VCE® Units 3 & 4

EAL

YEAR 12

STUDY DESIGN 2024
—

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Area of Study 1 in Units 3 and 4: Reading and responding to texts

This area of study focuses on reading or viewing, then analysing, texts. You will:

+ listen to and discuss ideas, concerns and values presented in an audio text
+ write an analytical response to a set text.

Reading and understanding texts

This chapter begins with a section on reading strategies intended to help you get the most out of reading or viewing your selected text. The remainder of the chapter presents an overview of the main elements to consider when analysing a text. These elements are relevant to every text, whether you are studying a novel, a film, a play, a nonfiction text, or a short story or poetry collection. Later chapters will look more closely at these features in terms of specific text types, such as novels and films.

IN THIS CHAPTER:

÷ Reading strategies
÷ Audience
÷ Context
÷ Setting
÷ Values
÷ Ideas, concerns and conflicts
÷ Using evidence

Reading strategies

This section contains advice about how to read (or watch) your texts in ways that will help you understand both their **literal meaning** and their **subtext**, or **implied meaning**.

> Throughout this section, references to 'reading' your text should be understood to include 'viewing' your text, if you are studying a film.

Aim to read your set texts at least twice. On your first reading you should focus on **understanding** the literal meaning of the text and becoming familiar with the plot, the characters and so on.

On your second and subsequent readings, you can focus on **thinking critically** about the text's main messages, or its implied meaning.

> The best way to ensure that you understand a text is to read it *slowly* and *repeatedly*.

The following table summarises some strategies you can use to check your understanding of the text and its literal and implied meanings. You might use some of these strategies in class and others during your own reading or study time.

Strategy	When	What to do / ask yourself
Predicting	before you read	Reflect on what you already know about the text. What do you know about the writer, their life and their other works? Do you know when the text was created? What do you think it is about? Does the book cover suggest certain ideas or themes that the text might explore?
Checking/ clarifying	during first and subsequent readings	Consider how accurate your predictions were. What surprised you about the text? Why? During your subsequent readings, note any details that you missed the first time you read the text. Do these change your understanding of the characters or ideas in the text?
Annotating	during first and subsequent readings	Highlight key words and phrases. You might like to use a colour code, e.g. pink for quotes relating to characters, blue for quotes relating to ideas, yellow for quotes relating to views and values. Reflect on the significance of these sections. How do they deepen your understanding of the text? Also write down any questions you have at any point in the text. Are you confused about what is happening, or about the reasons for a character's actions or choices? Do you wonder about the significance of a recurring motif?
Summarising	after your first reading	With a partner, take it in turns to explain to each other what happens in different parts of the text. Next, take it in turns to explain what you think the writer's main messages are. Create written summaries of different aspects of the text, including the plot, the main character(s) and the main ideas.
Interpreting	after multiple readings	Create interpretive statements about your text. Interpretive statements express an opinion about an aspect of the text, e.g. 'The narrator of *The Memory Police* is the most courageous character.' Create statements about the main character(s), the main ideas, and the views and values in the text.
Discussing	after your first and subsequent readings	In pairs or small groups, take it in turns to talk about your interpretive statements. Use evidence from the text to challenge each other's statements and support alternative points of view.

Audience

One of the most important factors to consider when analysing a text is its intended **audience**. Writers, directors and other content creators usually intend their works to appeal to particular groups of people (e.g. contemporary young adult readers or science-fiction fans). Identifying the target audience provides you with more context for the text. Understanding who the intended audience is will help you to recognise the literary strategies used to appeal to this particular group.

You should be aware of three main types of audience.

- **The contemporary audience:** This refers to the audience who encounters the text when it is first published; for example, those who attended Shakespeare's plays at the Globe Theatre in London in the early 17th century.

- **The modern audience:** This means those who are experiencing the text in our own time; for example, Year 9 students watching a stage performance of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* this year.

- **Yourself:** As you study, you need to be aware of your own cultural prism (see below) and how this may shape your responses to and interpretation of the text.

Cultural prism

As you read, view or listen to a text, it is important that you are aware of your own unique interpretation. This is informed by your 'cultural knowledge, experiences and understanding of the world' (English/EAL Study Design, p.17), which includes any cultural knowledge that you need to acquire in order to engage fully with the text. It also includes your own background and how this might shape your perception of characters and events.

e.g. Consider the three different audiences for Sophocles' *Oedipus the King*.

- **The contemporary audience:** Sophocles originally staged his play in ancient Greece at the Dionysia festival. The audience would have been familiar with the story of Oedipus and the conventions of Greek tragedy.

- **The modern audience:** Today many audience members would be aware of Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytical theory, the Oedipus complex (a child's sexual desire for their parent of the opposite sex), whose name is derived from this legend. They are unlikely to share ancient Greek views on the role of gods, fate and the position of women, and will bring to the text their current concerns about issues such as family violence.

- **Yourself:** Unlike the ancient Greek audience, who were probably familiar with the story of Oedipus and the conventions of Greek tragedy, many modern students will need to acquire this background knowledge. You will also view the text through the lens of your personal opinions and experiences.

Sophocles is thought to have been born around 496 BCE and died around 406 BCE.

Compare audiences

With reference to one of your set texts, research the different possible audiences, and reflect on your own unique interpretation. Complete the following table as you go.

Audience	What knowledge and experiences might this audience bring to the text?
Contemporary audience (at the time the text was written)	
Modern audience (likely readers of the text today)	
Yourself	

Context

The texts that you study are largely products of the **context** in which they were created. The term 'context' can include the following:

- the **historical context** – important events (e.g. the Great Depression: the global economic downturn of 1929–39), historical figures (e.g. Queen Elizabeth II) and politics (e.g. the national *Commonwealth Franchise Act 1962* giving First Nations Australians the right to vote)

- the **social context** – social rules and expectations (e.g. gender roles)

- the **cultural context** – the specific values and expectations of a particular group (e.g. the language and values of Chinese Australians living in Shepparton during the 1950s).

Being aware of this sort of contextual information can help you better understand the meaning and significance of your set text.

My Brilliant Career was published shortly after the Federation of Australia.

Here are some examples of significant contexts that are frequently studied in the VCE EAL course. The right-hand column identifies some important aspects to consider about each context.

Context	Considerations
Ancient Greece, e.g. *Oedipus the King* by Sophocles	• Ancient Greece was made up of city-states, each with its own government and laws. • It was a patriarchal society, with men holding most of the political and social power. • People believed in many gods and goddesses (Hellenic polytheism), and religion played a central role in their daily lives.
Elizabethan England, e.g. Shakespeare's plays	• In the Elizabethan era the arts and culture prospered. Theatre was a thriving and popular form of entertainment. • Society was very hierarchical, with strict rules governing people's behaviour and status. • Most people were devout Christians; the monarch was the head of the Church of England.
'Classic' texts published in the 19th and 20th centuries, e.g. *My Brilliant Career* by Miles Franklin	• These texts are often set against the backdrop of political and social upheaval such as the Renaissance, the Enlightenment and the Industrial Revolution. • Texts considered 'classics' were written by those who are regarded as masters of their craft.
Contemporary texts, e.g. *The Memory Police* by Yōko Ogawa	• Today there is a wide range of ways to find and consume texts, particularly via the internet. • There is more access to texts translated from other languages, as well as texts that include multimodal elements, using storytelling methods that differ from those in from classic texts. • Compared to classic texts, modern texts often present more diverse perspectives, including those of groups who were previously marginalised, e.g. due to gender, race, cultural background, sexuality or gender identity.

Context of production and reception

The considerations listed in the table above describe elements of the **context of production**. This context – the state and nature of the world in which the text was created – is fixed at the time of publication.

The world of the audience who is consuming the text is referred to as the **context of reception**. The contemporary audience might share a context – era and society – with the creator, but a modern audience might be experiencing the text many years later in very different circumstances. It is important to consider how your own context of reception might shape your reading experience, including the messages and elements that you find important.

Explore context

Research the context for one of your set texts. The following questions prompt you to compare the context of production to your own context of reception.

Historical events

1   What were some of the important events that took place before and at the time of publication?

_____

Values

2   What were common social values in this time and place?

_____

3   How are these social values similar to or different from those of your own context?

_____

_____

Beliefs

4   Were there any common religious beliefs at the time? How did these inform people's values?

_____

_____

5   What other beliefs were current at the time?

_____

6   How do these beliefs align with or differ from common beliefs in your context?

_____

_____

Structural elements

7   Were there any social circumstances that limited individual freedom during this time, for example, slavery and/or political disenfranchisement?

_____

_____

8   Do these structural limitations still exist today? If they have changed, describe the changes.

_____

_____

Setting

The time and place in which the events of the text occur are called its **setting**. The setting of a text is often closely linked to its context.

Time

The **time setting** of a text can include the historical era, season, specific dates or even a time of day. You can also identify how much time is covered by the text, which could range from a single day to multiple decades. Authorial decisions about the element of time can play a significant role in the plot and the characters' actions and motivations.

The historical era in which a text is set is evident in references to real events, public figures (including political leaders), outfits and language use. The time period in which a text is set will influence the characters' views and values, and the author's exploration of key ideas.

> Note that some fictional texts, such as science fiction, can be set in an imagined time that does not correspond with a real historical era.

The season or seasons in which a text is set might be revealed through references to the weather. This can influence the mood of the text, as well as being relevant to the plot. The time of day when key events or conversations occur might be revealed through, for example, references to clocks, the sun or moon, and shadows. Sometimes text creators also call attention to the passing of time through these same techniques.

Texts can follow different time structures:

- **linear** or **chronological** (with events told in the order in which they occur)
- **non-linear** or **non-chronological** (not in sequence, in a different order).

Contractions in time are used when the text creator wants the narrative to jump forward in time. The contraction may encompass a single day or even hour, a number of years, or anywhere in between.

Flashbacks refer to plot points that occur before the main timeline begins. You can think of these as memories that have a direct impact on the narrative.

e.g. The following timeline shows the main events in *Oedipus the King* by Sophocles.

The people of Thebes endure plague.

Oracle states he must find Laius' murderer.

Oedipus and Creon argue.

Messenger reveals that Polybus is not Oedipus' father.

Jocasta commits suicide.

Oedipus is exiled.

Oedipus seeks to end suffering.

Tiresias accuses Oedipus.

Jocasta describes the murder of Laius.

Shepherd reveals Oedipus' true parentage.

Oedipus is blinded.
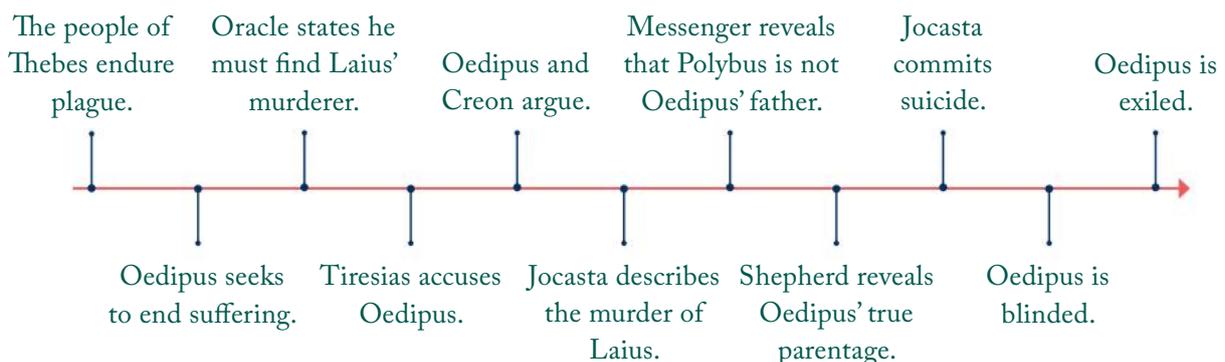
Place

The **place setting** refers to the location or locations in which the events of the narrative happen. Important features may include geography, environment and human-built infrastructure. Certain places have cultural and symbolic significance for some people.

Text creators incorporate particular places and types of environment to create mood, develop the plot and challenge characters. For example, oceans, snowy mountains, deserts and urban environments all affect the type of events that can take place in the text. They can also influence characters' behaviours and choices – for example, the small-town setting of *We Have Always Lived in the Castle* means that the protagonist Merricat feels unable to escape the scrutiny of the curious villagers.

Well-known places can also carry particular connotations (implied or associated meanings). For example, Trevor Noah's memoir *Born a Crime* is set in South Africa during and shortly after the years of apartheid (policy of racial segregation). This place and time is associated with racism and conflict.

Explore setting

Respond to the following questions with close reference to your set text.

1 When is the text set?

_____

2 What is the duration of time covered by the text?

_____

3 Is the text linear or non-linear? _____

4 Identify any significant contractions in time and/or flashbacks.

_____

_____

5 Where is the text set? _____

6 How does the setting impact the lives of the characters?

_____

_____

7 Identify a quotation that refers to the setting.

_____

_____

8 Does the setting have positive or negative connotations? Explain your answer.

_____

_____

Values

Cultural values are things (e.g. ideals, customs) that a community considers important to their sense of group belonging. There are two levels of culture that you can observe in texts:

- the **visible level**, which consists of characters' behaviours, traditions and practices that are observable

- the **invisible level**, which consists of the underlying values, beliefs and assumptions that guide characters' behaviour.

Using the analogy of an iceberg, superficial details are easy to see but what lies below the surface is harder to discern.

VISIBLE LEVEL

religious practices   food

clothing   language

appearance

political views   religious beliefs

social values   attitudes towards
gender and race

opinions
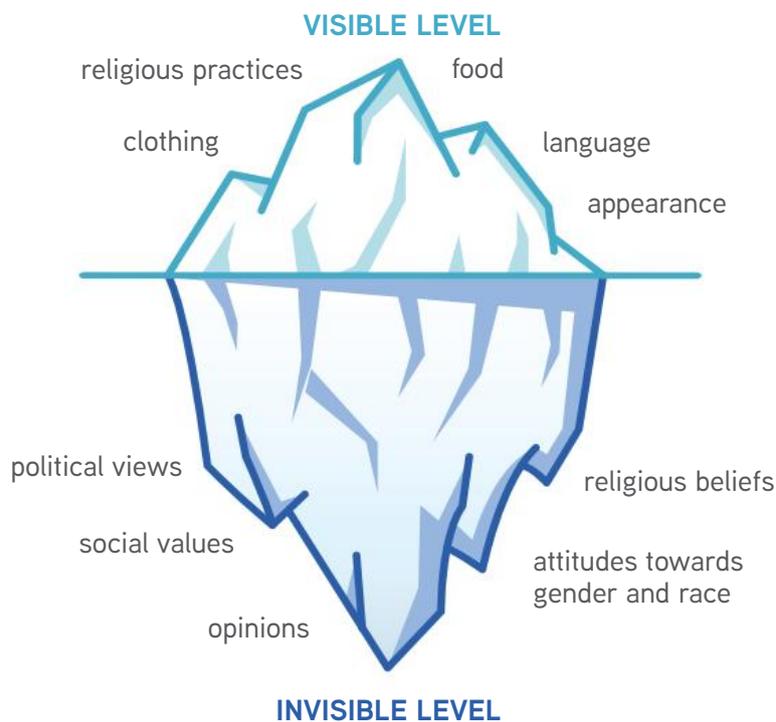
INVISIBLE LEVEL

Identify visible and invisible cultural values

Continue to research your text, identifying some of the visible and invisible cultural values it conveys.

Visible level	
e.g. clothing, appearance, food, language and religious practices	
Invisible level	
e.g. social values, religious beliefs, attitudes towards gender and race, opinions, political views	

Identifying views and values

The texts that we read or view also reveal the values of their creator. The values of the text creator are particularly important for this area of study, as you should discuss them in your analyses.

These questions will help you to identify views and values in your text.

- Is there a clear message at the end of the text? For example, Jane Harrison's *Rainbow's End* expresses the need for better housing, employment and social empowerment for First Nations Australians.

- Are those who make bad decisions punished? For example, Don John is punished for his evil plotting in William Shakespeare's *Much Ado About Nothing*.

- Are good characters rewarded? For example, Elizabeth Bennet's marriage in Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* can be viewed as a just reward for her honesty and intelligence.

- Are we encouraged to sympathise with or condemn particular characters? For example, while Sybylla in Miles Franklin's *My Brilliant Career* does not have a traditional happy ending, the reader is encouraged to sympathise with her because of her courage and determination.

- If there is widespread injustice, is the author condemning the society? For example, author Shirley Jackson implicitly criticises the small-minded villagers in *We Have Always Lived in the Castle*.

While some texts include clear protagonists and villains, it is important to remember that many characters are more complex. For example, while Oedipus in Sophocles' *Oedipus the King* exhibits many of the attributes of a hero, he remains ignorant of the facts about his birth, ignoring repeated warnings and avoiding the truth.

Ideas, concerns and conflicts

An important part of studying a text is identifying the **ideas**, **concerns** and **conflicts** that it explores. These are the underlying messages or meanings that the text creator is trying to convey, often also referred to as **themes**. They can be **explicit** (obvious, stated outright) or **implicit** (hinted at, below the surface). A text's themes are influenced by the author's context of production.

Motifs are specific recurring ideas or objects used to reinforce a text's themes. They include symbols, images and characters and can add depth and complexity to a text.

The following table shows examples of ideas and motifs.

Text	Ideas	Motifs
Sunset Boulevard directed by Billy Wilder	• the corrupting influence of power and money • the dangers of living in the past • the cruelty of the entertainment industry	• Hollywood • isolation • mirrors

Text	Ideas	Motifs
Chronicle of a Death Foretold by Gabriel García Márquez	• bystanders to violence • the role of tradition • the importance of honour	• death • the wedding • the rooster
Oedipus the King by Sophocles	• the power of fate • the consequences of hubris • the importance of self-knowledge	• crossroads • the oracle • blindness

Scan the code or click here to view a video about motifs in texts.

Identifying ideas, concerns and conflicts

Here are some tips for identifying ideas, concerns and conflicts in your set text.

- Look for **patterns** in the text. For example, mirrors recur throughout *Sunset Boulevard*, reinforcing the film's criticism of Hollywood's beauty standards.

- Identify **connections** between different parts of the narrative. For example, nearly everyone in the village seems to know that Santiago Nasar is going to be murdered in *Chronicle of a Death Foretold*. Márquez uses this irony to criticise bystanders to crime.

- Take note of **repeated** words and phrases. For example, the words 'disappeared', 'vanished' and 'forgotten' feature prominently in *The Memory Police*. They underline the novel's exploration of memory and loss.

- **Re-reading or rewatching** your text multiple times can reveal ideas and motifs that you missed the first time.

Understand ideas, concerns and conflicts

1 Brainstorm some ideas from your selected text, using the following sentence starters.

a The text creator suggests that _____

b The text concludes with the message that _____

c The audience learns that _____

2 Complete the following activities to identify important motifs in your selected text.

a Circle the elements of **nature** or **the body** that feature prominently in the text.

Water	Rain	Storms	Stars	Eyes	Hands
Trees	Fruit	Fire	Horses	Birds	Other (specify) _____

b Circle the **human-made creations** that feature prominently in the text.

Vehicles	Lights	Buildings	Weapons	Walls
Windows	Money	Technology	Books	Other (specify) _____
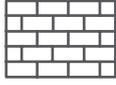
c Circle the **colours** that feature prominently in the text.

Black	White	Red	Orange	Yellow
Green	Blue	Purple	Pink	Other (specify) _____

d Now circle the **ideas** that these motifs represent.

Life	Death	Innocence	Beauty	Fate
Corruption	Power	Love	The past	Other (specify) _____

3 Complete the following sentences about motifs in your text.

a Throughout the text _____ is used to represent _____

b The text creator makes frequent use of _____ to encourage the audience to think about _____

c _____ acts as a motif in the text, emphasising the idea that _____

Using evidence

Selecting relevant evidence from your text is essential for supporting the arguments you will make in your essays. As well as annotating your text, you should record evidence in a separate file or notebook.

