VCE® ENGLISH

WRITING FOR SUCCESS

A Practical Toolkit

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About this book

In this book you will find everything you need to produce well-crafted written pieces in VCE English and EAL. Each chapter will step you through the processes, vocabulary and structures you need to write with clarity and sophistication.

We know that English is primarily a skills-based subject, and as such it can be hard to know how to organise yourself and your study time. Each section starts with suggestions for how to set up your files, set clear goals and find additional support. You'll find suggestions for SMART goals for each area of study. SMART stands for Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-Bound. It can be tempting to set a goal like 'I want to get a 40+ Study Score'. SMART goals help you break down this overall goal into smaller, more achievable steps. Take the time to complete this goal-setting because research tells us that this can have a big impact on your results.

Each chapter ends with ideas and techniques for studying, including checklists to help you prioritise key areas.

Throughout the book, you will find annotated examples, vocabulary banks, sentence starters and graphic organisers to help you refine your ideas. I encourage you to take this book to class and use it alongside the materials your teacher provides.

Reading and exploring / responding to texts

The first section of this book helps you develop your skills in writing text response essays. This is a core part of VCE English, as you will use it in SACs in Year 11 and Year 12 as well as in Section A of the external exam at the end of Year 12.

To begin with, you will need a system for organising your notes and other resources: this will help you to find textual details easily, and also to remember them. Chapter 1 gives you effective strategies for recording and organising notes.

Every good text response essay is underpinned by a thorough understanding of the text itself. Chapter 2 shows you how to read, annotate and analyse your text.

Chapter 3 guides you through the process of writing an essay and the way you can make a satisfactory essay more insightful and sophisticated. Finally, Chapter 4 provides tools for building your skills, helping you to reflect on and refine your work by using a range of shorter and longer tasks.

1
Setting up for success

One of the best ways we can achieve success in our studies is to make sure that we have effective systems in place. It's important to set these up before you begin a new area of study. This chapter provides systems based on hard copy and digital files, but you might like to use a combination of these. Think about approaches you've used in the past and whether these have been effective or need refining.

For this area of study, one of the essential ways you will take notes is by annotating your copy of the text. Use colour coding to organise your annotations by theme. You might like to have a separate colour for literary (or film) devices and/or characterisation. If you are studying a film for this area of study, you might be given access to a copy of the screenplay that you can annotate in the same way as other texts. If not, speak to your teacher about the best way to record running notes on the film.

How to set up your workbook

If you're working in hard copy, it's helpful to have a couple of different places to record your learning and store important documents. For this area of study we recommend the following.

> A document folder with plastic slips for you to keep class handouts in. You might like to organise these into:
>> › classwork
>> › exam preparation or study resources
>> › sample essays.

> An exercise book or loose-leaf lined paper. Use coloured tabs to separate your sections for:

>> › social, cultural and historical contexts and values

>> › key quotes

>> › key literary (or film) devices

>> › character analysis

>> › theme analysis

>> › practice writing.

For Unit 1, you would also have a tab for personal connections.

How to set up your digital files

If you're working digitally, set up a folder for this area of study and then nest the following folders and files within that. It can be tempting to create a new file for each lesson, but this will make it challenging to find specific notes and information when you need them later.

Folder: **About the text**

> *File*: Social, cultural and historical contexts and values.

> Upload any articles or resources your teacher gives you about the text or the text's creator.

Folder: **Analysing the text**

> *File*: Key quotes

> *File*: Key literary (or film) devices

> *File*: Character analysis

> *File*: Theme analysis

For Unit 1, you would also have an additional file in this folder for personal connections.

Folder: **Practice writing**

> *File*: Paragraphs. You could have a separate file for introductions and conclusions, but one file for shorter writing tasks should be sufficient.

> *File*: Essays. Use the comment function to record feedback from your peers or teacher.

Folder: **Sample essays**

> Upload any sample essays or paragraphs your teacher provides.

Set a goal for this area of study

Setting goals is an effective way to track improvement. You might like to set a goal in relation to a particular habit, or zoom in on a specific skill. Some suggestions for SMART goals (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-Bound) for this area of study are:

> By the end of Week 1, I will create a table to record key quotes. I will update this table weekly.

> I will seek feedback from my teacher on my practice writing. I will seek feedback at least four times by the end of this area of study.

> Before the SAC, I will write three practice essays under timed conditions.

Where to go for help

You should always ask your teacher if you get stuck. For this area of study we also recommend:

> the Insight Text Guide for your text

> Insight's other textbooks for Year 11 or Year 12 English or EAL

> websites like Sparknotes (www.sparknotes.com) or LitCharts (www.litcharts.com) that have a section on your text

> Crash Course Literature (thecrashcourse.com/topic/literature)

> the State Library Victoria Research Guides (guides.slv.vic.gov.au/vceenglisheal/list1)

> the VCAA assessment report for English or EAL (www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/assessment/vce-assessment/past-examinations/Pages/English.aspx
or
www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/assessment/vce-assessment/past-examinations/Pages/english-as-an-additional-language.aspx)

> your local library, which might offer:

  › free tutoring or study sessions

  › access to Studiosity (www.studiosity.com), where you can submit written documents for feedback, and chat live with tutors across the world.

2

Reading texts

In this chapter you will find ways to improve your understanding and analysis of texts. Annotating a text is a valuable skill across all areas of study in English, while making and organising notes adds to your knowledge of the text and of the metalanguage you will need to use.

Annotating

Below is an example of an annotated section of Sophocles' play *Oedipus the King*.

TIME AND SCENE: The royal house of Thebes. Double doors dominate the façade; a stone altar stands at the center of the stage.

Oedipus has power and authority

Many years have passed since OEDIPUS solved the riddle of the Sphinx and ascended the throne of Thebes, and now a plague has struck the city. A procession of priests enters; suppliants, broken and despondent, they carry branches wound in wool and lay them on the altar.

Social context: the monarchy

Importance of religion

The doors open. Guards assemble. OEDIPUS comes forward, majestic but for a telltale limp, and slowly views the condition of his people.

Characterisation: he cares about the people he rules

A useful annotation will identify what has been highlighted and provide some analysis.

> *Possible annotation:* Characterisation

> *Better annotation:* Characterisation: he cares about the people he rules

What to annotate	How to annotate
Unfamiliar words	Provide the definition or meaning of the word.
Key themes	Label the theme.
Lines that tell us about key characters	Identify what we learn about the character.
The author's values	Identify the author's opinion or position.
Language and text features	Identify the significance of the language or text feature.
Social, cultural and historical context	Identify what we learn about the context.

If you are studying a text with visual elements, such as a film or graphic novel, you still need to record your thinking through annotations.

Facial expressions show Dog is familiar with the experience of eating a hot dog, and Robot is unfamiliar.

Diversity of animals contributes to the sense that this is an inclusive, utopian society. But Robot is still out of place.

Still from *Robot Dreams*, directed by Pablo Berger
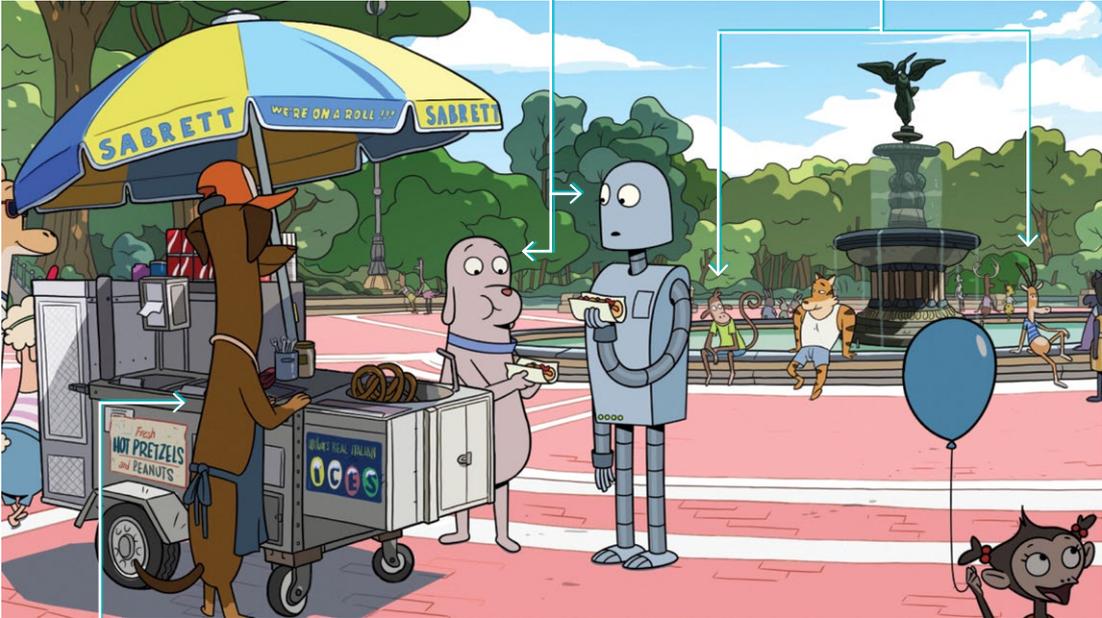
Hot dog seller is a dachshund, or sausage dog, creating a humorous reference.

Language features and construction elements

This section contains lists of language features and construction elements you might encounter in the texts you are studying. **Language features** are anything related to word choices and the effects of words. **Construction elements** are what the author uses to build the text – anything related to structure and meaning.

You don't have to write annotations for all of the features you notice, but you should look out for those that serve particular purposes, or emphasise a theme or value in the text.

Language features

Language feature	Definition
Allegory	An extended metaphor where characters, events or settings symbolically represent broader concepts (e.g. *Animal Farm* is an allegory for the Russian Revolution).
Alliteration	The repetition of the same sound at the beginning of a series of words (e.g. 'make more music').
Allusion	A reference to another text, historical event or cultural idea to deepen meaning (e.g. Joseph Conrad alludes to the Fates from Greek mythology in *Heart of Darkness* when he describes 'the two knitting women' who guard 'the door of darkness').
Analogy	A comparison between two things (e.g. 'If you want to do well on your exams, you need to plant your garden early and make sure to water it well').
Assonance	The repetition of vowel sounds within words (e.g. 'The rain in Spain stays mainly in the plain').
Colloquial language	Informal or conversational language (e.g. 'arvo' instead of 'afternoon').
Connotations	The implied or associated meanings of a word beyond its literal definition (e.g. 'stingy' has negative connotations of 'selfish' and 'mean' beyond its literal meaning of 'frugal').
Dichotomy	A contrast between two opposing ideas or concepts (e.g. the dichotomy between good and evil).
Euphemism	A mild or indirect way of saying something unpleasant (e.g. describing someone as having 'passed away' rather than 'died').
Figurative language	Language that goes beyond the literal meaning, including metaphors, similes and symbolism.
Foreshadowing	Hints or clues about future events in a narrative.

→

Hyperbole	Extreme exaggeration for emphasis or effect (e.g. 'I told her a trillion times').
Imagery	Descriptive language that appeals to the senses (e.g. 'The wind carried with it the soft scent of blossom and honey').
Intertextuality	When a text references another text, creating a deeper layer of meaning (e.g. Jean Rhys' *Wide Sargasso Sea* references Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre*).
Irony	A contrast between expectation and reality, often for humour or emphasis (e.g. in *Oedipus the King*, Oedipus is searching for the murderer of King Laius, but he is himself the murderer).
Metaphor	A direct comparison between two unrelated things to suggest similarity (e.g. 'This classroom is an oasis').
Motif	A recurring symbol, image or idea (e.g. the motif of blood in William Shakespeare's *Macbeth*).
Onomatopoeia	A word that imitates the sound it represents (e.g. 'buzz', 'hiss').
Pathetic fallacy	A type of personification where nature reflects human emotions (e.g. rain occurring when a character is sad).
Personification	Giving human qualities to non-human things (e.g. 'The trees danced a slow waltz in the breeze').
Repetition	The deliberate reuse of words or phrases for emphasis (e.g. 'Never again will I forget my pencil case, even if it causes me to be late I will never again forget it').
Simile	A comparison using *like* or *as* (e.g. 'This classroom is like an oasis').
Symbol	An object, person or event that represents a deeper meaning (e.g. a dove symbolising peace, a heart symbolising love).

Construction elements

Construction element	Definition
Novels, nonfiction texts and short stories	
Archetypes	Common character types, symbols or themes found across literature.
Character foils	Two characters (or subjects, in nonfiction) who contrast with each other to highlight differences.
Dramatic irony	When the audience knows something that the characters or subjects do not.

Ellipsis	The omission of words in a sentence, often indicated by '…', to create suspense or suggest hesitation.
Embedded narrative	A story within a story, often used to provide deeper context or contrast.
Flashback/ Flashforward	A shift in time to reveal past or future events.
Frame narrative	A story that contains another story within it.
Juxtaposition	The placement of two contrasting ideas or images close together for effect.
Narrative structure	The way a story is organised. Can be linear (chronological) or nonlinear (e.g. circular).
Plays	
Acts and scenes	The main divisions of a play. The action in a scene takes place in a single location and time. An act usually has several scenes and uses several locations (indicated by set changes).
Stage directions	Instructions that indicate movement, tone, setting or actions of characters. Usually written in italics.
Films	
Camera shots	The distance and framing of the shot, such as close-up, medium shot or long shot.
Camera angles	The position of the camera (e.g. high angle, low angle).
Mise en scène	Everything within the frame, including set design, lighting, costumes and composition.
High-key lighting	Bright, evenly distributed lighting, often creating a cheerful or open atmosphere.
Low-key lighting	Dark, shadow-heavy lighting, often used to create tension or drama.
Chiaroscuro	A lighting technique that uses strong contrasts between light and dark.
Montage	A sequence of short shots edited together to condense time, show progression or create emotional impact.
Crosscuts	Cutting between two scenes happening simultaneously.
Diegetic sound	Sound that originates within the world of the film (e.g. dialogue, a character's footsteps).
Non-diegetic sound	Sound that only the audience can hear (e.g. music, voice-over).

→

Poetry	
Caesura	A deliberate pause or break within a line of poetry, often marked by punctuation.
Enjambment	When a sentence or phrase runs over multiple lines without a pause.
Free verse	Poetry that does not follow a regular rhyme or metre.
Metre	The rhythmic structure of a poem, determined by the pattern of stressed and unstressed syllables.
Rhyme scheme	The pattern of rhymes at the ends of lines, labelled using letters (e.g. AABBAA).

Keeping track of what you find

Use the graphic organiser below to record important annotations, language features and construction elements. Using the last column (sample analytical sentence) is a good way to practise your analytical writing skills. You might want to fill out this column when you're revising or studying later in the unit.

Quote or example	Page number or timestamp	Connection to key theme/s	Notes	Sample analytical sentence
'The citizens of the island were now quite accustomed to these losses'	p.65	Memory, Loss	The citizens are passive. At this point in the novel, Ogawa does not seem to criticise or endorse this passivity.	Ogawa's neutrality when describing the citizens as 'quite accustomed to these losses' leaves the reader questioning the significance of the loss.

➤ Go to www.insightpublications.com.au/resources for a Word document
version of this graphic organiser.

3

Exploring and responding to texts

This chapter explains how to plan and write a strong text response essay. The sample paragraphs show the basic elements of introductions, body paragraphs and conclusions, as well as how to add more complexity and sophistication into your writing. The sentence starters give you ways to incorporate the key elements; you can also use these as the basis for your own sentences.

Responding to an essay topic

There are typically four types of essay topics.

1. Do you agree? / To what extent do you agree?

These essay topics require you to fully agree, fully disagree or partially agree with the statement in the topic. If you are writing three body paragraphs, you might write one body paragraph disagreeing with the statement and two body paragraphs agreeing with the statement. Usually, these essay topics are the most straightforward to answer.

> › Tradition is inescapable.
> To what extent does *Chronicle of a Death Foretold* show this to be true?
> (VCAA English exam 2024)

> › 'We demand the right to control our own destiny.'
> *Rainbow's End* suggests that vulnerable people can control their own destinies.
> Do you agree?
> (VCAA English exam 2023)

2. Discuss

These essay topics require you to explore the ways in which the statement in the topic is true. Although you can challenge the topic, teachers and assessors are looking for you to *discuss* the proposal.

› *Sunset Boulevard* shows that the pursuit of fame is a perilous journey.
  Discuss.
  (VCAA English exam 2023)

› *False Claims of Colonial Thieves* suggests that, despite their differences, people should seek to understand each other. Discuss.
  (VCAA English exam 2024)

3. To what extent + value statement

These essay topics encourage you to write at least one body paragraph exploring the truth of the statement in the topic, and then to challenge it in the remainder of your essay.

› To what extent does Mandel emphasise regret as a motivator in
  Station Eleven?
  (VCAA English exam 2023)

› To what extent is deception harmful in *Much Ado About Nothing*?
  (VCAA English exam 2024)

4. How

These essay topics ask you to write about the construction of the text. How does the creator of the text demonstrate or reveal something essential? You should structure your essay around construction elements: for example, argue that the creator of the text demonstrates or reveals something essential through characterisation, or through the use of imagery, or through the cinematography. These essay topics are generally considered the most challenging to answer.

› 'Doing nothing is as good as collaborating.'
  How does *All the Light We Cannot See* show the damage individuals can do when they remain silent?
  (VCAA English exam 2023)

› How does *The Erratics* demonstrate that memory is imperfect?
  (VCAA English exam 2024)

Often, there will be a quote from the text included as part of the essay topic. This is not just a handy piece of evidence for you to use in your essay – you need to think about how it modifies the essay topic. It might be encouraging you to think about a particular character, or section of the text, or perspective.

Writing your own essay topics is a great way to test your knowledge of the text. Use the templates below to help you:

> ❯ [Text] suggests that [theme] is [description]. Do you agree?
>
>> › e.g. *Oedipus the King* suggests that fate is cruelly inescapable. Do you agree?

> ❯ To what extent does [text] challenge readers/viewers to consider the devastating barriers / positive opportunities of [theme]?
>
>> › e.g. To what extent does *Jane Eyre* challenge readers to consider the devastating barriers of class?

> ❯ [Text] demonstrates [aspect of theme] but also [another aspect of theme]. Discuss.
>
>> › e.g. Mary Oliver's poetry demonstrates the beauty of nature but also its brutality. Discuss.

> ❯ How does [creator] reveal the [aspect of theme]?
>
>> › e.g. How does Billy Wilder reveal the underlying corruption of the film industry?

Planning an essay

These are the steps to follow when planning an essay.

1 Unpack the topic by identifying and defining the key words or phrases.
2 Rewrite the topic in your own words.
3 Decide on a brainstorming strategy and complete a brainstorm. Use one of these strategies:

> › ask questions
>
> OR
>
> › list characters
>
> OR
>
> › list construction elements.

4 Select your best ideas.
5 Sequence your ideas.
6 Write your topic sentences.

Here is a sample plan, for the topic:

In *The Memory Police*, memory and identity are inextricably linked. Discuss.

Sample plan

Key words:

> *Memory → Ability to remember, core experiences*
>
> *Identity → Personality, who you are, understanding of the world*
>
> *Inextricably linked → Cannot be separated, share important connections*

Unpack the key words by writing your understanding of their definition. What do these key words or phrases mean to you, in the context of this text?

Rewrite the topic in your own words:

> *In this novel there is a strong and important connection between someone's ability to remember and their identity.*

Your rewritten topic should be a summary of the main ideas.

Brainstorming strategy – list characters:

> *The narrator:* *Loses memory and then loses her physical self at the end of the text.*
>
> *R:* *Has his memory. Retains a sense of self, but is damaged by the memory loss everyone else is experiencing.*
>
> *The narrator's father:* *Loses his job due to disappearances, so loses a part of his identity as a result.*
>
> *The old man:* *Seems lost, but perhaps hasn't lost his identity even though he's lost his memory?*
>
> *Other:* *Collective memory has been lost, cultural identity is lost too.*

For this topic about identity, it's most helpful to work through the brainstorm by considering the different characters.

This student has selected the best ideas by circling them.

Sequence your ideas:

1 *Characters who lose their memory, lose their sense of self (the narrator, the narrator's father, the old man to an extent).*

2 *When everyone collectively loses memories, their cultural identity is lost, too.*

3 *Even characters who retain their memory lose connections and relationships, which impacts on their sense of place in the world (R).*

> **Logically sequence your ideas. In this example, the student is planning to write two paragraphs about those who experience a loss of memory, and then one paragraph about characters who don't.**

Write your topic sentences:

1 *Ogawa demonstrates the immutable connection between memory and our sense of self through the loss of objects and the emotions associated with them.*

2 *In <u>The Memory Police</u>, the collective loss of memory impacts the cultural identity of the people who inhabit the island.*

3 *While some characters retain their memories, their identities are still impacted by the memory loss of those around them.*

> **Check that your topic sentences all clearly respond to the essay topic.**

Writing introductions

Your introduction must be a clear response to the essay topic. It needs to include:

1 an introductory statement about the text

2 an introduction of your arguments

3 an introduction of your contention.

A more sophisticated introduction will include:

1 an introductory statement about the text

2 a consideration of the implications of the topic

3 an introduction of the author's/creator's message.

Sample introduction 1

Topic:

To what extent is hubris responsible for Oedipus' tragic downfall?

Simple approach		Sophisticated approach	
Set against a backdrop of plague and civil unrest, Sophocles' *Oedipus the King* explores the consequences of hubris.	Introductory statement about the text	Set against a backdrop of plague and civil unrest, Sophocles' *Oedipus the King* explores the consequences of hubris.	Introductory statement about the text
The ancient Greek play depicts the unravelling of Oedipus, the King of Thebes, as he arrogantly seeks to punish the murderer of King Laius. This arrogance is the primary cause of his downfall, although his hubristic nature is not solely responsible, as he also suffers from ignorance.	Introduction of the arguments	While Oedipus' relentless pursuit of truth reveals his determination and strength, it also exposes his fatal flaw: an overwhelming pride that blinds him to his limitations and the warnings of those around him.	Consideration of the implications of the topic
Ultimately, Sophocles condemns Oedipus' hubris and suggests it is the main reason for his tragic end.	Introduction of the contention	His refusal to heed prophetic advice serves as a powerful condemnation of Sophocles' contemporary audience, suggesting that any who position themselves as superior to the gods will ultimately face catastrophic outcomes.	Introduction of the playwright's message

Sample introduction 2

Topic:

Schindler's List shows that acting with empathy takes courage. Discuss.

