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**Cambridge
Essential
English
for Queensland**

SECOND EDITION

UNITS 3&4



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Downloadable sections

Downloadable worksheets for all of the activities included in this book are available on the *Cambridge GO* website (www.cambridge.edu.au/GO).

Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, Traditional Custodians of this land, recognising and honouring their continued stewardship. We pay our respects to First Nations' Elders past and present.

We are living, writing and working in and around Meanjin, Naarm and Seattle on the unceded lands and territories of Turrbal, Yagara and Kulin Nation and the sovereign lands of Coast Salish peoples. We recognise their continuing strength and resilience and the rich traditions of education on these lands.

We acknowledge the past and stand together for our future, informed by accountable relationships and meaningful actions.

About the authors

Rhiannon Rumble has had an exciting teaching journey working with diverse learners in Queensland and California metropolitan schools as a teacher of English and Humanities. She has been fortunate to learn from innovative and passionate individuals and to be part of enthusiastic teaching teams. Rhiannon has recently achieved her MA in English, focusing on contemporary literature, and is currently pursuing other projects in the US. She remains committed to teaching and learning opportunities that empower students to be critical thinkers. Rhiannon sees Essential English as a course where students can explore and exploit the way language shapes their world.



Dr Julie Arnold taught English in Queensland schools for 25 years, working with students, teachers and leaders as Head of Department and Literacy Coach across schools in the Brisbane metropolitan region. As Vice President of the English Teachers Association of Queensland, she coordinates and presents professional learning and takes an active interest in curriculum development. Julie is now a pre-service teacher educator at Queensland University of Technology. Her research interests are in building teacher linguistic subject knowledge for writing instruction and in accessible assessment practices. Julie believes fundamentally in the power of language to create opportunities for all students to be critical and creative learners.



Enoch Byrne is an English teacher based in Brisbane's south-west. They have been fortunate to have been part of creative and dedicated teaching teams, and have taken part in piloting Literature and General English courses. Utilising their background in literature and the arts, Enoch has endeavoured to make English accessible to students to empower them to see themselves and each other in everything they consume and, therefore, become active and empathetic readers. They believe that the power of Essential English lies in pragmatically connecting students with language and the world around them.



Lynda Wall has taught English in its various guises in Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria and London. She is currently a Deputy Principal and has previously been an External Assessment Officer (English) and Principal Project Officer (Assessment) with the Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority (QCAA), as well as having been a District Panellist for English, District Panel Chair for English Extension, and Head of English at St Aidan's Anglican Girls' School, Brisbane. She holds a Master of Education degree, with a focus on teaching language and literacy. Lynda is committed to the Essential English subject as a practical course that teaches students to use language as a tool for personal empowerment.



The authors and publisher would like to thank Dr Sue Bittner for reviewing the manuscript and providing feedback.

How this book is organised

Chapter 1 The world in pictures

Duration: 3 weeks

Culminating task: Response to stimulus test

This chapter continues the learning routines and skills development from *Cambridge Essential English for Queensland Units 1&2*. It draws on concepts from Unit 1 and Unit 2 and introduces vocabulary that underpins Unit 3. The content focuses on reading visual images, including skills for critical interpretation and explanation.

The culminating task is formative. It is designed to elicit information about students' current learning and extend the learning by offering an approach to interpreting visual images in the Common Internal Assessment that will be set by the Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority. The suggested task is not intended to contribute to students' results for Essential English.

Chapter 2 Speaking with a purpose

Duration: 9 weeks

Assessment: Spoken – podcast

This chapter introduces students to representations of issues that have local and global impact.

It includes a range of nonfiction texts across modes including *Textile Mountain*, *Consumed* and the podcasts *Little Green Pod* and *Not Stupid*. The additional online resources focus on the docuseries *War on Waste*.

Students explore a range of persuasive techniques used to represent issues, including food insecurity in Australia and the environmental cost of consumer choices.

The culminating task challenges students to create a podcast about local or global issues that are important to them.

Chapter 3 Living in a material world

Duration: 8 weeks

Assessment: Response to stimulus test

This chapter models an approach to preparing students for the Common Internal Assessment set by the QCAA.

It reviews the concepts introduced in Chapters 1 and 2, with activities based on representations of identity, representations of concepts, and representations of place. Examples are drawn from a range of persuasive texts. The activities explicitly model the writing style and structure required for the assessment.

Chapter 4 Reinventing representations

Duration: 10 weeks

Assessment: Video essay

This chapter explores the inspiration behind a range of popular culture texts, including tattoos, graphic novels, reality television shows and on-demand series. It shows students how creativity rests on cultural histories, and that the globalisation of entertainment draws together a rich range of older stories and symbols to create popular texts.

It includes extracts from case study texts, including the graphic novel and television series *American Born Chinese*, and *Lord of the Flies* and the reality TV shows it has inspired.

The culminating task requires students to create a video essay explaining how a character is represented in a modern transformation of an old story.

Chapter 5 Bouncing around Australia

Duration: 8 weeks

Assessment: Extended response (written) – imaginative recount

This chapter allows students to explore and respond to a range of Australian popular culture texts and aspects of texts, including identity, place, concept and events. Students select and use ideas and information to create representations and position readers to accept a perspective. This chapter also provides an opportunity for students to study a complete text.

The culminating task invites students to recount different perspectives of an event. Throughout the chapter, there are examples of how aspects of Australian popular culture texts can be used as springboards for written responses.

Introduction

Listening and speaking, reading and viewing, designing and writing are the ways we interact with others at school and in the complex and changing world of the twenty-first century. In Essential English, we learn how **texts** shape the world around us and how we can understand, challenge and change the way representations are constructed.

Teacher notes

Within each chapter you will find teacher notes offering alternative ideas for texts, tasks, and approaches to adapting the materials. These are intended to help make this textbook dynamic in response to your classroom needs.

In addition, an extensive Teacher Notes document is available for download from *Cambridge GO*. This document offers an overview of some pedagogical approaches that underpin the selection and design of materials in this book. The introduction to *Cambridge Essential English for Queensland Units 1&2* (2nd ed.) contains detailed examples of the foundational reading approaches outlined in Routines and strategies (pp. vii-xx).



What is a text?

When we talk about texts in this book, we don't just mean SMS messages to friends. A text is any communication where people make choices about language to serve a social purpose. In the Australian Curriculum, the Essential English Applied Senior Syllabus describes texts as follows:

Texts provide the means for communication. They can be written, spoken, visual, multimodal, and in print or digital/online forms. Multimodal texts combine language with other means of communication such as visual images, soundtrack or spoken words, as in film or digital media. Texts include all forms of augmentative and alternative communication; for example, gesture, signing, real objects, photographs, pictographs, pictograms and Braille.

SOURCE: Australian Curriculum v.9 2022 © Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority

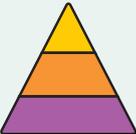
More simply, a text is anything that can be read for meaning. We even read people – just think about what you can tell from someone's body language or outfit.

Routines and strategies for success in Essential English

Routines are important in learning because they give you procedures to follow as you encounter new and more complex tasks. Scan (flick through) this textbook and note the routines and strategies below, so you're starting with a sense of how the whole textbook works.

Mastering these routines will set you up for success in Essential English and will help you to tackle new texts in tertiary study and the workplace.

Routine	What	How	Why
<p>Frayer model</p>	<p>Many key words are presented in a graphic organiser like this. It's called a Frayer model because it was designed by Dorothy Frayer at the University of Wisconsin in 1969.</p>	<p>Complete the model by adding the definitions, examples, characteristics, non-examples or pictures indicated in each quadrant.</p>	<p>Actively constructing the meaning of the word builds your understanding and helps you remember it.</p>
<p>PEEL approach</p>	<p>The PEEL approach to paragraphing is taught and revised throughout this book. It is a way of structuring paragraphs that can be helpful for organising thoughts and responses.</p>	<p>You will either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> analyse the paragraph by identifying its parts (PEEL it) <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> write a paragraph using the PEEL structure and the language features you have learned. 	<p>If you can master a well-structured paragraph, you can write a range of texts, including effective explanations, which are important for your success in Essential English.</p>
<p>Text-dependent questions</p>	<p>These are questions that depend on your reading of the text to answer.</p> <p>Text-dependent questions were formally developed to help you read</p>	<p>Check your understanding of important or tricky terms. Read the text and answer the questions or complete the activities.</p>	<p>It is important to be able to read accurately and critically. Text-dependent questions can support you to make connections</p>

Routine	What	How	Why
Text-dependent questions cont.	complex texts closely. They ask you to look at what the text says, how it works, what it means and what you might need to do next.	Discuss your responses with peers and your teacher.	with other texts and to create texts of your own.
Three-Level Guide 	The Three-Level Guide is about engaging with the text at three levels: Level 1: Literal Level 2: Inferential Level 3: Critical.	First, read the guide, which has statements for each of the three levels. Then, read the text. Next, mark the statements in the guide with True/False. Finally, highlight the evidence and discuss your responses.	Done properly, Three-Level Guides develop strong reading skills. You pay attention to what the words say, what the words mean and how the meanings connect to other things you know.
Spotlight on Language 	A table that helps you clearly identify text structure and language features.	Annotate the text features. Structure will be in the left column and language features on the right. Highlight the example in the text.	Identifying these elements means you have clear evidence for your explanations. This type of table can be used in your own notes too, not just the texts here.
Putting it all together 	This tells you what you need to do for the assessment. It is the last section of each chapter, except Chapter 3.	Do it! Take care to follow the instructions provided by your teacher.	Like any course, Essential English has a syllabus. The syllabus says you must show what you have learned. Fair enough.

What's the problem with PEEL?

'Life's not a paragraph.'

SOURCE: E. E. Cummings, 1926

There's nothing wrong with PEEL, really. On the one hand, it's a decent basic structure for writing a paragraph when you want to **inform**, **explain**, **analyse** or **argue** in a straightforward way. If you have a point to make or an answer to a question and you want your reader to understand it, PEEL can help. That's why it's taught widely in Australian schools and why we offer it to you in this book. On the other hand, PEEL is limiting and not very much fun (Gibbons, 2019). It doesn't tell you how to write the sentences or arrange the detailed information in your paragraph. And it is useless for writing stories. Further, even when they are explaining, writers in the real world often don't use it because it doesn't suit the style of their publication. This means it's important that you have your own clear idea of the purpose of your paragraph. Take this paragraph, for instance. It is *almost* a PEEL structure but there's no 'L'; it was more interesting for us to end it this way 😊.

What else can help you with your writing?

'Paragraphs, like life itself, are much more complex than PEEL can convey.'

SOURCE: McKnight, 2021

While it is true that PEEL is a useful shared structure for you and your teacher, and it can help you with your assessment in this subject, here are some things to remember as you become a better writer through Senior:

- PEEL is 'a handy tool for high-pressure, time-limited environments' (McKnight, 2021). It isn't always how people write in the real world.
- Look for examples of real-world writing that doesn't follow the PEEL structure. This section is one.
- You won't ever be assessed on PEEL; you're assessed on whether you communicate effectively with your audience.
- Experiment and play. Write for the fun of it. Break the rules. Write a terrible story. Write a paragraph that doesn't begin with the point.
- Worry less about the structure and more about the detail.

Definitions

Words in bold purple text

The first time an important word appears in the main sections of a chapter it will be in **bold, purple** text. This includes key terms from the syllabus; you can find a full list of key terminology with comprehensive definitions in the QCAA Essential English Syllabus.

It's a good idea to keep a digital or written record of these words and their meanings – a glossary. You can add your definitions, your notes, or the downloadable PDF Glossex available from *Cambridge GO*.

When you're building your glossary, you're building your vocabulary. A bigger vocabulary improves your reading comprehension and your communication.

Cognitive verbs

You will see that sometimes questions or tasks in the book have words in **bold, blue** text. For example, you might have a question asking you to '**analyse** and **compare**'.

These are cognitive verbs or thinking processes. Cognitive verbs direct your reading to what a task is asking you to do and how you can complete it well.

Read questions and instructions carefully and identify the cognitive verbs. You can find their meanings on the QCAA website.

Concepts in Essential English

Representations, beliefs, values, attitudes, ideas, perspectives and cultural assumptions are building blocks for the knowledge application you'll do in every unit. These terms can be difficult to understand because they're abstract nouns. They are academic ideas in the study of English rather than concrete objects in the world that you can see or touch.

The following table includes a technical definition for each term as well as a definition in everyday language.

Key concept	Definition	Everyday language
Representation	Textual constructions that give shape to ways of thinking about or acting in the world; texts re-present concepts, identities, times and places, underpinned by the cultural assumptions, attitudes, beliefs, values or world view of the writer, shaper, speaker/signer or designer (and of the reader, viewer or listener).	A representation is not the thing itself; it is a depiction of a thing (or person or idea) that is constructed by people when they communicate with each other (a re-presentation). We represent experiences in different ways depending on the purpose and audience. For example, you might represent a situation like being late to work one way to your manager and another way to your friends.
Perspective	A way of thinking about or viewing something, especially one that is influenced by your experiences, beliefs and values.	The way someone perceives texts, ideas, events.
Belief	That which is believed; an accepted opinion; conviction of the truth or reality of a thing; a tenet or tenets.	What we think is true.
Values	Characteristics, qualities, philosophical and emotional stances – for example, moral principles or standards, often shared with others in a cultural group.	What's important (to me or you or us).
Attitude	An internalised way of thinking about a situation, idea, character or social group; a position, a disposition or manner with regard to a person or thing.	How beliefs and values are expressed in words or behaviour regarding emotions, judgements about people and the value of things.



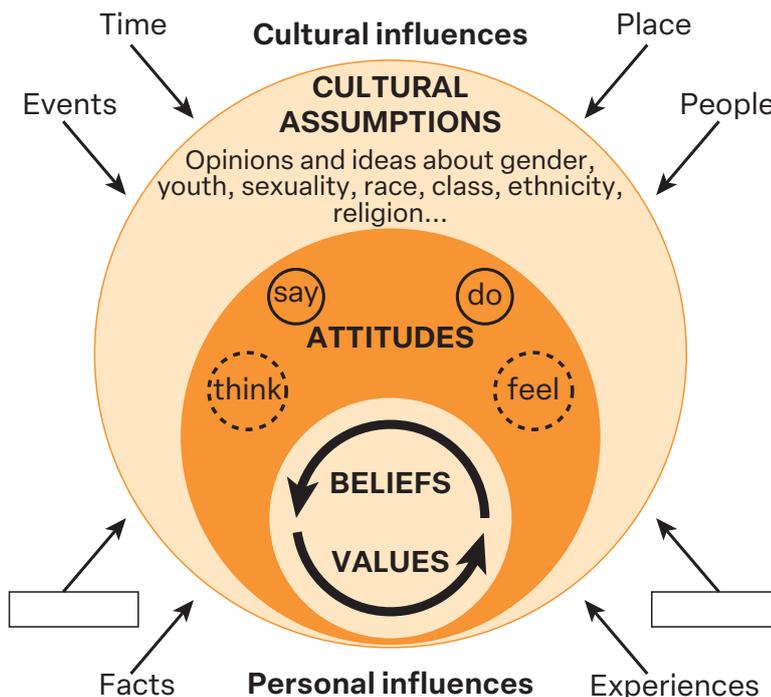
Key concept	Definition	Everyday language
Cultural assumptions*	Ideas, beliefs or attitudes about such things as gender, religion, ethnicity, youth, age, disability, sexuality, social class and work that are taken for granted as being part of the fabric of the social practices of a particular culture; cultural assumptions underpin texts and can be used to position audiences.	Beliefs, values and attitudes that are commonly held. Because they are shared by a social group, people who belong to that group see them as 'natural' or correct and may not be critical of them.

Teacher notes

*Cultural assumptions are included in the syllabus definition of representations. We include the concept of cultural assumptions because it remains important underpinning knowledge that helps make sense of how:

- stereotypes and bias fit into the context-text model of language in English (see the online Teacher Notes and pedagogical approaches)
- opinions and ideas, which connect to beliefs, values and attitudes (p. 21)
- how different people come to have different attitudes to issues.

We introduced this diagram in Units 1&2 as a way to think about what influences shape beliefs and values, attitudes and cultural assumptions. You may want to review this with your students.



UNIT 3

Language that influences



Unit description

In Unit 3, students explore community, local and/or global issues and ideas presented in a range of texts that invite an audience to take up positions. Building on Units 1 and 2, students apply their understanding about how perspectives, ideas, attitudes and values are represented in texts to influence audiences. They explore how issues are represented in a range of texts and develop their own point of view about these issues. Students synthesise information to respond to and create a range of texts, considering their intended purpose, their representation of ideas and issues, and audience responses. In responding to texts, students have opportunities to discuss and listen to differing perspectives, compare, draw conclusions and influence audiences for a range of purposes. Students also develop their skills in using appropriate vocabulary and accurate spelling, punctuation and grammar to enable effective communication.

Students respond to a variety of texts that invite audiences to take up positions, by constructing texts of their own.

The unit is made up of two topics:

- Creating and shaping perspectives on community, local and global issues in texts
- Responding to texts that seek to influence audiences.

SOURCE: Essential English 2025 v1.2 Applied Senior Syllabus © Queensland Curriculum & Assessment Authority



Chapter 1

The world in pictures

This chapter presents some of the most powerful techniques used to influence people, through the study of visual images in advertising and **social media**. When you understand how **perspectives, ideas, attitudes** and **values** are represented in **texts** that influence audiences to take up positions, you can develop a critical approach to what you believe in and value. This is important to do because your **beliefs** and **values** affect what you say, who you choose to associate with, what you buy, who you vote for – actually, everything you decide on. The work you do in this unit will prepare you to explore issues and ideas in texts in Chapters 2 and 3.

The chapter includes a practice task for the Common Internal Assessment (CIA), so you can feel confident about interpreting and explaining **representations** in visual and multimodal texts.

You will learn and develop the skills to:

- **explore** a range of issues and ideas related to marketing and social media that are helpful for interpreting texts and seeing how they invite audiences to take up positions
- **explain** how features of visual texts, including the layout of different kinds of information, can impact **audiences** by controlling the path of their reading

- **interpret** how figurative language and other features like icons and emojis create perspectives
- **identify opinions**, ideas, beliefs, values and attitudes that might have shaped representations in visual texts
- take an active role in the reading process by considering alternative meanings and offering your own opinions
- **examine** how data about you can be presented, collected and manipulated in social media
- **compare** how representations are constructed in two different marketing campaigns.

Teacher notes

The activities in this chapter are an introduction to Unit 3: Language that influences. They have been designed to revise and extend on key vocabulary and focus on skill development, especially for interpreting visual images. The related contexts of marketing and social media provide reasons to build critical literacy skills. The sections have been designed so each can be completed in sequence or stand alone. You should feel free to select and combine sections, depending on your students' needs and how much time you want to spend on formative work. For example, you could just do the section on reading pathways (which is referred to again in Chapter 3) and then skip straight to the culminating task, to evaluate how well your students were able to apply that concept and whether it will be worth including in your CIA preparation. You could even begin with the formative assessment, evaluate how your students respond, then cycle back to a section or sections to help meet the needs of the students in your class.

'Putting it all together' is intended as formative for the CIA. We've presented a complete possible assessment, including responding to written text, because your students have been continually building their written response skills and you may want to gather evidence of their progress on the whole. However, you could decide only to focus on the visual images.

Word play

Play with these words. Change their forms, morph them into new words, add prefixes or suffixes, and find words with similar spelling patterns. The first one has been done for you.

market	marketing	merchant	merchandise	marketer
image				
influence				
persuade				
represent				

Sentence combining

Vincent Namatjira is an award-winning artist known for his humorous and witty portraits that ask the audience to look at the world differently.

Organise, reword and combine the following sentences about Namatjira in a way that makes sense to you.

- Art allows people to show the world as they see it.
- He is an artist known for his portraits.
- His portraits are often based on press photographs.
- He paints people who have had an influence on him and Australia.
- Press photographs position audiences to perceive a subject in a particular way.
- Caricature is a style that exaggerates certain features or characteristics.
- His art often shows powerful people in unfamiliar situations.

You can look up Vincent Namatjira's work through the National Gallery of Australia audio tours and website. Some of his portraits have sparked discussions around representations. For a summary, read *The Conversation* article 'Can you control your image?' at <https://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/11167>.



FIGURE 1.1 Vincent Namatjira at the Museum of Contemporary Art, standing in front of his 15-metre mural *P.P.F. (Past-Present-Future)*

1.1 Marketing basics: How influence works

Marketing is about selling a product or service. It is about appealing to the real and imagined needs of people. We need attention. Love. Acceptance. Escape. Safety. Self-worth.

So, marketing isn't just about selling a physical product such as cars, shoes and drinks, it's about convincing people to choose one **brand** over other – often very similar – brands. You know, the important decisions, like: Do you drink Pepsi or Coca Cola? Do you drive a Ford Mustang Mach-E or a Tesla? Traditional marketing via advertisements has long been accompanied by things like sporting sponsorships and other activities that help build a brand by influencing how potential consumers see the product.

In the market-driven world of social media, we are also surrounded by 'influencers'. Influencers are typically people who aim to convince us that particular choices are normal or desirable. They market products and services, and they simultaneously build the value of their own brand; that is, they try to monetise their online **identity**. Some influencers, who can charge thousands of dollars for creating favourable content about a product, are part of our everyday life. It's important to be aware of patterns in these texts created by influencers, the ideas that are being presented, and what they are trying to convince us to do.



Activity 1.1

An **appeal** in advertising is a persuasive strategy that stimulates the potential customer's desire to buy a product. Four of the most powerful appeals used in advertising campaigns are listed below. Create a table with four columns, using these appeals as the headings. Flip through some magazines, browse the internet or watch a show and find a real-life example of each type of appeal.

Advertising appeals

- Associating the product with a powerful emotion
- Suggesting an inadequacy in the buyer that the product could fix
- Associating the product with the buyer's desire for a particular lifestyle or **identity**
- Associating the product with the buyer's group identity and need to belong.

Activity 1.1 *Continued*

These appeals overlap because they are all connected with emotions.

- 1 Find an advertisement that fits in each category. And yes, an influencer's post about a travel destination counts as an advertisement.

Association with a powerful emotion	Buyer's inadequacy will be fixed	Association with desire for a lifestyle or identity	Association with group identity and need to belong
<p>Australia Zoo: Steve Irwin tribute</p>  <p>This is an emotional appeal because it features baby animals and injured animals. Steve Irwin was an iconic Aussie who campaigned for the protection of Australian wildlife.</p>			

- 2 In a small group, share the advertisements you found. Explain the appeals.
- 3 As a class, create a digital or real class gallery. Select one advertisement that seems to work across all categories and one that doesn't seem to fit well in any. What real or imagined needs are these advertisements targeting? Identify the alternative appeals they used.

1.2 Reading in the visual mode

Messages aren't only communicated via written words. Texts in the media are commonly **multimodal**, meaning they combine one or more of words, sounds, and images. To make meaning from multimodal texts, we interpret the elements (what's there) and **composition** (how it's arranged) of visual images. This is a key skill for critical literacy, especially when we engage with texts in advertisements and social media. Controlling the language of visual and multimodal texts means you can create influential multimodal texts of your own, which you will do in Chapter 2.

Reading pathways

Generally, English speakers will create and read written texts by working from left to right. Visual texts work differently. The typical **reading path** *might* be left-to-right. However, it may also be top-to-bottom, or centre-to-margins, or a combination of the three. By making choices in the elements and composition of an image, the **author** can control where our meaning-making begins and ends.

The concept of a reading pathway applies to a single image, a composite image with various graphic and/or textual elements, or a narrative visual text that contains a series of images, like a comic strip or a graphic novel. The reader is **positioned** or influenced by the choices the author makes to control where the reading path leads.

Our reading pathway in visual and multimodal texts affects the meaning and value we attribute to particular elements in a visual text. Knowing how this works is important for noticing how we are being positioned, especially in persuasive texts like advertising.



Did you know?

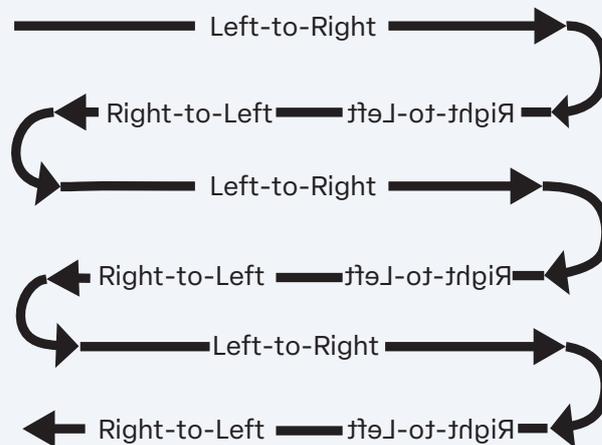
The language you are most comfortable reading and writing can affect how you interpret images too. If you are used to starting on the right of the page, or reading vertically, you will tend to use the same pattern when interpreting a picture.

Some languages, including Arabic, Hebrew and Urdu, are read and written from right-to-left. Many East Asian languages, such as Vietnamese, Japanese and Cantonese, are traditionally written and read in vertical columns.

Ancient Greek texts are examples of boustrophedon ('like the ox') writing. This means the first line is left-to-right, then the next line continues right-to-left (with the letters also backwards) – like an ox ploughing a field or a groundskeeper mowing the footy pitch.

Boustrophedon

“turn like an ox (while ploughing)”



In the following material, we have worked with ideas from *Reading Images: The Grammar of Visual Design* (Kress and Van Leeuwen: 2020). We recommend this text as a more comprehensive toolkit for analysing images.



Left-to-right reading path

The left-hand side of a visual text is associated with what is familiar or 'given', while the right-hand side is seen as new or 'demanded'. A very simple example from an assessment task sheet is that there will be a cell labelled NAME on the left side of the page, and you'll fill in the new information, your name, on the right.

You'll often see this layout used in magazine spreads where the article or interview is on the left page and the images are on the right. The images tend to be advertising clothing and accessories, so they're the new information.

Top-down reading path

In visual design, the top is associated with the 'ideal' or general. What is placed underneath is associated with the 'real', specific, or practical. For example, in an assessment task sheet, you'll often have the genre and topic at the top; for example, persuasive Speaking at the United Nations. Further down will be the more specific information.



This is a common technique for controlling your attention in advertising too, where the promised ideal is in the upper section of the text, so you give it your attention first, and the actual product is placed below.

A top-down reading path is typically how online storefronts are organised. Whatever you're buying, from beds to boardies, the page will begin with an appealing visual that constructs an idealised, positive representation of the brand. You have to scroll down to see the products you can buy to fulfil that appeal.

Centre-margin reading path

In this third common arrangement, the reading path radiates out from the central idea in the middle of the image. The creator of the text is demanding that we pay attention to the centre of the text first. The outer elements are all connected by their associations with the central idea. This type of organisation is common in internet imagery, including memes, and advertisements.

Centre-margin arrangements are useful for visualising how ideas are connected. When you create a mind-map or concept-map, you've utilised a centre-margin reading path.



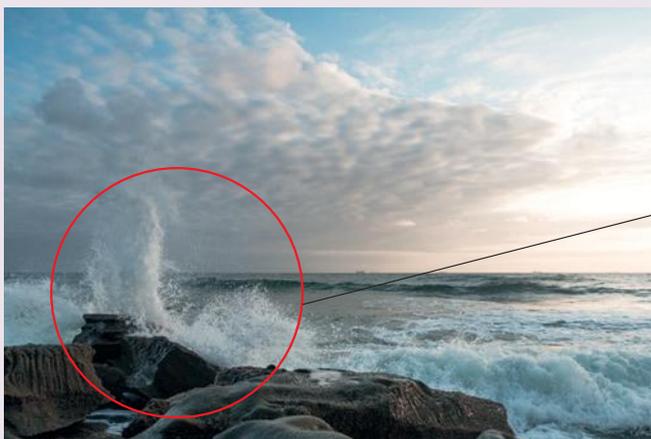


Activity 1.2

For this activity, you'll be using your understanding of reading pathways to **explain** how a website associates products with ideas.

- 1 Go to the website for R. M. Williams, an Australian company selling leather boots, accessories and clothing (<https://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/11168>). **Discuss** your initial impressions of the site with a partner or in a small group. Some questions that might help you start this discussion:
 - a What draws your attention first?
 - b Can you **identify** a clear reading path from first to next, etc? Is it one of the common reading paths on pp. 7–9? Where does your attention finally rest?
 - c Discuss the effects of your attention being controlled by the creator: What did the author want you to focus on as being important? Did you all read the text in the same way? How might noticing reading pathways make you more critical of the author's intentions? Use the language of left-to-right, top-down, centre-margin. Challenge yourselves to also use the terms ideal and real, given and new.
 - d What is the **purpose** of the text? How well did the authors achieve this purpose?
- 2 Now let's think about elements of this text in a different way. Take a screenshot of the site. Whatever appears first on your screen will do. Paste it to an online notebook or print and stick a hard copy on a whiteboard or a piece of paper.

Circle each element or object in the image. You can call these **signifiers**, if you want to be fancy. Then make annotations where you identify the ideas or the concepts they make you think of.



Waves crashing against the rocks.
Makes me think of the power of nature and the wilderness.
These boots can take on all kinds of terrain.

- 3 As a class, discuss how the visual text is positioning you to view the R. M. Williams brand. What **emotional**, inadequacy, or identity appeals are they making? Refer to the visual elements you have circled, the **connotations** you identified, and how reading pathways direct your attention.

Connotation

Connotations are ideas we associate with words. They are implied but not directly stated, and in marketing they are used to shape the viewer's impression of the product. For example, connotations of the word 'summer' include holidays and sunshine.

A connotation is not the **literal** meaning of the word; that's **denotation**. Summer denotes the warmest season of the year.

Denotative meanings do not include the evaluations people may connect with a term – what **judgements** about people, emotional responses, or **appreciations** of the worth or quality of things are implied in the way the term has come to be used.



You've now unpacked a visual marketing text that uses different reading pathways.

- 4 To complete this activity, use the outline below and your own knowledge of paragraph structure to explain how representations of R. M. Williams' products are constructed on their website. Refer to at least two visual elements (language features) of the image. You may also choose to talk about the layout of the website (text structures).



The multimodal text at the top of the R. M. Williams site represents _____ as _____. It includes written text saying '_____', which means _____. By drawing our attention to _____, the visual text emphasises _____. The use of _____ has connotations of _____. Additionally, the _____ connects _____ with the idea of _____. The R. M. Williams advertising appeals to our desire for/to be _____. It implies that if you take the action of _____ then _____.

Key terms for explaining visual texts

Key term	Definition	Think about ...
Camera angles	The angle the image is taken from and how close or far from the person, place or thing the image is shot.	Angles – low, high, tilted etc. Distance – close-up, medium shot, long shot etc.
Composition	The placement of the elements relative to each other and how this creates meaning.	Background, foreground, position in the frame, relationship to other elements and the viewer
Focalisation (audience point-of-view)	How the author positions the viewer to see the subjects and action in an image. The choices made around ‘who sees’ and what position the audience takes up in relation to the people, places or things in an image.	Are you higher than (looking down on) or lower than (looking up to) the participants or action in the text? How does this affect power relations? How does this change what you can see?
Framing	The dividing lines or spaces that create connection or disconnection between elements in images or between images in a sequence. Connections are created through shared qualities, such as colour, or frame breaks.	The stronger the framing, the more disconnected each item is from the other. PowerPoint and Google Slides’ templates make use of frames. So do panels in comics, anime and graphic novels.
Gaze	The line-of-sight of people (or sometimes animals) in visual texts. If the subject is gazing directly at the viewer, it is a demand and a kind of direct address. If they are gazing elsewhere, the gaze is a vector to direct a reading path.	Is anyone looking directly at the viewer or are all gazes directed elsewhere? Follow the gaze of those in the image. Does it lead to an object, person or beyond the frame?



Key term	Definition	Think about ...
Vectors	Indicate connections within the text. Vectors are created by elements that form an oblique line. These can be graphic elements like arrows or the tails of speech bubbles. It can also be 'imagined' lines from pointing fingers or a strong gaze.	Find the lines that you can easily identify in the image. Where do your eyes end up and what was pointing at that element? Which lines guide your reading pathway?
Saliency	What element is made to attract the viewer's attention? A human figure, direct gaze, cultural symbols or other significant objects will attract our attention first.	What do you notice first? How has the creator drawn attention to this element – placement, relative size, contrast, colour?
Typography	The visual elements of text including type, style and size of font(s).	Emphasises and guides the audiences to words or phrases

Language features and text structures

The syllabus and the CIA refer to **language features** and **text structures**. These shape and support meaning-making in texts. Authors select language features and text structures to create certain meanings and effects.

Language features in visual and multimodal texts include any written elements as well as elements such as framing, camera angles, and colour. If there are people in the image, look for body language and facial expressions.

Text structures are the ways in which information is organised and ideas are expressed. This includes organisation, sequencing, layout and placement of elements.

Annotating an image, as in Activity 1.2, is one way of deconstructing the elements of a visual text (including language features and text structures) and interpreting their meaning. This should give you pretty good information to use but you might still struggle to put your ideas together to make a cohesive response. To really nail this kind of interpretation, follow these three steps:

STEP 1: Describe the reading path. This is a great way to begin because you're looking at the whole and also noticing how the author might be positioning you.

STEP 2: Annotate the important elements (**salient** features) of the visual text with your notes about possible connotations, so you have information you can refer to about people, places, events and ideas.

STEP 3: Complete an observation and inference chart.

You've already practised Step 1 and Step 2. Let's look more closely at how to tackle an observation and inference chart.

Observation and inference chart

The observation and **inference** chart has three rows:

- 1 Make notes on your observations. This is what you can literally see in the text. *What is represented?* What is represented can be concrete like an object, place, person or product. A representation can also be abstract like an idea, concept, identity or time. *What language features can you identify? What text structures are used to hold the text together and guide our reading path?*
- 2 Next, think about what the things you've observed might signify, connote or mean.
- 3 Then, write 1–2 sentences or a series of dot points summarising your interpretation. To your impression of the main idea, add what opinions you can identify. Ask yourself: *What does this text mean when I put all this information together?*

Don't panic! We've done one for you, so you can see how it works. Read and discuss the completed activity that follows, then work through the second inference chart with your peers. To practise on your own, use this technique on images in this chapter or other visual texts collected from outside of the classroom.

Task: Explain how the language features (visual elements) and text structures (composition and/or organisation) within this image communicate ideas and information.

Context: A poster on a metropolitan transit system (bus and train routes).



As you complete this activity, think about what the poster is advertising and how you know this, even without words.

What can you see? What does it say?	<p>Representation(s) – What is represented?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A young person dancing and wearing a blue earbud. • Three tropical birds with open wings • A cityscape • A flower and leaves 	Elements that shape meaning in this text	
		<p>Observation – language features</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medium-close-up shot of the person draws reader attention first • The person’s body language is: eyes shut, a slight smile (expression); gesture is hands raised. They are wearing a yellow jacket, white top and blue earbud. • Colours are bright: pastel and bold – lots of contrast • The cityscape is dull in comparison but reflects the yellow of the jacket • Bright colours – blue background; pink flower; macaws; yellow jacket 	<p>Observation – text structures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elements are layered – the big flower in the background frames the person in the centre and the cityscape • The city at the bottom is relatively small • Empty space at margins • Birds create a vector pointing to the person and then beyond the frame
What does it mean?		<p>Inferences – language features</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The woman is moving to the music in her earbuds and enjoying herself – she’s in her own world. • The bright colours, flowers and tropical birds are associated with holidays - escape. 	<p>Inferences – text structures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ideal-real placement: the small cityscape at the bottom denotes real life and everything else is the escape – placing the earbuds at the very centre as the source of the escape • The birds create a sense of movement that supports the idea that the figure is dancing.
Conclusion	<p>Main ideas and opinions about the representation(s):</p> <p>This image portrays the perspective that music and dancing are liberating and allow people to take a break from the realities of everyday life. Our attention is drawn to the earbud, which suggests the product can help you do that.</p>		

A trick for explaining

If you flip a completed observation and inference chart on its head, you have the makings of an excellent explanation in a basic P+E+E form, which can be written as a complete paragraph or in dot points. The conclusion becomes your Point (or Topic), then you can connect the sets of observations and inferences to make a series of supporting sentences (E+E). You might need to experiment with the order – combine sentences, rearrange clauses (parts of a sentence), include text connectives. You will need to edit your writing.



Activity 1.3

- 1 Read the paragraph in the yellow box below.
- 2 In small groups or as a class, identify the evidence (language features and text structures) and the **conjunctions** the writer has used to connect the information together. Discuss what makes this an effective paragraph and those elements you can use in your own writing.

You will find useful vocabulary in the table 'Key terms for explaining visual texts' on pp. 12–13.

This composite image shows that music lets people take a break from everyday life. The salient element that the reader's eye is drawn to first is a woman in a medium close-up shot. She is in the centre of the image in front of a pink flower and above a city. Her eyes are closed, she is smiling, and her hands are raised like she is dancing. Three tropical birds fly across the top half of the image towards the right and overlap the woman and the flower. The elements are strongly connected through the layering. Birds and foliage are part of the natural world, connoting the idea of freedom. Additionally, the vectors created by the birds' flightpaths continue beyond the empty margins and out of frame. The bright colours, including the turquoise background and the woman's yellow jacket, imply freedom and happiness, suggesting a tropical holiday. In contrast, suggesting city is the smallest element and it is near the bottom of the image. This relates it to the practical and everyday. The poster communicates the idea that the woman is enjoying the music she is dancing to and is imagining freedom from the city.



Activity 1.4

- 1 In this example, we have focused on concrete representations. The image also constructs abstract representations of youth, urban life, music and nature. Try using the evidence we've collected for you in the Observation and Inference chart on pp. 14–15 to draw a conclusion and identify an opinion about one or more of these abstract representations.
- 2 The context of this image was 'A poster on a metropolitan transit system'. There is no written text, but what product or service could this poster be advertising? How do you know?
- 3 In small groups, decide on a product name and create a written element for this image, such as a caption, slogan or advertising blurb. Discuss and select the placement of the written text for this advertisement.

The process we propose here is pretty comprehensive. Whatever the approach you use, you will need to identify language features and text structures **and** explain how these elements work to construct a representation and influence an audience.



Activity 1.5

Task: Explain how the text positions the audience to view education. Refer to at least two language features (visual elements) and text structures (composition) in your response.

Context: A leaflet from a local college promoting business, marketing and accounting courses.

STEP 1: Describe the reading path for this visual text.

STEP 2: Identify the salient features of the text and their connotations.

STEP 3: In pairs or small groups, complete an observation and inference chart for this visual text.



What can you see? What does it say?	Representation(s) – <i>What is represented?</i> •	Elements that shape meaning in this text	
		Observation – language features •	Observation – text structures •
What does it mean?		Inferences – language features •	Inferences – text structures •
Conclusion	Main ideas and opinions about the representation(s):		

Conclusion = *What does it mean when we put it all together?*

Use your completed observation and inference chart to write your response as a structured paragraph.



Language features: icons and emojis

Icons and emojis are **symbols**.

Icons are used in computing as a graphic representation of a program, option, or other piece of information. Often these are based on real-world objects. For example, the ‘save’ icon in programs like MS Word is a graphic representation of a floppy disk, which is what computer files used to be saved on.

An icon can also be a famous person or thing that represents a particular opinion, or a set of beliefs or values. Dolly Parton is an icon of generosity. Bluey is an icon of wholesome Australian identity.

Emojis, from the Japanese words for ‘picture’ and ‘character’, can stand in for words, communicate ideas and shape the attitude or mood of a message. Different communities attach different meanings to emojis and these meanings change over time, often very quickly.

Before emojis were coded into personal devices as small images, punctuation was used to communicate emotion and sometimes still is :)

Symbolism

Symbols represent or **identify** ideas or qualities. A symbol can be an image, mark, sign or word that stands for something else, usually an **abstract** idea.

The image on the right contains a well-known symbol. Do you recognise it? What is it a symbol of?



Activity 1.6

Context: This poster was displayed in an international airport as part of a marketing campaign for a mobile phone plan.

- 1 From the poster's location and the featured icons, what services would you expect to be included in the phone plan?
- 2 What does the author of the image think travellers value? Explain by referring to at least two of the icons and other elements within the image. A concept map or observation and inference chart will be useful here.
- 3 Sometimes people interpret the same symbol differently. In the top right corner of the image is the icon for a battery. It is red and appears to have four bars in the outline.



In small groups, read the explanations below about what this symbol represents in the context of this image. Decide which explanation makes the most sense and justify your choice. You might refer to other elements in the image, key terms for visual texts (pp. 12–13) and your own knowledge.

- a A red battery icon indicates that battery power is low and needs recharging. A common belief about travelling is that it helps people to metaphorically recharge their batteries. The figure is throwing their hands up in despair because emails and other tasks are draining their batteries. An opinion in this poster is that people should turn their phones off when they go on holiday.
- b The battery symbol is in the top right-hand corner like it is on your phone. It helps frame the image to make it feel like you are looking through your phone screen. The vector created by the road points beyond the image and draws the viewer's eye to the other icons. This represents the phone plan as helping the traveller use apps on their phone to explore.
- c The bars in the battery symbol are nearly full. The figure is looking towards the road. The attitude of the figure is that they are ready to explore down the road because their apps and data are ready to go. This shows the audience of airport travellers what they will need to be prepared on their journey.
- d The battery symbol, the heart symbol and the map pin are the same colour. Red is the colour of passion. You can charge your heart ready for travel.

1.3 Images and influence: How images shape our opinions

This image is from an advertisement for running shoes. You are looking at the shoes, right? No? What *are* you looking at then?



Sometimes the product isn't the most important part of the advertisement. This is because the ad is selling a look and a lifestyle, not just shoes.

Which appeal is this advertisement using? A desire to belong is very powerful. While not many people think that buying expensive shoes is the key to looking toned and fabulous on the beach, the identity and experience they are connected with make the shoes an important piece of the puzzle.



Activity 1.7

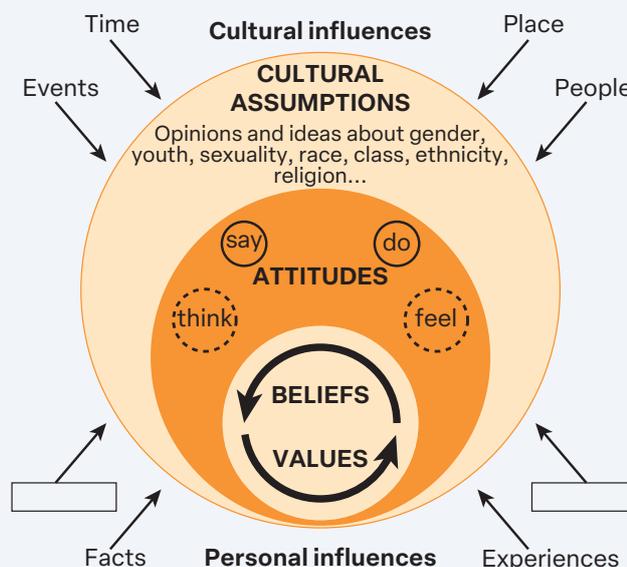
What opinions might you have about the people in the image? Describe who you imagine they are and what their life is like. Refer to the visual elements that shaped these opinions, like the setting or body language.

We form opinions about and even **categorise** people based on our own experiences and the associations evoked by powerful images and language. These messages are repeated in our culture via advertisements and in films, literature, social media and everyday conversations. When they are widely held in a community, opinions can become **stereotypes** and cultural assumptions. Cultural assumptions are particular opinions, ideas, attitudes, beliefs and values that are seen as being 'the norm' in a society.

Influences, attitudes, values and beliefs

What do you **recall** about these key terms from previous units? Can you put them into your own words?

How do attitudes, values and beliefs shape opinions and ideas about the world?



Opinions about what is ‘normal’, ‘good’ or ‘beautiful’ are used by influencers to sell us products – for example, running makes these people happy. This is an opinion, not a **fact**, although you could certainly **argue** that running activates endorphins and contributes to happiness. Or find research showing that people who regularly visit the beach are happier than people who don’t. That’s why facts and opinions can be tricky to separate.



Activity 1.8

1 Fact or opinion? Categorise these statements:

Australians drink more wine than beer.	
Beer goes with barbecues.	
Engagement rings should be given by men, to women.	
Exercise is good for your health.	
People with a tan are healthier.	
Sexual attraction is diverse – not everyone finds the same things attractive.	
Shoes should be worn when running on the beach.	
You can travel easily to New Zealand.	

2 In groups, discuss the opinions you’ve identified. Why might these opinions be promoted by advertisers? Are there any potentially negative consequences if some opinions became widely-held **cultural assumptions** or stereotypes?

It is important to consider the impact of idealised representations in media on people who can’t live up to the images which – let’s be honest – is most of us. If we aren’t super-fit, with flawless skin and hanging out beachside, do we feel unattractive or unsuccessful?

It’s easy to scoff at this question; we all think we aren’t that gullible. However, there are lots of studies that show people are subconsciously influenced by what they see in the media. Locate and read some of these articles from *The Conversation* website. You can check out the ‘recommended’ section at the end of each article for further information on this topic.

- ‘Why it’s so important for kids to see diverse TV and movie characters’, Dr Julie Dobrow, Assoc. Prof. Calvin Gidney and Prof. Jennifer Burton (2018), <https://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/11169>
- “‘This image has been digitally altered’: disclaimer labels are meant to protect viewers’ body image, but do they work?’, Prof. Marika Tiggemann (2021), <https://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/11170>

- ‘How ‘misogyny influencers’ cater to young men’s anxieties’, Dr Emily Setty (2023), <https://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/11171>
- ‘Australian media’s Instagram posts on Gaza war have an anti-Palestine bias – that has real-world consequences’, Dr Susan Carland (2024), <https://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/11172>
- ‘Teens see social media algorithms as accurate reflections of themselves, study finds’, Dr Nora McDonald (2024), <https://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/11173>

It is becoming more common to see advertisements and marketing campaigns using models and images that are more representative of Australian diversity and include a range of ages, body shapes and physical features.



Activity 1.9

Go online to view the most recent ‘lucky you’re with AAMI’ advertisements for AAMI Insurance. Then answer these questions.

- 1 Make a list of the **social groups** you can identify in the advertisement for AAMI.
- 2 Explain the mood of the advertisement. Refer to the music, pace and events depicted.
- 3 Decide which of the following appeals this advertisement uses to encourage people to consider buying insurance with AAMI over another company:
 - Associating the product with a powerful emotion
 - Suggesting a need the buyer may have which the product could meet
 - Associating the product with the buyer’s desire for a particular lifestyle or identity
 - Associating the product with the buyer’s group identity and need to belong.

Identify a different appeal if you believe there is one.

- 4 You can find advertisements featuring ‘lucky you’re with AAMI’ from the 1990s on YouTube. Watch one and discuss in small groups or with your class what differences you notice about the people, places and events shown in the advertisement then and now.
- 5 Using evidence from the advertisement(s) you watched, write a paragraph or series of detailed dot points to either:
 - a Explain how one of the advertisements persuades people to buy insurance with AAMI.



OR

- b Explain differences in the representation of social groups between a vintage advertisement and a more recent one.

Questions to help you reveal ideas, beliefs, values, attitudes and opinions in advertising include:

- What times, places, individuals or ideas are represented?
- What symbols do you recognise? What do they mean?
- What social groups are represented?
- Who is included or excluded? Who is powerful and not powerful?
- What beliefs about such things as gender, youth, disability or sexuality are taken for granted?
- What beliefs about such things as gender, youth, disability or sexuality are promoted or celebrated? What opinions might different people have about what's represented?
- What perspective on happiness, romance, heroism or success have been created?
- What appeals are used?
- What do the images make you think and feel? What attitudes are portrayed in what people seem to say, do, think, and feel in these images?
- What beliefs and values could have inspired these representations?



1.4 The role of the reader: Invited readings, resistant readings and stereotypes

Reading is interpreting the meaning of the text. Some interpretations are ‘invited’ – the messages are aligned with the intention of the text’s creator.



Sometimes we, the audience, ‘resist’ the messages – we make a **resistant reading**. We also negotiate meaning when we accept some messages and resist others.

Here’s an example:

I see an advertisement for beer that shows a group of men in a pub looking very happy. I recognise that the invited reading is that beer = fun. I make a resistant reading because of experiences where beer = violence. A resistant reading is made when we associate different connotations with the image or idea than the creator intended.

First, consider what is meant by ‘invited reading’ by completing the **Fruyer model**.

<p>Definition The interpretation intended by the advertiser and suggested by the text – the most obvious interpretation.</p>	<p>A picture to help you remember</p>
<p>Examples</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HOKA shoes will help you run faster. 	<p>Non-examples</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beer tastes like cat pee.

In the following activities, make up your mind to what extent you accept the invited reading or make a resistant reading.



Activity 1.10

Go online and watch two vintage advertisements for Carlton Mid Beer, a campaign first released in 2013 that's continued for over a decade. One features 'adjoining rooms' and another is 'poolside'.

- 1 Describe each advertisement either in dot-point form, short comic strip or a 25-word sentence (with correct punctuation).
- 2 Complete a **Venn diagram** to identify what characters, settings, events, themes or ideas are similar or different between the two advertisements and discuss these with your classmates.

The invited reading is constructed, in part, by the humour of the advertisements. The viewer is expected to find the men's ingenuity funny, either because we don't expect them to be so well-organised or because they have tricked their partners.

- 3 Choose the correct words from the square brackets to complete the invited reading of the Carlton campaigns.

The invited reading is that Carlton beer is a great drink to enjoy with [mates/wives]. It is a [blokey/sophisticated] drink that fits with activities like going to [restaurants/bars]. It is part of a lifestyle where men want to [enjoy/escape] the company of [friends/families]. This beer is for [men/women] who are [teenagers/middle aged/elderly], are [straight/queer] and live [alone/with partners].

Of course, not everyone will find the advertisement funny or be convinced that they should go and buy a Carlton beer. Invited readings rely on stereotypes and cultural assumptions – the idea that your experiences will be similar to mine. When we share cultural assumptions, we will have, or at least **understand**, similar perspectives, ideas, attitudes and values. However, Australia is one of the most culturally diverse countries in the world. The variety of different cultural influences means we all read advertisements differently.





Activity 1.11

Carlton resistant reading

The opposite of the invited reading is a resistant reading.

1 Complete the Frayer model

<p>Definition</p> <p>A justifiable interpretation of the text that contradicts the invited reading. The resistant reading is often a negative interpretation of the text.</p>	<p>Picture</p>
<p>Examples</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Men who drink Carlton lie to get what they want. 	<p>Non-examples</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carlton beer is good to share with friends.

2 Categorise the following statements into invited readings and resistant readings of the Carlton advertisements.

Remember that the resistant reading must be **justified** by evidence in the advertisements. Discuss your choices with your classmates.

- Beer is a drink for men.
- Carlton beer is a good drink to share with friends.
- Men who drink Carlton beers don't like spending time with women.
- Men need to drink beer to spend time with their friends.
- Women are no fun to hang out with.
- You have to exclude people to be able to enjoy drinking beer.
- Busy men need a break from their lives.
- Immature people drink beer.

The Carlton advertisements, like many other advertisements, use stereotypes about men and women. Stereotypes are powerful in advertising because they appeal to peoples' desire to belong to group identity and experience a lifestyle that they choose.

Stereotypes work by categorising individuals. Many people find stereotypes funny, even when they know they aren't true. Studies in psychology, however, have shown that repeated exposure to stereotypes alters our behaviour and can have a harmful influence on how we perceive ourselves and how we treat others.



Activity 1.12

- 1 In pairs or small groups, share three stereotypes you have noticed in television shows, advertising or on social media.
- 2 The table below lists known effects of stereotyping in the left-hand column. Complete the middle- and right-hand columns with examples of beliefs that may be influenced by the stereotypes of men and women portrayed in Carlton beer advertisements. Some examples have been completed for you.