Keep track of important quotes and other textual evidence as you read by using a table like the one on the next page, which refers to Robbie Arnott's novel *Flames*.

e.g.

Key quote / event / situation / character development	Key idea / value	Why is it important?
'But I know that between us there is love.'	family	This quote underscores the relationship between Charlotte and Levi, showing that, in spite of their differences, their familial bond connects them.

Scan the code or click **here** to see some tips and activities that will help you to memorise quotes.

Practise working with textual evidence

1 a Select the ten most important quotes from your text and write them in the first column of a table like the one below.

Quote	Order of importance	Relevance to key idea of _____	Relevance to key character of _____	Relevance to topic of _____

   b Rank the quotes in order, from most important to least important, by placing a number next to each in the second column of the table.

   c Choose one of the ideas from the text. Rank the quotes in order, from most relevant to this idea to least relevant, by placing a number in the third column of the table.

   d Choose one of the characters from the text. Rank the quotes in order, from most revealing about that character to least revealing, by placing a number in the fourth column of the table.

   e Choose an essay topic. Rank the quotes in order, from most useful for addressing the topic to least useful, by placing a number in the fifth column of the table.

2 a Write a sentence describing the main character in your text.

   _____

   b Find the following three types of evidence in your text to support your description.

   Quote: _____

   Event/situation: _____

   Decision/choice made by the character: _____

3 Identify a key value the author endorses. _____

4 Explain why you think this, supporting your answer with textual evidence.

Analysing novels and short stories

In this chapter you will learn more about how to analyse novels and short stories specifically. **Novels** are fictional, long-form written texts, usually divided into chapters. **Short stories** are short, fictional written texts. If you are studying short stories in Unit 3 or 4, you will be studying a collection of short stories, usually by the same author, and analysing how they are connected and form one overall text.

Characters

Characters are the people in the novel or short story. Characters drive action and plot. The main characters, or **protagonists**, are the most important people in the story. Most novels and short stories will have one protagonist. An **antagonist** is a character who opposes or creates challenges for the protagonist. **Minor characters** help us understand main characters, and are usually developed in less detail than main characters.

Minor characters might symbolise or represent a particular idea or social value. For example, the minor character of Lady Catherine De Bourgh in Jane Austen's novel *Pride and Prejudice* represents the paternalistic attitudes of the upper class in Regency England.

Character development

When we analyse characters, it is important consider the ways in which they change over the course of a novel or short story. Some novels may be coming-of-age stories, during which characters undergo enormous and impactful changes as they move from childhood to adulthood. (The German term 'bildungsroman' is often used to describe this kind of text.)

In novellas or short stories, characters may not be significantly different by the end of the story, but may have an important moment of realisation, or experience a shift in their thinking. Identifying the ways that a character develops enables us to analyse characters and, ultimately, the author's message.

Track character development

1 Create a table like the one below and identify the character development of some of the characters in the text you are studying. Make sure you support your ideas with quotes from the text.

e.g. Text: *My Brilliant Career* by Miles Franklin

Character	At the beginning of the text	During the text	At the end of the text
Sybylla Melvyn	intelligent egotistical and arrogant honest rebellious 'Fear I knew not.' 'I am an individual ever doing things I oughtn't at the time I shouldn't.' 'I borrowed every book in the neighbourhood and stole hours from rest to read them.'	reflective impulsive 'I was clearly in the wrong, and had been unwomanly beyond a doubt.'	self-aware compassionate 'In comparison to millions I knew that I had received more than a fair share of the good of life; but knowing another has leprosy makes our cancer none the easier to bear.' 'I am only one of yourselves, I am only an unnecessary, little bush commoner …'

Your text:

Character	At the beginning of the text	During the text	At the end of the text

2 Use this table to complete the analytical sentences about the characters in your text.

e.g. At the beginning of the novel, Sybylla is portrayed as intelligent but rebellious, and as always 'doing things [she] oughtn't'. As Sybylla moves away from the domestic space of Possum Creek and is introduced to wider society, she becomes more reflective and able to identify situations in which she is 'clearly in the wrong'. She ultimately matures into a self-aware and more compassionate character who recognises she has 'received more than a fair share of the good of life'.

a At the beginning of the novel, _____ [character name] is portrayed as / is depicted as / demonstrates [choose one] _____

b As _____ [character name] develops, they become aware of / realise that _____

c By the end of the novel, _____ [character name] proves themself to be / ultimately becomes / recognises that / shifts to [choose one] _____

_____

Character foils

To emphasise something about a character, authors often create another character with a contrasting personality or attitudes. We call these contrasting characters **foils**. For example, in Shirley Jackson's novel *We Have Always Lived in the Castle,* the character of Constance acts as a foil to Merricat. Constance's gentle and caring nature, as well as her initial desire to take a more active role in the world outside the home, contrasts with Merricat's strangeness and stubbornness. Constance's character traits allow the reader to gain a deeper understanding of Merricat, and create tension within the novel.

Characterisation

As readers, we need to look for clues in the text that provide us with information about characters. The way that authors **characterise** their protagonists and other characters helps us to understand and analyse novels and short stories.

In novels and short stories, characterisation is created through:

- dialogue
- physical description
- a character's thoughts and feelings
- a character's actions
- how other characters respond to that character.

e.g. Look at the extract from page 23 of Yōko Ogawa's novel *The Memory Police* below, and the characterisation of R.

"I saw something terrible on my way here," I told R, my editor, in the lobby of the publishing house.

"The Memory Police?" he asked, lighting a cigarette.

"Yes. They seem worse recently."

"They're awful," he agreed, slowly exhaling a long stream of smoke.

"But today was different somehow. They took four people at once from the center of town, in broad daylight. As far as I know, they've generally acted at night, on the edge of town, taking just one member of a family."

"Those people must have been hidden in a safe house."

"A safe house?" I said, repeating the unfamiliar words, but they died in my throat almost before I'd said them. I'd been told it was best not to talk about such sensitive matters in public. There was no telling whether plainclothes police might be nearby. Rumours about them were rampant on the island.

The lobby was nearly deserted. Just three men in suits near the potted ficus tree, deep in discussion around a thick stack of papers, and a receptionist sitting at the desk looking bored. ➡

This tells us that R has a negative view of the Memory Police as he associates them immediately with 'something terrible'.

The slow exhale suggests R is thoughtful and patient.
This tells us that R has more knowledge than the narrator. The narrator describes the words 'safe house' as 'unfamiliar', but R says the people 'must' have been in a safe house. His certainty emphasises his understanding of the situation.

R does not follow this rule, suggesting that he is more reckless, and also highlighting the trust he has in the narrator.

➡ "I would guess they had converted one of the rooms in the building into a hiding place. There isn't really much else they can do. I've heard there's a fairly large underground network that creates these safe houses and then keeps them running. They build the rooms and then provide the occupants with supplies and money. But if the police are starting to raid the safe houses, then there's really no place left to hide …".

R seemed to want to add something more, but he fell silent and reached instead for his cup of coffee, his gaze wandering to the garden in the courtyard.

Highlights R's knowledge of the political situation.

Ogawa creates a sense of deep unease in this phrase. She emphasises the dystopian nature of this world, and positions us to see R as a character who is aware of this.

Consider characterisation

Choose a page from the novel or short story you are studying, and highlight and annotate any aspects of characterisation you can identify. Make notes on the following.

1 What does the character say? What does this reveal about how they are feeling? What does it reveal about their relationships with other characters?

2 What does the character do? What does this reveal about their motivations? What might they be trying to hide?

3 What does the character think about? Is this different from what they say out loud?

4 How do other characters respond to this character? What does this reveal?

Connect characters and ideas

When you write about novels and short stories, you need to be able to link characters and ideas or themes. This activity will help you identify how characters uphold or resist ideas in the text. The examples are based on Jenny Erpenbeck's novel *Go, Went, Gone*.

1 Choose two or three themes from the text you are studying and write them below.

e.g. the importance of caring for others

_____

2 For each theme you have identified, write a description of a character that connects to the theme.

e.g. the importance of caring for others = empathetic; Rashid is empathetic.

_____

3 Now find a word that means the opposite of the word you chose for question 2.

e.g. empathetic – selfish

_____

4 For each description, draw an arrow like the one below, with the two words placed at either end of the arrow. Place the characters from your text along the arrow.

e.g. empathetic   selfish

⟵——⟶

Rashid   Richard   Osarobo   Monika and Jörg

5 Discuss your diagram with a partner who chose the same theme in question 2. Did you both place the characters in the same order? Why or why not? What evidence is there from the text to support your placement of the characters?

_____

_____

_____

Hold a four-corner debate

Have a four-corner class debate to develop your ideas and opinions about characters.

- In each corner of the room place a sign or card. The four cards should read: 'strongly agree', 'agree', 'disagree' and 'strongly disagree'.
- The teacher, or a student leader, makes a statement about a character. Students walk to the corner of the room that fits their opinion on the statement.
- Students then discuss their opinion with the other students in that corner, and identify evidence from the text to support their opinion.
- The four groups then argue their case, with evidence, in a whole-of-class discussion.

Below are some sample character statements.

e.g. Richard is the easiest character to sympathise with in *Go, Went, Gone*.

Merricat's actions in *We Have Always Lived in the Castle* are inexcusable.

Jane's biggest flaw in *Pride and Prejudice* is her reservedness.

In *The Memory Police*, R's memory gives him more freedom than the rest of the characters have.

Jack's grief in *Flames* makes him relatable.

Narrative structure

Narrative structure is the order in which stories are told, as well as the overall construction of the plot. Most novels are told in a **linear** way, with the earliest event happening first, and the most recent event happening last in the story. Some novels may include **flashbacks** or **flashforwards** or may shift back and forth through time. Often stories will follow a traditional narrative arc like the following.

4 Climax
The moment of greatest conflict in the story is when the main character faces a turning point, and/or comes face-to-face with their greatest challenge or fear.

3 Rising action
Conflict and tension increase, and the characters make important decisions or take significant action.

5 Falling action
Conflict and tension decrease as the characters experience the consequences of the climax.

2 Inciting incident
The first conflict or problem that occurs begins the story.

6 Resolution
The conflict of the story is dealt with or resolved. The main character achieves their goal (or not!).

1 Exposition
The introduction to the plot establishes the setting and characters.

e.g. Consider the narrative structure of *Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austen.

1 Exposition: The reader is introduced to the Bennet family, and the societal pressures the family faces.

2 Inciting incident: Netherfield Park has been rented by Mr Bingley, who arrives with his sisters and Mr Darcy.

3 Rising action: Mr Darcy proves himself to be unlikeable. Jane Bennet and Mr Bingley form an attachment. Mr Collins, a cousin, proposes to Elizabeth Bennet and is rejected. Mr Wickham becomes friendly with Elizabeth. Mr Bingley, his sisters and Mr Darcy leave Netherfield without warning. Mr Darcy proposes to Elizabeth and is rejected.

4 Climax: Elizabeth receives the news that Mr Wickham has run off with her younger sister, Lydia.

5 Falling action: Mr Darcy intervenes and ensures Wickham and Lydia are married.

6 Resolution: Mr Darcy and Elizabeth are married. Jane and Mr Bingley are married.

While you will not usually be required to write analytically about the narrative arc, understanding the development of the story enables you to identify what is most important both to the characters and to the author. In the example on the previous page, the climax reveals that the biggest threat to Elizabeth and the Bennet family is not financial difficulty, or spinsterhood, but the family's social ruin from the scandal of an unmarried daughter living with a man. Jane Austen's message, therefore, is not about the fulfilment of an individual's romantic ideals, but about notions of social responsibility and family loyalty.

If you are studying a collection of short stories, you might find that the stories do not follow a traditional narrative arc. Often, short stories do not have a typical beginning, middle and end, but offer a glimpse into a particular moment in a character's life.

In a short story collection there are sometimes connections between several or all of the stories. For example, in Alice Munro's collection *Runaway*, there are clear connections between the stories 'Chance', 'Soon' and 'Silence'. Munro allows the reader an insight into Juliet's life at various points, and by extension encourages the reader to imagine other characters from *Runaway* later in life, and the turning points and conflicts they might experience.

Map narrative arc

1   Map the narrative arc for the text you are studying.

Exposition: _____

Inciting incident: _____

Rising action: _____

Climax: _____

Falling action: _____

Resolution: _____

2   What does the climax of your text reveal about the characters? What does it reveal about the author's message?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Narrative voice and point of view

Novels and short stories are written in the **first-person**, **second-person** or **third-person voice**.

Stories told in the first person use the first-person pronoun 'I'.

e.g. *The Memory Police* by Yōko Ogawa is written in the first person: 'My mother died, and then my father died, and since then I have lived all alone in this house.'

Stories told in the second person use the second-person pronoun 'you'.

> The second-person voice is rarely used in imaginative writing.

Stories told in the third person use the third-person pronouns 'he', 'she' and 'they'.

e.g. Tessa Hadley's short story 'An Abduction' is written in the third person: 'In a way, she never assimilated the experience, though she didn't forget it either … Her early initiation stayed in a sealed compartment in her thoughts and seemed to have no effects, no consequences.'

Different narrative points of view achieve different effects. A first-person point of view creates a sense of intimacy with the reader, and can allow the reader more insight into the main character's thoughts and feelings. A third-person point of view usually creates more distance between the characters and the reader, but also can allow insight into the thoughts and feelings of a range of characters.

Explore narrative point of view

1 What is the narrative point of view for the text you are studying? _____

2 If you are studying a novel, does the narrative point of view shift or change throughout the story? If you are studying a collection of short stories, does the author use the same narrative point of view for all the stories, or does it change between stories?

_____

3 Why do you think the author has made these choices about narrative point of view?

_____

_____

Setting

The **setting** is where the story takes place. The setting includes the physical location of the story and the time period in which it happens. For example, the setting of Gabriel García Márquez's *Chronicle of a Death Foretold* is a small town on the coast of Colombia, in the 1950s.

The following table shows what certain settings might communicate about aspects of the text.

Type of setting	What it might tell you about the story or characters
An island	Characters are isolated from the world. They may feel trapped and/or become solitary.
An old house	Characters might be stuck in the past, or face challenges regarding memory or family. The story may have elements of suspense or the Gothic.
A nursing home	Characters are excluded from the rest of the community, and perhaps viewed as burdens, or as objects of pity. As an institution, a nursing home might have rules or protocols that are restrictive or unfair.

Each scene could also have a different setting, and when you are analysing your text you will need to think about how this contributes to the story.

Type of setting	What it might tell you about the story or characters
A small, crowded room	Characters might be limited in some way, or feel trapped.
A large, luxurious room	Perhaps the owner of the room has greater status or wealth than other characters. This might give them a sense of freedom or entitlement.
A kitchen	A domestic space such as a kitchen might suggest that the story focuses on family relationships or ordinary, everyday moments.
An overgrown garden	Characters might have access to the outside world but choose not to explore it. Characters could be wild or hostile.
An office	In a workplace, characters might hide their true selves.

Consider setting

1 Think about the text you are studying. What is the main setting of the text?

_____

2 What does it tell you about the story or the character?

e.g. The island setting of *The Memory Police* emphasises the isolation of the characters, and highlights their feelings of entrapment.

_____

3 Think about the key scenes in the text you are studying. Where are they set? What does that tell you about the story or character?

e.g. In Alice Munro's short story 'Runaway', Carla experiences a moment of crisis on a bus. The bus symbolises change, but while Carla believes she is 'taking charge of her own life' the passive nature of sitting on a bus suggests otherwise. Ultimately the only control she is able to exert is to get off the bus.

_____

_____

The author's purpose

When analysing a text, you should identify its overall message. One way to do this is to consider the way the text begins and ends.

e.g. The following beginning and ending sentences are from Gabriel García Márquez's novel *Chronicle of a Death Foretold*.

Beginning sentences	'On the day they were going to kill him, Santiago Nasar got up at five-thirty in the morning to wait for the boat the bishop was coming on. He'd dreamed he was going through a grove of timber trees where a gentle drizzle was falling, and for an instant he was happy in his dream, but when he awoke he felt completely spattered with bird shit.'	By concluding the novella with the event referred to in the opening lines, García Márquez comments on the inevitability of death. Both the beginning and ending sentences are centred in the everyday: the references to 'dirt' and 'bird shit' remind us of the ordinariness of death.
Ending sentences	'He stumbled on the last step, but got up at once. "He even took care to brush off the dirt that was stuck to his guts," my Aunt Wene told me. Then he went into his house through the back door that had been open since six and fell on his face in the kitchen.'	

What happens to certain characters can also reveal the message the author wants to convey. For example, characters who show qualities the author approves of might achieve happiness by the end of the text. By contrast, characters who display negative qualities might be punished in the text.

Consider the following questions to identify the author's main message.

- How does the text you are studying begin?
- How does it end?
- What has changed for the characters?
- What has changed in the world?
- What do you think the author wants readers to think after they have read the text?

Consider an author's purpose

1 Using the model above as a guide, complete the following table for your set text.

Beginning sentences	
Ending sentences	

2   What happens to the main character by the end of the text? Is the end of their story happy, sad or something in between?

_____

3   Identify a value that the author seems to approve of. What makes you think this?

_____

_____

4   Write a sentence summarising an important message conveyed by your text.

_____

5   Find a quote in your text that supports this message.

_____

Ideas, concerns and conflicts in novels and short stories

In the previous chapter, you learned how to identify ideas and values in a text. When you are studying novels and short stories, you will need to demonstrate your knowledge and understanding of these ideas and values by writing about them. Essay topics often require you to explore major ideas in a text, and to draw conclusions about an author's values.

When you are writing about ideas, it can be tempting to write sentences like this: 'In *Go, Went, Gone* the idea of loss is explored through the character of Rashid.' Your writing will be more analytical if you begin your sentence with the idea word. For example, 'Loss shapes Rashid's perspective and decision-making in *Go, Went, Gone*.' You can use sentence starters like the ones below to analyse the key ideas in the text you are studying.

- Throughout the text, … [idea] is revealed through the actions of … [character name], suggesting that …

- The author emphasises society's concern with … [idea] through … [element of text, such as plot or character detail]

- … [key idea] motivates … [character name] to …

- … [key idea] challenges the characters in the texts due to … [social, historical or cultural values that create challenge]

- … [idea] is emphasised through the use of … [literary technique] when … [particular moment or event in the plot]

- The author underscores the significance of … [idea] in the scene where …

- Although the characters in the text seek to understand/celebrate/avoid/dismiss [choose one] the impact of … [idea] in their lives, ultimately …

Write about ideas

1 Use a table like the one below to brainstorm the key ideas or themes in the novel or collection of short stories you are writing about. In the evidence column, include quotes, events or other examples from the text that support your understanding of this idea.

Key idea	Evidence

2 Use the sentence starters on page 25 to write three sentences about ideas in your text.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Values in novels and short stories

Values are the beliefs or morals that are regarded as important by a character or group in the text. **Explicit values** are directly stated in the text. **Implied values** can be suggested through the actions and words of the characters, or through the author's use of symbolism and imagery. To analyse the values in a novel or short story, you will need to identify what the author wants the audience to think about the world of the text.

Here are some sentences that analyse explicit and implied values.

• Jane Austen, through her use of humour, criticises the unrealistic expectations that society, and particularly male society, places upon women.

• The short story depicts women's lack of agency and encourages the audience to challenge the social structures that cause this.

• Ogawa endorses the narrator's courage throughout the novel, highlighting the worth of taking action even when it might seem futile.

• The fence surrounding the Blackwoods' land in _We Have Always Lived in the Castle_ divides the family from the village, and is a physical symbol of the Blackwoods' dismissal of values such as community and equality.

The word bank below provides some vocabulary for writing about values.