Simple approach		Sophisticated approach	
Amid the horrors of war and genocide, Steven Spielberg's film *Schindler's List* highlights the courage needed to act with empathy. Some characters risk their safety to protect others, while others resist oppression in ways that may go unnoticed. Even those who struggle with fear or self-preservation reveal the difficult choices involved in showing compassion. Overall, Spielberg suggests that for both Schindler and other characters, empathy is not simply an instinct but a conscious, often dangerous act of bravery.	Introductory statement about the text

Introduction of the arguments

Introduction of the contention | Amid the horrors of war and genocide, Steven Spielberg's film *Schindler's List* explores the complex relationship between empathy and courage. While some characters make personal sacrifices to protect others, others engage in quiet acts of defiance, using whatever power they have to alleviate the suffering around them. At the same time, the film acknowledges the moral dilemmas faced by those who hesitate or act out of fear, emphasising that empathy is not always easy or without consequence. Through these varied portrayals, Spielberg challenges audiences to recognise that true compassion often requires immense bravery, particularly in times of widespread injustice. | Introductory statement about the text

Consideration of the implications of the topic

Introduction of the director's message |

Sample introduction 3

Topic:

How does Franklin reveal the social consequences of poverty in
***My Brilliant Career*?**

Simple approach		Sophisticated approach	
Unveiling the harsh landscape of 1890s rural Australia, Miles Franklin's *My Brilliant Career* is an exploration of class and wealth. Limited opportunities force individuals into difficult choices, with financial hardship shaping their futures more than ambition or talent. Some characters accept their circumstances, while others resist, only to find that escaping poverty often comes at great personal cost. In the end, the novel reveals that poverty is not just about lack of money but about its social consequences and the restrictions it places on our identities.	Introductory statement about the text Introduction of the arguments Introduction of the contention	Unveiling the harsh landscape of 1890s rural Australia, Miles Franklin's *My Brilliant Career* is an exploration of class and wealth. Poverty limits personal freedom, particularly for women, dictating relationships, social status and even self-worth. While some characters submit to societal expectations, others attempt to defy them, highlighting the emotional toll of resisting a system that values wealth over individual potential. In the end, Franklin critiques a society in which poverty is not merely an economic condition but a force that shapes identity, opportunity and human connection.	Introductory statement about the text Consideration of the implications of the topic Introduction of the author's message

Useful sentence starters for introductions

Sentence starters for introductory statements

› Set against a backdrop of …

› [Author]'s [adjective] novel, set during …

› [Text title] reveals the …

› Unveiling the …, [author]'s [text title] is an exploration of …

› In a world of …

› By portraying …

› [Text title] by [author] examines the impact of …

› Confronting the reality of …, [author]'s [text type] [text title] explores …

› Exploring the tensions between …

› Immersed in a society where …, the protagonist of [author]'s [text title] struggles to …

Sentence starters for introducing arguments

› The text explores/reveals/demonstrates/depicts/portrays …

› Initially …

› Some characters …

› Even though …

› Throughout the text …

› By illustrating …

Sentence starters for introducing the implications of the topic

› While …

› Even though …

› At the same time …

› In contrast …

› Furthermore …

› However …

› Beyond this …

› Significantly …

› As a result …

Sentence starters for introducing the contention and the author's message

> Ultimately …

> Overall …

> In the end …

> Through this …

> It is clear that …

> It is evident that …

> [Author] critiques/criticises/endorses/celebrates …

> [Author] challenges the audience to consider …

> [Author] invites the reader/viewer to reflect on …

> [Text title] upholds the value of …

> [Text title] ultimately serves as a reminder of …

Develop your skills

Use the tools in this section to write and improve a strong introduction to a text response essay. Use the examples on *Oedipus the King, Schindler's List* and *My Brilliant Career* as models to guide you.

1 Select a topic on your text and do steps 1 (unpack the topic) and 2 (rewrite the topic in your own words) from page 14.

2 Write an introductory statement about the text, using one of the sentence starters in the table above.

3 Write one or two sentences introducing your arguments, using sentence starters in the table above.

4 Write a sentence introducing your main contention, using one of the sentence starters in the table above.

5 Now look at how you can make your introduction more sophisticated. Edit the second and third sentences so they consider the implications of the topic, and rewrite the final sentence so it states the author's message.

Writing body paragraphs

You have probably used models like TEEL, PEEL or SEAL before when writing body paragraphs. These are useful starting points and, if you haven't written an essay before, these models will give you a guiding scaffold. However, by VCE you should be able to think beyond the constraints of these models. In this section, we'll go through the elements you need to include in a body paragraph and how they work together in a completed paragraph.

Topic sentences

Topic sentences act as a mini introduction to your body paragraph. They should introduce the argument or idea you will be discussing in the paragraph, in connection with the essay topic. Here are some good topic sentences:

› By the end of the play, Medea achieves the justice she desires.

› Miller's play slowly reveals the destructive power of hysteria.

› Macbeth's ambition leads him to commit increasingly horrific acts.

› Huxley's dystopian world exposes the dangers of sacrificing individuality.

› The novel demonstrates that disillusionment with adulthood drives Holden's sense of alienation.

› Pragmatism motivates Jocasta to avoid the truth and prioritise ignorance.

These topic sentences:

› focus on ideas

› have an argument, and don't just report an event or state a fact about the text

› use powerful and specific verbs

› use specific nouns and noun phrases.

We can make these even better by:

› adding complexity

› connecting the argument to what this tells us about the world of the text.

Original topic sentence	Improved topic sentence	Why the improved sentence is better
By the end of the play, Medea achieves the justice she desires.	Revenge motivates Medea, and by the end of the play she has achieved the justice she desires.	Adds complexity
Miller's play slowly reveals the destructive power of hysteria.	Miller's play slowly reveals the destructive power of hysteria and mob mentality.	Adds complexity
Macbeth's ambition leads him to commit increasingly horrific acts.	Shakespeare reveals the horror that occurs when men ignore societal laws in favour of their own ambition.	Connects the argument to what this tells us about the world of the text
Huxley's dystopian world exposes the dangers of sacrificing individuality.	Huxley's dystopian world exposes the dangers of sacrificing individuality for social stability.	Adds complexity
The novel demonstrates that disillusionment with adulthood drives Holden's sense of alienation.	The novel demonstrates that disillusionment with adulthood drives young people's sense of alienation.	Connects the argument to what this tells us about the world of the text
Pragmatism motivates Jocasta to avoid the truth and prioritise ignorance.	Sophocles criticises his contemporary audience's increasingly pragmatic attitudes, as they result in an avoidance of the truth and a persistence of ignorance.	Connects the argument to what this tells us about the world of the text

Sentence starters for topic sentences

> By the end of the play/novel/film/text …

> Throughout the play/novel/film/text …

> [Author]'s text slowly/gradually/unerringly/increasingly reveals …

> The text interrogates …

> … the consequences of …

> … the inherent contradictions of …

> … the moral dilemmas surrounding …

> … the underlying causes of …

→

› [Author]'s grim/hopeful/restrictive/political/isolated world … › The text [verb] that society … › [Author] criticises a world in which … › [Author] ridicules a society where … › [Author] advocates for a world where … › [Author] gradually constructs a world where … › [Author] reveals a social framework that …	› … is shaped by … › … is doomed by … › … must confront … › … values are corrupted/upheld by … › … challenges traditional values of … › … is complicit in … › … fails to acknowledge … › … struggles to balance …
› [Author] celebrates characters who … › [Theme] motivates/drives/fuels/inspires/forces [character] to … › The actions of [character] are motivated by a desire for / a fear of [noun], which …	› … defy expectations … › … resist oppression … › … embrace change … › … question their beliefs … › … seek redemption … › … stand against authority … › … blindly accept … › … ultimately leads to …

You can also use the verb bank on page 28 to write about what authors are doing.

Using evidence

You need to use a range of evidence to support the ideas in your paragraph. Refer to pages 7–10 for a list of language features and construction features you can write about in your essay. You should also quote from the text. Avoid using a quote that is too long (generally, try to keep quotes shorter than 10 words), and avoid single-word quotes. You can use single-word quotes if the single word is specific and powerful. For example, if you were describing Mr Rochester from Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre*, it would be appropriate to use the quote 'abrupt', or you could describe Jane with the quote 'grave'.

Your quotes should be integrated as part of the sentence, so that the sentence would not make sense without them there.

Quote from *Night* by Elie Wiesel	Integrated quote
'"Why do you pray?" he asked after a moment. Why did I pray? Strange question. Why did I live? Why did I breathe? "I don't know," I told him, even more troubled and ill at ease. "I don't know."'	Elie associates praying with living, questioning 'Why did I breathe?' This realisation about the importance of his faith does not comfort him, but instead causes him to feel 'troubled and ill at ease'.
Quote from *The Women of Troy* by Euripides	**Integrated quote**
'You are allocated separately: not all together.'	Talthybius informs the Trojan women they have been 'allocated separately', highlighting their isolation.
Quote from *Orbital* by Samantha Harvey	**Integrated quote**
'They are the latest six of many, nothing unusual about this any more, routine astronauts in earth's backyard. Earth's fabulous and improbable backyard.'	Harvey juxtaposes the ordinariness of the 'routine astronauts' with the description of space as 'fabulous and improbable'.

You should use the same process when writing about language features and construction elements, even if there is no quote.

Evidence from *Sunset Boulevard* directed by Billy Wilder	Integrated evidence
A high-angle shot shows Joe and Norma dancing alone at the New Year's Eve party.	Wilder's use of a high-angle shot to depict Joe and Norma dancing alone at Norma's New Year's Eve party emphasises the pitiable nature of the event, and positions Norma as vulnerable and lonely.
Evidence from *Oedipus the King* by Sophocles	**Integrated evidence**
Sophocles uses metaphors of blindness and sight to represent knowledge and ignorance.	After realising how metaphorically 'blind' he has been, Oedipus punishes himself by gouging out his eyes, symbolising that although he possessed physical sight, he remained oblivious to the truth.
Evidence from *Rainbow's End* by Jane Harrison	**Integrated evidence**
He hands over the parcel and GLADYS *tears it open. She opens the book – celestial music is heard. She touches the pages lovingly, then holds the book out for* DOLLY.	The significance of the encyclopedia for Gladys is emphasised by the 'celestial music' in the stage directions, implying that this is a heavenly treasure, reinforced by Gladys 'touch[ing] the pages lovingly'.

Note the use of square brackets in the last example: this is the convention we use when we have changed a quote to ensure it fits grammatically into the sentence. In the original quote, the verb is 'touches'. When integrating it here, we've used the present participle 'touching' and indicated the change by placing square brackets around the changed letters: 'touch[ing]'. You can also use this convention if you are changing pronouns from first person to third person.

Because you are integrating evidence into sentences, most of the time you won't need sentence starters. However, here are some to help you begin.

Sentence starters for using evidence
› [Character] pointedly states that …
› [Character] explains that …
› [Author] suggests that …
› The importance of … is emphasised by …
› [Author]'s use of …
› [Author] juxtaposes/contrasts … with … in order to …
› [Author] employs … to …
› The symbolic nature of … reveals that …

Analysing

The best way to improve your analysis is to improve the specificity of your vocabulary. You can do that through your use of nouns, verbs and adjectives, and by adding detail with connective phrases.

Original analysis	Improved analysis	Annotations
Euripides explores ways in which women are limited by the society of ancient Greece. Euripides shows that Medea lives in a sexist society, where most people think it would be better 'if women didn't exist'. He highlights that Jason thinks without women 'life would be rid of all its miseries', showing that women are oppressed and seen as lesser than men. This	Euripides explores ways in which women are ostracised and belittled due to the restrictive nature of patriarchal ancient Greece. Euripides emphasises Jason's misogyny through his arrogance, characterised by the value he places on male superiority, and his desire to 'be rid of all' women. Jason's dismissiveness and othering of women is	More specific verbs Connective phrase Added adjectives More specific verbs More specific noun Connective words More specific nouns replace verbs

makes Jason into a villain and encourages empathy for Medea.	made clear in his idea of humanity as exclusively masculine, and his belief that 'if women didn't exist, human life' would continue, and, in fact, be without 'miser[y]'. This villainises Jason and encourages empathy for Medea as a result of the harsh societal standards.	More specific verb More specific nouns and adjectives More specific verb Connective phrase Added adjectives

Original analysis	Improved analysis	Annotations
Sophocles explores the tragedy of Oedipus recognising his own flaws. At the beginning of the play, Oedipus is confident in his power and intelligence, telling the Chorus to pray to him instead of 'the gods' because he will 'grant [their] prayers'. By the end, the Chorus pity him, saying they 'weep like a man who wails the dead' and calling his marriage 'monstrous'. This change shows how much Oedipus suffers as he realises his ignorance, saying he was 'so wrong, so wrong'. He punishes himself by 'stripp[ing] [him]self' and giving 'the command [him]self'. Sophocles shows that Oedipus only truly understands the truth after he blinds himself.	Sophocles explores the tragedy in Oedipus' recognition of his own flaws. In the prologue, Oedipus revels in his own power and intelligence, instructing the Chorus to pray not 'to the gods' but to him, as he will 'grant [their] prayers'. By the play's conclusion, the Chorus pity him, 'weep[ing] like a man who wails the dead' and offer some condemnation of his actions, 'judg[ing his] marriage monstrous'. Sophocles uses the Chorus to mirror the extent of the suffering Oedipus experiences as he realises his own arrogance and ignorance, declaring himself 'so wrong, so wrong'. The repetition emphasises his shame, and he takes responsibility for his own punishment, 'stripp[ing] [him]self' and giving 'the command [him]self'. Through this punishment he acknowledges the role his faults played in his downfall. Sophocles reveals through Oedipus' physical blindness that his metaphorical blindness is over, suggesting that truth and clarity can sometimes only be attained at great personal cost.	Nominalisation More specific noun More specific verbs More specific noun Added verb and nouns More specific verb Nominalisation Added noun More specific verb Added detail Connective words More specific verb Added adjectives Connective phrase Added adjectives

Verbs for writing about an author …						
feeling positive about something	feeling negative about something	stating something obvious	showing something less obvious	deepening the meaning of something	conveying the broader meaning of something	drawing out something from the reader/ audience
advocates approves asserts celebrates condones encourages endorses lauds promotes reiterates strengthens upholds verifies	cautions challenges condemns criticises discourages dismisses disputes exposes lambasts opposes questions rejects ridicules undermines warns against	conveys demonstrates depicts displays expresses illustrates outlines portrays presents	alludes to explores exposes implies indicates reveals suggests	amplifies emphasises enhances heightens highlights intensifies reinforces	embodies encompasses epitomises exemplifies mirrors reflects represents signifies symbolises typifies	compels elicits evokes instils inspires invokes provokes stimulates

Words to use in analytical sentences			
Adjectives for analysis		Nouns for analysis	
callous	gentle	apathy	passion
crass	compassionate	atrocity, tragedy, horror	wonder, beauty
cynical	idealistic	authority, power, strength	powerlessness, impotence, vulnerability
economical	emotional	chaos, turmoil	order, control, system
explicit	implied, ambiguous	complacency, passivity	activity, motivation
fallible	infallible	conformity	nonconformity, transgression
fervent	apathetic	decay, corrosion	growth
frivolous, trivial	earnest, serious	depravity	morality

limiting, restrictive, oppressive	freeing, liberating	desperation	hope, jubilation
ostensible	genuine	harmony	violence, dissonance
pervasive	unusual	hypocrisy, deception	sincerity, honesty, integrity
powerful	vulnerable	isolation	community, companionship
resigned	defiant	oppression	resistance
rewarding	unrewarding	reality	fantasy, unreality
societal, social	personal	repression	freedom, liberty
superficial	profound	resilience	fragility, rigidity
traditional	contemporary	subjugation	liberation
underlying	overt	suffering	contentment, peace
unrelenting	yielding	tradition	deviance, progressiveness
uplifting	ominous	value	insignificance

Often, a strong analysis will use two adjectives or two nouns to add specificity. For example:

> Noah depicts his mother's **defiant** and **unyielding** nature in *Born a Crime.*

> The **atrocity** and **horror** of war is amplified in *Regeneration.*

Connective words and phrases	
as a result/consequence of	in contrast
but also	including
by	not only
despite this	through
due to	thus
even more so	whereas
however	while

Writing concluding sentences

The final sentence of your paragraph acts like a mini conclusion, synthesising your arguments and ideas and outlining what this tells us more broadly about the world of the text. A good final sentence will tell us about the author's purpose or message. Here are some examples:

> Brontë rejects the societal norms that require women to marry for economic reasons and relinquish their independence, suggesting that this results in a society characterised by repression and desperation.

> Dickens ultimately critiques a society in which wealth is valued over human connection, demonstrating that true redemption is found through generosity and empathy.

> Hence it is clear that *Mean Girls* criticises the performative nature of high school social hierarchies, advocating instead for authenticity over popularity.

> By depicting such a world, Niccol brings into question the very notion of choice and free will.

Sentence starters for concluding sentences
> Therefore / Thus / Hence / Consequently / As a result
> In doing so / In this way / Through this …
> It is clear that / Ultimately / In essence / Overall …
> [Author] critiques / criticises / challenges / brings into question / rejects / dismisses …
> [Author] advocates for / upholds / underscores / seems to admire …
> By depicting …, [author] suggests / highlights / brings into question …

Sample body paragraph 1

Here is an example of a low- to mid-scoring body paragraph.

Topic:

In *The Kite Runner*, Baba finds it difficult to love Amir. Do you agree?

Hosseini illustrates that a lack of common interests can cause division. When Baba was a child, he was a skilled kite runner. He had won many kite tournaments and there is no one else who could 'reach Baba's record'. However, Amir does not share Baba's aptitude. Instead Hosseini depicts Amir as a rather timid bookworm of which Baba does not approve. Baba wants Amir to resemble him, despite Rahim Khan telling him he can't 'fill [Amir] in with [his] favourite colours'. The relationship between Baba and Amir is often tense and fragile: '[Amir] is not like [Baba] and [Amir] will never be [like] Baba'. Baba is a clever and influential character. He runs 'his own business … becoming one of the richest merchants in Kabul'. At home, Baba is the master of the house, he has power over his family, and 'everyone listens to him'. In public, Baba is a knowledgeable character who gains respect from everyone in Kabul. For them, he is a man who can do anything, including what he seems to be unable to do. 'They told Baba that running a business was not in his blood'. However, 'Baba and Rahim Khan built a widely successful carpet exporting business, two pharmacies, and a restaurant'. Hosseini conversely outlines that Amir seems more interested in introverted pursuits, suggesting that these differences in character cause a division.

Topic sentence outlines a clear argument, but does not have a clear connection to the essay topic

Use of transition words

Incorrect relative pronoun (should be 'whom' instead of 'which')

Quotes are integrated into the sentences

Relevant choices of evidence, but not integrated into the sentences

Does not relate to the argument outlined in the topic sentence – refers to differences in characters' personalities, not their interests

Concluding sentence does not link to the broader world of the text

Notes: At a sentence level, this student has used a range of sentence types. They have selected appropriate analytical verbs and used transition words to create connections between ideas. They have demonstrated that they can integrate quotes into sentences. They need to:

> Analyse the construction of the text.

> Integrate all quotes into sentences.

> Add complexity.

> Add specificity by using adjectives and nouns in pairs.

> Write about the author's message or purpose, particularly in the concluding sentence.

Sample body paragraph 2

Here is an example of a mid-scoring body paragraph.

Topic:

Born a Crime demonstrates the necessity of human connection in times of crisis. Discuss.

Noah illustrates that in times of difficulties, human connection provides crucial emotional support. Throughout *Born a Crime*, Trevor's mother, Patricia, acts as his primary source of stability, protecting him from the dangers of apartheid-era South Africa. She is unable to protect him from the violence of her husband, Abel, but maintains the connection with her son, assuring him that she 'know[s] what [he's] going through' and 'understand[s] why [he] needs to do [it]'. The endearment 'honey' illustrates the intimacy of their relationship, even though Trevor is physically distancing himself from her. When Patricia is shot, Trevor offers comfort to his younger brother, who had been 'holding it together the whole morning' but when Trevor 'ran to him and hugged him … he cried and cried'. This highlights the importance of emotional support as a source of resilience, particularly in moments of grief and crisis. In spite of the violence that characterises much of Trevor's life, he comes to realise 'that relationships are sustained not by violence but by love'. Ultimately, *Born a Crime* conveys that in a fractured and unjust society, meaningful human connections become essential lifelines, allowing individuals to endure and overcome hardship.	Topic sentence outlines a clear argument; it connects to the essay topic, but 'in times of difficulties' is a rewording of the key terms, which lacks sophistication Specificity of nouns adds complexity Quotes are integrated into the sentences Analysis of a language feature (word choice) Analysis adds complexity by outlining a broader message of the text Concluding sentence makes connections to the broader world of the text

Notes: At a sentence level, this student has used a range of sentence types. They have selected appropriate analytical verbs and added complexity to their writing with the specificity of their nouns. Evidence, including language features, is integrated into sentences. The concluding sentence makes connections to the broader world of the text. They need to:

› Consider the relevance of their examples. There are more powerful examples of emotional support in the text that could have been referred to.

› Avoid retelling the story, and increase the amount of analysis throughout the paragraph.

Sample body paragraph 3

Here is an example of a high-scoring body paragraph.

Topic:

Characters in *Chronicle of a Death Foretold* are restricted more by everyday rituals than by their social position.

Do you agree?

García Márquez suggests that while social hierarchy dictates the roles individuals must play, it is the rigid adherence to 'so many linear habits' that ultimately entraps them. The Vicario brothers, despite their reluctance, commit murder not solely because of their lower social status but because the expectations of honour demand it. Their actions are described as being performed like they 'are galloping on horseback', the simile reinforcing the idea that their crime is less a choice and more an obligation that must be carried out regardless of personal emotions. Similarly, the Vicario women dress in black to 'observ[e] a mourning that was relaxed inside the house but rigorous on the street', highlighting that although this clothing restriction affects only the women, it is the social convention itself that strips characters of autonomy and individuality. Angela Vicario is forced to participate in the ceremonial aspects of marriage, dressing in the 'symbols of purity' and getting married in the pigpen with 'its sacrificial stone', lacking personal agency. These descriptions position everyday traditions as the forces that constrain and limit characters, rather than rigid class distinctions. By presenting rituals as both ordinary and inevitable, García Márquez critiques a society where individuals enact violence and submission not out of personal conviction but out of an ingrained duty to perform expected roles. Through this, *Chronicle of a Death Foretold* reveals that entrenched customs, more than social rank, dictate the most oppressive limitations on individuals.	Topic sentence focuses on an idea (social hierarchies vs. rituals) with a clear argument Nouns and adjectives add specificity Analysis of a language feature (simile) Quotes integrated into sentences Articulates authorial intention Concluding sentence makes connections to the broader world of the text

Notes: At a sentence level, this student has used a range of sentence types. They have selected appropriate analytical verbs and added complexity to their writing with the specificity of their nouns and adjectives. Evidence, including language features, is integrated into sentences. The concluding sentence makes connections to the broader world of the text. The student has woven authorial intention throughout the paragraph, linking examples to the themes and ideas of the text.

Develop your skills

Use the tools in this section to write strong body paragraph sentences. Use the three sample body paragraphs as models to guide you.

1 Select a topic on your text and write the topic sentence for a body paragraph. Use the sentence starters on pages 23–4 as a basis for your topic sentence.

2 Write two sentences that support your topic sentence with evidence from the text. In at least one sentence, integrate a quote from the text. Use the table of quote examples on page 25 as a guide.

3 Write a concluding sentence for your body paragraph, using one of the sentence starters for concluding sentences on page 30.

4 Select a body paragraph from an essay you have written. Referring to the vocabulary tables on pages 28–9, identify four words you could use to replace existing terms or add to improve the analysis. Consider your use of nouns, adjectives, verbs and connective phrases.

Writing conclusions

Your conclusion needs to include:

› one or two sentences summarising your arguments and contention

› one sentence stating the 'big picture' message of the text. You might like to think about this as the 'Why should I care?' sentence, outlining the importance of the text in connection to the essay topic.

Sample conclusions

Topic:

To what extent is hubris responsible for Oedipus' tragic downfall?

Sophocles reveals throughout the course of the play that while fate guides Oedipus' actions, it is Oedipus' own hubris that ultimately leads to his horrific downfall. Sophocles criticises such overwhelming pride, and Oedipus' tragic end becomes a stark warning for a society that is beginning to reject religion and the ultimate authority of the gods.	Summary of arguments and contention 'Big picture' message of the text

Topic:

Characters in *We Have Always Lived in the Castle* are unable to escape the past. Discuss.

Ultimately, Jackson demonstrates how in spite of their attempts to forge new beginnings, characters in *We Have Always Lived in the Castle* are ruled by the events of the past. While characters are burdened with the grief and trauma of their childhoods, it is the suspicion and fear that arises from this that causes the most harm. However, even though Jackson suggests that the persistence of the past is inescapable, she offers hope that it is possible to acknowledge the loss and create something new.	Summary of contention Summary of arguments 'Big picture' message of the text

Useful sentence starters and phrases for conclusions

Sentence starters
› Ultimately …
› Overall …
› In essence …
› Fundamentally …
› At its centre …
› In the final analysis …
› Clearly / It is clear that …
› Finally …
› As a result …
› In the end …
› Essentially …

Phrases for writing about the 'big picture' message of the text

› ... presents an image of a/an [adjective] society in which ...

› ... depicts a world in which ultimately ...

› ... offers hope that ...

› ... invites readers to see that ...

› ... condemns the [adjective] nature of [adjective] society ...

› ... becomes a stark warning for ...

› ... serves as a warning for ...

› ... allows readers to understand the true nature of ...

› ... the importance/significance/futility/loss/consequences/impact of ...

› ... upholds the value of ...

› ... criticises the inherent [noun] of ...