Effects of stereotyping	Beliefs about men	Beliefs about women
You notice behaviours that confirm your stereotypical beliefs and ignore any behaviours that contradict it.	<i>A group of men having fun together confirms your belief that men neglect their families for their friends. You don't notice family groups having fun together.</i>	
You accept stereotypes as 'normal' and unconsciously change your behaviour towards particular groups or communities.		<i>Believing a stereotype that women are stupid influences behaviour. You might ignore women and exclude them from your social activities and conversations.</i>
The subjects of the stereotype are treated differently by, and excluded from, other groups. This affects how they think about themselves.	<i>Men assume that they are ...</i>	<i>Women believe that they are ...</i>

1.5 Issues in advertising: Perception

The extract in this activity is in the style of an academic paper, and deals with advertising, social media and effects on self-perception. Psychologists have found that the images we see in advertising and other forms of media can influence how we see ourselves and the world around us.



Activity 1.13

- 1 Before you read the extract, complete this anticipation guide. An anticipation guide is a series of opinions. It's a good way to test whether you have been influenced by the text, if you refer back to your completed guide after your close reading. Discuss your responses with your classmates. Repeat the exercise after reading, to see if your thinking has changed.

Before reading		Respond to this statement
True	False	Media images can change the way we perceive ourselves.
True	False	The ways bodies are represented in media can cause harm.
True	False	People shouldn't blame their personal problems on other people, organisations or social media.
True	False	As long as it's legal, advertisers can sell their product in any way they choose.
True	False	Social media shouldn't be regulated by governments or schools.
True	False	It is useful to compare your achievements to those of people who look like you.
True	False	It is worth spending money to look good on social media.

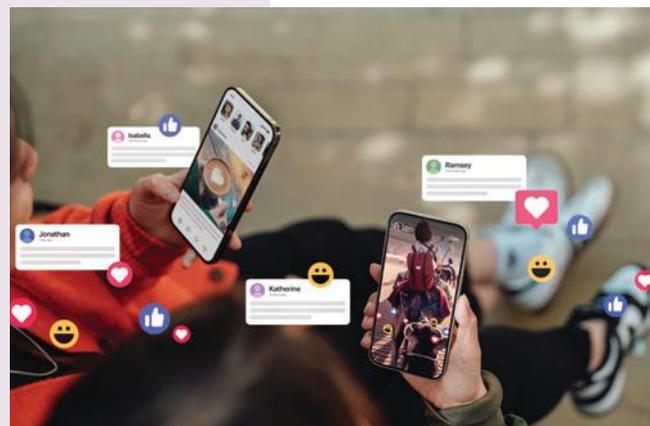
- 2 While you read, complete a Spotlight on Language by identifying and highlighting the features listed in the language features. These indicate the **formal**, academic **register** of the text. The first one has been done for you.



Academic article	Language features
<p>What the research says: advertising, social media and altered perceptions</p> <p>The use of Social Networking Sites (SNS) can increase a sense of connection and community, especially during catastrophic global events. However, it can also lead to a ‘comparison culture’ that may have significant negative consequences for physical, financial and mental wellbeing.</p> <p>Dissatisfaction with body image can lead to unhealthy behaviours around nutrition and exercise. Neuroscience studies found that repeated exposure to images of slender, artificially perfected bodies led to people perceiving healthy bodies as ‘fat’; their brain’s visual perception changed^{1,2}. Similarly, a 2021 U.S. study that found frequent comparison between self and people followed on SNS could increase body dissatisfaction³. Research shows teens and young adults to be particularly vulnerable⁴.</p> <p>Financial costs can also be significant. A 2021 study conducted by Harvard University and funded by Dove found the ‘combined financial and well-being costs of severe body dissatisfaction in the US was estimated to be \$305 billion in 2019’⁵.</p> <p>Pressure to buy into trends and maintain an image may lead to overspending.</p> <p>Geri Levin, Social Media Manager at Mind, a UK mental health charity, said: ‘The danger with social media is that we think the content we see is real life, when in fact it’s usually a highly edited snapshot of an unrealistic and unachievable reality.’⁶</p>	<p>Acronyms Large nominal groups, especially at the beginning of sentences; communicate detailed information focused on concepts instead of actions</p> <p>Attribution of information to researchers or studies</p> <p>Modal words that reduce or increase the certainty of conclusions (e.g. <i>consider, could, are</i>)</p> <p>Quantifiers that suggest the significance of the conclusions (e.g. <i>significant, few, many, some</i>)</p> <p>Text connectives or conjunctions to link different findings (e.g. <i>similarly</i>)</p> <p>Quotations from experts to appeal to authority</p> <p>Short sentences for clarity</p> <p>Complex sentences to communicate cause and effect</p> <p>Academic references to appeal to authority.</p>

Academic article	Language features
<p>'Influencer culture' alters the perception of 'normal' lifestyle. Users may have a particular perception of an aspirational influencer that is very difficult to attain in reality. Despite SNS guidelines, influencers do not always indicate if a post contains image manipulation or unverified claims, or if it is advertising – such as gifted or sponsored content. When a person's reality does not align with the seemingly perfect lives projected by SNS, this can create a negative self-perception, trigger perfectionism and lead to feelings of anxiety and frustration⁷. SNS users may try to maintain the appearance of a perfect life to the detriment of their physical, mental and financial wellbeing.</p> <p>Researchers suggest reducing time on social media, muting sources of negative comparison and investing in real-world experiences to build connections^{2, 3, 7}. Though support like the eSafety Commission goes some way to provide practical, evidence-based advice on these topics, further investment in mental health supports and education are systemic changes that would reduce harm.</p>	

- 3** Complete the following observation and inference chart for this text. Remember the following steps:
- First, identify three significant facts from the article.
 - Then, write what these observations suggest about the impact of advertising and social media on people's self-perception.
 - In the conclusion, summarise the main ideas in the article.



What can you see? What does it say?	Representation(s) – What is represented? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Influencers • • 	Elements that shape meaning in this text	
		Observation – language features <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complex sentences • • • 	Observation – text structures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic article • • •
What does it mean?		Inferences – language features <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shows reasoning – how ideas are connected • • 	Inferences – text structures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authoritative • •
Conclusion	Main ideas and opinions about the representation(s):		

Conclusion = *What does it mean when we put it all together?*

Sources

¹Brooks KR, Mond JM, Stevenson RJ, Stephen ID. (2016). 'Body Image Distortion and Exposure to Extreme Body Types: Contingent Adaptation and Cross Adaptation for Self and Other'. *Frontiers in Neuroscience*. doi: 10.3389/fnins.2016.00334. ²Harriger JA, Evans A, Thompson JK, Tylka TL. (2022). 'The dangers of the rabbit hole: Reflections on social media as a portal into a distorted world of edited bodies and eating disorder risk and the role of algorithms'. *Body Image*. doi: 10.1016/j.bodyim.2022.03.007 ³ Jiotsa B, Naccache B, Duval M, Rocher B, Grall-Bronnec M. (2021). 'Social Media Use and Body Image Disorders: Association between Frequency of Comparing One's Own Physical Appearance to That of People Being Followed on Social Media and Body Dissatisfaction and Drive for Thinness'. *Int J Environ Res Public Health*. doi: 10.3390/ijerph18062880. ⁴Bowman A. 'Social media's effects on the teen brain'. (2023). <https://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/11174> ⁵Bryn Austin S, Slaughter-Acey JC. 'The Real Cost of Beauty Ideals Report: study conducted by Dove, in collaboration with Deloitte Access Economics, and researchers from the Strategic Training Initiative for the Prevention of Eating Disorders: A Public Health Incubator (STRIPED) at the Harvard T. H. Chan School of Public Health'. (2022). <https://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/11175> ⁶King T. 'Looking good, feeling ... not so good: the impact of advertising and social media on body image'. (2021). <https://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/11176> ⁷Vogt C, A. Young. (2021). 'Under Pressure: Are the Stresses of Social Media Too Much for Teens and Young Adults?'. <https://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/11177>



Extension task 1.1

Your **evaluation** of the **ethics** of an advertisement or text will depend in part on your own attitudes and beliefs.

1 Sort the following words into those expressing positive evaluations and negative evaluations:

admirable, affirming, alarming, appalling, appealing, clever, damaging, degrading, entertaining, exploitative, fair, honest, immoral, insightful, insulting, manipulative, misleading, motivating, outdated, pleasing, positive, reprehensible, revolutionary, stupid, unacceptable, worrying

2 Select a recent advertising campaign for a well-known international brand. Use the evaluative words to write a paragraph for a blog, either:

- expressing admiration for the ingenious way a product has been advertised

OR

- expressing concern about the damaging or manipulative way a product has been advertised.

You may want to refer to blogs such as *Collective Shout* or *Mumbrella* for examples and opinions.

Questions	Effective openings
What is your purpose in this blog?	Enough is enough!
What are the connotations of the ad?	If you think nobody in advertising has a heart, think again.
What is your opinion about these connotations?	A big shout out to ____ for their latest campaign.
Who is the intended audience of the advertisement and how might they respond to these connotations?	Our fight against ____ continues.
What, in your opinion, should the advertiser or the reader do in response?	The latest ad for ____ should be ____.

1.6 Issues in advertising: Social media and the algorithm

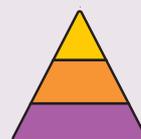
Companies conduct market research to identify the target market for the product and decide what the advertisement campaign should focus on. This research is increasingly conducted online via data collection on social media. The collection, sale and use of information obtained from social media accounts is a significant global issue.

All social media platforms review data about you – what you like, where you check in, who you tag, how much time you spend online – and then show you content that the **algorithm** identifies as likely to appeal to you. An algorithm is a set of rules for a machine or computer to do a certain thing. Social media algorithms are closely guarded secrets that use machine-learning to work out what will keep you engaged.



Activity 1.14

The article on the next page is an opinion piece about how personal data is used by social media to promote content and increase advertising revenue.



- 1 Read the statements in the Three-Level Guide below and then carefully read the text.
- 2 For each statement, decide whether the author would say it is true or false. On your worksheet, highlight the evidence that supports your claim.
- 3 Discuss your responses with your classmates. Were there any statements where you disagreed?

	Text:	True	False
Level 1: Literal	Social media collects information about how much you watch content.		
	The social media algorithm is most likely to suggest neutral content.		
	People are more likely to engage with a post that makes them angry.		
Level 2: Inferential	Even if you ignore targeted advertisements, they are still a valuable marketing technique because if enough people see it then someone will buy from it.		
	Social media is effective for connecting with people who experience the same things as you.		



	Text:	True	False
Level 3: Critical	Boys and young men are especially vulnerable to social media influence.		



The art of showing you what you want to see

By Gillian Paul

You've probably heard of 'the algorithm', but did you know how closely this is related to data collection and marketing?

Bear with me here.

When you sign up to social media, part of the terms and conditions are to do with the collection of data about you. The way social media companies make most of their money is through advertising. The data they collect allows them to target advertisements to your interests, making advertisement space on their platform more valuable. To keep a consistent number of users viewing these adverts, social media platforms need users to stay engaged with the content. To create active engagement, an algorithm (or realistically, several) analyses data about what users click on, how long they watch something, who or what they engage with, and then shows them more of the same. The more effective the algorithm is at using your data to keep your attention, the more companies can charge for advertising content.

Algorithms control what we see online.

Most social media companies keep their algorithms a closely guarded secret.

We like content we agree with. Only amplifying posts that we agree with perpetuates biases; we don't see content that challenges or expands our understanding of the world. We also tend to be more engaged with things that elicit strong emotions, like anger or fear or disgust.

The more users interact with this kind of content, the more the algorithm promotes it. Constantly consuming the same bitesize pieces of content can create a distorted view of reality. This can spill into attitudes and behaviours in the real world.

Principal investigator Dr Kaitlyn Regehr (UCL Information Studies) said: 'Algorithmic processes on TikTok and other social media sites target people's vulnerabilities – such as loneliness or feelings of loss of control – and gamify harmful content. As young people micro dose on topics like self-harm, or extremism, to them, it feels like entertainment'.



Anger, jealousy and fear are also strong emotions.

Demand for engagement can amplify harmful biases or inaccurate claims, especially those that are deliberately inflammatory.

Recent studies from University College London (UCL), University of Kent and the Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL), and from Dublin City University (DCU) show that social media algorithms do amplify extreme content. Both studies created 'sock-puppet' social media accounts to research the types of content shown.

The DCU study found that 'TikTok's and YouTube Shorts' algorithms promote toxic content to boys and young men. As the study progressed, each account was recommended an increasing amount of manosphere content, with the majority of messages promoting rigid and harmful masculine norms, misogyny, and spurious advice on mental health and wealth accumulation'.

The volume of conspiracy theories and extremist content was particularly concerning. This content tapped into anger and fear to manipulate users into investing time and money in influencer products.

So, what can we do to beat the algorithm?

Try diversifying your social media content. Experiment with following

neutral accounts, like funny animals or calming landscapes. How does this change your 'For You' page? More importantly, how does this change how you feel?

Take a break. You have the power to set limits on your social media use. Ask a friend or trusted adult to keep you accountable. If you need to, log off, clear cookies or delete accounts entirely and 'reset' the data. Empower yourself by understanding how the algorithm is designed to manipulate you.

If you see something that makes you angry, check who is saying it and what the aim of the post is. Are they selling something to fix the problem they've just told you about? What else have they posted? Does the comment section pass the vibe check? Confirm what is being said with another (reliable) source. A site like Snopes can be helpful because it traces and decodes what parts of a story are accurate.

Remember, social media has the potential to make our world a more positively connected place. By being aware of the data collection, marketing and algorithm cycle, you can take control of what you see and break out of the echo chamber.

For more about these studies see:

UCL 'Social media algorithms amplify misogynistic content to teens' and
DCU Anti-Bullying Centre
<https://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/11178>

Activity 1.14 *Continued*

- 4 Issues around social media and data are constantly changing. After you have completed the Three-Level Guide, think about what might have changed from when this piece was written. Share your own experiences, find more recent articles about the topic (see Boolean operators, p. 70 to help define your search), identify and discuss updates with your peers and teacher.

Please talk to a trusted adult if you have any concerns.
You can find more information about interactions online at <https://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/11247>.



Extension task 1.2

Compare the advertisements on your social media feed with those that friends or older relatives receive on their social media feeds. What do the marketers think you desire?

Discuss with your classmates the ways symbols and stereotypes are used in this type of targeted advertising.



1.7 Real-life reading: Comparing brands

In this section, you will see that companies choose to market their similar products in very different ways. While you are investigating the advertisement campaigns for rival brands, consider what message they want audiences to take away from their advertisements, and what issues the representations raise.



Activity 1.15

- 1 In small groups, choose one Nike, one Under Armour and one Adidas (or other sporting brand) advertisement that use professional or aspiring athletes in the campaign. You can view the latest advertisements on the companies' official YouTube channels or search for 'athlete advertisement campaign'.

Assign advertisements to group members to watch.

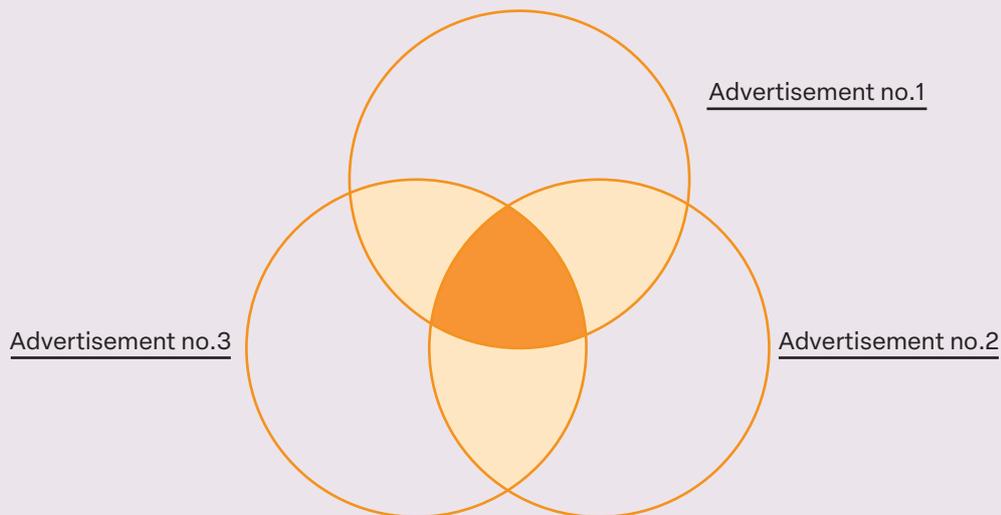
- 2 Summarise each advertisement you watched in 25 words or less.
- 3 Read the list of features below. For each advertisement, record the letters for each feature that appears. You might have to watch several times to catch them all.
 - a Individual exercising
 - b Group or team exercising together
 - c Female voiceover
 - d Male voiceover
 - e View of full body in action
 - f Focus on individual body part(s) or feature(s)
 - g Defiant or aggressive stance and/or facial expression
 - h Muscles visible
 - i Sweat visible
 - j Eye contact with the viewer (direct gaze)
 - k Brand shoes visible
 - l Brand clothes visible
 - m Natural or outside environment

Activity 1.15 *Continued*

- n Urban or inside environment
- o Minimal text/explanation of the product
- p Detailed text/explanation of the product
- q Metaphor for the athlete's sporting performance
- r Musical backing
- s Hashtag or connection to social media
- t Brand slogan.

4 Use a Venn diagram, and the letters you recorded, to identify whether a feature appears in one, two or all three advertisements.

What features do the advertisements have in common? Were any features in only one of the advertisements?



5 Individually, select 1–2 features in the centre of the Venn diagram and write a paragraph or a series of dot points explaining what opinions, ideas and perspectives about athletes are created by these advertisements.



Extension task 1.3

Fragrance companies, car manufacturers and fast-food restaurants must appeal to their target audience and differentiate themselves from the competition.

Using a Venn diagram, compare the advertisements for two brands selling similar products. Identify similarities and differences and explain how these advertisements portray the brand.

1.8 Putting it all together



Throughout this chapter we have looked at how marketing influences audiences. The visual and written texts have used text structures and language features to represent products and brands in a variety of ways.

This task is a practice for the Common Internal Assessment.



Response to stimulus

In this task, you will identify and explain representations and how they are constructed through opinion, language features and text structures.

Task

Respond to opinions and/or ideas in these advertising texts related to sport and exercise.

Suggested conditions: Students should have access to a copy of the QCAA document 'Language features and text structures Essential English' and blank copies of our Observation and Inference Chart (below).

What can you see? What does it say?	Representation(s) – <i>What is represented?</i> •	Elements that shape meaning in this text	
		Observation – language features •	Observation – text structures •
What does it mean?		Inferences – language features •	Inferences – text structures •
Conclusion	Main ideas and opinions about the representation(s):		



Visual stimulus 1

Explain how the images in this advertisement for a sportswear brand constructs two representations of the impact of exercise. In your response, explain how an opinion, a language feature and a text structure contribute to each representation.

Visual stimulus 2

How does this social media post position audiences to regard youth sports? Support your response in parts **a**, **b**, **c** and **d**.

- a** Explain two representations of youth sports.
- b** Explain two opinions about youth sports.
- c** Explain how two language features have been used to portray youth sports.
- d** Explain how two text structures have been used to portray youth sports.



@tassiedevilsfc The girls in our U13s team are gearing up for another big season, and they're faster and tougher than ever. If you've got a young girl in your life looking to level up her fitness and confidence, then we've got a squad of little devils waiting for her to join. 🍀 Shoot us a DM for more info about our upcoming trials! #playlikeagirl

Written stimulus

Explain how this blog post from a fitness influencer's social media site constructs two representations of the effect of exercise. In your response, explain how an opinion, a language feature and a text structure contribute to each representation.

No pain, no gain.

The more exercise we do, the better. Right?

Turns out, not always.

Now, don't get it twisted, I'm not saying exercise is bad.

It's great for building strength and stamina. Studies prove it can help our mental health. Exercising with others in a team or group is a great social activity (and is often a free or low-cost outing).

There are so many benefits to balanced exercise!

What I am saying is that there is a limit when exercise can become unhealthy. When we neglect rest, refuelling and rehydration, we can cause some serious issues.

It can be hard not to compare ourselves to others. We're surrounded by images of bodies in peak physical condition. We're told how attractive they are. Film stars and action heroes share their insane routines. Influencers track the gains. They make it look easy!

What isn't shown is the cost or the consequences.

Most of us don't have access to personal trainers and a full home gym. Most of us don't have our own chef. Most of us won't get a superhero payout for our time.

There are very few people talking about how their bodies are damaged after long periods of extreme exercise. Over-exercising can lead to feeling faint or vomiting. If this happens regularly after your exercise routine, or you have recurring injuries, it's time to check in with a professional. Even in the short-term, overtraining or overreaching can lead to fatigue, irritability and mood swings. That's not fun for anyone!

What I've learned from my own journey with exercise is that exercise is like ice cream. There's a sweet spot that makes me feel great. Too much and I feel awful.

So go out! Put your runners on! Set a new personal best!

Just remember to check in with how you're feeling – enjoy yourself, keep some balance and listen to your body.



CHAPTER 2

Speaking with purpose

As citizens, we encounter a range of **texts** that deal with local and global issues. Social media, news outlets, films and other media texts all **influence** us to respond to issues in certain ways. By selecting content, **language features** and **text structures**, the creators of these texts invite us to align our **attitudes** and **values** with theirs. This is called **positioning**. Your job is to **understand** how positioning works and become a powerful critical reader who can challenge and champion **perspectives**. Together, we will **explore** the complex issues of food insecurity and fast fashion. Then you will use what you have learned to **create** and present a podcast on this or another issue that matters to you.

You will develop the skills and understanding to:

- **explore** how different perspectives, ideas, attitudes and values are represented
- critically read and **appraise** information about an issue
- **develop** your own logical point of view when you have **synthesised** (pulled apart in order to put back together) ideas and information
- **examine** the patterns and conventions in persuasive and reflective podcasts
- **create** a podcast of your own that uses those patterns and conventions to position an audience in relation to the issue
- make use of opinions and/or ideas, beliefs, values and attitudes in the shaping of your representation.

Teacher notes

This chapter has lots of material. You won't want to do all of it, so scan the materials and select what issues, texts and activities work for your context. The issue of food security is introduced first. Then fast fashion has been selected as an engaging focus for students to relate to or empathise with. You could work closely with students on food security and gradually release responsibility to students as you work through fast fashion. Or you might just focus on one issue or text.

We have also assembled a range of resources and activities, included in an additional online section focused on the ABC docuseries *War on Waste*, which we invite you to explore. *War on Waste* may be a particularly current and interesting alternative text study, especially if you would like to take this assessment in a more imaginative direction. There are also some great materials on rhetorical techniques for persuading an audience. When you're deciding how to approach the assessment for this topic, consider the interests and the technical and interpersonal capabilities your students are bringing to the task. This is a terrific opportunity to offer some choice in whether students work alone, with a partner or in a larger group. You can also invite them to stick closely with our topics or explore their own interests.

Word play

Build new words from the words in the first column. Change their forms, morph them into new words, add prefixes or suffixes, and find words with similar spelling patterns. The first one has been done for you.

commune	community	communicate	communal	uncommon
local				
global				
relate				
active				

Sentence combining

Rearrange, combine, add adverbs and adjectives to these short sentences to make a more interesting passage about the Australian charity organisation, Foodbank.

- Foodbank operates across Australia.
- Foodbank believes everyone should have access to good quality food.
- Foodbank runs a School Breakfast Program in over 300 Queensland schools.
- Foodbank plays a role in reducing Australia's food waste problem.
- Foodbank provides essential supplies during disaster relief efforts.



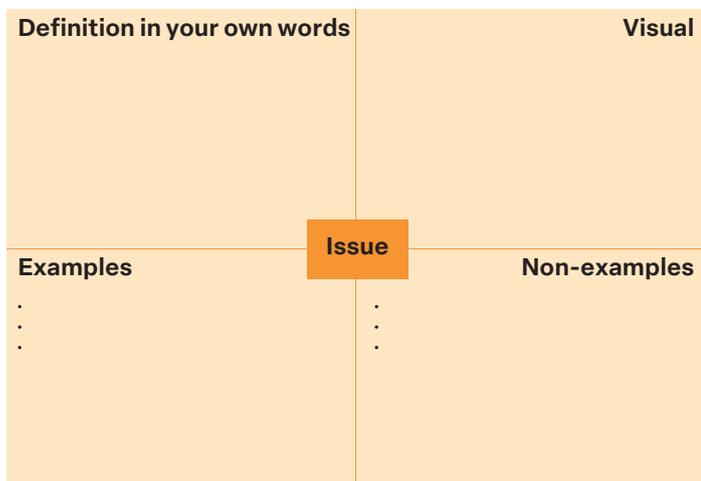
2.1 How to explore an issue

An **issue** is an important topic or problem that causes debate or discussion. My shoelace coming undone isn't an issue. Nobody will think

about it or talk about it. But access to high-quality mental healthcare is an issue. People discuss it with their friends, worry about it, and study it. Issues can be local, affecting only a few people; for example, litter in a neighbourhood park. Or they can be global, like climate change, which means their effects are felt around the world.

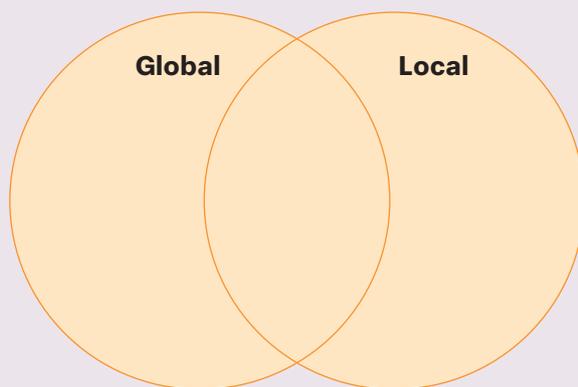
Complete a **Frayer model** like

the one above to consolidate your understanding of this key term.



Activity 2.1

- 1 Think about an issue you have heard about or experienced recently, like the cost of living or climate change or workplace discrimination. How many people does it affect? Is it a local, national or global issue? Do people have different views about how serious it is? What suggestions have been made to resolve or alleviate the issue?
- 2 Create an issues map for your class using sticky notes or a digital whiteboard. Record a range of issues you know and/or care about (one per note). Sort them into 'global' and 'local'. Some issues will be both.

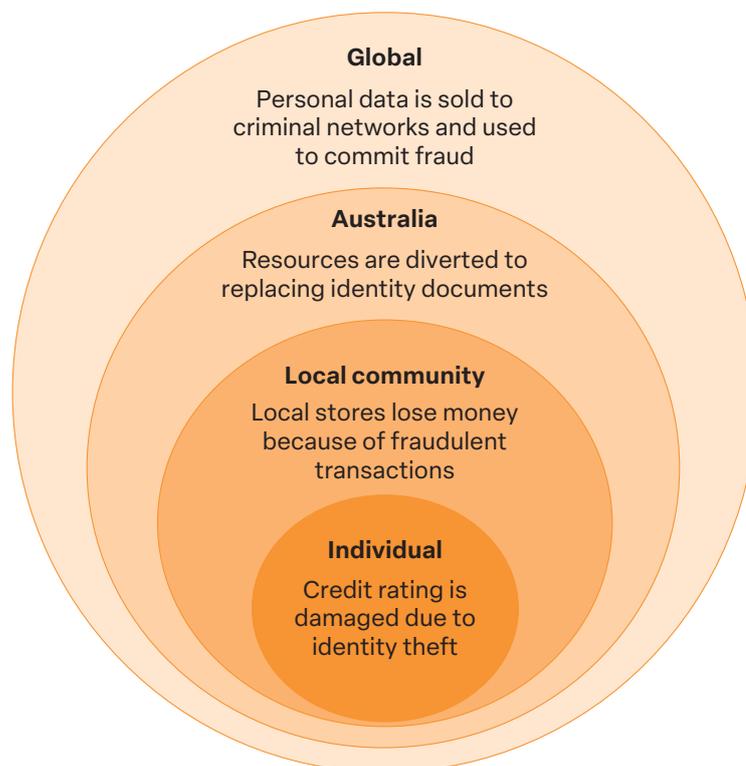


To find examples of issues, visit the websites of reputable organisations like the Australian Human Rights Commission or the United Nations, or local and national news websites. You can also look at reports like Australian Youth Barometer and Mission Australia Youth Survey to find out what other young Australians think.

You can **represent** the possible effects of an issue visually by thinking of ripples expanding across a body of water when an object is dropped into it. In the smallest circle, **consider** the effects on the individual (this might be you). In each 'ripple', consider the larger communities you're a part of – friends, school, suburb, city or town, Queensland, Australia, the world.

Here is an example of a ripple diagram representing the effects of online data security breaches.

Issue: data security breaches



Did you know?

The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) is an independent Commonwealth statutory authority. They educate businesses and consumers about their **rights** and **obligations** under consumer guarantees. You automatically receive these consumer guarantees when you buy goods and services. This includes privacy safeguards to ensure your data is protected.

In recent years, the ACCC has investigated alleged breaches of the Customer Data Right (CDR) rules. ACCC issued substantial financial penalties to companies not following CDR guidelines.

If you're affected by an issue where a business has done something they shouldn't, such as making false or misleading claims, you can report this to the ACCC. The ACCC can investigate and enforce hefty fines if a business is found to be engaging in unlawful practices.

You can find more information at:
<https://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/11183>



Activity 2.2

Why is it important to clearly identify an issue and its effects? Well, before you can fix a problem, you must identify there is one. One of the reasons that food insecurity and textile waste (both of which we look at later in the chapter) are current issues in Australia is that government policies have not successfully addressed the harm they cause. Drawing attention to difficult issues and measuring their effects, and the impacts of possible solutions, is important for creating lasting change.

1 **Select** one issue you've heard about or seen in the media.

Complete a ripple diagram, like the one on p. 45, considering how the issue might affect different communities.



2 Explain your chosen issue and its effects on individual, local and global communities. Use an extended PEEL paragraph. You can use the outline below.

Text structure (PEEL)	Topic: How does the issue of _____ affect individuals and the wider community?	Language features
Point	The issue of _____ can have significant negative effects such as _____ and _____.	Use synonyms and varied noun groups/phrases to refer to the issue, e.g. climate change; irregular weather patterns. Include adjectives to make noun groups more precise. Use prepositional phrases that indicate where the effect is, e.g. in rural communities.
E+E (individual)	For individuals, _____ means they will _____.	
E+E (local)	In _____ communities, this issue affects _____. It means that _____. Furthermore, this may influence other communities by _____.	
E+E (global)	On a global scale, _____ is a problem because _____.	
Link back to the topic	Like many issues, _____ has far-reaching consequences and we must _____.	
		Adverbial conjunctions connect sentences in your paragraph.

Focus on grammar: Adverbial conjunction

An adverbial conjunction (or conjunctive adverb) is an adverb or adverbial phrase that indicates a connection between two independent clauses. You use them after a full-stop (a period or semi-colon) and follow them with a comma. For example, this sentence begins with one.

Like regular conjunctions (and, but), they are used for addition, cause/effect, clarification, consequence, contrast and emphasis. Add examples to each category as you read through the texts in this chapter.

Addition	Cause/Effect	Clarification	Comparison	Contrast	Emphasis
Furthermore,	Therefore,	For example,	Similarly,	However,	Certainly,
Also,	Accordingly,	Notably,	Likewise,	Instead,	Undoubtedly,
Moreover,	Consequently,	Clearly,	Equally,	Alternatively,	Indeed,
•	•	•	•	•	•
•	•	•	•	•	•
•	•	•	•	•	•



2.2 Exploring an issue: Food insecurity

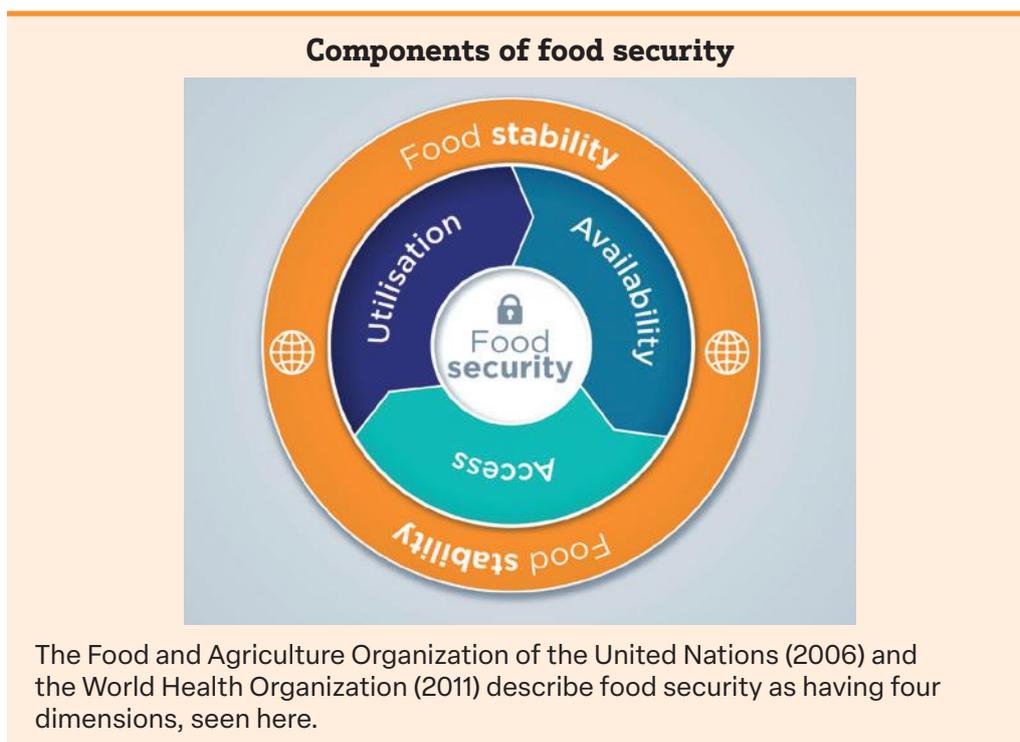
To **develop** informed perspectives and take decisive action, you need to clearly **define** the issue, **identify** reliable evidence and **understand** some of the causes, effects and potential solutions. While you are informing yourself and developing your perspectives about issues, pay attention to how the texts you encounter are positioning you to respond. Also, consider perspectives that are different from your own. When you care deeply about an issue, you will want to persuade people to share your perspective and take action.

A serious issue facing many Australians is food insecurity. This is when someone does not have reliable access to a sufficient quantity of affordable, nutritious, culturally appropriate food. Experiencing food insecurity negatively impacts the physical, mental and social health of adults and children. Having adequate food is a basic human right. Therefore, any threat to food security matters.

In this section, you will consider the issue of food insecurity and how representations of the issue have been created in different texts.

What's the issue?

Before we identify causes and effects of food insecurity, we should understand the elements that contribute to food security. The text below is from 'Understanding food insecurity in Australia', a Child Family Community Australia report based on information from the World Health Organization (WHO).



1 Food availability

The reliable supply of appropriate quality food from domestic production or importation, including:

- location of food outlets
- availability of food within stores
- price, quality and variety of available food

2 Food access

The economic and physical capacity to acquire foods that are safe, culturally appropriate and nutritious, including:

- the capacity to buy and transport food
- mobility to shop for food.

3 Food use

The physical, social and human resources to transform food into adequate and safe meals, including:

- the knowledge and skills to decide what food to purchase, how to prepare and consume it, and how to allocate it within a household
- home storage, preparation and cooking facilities
- time available to shop, prepare and cook food
- the use of non-food inputs that are important for wellbeing, such as clean water, hygiene and sanitation, and healthcare.

4 Food stability and sustainability

The consistent supply of food and the capability to account for risks such as natural disasters, price flux and conflict, including:

- economic stability
- household resilience
- insurance measures against natural diseases and crop failures.

SOURCE: Mitchell Bowden (2020) 'Understanding food insecurity in Australia' (CFCA Paper No.55) pp. 4–6 (<https://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/11248>)



Activity 2.3

An Ishikawa or **fishbone diagram** is a graphic organiser that shows the causes of a particular effect. The process of **creating** an Ishikawa diagram pushes you to **consider** many potential causes of a problem, not just the obvious ones. A thorough Ishikawa diagram looks like fish bones because each branch (primary cause) can have a number of sub-branches (secondary causes).



Activity 2.3 Continued

To help you make your diagram, try repeating the question: 'Why?'

Q: Why do we have a problem with food insecurity?

A: Because some people can't access healthy food.

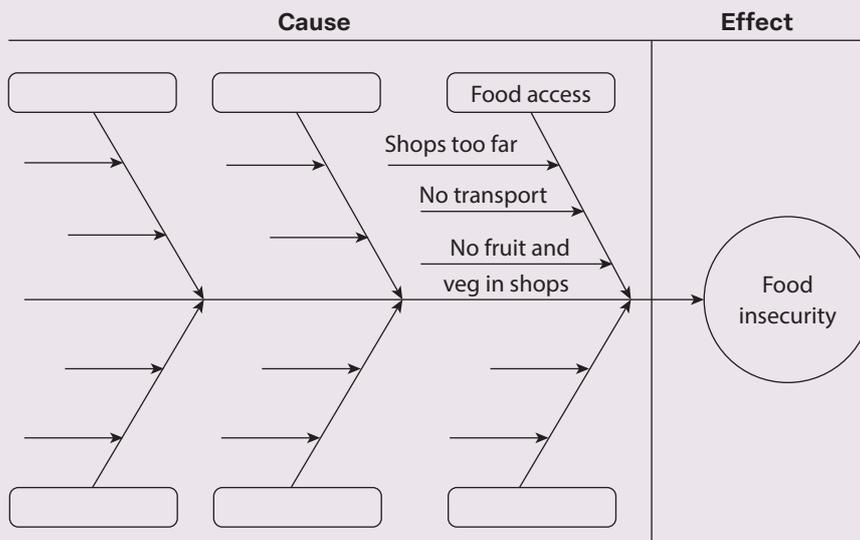
Q: Why can't some people access healthy food?

A: Because it isn't available in the stores they can get to.

Q: Why isn't it available in the stores they can get to?

1 Using the text on the previous page, and your own knowledge, add the components of food insecurity to your fishbone diagram.

You can find a template online or draw it. Begin with the information in this one below and add to it as you work through this section.



Activity 2.4

Use the Three-Level Guide to understand the perspectives in the article on the next page.

1 First, scan for and circle the **specialised vocabulary** in the text.

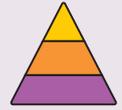
Use **context** clues (the words around this vocabulary) and your own knowledge to come up with synonyms or your own definition for the following words and phrases. Check your definitions and synonyms with your peers before using a dictionary or search engine.

- alleviating
- attributed
- burden
- gig economy
- grassroots
- organisations
- legislation
- perceptions
- persistent
- resilient
- viable



Activity 2.4 *Continued*

- 2 Use the statements in the Three-Level Guide to focus your careful reading of the article below. For each statement:
- **decide** whether the author would say it is True or False (not your opinion)
 - highlight the evidence in the text that supports your answer
 - **discuss** your responses with your classmates, especially Level 3 statements.



	Text:	True	False
Level 1: Literal	The gig economy and changing government support have increased people's income.		
	75% of food insecure households had someone in paid work.		
	3.7 million households experienced moderate-to-severe-level food insecurity.		
Level 2: Inferential	Families prioritise eating over other budget items.		
	Higher food prices are justified by increased costs for producers.		
Level 3: Critical	The government should create a public service campaign to increase awareness about the issue.		

Food insecurity: A personal problem?

Growing numbers of Australians are reported to be 'food insecure', with limited or uncertain access to nutritious food. When we think about who experiences food insecurity, the stories we see and hear influence our perceptions.

One persistent strand is that food insecurity is down to poor personal choices and priorities. From these stories, we might assume that people go hungry because they are 'too lazy' to prepare nutritious meals or aren't trying hard enough to solve their problems.

But is this accurate? Or does a focus on the individual miss the bigger picture?

Food insecurity is most often attributed to financial hardship.

If we believe this to be an individual problem, we can write it off as someone needing to work harder and earn more money.

However, household income can be affected by things outside individual control. In fact, over half of food insecure households had someone in paid work. Zero-hours contracts, the gig economy and changing government support can all negatively affect income. And once in a cycle of food insecurity, poor nutrition can lead to problems with mental and physical health, which in turn

contribute to missing work or poor performance.

Household spending can be even more unpredictable. Significant increases in fuel, housing and energy costs all mean less money for the necessities, even before accounting for higher food prices, particularly fresh food.

Rising food prices

Increasing food prices are a significant burden for household budgets.

Dr Rachel Carey and Dr Maureen Murphy, University of Melbourne, note that: 'Food prices have been rising since 2020 due to multiple shocks to the global food system' such as supply-chain issues and extreme weather events. They call on the Australian government to ensure food security for all Australians 'with a focus on promoting a food system that's healthy, sustainable, equitable and resilient', 'from farm to fork' (<https://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/11184>).

The price rises have been so significant that the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) is investigating supermarkets' pricing strategies. Increasing profits for large corporations may come at the cost of food accessibility for consumers.

Other factors

Complex living arrangements can add to the uncertainty. Many people struggle to find secure, affordable

housing and moving house is not always a viable option. Households with dependent children must consider childcare arrangements and costs. Many family circumstances can make it difficult to budget or plan meals effectively. Rather than people who 'can't be bothered' to eat right, some families must prioritise eating at all.

The accessibility and cost of travel as well as food availability are also problematic. While driving is expensive, a trip to buy groceries without a car can cost even more time and money. In your local area, how easy is it to use public transport? Would it be easy to move around the local stores if you had a mobility issue? This is assuming that the local store can stock fresh produce in the first place.



It is estimated that as many as one in four Aussie families are experiencing some kind of food insecurity.

The 2023 Foodbank Hunger Report identified that 3.7 million households experienced moderate-to severe-level food insecurity. It also reported a growing number of people experiencing food insecurity for the first time.

Activity 2.4 Continued

Blaming individuals for experiencing food insecurity ignores the role of the government in alleviating many of the root causes such as inadequate social support and housing protections. It places burden on charities and grassroots organisations and contributes to shame around food insecurity. Food insecurity is a national issue and requires national policy changes.

The huge numbers and diverse experiences of Aussies experiencing food insecurity totally undermine

any one-dimensional narrative of laziness and individual fault. People living under-resourced lives are doing the best they can. It is time for stories, and solutions, that focus on the bigger picture.



Presenting evidence

Facts and evidence are an important part of investigating and representing any issue. The data that is chosen and how it is presented influence audience perception. In the previous article, quotes from experts (Dr Carey and Dr Murphy, University of Melbourne) and data from the Foodbank Hunger Report are used as supporting evidence.

As more people source information from social media, **infographics** are a popular way to present evidence.

Infographic

This word is a portmanteau of information + graphic.

An infographic is useful for representing data in an accessible and visually appealing way. It can be effective for making complex research easier to understand. You are likely to come across infographics on social media as well as on posters and reports.

Like all texts, infographics are constructed by selecting information and combining text structures and language features. The reader is positioned by what information the author chooses to include (or leave out) as well as the choices the author makes to control the reading path (see Chapter 1, pp. 7–9). The layout, sizing, colours and accompanying text, including captions, influence the way we interpret the information.

While infographics are an effective way to quickly share information with a public audience, limited space means creators are selective. Data can be misrepresented when nuance is lost or the information is taken out of context.

The 2023 Foodbank Hunger Report presents evidence from its findings by combining graphic representations and text in a logical order. Most pages follow a similar structure or sequence. This predictable layout directs our **reading path** (see pp. 7–9). A logical reading path supports reading comprehension because our attention is not split between noticing the structure and interpreting the information:

- Heading with the main conclusion drawn from the data
- Subheading with additional information or explanation
- Title for the graphic
- Graphic with high-contrast colours
- A footer in smaller font with source question and base dataset.

Depending on the type of graphic, pages may contain:

- Quotation(s) from survey participants with basic details (sex, age, location, employment)
- Arrows identifying significant changes from the previous year (YAGO = year ago)
- A key or legend explaining colours and other details.

Attention and cognitive load

Our minds can only process so much information at once.

Working memory is how we hold information in our minds while we process it. It has a limited capacity.

The amount of working memory resources used as we learn is called cognitive load.

For example, when we attempt to solve a puzzle, we use our working memory to understand the problem, process information and solve the problem. Distractions and other information also take up our working memory.

In Units 1 and 2, we thought of this as a bookshelf. You can also think of this as a backpack. It is harder to carry lots of things all at once. Too much, and we become overloaded.

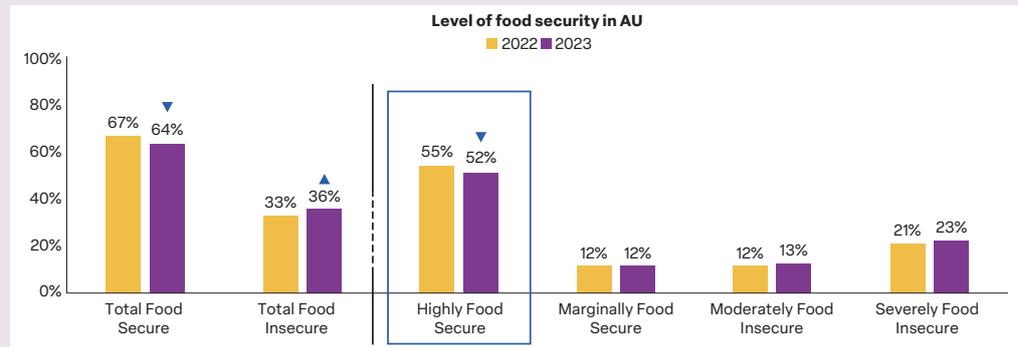
When we have processed the information, it can be transferred from our working memory to our long-term memory. It becomes knowledge!





Activity 2.5

Reading visual data, like an infographic, is an important skill to practise.



Notice how your attention is drawn first to the blue box outline (a **salient** feature), then via the path (**vector**) created by the blue downwards arrow to the 52% purple bar, and to the label 'Highly Food Secure'. A reading path from left-to-right will help you make sense of the labels and bars in the graph. Your eye will probably then be drawn to the heading in larger blue font at the top of the infographic.

Without that blue box to establish your first reading position, you probably would have begun with the heading 'Level of food security in AU' on the top left. We're not sure why, but most people won't come back to the blue and green information at the very top until after they 'read' the figure. How did you read it?

- 1 Interpret the information in this visual. Answer the following questions:
 - a What do the different bar colours mean?
 - b What is the effect of the line separating the first two sets of bars from the rest?
 - c Why do you think the author has chosen to draw your attention to the 'Highly Food Secure' columns first?
 - d What conclusion did researchers draw from this data?
- 2 The report includes personal stories from survey responses. In one example, a woman talked of how she had moved to the ACT for a better-paying job, but found her savings dwindling. Then she had a run of bad luck when her share-house group fell apart, she couldn't find cheaper accommodation that would let her keep her dog, and her car was stolen. Although she generally managed to stay afloat, there were times when after paying bills she hadn't allowed for, she didn't have enough money for food until her next pay day. She tried, but couldn't seem to get ahead.

Does this woman's story change how you interpret the information in the graph? How?



Activity 2.6

In this activity, you will consider how the language used to report evidence in news stories can position readers. This data has been invented for this activity so please don't quote us.

As part of a survey investigating loneliness and disconnection, 100 people were asked to respond by selecting a response on a 5-point Likert scale to the statement: 'I feel part of a community'.

1	2	3	4	5
I feel excluded from this community	I sometimes feel connected with this community	I usually feel connected with this community	I feel welcomed in my community	I absolutely belong in my community

Different news sources used different headlines to share this information. Using **graduated** language is one way that journalists and editors persuade (or position) their readers.

- 1 As you read each statement below, highlight words and phrases that graduate (or scale up the force of) meaning. An example has been done for you.
- 2 For each headline, individually decide whether you are being positioned to believe people felt like they were part of a community.

Source	Headline:	More/less part of a community
A	Local population in shock as new survey reveals that 8 out of 10 people are uncertain about their connection with a community.	
B	Sadly, only 15% of those surveyed felt like they absolutely belonged to a community.	
C	A recent survey showed as many as half of respondents did not feel welcomed into a community.	
D	Despite reports of increasing loneliness, over 90% of people surveyed felt part of a community in some way.	
E	In a new survey, just one third of people said they feel welcomed into a community.	



Activity 2.6 Continued

Now look at the raw data.

3 The number of people out of 100 who agreed with each statement is shown in the third row of the table.

Look at the numbers of people for each statement – the raw data. Are you surprised? In small groups, or as a class, share your thoughts about how the information was represented by each headline.

1	2	3	4	5
I feel excluded from this community	I sometimes feel connected with this community	I usually feel connected with this community	I feel connected with my community	I absolutely belong in my community
5 people	22 people	25 people	33 people	15 people

Perspectives on food banks as a solution

Food banks are one response to food insecurity. They are run by charities and other non-profit organisations and supply stocks of food, generally basic provisions and non-perishable items, free of charge to people in need.

As well as providing food, organisations like Foodbank, OzHarvest and Second Bite partner with supermarkets and food businesses by taking their unsold or potentially wasted fresh produce. This redirects and reduces food waste, which would otherwise go to landfill.

In Australia, the organisations running food banks, as well as the federal and state governments, have recorded an increase in their use over recent years. However, there are varied perspectives about the viability of food banks as a solution to food insecurity. Some commentators want the focus to be shifted to the government's role in maintaining food security. The following texts use **language features** and **text structures** to position readers to accept different perspectives in relation to food banks as a solution to food insecurity.





Activity 2.7

- 1 Read the following article about the Foodbank organisation as a local response to the national issue of food insecurity. Highlight the persuasive language features identified in the Spotlight on Language and identify any other language features you recognise.



Article	Language features
<p>Banking on community</p> <p>Imagine coming home from work and having to choose whether to feed yourself or your children. For many Australians, this is a daily reality.</p> <p>The 2023 Foodbank Hunger Report shows food insecurity has increased and households with children are more likely to experience severe food insecurity.</p> <p>Thankfully, charities are partnering with local communities to bravely step into the gap.</p> <p>As Australia's largest food relief organisation, Foodbank's mission is for everyone experiencing food insecurity to have access to nutritious meals. As well as co-ordinating food distribution from local warehouses, the charity provides empowering nutrition-education programs and fights food waste.</p> <p>Foodbank is run entirely on the generosity of local communities. Local communities like yours. Whether it is a bag of pantry staples or monetary donations from large corporations, it all helps meet a real need. Annually, around 11 million kilos of food and groceries are donated, which improves the lives of over 180 000 Queenslanders while they get back on their feet.</p> <p>Those of us with more time can provide hands-on support. From driving, to packing, to administration, volunteers are an integral part of these amazing Foodbank programs.</p> <p>Together, small actions within the local community make a big difference.</p> <p>You can find out more at the Foodbank website.</p>	<p>Positioning the reader to align with the writer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • information from reliable sources so you trust the writer • inclusive pronouns that invite you to be part of the team: us, we, our, your. <p>Evaluation: words and phrases that express emotion, make judgements about people, or communicate the worth or value of things.</p> <p>Graduating resources that scale meaning up and down:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • quantifiers because numbers tell us how many • adverbs and adjectives that describe the extent or importance, e.g. a <i>real need</i> • figurative language, in this case, idiom.



Activity 2.7 Continued

- 2 A key text structure in persuasive writing is the call to action. The call to action is a prompt aimed at eliciting an immediate response from the audience, directing them to take a particular action. Taking these language clues into consideration, what do you think was the **purpose** of the article? What does the writer want the reader to do after they've read it?