Writing about values	Writing about values the author supports	Writing about values the author does not support	Writing about how an audience is positioned to respond
attitude	advocates	challenges	elicits
belief	affirms	condemns	encourages
ideology	celebrates	criticises	evokes
moral	champions	disapproves	fosters
principle	endorses	dismisses	generates
quality	promotes	indicts	incites
view	sanctions	questions	prompts
world view	upholds	rejects	provokes

The vocabulary in this table can also be used for writing about values in other types of text, such as plays and films.

Writing about values

1 What are the explicit and implied values in the novel or short story you are studying?

_____

2 Which characters uphold or reject these values?

_____

3 What might the author want their audience to think about these values?

_____

_____

4 Are there any social values in the text you are studying that are different from social values in your own context? For example, are characters concerned about being seen in a particular way that you would not be concerned about?

_____

_____

_____

5 Which of the author's words convey that they endorse or condemn certain values?

_____

_____

Writing about novels and short stories

Below are some guidelines for writing analytically about novels and short stories.

- Demonstrate that you know the text well by including a wide range of evidence from across the whole text. Refer to minor characters as well as major characters, and to less obviously significant events and situations as well as obvious ones.

- Every paragraph of your text response should include at least one quote from the text, as well as an analysis of *how* this quote supports your interpretation of the text.

- Refer to the ideas, concerns and tensions in the text, and what the writer aims to communicate about these. What are the values that are endorsed (approved of) or condemned by the text? How do you know?

- Comment on the setting(s) and context(s) of the text, and how these affect the characters' attitudes and choices.

When writing about a collection of short stories, keep in mind the following.

- Refer to only three or four stories, and discuss these in some depth.

- Make clear which story you are referring to as you discuss particular characters, events and quotations.

- Don't skip back and forth between stories within a paragraph. Make a clear point, in some detail, about a particular story, then introduce supporting evidence from other stories.

- Consider the differences as well as the similarities between stories. For example, why do characters in different stories make contrasting choices or respond differently to conflict? What might the author be suggesting about how circumstances shape a person's nature and decisions?

Analysing film

While films share similarities with other types of text – for instance, they include characters, plot and themes – some features are specific to this medium. Films combine audio and visual features to present a narrative, and any analysis needs to look closely at these elements.

Many elements work together to make a film and contribute to its overall style and appearance. These can generally be divided into four main groups:

- mise en scène
- cinematography
- sound design
- editing.

This chapter looks at each of these elements and explores the different components that fall into each category.

Mise en scène

The French term **mise en scène** ('putting on stage') refers to everything that can be seen on screen (or, for theatre, onstage) and how it is arranged in the frame. It includes set design, lighting, costumes, and acting and movement: all the visual elements of a scene and how they relate to one another.

Set design

Set design includes the setting of the film (where the action takes place, indoors or outside) and the objects within a scene, which are called **props**. While the setting provides information about when and where the events of the film take place, the set design can also communicate information about how characters feel or their mental state.

e.g. Consider the following **still** (single frame of a film) from *Sunset Boulevard* directed by Billy Wilder, which depicts the interior of Norma Desmond's house.

Peeling paint on the brickwork suggests disrepair and ageing.

Organ adds to the Gothic atmosphere of the room.

The room has too much furniture, of different styles. This could suggest that items were bought as status symbols or memorabilia, rather than for practical reasons.
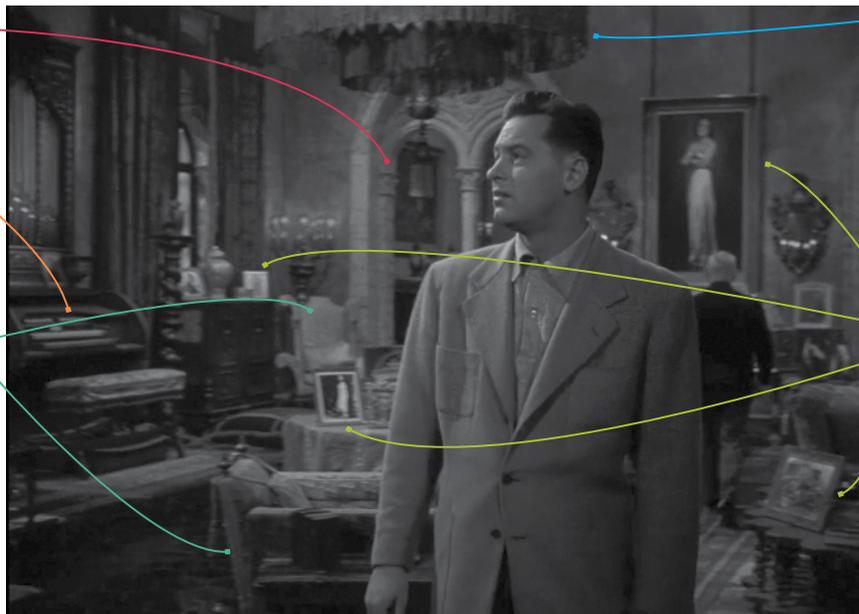
The heavy, low chandelier makes the room appear small and claustrophobic, giving the sense that Joe Gillis is trapped.

The room is filled with photographs and paintings of Norma Desmond, highlighting her obsession with her past glory as a film star. They all show Norma as a young woman, highlighting the loss of youth.

(Alamy)

Lighting

The way that light and darkness are used in a film can have a significant effect on the audience's interpretation of what appears on the screen. The intensity, direction and quality of **lighting** can create emphasis, mystery and suspense, or a particular mood.

Standard lighting is called **three-point lighting**. This helps to illuminate the subject of the shot, while also avoiding shadows. See the description in the illustration below.

THREE-POINT LIGHTING

Back light / hair light
- lights an actor or object from behind
- placed higher than the object it is lighting
- separates the actor or object from the background
- when placed at an angle it is called a **kicker**

Fill light
- cancels out the shadows created by the key light; doesn't create its own shadows
- less powerful than the key light
- placed opposite the key light

Key light
- primary light source of the scene
- the most intense and direct light source
- illuminates the subject or actor

Camera

nofilmschool

High-key lighting minimises shadows and creates bright images. This type of lighting is often used to create an upbeat mood and to suggest the openness and honesty of characters. Lighthearted, optimistic films such as romances, comedies and musicals frequently feature this type of lighting.

Low-key lighting emphasises shadows, darkness and contrast. This can help to create an atmosphere of mystery or danger, as it implies that there may be something sinister hiding in the shadows, or it could suggest that a character has something to hide. This lighting style is often seen in dramatic films that focus on suspense, mystery or horror.

Directors may also employ colour in film lighting. Warmer tones such as yellows and reds often suggest a happier mood, whereas colours such as blue and green can suggest coldness or sterility. In the early days of movie-making, black and white was the only option, but modern directors still sometimes choose to make a film in black and white, to make use of the dramatic effects of contrast and shadows or to portray a particular period or atmosphere.

e.g. Consider the contrast in lighting in the two stills below. The one on the left is from *Sunset Boulevard*, a film noir set mostly indoors. (Film noir is a genre of film associated with the 1940s. Noir films are black and white and often focused on exploring darker aspects of human nature.) On the right is a still from *High Ground*, directed by Stephen Johnson, which is set in outback Australia.

(Alamy)

Costume

Costume refers to the characters' clothes and accessories. Costumes can be used to convey information about a character or to illustrate connections between characters. For instance, shared colours might signify allegiances. A character's costume may change subtly over the course of a film, illustrating their development.

e.g. In *Sunset Boulevard*, Betty Schaefer is presented as the opposite of ageing actress Norma Desmond. Her costuming is simple, even when she is dressed up for a New Year's Eve party, with few accessories and minimal make-up. This presents her as fresh-faced and innocent, in contrast to Norma's heavy make-up and carefully selected, dramatic outfits.

(Alamy)

Acting

Most of the time, **acting** is something that shouldn't be noticeable to the audience, as actors typically aim for a naturalistic style. Sometimes, however, actors might act in an exaggerated or stylised manner to convey elements of their character. Acting has become more naturalistic over time, so if you are studying an older film you might find that performances are more affected or 'showy' than in modern films.

e.g. On first viewing, Gloria Swanson's acting in *Sunset Boulevard* might seem very strange – but this is deliberate. She is playing a character who was a star of silent films, when actors had to tell the story only through their face and gestures, as there was no dialogue or sound to help them. Because her character is trapped in the past, she still uses these exaggerated expressions.

(Alamy)

In addition to the way that the actors perform, you also need to consider their positioning on screen and how they interact. This can also be used to communicate information about relationships and the power dynamics between characters.

e.g. This shot from *High Ground* illustrates the elements of mise en scène. The positioning of the characters, with the group of First Nations people on the left and police officer Travis on the right, symbolises the distance between them. However, Travis is depicted in fairly close proximity to the others, rather than entirely separate, which reflects the respect and sympathy he has for them. The costuming also reinforces the differences between Travis and the other characters, with the minimal clothing worn by the First Nations characters emphasising their connection with the natural world. By contrast, Travis is fully clothed and seated on a horse, showing his connection to white authority.

(Alamy)

Analyse a still shot

1 Choose a single still from the film that you are studying, analyse it in detail and make notes about the elements of the mise en scène in a table like the one below.

Element	Description	What it tells the audience
Set design		
Lighting		
Costume		
Acting		

2 Write a paragraph analysing how these elements of mise en scène work together to convey the film's key ideas, concerns and tensions.

Cinematography

Cinematography is the word used to describe the art of film photography. The cinematographer is the person who sets up the camera shots to be used, which dictate how the story is told.

The elements of cinematography mainly fall into three categories: **camera distance**, **camera angle** and **camera movement**.

Camera distance		
Extreme long shot		Also called an 'establishing shot', this is often used to introduce the setting of a scene. It can also depict a character's relationship with their environment, making them appear small and insignificant.
Long shot		Characters' whole bodies are shown, and scenery and background are included in the shot. Helps establish setting and relationships between characters through their body language.
Medium shot		Characters are shown from the waist up. This is one of the most common shots. It provides context and detail in the same shot, allowing focus on the main subject of the shot while also showing what is happening around them.

Close-up		Shows the subject in detail – for example, it may just show a character's face or hands. Used to highlight something important or to emphasise a character's emotions through their facial expressions.
Extreme close-up		Focuses on something very specific. Used to show extreme emotion, or to highlight a detail (for example, a car numberplate) that is relevant to the plot.
Aerial shot		A shot taken from the air. Can also be called a 'bird's-eye view', as it shows things from above, the way a bird would see things. Often used to provide a sense of scale.
Camera angle		
Eye-level shot		The camera is at eye level with the characters on screen. Often used when characters are talking, to place the audience in the conversation.
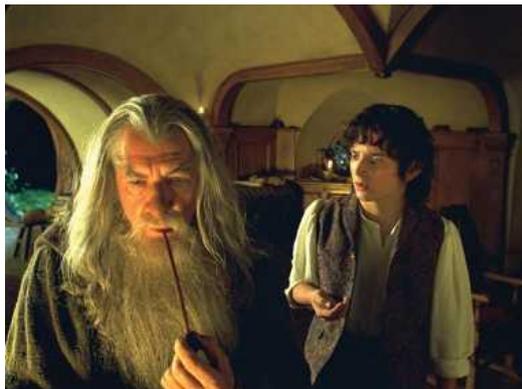
High-angle shot		The camera looks down on the subject. This positions the subject to look small and vulnerable. Can be used to indicate a character who is weak or at risk.
Low-angle shot		The camera looks up at the subject. This makes the subject appear bigger and more powerful. Can be used to present a character as dominant or threatening.
Tilt shot		In a tilt shot, also known as a 'Dutch angle shot', the camera is tilted to one side. This can create a sense of disorientation or suggest the character's mental instability or confusion.
Overhead shot		The camera is placed directly above the subject, looking down. Can be used to give a sense of scale when depicting setting, to indicate power or dominance, or to give context to a scene.
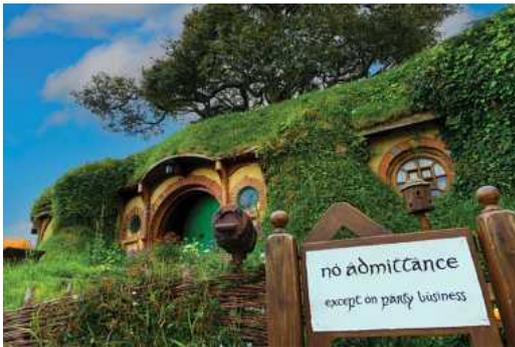
Camera movement		
Static shot		The camera doesn't move. Often used to enable the audience to focus on the actor's performance and dialogue.
Zoom shot		The focus of the camera moves in or out, getting closer to or further away from the focal point of the shot.
Panning shot		The camera remains in position, but rotates horizontally to the side. Can be used to follow action.

Camera tilt		Similar to panning, but the camera rotates vertically. Can be used to illustrate scale, e.g. a very tall building, or a steep drop.
Tracking shot		The camera moves with the subject of the shot. Can create a sense of momentum and help the viewer feel a part of the action.
Point-of-view shot		The camera functions as the eyes of a character, so the audience sees what the character is seeing.

Analyse film shots

1 Try to find an example of each of the shots listed on pages 34–8 in your film text. Write a sentence about each, analysing its impact on the viewer.

2 Compare your answers with a partner. Did either of you find shots that the other didn't?

Sound design

The **sound design** of a film includes all the audio components of the text: dialogue, sound effects, music, and any other sound elements such as voice-overs. The sound of a film can be divided into two categories.

Diegetic sound is sound that exists in the world of the film. This includes things – such as dialogue, footsteps, creaking floorboards, and music on a radio or stereo – that the characters can hear and experience.

Non-diegetic sound is sound that is not present in the world of the film. Voice-overs, the musical score, and anything else that the audience hears but the characters do not is described as non-diegetic sound.

Sound plays an important role in shaping the atmosphere and mood of a film. This is particularly true of the music used within a film. When analysing a film text, consider the following questions.

- **Is the music fast or slow?** Fast music is often used to create suspense or excitement, whereas slower music may be used to convey a sense of calm.

- **Is a piece of music repeated throughout the film?** Filmmakers often use a theme or motif to represent a character. The theme might change in tone over the course of the film as the character develops.

- **How does the music make you feel?** Sometimes filmmakers use discordant sound (sounds that do not fit together or that sound unpleasant) to create a sense of unease or tension.

- **Is there any sound?** Don't forget about silence! The absence of sound can be just as effective in creating atmosphere or tension as music or sound effects. For example, if a character needs to keep quiet while hiding from someone threatening, silence can increase the suspense.

Editing

Editing is the selecting and joining together of shots in order to make a sequence. Like many film techniques, editing is not something that viewers are usually aware of, but it plays an important role in shaping how the audience responds.

- **Montages** consist of many shots shown in quick succession. They are often used to condense time or information, or to introduce characters or the world of the film. Montages are often set to music.

- **Crosscuts** are used to show two or more stories that are running concurrently. The action jumps between the different locations and storylines, giving the impression that the events are happening at the same time. This is also known as parallel action.

- **Jump cuts** indicate a break in the smooth flow of the action. This usually occurs when there are small jumps in time, while the camera position or action doesn't differ much. Jump cuts may be used to show a character under the influence of drugs or alcohol, or experiencing confusion.

- **Fades and dissolves** create transitions from one scene to another. In a fade, the image either gradually appears (fades in) from a blank screen or fades out to a blank screen. In a dissolve, the image from one scene blends into the next. This is often used to indicate the passage of time.

Film style and genre

When analysing film, it is also important to consider the style and genre of the film. These two separate aspects can both provide clues to help audiences interpret a film.

- **Film style** relates to the way a movie is filmed, and the technical elements that are used in its construction. The different components of mise en scène, cinematography, sound design and editing described above all contribute to the film style. Some examples of film styles include classical Hollywood narrative, German expressionist and arthouse.

- **Film genre** relates to the category of the film, in terms of its narrative focus, tone or themes. Films in the same genre are likely to have similarities in their content or ideas. Some common genres include comedy, action, thriller, horror and science fiction ('sci-fi').

If a film is categorised in a particular genre, audiences often have specific expectations about what it will offer. For example, audiences generally expect a romance film to have a happy ending. Filmmakers may either meet these expectations or subvert them.

Narrative structure and viewpoint

Many films follow a similar narrative structure to other texts, such as novels or short stories, with an exposition, inciting incident, rising action, climax, falling action and resolution. Most films have a linear narrative (the action occurs chronologically), and the issues and conflicts are resolved by the film's end. However, some films employ alternative narrative devices to create more interest, increase tension or convey particular meanings.

- **Flashbacks** can show events that are relevant to the plot but occurred earlier, outside the timeline of the film (before the main action starts).

- **Reverse chronological timelines** present the action in reverse: the story starts at the end and works backwards.

- A **circular narrative** starts with the action that takes place at the end of the story, then jumps back to an earlier point in time and moves forward from there to the point at which the film began. This allows the audience to see the outcome first and to judge the characters while already knowing their fate.

- **Multiple perspectives** tell the same story from the perspective of different characters. This allows the audience to see things from different points of view and make a judgement about what happens.

Classical Hollywood narrative structure

The narrative structure of Hollywood movies, particularly in the first half of the 20th century, tended to follow a predictable formula. This is known as the **classical Hollywood narrative structure**, and it is still prevalent in many films today. However, today's audiences are far more film-literate and therefore more accepting of unconventional approaches.

The classical Hollywood narrative typically uses the following structure.

- There is a clear main character (usually male) who is the protagonist of the film. Their behaviour drives the action.

- The protagonist has a goal that they must achieve. Often the plot will require them to achieve two goals – one romantic and one other sort of goal – which usually become intertwined, creating the conflict in the film that must be resolved.

- There will be obstacles that prevent the protagonist achieving their goal(s).

- The protagonist must change in some way, in order to resolve the conflict, overcome the obstacles and achieve their goals.

- In the resolution, the protagonist overcomes the obstacles and achieves their goal(s). Alternatively, but less commonly, the protagonist fails to achieve their goal(s). Regardless of the outcome, there is a clear resolution and a sense of closure, providing a satisfying ending.

A classical Hollywood narrative film may employ a **deadline structure**, meaning that the protagonist must achieve their goal within a particular time frame. This helps to create suspense and tension as the audience knows that the protagonist's time is limited. For example, they might have a limited time to find and defuse a bomb before it explodes, or their love interest might be due to move to another city on a specific date.

Writing about film

The following advice will help you to write analytically about your film text. For almost any type of text that you study, you will need to discuss character, plot and theme; what makes film unique is the additional combination of audio and visual features.

- Ensure you **explain how the technical elements of the text have been used to create meaning**. It is not enough to simply identify film techniques that are used – you need to explain how they are intended to influence the audience's feelings about certain events or characters.

- Remember that everything within a film is constructed, and has been placed there by a director to contribute to the film as a whole. You should therefore **refer regularly to the director by name** in your analysis.

- **Use appropriate metalanguage** (presented in bold and in the tables throughout this chapter) to discuss the technical aspects of the text.

- **Include specific details** in your analysis, drawing on key scenes relevant to the topic you are writing about. Refer to aspects such as costumes, lighting, camera angles and acting style, focusing on how these elements are used to communicate ideas.

Write about film

1 Complete the following sentences about your film.

a A crisis point occurs when _____

The director heightens the impact of this scene by _____

_____

b The structure of the film is _____ This helps to communicate a key

idea by _____

c An important setting in the film is _____ [name/type of setting]

This setting is presented as _____ [description of atmosphere/

mood of setting] This is done by _____

_____ [film techniques used to convey this]

d The main character in the film is _____ [name of character] They

are presented as _____

[type of person / character traits], which is demonstrated by _____

_____

[description of their appearance, clothing, acting style or other elements that contribute

to characterisation]

2 a Create a topic on your film by filling in the blanks in the following topic template.

Topic: How does _____ [title of film] explore the importance of

_____ [key idea] in the lives of the characters?

b Create a brief plan for an analytical essay in response to the topic by making notes

below.