Develop your skills

Use the tools in this section to strengthen your conclusions. Use the examples on *Oedipus the King* and *We Have Always Lived in the Castle* as models to guide you.

1 Review the conclusion of an essay you have written recently. Does it contain sentences that clearly and concisely sum up your arguments and contention? Improve these sentences by using one or more of the sentence starters on page 35.

2 Now consider how well your conclusion states a 'big picture' message of the text. Check the example conclusions on page 35 and the phrases for writing about 'big picture' messages above. Can you improve your conclusion by using one or more of these phrases? Ensure you are also engaging closely with the essay topic.

Sample essay

Here is an example of a high-scoring essay. The annotations use the following colour coding:

› yellow = what the topic sentence is doing

› green = how other sentences are working

› red = how evidence and examples are being used

› blue = how the writer is using language to analyse and develop an argument.

Topic:

The characters in *Sunset Boulevard* are motivated more by self-interest than artistic ambition. Do you agree?

Billy Wilder's film noir *Sunset Boulevard*, set during the increasing commercialisation of 1950s Hollywood, is a scathing critique of the ruthless nature of the film industry. While the film's characters are all connected to the world of filmmaking, their actions are driven less by a passion for cinema and more by greed and a desire for control. Wilder presents Hollywood as a place where artistry is secondary to ego, power and financial security, ultimately suggesting that self-interest is the dominant force shaping these characters' fates, and society more broadly.

 Wilder's Hollywood prioritises commercial success over creative integrity, forcing individuals to compromise their artistic ambitions for financial survival. The film industry, as portrayed in *Sunset Boulevard*, is one where artistic passion is rarely enough to sustain a career. The opening shot is an extreme close-up of a gutter choked with leaves, symbolising the pervasive decay of Hollywood and the moral depravity of those who live there – they are figuratively in the gutter, 'crumbling apart in slow motion' like Norma Desmond's mansion. Joe Gillis exemplifies this downfall: once an aspiring

Annotations:

- Introductory statement about the text
- Considers the implications of the topic
- Introduction of the director's message
- Topic sentence connects argument to what this tells us about the world of the text
- Development of argument in second sentence
- Analyses a construction element (cinematography)

→

screenwriter, he is now desperate to sell uninspired scripts to 'try … to earn a living'. His decline into ghostwriting for Norma Desmond reflects a broader reality of Hollywood: survival often requires sacrificing artistic ideals. Norma's own attempt to return to the spotlight is defeated by the greed of the Hollywood executives, personified by Cecil B DeMille, who, although he empathises with the woman who 'thirty million fans have given … the brush', still won't produce her film. In this way, Wilder highlights a film industry that values marketability over creativity, forcing its artists into moral and professional compromises.

Wilder depicts the relentless pursuit of fame as a vanity exercise that erodes the true purpose of artistic creation. Norma embodies the consequences of an industry that glorifies celebrity over artistic substance. Her desire to return to the screen is not driven by a love of acting, but by an obsession with reclaiming her lost stardom. She sees herself as a legend, insisting that 'it's the pictures that got small', unable to accept that her time has passed. Her melodramatic performance style, characterised by her widened eyes and deliberate movements, reflects an inability to evolve, suggesting that her ambition is rooted in vanity rather than artistic growth. Wilder further emphasises this by consistently positioning her in shadow, symbolising her corruption as she aims for unrealistic ambitions. While some audiences might be left feeling sympathy for the discarded star, Wilder ultimately ridicules her self-interested desires, as well as the system that victimises her.

Wilder presents a world in which those who are interested in artistry are punished, or presented as tragic figures. Max von Mayerling, Norma's

Evidence is integrated into the sentence

Analysis connects example to what this tells us about the world of the text

Evidence is integrated into the sentence

Synthesising phrase

Concluding sentence tells us director's purpose

Topic sentence adds complexity with second clause ('that erodes the true purpose of artistic creation')

Second sentence develops the argument, connecting character to what this tells us about the world of the text

Evidence is integrated into the sentence

Analysis of construction element (acting)

Analysis of construction element (lighting)

Synthesising words

Concluding sentence tells us director's purpose and makes a connection to the world of the text

Topic sentence connects argument to the world of the text ('presents a world in which')

former director, dedicates his life to preserving Norma's delusions, even though he was once a young director who 'showed promise'. Any artistic ambitions he might have once harboured are given over in favour of fabricating fan letters to convince Norma she is still adored. The framing of Max in the background of various shots reveals the insidious nature of his service, presenting it as a morally inferior choice to the artistic work he once pursued. Similarly, Betty Schaefer, who is set up as the film's heroine through her clever dialogue and the use of bright, high-key lighting, is ultimately left bereft and defeated by the greed of Hollywood. The final shot of her walking away from the gates of Norma's mansion symbolises the way in which she is shut out of Hollywood. While she begins the film believing that 'pictures should say a little something', this honourable position ultimately proves to be untenable. Consequently, Wilder brings into question the value of pursuing creativity and artistry, presenting instead a nihilistic view of filmmaking.

While *Sunset Boulevard* acknowledges the allure of artistic ambition, it ultimately portrays Hollywood as a world where self-interest dictates the decisions of its inhabitants. The industry prioritises profit over creativity, transforms ambition into narcissism, and punishes those who might once have truly valued the merits of artistry. In essence, Wilder presents a vision of Hollywood as both seductive and destructive, allowing audiences to perceive the futility of any artistic ambition in such a greed-driven industry.

Evidence is integrated into the sentence

Analysis of construction element (framing)

Analysis of construction element (dialogue and lighting)

Analysis of construction element (cinematography)

Evidence is integrated into the sentence

Synthesising word

Concluding sentence tells us director's purpose and makes a connection to the world of the text

Summary of contention

Summary of arguments

'Big picture' message of the text

Personal response

If you are studying Unit 1, your first Outcome for this area of study will be to make personal connections to the text you are studying. Your teacher will give you more information about what you are expected to produce: you might be asked to write a standard essay with personal connections woven in, or you might be asked to write a series of reflective journal entries. We suggest that you use the text to self, text to text, text to world framework to develop your personal connections.

Text to self

These are the connections you make between the text and your own personal life and experiences. For example, if you are studying Kate Grenville's *The Lieutenant*, which is about a British astronomer who arrives in Australia with the First Fleet and makes connections to the local Eora people, you might write about:

> ❯ the emotions you had when you moved to a new school, comparing them to Daniel Rooke's experiences of starting at school, or arriving in a new and unfamiliar country

> ❯ the challenges you faced learning a new language, comparing them to Daniel Rooke's attempt to learn the language of the Eora people

> ❯ a moral dilemma you have encountered, comparing it to the moral dilemma Daniel Rooke faces towards the end of the novel.

Text to text

These are the connections you make between the text you are studying and other texts you know. The other texts could be novels, short stories, films, television shows, video games, songs, artworks or poems. For example, if you are studying Kate Grenville's *The Lieutenant*, you might write about:

> ❯ A.B. Original's song 'January 26', comparing the criticism of white colonialism in the song to Grenville's similar criticism

> ❯ Grenville's novel *The Secret River* or the miniseries of the same name, which deals with similar themes and is set at a similar point in Australia's history

> ❯ the Gadigal Mural, which portrays the geography of Sydney lands and waters, including the paths formed by Gadigal people before European colonisation.

Text to world

These are the connections you make between the text and the real world. For example, if you are studying Kate Grenville's *The Lieutenant*, you might write about:

> William Dawes, who the character Daniel Rooke was based on

> European settlement in Victoria or other parts of Australia

> The Voice to Parliament referendum.

Use the graphic organiser below to record your ideas.

Key idea or theme in the text	Text to self connections	Text to text connections	Text to world connections

⬆ Go to www.insightpublications.com.au/resources for a Word document version of this graphic organiser.

Sample paragraphs

Here is an example of a mid-scoring personal response paragraph.

Pung's novel *Laurinda* captures the anxieties and complexities of trying to belong in a new place and meet unfamiliar expectations. A few years ago, I started at a new school. Like Lucy, I found that there was a performance to assemblies, where 'every [student] sat still, no matter how long she had to wait' and where students 'had more badges and pins on their lapels than a World War Two veteran'. Pung highlights the threatening authority of teachers at Laurinda, who could 'quieten the girls' by simply 'rais[ing] an arm'. This ability to hold control over a large group of students is slowly revealed to be an insidious example of the expectations society has of young women as a whole – that they sit quietly and listen to others. I admire people like Malala Yousafzai and Greta Thunberg who challenge these societal expectations of girls, and instead speak up, and indeed loudly protest, about important issues.	Topic sentence outlines the idea that will be explored in the paragraph Text to self connection Comparison phrase to emphasise personal connection Quotes integrated into the sentences Text to world connection

Notes: The paragraph seems unfinished – the concluding sentence should synthesise the ideas in the paragraph. Specificity of adjectives like 'threatening' and 'insidious' adds complexity to the paragraph. A range of personal connections have been made. Paragraph is analytical as well as reflective: the student analyses the author's intention. This student could work on:

› extending the ideas in this paragraph further

› including the construction of the text as part of the analysis.

Here is an example of a high-scoring personal response paragraph.

My Neighbour Totoro depicts the way children's imaginations and beliefs can shift their perception of the world. As a child, I believed in fairies. Coming from a Western cultural background, in my imagination fairies were miniature human beings with wings, flitting from flower to tree branch to blade of grass. I loved Cicely Mary Barker's Flower Fairies books and the film *FairyTale: A True Story*. Shirley Barber's intricate illustrations in her picture books about fairies also captivated me, and as a result I associated fairies with the natural world. Unlike the 'susuwatari' in *My Neighbour Totoro,* the fairies of my childhood imagination were pretty, delicate creatures. At	Topic sentence outlines the idea that will be explored in the paragraph Text to self connection Text to text connection Text to self connection Comparison words to emphasise personal connection

times, the adults around me responded like Tatsuo, initially laughing at my belief in fairies, or suggesting they were a trick of the light, as Tatsuo explains sometimes happens when 'you suddenly move from a lighted room to a dark one' and 'you can't see for a second'. At other times, adults supported my creative beliefs, as Tatsuo does when Mei tells her family about meeting Totoro. Tatsuo explains that you can only see the forest spirits 'when they want you to' and suggests giving 'the forest spirits a proper greeting'. He leans down to meet Mei's eyes, physically emphasising that he is meeting his daughter at her level. Similarly, I remember building fairy gardens in my back yard as a child, believing fairies would come and dance there at night and perhaps leave me a gift. Sometimes, I would wake up in the morning and discover a dusting of glitter over the tables and chairs I had created out of moss and leaves. Once, there was an apple left behind, and I was convinced that it came from fairyland: it was sweet, and crisp, and perfectly round. Now, I know it must have been my parents who carefully placed these fairy gifts. Like Tatsuo, they recognised that my belief in the unseen wonders of the world was something to be respected and treasured.

Quotes integrated into the sentence

Analysis of characterisation

Text to self connection

Concluding sentence synthesises the ideas in the paragraph

Notes: The student has made a range of personal connections to the text, including text to self and text to text connections. The student weaves back and forth between the studied text and the personal connections, adding complexity through these multiple comparisons. This student could work on including more analysis of the text, particularly of film techniques.

Useful sentence starters for personal responses

> Like [character], I often feel …

> This moment in the text reminds me of when I …

> [Author]'s depiction is relatable, as I also …

> What I admire about … is …

> My reaction to this quote is …

> A key connection I made with this character is …

> I can understand [theme or moment in text] because …

> For me, the key similarity is …

→

→
- › An obvious connection is …
- › Through comparing these examples, I've realised that …
- › I can empathise with … because …
- › The juxtaposition of these texts allows me to …
- › I wonder/notice/feel …
- › I recognise/acknowledge/consider …
- › I struggled with/to …
- › I discovered/learned/changed/developed …
- › I relate to / connected to / identified with …

Develop your skills

1 Start completing the table on page 41, identifying text to self, text to text and text to world connections for three themes or ideas in your text.

2 Choose three of the sentence starters in the table above, and write three sentences describing connections with your text.

3 Re-read a personal response paragraph you have written. Using the sample paragraphs on pages 42–3 as a guide, rewrite your paragraph to make it stronger. Aim to include comments on the text's construction and end with a sentence that synthesises the ideas in the paragraph.

4

Studying for this area of study

This chapter contains some useful strategies for consolidating knowledge and skills, and to help you prepare for assessment tasks.

Identifying what to work on

Use this self-reflection checklist to identify the skills you need to do the most work on for Reading and exploring/responding to texts.

Skill	I'm confident I can do this on my own	I need to work on this, but I know how to do it	I really need some help with this
I can use examples from all sections of the text.			
I've memorised a range of quotes.			
I can embed evidence into sentences.			
I can write about language features and construction elements.			
I can analyse the setting of the text.			
I can analyse the characters in the text.			
I can analyse the plot and/or structure of the text.			
I can form an argument about the text.			

→

→ I can respond to essay topics focused on the construction of the text.			
I can plan an essay under timed conditions.			
I can write my topic sentences as part of my plan, and check they address the essay topic before I start writing.			
I can write an essay under timed conditions.			
I can re-read my essay and check it is a close response to the essay topic.			
Unit 1 only: I can make a range of personal connections to the text.			
I can use a range of analytical verbs.			
I can use a variety of sentence structures in my essay.			
I can proofread my work for grammar, spelling and punctuation.			

Considering this checklist, what are three strengths you have, and three areas you need to work on?

Strengths	Areas to work on

Quick tasks and longer tasks

Use the tasks in the following table to help you target specific skills.

If you need to work on your knowledge of the text …	
Quick tasks	**Longer tasks**
› Memorise four quotes. › Choose a short section of your text to read over, and add five annotations. › Look through a list of essay topics and tick the ones you'd be confident responding to. Identify any patterns – are you confident because they are about a particular theme, focus on a particular part of the text, or use a particular command term or phrase (e.g. 'Discuss', 'To what extent …')? › Find three quotes for each of the key themes in your text. Write a brief analysis of how each quote supports the theme.	› Read through any study notes your teacher has provided you with and make notes. › Listen to a podcast episode about your text, or watch a video. › Re-read or re-watch the first and last chapters/scenes of the text. Make notes about what has changed, and what this tells us about the author's purpose. › Write five essay topics, using a range of command terms and considering a range of themes.
If you need to work on planning and making sure your essay responds to the topic …	
Quick tasks	**Longer tasks**
› Re-read an old essay. Score yourself out of 10: 1 means you haven't addressed the topic at all, 10 means your teacher could not have done a better job. › Rewrite the topic sentences for a practice essay, making sure they address the essay topic. › Choose an essay topic and quickly list five pieces of evidence you could use in your response.	› Plan a response to an essay topic in 15 minutes. Now plan it again (same topic) in 5 minutes. › Write a short (200-word) response to an essay topic where you focus on making your contention as direct and clear as possible. › Compile a list of essay questions. Sort them into key themes. Plan a response to an essay topic about a theme you find challenging. › Read a sample essay and create a reverse plan: write down what each paragraph is doing, not just what it says.

→

→

If you need to work on your analytical writing skills …

Quick tasks

› Read through a sample essay. Highlight analytical verbs in one colour, metalanguage / construction elements in another colour, and transition phrases in a third colour. Pick five words or phrases you've highlighted that you will use in your next practice piece.

› Write an essay paragraph using only short sentences, then rewrite it using a mix of sentence lengths for fluency.

› Choose a minor character and write a single analytical sentence explaining their role in the text.

› Write two sentences analysing a specific word or phrase from the text.

Longer tasks

› Write a paragraph that focuses only on the author's use of one technique or construction element (e.g. symbolism, foreshadowing, humour).

› Read through a paragraph of an essay you have written. Select two sentences you think could be improved in their sophistication or fluency. Rewrite them.

› Read through an essay you have written. Highlight all the analytical verbs you've used. Rewrite the essay by using a broader range of analytical verbs that are more precise.

Crafting and creating texts

The second section of this book helps you develop your skills in crafting texts for different audiences and purposes. These skills are quite different from other skills in VCE English, but they are equally important. You will use these skills in your SACs in Year 11 and Year 12 as well as in Section B of the external exam at the end of Year 12.

To begin with, you will need a system for organising your notes and other resources: this will help you to keep track of important text features and build a bank of your own writing. Chapter 5 gives you effective strategies for organising and recording notes. Chapter 6 shows you how to read and annotate your mentor and supplementary texts. Chapter 7 guides you through the process of generating ideas, writing for a purpose, selecting text structures and language features and developing your authorial voice. This chapter will also support you to produce your written commentary. Finally, Chapter 8 provides tools for building your skills, helping you to reflect on and refine your work by using a range of shorter and longer tasks.

5 Setting up for success

As with the previous area of study, one of the ways you will take notes is by annotating your mentor texts. Use colour coding to differentiate between ideas relevant to your Framework, language features and text structures. You will also need one or more graphic organisers to capture ideas and concepts, and begin planning for the writing you will do.

How to set up your workbook

If you're working in hard copy, it's helpful to have a couple of different places to record your learning and store important documents. For this area of study we recommend the following.

› A document folder with plastic slips for you to keep class handouts in. You might like to organise these into:

  › classwork

  › exam preparation or study resources

  › sample pieces.

› An exercise book or loose-leaf lined paper with tabs for:

  › mentor texts

  › ideas and concepts

  › language features and text structures

  › practice writing.

How to set up your digital files

If you're working digitally, set up a folder for this area of study and then nest the following folders and files within that. It can be tempting to create a new file for each lesson, but this will make it challenging to find specific notes and information when you need them later.

Folder: **Mentor and supplementary texts**

> *File:* Mentor Text 1

> *File:* Mentor Text 2

> *File*: Mentor Text 3

> Upload any supplementary texts your teacher provides, or any that you find through your own research or study.

Folder: **Writing**

> *File*: Ideas and concepts

> *File*: Language features and text structures

> *File*: Short pieces

> *File*: Full pieces

>> › Use the comment function to record feedback from your peers or teacher.

> *Folder*: Sample writing

>> › Upload any sample written pieces or paragraphs your teacher provides.

Set a goal for this area of study

Setting goals is an effective way to track improvement. You might like to set a goal about a particular habit, or zoom in on a specific skill. Some suggestions for SMART goals for this area of study are:

> By the end of Week 2, I will read and annotate all my mentor texts.

> I will ask my teacher for recommendations for supplementary texts. I will make notes about at least three of these recommendations before I begin drafting.

> Every time I complete a practice piece of writing I will highlight the sentence I like the most.

Where to go for help

You should always ask your teacher if you get stuck. For this area of study we also recommend:

› the Insight *Framework of Ideas* guide for your Framework

› Insight's other textbooks for Year 11 or Year 12 English or EAL

› the State Library Victoria Research Guides for the Framework of Ideas (guides.slv.vic.gov.au/vceenglishEAL/FrameworkOfIdeas)

› the VCAA assessment report for English or EAL (www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/assessment/vce-assessment/past-examinations/Pages/English.aspx or www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/assessment/vce-assessment/past-examinations/Pages/english-as-an-additional-language.aspx)

› the Writers Victoria website (writersvictoria.org.au/resources/writing-advice)

› the Wheeler Centre website (www.wheelercentre.com/vce-2024-curriculum-resources)

› your local library, which might offer:

  › free tutoring or study sessions

  › access to Studiosity (www.studiosity.com), where you can submit written documents for feedback, and chat live with tutors across the world.
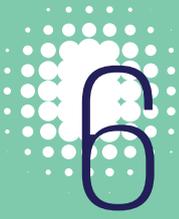
6 Reading mentor texts

Your mentor texts give you examples of effective writing in different forms, and you can use language and structural features that you find in mentor texts in your own pieces. They can also serve as inspiration for your own ideas about the Framework you are studying. Write notes about your mentor texts and use these as springboards for your own writing.

Annotating

Below is an example of an annotated section of Amy Duong's short autobiographical text 'The Red Plastic Chair is a Vietnamese Cultural Institution, and My Anchor'.

I don't own any plastic chairs myself and would have no idea where to buy them. For me, they serve a personal rather than functional purpose. They are cues; keys to memories I thought I had forgotten. One glimpse of that deep red (is it for luck? Prosperity? Longevity?) and suddenly I am on the streets of Sài Gòn, petrol fumes swirling around me. One glance and I am eight years old, huddled over a GameBoy while my uncle sings Careless Whisper on his home karaoke machine. I see tea ceremonies, funerals, family barbecues; the plastic is in my DNA. No doubt one day these chairs will fill the oceans, but for now they float through my memories weighing almost nothing, but carrying so much.

- *Introductory clauses — repeated use of these creates a rhythm*
- *Varied use of punctuation allows for precision in meaning*
- *Anaphora → fluency and rhythm*
- *Parentheses add detail*
- *List → emphasises the prevalence of chairs in her life*
- *Extended image of the ocean*

A useful annotation will usually identify what has been highlighted and provide some analysis.

> › *Possible annotation:* List

> › *Better annotation:* List: emphasises the prevalence of chairs in her life

Unlike your annotations for Area of Study 1, for Crafting and creating texts you should focus your annotations on text structures and language features. Your mentor texts have been selected as models of excellent writing, so your job is to understand what makes them excellent examples.

Use the list of language features and construction elements on pages 7–10 to identify what you should annotate. You might also label and annotate the following features.

Language feature	Definition
Anecdote	A short, personal story used to illustrate a point or engage the audience emotionally (e.g. 'I remember the summer when the countryside around us was scorched by bushfires. We barely escaped, and a lot of my friends lost their houses. That's when I realised: climate change isn't confined to the news or my science textbook. It's happening now.').
Contrast and juxtaposition	Writing about two ideas, images or concepts to highlight their differences and create a strong effect (e.g. 'They sit in air-conditioned offices while we march in the heat. They make empty promises while our futures burn.').
Direct statement	A clear and straightforward declaration of a fact, opinion or argument without unnecessary elaboration (e.g. 'Play is essential.').
Hyperbole	Exaggeration used to emphasise a point or create a dramatic effect (e.g. 'If we keep ignoring the problem, there won't be a planet left for us to save!').
Listing	The use of multiple related items or ideas in succession to reinforce a point, or create a sense of endlessness (e.g. 'Hopscotch, tiggy, hide-and-seek, sardines, capture the flag: we played them all.').
Rhetorical question	A question that does not require an answer but is used to provoke thought or emphasise a point (e.g. 'How do you know who you are until you leave everything behind?').
Sentence fragments and short sentences	Incomplete or brief sentences used for emphasis, urgency or dramatic effect (e.g. 'No more delays. No more excuses.').

Tricolon / rule of three	Three phrases or clauses used to create rhythm or emphasis (e.g. 'I learned. I adapted. I grew.').
Use of first language	Incorporating words or phrases from a writer's first language (e.g. 'My grandparents called this land home, "ngurra", our place. Now, that land is disappearing.').

Text structure	Definition
Bullet points	A list format used to organise key points.
Call to action	A direct appeal urging the audience to take specific action (e.g. 'Sign the petition and we will be able to make a difference').
Caption	A short piece of text placed below an image to describe or explain it.
Date and time stamp	A record of when a diary entry, transcript or blog post was written (e.g. 16/2/2026).
Hyperlink	A clickable text or image that directs the reader to another webpage or document.
Salutation and sign-off	A salutation is a greeting at the beginning of a letter or speech, and a sign-off is a phrase used to end it (e.g. 'Dear sir/madam', 'Kind regards', 'Thank you for the opportunity to talk to you today').
Speaker label	The part of a script or transcript that identifies who is speaking (e.g. 'SPEAKER 1: Hello').
Subheading	A heading within a text that introduces a new section or topic.

Keeping track of what you find

On the next pages are two graphic organisers you can use to record important annotations, language features and text structures, and consider how you might apply them to your own writing. Choose the graphic organiser that best suits the way you work, or that best supports the work you're doing in the classroom. The top row of each table is done as an example, using the Framework idea Writing about personal journeys.

Writing about _____			
Quote or example	**Mentor text**	**Purpose**	**My example**
'One glimpse of that deep red (is it for luck? Prosperity? Longevity?) and suddenly I am on the streets of Sài Gòn, petrol fumes swirling around me.'	'The Red Plastic Chair is a Vietnamese Cultural Institution, and My Anchor'	Parentheses add detail, and show the narrator's questioning/ curious nature. Narrator is interjecting/self-editing.	On the train home I watch the girl opposite bobbing her head in time to the music from her headphones (is she listening to pop? Country? Heavy metal?) and wonder whether Mum will have remembered to get toilet paper.

