- The concluding sentence in the paragraph should link back to the essay topic. Avoid introducing new ideas to be discussed in the following paragraph: if you bring in an idea to be considered in the next paragraph you will find it hard to conclude the current paragraph effectively and you run the risk of writing a topic sentence for your next paragraph.

> TIP: End each body paragraph with a sentence (or two) that makes a broader statement, drawing together the evidence and examples discussed.

Constructing body paragraphs

Tables that ask and answer questions about a theme are excellent sources of evidence and ideas for body paragraphs. The table opposite contains examples based on the theme of tradition in *The Queen* and *Ransom* (selected from the table on pages 77–8), with a focus on the characters of Queen Elizabeth II and King Priam. The highlighted sections indicate the different types of evidence and ideas that you can incorporate into sentences within a body paragraph.

Questions	*The Queen*	*Ransom*	How evidence and examples could be used
How is the theme explored in the text?	The monarchy wants to repeat whatever has happened in the past, and does not regard Diana as a member of the Royal Family.	Priam wants Hector's body to receive a traditional burial; to retrieve Hector he must break with his traditional ceremonial role.	Topic sentences; elaboration and explanation.
Who exemplifies this theme in the text?	Queen Elizabeth II	Priam	Focus on these characters.
How do the social, political, cultural or historical elements contribute to the theme?	Public affection for Princess Diana and grief over her death lead to questioning of the monarchy and tradition.	The wartime setting involves established rules and rituals, though Achilles challenges wartime conventions by mistreating Hector's body.	External forces contributing to the theme – elaboration and explanation.
Which key quotes demonstrate this theme?	'It's just no one seems to value tradition or constancy any more.'	'I told you, I *tried* to tell you, that my vision was of something new.' (p.92)	Quotes that could be used.
How does the author/director/playwright use the form or genre of the text to explore the theme?	The film begins with the Queen in formal robes for an official portrait. Throughout the film she is shown mostly in formal rooms and clothes. Her dialogue is restrained, and her facial expressions rarely show emotion, reflecting her ceremonial role.	Malouf's use of third-person limited narration gives the reader insight into Priam's dilemma – commitment to tradition on the one hand, and desire to try something new on the other. The crossing of the Scamander river symbolises a departure from tradition and the entry into the new.	Examples and evidence to be discussed.

The sample body paragraph on the next page discusses the theme of tradition in *The Queen* and *Ransom*, drawing on the evidence and ideas in the table; the highlighting shows the different kinds of evidence being used. Note the use of comparative language such as 'both', 'in contrast' and 'just as' to draw connections between the texts.

Both the Queen and Priam seek to uphold tradition, but do so in contrasting ways. The deaths of Diana in *The Queen* and of Hector in *Ransom* mean that the customs and conventions around funerals are foregrounded. The Queen sees her former daughter-in-law's funeral as primarily a matter for the Spencer family and, since Diana is no longer a member of the Royal Family, she does not see the need to become involved. However, the public's grief over Diana's death, a result of her enormous popularity, turns into anger at the monarchy. The Queen, so often restrained and formal in her interactions with others, regrets that 'no one seems to value tradition or constancy any more'. In contrast, King Priam responds to the death of his son Hector, and Achilles' relentless assaults on Hector's body, by breaking with his traditional ceremonial function. Achilles has defied the ordinary conventions of wartime burials, so Priam insists that his family and advisers must stop 'thinking in the old way' and try 'something new'. As Malouf's use of third-person limited narration makes clear, Priam's challenge is an internal conflict as much as an external one, just as the Queen's facial expressions usually hide her deeper feelings, as both seek to balance their ceremonial duties with more fundamentally human responses. Both leaders struggle with the weight of tradition, but Priam is much more willing to embrace change in order to suit the needs of unprecedented times.

Create a body paragraph

Refer to the table you created in the activity on page 79. Using the same theme and the notes in your table, write a body paragraph on how this theme is explored in your two texts. Remember to use comparative language to move from one text to the other and to identify points of similarity and difference.

Writing a conclusion

The function of a conclusion is to:

- summarise and conclude the discussion of the texts' ideas
- offer a definitive response to the essay topic in one or two sentences
- create a sense of closure or completion.

Strategies for writing a conclusion

- Vary your language from the introduction and body paragraphs; don't repeat your topic sentences or the main contention exactly as it was stated in the introduction.
- Sum up your reasons and reinforce your interpretation of the texts, without introducing new information or ideas.
- Discuss the texts together and show your understanding of their wider or big-picture ideas.

Sample response

This sample comparative response uses an alternating structure and follows the sample plan on page 89. Although each body paragraph focuses on one text, there are regular statements identifying points of connection between the two texts.

Read the annotations carefully to see how the sample response is structured and addresses the task requirements.

TIP: As you read the sample response, look for effective words and phrases you can use in your own writing – in particular, terms that enable the writer to identify connections between the two texts.

Topic:

Compare the ways in which the characters in *The 7 Stages of Grieving* and *The Longest Memory* find strength in the face of adversity.

Both *The 7 Stages of Grieving* and *The Longest Memory* depict moments of cruelty and of agonising loss. **1** Set in a plantation in Virginia in the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries, Fred D'Aguiar's novel *The Longest Memory* portrays black slaves and their white masters in a way that exposes the blind prejudice and frequent cruelty of white men. Prejudice and cruelty are also central to the stories of Indigenous lives and experiences told by the Woman in the single-actor play *The 7 Stages of Grieving* by Wesley Enoch and Deborah Mailman. **2** The characters in both texts experience poverty, discrimination, physical violence and the loss of family members, yet nearly all are able to survive. They find many sources of strength, ranging from the ability to laugh and tell stories to relationships that provide love, meaning and hope. **3**

The Woman in *The 7 Stages of Grieving* suffers the loss of family members as well as constant uncertainty about the wellbeing of her father and brother, yet she never loses her ability to laugh or to tell a story in an engaging and purposeful way. **4** In a brief 're-enactment' of the arrival of the First Fleet in 1788 she declares 'you can't park here, eh! You're taking up the whole bloody harbour!' **5** The seriousness of the impact of the colonisers' arrival is still evident, and the notion that they can simply arrive and inhabit the land is ridiculed and belittled, but the message is conveyed in a humorous way. She also describes a series of everyday experiences of discrimination, such as police attending when she attempts to break into her car with a coathanger (having locked her keys in the car), '*in the style of stand up comedy*'. **6** Telling stories about herself and her people becomes increasingly central to her sense of identity and belonging, as well as her ability to cope with loss. Near the end of the play she states, 'These are my stories. These

➡

1 Begins with a general statement about the texts that addresses the topic, using 'cruelty' and 'loss' to signal types of adversity faced by the characters.

2 Names the texts and authors, and identifies the form of each text.

3 Introduction concludes with two sentences that together signal the types of evidence to be discussed, as well as the overall argument.

4 Topic sentence indicates the focus of this paragraph will be *The 7 Stages of Grieving*, and the sources of strength considered will be laughter and storytelling.

5 Provides textual evidence, followed by explanation.

6 This example combines humour and storytelling, enabling a smooth transition to the discussion of story.

are my people's stories. They need to be told.' These lines are accompanied by the Woman placing her suitcase full of photos on the floor of the stage '*at the feet of the audience*'. **7** The audience experiences the performance as a form of sharing as well as of resistance to white attempts to silence and marginalise First Nations people. Despite the grief caused by so many losses, the Woman's ability to find humour in life and to tell stories about her people are significant sources of strength.

In *The Longest Memory* characters also derive strength from storytelling. **8** Chapel is drawn to Lydia when he hears her read, then later their roles are reversed and he reads to her. The bond between them continues to grow when they are forced to meet in secret, and is strengthened by Lydia's memorising and reciting of texts by Shakespeare, Chaucer, Milton and Donne, while Chapel 'compose[s] something in [his] head'. For Chapel, the strength of his love for Lydia is such that 'no one … not the threat of the overseer's whip, not his mother can stop him doing what is necessary' for him to be with Lydia. For her part, Lydia is determined to reject suitors who hold racist views and lack Chapel's 'wit, intelligence, charm and sensitive nature'. **9** Unlike the Woman in *The 7 Stages of Grieving*, whose stories are essential ways for her to connect with many others, Lydia and Chapel's love is forbidden and must be kept a secret. **10** Despite the danger to them if they are discovered, they draw on the strength of their feelings and begin to 'talk about our life in the North', imagining their future through stories.

Relationships of all kinds draw characters together and provide sources of strength to counter unhappiness and isolation. **11** In *The 7 Stages of Grieving*, family relationships bring happiness and meaning through shared experiences and memories; they also provide a sense of identity. For the Woman, stories are connected to family, such as the stories her grandmother would tell 'of the days when there wasn't enough to feed all the kids … we all listened'. **12** The photographs in the suitcase, too, are of family: those who are recently deceased and are 'passing the time till they can be talked of again'. The photographs and the memories survive, and when the Woman opens the suitcase and tips out the photos '*there is a feeling of catharsis and release*', emotions that reflect the importance of family and help to balance her powerful grief.

There are strong familial ties in *The Longest Memory* too, such as those between Whitechapel and Cook following their marriage, and between Whitechapel and Chapel. **13** A different kind of relationship is the intimate one that develops between Lydia and Chapel; it gives them the strength to hope and plan

7 Here, textual evidence includes stage directions and the explanation considers the impact of a performance element on the audience's understanding, demonstrating an awareness of the text's genre.

8 Topic sentence transitions smoothly to the second text by continuing the focus on storytelling and using 'also' to make a comparison between the texts.

9 This evidence demonstrates the different kinds of adversity faced by two characters, as well as the strength they draw from storytelling. This discussion also introduces the idea of the bond between these two characters as a source of strength, which is developed later in the response.

10 Connects the two texts through a point of difference.

11 Topic sentence makes a broad point relevant to both texts, shifting the focus to relationships. As the relationship between Lydia and Chapel is central to the previous paragraph the ideas flow logically and fluently, even though this paragraph returns to *The 7 Stages of Grieving*.

12 Although the topic words 'strength' and 'adversity' are not used in this discussion, references to a lack of food and deceased family members relate to adversity, while the references to happiness, meaning and identity relate to strength.

13 Consistent with the alternating structure, the discussion returns to *The Longest Memory*. The continued focus on family maintains fluency and coherence.

for a life together, knowing their families would do everything possible to prevent such a future. Even after Chapel's death, Lydia writes to the newspaper to argue against prejudice and discrimination, putting her grief aside in an attempt to make others at least question their racist assumptions and prejudices. Lydia's actions are a kind of resistance – a challenge to the status quo. **14** In *The 7 Stages of Grieving*, a similar strength to challenge prejudice and discrimination is expressed in collective public action, in contrast to Lydia's individual action. The Woman describes a protest march in Brisbane's Musgrave Park, a peaceful protest held in 1993 in response to the death in custody of a young Aboriginal man. **15** Although initially the Woman declares 'We're not fighting, we're grieving', she ends this scene with 'Don't tell me we're not fighting!' Here, she signals that, like Lydia, she has the strength to stand up to oppressors and racist authority figures, although unlike Lydia she gains it from solidarity and the united action of many. This strength is ultimately rewarded in the play by the even larger coming together of people in the Walk for Reconciliation across bridges in 2000. Grief has been sidelined, at least temporarily, as people unite to express confidence in a better future: 'I guess we can't go back now', the Woman concludes.

These two texts depict traumatic occasions of grief and suffering, yet the characters find strength to endure and to resist oppression. Their storytelling, laughter and love give their lives meaning and purpose despite the obstacles and dangers in their path. **16** There is no ultimate victory against oppression and prejudice, but in the strength shown by the Woman and by Lydia and Chapel there are reasons to believe in progress and in a better future for all people. **17**

14 The idea of resistance is introduced; the discussion becomes more integrated here as the texts are compared and contrasted through the characters of Lydia and the Woman, who find the strength to resist in different kinds of relationships.

15 Explains historical context relevant to the play's action.

16 The conclusion sums up the discussion, referring to forms of adversity as well as sources of strength, without exactly repeating earlier phrases.

17 Extends the discussion to draw a conclusion about the wider messages of the two texts.

ANALYSING AND PRESENTING ARGUMENT

Area of Study 2 overview

In Area of Study 2 of VCE English you will analyse how argument and persuasive language are used by writers and speakers to persuade an audience to agree with their point of view. You will also create your own persuasive texts.

In this second section of *Key Skills for Senior English 2nd edition*, Chapters 6, 7, 8 and 9 cover the key elements of persuasive texts. They explain how arguments can be constructed and how language can be used to present and bolster an argument. The activities will help you to improve your analytical skills as well as your ability to write precisely and insightfully about the persuasive effects of argument and language.

Chapters 10 and 11 provide detailed guidelines for two extended writing tasks: an analysis of argument and language in two media texts on an issue, and the presentation of a point of view. Both chapters include practical processes and models that you can use as the basis for developing your own written and spoken pieces.

Extra activities to hone your analytical skills are available in this digital book and indicated in the text by this icon: .

THE ART OF PERSUASION

In this chapter

How many people try to persuade you during the course of a day? Even before you leave the house, an advertisement may have encouraged you to buy something, a family member may have convinced you to eat a better breakfast, and a friend's Instagram post may have encouraged you to follow a particular hashtag. News media – including newspapers, blogs and social media posts – are also a part of our daily lives and constantly positioning us, whether we are aware of it or not, to view people, events and issues in particular ways. Being able to deconstruct, or take apart, the basic elements of another person's point of view can help you to decide whether or not you agree with it.

This chapter sets out the basic vocabulary and knowledge required to start analysing persuasive language and argument. It will help you to identify issues, recognise how the news is produced and understand some of the main methods of persuasion. It will also cover the importance of context, purpose and audience, and the impact of style and tone.

What is an issue?

There are many different types of persuasive texts, from advertisements and political campaigns to blog posts and newspaper opinion pieces. Your study of argument and persuasive language will focus on persuasive texts about **issues**. An issue is a topic that provokes different points of view. The opinion expressed by the writer or speaker of a persuasive text is referred to as their **contention**.

To work out if a topic is also an issue, ask a 'should' question about the topic to determine whether it might provoke a range of points of view.

Rewrite each of the general topics below as a 'should' question.

Plastic straws

Should _____?

Later school starting times

Should _____?

Make-up testing on animals

Should _____?

Understanding the news

Your study of argument and persuasive language in Area of Study 2 will focus on media texts. These include:

- **print texts**, such as newspaper, magazine and journal articles
- **audio texts**, such as speeches, radio programs and podcasts
- **multimodal texts**, such as advertisements and documentaries.

A majority of the texts you will study will be from publications that focus on news and current affairs, such as newspapers. Major newspapers, such as *The Age* and the *Herald Sun*, are produced in both print and online formats. There are also many independent news and current affairs sites that exist *only* online, such as www.crikey.com.au and https://theconversation.com/au. These sites provide an alternative to mainstream media organisations, and often encourage contributions from academics, independent journalists and experts.

While we might think of news sources as factual and unbiased, the way in which news stories are selected, produced and presented is affected by a range of factors that influence the way the reader or viewer is positioned to think about them. Below are examples of some of those factors.

- News organisations need to generate profit. This can mean that stories are selected according to their ability to capture the attention of readers, rather than their actual importance.

- The political biases of news organisations can affect the choice of stories they publish and the ways they position readers to respond to those stories.

- News publications will cater to the interests, biases and education level of their main audience.

- The writers' own viewpoints on the issue or story may influence how they present it.

- Journalists and editors avoid offending or undermining businesses who pay to advertise with them. For example, a front-page newspaper report that criticises an oil spill might lead to that oil company withdrawing its lucrative advertising dollars from the newspaper. Similarly, a social media personality will avoid offending those who pay them to endorse a product.

Consider news sources

Choose an issue that has been covered by a variety of news sources, then answer the following questions. Some suggested issues are:

- responses to the COVID-19 pandemic

- horse-drawn carriages in the city

- safe injecting rooms

- changing the date of Australia Day

1. What is the issue? _____

2. Find one example of each of the types of media text listed in the left-hand column of the table below. Then complete the table with details from each text.

Media text	Opinion expressed on the issue	Reasons presented	Main tone (e.g. reasonable, angry, sympathetic)
Opinion piece from *The Age*			
Opinion piece from the *Herald Sun*			
Opinion piece from *The Conversation*			
Letter to the editor or online comment			
Social media post			

3. Choose two of the media texts from Question 2 that express different opinions on the issue. Make notes below on any factors related to the publications that might affect the ways in which the writers' opinions are expressed. You might like to find out more about these publications by reading other pieces the organisation publishes and doing some background research into each publication: who owns it, any political biases it might reflect, the identity and affiliations of the chief editor and/or other staff, and characteristics of its main audience.

Publication 1:

_____

_____

_____

_____

Publication 2:

_____

_____

_____

_____

How writers persuade

The skills required to analyse persuasive media texts are not just useful for your assessment tasks. The ability to understand methods of persuasion is an important life skill that will help you decide whether you really agree with someone's point of view, or whether you are only being influenced by good persuasive strategies.

Some common methods of persuasion used by writers and speakers are listed in the following table. In the right-hand column, add a second example for each method.

Methods of persuasion	Example 1	Example 2
Using reason and logic	If we want more people to use public transport, we have to make it affordable for the majority – it's as simple as that.	
Presenting evidence	A recent study by Northwest University found that daily exercise can reduce anxiety and depression.	

Using emotionally charged (positive or negative) words	Glorious sunshine, world-class restaurants and top-notch tourist attractions – marvellous Melbourne has it all.	
Appealing to the audience's fears	If you don't update your phone's operating system today, you will be locked out permanently.	
Appealing to the audience's sympathy	Can you look into Samira's hungry eyes and tell her you can't afford a dollar a day?	
Appealing to the audience's financial self-interest	Shonky real estate agents are fleecing innocent consumers in dodgy deals.	
Appealing to shared values	Offshore detention that leaves vulnerable and traumatised people in limbo, with no end in sight, is abhorrent to all fair-minded and humane Australians.	
Presenting opinion as fact	The reason most people don't recycle is because the waste collection system is too complicated.	
Offering benefits	Every donation over five dollars is tax-deductible.	

Identify methods of persuasion

Read the opinion piece by Lucas Fothergill, published in the Student Opinion section of the *Independent* newspaper, then answer the questions that follow.

Rapid digital technology advancement is significantly impacting young people, socially and economically

Barely a week goes by without the release of a new device or app you might feel *obligated* to try, or a new 'thing' that takes up yet more time you could spend doing more productive tasks. Having been born in the 90s, like a lot of other people, I've grown up with new tech relentlessly sprouting up.

As an English Lit student, I sometimes struggle to concentrate on a novel for longer than six minutes. *Six minutes.* Student or not, I'm undoubtedly not the only person to have this attention span problem. *Engadget* recently reported on a study which suggested the average attention span has fallen since the start of the century. While people could focus on a task for 12 seconds back in 2000, that figure dropped to around eight seconds in 2013.

Would life be better without all this new digital technology? Would life be better without the bottomless pit of dull nonsense that is your Twitter feed? Probably not. We can lash back at new digital tech all we want, but it's difficult to imagine a future where we're less dependent on it. Plus, it's pretty easy to take it all for granted.

There are certain things that might irritate us about new digital tech and social media (i.e. that one person on Facebook who really loves horses), things our parents never had to deal with when they were younger. Still, though, I, for one, wouldn't have it any other way. Furthermore, as reported by *Engadget*, there are a lot of benefits to new tech as well, as it appears to improve your abilities to both multitask and concentrate in short bursts.

According to Ofcom, young people aged 16 to 24 spend more than 27 hours online every week. With laptops, tablets, and phones, new technology has made it easier than ever to be online. Over the next decade, this is likely to increase. However, it begs the question: is technology having negative effects on our health? The Mental Health Foundation has said it is 'too early' to say whether technology is changing our core ability to relate to others, adding: 'But soon enough to conclude that while it facilitates relationships, real and virtual, technology is no substitute for the human interaction that is a buffer against loneliness.'

Even if two thirds of young people find online communication easier than face-to-face interaction, more than a third of them also find new technology to have an isolating effect on their lives. Furthermore, teenagers who engage with social media during the night could be damaging their sleep and increasing their risk of depression and anxiety.

And there's more. Fairly recently, the Office for National Statistics released new data suggesting young people prefer to socialise via Facebook and Snapchat, rather than face-to-face. Look further back, and there were reports from Oxford University's Internet Institute claiming social media has made young people more selfish.

It's too simplistic to say that technology is either 'good' or 'bad' for young people. It's very

difficult to provide a definitive answer about whether technology is changing us for the worse. Everybody uses technology for different periods of time, and every individual uses technology differently. Therefore, the effects of technology will differ from person to person.

But, if we are to believe anyone trying to shine a light on the issue, we just need to make sure we don't overdose on online. We need to take care of ourselves. Who knows what this is doing to us in the long term? What will 50 years of social media usage do to us?

But let's circle back to the data released by the ONS – if it's a realistic representation of young people today, then this shows us how digital technology has changed the way we do the most basic of things: talking to each other. It's something that is truly unique to our generation. All of this – it's happening to us first.

Personally, the idea of young people preferring to socialise over Facebook rather than down the pub is pretty embarrassing. I don't believe the ONS's suggestion is indicative of young people at all. But, just imagine if the ONS is right. Imagine if the statistics were an accurate reflection of the reality of social interaction between young people today. It would be like living in a dystopia. A land where there aren't designated quiet carriages on trains anymore because every train carriage is quiet. People are sat there with their phones, their tablets, their virtual reality headsets. Nobody speaks to you because they're all too busy getting a virtual reality curry with football player Danny Ings in Yukti. Imagine.

All joking aside, though, the pace of new information and the rapid development of new technologies is surely set to increase and intensify. Whatever happens next, the effects will have a significant impact on the social and economic aspects of our lives – and the lives of our children.

Lucas Fothergill

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1. Find a place in the text where opinion is presented as fact.

    _____

2. Highlight three emotionally charged words or phrases used in the text.

3. Choose one of the words or phrases you highlighted. How do you think this word or phrase is likely to make the reader feel?

    _____

4. Circle two sentences in the text in which Fothergill appeals to shared values. What are these values?

    _____

5. Find an example of reason and logic in the text.

    _____

6. How do you think the reader might respond to this use of reason and logic?

    _____

7. Note down any other methods of persuasion Fothergill uses in his opinion piece.

    _____

    _____

    _____

Context, purpose and audience

Writers select and shape their arguments and make careful language choices, according to their purpose, their target audience/s and the context in which they are writing.

The **context** is the background to an issue and how a persuasive text fits into the general debate about a topic. Understanding the context of an article means considering why the text was written, how it was published or shared, relevant details about the writer, the events that provoked the debate, and the existing knowledge and feelings of the target audience of the text. Placing a text in its context will help you to understand the writer's main purpose and why they are presenting their argument in particular ways.