Contention: _____

Focus of body paragraph 1: _____

Supporting evidence: _____

Focus of body paragraph 2: _____

Supporting evidence: _____

Focus of body paragraph 3: _____

Supporting evidence: _____

Scan the code or click here to see a video analysis of the opening scene of
Sunset Boulevard.
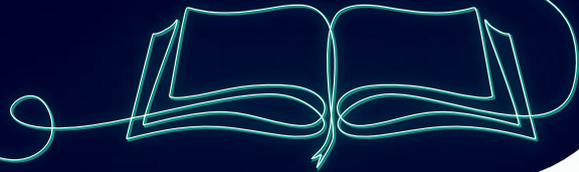
Analysing drama

In this chapter you will learn how to analyse **drama**. Most plays are written to be performed live, in a theatre. Throughout history, playwrights have written dramatic works to challenge assumptions, promote particular ideas and entertain audiences. While it is necessary to be familiar with the written **script**, you should aim to attend a live production of your set text if possible.

Drama can include similar features to novels and short stories. You can find further information on characters, setting and narrative structure in Chapter 2.

Types of drama

The features and conventions of drama have changed throughout history. The play that you are studying will probably belong to one of the following categories. The category a play belongs to will have an impact on how it is structured, as well as on the ideas and themes it explores.

Ancient Greek theatre

Ancient Greek theatre was an integral part of Greek culture, and was performed widely from 700 BCE. It was not only a form of entertainment, but also a way to educate people and express important cultural values. Euripides and Sophocles are two of the most famous playwrights from this period, and their plays are still performed widely today.

> While comedy was also an important form of Greek theatre, the plays you will study belong to the tragedy genre.

Masks were an integral aspect of ancient Greek theatre, worn both by main actors and members of the Chorus. The masked Chorus, who would sing and dance in unison, often represented the voice of the community.

The table below shows the main structural elements of Greek tragedy.

Structural element	Explanation
Prologue	This introduction to the tragedy's topic is usually given by one or two characters before others enter. The topic would usually have been familiar to the audience (e.g. many plays retold well-known Greek myths).
Parados	The Chorus enters the stage and provides the audience with background information.
Episode	Greek tragedies are split into multiple episodes, during which most of the events of the plot occur. Action and violence are implied to be happening offstage and are reported to the audience through dialogue.
Stasimon	The Chorus comments on the action between each episode.
Exodos	This final commentary from the Chorus expresses the message of the tragedy.

Dramatic irony

Ancient Greek tragedies often retell famous myths that were familiar to the contemporary Athenian audience (people from Athens). The audience could predict the major plot points in the story. This allowed playwrights to create **dramatic irony**. Dramatic irony is created when the audience knows something that the characters in the play do not know. This produces suspense, because the audience understands the situation while the characters are oblivious to it. The Chorus often plays a role in emphasising the dramatic irony.

Homer was a Greek poet whose two epic poems serve as the inspiration for much of Greek literature.

Elizabethan theatre

Thanks in part to Queen Elizabeth I, theatre blossomed in late-16th-century London. **Elizabethan theatre** was popular with people from all parts of society. William Shakespeare was one of the most famous playwrights during this period, and it is still common for students to study at least one of his plays during their schooling in Australia today.

William Shakespeare is considered one of the greatest playwrights in the history of literature.

The table below shows the five-act structure commonly used in Elizabethan plays.

Act	Explanation
Act I: Exposition	During the exposition, the protagonist, the world of the text, thematic concerns and the play's central problem are all introduced.
Act II: Rising action	The problem introduced in Act I is complicated by additional challenges.
Act III: Climax	This turning point for the protagonist may change their course for better or worse.
Act IV: Falling action	This final moment of suspense creates some doubt about the final outcome.
Act V: Resolution	At the conclusion of the narrative, all the conflict is resolved.

Act numbers were traditionally written in Roman numerals. In Roman numerals, I = 1, IV = 4, V = 5). Scene numbers were in small Roman numerals (i, v etc). This convention still continues although Arabic numbers are also often used today.

Modern theatre

Today, modern theatre can incorporate various forms of technology and give a voice to diverse groups of people. The use of lighting, sound and projections expands playwrights' capacities to tell stories and build the world of the text.

Technology is an important feature of modern dramatic productions.

- **Lighting** serves multiple purposes in dramatic productions. Brightness or dimness can alter the mood of the scene. Additionally, lighting is often used to indicate a transition between scenes. When the lights go down, it indicates a scene has ended. When the lights come up, it can indicate the beginning of a new scene, sometimes in a new location.

- **Music** is used together with lighting to alter the mood of a scene and sometimes to communicate information about setting, characters, ideas and plot.

- **Sound effects** can be prerecorded and played during a production. For example, the playwright might communicate that a storm is raging through the sounds of rain, wind and thunder.

- **Projections** can be used to show people, places or events that are not present on stage; for example, the visual projections of the floodwaters rising in *Rainbow's End*.

Identify elements of dramatic structure

1 What is the central problem in the play you are studying? How does the playwright introduce this problem?

_____

_____

2 Identify three challenges encountered by the protagonist(s) in the play.

_____

_____

3 When does the narrative reach its climax? How does the playwright develop the tension in this moment?

_____

_____

4 How is the problem resolved at the end of the play?

_____

_____

Acting

In dramatic productions, **actors** progress the story and create meaning through their **monologues** (individual speeches) and **dialogue** (speech between two or more actors). Most of the play's script usually consists of actors' spoken lines, presented alongside their name. **Stage directions** (usually in brackets and/or italics) are included in the script to provide guidance outside the spoken lines.

e.g. The following dialogue comes from Jane Harrison's play *Rainbow's End*.

ERROL: [*demanding*] Hang on. Are you saying you'd rather live in a humpy by the river? When I'm promising you the world?

DOLLY: Your world. And you're just assuming that your world is better. But actually, when I think about it … I'm not so sure it is better … And as far as what you're offering … no thank you. This is my place. I'm staying right here with my mum and my nan.

Dolly and Errol discuss their future in a dialogue from *Rainbow's End*. (Robert Catto)

In this dialogue, Errol is trying to convince Dolly to move to Melbourne with him. However, Dolly identifies and condemns Errol's prejudices against her home. Notice that the script includes a stage direction for Errol to be '*demanding*'. This provides the actor with instructions to guide his tone, gestures and demeanour.

Directors and actors convey information about characters in many ways.

- **Costumes** can reflect important characteristics. In *Much Ado About Nothing*, the characters Don John and Don Pedro are brothers. However, they might be costumed in different colours to symbolise that Don John is the villain and Don Pedro is the war hero. Scripts often include character descriptions, and some elements of costume might be specified in stage directions or dialogue.

➡ • **Monologues** can provide important information about characters, giving them the opportunity to speak, uninterrupted, for a long time. The term **soliloquy** is used when a character speaks their thoughts aloud, with the implication that they cannot be heard by anyone else.

• **Props** are items used by characters in the action of the play. In *Rainbow's End*, the volumes of the *Encyclopedia Britannica* serve many functions. Initially they symbolise the knowledge that the family on the flats wishes to attain. Later in the play, they represent the family's loss as a result of the flood.

• **Minor characters** are often used in plays to deliver important plot information. For example, **messengers** are used extensively in Greek theatre to drive action. Minor characters can also be used to emphasise and support key ideas. For example, Conrad's failed support of Don John serves to emphasise the criticism of deception in *Much Ado About Nothing*.

Drama often includes elaborate costumes to build the world of the text and reflect characters' personalities. The photo on the left is from a traditional production of Shakespeare's *Much Ado About Nothing*, performed at the Regent's Park Open Air Theatre, London in 2009. The photo on the right shows David Tennant as Benedick and Catherine Tate as Beatrice in a modernised production of the play at Wyndham's Theatre, London in 2011. (Alamy)

Consider characterisation in drama

1 Select one of the **main characters** from your set text and complete the questions below.

a What does the character look like? If there is no description of the character's appearance, refer to popular productions or adaptations to see how different directors have chosen to depict the character. Make reference to the character's costume, as well as any props they are associated with.

_____

_____

_____

_____

b What are the character's most important lines? What do these reveal about the character's motivations?

_____

_____

_____

c What are the most important events involving this character? What is their role in these events? What key decisions and choices do they make?

_____

_____

_____

_____

d What do other characters in the play think about the selected character? What does this suggest about this main character?

_____

_____

_____

2 Select one of the **minor characters** from your set text and answer the following questions.

a What is this minor character's role in the play? How is this character costumed? How do they move, speak and behave?

_____

_____

_____

_____

b Which of the text's themes or ideas does the role support? How does the character do this?

_____

_____

_____

Setting

Dramatic productions use backdrops, sets and technology to reflect the setting of the narrative. The script of a play includes notes or stage directions to describe the setting of the entire play or a specific scene.

- The **backdrop** of a play refers to a two-dimensional painted surface (often made of cloth) that depicts the setting.

- The **set** refers to all of the objects and features used to create the setting on the stage.

- Technologies used to establish the setting in modern drama include **lighting** and **projections**.

Playwrights often limit the number of locations in a play, for practical reasons, to reduce the need for set changes. Therefore, the locations they choose serve functional and sometimes symbolic purposes.

e.g In *Rainbow's End*, the following description of a setting provides information about the plot (the flood), characters (Nan and Gladys live humbly) and key ideas (poverty can cause suffering but also builds resilience).

The song 'Que Sera, Sera' is heard. It's late spring, late afternoon and gloomy outside. Inside their humpy NAN DEAR and GLADYS are rebuilding after a flood has devastated their home. Everything below three feet is sodden and mud-splattered. GLADYS mops, wrings out and removes things that are destroyed. NAN finishes hanging a piece of hessian to replace a ruined piece that lined the interior walls. Now she covers the hessian with pages from a magazine.

Consider setting

1 Locate a description of an important setting, whether in stage directions or the dialogue.

   e.g *Oedipus the King*: The royal house of Thebes. Double doors dominate the façade; a stone altar stands at the centre of the stage.

   _____

2 What is the relationship between the set and the characters? Do the locations empower some characters more than others?

   _____

   _____

3 Are there any significant objects on stage that have a symbolic meaning? Explain their significance.

   _____

   _____

Writing about drama

When writing about drama, it is important to use multiple kinds of evidence to support your interpretation. This evidence should include:

- short, direct quotations of spoken text and stage directions; for example: 'Is not marriage honourable in a beggar?' (*Much Ado About Nothing*)

- reference to major events from the play; for example: 'Tiresias reveals that Oedipus murdered Laius' (*Oedipus the King*)

- descriptions of characters, including character development; for example: 'Gladys develops her confidence and finds her voice' (*Rainbow's End*)

- references to setting, including its impact on characters; for example: 'When Gladys visits the Bank Manager in his office, the power he holds over her is apparent' (*Rainbow's End*)

- the use of metalanguage appropriate to drama; for example: 'Sophocles uses the Chorus to reflect the views of the male elders of Thebes' (*Oedipus the King*).

> One of the distinguishing features of drama is that it is intended to be performed live. Therefore, it is important to discuss the stage directions and how these affect the audience's understanding of characters, ideas and values.

Work with metalanguage

1 Consider the vocabulary below, circling metalanguage relevant to your set text.

act	dialogue	lighting	prologue	silence
aside	disguise	monologue	prop	soliloquy
audience	dramatic irony	music	scene	sound effects
Chorus	episode	playwright	script	stage directions
costume	imagery	projection	set	symbolism

2 Choose two of the terms you circled and write a sentence about the way each of these features is used in your play.

_____

3 Use the following sentence starters to incorporate discussion of these dramatic features.

a When _____
[summarise plot point], the playwright uses _____ [metalanguage term] This reflects _____
_____ [explain the point]

b The playwright's use of _____ [metalanguage term] emphasises
_____
[explain the point] This is prominent in the scene when _____
_____ [summarise plot point]

Analysing nonfiction

Nonfiction refers to texts that are true, or are supposed to be. Common nonfiction text types include biography, autobiography, memoir, travel writing and essay. Although nonfiction texts are based on fact, authors can still use creative techniques and choose how to present their subject or topic.

Selection and presentation of facts

The author of a nonfiction text will make careful choices about what material to include in or omit from the text, and how it will be presented. When they make these choices they will be thinking about their particular **purpose** or intention and the effect on their audience. For example, their main purpose might be to present a favourable or unfavourable impression of the subject, to inform readers about a topic, to provoke discussion about an important issue, to capture the mood of a particular time and place, or to share insights they have gained from specific experiences.

Thinking about the writer's main purpose will help you to identify how they have shaped their text to have particular effects on their target audience. These are some questions to consider when analysing a nonfiction text.

- What is the writer's **connection** to the subject or topic of the text? If you are studying an autobiography or memoir, the connection is obvious, as the subject is the person who wrote it. But for some texts the connection will not be so clear. If your text is a biography, does the writer know the subject personally? If the text is about a topic or issue, does the writer have particular expertise in this area? Does the writer have anything to gain or lose by presenting people or situations in a certain way?

- Which **narrative voice** is used? Is the text narrated in the first or the third person? Why might the writer have made this choice?

- Does the narrator of the text aim to be **objective**, presenting facts rather than opinion? Or do they openly convey their emotions and attitudes towards the subject or topic?

- What do the writer's **language choices** reveal about their attitude towards the subject or topic? Is their vocabulary mostly positive, mostly negative or mostly neutral? Do they use lyrical language to paint a vivid picture of a person or place, or is the tone mainly dry and factual, to give an impression of objectivity?

- In what **order** are events presented? For example, rather than being chronological from the subject's birth to the present, a memoir might begin with a key moment in the subject's life then return to their childhood to trace the steps that led to that moment, focusing on important influences in their life along the way.

- Have any important events or situations been **omitted**? Why might the writer have chosen to do this? For instance, an account of a real-life crime might not include a detailed description of the crime itself, focusing instead on the aftermath and the impact on the victim in order to generate sympathy for them.

- Whose **perspectives** are included in the text? Whose might be excluded? How does this position the reader to view the subject or topic?

Additional writers and supplementary material

Some autobiographical texts are written by a **ghostwriter** or with the help of a **co-writer**. Ghostwriters and co-writers assist the subject of a text to tell their story. While co-writers' names usually appear on the cover of the book, ghostwriters are not credited.

Supplementary material also influences the audience's understanding of the subject and events in a nonfiction text. Resources such as photographs and maps can help the reader to visualise people and places, and perhaps increase their empathy for the subject. Forewords, postscripts, interview transcripts and reports can provide important information about the historical, social and cultural context, and enrich the reader's understanding of the subject or topic. This supplementary material should be considered part of the text and can be taken into account in your analysis.

Context and values

The **context of production** (see page 6) will have a significant effect on the messages that a nonfiction text conveys about ideas and values connected to the subject or topic. For example, Trevor Noah's memoir *Born a Crime* takes its title from the existence of a law in South Africa at the time of Noah's birth that prevented Europeans and non-Europeans (white and non-white people) from marrying each other or having children together. The title implicitly criticises the attitudes that led to this law which, in effect, meant that the existence of a baby from such a union was a criminal offence. The memoir explores the impact that racism had on Noah, his family and South Africa in general, conveying the message that racist attitudes are destructive and illogical.

The **narrative conclusion** of a nonfiction text will leave the reader with a particular impression of the subject or topic and an overall message about an important idea or ideas explored in the text. Although their conclusion should be based on fact, the writer can choose the point at which they will end the text and the material they will conclude it with, in order to create a particular effect on the reader.

Understand your text

1   What type of nonfiction text are you studying?

   _____

2   Who or what is the main focus of your text?

   _____

3   Who is the narrator of the text? Is the narrator the same person as the subject of the
   text, or someone else?

   _____

4   Search the internet, borrow books from the library, listen to podcasts or interviews
   and/or read magazines or newspaper articles about the subject or topic that your text
   is about. Finding out more about the text's subject or focus will help you to form an
   opinion about whether your text is mostly objective (neutral, sticking to the facts) or
   subjective (taking a particular angle – positive or negative – on the subject), as well as
   to understand more about the text's context. Make notes in your workbook under the
   following headings.

Context of production (when the text was created)	Context of the subject/topic (period and circumstances the text is set in)	Author's connection to the subject/topic	Information, events or perspectives emphasised	Information, events or perspectives left out

5   Identify one important message the writer of the text aims to convey to the reader
   about the subject/topic of the text.

   _____

   _____

6   Identify one quotation and one other piece of evidence from the text (such as a key
   event, an aspect of character development, or the ending) to support your response to
   question 5.

   _____

   _____

7   Working in small groups, conduct an imaginary interview with the subject or a
   significant person in your text. Choose one person to play the part of this subject.
   The other people in your group should take it in turns to ask the subject interesting
   questions focused on their thoughts, feelings, choices, beliefs and values. The subject's
   responses should be as detailed and thoughtful as possible.

Writing about nonfiction

Although nonfiction texts are intended to be factual, your response to them still needs to analyse the ways in which the writer has presented people and events in order to create particular effects and convey certain messages. When writing about nonfiction texts, keep in mind the following.

- Refer to the people in the text as **subjects** rather than characters.

- Identify the writer's **main purpose** in writing the text. What ideas do they seem especially interested in? What do they think is important about the subject or topic? How do you know?

- Think about the impact of the way that the writer has **structured the text**. How does this create tension, suspense, intrigue, humour or interest? Which events or situations are emphasised and what is omitted or downplayed? Why?

- Consider the **impact of context** not only on the author and the reader, but on the individuals in the text. How does it shape their personality and values? How does it limit or encourage particular choices or decisions?

- Reflect on any **additional material** in the text, apart from the main narrative. What do photographs communicate about the subject? What extra information is provided by forewords or appendices?

Write about nonfiction

1 Write two or three sentences summarising the writer's message about a main idea, concern or tension in your text.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

2 a If your text is a single narrative, identify three key events or moments. For each, explain what you learned from this about a subject, an important idea or a key message.

Event 1: _____

_____

Event 2: _____

_____

Event 3: _____

_____

b   If your text is a collection, identify three topics or issues that are common to many or most of the individual pieces.

_____

c   Write a sentence summarising an important idea in the collection, and what the writer is aiming to communicate about this idea.

_____

3   Complete the following sentences about your text.

Three words to describe the subject of the text are _____

_____

The subject's most important relationship is with _____ The most significant thing that happens to the subject is _____

_____ This is important

because _____

_____

Three key quotations (by the subject or about the subject) are: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

4   Describe your impression of the subject/topic of the text at the beginning of the text, and at the end. How did the subject change or how did your understanding of the topic change? What factors influenced this change?

Subject/Topic:	
Subject/Topic at start of text	
Subject/Topic at end of text	
Factors that caused the subject to change OR that changed your perspective on the topic	

**CHAPTER**
06

Analysing poetry

In this chapter you will explore how to analyse poetry. Poems are written texts, often short, that use the sound and rhythmic qualities of language to express and create meaning. If you are studying poetry in Unit 3 or 4, you will study a collection of poems and consider the ways in which the poems are connected.

Although poems might be short texts, to understand and analyse them still requires thoughtful work. You might find it useful to have multiple copies of the main poems you are studying, so that you can annotate them for different purposes. Looking at the following poetic elements will help you to analyse each poem:

- form and structure
- meaning and purpose
- language.

IN THIS CHAPTER:
+ Form and structure
+ Meaning and purpose
+ Language
+ Writing about poetry
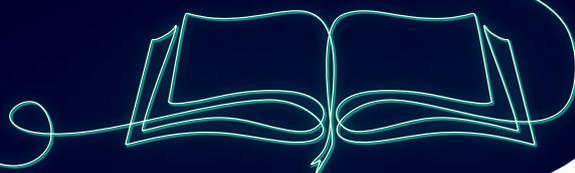
Form and structure

Form is the way the poem is arranged. This includes the length of the poem, the use or absence of a rhyme scheme, and other elements of structure, such as stanzas. A **stanza** is a group of lines within a poem that is separated from the next group by a blank line. It is the poetic equivalent of a paragraph. A new stanza often signifies a new idea or theme.