Beliefs, values, attitudes

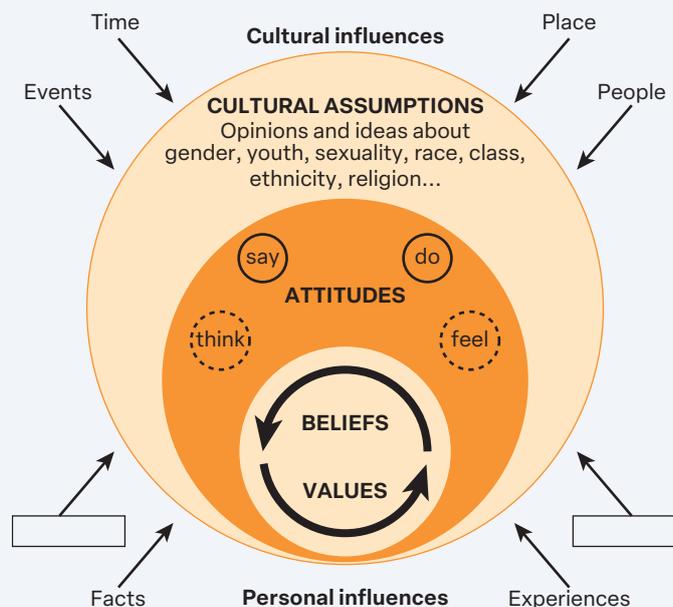
Authors position their audiences to accept **beliefs, values** and **attitudes** through textual choices.

Beliefs are ideas we hold to be true. Beliefs may or may not be based on evidence. We believe certain things to be true because of our experiences.

Values are underlying principles or stances that people feel are important— for example, equity, or the importance of rigorous scientific inquiry, or religious freedom. They are often shared between people of the same **social group**.

Beliefs and values are closely related concepts. They are influenced by experiences and can change over time.

Attitudes are expressed by our words and our behaviour, and they're evident to ourselves in the way we think and feel. They are the ways we approach or respond to people and events. For example, we might join a protest or only shop second-hand. Our attitudes can include emotional and intellectual responses: shock, scorn, empathy, concern, commitment. Authors reveal their attitudes through their choice of language features and text structures that indicate connotations, make judgements about people and evaluate the worth or quality of things (art, policy, etc.).





Activity 2.8

In small groups, discuss the beliefs, values and attitudes in the article 'Banking on community'. Share your ideas with the class and complete the table by including the author's beliefs, values and attitudes AND your beliefs, values and attitudes.

Beliefs (what they think is true or right)	Values (what's important)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Author: Food insecurity is a significant issue in Australia. They value fairness. • •
<p>Attitudes (responding to people, texts, events)</p>	
<p>What does the author want the audience to think and feel about food insecurity after reading this article?</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • 	



Activity 2.9

The author of the next article represents food banks as ‘successful failures’. As well as this **oxymoron**, the writer effectively uses other language features to position their readers. You will be responding to questions after you’ve read the article.

Oxymoron

An oxymoron is a phrase of two or more words that have opposite meanings. Actually, the word ‘oxymoron’ is an oxymoron itself – *oxy* is Greek for ‘sharp’ and *moron* is Greek for ‘dull’.

Read a copy of the article and make notes as you go.
To keep your focus as you’re reading:

- underline the main ideas
- circle unfamiliar or unusual words or phrases
- highlight three ideas and annotate them in the margin by saying what they mean, in your own words.

Hunger in the lucky country

The non-profit organisation Foodbank released its report *Fighting Hunger in Australia* this month. It reported that around 15% of Australians experienced food insecurity – an extraordinary figure given up to 40% of edible, but cosmetically imperfect, food is discarded before it reaches the market. The survey revealed that 3.6 million Australians have experienced food insecurity at least once in the last 12 months. Three in five of those people experience food insecurity at least once a month.

Not-so-lucky country for some

The problem lies with Australia’s political economy, where food is a commodity rather than a right. Under these conditions, it is the market, rather than government, that determines access to food.

Low growth in wages and cuts to welfare payments mean hunger

touches many. Food is one of the few flexible items in a household budget.

People who are economically marginalised find themselves increasingly distanced from access to nutritious food. With a shortfall in government responses, the non-profit sector has stepped in, patching together a food-security safety net.



‘Highly visible successful failures’

Australia’s welfare system relies heavily on charity and markets, rather than the government, to respond to the needs of economically marginalised people. This is evident in the collaborations

between food banks and supermarkets to redirect food waste to disadvantaged people.

Despite their rapid expansion, food banks are unable to meet the demand produced by stagnating wages, rising costs of living and a shrinking welfare state. They have been called 'highly visible successful failures'. As well as stepping into the state's shoes to provide a minimal social security safety net, they offer very useful services to food manufacturers and retailers.

Food donors can receive significant tax deductions for all produce donated to food banks. Food donors also save considerable sums in disposal charges as food banks divert millions of tonnes of waste from landfill. And, perhaps most significantly, donors can enhance their social licence to operate as good corporate citizens and receive cheap publicity into the bargain.

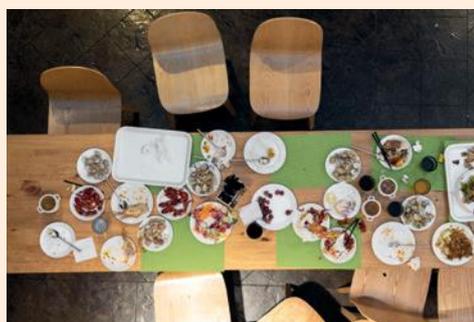
Band-aids, not solutions

In Australia, the federal welfare agency, Centrelink, offers limited relief for the food insecure, such as one-off crisis payments to recipients of benefits. However,

SOURCE: Adapted from Richards, C., 'Hunger in the lucky country – charities step in where government fails', *The Conversation*, 18 January 2018; and Rose, N. and Booth, S., 'Successful failures' – the problem with food banks', *The Conversation*, 12 November 2017

increases in the cost of food, energy and housing prices have not been matched by any increases in welfare payments.

Australia professes to be committed to the principle of universal human rights. Dignified access to good food is a fundamental component of the human right to adequate food. Feeding people food waste directly undermines this right.



There is no quick fix to this, but in the first instance the government needs to take responsibility for poverty and food security as a matter of urgency. No one could argue it is acceptable to have 730 000 children living below the poverty line.

Government support urgently needs to come into line with the cost of living if we are to recognise food as a right and eliminate first world hunger.

- 1 What do the authors mean when they use the oxymoron 'successful failures'?
- 2 Food banks are described as 'band-aids, not solutions'. Explain the meaning of this **metaphor**.



Activity 2.9 Continued

- 3 What is the authors' perspective on the topic of charities as a solution to food insecurity? What do they think needs to change?
In the title 'Hunger in the lucky country', the authors are referring to Australia when they say 'the lucky country'.
- 4 Have you heard this phrase before? What does it imply about Australia?
- 5 In small groups or as a class, discuss and share whether this phrase represents your own experiences in Australia. Do you agree or disagree with the authors that Australia is 'not-so-lucky for some'?



Extension task 2.1

The phrase 'Australia is a lucky country' comes from a book called *The Lucky Country* (1964). However, the author, Donald Horne, was disappointed that the phrase was taken out of context and misapplied. In your opinion, do any aspects of the full quotation could still apply today?

'Australia is a lucky country run mainly by second rate people who share its luck. It lives on other people's ideas, and, although its ordinary people are adaptable, most of its leaders (in all fields) so lack curiosity about the events that surround them that they are often taken by surprise.'



Activity 2.10

- 1 In small groups, **discuss** your responses to the perspectives on foodbanks as a solution to food insecurity in the articles 'Banking on community' (p. 58) and 'Hunger in the lucky country' (p. 61). What underpinning values, beliefs and attitudes did you identify? Do your own opinions align with what's here or do you take a different view?
- 2 Use the following table to organise your thoughts about the arguments for and against food banks as a solution to food insecurity. Two examples have been provided for you.

For	Against
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• An immediate source of relief for hunger due to food insecurity•••	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Loss of dignity for people already struggling because they're relying on charity or food waste••

- 3 **Decide** which side of the argument has more, or stronger, points in its favour and present these to your classmates. Consider the opposing points and suggest some counter-arguments of your own.



Activity 2.11

The power of a fishbone diagram is that it breaks the problem down far enough that potential solutions can be easier to see.

- 1 In your groups, return to your diagrams (Activity 2.3, pp. 49–50) and propose a solution for one of the causes of food insecurity in Australia. Keep in mind that complicated issues will likely have a variety of solutions working together, so solving a small part is fine.
- 2 Present your ideas to others in your class and convince them your idea is a workable proposal. Explain how your solution addresses a cause of food insecurity and use some of the techniques found in this section to position your audience to support your solution.

Once you start understanding the causes and effects of an issue like food insecurity, you will find that there are other interconnected issues and systems. One example is the links between the issue of food waste and food insecurity. The podcast *What Happens Next?* investigates these connections in the episode ‘Can We Take a Bite Out of Food Insecurity’ (<https://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/11185>).



Activity 2.12

As a class, create a concept map of issues connected to food insecurity. You could use a process similar to the opening activity for this chapter on page 44.

You may also notice connections between issues and your own interests. For example, if you enjoy playing footy, you might connect food insecurity with reasons people are prevented from participating in sports. Keep notes on these because they’ll be useful later.



2.3 Exploring an issue: The fashion chain

The issues caused by the production and disposal of fast fashion are represented in a variety of texts, including documentaries and podcasts. These texts aim to inform audiences and influence them to change what they think is true and important, then respond by adjusting their attitude – what they think and feel, and what they do and say about the issue. These texts, and the actions of the people who create and respond to them, have contributed to successful changes within the fashion supply chain. They have influenced public opinion and, in some cases, this has led to legislative changes. The best of these texts engage audiences, identify the issue and its effects, and offer practical solutions.

Let's begin an investigation of this issue with your place in the fashion supply chain. The clothes you wear are a type of text. For example, school or work uniforms identify you as belonging to a specific community of people. Clothes are a way you can express your values, beliefs and identity without saying a word.



Activity 2.13

- 1 Read the following statements and decide how strongly you agree or disagree with each. Explain your reasoning for your opinion in a sentence or two in the 'Explanations' column.

SA = Strongly Agree A = Agree D = Disagree SD = Strongly Disagree					
Statement, claim, opinion	SA	A	D	SD	Explanations
Price is the most important factor when buying new clothing.					
I don't think about where my clothes come from or how they were made.					
People should buy second-hand clothes whenever possible.					
I'd buy something cheap and wear it once, rather than re-wear an outfit.					
When I throw clothes away, I know where they go.					
Everyone should be able to wear what they want, wherever they want.					



Activity 2.13 *Continued*

SA = Strongly Agree A = Agree D = Disagree SD = Strongly Disagree					
Statement, claim, opinion	SA	A	D	SD	Explanations
There should be a limit on how much clothing people can buy a year.					
I would work any job I could to support my family.					
Everyone on Earth has an equal right to an equal share of its resources.					

2 In small groups or as a class, share and discuss some of your responses. Be prepared to share your reasons or personal experiences behind your opinion.

People have different experiences and understandings on issues, especially if they're learning about it for the first time. Be respectful and actively listen to what others have to say.

3 Consider your own values and beliefs about clothing. Here are some questions to spark your ideas:

- What are your opinions about clothing hauls and wear-it-once culture?
- What do you value about a favourite piece of clothing? Does it make you look or feel good? Is it connected to a special person or event? What do you look for in a new item of clothing?
- Do you have strong beliefs related to what you wear? Do you follow cultural customs or religious guidelines in your choice of outfits?
- Do you check that the companies you buy from align with your values and beliefs?

	Clothing hauls	Buying new clothes	Fashion trends
Belief	I believe people who buy huge clothing hauls are wasting their money and won't wear most of it.		
Value		The most important thing is having a new outfit for every event to prove I can afford it. I don't want people to see me in the same thing twice on social media.	



Activity 2.13 *Continued*

	Clothing hauls	Buying new clothes	Fashion trends
Attitude	I unfollow influencers who share hauls on social media.		
Opinion			

At the end of this section, you could review your responses and discuss how your thinking has changed (or not).

Where wear-it-once begins

Fashion retailers now produce more items, more quickly and for lower costs than ever before. The demand for cheap and fashionable clothing has increased exponentially. From 2000 to 2014 alone, clothing production doubled. Developments in synthetic materials, manufacturing and distribution mean it is now possible for a style to go from the runway to the consumer in a matter of days. While in previous decades, clothing would typically cost more but last longer, many people now see fashion clothing as a consumable to be discarded after wearing. This has been called ‘wear-it-once’ culture.



Activity 2.14

- 1 Find a copy of a world map and plot where the favourite items in your wardrobe were made.
- 2 **Compare** the map of your wardrobe with your classmates’ maps. Discuss any patterns you notice.



This quick and cheap business model has hidden costs. In the global supply chain, production is often outsourced to countries with a lower cost of production, including very low wages. These countries often have limited worker protections, which further reduces production costs but increases the risk of injury and exploitation of workers.

One of the events that drew attention to this was the Rana Plaza tragedy.

The Rana Plaza tragedy was the worst ever industrial accident in the garment industry and it was entirely preventable. In April 2013, over 1000 people were killed and thousands more injured in Dhaka, Bangladesh, when a commercial building in Rana Plaza collapsed. Management of a garment factory in the building had been warned about large structural cracks the day before. Other businesses had evacuated, but factory workers were forced to return or told they would lose their jobs. At least 29 global brands were identified as having recent or current orders with garment factories in the building, including Australian brands. The Rana Plaza tragedy sparked global outrage and calls for change.



Critical reading: Fact-checking

It is important to check the facts presented in documentaries and other nonfiction texts, because they often represent only a single perspective on the issue at one time. Things change over time, so you should find the most up-to-date information when forming your opinion. When you are persuading people to act on an issue, you need trustworthy evidence to show them the scope of the issue and how they can make a difference. Comparing data across time is one way to show this.

The True Cost (2015)

Film director Andrew Morgan heard about Rana Plaza and in 2015 created a **documentary** film, *The True Cost*, to raise awareness of the issues in the garment industry. The documentary investigated some of the impacts of the fast fashion industry on people and the environment. *The True Cost* contains **mini-narratives** and interviews with garment workers, factory owners, designers, environmentalists, academics and politicians. This important documentary is now a decade old, so it's worth looking at what's changed.



Activity 2.15

In the following table, there are five facts from *The True Cost* (2015). Are they still true today?

- 1 Use key words from each fact as your search term (see the hints in 'Effective searching' p. 70). Summarise your research into three informative dot points.
- 2 Check the trustworthiness of your sources by looking at the date of publication, site title and publisher, and checking the URL. Sites ending in .org or .gov are often more reliable because their sources are checkable and they are accountable to communities and legislative requirements. AI-generated summaries are often unreliable due to missing or misinterpreted information. These summaries may be marked as AI-generated and found at the top of the results listed. It is good practice to confirm your findings with a second source.

Facts in <i>The True Cost</i> (2015)	Current findings	Trustworthiness
Use key words from each fact as your search terms.	Summarise what you find from your own research on the topic.	Who produced it and when? Can it be checked?
The fashion industry is the world's second largest polluter. The first is the oil industry.		
Around 80 billion pieces of clothing are bought worldwide each year. This is up 400% from two decades ago.		
One in six people works in the global fashion industry. Most of these garment workers are women earning less than \$3 per day.		
Only 10% of the clothes people donate to charity or thrift stores get sold. The rest end up in landfill or markets in the Global South, where they are bought by the bale and kill the local textiles industry. Clothing in landfill can take decades or even centuries to decompose.		

Effective searching

To search efficiently and effectively, carefully select key terms. The table below provides some tips for using Boolean operators that will help you refine your online searches.

Using Boolean operators	Example search
Search for an exact phrase using speech or quotation marks “ ”	“there are a hundred cities”
Use AND or & to ensure two different words appear in the same results	fashion AND waste clothing & pollution
Exclude using a hyphen - You can also use NOT to exclude words	popular advertisement campaign -diamonds cotton dress NOT polyester
Use OR to search for alternative phrasing	cookies with chocolate OR raisins
An asterisk * is a kind of wildcard, useful for including related words with different prefixes and suffixes, or if you're unsure of spelling	Climate act*

Implementing change

Successful change: Safety

As a result of local and international campaigns, there have been some positive changes to the safety regulations in the garment production industry in Bangladesh.

In 2013, the Accord on Fire and Building Safety was created. It is one of the most extensive pieces of legislation covering building safety. In 2023, the International Accord was extended to the garment industry in Pakistan. Visit the re/make and Clean Clothes campaign sites for further information about the importance and impact of this Accord and to see which brands have signed up.

Find out more at: [Clean Clothes Campaign](#), [re/make](#), and [Human Rights Watch](#)

Fashion Revolution

Fashion Revolution is a not-for-profit organisation founded after the Rana Plaza disaster. As well as raising awareness, it aims to empower people to make positive cultural, industry and policy change. Fashion Revolution has produced a wide range of texts including award-winning short films, podcasts, magazines, reports, various live events, and even a garden. Since April 2014, the organisation has run an annual campaign called Fashion

Revolution Week. Fashion Revolution effectively uses online media and visually striking texts. You can find out more by exploring the Fashion Revolution website and social media channels.

Fashion Revolution connects audiences across social media with the call-and-response hashtags #whomademyclothes and #imadeyourclothes. The campaign has expanded to include fabric and fibres in the supply chain. Customers and makers are invited to share their selfies with respective signs and some are selected for the organisation's social media pages.



Activity 2.16

These images are similar to texts produced for the Fashion Revolution campaign 'Who Made My Clothes?'. You might decide to use the images from the website instead.

STEP 1: In pairs or small groups, describe the reading path for each image.

STEP 2: In pairs or small groups, identify and annotate the salient elements in each of the images below. Consider text structures (layout) and language features (like colour or camera angles). Focus particularly on **gaze** (where the people are looking), gesture (body language, including what they are holding), and facial expression.

STEP 3: Complete an observation and inference chart to gather and organise your evidence.

Individually, practise your writing skills by responding, in paragraphs or detailed dot points, to the following tasks:

- 1 Explain how the first image positions audiences to view workers in the garment industry. Refer to at least two elements within the image, including the caption.
- 2 How does the second image portray workers in the garment industry? Identify at least one language feature and text structure.

Returning to your groups or class, discuss the following:

- 3 What different perspectives about clothing production could be represented in these texts? How do you know?



Workers in a garment factory make pieces for an international fast fashion company.



A worker prepares for the day at a small independent fashion store.

Activity 2.16 Continued

- 4 If you have access (and with your teacher's permission), scroll through Fashion Revolution's Instagram page. Can you tell when campaigns change? Discuss what elements show these changes and any cohesive features in the grid layout of the Instagram page.



Extension task 2.2

- 1 Find a copy online of this year's *Fashion Transparency Index* or *Ethical Fashion Guide* and identify Australian clothing brands.
- 2 Compare the results of what Australian companies were awarded this year with their results in the previous year. Have they improved?
- 3 In groups, choose a company that you buy clothes from that has not been scored highly in your chosen report. On the company website, find out what their policies are around fair wages for garment workers and others in the supply chain. If you cannot easily find this information, contact the company to find out more. You can find a template for this on the Fashion Revolution website.

Successful change: Consumer opinion

10 years on from Rana Plaza, polling by Oxfam Australia (conducted by YouGov) of 1,023 Australian clothes buyers has shown that an overwhelming 9 in 10 (88%) of respondents believe it is essential to consider the safety of garment workers when purchasing clothing, highlighting the impact the Rana Plaza tragedy has had on consumers' beliefs (conditions for garment factory workers are not always safe), values (everyone has the right to be safe from harm in their work) and attitudes (purchasing habits).

SOURCE: <https://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/11249>

End of the line: Where does fashion waste go?

Consumers are more aware than ever where their clothes are made and who makes them. There is also a growing awareness of the harm caused by fashion waste, not only in the garment-making process, but when we are finished with our clothes. Consumers want to know where their clothing ends up.

What do Australians have to do with fashion waste?

- Australians spent nearly \$35 billion on fashion and apparel in 2022 (Australia Post eCommerce Industry Report 2023)
- Australians are the second highest consumer of textiles per person in the world, after the US, but the average Aussie only wears 40% of their clothes (CleanUp fast fashion survey <https://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/11186>)
- Only 7% of textiles waste is recycled, mostly overseas. The remaining 93% is sent to landfill (Australian Fashion Council, Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment)
- The Australian textile industry is hoping to divert 60% of clothing from landfill by 2027 (ABC, Tanya Plibersek).



2.4 Representing fast fashion in documentaries

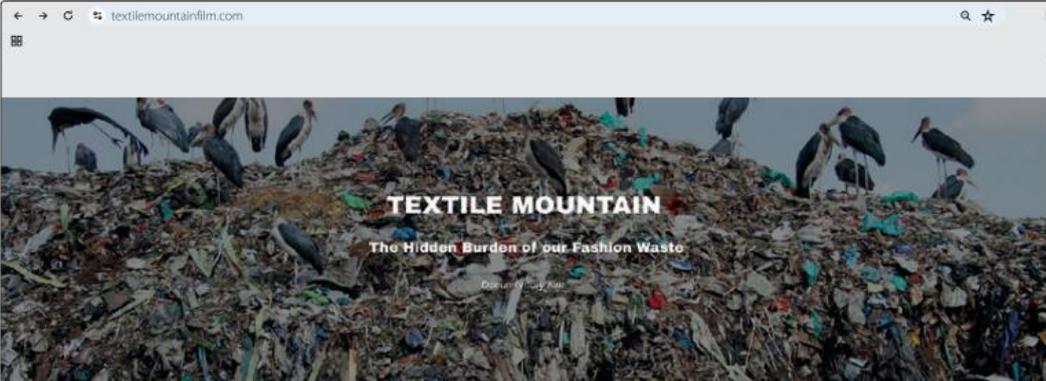
A documentary presents a particular perspective on an issue – often the human side to a story. They show real-life impacts and educate audiences in an entertaining way.

Textile Mountain (2020)

Textile Mountain is a documentary that investigates the issue of fashion waste. It follows people at each part of the fashion waste chain, from families living next to a ‘textile mountain’ and local clean-up campaigns, to designers and innovative upcycling initiatives.

Textile Mountain was released in 2020 as a short film and website that is freely available to view and screen for all audiences. It is credited to Feliipe Lopes, Caitriona Rogerson and Lindi Campbell Clause who worked with people affected by fashion waste across Europe and Kenya.

The website contains additional information and imagery that will aid your understanding of the documentary. You can view the gallery and resources at textilemountainfilm.com.



Europeans throw away 2 million tonnes of textiles each year. Every second, the equivalent of one garbage truck of textiles is landfilled or burned.

Many of us donate our unwanted clothes to charity shops and clothing collection banks – but do we really know what happens to them then?

Globally, 70% of our donated clothing is baled and sold to textile merchants who ship them overseas for resale in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Textile Mountain exposes the social and environmental cost of the second-hand clothing trade, tracing the path of our unwanted garments from recycling bins in Europe to landfills and waterways in the Global South.

Shot in Kenya, Ireland and Belgium, this film calls on us to re-imagine the way we design, wear and reuse our clothes – so that our fashion waste no longer becomes another country's burden.

SOURCE: textilemountainfilm.com



Activity 2.17

- 1 Before watching *Textile Mountain*, **predict** what information you will find in the documentary. What text structures and language features do you expect the documentary film maker will use? Create a list of these predictions in a shared class space.
- 2 Watch *Textile Mountain* all the way through. How accurate were your predictions?
- 3 In pairs, list what you learned from the documentary and anything you were surprised by.

Predictions	After watching	Things I learned
•	•	•
•	•	•
•	•	•



Activity 2.18

Textile Mountain is a persuasive text. It effectively uses language features and text structures to position its audience in relation to the issue of fashion waste.

Juxtaposition

This is a technique where contrasting words, ideas or images are placed next to each other to heighten their impact. This is an effective resource for positioning viewers because it draws attention to differences.



- 1 *Textile Mountain* opens (and finishes) with classical music playing over images of European cities and shoppers with the people living on and around the ‘textile mountains’ of Dandora, just outside Nairobi. Explain how this **juxtaposition** positions the audience to view the issue of fashion waste.
- 2 *Textile Mountain* begins in a place where waste clothing ends up, then finishes with manufacturers and designers. Why do you think the creators structured it this way? Do you think this is an effective way to structure a text about an issue?
- 3 Discuss why the creators chose to use music instead of a **narrator** as a **cohesive device** so the audience can follow along. Consider whose voices the audience hears the most, and why that might be important. In *The True Cost*, the narrator provided cohesion across the text.



Extension task 2.3

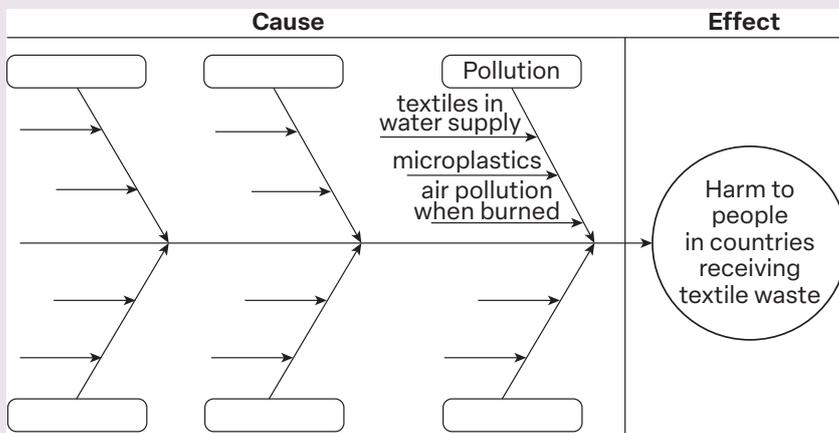
Larry Dwayne is a community leader in Kibera. He leads a clean-up crew called 'Slum Going Green'. Could organising a local clean-up crew be a viable solution to waste in your area?

Find out whether there are any initiatives like this in your community. Consider how a local clean-up crew (or an alternate activity) could be organised, its benefits, and any risks. Explain to your class how this could be an effective scheme for your school or local community.



Activity 2.19

Using a fishbone diagram, record the primary causes of harm to people in countries who receive textile waste. You may be able to identify sub-causes (contributors to a primary cause) too.



More fast fashion documentaries: *Fast Fashion: Dumped in the Desert* (2022)

Fast Fashion: Dumped in the Desert is a documentary investigating another place where waste clothes end up. The clothing dump in Atacama Desert, Chile is so big that it can be seen from space. And it is still growing. You can find this documentary, and others about global issues, on the DW Documentary YouTube channel (<https://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/11187>).

War on Waste (2017, 2018, 2023)



An Australian text, *War on Waste*, has been influential in inspiring local and global change. This docuseries, led by presenter Craig Reucassel, draws attention to the volume of waste Australians produce and where that waste ends up. Each episode focuses on a different aspect of the waste issue – food waste, plastic waste, fashion waste – and offers audiences practical advice to instigate positive change. In the digital version of this textbook explore how the docuseries effectively uses rhetorical techniques, structure, representations and register to persuade people to engage with positive change.

Of course, fashion waste is not the only issue that affects Australians. Programmes like *Four Corners* and channels like SBS and ABC are great places to start looking at how a broad range of issues are represented in documentary form.

2.5 Representing fast fashion in books

As well as documentaries and articles, there are longer written texts about the fashion supply chain and our role as buyers of clothes. There are books that focus on how we can buy better, like *The Conscious Closet*, *Stitched Up* and *Wear No Evil*, or how we got here, like *Wardrobe Crisis*, *Unravelling*, and *To Die For: Is Fashion Wearing Out the World?* The longer format allows writers to investigate issues in more depth, from the roots of a problem to proposals for solutions. The authors often recount **autobiographical** stories of their own experiences along the way.

Consumed (2021)

Aja Barber is a writer, stylist and consultant. Her book, *Consumed*, looks at a broad range of issues related to the fashion industry and how consumers can change the system.

Introduction

Welcome to *Consumed*. This is a book about stuff (particularly apparel), and why we need less of it, and what information you need in order to climb out of this mess.

The book is divided into two sections:

Part one is everything you need to know, but maybe didn't (I mean, I didn't know either until a short while ago) about how we got here, and why this problem is historical and endemic and tied down to oppression along the way. It will get heavy, but we will hear from the people who need to be heard.

In Part two I address you – hi, consumer of stuff! It isn't your fault that over-consumption has become a part of our culture. The likelihood is that you do it, just like I did, because you've been taught to. Who else is going to change this system other than you and me?





Activity 2.20

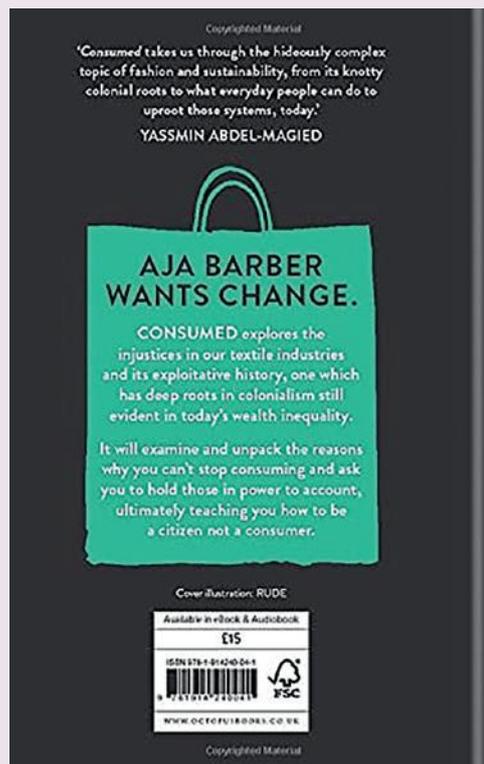
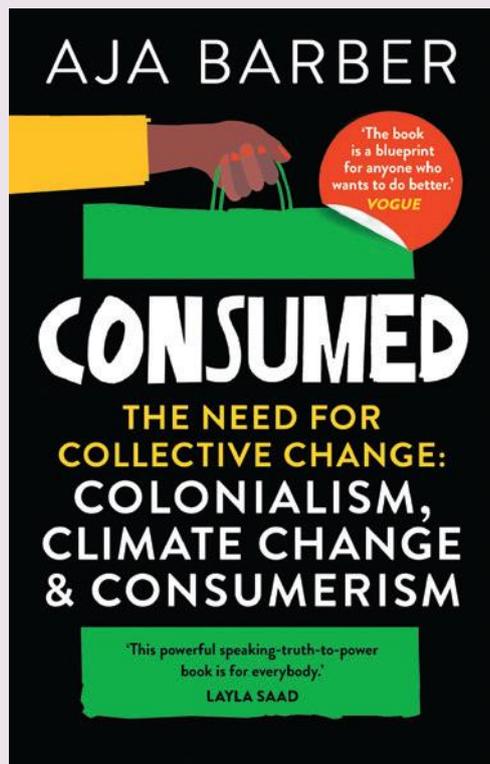
Titles are important. A good title tells a potential reader what the book will be about and often what perspective/s will be represented in it. Ideally, the title will attract attention, appealing to the potential reader to pick it up and consider the cover. Let's think about the title *Consumed*.

- 1 In pairs or small groups, compile a list of synonyms for 'consumed'.
- 2 Now, arrange or number from least forceful to most forceful. For example, 'eaten' is less forceful than 'demolished'.
- 3 As a group, share your most forceful and least forceful synonym with the class.
- 4 Explain to a partner why you think *Consumed* is an effective title (or not) for a book about 'stuff' and 'why we need less of it'.



Activity 2.21

Book covers attract potential readers and represent the ideas and opinions in the book in a concise way.



Normally, when we do a careful image analysis, we look at reading pathways (Step 1) and annotate salient features (Step 2). Write out those steps, or complete them mentally for this multimodal text.

Individually, or in small groups, complete Step 3, an observation and inference chart for *Consumed* and explain the features of the cover and the main idea of the text.

My letter to the Fast Fashion CEOs	Language features
<p>I wanted to let you know that, upon publication of this book, I will have donated \$10000 of my own hard-earned money to both garment worker unions and organizations at the end of YOUR supply chain. I am not a billionaire (but most of you are). I am not even a millionaire (but most of you are). I'm an individual who put way too much of my money into your pockets for far too long, when it should have been in the garment worker's pocket ALL ALONG.</p> <p>But back to you. Every single day, you have plenty of opportunities to do the right thing. And the power with which to do it. And you choose not to.</p> <p>You could pay more money for your clothing at the factory, agreeing on an absolute minimum for certain items at cost, which would eliminate the race to the bottom globally.</p> <p>You could give your money directly to garment worker unions and stop union busting.</p> <p>You could clean up the waterways that your clothing factories are spewing waste into at an accelerating rate.</p> <p>You could simply choose to make less stuff and stop pushing consumers to buy more of it through manipulative and expensive marketing (and perhaps consider, if you didn't spend those seven- or eight-figure sums on pushing products, where that money could go – yes, you guessed it, to the people who created your products in the first place).</p> <p>Of course, all of this looks like smaller profit margins for you, but let me tell you it looks like a better and more sustainable world for everyone else.</p> <p>We all know this planet has far too much stuff, and that's a problem you've created – one which is harming the people, the climate and the planet.</p> <p>Every year, month, day and even hour that you choose not to do these things, you are WILLINGLY turning away from the problem you have created and profited almightily from. Some of you have so much money that you could give away 90 per cent of it and never run out of money in your lifetime.</p>	<p>Rhetorical questions</p> <p>Hyperbole</p> <p>Use of punctuation for effect</p> <p>Repetition</p>

My letter to the Fast Fashion CEOs	Language features
<p>So that's what I challenge you to do. Use YOUR money to clean up YOUR mess. Use your enormous fortunes to make this system better for everyone. Step away from this slash-and-burn cycle. Stop with the 'cute' recycling bins in store, which your market research has taught you only incentivizes consumers to buy more.</p>	Sentence fragments
<p>Cut it out with the sustainable lines which account for less than 1 per cent of your business. Reform your ENTIRE business from top to bottom. From how you treat people at the bottom right through to the growth targets you set yourself. Think about other growth targets, like 0 per cent carbon emissions. First person to use their own money to do this wins, and I'll stay off your back (until you do something else crappy). The days of hand-over-fist profit over humanity are over. It's kind of a bad look.</p>	Direct address
<p>I still believe you might have a smidgen of humanity left in you, behind those piles of money you are so keen to grow, with no real purpose other than capitalist ambition. So, prove it. Because here's the thing: you can't buy integrity.</p>	Juxtaposition
<p>Yours, Aja Barber</p> <p>(*It's safe to address you as 'dudes' because 95 per cent of you are men – according to The Route to the Top 2018 report by Heidrick & Struggles – which is frankly a problem, but that's for another book.)</p>	

- 2 What was the purpose of Aja Barber's letter? Consider who it is addressed to and who the reader is likely to be. In your discussion, refer to:
- what subject matter is represented
 - what emotions, judgements about people, and evaluations of the worth or quality of things is communicated
 - what additional persuasive features might be used that position the reader to accept the writer's perspective over another possible one
 - how the text is structured or 'stuck together' (made cohesive).

When put together, the features and structures you've just discussed are referred to as **register**. Sometimes people say register when they mean the degree of formality.

Register is explained in more detail in the online Teacher Notes.



Activity 2.23

Read the following excerpt from *Consumed*. It explains where some waste clothes end up by focusing on the clothing market in Accra, the capital city of Ghana. When you have finished, you will answer the text-dependent questions that follow the text extract. Annotate the text with concise (clear, brief) notes to help you answer these questions.



Where do your clothes go when you're tired of them? Once you bag them up and give them to charity? Well, about 10–20 per cent of the clothing donated gets sold. A few charities are doing really good work with trying to mitigate the large amount of fast fashion they receive, but for the most part ... very few are selling every piece they receive. Instead, it gets sorted and sometimes it goes to a different charity, but very often the clothing which doesn't make the cut gets turned into a bale and shipped to various locations in the Global South. But we are going to focus on Accra, Ghana, because Accra is home to Kantamanto Market, which is probably the world's largest second-hand market. So, what does this market look like?

Donated clothes often end up overseas, not donated locally

...

Kantamanto is a thriving hub, and probably one of the most buzzing places on Earth. Both vendors and customers arrive sometimes before the crack of dawn. The big day for the market is Thursday (VERY early in the morning) when a hundred importers – mainly from Europe, the US and Canada, but even Asia, especially Korea and China – unload containers to sell their bales to retailers. The atmosphere becomes frenetic, with kayayei (porters who are women) zipping up and down the market with bales upon bales of clothes which will soon be opened and ready for the sell. Each bale is about 60 x 90cm (2 x 3ft) in size, wrapped and tied with plastic string. These distributors are selling the clothes in bulk packages to local vendors, who in turn sell it to their customers. It's on Wednesdays and Saturdays that the retail begins, with 30 000 traders laying out the purchased goods that are sellable (not all bales are created equal, and it's a total gamble as to what will be discovered in each bale before it's bought and opened).

Due to the gambling nature of bale buying, there's a lot of debt for sellers of Kantamanto. 'Less than 20 per cent of the retailers in Kantamanto make an actual net profit on the average bale, and retailers of women's clothes are even less likely to make a profit,' says Liz Ricketts, from The OR Foundation, which works with the market.

...

But why is it so hard to make a profit? The answer: fast fashion.

The quality of clothing has declined, and although the early buyers who generally start trawling the markets at 5:30 a.m. can get branded goods,

the rest of the clothing is mostly low-quality fast fashion. The bale-buying business is a gigantic risk because the traders are dealing in rapidly depreciating assets. Some strike it lucky and get a bale full of high-quality goods that can be sold on at a good price ... but that's a very small number. For all the sellers, however, it's a risk they're willing to take, because the options outside of the market are currently few.

This is where a lot of those purchases we probably didn't need end up, and it is these people who have to sift through your bad decision-making to try and find a way of making a living out of the abundance of low-value stuff you packed off to the charity shop.

'The pace of the market mirrors the pace of fast fashion production and retail in the Global North,' Liz explains. 'Kantamanto retailers are "restocking" new styles twice a week. This also means that any garments that cannot be sold typically leave the market as waste only 1-2 weeks after being unloaded in Kantamanto. This is especially mind-boggling when you consider the long and winding path (and carbon footprint) these garments take to get to Kantamanto.'

The things that we think we're giving away and being 'do gooders' by doing so are simply becoming someone else's problem. We really need to weigh the impact of an action or system over the intention. Intention doesn't matter when there's harm being done.

SOURCE: Barber, A., *Consumed: The Need for Collective Change: Colonialism, Climate Change, and Consumerism*, Brazen, 2021, pp. 59–62

Answer the following text-dependent questions.

What does the text say?

- a Where is Kantamanto Market? How does clothing end up there?
- b Most sellers in the market don't make a profit. What reasons are given for this?

How does the text work?

- c This excerpt contains a description of Kantamanto on market days. What words does Barber use to describe the atmosphere of Kantamanto on market day?
- d Find examples of Barber directly addressing the reader.

What does the text mean?

- e Why are places like Kantamanto, Dandora and the Atacama Desert important in the discussion about where our waste textiles end up?
- f What does Barber want the reader to believe and value after reading this excerpt?



What does the text inspire you to do?

- g** The last paragraph of this excerpt uses the pronoun ‘we’ and says we need to ‘weigh the impact of an action or system over the intention’. In groups, identify other actions by individuals or systems that have good intentions but are likely to have negative effects or little positive impact. For example, the Australian plastic bag recycling scheme collapsed (you can learn about this in *War on Waste*, 2023).

Kantamanto fire

In January 2025, a fire devastated the Kantamanto Market. The OR Foundation has committed US \$1 million to emergency relief efforts, including a community-led clean-up effort and immediate assistance to those injured by the fire. The Revival, a local business, and Upcycle It Ghana, a local non-profit, have shared videos of the devastation and its heartbreaking aftermath.

A *Vogue Business* article, ‘What the Kantamanto Market fire means for sustainable fashion’ (January 2025), raises important questions about who pays for the fashion industry’s waste.

Find out how Kantamanto Market is rebuilding through the OR Foundation website.

The final chapter of *Consumed* is called ‘I Believe in You.’ In this chapter, Barber focuses on the value of the individual and the power of the collective. She encourages readers to think about their own worth in terms of their positive actions, rather than how much or what ‘stuff’ they own.

Your worth isn’t the value of fashionable garments you wear or own, but the care with which you treat yourself (and others, and the planet) and the things you already have. Stop wanting more when you have enough. Because let me say it so that the world can hear: YOU ARE ENOUGH. WHAT YOU WEAR DOESN’T DEFINE YOU. WHAT YOU DO DOES.

Collectively, when we raise our voices, we can create change for ourselves and we can demand change for the planet and the other humans who inhabit it.

SOURCE: Barber, A., *Consumed: The Need for Collective Change: Colonialism, Climate Change, and Consumerism*, Brazen, 2021, pp. 269–270

Barber gives examples of actions she has taken to align with how she acts with her values and beliefs, even when that has been difficult or led to financial costs. This links back to her letter to CEOs, from the beginning of the book, where she says: ‘You can’t buy integrity.’

So go ahead and put that back on the rack.

Remove it from your shopper basket.

You don't need it because you're good as you are.

SOURCE: Barber, A., *Consumed: The Need for Collective Change: Colonialism, Climate Change, and Consumerism*, Brazen, 2021, p. 282

Did you notice that, although the attitude towards the clothing manufacturers in *Consumed* was definitely negative, and the **ironic** humorous tone was clear, there were few direct examples of words and phrases that indicated emotions? Writers of persuasive texts select vocabulary carefully – words that carry **bias**. In your culminating task for this chapter, your language choices will also position your audience to accept your perspective about an issue.



Activity 2.24

We have looked at a few excerpts from *Consumed*. In groups, or as a class, return to these excerpts, or a copy of the book, find examples of words and phrases and complete this evaluative language table. Note that evidence can be direct or indirect. When the evidence is indirect, you make an inference using the information in the text.

	Emotion	Judgements about people	Appreciation of quality or value of things and ideas
Positive	<ul style="list-style-type: none">enjoy (direct)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">not a billionaire (indirect)	
Negative			<ul style="list-style-type: none">wealth inequality

Words and phrases that graduate or scale up the force of meaning

- hideously complex topic (adverb)
- .
- one of the most buzzing places on Earth (words that intensify)
- .

When they create persuasive texts, writers and speakers establish an attitude by selecting and graduating meaning in words that communicate emotions, judgements about people, and the quality of things. They also engage with – even manipulate – their audiences in a variety of other ways. Some of these are classic rhetorical devices (ethos, logos, pathos), which are covered in the additional digital material on *War on Waste*.

To get an audience onside, and discourage them from thinking about the idea or issue in other ways, the following tools of bias are used in coordination with the language of attitude:

- **Attribution** or **sourcing**, that is, **projecting** – **quoting** or **reporting** different voices, points of view and perspectives
- **modality** (e.g. indicating degrees of possibility, usuality or obligation)
- **bare assertions** that is, claims that are not supported by facts, e.g. without fast fashion, the retail industry would fall apart.
- **rhetorical questions**, asked for persuasive effect rather than to encourage dialogue.
- **imperatives** (e.g. commands or directives)
- **disclaiming** (deny, counter)
- **proclaiming** (concur, pronounce, endorse).

SOURCE: J.R. Martin and P.R.R. White, 2005, *The Language of Evaluation*

We've included three examples of these from the Letter to CEOs at the beginning of *Consumed* (reprinted on pp. 79–81). From the other excerpts, find at least one other example of a technique that you could use in your own writing.

Example 1:

Aja Barber uses a command to close off dialogue: 'Stop wanting more when you have enough.' Find another example.

Example 2:

Aja Barber uses modality to indicate what the company directors could possibly do: 'You could clean up the waterways that your clothing factories are spewing waste into at an accelerating rate.' Find another example.

Example 3:

Aja Barber uses the conjunction 'but' to counter (or disclaim) her initial claim when she says, 'Of course, all of this looks like smaller profit margins for you, but let me tell you it looks like a better and more sustainable world for everyone else.' Find another example of where a conjunction controls the developing thinking of the reader.



Activity 2.25

Using the excerpts we studied and your interpretive work above, summarise the beliefs, values, attitudes and ideas related to the issue of fast fashion in *Consumed*.

Beliefs (what they think is true or right)	Values (what's important)
Attitudes (how they respond to people, texts, events)	

Aja Barber's letter places the responsibility and the solutions in the hands of the global producers of fast fashion. Local and personal changes are important too, when the issue is so big.



Activity 2.26

Here is a selection of suggestions that may help individuals to change their habits.

It would be helpful to have this list printed or on a digital platform where you can easily change the order.

1 Arrange the list from what would be the least amount of effort to the most amount of effort for you. Record the order by writing them down, taking a picture or screenshot.

- Auditing your wardrobe
- Removing anything you haven't worn for 12 months or that no longer fits
- Keeping a note recording your purchases and the cost. Add it up at the end of every month.
- Working out cost-per-wear for your clothes through an app or spreadsheet
- Organising a wardrobe swap with friends
- Checking brand sustainability policies before you buy, then only buying brands with a clear sustainability and fair labour policy
- Dropping off clean, wearable clothes at an op shop or other charity
- Committing to #30wears
- Mending your clothes
- Unfollowing influencers who promote ultra-fast-fashion or make you feel like you need to buy more clothes
- Buying clothing with only natural or recycled fibres
- Shopping at op shops, consignment and other second-hand stores before buying new.

Activity 2.26 *Continued*

- 2 With a partner or in small groups, re-organise the list from what you think would be the least impactful change, to the most impactful change in reducing clothing waste. This may mean changing your list. Discuss your choices in your group and explain your reasoning. You can ask for class or teacher opinions if you're stuck! When you're finished, compare your list to another group's choices. **Explain** the reasons for your choices.
- 3 Finally, choose one of the suggestions – or adapt one, or create your own – that you think is the best choice for changing your clothing habits. Write a PEEL paragraph or detailed dot points explaining the reasons for your choice, how easy it will be to make the change and how it could reduce clothing waste.



Activity 2.27

- 1 We have explored how issues have a negative ripple effect from the individual to the rest of the world. Solutions can also have a ripple effect – a positive one. To see how that works, identify a change an individual (maybe you?) could make and add examples of the impacts of that change if it was adopted in each concentric circle. Use the ripple diagram on the worksheet.

This issue is complicated. *Textile Mountain*, *Consumed* and other texts on the issue mention that selling clothing from the bales is the only form of income for many families. In the Atacama Desert in Chile, it may be the only way Venezuelan refugees can access clothing or income. In many of these areas, the traditional textile manufacturing industries collapsed with the arrival of cheap imports.

- 2 It is important to consider the consequences of change. As a group, mind-map what kind of changes might be effective in improving the clothing industry from production to disposal.

2.6 Representing fast fashion in a podcast

A podcast is a digital audio program (sometimes with video) related to a specific theme. It is usually conversational in style, making use of attitudinal resources that support informality and encourage candour.

A podcast can be structured as a solo, scripted show, where the host explains and reflects on a topic. Podcasts can also involve more than one person. This may be as a formal interview, with the host asking guests questions about a particular topic, or it may be more relaxed, with informal reactions and discussion.

Technical elements of podcasts include the use of music and other sounds to add interest and demarcate sections within the episode.



Do you listen to podcasts? Which ones? Why? Do they tend to be monologues, where just one person speaks? Or do you prefer conversations between two or more people?



Activity 2.28

The ABC podcast *Little Green Pod* #20, 'Fighting Fast Fashion', is available at <https://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/11188>. You can find a transcript in the online version of the textbook.



- 1 Listen to the entire podcast. This first-time round, just enjoy listening.
- 2 In small groups or as a class, identify the perspective about fast fashion represented in this podcast and what audience would be most likely to listen to it. Considering these questions will help you:
 - a What ideas are represented in this podcast?
 - b What personal opinions do the hosts and guests share?
 - c What supporting evidence and facts are included?
 - d Are any ideas, evidence or perspectives minimised?
 - e What bias can you identify?



Organising ideas and opinions in a podcast

Podcasts are popular texts for sharing opinions. Hosts keep listeners engaged by balancing new voices and novel ideas with a structure that is easy for listeners to follow. Structure is key to a successful podcast. In this section, we'll consider ways to structure podcasts and sequence information. You'll be able to use the ideas here to structure your own podcast episode.

One way of thinking about structure for any extended text is to break down the introduction, body, and conclusion of a text into stages and smaller phases. The kind of podcast we're presenting here is most like a discussion, where alternative views are considered (though there is often considerable bias in how they're presented) and the author lands on a final perspective.

Discussions can be very persuasive because they provide the appearance of objectivity, though in reality the opinions of the text's creators are often predetermined.

The table below outlines the structure and sequence of a podcast, with some examples of what that might look (or sound) like. You can add further examples as you listen to various podcasts.

Structure and sequence

Structure	Sequence details	For example:
Introduction	Hook	An anecdote (personal story) Rhetorical question(s) A call to action
	Host and guest(s)	Explain who they are. Explain what experience or expertise qualifies them to talk about this topic.
	Topic: issue and effects	What are you talking about today? This should be a brief summary with the most relevant and up-to-date information. It identifies the particular aspect of an issue being discussed. A 25-word sentence can be a useful summarising tool.
Body	Potential solution	Share a potential solution for the audience and how it would positively affect people. Has anyone tried this solution? What was the outcome?
	Potential problem	Identify any problems with the solution e.g. cost or accessibility. If this podcast is in a casual format, this may lead to further discussion.
	Interlude (optional)	Interesting facts, additional advice or details, where to find out more. In a commercial podcast, this may be an ad break.
	Potential solution	Further discussion about the previously suggested solution or another option for resolving the issue.
	Potential problem	Potential problems with the suggested solutions or the issue.

Structure	Sequence details	For example:
Conclusion	Summary	Recount what has been discussed in the podcast – the issue, effects, and potential solutions.
	Solution	Share the solution that is most effective, or will be most realistic for the audience to enact.
	Link to hook	Reiterate the call to action, answer the rhetorical question, finish the anecdote. This provides cohesion.
	Outro	Thank the audience for listening and anyone who helped create the podcast.

Structuring the body of the podcast as potential solutions and problems works well with a fishbone diagram (p. 49), which clearly identifies primary and secondary contributing causes to an issue. For a short podcast, you might only tackle solutions for one of these contributing causes.

You could use a SWOT model to plan your discussion of solutions in the body of the podcast.

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats (SWOT)

The SWOT model helps you consider the successes and improvements for different solutions. Using this model can help you consider different perspectives on the solution.



Proposal: replace single-use plastic with soy-sauce powder

This example of a SWOT diagram is from the extra digital material on *War on Waste*. It is a proposal to reduce single use plastics by changing soy sauce fish packets to dissolvable powder in gelatine.

	Successes	Improvements
Internal (the solution itself)	Strengths: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leaves no waste Same taste 	Weaknesses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> New manufacturing methods needed for mass production
External (responses to the solution)	Opportunities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changing other sauce packaging 	Threats: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gelatine often not vegan



Activity 2.29

Listen to the *Little Green Pod* episode ‘Fighting Fast Fashion’ again. This time, be prepared to pause at the end of each section so you can take notes as you go.

- 1 The sections have been identified in the table below. For each section, identify more examples of language features like repetition or sounds, and text structures and organisation.

Structure	Language features and text structures
Introduction	Hook: anecdote starting with ‘Confession time’
Body	Question for expert: ‘Hey Melinda, what is fast fashion anyway?’ Repetition: ‘10 minutes! Every 10 minutes sends 6 tonnes to landfill!’ •
Conclusion	• Closing music and outro

- 2 How does the ‘Fighting Fast Fashion’ episode alert the audience to a change in topic or speaker?
- 3 Share your examples of language features and text structures in groups. Then, discuss the beliefs, values and attitudes represented in the podcast. Summarise these in either a PEEL paragraph or as a series of detailed dot points that *explain* in the table below.