The main and obvious **purpose** of a persuasive text is to convince an audience to agree with the writer's contention. But sometimes a writer will have a more specific purpose – for example, an advertisement aims to make you buy a product and a political speech is intended to encourage you to vote for a particular candidate. In order to get their audience to agree with a point of view or behave in a certain way, persuasive writers and speakers target specific emotions and beliefs in their audience.
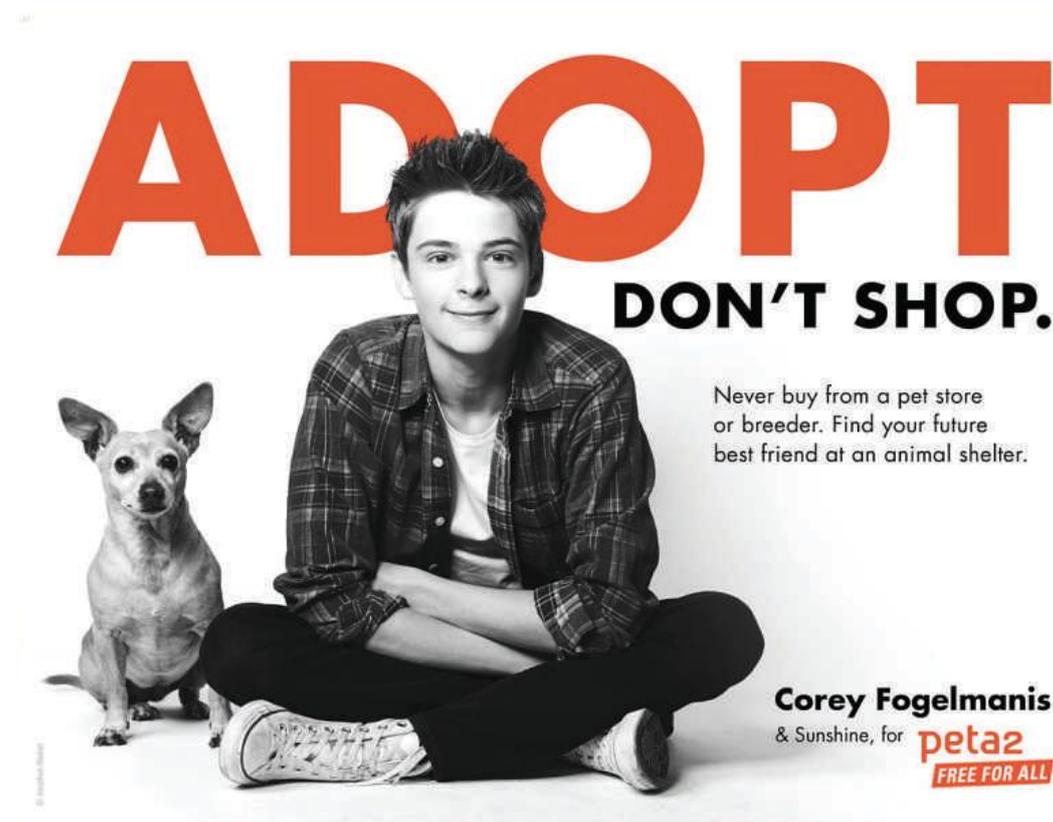
This poster is one of a series produced by animal protection organisation PETA for their 'Adopt, don't shop' campaign.

This poster prompts people to feel _____

This poster encourages people to think _____

This poster motivates people to _____ [action]

Texts are always written with a particular target **audience** in mind. Writers will try to appeal to this audience's beliefs, views and emotions through carefully chosen language and argument strategies. Sometimes the target audience of a text will be very specific, such as members of a local cycling club. At other times the intended audience is much broader, such as the readers of a politically left-leaning national newspaper. Some texts will be designed to appeal to several different target audiences.

Positioning the audience

Writers and speakers use various techniques to **position the audience** to think and feel in particular ways. Understanding the existing views of the people they are trying to persuade allows writers to shape their arguments in ways that target and leverage these beliefs and attitudes.

A range of factors can shape an individual's viewpoint on an issue, including these:

- age
- interests
- nationality
- gender
- education
- family

- friends
- religion
- political beliefs
- finances
- group affiliations
- ambitions

- past experiences
- health
- values
- traditions
- _____
- _____

Add two factors of your own in the blank spaces above. Then complete the following sentences.

The issue that I have the strongest opinion about is _____

My point of view about this issue is _____

_____

The factors that have influenced my views on this issue are _____

_____

Consider audience

1. For each of the sentences below, circle all of the specific target audiences that the statement might have been intended to persuade, then add another possible audience of your own.

   - Creating firebreaks around densely populated areas along the coast creates a safe holiday environment for everyone.

     holiday-makers   farmers   fire authorities   VCE students

   grandparents   coastal-town residents   city apartment-dwellers   _____ →

→ • Backyard trampolines pose unacceptable safety risks to young children.

| toy-store owners | environmentalists | doctors | insurance-company executives |

| dog owners | toddlers | school nurses | _____ |

2. Using the issue that you identified on page 107 as the one you have the strongest opinion about, express your opinion as a clear contention, and give the main reason for your belief, for the two separate audiences listed below.

Your classmates: I believe _____ because

_____

A politician: I believe _____ because

_____

3. What are the main differences between the ways you expressed your opinion for these two audiences?

_____

_____

_____

Style

The term **style** refers to the type of language used in a text. Writers tailor their style to appeal to their audience. This means choosing their words carefully, considering the context and the specific purpose they hope to achieve. Aspects of language that make up a writer's style include the register they write in and the sentence structures they select.

The word bank below lists some adjectives to describe the style of a persuasive text. Add your own words to the final column.

academic	polished	succinct	rambling	
colloquial	conversational	declarative	expressive	
relaxed	casual	complex	fluent	
official	tightly structured	unsophisticated	informative	

Register

The **register** is the degree of formality of a text. A formal register can make a writer seem knowledgeable and authoritative; an informal register can make a writer seem approachable and relaxed. Some texts move from formal to informal or are written in a standard register, which lies between formal and informal. Choosing the right register, however, always depends on the purpose and audience.

The table below summarises the features of formal and informal registers.

Formal	Informal
few contractions (e.g. 'it's', 'he's', 'we're')	more frequent use of contractions and casual abbreviations (e.g. 'I'll', 'you're', 'whatevs')
no slang or colloquial/casual language	more frequent use of slang and casual/colloquial language
more complex and varied sentence structures	simpler sentences that are less varied in structure
more sophisticated and varied word choices	simpler and more repetitive word choices; more frequent use of common, familiar words
more frequent use of third person ('he', 'she', 'they', 'the school's')	more frequent use of first person ('I', 'we')
more frequent use of the passive voice	more frequent use of the active voice

Consider the following examples.

Formal register: The company's statistical analysis did not indicate that the Richmond Football Club would be victorious in the Australian Football League Grand Final.

> The formal register is established by using the full, official names for the club and the competition, and sophisticated word choices such as 'victorious' and 'statistical analysis'. This gives the impression that the writer has examined the issue analytically and impartially.

Standard register: Our pundits didn't predict that Richmond would win the Premiership.

The standard register is established with words such as _____

Using a standard register gives the impression that the writer _____

_____

Informal register: We didn't have a clue the Tigers would smash the finals and come out on top.

The informal register is established with words such as _____

Using this informal register gives the impression that the writer _____

_____

Sentence structure

When you read a text, consider whether the sentences are simple, compound or complex. Is one type of sentence used more often? For example, the sentences might generally be very long and complex, but important points might be emphasised with short, simple sentences. The level of variation and complexity of sentences can affect the formality of a text and our impression of the writer's attitude to the topic.

Consider the following examples.

Simple sentences: The solution is clear. You must exercise. Follow the three-step plan.

> The simple, short sentences create a clear and firm style that gives the impression the writer is very certain of their views.

Varied sentences: The solution is clear, especially when you consult experts, and anyone who doesn't follow the three-step plan is foolish. You must exercise.

The short, simple sentence at the end of a long, complex sentence gives a strong, definite ending to the paragraph. This emphasises _____

_____

Complex syntax: The solution is clear – especially when you consult experts – and not to follow the three-step plan is foolish. You must, if you wish to stay healthy, exercise; you must also do it regularly and for extended periods.

The complex sentences make the writer sound _____ This creates the

impression that _____

Tone

Tone is the mood or feeling of a text; it reflects a writer's attitude to a topic or issue. Often, a writer's tone will change at different points in their text. For example, a letter to the editor might begin with a congratulatory tone when discussing the efforts of the police to catch a criminal, and switch to an angry tone when describing rising crime rates.

TIP: To identify a writer's tone, it is helpful to read the text aloud to reveal the emotions or attitudes underlying their words.

Add your own positive, negative and neutral words to the tone word bank below.

Positive	Neutral	Negative
appreciative	measured	disparaging
assured	matter-of-fact	uncertain
conciliatory	composed	provocative
enthusiastic	careful	apathetic
dynamic	responsible	sluggish
optimistic	restrained	pessimistic

Consider this extract from an opinion piece arguing that children should not be given gift cards as presents.

Young children are faced with a bombardment of advertising that sneakily targets their weak spots and capitalises on their naivety. They simply do not have the necessary critical thinking skills to understand and assess how advertisers are manipulating them. Nor do they have the maturity or financial experience to manage their own 'credit', which is what gift cards essentially are. This makes them a particularly vulnerable group who should not be asked to take on the complex responsibility required by gift cards.

Find an important word or phrase in the above passage, associated with the following nouns. Then complete the sentences to describe the main tone that these descriptions create. The first example has been done for you.

children: vulnerable

The word 'vulnerable' suggests that young children are likely to suffer harm from being given gift cards and thus need protection. This word choice helps to create a concerned tone.

advertising: _____

The word/phrase _____ has connotations of _____

_____

This helps to create a/an _____ tone.

gift cards: _____

The word/phrase _____ implies that _____

_____

This helps to create a/an _____ tone.

Bringing it all together: analysing a persuasive media text

The following opinion piece, by Patrick Carlyon, was published in the *Herald Sun* newspaper. Read the piece, then answer the questions that follow.

The need for bike controls is plain

Bike people don't like the idea of bike speed limits at Southbank. It seems unfair, they say. Yet it sounds like a wonderful initiative to the rest of us.

Here comes Mr Fancy Pants. Indigenous to Southbank promenade, he sports more bits than a camping trip, and more bulges than an overpacked plastic bag.

He weaves through the masses on a bike as if he is dodging bogeys in a video game. His expression is grim. He has somewhere to be, and never mind the startled glares.

Mr Fancy Pants is also indigenous to walking paths, such as Darebin Creek Trail, where he scans the obstacles ahead like Terminator in a bikie bar.

Without warning, he whirrs through scooters,

dogs, wheelchairs and wayward toddlers, before surging for the 29m of open path ahead.

Bike people don't like the idea of bike speed limits at Southbank. It seems unfair, they say, especially because bikes don't boast speedometers. Traffic is minimal during the hibernation of COVID. Why now, they argue? Why fines of $1652?

Yet it sounds like a wonderful initiative to the rest of us.

The need for bike controls is plain. A 2019 study found nine in 10 cyclists rode at more than 15km/h on the promenade.

Any hapless commuter who crosses the strip to and from Flinders Street Station does not need a study to describe the risks.

A police officer on the radar.

They must navigate not only entitled male cyclists, and their heinous crimes against fashion, but also the courier cyclist, known as Mr Antsy Pants.

A kind of feral replicate of Mr Fancy Pants, he pedals as if he is delivering urgent organs for surgery.

Mr Antsy Pants' self-importance defies his pay cheque, which apparently does not cover the cost of deodorant.

What surveys and studies do not measure is how speeding cyclists scare the bejesus out of walkers.

Bike enthusiasts wave findings that show pedestrian collisions have not risen.

There is an awful lot of literature about cyclists, their aggression or lack of it, and the imperative to promote respect between cyclists, drivers and pedestrians.

As cyclists are vulnerable to cars, so pedestrians are vulnerable to cyclists. Where driver education has softened views on cyclists, cyclist education should explore the attitudes of pedestrians going about their everyday business.

What the research has so far not measured is the sudden jolt of playing chicken with a speeding cyclist. Do you go left, right, or stand still and hope?

The perception of risk is not only frustrating, but also perpetuates the historical disdain for cyclists and their perceived sense of entitlement.

Most cyclists, like most car drivers, are not menaces. Any reasonable driver does not begrudge their place on the roads or tracks. Not the mothers with kids strapped on the back. Or dads who have nothing to prove to themselves.

These benign breeds tinkle pedestrians ahead and slow accordingly. They would heed promenade speed limits, mindful that they are only elements in an environment which is not the final stage of the Tour de France.

They are not the reason non-cyclists instinctively reject cyclist grievances. This reflex is a response to Mr Fancy Pants who, apart from speeding, should be held to account for other breaches of the greater good.

Why stop with speed limits at Southbank? Police with speed guns would be a welcome addition at Darebin Creek Trail. There are lots of bushes to hide behind.

What of the unchecked herds of Mr Fancy Pantses who assume weekend control of Beach Road because their group jaunt is more important than the kilometre of cars banked behind them?

These blokes, and they always seem to be blokes, represent a cycling subset.

Their specialty is myopic self-interest. The law about two cyclists abreast does not apply to them. Two serious accidents, including the death of a pedestrian, have involved cyclists running red lights.

Their outings take precedence over the ordinary people who wonder why the men don't take their peloton pretensions to places where they need not dodge drivers cased in 1.5 tonnes of metal.

To borrow a line, they are as much a danger to themselves as to the eyes.

They appear to inhabit a world where 'PBs' are an ice breaker. Their chatter, usually over a croissant at the cafe they choose to invade at ride's end, sounds a lot like golfers who prattle about their rounds.

These may be gross generalisations. But if they are to be unpicked, road laws should apply to the cycle clowns who hijack the peace and progress of so many.

Punish them for their smug lack of consideration. To do so would bring greater harmony and care from all.

After all, Mr Fancy Pants is why so many non-cyclists still dislike cyclists.

Patrick Carlyon

Analyse a media text

Complete the sentences below.

The issue addressed in the opinion piece is _____

Patrick Carlyon's main contention is _____

Two possible factors that might affect his opinion are _____

and _____

The purpose of the opinion piece is to _____

The target audience of the opinion piece is _____

The opinion piece aims to make the audience feel _____

The opinion piece aims to make the audience think _____

_____

One method of persuasion used by Carlyon is _____

This is evident, for example, when he _____

_____

Another method of persuasion used by Carlyon is _____

_____

This occurs when he _____

_____

The style of the opinion piece could be described as _____

The main register Carlyon writes in is _____ Two words or phrases

that demonstrate this are _____

and _____

The main tone of the piece is _____ Two words or phrases that help

to create this tone are _____

_____

UNDERSTANDING ARGUMENT

In this chapter

❱ The elements of an argument

❱ Argument structure

This chapter builds your understanding of how arguments are expressed and structured and how argument strategies are used to persuade an audience or reader. It will help you to:

- identify and summarise the contention and main arguments in a text

- understand the difference between an argument and an opinion

- understand the choices that writers make about the order of their material when they structure an argument

- analyse the role of organisational devices such as subheadings, breakout quotes and bullet points.

The elements of an argument

You will have heard and used the term 'argument' in a range of different contexts. When you analyse argument in Area of Study 2, this term refers to a contention supported by reasons and evidence. A good argument is made up of three parts.

| **Contention:** the writer's main point of view on the issue | supported by a series of | **Reasons:** explanations and evidence that support the writer's contention | expressed through | **Persuasive strategies:** structural and language choices intended to position an audience to agree |

Identifying the contention and reasons

The contention is the main point of view the writer wants their audience to agree with. Often, a writer or speaker will state their contention clearly near the start of their text, and then repeat or rephrase it at the end. Or, a number of facts, situations and pieces of evidence might be presented first, and then the contention stated clearly at the end.

Sometimes the contention in a text is implied (suggested) rather than stated explicitly. In this case, you have to infer (figure out) the underlying contention, based on the reasons and evidence presented. By not stating their contention directly, writers can give the impression that they are considering a range of ideas and options, rather than trying to convince their audience to agree with one opinion. Giving readers the impression that they are making up their own mind, rather than being manipulated or convinced, can be a powerful persuasive tool.

Without reasons, an argument is just an opinion. One way to identify an argument is to look for connectors that show cause and effect, such as 'because', 'this is shown by' and 'for this reason'. These phrases show the logical connection between the point of view and the reasons.

Consider the following examples, and add your own to the table.

Opinion	Argument
Cigarettes smell revolting.	Cigarettes should be banned because smoking-related illnesses are a burden on the health system.
It's cruel to keep animals in zoos.	Being removed from their natural environments causes animals physical and psychological harm – for this reason, they should not be kept in zoos.

Bias

Many arguments reveal a writer's bias. Bias is sometimes thought of as a negative quality, but we all have particular beliefs and values that affect the way we feel about particular issues. Sometimes a writer will have a stake in an issue that will affect their attitude. For example, a doctor might be more likely to support a medical approach to drug addiction than a police officer, who might feel it is a problem best dealt with through criminal punishment. Being aware of a writer's possible biases or vested interests can help you to better understand their purpose and the context of their persuasive text.

> TIP: When considering a writer's biases, ask yourself what they might have left out of their argument. Have they purposely omitted key information or alternative viewpoints?

Consider the following letter to the editor.

Holy terrier

Paying $6000 for a dog which will likely suffer the over-bred health problems typical of its breed? That's fashionable indulgence. Love is adopting a bitzer rescue animal (in my case, a cat) and watching it slowly forget the abuse and learn the meaning of trust and affection.

Peter Dark
Karabar, NSW

The contention of this letter is _____

_____

The writer's purpose is _____ The reasons the

writer gives to support his contention are _____

_____

The writer displays his bias against _____ through his use of the words

'over-bred' and _____ An important factor that might affect his

preference for rescue pets is _____

Identify a contention and reasons

Consider this extract from an opinion piece titled 'Why the curriculum should be based on students' readiness, not their age', published on *The Conversation* website, and answer the questions that follow.

THE CONVERSATION http://theconversation.com/au

… the current curriculum lacks flexibility. It expects every student of the same age to learn the same things at the same time. This sounds fair, and it might be if all students began the school year ready for the year's curriculum.

THE CONVERSATION   http://theconversation.com/au

In reality, as the Gonski report observed, evidence from testing programs shows the most advanced students in each year of school are about five to six years ahead of the least advanced students. Instead of beginning on the same starting line, students begin each school year widely spread on the running track.

The 21st century requires a more flexible and personalised approach. Learners of the future will learn anywhere at any time, progressing at their own rates, often with the support of technology. In this world, there will be no place for determining what individuals are ready to learn from their age.

My proposal is for a curriculum consisting of a sequence of levels through which every student progresses, but not necessarily at the same pace. This provides teachers with a frame of reference for establishing where individuals are in their learning and ensuring every student is taught and challenged at their current level.

Under this proposal, schools would continue to be organised into year groups and students in each year group normally would work in mixed-ability classes. The difference is that students in the same year group could be working at different curriculum levels.

Geoff Masters, CEO, Australian Council for Educational Research

1. The contention of this opinion piece is that _____

    _____

2. Highlight the sentence that most clearly states this contention.

3. List the reasons that the writer gives to support his contention.

    _____

    _____

4. How might the writer's position as CEO of the Australian Council for Educational Research influence his point of view? Why do you think that information is included with his by-line? What impression does it give to readers?

    _____

    _____

    _____

    _____

5. Identify a piece of evidence the writer uses to support his argument.

    _____

    _____

6. Highlight or circle two words or phrases that help to convey a positive impression of the writer's proposal.

7. Which of the following best describes the structure of the writer's argument?

☐ evidence – reasons – implied contention

☐ reasons – evidence – stated contention

☐ stated contention – reasons – evidence

☐ implied contention – evidence – reasons

Argument structure

A common way to structure an argument is to begin with a contention and some contextual information, then move on to a series of reasons. But there are many other ways to build an argument. Common structural features used in persuasive texts include:

- beginning with an anecdote or incident before moving into a discussion of the issue it gives rise to

- strategic placement of the main contention – sometimes declared at the beginning of the text and followed by an explanation of the reasons for it, which can suggest strong conviction; sometimes left to the end after reasons have been outlined, to suggest a logical conclusion has been reached

- subheadings to guide readers through the material and draw their attention to key ideas, facts or events

- bullet lists to highlight or summarise key information

- breakout quotes (quotes from the text used as visual elements) to highlight key points or to grab attention (sometimes called pull quotes)

- graphs, charts or tables to present information in a clear and immediately accessible way, and to break up long sections of text for ease of reading

- images to illustrate and provide a point of view on the issue, as well as to break up the text.

Consider the structures of the following two texts on the issue of recognition of women's football – an opinion piece by Anthony Colangelo and a comment from a reader, published in *The Age* newspaper – and read the annotations beside each. The Australian Football League (AFL) was a male-only competition from its earliest history in the nineteenth century (as the Victorian Football League) until 2017, when a national women's league consisting of women-only teams from several AFL clubs was formed.

Why the phrase "footy's back" is a proper faux pas

"Footy's back." **1**

It's a phrase you'll likely hear a lot across the weekend, beginning on Thursday night when St Kilda play Carlton in the opening AAMI Community Series match.

We heard it when Shane Warne championed the return of "proper footy" in a strongly criticised Twitter video to promote the Saints v Blues clash on Wednesday.

But it's factually incorrect. Footy is not back this weekend. Men's footy is back, but footy has been back for a while.

Fremantle and Collingwood play each other in the AFLW.

Footy – as in Australian rules football played at a national, top-tier level – has been back since January 28 when Collingwood beat Carlton in the AFLW season opener.

Warne later clarified that he intended "proper footy" to mean Aussie rules as opposed to "other footy codes", presumably soccer and rugby union with the A-League and Super Rugby already underway.

But the fact it generated such a strong response before his clarification is totally understandable.

When fans and players are used to being treated a certain way – just read what trolls say in Facebook comments and Twitter threads about AFLW – stinging reaction to off-the-cuff comments such as Warne's is hard to avoid.

2

This is the fifth season of the AFLW. That is, the fifth year there has been a national women's competition equivalent to what men have had for decades.

Watching the way we speak might seem like a small thing and in some ways it is. But in others, it's not.

The language we use around the AFLW matters, and footy media and supporters should at least be able to treat both competitions equally when speaking.

Because if we can't treat them equally

when simply addressing the topic of footy in everyday conversation, then closing the gaps in other areas of the competition all of a sudden seems a gargantuan task. **3**

AFLW fans, players and footy administrators want the competition to improve in many areas, not least the coverage it receives.