Some poetic forms have specific rules that define them. For example, a sonnet is a fourteen-line poem with a fixed rhyme scheme.

> Pay attention to line length and line breaks, and to any other conspicuous structural elements. For example, Charmaine Papertalk Green and John Kinsella sometimes use numbers and subtitles to divide sections of their poems.

Meaning and purpose

When reading a poem, you need to understand both its **explicit** and **implied** meaning. The explicit meaning is what is directly stated, or the most obvious meaning. The implied meaning is the message or idea suggested by a word or phrase, or inferred by the reader. To recognise the implied meaning, you need a thorough knowledge of the vocabulary used. Some words or phrases may have multiple meanings, and poets often make use of several definitions or connotations to create layers of meaning.

Just like authors of novels and short stories, poets have a specific purpose when they write, and intend to evoke particular responses in readers. In *False Claims of Colonial Thieves*, many poems have similar messages connected by the overall purpose of the collection. In *William Wordsworth: Poems Selected by Seamus Heaney*, the poems may have similar ideas, but Wordsworth's message or purpose might be quite different from poem to poem.

Language

To analyse a poem, look closely at the language used. Poets carefully choose words, phrases and poetic techniques to express their meaning and message. The table below outlines some common poetic techniques.

Poetic technique	Example
Alliteration: repetition of consonant sounds at the beginning of words, usually within the same phrase, line or sentence.	William Wordsworth alliterates the 's' sound in the opening lines of 'A slumber did my spirit steal'. This evokes the sound of whispering and creates a sense of peace and quietness that the reader might associate with death, the main theme of the poem.
Assonance: repetition of vowel sounds within words, usually within the same phrase, line or sentence.	The final lines of Wordsworth's 'The world is too much with us' contain assonance of the 'o' sound: 'Or hear old Triton blow his wreathèd horn.' Assonance mimics the sound of the horn being blown; repetition creates an echoing effect, highlighting themes of nostalgia and loss.
Caesura: a pause or break in the middle of a line of poetry, usually marked by punctuation, e.g. a comma.	Punctuation marks in the following lines from Wordsworth's 'Lines composed a few miles above Tintern Abbey' create caesuras: 'These waters, rolling from their mountain-springs / With a soft inland murmur.' The use of caesura in these lines interrupts the momentum of the poem's opening, requiring the reader to pause and take note of the time that has passed.
Enjambment: continuation of a sentence or phrase from one line of poetry to the next without a pause.	In Charmaine Papertalk Green's poem 'Don't want me to talk', the following lines use enjambment: 'You don't want me to talk about / Mining or its impact on Country'. Enjambment creates a conversational tone, and builds a sense of urgency through the lack of pauses.

Poetic technique	Example
Imagery: descriptive language used to help the reader visualise specific sights, sounds, tastes, smells or feelings.	John Kinsella uses imagery to depict the physicality of heat in the Australian landscape in his poem 'Edges of Aridity': 'heat / is the thin edge of a conversation, emu / and kangaroo shape the dry air.'
Metaphor: comparing an object or action to something else, often using the word 'is'.	The metaphor in the phrase 'the cathedral of salmon gums and wandoo' in Kinsella's poem 'Cathedral Avenue' compares the gum trees to a cathedral, suggesting they are part of a sacred place that should be protected.
Metre: the specific pattern of beats or stresses in a line of poetry. It includes the number of syllables in the line, and the pattern of emphasis on those syllables.	In the poem 'I wandered lonely as a cloud', Wordsworth uses iambic tetrameter. This metre consists of eight syllables (four pairs) per line; the second syllable in each pair is stressed (emphasised). This pattern sounds simple and natural when you hear it read aloud, and therefore connects to the thematic ideas of the poem.
Personification: giving objects or animals human characteristics or emotions.	Kinsella personifies the Chapman River in 'The Artlessness of Internal Travel': 'the Chapman River ate sandstone / and bream in the pools spoke / upstream language in their stasis.' Personification emphasises the significance of the river, providing it with an identity and creating the impression that is conscious and active.
Punctuation: the marks used to separate sentences and phrases, and to clarify meaning (e.g. commas, exclamation marks and colons).	In the poem 'There Was a Boy' by Wordsworth, the exclamation mark in the line 'ye cliffs / and islands of Winander!' highlights a moment of awe, while at the end of the poem the exclamation mark in 'looking at the grave in which he lies!' creates a heightened sense of shock.
Repetition: a word, phrase or idea appearing multiple times.	In Papertalk Green's poem 'Nganayungu Yagu', the phrase 'Nganayungu Yagu / My mother / Belong to me' is repeated throughout. 'Nganayungu Yagu' means 'my mother' in the Wajarri language, creating a repetition of meaning, as well as of words, in this poem. Papertalk Green reinforces the connection between herself, her mother and the land through this repetition.
Rhyme: the repetition of matching or similar sounds, usually at the ends of words or lines. Poetry that has no rhyme scheme is called **free verse.**	Wordsworth's poem 'To My Sister' uses an ABAB rhyme scheme: 'It is the first mild day of March: / Each minute sweeter than before / The redbreast sings from the tall larch / That stands beside our door.' 'March' and 'larch' rhyme, as do 'before' and 'door'.

Poetic technique	Example
Simile: comparing an object or action to something else using the word 'like' or 'as'.	Papertalk Green uses a simile when she describes a building designed by the architect John Hawes as 'like a sulking teenager demanding attention' in the final poem in 'Hawes – God's Intruder', highlighting the poet's disdain for Hawes, and diminishing the reader's view of Hawes' work.
Symbolism: an object or action is used to represent something other than its literal meaning.	In Wordsworth's 'Ode: Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood', light symbolises truth, understanding and divinity. Throughout the poem there are frequent references to light, shadow and brightness, beginning with the 'celestial light' that 'apparelled' the earth when the speaker was a child. By the end of the poem, the speaker mourns the loss of this childhood understanding but describes the remembrance of it as a 'master light' that still guides him.

The speaker of a poem is the 'voice' who is saying it, similar to a narrator in fiction texts. The speaker is not always the same as the poet.

Express yourself

Sometimes looking at something from a different perspective sheds new light on it. In a pair or small group, select a line or phrase from one of the poems you are studying and express it physically. You might do choreographed moves as a group, or create a tableau (a still or freeze-frame image). Be as creative as possible; think about using all three dimensions, e.g. changing height by crouching down or standing on a chair.

Analyse a poem

Choose one of the poems you are studying and complete the questions below.

1 What is the form of the poem? Does it follow a particular rhyme scheme? Is it long or short? Does the poem have subtitles or other structural features that stand out?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

2 Write two or three sentences summarising the explicit meaning of the poem.

_____

_____

_____

3 What do you think is the message of the poem? What is the poet's purpose? What does the poet want the reader to consider?

_____

_____

_____

4 List three poetic techniques used in the poem. Explain what you think their purpose is in the poem, or how they might affect the reader.

_____

_____

_____

Writing about poetry

In your SAC for this outcome and in the end-of-year exam, you will need to write about several poems. Essay topics will ask you to consider an idea or concern that is central to the poetry collection, which you will explore by looking closely at several poems, as well as the connections between these poems. The templates below will be useful for organising ideas.

Key themes (e.g. nature, loss, belonging)	Poems from the collection that explore this theme

Idea or premise	Poems from the collection that uphold this idea	Poems from the collection that challenge this idea
The poems in this collection are joyful.		
The poems in this collection tell us that we need to care for the environment.		
The poems in this collection emphasise the importance of communication between different groups of people.		

You will also need to consider other similarities between the poems, such as the historical and social context in which the poems were written and, for example, the use of First Nations languages in *False Claims of Colonial Thieves*.

Here are some sentence starters and models you can use for writing about poetry.

- Throughout the poem, … [idea] is revealed through the use of … [poetic technique], which highlights …

- The poet appeals to the reader's sense of … through the depiction of … as …

- This … [poetic technique] emphasises the importance of …

- This … [poetic technique] reinforces the idea of …

- The symbolism of … underscores …

- The poet critiques the societal attitude of … through the line …

- The repetition of … creates a strong rhythm in the poem, accentuating …

- The rhyme scheme enhances the poem's musicality, creating a sense of …

Using evidence

When quoting from a poem, follow these guidelines.

- Place the title of a poem inside single quotation marks. In a handwritten essay, the title of the poetry collection should be underlined. (If typing, use italics.)

- Use quotation marks at the beginning and end of each quote.

- Where you have shortened a quote, use an ellipsis (…) to indicate words have been removed.

- Use a slash or stroke to indicate a line break (/), with a space before and after.

   e.g. These lines are from Wordsworth's poem 'Lines Written in Early Spring':

   'I heard a thousand blended notes, / While in a grove I sate reclined.'

Writing an essay on a poetry collection

Here are two ways to structure an essay about a poetry collection.

Option 1

Essay topic	
Introduction	Summarise your interpretation of the poetry collection as a whole in relation to the essay topic.
Body paragraph 1	Analyse how Poem 1 relates to the essay topic and your interpretation.
Body paragraph 2	Analyse how Poem 2 relates to the essay topic and your interpretation.
Body paragraph 3	Analyse how Poem 3 relates to the essay topic and your interpretation.
Body paragraph 4	Analyse how Poem 4 relates to the essay topic and your interpretation.
Conclusion	Draw connections between the poems you have analysed, and reach an overall conclusion about how they relate to the essay topic and your interpretation.

Option 2

Essay topic	
Introduction	Summarise your interpretation of the poetry collection as a whole in relation to the essay topic.
Body paragraph 1	Analyse how several poems use a particular poetic technique (e.g. rhyme and metre) in relation to the idea in the essay topic. OR Analyse how several poems use a particular feature (e.g. second-person pronouns) in relation to the idea in the essay topic.
Body paragraph 2	Analyse how several poems use another poetic technique (e.g. imagery) in relation to the idea in the essay topic. OR Analyse how several poems use another feature (e.g. allusions and intertextuality) in relation to the idea in the essay topic.
Body paragraph 3	Analyse how several poems use a third poetic technique (e.g. enjambment) in relation to the idea in the essay topic. OR Analyse how several poems use a third feature (e.g. a specific form) in relation to the idea in the essay topic.
Body paragraph 4	Analyse how several poems use a fourth poetic technique (e.g. symbolism) in relation to the idea in the essay topic. OR Analyse how several poems use a fourth feature (e.g. non-standard grammar conventions) in relation to the idea in the essay topic.
Conclusion	Draw connections between the techniques or features you have analysed, and reach an overall conclusion about how they relate to the essay topic and your interpretation.

Practise analysing poetry

1 Choose two of the model sentences on page 62 and complete them with reference to a poem or poems you are studying.

_____

_____

2 Using one of the planning templates on pages 62–3, write a plan for an analysis of a collection of poetry you are studying. Consult study guides, previous VCAA exams or your teacher for possible essay topics.

Responding to audio and audiovisual texts

IN THIS CHAPTER:

+ Types of questions
+ Note-form summaries
+ Approaching the listening task

In this chapter you will learn how to comprehend **audio** and **audiovisual texts**, respond to a variety of question types designed to test your comprehension, and make note-form summaries of these texts.

The audio and audiovisual texts you encounter in this unit will be focused on the **historical, cultural and/or social values of your set text** for Unit 3. To practise, you may also listen to or watch texts about the writing or filmmaking process, the writer or director's life, or the experience of actors performing the text you are studying.

Some of the text types you might encounter in this task include:

- interview
- speech
- TED Talk
- documentary
- instructional video
- lecture
- presentation
- podcast
- talkback or Q&A session.

Types of questions

For the SAC, you will be asked to demonstrate your comprehension of the audio or audiovisual text through short-answer responses. As you practise for the SAC, you may also be asked to respond to:

- multiple-choice questions
- 'true or false' questions
- tick-box questions.

You might also be asked to:

- complete or fill out a table
- fill in a gap in a sentence
- provide examples.

Some questions might ask you to identify or give an example of what a speaker says. You might also be asked to explain, describe or analyse how they say it.

When responding to short-answer questions, write in full sentences. Below are some common task words used in questions, and guidelines for how to respond to each.

Task word	How to respond
Describe (e.g. Describe the speaker's attitude to Regency-era class structures.)	This is usually asking you to make a judgement about an aspect of the speaker's delivery. Use precise adjectives in your description.
Explain (e.g. Explain the poet's writing process.)	When asked to 'explain' something, you need to briefly summarise the idea or message in your own words. If you are asked to explain a series of steps or sequences, ensure you include all of them.
Give/Provide (e.g. Provide one example to support your response.)	This asks you to state an idea, example or reason. If you are asked to give a specific number of items (e.g. one example), provide exactly this number, not more or fewer. It can be tempting to provide additional detail, but this could imply that you have not read or understood the question properly.
Identify (e.g. Identify one reason that Greek tragedies are still relevant to audiences today.)	Carefully select the correct information from the text. For an 'identify' question, you usually do not have to use your own words.
List (e.g. List the aspects of a film the director is responsible for overseeing.)	If asked to 'list' something, include a number of items in your response. Usually, a list includes three or more items. Separate them using commas or bullet points.
How (e.g. How does the interviewer convey the importance of this?)	This type of question is usually asking you to make an inference. That means the answer is not directly stated by the speaker; you must make your own judgement about the answer.
Why (e.g. Why does the host thank Matt Ottley at the end of the episode?)	Similar to 'how', above, a 'why' question usually asks you to make an inference or judgement about something. Sometimes, though, it may be a more literal question.
Evaluate (e.g. Evaluate the truth of the statement 'World War II had a significant impact on Ogawa's writing'.)	To 'evaluate', you need to make an evidence-based judgement about what you heard in the text. You usually have to weigh up different ideas and decide which one you think is correct, giving evidence to support your opinion.
Compare and contrast (e.g. Compare and contrast the opinions of the two speakers about Gothic fiction.)	These terms ask you to use evidence from the text to find similarities and differences between two or more things.

Identify question types

Identify whether each question below is a 'what' or a 'how' question.

	What question	How question
Identify one genre Robbie Arnott states influenced his writing.	✓	
Describe Shirley Jackson's relationship with the other speaker, and provide one example of delivery that demonstrates this.		
In the delivery of his first suggestion, Stephen Johnson uses emphasis. Give one example that demonstrates this.		
According to the lecturer, what is Wordsworth's predominant attitude towards the natural world?		
Explain how the interviewer conveys her friendliness when speaking with Laveau-Harvie.		
Why is Jane Harrison surprised that she was asked to speak at this event? Give one reason.		
Give two words to describe the tone used by Alice Munro in the speech.		
Three students asked questions during the Q&A session with the writer. Provide one question that was asked.		
Identify one way Trevor Noah engages his audience in this excerpt, and give one example that supports your answer.		

Transcribe a text

This activity is called a **dictogloss**.

1 With a group of friends, watch this text about the film *High Ground*. Your job is to accurately transcribe the entire text. Listen to the text twice, but do not talk to one another until after you have listened to the text the second time.

Scan the code or click here to access the video.

2 As a group, share your notes and discuss until you think you have accurately re-created the text. Then, listen to the text once more and check for mistakes.

Note-form summaries

For the SAC, you may be asked to make a note-form summary. To save time when making your note-form summaries, avoid writing out words. Instead, use **abbreviations** and **symbols**. This system of writing is sometimes called **shorthand**.

The table below shows some common abbreviations and symbols.

=	equals; is the same as	@	at
≠	does not equal; is not the same as	?	question
∴	therefore	$	money, cost
∵	because	~	approximately
<	less than	w/	with
>	more than	w/o	without
→	leads to; causes	e.g.	for example
←	comes from; is caused by	i.e.	that is
esp.	especially	govt.	government
max.	maximum	min.	minimum
re.	regarding, about	diff.	difference
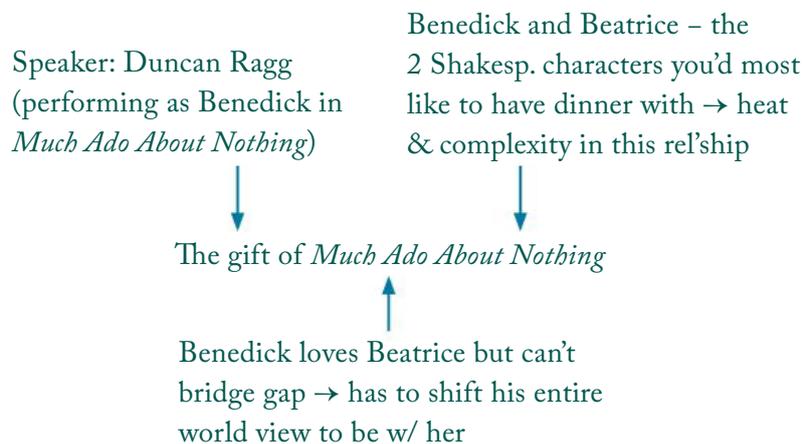
Sample student notes

Below are some examples of what a note-form summary might look like if you were asked to summarise the following audiovisual text about William Shakespeare's *Much Ado About Nothing*.

Scan the code or click here to watch the video.

e.g. 1   The following notes are in the form of a brainstorm, with the title in the middle, and the other information organised around it, connected by arrows.

Speaker: Duncan Ragg (performing as Benedick in *Much Ado About Nothing*)

Benedick and Beatrice – the 2 Shakesp. characters you'd most like to have dinner with → heat & complexity in this rel'ship

↓   ↓

The gift of *Much Ado About Nothing*

↑

Benedick loves Beatrice but can't bridge gap → has to shift his entire world view to be w/ her

➡ Audiences should see this production because:

- Shakesp's best play
- Most accessible play → could take grandma, bf, brother
- Everyone will find things to enjoy
- Everyone will be challenged by it
- This production: wild, playful, modern → you'll argue with your partner about it after

e.g. 2 This is a set of notes recorded using the Cornell note-taking system, with headings down the side and the notes on the right.

Scan the code or click here to find out more about the Cornell note-taking system.

TITLE	
The gift of *Much Ado About Nothing*	
Speaker: Duncan Ragg (performing as Benedick in *Much Ado About Nothing*)	
KEY WORDS / QUESTIONS	**MAIN NOTES / KEY THOUGHTS**
Benedick and Beatrice	Benedick & Beatrice → the 2 Shakespearean characters you'd most like to have dinner with → heat & complexity in this r/s
Ben loves Bea	Benedick loves Beatrice, but can't bridge the gap → has to shift his entire worldview to be w/ her
recommendation	Audiences should see this production because: • Shakesp's best play • Most accessible play → could take grandma, bf, brother • Everyone will find things to enjoy • Everyone will be challenged by it
SUMMARY	
This production: wild, playful, modern → you'll argue with your partner about it after	

Make note-form summaries

1 What are some abbreviations you know that you could use in a note-form summary?

2 Watch the following audiovisual text about the film *Sunset Boulevard* and make a note-form summary.

Scan the code or click **here** to access the video.

3 Now, watch it again and make a second note-form summary, using a different strategy.

Approaching the listening task

You will likely be provided with some **background information** about the text. Read this carefully, as it will help you to identify the text type, and give you some clues about the content of the text and the number of speakers you will hear.

Read through the questions carefully. If marks have been allocated to each question, **use these marks to work out how much you will need to write for each answer**. For example, for a 4-mark question you will need to include more detail than for a 2-mark question.

You might only be allowed to listen to the text twice. If this is the case, make sure that you **make plenty of notes** while you are listening. Use some of the strategies from the note-form summaries section (pages 67–9) to help you. Your notes should be relevant to the questions. If marks are allocated for each question, on the first listen ensure you write down some information relating to the questions that are worth the most marks. If you get stuck, and you have not made any notes during your first listen, write down anything you are able to comprehend while you listen to the text the second time. Hopefully, some of these notes will correspond to the questions.