Writing about _____				
Mentor text	**Language feature or text structure**	**Example from the text**	**Idea from the text**	**What could I borrow for my own writing?**
'The Red Plastic Chair is a Vietnamese Cultural Institution, and My Anchor'	Use of punctuation to add detail	'One glimpse of that deep red (is it for luck? Prosperity? Longevity?) and suddenly I am on the streets of Sài Gòn, petrol fumes swirling around me.'	Objects and colours can hold deep meaning for individuals.	An ordinary, everyday object can symbolise something more, e.g. the rolling pin that belonged to Grandma.

Supplementary texts

Your teacher will share with you some supplementary texts. These might be other excellent examples of a particular form of writing (e.g. a monologue or a podcast transcript) or texts that help you develop your understanding of the Framework (e.g. a painting or an episode of a TV show). You can find your own supplementary texts as well. Use the graphic organiser below to record key information.

Writing about _____		
Supplementary text (including text type)	**How does it help me understand our Framework?**	**What could I borrow for my own writing?**
Pride (film)	_It's about the LGBT activists supporting the 1980s Welsh miners' strikes. It's about the importance of supporting each other even though on the surface we might be different._	_I don't have to write about the protest itself. I could write about a community meeting, or a bus trip to a protest, or two people talking about whether or not they are going to protest._

7
Developing your texts

Developing an original piece of writing requires careful thought and planning. As well as working out *what* you want to say, you need to decide *how* you will say it. In addition, in an assessment task (including the end-of-Year-12 exam), it is likely that you will be asked to respond to a given title and stimulus material, so you will need to incorporate these ideas into your piece.

Generating ideas

One of the biggest challenges for this area of study is coming up with a good idea for your piece of writing. You should start by using your mentor texts and supplementary texts. How have they inspired you? What elements of their ideas could you borrow? Below are some other strategies you can use. Some will work better for your Framework than others.

Borrowed elements

Think about a story you love. It might be a film, a TV show, a fairytale or a picture book. What are the elements that you like about it? Does it have interesting characters? Is it set somewhere interesting? Does it have an exciting twist? Is there an important message or moral? List the things you like about it, and choose two or three that you could use in your piece of writing.

→

→ For example:

> › Story I love: *Cinderella*

> › Elements I like: A protagonist who is alone in the world, a high-stakes deadline (has to be home by midnight), a masked ball, an ordinary object (shoe) being important.

> › Elements I could use: A protagonist who is alone in the world. In my piece, her parents are travelling overseas for the summer and have left her with her aunt who does not understand her at all.

Mix and match

Create the following table, then fill it out. The first three rows have been done as an example, and this will work best with about ten rows.

	A character (age and/or career)	Who is (adjective 1)	And (adjective 2)	Living in (setting)	When (plot point)
1	a florist	brave	clumsy	Melbourne, 2026	someone falls in love
2	a retiree	ignorant	charismatic	Mount Midnight	the city falls under attack
3	an astronaut	mischievous	hot-tempered	Mars	a friend betrays a secret
4					

Then, roll a dice (or use a random number generator) five times. If you were using this table and rolled a 1, 3, 1, 3, 2 you would write a piece about a florist who is mischievous and clumsy, and who is living on Mars when the city falls under attack. If you want to do this digitally, the plot generator at blog.reedsy.com/plot-generator/ is a great tool. You can of course change the columns so that they fit different forms of writing. For example, if you wanted to write a speech, you could have:

A speaker (age and/or career)	Who is (adjective 1)	And (adjective 2)	Speaking to (audience)	In (setting)

Random generation

Use an online tool like story dice (davebirss.com/storydice/) or random objects (davebirss.com/things/) to generate several objects or concepts you must use in your writing.

Image inspiration

Do an image search for your Framework idea (e.g. country) or its synonyms (e.g. home, landscape). Choose an unusual or interesting image and brainstorm how you could use it in your piece of writing. Is it the setting? Could it be used as the key image in a feature article?

List making

Brainstorm some list topics for your Framework and write the lists. For example, if your Framework is Writing about protest, you might brainstorm the following topics:

> Times I have been angry with my parents

> Unfair things I have witnessed

> Ways to protest silently

> Things to bring to a protest rally

> My favourite protest placards.

If your Framework is Writing about futures, you might brainstorm the following topics:

> Things that will exist in 100 years that don't exist now

> Things that exist now that won't exist in 100 years

> My hopes for myself for the future

> Reasons having a robot would be cool

> Ways schools will have changed in the future.

Writing for a purpose

Your piece needs to achieve one of the four purposes:

> **to express** (writing that imaginatively engages with actions, events, experiences and/or ideas). Typically this is the purpose of short stories, plays, poems and songs.

> **to explain** (writing that examines causes, effects and possible consequences of actions, events, experiences and/or ideas). Typically this is the purpose of feature articles, interviews and podcasts.

> **to reflect** (writing that explores personal experiences and discoveries to develop a deeper understanding of actions, events, experiences and/or ideas). Typically this is the purpose of personal essays, blog posts and diary entries.

> **to argue** (writing that presents a clear point of view, supports it with reasoning and evidence, and seeks to persuade others about actions, events, experiences and/or ideas). Typically this is the purpose of opinion pieces, speeches and editorials.

You can, of course, write for multiple purposes. You might write a podcast script that *explains* the causes of a particular protest, and *expresses* admiration for the protestors. Or, you might write a speech that *reflects* on the difficulties of moving countries and *argues* that Australians should be more welcoming.

Your writing needs to reflect the purpose you have chosen at a word and sentence level, as well as at a whole-text level. Have a look at the example below, written *to explain*.

The first step in looking after your local area is recognising the impact small actions can have over time. In Merribank, the community park had been allowed to become overgrown and littered with rubbish, making it an unwelcoming space for families and local wildlife. When a group of residents organised a clean-up day, volunteers of all ages came together to remove rubbish, trim overgrown plants, and paint benches and playgrounds. As a result of these efforts, over time the park became a place people wanted to visit again. It became a cleaner, greener and more inviting space for everyone.	Sequencing of ideas Neutral, formal language Passive voice Generalised language that doesn't focus on individual experiences Focuses on cause and effect

Here are some words and phrases you can use for each of the four purposes.

Express	› I was overcome with …
	› The world seemed to shimmer with …
	› A surge of [emotion] washed over me as …
	› The air was thick with …
	› I can barely express my …
	› Even after all this time, the scent of [noun] reminds me of …
	› My heart was full of [noun] as I …
Explain	› A key reason for this is …
	› This can be attributed to …
	› The data suggests that …
	› For instance …
	› To illustrate this point …
	› The first step in …
	› Having … it is now apparent …
Reflect	› I never expected …
	› I realised …
	› I became aware that …
	› I now understand that …
	› It was only when … that I …
	› At first, I struggled with …
	› I realised too late that …
Argue	› It is unacceptable that …
	› It is not a question of if, but when …
	› There is no justification for …
	› We must …
	› We cannot ignore / afford to ignore …
	› Every one of us has a responsibility to …

Here are some language features you can use for each of the four purposes.

Express	› analogies › metaphors › personification › sensory descriptions › similes
Explain	› definitions › direct quotes › neutral, formal language › statistics › time markers (at present, in the past etc.)
Reflect	› ellipses and elliptical phrases › first-person perspective › modal verbs (should, might etc.) › parentheses and parenthetical clauses › repetition
Argue	› call to action › exaggeration › rhetorical questions › tricolon

Develop your skills

1 Decide which purpose you will write for. Brainstorm some sentence starters or phrases you could use that fit that purpose.

2 Choose a section of your own writing. Rewrite it for a different purpose.

3 Choose a purpose and write the first three sentences of a text (for example, a speech or a blog post). See if you can make your purpose evident in these first three sentences.

Visible text structures and language features

The writing you do for this area of study should feel like a real piece of writing that exists in the world. You need to think carefully about your purpose, audience and context. We suggest that you also select a specific text type, and explicitly use text structures and language features appropriate for the text type. For example, a speech will start with a salutation ('Good evening, everyone') and might include directions for the speaker ('[pause for laughter]').

Below are some suggestions for visible text structures and language features you can use for a range of text types.

Text type	Visible text structures and language features	Example
Blog post	Comments	Anonymous181: Great post! I totally agree with your points about school uniforms.
	Date and time stamp	Published on November 15, 2025, at 10:33 am
	Hashtags	#personalstory #newbeginnings #myjourney
	Hyperlinks	Check out the guide on reducing plastic waste <u>here</u>.
	Images with captions	[Image of a group of young people carrying placards and shouting] Caption: Students march for climate justice in Melbourne.
	Links to similar posts	Related post: <u>10 Ways to Live with Nature</u>
	Subheadings	*What We Can Do*
Diary entry or letter	Arrows (to connect ideas)	I went to the beach today → It reminded me of our trip last summer.
	Bullet points	These were the things I realised: › I couldn't do it alone. › I didn't know who to ask for help. › I didn't know how to ask for help.
	Colloquial language	Today was such a mess, I can't even.
	Date	February 2nd, 2026
	Salutation	Dear Diary / Dear Jennifer
	Shorthands and abbreviations	IDK what to do w/o you.
	Sign-off	Til next time / Yours / Lovingly

→

Email	Attachments	See attached report.
	Email signature	Best regards, Dr Alex Carter | She/Her Senior Lecturer, University of Melbourne Alex.Carter@unimelb.edu.au
	Hyperlinks	Please sign up using the form here.
	Reply and forward indicators	Re: Meeting Agenda Fwd: New Acknowledgement of Country
	Salutation	Hi team, / Dear colleagues, / Hey Jake,
	Sign-off	Cheers / Regards / Thanks in advance
	Subject	Subject: Upcoming Staff Training Session
	To and CC	To: amy-li@marketing.ourcorp.com CC: phillip-brooks@hr.ourcorp.com
Feature article or opinion piece	By-line	By Amrit Maghera, Entertainment Reporter
	Columns	Last Monday night at The Venue, Christina Stargazer gave a riveting performance of her best-known songs. A large crowd of her loyal fans braved the wet weather and dressed in a variety of Stargazer's most exotic and colourful outfits. She opened with a few new songs before launching into her famous back catalogue, inviting the audience to …
	Direct quotes	According to Green, 'If we do not act in the next five years, the consequences will be catastrophic.'
	Headline and subtitle	Inside the Mind of Christina Stargazer An interview with the world's greatest songwriter
	Images with captions	[Image of a flooded street] Caption: Residents wade through knee-deep water after heavy rains.
	Pull quotes	The importance of acting soon was recognised by many at the convention. According to Green, 'If we do not act in the next five years, the consequences will be catastrophic.' *"the consequences will be catastrophic"*

Memoir	Paragraphs (of varying lengths)	I started at primary school a year later than most of my peers. It was an experiment by the parents, who thought that I would thrive if I had an extra twelve months of playing in the dirt and doing finger painting.
		In some ways, they were right.
		My early days at school were not challenging: I made friends easily and I could count up to twenty.
	Subheadings	Moving to Australia
	Use of first language	My grandmother often said, 'La vida es sueño.' Life is a dream.
Monologue	Second-person pronouns	You're sitting there thinking that this won't happen to you, that what I'm talking about only happens to characters on a stage.
	Speaker label	CHARLIE: [*sighs*] I don't know what to do.
	Stage directions	[*She paces the room, biting her nails. The lights dim until there is only a single spotlight left on her.*]
Podcast script	Music cues	[Upbeat intro music fades in]
	Salutation	Hello, and welcome to ALR's 'Music of the Moment'. I'm your host Joshua Taumalolo, and we have an outstanding panel of guests to fill your ears in this episode.
	Sign-off	Thanks for tuning in. We'll be back next Wednesday with our monthly bonus episode. Until then, keep on standing.
	Sound effects	[Phone ringing in background]
	Speaker labels	HOST: Today, we're talking to climate activist Zara Khan.
	Filler words and sounds	So, um, what was your inspiration for this project?
Screenplay	Capitalisation of character names	We see FRANKIE, leaning against the railing, waving to STUDENT 1 and STUDENT 2.
	Descriptions of action	The door blows closed in the wind, banging noisily against the doorframe. We see Ava look up. A close-up of the hook by the door: she's noticed the missing key.
	Descriptions of characters	Enter BILLY, a lanky teenager wearing a Beatles t-shirt. His hair needs a brush.

→

→	Descriptions of settings	We're in Malorie's bedroom. The walls are covered in polaroid pictures of her friends. There's an overflowing rubbish bin in the corner, and the bedside table is laden with make-up bottles.
	Dialogue	JAMES I can't believe you did that. MR SMITH It's for your own good, son.
	Scene headings	INT. COFFEE SHOP – NIGHT
	Transitions	CUT TO:
Script	Act and scene numbers	Act 2, Scene 3
	Capitalisation of speaker labels	BELLA: I knew I couldn't trust you.
	Descriptions of settings	*A country lane, littered with cigarette butts.*
	Dialogue	BELLA: I knew I couldn't trust you. EMILY: What? BELLA: It was you the whole time.
	Stage directions	[*Lights up on* KATHLEEN, *centrestage. She walks towards the audience.*]
Short story	Frame narrative	Let me tell you a story about a man who disappeared one night.
	Paragraphs (of varying lengths)	In the distance, Alice could see the church spire, rising above the town. The paddocks were like one of her mother's quilts, gently undulating in the breeze. There was nothing to suggest the secrets this town held. Nothing at all. But Alice knew they were there. It was Alice who had the key to the biggest secret of all. She just didn't know it yet.

Social media post	Colloquial language	Omg, this is the best day ever!!
	Comments	AlleyKatt: I love this! theJohnPark: Where was this taken?
	Emojis	Feeling 😍 after today's event!
	Images and gifs	[GIF of a cat jumping excitedly]
	Likes and reactions	Liked by AlleyKatt and 23 others
	Polls and other interactive features	Which dress should I wear? 🟢🔴 Vote below!
	User handle	@ClimateWarrior2025
Speech	Audience interaction cues	Raise your hand if you've ever felt road rage.
	Directions for speaker	[Number each point off by holding up a finger]
	Introduction by an alternate speaker	And now, please welcome our keynote speaker, Dr Lena Patel.
	Salutation	Good morning, St Margaret's, and thank you for having me today. It's an honour to be speaking at such a prestigious school.
	Sign-off	Thank you very much.
	Slides	[Slide 1: An illustration of Camelot, with the text 'The Stories that Make Us']

Use the graphic organiser below to plan for how you will incorporate a range of text structures and language features.

Form / text type e.g. a speech	
Audience e.g. young, second-generation Australians	
Purpose e.g. to express	
Context e.g. an event at a university, presented as part of Diversity Week	

→

Key idea about your Framework e.g. the grieving process is a personal journey	
Dot-point plan	
Text structures and language features e.g. I'm going to begin with an anecdote, emphasising particular points through repetition.	

Develop your skills

1 Select a text type you will use for your SAC or exam. Brainstorm a list of text structures and language features that fit this text type, or highlight the ones you like best on pages 65–9.

2 Look up some real examples of this text type and add to your brainstorm.

3 Practise writing the opening of your piece, focusing on using appropriate text structures and language features.

Developing a voice

One of the things you will work on in this area of study is developing a voice. This means that your piece of writing needs to sound like you wrote it, and no one else. The best way to achieve this is to use the text structures and language features outlined in this chapter. Have a close look at the examples below, and note how distinct voices have been created.

Consider this excerpt from Emmeline Pankhurst's speech 'Freedom or Death':

I am here as a soldier who has temporarily left the field of battle in order to explain – it seems strange it should have to be explained – what civil war is like when civil war is waged by women. I am not only here as a soldier temporarily absent from the field at battle; I am here – and that, I think, is the strangest part of my coming – I am here as a person who, according to the law courts of my country, it has been decided, is of no value to the community at all; and I am adjudged because of my life to be a dangerous person, under sentence of penal servitude in a convict prison.	Metaphorical language – compares herself to a soldier Aside added using parenthetical en dashes Repetition Formal, antiquated language

Here is the above excerpt, rewritten with a young, casual voice:

I'm basically a fighter, like actually in the middle of the action, but I had to step away for a bit to explain (which is kinda wild that I even have to) what it's like when women are the ones fighting a war. And yeah, I'm not just here as someone taking a break from all that, I'm also here as someone who, according to the legal system, is apparently worthless to society. (Yep, that's right.) They've literally decided that because of what I've done, I'm a threat and should be locked up in prison.	Metaphorical language – compares herself to a fighter; 'fighter' is more individualistic than 'soldier' Colloquial language Aside added using parentheses Repetition

Here is the same excerpt, rewritten with a sparse, minimalistic voice:

I fight. I have stepped away from battle to explain – though it should not need explaining – what war is when women wage it. I am not only a soldier away from the fight. I am here, and that, I think, is the strangest thing. I am here as someone my country has judged to be worthless. They say I am a danger. They have sentenced me. A prison waits.	Short, direct sentences Aside added using parenthetical en dashes Metaphorical language Repetition

And here is the excerpt rewritten with a poetic, flowery voice:

I stand before you, a warrior pulled from the tempest of battle, called to shape into words the unspeakable – the truth of war when waged by women. It is a cruel thing that such truth must be spoken at all. I am not merely a soldier in exile from the fight; I am here, and somehow, that is the strangest fate of all. I stand as one my country has cast into shadow, stripped of worth, erased from the world of the righteous. They have named me a danger, bound me in judgement, and now the iron jaws of a prison wait to swallow me whole.	Imagery Metaphorical language – compares herself to a warrior; 'warrior' is more heroic than 'soldier' Repetition Tricolon Powerful, dramatic language

Develop your skills

1 Choose a section of your own writing. Identify the voice you have used. Is it personal or impersonal? Satirical or earnest? Poetic or minimalistic?

2 Now rewrite this section using a different voice.

3 Practise writing some dialogue. Each character should have a distinct voice. Exaggerate this as much as possible, then give your dialogue to a friend and see if they can identify the different voices in a way that matches your intention.

Planning a text

Use the graphic organiser below to carefully plan your piece. Complete it using dot points.

Form / text type	
Context and audience	
Purpose	
Key idea	

Introduction/ opening	
Main idea / body	
Conclusion/ closing	

Sample written pieces

This section contains three sample responses. They would receive marks in three different bands. Read the pieces and the annotations to see why they would be graded differently.

Sample 1

Here is an example of a crafted text for Writing about protest. This piece would score in the low to medium band.

Good afternoon. Thank you so much for coming today. It means a lot that you're willing to show up, and that you've kept showing up, to protest one of the greatest crises of our time. Your presence here, on the steps of Parliament, sends a message: we want change.

Begins with a salutation

Although the student has addressed an audience, it's not clear who the audience is

Clear context: this speech is being delivered outside Parliament

For decades, we have been told to wait. To trust that things will change. To believe that the government, and the corporations that fund it, will do the right thing. But waiting hasn't stopped the oceans from rising. It hasn't stopped rainforests from being cut down. It hasn't stopped the bushfires that threaten communities every summer. Our government continues to prioritise profit over people, and we're here today because we refuse to accept that.

We refuse to accept a world where clean air and water are luxuries. To accept a world where ecosystems are destroyed in the name of economic growth. Where politicians make empty promises while the planet heats up beyond repair.

Climate change has become a bit of a dirty word in this country. Just like many of you, I'm still at school. And I'm sick of hearing that I'm too young to be so worried about the future. That I should focus on my studies, enjoy my childhood, leave politics to the adults. But how can I enjoy my childhood, when I don't know what kind of childhood my sons and daughters will have? How can we stand by while politicians debate whether our planet is worth saving? Politicians keep telling us that change is complicated. That it takes time. But we don't have time. We know the truth: the science is clear. The solutions exist. What we lack is not knowledge or technology, but political will.

Instead of investing in renewable energy, our government approves new coal mines. Instead of protecting our natural landscapes, they allow more deforestation. Instead of listening to climate scientists, they listen to corporate lobbyists. We are being asked to pay the price for their greed, and we refuse.

Repetition: each phrase is repeated three times, which is a strong persuasive technique

Introduction of persona/speaker

Rhetorical questions

Juxtaposition emphasises the urgency of taking action

Repetition

History shows us that real change has never come from those in power willingly giving it. It has come from movements like this, from people like you and me who show up week after week, demanding better. Change has come from people who understand that the future is not something we wait for, but something we fight for.

Connection to the Framework (Writing about protest)

Repetition

So today, like every week, we are here not just to march, not just to speak, but to demand action. Not in ten years. Not when it's convenient. Not when those in power decide they're ready. But now. Because the planet does not wait.

And neither will we.

Thank you.

Short, fragmented sentences emphasise urgency

Sign-off

Notes

This student has structured their piece appropriately, with a clear outline of the problem and a powerful call to action. Although this speech is being presented at a climate change protest, it is only loosely connected to the Framework. The strongest ideas are about climate change, rather than about protest. This student has used repetition and emotive language to fit their purpose of *arguing*. They need to use a wider range of text structures and language features. This piece would be improved with a clearer indication of who the audience is, and perhaps some direct addresses to the audience (e.g. asking them to join in with a protest chant).

Sample 2

Here is an example of a crafted text for Writing about play. This piece would score in the medium to high band.

THE HIDDEN THREAT BENEATH OUR CITY

By Anj-U, Senior Correspondent, Fifth Star Member

Headline (and following by-line) → text features of a feature article

By-line suggests that this is a fantasy or futuristic world

Authorities have successfully dismantled yet another illegal playground, exposing the ongoing dangers of recreational activities. In a late-night raid, Robo Guards stormed a concealed area beneath Building 58, where an elaborate, illicit play structure had been constructed. The operation resulted in multiple arrests, with those involved now facing serious charges under the Anti-Disruption Act and the Productivity Protection Laws.

UNCOVERING A HUB OF DISORDER

The so-called 'Under-Play-Ground' featured crude re-creations of pre-ban entertainment devices, including primitive handmade toys, illicit board games and even a rudimentary stage for theatrical performances – all clear violations of the Anti-Disruption Act. Enacted two decades ago, the Act ensured the complete eradication of play following a surge in criminal activity, workplace inefficiency and declining economic output linked to recreational distractions.

> Still image from a body cam of Robo Guards destroying a rusted slide

Above: Security Forces deconstruct unauthorised play equipment, ensuring it cannot be used again.

Evidence suggests that for months, if not years, individuals had been gathering in secret to engage in dangerous, unproductive behaviours: running, jumping and even laughing in direct violation of established societal guidelines.

'The scene was chaotic,' said Officer Pete-Rr, who led the operation from the control room. 'There were children and adults alike, fully engaged

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Annotations:

- Formal, reportage voice is appropriate for the text type
- Text details contribute to worldbuilding
- Subheading → text feature of a feature article
- Outlining of the cause and effect fits the text's purpose of *explaining*
- Image and caption → text features of a feature article (note that the image is only described and not present, which is an appropriate way to signal this text feature in an assessment piece)
- Text details contribute to worldbuilding

in reckless physical activity. Some were even telling stories and making music. We know these activities are gateways to inefficiency and disorder.'

A GROWING THREAT? ····· ········ ··· ·· ··· ···

This is not the first illegal play site to be discovered. Just last year, a similar operation in Building 218 led to the arrest of 14 individuals, many of whom were sentenced to re-education programs. The leader of that underground network was later identified as a former teacher, demonstrating how even once-trusted members of society can be drawn into reckless ideology.

Description of similar events fits the text's purpose of *explaining*

> Still image from a body cam of a board game. The board game box is old, and sticky-taped together. The name of the board game has been censored.

Above: A confiscated board game, found among the ruins. ··· ··· ·

Image and caption → text features of a feature article

Despite clear laws prohibiting play-based distractions, those captured in the raid attempted to defend their actions. One individual, identified as L-Ee, stated: 'We are not criminals. We are just trying to remember what it was like to be free.'

Another detainee, who refused to give their name, claimed: 'They tell us to work harder, but for what? There is nothing else left.'