Beliefs (what they think is true or right)	Values (what’s important)
• • •	• • •
Attitudes (how they respond to people, texts, events)	
• • •	

- 4 Complete a SWOT model for one of the proposals offered in the episode, or something you think would work instead.

Proposal:

	Successes	Improvements
Internal (the solution itself)	Strengths: •	Weaknesses: •
External (responses to the solution)	Opportunities: •	Threats: •



Activity 2.30

Not Stupid, and the bonus episodes *Extra Stupid*, is a podcast where friends and hosts Julia Baird and Jez Fernandez chat about the news and current events. They unpack the stories that matter and try to find the hope in the news.



This podcast is conversational and draws on genuine discussions and personal experiences.

- 1 Listen to the episode from *Extra Stupid*, '\$40 Party Pants', at <https://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/11189>. You can find a transcript of the episode in the online version of this textbook.
- 2 The sections have been outlined in the table below. Identify examples of language features and text structures.

Structure	Sequence details	Language features and text structures
Introduction	Hook Context Topic	
Body	Main concerns Personal experiences and anecdotes Connections to current events Discussion about issues and solutions	
Conclusion	Final thoughts and anecdotes Closing music	

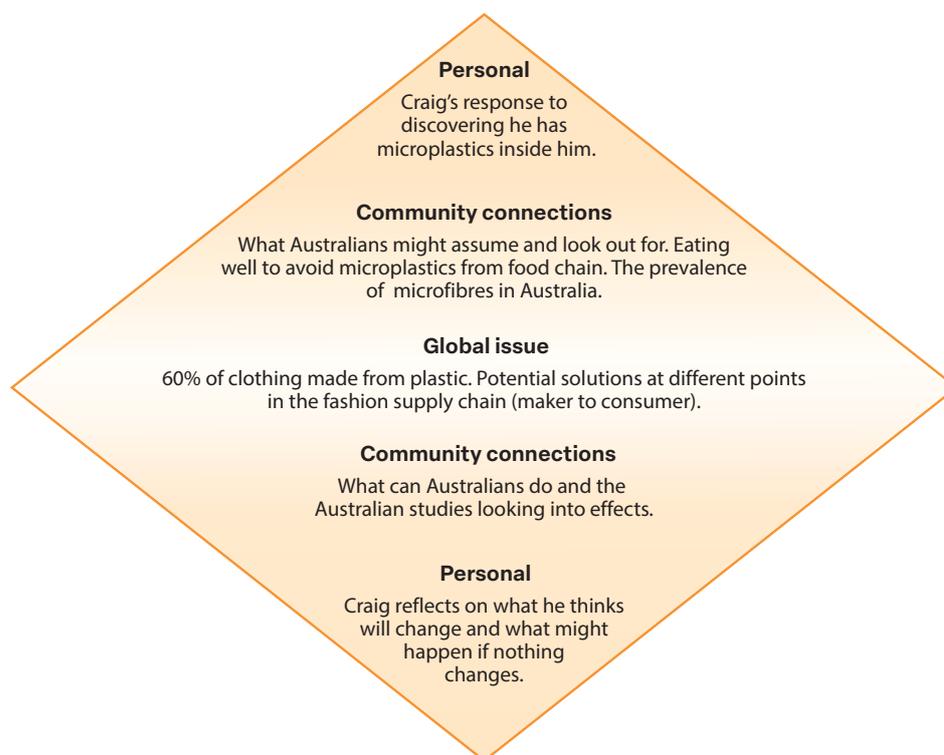
- 3 Share your findings in groups. Then, discuss the beliefs, values and attitudes represented in this episode. Summarise these in either a PEEL paragraph or as a series of detailed dot points that *explain* in the table below.



Beliefs (what they think is true or right)	Values (what's important)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • •
Attitudes (how they respond to people, texts, events)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • 	

Another way to think about the structure of a podcast (or even a written article about an issue) is as a diamond shape. This structure moves from personal experience (specific, small), to local communities, to the global community (broader, more general contexts) and then back to the personal and specific. Using a ripple diagram can be a helpful way to prepare this structure.

This example of a diamond diagram uses the *ABC News Daily* episode, ‘Fast fashion and the plastics you’re inhaling’, as an example of what this structure might look like. This multimodal text is in an interview format where the host, Sam Hawley, asks Craig Reucassel about his experiences with *War on Waste* and how he feels knowing he has plastic microfibres inside him. Craig also discusses his experiences with *War on Waste*, which is the focus of the digital-only section of this chapter.



Reflective text: Solo podcast

A reflective text is one in which you make sense of how experiences and concepts relate to yourself and your community. Sharing how an issue affected you and what you plan to do with your new knowledge is one way of creating an engaging solo podcast. Long-running solo podcasts like *Clotheshorse* or *George the Poet* talk to their audience about a mixture of personal experiences and topics of interest. Both podcasts also make use of personal websites and social media to extend the conversation and engage directly with the audience.

The 4Rs of reflection, used by several Australian universities to encourage students' reflective thinking, is a useful framework for thinking through and organising your ideas and connecting them with your own experiences. You might not answer every question here. You might have additional questions that fit in these sections. Practise using these questions to reflect on your experiences learning about an issue in this chapter.

The 4Rs of reflection

<p>Reporting and responding</p>	<p>What is the issue, who is affected and where?</p> <p>Why is it relevant for my audience?</p> <p>What is my opinion and/or what questions do I have?</p> <p>How do I feel about this issue and its effects?</p>
<p>Relating</p> <p>Connect to your own life and communities</p>	<p>Why is this important to me?</p> <p>How does this connect to my experiences or community?</p> <p>Have I seen this before?</p> <p>What do I already know about this?</p> <p>What can I do with my skills and knowledge?</p>
<p>Reasoning</p> <p>Think through contributing factors</p>	<p>What are the significant factors causing or contributing to the issue?</p> <p>Why are these factors important for understanding the issue?</p> <p>What do the experts say and what data is available?</p> <p>What other perspectives are there on the issue?</p> <p>How has our understanding of the issue changed?</p>
<p>Reconstructing</p> <p>Reframe the issue and propose solutions</p>	<p>How has my understanding of this issue changed?</p> <p>What solutions might solve this issue, or aspects of it?</p> <p>Are there any potential problems or alternative options?</p> <p>What changes or actions will I take to alleviate this issue?</p>

ADAPTED FROM: Ryan, M., 'A Model for Reflection in the Pedagogic Field of Higher Education', *Teaching Reflective Learning in Higher Education*, Springer Cham, 2015 (<https://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/11251>)



Extension task 2.4

Find and listen to another podcast episode about the fashion industry. Identify the issue, format, and any text structures or language features that you think are particularly effective. Make notes on the solutions suggested and where to get more information.

Some suggestions to help you get started:

- *Clotheshorse*
- *Critical Fashion Studies*
- *How to Save a Planet*
- *The Wardrobe Crisis*
- *What Happens Next?*

How successful was *Little Green Pod* in recruiting you in the fight against fast fashion? Are you hungry for change after reading *Consumed*?



Activity 2.31

Refer back to Activity 2.13 (p. 65) Have your initial opinions changed? Which text, if any, was the most persuasive?

These texts have inspired grassroots, local movements that have had national or global effects. Through their representations of issues, the creators influence what their audiences believe and value, and what attitudes may be evident in what people think and feel, say and do.

Issues that affect you

This section takes you through a process that you can use to prepare for the assessment task.

Choose an issue: waste, fast fashion, or some other issue that matters to you. Use the research materials and methods presented in this chapter and apply them to information that is interesting and relevant to you, in consultation with your teacher.

Start by clearly identifying and defining the issue. Many of the issues here are large and interconnected so, for your assessment task, focus on one element or smaller aspect. For example, rather than trying to explain all the negative effects of the fashion supply chain, you might look specifically at the effects connected to social media ‘haul’ videos.



Activity 2.32

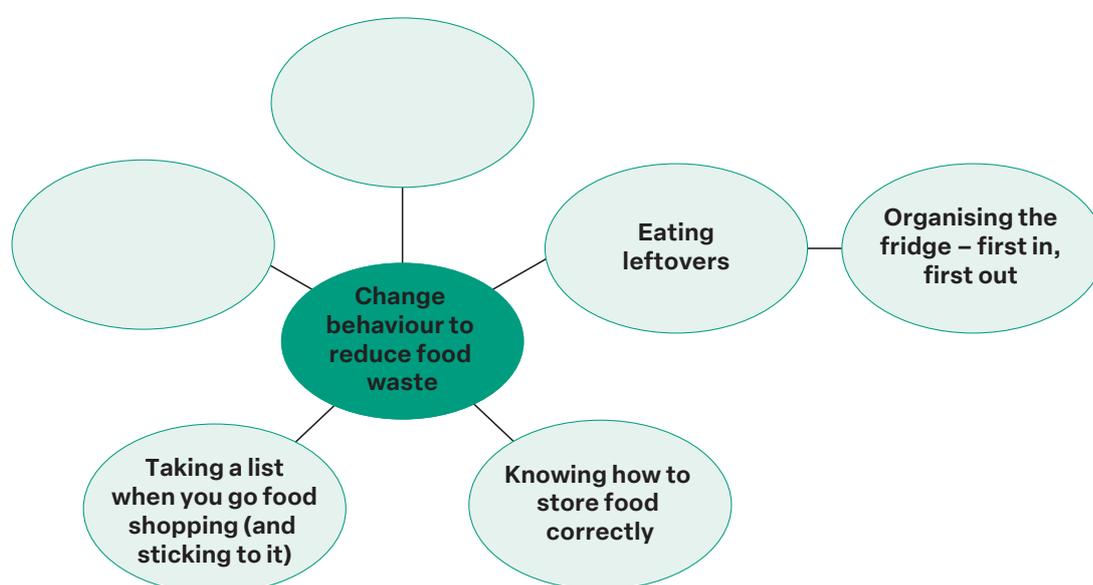
- 1 Write down the beliefs, values and attitudes you already have about the issue. Consider who has influenced you and where you get your information from.
- 2 Select a range of texts from this chapter or elsewhere that have drawn attention to the issue.
- 3 Complete the appropriate graphic organisers to support your listening, viewing or reading.
 - a A KWL chart before and during viewing.
 - b A fishbone diagram to consider cause and effect.
 - c A ripple diagram to break down the effect.
- 4 What solutions have been proposed in these texts? Would any of these work for your local community?
- 5 The 4R model on p. 97 can help you think more deeply about the issue, or aspect of an issue that you’ve chosen and connect it to your experiences.

Ways to help your community

For your assessment task, whether your class does a podcast or some other genre, you will show your own knowledge and express your opinion about an issue in a persuasive, reflective or imaginative response. You will share possible solutions to the issue you are addressing and persuade people to adopt these solutions.

This is where a concept map is useful for generating ideas for solutions. A concept map connects related ideas and can keep expanding outwards as you make new connections. Generally, you move outwards from more general ways you could address current issues and then move onto specific changes people could enact.

An example of a concept map has been started below. It focuses on changing consumer behaviour to reduce food waste.



Activity 2.33

- 1 Create a concept map of changes needed to address the issue you have identified. There are already existing organisations and campaigns for many issues.
- 2 Once you have decided on potential changes, you should think about how your solution could work in your local community. A ripple diagram may help your thinking here.
- 3 Create a SWOT analysis to identify what your local community might see as strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in the changes you are proposing.

After you have completed a deep dive into an issue and its impacts, proposed and considered possible solutions, you're ready to communicate your ideas and opinions to others.

2.7 Putting it all together



Context:

Your class has been selected by the ABC to create a podcast series addressing issues that are important to young Australians. Your podcast could be single issue like *Little Green Pod* or multiple issues like *Not Stupid*. Give your podcast a name. Individually, you will create an episode to explain an issue, offer potential solutions and persuade people to take action.

Task:

Create a persuasive episode for your podcast to raise awareness of a current community, local or global issue. Suggest a community response or individual action that can make positive change.

Carefully select and sequence subject matter on your chosen topic, using the patterns and **conventions** of a podcast to influence your audience. Select text structures and language features that will support your perspective.

You may support your response with audio, visual and digital media as appropriate.

Purpose: Persuade your audience to take local action on a global issue.

Genre: Podcast

Audience: Young Australians

Structure and sequencing:

- Introduce yourself and explain what first interested you in the issue.
- Define the issue and its major causes.
- Explain how this issue affects individuals and your local or national community.
- Summarise current responses, including any campaigns and their effects.
- Outline your proposal, including the specific causes it would address.
- Explain how this proposal would positively benefit the community.
- Give an example of how you, or others, have already made the positive change you're proposing.
- Reiterate the action you want people to take and how it will have a positive impact.
- Return to what first interested you in the issue.

Variations:

Solo podcasts:

- A reflective response exploring the host's personal experiences with an issue, and their reactions to different perspectives. The host shares the actions they've taken, the expected benefits of these changes on a personal and community level and their hopes for future outcomes.
- An imaginative response to the topic through a short story exploring what could happen if nothing is done about the issue. The host offers an alternative ending with an action that listeners can take.

Partner or small group podcasts:

- Engage in a scripted conversation as a host and guest(s), explaining what an issue means for them and what actions people can take to reduce harm caused by this issue on a personal or community level. There is the opportunity for the host and guest(s) to take on the role of the expert in different aspects of the issue.
- As co-hosts, reflect on shared and different experiences with aspects of an issue. Co-hosts might consider how cultural influences shape their experiences. Each host has an opportunity to propose different solutions and consider their effectiveness.
- Try out the style of a more formal interview with an expert. This is an opportunity for the podcast host to be the expert being interviewed, with a teacher or peer as the interviewer.

Alternative mode options:

- Individually, or as a small group, produce a short video that will be part of a documentary exploring how an issue affects young Australians and the actions they are taking.
- As an expert, present a potential solution to the local council. Explain the elements of the issue that the solution would resolve and any foreseeable problems.
- Create a digibook or other hyperlinked text that explains a cause and effect of an issue relevant to the community. Identify and explain potential solutions already in place in the local community and how people can be involved with these.



Chapter 3

Living in a material world

This chapter is designed to help you to achieve your best results in the Common Internal Assessment (CIA); that is, the assessment that all students studying Essential English in Queensland will complete. First, you will review key vocabulary and skills. Then, we use diamonds as an integrating device for exploring how texts in a range of **genres** can represent an identity, place, event or concept related to diamonds. You will be able to see how a **perspective** about selected **issues**, companies and people connected with diamonds have been created. In this chapter, we will say that perspectives are created in a text when it includes particular **opinions** and ideas, and makes use of selected **language features** and **text structures**. If you can see how this is working, you will be able to **explain** how the audience is being **positioned** by written and visual texts. To enhance your skills for **interpreting** how texts communicate information and shape meaning, you could also return to Chapter 1 and try some of the activities there. There is no 'Putting it all together' section in this chapter because you will do the CIA.

In this chapter you will revise the skills needed to:

- **explain representations** of identities, places, events and concepts
- **explain** the ways opinions, ideas, **attitudes, values** and/or **beliefs** related to issues connected with diamonds influence how representations are shaped and how they position audiences
- write clear explanations in paragraph or dot point form that show how the audience is being positioned.

SOURCE: Essential English 2025 v1.2 Applied Senior Syllabus © Queensland Curriculum & Assessment Authority

Teacher notes

We don't have a crystal ball; the CIA could focus on any issue (or identity, place, event or concept). We selected 'diamonds' to suggest a way through the unit topic that's engaging and could provide the basis for learning activities that could be adapted for whatever is the focus for the year. By following this model, we demonstrate how you might take whatever the CIA subject is and present it as a story for your students, so your teaching and learning sequence can have some meaning for students beyond the test. When you know what the actual focus will be, you could mix and match skills development work from Chapter 1 of this book, and from Units 1 & 2, Chapters 1 and 6, depending on the needs of your students. Instead of a 'Putting it all together' task at the end of the chapter, we have included CIA practice questions throughout. We have used multimodal texts here because they're more authentic. We've included visual-only texts in Chapter 1, if that's something you'd like to practise. While these activities represent a reasonable interpretation of the syllabus specifications for that assessment instrument, they are not the only way to construct questions for this CIA. Please do review the latest Essential English syllabus document and the actual CIA materials when they come. You will want to make sure that your advice to students is carefully aligned with whatever the current wording is in those documents.

Word play

Play with these words. Change their forms, morph them into new words, add prefixes or suffixes, and find words with similar spelling patterns.

behaviour	behaviourist			
perspective	spectator			
representation	representative			
value	evaluator			
belief	believer			

Sentence combining

Organise, combine and edit these sentences so they are structured as an explanation. You will find tables of **conjunctions** and **text connectives** on p. 106. Use some of the conjunctions and connectives to write your explanation.

- Frauke Bolten moved to Kununurra, WA, in 1981.
- She had no idea of the turbulent future ahead.
- Kununurra was a dusty frontier town in unforgiving terrain.
- Frauke started selling jewellery from her back porch.
- She opened Kimberley Fine Diamonds as a business in 1991.
- The nearby Argyle Diamond Mine unearthed more rare pink diamonds in the 1990s.
- Frauke pioneered a diamond empire.
- Kimberley Fine Diamonds in Kununurra now has one of the world's largest collections of Argyle pink diamonds.

Adapted from: *A Diamond in the Dust* (2018) and 'Frauke's Story' (<https://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/11191>).



3.1 What's the deal with the CIA?

The CIA sounds mysterious and interesting. In reality, it's a pretty straightforward test of how well you have learned to **interpret** and **explain** meaning in two different kinds (**modes**) of texts. It exists as a checking mechanism, to ensure that the school judgements about student achievement are consistent with syllabus expectations. Fair enough.

Preparing for the CIA is useful beyond the test. The work you do in this unit topic, and in all of Essential English, challenges you to be a **critical reader** who can see how you are being positioned by texts in the media and **popular culture**. A critical reader can interpret texts, identify facts and opinions, and distinguish objectivity from bias. A critical reader can see how text structures and language features are shaping representations and make up their own mind about the subject at hand.

It can be challenging to apply the terminology used in Essential English to evidence you select to use in your explanations. You and your teacher might worry about being consistent and getting it 'right'. The most important thing is that you and your teacher agree because abstract terminology like 'beliefs' and 'ideas' can be slippery. In this opening section, we're going to be as clear as we can about key terms. Your job is to practise using them when you talk and write to explain your interpretation of each text.

First things first

You may have noticed that verb **explain** appears a lot in this list of skills at the start of this chapter. That's because it is the key skill you need to demonstrate when you are completing assessment. So, the first thing you need to do is to remind yourself what it means to explain.

Complete a **Fruyer model** like the one below to consolidate your understanding of this key term.

QCAA definition: make an idea or situation plain or clear by describing it in more detail or revealing relevant facts; give an account; provide additional information Source: QCAA Glossary of cognitive verbs (January 2018)	Characteristics
Examples •	Visual •

Throughout this chapter you will find activities labelled 'Practice question' with this icon: 

When you see the icon, answer the practice questions in complete sentences, or in detailed dot point form. This will help you to practise explaining representations in texts.

Being successful in the CIA means showing you know that representations are constructed. Whether or not the construction is deliberate in the way it invites the reader to take on a particular meaning, it is nonetheless made of opinions and ideas, **language features** and **text structures**. Your task is to explain how the texts are constructed.

In keeping with the idea that media texts are constructed by authors, some variation on 'explain how' is the most common stem in CIA questions or tasks. Here's what it might look like:

Explain how a text constructs one (or more) representations of identity, place, event, concept.

How does the text position/persuade/invite audiences to regard/see/view an identity, place, event and/or concept?

This bigger question could be broken down into parts like:

- Explain a representation of the identity, place, event, concept
- Explain an opinion/point of view/perspective about identity, place, event, concept
- Explain how language features have been used to portray/represent/shape perspectives about identity, place, event, concept
- Explain how text structures have been used to portray/represent/shape perspectives about identity, place, event, concept.

Although these are the most likely ways you will be asked to respond in the CIA, it is also possible that:

- identity could refer to a real individual, a character or a social group
- places and events might be combined and be local and very relatable (a city council proposal) or broader (climate change)



Language features and text structures in explanations

Language features and text structures shape and support meaning-making in texts to suit different purposes and audiences.

Language features include sentence structure, vocabulary, figurative language, literary devices and complementary features. In visual and multimodal texts, visual language elements, such as framing, camera angles and body language (pp. 12–13) are considered to be language features.

Text structures are the ways in which information is organised in the text. This includes sequencing, layout and other generic patterns.



Activity 3.1

- 1 Ask your teacher for a list of the language features and text structures you will find useful for practising and completing the CIA.
- 2 Return to the list of key terms for explaining visual texts in Chapter 1. Which ones are language features and which ones are text structures?

When we write explanations, we use particular text structures and language features to make our texts coherent, so our readers can make sense of what we're saying.

A neat trick for cohesive text structure in explanations is to make deliberate decisions about how you begin (theme) and end (rheme) sentences. When you do this, you control the **reading path** of the reader so they *do* stay focused on the important information. The reader doesn't need to work so hard to figure out what pronouns like 'it', 'they' and 'these' are referring to.

There are two common ways of controlling **text structure** in explanation, whether you are writing in whole paragraphs or detailed dot point form.

- 1 Repeat the same idea in theme (first) position in the next sentence.
 - **De Beers** is the world's leading diamond company.
 - **De Beers** produces, markets and sells the precious gem.
- 2 Repeat the idea at the end of a sentence and the beginning of the next one, so the rheme of one sentence becomes the theme of the next. The following three sentences use both techniques.
 - In 1938, after the Great Depression and with war looming in Europe, sales of diamonds fell again. In response to **this problem**, De Beers and N. W. Ayer, a leading advertising agency in the US, launched **a marketing campaign. This campaign** was designed to change the public perception of diamonds by associating them with glamour and romance.

Conjunctions and connectives

These are language features that help make texts cohesive.

Conjunctions: Linking ideas within sentences				
	Coordinating conjunction	Correlative conjunction	Subordinating conjunction	Conjunctive adverbs
Purpose	Linking two equally important parts of an idea	Describing equally important parts of an idea, using pairs of words	Expanding or further describing the main idea	Connecting two independent ideas in one sentence – often to show a relationship
Example	His leadership is weak and misguided.	He is both smart and humble.	They should succeed because they are so determined.	She avoided stressful situations; consequently , she rarely achieved her goals.
Word list: fill in the gaps. Add your own examples	a___ o___ but y__t nor	both/and not only//but also either/or n_____r/ nor whether/or n__t	as be_____e since alth___gh unless provided if	how____r conseq____tly similarly therefore furthermore (use a semi-colon to join sentences with these)
Connectives: Linking ideas between sentences				
	Sequence	Cause–effect–result	Compare–contrast	Addition
Example	Some routes are experiencing disruptions due to high winds. Before travelling, check the Qantas website and app.	A new school has changed the demographics of the area. As a result , there are opportunities for ambitious developers.	The new play areas have encouraged healthy activity. Similarly , ‘walk to school’ programs are a positive incentive.	The school offers courses to cater for students’ ambitions. The school also encourages school-based apprenticeships.
Word list: fill in the gaps. Add your own examples	meanwhile secondly bef___e after n___t	consequently as a result this is why be_____e thus	similarly in contrast alternat____ly even so alth____h	also additionally m_____ furthermore

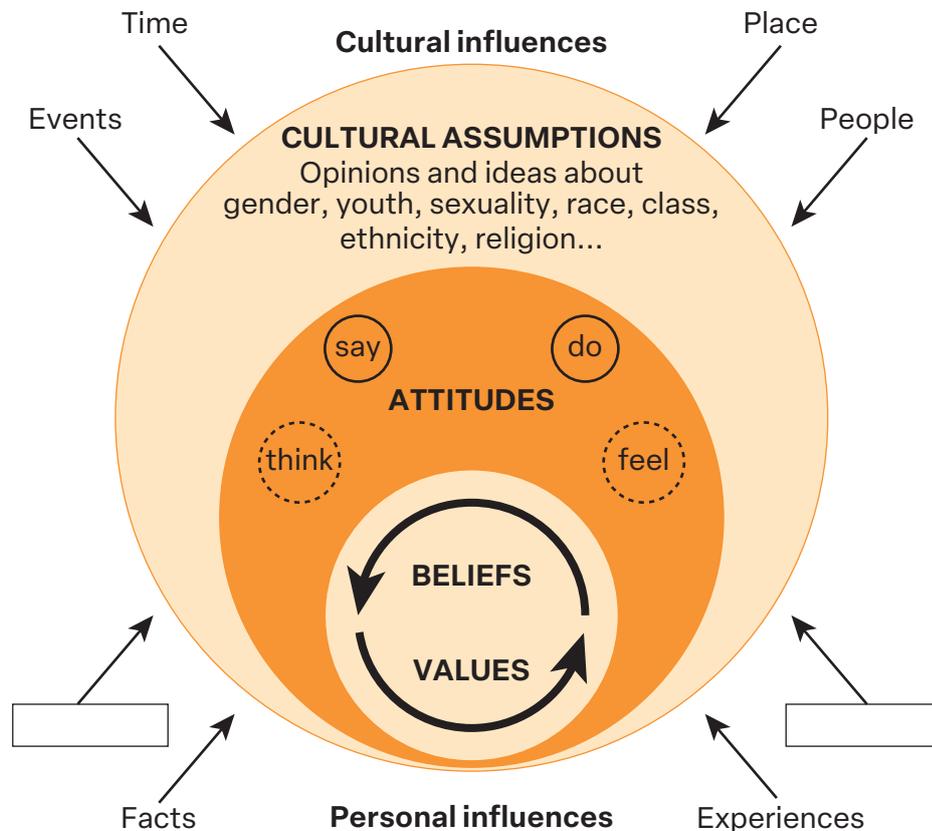
Be test savvy. You'll be tempted to just fill in the blanks when we offer a scaffold. For at least some of them, write out the whole response. You'll remember it better when it comes to assessment.

Terms for critical literacy

We've learned about critical literacy terms. They help us understand how authors might create particular representations and how readers might choose to interpret them. Here are the terms again, with their most basic definitions:

Beliefs are what we think is true. *Values* are what we think is important. Our beliefs and values are influenced by our experiences, including what we read and view, and who we interact with. They change over time. *Attitudes* are evident to others in how we speak and act, and to ourselves in how we think and feel. In the CIA, attitude can be identified in the language features and text structures that communicate emotions, judgements about people, and our evaluations of the worth or quality of things. Although you will not need to use this term in your assessment response, cultural assumptions are evident in the opinions people or groups express (attitudes) about issues and ideas like gender or youth. They are the source of bias in texts.

These ideas are represented in the diagram below.





Activity 3.2

- 1 Individually or in small groups, consider your opinions and discuss how these are influenced by your values and beliefs.
- 2 Think about how you express these values and beliefs in your attitudes (behaviours and words, thoughts and feelings, in response to events, people, places and things).
- 3 In small groups, use the prompts below to start your thinking. Extend your discussion by considering other events, people, places and things that are more relevant to you.

Remember to be respectful in how you listen to and speak about the opinions of others.

	Education	Individuality	Wealth
Belief	I believe education can look different for different people. Education helps us engage with the world around us.	I believe ...	I believe ...
Value	I value my education and learning.	I value ...	I value ...
Attitude	I enjoy learning: I like to exchange ideas with others in conversation. I am friendlier when I'm talking with people who also value education.		
Opinion	Everyone deserves an education.		

What next?

Now that we've looked at terminology, we're going to practise using it in CIA-style tasks.

The CIA could focus on any issue and any identity, place, event or concept. The focus topic might be a combination of these; for example, stress at school in the twenty-first century. For the remainder of this chapter, we have chosen a topic – diamonds – and will be presenting you with a series of practice CIA questions relating to it. Even though a diamond is a thing, diamonds are connected with a wide variety of potential identities, places, events, concepts and issues.

3.2 Marketing diamonds

In any survey of the most influential marketing campaigns of all time, the marketing of diamonds comes out near the top. People have lots of ideas and opinions about diamonds – who wears them, how they are mined, what they mean.



Activity 3.3

- 1 Identify the symbols in the text below. Use dot points to explain ideas associated with diamonds in this image.



- 2 What **connotations** do you associate with 'diamonds'?
See p. 11 (Chapter 1) for a refresher on connotations.
- 3 Compare your answers with your peers. Did you all have the same associations, or were there a range? What ideas or words were most commonly linked with diamonds? You could share this as a mindmap.



The word 'expensive' might have featured in your notes and the reason for this is marketing. Really, a diamond is just a polished rock, and many other gemstones are rarer, like Black Opal and Alexandrite.

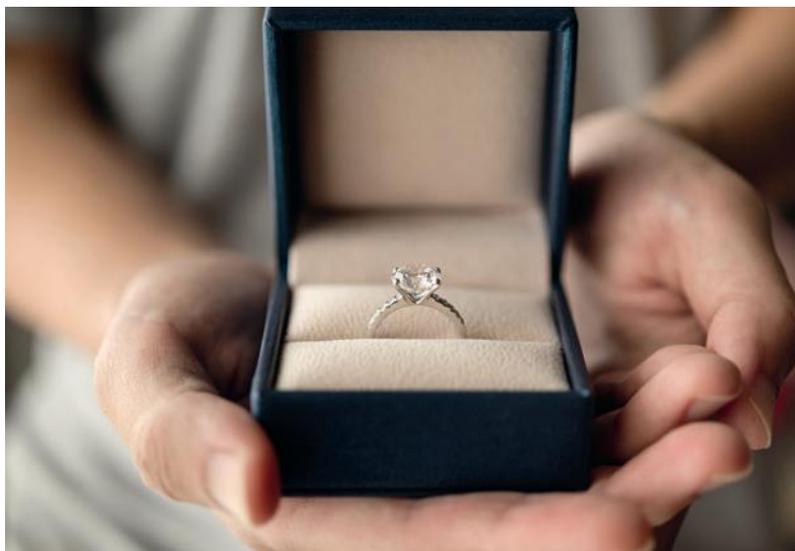
De Beers is the world's leading diamond company. De Beers produces, markets and sells the precious gem. From its mining operations to its innovative marketing campaigns, De Beers is highly influential in the perception of diamonds.

Before the De Beers diamond advertising campaign of 1938, rubies and sapphires were the most popular gems for engagement rings, and a ring was not an expectation. The campaign shaped a representation of marriage that included a diamond as a **symbol** of love.

The story of De Beers began in 1888, when shrewd investors in South African diamond mines realised that the large number of diamonds in the market was causing the price to fall. The investors could control the supply of diamonds by merging under a single powerful company. This company was called De Beers Consolidated Mines Ltd. Limiting the supply of an item generally creates higher demand and higher prices, similar to how brand drops or limited editions control demand in other markets.

In 1938, after the Great Depression and with war looking likely in Europe, sales of diamonds fell again. In response to this problem, De Beers and N. W.

Ayer, a leading advertising agency in the US, launched a marketing campaign. This campaign was designed to change the public perception of diamonds by associating them with glamour and romance. De Beers' diamond rings were photographed on the hands of fashionable women. Newspaper stories focused on the size and expense of diamonds when influential men proposed to their stylish sweethearts. Beautiful paintings, like Charles Rain's *Lover's Light*, were used in advertisements for diamonds. Diamonds were featured in the finest films of the day and became associated with wealth and desirability.



Audrey Hepburn plays Princess Ann in the iconic 1953 film, *Roman Holiday*. In this romantic comedy, Hepburn stars as a bored princess who rebels by sneaking out of the palace and going to see Rome. How do we know this image is of a princess?

It has been almost 90 years since the original De Beers campaign to promote diamonds. The way we engage with ads and brands has changed drastically but many of the principles are the same.

Product placement is a powerful marketing strategy where a product is featured in films, TV shows and stories about influential people.



Activity 3.4

- 1 As a class, list film, music, events and other media that use product placement. Some examples to get you started are:
 - Coca-Cola in *Stranger Things*
 - Etch-a-Sketch in *Toy Story*
 - every second thing on reality television, like KFC as a prize in *Survivor*.
- 2 In dot points, or a paragraph, explain what the text wants the audience to think about the product. Use the following steps:
 - a Identify the product
 - b Identify the setting (where the product is placed) or who uses the product
 - c Identify concepts and ideas associated with the product
 - d Explain how the text communicates ideas and information about the product.

Here's an example paragraph explaining the product placement for Rolex (the product) in Formula One (the setting):

One of the sponsors of the Formula 1 (F1) motor race, the Australian Grand Prix, is the luxury watch company, Rolex. Rolex is 'the Official Timepiece of Formula 1'. The Rolex logo appears on-screen during F1 races and is used to time laps. Rolex watches are worn by prestigious drivers. The Rolex brand is connected to the engineering excellence, precision and excitement associated with F1. The product placement of Rolex in an F1 race communicates that Rolex products are highly regarded by experts and worn by winners.



Activity 3.4 *Continued*

3 Sometimes it can help to think about the effect changes would have on your interpretation. Experiment with a product placement that would drastically change the associations with a product.

For example: If Rolex sponsored The Wiggles, how would that change audience perceptions about Rolex watches?

Placing the product in a different place or setting can be an effective marketing strategy. Stanley Drinkware successfully transformed the brand from being seen as a practical item for outdoorsmen and tradies in the 2010s to a must-have accessory for influencers in the 2020s.

We're going to practise using terms from the assessment objectives that you might encounter and need to use in your CIA.



Practice CIA 3.1

Context: The following comment thread is from a post on a local news site, after a gala (a fancy party) at the local museum. There was a formal dress code and some guests wore jewellery from the exhibition.



1 One opinion shared in this thread is diamonds are beautiful. Identify two more representations of diamonds.

However, the comments don't only represent diamonds. Identify two more representations of an event and an identity.

2 What opinion, view or perspective about each representation can you see?

3 Select and explain how a representation has been created. Refer to a text structure and language feature in your explanation.

- a diamonds
- b gala attendees
- c the gala event.

For example:

When Mo uses a question to direct the readers' attention to the pictures, and then uses evaluative language to describe the gems as 'beautiful' and 'stunning', we are positioned to see diamonds as exceptional.

4 Guy and Kim have different opinions from the others. Their beliefs and values about the issue of poverty influence the choices they make in their comments. Explain their opinion (judgement) about the gala attendees.

5 Who do you agree with and why? Or do you have an entirely different opinion? In your answer, refer to any beliefs, values, or attitudes you have that might influence your response. You may want to refer to the diagram and explanation on p. 108.

[**Mo**, Fashion Student] Have you seen the pictures from the City Gala last night? I've never seen so many beautiful gems! It really made the whole evening so glamorous. It definitely would not have been the same if attendees didn't have those stunning jewels. I think it really shows how beautiful diamonds are. 🥰

[**Guy**, Economics Student] I thought it was so tone-deaf to have all those rich people wearing so many diamonds. The money they spent showing off could have been used to help people struggling to afford food. Some things are more important than showing off how much money you have! 😡

[**Kim**, Student] I agree with **Guy**. Rich people are so out of touch! It would be better to sell the diamonds and give the money to charity.

[**Guy**, Economics Student] I'm not sure what is so special about these rocks. I think it's all marketing. You can grow the same things in a lab now. 🗨️

[**Jas**, Curator] Some people criticised the attendees' accessories, but most of the jewellery was on loan from the museum. If the diamonds were sold, we might never have a chance to see them publicly – they'd be locked away in private collections. The museum uses the money from this event to curate future exhibits.

[**Esme**, Tailor] I'm glad they used pieces from the museum. Those old diamonds still look great today – they really are forever! It is better to use what has already been created rather than make new stuff. I think it is a good example of how things should be looked after.

[**Sal**, Artist] Who says everyone was rich? Many of the people attending work for charities or are from local arts companies. Just because someone is wearing diamonds doesn't make them a millionaire! 😊

[**Geb**, Writer] I think it's amazing that people can wear the same diamonds as icons like Elizabeth Taylor. It was like watching history come to life. Imagine the stories those diamonds could tell! 🌟



Extension task 3.1

Another famous example of diamonds featuring in a media text is the song ‘Diamonds Are a Girl’s Best Friend’ from the film *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* (1953).

- 1 Search online to:
 - a read the lyrics for this song
 - b watch the film clip.
- 2 Identify and explain:
 - a The significance of diamonds in the song.
 - b How men and women are represented.

You may need to do some additional investigation to understand the beliefs, values, and attitudes about gender in 1950s America.



In 1947, copywriter Frances Gerety came up with the iconic slogan that changed the industry: ‘A Diamond is Forever’. This striking phrase was so influential that a James Bond novel was titled *Diamonds are Forever* (1956). In 1999, ‘A Diamond is Forever’ was named ‘The Slogan of the Century’ by Advertising Age. Through effective marketing strategies, diamonds became a symbol of everlasting love.



Practice CIA 3.2

Context: an early advertisement for diamonds

‘A girl’s joy, flowering like a rose,
 is radiant and full in the lovely miracle of love awakening.
 And for her a star, blazing bright in her dreams,
 will recall this moment always.
 Her engagement diamond, fair spark of eternity,
 reflects the light of her happiness in changeless splendour,
 and treasures his tender message of love until the end of time.’

Split the class into two. One side will use ‘diamonds’ and one side will use ‘love’ to fill in the first blank for each sentence. Then groups have to complete the sentence using evidence from the advertisement text above. In pairs, peer review your responses.

Task:

Explain how a perspective on _____ has been created. Refer to an opinion or idea, and a language feature and a text structure in your response. To make it easier, you can use the dot point structure below.

- The perspective on diamonds represented in _____ is that _____
- The idea of _____ connotes _____.
- One language feature that positions the reader to agree with this perspective is _____ which has the effect of _____
- One text structure that contributes to this meaning is _____, which _____.

Even if you have never bought a diamond, you have most likely made purchases motivated by a product's symbolic significance. For example, if you have bought someone flowers, a card or chocolates for a special occasion, you have given a product that has been made into a symbol by marketers.



Extension task 3.2

In groups, discuss and investigate the following:

- Chocolate is to Valentine's Day what diamonds are to marriage proposals. How did chocolate become a symbol of love and romance?
- What are the potential problems or ethical **issues** when marketers influence us to buy products for our most significant celebrations? What harm could it do?



Practice CIA 3.3

Context: This article is printed in a high-end fashion magazine.

Task:

Explain how the article constructs two representations of an identity, place, event and/or concept.

This text is a little longer, so you'll need a process for interpreting it.

STEP 1: Read the whole text, with your task in mind.

STEP 2: Highlight and annotate the important elements, focusing on what information communicates the representation/s, any opinions or ideas you can identify, and the language features or text structures that are working hard to make the meaning.

STEP 3: Use your highlights and annotations to complete an observation and inference chart.



What can you see? What does it say?	Representation(s) – <i>What is represented?</i>	Elements that shape meaning in this text	
		Observation – language features	Observation – text structures
	•	•	•



What does it mean?		Inferences – language features <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	Inferences – text structures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
Conclusion	Main ideas and opinions about the representation(s):		

Haute couture: a conservation of artistry or a waste of resources?

You might be familiar with ultra-fast fashion, fast fashion and luxury fashion, but do you know about the next step up?

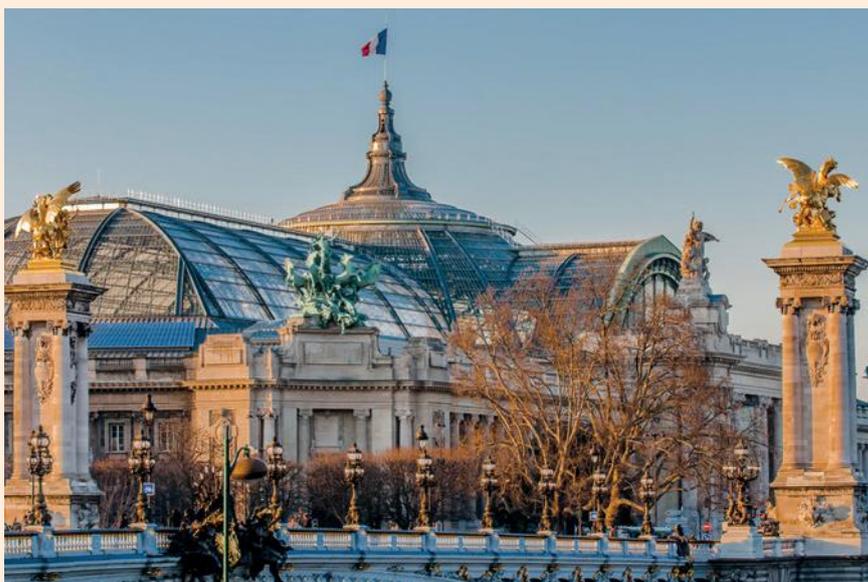
Fashion can be seen as a way to show off your wealth to the rest of the world. You might think it's just a status symbol, like diamonds and sportscars.

I see fashion as an expression of individuality. And the pieces that

set the trends? Well, you'll find those in *haute couture*.

Haute couture, the epitome of fashion refinement, is an art like no other.

There are only 14 designers who are labelled '*haute couture*' (French for 'high sewing'). The shows are like theatre! As well as the streets of Paris, designers showcase their designs at extravagant museums and exquisite locations around the world.



Did you know the term '*haute couture*' is a legal term in France? This prestigious label comes with very strict criteria. Designers must:

- create made-to-order apparel for private clients
- have an atelier (workshop) in Paris that employs at least 20 full-time staff and at least 20 full-time technical people
- present twice a year at Paris Couture Week (January and July)
- have at least 25 original designs in each collection.



For many buyers, it is an investment, a piece of wearable art. They take tens of thousands of hours and are at the forefront of luxury. These clothing pieces are truly one-of-a-kind.

In fact, *haute couture* often comes with an expectation, or even a legal obligation, for exclusivity (look at the Giambattista Valli controversies!).

And like any masterpiece, it comes with a significant cost, often over \$100,000 per item. When price is

not an object, there is no limit to creativity.

I totally understand that this may seem a ridiculous amount of money to spend on a dress. However, I think of these as being like having a Leonardo da Vinci in your living room. There are definitely more affordable ways to access the art of fashion.

And, if we don't have people to support it, will we lose the art of clothing making? Is having the most fashionable on-trend item a want or a need? Are we entitled to it?

Haute couture can be a way to reflect on what should be the true cost of fashion.

Consider countries known for their fine tailoring and how the influx of cheap clothing means the loss of skills in garment and textile making. For example, India and Ghana are both known for their exquisite textiles and craftspeople. More people are looking to these countries to access fine art they can wear and to support artisans.

I also think *haute couture* can make us reflect on how to think of clothing as art in our life. If we are willing to invest time in the making of things, we use less resources per item. Even if it takes longer to get to us, high-quality things last longer.

If we're living in a material world, it's time to invest in the highest quality material we can.

What are your thoughts?

3.3 Other facets of the diamond industry



The hidden cost behind your jewellery (00:45)

The diamond industry has been implicated in the trade of ‘blood diamonds’ – gems mined in unsafe conditions or in conflict zones – and in destructive mining practices that have had harmful effects on the environment. You may have seen the film *Blood Diamond* (2006), but more reliable and current sources of information on blood diamonds are the Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International and the UN websites.



Practice CIA 3.4

Context: This is a paid placement in a fashion magazine.

Task:



How does the advertisement position audiences to regard the diamond industry?

- a explain a representation of an identity, place, event or concept in this text
- b explain a point of view about the identity, place, event or concept
- c explain how language features have been used to shape perspectives about the identity, place, event or concept
- d explain how text structures have been used to shape perspectives about the identity, place, event or concept.



To control or position public perspectives or opinions on their identity in the wake of negative revelations about the industry, diamond suppliers have made commitments to positively affect the local communities and environments around mining areas. De Beers highlights their commitments to improvement in the ‘Sustainability and Ethics’ section of its website.



Activity 3.5

Go to the ‘Sustainability and Ethics’ section of the De Beers website, or the site for another luxury brand.

Don’t click on anything there yet!

This is a mainly visual text and there is a great deal to see. In your class, you might want to divide into groups to consider particular sections.

We will be looking at the whole webpage as a text. You will identify, consider and explain how elements of this page work together to shape meaning. As you’ve seen with other websites, this page follows a top-down reading path (see p. 9, Chapter 1)

STEP 1: Individually, scroll down to the end of the page so you have a clear idea of the elements of the text. Your purpose is to identify reading paths and structural elements.

STEP 2: In small groups, identify the salient or important elements, focusing on what information communicates the representation/s. Also identify any opinions or ideas you can identify, and the language features or text structures.

You might choose to record this information by:

- using a shared digital notebook
- allocating a scribe to write down ideas
- writing on a large piece of paper
- adding ideas to a whiteboard.

STEP 3: Use your annotations and ideas to complete an observation and inference chart that will help you explain how this section of the website represents the De Beers Group and positions the audience to think about their sustainability and ethics policies.

What can you see? What does it say?	Representation(s) – What is represented? •	Elements that shape meaning in this text	
		Observation – language features •	Observation – text structures •
What does it mean?		Inferences – language features •	Inferences – text structures •

Activity 3.5 *Continued*

Conclusion

Main ideas and opinions about the representation(s):

In the Sustainability and Ethics section of their website, De Beers has positioned the audience to accept that _____



Activity 3.6

Lucara Diamond is another diamond mining company. The company worked with Eco-Age, a marketing agency specialising in eco-responsible strategy, to showcase the positive impact diamond mining can have on communities.

- 1 Watch the short film *Fashionscapes: The Diamonds of Botswana*. You can find the film on YouTube and the EcoAge website.
- 2 How does this short film represent Lucara's mining operations in Botswana? Identify language choices and text structures to help you explain how this representation is constructed.

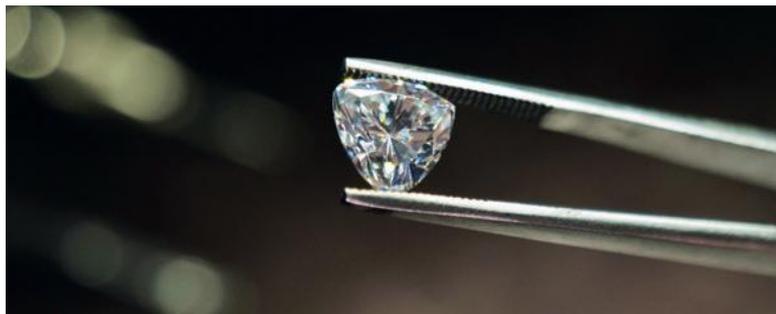
The short film *Fashionscapes: The Diamonds of Botswana*, represents Lucara as a ___ influence in Botswana. Language choices such as ___ and ___ have connotations of ____. This emphasises Lucara's ____. The visual language features of ___ and ___ portray the mining operations as _____. The short film is sequenced or structured so the audience sees events from the point of view of _____. At each stage, ___ effects are highlighted. Overall, the film represents Lucara as ___ that values _____.



Extension task 3.3

Hone your critical reading skills by considering what information about diamond mining has been left out of the website and short film.

Discuss any potential ethical implications of a 'green' (environmentally responsible) company working with the diamond industry. You may have to find out more information about the environmental impacts of existing diamond mines.





Practice CIA 3.5

Context: This news article appears in an online geography magazine.

Task:

Explain how this article constructs a representation of an identity, place, event, or concept.



Botswana's rich future

In August 2024, Botswana's President, Mokgweetsi Masisi, held the largest diamond found in more than a century. It weighs approximately half a kilogram, 2492-carats, and is the biggest diamond found since the Cullinan Diamond was unearthed in South Africa, 1905.



PICTURED: President Masisi inspects the record-setting diamond. Botswana is located in southern Africa, neighbouring South Africa, Namibia and Zimbabwe. This small African nation is rich in scenery, culture, history and natural resources.

Did you know?

- Diamonds are around 80% of Botswana's exports
- Diamond production is about 30% of Botswana's GDP
- Diamond mines are the largest private sector employers in Botswana
- The 20 pula note features the Oropa mine.

We hear so much about the negative effects of mining. And a lot of it is true! But Botswana shows different possibilities and opportunities in the mining industry.

Botswana is known for its forward-looking and community-focused approach to diamond mining. The government partners with De Beers and other companies to ensure profits are invested back into Botswana's community and environment.

The Botswana government understands that diamonds are a limited resource and that the country will need to transition to a diversified economy in the future. They invest in skilled jobs, education and technology – especially technology reducing negative effects on the environment. For example, the 2024 diamond was located using X-ray technology designed to find large, high-value diamonds, a sign of the great success this forward-looking approach has brought to Botswana.



PICTURED: Botswana's diamond industry is known for its investment in sustainable futures.

Though the history of diamond mining is fraught with environmental and humanitarian disasters, Botswana shows a more positive partnership is possible.

Botswana's success speaks to the changing values in diamond mining – from taking diamonds out of the Earth at all costs to reinvesting in people and environment.

Investing in tomorrow means a rich future for Botswana.

No scaffolding for this one. You've got this!

By 2010, technology had refined the process of lab-grown diamonds to produce high-quality gems that were comparable to natural diamonds. These lab-grown gems are available for a much lower price because they don't take millions of years to create. The rising sales of lab-grown diamonds meant fewer people were buying natural diamonds.

De Beers launched the 'Where it Begins' campaign to promote natural diamonds. Starring actor Lupito Nyong'o, the aim of this campaign was to tell:

'The story of discovery and the magical transformation of nature's rare treasures from their raw form into magnificent jewellery.'

Part of modern marketing is ensuring that the people associated with the product – influencers, celebrities, employees – align with the values and culture of the brand. You might remember this from Unit 1, Chapter 3.

3.4 A deeper dive into language features



Activity 3.7

Lupita Nyong'o is the first ever De Beers Global Ambassador. On the De Beers website, she is described as:

The ultimate muse, Academy Award-winning actor Lupita Nyong'o possesses rare magnetism and exceptional talent. Epitomising the power of boundless possibilities, she is a force for positive change, sharing our values and commitment to creating a better future for people and the planet.



It is interesting how powerfully positive the **nominal groups** (groups of words that represent or describe things) are and how the verb groups do the work of aligning the company's identity with the actor's.

Nominal groups	Conjunctions	Verb groups
The ultimate muse, Academy Award-winning actor Lupita Nyong'o		possesses
rare magnetism	and	
exceptional talent		
		epitomising
the power of boundless possibilities.		
She		is
a force for positive change,		sharing
our values	and	(sharing)
(our) commitment to creating a better future for people and the planet.		

- 1 What words in the nominal groups could also be used in a description of diamonds?
- 2 In your own words, explain what De Beers is trying to achieve by using Nyong'o as a brand ambassador. What do they want us to say or do, think or feel?
- 3 Let's get critical. As well as being an eloquent communicator and international award-winning actor, Nyong'o is known for her philanthropic and humanitarian work. The mining of diamonds has a fraught and bloody history. The advertising of diamonds has been accused of reinforcing unreasonable expectations about spending and unfair gender roles. If we were being very critical, what might you say about De Beers' reasons for choosing Nyong'o as the brand's Global Ambassador?



Activity 3.8

Many brands choose 'Brand Ambassadors' or 'Friends of the Brand' who promote products to consumers. These ambassadors are chosen because they represent the brand's values.

- 1 As a group, decide on another person you would like to see represent a global brand. This could be an actor, political figure, or social media influencer. It could be you! What brand and/or product would you like to be associated with?
- 2 Give an 'elevator pitch' – a 30–60 second presentation – to persuade your peers the person you selected would be an effective ambassador for your chosen brand. You will need to shape a representation of the selected person in relation to the brand. You can use this scaffold to help write your pitch:

The ultimate _____, _____ possesses qualities of _____ and _____. Epitomising the power of _____, she is/he is/they are a force for _____. It is clear that _____ shares the brand's values and commitment to _____. Appointing them as brand ambassador for _____ will help us represent the brand as _____.