You may be allowed to listen to the text more than twice, or possibly an unlimited number of times in a given time frame. If this is the case, don't waste time writing down every word. **Focus on overall comprehension**, and make sure you allow plenty of time to demonstrate your understanding of the text in your written answers.

The audio and audiovisual texts you will be given will be connected to the **historical, cultural and/or social values of the text you are studying** for Unit 3. Develop your vocabulary in these areas, and aim to have a thorough knowledge of the set text before sitting the listening SAC.

Practise listening comprehension

1 View the audiovisual text of Trevor Noah discussing his memoir *Born a Crime*, then answer the questions below.

Scan the code or click **here** to access the video.

Background information

Trevor Noah is the author of the autobiography *Born a Crime*. In this interview, Noah discusses why people should read his book, and some of the consequences of writing it.

a   How does Noah emphasise the important connection between himself and his readers?

_____

b   Why does Noah think specificity is important to his writing?

_____

c   Identify two of the dreams Noah had.

_____

_____

d   Why does Noah describe his dreams as limited?

_____

e   Noah is a thoughtful speaker. Give two examples of his language or delivery that demonstrate this.

_____

_____

2 View the audiovisual text of Dane Cobain talking about Shirley Jackson, then answer the questions below.

Scan the code or click **here** to access the video.

Background information

Shirley Jackson is the author of *We Have Always Lived in the Castle*. In this YouTube video, Dane Cobain presents five facts about Shirley Jackson.

a What type of books did Shirley Jackson have in her library?

_____

b Why does Cobain talk about Shirley Jackson's opinions on the supernatural?

_____

_____

c Which country banned Shirley Jackson's short story 'The Lottery'?

_____

d Explain Shirley Jackson's system for thinking about her moods.

_____

_____

e Shirley Jackson was writing in the 1950s and 1960s. How might this have influenced her opinions about domestic duties?

_____

_____

f Cobain's YouTube video suggests that Shirley Jackson had a sense of humour. Give two examples that demonstrate this.

_____

_____

Scan the code or click **here** to see tips and advice for improving your listening skills.

Writing a text response

Writing a text response essay brings together your writing skills and text knowledge. In preparation for this part of the EAL course, it is essential to prioritise the areas you wish to improve.

This chapter will cover the following three broad steps for writing a text analysis:

- understanding and analysing an essay topic
- selecting the best evidence to justify your response
- structuring and writing your essay.

IN THIS CHAPTER:

- ⁜ Understanding the topic
- ⁜ Planning your response
- ⁜ Writing your response
- ⁜ Text response essay skills
- ⁜ Sample text response
- ⁜ Essay editing checklist

Understanding the topic

You will normally receive two essay topics for your assessments in this area of study. The following are the key steps at this stage.

1 Select the topic that is right for you.

2 Brainstorm everything you know about this topic.

3 Refine your contention and paragraph ideas.

Your **contention** is the summary of the argument you want to present, i.e. your interpretation of the text in response to the topic. The important features of an essay topic include the **task word(s)**, the **focus** of the topic and any **modifying language**.

e.g. "When you've got the high ground, you control everything." '*High Ground* suggests that true power requires balance and restraint.' Do you agree?

Double quotation marks used for direct quotations from the text

Modifying language

Modifying language

Task words

Single quotation marks used for propositions (idea statements)

Topic focus: the film's exploration of a key idea
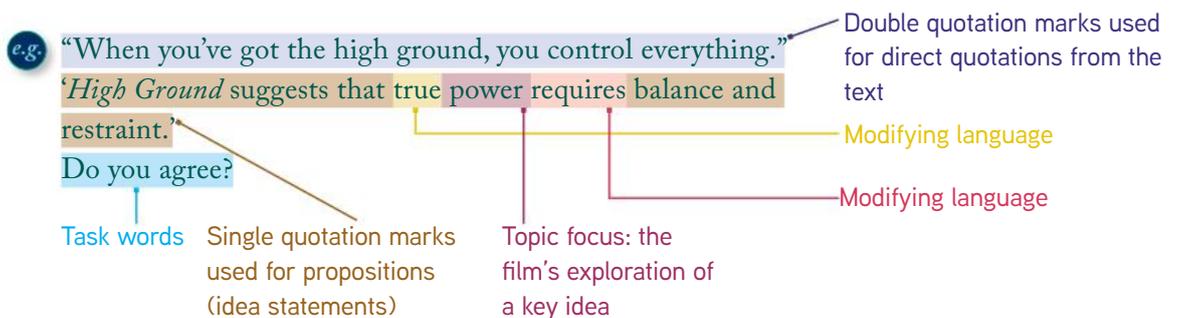
Jacob Junior Nayinggul as Gutjuk, who survives a massacre in *High Ground*. (Alamy)

Task words

Task words provide you with instructions about what your response should do. Here are some common task words and phrases you can expect to find in your assessments.

- **Do you agree?** Respond to the proposition with a contention. Decide if you agree, partially agree or disagree with the proposition. Often *partially agreeing* with the statement can lead to a more nuanced and thoughtful response that shows you have considered a range of evidence.

- **Discuss.** Your response should be a broad consideration of the ideas contained in the proposition. While you should include a clear contention, you must acknowledge alternative viewpoints.

- **To what extent …?** Assess and express how much you agree with the proposition. Again, you are being asked to acknowledge different possible responses.

- **How …?** Your response should focus on authorial intention, or the author's purpose. These topics ask you to consider the text's structure, style and language. Therefore your response should prominently feature this type of evidence.

- **In what ways …?** These task words function in a similar way to 'how' topics, requiring you to focus on authorial intention and how the author communicates their ideas.

- **What …?** In your response, focus on the key words in the topic. This task word is often used for topics focused on characters, which are explained in the next section.

Topic focus

Essay topics usually prompt you to focus on a particular element from the text in your response. However, keep in mind that you need to demonstrate a broad understanding of the text. So, for example, if the topic focuses on characters, you should still write about ideas and text structure.

The table below outlines some common topic focuses, with examples.

Type of topic focus	Example
Quotations A quotation in the topic directs your response towards a particular idea in the text. You must address the quotation at some point in your response. Note: Quotation topics normally have an additional focus on a character, an idea or structure.	"With fear my heart is riven, fear of what shall be told." 'In *Oedipus the King*, Sophocles suggests that fate is the most important part of people's lives.' Discuss.
Characters You are asked to think about a particular character or characters, and their qualities or views on an idea in the text. You should focus primarily on the character or characters in the topic statement, but also refer to other textual features, such as ideas and values.	'In *Sunset Boulevard*, Norma Desmond is revealed to be completely delusional and living in the past.' Do you agree?
Ideas You are asked to explore a particular idea or theme in the text. Depending on the topic, there may be scope for you to consider other ideas as well. Consider how the idea in the topic is explored through characters, plot, structure etc.	To what extent does *The Memory Police* suggest that loss is inevitable?
Structure, style and language You are required to discuss how ideas are portrayed in the text through its structure, style and language. While this type of evidence should feature prominently in your response, you should also include other types of evidence, such as direct quotations.	How does García Márquez's use of magic realism in *Chronicle of a Death Foretold* shape the reader's understanding of events?

A scene from the 1987 film version of *Chronicle of a Death Foretold*, directed by Francesco Rosi. Author Gabriel García Márquez is famous for his use of magic realism. (Alamy)

Modifying language

In addition to identifying the overall task required by each topic, it is important to take note of any modifying words in the topic. Modifying words describe the relative strength or extent of an idea. Some common examples are shown below.

always/all > most > many > often > sometimes/some > little/few > only > never/none/no

← ─── →

↑ extraordinary, powerful

　inevitable, necessary, the heart of, require

　a great deal, significant, importance, true

　regardless of, despite, rather than

↓ inability, lack of

Your assessors include these words to encourage you to challenge the proposition or question posed. When you see words like those above in a topic, you should consider whether there are exceptions to what is suggested in the statement.

> A useful question to ask yourself when considering a statement about a text is: 'Is this *always* and *absolutely* true?'

The following example illustrates the process of challenging a statement about a text.

> *e.g.* 'Sybylla's determination not to marry at the end of *My Brilliant Career* reflects her **extraordinary** courage.'
> Discuss.

One way to challenge the statement is to consider the implications of the word 'extraordinary' in terms of Sybylla's courage.

- Given the conservative values at the time of the novel's publication, it is true that Sybylla demonstrates some courage in deciding not to marry.

- However, her courage is supported by her firm conviction that she would be unhappy as Harold's wife.

- Regarding authorial intent, Franklin uses Sybylla to reject traditional European feminine ideals such as sweetness and humility. Thus, Sybylla's decision is not just an example of an individual's courage, but also an expression of Australian identity.

So you might conclude that Sybylla displays courage, but not *extraordinary* courage.

> Remember that there is no single 'correct' response to an essay topic. As long as you support your interpretation with evidence from the text, it will be valid.

Scan the code or click **here** to view a video about unpacking an essay topic.

Identify features of an essay topic ✏️

1 Identify the task word(s), focus and any modifying language in the topic below.

"Oh Constance, we are so happy."

To what extent are the characters truly happy in *We Have Always Lived in the Castle*?

Task word(s)	
Focus	
Modifying language	

2 What are the task words instructing you to do in this essay?

_____

3 How would the focus of this topic guide your planning?

_____

4 What is implied by the modifying word in this topic?

_____

5 Create a topic on your selected text that includes a modifying word.

_____

Planning your response

After identifying the main features of the topic, it is time to start matching the task with your knowledge of the text. While it can be tempting to start writing your response straight away, an effective plan can speed up your writing process and improve the overall quality of your essay.

Identify key terms

Key terms are the words in the topic that direct you towards content from your text. They may refer to characters, ideas, values, authorial intentions, events, setting, text structure and/or stylistic elements. Verbs, task words and modifying language can also serve as key terms in essay topics. It is essential that you check definitions and translations for key terms in your dictionary. Even if you already know what a word means, a dictionary can provide synonyms and different ways of expressing key terms.

e.g. "When you've got the high ground, you control everything."
'*High Ground* suggests that true power requires balance and restraint.'
Do you agree?

Consider the following breakdown of the key terms in the example topic.

'Control' reflects one kind of 'power' in the film.

'True' modifies the idea of 'power', implying that there are some kinds of power that have more credibility.

'Requires' places a limitation on the proposition, encouraging you to question whether 'true power' requires balance and restraint.

'Balance' and 'restraint' introduce a softer version of 'power' in the film, which can be contrasted with 'control'.

Brainstorm all factors

After identifying and defining the key terms, you need to recall all your text knowledge to brainstorm your response. For each of the key terms, pose questions that can help you to sort through your knowledge of the text.

> *e.g.* 'In *Sunset Boulevard*, Norma Desmond is revealed to be completely delusional and living in the past.'
> Do you agree?
>
> **What** question: What does the film suggest about the consequences of being delusional and living in the past?
>
> **How** question: How is Norma revealed to be delusional and living in the past?
>
> **Why** question: Why is Norma delusional and living in the past?
>
> **To what extent** question: To what extent is Norma delusional and living in the past: completely or only in part?

Depending on your study and preparation, you will find some of these questions easier to answer than others. Identify the most interesting examples and ideas in your answers to the above questions and use these as a basis for developing your response.

Unpack an essay topic

1 Select a topic on one of your set texts. If there are none in this chapter, consult a study guide or ask your teacher to help you find a relevant topic. Write it in the middle of a blank piece of paper or computer document.

2 Now go through the initial planning steps outlined above. This is sometimes called **unpacking** an essay topic.

   a Identify the task instructions, including the task word(s), topic focus and any modifying language.

   b Identify the key terms and pose questions to prompt your brainstorm.

   c Answer the brainstorm questions, drawing on your text knowledge.

Create a contention

Before starting your essay, ensure that you have a clear idea of your essay's contention. Your contention should be a well-crafted statement that summarises your response to the topic. It is important to use precise vocabulary and capture every aspect of the topic. Avoid creating a narrow contention that is limited to one part of the topic and ignores a second part. Equally, avoid contentions that are too broad and therefore miss the topic's nuance (the meaning below the surface).

Practise crafting contentions

Topic: To what extent does *The Memory Police* suggest that loss is inevitable?

The three contentions below refer to the same essay topic. Draw arrows to match each label to the relevant contention.

While loss seems inevitable in *The Memory Police*, Ogawa advocates for holding on to memories.	narrow contention
In *The Memory Police*, Ogawa suggests that the residents of the island lose their memories.	broad contention
The Memory Police suggests that the loss of memories, while not inevitable, is difficult to prevent.	precise contention

Planning tools

There is no single correct way to structure the plan for your response. Experiment with a few different methods, then choose the one that works best for you. You should only spend a short time developing your plan: aim to limit it to five minutes. One way to save time is to use note-form writing. Notes may include abbreviations, symbols and initials. (See pages 67–9 for more on note-form abbreviations.)

> As your plan is not assessed, you can also use expressions from your first language if it helps.

Dot-point plan

A simple and effective method of planning is through dot points. A basic structure for a dot-point plan might look like this:

- Contention
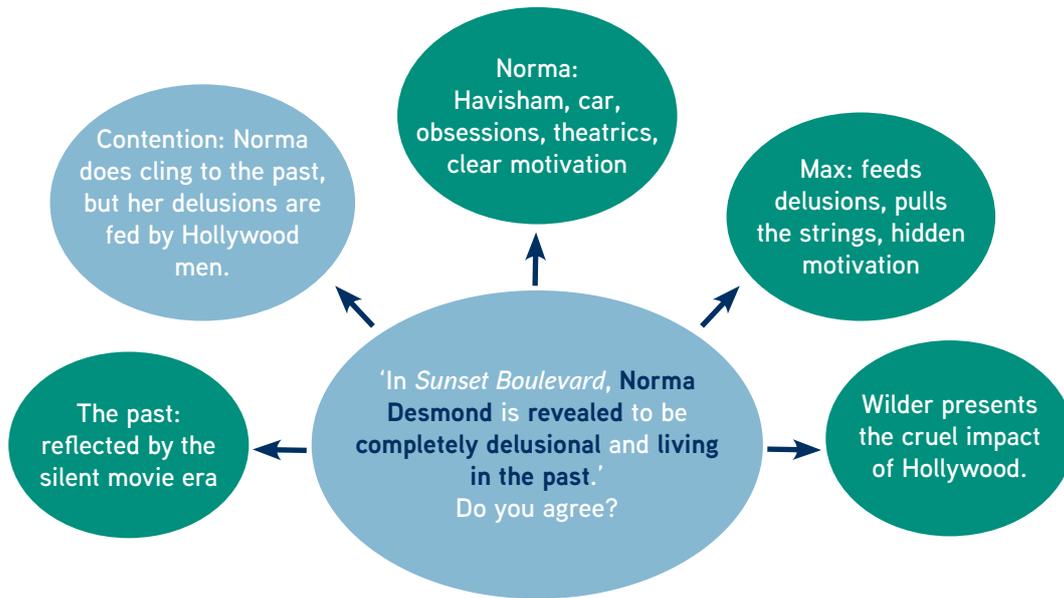- First body paragraph idea
  - › Examples

- Second body paragraph idea
    › Examples
- Third body paragraph idea
    › Examples
- Subsequent paragraph ideas
    › Examples

Mind map

Mind maps are visual tools that present the connections between ideas.

Norma:
Havisham, car,
obsessions, theatrics,
clear motivation

Contention: Norma
does cling to the past,
but her delusions are
fed by Hollywood
men.

Max: feeds
delusions, pulls
the strings, hidden
motivation

'In *Sunset Boulevard*, **Norma
Desmond** is **revealed** to be
completely delusional and **living
in the past**.'
Do you agree?

The past:
reflected by the
silent movie era

Wilder presents
the cruel impact
of Hollywood.

It might be a little more difficult to create a mind map or other graphic organiser in an assessment setting. However, understanding the required inputs may help you to remember the necessary information for a text response essay.

Plan an essay

Fill in the following planning template with reference to the topic that you chose for the 'Unpack an essay topic' activity on page 77.

Introduction:
Author
Text type
Title
Historical context
Contention

Body paragraph 1: Key idea Example 1 Example 2 Authorial intention	
Body paragraph 2: Key idea Example 1 Example 2 Authorial intention	
Body paragraph 3: Key idea Example 1 Example 2 Authorial intention	
Conclusion: Relevant quote Authorial intention	

Writing your response

Before writing your analytical text response, review the following guidelines.

Introduction

The introduction is your first chance to make a good impression on the person assessing your essay. It should be relevant, clear and brief. Aim to do the following.

- Introduce the text creator(s), text <u>title</u> (underlined) and text type. If you can, also make a reference to the historical context in a way that is relevant to the topic.
- Demonstrate your understanding of the topic by rewording its ideas.
- Signpost your body paragraph ideas.
- State the essay's contention.

Body paragraphs

The body paragraphs are the core of your essay. For a basic response, three body paragraphs are enough to support your contention. However, if you are able to write more quickly, you could aim to write four or more. Keep in mind the following.

- Begin each paragraph with a clear **topic sentence** that introduces the key idea.

- Provide **evidence** from the text to justify your idea – between two and five examples. Vary the type of evidence you use by including direct quotations, descriptions of character development, references to setting, paraphrased events, features of the text's construction and statements about authorial intention. Discuss the following.

  › **What** is the writer doing? **Identify** the example, providing context and using metalanguage when appropriate.

  › **How** is the writer doing it? **Describe** the implied meaning.

  › **Why** did the writer do it? **Explain** the relevance to the topic, making use of key terms.

- **Conclude** your paragraph with a clear thematic statement. This can be a good opportunity to refer to authorial intention.

Conclusion

The conclusion is your final chance to leave a good impression on the assessor. If you are running out of time, a quick conclusion is fine. You should prioritise making a final impact, not giving a lengthy summary of your ideas. In your conclusion you should:

- restate your contention in different words

- sum up your main points briefly

- end with a strong thematic statement that relates to the topic.

> Ending with a direct quotation from the text that sums up your interpretation can be a very effective way to conclude your essay.

Text response essay skills

This section presents an overview of some of the main skills required for writing effective text response essays.

Embedding quotations

Quotations are an essential type of evidence that you should include to justify your interpretation. As you will likely need to memorise them, try to keep your quotations short.

e.g. The following examples show how the opening line from *Chronicle of a Death Foretold* can be incorporated smoothly into analytical sentences. The opening line is: 'On the day they were going to kill him, Santiago Nasar got up at five-thirty in the morning to wait for the boat the bishop was coming on.'

- The chilling opening – 'On the day they were going to kill him' – sets the tone for García Márquez's novella …

- From the opening line of the novella, the reader is aware that 'they were going to kill' Santiago.

- Despite revealing that this is 'the day [someone is] going to kill' Santiago, the novella's opening passage focuses on the mundane start to his day.

Remember the following guidelines.

- Use an ellipsis (three dots) to indicate any words left out of a quote.

- Use square brackets to show a quote has been modified to suit the sentence structure.

- Avoid beginning a sentence with a quote or using the word 'quote'.

- Aim to use a combination of short direct quotes and paraphrasing (putting things in your own words).

- Always discuss any quote you include, explaining its significance to your argument.

Analytical verbs

Making frequent use of the following verbs will ensure you are writing analytically. The subject for each of these verbs will vary and could include, for instance, characters, incidents, symbols or the text's creator (e.g. 'García Márquez shows …'). Remember that text response essays are mainly written in the **present tense**.

Writing about meaning	Writing about effect	Describing	Comparing
conveys	accentuates	depicts	compares
demonstrates	emphasises	displays	contrasts
implies	highlights	illustrates	juxtaposes
shows	symbolises	reveals	opposes

Linking words

To improve the fluency of your writing and connections within paragraphs, incorporate a range of linking words and phrases.