Normalise the fact that AFLW is also footy. Then bigger gains might follow.

The phrase "footy's back" might be said on radio and television by commentators and hosts, on social media posts by fans and media outlets, or in conversation with colleagues, family and friends.

It's more often than not said harmlessly and out of habit, but it doesn't mean we shouldn't try and change the pattern of behaviour that causes it.

The official AFL Twitter account tweeted on Monday before men's preseason games tickets went on sale that: "Footy is just around the corner and now everyone can see it live". **4**

The tweet was criticised, for obvious reasons, and then it was deleted.

And it's not just variants of the phrase "footy's back" that can de-legitimise the place AFLW holds within modern Australian rules football.

It's an easy mistake to make, one that I was guilty of last week when I wrote that "no games were held in front of fans in Victoria in 2020" in a story about 50 per cent of crowds being allowed back into stadiums for the AFL season.

Crowds watched AFLW games in Victoria in 2020 and I should have written "no men's games were held in front of fans in Victoria in 2020".

Writing that "no games" had crowds in Victoria is not only factually incorrect, it is ignorant and disrespectful to those who support AFLW and to the women who work so hard to play in the competition.

It's OK to get it wrong, given we have been used to one national or top-level footy competition, for the men, ruling in this state and country.

But nearly five seasons into the AFLW it's time to learn from those mistakes and change the way we define "footy". **5**

Anthony Colangelo

---

2 This screenshot highlights the tweet from Shane Warne that sparked debate over the issue of the marginalisation of women's football.

3 The writer identifies the broader issue at stake – that of gender equality generally.

4 Additional evidence and examples are included, supporting the argument that there are many instances of the womens' game being marginalised, not just the example of Shane Warne.

5 The final paragraph reiterates the writer's main contention, contributing to a circular structure.

Now read an opposing opinion, expressed in an online comment in response to Colangelo's opinion piece. The writer takes a different approach to structuring their argument, relying on a series of blunt, declarative statements that help to create an authoritative tone. The writer's contention is implied through these statements, and not expressed directly until the final paragraph.

Read the comment and annotations, then complete the activity.

COMMENTS

Agriculturist

Respect needs to be earned, not thrust upon us. The standard of the current AFLW games is poor. I have watched several games but turned most of them off before half time. **1**

There are too many teams for the number of quality players in the competition, so the standard is dilute. Maybe should have had one team from each state, even Tassie? How about they got the comp going properly before flooding the media/tv with a disappointing spectacle? **2**

The men's game has developed over 100+ years, it is proper footy. If and when the women's game provides a similar spectacle then it will be able to claim itself as proper footy. Currently it is below VFL/SANFL standard. **3**

1 The writer's opening statement implies disagreement with Colangelo's point of view.

2 The middle paragraph expands on the writer's reasons for their belief that women's football is of a much lower standard than men's; the implication is that it is therefore less deserving of being considered 'real' footy.

3 The writer states their main contention – that women's football should not be considered 'proper footy' until the standard improves.

Compare argument structures

1. List the people or groups Colangelo might be seeking to persuade.

    _____

    _____

2. Complete the following analytical paragraphs about the structure of Colangelo's opinion piece.

Starting the text with reference to the ways in which the familiar phrase _____ _____ is commonly used positions the audience to view the issue as _____ Following this with the short declarative statement 'But it's factually incorrect' is likely to surprise the reader and thus capture their attention. He follows this with a succinct summary of why the expression 'footy's back' is misused, setting up his argument before supporting it with reasons. The text is thus structured like an explanation, positioning the reader to _____ _____

➔ The predominant tone is _____, as conveyed by words/phrases such

as _____ Framing the issue as being about

a 'mistake' that is often made simply 'out of habit' suggests _____

_____ Choosing to include an

admission of his own mistakes when speaking about football makes the writer seem

_____

Ending with a firm final sentence that restates his main contention has the effect of

_____

3. Highlight a sentence from the opinion piece that you think could be used as a breakout quote because it captures an important idea or piece of information.

4. The comment has a more emotive opening paragraph than the opinion piece. How might this emotive opening position the audience to feel or think about the issue?

_____

_____

5. Do you think the comment targets the same audience as the opinion piece? Explain why or why not.

_____

_____

6. For each paragraph in the comment, write a subheading that highlights the key argument and captures the tone of the paragraph.

_____

_____

_____

7. How might these subheadings help to influence a reader's feelings or thoughts about the issue?

_____

_____

_____

For an activity on mapping an argument, based on the persuasive petition 'Create a Disney Princess with Disabilities' by Hannah Diviney, see pages 203–5 of this digital book.

THE POWER OF LANGUAGE

In this chapter

❱ Analysing persuasive language

❱ Argument and persuasive language techniques

Persuasive language is a vital part of any argument, but analysing how it is used requires much more than just identifying examples or labelling language techniques. Instead, you will need to focus on explaining the *intended effects* on the target audience of particular persuasive strategies and language choices.

This chapter will help you to analyse how language choices are used to support arguments and generate emotional responses in audiences.

Analysing persuasive language

To analyse persuasive language well, you need to think about how the writer's argument and language *work together* to create persuasive effects. You need to explain how an argument is supported by the language in which it is delivered and how this is intended to appeal to the audience. Remember, too, that a writer will often have a specific target audience who have their own interests, biases, experiences and knowledge. Always consider how particular language choices are likely to influence the writer's *specific* audience.

A useful approach to analysing a persuasive text is to ask yourself 'What? How? Why?'

WHAT?
What is the writer arguing?

→

HOW?
How is the writer using language to persuade?

→

WHY?
Why might the writer have made these language choices? That is, what is their intended effect?
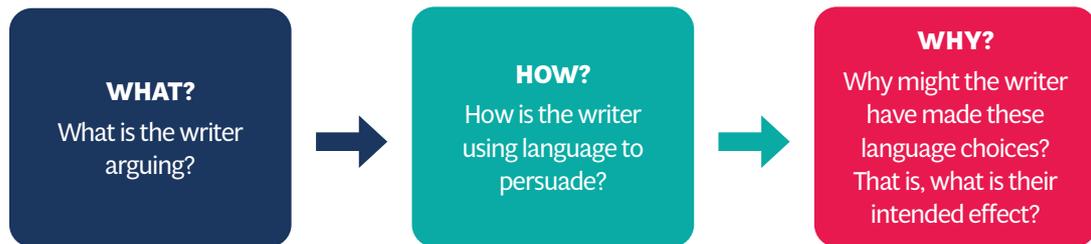
Connotations and associations

An important part of analysing a persuasive text is considering why the writer selected the particular words and phrases they did. What ideas or feelings do specific vocabulary choices evoke in the reader's mind, and how do they support the writer's viewpoint?

Connotations are the extra meanings or associations attached to a word or phrase, beyond its literal meaning. They can be positive or negative. For example, consider some of the different words for thin, such as svelte, slender, gaunt, scrawny, willowy, lean, skinny, emaciated and skeletal. Each has different associations and creates a different image in the reader's mind, some positive and some negative.

Consider the following online comment, written in response to an article about a proposal to extend a quarry into Arthurs Seat State Park on the Mornington Peninsula.

COMMENTS

Our precious bushland

Thank you, Miki Perkins, for your excellent coverage of the Ross Trust's bizarre plan to expand a disused quarry adjacent to Arthurs Seat State Park (*The Age*, 19/3).

On the trust's website, it says it has "a vision to create positive social and environmental change so Victorians can thrive". In that case, why would it entertain the idea that its work can be funded by blasting precious bushland in the Mornington Peninsula? This is vital habitat for koalas and native species. The quarry would also leave a horrible scar on a beautiful landscape that so many visitors enjoy. There are better places for Victoria to source granite that will not necessitate the destruction of bushland. Let us hope the Ross Trust scraps its plan.

Matthew Davison, Shoreham

The writer describes the bushland as 'precious'. What connotations and associations are suggested by this word? Write down as many as you can think of.

_____

_____

How do these connotations and associations position the reader to feel about the bushland?

_____

Now complete the following sentences.

The phrase 'horrible scar' has connotations of _____

_____

It suggests that the quarry is _____

The description is intended to make the reader feel _____, thus positioning

them to _____

The writer uses the adjective _____ to describe the Ross Trust plan. The

connotations of this adjective are _____

_____

These connotations position the reader to feel _____

about the quarry plan.

Consider connotations and associations

Complete the following table by making notes on the connotations and associations of the highlighted words and phrases. Add two examples of your own to the final rows.

Example	Connotations and associations	The reader is positioned to feel …	The reader is positioned to think …
It is unconscionable that hundreds of people remain in offshore detention in PNG and Nauru.			
Nature's Bounty muesli bars – your secret superpower!			

Example	Connotations and associations	The reader is positioned to feel …	The reader is positioned to think …
When rates rise, as they inevitably will, the tsunami of tears from the over-indebted will be a sight to behold.			
The vaccine rollout is limping rather than galloping forward.			

Argument and persuasive language techniques

The argument and language techniques in the following table are used by writers to encourage readers to respond to their opinions in a particular way, or to portray an opponent's point of view in a negative light. It is not necessary to be able to label every example of persuasive language that you see in a text in order to analyse it. However, having a good understanding of the metalanguage associated with the purposeful ways in which writers use language can help you to write precisely about it.

Technique	Often used to …	Example	Example analysis
Ad hominem attack: personal criticism or insults aimed at an individual or a group rather than at their argument	• belittle opponents and their views • gain attention and give emphasis to key ideas	I can't believe he has the nerve to tell us to watch our carbon footprint when he drives that gas-guzzler.	This ad hominem attack undermines the credibility of the commenter by implying that his stance is hypocritical and his actions are selfish.

| Technique	Often used to ...	Example	Example analysis
Alliteration: repetition of consonant or vowel sound, especially at the start of words	• emphasise and highlight specific words (usually related to the key ideas of the issue)	Trouble-making teens turning their attention to THC	The repetition of the consonant 't' draws the reader's attention to the alarming spike in cannabis-related crimes. The 't' is also a hard consonant sound, contributing to a harsh tone that underscores the seriousness of the topic.
Analogy: a comparison between two things or ideas that leads the audience to draw conclusions about the similarities	• explain a complex idea in a more familiar way • link an argument to other ideas that readers know well and believe, to make it seem correct	Asking politicians to tell their constituents the truth is like asking a cat to drive; it's just not in their nature.	The comparison between politicians and cats implies that politicians are as uncontrollable as cats, emphasising the futility of relying on them to be honest.
Anecdote: a brief personal account or story, usually entertaining, that provides a human angle and engages the reader	• evoke a feeling of close personal connection with the speaker • make the point of view feel more real or authentic	Typing class wasn't the most exciting part of school, but as an adult I am forever grateful for Mr Bolger's patient instruction. Touch-typing is a valuable skill that has stood me in good stead throughout my career and should be a compulsory part of the curriculum.	The anecdote about receiving touch-typing classes is a form of evidence that encourages the audience to consider how not having these classes might affect their children's futures.
Appeal to family values: suggesting that only traditional family life can provide the essential values for a healthy, stable society	• play on readers' desire to protect and nurture their family, especially young children • undermine or criticise other family structures	The nuclear family model has lent strength and stability to families everywhere. We mustn't abandon it.	The writer's praise of the nuclear family suggests that it has stood the test of time and thus proved its worth.
Appeal to fear and insecurity: playing on readers' existing fears or worries	• imply that readers should heed the writer's advice or terrible things will happen	Without access to a firearm, how can we be expected to keep ourselves and our families safe from would-be attackers?	The writer aims to evoke a sense of fear and appeals to the reader's desire to protect their family, positioning them to agree that gun restrictions should be opposed.
Appeal to group loyalty and patriotism: using people's desire to belong to a group to persuade them to agree with a viewpoint or take action	• suggest that readers are missing out on something good or will be excluded if they do not agree • evoke feelings that all people from one place or group have a shared identity or purpose	We're the great country we are because of our proud history of supporting the underdog and giving people a fair go.	By appealing to traditional Australian values and using inclusive language, the writer aims to evoke readers' desire to be included in this positive collective identity and experience.

Technique	Often used to …	Example	Example analysis
Appeal to financial self-interest: making the audience think about how their personal finances will be affected	• make readers feel that they are getting good value for their money or, conversely, that they have been cheated (can be positive or negative)	**R.I.P. off** Funeral insurance is poor value for money, with most purchasers paying far more than they'll ever get back in payouts.	Using a play on words that associates financial loss with loss of life, the advertisement appeals to the audience's desire not to be taken advantage of.
Appeal to modernity: engaging with people's desire to be progressive and part of the in-crowd	• create an impression that people are out of touch if they don't agree, and that they should feel embarrassed about falling behind	Self-driving cars aren't just a thing of the future, they're a thing of the present too. Soon having a licence will be an obsolete skill, a relic of the past.	The words 'obsolete' and 'relic' make driving a car seem an outdated skill; self-driving cars seem exciting and progressive by comparison.
Appeal to justice: playing on people's belief that we all have the right to be treated fairly	• highlight what is unjust and urge people to fight against it, or highlight what is fair and urge people to fight to keep it	Police corruption is rampant! For an institution that is supposedly meant to uphold law and order, it's just not right. Something must be done.	This comment positions readers to feel outraged and angry that the police, who are supposed to protect society from crime, are themselves acting like criminals.
Appeal to self-interest: encouraging people's feelings that their interests should be placed ahead of others'	• generate a fear that others might take advantage of the reader or not care about them, making them want to change the situation, or act to protect what they have	The burden of funding childcare should not fall on the general population. Why should the rest of us be forced to pay for other people's lifestyle choices?	This appeal to the audience's self-interest creates a divide between those who use childcare and those who don't, evoking in the latter group feelings of irritation and of being exploited.
Appeal to tradition and custom: playing on people's belief that rituals and traditions are valuable and should be preserved	• create a feeling that too much change to the way we live damages families, culture and religion, and ruins social unity	Banners are a staple part of the footy. It's outrageous to suggest getting rid of something that has been part of the fabric of the game forever, based on flimsy environmental concerns.	The writer indicates that losing the banner would be a major blow to the sport, contrasting this with 'flimsy' environmental concerns to position the reader to value and wish to uphold tradition.
Cliché: an overused phrase that a wide range of readers can quickly grasp and understand	• make audiences feel reassured when they recognise a familiar expression • create a humorous effect or mocking tone	The forward-thinking person will have a diverse portfolio of investments – you don't want all of your eggs in one basket.	The phrase's familiarity works to reassure readers by suggesting that financial planning is accessible and manageable.
Emotive language: strong words and phrases deliberately used to arouse specific feelings	• take focus away from the logic or evidence of an argument and place it on strong feelings • generate a powerful emotional reaction for or against something	People must treat air pollution as the grave threat it is. Failing to take preventative action will be fatal.	The highly emotive adjectives 'grave' and 'fatal' portray air pollution as an imminent threat, evoking in the reader alarm and a desire for urgent action.

Technique	Often used to ...	Example	Example analysis
Exaggeration, overstatement and hyperbole: presenting an extreme view of a situation	• create surprise and strong dramatic impact • provoke a strong emotional reaction • add humour	If an athlete dares to offer any sort of political opinion, no matter how mainstream or reasonable, they will be mercilessly attacked.	The exaggerated phrase 'mercilessly attacked' has connotations of violence that position the reader to feel sympathy for public-speaking athletes and condemn those who criticise them.
Figurative language: words and phrases used in a non-literal way (e.g. metaphors or similes)	• make the writer seem witty and clever • create engaging imagery or comparisons that have a strong emotional impact	It's remarkable what a bit of hard work has done for her grades. It's like she's gone from struggling in the ressies to first name on the team sheet.	The writer illustrates the large improvement in grades with an image that most readers will recognise: going from playing in the reserves to the first team. This helps the reader to grasp the point and contributes to a lighthearted tone.
Generalisation: a statement that suggests that what is true for some is true for most or all	• play on readers' existing beliefs about specific examples, to make them feel the same way about a much larger group or concept	Sitting in their ivory towers, academics have no understanding of the real world. How can they feel qualified to opine on issues such as the state of public transport?	This generalisation depicts academics as elitist and isolated from the 'real' world, thereby encouraging the reader to dismiss academics' opinions on social issues.
Inclusive language: terms such as 'we', 'our' and 'us'	• create a sense that the writer/speaker shares common experiences and beliefs with the audience • make audience members feel that they are being considered	Back then playgrounds were fun. We took risks. We got scared. And yes, sometimes we got hurt. But we also learnt to push ourselves and test our physical abilities.	Pronouns such as 'we' and 'ourselves' encourage the reader to see themselves and the writer as having shared experiences. This inclines them to accept the writer's message that playgrounds were better in the past.
Irony and sarcasm: saying the opposite of what is true or expected	• point out unexpected or flawed aspects of an opposing argument • mock and belittle an opposing argument or person	I'm just not seeing an upside for the government in funding disability support ... are there votes in it?	Sarcasm is established through the juxtaposition of the positive idea of funding disability support with the suggestion that the only benefit is votes. The implication is that politicians are self-interested rather than genuinely concerned for citizens.
Puns and plays on words: words with multiple meanings, used to imply multiple ideas with the one phrase	• present the writer as clever and funny • position the audience to want to pay attention	Thanks to political squabbling, the government's discounted flight scheme won't take off.	The phrase 'won't take off' presents what could be seen as a dry political issue in a more comedic light, encouraging audiences to engage with the writer's opinion while also reinforcing the serious consequences of the 'squabbling' of politicians.

Technique	Often used to …	Example	Example analysis
Reason and logic: drawing conclusions from evidence and known facts to support a clear argument	• suggest that the writer reached their view through careful, coherent thought • imply an argument is sensible and intelligently developed	Research suggests that consuming red meats such as steak is bad for our hearts. Therefore, we should collectively cut down on our consumption of meat.	The audience is encouraged to see a direct link between consuming red meats and heart disease. This is likely to position them to agree that people should eat less red meat.
Repetition: to repeat a word or phrase several times	• place emphasis on the words or phrases that are repeated, to highlight ideas or evoke an emotional response	There are more than 60 million people who are either refugees or in some way displaced from their home. More than 60 million people suffering the fear and anxiety that this entails. More than 60 million people we must do everything in our power to help.	The repetition of the phrase 'more than 60 million people' reinforces the scale of the figure and the importance of dealing with crises of displacement now, before the situation becomes even bleaker.
Rhetorical question: a question with an implied answer	• guide readers to one self-evident or obvious answer that positions them to see this view as correct	When we realise that all teachers are graduates from the same universities and colleges, where is the benefit in private schooling?	The writer's rhetorical question invites the reader to consider what differentiates teachers with a shared background. The framing of the question suggests that the answer is a self-evident 'nothing'.

For an activity to hone your skills analysing the use of argument and language in the opinion piece 'Why councils talking rubbish won't fix our bins' by Susie O'Brien, see pages 206–7 of this digital book.
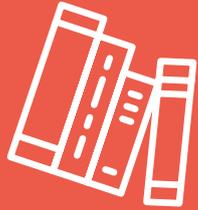
PERSUASIVE TEXT TYPES

In this chapter

- ❱ Headlines
- ❱ Opinion pieces and blog posts
- ❱ Editorials
- ❱ Letters to the editor and online comments
- ❱ Advertisements
- ❱ Speeches
- ❱ Petitions
- ❱ Photographs
- ❱ Cartoons and illustrations
- ❱ Charts and graphs
- ❱ Filmed texts
- ❱ Social media and online forums

When studying argument and persuasive language, you will examine a wide range of texts. Many of these will be from newspapers and news programs on television or radio; but other news sources, especially online ones, also play a significant role in how people obtain information and, consequently, how people express a point of view. You might analyse written texts, audio texts (or transcripts of these), visual texts or multimodal texts (texts that use more than one mode of conveying meaning – for example, written words and still images, or sound and video footage).

This chapter builds your understanding of the different types of media texts and how they are constructed to position an audience. You will also explore the different features of each text type, including their commonly used language techniques and structural features.

Headlines

Most written texts, no matter where they appear or what their purpose, will have a headline or title. Headlines have three main purposes:

- to attract the reader's attention
- to inform readers about the topic, event or issue addressed in the text
- to establish the tone of the text.

Especially online, you may notice that headlines are written to grab attention rather than to summarise the content of a text. Headlines specifically designed to attract attention and encourage people to click through to an article are called 'clickbait'. Often the volume of traffic on a site and high levels of engagement (people reading lots of different pages on the site) will help to attract advertisers.

The table below shows the common features and conventions of headlines.

Language	Argument
• short, usually incomplete sentences • attention-grabbing or sensational language that may include highly emotive words, exaggeration, repetition, assonance, alliteration, puns and wordplay	• set the direction of the argument • introduce the broader issue • suggest or state a contention • emphasise important or interesting details

Analyse headlines

1. Consider the headlines below. After each headline, identify the argument and persuasive language strategies used.

- 'Public toilet plan raises a stink' (*Frankston Standard Leader*)

  _____

- '"Overworked, underpaid": Doctors wage war against hospitals' (*Herald Sun*)

  _____

- 'Vaccine fears may be more deadly than any side-effect' (*The Economist*)

  _____

- 'Pooches seek paw-fect pals' (*The Guardian*)

  _____

- 'Cost of living fears as petrol prices surge' (*The Mercury*)

  _____

- 'How big pharma mugged Australia's nursing homes and set up a deadly addiction' (*Crikey*) _____

2. Choose one of the headlines that you think has been written primarily to attract attention. Complete the sentences below to explain which words in the headline help to establish readers' expectations of the article.

The headline _____ has

been constructed to attract readers' attention. Words such as _____

_____ create curiosity about the text by

_____

3. Choose one of the headlines that you think has been written primarily to inform. Complete the sentences below to explain which words in the headline help to establish readers' expectations of the article.

The headline _____ clearly

establishes the topic of the text. The use of words such as _____

creates a _____ tone, implying that readers should think

_____

4. Choose a headline that uses emotive language. Complete the sentences below to describe how specific words position readers to feel or think a certain way about the issue.

The headline _____ uses

emotive language such as _____, which

implies that _____

This positions the audience to feel _____ about the issue.

5. Choose a headline that uses a pun. Complete the sentences below to explain what the pun is intended to make readers think or feel, and how.

The headline _____

includes the pun _____ This is intended to create an impression that

_____ by _____

6. Find a headline that uses repetition, alliteration or assonance. Complete the sentences below to explain what this technique emphasises and what its use is intended to make readers think or feel.

The headline _____

uses _____ to emphasise _____

This has the effect of _____

7. Find a striking headline of your own from a print or online newspaper. Write two or three sentences analysing its intended effect on the reader.