Practice CIA 3.6

The text juxtaposes or contrasts two sets of values represented by a list of behaviours or actions the person might do (we might refer to these as expressions of their attitudes). To explain how each representation has been constructed, refer to opinions or ideas behind the actions, and what characteristics of the image reinforce the main idea of the poster.

Context: This poster is displayed in a local community centre.

How does the advertisement invite audiences to view finding their value?



- a Explain a representation of an idea, place, event or concept
- b Explain a perspective about the idea, place, event or concept
- c Explain how language features have been used to represent the idea, place, event or concept
- d Explain how text structures have been used to portray the idea, place, event or concept.

How do you find your value?

- 
- Helping at least one person per day
 - Complimenting people
 - Checking in with a friend I haven't heard from for a while
 - Cooking something for my coworkers
 - Wearing the clothes I love
 - Giving myself a little treat
 - Owning expensive jewellery
 - Buying a nice meal or takeaway (no washing up!)

Now that you've studied the image, think about it a little bit more. Could this be one person? Could one person display both attitudes for some of the behaviours?

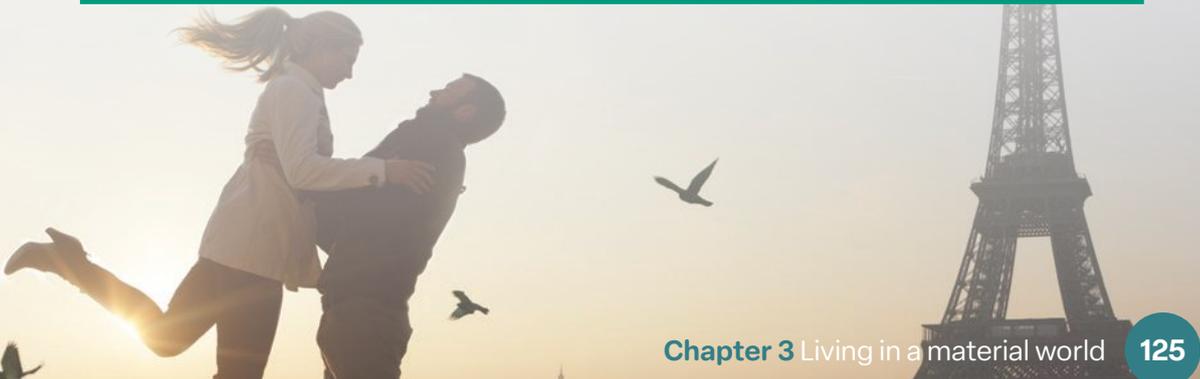
In 2023 DeBeers relaunched their 'Diamonds are Forever' campaign.

Al Cook, CEO of De Beers Group, said: 'Natural diamonds have remained icons of love for centuries. And De Beers advertising has remained iconic over the decades. We're proud to build on this tradition by reviving and refreshing one of our most successful campaigns. By investing ahead of the holiday season, we aim to support the industry, drive consumer demand and underline our confidence in the future of the diamond dream.'



Extension task 3.4

To what extent do you agree or disagree with Al Cook's representation of diamonds? Are natural diamonds icons of love? What alternatives can you think of? You might consider symbols of love in different cultures or other representations of love that you've seen.





Activity 3.9

Explain how the De Beers marketing campaign successfully shapes a representation of diamonds. You can use the following PEEL paragraph to help you.



Point	The 1938 De Beers marketing campaign is one of the most _____ in history. When the value of diamonds was _____ because _____, the De Beers campaign managed to turn them into symbols of _____. One of the ways they did this was to _____. This portrayed diamonds as _____. In texts such as _____, diamonds were represented as _____ through language features including _____. Another strategy was to _____. The audience were positioned to see diamonds as _____. This raised the perceived value of diamonds.
E+E (Evidence + Explanation)	
E+E (Evidence + Explanation)	
Link	

Or you could represent the same information in dot point form.

Your critical reading skills will set you up for success in the CIA and in life. Review your learning so far, including the key terms we've introduced along the way. Consult with your teacher about the best approach to writing your explanations. Share practice responses with your peers, to make sure you're being clear. The more you rehearse, the more you remember, the better you get. Good luck! Sometimes it can help to think about the effect changes would have on your interpretation. Experiment with a product placement that would drastically change the associations with a product.

UNIT 4

Representations and popular culture texts

Unit description

In Unit 4, students explore how the text structures, language features and language of contemporary popular culture texts shape meaning. They revisit and build on learning from Units 1, 2 and 3 about how the relationship between context, purpose and audience creates meaning, and they independently apply comprehension strategies when engaging with texts. Students respond to and engage with a variety of texts, including Australian texts, and create texts of their own. In responding to popular contemporary texts, students consider how perspectives are represented, they explore values inherent within these texts and examine connections between audience, purpose and context. They reflect on a range of popular culture texts and develop their own interpretations. Students also develop their skills in using appropriate vocabulary and accurate spelling, punctuation and grammar to enable effective communication.

The unit is made up of two topics:

- Responding to popular culture texts
- Creating representations of Australian identities, places, events and/or concepts.

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Chapter 4

Reinventing representations

This chapter is all about how **popular culture** reflects and shapes our **perspectives** of the world. You will **develop** skills to construct and **communicate** your points of view about **representations** in popular culture texts. You will **explore** a range of popular culture texts and see how the content we engage with has been inspired by cultural contexts, including traditional stories and emerging trends. The heart of popular culture is creativity that rests on rich cultural histories – **symbolism** and stories – and the intention of conveying meaning and perspective to an audience.

You will learn and develop skills to:

- **interpret** visual images, including symbolism
- **explain** how new **texts** have found inspiration in older ideas and stories
- **identify** a range of representations and explain how they have been constructed in different genres
- **consider** different points of view and how representations are constructed
- **understand** the influence of non-scripted or ‘reality’ television on popular culture
- **construct** a **multimodal** text that explains your perspective about the way an old idea has been used to create a twenty-first century popular culture text.

Teacher notes

We love this unit! There are so many ways to make it engaging for students. We've created a tour of popular culture text types that are more and less familiar. The collection provides an excellent opportunity to invite students to help you decide whether to take a deep dive into text types, like body art, or work across them all.

Word play

Play with these words. Change their forms, morph them into new words, add prefixes or suffixes, and find words with similar spelling patterns.

popular	popularise	popularly	unpopular	population
expect				
symbol				
ethics				
adapt				

Sentence combining

Combine these short, simple sentences to make more interesting ones. Be bold! Add words and phrases to extend the idea. Swap words around.

- Popular culture influences what people say.
- Popular culture influences what people do.
- Popular culture influences what people think.
- Popular culture can inspire us.
- Popular culture can include literature.
- Popular culture can include clothing.
- Popular culture can include social media.
- Popular culture changes over time.
- Popular culture is a way to express ourselves.



4.1 What is popular culture?

You participate in popular culture every day through the choices that you make. What you choose to wear, read, watch, listen to and say are all influenced by pop culture. It really is everywhere!



Activity 4.1

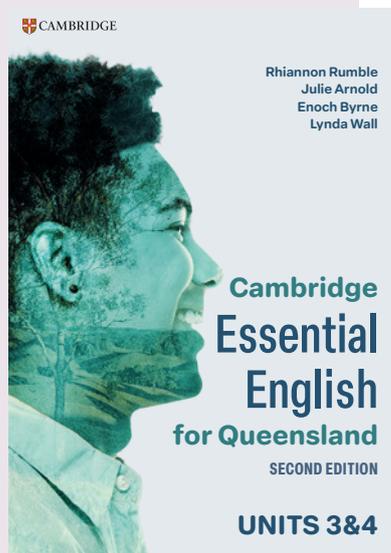
Here is a **formal** definition of popular culture:

artefacts, art, media and entertainment that reflect the dominant or prevailing traditions and culture of a society

Here is a less formal definition of popular culture:

cultural experiences, like art and music, enjoyed by the majority of members of various groups within the community

- 1 Draw on your own knowledge to decide whether the following images count as popular culture. Use the definitions to explain your choice. The first one has been done for you.
 - a The image on the left is someone engaging with popular culture by looking at magazines in a store. On the right is the cover of this textbook. Magazines belong to popular culture, while the textbook is used for educational purposes.



Activity 4.1 Continued

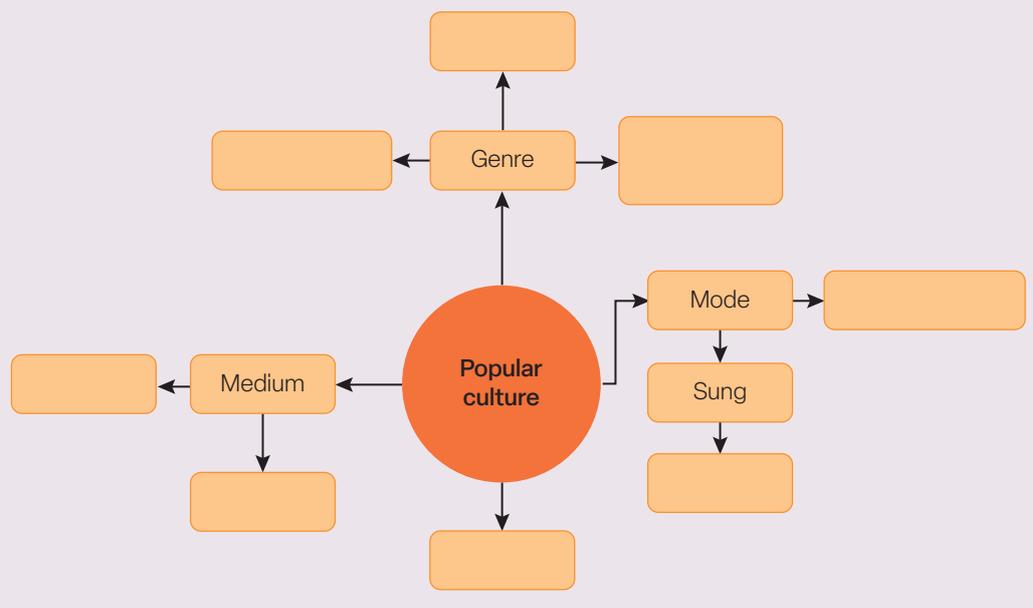
b Now you try. Are these images popular culture?



c And these?



2 On a series of sticky notes, write down as many examples of popular culture you can think of. Sort them into categories in a **concept map**. Organise them by mode (e.g. written, spoken, sung, played), medium (e.g. screen, body, canvas) and genre (e.g. reality television, indie music).



4.2 Tattoos: Getting symbolism

The alteration or decoration of the body is one of the most ancient sources of human expression. Body art, or body decoration, has been practised in every **culture** throughout human history.



An example of this is *mehndi*, or henna, which has been used in South Asia for over 5000 years. It is believed to bring good luck and fortune, especially in weddings, festivals and other celebrations. As well as being beautiful, the patterns are deeply symbolic and each element has a different meaning. The peacock design in the image on the left symbolises beauty, grace and love.



Roimata Taimana, Māori singer/songwriter and artist, wears *moko kanohi* that shows he is a descendant of the *iwi* (tribe) of Ngāpuhi

In recent years there has been a resurgence of the art of *tā moko* (Māori customary tattoo) in Aotearoa New Zealand, with many young Māori eager to reclaim the practice as a way of decolonising and re-indigenising their bodies. While the practice had nearly disappeared by the 1970s, you can now see *moko kanohi* (facial tattoo worn by men) and *moko kauae* (chin tattoo worn by women) on politicians, newsreaders, sportspeople and throughout the Māori population. *Tā moko* is an expression of genealogy and history and if you know how to ‘read’ a *moko* you can tell where someone is from and who their *iwi* (tribe) is. Each tattoo is so specific to the person wearing it that when signing the Treaty of Waitangi in 1840, some chiefs drew their *moko* in place of a signature.



Activity 4.2

1 Conduct a short investigation into the **purposes** and categories of body art in indigenous cultures. Use the table on p. 133 to organise your findings. You are looking for examples of traditional practices, so try searching ‘traditional culture body art’, or use Boolean operators (p. 70) to keep your search specific.

The Australian Museum curated the Body Art exhibition, which explored different ways people modify, change, decorate and adorn their bodies. The website is a good place to start exploring the history of body art: <https://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/11192>



Activity 4.2 Continued

- a The categories of body art are listed in the left-hand column in the table in b). Find one example for each category.
- b To help you think about the purpose of body art, there is a list of motivations, or reasons, underneath the table.

Category	Example practice	Culture and time	Purpose
Body modification	Foot binding	Originally Eastern China, 900s	Beauty Reflects social structure (only for high-class women)
Body painting			
Tattooing			
Cicatrization (scarring)			
Piercing			
Hair and hairstyles			

Other purposes for creating body art in traditional cultures include:

- a rite of passage
- to reflect social structure – for example, group identification, genealogy or status
- rebellion
- camouflage
- artistic expression
- other cultural significance, such as being part of a celebration.



Why am I doing this?

When you are deciding what motivates people to participate in body art, you are recognising something about the beliefs, values and attitudes of different cultures. You are beginning to understand symbolism and ritual as ideas and practices that have a meaning beyond what we can immediately see. To the people involved, they **represent** something important about **identity**.



Extension task 4.1

Traditional forms of body art can be a source of discrimination, especially when their meanings and history are misunderstood or actively suppressed. One way of valuing cultural practices is by ensuring their protection under the law.

The CROWN Coalition is a group of businesses and nonprofit organisations aiming to protect people from discrimination because of their hairstyles. The organisation has conducted surveys to identify the prevalence of race-based discrimination in the workplace and public schools in the United States of America. Scan the QR code to see a short video.



The CROWN Act by Dove and the CROWN Coalition to Stop Hair Discrimination (01:47)

Visit the CROWN Act website and read the summaries, infographics or full information from their latest research study. Discuss what surprised you (or not) about the study findings.

Though the CROWN Coalition focus on hair discrimination in the USA, the way people choose to wear their hair has also been an issue in Australia. Review your school's dress code and explain how it considers the needs of different groups, including cultural and religious practices.

Tattoos as popular culture

Tattoos are one of the most popular and visible forms of permanent body art.

We use the word 'tattoo' in English to mean a permanent mark, picture, pattern or word created by ink placed under the surface of the skin. This word originated from the Tahitian, Marquesan and Sāmoan words, 'tatau', 'tatu' and 'tātatau'. Tattoos are still an important rite of passage in Māori, Sāmoan, Tongan, Fijian and other Pacific Islander cultures.

In some cultural contexts, tattoos have been associated with disreputable sailors and criminals who had been marked for their crimes. Until quite recently, in many Western cultures tattoos were seen as a 'poor life choice' and people were advised not to have any tattoos. In some countries, the criminal associations of tattoos mean they are still perceived as inappropriate and people with tattoos may not be allowed to participate in some activities or spaces.

In Australia, people are generally accepting of this artform. It is estimated that between 25–30% of Australians have tattoos.

Tattoos may have fluctuated in popularity, but they have stuck around in popular culture for thousands of years. That’s what makes them such an interesting way to consider symbolism and how representations in popular culture shape societal responses.

Did you know?

Tattoos have existed as a cultural practice for millennia.

- Ötzi the Iceman, who was buried on the Austrian-Italian border around 5300 years ago, had over 60 tattoos across his body.
- Ancient Egyptians represented tattoos in their artwork, including figurines from over 5000 years ago.
- Mummies found in China’s Taklamakan Desert were tattooed 3000 years ago.
- 2000-year-old tattoo needles were found in Southwestern US.
- A Sudanese woman buried around 1300 years ago is tattooed with the symbol of the Biblical Archangel Michael.

Our opinions about cultural practices like tattooing are influenced by what we see in popular culture. Think about the last show, music video, or social media clip you saw featuring a character with tattoos. What social or cultural groups did they belong to? Were they represented positively?



Activity 4.3

Opinions are personal and shaped by experiences that may or may not be based on evidence. **Facts** are **objective** and they can be backed up with evidence.

- 1 For each of the statements in the table below, decide whether they are fact or opinion.
- 2 Discuss your choices. Were there any statements that were tricky to categorise? Which opinions do you agree or disagree with?

STATEMENT	FACT	OPINION
Tattoos are created by inserting inks under the top layers of skin.		
People who get tattoos will regret it.		
Tattoos look worse as people get older.		
Traditional tattoos should only be used by the people who belong to that culture.		
Tattoos have been part of cultures for thousands of years.		
People should research their tattooist and design carefully.		
Having a tattoo can make your life difficult.		
Most tattoo designs have symbolic meaning.		



Activity 4.4

- 1 Scan the following article for the following terms before you read it carefully. As a class, check you understand these terms.
 - a botanical
 - b commoditisation
 - c gatekeep
 - d heritage
 - e steadfast
 - f stigmatisation
 - g iconography
- 2 Now read the article carefully. Your purpose is to understand **attitudes** about tattoos and Grace Neutral and Heleena Mistry's **role** in presenting tattooing and other forms of body art as something that should be accepted and celebrated.



A wave of change through the tattoo industry

By Camryn Rose

Many women tattoo artists have spoken about how difficult it was to get started. Thankfully, a new generation of artists are creating studios that welcome everyone. Grace Neutral and Heleena Mistry are two of these artists.

As an artist, subject and student of all forms of body modification and tattooing, Grace Neutral has dedicated her career to exploring the ways our physical selves can be a canvas for expressing our identity. She hosted the Viceland documentary *Needles and Pins* (2018), which you can find on YouTube.

Neutral's own body is a canvas for the expression of her ideas and desires. There are things that make her happy – a juice box, the character Totoro – and more subtle images hinting at her femininity and the light and dark in her life. There are also beautiful, intricate patterns. Neutral says she is drawn to symmetry and geometry, inspired by nature. Though she enjoys

the calmer side of life now, she says she used to be a party animal in her younger years.

'People get tattooed for many different reasons: to heal or to rebel; for confidence, love or grief – but it's always an expression of control. Of your body, of how you see yourself and how you're seen, in a world where it's hard to control anything.'

(*Guardian*, November, 2022)

Heleena Mistry is an accomplished British-Asian tattoo artist whose work draws from Indian artistic traditions. She is influenced by India's rich and colourful history of creativity, especially folk art and Mughal miniature paintings. These bold and beautiful designs incorporate strong Mughal profiles, Hindu iconography, and familiar floral patterns. Mistry says she uses her art to reconnect with her culture. The inspiration for Mistry's tattoos is an Indian botanical garden. She even has matching fish



on her forearms, pictured in a pond with her frog. What better way to make timeless pieces than being inspired by paintings that have been around for centuries?

Mistry defied critics who said her art was too 'ethnic' or 'culture oriented' and expected her to conform to Eurocentric norms. Mistry has also spoken out against the stigmatisation of tattoos in various South Asian communities, especially comments about how future husbands and in-laws won't like them. She has tattooed Indian-inspired pieces on non-South-Asian clients. These are not just cool designs, but have symbolic history. Mistry says it is 'a privilege to be able to combine my heritage and tattooing'.

Mistry is very aware of the balance of cultural appreciation versus appropriation and commoditisation. Appropriation and commoditisation are when a small part of a cultural practice is taken out of context by people who don't understand the symbolism or culture it's from, especially when it is then used to sell other things. Genuine interest and understanding, as well as listening and acting on what is said by people from the culture, is a way of showing appreciation.

Neutral and Mistry are very open about their difficulties in the tattoo industry. Neutral is glad that the internet has given more people access to information about tattoos. She remembers when she was an apprentice and more established artists used to gatekeep techniques and learning experiences. When

Mistry started, she says 'I just didn't fit into the industry, there wasn't anybody else like me.' It took three hard years of steadfast determination for her to become an apprentice in a tattoo studio.

These difficulties are partly related to a lack of representation and understanding – you can't be what you can't see. Depictions in films and media have shaped stereotypes about how people view those with tattoos and who should be doing the tattooing.

Reputable tattoo artists, like Neutral and Mistry, teach clients about looking after their tattoos so the intricate designs last a lifetime. Some artists warn clients about going for on-trend designs and fads, especially in highly visible places. There's a more relaxed attitude in younger generations towards tattoos. Equally, however, laser removal clinics have reported increased business in the last decade.

Neutral and Mistry are passionate about creating welcoming spaces for different communities. They are dedicated to creating studios that make tattooing a positive experience because they agree that it should be the norm to go into any studio anywhere and feel comfortable. All aspects of tattooing should reflect the world we actually live in.

You can find interviews with both artists as part of *Stories & Ink Artist Series* on YouTube and the *Stories & Ink* website. You can also check out Heleena Mistry's interview with *Kajal Magazine*.



Innovation and artistry flourish in a welcoming space.



Stories & Ink: Artist Series: Grace Neutral (03:41)



Stories & Ink: Artist Series: Heleena Mistry (02:57)

Scan the QR codes to see interviews with both artists as part of *Stories & Ink*: Artist Series.

- 3 Your next step is to locate important information and apply it to your purpose.
- 4 Find the **evidence** from the left column of the table. Sometimes you will have to reread around the evidence to help you decide what it means.

EVIDENCE <i>Find and highlight the phrase in the text</i>	MEANING <i>What does this tell you about Neutral's, Mistry's and others' attitudes to tattoos?</i>
our physical selves can be a canvas for expressing our identity	
I just didn't fit into the industry, there wasn't anybody else like me	
it's always an expression of control. Of your body, of how you see yourself and how you're seen, in a world where it's hard to control anything	

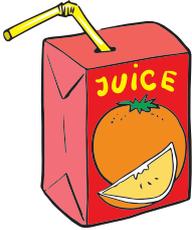


EVIDENCE <i>Find and highlight the phrase in the text</i>	MEANING <i>What does this tell you about Neutral's, Mistry's and others' attitudes to tattoos?</i>
the balance of cultural appreciation versus appropriation and commoditisation	
All aspects of tattooing should reflect the world we actually live in	

5 Tattoos can have **literal** and symbolic meanings. In your own words, **explain** the possible meaning behind the tattoos shown below.

Juice box

Neutral has a tattoo of a juice box on her upper left arm. In a 2017 interview with Refinery29, Neutral identified this as one of her favourite tattoos: 'I just love juice boxes. Especially in the summertime, you won't find me without a juice box in my hand.'

<p>Juice box</p>  <p>*This image is for reference only</p>	<p>Having a juice box tattooed on her arm literally means ...</p>
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Apple

On Neutral's torso, there is an image of a hand holding an apple. Let's assume this one is not just expressing her literal positive attitude to apples. What **abstract** or symbolic meaning might a hand holding an apple be communicating?

<p>Apple</p>  <p>*This image is for reference only</p>	<p>Neutral's apple symbolises ...</p>
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Botanical designs

Both Neutral and Mistry identify nature and botanicals as major influences on their tattoos. What meanings might people find in these designs?

Botanicals (florals and plants)



For many people, botanical designs might mean ...

- 6 Neutral's first tattoo was similar to this one on the right – a heart with a scroll going through it. She deliberately chose to keep the scroll empty. What might an empty scroll symbolise? What does this tell you about how Neutral saw herself?



- 7 Using the information you have gathered from the text, and your own opinions about tattoos, write a paragraph about how Misty and Neutral are represented in the article by filling in the blanks on your worksheet. If this PEEL structure doesn't quite fit what you want to say, write it in your own way.



Text structure	Topic: What do Grace Neutral, Heleena Mistry and the author want people to understand about tattooing?	Language features for expressing fact and opinion
<p>Point with an extra sentence (mentioning body art or tattoos) to elaborate</p> <p>E+E</p> <p>E+E</p> <p>Links back to the purpose of the paragraph</p>	<p>The article invites us to think that _____.</p> <p>It discusses the issues of _____ and _____.</p> <p>For example, _____.</p> <p>It means that _____.</p> <p>Grace Neutral supports this idea when she says that _____.</p> <p>Heleena Mistry claims that _____.</p> <p>This suggests that _____.</p> <p>Clearly, the author wants us to think that people's attitudes to tattoos _____.</p>	<p>Can you use verbs like <i>invites</i>, <i>supports</i> and <i>claims</i>, that make your meaning more precise?</p> <p>Adverbs like <i>very</i>, <i>completely</i>, <i>absolutely</i> and <i>never</i> can scale the force of your meaning up or down.</p> <p>Well-chosen adjectives like <i>fair</i>, <i>misunderstood</i>, <i>confident</i> and <i>self-conscious</i> can also help communicate your meaning clearly.</p>

From counterculture to popular culture

Something interesting about tattooing and some other forms of body art is how they have made their way into popular culture. This is partly because high profile figures like musicians and athletes who have tattoos are visible in media and popular culture. It's an organic process where having a tattoo becomes normalised. Ancient traditions and practices can come back into popular culture with renewed community participation.

Encouraging body art can also be a deliberate process of keeping traditional cultural practices alive.



Activity 4.5

One example of an ancient art coming into popular culture is the Filipino practice of *batok*, a traditional method of tattooing.

This blog post is from a series discussing *Vogue* cover stars. It is about Apo Whang-Od, her inclusion in *Vogue* – a popular culture text – and how traditional practices are becoming more popular.

1 Read the blog post below. Circle new vocabulary and underline key ideas.

Meet the tattooed centenarian and *Vogue Philippines* cover star: Apo Whang-Od

Welcome back to our series covering *Vogue's* most iconic cover stars!

In 2023, *Vogue* broke the mould by featuring the iconic centenarian Apo Whang-Od (also known as Maria Oggay) on their cover. Whang-Od is from Buscalan, a remote village in the northern Philippines. She is credited with helping keep the ancient art of *batok* alive.

Batok is a thousand-year-old traditional practice of tattoo and involves tapping the tattoo into the skin by hand, using a thorn attached to a bamboo stick along with soot and natural dyes. The *Vogue Philippines* cover helped bring *batok* to a global audience.

Whang-Od began tattooing at 16 and it is estimated that she has tattooed thousands of people. Initially, Whang-Od travelled to other villages to tattoo sacred symbols in rites of passage. In more recent years, after the series *Tattoo Hunter*, thousands of others have made the pilgrimage to be tattooed by her.

Whang-Od was once described as the last remaining *mambabatok*, or traditional Kalinga tattooist. However, according to *Vogue Philippines*, more young people have begun to train in the practice. Other practitioners are beginning to reclaim ceremonial traditions around tattoos and this cover corresponds to a wider trend with the **diaspora** seeking out their roots.

A *mambabatok* can only pass their skill down through their bloodline so Whang-Od has trained her grand-nieces, including Grace Palicas. Grace is the first Buscalan native to tattoo *batok* in Europe.

Tourism has changed Buscalan. At its peak, as many as 400 people per day were visiting the village. For these tourists, there are a limited number of designs to choose from. These tattoos are removed from their original ancestral context. As Audrey Carpio, the *Vogue* reporter says:

'In the end, we assign our own meanings to them, reading the symbols through the lens of an individual and not the community.'



Whang-Od plans to continue tattooing as long as she can

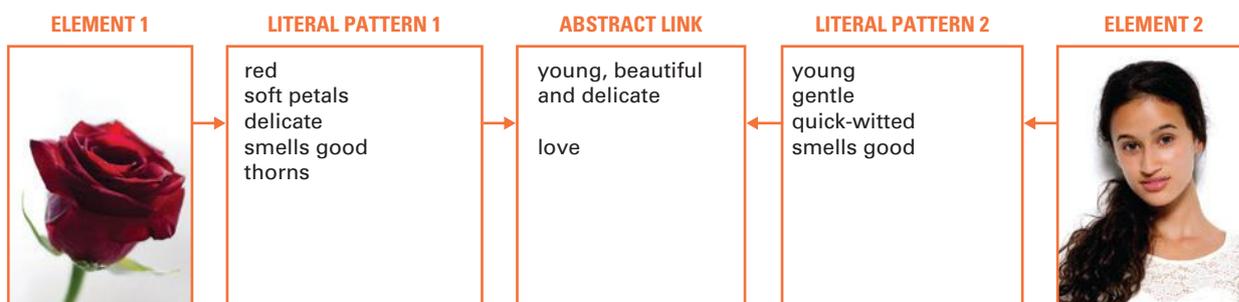
More people are choosing to get an indigenous tattoo to reconnect with their ancestral roots, decolonise aesthetics and reclaim their bodies.

If you are considering a 'traditional' tattoo, make sure you understand your connection to that tradition and the role you play in sustaining traditions. Otherwise, you risk reducing that permanent art to just a transaction. Culture survives through representation, not appropriation.

- 2 Considering the context, purpose and audience of a text is important when thinking about how the **language features** and **text structures** shape representations. What information would be emphasised if this was published on a travel website, where the purpose is to persuade, rather than an informative blog?
- 3 The purpose of this blog post was to inform people about the story behind the oldest *Vogue* cover model and her influence on the practice of *batok*. Using the ideas and information from the article, create a different text. Choose from:
 - a An engaging description for a travel website imagining the journey to Buscalan.
 - b An explanation for an older family member of why people seek out tattoos with traditional designs or traditional methods.
 - c A short blog about another ancient tattooing practice.

Reading symbols: What's a 'meta' for?

Metaphors are a beautiful way of **graduating** the force of meaning in our language; that is, making it more intense. Metaphors **compare** two things that are not literally alike but have some abstract feature or features in common. Let's see how it works. Take Robert Burns' famous metaphor, 'My love is like a red, red rose'. Yes, you're right, well done, this is actually a **simile**. The metaphor, strictly speaking, would be 'My love is a red, red rose'. A red rose signifies love, passion and beauty in many cultures.



Can you see how using the metaphor **communicates** much more than if the poet had described his love literally by saying, 'My girlfriend is good-looking'? No wonder many of us think poets are romantic!

It's not much of a leap to move from ordinary metaphors to visual metaphors. **Visual metaphors** are images that represent things symbolically (or **figuratively**) rather than literally. This is useful in body art, where people often want to communicate an abstract message, or perhaps be ambiguous in their meaning, leaving the reader to work it out for themselves.

Did you know?

The language of flowers is called 'floriography'. This is a type of coded communication that allows people to 'read' messages in bouquets of flowers. It is another practice that has been around for thousands of years and can vary depending on where you live. The meaning is created from the type of flower, the colour and the combination in the bouquet.

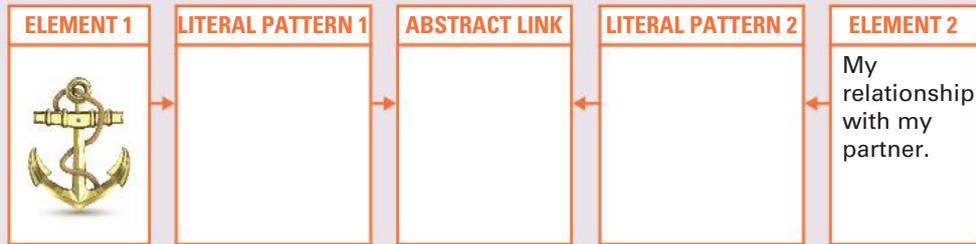
Marigolds are associated with positive energy, love and luck in India. In Mexico, marigolds are associated with mourning and honouring the dead.

Let's go back to our rose metaphor (a pretty common one in tattooing and poetry, by the way). Robert Burns could have saved himself lots of time by giving his girlfriend a flower. The visual metaphor might have achieved the same thing, although the rest of us would have been deprived of an excellent poem.



Activity 4.6

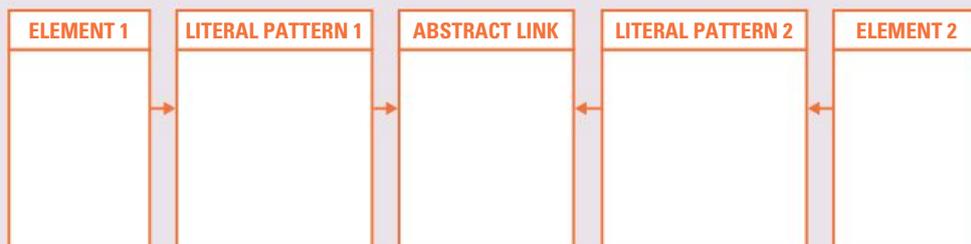
1 Now you try it. Interpret this visual metaphor.



2 Let's make the challenge a bit more complicated. Imagine someone has the tattoo below. Interpret the visual metaphors they've used and what the tattoo might represent.

Make a series of interpretation boxes like the ones below to help you think about the meaning of this tattoo.

- List elements from the tattoo in the 'Literal pattern 1' boxes.
- Write down what that image might represent for the wearer of the tattoo in the 'Element 2' boxes.
- List possible characteristics of Element 2 in the 'Literal pattern 2' boxes.
- Decide what the abstract meaning is (what quality is being valued or message conveyed) by looking at the common characteristics of the two elements.



- The 'Abstract link' boxes tell a pretty good story about the person's identity, or how they want to represent themselves. Draw some conclusions about this person.
- Let's try reversing it. Think of an event you want to commemorate – it could be an achievement, a birthday or other milestone. What symbols or elements would you include?

Understanding symbolism is an important skill when you are explaining or creating texts of your own.

4.3 Graphic novel: The journey from ancient history to popular culture

The Chinese legend of the Monkey King can be traced back over 1500 years when the Buddhist monk Xuanzang was said to have travelled 10 000 miles (a 16-year journey) to find holy texts in India. Xuanzang offered an account of his journey in an ancient text called *Records of the Western Regions*.

In what may be considered a very early example of old ideas being reimagined for an emerging popular literary form, Xuanzang's account was transformed almost 1000 years later in the sixteenth-century novel *Journey to the West*. The story goes that Sun Wukong (the Monkey King) is a monkey born from a heavenly stone who acquires supernatural powers. In the novel, the Monkey King is a quick, strong, skilled fighter. He can manipulate the weather, protects every monkey (and remembers all their names) and has the power of 72 Transformations.

Because he is mischievous, disrespectful, arrogant and quick-tempered, he clashes with the gods.

You can read more about the history in the *National Geographic* article 'The real history behind the legend of Sun Wukong, China's Monkey King', available online at <https://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/11193>.

In literature, we would refer to the Monkey King as an **allegory** because the adventures of the fantastic characters represent human characteristics and experiences. This **Fruyer model** has been completed for you. Use the information to **decide** what the purpose of an allegory is in literature.



<p>Definition</p> <p>a story that has a symbolic meaning as well as a literal meaning</p>	<p>Characteristics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the characters (often animals) are symbols that represent real people or ideas • the stories often deal with human vices and virtues • the main idea must be inferred by the reader
<p>Examples</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Animal Farm</i>, George Orwell • 'The Tortoise and the Hare', <i>Aesop's Fables</i> • <i>The Wizard of Oz</i> (1900, 1939, 1987) and its various adaptations 	<p>Non-examples</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • news reports • emails • this textbook!

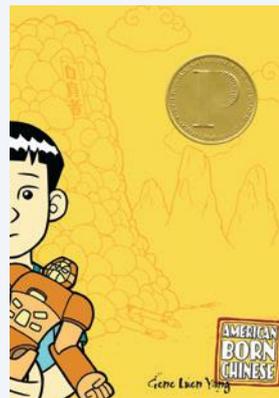
The first representation of the Monkey King in (more or less) contemporary popular culture was in the cult Japanese television series *Monkey*, released in 1978. More recently, in 2018, this was adapted to a series called *The New Legends of Monkey*. Watch either of these if you have an opportunity.

Here, we'll **examine** how graphic novel **author** Gene Luen Yang reimagined the tale in his twenty-first-century graphic novel *American Born Chinese* (2005). Then, we will look at how the graphic novel was transformed into a live-action series on Disney+ (2023). Although many of the core themes have stayed the same, the representations in the show have been updated to engage a new audience.

The texts

We'll share some **frames** from the graphic novel *American Born Chinese* in this chapter, so you can see how it works – it is also an excellent book for a complete text study.

We'll also refer to the Disney+ live-action adaptation. The first episode of the show, 'What Guy Are You?', establishes the key themes and representations in this version of the story.



American Born Chinese is an example of what in a Western literary tradition would be called 'Bildungsroman'. Bildungsroman is a literary **genre** that focuses on character change and coming of age – the lessons you learn from growing up. The term comes from the German words *Bildung* (education or forming) and *Roman* (novel). As you may have noticed, English tends to steal useful words from other languages.



American Born Chinese is set in a modern American high school. It follows the stories of characters who face some common issues around finding their place in the world. These characters include:

- Jin Wang, a high school student whose parents emigrated to the US before he was born. He struggles between wanting to fit in and discovering who he could be.
- Wei-Chen, the son of the Monkey King
- various characters in fictional sitcoms. These sitcoms feature racist stereotypes that reflect what Jin experiences in school.

American Born Chinese: Reading the graphic novel

A graphic novel is a text type that relies on images and words to make meaning. It's basically a long cartoon, or a novel with pictures, or – more fancily – a long-form work of sequential art. Since the graphic novel and the comic are often associated with superheroes, it is not surprising that the Monkey King would appear in this form!

While your body may seem passive or still when you're reading, your mind is very active. In fact, reading comics and graphic novels may be the most active kind of reading there is. The combination of words and images helps 'switch on' the active reading in your brain, forcing you to make connections between words and images and from panel to panel as the story unfolds. The perceived strength of these connections can be influenced by the framing of the panels, the dividing lines or spaces between panels (see the table Key terms for explaining visual texts, p. 12). Rather than give you *more* information, the combination of words and images actually leaves large **gaps** (incomplete ideas) and **silences** (points of view left unexplained). Your brain has to work hard to get the joke. The cartooning experts call this closure, and it is an essential part of their craft.



Activity 4.7

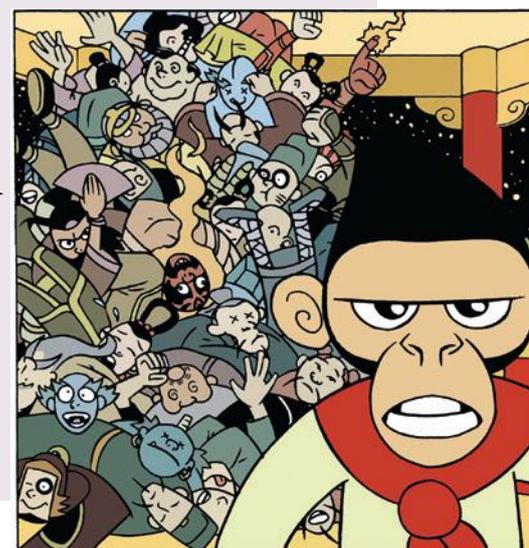
As you read this summary of the beginning of the Monkey King legend in *American Born Chinese*, make some notes about the characters and the important elements in the images.

Yang's graphic novel begins in Heaven. The gods are having a dinner party and the tasty smells waft all the way to the Monkey King's home. The Monkey King loves parties and wants to join in. →

- 1 Identify typical party behaviour.
- 2 How do we know they are gods?

The Monkey King becomes very angry when he isn't allowed into the party because he isn't wearing shoes (after all, he is a monkey). He thinks he has been unfairly treated so he causes havoc. →

- 3 What has the Monkey King done?
- 4 How is the Monkey King represented compared to the other gods? Consider the **composition** of the frame (**foreground**, **background**, relative size).



Activity 4.7 Continued

Embarrassed by the comments about his appearance (and smell), the Monkey King declares all monkeys must wear shoes and locks himself in his chambers to study kung-fu. When he emerges, he has new powers and looks human. He declares to the gathered monkeys that he is no longer the Monkey King and is now The Great Sage, Equal to Heaven.

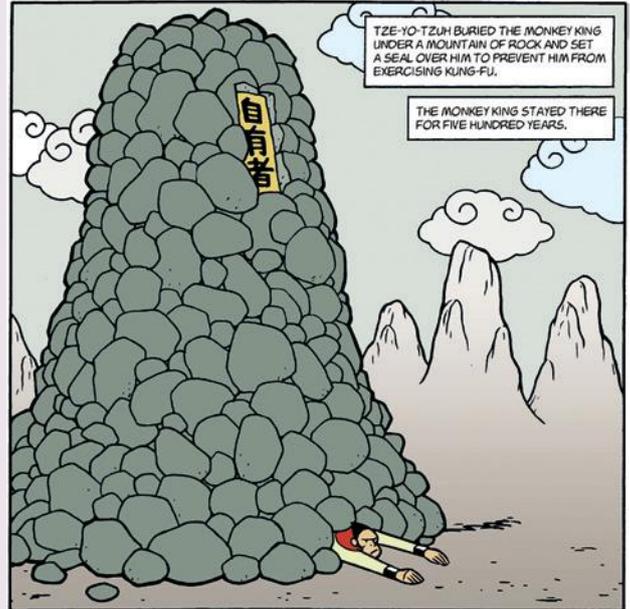
The (former) Monkey King stomps around heaven forcing everyone to accept his new name. The inhabitants of heaven complain to the great Tze-Yo-Tzuh – an omnipotent force who oversees the lives of humans and deities.

Tze-Yo-Tzuh tries to convince the Monkey King to accept himself as a monkey.

The Monkey King is having none of it and insults Tze-Yo-Tzuh again.

Tze-Yo-Tzuh imprisons the Monkey King under a mountain for 500 years. Rough.

- 5 This image is funny. Why?
- 6 Based on the information you have so far, what might be the main idea or overall message of the story of the Monkey King, as told in *American Born Chinese*? How might readers relate to this story?



Intertextuality

The echo of other texts within a text is called **intertextuality**. Writers and creators draw on older stories and ideas to create the new story. As readers and viewers, noticing intertextual references can improve our understanding and enjoyment. For example, knowing the traditional Monkey King story makes it easier to understand the interconnected stories and ideas in *American Born Chinese*.



Extension task 4.2

Graphic novels can be effective at representing serious issues in an accessible way. Find and read an award-winning graphic novel based on personal experiences. We've listed some examples below:

- *A Part of Me is Still Unknown*, Meg O'Shea
- *Displacement*, Kiku Hughes
- *Maus*, Art Spiegelman
- *Persepolis*, Marjane Satrapi



Extension task 4.2 *Continued*

- *Still Alive*, Safdar Ahmed
 - *The Best We Could Do*, Thi Bui
 - *They Called Us Enemy*, George Takei, Justin Eisinger, Steven Scott.
- Readers may find some of the subject matter and artwork disturbing, so check the blurb or synopsis (a brief summary of the story). As always, talk to a trusted adult if you need to.

American Born Chinese: Viewing the on-demand television series

Digital technology has changed popular culture. Content is cheaper and quicker to produce, so there is more of it. No matter what you are interested in, there's something for you on whatever device you choose. Your choices influence the content too. Production companies like Netflix and HBO get immediate feedback from viewers and produce content to match demand. If a series is popular, it remains available on the platform, more seasons are produced and it will likely inspire similar shows. You'll also be directed to watch related content by the platform's algorithm.

'Reboots' and 'remakes' have always been part of popular culture. Transformations, adaptations and re-imaginings of older texts can also be a practical choice. The studio might already own the rights to a series or story. Older texts are out of copyright, and no one 'owns' myths and legends, so it is cost-effective to adapt these. It's a pretty safe bet that if audiences enjoyed the original text, they'll tune in to the remake.



Activity 4.8

- 1 In your class, make a list of on-demand television shows that transform older ideas for a twenty-first century audience.
- 2 How many remakes, inspirations or transformations can you find? How many completely original ideas are there?

To get you started, here are ten popular shows from 2024 (in no particular order). Content changes more quickly now than ever, so search for 'most popular on-demand shows' for an up-to-date list.

- *Shōgun*
- *Arcane*
- *Hacks*
- *Only Murders in the Building*
- *Fallout*
- *Abbott Elementary*
- *House of the Dragon*
- *The Bear*
- *X-Men '97*
- *Masters of the Air*.

Activity 4.8 *Continued*

3 For one of the shows you've identified, find the text it was originally based on. Then, from your own knowledge or using synopses, note the identities, ideas, events and/or concepts represented in the original text. Discuss whether you think these are still relevant today.

Original text(s)	Identities, events, ideas and concepts in the original text	Relevance today
•	•	•
•	•	•
•	•	•

For example:

The 2012 TV series *Elementary* (and over 100 other adaptations) features the character 'Sherlock Holmes'.

Original text(s):

The canon of Sherlock Holmes consists of short stories and novels written between 1887 and 1927 by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle.

Identities, events, ideas and concepts in the original text:

- The 'lone genius' and their trusty sidekick
- The criminal mastermind
- The role of friendship and loyalty
- Appearances can be deceiving
- Mercy, judgement and justice
- Social class, class differences, their importance in society and maintaining reputations
- Crimes can happen anywhere.

Relevance today:

- The trope of the criminal mastermind versus the genius lone detective or hero is still found in texts. This might be challenged by the importance of community, with groups of heroes teaming up to defeat villains.
- Popular TV shows and films still explore questions about justice, mercy, punishment etc. such as whether a crime can ever be justified.

The *New York Times* article titled 'Is that you, Sherlock?' contains additional information about how these turn-of-the-century (when the 1800s became the 1900s) characters were made appealing to a contemporary audience.

Almost two decades after the publication of the graphic novel *American Born Chinese*, Gene Luen Yang created an adaptation for the screen. While the two versions of the *American Born Chinese* story have much in common, representations have been updated as contexts and audience have changed.



Activity 4.9

- 1 Predict some of the differences you might see in the television series. Consider the following:
 - a The storytelling mediums are different. What can a television show represent that a graphic novel can't (and vice versa)?
 - b What technologies, ideas, opinions, attitudes and beliefs have changed since Gene Luen Yang went to school (1980s), the graphic novel was published (2006), and the day you're reading this. HINT: look at when social media was available.
- 2 Read the blurb for the graphic novel and watch the trailer for the series. In your groups, review your predictions and decide which are more or less likely to happen.
- 3 As a class, identify and discuss ideas, themes and concepts in the texts.

Gene Luen Yang created *American Born Chinese* based on his own experiences of racism in high school. In the television series, the Asian–American community was represented on the screen and behind it. The directors, show creators, producers and writers are Asian–American, and the impressive cast is led by Asian–American actors.

What's your opinion? Is it important to know who's on the team behind a production? Why?

Asian–American commentators have spoken about how important it is to see themselves represented in popular culture texts, when they so often have been reduced to stereotypes. Ke Huy Quan along with many of the actors in *American Born Chinese* – including the award-winning Michelle Yeoh – have had their own difficult journeys to Hollywood success. We highly recommend watching the 2023 Academy Award acceptance speeches from both Quan and Yeoh (for Best Supporting Actor and Best Actress respectively, in *Everything Everywhere All at Once*) where they share some of the obstacles they've overcome.



Activity 4.10

- 1 Identify popular culture texts that have represented a social group you belong to. For example, think of the last time you saw a high school student in a film.
- 2 Discuss what you thought about how the creator represented the cultural group.
- 3 Explain what you would have changed to make it a more accurate or positive representation.

Representation

A representation is the textual construction that shapes ways of thinking about or acting in the world. It is the description, portrayal or likeness of someone or something represented in a particular way.

One way of thinking of it is by considering the prefix 're-', which indicates 'again' or 'back'. A re-representation is presenting something again, usually in a way that positions the audience.



Activity 4.11

The table below identifies some of the main differences in representations between the graphic novel and the show.

- 1 For each row, identify what identities, times, places, events or concepts are being represented. The first one has been started for you.
- 2 As you read, write down any questions you have about the changes. Be prepared to discuss what they show you about changing representations in texts.

<i>American Born Chinese</i> (2006)	What identities, times, places, events and concepts are being represented?	<i>American Born Chinese</i> (2023)
<p>Jin Wang</p> <p>Jin's parents each immigrated to the US from China and met at school in San Francisco. Jin is born in the US. When Jin's family moves to the suburbs, he starts at a new junior high school. Jin is the only Chinese American student at his new school. He experiences overt racism from other students and teachers.</p> <p>It's kind of complicated, but Jin manages to transform himself into Danny, a sporty blond, white boy, who is also a character in a sitcom (p. 158).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• immigrant families• starting high school• racism• friendship	<p>Jin Wang</p> <p>Jin's parents emigrated to the US from Taiwan. Jin was born in the US. Jin is interested in manga (the fictional <i>Kugo Ren Saga</i>) and soccer.</p> <p>The series starts at the beginning of a new school year. His best friend, Anuj, is angry at him.</p> <p>As one of the few students of Asian heritage, Jin experiences racism and micro-aggressions; people mispronounce his name, the administrator tells him to help Wei-Chen 'because you have SO much in common', a video based on the racist sitcom turns him into a viral meme.</p>

American Born Chinese (2006)	What identities, times, places, events and concepts are being represented?	American Born Chinese (2023)
<p>Wei-Chen</p> <p>A Taiwanese boy who moves to Jin's neighbourhood. Jin is rude to him at first, but the two bond over their love of Transformers.</p> <p>Wei-Chen is a great friend to Jin until Jin is rude to him and they fight.</p> <p>At the end of the graphic novel, it is revealed that he is more than he appears. Wei-Chen forgives Jin.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • 	<p>Sun Wei-Chen</p> <p>Sun Wei-Chen is the son of the Monkey King. He wants to prove himself to his father so steals the Monkey King's staff and goes on a quest.</p> <p>Wei-Chen appears as an exchange student and bonds with Jin over <i>Kugo Ren Saga</i>. He is much more confident than Jin.</p> <p>When Wei-Chen is about, unlikely events and strange accidents happen.</p>
<p>Sitcom: <i>Everyone Ruvs Chin-Kee</i></p> <p>Danny is visited every year by his cousin, 'Chin-Kee', an offensive caricature of racist stereotypes about Chinese people in 1980s US. (Yang has said the character 'felt like an exorcism' because it pointed out the absurdity of stereotypes.) Danny has to switch schools every year because of events that happen when his cousin visits.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • 	<p>Sitcom: <i>Beyond Repair</i></p> <p>A fictional 90s sitcom featuring 'Freddy Wong', an offensive caricature of racist stereotypes. His catchphrase 'What could go Wong?' is delivered right before slapstick moments, usually a ceiling fan falling on his head. The soundbite (and a fan animation) is being used for memes on social media.</p>



Activity 4.11 *Continued*

American Born Chinese (2006)	What identities, times, places, events and concepts are being represented?	American Born Chinese (2023)
<p>It's complicated, but Jin transforms into Danny, the sitcom character.</p> <p>After an incident in the library, Danny (Jin) punches Chin-Kee, who fights back with kung-fu moves. Danny's final punch reveals that Chin-Kee is really the Monkey King.</p> <p>The Monkey King changes Jin back to himself, saying he would've saved himself 500 years under a mountain if he'd realised how good it is to be a monkey.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • 	<p>The actor who played 'Freddy Wong' is called Jamie Yao (played by Ke Huy Quan). Jamie Yao now works as a repairman and teaches a college class about Shakespeare.</p> <p>The show plans a reunion because of its sudden popularity. Jamie speaks out about the guilt he feels for playing the character 'Freddy Wong' and how it negatively affected him. He hopes kids and adults who look like him realise they don't need to be the punchline; they can be the hero.</p> <p>Jamie's growth and public defiance of expectations inspires Jin to help Wei-Chen save the world.</p>

The sitcoms in both versions of *American Born Chinese* are especially effective for comparing how representations change in different social contexts.

Sitcom

The word sitcom is short for 'situational comedy'. This genre follows a recurring cast of more and less likable characters in a consistent setting as they navigate humorous situations. Sitcoms are usually episodic, which means you can jump into any episode because the characters and their relationships with each other rarely change.



In the 90s (when the *American Born Chinese* sitcoms are set), sitcoms were usually filmed in a studio. They often had a live audience and featured a 'laugh-track'. Sometimes sitcoms had episodes that dealt with more serious issues. The **juxtaposition** with the comedy of the rest of the series heightened the emotions of these moments. *The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air* episode where Will's dad leaves is iconic because the show was normally funny, not heart-wrenching. The titles of sitcoms are usually puns on their content.