Expanding point	Opposing point	Logical progression
for example	however	consequently
furthermore	nevertheless	indeed
in addition / additionally	on the other hand	therefore
similarly	whereas / while	ultimately

Nominalisation and pronouns

Another way to improve the fluency and formality in your writing is to incorporate **nominalisation**, **relative pronouns** and **demonstrative pronouns**.

Nominalisation involves taking a verb or verb phrase and turning it into a noun. This can then be used to summarise the idea in a subsequent sentence.

> *e.g.* Santiago dies due to the whims of fate. His death reinforces García Márquez's idea that fate is beyond human control.

Relative and demonstrative pronouns are useful words that can help extend ideas and draw connections between sentences. Experiment with using them in your writing.

Relative (W) pronouns	Demonstrative (T) pronouns
when	that
where	these
which	this
who	those
whom	
whose	

e.g. R, <u>who</u> entrusts his life to the narrator of *The Memory Police*, is one of the few inhabitants of the island <u>who</u> retains memories of disappeared objects.

Sample text response

This sample response analyses Billy Wilder's film *Sunset Boulevard* in relation to the following topic:

'In *Sunset Boulevard*, Norma Desmond is revealed to be completely delusional and living in the past.'
Do you agree?

Billy Wilder's film noir *Sunset Boulevard* is a melodrama that criticises Hollywood's film industry. It features Norma Desmond, a modern 'Miss Havisham', who is unable to accept that her acting career has ended. The film follows her growing obsession with Joe Gillis, an unlucky screenwriter who becomes increasingly captivated by the lifestyle that Norma can provide. Always lurking in the shadows of the Sunset Boulevard mansion is Max von Mayerling, whose role in the film becomes more complex as it progresses. While it is clear that Norma clings to her past success, the audience learns that her delusions are fed by the Hollywood men who surround her.

Before the audience meets Norma, they are introduced to her decaying Sunset Boulevard mansion. As Joe drives his prized contemporary 'Plymouth convertible' into the garage, it is contrasted with Norma's vintage Isotta Fraschini. Wilder uses the contrast between these cars to symbolise their owners, in particular the outdated owner of the antique. A sense of mystique is developed as Joe's narration observes that the house reminds him of that of Miss Havisham, a character in Charles Dickens' *Great Expectations* who is

Opening sentence succinctly introduces the text, text type and main message.

Expresses the main idea in the topic in different words.

Introduction concludes with a nuanced contention.

Refers to an important setting.

Aim to refer to the text creator(s) and their choices regularly.

unable to move on from her wedding day. Those watching this film in the 1950s when it was released would have been keenly aware of this reference, as Dickens' novel was less than ninety years old at the time and considered a classic. When the cameras bring the audience inside the mansion, the true parallels become clear. From the brightly lit exterior, the scenes filmed inside are suddenly shrouded in darkness. Sparse lights are used to highlight an interior stuck in a bygone era. Ruffled sheer curtains, tassels, candelabras and ornate patterns richly adorn the rooms. At the centre of it all is a woman clothed in black and wearing a turban, who states, 'I've made up my mind, we'll bury him in the garden'. The pervasive imagery of death reflects her long-lost stardom.

Including limited discussion about the intended audience can be appropriate.

As this text is a film, it is important to refer to techniques specific to filmmaking.

Aim to include a mix of sentence types. While complex sentences can improve the flow of your writing, you should also include simple sentences.

As Wilder reveals more about the dramatic actor, it becomes apparent that she continues to pursue the fame she found in the silent film industry. This is best depicted through her posed facial expressions and desire to be bathed in the spotlight. Regardless of what she is talking about, Norma displays the most exaggerated expressions. She tilts her face up, arches her eyebrows and snarls. Her motivation in the film is shared with Joe. What she plans is not a 'comeback', but her 'return' to her fans, who never forgave her for 'deserting the screen'. Indeed, her behaviour suggests that she feels there is a camera on her at all times. In a key scene, she accosts film director Cecil B DeMille at Paramount Studios. As she moves around the set, stagehands and lighting engineers recognise her and plunge her back into the limelight that she craves. However, this is juxtaposed with the montage that follows, depicting Norma's beauty regime. Wilder uses an extreme close-up shot of Norma through a magnifying glass, intending to shock the audience with the face of a middle-aged woman. While the former scene reflects the past fame that Norma craves, the latter depicts the cold reality of Hollywood and its exacting beauty standards. Thanks to her headstrong nature, Norma chooses to believe that all the adulation is real and will lead to her next great role.

Short sentences can provide some relief. Remember to vary the length of sentences.

A range of linking words is used throughout the essay.

Ultimately, these delusions that fuel Norma's behaviour are revealed to be the result of the manipulations of the men in her life. The chief of these is Max, who seems omnipresent in the film, always appearing from the shadows. Joe slowly learns the truth behind Norma's extravagant lifestyle and fabulous plans: it is Max who is feeding her delusions. The first clue comes when Joe ascertains that Max has been writing the 'fan letters' still regularly received by the actor. Towards the climax of the film, Joe confronts Max and calls out 'the lies' that Norma is being fed. At this point, Wilder reveals a plot twist: Max is Norma's ex-husband and he 'made her a star'. At its core, it is this notion of making 'a star' that *Sunset Boulevard* is criticising. The filmmakers want their audience to realise that the Hollywood stars are all built on false narratives and shady characters. There is nothing special about Norma,

Using precise vocabulary can help you to achieve marks in the upper range.

or any of the other stars in Hollywood. It is all fantasy. At the end of the film this is put in stark relief when Norma is coaxed downstairs by Max and the police. Her former director continues to pull the strings by treating the situation like a film set: 'Alright. Cameras, action!' Norma struts down the staircase in character, approaching the camera for her 'close-up'. However, just like all of the stories that she has been told throughout the film, the idea that her film career is about to be revived is a lie.

If Betty Schaefer *knows* 'all the plots', it is evident that Norma Desmond *believes* them all. *Sunset Boulevard* paints a portrait of an ageing celebrity who trusts that all the fanfare surrounding her status is true. Yet the filmmakers' message is that audiences should see through the glamour of Hollywood, and recognise its stars as humans who are often manipulated and used by the industry. Knowing the difference between manufactured images and reality is a lesson that remains current and important for audiences watching the film today.

A short, full sentence quote towards the end of your paragraph can set your writing apart. But avoid trying this in your first body paragraph.

The conclusion focuses mainly on authorial intention, rather than on merely summarising the essay's argument.

Essay editing checklist

Use the following checklist to help you edit your essay.

- ☐ You have underlined the title of the text (or, if your essay is typed, used italics).
- ☐ You have accurately spelled key words, including character and place names.
- ☐ You have capitalised names of people and places, including the text's creator(s).
- ☐ You have written in present tense throughout essay.
- ☐ You have avoided the first-person voice: 'I', 'me', 'we' and 'us'.
- ☐ You have avoided contractions (e.g. 'can't', 'mustn't'), replacing them with the full forms (e.g. 'cannot', 'must not').
- ☐ You have avoided clichés, colloquial expressions, abbreviations and informal vocabulary (except in quotations).
- ☐ Every paragraph contains a clear topic sentence.
- ☐ Every paragraph includes relevant textual evidence.

Scan the code or click **here** to see a mind map and an essay on *Oedipus the King*.

SECTION 2

Area of Study 2 in Unit 3: Creating texts

This area of study focuses on the craft of writing and your ability to create original texts. You will:

+ write two original texts, drawing on your study of a key idea and mentor texts
+ produce a set of annotations to accompany your writing, explaining your authorial choices.

(See page 233 for an overview of assessment for Units 3 and 4.)

Key ideas and mentor texts

In Unit 3, Area of Study 2, you will study one of the key ideas in the Framework of Ideas specified by the VCAA. These are the four key ideas:

- Writing about country
- Writing about personal journeys
- Writing about play
- Writing about protest.

For each key idea, there are four associated mentor texts. You will study at least three of these, as well as possibly other supplementary texts connected to the key idea.

This chapter gives an overview of each key idea and its associated mentor texts. It presents advice on and examples of how you might explore the key idea and draw on features of the mentor texts in your own writing.
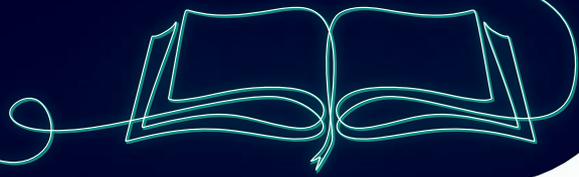
Writing about country

The ideas sparked by the word **country** could relate to physical landscapes, or to nations, or to rural areas, farming and the impact of climate change. If you are studying this key idea, you'll read mentor and supplementary texts that address different concepts of country. You will think about ideas such as connection, dispossession, dislocation, belonging and nostalgia. You'll also discover the ways that different groups view the concept of country, and how this might affect interactions between races and cultures.

The two most common definitions of country are:

- an area of land that is an independent political unit, with its own government; a nation
- land that is not in towns, cities or industrial areas, which is either used for farming or left in its natural state.

However, as you unpack the ideas associated with 'country', you will discover that they do not just relate to physical and concrete things, but include emotional and philosophical concepts as well.

The experiences of First Nations peoples feature prominently in two of the mentor texts, and investigating their concepts of country will play an important role in your exploration of this idea. For First Nations Australians, the term 'country' (often capitalised, as 'Country') has a far broader and deeper meaning than the English dictionary definition. It is a word used to describe the lands, waterways and seas to which First Nations peoples are connected. The term contains complex ideas about law, place, custom, language, spiritual belief, cultural practice, material sustenance, family and identity.

Mentor texts

The four mentor texts for this key idea are listed below. You will work closely with at least three of these texts, as well as other texts suggested by your teacher.

'Gooseberries' by Anton Chekhov	short story
The Hate Race (Chapter 2) by Maxine Beneba Clarke	memoir
'The Conquest of Land and Dream' by Yumna Kassab	essay
'Split' by Cassie Lynch	short story

Annotated mentor text: *The Hate Race*

Below is an extract from one of the mentor texts. The annotations identify some of the features and language you could draw on in your own writing about country.

Title: Chapter 2 from *The Hate Race*

Author: Maxine Beneba Clarke

Published: 2016

Form: Memoir

Main audience: Readers interested in contemporary Australian migrant experiences

Purpose: To recount and reflect

In 1976, after twenty-nine hours of travel, nine cardboard-consistency meals and two sleepless nights, racked with excitement, anxiety and anticipation, Bordeaux and Cleopatra Clarke arrived at Sydney International Airport. They disembarked wide-eyed from the enormous kangaroo-stamped jet, in the company of a hundred other tired travellers.

Use of listing to illustrate how long the journey has taken.

Their first impression of their new country was the sheer brightness: a luminous southern hemisphere sunlight they had never seen before in an impossibly clear blue sky. It was glorious, that light, as if they'd stepped suddenly out of grey, dreary Kansas into the motion-picture technicolour of Oz. Terra Australis. Endless possibility.

…

Wishing to celebrate their arrival with the obligatory English wine and cheese before finally catching some sleep, Bordeaux and Cleopatra were directed to the local bottle shop by wary hotel management. The man behind the counter immediately directed the young black couple to the cask wine section. Bordeaux and Cleopatra, who had never seen cask wine before, peered through the holes in the cardboard casks to inspect the foil bags which appeared to contain the wine. Not realising they'd been directed towards the cheap, nasty booze assumed to be their consumption of choice, they selected one of the more expensive casks and headed back to the counter.

In the adjoining Franklins supermarket, wooden crates and cardboard boxes were stacked from floor to ceiling, creating makeshift aisles which rendered navigation of their trolley an Olympic feat. Ugly black block-writing screamed the name of smallgoods across white, plastic packages. Cleopatra reached instinctively for one of the few coloured packets in the cheese section of the refrigerator. Bordeaux caught his young wife's hand mid-air, recoiling in shock. In giant blue lettering, the word COON leered at them.

Again, those beasts of doubt, waking and turning, deep in my mother's gut. *What have we done? What have we done?*

Positive imagery used initially, reflecting the hope felt by Bordeaux and Cleopatra.

Allusion to the film *The Wizard of Oz*, which famously begins in black and white then becomes brightly coloured.

Play on words that references both the magical land of Oz from *The Wizard of Oz* and the slang term for Australia.

Highlights ways in which the couple are victims of racism even when unaware of it.

The survival of the cheese brand name 'Coon' (named after a cheesemaker, EW Coon), despite protests, highlights endemic casual racism in Australia.

Metaphor vividly conveys their uncertainty and the undercurrent of danger.

Scan the code or click **here** to hear Clarke discussing *The Hate Race,* her reasons for writing it, and her writing process.

Using this mentor text

Clarke's memoir explores her childhood in Australia, and the racism that she faced growing up as young girl of Afro-Caribbean descent in a white middle-class neighbourhood. Chapter 2, the designated mentor text, focuses on her parents' arrival in Sydney from London and the initial stages of their settlement in the suburb of Kellyville. The text explores the dislocation felt by her migrant parents as they encounter a land different from both their West Indian homeland and the country (England) that they have just left behind. By using ominous brand names, evocative language and subtle hints, Clarke sets the scene for the explicit exclusion and rejection that her family experiences later.

Consider how you could explore some of the following literary features from this text in your own writing.

- **Allusion:** Can you incorporate allusion into your writing to help the reader make connections between what you are discussing and a wider context?

- **Cultural references:** Clarke uses references to popular culture and everyday products to illustrate the widespread nature of racism and foreshadow the issues her family will encounter. How can you use cultural references in your writing to convey your own messages and concerns?

- **Language choices:** Throughout the memoir, Clarke makes use of vocabulary reflecting West Indian, British and Australian influences, emphasising that she is a product of many societies. How can you incorporate language that is specific to certain places or cultures, and can you use this to suggest connection, inclusion or exclusion?

- **Showing, not telling:** While no explicit racism is discussed in this extract, it is heavily implied. The behaviour of the bottle-shop worker, the dubious name of the cheese and Cleopatra's sense of unease all combine to suggest an undercurrent of racism. In your own writing, consider how you can imply meaning rather than making everything explicit – make the reader do some work!

Using other mentor texts

You might also make use of some of the writing strategies employed in the following mentor texts.

'Gooseberries' by Anton Chekhov

Chekhov's short story explores the nature of dreams and aspirations, and encourages readers to reflect on the source of true happiness.

- **Structure:** Chekhov uses the structure of a story within a story. The ideas presented in the inner story reflect the characters in the outer story in which it is set. Structure can be used to add depth and complexity to your writing. While some narratives are best told in a linear way, consider experimenting with structure to create interest or to encourage readers to reflect on the behaviour of particular characters.

- **Imagery:** Chekhov makes extensive use of **pathetic fallacy** (attributing human traits to nature), with the weather and landscape reflecting the emotions of his characters. In your writing, consider how you can use settings to convey the feelings of characters. This could be particularly effective when writing about the environment or natural locations.

- **Mood:** From the beginning of the story, Chekhov establishes a downbeat, dreary mood, and this is maintained throughout. Note the vocabulary that is used in descriptions – 'overcast', 'dull', 'malignant', 'mournfully', 'oppressive' – and that these words have a similar tone, whether they are used to describe the weather, animals or people. Consider the mood that you want to create in your writing, and select words that help to convey this. Highlight adjectives and adverbs you have used and experiment with changing them to see how it affects the mood of the overall piece.

'The Conquest of Land and Dream' by Yumna Kassab

Kassab's essay, which was first published in the Spring 2021 issue of *Meanjin*, explores the impact of colonisation and settlement on First Nations peoples, and the settlers' ignorance of the country that they have claimed.

- **Narrative voice:** Kassab predominantly uses the second-person narrative voice, attacking the settlers by addressing them directly – 'You pound the earth', 'You do not see the land'. This gives the impression that the author is speaking directly to readers, challenging them to reflect on their own role in this dispossession. Consider who your own readers will be and how you could use narrative voice either to involve them in the narrative or to create a sense of distance that might allow them to reflect on it.

- **Pronoun use:** Note Kassab's extensive use of pronouns throughout her essay. This highlights the divisions that she focuses on, illustrating the difference between 'you', the colonising settlers, and 'they', the First Nations peoples who already occupied the land. It also works with her choices of narrative voice. Consider how you could use pronouns to include and/or exclude, and the effect of using them to replace specific names, to imply the involvement of a wider group.

- **Metaphor:** Kassab makes extensive use of metaphor throughout her essay, to illustrate the impact of colonisation. Some of these metaphors are interconnected and relate to the actions of the settlers. For example, weapon terminology appears in metaphors relating to the settlers 'protecting' themselves from the harsh reality of their behaviour. Consider how you could use metaphor to create imagery in your own writing. Aim to link your figurative language to the context and/or your messages.

'Split' by Cassie Lynch

This short story deals with the contrast between the traditional concepts of time and land, and those of the settlers who have made the city of Perth in Western Australia their home.

- **Imagery:** Lynch's language choices are very specific, creating evocative images of both urban and natural landscapes. When drafting and editing your writing, experiment with synonyms and alternative vocabulary to see how this changes the effect.

- **Magical realism:** Lynch's story is highly realistic in many ways, especially when describing the urban environment; however, she also incorporates elements of magic into her writing: a scooter drives through the body of a tiger snake, which is 'undisturbed', and dolphins inhabit underground car parks. Consider whether a clash between fantasy and reality could be effective in your own writing, especially if you want to compare different experiences of the same environment.

- **First-person narrative:** Lynch uses the first-person narrative voice for her story, taking readers on a journey through Perth and its history. Would this story be as successful if it were told in the third person? How would it change? Consider the impact of narrative voice in your own writing, and play with different voices to determine the most effective.

Explore a mentor text

1 Access one of the mentor texts for Writing about country and annotate it for language, text structures and text features. Look for:

- conventions of the text type (e.g. headings and subheadings, types of paragraphs, use of dialogue or quotes)
- ways in which the text changes or experiments with the conventions of the text type
- examples of literary techniques (e.g. imagery, repetition, assonance)
- examples of persuasive techniques (e.g. appeals, use of evidence, emotive language)
- elements that develop a sense of style or voice (e.g. use of humour or satire, unusual or interesting word choices, incorporation of words from other languages)
- words or phrases that have been selected for specific purposes (e.g. powerful verbs, evocative adjectives, nouns with positive or negative connotations).

2 Write two or three paragraphs exploring how the mentor text is connected to the idea of country.

Generating ideas about country

As you read the mentor texts and explore their literary features, think also about how they connect to ideas relating to country. You should also reflect on your own experiences and how you could incorporate them into your writing.

A graphic organiser like the one below can help you to generate ideas.

Prompts	Notes on your ideas and experiences
Where do you feel most at home? Explain what makes you feel this way.	
Which place is the most special to you? Why?	
Have you ever moved from one country to another, or to a different community? Describe your feelings before the move, and how you felt afterwards.	
What does the word 'country' mean to you personally?	

Scan the code or click here to see a list of possible supplementary texts for Writing about country.

Writing about personal journeys

Stories of **personal journeys** reflect a wide range of experiences, including personal challenges, growth and self-discovery. They can be a powerful way for you to share your unique experiences with others. It is important to consider your purpose for writing about your personal journey. It might be to argue for change, to express feelings, or to explain a situation to those who have not seen things from your perspective. At their core, these journeys all reflect something fundamental about life.

- Some will reflect **one individual person's experience**. No particular ingredients are required: everyone's story can be valuable, no matter how mundane or everyday. It is the way the story is told that can transform it into something universal and impactful.

- Stories of journeys can be shared **between family members or significant stakeholders**. The process of telling or listening to a meaningful personal story can be powerful.

- There are some journeys that many people undergo. These can result in stories that reflect **a group or community's experience**. For example, people who have migrated to Australia may have some things in common.

Mentor texts

The four mentor texts for this key idea are listed below. You will work closely with at least three of these texts, as well as other texts suggested by your teacher.