_____

_____

Opinion pieces and blog posts

The purpose of an opinion piece is for the writer to give their point of view on a specific issue. Such texts can be found in newspapers (e.g. *Herald Sun*, *The Age*, *The Australian*), journals and magazines (e.g. *The Big Issue, Time*), on news and current affairs sites (e.g. *The Guardian Australia*, news.com.au) and issues-based academic discussion pages (e.g. *The Conversation*). You will also find opinion pieces on websites run by companies, charitable organisations, special interest groups and political parties.
Many personal blogs also include opinion pieces.

The table below shows the common features and conventions of opinion pieces and blog posts.

Language	Argument and structure
• include a range of persuasive techniques • can be emotive • may use personal pronouns ('I', 'they', 'you', 'we') • by-line gives writer's name • language varies depending on writer's style, purpose and intended audience	• headline sets tone and establishes issue • argument will vary according to form, style, audience and register • opening 'hook' draws readers in • contention often clearly restated at the end

Analyse an opinion piece

The following opinion piece, 'Stop romanticizing sad music' by US university student Peyton Froome, was published in *The Collegian*, the daily newspaper at Kansas State University. The newspaper's content is reported, edited and produced by students at the university. Read the piece then answer the questions that follow.

Stop romanticizing sad music

Across the board, sad music is trending. As artists like Billie Eilish, Halsey and Lil Uzi Vert are constantly releasing songs with sad and angsty undertones, many young people are finding their playlists full of songs about heartbreak, toxic love or wishing they were someone else.

Such an emphasis on downcast situations and feelings can cause the lyrics and emotions of the music to transfer into the listener's real-life headspace. For this reason, romanticizing sad music is dangerous.

This music forces the listener to think about sad or uncomfortable situations. According to an article from *The Conversation*, people with greater tendencies to become depressed are more likely to ruminate after listening to sad music and be less motivated to create change in their lives.

Obviously, listening to sad music is not always a bad idea. Sometimes emotional music is the only way people can feel understood, and it can be a cathartic experience. Sad music is, however, only beneficial in moderation, like most experiences in life.

Romanticizing sad music and acting as if sadness for long periods of time without relief is normal is not OK. Doing so perpetuates the idea that people who are not sad are missing out.

Sadness is a part of life, and from time to time everyone should feel sad. Everyone lives through a difficult time, and sorrow is a sign that connection and hope are created (but later broken) in someone's life. That

is a healthy emotion to feel. Grieving is often the only way to move on, and is necessary for the human experience. What really matters in the end is how people decide to heal themselves and move past the dark times.

Listening to sad music all day, every day encourages people to dwell on the unfortunate, and constantly reminds them that, yeah, life sucks sometimes. Replaying that thought is a dangerous trap that can cause people to forget about the good parts of life, like seeing friends, laughing until your stomach hurts and stuffing yourself full of ice cream during movie marathons.

According to an article from *Forbes*, in 2017 Americans listened to around 32 hours of music weekly. Thirty-two hours is nearly enough to become a full-time job, so clearly music is a significant part of people's lives.

Since music is so vital to the human experience, the genre and kind of music people choose to listen to plays an important role in their well-being and mental health. Much like any other activity, if people decide to spend all their free time regretting their decisions and crying over lost friends and family, their lives will never change and

they will never learn to move on and live life in the present rather than the past. Consistently listening to sad music has much of the same effect.

I'm not saying sad music should be completely off the table. I have one or two sad playlists of my own, but I try my hardest to only listen to sad music when I know doing so will bring about a crying-session I am in dire need of, or if I know listening to the songs will not turn my lighthearted mood into a dark, gloomy afternoon.

I recommend becoming more aware of how music makes you feel. If a certain set of songs always ruins your day because it reminds you of a dark time of your life, then you probably should not listen to those songs on a normal day. If your day-to-day playlists consist of mainly sorrowful music, maybe it is time to rethink why that is the case, because romanticizing sad music is a slippery slope.

Peyton Froome

Complete the sentences below to analyse Froome's opinion piece.

In her opinion piece 'Stop romanticizing sad music', published in _____,
student Peyton Froome argues that _____
_____

She appeals directly to her target audience of _____ in her opening
paragraph by _____,
positioning them to _____

Describing the romanticisation of sad music as 'dangerous' is likely to evoke _____
_____ in the reader. This is accentuated by Froome's description of
the way in which sad music 'forces the listener' to think about difficult things. The
words 'forces' has connotations of _____,
_____ which suggests that sad music is
_____

→ Froome supports her view with evidence, including _____

_____ This is intended to encourage the reader to think

_____

By acknowledging that she has 'one or two sad playlists of [her] own' Froome

presents an impression of herself as _____ This is reinforced by

her _____ tone, which is created by such words/phrases as

_____ The reader is thus positioned to

_____

Editorials

Editorials express the official opinion of a newspaper. They are written by senior editors, or members of the editorial team. Unlike an opinion piece, an editorial represents the point of view of the organisation, not of an individual, so the writer is never personally named.

The table below shows the common features and conventions of editorials.

Language	Argument and structure
• use sophisticated language • use formal register • use a serious, authoritative tone • use plural first person ('we', 'us') or third person ('this organisation')	• rely on reasoned arguments • include points supported by evidence • state a clear contention • have a headline that outlines a key issue, and often states a contention

Analyse an editorial

Read the editorial below from *The Mercury*, and complete the sentences that follow.

Tasmanian school phone call right one

There is simply no good reason for school students to have their phones with them while in the classroom.

CONGRATULATIONS to Education Minister Jeremy Rockliff for his decision to ban mobile phones in all schools – "from bell to bell" – as of term 2 of next year.

It will – sensibly – be left up to individual schools to decide how to enforce the policy, and how to discipline those students who don't do what they are told.

Exceptions will be made where teachers want to use the devices for learning, or where they are needed to monitor medical conditions.

This is just the latest example of Mr Rockliff being a Minister who does the right thing in just making decisions quickly and with authority, after the relevant timely reviews. There is simply

no good reason for school students to have their phones with them while in the classroom. Not only are they an unnecessary distraction, but by having them in the schoolyard too it only encourages anti-social behaviour such as cyber-bullying – and just general distraction during a time they should be learning social skills.

And Mr Rockliff has gone about this the right way. Following the Victorian Government announcing recently it would implement a ban from 2020, Minister Rockliff established a departmental working group to develop the policy. And he didn't just issue a directive or leave it to the bureaucrats. He first surveyed all school association committees – which include principals, school staff and parents, following an initial round of consultation with principals. The response to the survey was that 71 per cent thought it was not important for students to be able to access their mobile phones during the day, and that 58 per cent had witnessed "adverse impacts" from them – which could be something as simple as being distracted by them.

Still not convinced? Perhaps listen to David Kilpatrick, the principal of New Town High School – where a ban has been in place since last year: "On just about every performance measure, our graph is heading upwards. The students are more relaxed and more focused on their learning." Add to that the fact that 80 per cent of students there say they have not had an incident of cyber-bullying in the past year and it's clear this is an idea you can take to the bank, as Minister Rockliff has done. And he made sure things moved quickly through his process, too. The Victorian decision was only announced five months ago. More Ministers should take note.

In his opinion piece published in today's Talking Point pages, Mr Rockliff points out that any school could have already implemented a ban – and those that have told him of the positive impacts on "student wellbeing and social connection in class and the schoolyard, with more face to face talking".

One imagines a survey of parents would find the same. If you can't make an argument in favour of the benefits of something, then perhaps it's not a good idea.

This is all not to say students should not have technology in the classroom. One of the biggest and most important changes in classrooms over the past decade is that laptops have become as central to learning as pens and calculators. This is how it should be, because the primary job of schools should be to prepare our children for adult life. But mobile phones are a step too far. This is a good decision.

The issue raised in this editorial is _____

The editorial's contention is _____

Two key reasons presented in support of the contention are _____ _____ and _____

The tone of the headline is clear and authoritative. This tone is continued in the body of the article, shown in such words and phrases as _____ and _____

The editorial uses a primarily formal register. Elements that help to create a formal register include _____

The use of the rhetorical question _____ suggests to the reader that _____

Repetition of the word 'right' throughout the editorial has the effect of _____ _____, prompting the audience to feel _____

The blunt concluding sentence – 'This is a good decision' – echoes the declaration in the headline, contributing to a _____

structure in which a contention is stated, the reasoning behind it is outlined, and the contention is restated in different words. The intended effect of this structure is

_____

_____

Two audiences likely to respond positively to the editorial are _____

and _____ This is because _____

_____

Letters to the editor and online comments

Letters to the editor and online comments allow readers, organisations and public figures the opportunity to give their opinion on the issues and events raised in a publication.

The most significant difference between the two is the vetting process. Only a limited number of letters are chosen to be printed in a paper each day, related to topics recently covered in the paper. In theory, online comments *all* appear online unless the moderator of the site decides that they violate the terms of posting or the poster deletes them. This vetting process, of course, leads to a lot of comments being posted that would never be selected for print.

The table below shows the common features and conventions of letters to the editor and online comments.

	Language	Argument and structure
Letter to the editor	• style, register and tone vary • use singular first person ('I')	• usually very brief (around 50 words), unless longer 'lead' letters (around 400 words) • often include just one or two main points • often refer directly to articles or views expressed in previous editions • assume some prior knowledge of the issue • edited/selected by editorial staff
Comment	• style, register and tone vary • use singular first person ('I') • can be colloquial, informal and even aggressive	• allow for discourse between commenters • do not always engage with central arguments of others • often include just one or two main points • do not always include evidence • assume some prior knowledge of the issue • may be moderated

Analyse letters and comments

Below is a series of letters and comments about the use of Gasworks Park by Albert Park College students, for whom it is the only available local green space. The letters and comments were published in *The Age* newspaper. Read them carefully, summarise the contention in the line below each text, and then answer the questions that follow.

https://www.theage.com.au

LETTERS

Parks are for everyone

The argument for restricting student access to the Gasworks Park in Albert Park and having it essentially only utilised by retired folks and artists is absurd, and a slap in the face to local rate-paying families. School land has historically been sold off to make way for an increase in city dwellings. Councils have approved high-density housing and benefit from increased rate revenue. It is unconscionable for them to then prevent a section of our local community from accessing the parks. Our students should be allowed to access parklands to stretch their legs, speak, laugh and play in the open air freely without needing to worry about upsetting other community members. Goodness knows they have suffered being locked up for the better part of a year! And by the way, children are seen and are heard these days.

Maria Kassiotis, South Melbourne

Don't lock people out of local green space

My grandchildren attend a school adjacent to a local football oval. With no fences, the students have plenty of space to kick a football, run, do whatever children do in open space. Residents walk their dogs, jog, do whatever adults do in open space. My grandson is the school's sustainability captain, elected on a platform of reducing and cleaning up rubbish. Reading about residents wanting to keep their public open space for themselves, not for local students, saddened me. They can do better. At a time when we recognise the importance of open space, it is better to address the issues through education. Perhaps a school assembly with local residents talking to students about the joys of a rubbish-free park with well-grown bushes? Use of public open space should be encouraged, not restricted. We do not want to follow London's example of locked local green space available only to keyholders.

Louise Kloot, Doncaster

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https://www.theage.com.au

Loved and cared for by all

I was saddened to read about the arguments between local residents, Albert Park College and Gasworks Park (*The Age*, 17/3). After waiting many years for an excellent, local high school, I feel a sense of joy every time I see the students walking and riding through the streets. I have felt welcomed attending community events there.

I have been involved with Gasworks Park since its inception and helped plant many of the trees that now enhance the space. It is a haven set up to support working artists and theatre performance as well as community programs, recreational space, barbecues, a cafe and dogs. All of this adjacent to a crowded school with limited green space. Supervision should be provided during school hours and the kids required to respect the park so that it is properly maintained. The school and park are valued places to be loved, shared and cared for by all.
Gael Wilson, Port Melbourne

COMMENTS

Oath

I bet these are the same people who whinge that teenagers are spending time inside and playing games. I hope the council lets the kids stay.

EAK

Youth are our future, yet youth disillusionment is increasing and youth mental health declining. Allowing students to utilise a public area for less than 3 per cent of its total availability seems to be a minimum impost compared to the longer-term advantages of improved well-being.

Fambam

For goodness sake, wander down any time of the day and there are multiple dogs running around tearing up the turf and doing their business whilst their human owners are socialising and looking the other way.
Let the kids use the area they were promised and let them be kids.
Since when did a dog become more important than our future leaders? Most of these kids live in the city of Port Phillip and their parents are paying rates.
It's delightful seeing young people in the park – please stop being unkind and share the space.
Disappointed in my fellow selfish citizens!!!!

1. What differences do you notice between the letters and the comments?

   _____

2. Give two words to describe the tone of the letter 'Loved and cared for by all'. Circle or highlight three words or phrases in the letter that contribute to this tone. _____

3. Which letters and comments suggest a compromise position? Write a contention that summarises this position.

   _____

4. What is the main emotion Fambam aims to evoke in the reader? Circle or highlight three words or phrases that target this emotion. _____

5. Choose one letter or comment and complete the following sentences with details from the selected text.

   In a mostly _____ tone, _____ (writer) contends that _____

   The reason/s they present for their point of view is/are _____

   _____

   They position the reader to feel _____ (emotion) through the use of such words/phrases as _____ and _____

6. Choose one text that relies primarily on reason and logic to present a point of view, and one text that takes a more emotive approach to the issue. Complete the following sentences.

   Taking a rational approach to the issue, _____ (writer 1) argues that _____

   Their reliance on logic is evident in their use of _____ (reason or argument strategy) and _____ (language example). In contrast, _____ (writer 2) expresses their view that

   _____

   in a more emotive way. This is evident in their use of _____ (reason or argument strategy) and _____ (language example)

Advertisements

Advertisements use a combination of written and visual language to promote a product, service or idea. Most advertisements are produced on behalf of companies aiming to persuade consumers to make a particular purchase. Governments, charities and issues-based organisations use advertising to provide information and to attempt to change

people's behaviour, such as in anti-speeding campaigns or animal cruelty videos. Charities and issues-based groups also advertise to seek donations.

An **advertorial** is an ad that appears in a newspaper or magazine and presents information about a product or service in the style of a news article. Although advertisers are required to disclose that this information is an ad, readers can be positioned to believe that the content is objective or the view of the publishers, because the material closely resembles other articles in the publication.

You may also have noticed that news or other websites often display advertising that seems to match your interests. This is because many websites use cookies, which collect information about what you view so that the ads you see can be tailored to your interests. This is sometimes called 'online behavioural advertising'.

Common features and conventions of advertisements are listed below.

- Specific aspects of the image are highlighted or a specific feeling is generated through cropping, distance, colour and lighting.
- Attitudes to events and issues are shown through the facial expressions and body language of the people in the image.
- Visual details are distorted, manipulated or altered to emphasise particular features.
- Text, graphics or illustrations are added to emphasise particular features.
- Memorable slogans or catchphrases may be included.
- Logos and branding are used.

Analyse an advertisement

Consider the following print advertisement for Australia Post then answer the questions that follow.

If you really want to touch someone, send them a letter. ⓞ **POST**
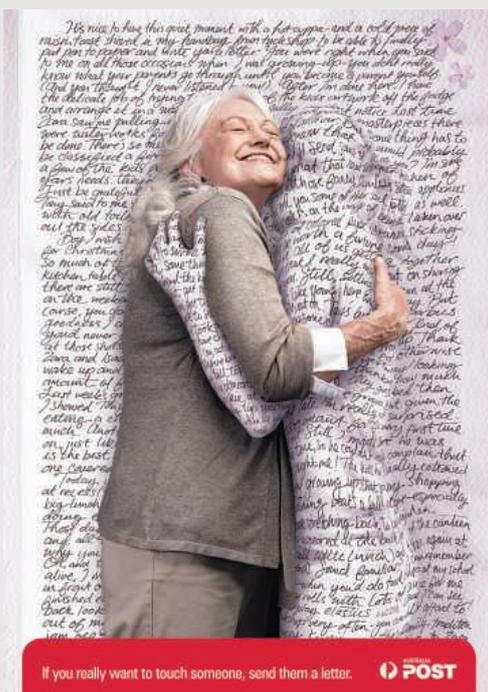
1. What is the main emotion the ad aims to evoke in the viewer?

   _____

2. Identify two features of the ad that help to evoke this emotion.

   _____

   _____

3. Why might this emotion encourage the viewer to use Australia Post's services?

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

4. How does the image reinforce the message of the written text?

_____

_____

5. Visit a news site and read several articles. Take note of the advertising on the pages you visit. Do the products or services in the ads reflect other websites you have visited recently? Visit one or two other news sites. Do they also show you ads for similar products or companies?

_____

_____

_____

6. How might the presence of advertising that directly relates to your interests make you feel about a particular news site or article?

_____

_____

Speeches

A speech is an oral text delivered to an audience. Presentations, such as TED Talks, might include digital content such as slides to engage and persuade the audience. In addition to considering the content of a speech or presentation, you should also consider the way in which it is delivered – that is, how the speaker uses their voice, body language and any supplementary visual or digital material to position the audience to agree.

The table below shows the common features and conventions of speeches.

Language	Argument and structure	Delivery
• use vocabulary that is easy for the audience to understand • often use inclusive language, humour or anecdotes to build rapport with the audience • ask questions (both rhetorical and those that require an audience response) • use jargon or language specific to a target audience	• open with an engaging, attention-grabbing line • use clear and obvious signposting at start and end of each point to help audience follow argument • conclude with a strong, memorable sentence that sums up the argument • use clear connectives to show transitions between ideas • use repetition and short sentences or phrases to highlight key points	• vary pace (pauses and slowing down for emphasis) • vary volume and pitch (to create tension or a specific tone) • use body language and gestures for emphasis • use eye contact to engage audience

Analyse a speech

Read the speech by Australian musician Paul Kelly, which he wrote for the Sydney 'Don't Kill Live Music' rally in 2019. Although he was unable to attend the rally in person, his speech was read aloud on his behalf. The rally was organised to protest against the NSW state government's shutting down of various music festivals deemed 'high-risk' in terms of potential drug-taking activity.

> I first started playing in Sydney in the late seventies.
>
> French's Tavern on Oxford Street was the first I remember.
>
> Bondi RSL, The Trade Union Club, Graphic Arts Club, Kardomah Cafe, The Manzil Room.
>
> We never got out of the Manzil 'til after dawn.
>
> Later on the Strawberry Hills Hotel, the Hopetoun, Dee Why, Salinas, The Annandale, War and Peace.
>
> Many of these places have gone but their legacy lives on in the venues and the festivals under threat today.
>
> You don't learn how to write a song in school.
>
> You don't do a TAFE course in How to Play In Front of An Audience.
>
> These places were my universities.
>
> I still go to music festivals, pubs, clubs, and cafes all the time to do extra study.
>
> Take a little refresher course.
>
> Listen and learn.
>
> This is where we grow and thrive, love and hate, compete and cooperate.
>
> This where we make our communities, carve our sound, and develop our unique art.
>
> Fight for it!
>
> PK.

1. Who is the likely target audience of Kelly's speech?

   _____

2. What is the purpose of the speech?

   _____

3. How does Kelly's likening of live music venues to universities position the audience to feel and think about the government's plan to prevent certain live music events from going ahead?

   _____

   _____

4. How might Kelly's use of repetition help his audience to understand and agree with his message?

_____

_____

5. Identify two other persuasive argument or language strategies Kelly uses, give an example for each and describe why each might appeal to his target audience. An example has been done for you.

Strategy 1: appealing to tradition

Example: 'I first started playing in Sydney in the late seventies … Many of these places have gone but their legacy lives on.'

Effect: The appeal to tradition draws attention to live music as an important part of Australian culture with a long history. The implication is that a valuable cultural practice is under threat; the aim is to evoke the audience's alarm and outrage, thus positioning them to support the rally's cause to save live music.

Strategy 2: _____

Example: _____

Effect: _____

_____

Strategy 3: _____

Example: _____

Effect: _____

_____

Petitions

A petition is a written formal request, signed by multiple people, directed at a person or organisation with the power to grant the request. Often, the greater the number of signatures attached to a petition, the more likely it is to be considered and possibly acted on.

The table below shows the common features and conventions of petitions.

Language	Argument and structure
• may use sophisticated or simpler language, depending on the target audience • use a mostly formal register • usually use a firm and urgent tone	• rely on reasoned arguments and evidence • often use highly persuasive langauge • state a clear contention • include explicit encouragement to the reader to sign

Analyse a petition

The following petition, by Brendan Highway, was published on the website of the Australian Parliament, which has a section for e-petitions directed to the House of Representatives with requests for action to be taken on something that the House or the Federal Government is responsible for.

Read the petition, then answer the questions that follow.

https://www.aph.gov.au/e-petitions

Petition EN2487 – Allow 16- and 17-year-olds to vote

Petition Status

The petition is currently **open** for signatures.

OPEN — CLOSED — PRESENTED — RESPONDED

Petition Reason

This petition proposes to grant 16- and 17-year-old Australian citizens the optional right to vote in federal elections. For many older voters, issues such as education can become merely a talking point and nothing more. For younger people, however, the quality of our education can greatly affect our future and the people that we become. With our education holding so much influence over our futures, we should have a say in how the education system is run, and the easiest way to do that is by allowing young people to choose who represents their interests in parliament. Education is only an example, as there are many issues, such as issues of equality and casual wages, that affect many young people, people who ultimately have no say over any policy in these areas. Granting 16- and 17-year-olds the right to vote can also increase engagement in our democracy. Ultimately, this change will greatly increase the size of the electorate, which means more people who get their voices heard, and a parliament that more accurately reflects the people it represents, which can only strengthen our democracy.

Petition Request

We therefore ask the House to amend the Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918 granting 16- and 17-year-old Australian citizens the optional right to vote in all federal elections.

Signature count:	39
Closing date for signatures:	21 April 2021 11:59 PM (AEST)

Sign this Petition   Share this Petition

1. What is the purpose of this petition?

   _____

2. Identify two separate target audiences for the petition.

   _____

3. Cite two main reasons the writer gives for his opinion.

   _____

   and _____

4. Complete the sentences below.

One persuasive technique used by the writer is _____

The intended effect of this on the audience is _____

_____

Photographs

When photographs accompany a written persuasive text, they can highlight specific aspects of an argument, evoke particular emotions and position the reader to respond in certain ways to the written text.

It is important to remember that photographs are not objective; they are usually consciously 'set up'. Even spontaneous or candid shots can be edited to present the subject in a particular way – for example, by altering the colours, cropping, and darkening or lightening the image.

The list below shows the common features and conventions of photographs in persuasive texts.

- Cropping, distance, focus, colour and lighting are used to highlight specific aspects of the image or generate specific emotions.
- Attitudes to events and issues are shown through the facial expressions and body language of the people in the image.
- Details may be distorted, manipulated or altered to create specific effects.