The imagined sitcoms in both versions of *American Born Chinese* have been created for particular purposes. They rely on incredibly offensive caricatures and stereotypes that emphasise the racism experienced by Asian-Americans and to provide a way for characters to challenge stereotypes shown in the media.

Pun

A joke that relies on us knowing different meanings for similar sounding words or similar looking visuals and symbols.

Time flies like an arrow. Fruit flies like a banana.

Q: What do you call an alligator in a vest? A: An investigator.

In *American Born Chinese* (2023), a meme from the fictional sitcom *Beyond Repair* is a popular filter for social media videos. In the beginning of the first episode, Jin (and the audience) see several examples of this trend. Each clip shows a person who looks of Asian descent tripping over, dropping something, or otherwise having a bad day. The catchphrase 'What could go Wong?' is heard and a graphic of a ceiling-fan falls on the person's head. The 'humour' relies on stereotypes (or cultural assumptions) that Asian Americans are physically and/or socially awkward. Though Jin doesn't say anything, he looks extremely uncomfortable when he sees these videos. He puts his phone away quickly when he is around others but scrolls through these videos when he's alone.



Activity 4.12

- 1 How do you think these stereotypes and the video make Jin feel? How do you know?
- 2 In small groups, or as a class, share and discuss examples of stereotypes you've seen in the media.
- 3 Why was a stereotype used in the text? For example, stereotypes can be used to make people angry and increase engagement.

Remember to listen respectfully to others and the experiences they share.



Activity 4.13

When it comes to your final task in this chapter, you will need to be specific about explaining the choices in a scene or short excerpt. Let's examine some scenes representing teenagers and young adults and consider how creative choices shape audience responses and interpretations.

- 1 This scene shows a student climbing stairs to the library after their first day of school.
- a Insert the correct specialised words from this list into the scene description.

long shot	figure
frame	shadows
setting	foreground
relatively small	ominous



This _____ allows us to see the whole _____. This type of shot is often used to show a new location. Our attention is drawn to the _____ climbing the stairs in the _____. The lone student is _____ in comparison to the building. The viewer's gaze is drawn to the word 'library' in the centre of the _____. The _____ indicate the time; it is later in the afternoon and the sun is going down. The doorway is darker and has an _____ feel.

- b Write a short paragraph or use images to storyboard what you think happens next. Consider the genre of film or tv show might this scene belong to and how the building and the student are represented.
- 2 In this shot, a student is sitting on the stairs looking at their phone. Notice the two figures in the back right. Think about what could be happening in this scene.



- a Complete the cloze activity to explain the elements of the scene.

In this medium, eye-level shot we can see _____. This type of shot helps connect the audience with the characters. The colours in this scene are _____ and _____. Our attention is drawn first to the figure on the stairs, who is wearing a _____ shirt and _____. The figure is looking down at their phone with their head resting on their hands. Their gestures and _____ suggest that they feel _____. Then the viewer's gaze is drawn to _____ on the right-hand side of the image. There are two figures in silhouette that look like _____. This scene shows a young adult experiencing _____.



Activity 4.13 Continued

- b** How do you interpret this scene? What do you think might be happening and who might be involved? Write down detailed dot points and discuss your ideas. You might want to act out your interpretation.
- 3** This final image is from a sitcom about a family with teenagers. Their mum has just come home after leaving them alone for the weekend. Complete the cloze activity below, explaining the representation of teenagers that has been created here.



In this _____ shot, the teenagers are represented as _____. The over-the-shoulder shot means that the audience takes the _____ of the figure in the right of the frame – the mother. The three figures are wearing _____ outfits, which creates _____ between them. Our eyes are then drawn to the colour _____, which is seen throughout the frame. This draws attention to the _____ around the room and in the _____ of the frame. The _____ between the messy _____ and the plain background emphasises the _____. The body language of the teenagers shows _____. This is contrasted with _____. Furthermore, the teenagers are focused on _____, which suggests that they are _____. Overall, these teens are represented as _____. This is a [fair / unfair / stereotypical / unusual] representation of teenagers.

- 4** In pairs or small groups, identify and either take a screenshot or describe an example of a representation of teenagers in a scene or image from recent media. In short paragraphs or as dot points, explain the representation of teenagers that has been constructed. Do you think it is a fair or unfair representation? Share your examples and explanations with your peers.



Extension task 4.3

We've identified teenagers, Asian–Americans and immigrant families as communities that might connect with representations and experiences shown on *American Born Chinese*.

What other Australian communities might be represented in the TV show or the graphic novel? How would these groups or representations change if the story was set in an Australian high school?

Contemporary symbolism

Trying to be someone you are not has negative consequences for all the main characters in *American Born Chinese*. The idea of **transformation** runs through the graphic novel and the on-demand television series. The traditional Monkey King character is known as the Master of the 72 Transformations.

Another symbol of this idea is the transforming action figure. The Transformer toy is how Jin and Wei-Chen know that they share interests and it leads to their friendship in both versions.



Activity 4.14

The idea of transformation is a key **theme** and/or concept. Gene Luen Yang 'glues' the graphic novel together by using the Transformer as a symbol. In the graphic novel, we first see the action figure on the front cover. It becomes a central symbol as the story progresses, weaving the stories of the Monkey King, Jin and Danny together.

- 1 After the cover, our first real clue to the significance of the Transformers action figure is when Jin meets the Chinese herbalist's wife. Jin is a young child at this point. He is silent in this scene. Complete the thought bubble on the second panel below, to show what Jin may be thinking.
- 2 **Paraphrase** the herbalist's wife's words as if they were the main idea.



Activity 4.14 Continued

- 3 Here is another important panel that occurs later in the novel, when Jin is in high school. To understand what is happening, quickly write down the **salient** (important) objects in this panel. What elements connect it to the earlier panel?



- 4 How is this panel arranged to make the herbalist's wife seem powerful?
- 5 Notice the change in Jin/Danny's expression as he is transformed. Explain what he is feeling from the far left to the far right of this panel. In your opinion, what might be the positives and negatives of being transformed into someone else?

American Born Chinese effectively interweaves real-life experiences with the ancient legend of the Monkey King to create a new story. Next, we'll look at another popular culture genre that combines old stories with modern people – reality television.

4.4 Transforming stories for reality television

The global success of *Big Brother*, *Idol* and *Survivor* changed the face of popular culture. In reality television shows, regular people compete with each other for a prize. Local spin-offs and new shows offer a wide variety of subgenres for viewers, from romance to renovation.



Activity 4.15

Class discussion:

Brainstorm all the reality television shows you can think of. Which shows do you love? Why? Why are they popular? Why do people keep watching them, even if they say they don't like them?

Much of the most influential reality television has been inspired by literature. *Big Brother* was the original, inspired by George Orwell's classic dystopian novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (which was published in 1949). In this section, we're interested in this kind of intertextual inspiration that creates new stories from old.

Old stories in new ways

Imagine your plane has crashed on a desert island. The island has a mountainous area, a forest, a sandy beach and a lagoon. The plane has drifted out to sea. All the adults have perished – only a small group of students remain. You have only the items on your person and the clothes on your back. Your job is to survive. At first, you split into two groups for practical reasons: one group needs to find food and the other must attend to the practicalities of the camp. But soon, tensions arise between you.



Sound familiar?

This scenario, created by William Golding in his 1954 novel *Lord of the Flies*, has clear links to one of the most enduring reality television franchises. *Survivor* draws heavily on Golding's exploration of what can happen when disparate people are placed in the wilderness, split into two opposing teams and face difficult challenges.

Did you know?

The original *Survivor* was a Swedish reality television show produced in 1997 called *Expedition Robinson*. 'Robinson' is an intertextual literary reference to *Robinson Crusoe*, a much older novel by Daniel Defoe about a castaway who lives for 28 years on a deserted tropical island before being rescued.



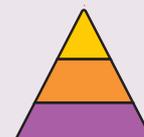
Extension task 4.4

Read Golding's classic short novel, *Lord of the Flies*. Or watch one of the film adaptations from 1963 or 1990. There's a new one in the works as we speak.



Activity 4.16

Examine the following Three-Level Guide. After that, read the extract about the connection between *Lord of the Flies* and *Survivor*, then complete the activity. For each statement:



- decide whether the author would say it is True or False (not your opinion, but the point of view presented by the author)
- highlight the evidence in the text that supports your answer
- discuss your responses with your classmates, especially Level 3 questions.

	Connections between <i>Lord of the Flies</i> and <i>Survivor</i>	True	False
Level 1: literal	<i>Survivor</i> has only been set in America and England.		
	The major difference between the story in <i>Lord of the Flies</i> and shows like <i>Survivor</i> is that the contestants aren't really alone on reality TV.		
Level 2: inferential	The torch is a symbol of life.		
	People who agree to appear in reality television shows understand that they will experience conflict and bullying.		
Level 3: critical	Golding would have been upset about his story idea being used to create reality TV.		



Surviving William Golding

With a new reimagining of *Lord of the Flies* in the works, what is it about this tale that endures?

We've seen our fair share of teens (and others) stuck in a different time or place – *Yellowjackets*, *The 100*, *The Society*. It's a timeless

set-up. And the consequences seem easy to predict ... there's something to be said about the consistency of human nature.

One of our most popular transformations of Golding's ideas is also one of the first reality

shows. *Survivor* first aired in the US in the early 2000s and has continued to haunt our airwaves ever since. Contestants are dropped in remote locations, where they must survive by their wits, either utilising natural resources, or winning various challenges to gain precious items.

The key to *Survivor*'s success is dividing contestants. There's something about 'us' and 'them' that makes things exciting. The voting-off process involves extinguishing the torch. There's a primal fear to letting your fire go out and being left in the wild dark. It's often like watching a real-time *Lord of the Flies*, with betrayals and daring raids, only with the safety of a medical team and careful editing. Also, in most cases ethically with consenting adults rather than stranded children.

We know this because there have been at least two ill-fated attempts to make the format work with children. *Kid Nation* was a 2007 CBS show featuring 40 children between the ages of 8 and 15, trying to build a society without adults. It drew plenty of *Lord of the Flies* comparisons even before it aired, although the kids were never truly left alone. In fact, producers were accused of being over involved and manufacturing drama by setting up situations. Overall, it has continued to be criticised as being unethical, drawing large numbers of YouTube commentators to wonder what CBS thought would happen and where those kids are today.



Kid Nation, 2007, CBS

The British broadcaster, Channel 4, showed *Boys and Girls Alone* as a four-part documentary in 2003. A group of 10 boys and another of 10 girls were left alone (other than production crews and trained chaperones) in a fully-stocked house for five days. It quickly descended into bullying and other behaviours that parents were shocked to see broadcast to the nation. What was most shocking though was how quickly the boys' behaviour fell into chaos, blaming and isolating one boy to the point of leaving him tied to the chair in the garden (chaperones intervened).

At the time, the difference in behaviour was blamed on societal flaws, including a lack of female leadership. It took nearly 15 years, but the 2017 BBC documentary *No More Boys and Girls: Can Our Kids Go Gender Free?* looked at how children's perceptions of themselves and their gender are shaped by their environment. This isn't a new 'woke' question either. It hangs over Golding's 1954 novel, which itself was written in response to *The Coral Island*, a novel that emphasised the



Activity 4.16 Continued

superiority of the (white) European male. *Lord of the Flies* ends with a British Naval officer arriving on the island. He is disappointed that British boys would be so savage, playing silly games against each other. His response entirely misses the irony that the boys on the island

learned these behaviours from the society they nearly escaped.

Lord of the Flies endures because it speaks to something in us. A whisper of 'what if?' that is best explored in fictional, controlled scenarios. A reminder that civilisation may not be that civilised.

Activity 4.17



Below is William Golding's description of the setting from the novel. Here, he gives human characteristics to some of the physical features of the deserted island (personification or anthropomorphism). In this way, Golding creates a representation of the island setting as being like a character with whom the other characters must interact.



- 1 Read the **excerpt** below and complete the following tasks on your worksheet. Identify what is being described. Highlight language features that do the descriptive work.

What place, time, event, identity, or concept is represented?	<i>Lord of the Flies</i> – the cove	Language features
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Setting (place and/or time): the shore, _____ • Event: _____ • Identity: _____ • Concept: _____ 	<p>The shore was fledged with palm trees. These stood or leaned or reclined against the light and their green feathers were a hundred feet up in the air. The ground beneath them was a bank covered with coarse grass, torn everywhere by the upheavals of fallen trees, scattered with decaying coconuts and palm saplings. Behind this was the darkness of the forest proper and the open space of the scar.</p>	<p>Personification</p> <p>Adverbs and prepositional phrases (circumstances of place that tell us where something is happening) lead us around the setting</p> <p>Words and phrases that indicate shape or direction</p>



What place, time, event, identity, or concept is represented?	<i>Lord of the Flies</i> – the cove	Language features
	<p>Ralph stood, one hand against a grey trunk, and screwed up his eyes against the shimmering water. Out there, perhaps a mile away, the white surf flinked on a coral reef, and beyond that the open sea was dark blue. Within the irregular arc of coral, the lagoon was still as a mountain lake – blue of all shades and shadowy green and purple. The beach between the palm terrace and the water was a thin bow-stave, endless apparently, for to Ralph’s left the perspectives of palm and beach and water drew to a point at infinity; and always, almost visible, was the heat.</p>	<p>Neologism – when a writer invents a new term. Why do you think Golding uses ‘flinked’? What other terms could he have used?</p> <p>Noun groups that include adjectives that describe colour, e.g. <i>the white surf</i></p>

SOURCE: Golding, W., *Lord of the Flies*, Faber & Faber, 1954



- 2 Visualise the **setting** described above and draw it on the worksheet.
- 3 Now watch the opening segment of *Australian Survivor* (you can find this online) or use this image as inspiration. Use the patterns in Golding’s paragraph to write a similar description for the setting in *Survivor*.

Symbols in *Survivor*



Extension task 4.5

One possible reading of the opening sequence of *Australian Survivor 2018* is that it has colonial or racist overtones. Find and watch it. What's your opinion? Explain your answer, using evidence from the text.

How does it compare to the opening sequence of the most recent season?



Activity 4.18

- Using your knowledge and the information in the following table, explain what each symbol means in the reality television show. The first one has been completed for you.

Symbol	Meaning in <i>Lord of the Flies</i>	Meaning in <i>Survivor</i>
	<p>The conch shell is used by Ralph and Piggy to call the boys to the beach. Later, the person holding the shell is the one who can speak. In this way, the conch shell is a symbol of civilisation and order.</p>	<p>In an episode of <i>American Survivor</i>, the host uses a conch shell to encourage communication at the Tribal Council. It didn't work well, but the conch is often heard in <i>Survivor</i> music and probably still symbolises the coming together of the contestants.</p>
	<p>Piggy's glasses are a symbol of his intelligence and thoughtfulness – for example, they are used to start the fire. They also symbolise his difference.</p>	<p>In <i>Australian Survivor</i>, Jonathan's glasses symbolise _____</p> <p>They position the audience to view Jonathan (the host) as _____</p>

Symbol	Meaning in <i>Lord of the Flies</i>	Meaning in <i>Survivor</i>
	<p>In <i>Lord of the Flies</i>, the signal fire symbolises the boys' hope of rescue. It also symbolises the idea of civilisation. It later goes out, showing us they've been distracted from this priority.</p>	<p>In <i>Australian Survivor</i>, the torch symbolises _____</p> <p>It is associated with ideas of _____</p>

2 Construct a paragraph explaining how the creators of *Survivor* have used setting and symbols to make the ideas in *Lord of the Flies* **appealing** for a twenty-first century audience.



Text structure	Title:	Language features
<p>Point or purpose</p> <p>E+E (Evidence + Explanation)</p> <p>E+E</p> <p>E+E</p> <p>Links back to the purpose of the paragraph</p>	<p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Clearly, _____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	<p>Evidence, including quotes, integrated into sentences.</p> <p>Words of comparison and cause show the connection between the two texts and the effect of the director's choices.</p> <p>Use 'clearly' in your Link sentence to communicate a high degree of certainty.</p>

Constructing a villain in literature and media

In *Lord of the Flies*, Jack Merridew is introduced leading a group of boys who are all wearing black cloaks and square black caps with silver badges. Jack has a golden badge. He is described as 'tall, thin, and bony ... His face was crumpled and freckled, and ugly without silliness'. He almost immediately becomes angry, intimidates the other boys and tries to control the group.

What about this introduction indicates that Jack is the antagonist in the novel?

There are many different representations of people in media **texts**. Some people are actively participating in how they are represented, whereas others find themselves the unwilling targets of media constructions. Often, people fall somewhere in between, like the reality television show contestants who agree to participate but then discover they are being **constructed** as villains.



Activity 4.19

Gena Lida Riess made a **documentary** about how the producers of reality television shows, such as *The Bachelor*, construct people as ‘characters’ to make the shows dramatic and popular. Below, you will read an article by Riess about the experiences of the people who are represented as villains in reality television.

- 1 Before you read, check your understanding of these key words by writing synonyms or definitions.
 - Realism
 - Construction
 - Manipulation
 - Characters
 - Villain
- 2 As you read, underline the main ideas and circle unfamiliar or unusual words and phrases.
- 3 After reading the article, complete the text-dependent questions that follow.



‘Most hated person in Australia’: What it’s like to be cast as a reality TV villain

By Gena Lida Riess

For a while now, I’ve been obsessed with reality television. If the public’s reaction to this season of *The Bachelor* is anything to go by, I’m far from alone.

Being a reality TV fan was something I used to be ashamed of, but now I’ve embraced it. I wanted to explore the bizarre world of reality TV – to separate **realism** and truth from the construction and manipulation.

People are so judgy about reality TV but we shouldn't be embarrassed. It's just fun.

When we watch reality television, we contradict ourselves. We don’t believe it to be real yet we behave as though it is. For evidence of this, you just need to look at how reality TV stars are treated when they return to their day-to-day lives – for the viewers, the person is forever the ‘character’ they played.

Being a filmmaker, I decided to explore these questions in a documentary. As I found out, many former reality television contestants feel manipulated and betrayed. These people have often been cast as the ‘villains’ of their shows.

Crafting a character

The success of a reality TV program has a lot to do with casting and editing. It is clear that, even before the show is being filmed, producers know which contestants are likely to be favourites and those that will be potential sources of conflict.

The contestants themselves have very little choice in how they are cast. David Witko, a contestant in the first season of *The Bachelorette*, was typecast as a high-flying international model.

'When we first got interviewed about what we do ... [I told them] I'm a model,' he said.

'They're like, "That's great, that's great – have you worked overseas?"

'And that's what it was ... David the international model. And I was like, "You bastards".'

When David was watching the show go to air with his friends and family, he noticed that he had been given a different soundtrack.

'Even from the first moment I stepped out of the car, the music went from twinkles to hardcore bass ... And I was like, "Okay, this is not good",' he said.

Stirring the pot

To make their programs compelling, reality TV producers put the contestants in emotionally charged situations with the potential for conflict and drama.

In one season of *The Bachelor*, we saw an attempt to stir the pot when one of the contestants, Leah, was 'exposed' for past work as a topless waiter. It was clear that this was planted information, with no real strategy but to embarrass someone and make her feel judged by the other women.

Leah's experience is not unusual. Reality TV contestants face a strange new environment. They are put into hair and makeup, have several cameras on them for most of the day and are told – especially in the early stages – they have to make themselves seen in order to not get evicted.

Often there is alcohol involved, too. Exhausted and in a heightened state of emotion, they have to perform – consciously or subconsciously – in order to impress the producers.

Reality bites

What was devastating for the people I spoke to was that they weren't aware they'd be portrayed in a negative light until the program was aired.

Sandra, who had really enjoyed her time on *The Bachelor*, described the sinking feeling when the realisation dawned on her while watching the first episode with her family.



During a 'cocktail party', where the contestants are frocked up and plied with alcohol, after being prompted by a producer, Sandra asked the other contestants who they thought they might not get along with.

After being met with replies of 'I get along with everybody', Sandra said, 'Stop being so nice.'

The show then cut to an interview segment with one of the contestants, Reshael, who suggested Sandra was 'talking about other girls in a negative light'.

'She knew that was asked by one of the producers ... and that argument – that stupid one question – was the entire episode,' Sandra said.

'My family couldn't believe what had just happened ... but then I realised that, wow, if this is the start of what the public is going to think of me, it's bad.'

Headlines described David Witko as the 'most hated person in Australia' after he left *The Bachelorette*. He lost a job and it severely impacted his modelling work.

What we often forget when we watch these shows is that they are built environments, and most of what we see and feel is a result of decisions made by the show's production team.

Perhaps instead of attacking or adoring these reality TV stars, we should just sit back and appreciate reality TV for what it is – a format cleverly constructed for our enjoyment.

SOURCE: Riess, G.L., "Most hated person in Australia": what it's like to be cast as a reality TV villain', ABC News, updated 15 September 2017

Complete the following text-dependent questions on your worksheet.

What does the text say?

- a Find three pieces of evidence that show how the people in reality television shows feel when they realise they have been represented as villains.
- b Use examples from the text to explain how characters are 'constructed' by the producers of reality television.

How does the text work?

- c Who do the quotations come from in this text? Who else is involved in creating reality television shows who isn't quoted? What does this selection tell you about the point of view the article is written from and what perspective they are constructing?
- d Reread the beginning and the ending of the article. To whom is the author referring when she uses the pronoun 'we'? What assumptions is she making about her readers? What is her purpose in using 'we' and 'I'?

What does the text mean?

- e Compare and contrast this article with another text focused on the representation of Abbie Chatfield. This might be a podcast, video or article. Consider how text structures, editing choices and language features represent Chatfield and position the audience to respond. In 2019, Abbie Chatfield was framed as the ‘villain’ on reality show, *The Bachelor Australia*. Though still a controversial figure, she is now known as a businesswoman, podcast host and tv presenter. Chatfield has positioned herself as someone who talks frankly and with humour about mental health, dating, politics and many topics in between.

Compare and contrast the article you’ve just read with the other text you found that represents Abbie Chatfield. This might be a podcast, video or article. Consider how text structures, editing choices and language features represent Chatfield and position the audience to respond.

What does this inspire me to do?

- f Imagine your ideal ‘reality’ TV show. What would it be about? How would you use casting and editing to make sure it was interesting to the audience?



4.5 Interpreting representations in popular culture: The video essay

The assessment task will ask you to present your perspective about representations in a popular culture text in the form of a video essay. To do this, you will need to use what you have learned about how language features and text structures shape meaning.

A video essay is a recorded multimodal text about a specific text, idea, person or event. It can be short, under 10 minutes, or quite long, with some examples running for over an hour. Yours will be very short. Video essays are a popular format on YouTube and you will find that longer TikTok videos follow a similar structure. Polygon's annual 'Best Video Essays' is a great place to find examples. In video essays, multimodal elements like music and images help explain what representations are presented and express perspectives.

The 'Monstrum' playlist on *PBS Storied's* YouTube channel looks at changing representations of monsters and how monsters reflect, challenge and inspire.



Activity 4.20

Go to *PBS Storied's* 'Monstrum' playlist on YouTube (<https://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/11194>). Familiarise yourself with the genre by watching several examples. Here are some that relate to ancient and not-so-ancient monsters and their twenty-first century representations to get you started.

- 'The Mother of Vengeance: Grendel's Mom' begins with the original text, *Beowulf*, and explores the representations of Grendel's mother in adaptations (1975, 1999, 2005, 2007). It focuses on the language, imagery and traits associated with each version of Grendel's mother.
- 'Medusa: Victim or Villain?' summarises Medusa's history as a powerful symbol. Medusa reappears in modern adaptations like *Clash of the Titans* and the *Percy Jackson* series. Medusa has been represented as both a vicious monster and misunderstood victim.
- 'I Thought Way too Hard About King Kong' investigates how King Kong has been represented on screen from 1933 to today, inspiring fear, hope and empathy in different audiences. King Kong's adaptations reflect and comment on society's issues and changing historical contexts.

Structure and features of a video essay

A video essay is basically a big explanation. An explanation typically has three stages. These stages are summarised for you below, including suggestions for complementary features to help you make your own successful video essay.



	Stages	Complementary features
Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifies the subject (text and group represented) and speaker Usually summarises the text and context Often asks a question or shares an opinion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Title Image or short clip Music or muted intro
Body	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus on a few salient (important) elements to explain how representation has been constructed. These elements are often related to a theme or concept such as courage. Often organised by looking at representations in an original text and making comparisons with representations other texts (including adaptations) The presenter shares personal opinions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence from the text including quotes and/or images Muted excerpt with a voiceover Labels, captions, headings, dot points Gestures to identify elements and include audiences Close-ups of selected elements Quotes from experts and artists Transitions to show movement between representations and time periods
Conclusion	<p>Ties up the explanation by summarising key points and then responds to the initial question or statement in the introduction</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outro music Dot-point summary Direct address to the audience Link to the introduction



Activity 4.21

Once you understand the stages of a video essay, you can identify common language features in each section. These are an important part of establishing the tone of the commentary and engaging the audience. Use the 'Monstrum' video essays for these tasks.

- 1 Identify which of the following language features have been used. Give examples of the identified features from the introduction, body and conclusion of the commentary. If you are watching a video clip, having subtitles on will help.
 - **Informal** language that marks this as a spoken text
 - Present **tense**
 - Technical terms that are explained for the audience
 - Use of pronouns to replace words already introduced
 - Action verbs to explain what happens
 - Use of **conjunctions** and other connectives to link time sequences and explain events
 - Adverbs that direct the viewer's attention to a particular element
 - Evaluative language that communicates emotion, judgements about people or characters and the beauty or quality of things.
- 2 Identify a key question, opinion or main idea foregrounded in the commentary.
- 3 Decide what you think makes an effective conclusion. In 'Monster Plants and the Humans who Invent Them', Dr Zarka finishes by saying, 'So have you talked to your plants today?' Is this an effective conclusion? Why, or why not?



4.6 Putting it all together



Context:

You are creating a video essay for a playlist called 'Representations: Old and New' for Metro online magazine.

Task:

Create and present a video essay explaining how a character is represented in a short excerpt from an old story transformed for a modern audience. Include how audiences have been positioned and share your perspective on the character in the original story and in the modern popular culture text.

Your response might consider, but is not limited to, the following:

- the meaning of symbolism in your excerpt
- the setting of the text – how 'when' and 'where' affects perspectives
- how costume design positions the audience to view characters
- the impact of genre elements and tropes – for example, the 'damsel in distress' in fantasy
- the sequencing and organisation of the text and its effects
- the potential effects of representations beyond the text
- who created the text and what communities they belong to.

Purpose: Explain

Genre: Video essay

Audience: Public

Procedure:

- Select a book, film or TV series that is an adaptation of an older text. You might use the suggestions in this chapter or other from media that you've enjoyed.
- Select a character in the text and compare how they have been represented.
 - Begin by rewatching or reading the texts
 - Identify ideas and/or opinions
 - Choose a scene or short excerpt (20 seconds or less) to focus on
 - Identify the language features and text structures that create the representation and position audiences – you can refer to Chapter 1, 'Key terms for explaining visual texts' on p. 12 and observation and inference charts on p. 15
 - Note down your initial perspective about the representation in each text.
- Plan your script and additional elements using the 'Structure and language features for a video essay' on p. 172.
- Write a draft script, read it out loud, seek feedback and edit.
- Create an engaging visual presentation (or other mode) to go with your script.

- Practise your video essay with all the elements together, editing as needed.
- Record and publish your video essay.

Alternate contexts:

Character is the focus of this task and many of the activities in the chapter. Consider a range of other representations of identities, times, places, events and concepts. Here are some alternative representations and contexts to consider.

- As part of a statewide film festival, give a presentation on the importance of representation in front of and behind the screen. Use a recent film or TV text that has been an example of positive representation through its inclusion of social groups. Explain the selected representation, how audiences are positioned and your opinions on its effects. Benjamin Law's interview with the SBS News *Who We Are* podcast is an example.
- You have been invited to be part of a video essay series explaining how audiences are positioned by a representation of a social group you are a part of. Identify the social group (e.g. students), an example of media representation (e.g. *Heartbreak High*) and explain your perspectives and opinions on this representation.
- Create a director's commentary on how a representation has been created in a scene or short excerpt from a film or TV episode. You will find examples in *Vanity Fair's* 'Notes on a Scene' playlist.
- *The Guardian* has received lots of engagement on its article about how tattoos went from subculture to pop culture. They want to follow it up with a video essay about tattoos on TV. Select a series or reality TV show and create a video essay explaining how body art features amongst characters and/or contestants and how it is represented.



Chapter 5

The other side of the fence

The people who entertain us in **popular culture** tell us about the world around us and what happens in it. They share diverse stories about what it's like to be at a certain age, have a particular **identity**, grow up in the city or the country, be a musician or artist, and to feel like we belong – or not belong. In this chapter, we turn our attention to aspects of Australian popular culture texts and the **representations** of people, places, events and concepts.

You will learn and develop skills to:

- **identify aspects** of a range of Australian popular culture texts
- **explore** how **perspectives** are shaped and make connections with your own experiences
- **select** and **use ideas** and information to **create** representations of your own
- select a **genre** and write a text that **positions** the reader to accept your perspective.

Teacher notes

Unit 4 Topic 2 is very open; it's something we love about Essential English. Your choices with students about what texts to explore – a range or a close study – will depend on the interests and needs of your students. This is their last task so consider what will be the best way to end their study of English at school. To help you, we've created this chapter as a series of springboards. By considering identity, place, concept and event in turn, we demonstrate entry points to a range of texts and provide plenty of departure points you can use for either formative assessment of student progress or summative assessment. At the end of each section are examples of how an aspect of a text can be used as a springboard for a written response students can create to position their real or imagined audience. In the 'Putting it all together' section, there are references to materials in *Cambridge Essential English for Queensland Units 1&2* (2nd ed.) and to earlier chapters in this volume, to support writing in a range of genres.

Through the study of *The Arsonist*, you can do a deep dive into a whole text, for a less free-range experience. The book describes the investigation of the Black Saturday bushfires in 2009, and the prosecution of Brendan Sokaluk, who was sentenced for arson causing death in 2012. Be aware that some parts of this text are confronting. *The Arsonist* includes eyewitness accounts of the Black Saturday fires, including stories of some of the people who died, and the after-effects for people in the area. It also includes frank discussions about the experiences of autistic people, including discriminatory language. Consider your student cohort and school context, especially those who may have had similar experiences.

Word play

Play with these words. Change their forms, morph them into new words, add prefixes or suffixes, and find words with similar spelling patterns.

diverse	diversification			
social		society		
experience			experiment	
culture				vulture
reveal	revelation			

Sentence combining

These are some common assumptions, **stereotypes** and misconceptions about Australia and Australians. Practise combining these short, simple sentences to make more interesting ones. Don't be shy. Add or change words and phrases to deliberately create a perspective about Australian-ness.

- Australians are easy-going.
- Australians live by the beach, enjoy surfing and don't wear shoes.
- Australians eat Vegemite every day.
- Australians are all immigrants.
- Australia is full of dangerous animals.
- Australia has no culture.

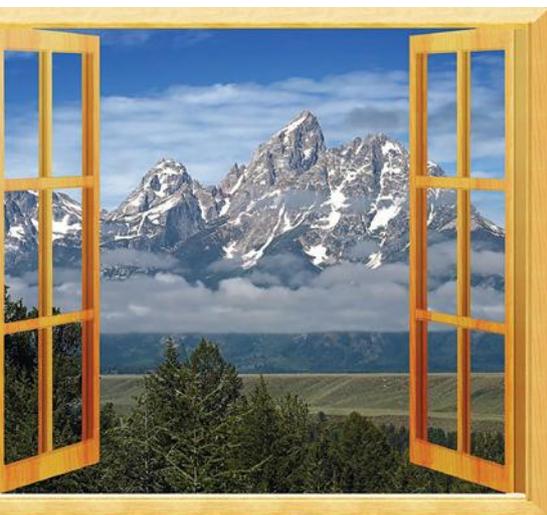
5.1 Australia in popular culture

Australia is a vast and often contradictory place. It is home to the oldest continuous culture in the world and is newly home to many millions of people who've emigrated from around the globe. According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, over 30% of our current population was born outside Australia. The landscape ranges from desert to coast, mountain to sea. We experience the most delightful weather and also suffer the impact of destructive natural disasters. What has happened before and what it's like to be here now influence what popular culture texts people create and enjoy, and what parts of our shared and individual experiences are represented in them.

Australian popular culture drives important industries in music, film and television, publishing, games and social media. Sport is a common topic. Roy and HG commentating the Sydney Olympic gymnastics capture the larrikinism that is familiar to audiences at home and abroad. Cathy Freeman and Raygun have, at different times and for very different reasons, dominated media and challenged popular ideas about national identity and what's important to Australians. Suburban values feature in a string of iconic comedies from *The Castle* to *Kath and Kim*. Paul Kelly asks us to consider big concepts like masculinity, forgiveness and family in the Australian Christmas carol 'How to Make Gravy'. And the world knows we are great with kids – how could we not be, as the home of *The Wiggles* and *Bluey*?

Aspects in popular culture texts

First things first: let's get a handle on what we mean by **aspects** of Australian popular culture texts. When we have done that, it will be easier to explore what representations might be created in texts. Explore in this unit topic means to consider familiar and new texts and make connections with what you've learned in Essential English. When you've practised that, you'll be ready to decide on a perspective of your own to share with others when you create a written text.



Defining 'aspects'

An aspect is a part or feature of something. An aspect in this chapter refers to a part or feature of an Australian popular culture text.

Another everyday meaning of the word *aspect* is what you see from a place or property. In this context, it's a synonym for view, as in 'this apartment has a lovely aspect'.

The term aspect might be confusing because there are lots of words in Essential English that have similar meanings, like point of view, perspective or even opinion.



Activity 5.1

1 Add an example for each of these aspects in texts.

Aspect	What it is	Example
Identity	Social group	• Boomers, _____
	Real individual	• Julia Gillard, _____
	Fictional character	• Bluey, _____
Place	Its name or where it is	• Great Barrier Reef, _____
	Physical characteristics	• Coral and ocean, _____
	What happens there	• Marine ecosystem, _____
	Why it's important	• World Heritage, _____
Concept	An idea, quality, state, principle or theme. Concepts are typically expressed as abstract nouns. Unlike concrete nouns, you can't really touch a concept.	• Justice • Fun • Climate change • _____
Event	What happens and how people respond to it. Events happen in the real world and in fiction.	• A bushfire, where people act heroically • _____
Text	A text type, genre or pattern (you can find examples in Units 1&2, Ch. 1, p. 17)	• Bush ballad, like <i>Waltzing Matilda</i> • _____
	A trope	• A love triangle in a romcom

2 Write a response to or discuss these questions about aspects in everyday life:

- What aspects of school do you enjoy?
- What would be the most worrying aspect of going to the dentist?
- Have you thought about your future career from every aspect?
- What aspects of filmmaking are the most important?

We will consider each of these aspects in turn and some in combination.

5.2 Identity: Individuals and social groups



We all belong to **social groups** that share patterns in what the members **believe** and **value**, think and feel, say and do. Where we grew up and who we grew up with are usually an important part of that story. As we grow up, we connect beyond our immediate communities of home and school, and make choices about where we work, the music we're into and the shows we watch. We **influence** and are influenced by every social group we interact in. And we learn to speak and act in different ways, depending on what group we're in at the time. **Consider** how you interact with siblings at a family dinner compared with how you interact with friends at school. These different ways of *being* in social groups contribute to our identity – our sense of who we are and where we belong.

We often **categorise** other people based on the social groups they belong to and how much we have in common with them. This can lead to our making assumptions about others based on our own experiences of our – and their – group's **culture**. The ways groups are represented in different forms of popular culture also influence our response to them. Which voices are included or excluded – **privileged** or **marginalised** – and whether they are shown in a positive or negative way all shape our perceptions.

Remember 'representation'?

We've been talking about representations since you began this course. The easiest way to think about representations is to understand that a text is re-presenting something. The prefix 're-' means back or again. The way an identity, event, idea, place or concept is shown in a text is a version or interpretation of the original; it's selective and leaves out as much as it includes. A representation gives shape to ways of thinking about or acting in the world.



Activity 5.2

Let's explore who we 'see' in our reading, viewing and listening.

- 1 Think about what you watch (or listen to or read), then complete the following in a table or as dot points. You'll find an example in the table below.
 - a List three Australian popular culture texts you engage with. This might be television programs, books, games or music.
 - b Identify the individuals and social groups represented in each text.
 - c Who is unlikely to be represented in the text?

Australian popular culture text	People and groups represented (or mainly represented)	People and groups unlikely to be represented
<i>Neighbours</i>	Blended families Middle-class people with white-collar jobs Homeowners	Immigrant families People with disabilities People who follow a particular religion

Here's a way to identify social groups in allegorical texts. If your favourite Australian popular culture text is fantasy or a cartoon, and the social groups aren't obvious, the question might be: *If you take away the supernatural powers and talking creatures, what people are you seeing?* In Chapter 4, the sitcom characters shown in *American Born Chinese* weren't real people. One was a cartoon character with strange powers. However, as readers we know they were meant to represent an offensive and racist caricature of Asian men. Challenging the stereotype was part of the protagonists' journey to self-acceptance.

- 2 Below are four reasons a person might want to see more diverse social groups represented in popular culture texts. Number them from 1–4, according to which reason seems most convincing to you.

	When there are people like me in the texts I read, watch and listen to, I feel a sense of belonging or acceptance.
	It's good for me to see other people's experiences – to 'walk around in other people's shoes'. I can be a better person when I understand and empathise with others.
	I find it more entertaining when I see a variety of people, cultures and places on screens; I get bored with seeing the same things.
	I'm more interested in stories I can relate to, that are about people like me.

- 3 Class discussion: What popular culture texts do you enjoy reading, viewing or listening to? How many are Australian? Do you see yourself in the social groups you find in these texts? Is that important to you?



Extension task 5.1

In recent years, there has been a lot of discussion about who creates our texts and who is represented in them. The Australian Writers Guild (AWG) is the professional association representing writers for stage, screen and other media. The AWG website (<https://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/11252>) is a useful place to see upcoming texts and who has written them.

- 1 In pairs or small groups, click 'What's on by AWG members' to go to the 'Now playing' section of the AWG website and follow the link to 'What's on screen (television, film, online, gaming)'. Choose 2–5 texts from this list and find out what social groups are represented both on screen and in the production team. You will have to search the title and writer(s) to find this information.
- 2 In your group, decide how these texts represent individuals and the social groups they belong to. Are the representations positive or negative, accurate or inaccurate, helpful or unhelpful, fair or discriminatory? Share your opinions with your class, explaining the evidence from the texts you've selected.

How social groups influence identity

The social groups we belong to are part of our cultural **context**. They shape our **opinions**, ideas, and perspectives about the world and people around us.

Queenie Chan is a Chinese–Australian manga artist and writer (see, we're already categorising her by social groups) who has published a number of online and manga texts including *The Dreaming* and the nonfiction series *Women Who Were Kings*. You can read the first chapters of *The Dreaming*, a supernatural mystery-thriller set in a remote boarding school, on Chan's website (<https://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/11195>).

We're all busy within our own little boxes—
with the labels we place on ourselves, and also
the ones others put on us, which can
override how we want to be seen.



Chan grew up in Sydney, but had yearly trips back to Hong Kong, from where her family had migrated when she was six. When she was growing up, she enjoyed Western-style cartoons, but loved the **narratives** and art of manga. On the following page, Chan reflects on how her choice to draw her own comics in a manga style defined her in ways she didn't expect. She explores how social groups can shape our identities, become 'building blocks' for community and help us to find a place to belong.

Chan created this text for the ABC *Earshot* podcast. You can read the full text at 'The story of Queenie Chan, a manga artist shattering stereotypes' on the ABC News website (<https://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/11196>).



We may not think of these labels as useful or accurate...

HEY!

MANGA ARTIST

...BUT I CAN'T DENY THAT THEY HAVE THEIR USES.

Truth is, labels can help us distinguish ourselves from each other, and give the creative landscape a bit of variety.

And however ramshackle and arbitrary they may be, these boxes are the building blocks of a national artistic community.

Which is ultimately what really matters to me - a sense of BELONGING.



Activity 5.3

- 1 Mainly, Queenie appreciates belonging to a social group, but at the top of p. 183 her facial expression is angry and she exclaims 'HEY!'. Why?
- 2 You also belong to large social groups and smaller sub-groups. Maybe you are even a part of a national artistic community, either as an artist or a fan. Choose one large group to which you belong. Design a community wall, like one of Queenie Chan's, to represent your place in it. Here are some **ideas**, to get you started:
 - sporting community
 - school community
 - cultural heritage
 - music preferences
 - area you live – rural or urban, coastal or central.
- 3 How did you feel when you drew yourself on your wall?



Exploring social identities

Beginning with Alice Pung's 2008 *Growing Up Asian in Australia*, each of the 'Growing Up' series of books collects individual experiences of being in a particular social group or culture in Australia. As well as valuable shared experiences, this series contains excellent examples of written texts about aspects of growing up in Australia that might inspire your own work.

You can see the full list of titles on the Black Inc. website (<https://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/11197>).



Activity 5.4

- 1 The following are images of characters and social groups that might be shown in Australian pop culture texts. For a character in each image, identify the social groups you think they could belong to. Consider the whole image, including **salient** objects and people around the main figures. There are some suggestions to choose from alongside the first image.



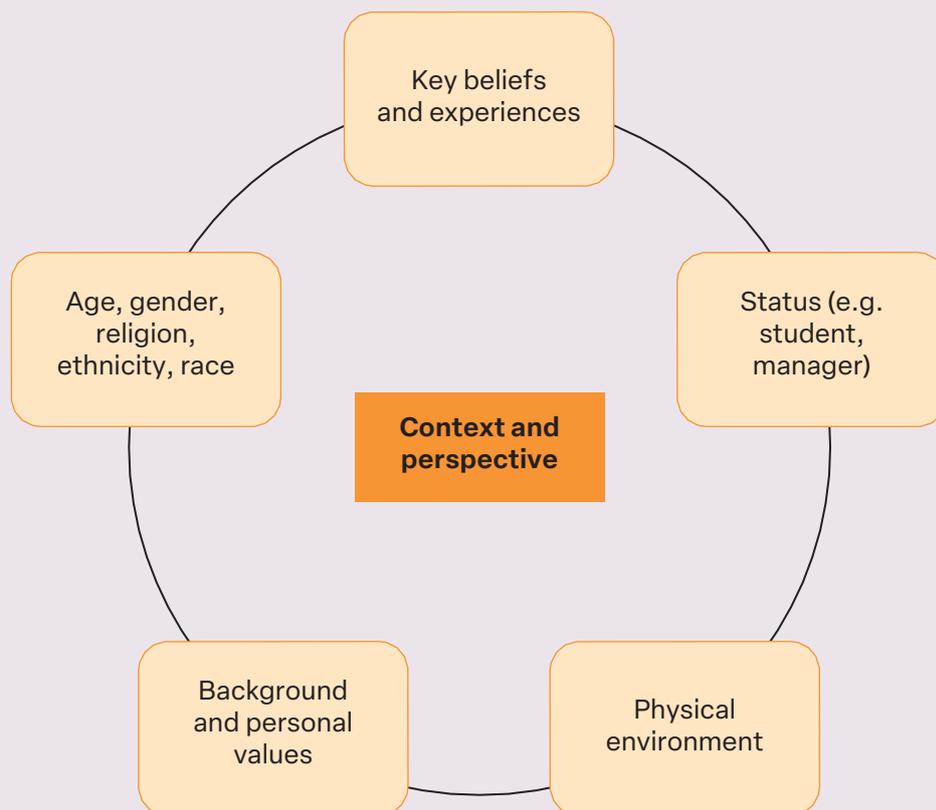
Image	Possible social groups
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urban/rural • Child/youth/adult/middle-aged/Elder • Student/working/retired • Netball/League/AFL/cricket • Hip hop/country/pop/punk/indie • Religious/non-religious • Office worker/tradie/farmer/student



- 2** Select one of the characters from the images above.
- a** Identify an Australian popular culture text you might see them in. This might be a specific text, like *Mastermind Australia*, or a broader genre, like ‘a sitcom’.
 - b** Using the diagram on the next page, create a context and perspective map for this character. Include as much detail as you can. You can give them a name, if you like.

The context and perspective wheel is useful for thinking about what might influence people (social groups, individuals, characters) to think in particular ways about their experiences. These can be things that happen in the ‘real’ world or interactions within texts. To have a robust discussion about how these elements are related to beliefs, values and attitudes, refer to diagram in the introduction, p. xiv.





- 3 Using your completed wheel as a guide, write a short paragraph introducing this person to your teacher or a sibling, cousin or family friend.

Think carefully about the details you select and the word choices you make to invite your audience to make a judgement about this person. Feel free to invent individual characteristics like personal likes and pet peeves.

Here are a few sentence starters that might help:

Meet Jo. Jo is a _____. She lives in _____ and works in _____. She enjoys _____. I think that she _____.

Alternatively, write a **script** for the first scene when the character enters the show. Decide whether you want the audience to view the character as a hero or villain, or somewhere in between. Include stage directions so the actor knows how the character would respond. You'll find an example of a script in *Cambridge Essential English for Queensland: Units 1&2* (2nd ed.), ch. 5 pp. 159–162.

Be careful when you talk about social groups

A picture might be worth a thousand words, but we can't judge people only on what we see. As Queenie Chan showed us, while our membership of groups can give us a sense of belonging, being labelled can be negative too. Stereotypes are oversimplified, fixed ideas about a group. Stereotypes are perpetuated when we don't question the representations we see around us.

Activity 5.4 Continued

- 4 Compare your notes and discuss the following questions. Listen respectfully and record key points.
 - a Did you identify similar social groups for each character? Were there any differences? What elements in the images did you use to identify which social groups a character might belong to?
 - b What characteristics of social groups can't be judged from an image?
 - c Our social groups and associated stereotypes can be used by others to make **judgements** about us. What unhelpful labels or assumptions might people make about your social group because of stereotypes or misinformed representations?
- 5 Choose one of the characters from question 1 and the assumptions you made about them. Add a speech bubble or thought bubble to the image that challenges or changes how the audience might see them.

This section has focused on identity, specifically social groups, as an aspect of Australian popular culture texts. The table below demonstrates how you could use identity or another aspect of Queenie Chan's cartoon as a springboard for a written response that would invite a reader to take up a position. In the right-hand column, we've provided an example of how your written response could begin. You could take this idea and keep writing from there or use it as a guide for writing in the genre.

Springboard for a written response: Aspects of Queenie Chan's cartoon



Aspects	Genre and audience	Some words to get you started
Identity: Manga fan	An opinion piece for <i>Folio: Stories of Contemporary Australian Comics</i> as part of a new series with the title: 'Australian manga blends the best of East and West'	When fans talk about manga and comics, they are quick to defend the difference. Manga <i>must</i> come from Japan; anything else is 'just' a comic. However, like manga's explosion into global popular culture in the late 90s, the boundaries of the genre have expanded too. The indomitable Queenie Chan's 'Manga Fandom in Australia' is a trailblazing cultural phenomenon.



Aspects	Genre and audience	Some words to get you started
Concept: loneliness and belonging	A recount or anecdote about the first day of school for <i>Growing Up Asian in Australia</i>	<p>Geelong. February, 1982. Only one person was in the cool shadowed tuckshop when I tottered in, starving for a reprieve from the badgering and the flinty heat. I took my time to write down my lunch order before handing it to the middle-aged woman behind the counter.</p> <p>SOURCE: Pung, A. (ed.), <i>Growing Up Asian in Australia</i>, Black Inc., 2008, p. 42</p>
Place: a house with a history	A real estate advertisement for a house a famous author has lived in	Situated in the convivial town of Bath, this charming house would suit those who host their closest friends and most interesting neighbours. A well-appointed family home, once the residence of Jane Austen, this gorgeous space is steeped in stories. Its Bath stone frontage takes pride of place, but if this doesn't immediately persuade you, surely it won't prejudice you against this desirable building.
Event: a comic book convention	An invitation to actors from two different comic book adaptations to sit on a panel talk	<p>Re: an invitation to a TM Events panel</p> <p>Dear Mr Arcane,</p> <p>Our vision at TM Events is to bring about interesting conversations by placing artists from different shows in one room. At our October event, we will host a guided conversation to showcase two points of view about the opportunities and challenges of adapting manga and comic characters for television.</p>

5.3 Place: Australian landscapes

The Australian landscape is powerful. In this section, you will explore how creative descriptions position audiences to respond to particular places. Does the place have positive or negative **connotations**? Is it a comfort to the **narrator** or does it pose a threat? Has something changed in the landscape and how do the characters or author feel about it?



Prose

Activity 5.5 contains an extract from a work by Tim Winton. Winton is an Australian writer of novels, nonfiction, children's books and short stories. He draws inspiration from landscapes, mostly those near his home in coastal Western Australia. He is an environmental activist who argues that we should listen to the views of young people; for Winton, 'despair is simply not an option'. In the extract on the next page, Winton describes the unique landscapes, geography, weather and regions of Australia. He cleverly communicates how landscape has shaped him and the importance of place in his work.



Activity 5.5

1 There is some complex vocabulary in this extract, so let's start by finding synonyms or definitions for each of the following words:

- arid
- austere
- congenial
- density
- membrane
- perilous
- relentless
- reverent
- saltpan
- scantiest.

On your first reading, circle any words or phrases you are still unsure about and highlight or underline key ideas and paraphrase them in the margin.

2 After you've read this excerpt, answer these text-dependent questions (p. 192).



The island seen and felt

I'm increasingly mindful of the degree to which geography, distance and weather have moulded my sensory palate, my imagination and expectations. The island continent has not been mere background. Landscape has exerted a kind of force upon me that is every bit as geological as family.

...

When I was born in 1960 there was about a square kilometre for every person on the island continent. Fifty-five years later the population has doubled, but density is still exceptionally low. Despite a peopled history of sixty thousand years, Australia remains a place with more land than people, more geography than architecture. But it is not and never has been empty. Since people first walked out of Africa and made their way down to this old chunk of Gondwana when it was not yet so distant from Asia and the rest of the world, it has been explored and inhabited, modified and mythologised, walked and sung. People were chanting and dancing and painting here tens and tens of thousands of years before the advent of the toga and the sandal. This is true antiquity. Few landscapes have been so deeply known. And fewer still have been so lightly inhabited.

...

In the semi-arid range country where I live these days the heavens draw you out, like a multidimensional horizon. For most of the year the arrival of a cloud is something of an event. Along the south coast where I spent my adolescence, the air boils with gothic clouds. There the sky's commotion renders you so feverish your thoughts are closer to music than language. In the desert the night sky sucks at you, star by star, galaxy by galaxy, until you begin to feel you could fall out into it at any moment. In Australia, the

The places Winton lives influence his identity; that is, who he is, what he does, how he writes, what he enjoys

sky is not the safe enclosing canopy it appears to be elsewhere. It's the scantiest membrane imaginable, barely sufficient as a barrier between earthbound creatures and eternity. Standing alone at dawn on the Nullarbor, or out on a saltpan the size of a small country, you feel a twinge of terror because the sky seems to go on forever. It has perilous depths and oceanic movements. In our hemisphere the sky stops you in your tracks, derails your thoughts, unmoors you from what you were doing before it got you by the collar.



A storm over the Nullarbor Plain, South Australia

The places dearest to me can be really hard to reach. They're austere, savage, unpredictable ... Not much of our country is lush or instantly congenial. The regions I know best are particularly challenging and my home range in the west can be hard work – it's spiky, dry, irritating, even humiliating, and after some visits I often feel as spent and dismayed as any guest at a Christmas lunch, wondering why the hell I bothered. But homecomings are partly about submitting to the uncomfortably familiar, aren't they? ...

This country leans in on you. It weighs down hard. Like family. To my way of thinking, it is family.

...