These statements show how hard it is to change people's minds. Our citizens are lucky to live in a world that understands the value of work, and how much enjoyment and success can be gained from working hard. ··· ·

Voice is not maintained here

THE GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE ← Subheading → text feature of a feature article

A spokesperson for the Department of Public Order assured citizens that there would be no tolerance for such violations: 'The government remains committed to protecting our nation from the corrosive effects of unregulated play. Play leads to distraction. Distraction leads to disorder. Disorder leads to collapse.'

The Department of Public Order is responsible for making sure we are all safe. They will introduce new surveillance measures, like more security cameras and more Robo Guard patrols. ← Voice is not maintained here

All citizens are urged to report any suspicious behaviour that could indicate an underground play network.

Notes

This student has used the text structures and language features of a feature article appropriately. The premise of this piece is clever, but is lacking some detail. Although there are worldbuilding details, it is not clear whether the article is written in our world in the future, or in a fantasy world. This piece is connected to the Framework, but needs to further develop the idea of the importance of play. By focusing only on the dismantling of the underground playground, the piece spends a lot of time exploring the absence of play.

Sample 3

Here is an example of a crafted text for Writing about personal journeys. This piece would score in the high band.

Note: The following monologue was performed in Melbourne in July 2026 as part of a series of monologues about characters from classical literature. ← Author's note provides context and audience

[*There is a song playing. Something from the 60s. SUSAN is dancing. Badly. She is also drunk. The music stops and she continues humming or singing along. She stops as she sees …*]

SUSAN: Oh, hello. You again.

[*She is talking to an empty chair in the front row of the audience.*]

Sorry, sorry, sorry. My apologies. Your most imperial majesty, most magnificent, Emperor of somewhere that's probably important – what even is a High King anyway? No one ever explained that to me properly.

Anyway, Peter, don't you have anything better to do than … whatever this is? I don't really think you can consider it *haunting* if you don't even *say* anything. Can't you bother somebody else? Although I suppose all the logical options are dead.

[SUSAN *sits.*]

Now, let me see what news there is to catch you up on. No wars that need winning. No political matches to make. Haven't heard any rumours of uprisings and, as far as I know, no one's been blowing any horns for you.

[*A beat.*]

Sometimes I dream about that – wake up in the dead of night and could swear on my life I'd heard that horn. It was such a bone-deep noise, wasn't it? Like we were being pulled back into the land of the living after having died.

You always said you didn't mind coming back here. I was so jealous of you for that. You slipped back into your boyhood like it was one of those coats in the wardrobe. Fifteen years of ruling in Na – the other place – and you just accepted that

Stage directions → text feature of a monologue

Text details contribute to worldbuilding

Stage direction signals a change in tone

Conversational tone matches the premise of the piece and creates a distinct voice

now it was back to mathematics homework and geography lessons. As if we hadn't learnt how to read topographical maps a decade ago. As if we hadn't balanced the budget of an entire kingdom. As if thousands of our subjects hadn't knelt down in front of us and sung out their obedience.

Maybe it's different for boys. But I was 27 when we left the other place, and let me tell you that it was hard to lose this –

[*She gestures at her body*.]

– and to go through puberty all over again. I was oblivious, I suppose, before we went through the wardrobe. I didn't notice the looks men gave me, or didn't recognise what they meant. But when you've grown up a woman, you don't lose that knowledge when you go back to being a girl. And maybe it's different for boys because people listen to you anyway. They let you talk and talk and talk. But it was always 'Not now, Susan' or 'Hold your tongue, Susan' or 'Nice girls should be seen and not heard.' Nice girls? I was a *queen*.

You always frowned at me for wearing lipstick and stockings. Yes, that's it, that's the frown. And I don't need to justify myself to you but when what you feel on the inside doesn't match how you look on the outside, sometimes lipstick can be a sort of armour. A way of making the skin you have conform to the idea of who you know you really are.

The truth is, I didn't want to be the innocent little Susie you expected me to be. I learnt things in Na – the other place. I know you never wanted to see it. You were content to sit up there on your throne and have people bring you their problems and pretend that you could fix them. It took me a long time to question why they crowned four

Repetition builds tension

Conversational tone matches the premise of the piece and creates a distinct voice

Reflective language connects to the personal journeys Framework

children. Why they let us rule, when we had no real connection to the place, no understanding of its history or culture or politics or people. God, the arrogance of us.

Conversational tone matches the premise of the piece and creates a distinct voice

I remember you told me once that it was easy. When it came down to it, you said, you could usually tell if someone was right or wrong, good or bad, just by looking at them. Weasels and hags and Black Dwarves are generally bad, and centaurs and bears and beavers are generally good. I was young then, and I believed you, and I liked that the world could be divided so neatly. We'd come from the Blitz, with Nazi planes raining bombs on London. I knew that the Germans were bad and the British were good, and so why wouldn't that apply to the talking animals of the other place?

Text details contribute to worldbuilding

Reflective language connects to the Framework

There was a skirmish at the borders. We must have been in the other place 10 years by then. A skirmish, I was told, but there were 200 dead. We'd taken prisoners, and one of your council members recommended starving them. He didn't put it like that, of course. It was 'limit their access to sustenance to encourage them to share information'. I spoke up, because we were on the side of goodness and right, weren't we? And if they didn't half stare me down.

I paid more attention after that. For a while. Noticed the documents you signed without reading them through. Saw which people were turned away at the palace doors. Heard the reports of evil southerners, or barbaric northerners, and wondered how much was made up. How could all the weasels and hags and Black Dwarves be bad?

Sentence fragments depersonalise the statements and shift the tone to more accusatory

But it's hard to speak up. Even when you're a queen. I tried. I asked your council members about our defence strategies, and I requested that all my mail should be delivered directly, and not filtered out for me. Most of the time I was told to speak to you about it, and of course you weren't interested. If it took me a long time to question why they put the four of us in charge, it took you longer. Perhaps you never did.

[*A beat*.]

Stage direction signals a change in tone

But maybe that's not as bad. Maybe it's worse to question the way things are run, and then choose to look the other way. Because the parties and the gowns and the banquets and the concerts are very nice, actually, and really, what can one person do?

When we left the other place, when we came back home, it seemed like a second chance for all of that. I wasn't going to look away when things were difficult or unpleasant. But if it's hard to speak up when you're 22, or 23, or 24, it's much harder when you're 12.

Reflective language connects to the Framework

It's much harder when you're not a queen, and people barely notice you're in the room, let alone hang on your every word. I look for doorways, you know. I've become a bit obsessive, actually.

[*She laughs self-deprecatingly*.]

Can't go past a wardrobe without checking how far it goes back. I just … I think I could be better, if I was back in the other place. I would be the queen they wanted me to be, but I could do a better job of it than last time.

Text details contribute to worldbuilding

Ellipsis signals hesitation

Reflective language connects to the Framework

And I like to think you might be there. Or Lucy. Or Edmund. After the train crash, people used to tell me how lucky I was, that I hadn't been on the train. It never felt like luck. It felt like punishment.

And I'm done being punished, Peter. If there was any atoning I needed to do, I've done it. Sometimes I wish we'd never even seen the wardrobe, or met any lions or witches. How much lonelier it makes you, when you've stepped through into a whole other world, and you have to leave it behind. With all its magic and promises and power.

All you're left with are ghosts.

Final line confirms the premise that the speaker is talking to a ghost
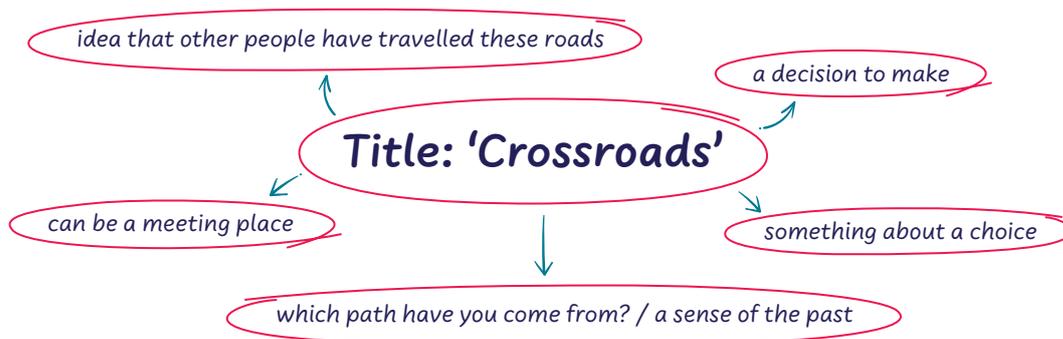
Notes

This student has used the text structures and language features of a monologue well. A distinctive voice has been maintained throughout the piece, characterised by the conversational tone and short, direct sentences. The piece clearly fits the purposes of *expressing* and *reflecting*. This student has been inspired by CS Lewis' *The Chronicles of Narnia*, but has also developed meaningful connections to the Framework, exploring the internal and physical journey of the character.

Responding to titles and stimulus material

In your Year 12 exam, you will be asked to write a text in response to a title and stimulus material. A useful strategy is to prepare one or two pieces of writing that you can adapt in the exam in response to the material provided.

The title must shape your text. You must use it as the central idea. Take time to unpack the ideas in the title, as you would for an essay topic. Here is an example of a brainstorm for a title on Writing about personal journeys.

idea that other people have travelled these roads

a decision to make

Title: 'Crossroads'

can be a meeting place

something about a choice

which path have you come from? / a sense of the past

Here are two examples of how you might adapt your text for different titles and stimulus material:

<table>
<tr>
<td>

Framework 3: Writing about personal journeys

Write a text that explores ideas about personal journeys.

You must use the title provided.

You must use **at least one** of the following stimuli.

Title: 'We journey together'

Stimulus 1

'Every journey starts with fear.'

Stimulus 2

Stimulus 3

'No one is an island,
Complete in itself;
Each person is a part of the whole,
A piece of the greater world.'

</td>
<td>

Good evening parents, teachers, esteemed guests and, most importantly, the graduating class of 2026! It is my privilege to stand before you this evening as the inaugural recipient of the Ada Smith Prize for Community Service. Ada Smith sadly passed away in July. She was surrounded by family and friends because that is how she lived her journey.

I had the honour of meeting Ada before she died, and she gave me some important advice: 'We're all connected. We're all part of the same community.' And that's what the Ada Smith Prize is all about: community. We can't sit alone in our rooms, posting on TikTok – we're not islands. We have to journey together.

</td>
<td>

Connection to title

Connection to Stimulus 3

Connection to title

</td>
</tr>
</table>

Framework 3: Writing about personal journeys

Write a text that explores ideas about personal journeys.

You must use the title provided.

You must use **at least one** of the following stimuli.

Title: 'The turning point'

Stimulus 1

'One's destination is never a place, but a new way of seeing things.'

Stimulus 2

Stimulus 3

'In the maze of life, we'll wander many mountains, and cross many valleys. Sometimes, in order to find the way, we first have to be lost.'

Good evening parents, teachers, esteemed guests and, most importantly, the graduating class of 2026! It is my privilege to stand before you this evening as the inaugural recipient of the Ada Smith Prize for Community Service. Ada Smith sadly passed away in July. Ada's journey was filled with turning points, but tonight I'd like to share with you one of mine, and how it changed me.

Connection to title

I had the honour of meeting Ada before she died, and she gave me some important advice: 'A destination is not a place. It's part of the journey.' And that's what the Ada Smith Prize is all about: seeing things from a different perspective. We can't approach the world the same way every day – we have to learn and grow and change. We have to recognise the turning points and be ready to meet them.

Connection to Stimulus 1

Connection to title

Writing the commentary

Part of your assessment for this area of study will be to produce a written commentary. Here is a written commentary for the sample response on pages 75-8.

My created text 'The Hidden Threat Beneath Our City' is a feature article that explores the concept of an underground playground. This feature article is published in a dystopian, futuristic society where play of any kind is illegal. The purpose of my text is to explain the consequences of a raid on an underground playground. In this imagined future, the media is controlled by the government, and therefore the secondary purpose of my feature article is to persuade the citizens that rebelling is pointless. The intended audience for my feature article is the general population living under this oppressive regime.

By adopting the voice of a state-controlled media outlet, I sought to reinforce the government's authority while subtly exposing the harsh realities of this society. The official, detached tone mirrors the cold, propagandistic style of authoritarian news sources. The use of loaded language, such as referring to the playground as an 'elaborate, illicit play structure' and play as 'dangerous, unproductive behaviour', manipulates the reader's perception, framing the rebels as reckless rather than courageous.

One of the key features of my article is its strategic use of omission and selective reporting. By focusing on the destruction of the playground and the swift government response, rather than the motivations behind the rebellion, the piece mirrors real-world propaganda techniques.

- Introduction of form / text type
- Introduction of context
- Introduction of purpose
- Introduction of audience
- Explanation of decisions about language features and voice
- Explanation of decisions about text structure

The part of the writing process I struggled with the most was the voice I chose to adopt. I had to revise and edit it many times as initially I just used a formal tone, without considering the impact of the individual words. My teacher suggested I include the descriptions of images, and I think this added to the credibility of the final piece.

Reflection on the writing process

My article was inspired by dystopian worlds like *The Hunger Games* and *The Giver*, where the government attempts to convince its citizens that they are fortunate to live in such a civilised society. These texts take an element of our modern-day world to the extreme in order to critique something about the way we live. Through my imagined world, I hoped to critique the capitalist values of work and the moral judgements we place on productivity. Through explaining the consequences for citizens who disobeyed the law in my imagined world, I wanted to convey the importance of play, and the risks some people might take to engage in play.

Explanation of how the writing has been inspired or influenced by other texts

Essential elements

These are the things you should include in your written commentary:

› form / text type

› context

› audience

› purpose

› text structure and language features

› reflection on the writing process.

Your teacher might give you a specific structure identifying what to include in each paragraph. Typically, the written commentary will have an introduction outlining your form, context, audience and purpose, and then two to four paragraphs reflecting on the decisions you made as a writer, and on the writing process.

Useful sentence starters for the written commentary

Sentence starters for the opening
› My piece is a … that …
› I wrote a … to …
› I produced a … that focuses on …
› This piece was written in the form of a …
› This piece is a …
› Through this piece, I aimed to represent how …
› The idea of … makes me feel …, so in this piece I wanted to …
› For me, at the very heart of protest is …
› To me, the idea of a journey means not only … but also …

Sentence starters for reflecting on the writing process
› When I was planning, I noticed that …
› Originally I included …; however, I decided to change this because …
› The section of the piece I found most challenging to write was …
› The inspiration for this piece was …
› I tried to mimic the style used by …
› One of the challenges for me was …
› I think I was most successful in …
› Something I learnt through writing this was …
› Comparing my first draft to my final version, I can see that …
› I experimented with different perspectives (first/second/third person) before deciding on …
› After receiving feedback, I revised … to make it more …
› If I were to rewrite this piece, I would …

Sentence starters for writing about your language choices

> I used the symbol of … to represent … This allowed me to explore …

> I finished my piece with repetition: '…'. I aimed for my audience to …

> By using the imagery of '…', I hoped to convey …

> My use of anaphora, a common language feature in persuasive pieces, here served to …

> My original metaphor was '….'; however, I felt that …, so I revised it to '…'. This allowed me to …

> The pacing of my piece slows down / speeds up when … in order to …

> The contrast between '…' and '…' highlights …

> Through my use of irony/sarcasm, I wanted to …

EAL specific task

If you are an EAL student, you will write a series of annotations rather than a written commentary. Here is an example:

The stage is quiet. I can hear the laughter of some Year 11 girls in the changing rooms, and there's a teacher somewhere in the wings talking on the phone. But the stage itself is quiet. I stand on the edge, within reach of the long black curtains – ready to duck back behind them at a moment's notice.	My inspiration for this piece was Amy Duong's memoir. I wanted to use an object and reflect on its significance in my life. I've used repetition here, like Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie does in her speech, to emphasise the importance of this place/object. It was important that my audience understood I am shy and introverted, and that this is not a place I feel comfortable, so I tried to convey my anxiety here.

You need to ensure you cover the same elements as the written commentary for English students (form / text type, context, audience, purpose, text structure and language features, and a reflection on the writing process), and you can use the same sentence starters.

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8 Studying for this area of study

This chapter contains some useful strategies for consolidating knowledge and skills, and to help you prepare for assessment tasks.

Identifying what to work on

Use this self-reflection checklist to identify the skills you need to do the most work on for Crafting and creating texts.

Skill	I'm confident I can do this on my own	I need to work on this, but I know how to do it	I really need some help with this
I can list a range of ideas about my Framework.			
I know how to craft a text in response to a title provided.			
I know how to make meaningful connections to stimulus material.			
I know how to write for all four purposes.			
I know a range of different text structures.			
I know a range of different language features.			
I have a strategy I can use for planning, including how to adapt my pre-planned piece to the material provided.			

I can write a crafted/created text under timed conditions.			
I can re-read my crafted/created text and check it is a close response to the title provided.			
I can use a variety of sentence structures in my crafted/created text.			
I can proofread my work for grammar, spelling and punctuation.			

Considering this checklist, what are three strengths you have, and three areas you need to work on?

Strengths	Areas to work on

Quick tasks and longer tasks

Use the tasks in the following table to help you target specific skills.

If you need to work on your knowledge of the Framework …	
Quick tasks	**Longer tasks**
› Brainstorm a list of 15 synonyms for your Framework (e.g. protest → struggle, resistance, fight). › Do a Google image search for your Framework. Make notes about what you find. › Find three quotes that you consider powerful or inspiring in your mentor texts. Annotate them.	› Read through any study notes your teacher has provided you with, or the Insight *Framework of Ideas* guide for your Framework, and make notes. › Ask a friend for a recommendation for a TV show or film connected to your Framework. Watch it. › Re-read one of the mentor texts. Make notes about the ideas in the text.

→

→

> Re-read the openings of your mentor texts, and add three annotations.

> Generate a list of possible titles for your Framework.

> Access the State Library Victoria Research Guides for the Framework of Ideas (see page 52 for the URL) and complete the worksheet 'Unpacking the key ideas'.

If you need to work on planning and making sure your piece responds to the title and stimulus material …

Quick tasks

> Spend 10 minutes annotating the title and stimulus material for a Section B practice piece.

> Annotate the instructions and criteria for Section B of the exam with your own notes.

> Write a plan for a Section B response using the following approach. Create a purpose statement – so you know exactly what you're trying to do; a breakdown of what you will do in the opening, body and closing; and notes on how you will refer to the title and to at least one stimulus.

Longer tasks

> Read a sample Section B response or crafted/created text (there are some in recent VCAA assessment reports) and assess it against the exam criteria.

> Read a practice piece you have written. Rewrite it, ensuring it responds more closely to the title and stimulus material.

> Develop a core idea bank containing four or five ideas that can be used for different titles and stimuli.

> Read a sample crafted/created text and create a reverse plan: write down what each paragraph is doing, not just what it says.

If you need to work on using a range of language features …

Quick tasks

> Brainstorm a list of language features in five minutes (e.g. simile, repetition).

> Re-read the first page of one of the mentor texts. Highlight two new language features you haven't already annotated.

> Spend 10 minutes writing and editing three sentences about your Framework for a particular purpose (to express, to reflect etc.). Use at least one language feature.

Longer tasks

> Use the BAR approach to edit a piece you've written: What can be Bigger? (What's interesting that you could make more important, or emphasise more?) What can you Add? (What's missing?) What can you Remove? (Is there anything boring or irrelevant you can cut out?)

> Read through a sample crafted/created text. Highlight the language features. Pick five language features you've highlighted and practise using them in your own piece of writing.

Exploring and analysing argument

The third section of this book helps you develop your analytical and persuasive skills. For this area of study you will be studying a contemporary local and/or national issue. You will read, watch and listen to a range of opinions on this issue, and analyse the ways in which these texts persuade their audiences.

Chapter 9 will help you set up your notes and classwork for this area of study, and support you to set specific goals around your analytical and persuasive skills. Chapter 10 guides you through the process of annotating persuasive texts, helping you to know what features to look for and how to identify them.

Chapter 11 shows you how to write an analysis of argument essay. Chapter 12 will take you through the skills you need for a point of view presentation, from selecting your topic to rehearsing your finished presentation.

Finally, Chapter 13 supports you to identify your strengths and weaknesses for this area of study, and provides you with a range of tasks to develop your skills in these areas.

9
Setting up for success

In this area of study, you will collect and annotate numerous opinion pieces. You will also build up a bank of writing, and will likely be provided with helpful lists of persuasive devices and strategies.

How to set up your workbook

If you're working in hard copy, it's helpful to have a couple of different places to record your learning and store important documents. For this area of study we recommend the following.

› A document folder with plastic slips for you to keep class handouts in. You might like to organise these into:

    › opinion pieces

    › exam preparation or study resources

    › sample essays.

› An exercise book or loose-leaf lined paper with tabs for:

    › background to the issue

    › persuasive devices and strategies

    › word banks and sentence starters

    › practice writing.

How to set up your digital files

If you're working digitally, set up a folder for this area of study and then nest the following folders and files within that. It can be tempting to create a new file for each lesson, but this will make it challenging to find specific notes and information when you need them later.

***Folder:* Opinion pieces**

> *File:* Short opinion pieces

> *File:* Longer opinion pieces

> *File:* Images

In this area of study, you may also be analysing audio and audiovisual texts. If so, create a separate file for transcripts of these texts.

***Folder:* Resources**

> *File:* Background to the issue

> *File:* Persuasive devices and strategies

> *File:* Word banks and sentence starters

> *Folder:* Sample essays

> › Upload any sample essays or paragraphs your teacher provides.

***Folder:* Analytical practice writing**

> *File:* Paragraphs

> › You might want to create a separate file for introductions, but generally one file for shorter writing tasks will be sufficient.

> *File:* Essays

> › Use the comment function to record feedback from your peers or teacher.

***Folder:* Presenting a point of view**

> *File:* Word banks and sentence starters

> *File:* Planning

> *File:* Practice writing

> › Use the comment function to record feedback from your peers or teacher.

Set a goal for this area of study

Setting goals is an effective way to track improvement. You might like to set a goal about a particular habit, or zoom in on a specific skill. Some suggestions for SMART goals for this area of study are:

> › For each opinion piece I annotate, I will make sure my annotations identify the purpose/effect of language and argument (and don't just label a technique).

> › Each week, I will write three practice paragraphs and give them to my teacher for feedback.

> › By the end of Week 1, I will set up a graphic organiser where I can record useful vocabulary and sentence starters.

Where to go for help

You should always ask your teacher if you get stuck. For this area of study we also recommend:

> › Insight's *Explore and Analyse Argument*

> › Insight's other textbooks for Year 11 or Year 12 English or EAL

> › the VCAA assessment report for English or EAL (www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/assessment/vce-assessment/past-examinations/Pages/English.aspx
> or
> www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/assessment/vce-assessment/past-examinations/Pages/english-as-an-additional-language.aspx)

> › your local library, which might offer:

>> › free tutoring or study sessions

>> › access to Studiosity (www.studiosity.com), where you can submit written documents for feedback, and chat live with tutors across the world.

10 Annotating persuasive texts

A crucial skill in this unit is effectively and efficiently annotating the persuasive texts you will study. We recommend that you read the text at least twice: the first time you should read to comprehend, and the second time you should read to analyse. You may be used to hunting for persuasive devices, and while this can be useful, it is more important to establish the overall arguments and strategies of a persuasive piece.

Contentions

The first thing you need to identify is the contention. The contention is the main point of view of the writer or speaker. It is usually:

> a belief that something is good (e.g. Risky play is beneficial for children's development)

or

> a belief that something is bad (e.g. Risky plays puts children in unnecessarily dangerous situations).

A good tip for identifying the contention is to re-read the headline, the first sentence and the last sentence of the text. You should be able to state the writer's contention in your own words.

Protect our children I took my three-year-old daughter to the Roxbury 'adventure' playground on the weekend. Adventure? It was more like a *disaster* playground. Every section of the so-called playground had an accident waiting to happen. Some parents might want to risk their children's lives on rope swings and climbing walls made out of old tires, but I refuse to. I don't know how our local council allowed this to happen but it cannot be allowed to continue. This playground needs to be taken down.	In this persuasive text, the contention is that the Roxbury adventure playground must be taken down in order to protect children.