Analyse photographs

Consider the impact of the photographs accompanying the news article by Charlotte King on the next page and complete the questions that follow.

https://www.abc.net.au/news

Rock-climbing bans in Grampians unveiled in draft plan to protect more cultural sites

The Grampians National Park, or Gariwerd, in western Victoria is a place of great cultural significance to many Aboriginal people.

Victoria's parks authority has published a draft plan that would permanently ban rock-climbing in sections of the Grampians National Park.

The spectacular sandstone mountain range consists of woodlands and rocky outcrops that stretch across 167,000ha of western Victoria and attracts more than 1 million visitors every year.

Known as Gariwerd to the Eastern Maar, Barengi Gadjin and Gunditj Mirring Traditional Owner groups, the mountain range contains the largest concentration of Indigenous rock art in Victoria, with human occupation dating back 22,000 years.

Parks Victoria regional director Jason Borg said the draft land management plan – the first to cover the Grampians since 2003 – was an attempt to "celebrate and protect this heritage-protected landscape".

Key points:

- Parks Victoria says the draft plan aims to "celebrate and protect" the heritage of the landscape

- The plan proposes 89 designated climbing areas, 66 off-limits areas, and 126 areas to be assessed

- Traditional Owners welcome the plan but climbers criticise the consultation process

"It's changing the way that we look at the landscape," Mr Borg said, "wanting to ensure protection of both cultural values and natural values, but then also looking at opportunities for how people use Gariwerd or the Grampians."

Plan to reintroduce dingoes

The draft plan sets out a framework for managing threats to the landscape, including weed invasion, over-grazing, "inappropriate fire regimes", water use and pressures from visitors – including the creation of more designated campsites.

https://www.abc.net.au/news

It also proposes to introduce management overlays to minimise noise and light pollution, and aims to restore locally extinct wildlife, including dingoes.

Climber Mark Gould at Summer Day Valley, a popular climbing spot in the Grampians, which has been subject to bans this year by Parks Victoria. (ABC News: Lauren Day)

White chalk prints, left by climbers, just metres from some rock art. The magnesium in the chalk can damage the art. (ABC News: Lauren Day)

"We've gone through a pretty robust process," Mr Borg said. He said the process started with cultural heritage and environmental surveys. "We then have an understanding of what is there," he said. "The Traditional Owners provide us their thoughts about what that means to them, we also have a look at what risk of harm there is … and then we determine the suitability of access."

1. Although this is a news article rather than an opinion piece, do you think it subtly positions the reader to view rock-climbing in the Grampians in a certain way? If so, what attitude do you think it promotes? _____

   _____

2. Identify two aspects of the written text that help position the reader to feel this way. _____

   _____

3. Complete the following checklist to analyse the impact of the photographs included in the article. The second one has been analysed for you as an example.

	Photograph 1	Photograph 2	Photograph 3
What is depicted in the photograph? Is it a close-up, medium shot or wide-angle shot?		a man climbing a cliff face; a wide-angle shot	
What is the most significant feature of the image? Why?		the rock, because it takes up most of the space in the photo	

What else is included in the foreground, middle ground or background of the photograph? What are the effects of these elements?		There's a man using a rope to climb the cliff. He is looking up towards the top of the cliff, suggesting he is awestruck or intimidated by the climb, reinforcing the idea that the activity is unwise.
Describe the effects of the colours, shading and framing of the image.		The climber's bright clothing contrasts with the brown shades of the rock, making him look like he doesn't belong in the environment; because it is a wide-angle shot taken from below, the cliff looks imposing and the climber small.
Does the photograph support or present a particular argument?		yes – that rock-climbing in the Grampians is disrespectful to its Traditional Owners
Is there any text, such as a caption, a by-line, comments or speech bubbles, accompanying the photograph? If so, how does this help to shape the viewer's response?		A caption identifies the climber and the location. Describing it as a 'popular climbing spot' suggests that there is a lot of human activity in the area, which could position the reader to feel that a ban is necessary to protect the environment.

4. Write one or two sentences analysing how the photographs included in the article work with the written text to position the reader to take a particular view about the climbing ban.

_____

_____

_____

_____

Cartoons and illustrations

Cartoons aim to make people laugh or to consider an issue from an ironic or mocking point of view. They usually combine an illustration with some brief written text.

The table below shows the common features and conventions of cartoons.

Language	Argument and structure
• use irony, sarcasm and ridicule • exaggerate situations and appearances • contrast or juxtapose images and captions • express points of view through the characters' words, facial expressions and body language	• may include a headline or caption • express a point of view, but can also show a humorous side of an issue without accusing or blaming • highlight errors, faults or inconsistencies of public figures and politicians

Analyse a cartoon

Examine the cartoon below and complete the questions that follow.

1. Complete the analytical paragraph below.

The cartoon addresses the issue of _____ The cartoonist's opinion

is that _____

The entrance to the aged care facility on the left conveys an impression of _____

_____

➔ Its name –'Rest Easy Aust Aged Care Facility' – evokes an impression of an environment that is _____ This impression is reinforced by _____

The depiction of the entrance to the aged care facility contrasts starkly with the depiction of the elderly person on the right of the image, who appears to be _____ _____ This is suggested by _____ _____, as well as by _____

2. Write two main contentions – one expressing agreement with the point of view expressed in the cartoon and one expressing an opposing point of view.

_____

_____

3. How might the following stakeholders respond to the cartoon, and why? Make notes in the table below.

Stakeholder	Likely response to cartoon	Factors that might affect their response
Residents of aged-care facilities		
Employees of aged-care facilities		
Family members of residents in aged-care facilities		
The Minister for Senior Australians and Aged Care Services		

Charts and graphs

Visual representations of statistics and numerical information, such as charts and graphs, provide an overview of data at a glance. Although based on data, charts and graphs can also position readers to feel or think a certain way about an issue. When reading charts and graphs, always consider the reliability of the source and whether the data set appears to be complete.

The table opposite shows the common features and conventions of charts and graphs.

Language	Argument and structure
• succinct (few words) • highlight trends at a glance • use footnotes or annotations to explain key statistics • use colours and simple icons	• give a summary rather than an in-depth analysis • can represent information in a way that skews the reader's first impression (e.g. by omitting information or choosing a visual form to downplay specific statistics) • use headings, labels and annotations

Analyse a chart

Examine the chart below, published in *The Sydney Morning Herald* newspaper accompanying an article about threats to the Great Barrier Reef, and answer the questions that follow.

THE GREAT BARRIER REEF WIPEOUT

HOW MUCH IS GONE?

50.7% of the coral has died in the past 27 years

CAUSES

24% Tropical cyclones

21% Crown of thorn starfish outbreaks

5% Coral bleaching

Healthy coral
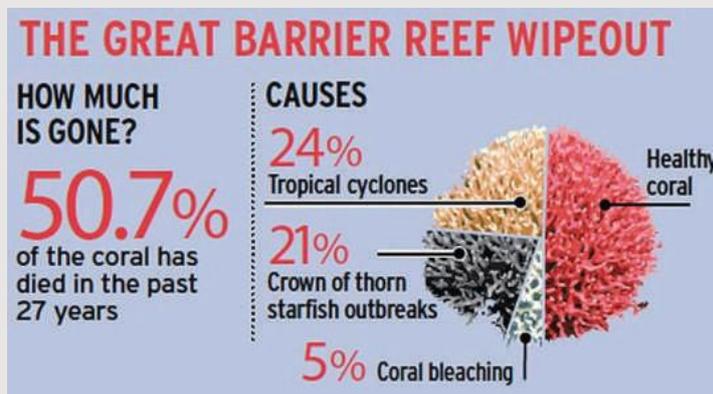
1. What is the issue that the chart addresses? _____

2. Which information is presented most prominently? Why?

_____

_____

3. What visual devices are used to help readers easily understand the main point of the graphic?

_____

_____

4. Complete the following analytical sentences.

The design of this chart positions readers to feel _____ about the Great Barrier Reef. One element of the chart that contributes to evoking this emotion is _____ It positions the viewer to feel this way by _____ This is reinforced by _____, which encourages the viewer to _____

Filmed texts

Persuasive filmed texts that cover topical issues include television news and current affairs programs. It can be easy to assume that such programs present credible and impartial perspectives on issues because the visual elements and firsthand accounts make viewers feel that they are witnessing events as they happen. However, all news programs are heavily edited and the stories carefully selected to focus on the most dramatic aspects of an event or issue.

Documentary films and series, such as *Citizenfour* (2014 documentary directed by Laura Poitras) and *Human Flow* (2017 documentary directed by Ai Weiwei), present a point of view on an issue in greater depth, including interviews and exploring the development of an issue over time.

Personal or corporate vlogs (video blogs) are a low-cost, accessible way for individuals and companies to communicate ideas or persuade people to buy a product or service.

The list below shows the common features and conventions of filmed texts.

- Compelling footage provokes strong emotional reactions.
- Scenes are carefully selected for impact.
- The focus may be on compelling visual material rather than the complexities of an issue.
- Seriousness, urgency and importance are conveyed with set design and opening music.
- Shot types, distance, colour and lighting are used to generate a specific mood.
- Details may be distorted or altered for effect.
- Sound effects and music create a specific tone or emotional reaction.
- Text on screen adds information.

Analyse a filmed text

Read the transcript below and on the following pages from a segment on Channel 10's news and current affairs program *The Project* about Worn Up, an organisation that recycles old school uniforms. You can view the full segment at https://10play.com.au/theproject/exclusives/2021/repurposing-old-school-uniforms/tpv210330sbdko

Annie Thompson:
I think it's really important for kids to understand that we care about their future. And I think it's really important to actually make a difference to that future.

Waleed Aly:
Annie Thompson manufactures school uniforms. She knows first-hand their lifecycle can be short.

Annie Thompson:

If you think about 100 kilos a school, across the national school base, there's hundreds and hundreds of tons going to landfill each year that we can stop.

Annie Thompson (to Murray):

Where's this come from?

Murray:

Oh, Cameroon.

Annie Thompson:

Cameroon?

Waleed Aly:

Together, they've figured out a way to turn old uniforms into raw materials to make dog beds, tiles and even a desk.

Annie Thompson:

Murray's really the brains trust behind how we actually bring the materials to life and what we make out of them. He's an architect by trade and that skill's just been absolutely amazing in terms of interpreting the whole process around making your products.

Waleed Aly:

Worn Up was born in this warehouse, an initiative to recycle and repurpose school and work uniforms.

Annie Thompson:

We've collected about 6700 kilos just in six months so that's about a ton a month that's come in.

Waleed Aly:

Schools were encouraged to join the program, and have students recycle their old uniforms.

Jacqueline Crompton:

It's really important for kids to learn about sustainability because it's gonna be a feature of the way the world is managed going forward.

Waleed Aly:

Jacqueline is president of the P&C at Hunter's Hill, the first of thirty schools to join the initiative.

Jacqueline Crompton:
It's a win-win, it's an environmental win, um, it's
an ethical win. Our school community feels really
proud – there's just no downside to it at all.

Waleed Aly:
So far these students have stopped a whopping 150
kilos of uniforms going into landfill.

Whitney Mueller (student):
Young kids are gonna be more vigilant about
sustainability. We were the first to process old
uniforms. I think I'm really proud of that.

Waleed Aly:
Annie's daughter Amelia educates students on how they
can help.

Amelia:
Students are really reacting really well. We didn't
even think that we were gonna have this volume,
and we're exceeding 6.5 tons of uniforms and I'm
just astonished about the reaction from Australian
schools.

I'm so impressed and inspired by both of them, they
put everything they believe into this business and
time, money and effort.

Waleed Aly:
At this stage, Worn Up is largely a New South Wales
initiative, but the Thompson family is determined to
go national.

Annie Thompson:
I think it helps everyone understand that we have
limited resources, and it's really important to use
what we already have. And also that not everything
has to end up in the rubbish.

Carrie Bickmore:
Great idea, send those tables back into schools where
they don't have the resources as well.

Waleed Aly:
Yeah.

1. In your own words, summarise the message of the segment.

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

2. Give two words to describe the tone of the segment.

   _____

3. What is the likely impact of the use of statistics on the audience?

   _____

   _____

4. Select one description of the Worn Up program used in the segment and write a sentence analysing its connotations and the way in which it positions the audience to view the initiative.

   _____

   _____

   _____

5. Watch the segment on 10play.com.au. Make notes below on the way in which footage is used to support the point of view presented, in terms of the following aspects.

Selection of speakers: _____

_____

_____

Settings: _____

_____

_____

Lighting: _____

_____

_____

Social media and online forums

Social media and forums allow people to present themselves as they want to be seen. Many organisations use social media platforms to promote goods, services and ideas.

Online discussion forums allow users to create online personas and to remain relatively anonymous. This has implications for the credibility of their views. Whenever you read a comment or post that does not allow you to assess the credibility of the contributor, be aware that they will have their own intentions, biases and influences.

The list below shows some of the conventions of social media and online forums.

- They are highly interactive mediums.
- Photos, videos and other visuals are used to capture audience interest.
- Colour, graphic elements and layout are designed to attract attention.
- Music and sound are used to capture attention and create atmosphere.
- Users can form groups or show their support with emojis or symbols.

Analyse a social media post

Examine the Instagram post from the animal sanctuary Edgar's Mission below, then answer the questions that follow.

edgarsmission
Edgar's Mission

5,248 likes

edgarsmission "No borders, just horizons – only freedom." – Amelia Earhart 🌞 ❤️ 🐮

📷 Clarabelle enjoying what every being wants....love, freedom and peace. ☮️

1. Describe the photograph in the post.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

2. What impression does this image give of Clarabelle the cow? How does this impression encourage the viewer to feel about Edgar's Mission?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

3. Amelia Earhart is a famous American pilot and the first woman to fly solo across the Atlantic Ocean, in 1928. Why do you think Edgar's Mission chose this particular quote to accompany the photo of Clarabelle?

_____

_____

4. Complete the following sentences to analyse the ways in which the photograph works to support the message of the website.

The most prominent feature on the Edgar's Mission Instagram post is the image of

_____ The predominant colours of the image are _____

_____, which contribute to a _____

impression of the Mission. This is reinforced by _____,

and also supported by the _____ tone of the caption, which aims to

evoke _____ in the reader.

For an activity to hone your skills analysing written and visual language in the opinion piece 'Nup to the Cup: Why the glitz of the Melbourne Cup is tacky' by Anthea Hansen, see pages 208–10 of this digital book.

WRITING AN ANALYSIS

In this chapter

❱ Texts for analysis
❱ Analysing the texts
❱ Planning your analysis
❱ Writing your analysis
❱ Editing your analysis
❱ Sample analysis

This chapter will help you to plan, organise and write an essay that analyses the use of arguments and persuasive language in two media texts. The steps outlined take you through the process of writing an analysis of two texts, but the same steps apply if you are writing about one or three texts.

Texts for analysis

The exercises and examples in this chapter are based on the following two texts:

- an opinion piece titled '"Wellness" is a completely made-up industry and it's making women sick' by Leigh Campbell, published on the Mamamia website (mamamia.com.au)

- a social media post by Dr Joshua Wolrich, published on his Facebook page.

Text 1

https://www.mamamia.com.au/toxic-wellness

'Wellness' is a completely made-up industry and it's making women sick.

This post deals with eating disorders and might be triggering for some readers.

I don't think many people are going to like my opinion on the wellness industry. I mean, how could anyone not like wellness? It's about being healthy and happy and who doesn't want that? We all do.

Except it's not making us well.

It's making us insecure, overwhelmed and obsessed.

First, let's look at the word 'wellness'. We could argue it's not a proper word, but it's in the dictionary so I won't fight you on it. The definition is 'the state of being in good health, especially as an actively pursued goal'.

That second bit is the important part. An actively pursued goal. Something you work towards, strive for and aspire to ... but for many, never quite feel like you've got there. Where is the finish line?

https://www.mamamia.com.au/toxic-wellness

Sure, if you're unhealthy, or certainly sick, being more well than you are is a good thing. It could probably save your life. And, of course, there are qualified doctors who can help you with that.

But the wellness industry isn't backed by doctors. It's mostly driven by thin white celebrities and influencers with no qualifications, and your friend Suzy who did a homeopathy course on the weekend, and Beth at school drop off who's an expert in essential oils.

It's about taking expensive vitamins without first having a professional determine if you're deficient. About drinking celery juice because it's 'magic'. About eliminating food groups and wearing the right brand leggings and cutting out gluten.

Actively pursuing a goal is excellent. Although, when it comes to 'wellness' most people will never reach it, because the more into it people get, the more the world opens up to being more well. How well is well enough? According to the wellness industry you can always be 'more well'. We're looking for a bullseye when in reality we've been dragged into Alice's Wonderland.

Count how many times you've seen a dietitian use the term 'clean eating'. Now count how many fitness experts or gym enthusiasts with no qualifications in nutrition talk about clean diets and cheat meals.

Orthorexia is the condition of obsessive behaviour in pursuit of a healthy diet. Although a relatively new notion it's already becoming an epidemic. Sure, it affects men, but it's overwhelming women who are buying into clean eating as a lifestyle (nay, a prison).

According to nationaleatingdisorders.org, the term 'orthorexia' was coined in 1998 and means an obsession with proper or 'healthful' eating. Being aware of the nutritional quality of the food we eat isn't a problem in itself, though people with orthorexia become so fixated on so-called 'healthy eating' that they actually damage their own well-being. Ironic, huh?

Some of the symptoms include compulsive checking of nutrition labels, cutting out entire food groups (all sugar, all carbs, all dairy, all meat), showing high levels of distress when 'healthy' foods aren't available and the obsessive following of food and 'healthy lifestyle' accounts on social media. Did you picture someone you know when you read that? Maybe even yourself?

Unless you dropped your chicken schnitzel on the pavement then it's clean. A Tim Tam is not bad. A medium Hawaiian from Domino's isn't a cheat meal. It's all just stuff to eat in moderation, but assigning emotions to food is making women feel guilt and shame and hate themselves. Common sense tells us it's about balance but clean eating isn't about balance, it's about an iron will and an inevitable fall from an unobtainable pedestal we put our self-worth on. Clean eating is simply a socially acceptable term for disordered eating.

https://www.mamamia.com.au/toxic-wellness

Besides making us feel insecure and like we're failing, it's also making us broke.

According to the Global Wellness Institute, the wellness industry is now worth $4.2 trillion. The industry has grown 12.8 percent between 2015 and 2017 and represents 5.3 percent of global economic output.

So to be well we must be spending all that money on seeing doctors, no? No.

We are spending it on maca powder and acai bowls and infrared saunas and kinesiology and lavender oil and herbal teas and detoxes and alkaline water.

We know detoxes are pure marketing. You don't need to pay for one in the form of tablets or a juice cleanse because your liver does it for free. Infrared saunas are no better for you than the traditional type, but of course they are far more trendy and look cooler on Instagram. Everyone blindly followed The Blood Type Diet, and many still do, even now that the author's claims have been proven unfounded by hundreds of scientists. Alkaline water is a complete sham, as is an alkaline diet – if your body was alkaline you'd be dead. And yet we throw our pay and our self-esteem at these expensive and pointless endeavours.

…

There's almost always a dichotomy between science and wellness. Because so much of the wellness marketed to us is unfounded. Scaremongering sells stuff, it's that simple. So I'm pretty bloody thankful there's a bunch of truth tellers fighting the pseudoscience, with the education to do so.

Dr Jen Gunter is an American gynaecologist who is unapologetically going head to head with the likes of Gwyneth Paltrow and her wellness empire, Goop, to provide and promote facts around women's health trends that are founded on nothing more than woowoo.

"I … started to notice overlap between the language," Gunter told *The Guardian*, referring to the wellness industry borrowing language from medicine to sound more legitimate. "The anti-science views of wellness and the anti-science of the religious right. Themes like 'purity' and 'cleanliness' with their similar rituals. It's predatory. It's the patriarchy by another name. And it keeps women back by telling them lies about their body. They might be different lies, but the effect is the same."

…

Are you free from any diagnosed diseases? Do you love your Monday night yoga class, binge-watching MAFS on Wednesdays and going for a walk with Sally from next door on Saturday mornings because it's a 45-minute reprieve from the kids? Do you take homemade stir fry to work on Tuesday and get Uber Eats on Friday night? Guess what? You're well.

You haven't failed. In fact, you haven't let a made-up industry make you feel like you're not doing enough or you're simply not enough as you are. And that should be the end goal.

Text 2

Posts

Dr Joshua Wolrich
18 hrs 🌐

Stop being disillusioned by the fact that 95% of health and nutrition advice on social media is utter nonsense; instead allow yourself to feel a sense of relief.

Do you need to be worried that you have adrenal fatigue? No, because it's not a thing. Gosh that's reassuring. Now you can actually ask your doctor to properly investigate your symptoms.

Do you need to avoid gluten because some idiot on the internet said that it causes leaky gut? Absolutely not, as there's no evidence for that being a thing unless you have inflammatory bowel or Coeliac disease. Thank goodness you don't have to ignore bread for the rest of your life.

Do you need to be afraid of Diet Coke because some charlatans told you it not only causes cancer but actually leads to diabetes? Categorically not, those myths have been debunked ages ago. Phew! Enjoy that can and fight anyone that prefers it from a bottle.

Clear your Instagram feed of people trying to sell you their warped view of health. Get rid of them once and for all.

DR JOSHUA WOLRICH

FOOD ISN'T MEDICINE

CHALLENGE NUTRIB*LLOCKS & ESCAPE THE DIET TRAP

'A voice of reason in a field of fake news'
Megan Jayne Crabbe @bodyposipanda
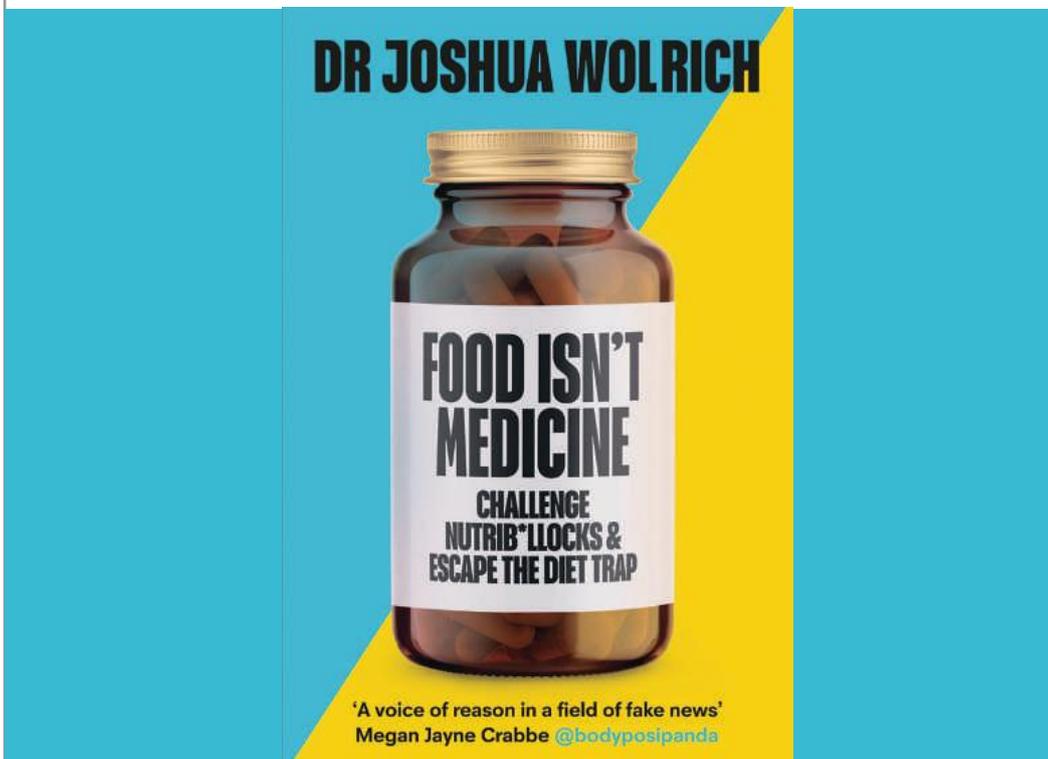
👍 20   5 Comments

Analysing the texts

The first stage in writing an argument and persuasive language analysis is developing a strong understanding of all aspects of the texts. You will need to read through the material two or three times to understand it well enough to analyse it.