There is no denying the fact that there's something physically relentless about Australia, but there's also something hauntingly paradoxical, for to even the most reverent observer it sometimes feels as if this continent is more air than matter, more pause than movement, more space than time. The place is still itself. It continues to impose. It imprints itself upon the body, and in order to make sense of it the mind is constantly struggling to catch up.

...

In a disembodied era of digital technology and franchise culture there are periods when even an Australian at home can feel he or she might be anyplace, or perhaps no place at all. But wildness soon intervenes to disabuse us. The pressure of geography reasserts itself palpably and unmistakably to remind us that, of course, we could only be *here* ... For generations at school, we sang the praises of Australia's beauty but also 'her terror.' We always knew we were subject to the whims of the wide brown land, and as extremes of weather become more commonplace this underlying perception of exposure is unlikely to fade. Nowadays bushfires don't just threaten the outskirts of timber towns, they infiltrate and ravage

the suburbs of capital cities ... Geography and weather have never been mere backdrop in this country, and given the obvious trends they won't be slipping from consciousness any time soon. You only need stand on a mainland street corner in the business district and watch the desert dust fall like rain upon the gridlocked traffic to know it. Whatever else we've told ourselves, we are not yet out of nature and nature is not done with us.

...

It's good for the spirit, to be reminded as an individual or a community that there will always be something bigger, older, richer and more complex than ourselves to consider. Despite our shared successes, our mobility and adaptability, there remains an organic, material reality over which we have little control and for which we can claim no credit. To be mindful of that is to be properly awake and aware of our place.

...

This is why we write about it. This is why we paint it. From love and wonder, irritation and fear, hope and despair; because, like family, it refuses to be incidental.

SOURCE: Winton, T., 'The island seen and felt', as part of the *Places Journal*, March 2017

What does the text say?

- Tim Winton describes two different places in this excerpt. Which two places?
- What does the author mean when he writes 'the arrival of a cloud is something of an event'?

How does the text work?

- Winton's description is incredibly physical and visual. He truly paints with words. Highlight words and phrases that:
 - use verbs to describe movement in the landscape
 - use adjectives to emphasise the scale and scope of his image of Australia
 - personify the landscape
 - place the reader in the landscape.
- What is the overall **affect** (mood, tone, feeling, emotion) of this text? Choose from the following words: playful, intense, ironic, serious, passionate, angry, indifferent, sarcastic, reflective, mournful, delighted, awestruck, impatient, humbled.

What does the text mean?

- Go to the last two paragraphs, where Winton explains why he thinks it is important for us to understand the physical places we live in. List two of the reasons he gives and add one of your own.



Activity 5.5 Continued

What does the text inspire you to do?

- f Imagine you found yourself in the desert landscape Winton describes. In at least one paragraph, describe how you would feel if you were there. Persuasive writers and speakers use words that evoke strong emotion in audiences. This affect (feeling) table might help.

Positive	Negative
Happiness: relieved, contented, ecstatic, delighted, cheered	Unhappiness: sad, despondent, dejected, downcast, anguished, grief-stricken, distressed, pessimistic, isolated
Affection: sentimental, reassured, fond	Dislike: scorn, displeasure, hate
Attraction: desirous, yearned for, longing	
Security: confident, comfortable, trusting, assured	Insecurity: uneasy, restless, nervous, anxious, startled, fearful, terrified
Satisfaction: interested, involved, absorbed, pleased, impressed, thrilled	Dissatisfaction: flat, jaded, bored, frustrated, disillusioned, irritated, disgusted, resentful

Adapted from: Martin, J.R., & White, P.R.R. (2003). *The Language of Evaluation* (Vol. 2). Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Alternatively, draw, paint or find an image to represent a landscape that's precious to you.

Tim Winton's work is mainly prose or continuous text. Australian landscapes also inspire poets and songwriters. Poems and songs use different, often less predictable, text structures. Patterns of rhythm and rhyme, as well as graduating language like **imagery** and **metaphor**, shape meaning and invite the reader to adopt the perspective the author presents.

Poetry and song, people and place

Samuel Wagan Watson is an artist whose poetry is embedded in the Eleanor Schonell Bridge, Brisbane. His words have been sent to the International Space Station. Wagan Watson is of Mununjali, Birri Gubba, Gaelic and European descent and he grew up and lives in Brisbane. He has published award-winning collections including *Smoke Encrypted Whispers* and *Love Poems and Death Threats*. By playing with poetic forms, Wagan Watson challenges people's expectations of poetry and presents familiar scenes of the urban landscape in new ways.



Samuel Wagan Watson's poem 'revolver' is included in Activity 5.6. He has said 'revolver' is one of his favourite poems because he is a visual person. It is full of beautiful and unusual metaphors. Before you read it, **recall** what a metaphor is or refer to the activities in Chapter 4, p. 144 if you want to revise this important example of **figurative** language. You can hear Wagan Watson discuss the influence of popular culture and ancient artforms on his poetry on the episode 'Love Poems and Death Threats' on the ABC Radio National program *Earshot* (<https://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/11198>).



Activity 5.6

Read the poem. Have someone read it to you. Read it again.

'revolver'

From my balcony I can read a strong poem that the moon has pasted on the river. Everything is quiet. Now and then, a wave breaks the message, temporarily changing the font from **bold** to *italics*. The moon in its crescent appearance is the precision blade of a Shaolin warrior. I'm concerned that if I gaze too long, I may carelessly jag my retinas on its razor points, pierced globes adding vitreous humour into this serious stretch of river. A mullet leaps from the water and reconstructs the moon's message; it is now the sound of one silver hand clapping. Above, an anonymous comet breaches the sky a small eternity, but shooting stars don't have the recoil of a poem executed in the lull of moon fire.

oval mirror lights

seduction on night-water

flagrant moon kisses

By Samuel Wagan Watson

- Figurative language (e.g. personification, metaphor, imagery) is a powerful way poets create images and **intensify** the meaning in their writing. Find the figurative language identified here. Explain the meaning and experiment with writing images of your own that follow the pattern.

Figurative language	Example	Meaning	My experiment
Personification	<i>a strong poem the moon has pasted on the river</i>	In his mind's eye, the reflection of the moon on the surface of the river makes him think of a poem.	<i>a heavy story the tyres have pressed into the road</i>



Figurative language	Example	Meaning	My experiment
Metaphor	<i>The moon in its crescent appearance is the precision blade of a Shaolin warrior</i>	The moon is curved and this reminds him of a curved sword.	
Visual imagery	<i>oval mirror lights</i>		



- 2 In your imagination, take yourself to the river in this poem. There's a road that follows it and a path you can walk along. Write a short **recount**, describing an imagined encounter with someone you meet there. Include **dialogue**. If you need help with the structure of a recount, refer to the recount table on page 217.

Conventions for punctuating dialogue

You really need to get this right in all kinds of stories. If you follow these basic rules, you should be okay.

Use quotation marks around the character's words. You can use either single (') or double (") quotation marks, provided you are consistent. Always put the punctuation (comma, period, exclamation mark, question mark) inside the quotation mark:

'Did you see Saya Sakakibara win the gold medal at the Paris Olympics?' asked Cat.

Each new speaker gets a new line:

‘Yeh, I did! It was amazing!’ exclaimed Ken.

‘I think her dedication is so inspiring,’ Cat added.

If the dialogue is interrupted with a saying verb, use a lower-case letter when you reopen the quotation marks:

‘I’m glad she’s representing Australia,’ said Vern, thoughtfully, ‘she could have been on team GB!’

Coming home

The idea of coming home is a common one in poetry and songs by Australian creators. It might be connected to Australia’s culture of travelling – another aspect often represented in popular culture texts. Surveys from companies such as Nielsen and Luxury Escapes show that Aussies are highly motivated to travel, both domestically and overseas.

Artists such as Dan Sultan, Thelma Plum and King Stingray have all released award-winning albums and songs that represent ideas of ‘coming home’. Songs in Dan Sultan’s albums *Blackbird* (2014) and *Dan Sultan* (2023) are about coming home literally and metaphorically. Thelma Plum grew up in Meanjin/Brisbane and rural NSW and her experiences inform her music. Plum has described her EP *Meanjin* (2022) as a love letter to her hometown. King Stingray’s album *For the Dreams* (2024) was inspired by their travels and homegrown experiences in Arnhem Land. You can learn more about the inspirations behind these albums in the artist interviews with themusic.com.au and *Rolling Stone Australia*.

The accompanying music videos are also important representations of place. Visual elements are carefully selected for the purpose of sharing the artist’s experiences. As well as being filmed on location, the videos often use personal or tour footage so the audience feels part of personal moments, while aerial shots give a more general sense of the setting and the vastness of Australia.





Activity 5.7

Dan Sultan’s song ‘Kimberley Calling’ was written after he located his maternal grandmother’s grave at One Armed Point in the Kimberley. Sultan’s mother was taken from her family as a child and, although eventually reunited (Sultan wrote the song ‘Roslyn’ for her), his mother’s experiences shaped Sultan’s personal story and the value he places on celebrating cultural heritage.

‘Kimberley Calling’ name-checks many landmarks in the Kimberley region of Western Australia, like the Buccaneer Archipelago (pictured here). Watch the music video for this song while you read the **lyrics** – the video enhances the sensory experience.



- 1 These texts create a strong sense of what the Kimberley means to the singer. As you listen and watch, list the different features of landscape the singer associates with the Kimberley.
- 2 After watching the music video, identify the elements of production. Some examples have been given for you. You might want to work in pairs or small groups, then discuss with the class to ensure you have as much information as possible.

Elements of production	‘Kimberley Calling’
Participants: Who? What else do we know about them?	Dan Sultan, singer-songwriter
Processes: What are they doing?	
Circumstances: Where? When?	In the Kimberley
Framing: Camera angles, distance, vectors etc.	
Structure and composition: Sequencing and transitions	
Other: Gesture, expression, clothes, colours, effects etc.	

- 3 Imagine you are a singer-songwriter writing about the place you think of as home, or another important place in your life.
 - a Select your place and note down key details about how being there makes you feel and what is most important about it to you.
 - b Using the table, identify production elements you would include in a music video depicting your place.



Activity 5.7 *Continued*

Elements of text production	Place:
Participants: Who? What else do we know about them?	
Processes: What are they doing?	
Circumstances: Where? When?	
Shots: Camera angles etc.	
Structure and composition: Sequencing and transitions	
Other: Gesture, expression, sound, clothes, colours, effects etc.	

- 4 When you've finished, write the lyrics for a song about your own place. It doesn't have to be long. Aim for three verses and a chorus with at least four lines each. Use Dan Sultan's language as a guide to how you can position listeners to appreciate this place.



Extension task 5.2

Select a song from *Meanjin*, *For the Dreams* or another album about Australian experiences. Listen to the song, read the lyrics and watch the music video. Identify the artist's relationship with place and how they are positioning the audience to respond through their use of **language features** and **text structures**, including elements of production.

In your class, decide which text (song, lyrics or video) was most effective at positioning the audience to accept the creator's perspective about that place.

It is not just the description of the place itself that is an aspect of these poems and songs, but also the experiences and events connected with it. Creative practices can be a way to think about these events differently or share them with others.

In a talk for TEDxCanberra, Dan Sultan reflected on how transforming experiences through creative practices can be restorative. Sultan shares his earliest memory and the fear and terror that racism and bigotry brings. His perspective on creativity is that it can offer a powerful, lasting, impactful way to break out of vicious cycles, such as being scared or angry and lashing out.

'To turn something like that note on the door all those years ago, something so ugly as that, into something beautiful for my kids, and for anyone who wants it, it's gorgeous.'

SOURCE: Dan Sultan, 'Impact through creativity' for TEDxCanberra, 21 January 2023

Watch this talk:
<https://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/11199>.

Sultan makes the point that the telling of stories and knowing they've been heard and acknowledged is a basic human need that tells us that we matter. The idea that we all have the right to be recognised and see ourselves in our cultural artefacts is a powerful one.

This section has focused on place as an aspect of Australian popular culture texts. The table below demonstrates how you could use place or another aspect of Dan Sultan's 'Kimberley Calling' as a springboard for a written response that would invite a reader to take up a position. In the right-hand column, we've provided an example of how your written response could begin. You could take this idea and keep writing from there or use it as a guide for writing in the genre.



Springboard ideas for responding to 'Kimberley Calling'



Aspects	Genre and audience	Some words to get you started
Place: The Kimberley	A website for visitors to Australia, creating a perspective of the Kimberley by foregrounding its remoteness	<p>Welcome to Australia!</p> <p>If you were wondering if there's more to our sunburnt country than Sydney and Melbourne, you can't go further from the tourist track than the Kimberley.</p> <p>A 4000 km road trip from Sydney – that's further than coast-to-coast US – this stunning part of Australia has fewer people per square km than almost any other place on Earth.</p> <p>Where the outback and the beach collide, take at least a week to reclaim yourself, take on the adventure and appreciate the beauty of the Kimberley.</p>
Concept: conservation	An email to your local MP about protecting the environment of Springbrook National Park	<p>Re: Springbrook Development</p> <p>Dear Minister,</p> <p>I'm writing to you after my recent visit to Springbrook National Park. I'm appalled to hear that you intend to approve initial plans for a large development at Wunburra Lookout. It is imperative that we protect the natural environment that still exists in the Gold Coast area.</p>

Aspects	Genre and audience	Some words to get you started
Event: coming home	A journal entry describing a time you returned home	<p>We finally touched down in Townsville yesterday! The blue skies and the smell of the eucalypts as we disembarked were a relief after months away. I knew we still had a long drive ahead but breathed a sigh of relief at being on solid ground again.</p> <p>Dragging our cases over to the car rental place, the excitement and nerves rose once again. I hadn't been home for so long. I wondered what kind of welcome would be waiting for us.</p>
Identity: a travel agent	A travel itinerary for an American who wants to see Uluru	<p>Day one: Travel from Sydney to Uluru. Arrive at lunchtime and be transported from the airport to accommodation. We invite you to settle into your luxury lodge and enjoy a late lunch freshly prepared by our on-site chef. In the evening, you have the option of a gourmet dinner and star-gazing experience in the desert. Alternatively, you are welcome to enjoy a relaxing night enjoying the world-class facilities.</p> <p>I highly recommend the star-gazing. Although there is an additional cost, it is truly a wonderful experience at one of the few remaining dark-sky sites in the world. The view of the stars is unparalleled.</p>



5.4 Concepts: Themes, big ideas, changing representations of being Australian

Another aspect of Australian popular culture texts is the concepts that are represented in them. ‘Australianness’, generations and belonging are all concepts you could use as springboards for a written text response of your own.

For the last two decades, the Lamb Day advertisement by Meat and Livestock Australia (MLA) has invited the nation to get together and ‘chuck some lamb on the barbie.’ These advertisements are written to be entertaining and rely heavily on **irony** – a staple in Australian humour – and have become part of Australian popular culture.

Irony

Irony is a rhetorical device in which the appearance of something is opposite to the reality.

It can be a way to express the contrasting meanings of what is said, written or otherwise communicated; the literal meaning is different to the intended meaning. For example, if someone drops a glass and says, ‘I meant to do that’, they did not mean to drop anything but have used irony to laugh at the situation.

Situational irony is when what is expected is very different from what occurs.



Usually, the lamb advertisements refer to events, stereotypes and ideas in popular culture texts from the year prior. They incorporate irony to **subvert** negative expectations and, ultimately, bring everyone together around a lamb BBQ. Even the lamb BBQ is a pun on the idea of a ‘roast’ – a form of comedy where a guest of honour (in this case, Australians) is subjected to jokes at their own expense. In 2022, after international travel resumed, the Lamb Day advertisement featured Australians ‘realising’ that other countries existed. In 2023, the plot revolved around people expressing opinions and being called un-Australian. When someone in the advertisement is called un-Australian, they disappear from the original setting and are sent Down Under. Eventually, a lamb BBQ appears Down Under and everyone is reunited as Australians. How much do you agree with what is decided to be un-Australian in the 2023 advertisement?



Activity 5.8

Watch two of these advertisements, which are available on YouTube. Search for the advertisement from 2005 and either the 2024 'Generation Gap' advertisement or the most recent one.

- 1 Watch each advertisement at least twice. The first time, just watch. The second time, note down anything that stands out to you, like objects, settings, people, examples of irony or other language features and text structures.
- 2 In groups or as a class, use the table below to record text details, identify ideas, opinions, values and beliefs, and the attitudes presented in each advertisement. You can include key quotations as evidence. We've included examples from the 2005 advertisement but you are likely to think of some more.

Text details Setting, characters, key phrases etc.	Ideas, opinions, values and beliefs	Attitudes What people say or do that shows their values and beliefs
'We love our lamb' (2005) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desk in front of an Australian flag, with more flags and a map • 'Lambassador', Sam Kekovich, known for his deadpan rants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Things must be done a certain way to be Australian • Australian men are supposed to eat meat and drink beer • Being Australian is better than anything else 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'The creeping tide of un-Australianism eroding our great traditions' • People who eat anything other than lamb on Australia Day should be harshly punished
'The Generation Gap' (2024) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • •

- 3 Discuss: What are some key differences or similarities between the ideas and the attitudes represented in these ads? What concepts of 'Australian-ness' have remained the same? What ideas or concepts are understood as being uniquely Australian?

The advertising campaign is no stranger to controversy.

- 4 Find written reactions to the 2024 and other Australian Lamb advertisements – taste.com.au, SBS Food and news.com.au are places to start. Identify the perspectives in these texts. What do they want their audiences to agree with?



Activity 5.8 Continued

5 In 2017, MLA group marketing manager Andrew Howie said:

‘Ultimately, as the face of Australia continues to evolve and change, we need to make lamb relevant to a diverse, modern Australia. This campaign does that by celebrating the diversity of Australia.’

To what extent do you think the MLA lamb advertisements that you’ve seen celebrate the diversity of Australia (or not)?



Activity 5.9

2005 was the first Lamb Day advertisement and features Sam Kekovich sitting at a desk in front of an Australian flag. The ideas and attitudes have not aged well. The advertisement has a deliberately limited and stereotypical idea of what being Australian is.

Write an open letter – a letter intended to be read by a lot of people, but addressed to one person or group (like Aja Barber’s letter on pp. 79–81) – explaining how attitudes in Australia have changed and what you think should be included in next year’s advertisement. You might include what you believe is un-Australian and what is most valued in Australia today.

You can use these sentence starters to help structure your letter.

Text structures	Sentence starters	Language features
Greeting Why you’re writing – context, purpose, overview	Dear Australians, I recently saw the 2005 Lamb Day advertisement and thought _____. I felt _____ because _____. The attitudes in Australia have changed.	Formal register Text connectives

Activity 5.9 *Continued*

Text structures	Sentence starters	Language features
<p>Ideas organised into short paragraphs. This might be chronological (past to future), in order of importance, or another logical structure.</p> <p>Sign off</p>	<p>What is most valued in Australia is _____.</p> <p>You can see this _____ and _____.</p> <p>Australians care about _____.</p> <p>I believe it is more un-Australian to _____ than it is to _____. Surely, you have _____.</p> <p>While this advertisement showed _____, I believe a more accurate representation of Australians would include _____.</p> <p>In future, I hope Australians are shown as _____.</p> <p>Kind regards, _____</p>	<p>Modality</p> <p>Superlative adjectives</p> <p>Comparative adjectives</p>



Extension task 5.3

Write a paragraph evaluating this year's Lamb Day advertisement. The following vocabulary table gives you some positive and negative vocabulary you could use.

Positive	Negative
Breaking down barriers	Stereotypical
Inspirational	Judgemental
Challenging	Simplistic
Transformative	Limited point of view
Inclusive	Exploitative
Entertaining	Insulting
Cathartic	Manipulative

This section has focused on concepts as an aspect of Australian popular culture texts. The table on the next page demonstrates how you could use identity or another aspect of Lamb Day advertisements for a written response that would invite a reader to take up a position. In the right-hand column, we've provided an example of how your written response could begin. You could take this idea and keep writing from there or use it as a guide for writing in the genre.

Springboard ideas for responding to Lamb Day advertisements



Aspects	Genre and audience	Some words to get you started
<p>Place: Australian mining town</p>	<p>A comment thread responding to an article titled: 'The beautiful side of these ugly Australian towns', for <i>Sydney Morning Herald</i></p>	<p>COMMENT:</p> <p>Like polishing a rare gem, Catherine Marshall draws out the attraction and splendour of Aussie opal-mining towns. I can't wait to visit some to unearth their treasures.</p> <p>COMMENT:</p> <p>I'm not sure what you're polishing. Despite Marshall's best efforts, I reckon mines and solar panels are ugly as. What is there to see in a town where the only thing to do is digging?</p>
<p>Identity: teens</p>	<p>An editorial for a national newspaper titled: 'The grown-ups have underestimated the "social" in social media'</p>	<p>The Federal Government's decision to ban people under the age of 16 from accessing social media shows their fundamental misunderstanding of what it truly means to us. In an increasingly divided world, a cultural phenomenon that older generations have certainly contributed to, connecting through social media allow us to broaden our horizons, to check in with each other, and to build strong communities.</p>
<p>Concept: conflict</p>	<p>A 'one-sheet' pitch for a new Australian television show about the cultural divide between Queensland and New South Wales (see nofilmschool.com for a guide to structure)</p>	<p>Short synopsis: <i>South of the Border</i> follows an exchange trip between students in Queensland and New South Wales schools in the week leading up to the final State of Origin game. The students are from schools all over the states and, through their experiences and hi-jinks, are exposed to the language differences and culture shocks, ultimately finding more to unite them than divide them.</p>
<p>Event: 26 January</p>	<p>An open letter sharing your point of view about changing the date</p>	<p>Dear fellow Aussies,</p> <p>Every year we hear the same tired arguments about holding onto a tradition that isn't that old and has never really been agreed on by everyone. The date of 26 January was only fixed across all states and territories in 1994. The idea of Australia Day has been protested since 1938. So, let's change it!</p>

5.5 Extended text study: *The Arsonist: A Mind on Fire*

This extended text study invites you to explore the range of aspects of Australian popular culture texts we've introduced so far – identity, place and concepts – and consider how they are interconnected. *The Arsonist* is about an important and terrible event in Australia's history: the Black Saturday bushfires in 2009 in Victoria.

Teacher notes

Before embarking on this extended text study, refer to the teacher note at the start of this chapter, and consider your student cohort and school context.

Events are especially interesting aspects of texts because they tie together the other aspects so well. Social groups usually experience key events together because individuals were in the same place at the same time. Families will **recount** the same stories and friendship groups will retell the same inside jokes when they relive experiences together. Having a collective history shapes our current perspectives because recounting past events allows us to learn invaluable lessons from both our joys and sorrows. In the same way, Australian popular culture texts recall past events to reveal and explore the ways Australians have responded to them.



Activity 5.10

Popular culture texts are often created in response to big events. Think of films about doomed human endeavours (*Titanic*), natural disasters (*The Impossible*), or people overcoming adversity (*Invictus*).

- 1 Select a film or other pop culture text/s about an event and use it to answer the questions in the table below. An example using the film *Titanic* has been completed for you.

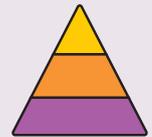
Text	What event is being recalled in this text?	From whose point of view is this event being represented?	What perspective about the event is the audience being positioned to accept?
<i>Titanic</i> (1997)	The sinking of the 'unsinkable' ship, the RMS <i>Titanic</i> in 1912	The film recounts the disaster from the perspectives of Rose and Jack, two young lovers who meet on the ship's maiden voyage. Director James Cameron tells the story through these characters' eyes.	Choosing Jack and Rose's point of view personalises and brings nuance to the story. The tragedy is intensified for the audience because the two young people fall in love only to face mortal danger. The <i>Titanic</i> sinking due to human arrogance and negligence makes the audience see the disaster as avoidable and therefore even more tragic. The wider cultural perspective is that true love transcends time and tragedy.

A bushfire is an event. Before we look at the bushfire in *The Arsonist*, build your understanding of the role of bushfires in Australia's past, present and future.



Activity 5.11

Set your purpose for reading by using the statements in the Three-Level Guide to focus your careful reading.



For each statement:

- decide whether the author would say it is True or False (not your opinion)
- identify evidence in the text that supports your answer
- discuss your responses with your classmates, especially the Level 3 statements.

		True	False
Level 1: literal	Eucalypts are destroyed by bushfires.		
	Those who live between cities and the bush are least likely to be affected.		
	Climate, topography and landscape contribute to the impact of bushfires.		
Level 2: inferential	Everyone understands that the best way to reduce the impact of bushfires is to prevent them from starting.		
	Bushfires are evidence of climate change.		
Level 3: critical	First Nations peoples should have a bigger say in bushfire responses.		



Bushfires in Australia

'Australia had always been a burning continent' (Hooper, C., *The Arsonist: A Mind on Fire*, Penguin, 2020, p. 54).

Bushfires are a natural part of the Australian environment. Much of Australian vegetation, notably eucalypts filled with flammable oils, has evolved to survive and thrive through fires. Some species need intense heat for their seeds to germinate and create new trees.

However, there is a desperate need to consider human influence on the dangers they pose.

Past

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have used fire as a land-management tool for tens of thousands of years. Because land custodians have been able to adapt the heat and intensity of fire to individual environments, low-intensity fire management was used to burn off grass and bush, to keep trails clear, to promote new growth, and to drive animals towards waiting hunters. Frequent burning reduced the dead leaves, desiccated branches and dried grass that fuel fires, lessening the intensity of these burns. British colonisers limited the use of fire, even as a land-management tool.

The combination of climate, topography and landscape make Australian bushfires deadly and destructive. They have been recorded at speeds of over 100km/h and it can take weeks before the

final hotspots are smothered. As well as the dryness of the fuel and long hot summers, sudden changes in wind direction and speed contributes to the speed and intensity of fires; it can quickly transform a small burn into a broad fire front or ember attack.

Present

In the last 200 years, large-scale fires have increased in size and frequency. As urban Australia spreads, the frontier zones of city and bush are where fire does the most damage.

Recently, Australia (especially the south-east) has experienced its worst bushfires ever.



As the Victorian Royal Commission into the 2009 'Black Saturday' fires noted, fires often arise from a range of complex factors: 'It is axiomatic that the most effective way of reducing bushfire damage and protecting human life is to prevent fires from starting.'

These complex factors are intersecting and it is in our power to demand change.

Future

Education on bushfires is drastically needed. Individuals and communities should be able to access resources to put in place effective fire plans and learn best practices. Education is empowering. However, this needs to be funded at state and national levels. It needs to be guided by experts.

The environment fuels the fire and can influence its behaviour and destructiveness. There is a need for individual and local awareness of how to monitor the risk factors and to create fire breaks. The government needs to seriously address climate change and finally listen to the

evidence that it is exacerbating the risk and damage of bushfires.

Tangible support is vital in a number of areas. Economic support for towns already damaged by fire and those at particular risk. Funding for education and environmental initiatives. Targeted health programs aimed at helping those whose health has been affected by fires.

Fire will always be an element of Australian life. Government, community and individual actions across education, environment and support should be the Australian response.

**Extension task 5.4**

In 2019–2020, Australia's hottest and driest summer resulted in fires that caused unfathomable destruction, burning across more than 24 million hectares, indirectly killing hundreds of people and damaging the ozone layer. These catastrophic bushfires became known as Black Summer.

An ABC investigation pieced together data, imagery and interviews to form a new narrative of the Gospers Mountain blaze. The investigation is presented in a visual essay, titled, 'Anatomy of a "mega-blaze"', available at <https://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/11200>.

Read the essay and identify the perspectives shown in the selection of visuals and quotes used. As a class, discuss how the images, language features and text structure position you to view people, places and events.



What kind of book is this?

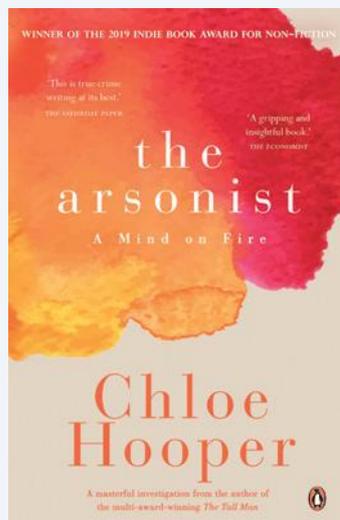
The Arsonist is the true story of the investigation of the deadly Churchill fires of Black Saturday, 2009.

About the book

The Arsonist balances individual experiences with scientific and demographic information about geology, bushfires, arson and pyromania, power-stations and coalmining, as well as the Latrobe Valley and its socioeconomic circumstances.

Chloe Hooper describes her investigation in *The Arsonist: A Mind on Fire* as a puzzle, piecing together stories behind the fires that swept through the Latrobe Valley, Victoria, on a fateful Saturday in 2009.

You can watch an interview with Chloe Hooper about *The Arsonist* on The Wheeler Centre's YouTube channel: <https://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/11201>



Nonfiction is not neutral. Authors construct representations through the selective use of language features and text structures. They also control what is (or isn't) included. They retell stories of events in a way that positions their readers to agree with their perspectives on these events. Not convinced? Read what the author herself said.

'I had to pare[sic] a mountain of information, about all kinds of aspects and I just made choices, instinctual, aesthetic, I'm not sure whatever else, to what do you really need, what's essential. Because otherwise, it becomes an academic text. I didn't want it to become some sort of thesis.'

SOURCE: Chloe Hooper, quoted in Samuel Elliott, 'An Interview with *The Arsonist's* Chloe Hooper', *Compulsive Reader*, 21 January 2019

True crime genre

People are fascinated by true crime. It is an incredibly popular genre that entertains, informs *and* persuades. True crime podcasts, films, and television programs explore details of the crime itself, the investigation, the people involved and the legal proceedings. Often, an investigative journalist will spend months or years researching for a true crime text. They develop a variety of perspectives on the event (the crime). At some point, they will either pitch one or more perspectives to media executives or go ahead and create their own piece. For *The Arsonist*, Hooper chose to focus specifically on the Churchill fires and the search for the arsonist.



Activity 5.12

Complete the **Framer model** for true crime

Characteristics	Related genres
Examples •	Non-examples •

True crime

- 1 In your class, how many people have read, watched or listened to true crime or other forms of investigative journalism? Find some examples in streaming, podcasts and books.
- 2 Discuss the reasons people engage with true crime texts. What's the appeal?

'Crime is human drama, and the resolution of a wrongdoing makes us feel a restored sense of security about the world we live in. But I think for true crime to achieve something more lasting, it does need to delve into the sociological, and find deeper truths about where an often tragic event sits in our history and public imagination. At its best it can be investigative and reflective.'

SOURCE: Chloe Hooper, 'After The Fire: Q&A with Chloe Hooper on writing *The Arsonist*', *Better Reading*, 19 October 2018





Activity 5.13

Use the excerpt from the Victorian Royal Commission below and additional resources to complete the table and develop your understanding of a specific bushfire in the events of Black Saturday.

Setting	What happened?	Consequences
Where and when		Positive and negative Immediate and lasting
• • •	• • •	• • •

Black Saturday, 7 February 2009

The bushfires of Black Saturday, 7 February 2009, caused the death of 173 people. Black Saturday wrote itself into Victoria's history with record-breaking weather conditions and bushfires of a scale and ferocity that tested human endurance. The lives of many Victorians were changed forever, and many showed they are capable of deeds of great courage and compassion. Although some communities were physically destroyed, their members also displayed ingenuity, strength and resolve in the face of this calamity. There was also widespread devastation of considerable areas of the scenic forests and woodlands that form part of Victoria's natural heritage.



Black Saturday

...

The fires in January–February 2009 – and in particular on 7 February – have deeply scarred the Victorian people and the landscape. The Commission therefore begins its report with a discussion of the 15 most damaging, or potentially damaging, fires that burned on 7 February, including those in which people died. Many of these fires were significant because of their size and impact; some of the smaller ones, however, provide insight into the differing circumstances and demands of the day.





These fires were not the only ones that occurred during the 2008–09 bushfire season: DSE and CFA staff and volunteers fought hundreds of fires. The fire season was long and demanding, placing considerable pressure on firefighters even before the worst fires began in early February.

SOURCE: 2009 Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission, *Final Report*, July 2010



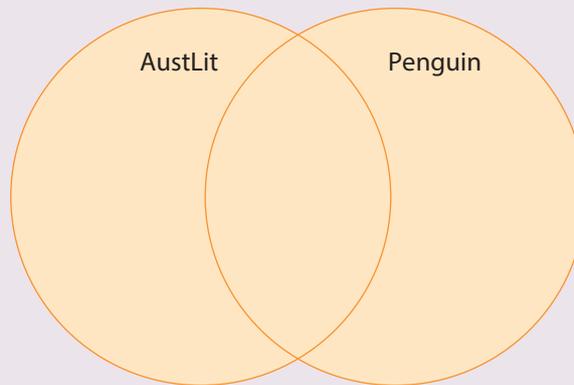
Additional resources can be found through ABC, BBC, CFA Victoria and in the National Museum of Australia’s online collections, ‘Defining Moments’ (<https://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/11202>) and ‘Digital Classrooms’ (<https://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/11203>).



Activity 5.14

Below are two synopses, or overviews, of *The Arsonist*. They summarise the book in slightly different ways, creating alternative perspectives by positioning the audience to focus on different aspects.

- 1 First, read the two synopses. Highlight the most important information.
- 2 Compare and contrast the two texts by using a **Venn diagram** to identify information that is included in one or both texts.



- 3 AustLit is a resource for and research database about Australian literature and storytelling. It can be accessed through schools and libraries. Penguin is the publisher of *The Arsonist*. What is the purpose of each synopsis and how do you know?

AustLit

The Arsonist takes readers inside the hunt for a fire-lighter. After Black Saturday, a February 2009 day marked by 47-degree heat and firestorms, arson squad detectives arrived at a plantation on the edge of a 26000-hectare burn site. Eleven people had just been killed and hundreds made homeless. Here, in the Latrobe Valley, where Victoria's electricity is generated, and the rates of unemployment, crime and domestic abuse are the highest in the state, more than thirty people were known to police as firebugs. But the detectives soon found themselves on the trail of a man they didn't know.

Penguin

On the day that became known as Black Saturday, one man deliberately lit two fires near the small town of Churchill, Gippsland, then sat on the roof of his house and watched the flames. *The Arsonist*, by the acclaimed author of *The Tall Man*, is the story of that man, the fire he lit, and the people who were killed.

On the scorching February day in 2009 that became known as Black Saturday, a man lit two fires in Victoria's Latrobe Valley, then sat on the roof of his house to watch the inferno. In the Valley, where the rates of crime were the highest in the state, more than thirty people



The Arsonist tells a remarkable detective story, as the police close in on someone they believe to be a cunning offender; and a puzzling psychological story, as defence lawyers seek to understand the motives of a man who, they claimed, was a naïf that had accidentally dropped a cigarette.

It is the story not only of this fire – how it happened, the people who died, the aftermath for the community – but of fire in this country. What it has done, what it has meant, what it might yet do. Bushfire is one of Australia's deepest anxieties, never more so than when deliberately lit. 'Arson', wrote Henry Lawson, expresses a malice 'terrifying to those who have seen what it is capable of. You never know when you are safe' ('Crime in the Bush', 1899).

As she did in *The Tall Man*, Chloe Hooper takes us to a part of the country seldom explored, and reveals something buried but essential in our national psyche. The bush, summertime, a smouldering cigarette – none of these will feel the same again.

were known to police as firebugs. But the detectives soon found themselves on the trail of a man they didn't know.

The Arsonist takes readers on the hunt for this man, and inside the strange puzzle of his mind. It is also the story of fire in this country, and of a community that owed its existence to that very element. The command of fire has defined and sustained us as a species – understanding its abuse will define our future.

A powerful real-life thriller written with Hooper's trademark lyric detail and nuance, *The Arsonist* is a reminder that in an age of fire, all of us are gatekeepers.





The Arsonist opens with a description of the setting the detectives drove through on the morning after Black Saturday. Hooper skilfully guides readers through the details as well as the points of view of the detectives investigating the arson and the lawyer representing the accused.



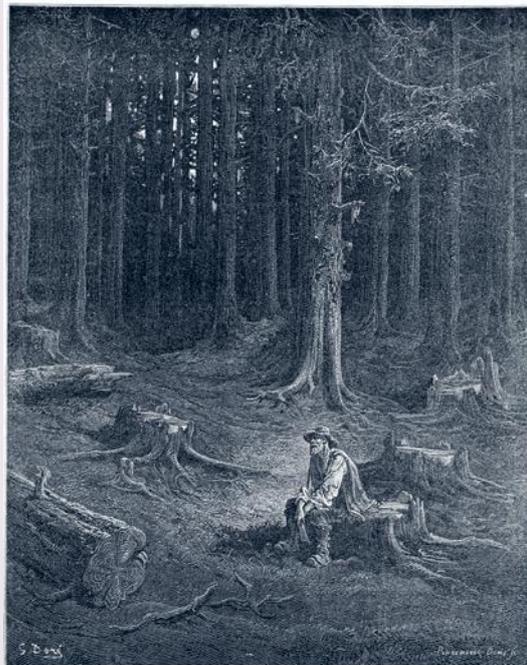
Activity 5.15

- 1 Read the opening paragraph of *The Arsonist*, below. You may find it helpful to draw the scene while reading about it, to capture the written details more fully.

'Picture a fairytale's engraving. Straight black trees stretching in perfect symmetry to their vanishing point, the ground covered in thick white snow. Woods are dangerous places in such stories, things are not as they seem. Here, too, in this timber plantation, menace lingers. The blackened trees smoulder. Smoke creeps around their charcoal trunks and charred leaves. The snow, stained pale grey, is ash. Place your foot unwisely and it might slip through and burn. These woods are cordoned off with crime scene tape and guarded by uniformed police officers.'

SOURCE: Chloe Hooper, *The Arsonist: A Mind on Fire*, 2020

- 2 In this excerpt, Hooper compares the scene to a fairytale. What characteristics or elements of fairytales can you identify in the description?
- 3 How would you describe the mood of the excerpt?
- 4 Here's your challenge: rewrite the passage to describe any image in this chapter. Decide on the mood you want to create and select language to support that perspective of the place and what might be happening in it.



THE FOREST AND THE WOODMAN.

Recount

A recount is a type of story that retells events. Its purpose is to entertain readers or listeners by recounting a series of real or imagined events. Well-structured recounts begin by introducing the setting and characters, and describing each event in a sequence. They end with a comment that indicates the meaning or significance of the events.

This table summarises the stages and phases of a recount.

Recount stages	Sentence guide (phases)	
Orientation	Present and describe the people, activities, place and time.	
Event 1	What happens first?	Give the character a sequence of problems, reactions and (if you like) solutions.
Event 2	What happens next?	
Event 3	What happens after that?	
Reorientation	How does it end up? Re-present and describe the people, activities, place and time.	

Activity 5.16

The first chapter of *The Arsonist* follows Detective Sergeant (DS) Adam Henry as he drives through the devastated landscape of Churchill. The description is visceral, meaning we feel it deeply.

- 1 Read the whole excerpt. Circle important words and phrases. Underline key ideas and annotate the text.
- 2 After you've read this passage, complete the text-dependent questions on p. 219.



The puzzle is that the trees are unharmed on one side of the road and completely burned on the other.

At the intersection of two nondescript roads, Detective Sergeant Adam Henry sits in his car taking in a puzzle. On one side of Glendonald Road, the timber plantation is untouched: pristine *Pinus radiata*, all sown at the same time, growing in immaculate green lines. On the other side, near where the road forms a T with a track named Jellef's Outlet, stand rows of *Eucalyptus globulus*, the common blue gum cultivated the world over to make printer paper. All torched, as far as the eye can see. On Saturday 7 February 2009, around 1.30 p.m., a fire started somewhere near here and now, late on Sunday afternoon, it is still burning several kilometres away.

Detective Henry has a new baby, his first, a week out of hospital. The night before, he had been called back from paternity leave for a 6 a.m. meeting. Everyone in the Victoria Police Arson and Explosives Squad was called back. The past several days had been implausibly hot, with Saturday the

endgame – mid-forties Celsius, culminating in a killer hundred-kmph northerly wind. That afternoon and throughout the night, firestorms ravaged areas to the state's north, north-west, north-east, south-east and south-west. Henry was sent two hours east of Melbourne to supervise the investigation of this fire that started four kilometres from the town of Churchill (pop. 4000). An investigation named, for obvious reasons, Operation Winston.

Through the smoke, and in the added haze of the sleep-deprived, he drove with a colleague along the M1 to the Latrobe Valley. On the radio, the death toll was rising – fifty people, then a hundred. Whole towns, it was reported, had burned to the ground. The officers hit the first roadblock an hour out of the city. The dense forest of the Bunyip State Park was on fire, and the traffic police ushered them past onto a ghost freeway. For the next hour they might have been the only car on the usually manic road.

Outside, a string of towns nestled in the rolling green farms of Gippsland, and then it changed to coal country. Latticed electricity pylons multiplied closer to their source, their wires forming waves over the hills.

Turning a corner beyond Moe, Henry saw the cooling towers and cumulus vapours of the first power station, then, round the next bend, a valley ruled by the eight colossal chimneystacks of another station called Hazelwood. A vast open-cut coalmine abutted the highway. Layers of sloping roads descended deep into a brown core – the carbon remnants of a 30-million-year-old swamp – where dredgers, shrunk by a trick of the eye to Matchbox versions, relentlessly gouged the earth.



He turned off to Churchill, a few kilometres south of the highway. The town, built in the late 1960s as a dormitory suburb for electricity workers, had wide streets and a slender, anodised statue rising thirty metres out of the ground. It was the sole public monument, commemorating the great man of Empire in the form of a stylised golden cigar.



The detective didn't stop. He could see smoke above the blackened hills circling the town and wanted to get to the fire's suspected area of origin before it was disturbed. If this was a case of arson, the police needed to prove the connection between the point of ignition and the victims, some of whom were likely to be kilometres away in places still too dangerous to access.

Passing the final roadblock, Henry parked and sat looking at the Nordic dreamscape on one side of the road, and the blackness on the other—the axis where the world had tilted.

Out of the car, it was eerily quiet. No birds cried, no insects thrummed their white noise. The air was cool, pungent with eucalyptus smoke. A not unpleasant smell. On the other side of the police tape, Henry saw the police arson chemist.

SOURCE: Chloe Hooper, *The Arsonist: A Mind on Fire*, 2020

What does the text say?

- a Why was DS Henry driving down the M1 to the Latrobe Valley?
- b What is the name of the person who is memorialised in 'the sole public monument, commemorating the great man of Empire in the form of a stylised golden cigar'?
- c What are the key features of the landscape DS Henry drives through?
- d Plot DS Henry's journey on a map app and look at the satellite or street view. What would that journey look like today?

How does the text work?

- e The purpose of the first paragraph is to describe the setting. What is the purpose of the second paragraph?
- f What does the author mean by a 'ghost freeway'?
- g This excerpt uses **juxtaposition**. One example is 'the Nordic dreamscape on one side of the road, and the blackness on the other – the axis where the world had tilted'. Find another one and explain the contrast to a partner. What is the effect of using juxtaposition in this passage?

Juxtaposition

Juxtaposition is created when two opposite elements (objects, events, imagery, words) are placed next to each other. The effect is that we notice the contrast and how funny, unsettling or beautiful it may be. Juxtapositions can be very useful for exploring representations of identities, places, events and concepts in popular culture texts.

What does the text mean?

- h A journey is a popular trope or pattern in narratives. How does this journey help the reader understand the events, places, concepts and identities in *The Arsonist*?
- i What does DS Henry's description of his journey reveal about his character?
- j Find the 2021 documentary *Burning*. How does that text position the viewer to understand the events, places, concepts and identities of the bushfires of 2019/2020?

What does the text inspire you to do?

- k All journeys, whether they are between two places or two ways of being, have a purpose. People are inspired, required, or forced to move. Think of the last time you were on a journey. Where did your journey begin? Where were you going? What was the reason behind your move? Write a **recount** of this journey. You might like to focus on describing the starting or ending locations, or the environments you experienced on the way.
- l Find out about the fire safety procedures at your school or workplace.

Fire and symbolism

Fire symbolises many ideas: passion, rage, a catalyst for change.

Fire might be an element that has meaning for you or in your culture. In Chapter 4, we considered what fire might symbolise in *Lord of the Flies* and *Survivor*. Hooper explains some of its symbolism in Australia:

'Every culture has a tale about a human or an animal stealing fire, for better or for worse. In some traditions, this figure is a trickster spirit, like fire itself, a mischievous, self-absorbed, shapeshifting force both cunning and foolish, bewildered and bewildering. In Australian Aboriginal mythology, the fire thief is often a bird. And in the Northern Territory's tropical savannahs, the 'fire hawks' – the brown falcon, and black and whistling kites – really have been seen carrying smouldering sticks in their beaks or talons to reignite and extend a fire if it's petering out. They hunt on the blaze's flanks, ready to capture small fleeing creatures. So even the birds here are firesetters.'

SOURCE: Chloe Hooper, *The Arsonist: A Mind on Fire*, 2020



Activity 5.17

- 1 Read the descriptions of fire from *The Arsonist*.
- 2 Discuss why you think Hooper and the scientists personify or anthropomorphise fire. How does making the fire seem alive and sentient position the reader to view the fire?
- 3 Draw the beast.

‘The scientists were not the kind to anthropomorphise. And yet they did. ‘Flank’, ‘head’, ‘back’ or ‘rear’, ‘fingers of flame’, ‘tongue’, ‘tail’: despite themselves they described a beast. The low-hanging smoke drifted around the burnt trees. A sprite may as well have visited the forest and left one tiny spark, one curling lick of flame that begat this monster, which grew a tongue, a head, flanks and claw-like fingers, and stretched for mile after mile, taking whatever it wanted.’

SOURCE: Chloe Hooper, *The Arsonist: A Mind on Fire*, 2020

‘The fire he was seeing was a creature, a demon. It was alive.’

SOURCE: Chloe Hooper, *The Arsonist: A Mind on Fire*, 2020



Latrobe Valley

Geology ruled the valley.

SOURCE: Chloe Hooper, *The Arsonist: A Mind on Fire*, 2020

The Latrobe Valley is an important aspect of *The Arsonist*. The coal mines, power stations, forests and pine plantations make the area especially vulnerable to fire, especially after a very dry summer. The history, economy and environment influence the perspectives of people living in its towns.

The Arsonist paints a portrait of the town of Churchill in the Latrobe Valley as a town in economic decline. The closure of coal mines placed pressure on local businesses and public services because there are fewer jobs and people find it difficult to pay for what they need. In these tough circumstances, people may find it too expensive and emotionally difficult to move elsewhere.



Activity 5.18

Not a uniquely Australian experience, these communities under pressure are sometimes referred to as ‘rust belt towns’.

- 1 Have you heard this term before? What might it mean?
- 2 Search for images of rust belt towns.
- 3 Write a recount imagining you are visiting one of the towns. Choose your words carefully to position your audience to feel either hopeful or despondent.
- 4 What is being done today to support and transform struggling Australian industrial towns, like those in the Latrobe Valley?



Extension task 5.5

In *The Arsonist*, Chloe Hooper references Bruce Springsteen’s song, ‘Youngstown’, when Selena McCrickard is walking through Morwell. Springsteen’s song is about another industrial town, from the discovery of iron ore to the closure of the steel mills.



‘Bruce Springsteen’s ‘Youngstown’ came to mind. He sang of smokestacks stretching into a dirty sky like the arms of a deity, the rise of industry and the looming fall. Along with the song’s narrator a lot of the people Selena met felt they had been forgotten. They lived beyond the sight of those with influence, amidst the symbols of the unloved past.’

SOURCE: Chloe Hooper, *The Arsonist: A Mind on Fire*, 2020

Listen to the song and read a copy of the lyrics. What inspired Springsteen to write this song? Find the aspects that connect with *The Arsonist*. You might want to start with ‘my sweet Jenny’, the nickname for the Jeanette Blast Furnace.

A myriad of perspectives

The Arsonist is cleverly structured to show different perspectives of the event and the accused arsonist, Brendan Sokaluk. Hooper incorporates witness statements and interviews. The first part of the text focuses on the detectives and investigators, setting the scene and the sequence of events. The middle section centres on the lawyers and Brendan's cultural context, life circumstances and personal characteristics. In the final part of *The Arsonist*, the focus shifts to the courtroom and the perspectives created by the prosecution, the defence, the media and others watching the trial. Significantly, Brendan is never heard from directly. We only read other people's perspectives and opinions about him.

Hooper has discussed the challenge of managing these different perspectives throughout the book.

Interviewer: *As a work of nonfiction, how much research went into this book? What was the process like?*

Hooper: The Victoria Police Arson Squad agreed to talk with me first about Brendan Sokaluk's case and I started writing about the fire from their point of view. They believed Brendan to be a cunning serial fire-lighter. Legal Aid, who represented Brendan, eventually also agreed to speak with me, and so I began to hear a different perspective. Brendan, who had been badly bullied through his life, had been diagnosed post his arrest as being autistic with a serious intellectual impairment. Trying to do justice to both perspectives made this a very time-intensive book to write.

SOURCE: Chloe Hooper, 'After The Fire: Q&A with Chloe Hooper on writing *The Arsonist*', *Better Reading*, 19 October 2018





Activity 5.19

Selena McCrickard worked for Legal Aid and was assigned as Sokaluk's first legal representative. She lived in another town in the Latrobe Valley so she had a very good knowledge about the area and its people. McCrickard had sympathy for what Sokaluk had experienced growing up and, in her role as a barrister, took a different perspective to the detectives like DS Henry, who were the focus in the first section of *The Arsonist*.

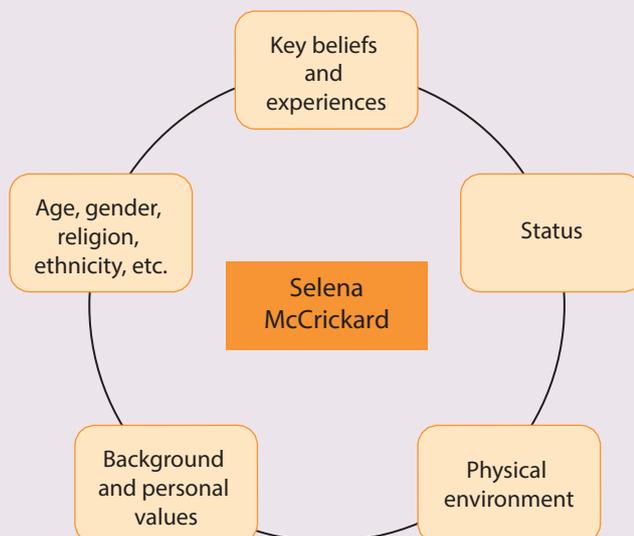
Use the two excerpts below to complete the context and perspective wheel below for McCrickard and understand what contextual factors might have influenced her perspective about Sokaluk.

'It took less than ten minutes to walk to the police station, and McCrickard, a fit woman in her mid-thirties, usually went directly up the main street of Morehell, as she called the town with begrudging affection. She passed the FOR LEASE notices pasted on shopfronts, interspersed with charities and services for victims of crime, and then, closer to the court, lawyer's offices. Even as she moved she held herself straight, tensed, as if balancing on something.'

SOURCE: Chloe Hooper, *The Arsonist: A Mind on Fire*, 2020

'Inevitably, many of the witness statements she read reflected the community's grief and resentment. A common theme was that Brendan was a sly, calculating man. She had seen this in other cases: accusers insisting that the accused was feigning his symptoms of intellectual disability, 'putting it on'. The great social contradiction, as Selena saw it, was the general forbearance shown people with mental disabilities, and acceptance of their need for understanding – but not if they do that. When a mentally ill person did something heinous, goodwill vanished in an instant, and the radio shock jocks were soon telling an audience eager to believe in their own righteousness and sound mental health that the impairment was fake.'