Go away risky play As a teacher, I understand the benefits of challenging children with controlled risks. However, the pressure of supervising children on playgrounds that promote risky play is enormous. If a child were to hurt themselves while under my care, I doubt their parent would be understanding and view it as part of the learning experience. Instead, my job and livelihood would be threatened. Encouraging risky play is all very well, but playground designers need to consider the very real dangers that exist for adults, as well as children.	In this persuasive text, the contention is that risky play poses threats for adults in supervisory roles.

Sentence starters for writing about contentions
> [Writer] contends … > The writer of this piece contends … > The writer proposes … > From the outset, [writer] asserts …

Audiences

Once you have identified the contention, you need to identify who this contention is aimed at. Who are the readers or viewers of this persuasive piece? Generally, we read persuasive pieces that reinforce our opinions. If we've just seen a movie we hated, we are more likely to look for bad reviews that justify our hatred, rather than read positive reviews that might make us see the movie differently. Use these questions to establish the likely audience of a persuasive piece.

> Are the audience members more likely to be men or women?

> Is the audience more likely to be made up of younger readers or older readers?

> ❯ Where do the audience members live? Do they live in Melbourne or in rural Victoria? Or is it a global audience?

> ❯ Does the audience have a particular stake in the issue? Are the readers parents, for example? Or small business owners, or university students?

And finally:

> ❯ Is the audience likely to be progressive or conservative?

The simplest way to think about progressive audiences and conservative audiences is that generally progressive audiences want change and conservative audiences resist change.

Progressive audiences ...	Conservative audiences ...
Want change Want to improve the bad things about society	Resist change Want to protect the good things about society
Focus on the benefits to society	Focus on the benefits to the individual
Care about individual rights and freedoms	Care about traditional family values
Care about consumers and employees and want to regulate the economy and businesses	Care about businesses and don't want to regulate the economy and businesses
Believe the government should support disadvantaged groups in the community	Believe the government shouldn't intervene and that individuals need to help themselves
Believe that the environment should be protected	Believe that the environment is a resource
Raise their children to be fulfilled through nurturing parenting	Raise their children to be self-reliant through strict parenting

Useful phrases for writing about audiences
❯ ... aims for the audience of ... to ...
❯ ... is directed at readers who are likely to ...
❯ ... is designed to convince more progressive/conservative readers to ...
❯ ... encourages the audience of ... to consider ...
❯ ... appeals to readers who value ...
❯ ... targets a likely audience of ...
❯ ... seeks to engage readers who are concerned about ...
❯ ... uses language that resonates with an audience who ...
❯ ... establishes a connection with female/male/younger/older readers by ...

When you are writing your analysis, you will need to consider how the arguments and language of a persuasive text are positioning a particular audience. You might also need to consider how various sections of an audience might be positioned differently. For example, if the audience is people who use public transport, older people who use public transport might be affected differently by an argument than younger people.

Purposes

Now that you have worked out who the audience of the persuasive piece is, you need to establish the author's purpose. What are they trying to convince their audience to do?

They might be trying to …	And they might do that by …
Undermine an opposing viewpoint	Ridiculing or mocking the opposition Pointing out the flaws in the opposition's argument Dismissing the opposing viewpoint as illogical
Influence behaviour or actions	Presenting a course of action as necessary or inevitable Highlighting the consequences of inaction or of a particular choice Appealing to values, duty or responsibility
Inspire a particular emotion (e.g. anger or hope)	Framing an issue in a way that provokes an emotional response Highlighting injustices, triumphs or personal stories
Promote a product or idea	Creating a sense of urgency or exclusivity Emphasising its benefits and superiority Presenting it as the best or only option
Advocate for change	Exposing a problem Framing the status quo as unacceptable Highlighting injustices or societal problems Proposing a solution
Strengthen a community or group of people	Appealing to shared values, identity or traditions Creating a sense of unity against an external challenge
Justify a decision or action	Providing logical reasoning and evidence Presenting the decision or action as rational, fair or unavoidable Rebutting counterarguments or alternative options
Shape public perception	Framing an issue in a way that influences how it is viewed Reinforcing stereotypes or challenging existing narratives

Sentence starters for writing about purposes
❯ [Writer] aims for the audience to …
❯ [Writer] encourages the audience to consider …
❯ The purpose of their persuasive piece is to …
❯ The writer intends to persuade this audience to …
❯ [Writer] calls on the audience to …
❯ [Text title] frames the issue in a way that encourages the audience to …
❯ This opinion piece serves to …
❯ The writer seeks to …
❯ [Writer] strives to …
❯ [Text title] is designed to …
❯ [Argument / persuasive technique] operates as a means to …
❯ [Writer] endeavours to …

Develop your skills

1 Read an opinion piece your teacher has given you, or another one you have found. Identify the contention, audience and purpose.

2 Write a sentence about the contention, using the sentence starters on page 98.

3 Write a sentence about the audience, using the sentence starters on page 99.

4 Write a sentence about the purpose, using the sentence starters in the table above.

Identifying arguments

It can be tempting to look at each paragraph in a persuasive text and try to identify one argument per paragraph. While some writers will organise their texts in this way, it's likely that the pieces you encounter in this area of study will be more complex.

The first step is to determine the overall line of argument. For example, a writer might:

1   Establish the urgency of the issue
2   Highlight the risks of inaction
3   Present the solution as the only viable option
4   End with a direct call to action.

Or:

1   Establish a connection with the reader through a relatable personal anecdote
2   Appeal to shared outrage
3   Show how the issue directly affects the community
4   Contrast the current situation with a vision of a better future
5   Frame inaction as a betrayal of core values
6   Provide an easy and accessible solution.

Once you determine the overall line of argument, you can identify the specific arguments used by the writer. For example:

1   Establish the urgency of the issue

    ›   *Fast fashion contributes to pollution, excessive waste and depletion of natural resources.*

2   Highlight the risks of inaction

    ›   *Many workers in the fast fashion industry are subjected to terrible working conditions.*

    ›   *Fast fashion is causing ongoing damage to the environment.*

3   Present the solution as the only viable option

    ›   *Supporting ethical fashion labels and buying less reduces environmental impact and promotes fair labour practices.*

4   End with a direct call to action

    ›   *Consumers have the power to influence the market by demanding more responsible production methods.*

Or:

1   Establish a connection with the reader through a relatable personal anecdote

2   Appeal to shared outrage

› *A chain fast-food restaurant would homogenise Greentown's unique food culture, replacing local flavours and community identity.*

3   Show how the issue directly affects the community

› *A chain fast-food restaurant would take away customers from existing Greentown restaurants and ultimately force local businesses to close.*

› *Jobs at chain restaurants come with lower wages and fewer benefits compared to jobs in local businesses.*

4   Contrast the current situation with a vision of a better future

› *With no fast-food restaurant, local businesses thrive and the community retains its unique culture.*

5   Frame inaction as a betrayal of core values

› *Allowing a chain restaurant to dominate the town would show a disregard for local pride.*

6   Provide an easy and accessible solution

› *By voting against the chain fast-food restaurant's proposal, the community keeps its money circulating within the town.*

Things writers might do to develop their line of argument	
Define the issue	Simplify complexity
Establish a clear position	Create a shared sense of identity
Establish urgency or importance	Highlight a gap or contradiction
Build trust and credibility	Anticipate and rebut opposition
Establish a moral or ethical imperative	Offer a solution
Connect to broader societal, cultural or global trends	Provide a vision for the future
Highlight consequences	Present a call to action

Identifying persuasive language

Once you have identified the overall mechanics of a persuasive piece, read the piece more closely and identify the persuasive language the writer has used.

› Identify words or phrases that are persuasive.

› Focus on persuasive language that supports the argument or contention, or that contributes to the overall line of argument.

› DON'T simply label persuasive techniques.

Read the annotated opinion piece below from the *Los Angeles Times*. It was published on 29 September 2019, and you can find it online at www.latimes.com/opinion/story/2019-09-27/climate-change-food-plant-based.

When deciding what foods to eat for lunch, consider climate change

Contention: we should choose what we eat based on the environmental impact it has

Defines the issue

Have you ever sat down in a restaurant and felt instantly drawn to a particular dish on the menu? The reason might be something as simple as that you love the dish's main ingredient, but it's often more than that. It could be the item's placement on the menu, its name, even whom you saw eating it as you crossed the restaurant.

Directly addresses the reader

Tricolon / rule of three → suggests abundance of reasons people pick something from a menu

Understanding all the factors that attract us to certain foods is a growing area of research, with enormous potential for addressing something unexpected: climate change.

Agriculture – and the changes in land-use it necessitates – accounts for about 25% of all greenhouse gas emissions warming the planet. But not all foods have equal impacts. Globally, the production of animal-based foods accounts for about two-thirds of agricultural emissions and more than three-quarters of agricultural land use, while plant-based foods generally have lower environmental impacts.

- **Contrast between impact of meat and impact of plants**

The food choices we make have helped drive the climate crisis, and they can help address it. But first we have to understand how we choose what to eat.

- **Signposting → suggests writer is logical in their approach**

Scientists are finding that the way food is presented and labelled can make a big difference. In one study, for example, party guests were given a glass of a cold mango-yoghurt drink called a mango lassi. Half the guests were told the lassi was healthy. The rest were told it was unhealthy. Those who had the 'healthy' drink rated it as 55% less enjoyable than those who drank the 'unhealthy' version, though the drinks were exactly the same.

- **1ST ARGUMENT**

  Challenges the reader's assumptions

Whether food is displayed on a porcelain or wooden platter makes a difference in what diners pick. So does the day of the week. Meat-Free Mondays, for example, haven't caught on simply because of a catchy name: research shows that people often seek out healthier food options following indulgent weekends – and choosing plant-based foods fits the bill.

- **Use of case studies and evidence → research-backed arguments**

People's choices around what to eat are influenced by so much more than just the food on offer. Our decisions tend to be driven by habit and familiarity and what our peers are eating. Choices are made rapidly and are influenced by lots of seemingly small factors outside our conscious awareness. But we can make those choices more conscious by arming ourselves with information.

- **Removes blame from the reader**

- **2ND ARGUMENT**

  Reframes the problem as solvable and within the reader's control

Per gram of protein, beef requires 20 times more land and generates 20 times more greenhouse gas emissions than a plant-based protein such as beans. Increasing the share of plant-based foods in our diets is therefore a critical step in reducing agriculture's pressure on forests, water and climate. That doesn't necessarily mean giving up meat, though. We can cut diet-related environmental

- **Reassures the reader**

impacts by nearly half simply by eating less animal-based food and more plants. At the World Resources Institute, we recommend that Americans limit their red-meat consumption to the equivalent of 1.5 burgers per week.

By examining how food decisions are made, scientists have learned that simple nudges can change people's behaviour in big ways. Restaurants, hospitals, hotels, universities, and even cities have begun tapping the latest behavioural science to help consumers cut their carbon footprint by choosing more sustainable foods.

Through the Cool Food Pledge, an initiative that aims to slash food-related GHG emissions by 25% by 2030, signatories like UCSF Health, the University of Maryland, Hilton Hotels and Europe's Max Burgers are changing menu layouts, using appetizing language to encourage healthy choices, offering tastings and embracing other science-backed innovations to make the sustainable-food option attractive to diners. Together, the participants in this new effort serve more than 800 million meals each year.

Some of these behavioural-science-backed strategies include offering consumers appealing alternatives to beef. In April, Burger King began a trial of the plant-based Impossible Burger at 59 outlets in and around St. Louis. The Impossible Burger is an imitation-meat burger specially designed to look, smell and taste like beef. After just one month, Burger King reported that restaurants in St. Louis pulled in 19% higher foot traffic than the company's national average, and the company has now rolled out the Impossible Whopper to its restaurants across the United States.

Another strategy has been giving more real estate to plant-based dishes. At Seattle Pacific University, campus food service provider Sodexo doubled the size of its plant-rich food station, spreading existing options into neighbouring display areas and adding new menu items. The team also changed how it marketed the food, rebranding the station as Avant Garden to appeal to meat eaters as well as core vegetarian and vegan diners. In the semester following these changes, sales from Avant Garden increased by 11%.

- Shows impact of small steps, without demanding perfection

- Highlights widespread take-up of this approach

- **3RD ARGUMENT**
  Provides a vision for the future

- Reinforces legitimacy of arguments

- Supports claims with measurable impact/data

Every day we're learning more about how people make decisions on food, and how to put that knowledge to work protecting the planet's natural resources and fighting climate change. These kinds of nudges may sound simple enough, but they are powerful drivers for climate action. Your lunch plate, and the choices you make about what goes on it, may just help save the planet.

Daniel Vennard is director of the Better Buying Lab at the World Resources Institute. He also leads the institute's Cool Food Pledge efforts.

Presents a call to action

· Value of individual actions

· Directly addresses the reader

Develop your skills

1 Read an opinion piece your teacher has given you, or another one you have found. Identify and annotate the line of argument.

2 Read an opinion piece your teacher has given you, or another one you have found. Identify and annotate five examples of persuasive language. How do they help to develop the argument, and what effects are they likely to have on the audience?

11 Analysing argument

Once you have carefully read and annotated a persuasive text, you then need to write an analysis.

Using annotations to plan an analysis

Unlike other essays you will write in English, you do not need to write a separate plan for an analysis of argument essay. Instead, your annotations will act as your plan. Work through the opinion piece chronologically, using the line of argument to guide the paragraphs you will write. For example, if you were writing an analysis of argument essay about the opinion piece on pages 104–7, you might think about a plan like this:

Introduction	
Paragraph 1	Analysis of the opening (defines the issue) Analyse: › directly addresses the reader › tricolon → suggests abundance of reasons people pick something from a menu › contrast between impact of meat and impact of plants › signposting → suggests writer is logical in their approach.
Paragraph 2	Analysis of the first argument (challenges the reader's assumptions) Analyse: › use of case studies and evidence → research-backed arguments › 'rapidly' and 'lots' → removes blame from the reader.

Paragraph 3	Analysis of the second argument (reframes the problem as solvable and within the reader's control) Analyse: › 'that doesn't necessarily mean giving up meat, though' → reassures the reader › 'we can cut diet-related environmental impacts by nearly half simply by eating less animal-based food and more plants' → shows impact of small steps, without demanding perfection.
Paragraph 4	Analysis of the third argument (provides a vision for the future) Analyse: › 'signatories like UCSF Health, the University of Maryland, Hilton Hotels and Europe's Max Burgers' → reinforces legitimacy of arguments › supports claims with measurable impact/data.
Paragraph 5	Analysis of the conclusion (presents a call to action) Analyse: › value of individual actions › directly addresses the reader.

Note that you do not need to write a conclusion for an analysis of argument essay.

Writing introductions

Introductions need to:

› outline the background or context to the issue

› introduce the writer and their persuasive text

› identify the writer's contention

› identify audience/s

› identify purpose.

Your teacher may give you a mnemonic device to help remember the things you need to include in an introduction. Try using the acronym CATCAP: Context, Author, Text Type and/or Title, Contention, Audience, Purpose.

The debate around safety on playgrounds has been explored in many opinion pieces. Writing in response to this issue is Jessica Edgerly, who contends in her opinion piece titled 'Keep You and Your Kids Safe While Playing in a Playground' that children need to be kept safe in playgrounds. She urges her online audience of parents, most likely mothers, to feel responsible for their children's safety and moves them to see the danger of not doing so.

Outlines the **context**
Introduces the **author**

Introduces the persuasive **text**
Identifies the **contention**
Identifies the **audience**

Identifies the **purpose**

As society becomes more aware of the environmental impacts of our daily habits, fashion waste and fashion consumerism has become an issue of concern, particularly on social media. Consequently, Maya Martin shares her views in her Instagram stories, asserting that we need to make sacrifices to protect the environment. Addressing her fans and social media followers, most likely young women, Martin encourages them to reconsider their fashion habits and to see the seriousness of the issue.

Outlines the **context**

Introduces the **author**
Introduces the persuasive **text**
Identifies the **contention**
Identifies the **audience**
Identifies the **purpose**

Useful sentence starters and phrases for introductions

Outlining the context

> The debate about … has been explored in many opinion pieces.*

> The issue of … has caused much concern in Australia.*

> The changing nature of the [industry / work type] industry has given rise to the issue of …*

> Increasing media attention has brought the issue of … into the national spotlight.*

> As public awareness of [issue] grows, so too does …*

> The recent controversy surrounding [event or decision] has ignited/reignited debate about …

> There is growing concern over the long-term impacts of …

> At a community level, concerns have been raised about …

*These sentence starters may not be applicable for your Year 12 exam, as the issues presented in Section C of the exam are usually local, community concerns rather than global or national debates.

Introducing the author
› One opinion on this issue is from …
› Writing/speaking in response to this issue is …
› Presenting their view on this matter is …
› Drawing attention to this issue is …
› Advocating for action is …
› Contributing to the discussion is …

Introducing the text and identifying the contention
› … who contends in their opinion piece titled '[title of opinion piece]' that …
› … who proposes in their speech that …
› … who argues in the [text type] titled '[title of opinion piece]' that …
› … who asserts in their persuasive piece titled '[title of opinion piece]' that …

Identifying the audience
› Addressing …
› Speaking to an audience of …
› Appealing to the concerns of …
› Targeting readers who …
› Engaging an audience who may be …

Identifying the purpose
› The purpose of the persuasive piece is to …
› … intending to persuade the audience of … to ….
› [Writer/speaker] encourages their audience to …
› She/He urges the audience of … to …
› … seeking to motivate readers to …

Develop your skills

1. Highlight four sentence starters in the table on the previous pages that you could use in your writing.

2. In dot points, identify CATCAP elements for one of the opinion pieces you have read in class.

3. Write an introduction using some of the sentence starters in the table on the previous two pages.

Writing body paragraphs

In this section you will learn how to write body paragraphs for an analysis of argument essay. In each body paragraph you will need to:

> write a topic sentence

> analyse specific word and language choices made by the writer

> analyse the line of argument – how the argument develops throughout the text

> write a concluding sentence.

You should alternate between micro analysis (word choices) and macro analysis (development of argument). So, your body paragraph might follow a structure like this:

Topic sentence
Analysis of specific word and language choices made by the writer
Analysis of the overall development of argument
Analysis of specific word and language choices made by the writer
Analysis of the overall development of argument
Analysis of specific word and language choices made by the writer
Concluding sentence

Writing topic sentences

A basic topic sentence will introduce the argument you are analysing in your paragraph. For example:

> The writer argues that apples are the healthiest fruit.

> Nguyen proposes that due to their well-established popularity, apple sales will increase.

> The writer rebuts suggestions that oranges are a more beneficial fruit.

> Nguyen's argument is that the symbolism of apples makes them more than just a fruit.

The first step to improving these topic sentences is to add words such as prepositions, adverbs and adjectives to indicate which part of the opinion piece you are analysing. For example:

> The writer **begins by** arguing that apples are the healthiest fruit.

> **Furthermore**, Nguyen proposes that due to their well-established popularity, apple sales will increase.

> The writer **continues by** rebutting suggestions that oranges are a more beneficial fruit.

> Nguyen's **final** argument is that the symbolism of apples makes them more than just a fruit.

A more sophisticated topic sentence will identify the line of argument. For example:

> The writer begins by **establishing the moral responsibility of adults to guide children's eating habits**, arguing that apples are the healthiest fruit.

> Furthermore, Nguyen **celebrates the positive consequences of our individual choices**, proposing that due to their well-established popularity, apple sales will increase.

> The writer continues by **challenging common assumptions**, rebutting suggestions that oranges are a more beneficial fruit.

> Nguyen closes by **reiterating the societal importance of our fruit choices**, arguing that the symbolism of apples makes them more than just a fruit.

And finally, the best topic sentences will also make a link to the author's purpose, considering the effect on the audience. You might need to add a second sentence to include some of this detail.

For example:

> The writer opens by establishing the moral responsibility of adults to guide children's eating habits, positioning apples as the ideal fruit ***in order to urge readers to adopt healthier parenting practices***.

> Furthermore, Nguyen celebrates the positive consequences of our individual choices, proposing that due to their well-established popularity, apple sales will increase. ***Nguyen thus encourages readers to recognise how their decisions can shape market trends and support local growers***.

> Challenging common assumptions, the writer critiques the overvaluation of oranges, ***aiming to provoke critical thinking in readers who may hold unexamined biases about health***.

> Nguyen closes by reiterating the societal importance of our fruit choices, arguing that the symbolism of apples makes them more than just a fruit. ***She therefore invites readers to view fruit not only as food but as cultural representation, and to choose accordingly***.

Sentence starters for topic sentences
> From the outset …
> The writer begins by …
> The writer immediately establishes …
> The writer opens with …
> [Writer]'s initial strategy is to …
> [Writer] commences by …
> Having established …, the writer continues by …
> After having …, [writer] then seeks to …
> Furthermore …
> Moreover …
> [Writer] then moves to …
> The writer finally proposes …
> [Writer] closes by …
> To conclude their piece, the writer …
> Finally …
> Ending with …, [writer] makes clear that …

Analysing specific word choices

In your essay, you will need to analyse at both a micro level (discussing language and word choices) and a macro level (discussing development of the line of argument and the overall strategies used by the writer).

Here is how you might unpack a writer's choices at a micro level:

Guys – I follow you online and I love you guys so much and need to express my concern that things aren't being taken seriously enough right now. I'm seeing lots of unboxing videos and shopping trips and outfit of the day posts. This is the time to really think about our impact on the environment and how our actions can affect others. It's a really scary time but we can all make sacrifices and be the change that's necessary for the world.	*What is the effect of the highlighted example?* Implies there are many ways fashion consumerism exists on social media. *How does this impact or position readers?* Positions readers who have been participating in this fashion posting to feel guilty.

A useful way of writing about these choices is to consider what, how, why and so:

> **What** is the writer doing? What is it they are arguing, or what strategy are they using?

> **How** is the writer presenting this? How have they used language or visuals to support their argument or strategy?

> **Why** is the writer doing this? Why is this persuasive?

> **So** what effect does this have on the audience? Explain how the audience is positioned to think, feel and/or act.

Martin then describes how she has been 'seeing lots of unboxing videos and shopping trips and outfit of the day posts'. By using the word 'lots', Martin emphasises the vast amount of fashion consumerism being shared on social media and positions readers who may have posted or enjoyed these types of stories to feel guilty and ashamed.	**What** is the writer doing? **How** is the writer presenting this? **Why** is the writer doing this? **So** what effect does this have on the audience?

Chen urgently appeals for safety, framing the proposed bike lane not as a convenience, but a public necessity. He asserts that 'every day, cyclists weave between cars, potholes and parked vehicles: a dangerous dance that puts lives at risk'. The metaphor 'dangerous dance' captures the unpredictable and hazardous nature of city cycling. By constructing cyclists as vulnerable and under constant threat, Chen evokes a sense of shared responsibility in the reader.	**What** is the writer doing? **How** is the writer presenting this? **Why** is the writer doing this? **So** what effect does this have on the audience?

In this area of study you might also have to analyse audio or audiovisual texts. You can use the same approach for these text types:

Morris echoes Lee's contention, stating that 'many people return' to living with their parents 'when they have sudden changes in their lives, or if they suffer a significant loss', saying the word 'or' with a rising intonation. This implies Morris is a thoughtful and considered speaker, positioning listeners to view her as trustworthy and logical.	**What** is the speaker doing? **How** is the speaker presenting this? **Why** is the speaker doing this? **So** what effect does this have on the audience?

Sentence starters for analysing specific word choices

> The writer's use of the word '...' suggests ...

> By choosing the word '...', the writer evokes a sense of ...

> The term '...' is loaded with connotations of ...

> The writer deliberately uses '...' and '...' to ...

> Through the word choice of '...', the writer positions the reader to feel ...

> The word '...' implies ..., making the reader consider ...

> The writer's use of '...' serves to challenge the reader's assumptions about ...

> By selecting '...' over a more neutral term, the writer emphasises ...

> The phrase '...' is intended to create a contrast between ... and ...

> The choice of '...' highlights the [adjective] nature of the situation, encouraging the reader to reflect on ...