Before you read

Begin by identifying the issue, the context, the text types and anything notable about the way in which the material is presented.

The issue the texts address is _____

This issue is being discussed in the media because _____

_____

The groups of people affected by this issue are _____

_____

What I already know about the issue from friends, family and the news is _____

_____

_____

Text 1 is a/an _____ (text type) that was published

_____ (place of publication)

Text 2 is a/an _____ (text type) that was published

_____ (place of publication)

A prominent visual feature of Text 1 is the headline, presented in large bold font, that firmly declares the wellness industry to be damaging and fraudulent.

Other interesting features of Text 1 that I noticed are _____

_____

_____

The most prominent visual feature of Text 2 is _____

_____

_____

Other interesting features of Text 2 that I noticed are _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

First reading

The first time you read the material, you are reading for understanding. Focus your attention on understanding the key elements of the argument.

Campbell's contention is _____

This contention is declared in the headline. Highlight another place in the text where she states her contention.

Wolrich's contention is that _____

Campbell's purpose is to _____

Wolrich's purpose is to _____

The target audience of Campbell's opinion piece is _____

Highlight two examples in the text of argument or language that aims to appeal directly to this audience.

The target audience of Wolrich's social media post is _____

_____ This is suggested by

_____

The main reasons Campbell presents for her point of view are

_____

Use different colours to highlight where each new reason is introduced.

> TIP: Remember that the target audience is unlikely to be 'everyone who reads the text' or 'the general public'. Determine which *specific* group is being encouraged to do, feel or think something in response to the text.

The main reasons Wolrich presents for his point of view are _____

_____

Second reading

When you read the material for the second time, focus your attention on analysing how the argument is presented in and supported by persuasive language. Use pens and highlighters to identify different persuasive aspects of the text and to make notes about the intended impact of the writer's choices on the target audience.

Campbell's main tone is _____ Words and phrases that help to create

this tone include _____

Her tone changes when _____

Her tone at this point is _____, as conveyed by language choices such as

_____

The intended effect of this shift in tone on her audience is _____

_____

Wolrich's main tone is _____ Words and phrases that help to create this

tone include _____

The intended effect of this tone is _____

Next, highlight examples of persuasive strategies, structural choices and specific words and phrases you will analyse in your essay. You might want to use different coloured highlighters for different elements – for example, yellow for words and phrases targeting a particular emotion such as fear, green for structural choices, and pink for places where the writer aims to create a dichotomy.

Complete the following table for Campbell's opinion piece, then on your computer or in your notebook, create and complete a similar table for Wolrich's social media post.

Persuasive element	Intended effect
Repeated use of question-and-answer sentence structures	
	To incline the reader to like and trust her
Expert evidence and statistics	
	To evoke annoyance or anger at the wellness industry

Now look closely at the visual elements and consider their relationship to the written text. Complete the table below with details about the visual elements in Campbell's and Wolrich's pieces.

	Campbell	Wolrich
How many visual elements or images are included? What forms do they take?		
Does the visual material support, contradict or offer a different perspective on the opinion presented in the text? How does it do this?		
What is the most significant feature of the dominant visual element? Why do you think this choice was made?		

What is in the foreground, midground and background of this visual element?		
How are particular colours, light and shade used to create a mood, convey an idea or evoke an emotion?		
Are symbols or visual motifs used? What do they suggest about the artist's opinion on the issue?		
Is the visual material accompanied by text such as a caption, speech bubble or heading? How does this text position the viewer to interpret the image?		

Planning your analysis

Your analytical essay needs to unpack how argument and language work together to position readers. This means ordering your body paragraphs and structuring your discussion to show your understanding of the overall impact of the arguments, language and visual material, as well as of the impact of particular word choices and structural decisions.

Choosing a structure

If you are analysing a single text, you might structure your essay in one of the following ways.

- **Reason by reason.** Identify three or four key reasons offered by the writer to support their viewpoint; in each of your body paragraphs, analyse how the reason fits into the overall argument and the language used to present it.

- **Chronological.** Analyse each paragraph or section of the text in order, considering the reasons presented, the order they are presented in, how they develop the writer's argument, and how persuasive language is used to support each point. (This structure can be similar to the 'reason by reason' structure outlined above, as many writers arrange their arguments as a succession of reasons.)

- **Grouping persuasive elements.** Identify several key persuasive elements of the text and devote a paragraph each to analysing them. For example, your first body paragraph might focus on the persuasive effects of the text's structure, your second on the writer's use of emotional appeals, your third on their use of reason and logic, and your fourth on the impact of visual material.

When analysing two texts, you can use either of the following approaches.

- **Block approach.** Discuss both texts in your introduction and conclusion; in your body paragraphs, discuss the main or longest text first, then the second text. When you analyse the second text (and third, if there is one), you can make comparative statements using connectors to show similarities or differences between the texts, such as 'in contrast to ...' or 'similarly ...'.

- **Integrated approach.** In your introduction, give details of both the texts, their authors and where they were published; each of your body paragraphs should focus on a key point of similarity or difference between the texts. Your conclusion should summarise the main similarities and differences.

Use a template like the following to plan the body of your essay. In the middle column, note the main persuasive element you will focus on in each body paragraph. In the final column, note down some key quotations from the text/s you will use to support your discussion. An example has been done for you. (Note that you might only have four body paragraphs rather than five.)

Structure: Integrated		
	Focus	**Examples from the text**
Body paragraph 1	Use of question-and-answer sentence structures by both writers	'It's about being healthy and happy and who doesn't want that? We all do.' 'So to be well we must be spending all that money on seeing doctors, no? No.' 'Guess what? You're well.' (Campbell)
		'Do you need to be worried that you have adrenal fatigue? No, because it's not a thing.' 'Do you need to avoid gluten because some idiot on the internet said that it causes leaky gut? Absolutely not ...' 'Do you need to be afraid of Diet Coke because some charlatans told you it not only causes cancer but actually leads to diabetes? Categorically not ...' (Wolrich)
Body paragraph 2		
Body paragraph 3		
Body paragraph 4		
Body paragraph 5		

Writing your analysis

The third stage in writing your analysis is drawing all your ideas and evidence together in a cohesive discussion.

Introduction

Whether you are writing about one or multiple texts, the contents of your introduction will generally be the same. You can use a template like the following, in which details for Campbell's opinion piece have been included. Add the details below for Wolrich's social media post.

Give the writer's name, contention and main tone. Identify the form they are writing in and where the piece was published. Comment on the structure and visual elements.	In her opinion piece, published on website mamamia.com.au, which attracts an audience of predominantly middle-aged female readers, Leigh Campbell argues that false claims by many in the wellness industry are actively harmful, especially to women. In a logically structured argument that examines each of the reasons for her opinion in turn, Campbell adopts a critical yet often humorous tone to convey her scorn for the industry. The persona she projects, of a concerned and helpful friend, is reinforced by the smiling image of her next to a feminist symbol.
Introduce the second text with a connecting word or phrase. Note the writer's name, contention and main tone; the form of the piece; where it was published; its structure; and any visual elements.	Similarly,

Body paragraphs

Each body paragraph will have three main sections:

What?   What persuasive strategy is being used?

How?   How is it being used?

Why?   Why is it being used?
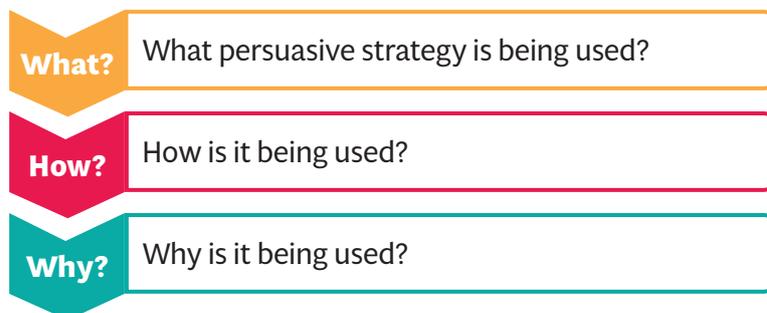
A persuasive strategy might be a reason, a language technique, an element of structure or any other aspect of the text intended to have a persuasive effect on the audience.

The opening of each paragraph – **the topic sentence** – should clearly identify the *what* – that is, the persuasive element that will be the focus of the paragraph. For example:

> Both Campbell and Wolrich directly address the reader using 'you' to establish a rapport with the reader and incline the reader to trust them.

The tables below contain some useful words and phrases you can use in your topic sentences.

Terms to replace 'The writer says …'			
The writer/speaker	contends	argues	claims
	reasons	explores	disputes
	declares	attempts to show	reveals
	asserts	believes	suggests
	states	highlights	challenges
	considers	discloses	maintains
	presents	indicates	demonstrates
	emphasises the significance of	expresses a view that	condemns the notion of

Terms to replace 'The writer uses … (persuasive strategy)'			
The writer/speaker	deploys	makes use of	adopts
	employs	relies on	exploits
	leverages	manipulates	prefers
	applies	mobilises	takes advantage of
	presents their argument in/through	expresses him/herself through	capitalises on

The next part of the paragraph includes examples and/or quotations from the text and explores *how* the persuasive element has been used.

> Campbell relies on phrases such as 'You know', 'You haven't failed' and 'You're well' to construct a friendly persona that positions the reader to feel reassured and comforted rather than alarmed by the idea that the wellness industry is 'made up'. This is a strategy also deployed by Wolrich, who uses expressions such as 'allow yourself to feel a sense of relief' and 'clear your Instagram feed' to similarly relieve his audience's anxiety.

The table below shows some ways to construct analytical sentences about how a writer positions their audience.

This	positions the reader to encourages the audience to implies that the reader should suggests that viewers should inspires readers to	consider the potential …
		reflect on the idea …
		contemplate how …
		think about whether …
		reflect on the possibility of …
		suppose …
		imagine …
		assume …
		believe …

The concluding section of the paragraph examines *why* the persuasive strategy has been used. What impression is the writer aiming to create? What are the feelings, actions or beliefs they intend to evoke? Try to use the words 'reader', 'listener', 'audience' or 'viewer' in this part of the paragraph.

> By directly addressing the reader in this way, both writers intend to suggest that rejecting the false claims of those in the wellness industry will be liberating, with the aim of evoking a sense of gratitude and comfort in their audiences.

The table below shows some ways to construct analytical sentences that describe the intended effect of persuasive elements.

This	is intended to suggest that gives the impression that generates a sense that indicates that implies that	readers the audience viewers	should feel …
			should acknowledge …
			ought to accept …
			should concede …
			are being influenced to …
			are being encouraged to …
			should act to …
			would benefit from …
			are likely to believe …

TIP: Do not write, 'The reader is persuaded …' There are two reasons for this. Firstly, your focus should be on analysing how writers try to persuade, not on evaluating whether or not they succeed. Secondly, you do not know that members of the target audience *will* be persuaded.

Cohesion and fluency

Cohesive devices (or connectives) make sentences flow on logically from one another, helping you to construct a fluent essay that is easy to understand. Use cohesive terms within and between your paragraphs. The following table shows some useful connectives.

To compare similar things	also, besides this, furthermore, moreover, in addition, additionally, similarly, equally
To show contrasts, or changes in argument	rather, alternatively, at the same time, yet, although, though, while, on the other hand, meanwhile, contrary to, in contrast, whereas, neither, however, nevertheless, conversely
To conclude	lastly, hence, thus, therefore, as a result, in conclusion, summarily, consequently

TIP: Aim to use a range of different connectives, rather than overusing one or two words or phrases – this will add interest and precision to your writing and demonstrate your control of language.

Conclusion

Your conclusion is a good place in which to make a summarising statement about the overall impact of the content, structure and language of the writer's argument. Do not simply repeat what you have already explained in your body paragraphs – use different vocabulary and focus on the combined effects of argument and language strategies.

Sentence starters for conclusions			
At the close of the piece …	In closing …	The final impression …	The culmination of the argument is …
Finally, the writer …	In conclusion …	In the final paragraph …	The piece ends with …

The example below is the beginning of a conclusion comparing the holistic effect of the sample texts earlier in this chapter. Complete the paragraph with a similar discussion of the overall impact of Wolrich's Facebook post.

Campbell and Wolrich share a similar attitude towards the wellness industry and both aim to present friendly, relatable personas to encourage their audiences to trust their opinions. However, Campbell relies more heavily on the use of logic, presenting a series of reasons, supported by research and evidence, to persuade the reader that the wellness industry is damaging. In contrast, Wolrich _____

_____

_____

_____

TIP: Do not include your own opinion. The task does not ask whether you have been persuaded.

Editing your analysis

An important part of the writing process is editing your work. Use the checklist below to assess your analysis and revise it where necessary.

- ☐ The introduction gives the key details of each text (writer, publication details, text type).
- ☐ The impact of context, purpose and audience on the choices made by the writer/s with regard to argument and language is discussed.
- ☐ The tone of the writer/s is discussed, any shifts in tone are identified and their intended impact analysed.
- ☐ Each body paragraph follows the 'what, how, why' structure.
- ☐ Each body paragraph includes a variety of short examples or quotes to support the discussion.
- ☐ The impact of any visual elements is discussed.
- ☐ Every sentence is clear and complete.
- ☐ Spelling – including names of people and places in the text – is accurate.

Sample analysis

The following sample analysis compares Campbell's opinion piece and Wolrich's social media post on the issue of the wellness industry, drawing on the sample paragraphs developed earlier in this chapter. The annotations highlight features that you should aim to include in your own analyses.

In an opinion piece published on the website mamamia.com.au, which attracts an audience of predominantly middle-aged female readers, Leigh Campbell argues that false claims by many in the wellness industry are actively harmful, especially to women. In a logically structured argument that examines each of the reasons for her opinion in turn, Campbell adopts a critical yet often humorous tone to convey her scorn for the industry. The persona she projects, of a concerned and helpful friend, is reinforced by the smiling image of her next to a feminist symbol. Similarly, Dr Joshua Wolrich argues in his Facebook post that there is a positive aspect to the questionable nature of much popular health and nutrition advice, as this gives readers licence to dismiss it. Wolrich adopts a conversational and humorous yet assertive tone to reassure his audience of health-conscious millennials that the realisation that health-industry claims are frequently false can actually be liberating. The image reinforces his authority as an expert on the subject by depicting the front cover of a book he has published. **1**

1 The introduction gives the key details of each text and summarises the writers' contentions and persuasive approaches.

Campbell shapes her argument to appeal to her target audience of women of a similar age and demographic to herself, using often casual language ('stuff', 'bloody thankful', 'woowoo') and references to familiar items such as Domino's Pizza and Tim Tams to project an image of herself as a trusted friend. **2** While Wolrich's target audience is broader, encompassing both men and women of various ages, **3** he similarly uses humour and casual language – for example, 'gosh' and 'phew' – and an assured and authoritative tone to reassure his readers that many alarming claims made by wellness experts are not true, and to convey the impression that he is both concerned for readers' welfare and an expert on the topic.

Both Campbell and Wolrich also directly address the reader using 'you' to establish a rapport and incline the reader to trust them. Campbell relies on phrases such as 'You know', 'You haven't failed' and 'You're well' to construct a friendly persona that positions the reader to feel reassured and comforted rather than alarmed by the idea that the wellness industry is 'made up'. This is a strategy also deployed by Wolrich, who uses expressions such as 'allow yourself to feel a sense of relief' and 'clear your Instagram feed' to similarly reassure his audience. By directly addressing the reader in this way, both writers intend to suggest that rejecting the false claims of those in the wellness industry will be liberating, with the aim of evoking a sense of gratitude and comfort in their audiences. **4**

Similarly, **5** both writers use a question-and-answer structure to communicate key ideas. The effect of this is threefold. Firstly, it allows both writers to adopt a more conversational, friendly tone, aimed at encouraging their respective audiences to view their arguments as well-intentioned and helpful rather than lecturing. This is reinforced by the often comedic way the writers, particularly Wolrich, use this strategy, as, for example, when he tells the reader that adrenal fatigue is 'not a thing'. Secondly, **6** it is a structural technique that allows each writer to present their contentions as though in response to reader questions, implying that they are directly addressing readers' key concerns. This is particularly evident in Wolrich's piece, which is almost entirely structured around this technique. Finally, the use of the question-and-answer structure throughout each piece mimics a dialogue with the audience. By asking questions, the writers prompt the audience to actively engage with their arguments, encouraging them to genuinely consider the issues being discussed. Campbell's framing of

2 Identifies a persuasive strategy and cites relevant evidence from the text in the form of short quotations.

3 Identifies the specific and distinct audience for the second text.

4 Insightful analysis of the intended effect of a shared persuasive strategy, supported by short quotations.

5 Appropriate connecting word is used to transition to a discussion of another key similarity between the texts.

6 Use of signposting ('Firstly', 'Secondly', 'Finally') contributes to a coherent and in-depth analysis of a particular strategy.

→ her rhetorical questions and Wolrich's question-and-answer structure aim to lead their audiences to agree with them, aided by the confident tone in which both writers state their answers, as in Campbell's declaration that 'you're well' and Wolrich's bold statement 'categorically not'. **7**

However, Campbell and Wolrich take divergent approaches to providing evidence to support their arguments. **8** Throughout her piece, Campbell cites evidence and statistics to support her arguments. She explains that the wellness industry 'has grown 12.8 percent between 2015 and 2017', outlines the recent history of the term 'orthorexia' and cites a number of doctors and other medical experts to reinforce her contention. This generates a sense of legitimacy: by providing a range of expert opinions and concrete evidence to support her conclusions, Campbell positions her audience to believe that her opinion is well-founded, rigorously researched and supported by others. In contrast, Wolrich's arguments are substantially more emotive, and he provides little in the way of tangible supporting evidence. Instead, he relies on his tone and status as a doctor to lend his argument credibility. By speaking in an authoritative tone, Wolrich presents his reasons as self-evident conclusions. His title of 'Dr' also encourages his audience to view these conclusions as reasonable and based on his own expert knowledge, inclining them to trust him. **9**

The images accompanying each piece also contribute to their persuasive impact in distinct ways. Campbell's image, with her smiling face centred and her direct gaze at the viewer, reinforces the friendly persona her written text relies on, while the image of Wolrich's book cover reinforces his expert status. **10** The photograph of Campbell is superimposed on a background composed of various images intended to evoke a connection to the wellness industry, such as an avocado. Next to her is a well-known feminist symbol. The intention of this image is to link Campbell with women's rights, thus positioning her as a noble crusader fighting, on behalf of women, against the exploitative wellness industry. **11** The reader is encouraged to feel that she has their best interests at heart and her stance is based on genuine concern for women, a group likely to include the reader. Wolrich's image likewise constructs him as a figure in opposition to the wellness industry. The image is of the cover of a book he has written, signalling that he is an authoritative figure on the topic of health. The picture of a bottle of pills is intended to contrast with its label, the slogan 'food isn't medicine', with the pills representing a more traditional medicinal form. The imagery of the pills also evokes

7 Unpacks the multiple intended effects of a key persuasive strategy used by both writers.

8 The connecting word 'however' is used to transition to a discussion of differences between the texts.

9 Further comparative language – 'in contrast', 'more', 'instead' – is used to present an analysis of a key difference between the writers' use of evidence.

10 A paragraph is devoted to an analysis of the visual language in both texts, again using appropriate comparative terms such as 'distinct', 'while' and 'likewise'.

11 Thoughtful analysis of the effects of a particular element of the image and the way in which it supports the creation of the writer's persona in the written text.

the idea of a 'red pill', popularly associated with the revelation of disturbing truths and new understanding, consequently framing Wolrich as someone who will shatter the illusory spell of the wellness industry. This is further reinforced by the quotation at the bottom of the image, labelling Wolrich 'a voice of reason in a field of fake news'. **10**

Campbell and Wolrich share a similar attitude towards the wellness industry and both aim to present friendly, relatable personas to encourage their audiences to trust their opinions. However, Campbell relies more heavily on the use of logic, presenting a series of reasons, supported by research and evidence, to persuade the reader that the wellness industry is damaging. In contrast, Wolrich relies on an authoritative yet friendly tone, supported by his status as a doctor, to persuade his audience to reach a similar conclusion. **11**

10 Both visual and written language connected with the image are analysed in terms of how each supports the other.

11 Fairly short but effective conclusion summarises the main similarities and differences between the texts.

PRESENTING YOUR POINT OF VIEW

In this chapter

This chapter outlines the process of choosing and researching an issue, and planning and writing a persuasive piece to express your own point of view on the issue. The process you will follow applies equally to both written and oral delivery.

When planning and writing your point-of-view piece, you should apply all the skills and knowledge you have learned from analysing the arguments and persuasive language of other writers.

Choosing an issue

The issue on which you present a point of view should be one for which you can find plenty of information and a variety of opinions. Create a list of possible issues by collecting articles from newspapers and blogs; watching news and current affairs programs; listening to news-based radio programs; and following news services' social media feeds. This will give you a good idea of topical issues in the media. Comments sections in both print and online news publications will also give you an idea of the range of opinions the topic provokes.

Possible issues I could present a point of view on: _____

_____

_____

Choose one of the issues in the list you compiled above, and create a table like the one below to capture information about how it has been covered in the media. Refer to a range of media sources and text types.

> TIP: Remember that an issue is a topic that generates a variety of different viewpoints and is of general public concern.