SOURCE: Chloe Hooper, *The Arsonist: A Mind on Fire*, 2020



Was only an arsonist to blame?

In the investigations following Black Saturday, it was determined that the majority of deaths and destruction were due to failures of the power grid and the companies responsible for its maintenance. Among other causes, the Kilmore East fire began when an electricity line or conductor fell, and then joined with the Murrindindi fire which was also caused by a fallen power line. Records suggest some of the failures were due to aging parts and recommendations that had been ignored.



Activity 5.20

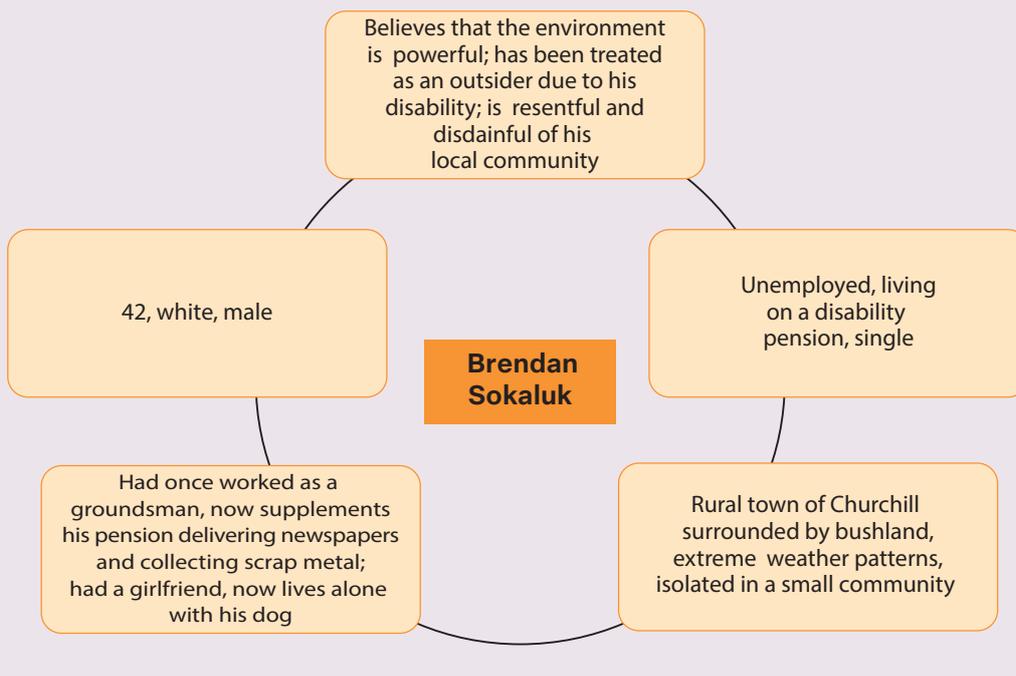
The following recount is written from the point of view of someone who saw Sokaluk watching the fire from his rooftop.

'On the afternoon of Black Saturday, after Natalie Turner had dropped him home, Brendan climbed onto his roof in Sheoke Grove and sat watching the inferno in the hills. His neighbours saw him and noticed that his face was streaked with dirt. He was wearing a camouflage-print outfit and a beanie. One hand shaded his eyes. All around, the sky was dark with smoke. Ash was falling. Tiny cinders burnt the throat on inhaling. Brendan glared down at the neighbours, then went back to watching his mother earth burn.'

SOURCE: Chloe Hooper, *The Arsonist: A Mind on Fire*, 2020

Two recounts of the same event can look very different. After all, there are always two (or more) sides to the story.

From this excerpt and other information in the book, we know a little about Sokaluk and what cultural influences and personal circumstances might have influenced his perspectives.



Activity 5.20 *Continued*

- We have worked out some of this information in the context and perspective wheel by inferring it from the excerpt. Highlight phrases from the excerpt that tell us that:
 - Sokaluk believes the environment is powerful
 - Sokaluk believes the environment is special to him
 - Sokaluk is resentful and feels disdain for his neighbours.
- We can practise writing recounts by writing from the perspectives of other characters in the text. Here, we've rewritten the excerpt from the perspective of one of Sokaluk's neighbours:

Stage and phase	Recount
Orientation: Describe the where and when. Include an action where your main character arrives at their setting.	On that dark Saturday afternoon, while her father frantically forced their most important belongings into the car, Annabelle stumbled out the fly screen door and stared dazedly at the inky smoke tarring the sky.
Event 1: Noticed someone on the roof	A figure caught her eye: Annabelle's neighbour sat calmly on his own roof, intently absorbing the horror decimating the skyline. His face was filthy. His camouflage tracksuit was tattered, dirtied with ash.
Event 2: Fire coming closer	Despite the man's visible complacency, the inferno raged on in the mid distance. The air angrily singed her throat when she breathed in. The heat was too close.
Reorientation: Re-present aspects to show the character's point of view.	Annabelle's stomach lurched; she thought he might be staring right at her. There was no fear in his gaze. His apathy disgusted her. He disgusted her. Annabelle glared back before turning to help her father.

- Your turn. Rewrite this event from the perspective of a firefighter driving by Sokaluk's house in Sheoke Grove on their way to put out the fire.

Stage and phase	Recount
Orientation: Describe the where and when. Include an action where your main character arrives at their setting.	
Event 1	
Event 2	
Event 3	
Reorientation: Re-present aspects to show character's point of view.	

Activity 5.20 Continued

4 Rewrite this event to describe the view from the rooftop.

Stage and phase	Recount
Orientation: Describe the where and when. Include an action where your main character arrives at their setting.	
Event 1	
Event 2	
Event 3	
Reorientation: Re-present aspects to show the character's point of view.	

The silence of Brendan Sokaluk

Although the book includes transcripts from interviews with the police, *The Arsonist* does not include Sokaluk's own perspective of events. Hooper explains that he was living with an undiagnosed disability. She suggests this gave him a very different perception of the world than other people he was interacting with in the investigation.

Perspectives of people with autism

Chloe Hooper refers to the following texts in *The Arsonist* as examples of people with autism who share their own points of view on the world.

- Temple Grandin, *Thinking in Pictures*
- Naoki Higashida, *The Reason I Jump: One Boy's Voice from the Silence of Autism*
- Donna Williams, *Nobody Nowhere and Somebody Somewhere*.

'When you read some of those descriptions of the sensory havoc that can occur [for people with autism]. You're almost in a parallel universe slightly. There are so many issues about culpability in this. I'm not excusing him. I feel, without fulsomely looking at Brendan's point of view, you've missed the story.'

SOURCE: Chloe Hooper, quoted in Samuel Elliott 'An Interview with *The Arsonist's* Chloe Hooper', *Compulsive Reader*, 21 January 2019



Activity 5.21

At the end of *The Arsonist*, Hooper has included a coda (a conclusion) and an afterword (an epilogue). Both are worth reading in full. For now, read this excerpt where Hooper describes the landscape as she drives through it almost 10 years later.

'I drive past Eel Hole Creek, not much of a creek if it's still there at all, then I come to eucalypts in straight lines, the monoculture of a plantation interrupted by transmission towers and powerlines, and shortly I pass a stretch of road that always brings to mind science fiction, the dystopic kind set in the concrete and rust of a post-industrial world. Behind barbed-wire fencing, various elements of power infrastructure make a tangled fortress of steel and wires, transformers and insulators, chimneys and pylons. It's a kind of grandly engineered scrapyard now. In a line are the remnants of the Morwell power station, the briquette factory, the char plant. All this industry has shut down in the past few years, one closure precipitating the next.'

SOURCE: Chloe Hooper, *The Arsonist: A Mind on Fire*, 2020

- 1 As she did in the opening paragraph (p. 216) where she referred to fairytales, Hooper makes a comparison to aspects of a fictional genre, this time dystopian fiction. What is the effect of making connections to these popular fiction genres?
- 2 Think of a time you've driven (or been driven) through a dramatic landscape or unsettling, unfamiliar place, like driving on a narrow road, or taking a wrong turn. Describe the experience in a paragraph or two. Challenge yourself by making a connection with a fictional genre like horror or fantasy.



This section has focused on the Black Saturday bushfire event. The table on the next page demonstrates how you could use an event, identity, concept or place as a springboard for a written response that would invite a reader to take up a position. In the right-hand column, we've provided an example of how your written response could begin. You could take this idea and keep writing from there or use it as a guide for writing in the genre.

Springboard for a written response: Aspects of *The Arsonist*



Aspects	Genre and audience	Some words to get you started
Event: a natural disaster	A blog, written in-role as a survival expert, explaining what you would take from your house and why, if you needed to evacuate and find higher ground	In the event of a natural disaster, and let's be honest, the research suggests that could be tomorrow, here's my list of things to take: 1. My Fenix PDR36R Pro flashlight because it has a long battery life (and it was expensive!)
Identity: teen	A dystopian short story for <i>The Best Australian Yarn</i> short story competition about a teen who survives in the wild	I only survived because I was young. Old enough to know when to run, but young enough that I could still run fast. Now all I can do is look at the barren hills around me.
Concept: ethics of true crime	A transcript for an episode of the podcast <i>The Rest is Entertainment</i> about who engages with true crime texts and why	Host: Today on <i>The Rest is Entertainment</i> , we're discussing true crime podcasts! Do they make us feel safer? Or are they putting more people in danger? We'll hear the cases that were solved and about the unintended consequences of internet sleuthing.
Place: Queenstown, Tasmania	A news story for the Tasmanian publication <i>Mercury</i> about an influx of new residents in Queenstown, titled: 'Queenstown is the new hotspot of interstate migration'	A 2023 report by the Tasmanian Policy Exchange for the University of Tasmania reveals that the West coast is experiencing heightened 'population churn'. Residents are coming and going at rapid rates; they are pulled to where the mining work is but pushed away by the slow pace of small-town life. Queenstown has been a centre of industry for the past 30 years. The mining industry has irreparably altered the landscape, but luckily, there is a wave of young families who are finding a spate of reasons to call Queenstown 'home'.

5.6 Putting it all together



Context:

In this chapter, you have explored aspects of Australian popular culture texts. You have learned that these texts position their audiences to take up perspectives about the identities, places, concepts and events represented in them. Now it's your turn to create a text.

You're a reporter working for the Australian Broadcasting Corporation. You arrive at the scene of a disaster, natural phenomenon or other event and gather the perspectives of people who saw it first-hand. Their accounts will be presented as part of ongoing news coverage of the event on the ABC News website.

Task:

Write a recount, first of your arrival at the scene and then from the perspectives of one or more eyewitnesses. For each person, provide information that identifies the eyewitness followed by their description of the sequence of events as they saw them.

Purpose: Engage, inform

Genre: Personal recount

Audience: Readers of the ABC News website

A model recount from the perspective of an eyewitness to the 2015 Nepal earthquake:

Sarah Hunt, Kathmandu

Sarah Hunt is a blogger who was in Nepal to hike the Annapurna Circuit trek.

"I was chatting inside our hostel on the first floor in Thamel, Kathmandu's central tourist district, when the beds around us began shaking. We have already had many aftershocks, so we initially assumed it was one of these, but the intensity kept building.

"I could hear yelling and screams from outside. We bolted out of the room, running down the stairs, which were moving underneath us. We ran into a courtyard outside the hotel, looking above for signs of movement. The ground below felt like it was melting, or rippling like a swimming pool. I dived under a table outside with five others. Everyone was making eye contact and some were screaming.

"Someone called that it wasn't safe so we ran to a wider space. There were high buildings all around us so we kept looking upwards, waiting to see if there was any debris coming down. Everyone was huddling together, some staring numbly, others trying to call relatives."

SOURCE: 'Nepal earthquake: Eyewitness accounts',
BBC News, 12 May 2015

Alternate springboard ideas for a written response:

Throughout this chapter are suggestions for how you could use aspects of a popular culture text as a springboard for a written response. You can find these on p. 229, pp. 187–188, pp. 199–200 and p. 205.

Some examples of texts in different genres to guide your writing:

- Units 1&2 Explanation of a form, Chapter 1, pp. 21–22
- Units 1&2 Email exchange, Chapter 1, pp. 22–25
- Units 1&2 Advertisements for hotels, Chapter 2, pp. 48–50
- Units 1&2 Transcript of a discussion, Chapter 3, pp. 80–81
- Units 1&2 Articles, Chapter 3, pp. 91–92 and 93–94; Chapter 4, pp. 110–111
- Units 1&2 Film review, Chapter 4, pp. 131–133, 134
- Units 1&2 Descriptions of place, Chapter 5, p. 152–153, pp. 155–157
- Units 1&2 Script Chapter 5, pp. 159–162
- Units 3&4 Articles, Chapter 1, pp. 34–35; Chapter 2, pp. 51–53, p. 58, pp. 61–62; Chapter 4, pp. 136–137; Chapter 5, pp. 161–163, pp. 167–169
- Units 3&4 Letter, Chapter 2, pp. 79–81
- Units 3&4 Podcasts, Chapter 2, p. 89–90

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Chapter 2

– additional digital-only content

***War on Waste* (2017, 2018, 2023)**

An Australian text, *War on Waste*, has been influential in inspiring local and global change. This docuseries, led by presenter Craig Reucassel, draws attention to the volume of waste Australians produce and where that waste ends up. Each episode focuses on a different aspect of the waste issue – food waste, plastic waste, fashion waste – and offers **audiences** practical advice to instigate positive change.

If you saw any of the series, do you think they were successful? What do you remember most?

Let's start by thinking about the causes and effects of the volume of waste in Australia. Use graphic organisers like the ripple and **fishbone diagrams** to structure your own knowledge. It is usually helpful to begin individually, then share your ideas with your peers to construct a knowledge bank that you can refer to as you work towards **proposing** solutions to an issue.





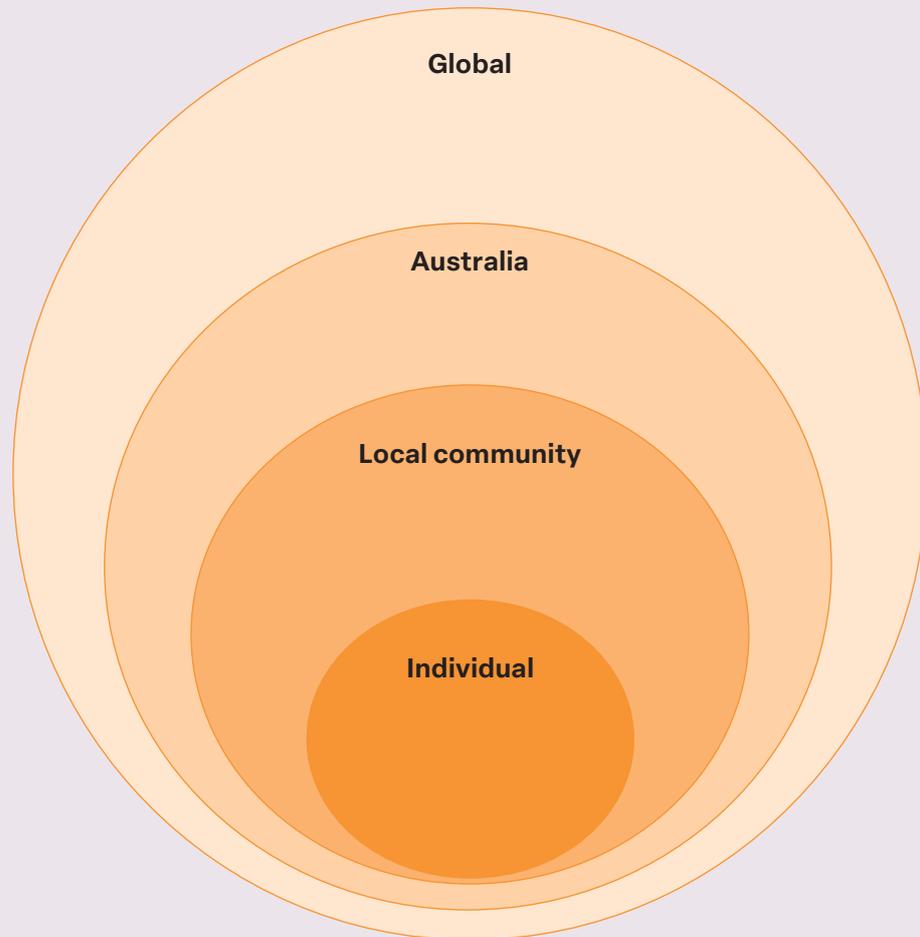
Activity 2.34

A ripple diagram is a way to visualise the effects of an issue on individuals and the larger communities they're a part of. In the smallest circle, consider the effects on the individual (this might be you). In each 'ripple', consider the communities you're a part of – school, Queensland, the world.

You can find an example of a ripple diagram representing the effects of online data security breaches on p. 45.

Complete a ripple diagram showing the effects of having too much waste in Australia.

Issue: too much waste





Activity 2.35

An Ishikawa or fishbone diagram is a graphic organiser that shows the causes of a particular effect. Creating an Ishikawa diagram will help you consider many potential causes because each branch (primary cause) can have several sub-branches (secondary causes). You can find an example of an Ishikawa diagram on p. 50.

To help you make your diagram, try repeating the question: ‘Why?’

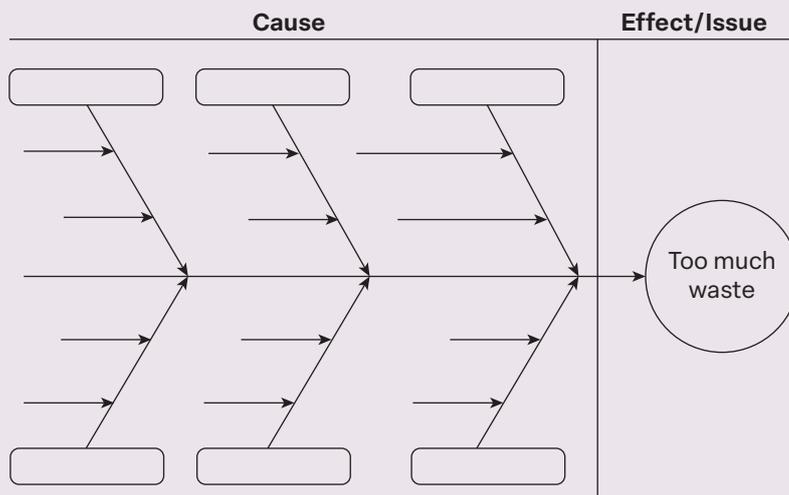
Q: Why is there so much waste in Australia?

A: Because we use so much single-use plastic.

Q: Why don’t we use a different material?

A: Because it’s cheaper and easier for companies to use plastic.

Begin identifying causes of the issue – too much waste – that you can predict from your own knowledge. Add them to a fishbone diagram. Update this diagram as you learn more about the problem of waste in Australia.



Persuading you to watch

A **documentary** presents a particular **perspective** on an issue, often the human side to a story. It shows the real-life impacts and educates audiences in an entertaining way.

When persuading people to change their behaviour, first they need to be persuaded to engage with the text. Let’s look at how a tagline and trailer are designed to grab the attention of the audience.



The True Cost (2015)

Andrew Morgan heard about the Rana Plaza Disaster (see p. 68) and created *The True Cost* to investigate the issue and effects of the fast fashion industry on people and the environment. It is considered a success in raising awareness of the terrible working conditions within many garment factories and influencing **attitudes** and behaviours around the issue. *The True Cost*, along with other campaigns responding to the disaster, are credited with positive changes and improvements in protections for garment workers.



Activity 2.36

Obviously, the title is important. It's the first thing the audience will engage with. On p. 78, we consider the title *Consumed*. As well as a catchy title, *The True Cost* also uses a tagline. A tagline is a hook that intrigues the audience.

The tagline for *The True Cost* is:

WHO PAYS THE PRICE FOR OUR CLOTHING?

- 1 Discuss and make notes about what this tagline makes you think about.

The trailer is another important way of 'hooking' the audience. One feature used in this trailer is **juxtaposition**.

Juxtaposition

This is a technique where contrasting words, ideas or images are placed next to each other to heighten their impact. This is an effective resource for positioning viewers because it draws attention to differences.



- 2 Watch the trailer without sound and write down a list of the images you see. Identify examples of juxtaposition. What else do you notice about the selection and sequencing of the images?
- 3 Next, watch the trailer with the sound on. Note down any phrases or sounds that catch your attention.

Another feature of the trailer is that it summarises what you are about to watch in an easily accessible way. It also wants to leave you with unanswered questions that you have to watch the documentary to find out.

- 4 Summarise some of the impacts that the demand for low-cost clothing has on garment workers. What unanswered questions were you left with?



Activity 2.37

- 1 Watch the trailer for season 3 for *War on Waste* without sound. Note down examples of images or scenes that stick out to you. What examples of juxtaposition do you notice?
- 2 Next, watch the trailer with the sound on. What sounds or phrases caught your attention?
- 3 Make a list of questions to answer when you watch the full series. How effective is the *War on Waste* trailer in persuading people to watch the series? Give specific evidence for your response.

Why do we need a war on waste in Australia?

With the launch of the Keep Australia Beautiful campaign in the late 1960s, and the Do the Right Thing campaign of the 1980s, Australia appeared to be a recycling innovator. As the decades passed, our percentage of recycled materials grew. However, the waste the average Aussie produces was also growing at an alarming rate. By 2016, Australians were generating, on average, 540kg of waste each per year.

In 2017, China announced it would no longer import rubbish for recycling. As Australia had been reliant on offshore recycling, waste plastics and paper began to pile up. Despite the efforts of community groups and environmental organisations, most Australians had little idea where their rubbish was going.

Enter *War on Waste*.

The first two series reached millions of viewers, with additional content across radio, television and online platforms. On social media, #WarOnWasteAU was the ABC's biggest ever campaign. In 2019, the ABC partnered with the Institute for Sustainable Futures (ISF) at University of Technology Sydney to produce an impact report. This report found that *War on Waste* influenced positive changes in behaviour for consumers and businesses.

For example, the sales of reusable coffee cups increased, cafes offered discounts for bringing your own cup, and there was a rise in participation of initiatives like Recycle Mate. In 2020, McDonald's was one of the first restaurant groups in Australia to phase out single-use plastic straws and cutlery nationally.

Audience responses translated into systems-wide changes within Australia's private, public and community sectors. Active audiences are successful drivers for change.



Activity 2.38

Reading ‘Why do we need a war on waste?’ and watching the trailer will give you some ideas about the issue of waste and what can be done about it.

Let’s review what we already know by using a **KWL chart**. This is an effective way to organise your thoughts before looking into an issue in more depth.

- 1 Complete the ‘Know’ and ‘Want to know’ columns of the KWL chart on your worksheet before you watch *War on Waste*. The **question chart** below the KWL chart will help you to write questions for the ‘Want to know’ column. (You will complete the Learned column in Activity 2.42.)

KWL chart:

Know	Want to know	Learned
In dot points, write down everything you already <u>know</u> about the issue of excess plastic, food, and/or fashion waste.	Write down any questions you <u>want</u> or need to ask. Use the question chart to help you design effective questions.	Record what you <u>learn</u> from an episode.
• • •	• • •	• • •

How to use a question chart

Start your question with a word from the left-hand column. Then select a word from the top row. You can change the form of the verbs along the top of the chart. For example:

- *What do* most households throw away?
- *How can* individuals help in the war on waste?

You may not have questions for all the boxes; these are just to get you started.



Activity 2.38 *Continued*

Question chart:

	is/are	do	can	will
What	What is my school's recycling policy?			
Who			Who can I contact about composting schemes?	
Where		Where do I exchange rubbish for money?		
How				How will I reduce my own waste in future?

Why am I doing this?

You can use the KWL chart and question chart in combination with ripple and fishbone diagrams to help you select, organise and sequence information for your own investigation.



Activity 2.39

The following statements are based on the *War on Waste* trailer, social media and interactive digibook, which can be found in the education resources on the ABC website.

Label each statement **fact** or **opinion**. Are any of them difficult to label either way? Why?

	In one year, Australians generated 26 million tonnes of waste.
	Food waste in landfill creates more greenhouse gas emissions than the aviation industry.
	Encouraging your friends and communities to reduce waste is effective.

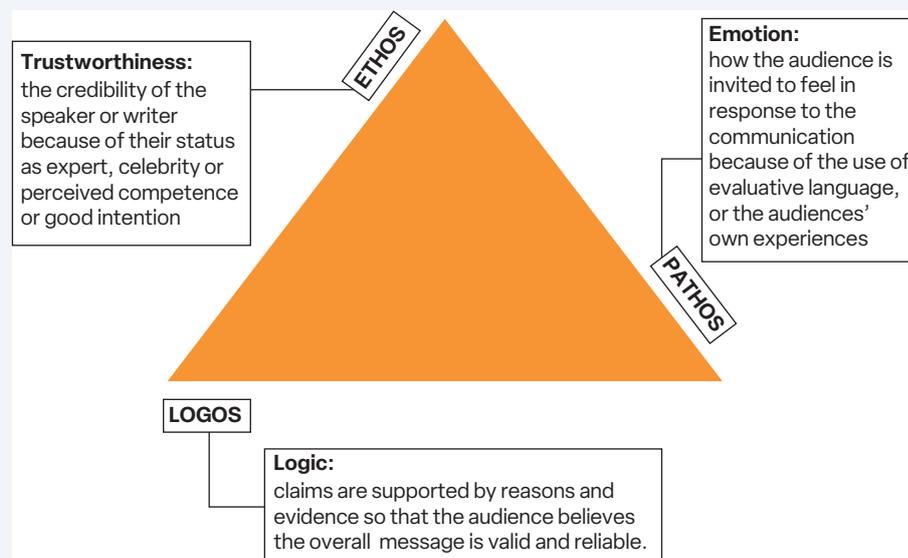
Activity 2.39 Continued

	Plastic Free July is a global movement with millions of participants.
	Mending and sewing is a fun way to prolong the life of your clothes.
	Sorting your recycling correctly is quick and easy.
	<i>War on Waste</i> provides practical tips and tricks for change.
	Over 60% of our textiles are made using fossil-fuel based materials.

As well as being entertaining and informative, *War on Waste* aims to persuade the audience to change their behaviour around waste. One of the ways of doing this is using rhetorical techniques – pathos, logos, ethos.

Rhetorical techniques

The Greek philosopher Aristotle described three rhetorical **modes** a speaker might use to position an **audience** to accept their perspective (point of view). **Pathos** is the emotional **appeal** of the message. **Logos** is the logical reasoning that supports the case. **Ethos** is the trustworthiness of the source.



Aristotle's thinking is still useful for explaining how we are positioned and how we can persuade and influence others. In combination with a strong understanding about **language features** and **text structures**, these categories can help people to be powerful readers and creators of texts.

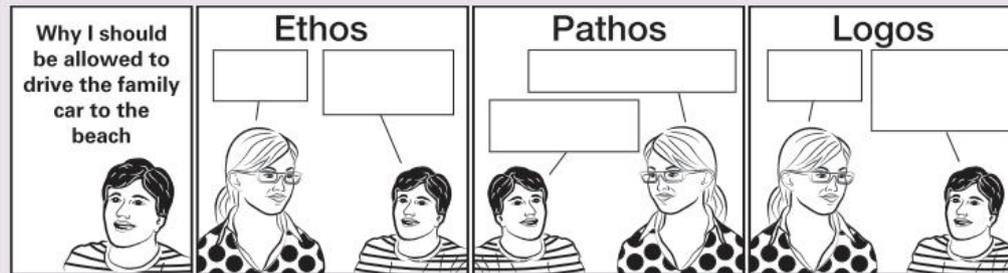


Activity 2.40

Below is a cartoon where characters use different rhetorical techniques.



Now you try it. Make a similar cartoon, explaining why the character should drive the family car to the beach. Use the explanations in the rhetorical triangle to help you.



Activity 2.41

- 1 Read the following article about the Foodbank organisation as a local response to the national issue of food insecurity. There is an activity looking at the beliefs, values and attitudes in this article on p. 58.

Banking on community

Imagine coming home from work and having to choose whether to feed yourself or your children. For many Australians, this is a daily reality.

The 2023 Foodbank Hungry Report shows food insecurity has increased and households with children are more likely to experience severe food insecurity.

Thankfully, charities are partnering with local communities to bravely step into the gap.

As Australia's largest food relief organisation, Foodbank's mission is for everyone experiencing food insecurity to have access to nutritious meals. As well as co-ordinating food distribution from local warehouses, the charity provides empowering nutrition-education programs and fights food waste.

Foodbank is run entirely on the generosity of local communities. Local communities like yours. Whether it is a bag of pantry staples or monetary donations from large corporations, it all helps meet a real need. Annually, around 11 million kilos of food and groceries are donated, which improves the lives of over 180 000 Queenslanders while they get back on their feet.

Activity 2.41 *Continued*

Those of us with more time can provide hands-on support. From driving, to packing, to administration, volunteers are an integral part of these amazing Foodbank programs.

Together, small actions within the local community make a big difference.

You can find out more at the Foodbank website.



- 2 Identify Aristotle's persuasive techniques at work, so you can more clearly see how you are being positioned by this article. Provide an example of logos and ethos from the text and explain their effects. One example of pathos has been included for you.

Category	Example	Effect
Pathos (emotional appeal)	Imagine coming home from work and having to choose whether to feed yourself or your children.	Appeals to audience imagination and creates empathy for a difficult situation.
Logos (logical reasoning)		
Ethos (trustworthiness)		

Documentaries are **multimodal** texts, which means audio, visual and non-verbal elements all contribute to positioning the audience.

Assumptions and **connotations** add to the documentary's message. For example, setting part of the documentary in a science lab might make the audience assume the presenters are experts proving a scientific claim, while a natural location might be viewed as 'clean' or 'pure'. These settings can add legitimacy to claims (ethos), even if the people in the lab are not experts, or the claim is an opinion, rather than a fact.



Activity 2.42

- 1 Watch an episode of *War on Waste*, and identify examples of the persuasive and rhetorical techniques that are used to engage audiences with an issue.
- 2 Turn this into a game of *War on Waste* bingo by crossing off each persuasive element you see in an episode. You might change the devices listed here or increase the challenge by adding more boxes to your bingo grid.

Interview with an expert	Laboratory location	Dramatic music	Ethos (appeal to authority and credibility)
A challenge	Striking visual	Factory or other industrial location	Hyperbole
Humour	Pathos (emotional appeal)	Outdoor location	Craig goes through rubbish
Logos (facts and figures)	Association with group identity	Interview with a 'regular' person	Rhetorical question

- 3 Refer back to your KWL chart from Activity 2.38. Use the facts and statistics you see and hear to complete the 'Learned' column. These are examples of logos. If there are any experts, that's ethos!
- 4 Compare and combine your completed 'Learned' column with your peers. Create a record of all the facts and expert quotations in an episode. You could present this as a poster or use an online space to collate your work. Be careful – are there any statements that are opinions, rather than facts?

Elements of success of *War on Waste*

The ABC and the Institute for Sustainable Futures (ISF) collaborated on an Impact Report about the effect of *War on Waste*. This report showed that the docuseries had been effective in influencing individual waste habits and creating change at the business and government level.

The Executive Summary of the report said the following:



ISF's case studies and analysis revealed viewers responded positively to the show's unique storytelling format including Reucassel's willingness to cheerfully rummage through our bins to expose the extent and nature of Australia's waste crisis. Respondents cited Reucassel's humour and encouraging, personable manner, the show's dramatic visualisations (such as the enormous plastic footprint on Manly Beach in Sydney, which represented the volume of plastic discarded in Australia every minute), and the many accessible solutions. Viewers also identified with the ordinary Australians – of all ages and from all walks of life – who featured on-screen with Reucassel as they rose to the challenge to 'clean up' and to campaign for change.

SOURCE: <https://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/11253>

War on Waste effectively uses structure (such as storytelling), **register** (humour and a personable manner), and various **representations** to **position** the audience to respond to the issues presented and adopt suggested solutions.

Structure: How to tell a story

In Series 3 of *War on Waste*, there is a focus on fixing problems in the design stages. After all, one way to reduce waste is to not have it in the first place!

As part of the show's successful storytelling format, some sections have a narrative structure. A narrative typically has three stages:

Orientation: introduces the audience to the setting and the people involved, and may indicate when and what has happened previously.

Complication(s): some significant problem or conflict that needs to be resolved

Resolution: what happens that 'resolves' the complication, often including a description about how the people and places are at the end.

Structure: How to tell a story

One of the cohesive threads through the series is the work of students at the University of New South Wales (UNSW).

Orientation: In episode one, Reucassel identifies some problem products at the recycling facility. He then meets students at the Design Futures Lab, UNSW, to introduce the #designitbetter challenge.

Complication: The students are tasked with redesigning four products – a cordial bottle, the soy sauce fish, fruit stickers and bread bags. In episode two, students discuss the problems they identified with the original designs and the solutions they'd considered. Finally, in episode three, we see trials of the suggested redesigns and how they solve the problem.

Structure: How to tell a story *continued*

Resolution: One student, Jordan, comes up with a solution to fruit stickers and pitches this solution to Harris Farm Markets. In each episode of the series, we see Craig and the students in slightly different scenarios as they come up with their solutions.



We see effective use of structure when Mao, Katie and Jordan present their ideas to Craig, tutors and peers. Their presentations are logically structured to guide their audience from a problem to the solution:

- 1 Outlining problems with the current product
- 2 Overview of idea for a solution
- 3 Explaining the details of the solution – materials
- 4 Trials and prototypes
- 5 Solution.

Discuss whether this is an effective structure for presenting the proposed solutions. **Consider** anything else you would have added to the presentations.



Activity 2.43

When looking at potential solutions, a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis is useful for identifying what has been done well and what can be improved.

Here's an example SWOT analysis of Mao's proposal for a powdered soy sauce in dissolvable, edible gelatine packaging.

Proposal: Powdered soy sauce in gelatine

	Successes	Improvements
Internal (the solution itself)	Strengths: Leaves no waste Same taste	Weaknesses: New manufacturing methods needed for mass production
External (responses to the solution)	Opportunities: Changing other sauce packaging	Threats: Gelatine often not vegan

Activity 2.43 Continued

- 1 In groups, complete a SWOT analysis for either:
 - a one of the students' proposed solutions to the challenge
 - b a solution proposed for another issue in *War on Waste*
 - c your own solution for a school-based waste issue, such as composting food waste or encouraging recycling.

Proposal:

	Successes	Improvements
Internal (the solution itself)	Strengths:	Weaknesses:
External (responses to the solution)	Opportunities:	Threats:

Representation: People like you and me

Documentary creators aim to connect with their target audience by representing everyday people on screen; this shows the audience that they too can make a difference.

In *War on Waste*, Craig interacts with people involved in waste supply chain, from creating it to transforming it. He also speaks to regular people like those interacting with the series' visual representations and stunts, as well as the residents of Wood Street.

The residents of Wood Street investigate the understandable confusion around waste habits. Following one community throughout the series effectively creates connection. As an audience, we recognise familiar faces, are invested in their success and can (hopefully) visualise ourselves in their position.



Activity 2.44

Discuss the following:

- 1 Did you see anyone who represented an aspect of your identity or shared your values and beliefs?
- 2 Did their attitudes change? How did that influence your attitudes and behaviours to the different types of household waste?



Activity 2.45

Representing ordinary Australians throughout the program aligns with *War on Waste*'s aim to provide achievable, realistic solutions for everyone. This includes recycling advice, suggestions for using up what's in your fridge and explaining why we should all be buying less.

- 1 Select one of the changes suggested in *War on Waste* and create a ripple diagram to show the positive effects and waste reduction that could stem from this change.
- 2 Is this change one that you could or would make?

Register: A manner of speaking

When you are trying to persuade people to change their behaviour, reasons and facts (logos) alone are not enough. Texts that seek to influence our attitude make use of what the famous linguist Michael Halliday (1989) called **register**; that is, language to serve the situation. When we control register well, we select subject matter, control how the audience engages with the ideas, and arrange them cohesively.

Controlling emotional responses is an important part of the communicative process. Encouraging more positive emotions, like optimism and excitement, is often more constructive than generating a mood of fear and guilt. Some media commentators use a humorous tone to lighten the mood. Humour is also a way to criticise the current systems and offer solutions.



Activity 2.46

- 1 The following text is about microplastic contamination. As you read, highlight the language features and text structures that make the register more **formal** and impersonal, creating distance between the reader and writer. Some examples have been identified for you.



Text structures	Article	Language features
Formal title	<p>Presence of microplastics throughout Australian marine sites</p> <p>Degradation of larger plastics, including clothing, eventually produces microplastics. These microplastics are smaller than 5mm and can be particles or fibres that are often too small to see with the naked eye. Microplastics are now being found across marine ecosystems, such as Australia's Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area.</p>	<p>Language: specialised vocabulary</p> <p>Attribution: expert opinion</p>

Text structures	Article	Language features
Citations	<p>Academics from Flinders University note that microplastics ‘pose a risk to organisms across all stages of biological organisation’ and, although negative consequences of the ingestion of plastic have been reported in laboratory settings, more on-site research is needed (Tuuri and Leterme, 2023 https://doi.org/10.1016/j.envpol.2023.121156).</p>  <p>Once in the ocean, plastics are known to absorb a range of hazardous chemicals that may be ingested by marine life. Additionally, microplastics can be a source of PFAS, or ‘forever chemicals’. These leach from microplastics into the water, building up in plants and animals through bioaccumulation.</p> <p>Microplastic contamination is a complex problem because researchers must consider the types of polymers, as well as the age and size of the plastic.</p> <p>This is a key issue for Australia as the majority of the population lives in coastal areas and plastic production and use is increasing.</p> <p>The full ecological effects of microplastic contamination are still under investigation.</p>	

Activity 2.46 *Continued*

- 2 Transform the information from the article ‘Presence of microplastics throughout Australian marine sites’ into a more informal piece of writing that matches the register used in *War on Waste*. You are writing for the Australian public. Try to use some humour if you can. Include an appropriate and engaging image.

Save our seas	Examples of text structures and language features
<p>Our ocean has _____.</p> <p>When we throw away our plastic, much of it _____.</p> <p>Think about _____. It isn't just short-term either.</p> <p>Did you know that _____?</p> <p>On top of this, _____.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Catchy title • Inclusive pronouns • Emotive language • Exaggeration • Direct appeal • Humour • Wordplay • Varied paragraph lengths



Activity 2.47

Watch the sections in each episode featuring Craig and the students at UNSW's Design Futures Lab.

- 1 Identify how students, Craig and other figures are represented to the audience in terms of their language choices, multimodal and nonverbal elements.

Section	Language choices	Non-verbal elements	Multimodal elements
	Spoken and written	e.g. body language and gesture, clothing	e.g. props, sound, visuals
<p>Episode 1: 29.50–33.40mins</p> <p>Craig presents the challenge and students share initial thoughts</p>			Craig has props for all the issues



Activity 2.47 *Continued*

Section	Language choices	Non-verbal elements	Multimodal elements
	Spoken and written	e.g. body language and gesture, clothing	e.g. props, sound, visuals
Episode 2: 36.20–41.30mins Students present ideas to their tutors and Craig	Use of humour		
Episode 3: 22.45–26.45mins Jordan presenting to Angus Harris, CEO of Harris Farms		Shaking hands	

- 2 Why do we present ourselves differently in different situations? Identify examples of situations from *War on Waste* or your own experience. Explain what changed (word choices, clothing, body language etc.) and the purpose of these changes.



Communicating for success

War on Waste successfully communicates with its audience and has persuaded many people to change their habits.



Activity 2.48

Did watching *War on Waste* change or reinforce your perspective? Complete the cloze activity to reflect on your ideas.

Before I watched *War on Waste*, my attitude towards the things I throw away was _____. My perspective has [*stayed the same/changed a little/completely transformed*]. I have learned that _____ and in future I will _____. I [*would/would not*] encourage people in my [*school/family/local community*] to watch this because _____.

Social media engagement has also been a very successful strategy for *War on Waste* and allows even more people to be involved with informed and active citizenship. For *War on Waste*, the battle to educate Australians continues through #WarOnWasteAU.

'In our house, we dream BIG dreams. Go all or go home.'

Scan the QR code to watch the story of Elijah Richardson, a community organiser inspired by *War on Waste*.



Kids like this give us hope for the future (06:56)



Activity 2.49

Social media can be a powerful agent for change.

- 1 As a class, identify examples of social media campaigns that led to positive changes.
- 2 Create a concept map that identifies the issue the social media campaigns addressed and how the campaign improved the issue. Did it raise awareness or funding? Did it lead to a change in behaviours? Did it result in a change of legislation?
- 3 Choose one successful social media campaign and explain its success. Elaborate on one element of the success using a paragraph structure.

The use of social media allows communities to connect and participate in citizen science, community-led projects and grassroots change. You can find Australian projects that have had a positive environmental impact in the 'Good Green News' section on *The Conversation* website.

Moreton Bay Shellfish Reef Restoration Project

A community-driven project in Moreton Bay, Queensland is restoring the coastline and inspiring other states. Scan the QR code to watch a video overview of the project and how it will continue benefit community members and scientific understanding in the future.



Moreton Bay Shellfish Reef Restoration Project (04:36)

Find the article 'How a filmmaker, a pile of old shells and a bunch of amateurs are bringing our oyster reefs back' on *The Conversation* website.

Read the section with the subheading 'Fishing filmmaker's bright idea' to learn how the project started. Why do you think the authors located this section in the middle of the article? Is the sequencing of this article effective?



Extension 2.5

There are plenty other success stories in Australia's war on waste. Find a local organisation, project or event that you can participate in as a community. Some places to start are:

- Reef Builder
- Clean Up Australia Day
- Recycle Mates
- Plastic Free July
- The Ocean Cleanup.

You might even work with your peers to create your own group.

Of course, waste is not the only issue that affects Australians, and this is not the only docuseries exploring them. Programs like *Four Corners* and channels like SBS and ABC are great places to start looking at how issues are represented in documentary form.

GLOSSEX

A glossary and index

When you come across a word in purple or blue bold, look it up in this glossary and complete the blank squares. You may prefer to do this in the PDF version of the Glossex, available for download from *Cambridge GO*.

To complete the definition column, try:

- copying from the definition box
- looking it up in a dictionary
- reading around the word in the chapter for clues.

To complete the memory jogger column, you can:

- draw a picture
- look up the word origin in a dictionary
- write down some **synonyms** (or **antonyms**, but mark them clearly as antonyms)
- write the word in a sentence
- provide examples, interesting facts or characteristics
- create any other **mnemonic** that will help you remember the meaning of the word.

Word	Definition	Memory jogger	Page refs
abstract	An idea that is not concrete or applied; non-specific		
advertise	Publicise information, usually that something is for sale or available		
affect	Emotional response (noun); to act on or produce a change (verb)		
algorithm	In marketing, social media and other digital content, the algorithm is a set of rules and calculations used by platforms to determine what content you are shown		
allegory		Synonyms: fable, figuration, myth, parable, story, symbol, tale, typification, legend	
analyse	Examine specific details to make and justify conclusions		
angle	Way of looking at something; perspective		
annotate	To make notes – often written on a text, in the margins or on post-its		
appeal	The power to attract or move people's emotions		

Word	Definition	Memory jogger	Page refs
appraise			
appreciation	Writers and speakers positively/negatively communicate the worth and beauty of: people's appearance, abilities and relationships, plans, policies, human artefacts and the natural world		
argue			
aspects			Ch. 5, 182
assumption			
attitude		'Get rid of that negative attitude, young man!'	
attribution	Writer/speaker acknowledges or reports the words and viewpoints of external voices		
audience		From the root word meaning attention or hearing. Related words: audio; audible; audition	
author			
autobiographical			
beliefs			
bias			
brand			
categorise			
communicate			
composition			
compare			
conjunctions	Words that bind clauses together to make sentences		
concept map			
connotation	Ideas suggested by a word or phrase; the meaning is implicit rather than explicit		
consider			
construct	Create or put together (e.g. an argument) by arranging ideas or items; display information in a diagrammatic or logical form; make; build		

Word	Definition	Memory jogger	Page refs
context	The surrounding text or the circumstances that help determine the meaning of a text		
contrast	The difference between two things		
convention	A practice, procedure or technique that's widely used by a group		
create	Bring something into being or existence; produce or evolve from one's own thought or imagination; reorganise or put elements together into a new pattern or structure, or form a coherent or functional whole		
critical reader			
cultural assumptions	Ideas, beliefs or attitudes about such things as gender, religion, ethnicity, youth, age, disability, sexuality, social class and work that are taken for granted as being part of the fabric of the social practices of a particular culture; cultural assumptions underpin texts and can be used to position audiences		
culture	The ways of living and thinking practised by a particular group, or society, sometimes passed down from previous generations		
decide	Reach a resolution as a result of consideration; make a choice from a number of alternatives		
define			
denotation			
develop			
describe	Give an account (written or spoken) of a situation, event, pattern or process, or of the characteristics or features of something		

Word	Definition	Memory jogger	Page refs
dialogue		<p>Teacher: Please fill out the definition tables.</p> <p>You: How come? It's a bit dull.</p> <p>Teacher: It's important to learn new words so that you understand what you read.</p> <p>You: Fair enough.</p>	
diaspora			
discuss	Examine by argument; sift the considerations for and against; debate; talk or write about a topic, including a range of arguments, factors or hypotheses; consider, taking into account different issues and ideas, points for and/or against, and supporting opinions or conclusions with evidence		
documentary			
elaborate/ elaboration	Adding more detail		
emotion/ emotive		Synonyms: affect, mood	
ethics	The principles that a person believes are important and which guide decision making		
evaluate/ evaluation	Assess the worth, value or significance of something		
evidence			
examine			
excerpt	A section taken out of a longer document		

Word	Definition	Memory jogger	Page refs
explain/ explanation	Use sentences to make something clear		
explore			
facts			
figurative	A representation, such as a metaphor; not literal or exact		
fishbone diagram	An Ishikawa, or fishbone, diagram is a graphic organiser that shows the causes of a particular effect; commonly used in business when a problem has been identified and a solution is being sought		
foreground			
formal	Done in accordance with rules or conventions and suitable for an important occasion		
frame			
Frayer model	Definition and vocabulary table created by and named after Dorothy Frayer		
gap	An omission from the text that the reader is expected to fill in using prior knowledge		
gaze			
genre			
graduation/ graduating meaning	To move up in scale or force		
hyperbole	Exaggeration for rhetorical effect – humour, impact		
icon			
idea			
identify	Distinguish; locate, recognise and name; establish or indicate who or what someone or something is; provide an answer from a number of possibilities; recognise and state a distinguishing factor or feature		

Word	Definition	Memory jogger	Page refs
identity	Sense of self – distinguishing features, especially of a person		
imagery			
inference	To draw together ideas or evidence to make a conclusion		
infographic			
inform			
informal	Casual, relaxed, not formal, conversational		
intensify	To make more acute, strong or vehement		
interpret			
intertextuality	The connection between similar or related works of literature that reflect and influence an audience's interpretation of the text		
invited reading	The most obvious reading that fits the text's apparent purpose		
ironic/irony	The literal meaning is the opposite of what is intended	There are three categories of irony: rhetorical, situational and dramatic	
issue	An important topic or problem that causes debate or discussion		
judgement			
justify	To show reasons as to how something is true or just		
juxtaposition			
KWL chart	Research retrieval chart showing information you know, information you want to know and information you have learned		

Word	Definition	Memory jogger	Page refs
language features			
link		Hint: Link it to the point or theme of the paragraph, though sometimes we do link to the next paragraph, to improve cohesion	
literal	True to fact – it means exactly what it says		
lyrics	The words of a song	From the Greek instrument the lyre 	
marginalised			
marketing	The process of promoting or selling goods to the market		
metaphor		I cried an ocean of tears because my heart was broken.	
mnemonic		For example, rhyme, rule, acronym, picture	
modal words, modality	Words and phrases that describe the degree of inclination, obligation, usuality, probability, capacity		
mode	In English, this usually means the method (how) and medium (through what) used to communicate the message. A written email or an audio voicemail are different modes that can be used to share a school announcement		
multimodal	Combine more than one way of presenting		



Word	Definition	Memory jogger	Page refs
narrative	A story with a complication		
narrator	The person/voice telling the story		
non-verbal	Communicating without words		
objective	Not influenced by personal feelings or opinions in considering and representing facts		
obligations			
opinions			
paragraph		PEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEL!	
paraphrase	Saying it again in a different way, in your own words, to make it clear		
perspective	The way a reader/viewer is positioned by a text or how a particular ideology is embedded in a text – for example, a feminist perspective; a point of view or way of regarding/thinking about situations, facts and texts		
phrase	A group or sequence of words that create a meaningful unit within a sentence		
point	Main idea or purpose; overall message		
popular culture	The collective ideas and attitudes of a given community as reflected in mainstream art, film, internet memes and other texts of a popular nature; cultural experiences widely enjoyed by members of various groups within the community		
positioning	Refers to how texts influence responders to read in certain ways; responders are positioned or invited to construct particular meanings in relation to the characters, arguments or groups in a text; a selection of techniques of composition influencing the responder to adopt a particular point of view and interpret a text in a particular way; composers position responders by selectively using detail or argument, by carefully shaping focus and emphasis and by choosing language and other textual features that promote a particular interpretation and reaction		

Word	Definition	Memory jogger	Page refs
practise (verb)	Perform (an activity) or exercise (a skill) repeatedly or regularly in order to improve or maintain one's proficiency		
predict/ predicting		Pre = before 	
privileged			
pronoun		I, he, she, who, they, it. Pronouns never take apostrophes of possession – for example, the ship changed its course. Whose truck is parked in the driveway?	
proposing			
purpose	A reason for doing something; the intended or desired result		
quantifiers	Words referring to specific quantities		
question chart	A prompt chart of theme words plus modal verbs for developing a range of questions		
reading path			Chapter 1
recall	Remember; present remembered ideas, facts or experiences; bring something back into thought, attention or into one's mind		
recount			
register			
represent/ representation	The arrangement of signs or symbols (including words) to 'represent', or stand in for, something else		
resistant reading			
rights			

Word	Definition	Memory jogger	Page refs
role	A part a person fulfils, either in life or in a play		
salient	Important or noticeable		
scan	Looking over a text with something particular in mind		
scene	A division of a play, similar to a chapter in a book		
script	The written text of what will be spoken in a play or skit		
select	Choose in preference to another or others; pick out		
setting			
signifiers			
silence	Significant information or voices left out or ignored by a text		
simile	When two things are compared, using the connectives 'like' or 'as'		
social groups		Surfers, neighbours	
social media			
special effects			
specialised vocabulary	Language that is used only in a specific field of knowledge, usually by experts		
statistics		Identical triplets occur once in every 500 000 births; 12% of men and 10% of women are left-handed	
stereotype	A simplified understanding of a group identity based on a few observable characteristics. This understanding is applied to all members of the group without acknowledging individual divergence.		
subvert			
summarise	To create a shorter account that sums up the main ideas of a text		
symbol/ symbolism	Representing ideas or qualities by giving objects (or colours or sounds) meaning that is different from their literal meaning		

Word	Definition	Memory jogger	Page refs
synonym	A word that has the same or similar meaning as another word		
synthesise	Combine different parts or elements (e.g. information, ideas, components) into a whole, in order to create new understanding		
text	Anything that can be read; communication of meaning produced in any medium that incorporates language, including sound, print, film, digital and multimedia representations; texts include written, spoken, non-verbal or visual communication of meaning; they may be extended unified works or series of related pieces		
text connectives	Words and phrases that link sentences and paragraphs across a text		
tense			
text structures			
theme			
transformation			
understand			
use	Operate or put into effect; apply knowledge or rules to put theory into practice		
values	Characteristics, qualities, philosophical and emotional stances; for example, moral principles or standards, often shared with others in a cultural group		
vectors			
Venn diagram	A diagram using circles to represent sets, with the position and overlap of the circles indicating the relationships between the sets		
visual metaphor			