> By incorporating the term '...', the writer reinforces the notion of ...

> The word '…' is strategically used to paint [noun / noun phrase] in a negative/positive light.
> The term '…' is designed to resonate with the reader's sense of …
> This is furthered by the use of …
> Highlighting this argument is the writer's use of …
> This [language choice] is accompanied by …
> The incorporation of [language choice] depicts [noun] as …
> The phrase '…' is designed to shock the reader into …
> This language choice aims to provoke …
> The words '…' and '…' appeal to the reader's sense of …

Analysing the development of argument

To write a high-scoring analysis of argument essay, you need to ensure that you analyse the way in which the argument develops in a persuasive text. When you annotated the persuasive text, you should have identified and labelled the line of argument (see pages 104–7).

Here's what that looks like in a written analysis (the examples refer to a newspaper article by Andy Griffiths, about the language in Roald Dahl's children's books):

Griffiths strategically initiates his piece with a humorous acknowledgement of the recurring controversies surrounding Dahl's works. By employing phrases like 'another year, another Roald Dahl controversy', he not only establishes a rapport with his readers but also underscores the cyclical nature of such debates. This tactic simultaneously disarms the reader and sets the stage for the crux of his argument: the inevitable evolution of language.	Analysis of the development of argument

And here's a more sophisticated analysis:

Griffiths initiates the discussion with a humorous nod to the recurring nature of Dahl-related controversies, immediately grounding the reader in the topicality and familiarity of the issue. This playful entry point then gradually transitions into a more profound reflection on language's temporality, illustrated through examples from Dahl's works.	Analysis of the development of argument

Here's another example:

Griffiths moves from discussing the broader issue to sharing personal experiences, such as his own '25 years' as a published author. This shift helps to build his credibility by positioning him as someone with direct experience in the field. By referencing his own book *The Day My Bum Went Psycho*, he makes his argument more relatable and grounded, while diminishing the authority of opposing viewpoints, suggesting that they lack experience.	Analysis of the development of argument

And here's a more sophisticated analysis:

Griffiths then introduces more personal examples, drawing on his own experience as a published author of a 'mere 25 years'. This shift in argument from the social to the personal not only builds his credibility but diminishes the perspectives of those who hold opposing views, implying that by contrast they have no authority or expertise with which to speak. Griffiths' argument is reinforced by the specificity of his publishing anecdote about *The Day My Bum Went Psycho*, positioning himself not as a great intellectual, but as someone who is as silly and childish as Dahl, guiding the audience to see him firstly as authoritative and then as someone as grounded and ordinary as his readers.	Analysis of the development of argument

(If you are interested in reading the article by Andy Griffiths, you can find it here: www.smh.com.au/culture/books/dahl-s-big-fat-words-should-get-with-the-times-any-snozzwanger-knows-that-20230219-p5clqn.html)

Word bank for analysing the development of argument	
Adverbs	**Verbs**
abruptly	builds
clearly	consolidates
closely	continues
completely	contrasts
constantly	deepens
deliberately	develops
dramatically	diminishes
eventually	dismantles

explicitly	enhances
gradually	erodes
logically	expands
openly	moves
rapidly	refutes
relentlessly	reinforces
sharply	relies
significantly	revisits
slowly	sets up
steadily	shifts
substantially	strengthens
subtly	supports
swiftly	undermines

Sentence starters for analysing the development of argument

› [Writer] begins by …

› [Writer] initially argues …

› [Writer] returns to …

› [Writer] reinforces the argument that …

› Through a series of …, [writer] develops the argument that …

› Sequencing the arguments in this way, [writer] positions their audience to …

› By firstly … then moving to …, [writer] positions the audience to …

› [Writer] relies initially on a pathos-based argument before moving to a logos-centred approach in order to …

› [Writer] begins by framing the argument in a way that …

› By presenting … first, [writer] sets the foundation for …

› After addressing …, [writer] moves to the larger issue of …

› Through a logical progression, [writer] develops the idea that …

› [Writer] sets up a cause-and-effect relationship, arguing that if … occurs, then … will follow.

› By revisiting …, [writer] brings the argument full circle, reaffirming their stance on …

› Before …, the writer first seeks to …

› Having established … the writer continues by …

Analysing visual material

Not only do you need to analyse the language choices made by the writer, you will also have to analyse any visual material provided to you. Typically this will be a photograph or an illustration accompanying the opinion piece, but you might be given a cartoon or an infographic. In Section C of the Year 12 exam, you might also be given a text that contains other visual material, like a logo or icon, a website header or email signature, or a diagram or slide. It is important that you take the time to annotate and analyse this material as you would the written material. Make sure you do the following when analysing visual material.

> **Describe:** What is included in (or purposefully excluded from) the image? Can you describe the expression on someone's face? How have objects or figures been positioned?

> **Analyse:** What is the mood created by the visual material? What are we meant to infer?

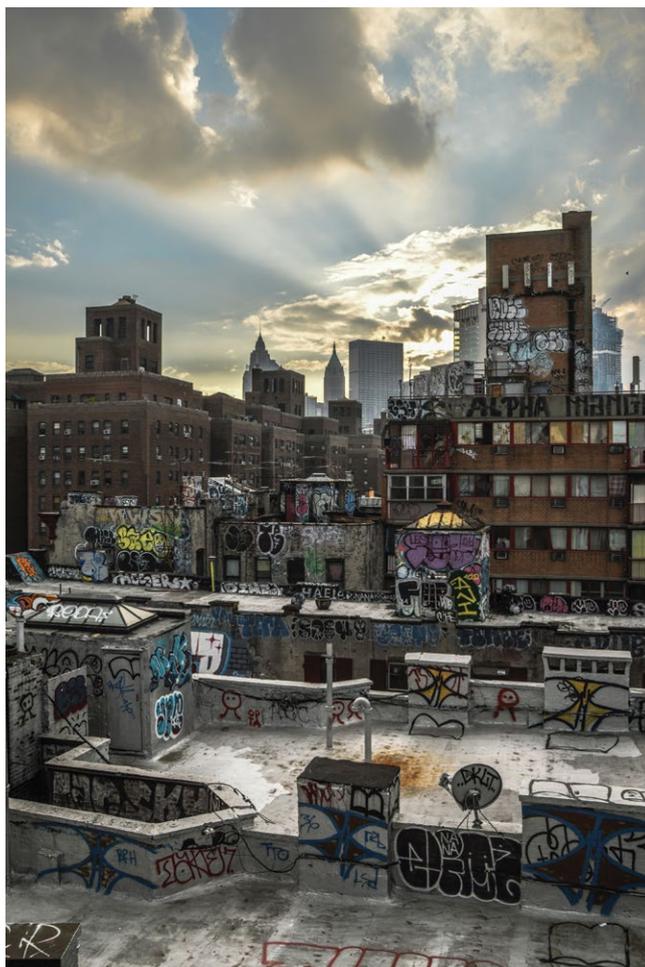> **Link:** Which argument or strategy does this link to?

Here is an example:

Photo by Alice Pasqual on Unsplash

The image presents a sprawling cityscape overrun by graffiti, with nearly every rooftop, wall and surface saturated in chaotic tags and symbols. The lack of any human figures highlights the sense of neglect, while the sheer volume of graffiti gives the impression that the city is being overwhelmed by vandalism. The distant skyline is visually and metaphorically overshadowed by the mess in the foreground. This visual reinforces the writer's argument that graffiti degrades the appearance of our cities, suggesting a loss of control and civic pride, and prompting the viewer to see graffiti not as art, but as a symptom of urban decay.	**Describe** **Analyse** **Link**

Photo by Kelly Sikkema on Unsplash

The photograph depicts a young child fixated on a tablet, with only part of their face visible as they tap the glowing screen. The fact that their full face is not included makes the child appear anonymous, suggesting they could represent any child, anywhere. This deliberate choice encourages viewers to see the child not as an individual, but as a symbol of a broader issue: the widespread dependence on screens from an early age. Traditional toys, like the model airplane on the left of the image, are pushed away, highlighting a quiet shift from traditional play to digital consumption, and further emphasising the writer's views that 'screens are dominating the modern childhood' and inviting the audience to consider the long-term consequences of this trend.	**Describe** **Analyse** **Link**

Sentence starters for analysing visual material

› The image shows …

› The visual representation of …

› The photograph depicts …

› The infographic illustrates …

› In the foreground/background, we see …

› The use of colour/light/darkness suggests …

› The person/object is positioned …

→

> The expression on their face is ...

> Through depicting ... as ...

> This represents ...

> By illustrating ... as ...

> The choice to obscure/exclude ... implies ...

> The choice to include/emphasise ... suggests ...

> The image reinforces the argument that ...

> The visual material further emphasises ...

> This illustration works alongside the text to ...

> The framing of the image directs focus towards ...

> The angle of the shot creates a sense of ...

> The use of contrast between ... and ... highlights ...

> The body language of the subject suggests ...

> The setting/background evokes a feeling of ...

> The blurred/sharp focus draws attention to ...

> This visual choice mirrors the writer's claim that ...

> The image serves as a metaphor for ...

> This portrayal challenges/reinforces the stereotype of ...

> The omission of ... invites the viewer to question ...

> The moment captured symbolises ...

Concluding sentences

The concluding sentence in a body paragraph should make an overall statement about the line of argument you have analysed and the purpose of the persuasive text. For example:

> In framing the apple as unpretentious yet powerful, the writer dismantles the glamour of 'trendier' fruits, consolidating the argument that longstanding appeal is a marker of true quality.

> By undercutting the appeal of more exotic or high-maintenance fruits, Nguyen draws the audience into a shared understanding: that apples represent a rare combination of tradition, practicality and universal value.

> The cumulative effect of the writer's reasoning is to create a sense of inevitability, guiding readers to conclude that apples are the obvious and superior choice.

Sentence starters for concluding sentences

> Ultimately, this positions the audience to …

> As a result, readers are encouraged to …

> Through this reasoning, [writer] …

> Consequently, the audience is led to view …

> In doing so, the text reinforces …

> By drawing these comparisons, the writer invites readers to …

> The cumulative effect of these strategies is …

> In aligning this idea with broader social values, [writer] inspires readers to …

> This final impression allows the audience to feel that …

> Such framing positions the audience not only to accept the argument, but also to …

> Thus, the audience is left with a sense that …

> In consolidating these points, the writer leaves readers inclined to …

> Accordingly, the audience is drawn into a perspective that …

Here is an example of a low-scoring body paragraph analysing the opinion piece on pages 104–7.

The writer begins by arguing that our food choices have an environmental impact. They use a friendly question, 'Have you ever sat down in a restaurant and felt drawn to a particular dish on the menu?' to create an instant connection with the reader. This is followed by a list of subtle influences, like 'the item's placement on the menu, its name, even whom you saw eating it', which not only adds rhythm to the writing but also suggests that our food choices are often influenced in ways we may not realise. Vennard ends this section with a clear signpost: 'But first we have to understand how we choose what to eat.' This signposts that his next argument will be that we must 'understand how we choose what to eat'. The tone is initially casual but shifts to a more serious and informative tone, introducing environmental facts and data. The reader is guided into a more reflective mindset, preparing them for the rest of the opinion piece.	Topic sentence identifies an argument What Why How Why What Just rephrases the quote; not an analysis Only identifies tone, rather than analysing its effect Concluding sentence focuses on the intended effect on the audience

Notes: This student has used a simplistic paragraph structure and identified relevant language choices to analyse. The student has not sufficiently analysed the effect on the reader. This student has labelled the persuasive technique 'signposting' without analysing its effect, and similarly they have described the tone used but not explained how this might position readers.

Here is an example of a high-scoring body paragraph analysing the opinion piece on pages 104–7.

Paragraph	Annotation
The writer opens the piece by clearly defining the issue: the environmental consequences of our food choices. In doing so, he positions the audience to see themselves as both part of the problem and capable of change. Using a friendly, rhetorical question, 'Have you ever sat down in a restaurant and felt instantly drawn to a particular dish on the menu?' he directly addresses the reader, drawing them into a familiar, relatable scenario and establishing an immediate connection. This is quickly followed by a tricolon listing subtle influences like 'the item's placement on the menu, its name, even whom you saw eating it', implying that our decisions are rarely neutral or conscious. This encourages the audience to reflect on how easily their preferences can be shaped, positioning them to feel more self-aware and receptive to the idea that behavioural change is both necessary and achievable. This personal opening then shifts to a logical explanation of the link between agriculture and climate change, particularly the stark contrast between the environmental impact of animal- and plant-based foods. The juxtaposition between the casual opening and the confronting data about emissions and land use encourages the reader to reflect more critically on the consequences of their own food choices. By using a clear signpost, 'But first we have to understand how we choose what to eat', Vennard positions himself as thoughtful and evidence-based, framing the rest of the piece as an exploration of behaviour change. In doing so, the opening not only defines the issue at hand but also primes the reader to approach the topic with both curiosity and accountability.	Topic sentence uses two sentences to identify the line of argument and its effect on the audience What How Why So How What Why So Analysis of the development of argument How What Why How What Why Analysis of the development of argument So

Notes: This student has structured their paragraph appropriately. They have moved between analysing specific language choices and analysing the overall development of argument in the opinion piece. There is a clear focus on the intended effect on the audience. The student has adapted the frameworks as needed, sometimes using 'how, what, why' instead of 'what, how, why, so'. This indicates confidence in analysis, as it does not detract from the fluency of the writing.

Develop your skills

1 Write the topic sentences for an analysis of argument essay using some of sentence starters on page 114.

2 Write three sentences analysing one example of persuasive language using the sentence starters on pages 116–17.

3 Write two sentences analysing the development of argument using the sentence starters on page 119.

4 Write an analysis of a photograph or illustration using some of the sentence starters on pages 121–2.

5 Write the concluding sentences for an analysis of argument using some of the sentence starters on page 123.

6 Write a body paragraph analysing one of the opinion pieces you have read in class.

Sample analysis

Here is an example of a high-scoring essay analysing the opinion piece on pages 104–7.

Increasing media attention has brought the issue of sustainable eating into the international spotlight. Drawing attention to this issue is Daniel Vennard, who asserts in his opinion piece titled 'When Deciding What Foods to Eat for Lunch, Consider Climate Change' that we should choose what we eat based on the environmental impact it has. Targeting readers who primarily live in Los Angeles and dine out regularly, Vennard encourages his readers to feel empowered to take individual action on this global issue.

Introduction follows CATCAP

The writer opens the piece by clearly defining the issue: the environmental consequences of

Topic sentence establishes the issue and analyses the development of the argument

our food choices. In doing so, he positions the audience to see themselves as both part of the problem and capable of change. Using a friendly, rhetorical question, 'Have you ever sat down in a restaurant and felt instantly drawn to a particular dish on the menu?', he directly addresses the reader, drawing them into a familiar, relatable scenario and establishing an immediate connection. This is quickly followed by a tricolon listing subtle influences like 'the item's placement on the menu, its name, even whom you saw eating it', implying that our decisions are rarely neutral or conscious. This encourages the audience to reflect on how easily their preferences can be shaped, positioning them to feel more self-aware and receptive to the idea that behavioural change is both necessary and achievable. This personal opening then shifts to a logical explanation of the link between agriculture and climate change, particularly the stark contrast between the environmental impact of animal- and plant-based foods. The juxtaposition between the casual opening and the confronting data about emissions and land use encourages the reader to reflect more critically on the consequences of their own food choices. By using a clear signpost, 'But first we have to understand how we choose what to eat', Vennard positions himself as thoughtful and evidence-based, framing the rest of the piece as an exploration of behaviour change. In doing so, the opening not only defines the issue at hand but also primes the reader to approach the topic with both curiosity and accountability.

Vennard continues by challenging the assumptions of his audience and arguing that 'the way food is presented and labelled' can influence the food decisions we make. The writer uses the case study of a mango lassi to demonstrate how

Explanation of the likely effect on the audience

Examples of 'how' connect 'what' to 'why' and 'so'

simply labelling food as 'healthy' or 'unhealthy' can drastically alter its appeal. The use of a case study works not just to inform but also to challenge the reader's assumptions about food choices being based purely on the product's intrinsic qualities. As a result, readers are encouraged to question their food perceptions and, by extension, their environmental impact. Vennard continues to refer to research and data, mentioning studies conducted about 'Meat-Free Mondays' to position himself as logical and evidence-backed. Progressive readers are likely to be bolstered by these data-driven arguments because they typically value scientific research and evidence-based solutions to global issues like climate change. By grounding his recommendations in research, Vennard appeals to readers' belief in the importance of data and tangible outcomes, reinforcing their commitment to practical, informed approaches to environmental action. Vennard avoids placing blame on readers for their past decisions, acknowledging that 'choices are made rapidly' and there are 'lots of seemingly small factors' influencing these choices. This reassures readers, and positions them to feel empowered rather than ashamed, making them more amenable to Vennard's call to action.

Analysis of audience values and how this impacts the effect of persuasive choices

Furthering this logic-based argument, the writer relies on a range of data to reframe climate change as solvable and to position readers to view it as within their control, inspiring them to metaphorically 'arm ... [them]selves with information'. The statistic that 'beef requires 20 times more land and generates 20 times more greenhouse gas emissions than a plant-based protein such as beans' contrasts the environmental impact of animal-based and plant-based proteins.

Quotes from the opinion piece are integrated into sentences

The inclusion of this stark comparison not only serves as an appeal to logic, but also aims to create a sense of urgency, motivating the reader to feel the weight of the climate crisis in their food choices. The importance of a plant-based diet is reinforced through the photograph of a market stall offering vibrant vegetables. The amount of each type of vegetable suggests an abundance of this type of food, emphasising that the shift to this type of diet will be easy and provide a wide variety of choice. This ease of choice is also highlighted by the lack of price labels, implying that these vegetables may be cheap or even free, positioning readers to see a plant-based diet as financially beneficial. Vennard continues to emphasise the ease and practicality of gradual change, reassuring readers that a change in diet 'doesn't necessarily mean giving up meat'. This reframing not only makes the action seem more attainable but once again ensures the reader does not feel overwhelmed or guilty about their current habits. By reducing the scale of the action required, Vennard positions readers to feel that there is no justification for resisting change, and creates moral responsibility for his audience to make these small, manageable adjustments to their diet.

Having established the evidence-based rationale for these changes, Vennard then provides a vision for the future, identifying the widespread take-up of this approach and reinforcing the argument that consumers can 'cut their carbon footprint by choosing more sustainable foods'. He depicts these consumers, and therefore the readers, as active participants in the movement towards sustainability. By listing signatories to the Cool Food Pledge, like 'UCSF Health, the University of Maryland, Hilton Hotels and Europe's

Detail added to analysis through the sentence structure 'not only ... but also ...'

Analysis of visual material → links to the relevant argument, describes the photograph and analyses the photograph

Max Burgers', Vennard reinforces the legitimacy of his arguments. This is furthered through his use of statistics which demonstrate the increase in sales: 'Burger King reported that restaurants in St. Louis pulled in 19% higher foot traffic than the company's national average' and 'sales from Avant Garden increased by 11%'. This barrage of data constructs an image of growing momentum and mainstream success, encouraging the reader to feel confident that sustainable food choices are not only environmentally responsible but also socially validated and economically viable.

Links similar examples together to analyse

Detail added to analysis through the sentence structure 'not only ... but also ...'

Vennard closes with a clear call to action, urging the reader to recognise the value of their individual actions. He describes the decisions we make 'every day' about food, referring to a 'lunch plate' and the 'simple enough' nudges. Minimising the behavioural shift required reassures the audience that meaningful change is within reach, helping to overcome resistance or apathy. Vennard empowers his audience to feel that they are part of a collective solution to a global problem. This closing strategy reinforces the piece's overarching contention: that individual choices matter, and that progress towards sustainability begins with everyday decisions. Thus, readers are inspired to experience a sense of personal responsibility and optimism, encouraging them to feel motivated to make more climate-conscious food choices in their daily lives.

Final sentences act as a conclusion to the essay → it's clear the essay is finished

Notes

The student has worked chronologically through the opinion piece, analysing thoroughly the line of argument and the specific language choices made by the writer. There is a clear focus on the intended effect on the reader, and some analysis of the ways in which this specific audience has been positioned.

12
Presenting a point of view

In Unit 2 and Unit 4 you will need to present a point of view. Typically, this will be a persuasive speech that you will give to your class. Your teacher will be able to give you specific details about the expected length of this presentation; whether you will be permitted to use slides, images or videos as part of your presentation; and the options for your topic or issue.

Selecting a topic

It is likely that you will have a lot of freedom to choose your topic. You should select something that you care about or that interests you, because you will be spending a lot of time writing and editing your presentation. Here are some sample topics:

> Lowering the voting age to 16

> The negative effects of social media

> A ban on single-use plastics

> The impact of homework

> Free public transport.

You might feel like these topics are uninspiring or irrelevant to your life. If you have been given the freedom to choose any topic, you might want to do something like:

> Teaching video game skills in secondary school

> The importance of Taylor Swift as a musician

› The meaning people can find in their lives through astrology

› How fictional characters can impact young people

› School start times.

Here are some questions to help you brainstorm a topic:

› What is something that makes you angry? Do you think other people should be angry about this too?

› What fills you with joy? Do you think other people should be excited about this too?

› Is there something you think people misunderstand? What do you wish people understood better?

› What are people your age talking about now?

› What are people in your community talking about?

› What new things are happening at the moment that you think will have future consequences?

› Are there any stereotypes you want to challenge?

Choosing an audience and persona

Although you will likely be presenting this point of view to your English class, an effective approach is to take on a persona and choose a specific audience that is relevant to your topic. For example, if your topic is free public transport, you might want to take on the persona of the Shadow Minister for Transport, speaking in Parliament about the benefits of a free public transport scheme. Or, if your topic is the negative effects of social media, you might want to take on the persona of a social media influencer, speaking on the topic in a TikTok video.

The more specific you are, the easier it will be to select arguments and language that will persuade your chosen audience. It can be hard to make these choices explicit if you are speaking as a Year 12 student to your class.

Here are some questions to help you choose an audience and persona.

Persona	Audience
Who has a stake in this issue?	Who needs to hear about this issue?
Who cares about this issue?	Who already cares about this issue?
Who has authority to speak on this issue?	Who has the power to make change about this issue?
What role in society might someone connected to this issue have?	Who has a stake in this issue?
	Who might attend an event connected to this issue?

Planning a point of view presentation

Use the graphic organiser below to plan your point of view presentation.

Topic
e.g. The meaning people can find through astrology

Contention
e.g. We should embrace people who believe in astrology rather than ridiculing them.

Persona
e.g. Horoscope columnist with a degree in astrology

Audience
e.g. University students studying a subject called 'Faith and Free Will'

Opening	
What persuasive strategies will you use to begin your point of view presentation?	
How will you make clear your persona and audience?	
How will you outline your contention?	
e.g.	
› *Formal presentation: introduce self as guest lecturer*	
› *Start with humour: astrology memes*	
› *Shift to serious → introduce contention; connect to the university course (faith in things can provide meaning)*	

Key argument 1 What's your first main point? What evidence or examples will you use to support this argument? What language or persuasive strategies will you use to support this argument? *e.g.* › *Astrology provides comfort and meaning in an unpredictable world.* › *Quote from Carl Jung: 'We are born at a given moment, in a given place and, like vintage years of wine, we have the qualities of the year and of the season of which we are born. Astrology does not lay claim to anything more.'* › *Anecdote from column reader feedback* › *Inclusive language* › *Appeals to ethos*	
Key argument 2 What's your second main point? What evidence or examples will you use to support this argument? What language or persuasive strategies will you use to support this argument?	

→

→ **Key argument 3 OR rebuttal**

What's your third main point?

What evidence or examples will you use to support this argument?

What language or persuasive strategies will you use to support this argument?

OR

What might a sceptic say? What would be your response?

What evidence or examples will you use to support this rebuttal?

What language or persuasive strategies will you use to support this rebuttal?

Conclusion

What persuasive strategies will you use to conclude your point of view presentation?

How will you reinforce your contention?

e.g.

› *End with humour: joke about Mercury being in retrograde.*

› *Finish with a call to action: Be mindful of your words and actions when talking to people about the things they believe in. Don't dismiss them or ridicule them just because you don't share their beliefs.*

Additional resources

e.g. I will use five PowerPoint slides, and will need a laser presenter/pointer.