Issue: _____

Context	This issue was in the media recently because _____ _____				
Points of view	The main points of view are _____ _____				
Sources	Text title and text type	Writer (include any known qualifications, affiliations etc.)	Place and date of publication	Contention	Key points
Contention	My opinion on this issue is _____ because _____ _____ _____ (identify at least three strong reasons)				

Planning your point-of-view piece

Now that you have gathered information on your issue and formed an opinion, you can plan how you will present your argument. Remember that, in Unit 4, your point of view must be delivered as an oral presentation. In Unit 2 your point-of-view piece must be in written form, but in Unit 1 the method of delivery is not specified by the VCAA, so your school will decide. You might be required to deliver an oral presentation or you might have the opportunity to choose a written form such as an opinion piece or a blog post.

Having a clear purpose and understanding of your target audience will help you to create a strongly persuasive text.

The text type in which I will present my point of view is _____

The key structural features of this text type are _____

_____

The key persuasive language features found in this text type are _____

_____

My target audience will be _____

What they are likely to know about the issue already is _____

_____

Their opinion on the issue is likely to be _____

After reading/listening to my point of view I want my audience to think/feel/believe

_____

Your aim is to persuade your audience to do, think or feel something, so choose strong, logical arguments and evidence that will persuade them. Return to the notes you made in the table on page 179. In the final cell, you identified reasons for your belief. You now need to decide the order in which you will present these to have the greatest impact. For example, you might open with your strongest reason, to engage the audience immediately. This is often a good approach if you feel your audience is likely to already be receptive to your point of view. Alternatively, you might choose to begin with the reason that is likely to be least confronting or difficult for your audience to accept, then build your argument by presenting progressively stronger reasons.

Reason 1: _____

Reason 2: _____

Reason 3: _____

Reason 4: _____

Next, consider 'roadblocks' – beliefs held by your audience that might prevent them from being convinced by your argument. Do they think that what you are suggesting will be boring, harmful, morally wrong, expensive, unsafe, unfair or frightening? Will it upset their way of life, affect their loved ones, or negatively alter their environment?

Identifying your audience's likely roadblocks will help you to dismantle them. For example, if you are arguing that bike helmets should not be compulsory, you might need to convince an audience of bike riders or their parents that riding without a helmet will be safe, before you can persuade them that wearing a helmet should be a matter of personal choice.

My audience's main roadblocks are likely to be_____

_____

I will convince them this doesn't matter by _____

_____

You could include a paragraph rebutting key roadblocks after you have presented your reasons, or you might like to begin with the rebuttal paragraph, to prepare your audience to accept your argument.

Planning template

You can use a template like the following one to plan your piece. You might have more than three main reasons to support your viewpoint. In the middle column, make notes about the details you will present to support each reason. In the final column, make notes about the language techniques or word choices you will use to support your argument. If you will be giving an oral presentation, make notes about how you will deliver each section of the speech, such as where you might display a graph or photo, or points at which you might raise your voice for effect, or use particular gestures to emphasise a point.

Section	Information, evidence and examples	Language and delivery
Introduction • Use an engaging opening, e.g. an anecdote or direct question to the audience. • Introduce the issue. • Identify the main points of view. • State your contention.		
Reason 1 • Present your first reason.		
Reason 2 • Present your second reason.		
Reason 3 • Present your third reason.		
Rebuttal • Counter your audience's likely roadblocks. • Refute the arguments of those on the other side of the debate.		
Conclusion • Restate your main points. • Give a call to action.		

Writing your point-of-view piece

On average, clear speeches are delivered at a speed of 130–150 words per minute. For a speech of four to six minutes, you will need to write between 600 and 900 words.

Getting your audience's attention

While your introduction needs to give some context for your issue and outline your contention, it is also important to capture your audience's attention from the beginning. The best way to make your audience listen is to demonstrate that the issue is important and relevant to them, because it affects them or people or things that they care about, or concerns a principle or idea they value. This task requires you to show sophistication and logic in your presentation, so avoid showy stunts.

Consider starting by:

- telling a short story or anecdote
- asking a question, either one that requires a response or a rhetorical question
- presenting an interesting and little-known fact, statistic or example
- stating directly why this issue should matter to your audience
- using humour to relax your audience and establish a rapport.

These will be my opening lines: _____

_____

_____

_____

Writing for speech

If your point of view is to be delivered orally, remember that you are writing for the ear. Write a piece that is easy to deliver and easy to follow aurally – a live audience cannot rewind what you say, so every statement should be immediately comprehensible to listeners. Techniques that will help your audience to follow your argument include:

- repeating short sentences or phrases that emphasise your key arguments
- asking rhetorical questions followed by slight pauses
- using simple, direct sentences to introduce and conclude each new point or emphasise important points
- repeating your contention at the end.

The use of clear signposting words and phrases when you are starting and ending a point, or are providing evidence, will also help your audience to follow your reasoning. The table opposite gives some examples.

The first point	This is demonstrated by	Finally
It is also vital to recognise	The evidence to support this	To conclude
The next significant	To illustrate this	As the evidence shows
In considering … we must also acknowledge that	To make this clear, consider	It is clear that
Another perspective is that	This is suggested by	In summary

You should also clearly show the connections between your ideas and examples. The table below gives some useful words and phrases.

To show similarity	To show difference	To expand on a point
similarly	by contrast	furthermore
likewise	on the other hand	moreover
in the same way	however	in addition
equally	yet	for example
so too	whereas	for instance
just as	in comparison	in this way

Editing your point-of-view piece

For all point-of-view pieces check the following.

- ☐ The piece demonstrates research into and understanding of the issue and identifies relevant stakeholders.
- ☐ The contention is clearly expressed.
- ☐ All the reasons and evidence clearly support the contention.
- ☐ The argument is logically structured.
- ☐ A range of audience-appropriate persuasive strategies is used.
- ☐ There is a range of interesting persuasive vocabulary.
- ☐ The opening is engaging and the conclusion is strong.
- ☐ Sources are appropriately cited.

For oral presentations, read your draft out loud to check the following.

- ☐ You know how to pronounce every word. (If your piece contains any difficult words or names, spend some time practising how to pronounce them, or rewrite to eliminate them.)
- ☐ There are no overly long sentences that cause you to run out of breath.
- ☐ You know where you need to pause, speed up or slow down for effect.
- ☐ Signposts and transition phrases are clear and appropriate.

Writing your statement of intention

In Unit 4, you must write a statement of intention, which should be around 300–500 words, to accompany your point-of-view SAC. It is likely that you will also be asked to write one to accompany your Year 11 assessment. The statement will explain the writing decisions you made as you developed your piece. It can be written in the first or third person, and in the future or past tense.

For each of the key elements in your point of view you will need to explain why you made that choice and how your decision works to position your audience. The following template provides a sample outline for a statement of intention; you will need to adapt it to suit your own piece and to reflect your own writing style.

My point-of-view piece argues that _____

_____ (contention). The purpose

of this piece is to convince _____ (target audience) to

_____ (purpose)

I chose to write my piece as a/an _____ (form). I structured my

argument _____ By doing this I hoped to

_____

I considered that the greatest hurdle in persuading my audience was _____

_____ (roadblock), so I decided to _____

Examples of this include _____

This was intended to position my audience to _____

I chose to write in a predominantly _____ style, as shown by the choice

of such words and phrases as _____

and _____

I felt this style would appeal to my target audience because _____

_____

I also used a range of other persuasive strategies. Specifically, I used _____

(strategy). Examples of this include _____

This was intended to _____

_____ (desired effect on audience)

Another key strategy I used was _____, with the aim of positioning the

audience to _____

I aimed to leave my audience with a powerful final impression by _____

_____

_____

Delivering a speech

Whether you are delivering an oral presentation as a recording or in person, careful preparation is vital. The following tips will help you to present confidently.

- Memorise the main points of your speech so that you do not have to read every word of your presentation and can establish eye contact with your audience.

- Use cue cards. Number them and write on them in a large, clear font.

- Mark timing and emphasis on your cards with highlighters or coloured text. Include when to pause, which words to emphasise and when to alter your pace, pitch (high or low) or volume.

- Rehearse out loud – multiple times – to perfect your timing and delivery.

- Record yourself or rehearse in front of the mirror to make sure your gestures are appropriate and natural, and your voice is clear and well-paced.

When delivering your presentation, remember the following.

- Take a deep breath before you begin, to steady your nerves.

- Speak a little more slowly than you usually would. This will help you to feel calm and also combat the natural tendency to speak too quickly when nervous.

- Make eye contact with the audience and assume a positive and engaging stance. If you find it difficult to make eye contact with individual audience members, look just above the audience members' heads.

- Use facial expressions, hand gestures and emphasis where appropriate.

- Speak in a tone suitable to your topic, varying this as appropriate.

> TIP: If you are not able to deliver your whole speech without reading from notes, at least memorise key lines, such as your opening and conclusion, so that you can deliver them with greater impact, making eye contact with your audience.

Sample point-of-view piece

The following sample point-of-view piece focuses on the issue of bilingual school programs. It is followed by a statement of intention explaining the writer's choices.

Hello everyone. Or should I say, *Konnichiwa, Aloha* and *Guten Tag*! May I take a moment to ask how many of us can speak a second language fluently? [pause] More importantly, how many of us *wish* we could? **1**

I wanted to talk to you today about an issue that I'm passionate about – bilingual programs in schools. As you all know, here at Lorikeet College, we study French and Japanese from prep and

1 The audience's attention is captured by two effective strategies – the unexpected use of multiple languages and a direct question.

can continue with either or both languages right up to Year 12. I do Japanese, and I love it. But unfortunately, a couple of language classes a week aren't going to make any of us fluent. **2** There is overwhelming evidence to show that being immersed in a language is far more effective. That's why I believe that Lorikeet College – and in fact all schools – should introduce a fully bilingual program. How much more quickly would we learn a new language and vocabulary if we heard and spoke it in *every* class?

I know this might sound like a drastic change, and perhaps only something that prestigious international private schools might attempt. But several schools in our state have already incorporated an additional language in their schools to great effect, by inviting expert language teachers to collaborate with existing staff. As students, we are being robbed **3** of the best opportunities to learn and grow if our school doesn't follow suit.

Dozens of studies by educational psychologists show how learning a second language aids brain development. By switching between two sets of words, we develop a cognitive flexibility that isn't achieved through using just one language. **4** Similarly, it improves problem-solving, literacy and listening skills. In fact, bringing a second language into every subject – maths, science, geography and so on – will likely improve students' marks across the board. And then there are the benefits in terms of creativity. The skill needed to switch between two sets of vocabulary and grammar rules also boosts our capacity to find new ways to make sense of the world and to consider multiple perspectives at once.

Did you know that, compared to adults, young people are linguistic geniuses? According to research by Dr Dean Rather, a child's ability to learn a new language is much higher before they reach puberty. **5** Therefore, the earlier additional languages are introduced, the better, which is why I believe the bilingual schools program should start with our very youngest students in prep. Think how fluent they'll be by the time they're our age!

I understand that some of you might be concerned that learning in another language might be overwhelming. Let me reassure you. Recent studies have disproved the myth that children become confused when learning multiple languages. In fact, these studies show that children reach the same developmental milestones no matter how many languages they're learning. **6**

2 Reference to their shared school experiences, together with the use of inclusive language, positions audience members to feel that this is an issue relevant to their own lives.

3 Emotive vocabulary choice encourages audience members to feel disadvantaged and even victimised, which is likely to make them feel invested in the issue and inclined to side with the speaker.

4 Specialist vocabulary appropriate to the topic is used.

5 Expert evidence is appropriately cited.

6 The speaker addresses a likely roadblock or counterargument and rebuts it by citing recent studies.

The next important point to consider is the benefits to students beyond the classroom. Let me tell you a story about my cousin. A few years ago my whole family went to Europe on holiday. My cousin had been studying French in school, and she treated it like any other subject until we ended up lost in the streets of Paris. She started to recognise the words on the signs around us, and even stumbled through a conversation with a local who was able to direct us back to our hotel. And from that point on, my cousin acquired new French vocabulary everywhere she looked and was exchanging basic phrases with anyone we met. A whole new culture opened up for her, full of new people and perspectives. Now she's a young adult who travels to a different French-speaking country every year. She's even considering career options in Paris. **7**

This demonstrates the power of learning a language, beyond the undeniable academic benefits. Travel opportunities. Relationship-building opportunities. Career opportunities. **8** We live in an international world, and those who are bilingual can earn five to twenty per cent higher salaries, according to multiple sources. While it can be hard to imagine where we all might end up one day, it's important to consider whether we feel our school experience has equipped us to achieve all the varied and great things we dream of.

Here in Australia we are lucky enough to belong to a diverse community, full of different cultures and languages. According to the 2016 census, more than twenty per cent of Australians spoke a language other than English at home. When all students are studying an additional language, there will be less differentiation between the children of migrant families and those who are native English speakers.

But perhaps the most important benefit of making our schools bilingual is *compassion*. **9** New perspectives that develop from learning another language promote an understanding of and interest in people who might seem very different from us. By learning how to address people in Japanese, you also learn conventions for showing respect to others. By learning polite phrases in the Hawaiian language, you will also discover how much religion is interwoven into the culture. By learning unique words in German that aren't found in English, you might discover Germany's rich history of philosophy.

So I hope you'll agree with me that making the bold leap into bilingual learning will aid students academically, emotionally and socially. As the evidence shows, being immersed in an additional language doesn't just teach you a second language. It teaches you how to learn. **10**

7 Anecdote illustrates several benefits of language learning in a way likely to be inspiring and relatable to the audience.

8 Repetition of 'opportunities' is used effectively to suggest that there are many benefits to language immersion.

9 The speaker presents their most important reason at the end of the speech, to leave the audience with a strong final impression.

10 The conclusion aims to inspire through the use of phrases such as 'bold leap' and through a succinct statement about the broad overarching benefit of language immersion.

Statement of intention

My point-of-view speech will argue in favour of implementing bilingual education in schools. My audience will be my teacher and my fellow students who share my context of having twice-weekly classes in an additional language at school. My aim will be to draw on that shared experience, which most of us view positively, to convince them that making the change to bilingual education will be in the best interests of us all. **1**

I will structure my speech to easily guide the audience through the different aspects of my argument, starting with evidence for the academic benefits before moving on to the emotional and social benefits. As senior secondary students, most of my peers are concerned about performing well academically, so I believe this structure is likely to be effective. As we are starting to think about university and careers after school, the argument that our earnings could increase and we could have more career options if we were fluent in another language will also be likely to engage and persuade them. **2**

I will include repetition, inclusive language and rhetorical questions in my speech, as well as an interesting opening. I will choose language such as 'our school', 'we' and 'us' to emphasise that my proposal will benefit all of us, positioning listeners to feel invested in the issue. I will use rhetorical questions and repetition to provoke the audience's imagination, and encourage them to consider both their own wish that they had learned a language when they were younger and the possibility of giving that gift to other students. These techniques will enable me to counteract a potential roadblock: that making such a change in schools would involve a lot of work. By mentioning that other schools in the state have already introduced bilingual programs, I hope to evoke anxiety that our school may fall behind if we don't act now. **3**

I will also employ an enthusiastic and passionate tone to communicate my strong feelings about the issue and encourage the audience to share them. By describing the proposal as 'bold' I will acknowledge that making the school bilingual would be a big step, but will also position the audience to want to identify with that positively connoted adjective (which has associations with adventure and innovation), and therefore to agree with me. **4** Balancing the use of emotional appeals, I will include statistics, references to research and an anecdote to support my reasons, conveying the impression that my view is supported by experts and evidence. This will position my audience to feel that, on both a logical and an emotional level, my proposal makes sense. **5**

1 Shows an awareness of audience and context; explains purpose.

2 Discusses structural choices in terms of the intended impact on the audience.

3 Identifies particular persuasive strategies and their intended effects on the audience.

4 Discusses a particular vocabulary choice in terms of its connotations.

5 Identifies an overall persuasive strategy – the balancing of reason and emotional appeals – and explains why it was chosen.

THE EXAM

In this chapter

❭ Preparing for the exam

❭ In the exam

The final assessment for VCE English is a three-hour written exam, with an additional fifteen minutes of reading time. Your exam mark is worth 50 per cent of your final Study Score for English. The other 50 per cent comes from the total of all your SAC marks.

The exam consists of three sections:

• A – Analytical interpretation of a text

• B – Comparative analysis of texts

• C – Argument and persuasive language.

Each section is equally weighted, with each response receiving a mark out of 10 from two assessors, giving a total of 20 available marks for each section. Your total examination score is out of 60.

You will be given a task book containing instructions for each of the three sections of the exam, as well as topics for Sections A and B, and the written and visual material for Section C. The criteria will be printed on the back page of the task book. You will write your responses in an answer book.

You are permitted to take the following materials into the exam: pens and/or pencils; highlighters; erasers; sharpeners; rulers; and a printed English and/or bilingual dictionary.

There is no official VCAA exam at the end of Year 11. However, many schools ask their students to complete a practice exam to help prepare them for the exam in Year 12. The advice in this chapter will also help you to prepare for and complete such a practice exam.

Preparing for the exam

The work you complete during the year is excellent preparation for the end-of-year exam. However, in the lead-up to the exam, you should also dedicate plenty of time to revising your texts, practising your essay-writing, and honing particular skills you find challenging. Strategies for revising include the following.

- Re-read or re-watch your texts as many times as you're able to, so that you know them thoroughly. Make notes about themes, characters, plot, setting and so on, and memorise at least six short, impactful quotations from each.

- Read past exams and examination reports, which are available on the VCAA website (https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/assessment/vce-assessment/past-examinations/Pages/English.aspx). Previous exams will give you a good idea of the structure and general content to expect, while examination reports provide valuable information about particular aspects of the exam that previous students either struggled with or tackled successfully.

- Attend revision lectures, whether arranged by your school or offered by an external organisation. These usually offer helpful insights and information, provided by experienced teachers and exam assessors.

- Plan how you will divide your time in the exam. The three sections are equally weighted, so you should spend roughly the same amount of time on each. If you find a particular task more challenging than the others, you might want to spend a little more time on that section. You can do the three sections in whichever order you wish. If you start with Section C, the task material will be fresh in your mind after the reading time; or you might prefer to start with the section you feel most confident about.

- Practise handwriting. Many students are so used to working on their computers that they struggle to write by hand for three hours. It is important that your handwriting is legible to assessors.

In the exam

Use the fifteen minutes of reading time to familiarise yourself with the task material in Section C. You cannot make notes during this time, but you are allowed to consult your dictionary if there are any words you don't understand.

You should also take a few minutes during reading time to look at the topics for your texts in Sections A and B, and choose the ones you feel most confident tackling.

Section A

Section A of the exam requires you to write an analytical response to one of two possible topics on your set text. Your essay will be given a mark out of 10 based on the expected qualities published by the VCAA (https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/assessment/vce-assessment/past-examinations/Pages/English.aspx).

The response will be marked holistically, meaning that marks will not be awarded or deducted based on a list of requirements. Instead, assessors will decide which mark-range qualities best describe your essay as a whole.

The following advice will help you to write a strong response for Section A.

- Read the topic carefully to make sure you understand exactly what it is asking. Pay attention to *all* the key words – for example, if you are asked how a text conveys a sense of hope and optimism, you must discuss *both* terms, demonstrating your awareness of the subtle differences between them. If a topic refers to 'characters', plural, you must discuss several, including some minor characters.

- Spend a few minutes planning your essay. Your plan will not be marked, but having an outline of the ideas you will explore and the order in which you will discuss them will help you to write a coherent and well-structured piece. An effective approach to structuring your essay is to state a contention (your interpretation) in your introduction; then, in the body paragraphs, present your reasons in descending order of importance.

- High-level essays will demonstrate a nuanced understanding of the topic and of the text. Looking for complexity in the topic and considering its assumptions can help you to develop a subtle interpretation. For instance, if a topic refers to the idea of loyalty, a straightforward analysis might explore only loyalty between romantic partners, while a more thoughtful analysis might consider loyalty in terms of friendships, or in a professional context, or even relating to ideas and values.

- Every paragraph should present a particular idea or reason in support of your interpretation. Each paragraph should also include relevant supporting evidence from the text, such as quotations. But remember that it is not enough simply to include examples. All textual evidence, including quotations, needs to be explained in terms of how it supports your interpretation.

- Keep quotations relatively short – most space should be devoted to your own ideas and analysis.

- Offer an original interpretation of the text that reflects your own deep thinking about it. Remember that interpretations are not right or wrong – if you can support your interpretation with strong reasons and evidence from the text, it is valid.

- Use metalanguage appropriate to your text type and the topic. Try to include some reference to views and values in order to demonstrate a deep understanding of the implications of the ideas in the text.

> TIP: If you know your text as well as you should, you will have far more ideas and evidence than there is room to include in your exam response. Be selective – choose only your best ideas and support them with the strongest and most relevant textual evidence.

Section B

The task for Section B requires you to write a comparative analysis of two texts in response to one of two topics on your text pair. Your response will be marked holistically and awarded a mark out of 10 based on the expected qualities.

The following advice will help you to write a strong response for Section B.

- The topic will identify a key idea or ideas that should be the focus of your essay. However, as with your text response in Section A, you are encouraged to think about the implications of these ideas, consider the assumptions that underlie them and look for ways in which you could open up the topic to explore connected ideas.

- While it isn't a requirement to write an integrated analysis in which you discuss both texts in each of your body paragraphs, this approach does tend to lead to stronger responses. You might devote slightly more space to one text in one paragraph and to the other text in the next, but aim to address an idea or point of argument in terms of both texts in each paragraph.

- Each paragraph should also include supporting textual evidence from each text. Aim to include a mix of 'obvious' and more unexpected evidence, in order to demonstrate that your knowledge of the texts is both broad and deep.

- Textual evidence concerning characters, plot and so on should be analysed in terms of the key ideas you are exploring in your response. Consider the views and values that underpin the depiction of characters and events, and the big-picture messages the creators of the texts are aiming to convey.

- Like your response for Section A, your comparative response should demonstrate your own original thinking about the texts. As long as they are supported by textual evidence, your unique insights into the connections between the texts will be valid.

- Consider how key differences between the texts affect the ways in which they present ideas. For example, the visual language in a film communicates meaning differently from the written text of a novel or the stage directions in a play. Even if your texts are the same text types, they will have been created in different social, historical and geographical contexts, all of which affect their exploration of ideas.

> TIP: Do not try to re-use all or part of a previously written comparative response. Engagement with the specific and nuanced way in which particular ideas are expressed in the topic is an important element of a high-level response.

Section C

Section C requires you to write an analysis of the use of argument and persuasive language, including visual language, in a media text or texts. You will be presented with one or possibly two persuasive texts, which will include or be accompanied by a visual element, such as a photograph or illustration. The material will also include a box with background information, such as the name/s of the writer/s and the context for the text/s. Your analysis will be awarded a mark out of 10 based on the expected qualities.

The following advice will help you to write a strong response for Section C.

- Read through the task material at least twice, ensuring you have a clear idea of the contention/s and main persuasive strategies used. You could complete these readings during reading time and choose to tackle this section of the exam first, while the material is fresh in your mind.

- You might be presented with a single text (including visual material), or two texts. If there are two texts, one is likely to be the main text and to be longer than the second. Devote most of your analysis to the longer text, with perhaps just a paragraph on the shorter text. The exam task does *not* ask you to *compare* the texts. However, you might like to use a comparative term to transition from discussing the main text to the secondary text, to make your writing flow well.

- Spend a few minutes planning your analysis. First, highlight or circle key persuasive strategies or vocabulary choices in the text/s. Then decide on an approach. You might sort persuasive strategies into groups, or you might analyse the text reason by reason. Number your highlighted examples according to the paragraph in which you will discuss them. You won't be able to discuss every example, so select the strongest ones.

- Your analysis should include discussion of the text's tone, noting any places where it changes, and why. Support your analysis of tone with examples of words or phrases that contribute to it.

- Incorporate the background information into your analysis, to demonstrate your awareness of the ways in which the writer or speaker has crafted their message according to their *specific* audience, the context in which they are writing or speaking, their purpose and the text type.

- Analysing visual language is a specific requirement of the task. Aim to relate the point of view conveyed by the visual material to the point of view expressed in the written text/s – do they convey similar or opposing opinions?

> TIP: Using the 'What? How? Why?' approach to writing your analysis (see page 170) will help you to keep your focus on the intended effects of particular persuasive strategies on the target audience.

Acknowledgements

DIGITAL BONUS MATERIAL

KEY SKILLS

for

SENIOR ENGLISH

2nd edition

Narrative point of view

The narrative viewpoint in a film is created by a combination of shots and editing. This can give the impression that the story is being told from an external, objective perspective or, alternatively, that it is presenting the point of view of a particular character. The narrative viewpoint can be shown through:

- a cut to a **point-of-view shot** in which the camera shows a scene as it would be viewed through the eyes of a particular character
- a cut to a **close-up shot** of a character's face to show their emotional responses
- a shot or a series of shots showing the **flow of images or thoughts** in a character's mind
- a **narrative voice-over** added during the editing stage to tell the audience what a character is thinking or remembering.

Grace Kelly as Lisa in *Rear Window*, shown in this shot from Jeff's point of view

Analyse narrative point of view in a film

1. Consider the opening scenes of your film. Is the audience positioned to view events as a detached observer, or are they positioned to see things from one character's perspective?

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

2. Which film shots and techniques are used to create this narrative viewpoint? (For example, an extreme long shot might give a detached perspective, while a handheld camera might convey a character's viewpoint.)

_____

_____

_____

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3. What is the effect of this choice of narrative viewpoint? (If the viewpoint changes at any point in the film, consider the effects of this, too.)

_____

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Sample response: *The Women of Troy*

This essay follows the plan on page 40.

Topic:

'In *The Women of Troy* there is hope despite profound loss.' Discuss.

The losses experienced by the characters in *The Women of Troy* are profound on many levels: they are both emotional and material; they occur in the past, the present and the future; they lack any sense of justification or proportion. **1** The Trojan women have lost their families and their homes, **2** and as the play unfolds it reveals that their futures hold few if any sources of pleasure or comfort. **3** Yet the women offer a powerful testimony about the devastation caused by war, and the Greeks face a traumatic journey home following their brutal and immoral actions at Troy. **4** For the Trojan women there is little hope, but the play as a whole suggests that the future might hold a stronger sense of justice and honour for the Trojans. **5**

Loss in *The Women of Troy* is comprehensive, from the loss of loved ones to the loss of one's city. **6** Hecuba laments: 'I've lost my home. I've lost my children. Everything.' Her daughter-in-law, Andromache, has lost her husband Hector, just as Hecuba has lost Priam. Hector 'had everything [she] dreamed of in a husband', and when she learns that her son, Astyanax, is to be killed, she despairs that 'I can't save my own child from death'. Euripides emphasises how much the war has taken from these women, and how complete their defeat is. **7** In the end, Talthybius issues orders to 'burn everything down'; it will be no mere attack on the city's buildings, but total annihilation: 'When we have reduced the whole lot to ashes then we can celebrate'. To destroy an ancient city and then 'celebrate' exposes the twisted logic of the Greek victors, leading the audience to condemn the Greeks' brutality as well as share the Trojan women's feelings of devastation. **8** Throughout the play there is, alongside the women's grief, a tone of weary resignation, a sense that events are unstoppable. 'What's done is done' cries the Chorus, while Hecuba regrets that 'We can only beat our breasts in anguish'. Their sense of loss is deep and lasting, and intensified by feelings of powerlessness. **9**

These terrible losses mean the women have nothing to look forward to, only continued suffering. **10** Their bleak circumstances seem incompatible with hope. **11** They face years of slavery to men they detest, as well as the permanent loss of any social status or source of consolation. Hecuba will live the rest of her life 'as a slave … the floor will be good enough

1 Begins with a broad statement about the play, addressing the topic.

2 Signpost 1 – forms of loss experienced by the women.

3 Signpost 2 – what the future holds, showing the absence of hope.

4 Signpost 3 – examples that suggest a small degree of hope.

5 Main contention, presented as a logical development of the previous sentences.

6 Topic sentence 1 picks up on signpost 1.

7 Explains significance of the evidence.

8 Continued explanation of the examples and quotes, using verbs such as 'exposes' and 'condemn' to explain how the text is presenting ideas and attitudes.

9 Linking sentence draws together the discussion and clearly connects with the topic.

10 Topic sentence 2 picks up on signpost 2. Note that the phrase 'look forward to' avoids excessive repetition of the word 'hope'.

11 Elaboration on the topic sentence.

for my bony back' while Andromache is to be 'a slave in the very house of the man who murdered my husband'. They do not even have the prospect of seeing their children grow up; they only have the memories of their tragically truncated lives and unnecessary deaths. Both women contemplate the value of their lives, and the possibility (or impossibility) of hope. Hecuba asserts 'The lucky ones are dead', while Andromache feels that Polyxena is 'happier dead than I am living'. Yet this prompts Hecuba to qualify her own position, **12** and to raise the possibility that not everything is lost: 'The living at least have hope. To be dead is to be nothing'. For Andromache, 'to die is better than a life of agony', and she asks: 'What hope have I?' While both women have little to look forward to, for Hecuba there is a kind of hope contained in sheer endurance, and in continuing to have feelings of any kind. Even at the end she wills herself on: 'My legs are trembling, but I won't fall'. By this time, Andromache has been taken away, and Hecuba's continued presence onstage **13** allows her message about life and hope to prevail over Andromache's more nihilistic one. Yet she knows too well how overwhelming her losses have been, and that, as the Chorus states, 'Time will bring no relief'.

Nevertheless, there are sources of hope within the play, although for the women themselves these are limited. **14** They have survived; they show pride and resilience; they reveal how cruelly the Greeks have acted. Their lives have been all but destroyed, yet they will leave a legacy for the future through the 'songs' that will be 'written in memory of our suffering'. There will, in other words, be a form of testimony, of remembering and honouring the lives of the Trojan women and men. Moreover, there is a sense of justice, of a divine levelling, in the prospect facing the Greeks as they return home: Athene is furious with the Greeks for dragging Cassandra from Athene's temple and, expressing a wish that the women of Troy might well share, wants the Greeks' 'voyage home to be a complete disaster'. Poseidon too expresses a desire for retribution: 'When a man sacks a town and destroys everything … He's asking for trouble. The same destruction sooner or later, will fall on his own head'. This prediction hangs over the play, so as the audience feels mounting anger towards the Greeks for their callous treatment of the Trojan women and the brutal murder of young Astyanax, they also know that the Greeks too will receive a punishment at the hands of the gods. **15** It is a harsh form of justice, but nevertheless a form of redress that awaits beyond the play's ending, that suggests the extreme violence of the Greeks will not go unchecked forever. There will, in the end, be a kind of accounting. As thin and unpromising as it is, this is one version of hope offered by the play.

12 Explanation of the evidence addresses contrasting perspectives on hope within the play, showing an understanding of the play's complexity.

13 Reference to a performance aspect (character exits) shows understanding of the text's form.

14 Topic sentence 3 picks up on signpost 3. The word 'nevertheless' signals a shift in the focus of the argument.

15 Extended discussion of revenge/retribution develops this as a form of hope in the play.

The women of Troy have no prospects of future happiness, but Hecuba embodies their power to endure, and to retain the shreds of dignity she expresses in 'But I won't fall'. For her, 'to be dead is to be nothing', and she does not want to be nothing. **16** As she predicts, she and the other Trojans will live on in story and song; and, as Athene foretells, the Greeks too will have their share of suffering and loss. In this scathing critique of war, Euripides expresses little hope, but nor is there 'nothing' left at the end of the play. **17** There is, finally, a hope embedded in the play that evil acts will not remain unpunished, and that the endurance and courage of war's victims will be remembered and honoured by history. **18**

16 Draws together the discussion, repeating some earlier quotes and using them to make strong interpretive statements about the text.

17 Reasserts the main contention in a different form of words.

18 Concludes with a statement of the play's wider meaning with relevance to the topic.

How to incorporate quotations

One way of providing evidence to support your analysis is to include relevant quotations from the text. The following guidelines demonstrate how to do this.

Length of quotations

Generally speaking, the shorter the quotation, the better. Long quotations can lead you away from the purpose of the essay, which is to analyse. It is also difficult to memorise long quotations in preparation for an assessment task. If you insert a quotation it must be accurate. In an exam situation, if you can remember only key words, paraphrase the rest and include the key words in the paraphrase.

Also, it is easier to incorporate quotations into your analysis if they are short. Consider the following example from an analysis of *Medea*, in which brief quotations are smoothly incorporated.

> Medea is characterised as 'no ordinary woman'. Instead of being a passive and powerless victim of Jason's action, she plans revenge against her enemies Creon, Glauce and Jason, vowing to make 'corpses' of them.

Square brackets [ ]

Sometimes you will need to modify part of a quotation so that it fits into your sentence grammatically. For example, you might need to insert or change a pronoun, or change the tense of a verb. You should place any modified text in square brackets.

Consider the following example.

> When Medea suggests sealing her agreement with Aegeus with a sacred oath, he is 'quite prepared to carry it out' because it 'involves [him] in less risk'.

The original quotation, from a speech by Aegeus, is 'This course involves **me** in less risk.' However, because you refer to Aegeus using either his name or third-person pronouns such as 'he', 'his' or 'him', the quote fits more smoothly into your sentence if the first-person pronoun 'me' is changed to 'him'. The square brackets indicate that this word is not in the original.

Ellipses

If you want to shorten a quotation by removing words or phrases, use an ellipsis in place of the deleted words. An ellipsis consists of three dots in a row, like this ...

Consider the following example.

> At the start of the play, Medea seems to be unhappy and disillusioned. The Nurse reveals Medea's pitiable state to the audience when she says that 'she has remained where she lies … surrendering herself to anguish.'

The original quotation reads: 'she has remained where she lies, all thought of food dismissed, surrendering herself to anguish'. Including the entire quote would have created a very long sentence; using the shortened form enables the point to be made more clearly and succinctly.

Avoid using the word 'quotation' or 'quote'

Introducing a quotation using the word 'quotation' or 'quote' can sound awkward. Consider these examples:

> This is demonstrated by the quote 'My fear is that she may hatch some unheard-of scheme.'

> At the start of the play, the Nurse thinks that Medea is so depressed she might harm the children. Quotation: 'My fear is that she may hatch some unheard-of scheme.'

In both examples, the quotation is inserted in a way that interrupts the flow of the writing. Furthermore, in the second example there is no explicit link between the sentence and the quote, so the reader has to assume that the 'unheard-of scheme' is something to do with harming the children. Your writing will be more fluent and easier to follow if you incorporate the quote into the structure of your sentence like this:

> At the start of the play, the Nurse fears that Medea is so depressed that 'she may hatch some unheard-of scheme' to harm the children.

Avoid beginning a paragraph or sentence with a quotation

As a general rule, you should cite evidence from the text (such as quotes) after you have stated the point that the evidence supports. Consider the following example.

> 'My fear is that she may hatch some unheard-of scheme.' This quotation shows us that even at the start of the play Medea is planning to harm her children.

This would be better expressed in the following way.

> Even at the start of the play Medea is planning to harm her children, as the Nurse suggests when she states, 'My fear is that she may hatch some unheard-of scheme.'

Bringing it all together: mapping an argument

One way to gain an overview of the line of argument in a text is to create a diagram of its structure. Read the following petition, which was published on Change.org, a website that allows people all over the world to publish petitions and collect signatures on issues that are important to them. Then complete the activity to map the argument.

https://www.change.org/p/disney-create-a-disney-princess-with-disabilities

Create a Disney Princess with Disabilities

Image: Alexsandro Palombo

Hannah Diviney started this petition to Disney.

Dear Disney,

My name is Hannah Diviney and I'm a 21-year-old writer and disability advocate. I have Cerebral Palsy, a physical disability which affects my fine and gross motor skills. It means I use a wheelchair to navigate through the world.

I'm writing you this message as a young woman who has always loved Disney films but never seen herself in them.

Creating a disabled Princess (we know how influential those characters are) would give millions of children around the world the invaluable chance to see themselves having adventures, rich full lives and being the hero of their own stories. You'd be working to dispel the painful idea that many children subconsciously absorb, [that] life with a disability has to mean a life without joy, adventure, friendship or love.

Beyond that, you'd also be providing a powerful reference point for non-disabled children to understand us and our lives. You would actively be creating a culture of tolerance, acceptance, empathy and understanding to replace fear, confusion and the seeds of bigotry that are often unconsciously sowed when we are confronted with something different that is hard to understand.

For decades now, you as a company have stood at the forefront of children's lives by providing high quality emotionally intelligent entertainment full of valuable lessons and important tools to help all of us understand the world.

As the first company to hopefully take this bold step, Disney would be a visionary leader in what I hope will become a powerful trend of better representation across the board.

Walt Disney envisaged his empire as a place for children to dream and hope. **These days, we know more than ever that hope is the most powerful thing we have.** Children with disabilities don't have that place of fantastical hopes and dreams. We've never seen the possibilities of our lives represented for us and the world.

You have the chance to give us that magic.

Hannah

Map an argument

1. Identify two structural strategies used by the writer.

_____

_____

_____

_____

2. Write one or two sentences explaining the likely impact of one of these structural strategies on the target audience.

_____

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3. List the reasons in the order in which they are presented and complete the sentences explaining why this argument might appeal to the writer's target audience.

Issue:

↓

| Contention: | → | The target audience of this text is |
| | | The purpose is to |

↓

| First reason: | → | This point is intended to make the target audience feel/think/believe that |

↓

| Second reason: | → | This point is intended to make the target audience feel/think/believe that |

↓

| Third reason: | → | This point is intended to make the target audience feel/think/believe that |

Bringing it all together: analysing argument and language

Read the following opinion piece by columnist Susie O'Brien, published in the *Herald Sun*, and complete the activity that follows.

Why councils talking rubbish won't fix our bins

When sanctimonious councils who spend their time pandering to specialist minority groups can't even manage bin collections, it's time to move.

Woke lefty councils are putting up signs for non-romantics, advertising for climate change artists and letting cyclists take over city streets.

But they can't even manage basic services such as bin collections.

The *Herald Sun* revealed on Tuesday that Mornington Peninsula Shire residents who put rubbish in the recycling will be fined up to $600 and banned from recycling for three months.

And they will have to keep paying their $327 waste levy for a service they aren't even receiving.

Even worse, they'll have to undergo "education sessions" about how to recycle properly.

When sanctimonious, preachy councils like this think it's their role to educate the rest of us, then it's time to move.

Never before have councils – who used to occupy themselves with providing basic services like rubbish collection and stray dogs – taken such an interventionist activist role in teaching the rest of us how to live our lives.

If they spent a bit less time pandering to specialist minority groups, then they might get the major issues right – like bin collection services.

If they set up simple, workable systems, then they'd find a much higher rate of recycling compliance.

We want councils to stop obsessing about issues that don't matter and pick our rubbish up.

But when councils take away people's rubbish bins, or downsize their bins and switch pick-ups from weekly to fortnightly regardless of the size of the household, they force residents to break the rules in order to dispose of stinking, unhygienic rubbish.

At a time when recycling rates by councils are at an all-time low due to the difficulty of securing overseas or local recycling facilities, it's absurd of them to be punishing rate payers for doing the wrong thing.

People in many areas are getting four bins to make things easier for the council – but all the sorting makes it harder for residents who are stuck if their waste doesn't fit in the bins.

It doesn't help that some things that used to be recycled are now rubbish, and that the rules differ between areas.

Or that some councils are creating the problem of bins that don't meet our needs then making us come up with solutions such as Yarra's patronising "getting to know your neighbours" initiative.

We don't want to be educated or preached to by our council.

We don't want council officers to be taking photos of our bins and putting us in the naughty corner for breaking the rules.

We don't want strangers peering into our bins to make sure our cardboard is folded correctly.

We want guidelines that are workable and flexible and cater to the needs of all sizes of families.

And we want councils to stop obsessing about issues that don't matter and pick our rubbish up.

Nothing more, nothing less.

Susie O'Brien

Analyse argument and language

1. What is O'Brien's main contention?

_____

2. What reasons does she present for her belief?

_____

_____

_____

3. Write two or three sentences describing the language style of O'Brien's opinion piece. Support your description with quotes from the text.

_____

_____

_____

_____

4. List all descriptions of the council used by O'Brien.

_____

_____

5. Write one or two sentences analysing how these descriptions position the audience to feel about the council's actions.

_____

_____

_____

6. Complete a table like the one below with examples of persuasive language techniques that appear in the persuasive language table in Chapter 8 (pp.126–30) and are used by O'Brien.

Persuasive technique	Example	Intended effect

7. Now choose an example of highly persuasive language used by O'Brien that you feel doesn't fit the description of a particular language technique outlined in the persuasive language table and complete the following sentences.

The word/phrase _____ has connotations of

_____

This encourages the reader to feel _____, thus positioning them to

agree with O'Brien that _____

Bringing it all together: analyse written and visual language in a media text

The opinion piece below, by Anthea Hansen, was published in *The Brag*, an online magazine that publishes articles and opinion pieces on a variety of issues. Read the piece, then complete the analytical paragraphs that follow.

https://thebrag.com/nup-to-the-cup-why-the-glitz-of-the-melbourne-cup-is-tacky/

Nup to the Cup: Why the glitz of the Melbourne Cup is tacky

Every year I am dumbfounded by the seemingly educated people who celebrate The Melbourne Cup. Do I secretly judge you as you chow down your champagne in the office and watch *the race that stops the nation*? You bet.

But you can count your lucky stars that that is the *only* bet I make on Melbourne Cup day. Am I really the only party pooper that believes our excuse to let loose can be celebrated in other forms?

I'm actually *glad* that I don't have to engage in social normalcies this year with working from home. And before you think it, I am not on a *moral high horse* either. Now, just the fact that there is a phrase in the English language that represents someone's values as too righteous in comparison to a horse should tell you that we should treat these creatures better. Because hey, they *do* deserve better.

The Melbourne Cup is symptomatic of everything wrong with this country.

Want to know a secret of mine? Horses are pretty much my one and only fear. One of my earliest memories was falling off a horse on my great-uncle's farm. I vividly remember hitting my head. Another terrible time that makes my stomach churn was up in the Blue Mountains when I was about seven. The horse I was saddled on had decided to chuck a temper tantrum and bucked with all of its might. The horse minder said that I was lucky to have survived.

I am not exactly trusting of them and I am sure that they are not trusting of me either. ***Because truth be told, they know that humans put them into bad situations.*** And you know what? Even though they scare the *bajeebus* out of me, I still wouldn't place bets on their ultimate demise. Can we just not celebrate animals being flogged for the purpose of having a few wines and beers? It grosses me out that in this day and age, this is still considered *normal*.

Am I a vegetarian or vegan? No. Do the true animal lovers of the world think I'm a hypocrite? Probably. Though I don't think you need to have a strict diet or set of moral guidelines to actually know that the treatment of horses for human entertainment is quite preposterous and well, sickening – when really thought about. So please, I urge you to actually think about it this Melbourne Cup and question why we allow this to happen still in 2020.

Sure, horse racing is a billion-dollar industry. Though at what cost do people feel the need to throw their money [away] on something so cruel? It might be considered a "tradition" in our culture, but you know what? So was sacrificing a person a day to keep the world still running "smoothly" in ancient Aztec culture. **Just because you slap a pretty bow on an ugly truth does not make the lie any more appealing.**

So this year, when your colleagues take time off work to watch that race, keep in mind that a horse will likely die.

If you're open-minded, why don't you gather your office "betting" money and give it to a charity in need. Maybe it'll be an animal-related charity, or maybe it'll be for a cause that is close to one of your colleague's hearts.

Let's reach a little deeper and be a lot better as a society. Let's ditch the tackiness of fascinators and start helping and rather than betting, donating to a real and worthy cause.

Call up your local animal shelter and donate some needed money to keep animals safe, or better yet, if money is not something that you can donate, give them some of your time.

Animals all need our love and entertainment too.

Writer and journalist Anthea Hansen has written for Nine and Mamamia. She is not afraid to stir the pot and to just say it like it is. She can appreciate a good argument and only tends to bow down to her domineering husky (she's the cutest).

Complete the analytical paragraphs below.

In an opinion piece titled _____ journalist _____ argues that horse races such as the Melbourne Cup should _____ In a mostly _____ tone, and supported by a _____ photograph, she aims to position the reader to view horse racing as _____ _____

Hansen uses an often _____ register, demonstrated in word choices such as _____ and _____ This helps her to construct a persona that is relatable and _____, thus encouraging the reader to feel _____. This impression is reinforced by the author details included at the end of the piece, in which she is described as _____ _____ It is further reinforced by the anecdote she tells about _____ Admitting that she doesn't 'trust' horses makes her stance against cruelty towards them seem _____

Hansen uses highly emotive language, such as 'grosses me out' and 'sickening', to describe horse racing. These have connotations of _____, and thus imply that horse racing is _____ Moreover, expressions such as _____ and _____ are aimed at evoking the reader's sympathy and outrage about the plight of racehorses.

Hansen also appeals to assumed shared values, presenting the issue as a moral one. She does this by _____ _____

This positions the audience to feel _____

The piece includes a photograph taken at a horse-racing event. It depicts _____ _____

It seeks to rouse the audience's _____ by _____ _____ _____

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