Develop your skills

1 Use the questions on page 131 to select a topic.

2 Brainstorm answers to the questions about personas and audiences on page 131. Highlight the ones you like the best.

3 Plan your persuasive point of view piece using the graphic organiser on pages 132–4.

Writing an opening

The opening is one of the most important parts of your presentation. A strong opening grabs the audience's attention, introduces the topic and sets the tone. Here are some ways you can do this.

Strategy	Example	Sentence starters
Establish a connection with your audience › Ask a question (rhetorical or direct) › Tell an anecdote › Use humour or a relatable scenario	Have you ever scrolled through TikTok for hours and suddenly realised it's 2 am and you haven't even started your homework? We've all been there: eyes dry, brain fried and no idea where the time went. That daily experience connects us, but it also reveals how easily we lose control to our screens.	› Have you ever … › I think most of us know what it feels like to … › Let me tell you a quick story that might sound familiar … › You're not alone if you've ever … › We've all experienced that moment when …
Establish your authority to speak on this topic › Introduce your persona and background › Tell an anecdote	As someone who's worked with public transport systems for over a decade, I've seen firsthand how free public transport changes lives. I've consulted with councils, interviewed commuters and reviewed international case studies. I'm here to tell you that this policy isn't just possible, it's essential.	› As someone who has spent time working with … › After researching this topic thoroughly, I've discovered … › In my experience as a … › I've seen firsthand how … › Speaking as someone who has personally dealt with …

→

Establish the seriousness of the issue	Every minute we ignore the rise in youth anxiety, another teenager feels alone, unheard and overwhelmed. This isn't just a phase: it's a public health crisis. And if we don't act now, the long-term impact on an entire generation will be devastating.	› Right now, we're facing a problem that could shape our future in ways we're not ready for. That problem is …
› Use emotive language		› What I'm going to talk about affects more people than you probably realise …
› Refer to real-world consequences or urgent situations		› Every minute we ignore …
› Highlight who is being affected and how		› Several studies have shown that …
› Provide a fact or statistic		
Shock your audience	By 2050, there will be more plastic in the ocean than fish. Let that sink in. The plastic straws you use, the plastic wrapping from your latest online shopping haul, the coke bottle you threw out at lunch: all of that is ending up in our oceans.	› Did you know that …
› Provide a surprising fact or statistic		› This might sound unbelievable, but it's true: …
› Use a powerful visual or metaphor		› Let me hit you with a number that might change how you think …
› Challenge a commonly held belief or assumption		› I want to start by telling you a surprising fact: …

Develop your skills

1 Highlight the two opening strategies you like the most in the table above.

2 Write the opening for your persuasive point of view piece using one of these strategies. Then rewrite it using the second strategy. Decide which opening is more persuasive.

Writing arguments

The argument section of your presentation is where you will make your case and provide evidence to support your point of view. This is the core of your persuasive speech, where you present your main points and back them up with facts, examples and reasoning.

The following table will help you to structure your arguments effectively.

Structure	Sentence starters
Introduce your argument	› One of the main reasons is … › The most important argument is … › Let's start by stating the obvious: … › Firstly … › Let me begin by outlining … › Let's be clear about … › The key issue here is … › The first point I want to make is … › To begin with, it's essential to understand … › First of all, let's examine … › What needs to be acknowledged first is …
Explain how this argument supports your contention	› This is important because … › The reasoning behind this is … › What this shows us is that … › This highlights the importance of … › This ties back to my point that … › In this case, the evidence shows … › The core of this argument is … › What we see here is a clear example of … › This reveals that …
Summarise your argument, reinforcing your overall contention	› In essence, the argument is clear that … › Therefore, the evidence strongly suggests … › To put it simply, this demonstrates that … › As we've discussed, the impact is … › Overall, it's clear that … › The key takeaway is … › In short, it is evident that … › As we've seen, this proves that …

You will also need to use persuasive strategies and language to support your argument.

Persuasive strategy	Example	How it works
Appeal to credibility (ethos)	As a teacher who's worked with teens for more than 15 years, I've seen this trend grow.	Builds trust by showing the speaker is informed or experienced.
Appeal to emotion (pathos)	Imagine being 12 years old and too afraid to go to school.	Evokes sympathy, fear or anger in order to persuade.
Appeal to logic (logos)	Studies show that 80% of students perform better with regular breaks.	Uses facts, evidence and reasoning.
Call to action	So, let's stop talking and start acting. Today.	Encourages the audience to take immediate action.
Emotive language	It's heartbreaking to see children go without their basic needs being met.	Uses strong words to evoke emotions.
High modality words	We must change the system now.	Uses strong words like 'must', 'will' or 'definitely' to show confidence and urgency.
Hyperbole	This is the single biggest crisis of our generation.	Deliberate exaggeration to make a point.
Inclusive language	We all want safer streets for our families.	Includes the audience by using words like 'we', 'our' and 'us'.
Repetition	This is unacceptable. This is outrageous. This must change.	Repeating words or phrases for emphasis.
Rhetorical question	Do we really want to live in a world where profits matter more than people?	Asks a question without expecting an answer, to make the audience think and to imply that the answer is obvious or beyond doubt.

On the next page is an example of a medium- to high-scoring argument.

The key issue here is we're overlooking a powerful tool that's already capturing our students' hearts and minds: video games. Every time a student builds an intricate world in *Minecraft*, leads a team to victory in *Overwatch* or makes strategic decisions in *Civilization*, they're practising skills we spend months trying to teach: resilience, problem-solving and teamwork. This is important because we're not just preparing students for exams; we're preparing them for life. And life demands adaptability, quick thinking and the courage to try again after failing – all skills that games develop in spades. A recent study from the University of Alderidge found that regular gamers improved in communication, resourcefulness and even emotional intelligence. What we see here is a clear example of learning that is joyful, meaningful and deeply relevant to how young people experience the world. To put it simply, this demonstrates that video games don't pull students away from learning: they pull them in.	Signposting the first argument Tricolon Repetition Tricolon Evidence Tricolon Summary of the argument

Here is an example of a high-scoring argument:

Video games are not just entertainment: they are the future of learning. The first point I want to make is that studies show action games can significantly improve cognitive abilities such as critical thinking, problem-solving and decision-making – all skills crucial for student success. This is important because research from the University of Alderidge reveals that playing fast-paced games enhances cognitive flexibility, helping students adapt in fast-changing environments. Last year I used *Minecraft* in my classroom for the first time, and I was amazed at the increase in engagement and learning that occurred. One student, who had been passively disengaged for most of the term, eagerly called me over to show me what he'd created in our very first lesson. By the end of the unit, his average grade had increased from a 52% to a 64%. What we see here is a clear example of how games like *Minecraft* are more than just fun; they promote creativity, collaboration and strategic thinking. The core of this argument is that as educators, it's our responsibility to prepare students for the world they'll face, not the one we knew. In essence, the argument is clear: the digital world is shaping the future, and if we ignore video games as a tool for learning, we risk leaving our students behind. We must embrace new, evidence-backed methods to equip our students with the skills they truly need.	Statement of contention Signposting the first argument Tricolon Explains how this argument supports the contention Anecdote Anecdote supported with quantitative evidence Explains how this argument supports the contention Summary of the argument High modality verb

Writing a conclusion

The conclusion is your final opportunity to reinforce your argument and leave an impression on your audience. A good conclusion will summarise the key points, restate your position and inspire your audience to take action. Here are some ways you can do this:

Strategy	Example	Sentence starters
Summarise key points › List the key points › Reframe the contention › Metaphorically summarise the key points	To recap, we've seen that social media distracts us from what matters most, affects our mental health and makes it harder to be truly present. Like a fog slowly rolling in, it clouds our minds until we can't see what's right in front of us.	› In summary … › To recap … › What we've covered is … › So what does this all mean? It means … › Looking at the bigger picture … › To put it another way … › When you think about it … › Make no mistake: …
Provide a vision for the future › Tell an anecdote › Use a powerful visual or metaphor › Use emotive language	Imagine if every student walked into school feeling calm, focused and connected. Imagine if every student was actually smiling hello instead of looking down at their phones. There is a future in which we're not governed by the notifications and likes from our apps, and that future is possible, but only if we take our screens seriously today.	› Imagine if … › What kind of world do we want to live in? A world where … › Picture this: … › Let's imagine a world where …
Call to action › Highlight the urgency and stakes › Use inclusive language and appeals › Directly appeal to the audience	Now it's up to us to make climate action more than a hashtag. We need to vote, protest and push for policy change. If we don't act, it's our generation that will suffer the consequences.	› Time is running out to … › Now it's up to us to … › I challenge you to … › What we must do now is … › Together, we can … › Let's take this opportunity to …

| **Bring it full circle**
❯ Remind the audience of your opening anecdote
❯ Repeat a fact or statistic you used in your opening
❯ Echo language or imagery from your opening
❯ Resolve a question raised in the opening | I started by telling you that in 2050, there will be more plastic in the ocean than fish. Each time we buy a plastic product, we are contributing to this crisis. This isn't just a statistic: it's a reality we're creating. Now, it's up to us to take responsibility and make real change before it's too late. | ❯ I started by telling you that …
❯ A few minutes ago I shared with you …
❯ You might remember …
❯ We started with …
❯ This brings us back to …
❯ I began by asking you … The answer is … |

Develop your skills

1 Highlight the two strategies for writing a conclusion you like the most in the table above.

2 Write the conclusion for your persuasive point of view piece using one of these strategies. Then rewrite it using the second strategy. Decide which conclusion is more persuasive.

Delivering an oral presentation

Writing a persuasive presentation is only the first step. You also need to plan for how you will deliver this presentation. Part of your grade for this assessment will likely be based on your presentation skills, so you need to consider this carefully.

Engaging an audience

You don't need to memorise your presentation, but you also don't want to read it out in a monotone. Here are some strategies you can easily apply to ensure you're engaging an audience effectively.

Eye contact	To make effective eye contact, you need to do more than just glance up from your printed speech once a minute. You need to select relevant points where you want to draw the audience in, and then either steadily move your gaze around the room or pick a couple of people to look at directly.
Posture and body language	Stand confidently, with your feet slightly apart. Don't lean against the whiteboard or table. You should use open body language, which means you need to avoid crossing your arms, or standing with one leg crossed over the other.
Hand gestures	Select relevant points in your presentation that you want to emphasise, and think about how you could use a related hand gesture. For example, if you are stating the statistic '1 in 4', you might hold up one finger and then four fingers. You can also use your hands to mirror the magnitude of your ideas. If you're talking about something large, spread your hands apart; if you're talking about a smaller idea, keep your hands closer together.
Movement and using the space	Pick two or three points in your presentation where it would be persuasive to add in movement. For example, you might want to take a step towards the audience. Avoid pacing, as this can be distracting.
Tone and pace	Generally, we speak with a moderate tone and pace. You should select two or three moments in your presentation where it would be effective to slow your pace for emphasis, or drop your volume to make the audience lean in, or increase your volume to startle your audience or emphasise a point. You could also think about incorporating a tonal shift. Will you start your speech encouragingly and shift to anger? Will you start your speech seriously and shift to excitement? Will you start your speech with disappointment and shift to hope?
Pauses	Add pauses after an important point or question to help your audience absorb the information and to build suspense. Well-used pauses can also add emphasis.

Depending on the persona and audience you have selected, it might be appropriate to ask the audience a direct question. Avoid questions that rely on someone sharing an individual answer, idea or opinion. Instead, ask the group something that requires them to raise their hands (e.g. 'Put up your hand if you use your mobile phone for at least one hour a day. Keep your hand up if you use your phone for at least two hours a day'). If you're doing this, make sure there is a persuasive purpose to the question or instruction beyond simply interacting with the audience.

Using slides and props

Your teacher might allow you to use slides and props as part of your presentation. If so, you need to think carefully about how to use them persuasively. Use the elements below (which are illustrated in the sample slide that follows):

> The heading makes the argument clear.

> Short dot points summarise the key information.

> The text is clear to read.

> The images are the focus.

The Problem with Tourists at St Kilda

- Overcrowding
- Use of camera flashes (damages penguins' eyes)
- Selfie sticks stuck down burrows

When preparing your slides you should do the following:

Keep slides simple	Use dot points or key phrases.
	Don't overcrowd the slide.
	Have clear headings and subheadings.
Make it readable	Ensure the font is legible – don't use something that looks too handwritten.
	Font size should generally be no smaller than size 20.
Use images	Use clear, high-quality, relevant images and graphics to support your arguments.
	Limit or avoid the use of animations, as these can be distracting.

You should not read from your slides. They should support or emphasise the body of your presentation, not contain your entire presentation.

If you are using a prop (such as a piece of plastic for a presentation about plastic pollution), carefully consider where in your presentation you will bring it out and how it will reinforce your argument. Waving a piece of plastic around will not be persuasive!

Tips for rehearsing

Part of preparing for any assessment is to practise. For a written assessment, you would practise by writing draft essays or paragraphs. For your point of view presentation, you will need to practise saying your speech out loud. Here are some tips for doing this:

Practise your opening	Start by practising just your opening. You want to make a good impression, so you should know the beginning of your presentation really well.
Practise your conclusion	Similarly, you should practise your conclusion on its own. You want to leave your audience, including your teacher, feeling impressed by you.
Check your pronunciation	Often we write words that we don't use in casual conversation. Check that you know how to correctly pronounce all the words you have written.
Video yourself	It can be tempting to practise in front of a mirror, but it is far more effective to record yourself and then watch the video, looking for mistakes and things to improve.
Practise in the space	Our bodies often have a physical response when we have to stand up and present in front of an audience. This can be hard to control, so one way to overcome this is to practise delivering your presentation in the same space where you will be assessed. If you're using slides, this is also a good time to check the technology works with your computer or device.
Do a vocal warm-up	When delivering a presentation, you're physically using your voice and your body. You should warm these up, just as you would before a sports match or a music exam. Google some vocal warm-ups, or ask your teacher to facilitate some with the class.

Here is how your preparation might look in the lead-up to your presentation:

Monday	Complete draft of presentation and get feedback from teacher.
Tuesday	Read through whole speech three times, checking pronunciation.
Wednesday	Practise the opening.
Thursday	Practise the opening and closing.
Friday	Ask teacher for permission to practise in the space, check technology works, rehearse entire presentation.
Saturday	Video the opening and closing, take notes about things to improve, practise opening and closing.
Sunday	Rehearse entire presentation.
Monday	Do a vocal warm-up. Deliver presentation!

Develop your skills

1 On the draft of your persuasive point of view presentation, write annotations that explain how you will engage your audience. For example, which hand gestures will you use and when? When will you use eye contact?

2 If you are using slides, develop the slides. Then, show them to a friend for feedback.

3 Create a rehearsal plan and carry it out.

Sample point of view text

Here is an example of a high-scoring point of view presentation.

Good evening. I'm Eliza, and I'm really honoured to be a part of this star-studded panel at UnrealCon tonight to talk about something that is far too often overlooked, especially in the reality TV world: mental health and the damage done by online hate. I'm lucky enough to be the winner of the 2026 season of *Australian Survivor: Architects V Assassins*. Over one million people tuned in to the season, so I'm guessing that some of you sitting in this audience saw it, and given that you're here tonight, probably enjoyed it. I played a strategic game, one that required me to make hard choices, sometimes cutting people I cared about. But, just like all of us on this stage tonight, I am not simply a character on TV.

I'm a mother, I'm a lawyer, I'm a wife, and I am someone who deeply feels the weight of every decision I make. But here's the thing: the public doesn't always see that. They only see what's shown on TV, and when the cameras stop rolling, the online hate begins. And I'm not talking about the occasional snide comment. I'm talking about the constant barrage of hate, personal attacks and, yes, the parasocial relationships where viewers think they know us better than we know ourselves.

And it's killing us, not just mentally but emotionally. You, the viewer, may think you've got the full picture, but you don't. And that has to change.

Let's break it down. When I was playing *Survivor*, I relied on trust, alliances and strategy to get me through. But that didn't mean my

Makes clear the selected persona and audience

Introduces the issue

Expands on the persona and establishes authority to speak on this topic

Shift in tone

Exaggeration

Introduction of contention; appeal to empathy

Signposting

Tricolon

relationships were any less real. The moment I cut Theo, someone I had considered a close friend, I knew the consequences would follow me. I had no idea that those consequences would not just be felt by me, but would spill out into the lives of my family, too.

Personal anecdote

But what's really damaging here is the idea that people think they know me based on what they saw on the screen. And the same goes for all of us who've been in reality TV. You watch *Survivor*, *MAFS* or *The Bachelorette*, and you think you get it. You think you understand who we are. But here's the harsh truth: what you see is one moment. It's not the full story.

When viewers form parasocial relationships, they forget that what's being portrayed is a tiny fraction of who we really are. Mark, I know, is going to speak later about his experiences on *The Bachelorette,* and the impact of getting a villain edit. I bet there were plenty of moments we didn't see, plenty of moments of Mark being an absolute gentleman, or showing empathy and compassion to his fellow contestants. The editing leaves out those crucial moments. This is an audience of fans, so I'm guessing you've heard the term 'frankenbite', where audio from several interviews is edited together to sound like one continuous interview line. If you know what you're looking for, they can be easy to spot, but they construct a narrative that doesn't reflect reality. Yet fans still feel they have the right to judge, even though they don't know the real story. They feel entitled to it, and when they don't get what they expect, they lash out with hate.

First argument

Directly addresses the audience

I'll tell you straight: this isn't just about a few mean tweets. This isn't just about being called 'manipulative', 'cold-hearted' or 'fake'. It's relentless,

Second argument

it's personal, and it comes from people who feel betrayed because of something they saw on a show, something that was never intended to be the full truth. And, although I acknowledge the awfulness of what Mark has been attacked for online, it's worse for us women. A 2021 report from the Demos think tank found that gendered abuse of reality TV stars 'disproportionately targets women'. Their analysis of over 45 000 comments and tweets found that comments about women were abusive 24% of the time compared to 14% of the time for men. Furthermore, abusive comments about men generally attack them for being weak, or creepy and scary. Abusive comments about women depict them as crazy, emotionally volatile, entitled, devious, evil or an impermissible inconvenience.

Evidence

I remember one night, sitting in my kitchen, kids finally asleep, scrolling through messages I knew I shouldn't read. One person told me I was a 'snake'. Another said they hoped I'd lose my job. Someone else messaged me about Theo – told me I'd 'ruined his life'. As if the show was real life. As if what they saw in a one-hour episode could justify that kind of vitriol.

Personal anecdote

And this doesn't only affect us in the short term. It stays with us. This kind of scrutiny, the toxic online environment, can cause anxiety, depression and even self-doubt. And it's not just me. Think about how many people you see on reality TV who may be quietly struggling with the same thing. For every person who seems confident and well-adjusted, there's a side that no one talks about. We don't talk enough about the mental health issues that come with being on reality TV because we're expected to be strong, expected to just 'move on', expected to brush off the hate.

Emphasises the consequences

This isn't just a personal issue, it's a systemic one. It's a culture we've created, where we tear people down for entertainment. There's this idea that once you sign up for reality TV, you sign up for abuse. That you 'knew what you were getting into'.

Third argument

No. You sign up for adventure. For a challenge. For a shot at something wild and rare and real. You do *not* sign up to be dehumanised.

Short sentences add emphasis

I wish I could stand here and say 'it's not you'. You're here at UnrealCon because you love these shows, and you want to meet the people you've seen on screen for so long. There are many people in this room who have called others out online for their abusive and violent comments. But there are also definitely some people sitting in this room who have tapped out a cruel message and hit send. Because they believe they have a right to.

Directly addresses the audience

We need to start changing the way we view reality TV and the people who participate in it. Reality stars are not just characters on a screen. We are human beings. We have real lives, families and mental health to protect. So, let's start treating each other like it. Let's stop forming these one-sided relationships where we judge others based on their edited highlights.

Call to action

Instead, let's change the conversation. Let's encourage empathy and understanding. For each of you sitting here today, take a moment to think about the person behind the screen. Before you post that comment, ask yourself: is this helping or hurting? Is this something you'd say to their face?

And for those of us who've been through it, let's speak out. Let's show the world that it's okay to not be perfect, it's okay to make mistakes and it's okay to be human. We have the power to

Repetition

change the conversation, to promote kindness over hate and to make mental health a priority.

In closing, I want to challenge all of us, whether you're a viewer or a contestant. Let's create a culture where kindness wins. A culture where we stop tearing people down for our entertainment and start lifting each other up. It's time to treat reality stars like human beings, not fictional characters. It's time to show empathy, respect and support, both online and off.

Signposting

You, the viewer, may think you've got the full picture, but you don't. You're watching the edit. We're living the consequences.

Bringing it full circle → repetition of statement from the start

Notes

This student has selected a specific audience and persona, made this clear in their opening, then persuasively addressed this specific audience throughout. The student has focused on the immediate, personal consequences of this issue, and then widened the argument to consider the issue's societal significance. A range of persuasive techniques has been used throughout. The closing includes a clear call to action for different stakeholders, and brings the presentation full circle with a repetition of a statement from the opening.

13
Studying for this area of study

This chapter contains some useful strategies for consolidating knowledge and skills, and to help you prepare for assessment tasks.

Identifying what to work on

Use this self-reflection checklist to identify the skills you need to do the most work on for Exploring and analysing argument.

Skill	I'm confident I can do this on my own	I need to work on this, but I know how to do it	I really need some help with this
I can identify the contention, audience and purpose of an opinion piece.			
I can identify the line of argument in an opinion piece and analyse how a writer develops this argument.			
I can annotate an opinion piece thoroughly, and use this to guide my writing.			
I know how to write topic sentences that introduce the line of argument being discussed and its effect on the audience.			

→

→ I can select evidence that is relevant to the argument or persuasive strategy.			
I can analyse how the audience is positioned by the arguments and language used.			
I can describe and analyse visual material, and make links to the written material.			
I know how to write concluding sentences that make an overall statement about the line of argument and the purpose of the persuasive text.			
I can write an analysis of argument under timed conditions.			
I can proofread my work for grammar, spelling and punctuation.			

Considering this checklist, what are three strengths you have, and three areas you need to work on?

Strengths	Areas to work on

Quick tasks and longer tasks

Use the tasks in the following table to help you target specific skills.

If you need to work on your annotation skills …	
Quick tasks	**Longer tasks**
❯ Identify the contention, audience and purpose of an opinion piece. ❯ Spend 10 minutes just annotating the visual material in an opinion piece. ❯ Read the background information for a Section C practice piece. Without reading the piece, use the background information to make notes about the context and audience. Make notes predicting the contention and intention, and some of the key arguments (e.g. environmental, financial).	❯ Practise using reading time. Spend 15 minutes reading a Section C piece. Then use two minutes of writing time to annotate the most crucial things you would need to analyse. ❯ Annotate an opinion piece but allow yourself to only annotate three persuasive techniques. Select the most important and/or persuasive and ensure you have noted how they position the audience. Repeat for the three next most persuasive techniques.
If you need to work on your analytical writing skills …	
Quick tasks	**Longer tasks**
❯ Find a list of analytical verbs (you could use the one on page 28). Highlight all the ones you typically use in your writing. Write three sentences using three new verbs. ❯ Write an analytical sentence using the 'not only … but also …' structure.	❯ Write one body paragraph. Give it to a friend or your teacher and ask them for feedback. Rewrite the paragraph incorporating this feedback. ❯ Practise analysing visual material. Start with a short description (five or six words) of the image, analyse the link to the argument and add a sentence with a deeper level analysis.
If you need to work on analysing the development of the argument …	
Quick tasks	**Longer tasks**
❯ Read a sample analysis essay (the VCAA assessment reports include some). Highlight where the student analyses the development of the argument. ❯ Use the word banks and sentence starters on pages 118–19 of this book to write three separate sentences about the development of argument in a Section C practice piece.	❯ Annotate an opinion piece focusing just on the development of argument. Then, use these annotations to write six sentences analysing the line of argument used by the writer. ❯ Rewrite an essay you have previously written, adding in or editing sentences analysing the development of argument.

Acknowledgements