'The Danger of a Single Story' by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie	speech
'The Red Plastic Chair is a Vietnamese Cultural Institution, and My Anchor' by Amy Duong	essay
'bidngen' by Maya Hodge	autobiographical short story
Walter's speech (end of Part 1) from *The Inheritance* by Matthew López	monologue from a play

Annotated mentor text: 'bidngen'

Below is an extract from one of the mentor texts. The annotations identify some of the features and language you could draw on in your own writing about personal journeys.

Title: 'bidngen'

Author: Maya Hodge

Published: 2021

Form: Autobiographical short story, memoir

Main audience: Emerging Writers' Competition judges, readers of Australian memoir

Purpose: To express and reflect

jarde (land: Gununa)

Thuwathu created vast valleys, winding waterways and scattered landscapes. His body slithered through Country and imprinted his shape into the skin of the land. Moving through time, his presence is still embedded within rock and soul. As Ancestral Being, he is part of every Lardil person, from limb to organ, he sustains life.

Latje Latje Country (Mildura)

A little Lardil girl and her brother grow up along the winding river on Latje Latje Country and underneath the canopies of dust-coated eucalyptus. They grow up faster than most kids do in a town festering in generational racism and drugs. But on good days, they fish on the soft green slow-moving river, underneath the cool shade of the old gums they sit with aunties and uncles and breathe in the hot dirt smell.

This town is dry and beautiful and painful. These kids grew up in a crumbling house with holes in the floors and busted leaking pipes. Despite this, they stitched the house together with love.

Her mother would cook big feeds out of leftovers they had in the fridge and the coins they found under the couch cushions. This little girl grew up in a house that held heavy melancholic memories, leaving the girl with invisible scars beneath her brown skin.

Her brother held the world on his shoulders as he walked through the streets of this bitter small town with a target on his Warrior's back. He walked home in the inky black of night and found himself in a hospital bed, battered and bruised from hateful hands. The girl was awoken in the middle of the night by her scared mother, with shaking hands and the shiny whites of her eyes bright and watery. The fear she felt for him stayed with her after that night.

Lardil language is used to emphasise important concepts in the story. It reinforces the importance of language in the writer's journey.

Subheadings are used to structure this piece of writing. They bring together disparate memories and reveal how they have shaped the writer's identity.

The story within a story brings in a Dreamtime tale, reflecting the author's cultural background. 'Thuwathu' is the Lardil word for Rainbow Serpent.

Hodge orients the reader to a specific place, including some evocative descriptions.

References to the challenges of racism and drug use give further context to the setting and help to develop a sombre mood.

Hodge contrasts the challenges with positive behaviour and the natural beauty of her home town.

Another example of contrasting descriptions: from negative (dry) to positive (beautiful) and back to negative (painful).

Hodge uses a metaphor to emphasise the importance of family.

This metaphor conveys the idea that she continues to suffer from the trauma of her childhood.

Using this mentor text

Hodge's autobiographical short story explores the role that culture, place and memories have played in shaping her identity. The text shifts between the challenges and the positive elements she encountered growing up in Mildura.

In your own writing, consider how you could make use of some of the strategies used in this text.

- **Subheadings:** Would it be a good idea to use subheadings to create sections that also develop connections between different types of content?

- **Languages other than English:** Can you make purposeful use of vocabulary from other languages, particularly to express an idea that cannot be easily communicated through English?

- **Stories within stories:** Are there childhood or cultural stories that you can summarise to provide background to your story?

- **Imagery (e.g. metaphor):** Can you express the feelings and experiences in your story in a unique way, using language that is not clichéd?

Using other mentor texts

You could also consider using some of the writing strategies that are employed in the following mentor texts.

'The Danger of a Single Story' by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie

Adichie's speech argues for more diverse storytelling, with a focus on stories from the African continent.

- **Personal anecdotes:** Can you recall (and embellish) critical moments from your childhood or that of a close relative?

- **Thesis statements:** To illustrate messages in your memories, consider interweaving them with strong statements of opinion.

- **Humour:** How can you use humour to lighten the mood of your writing? Comic relief can help to keep readers engaged.

'The Red Plastic Chair is a Vietnamese Cultural Institution, and My Anchor' by Amy Duong

Duong's essay explores and reflects on her identity as a Vietnamese Australian.

- **Cultural references:** Is there a cultural artifact or ritual that you can use to reflect an idea or feeling?

- **Characterisation:** How can you build a description of the most important individual in your writing? Consider describing their habits and interests, as Duong does when she describes her Aunty (Tua Ee).

- **Self-reflection:** Duong reflects on her limited proficiency in Teochew and Vietnamese languages. Can you identify one of your own unique characteristics that you might explore in your writing?

Walter's speech (end of Part 1) from *The Inheritance* by Matthew López

López's monologue expresses the pain and frustration of living through the AIDS crisis in New York City.

- **Descriptions of setting:** López conveys a strong sense of the energy and dynamism of New York City. How can you describe the setting of your story, to give the reader a powerful impression of place?

- **Symbolism:** The cherry tree is a symbol of stability and survival in Walter's speech. Try to include a significant symbol in your writing. This can be particularly powerful if it appears at a critical moment.

- **Shifts in tone:** Aim to evoke different emotions and feelings at various points in your writing. This can help to maintain your reader's interest.

Generating ideas about personal journeys

Regardless of the style of writing that you choose for your assessment, there will be an opportunity for you to draw on your own experiences. Consider the following examples of personal journeys.

- **A travel experience:** Have you visited a place that holds special meaning to you? Perhaps you were arriving somewhere new for the first time; or it might be meaningful because you travel to this place regularly or used to live there when you were younger.

- **A turning point in your life:** Moments such as migrating to a new country or moving house are important if you can identify ways in which the event changed you.

- **Rites of passage:** Within your family, friendship group or a wider community there may be rituals, ceremonies and traditions that are milestones on your journey of growing up.

- **A formative memory:** A memory sometimes illustrates a fundamental truth about life. It could be your recollection of something that had a big impact on your childhood or adolescence, or perhaps a family member's story that is frequently shared.

Brainstorm personal journeys

Using the questions in the table below, continue to brainstorm personal journeys that have been important to you and other significant people in your life.

Travel	Turning point
Where do you travel frequently?	Do you remember coming to Australia, or travelling to an unfamiliar place, for the first time?
What is the most interesting trip that you have had?	Has a friendship ended, leading you to forge new friendships?
What object can you not travel without?	Have you experienced any challenges that changed you?
Who do you enjoy, or not enjoy, travelling with? Why?	

Rites of passage	Formative memory
In your community, are there important rites of passage?	Is there a story you remember from childhood that has had a big impact on your life since?
Where do these rites take place? Do they occur at a particular time of the year?	Does someone else in your family have such a story?
What are the traditions that accompany these rites of passage?	What was the outcome and how did this change the course of the individual's life?

Explore features of personal journeys

While a personal journey does not have a set structure, there are some common features that you can consider in planning your own writing. Select the most compelling personal journey you have identified so far and follow the planning process outlined below.

Features of personal journeys	Instructions
Place: Journeys are tied closely to places. Indeed, journeys usually have an origin and a destination.	Describe a few unique elements of the place or places that feature in your memory.
Cultural context: All memories exist within a specific cultural context, including references to language, beliefs and traditions.	Introduce and explain any cultural references that will not be understood by all Australians.
People: Plan to limit your writing to one central person (such as yourself) and perhaps one or two others.	List a few characteristics of the central person, including physical features and personality.
Challenges: These can include someone holding a different opinion; terrible weather; miscommunication; limited time; physical danger; limited resources (e.g. money); getting lost; or losing something or someone important.	Identify a challenge and describe the mood it created.
Growth: The journey might conclude with a reflection on how the central person experienced growth, perhaps because they overcame a challenge. **Self-discovery**: At a deeper level, perhaps the central person discovered something new about themselves.	Reflect on the growth and/or self-discovery experienced by the central person in the journey and articulate this as a statement.

Scan the code or click **here** to see a list of possible supplementary texts for Writing about personal journeys.

Writing about play

When you think about the word **play**, you might think of children and the activities they do for fun. But when studying this key idea you will encounter mentor and supplementary texts that deal with a much broader sense of what it means to play.

You might read texts about playing sport, playing a musical instrument, playing a character in a theatre production, or playing video games or board games. Other texts might relate to adults 'playing games' in an idiomatic sense (e.g. being deceptive, or not taking a situation seriously), or could be about people who are hiding an aspect of themselves from the world so they feel they are playing a part, in the theatrical sense. The texts themselves might be playful, experimenting with language or using it in interesting and unusual ways.

Reflect on play

1 Use the graphic organiser below to start developing ideas about play.

Questions about play	Ideas and examples from your life
Which games did you like to play as a child? Did you play any that you kept secret?	
Where did you play as a child? Was there always someone watching over you, or were you allowed to play on your own?	
When you see children play now, how do you feel? Why?	
Which sports do you like playing? Why?	
Do you play a musical instrument? Which instrument would you like to be able to play?	

Questions about play	Ideas and examples from your life
Do you like performing in front of an audience? Why or why not?	
What roles do you play in your life? Do you behave differently in the classroom from the way you behave with your friends or family?	
Have you ever felt that someone was playing with you, i.e. not taking you seriously?	

2 Play a game as a whole class (e.g. a 'rock, paper, scissors' tournament or a scavenger hunt). Afterwards, discuss what you noticed while playing. Consider these questions:

• Did people work together?

• How did people demonstrate competitiveness?

• Which elements of the game were fun?

• Was anyone left out? Did someone take charge?

• Did it make you think differently about the idea of play?

Mentor texts

The four mentor texts for this key idea are listed below. You will work closely with at least three of these texts, as well as other texts suggested by your teacher.

Monologue from *Cyrano* by Virginia Gay	monologue from a play
'An Open Letter to Doubting Thomas' by Chelsea Roffey	letter
'All That We Know of Dreaming' by Penni Russon	short story
'About the Boys' by Tim Winton	extract from a speech

Annotated mentor text: Monologue from *Cyrano*

On the next page is an extract from one of the mentor texts. The annotations identify some of the features and language you could draw on in your own writing about play.

Title: Monologue from *Cyrano*

Author: Virginia Gay

Published: 2021

Form: Dramatic monologue

Main audience: Australian theatre-goers who enjoy romantic comedies

Purpose: To express, to amuse

I want to take you to every restaurant in the city. Every single one. And we'll say to the waiters, 'Just bring us what *you* think the best food is. No, no, no, don't tell us. Just *bring* it to us.' I want to take you to a museum in Amsterdam. I want to kiss your neck amongst the Rembrandts. The marble that looks like flesh – how did they do that? Butterflies in stone with transparent wings.

Let's go to a cabin in the woods together. Can it be a log cabin? Has to be a log cabin, right? Let's get very rich and own a log cabin. Let's own several and give them away to friends. And also let's never get rich. Let's always work and know the worth of our work. Let's get our hands dirty and sleep well at night.

Hey – do you snore? I mean, I guess we'll find out.

Let's have a garden. Yeah. Let's have a garden! With a big old table out the back and we'll throw a sheet over it and serve up lamb we cooked for hours. Except you're a vegetarian. You told me that. We'll serve up eggplant we cooked for hours and then we'll invite everybody over and they'll drink wine and laugh and none of them will leave, and at 3am we'll reluctantly call some of them cabs and the rest of them we'll wedge about the house. The sofa here. The window seat there. Little corner of the kids' room (sweep the lego out of the way with a foot). Roll them in, covered in coats, cause we've run out of blankets.

Kids. I did say kids just then, didn't I? Um, look, maybe we could talk about this later, it's just I'm on national television at the moment, but yeah, kids. Okay.

Annotations:

Dialogue, which contributes to characterisation, is incorporated into the monologue.

Questions help to build a sense of curiosity and playfulness.

Use of incomplete sentence adds to the sense of intimacy and informality between the speaker and the person they are addressing, as well as with the audience.

Repetition helps to establish a rhythm.

Humorous aside suggests the relationship between these two people is new, as they are still learning things about each other.

Listing suggests abundance, and creates a cosy image of a family home.

Additional small details make the scenario more realistic and specific.

The speaker's awareness of the audience ('breaking the fourth wall') adds to the playfulness of the monologue.

Scan the code or click here to access the video of Virginia Gay performing this monologue.

Using this mentor text

This monologue, performed and written by Gay, later became a dialogue between two lovers in her full-length play, *Cyrano*. The monologue explores the joy and tension of falling in love, and plays with possibility and hope for the future. Gay uses a stream-of-consciousness style of writing to list the experiences she hopes to have in this relationship, directly asking questions of the audience as if they are the lover to whom she is speaking.

There is a playfulness not only to the tone, but also within the words and phrases themselves, as Gay encourages her audience to see the beauty in the everyday.

You might like to consider how you could draw on elements of this monologue in your own writing.

- **Lists:** Can you connect a series of ideas or experiences together in a section of your writing?

- **Slang:** Would using informal or slang words add authenticity to your writing?

- **Speaking directly to the audience:** Are there points within your piece where you could address readers directly, or ask them a question?

- **Imagery:** Can you include descriptions that draw on all five of the senses, to enhance the objects and experiences you're writing about?

Using other mentor texts

You can also consider the writing strategies employed in the following mentor texts.

'An Open Letter to Doubting Thomas' by Chelsea Roffey

Roffey reflects on the challenges of being a woman in a male-dominated profession.

- **Conversational tone:** Use of a casual and informal tone can help to establish a rapport with your audience.

- **Humour:** The author incorporates humour throughout the piece, often using self-deprecation and irony to keep the reader entertained.

- **Anecdotes:** Roffey shares personal experiences and stories to illustrate her message and create a deeper connection with the reader.

'All That We Know of Dreaming' by Penni Russon

Russon's story focuses on family and domesticity, as well as their darker undercurrents.

- **Figurative language:** Like Russon, try using figurative language, such as similes and metaphors, to paint vivid pictures for the reader.

- **Developing characters' interior worlds:** Russon explores her protagonist's innermost thoughts and emotions, helping the reader to empathise and connect with her.

- **Themes and motifs:** Russon's story revolves around themes of connection, dreams and memory. Identify the specific themes and motifs you want to explore in your own writing and weave them through your narrative.

'About the Boys' by Tim Winton

Winton examines the ways in which a patriarchal society damages boys and young men.

- **Short sentences:** Like Winton, you could aim to build tension and create evocative lists through short sentences.

- **Anecdotes and personal observations:** Winton draws on his own experiences and interactions with young men to make his message more accessible and relatable.

- **A focus on larger social issues:** Winton explores the consequences of such large-scale issues as racism and misogyny in a thoughtful and compassionate manner.

Reflect on a mentor text

In pairs, discuss how Gay's text is connected to the idea of play. What can you guess or infer about the person the speaker is talking to? Do you have similar dreams for your future? What are some similar fun activities or experiences you have had?

Generating ideas about play

Hopefully the mentor texts have given you plenty of ideas for how you might write a piece focused on this key idea. Below are some further suggestions.

- Use the word 'play' to search for images online. Choose three images to inspire your writing then make notes about how they are connected to the key idea, what they make you think about and how they make you feel.

- Using a music app, find a playlist you like by searching for key words connected to the idea of play, such as 'amusement', 'playful' or 'competition'. Listen to the playlist, and complete a free-writing activity, using the music as inspiration.

- Take some time to observe others playing. Visit a playground, skate park or games arcade. What do you notice about how people interact? What can you imagine about their lives, relationships or experiences, based on how they play?

- Read more widely – look at the supplementary texts linked below, or find your own. Think about films or television shows that relate to this key idea; podcasts or audio dramas about play; or songs and artworks you like or are inspired by. What new ideas do they give you? How do they make you feel? How do they change your perspective?

Scan the code or click **here** to see a list of possible supplementary texts for Writing about play.

Writing about protest

When we think about **protest**, we usually picture public demonstrations and speeches or marching crowds with banners. Yet there are many different ways to protest, as an individual or as part of a larger group, and many reasons why people feel compelled to do so. Protests begin with individuals deciding to take a stand on an issue and can grow into national or worldwide movements.

The desire or need to protest and demand change can stem from personal experience or just a gut feeling that something is immoral, unethical or unjust. Some common motivations include:

- personal grievances – an individual's concerns or complaints about a local or personal situation

- social change – an objection to how people are treated within the community, aimed at raising awareness and suggesting alternatives

- political change – putting pressure on elected officials, holding them accountable for problems and demanding legislative change.

Protest is often a way to speak truth to power – a nonviolent way to oppose oppressive government actions. The right to assemble and the right to free speech and expression are important elements of democracy. Protest is, above all, an appeal for change, whose goal is often social progress, better governance and a safer, more inclusive world.

Without courageous activists making personal sacrifices and taking a stand, even when faced with severe consequences, there is often no social progress and those in power are not held responsible for their actions.

Mentor texts

Below is a list of the four mentor texts assigned by the VCAA for the study of this key idea. You will use at least three of these in class as models of effective writing to inspire you to write your own texts. Your teacher may also supplement these with additional short texts.

'Friday Essay: On the Sydney Mardi Gras March of 1978' by Mark Gillespie	essay
'Freedom or Death' by Emmeline Pankhurst	speech
'Harrison Bergeron' by Kurt Vonnegut	short story
Monologue from *City of Gold* by Meyne Wyatt	monologue from a play

Annotated mentor text: Monologue from *City of Gold*

Below is an extract from one of the mentor texts. The annotations identify some of the features and language you could draw on in your own writing about protest.

Title: Monologue from *City of Gold*

Author: Meyne Wyatt

Published: 2020

Form: Monologue from a play

Main audience: Australian theatre-goers and television viewers, especially those interested in First Nations experiences and issues

Purpose: To reflect, express and argue

I'm always going to be your *black* friend, aren't I? That's all anybody ever sees.

> Wyatt opens with a rhetorical question and repeats this technique throughout, to confront the audience with the discrimination the speaker faces.

I'm never just an actor. I'm an Indigenous actor. I love reppin', but I don't hear old Joe Bloggs being called white Anglo-Saxon actor blah-di-blah.

> Colloquial language throughout the piece gives it authenticity. ('Repping', in this context, means 'representing', i.e. the speaker feels he is viewed as representative of First Nations peoples.)

I'm always in the black show, the black play. I'm always the angry one, the tracker, the drinker, the thief.

> The listing and repetition here builds the argument, highlighting barriers and stereotypes.

But sometimes I just want to be seen for my talent, not my skin colour, not my race. I hate being a token. Some box to tick, part of some diversity angle.

➡ 'Oh, what are you whingeing for? You're not a real one anyway. You're only part.'

Well what part, then? My foot? My arm? My leg? You're either black or you're not. You want to do a DNA test? Come suck my blood.

'Well, how are we to move forward if we dwell on the past?' That's your privilege. You get to ask that question. Ours is we can dance and we're good at sport. You go to weddings, we go to funerals.

No, no, no, no, you're not your ancestors. It's not your fault you have white skin. But you do benefit from it. You can be okay. I have to be exceptional. I mess up, I'm done. There's no path back for me. There's no road to redemption.

Being black and 'successful' comes at a cost. You take a hit whether you like it or not. Because you want your blacks quiet and humble.

You can't stand up, you have to sit down. Ask the brother-boy Adam Goodes. A kid says some racist shit. Not ignorant! Racist! Calling a black fella an ape. C'mon man we was flora and fauna before 1967, nah actually we didn't even exist at all.

This was a learning moment. He taught that kid a lesson. But did they like that? A black man standing up for himself? Nah, they didn't like that.

Annotations (right margin):

Part of the monologue is a dialogue that includes rebuttal of the speaker's critics and antagonists, or society as a whole.

Wyatt takes the monologue from the personal to the political by referencing elements of the wider social context – namely, the higher rate of deaths in custody and the lower life expectancy of First Nations peoples.

This is an allusion to the AFL footballer who spoke out against the racism he endured on the sporting field.

This refers to the 1967 Australian referendum that asked citizens to vote on whether First Nations peoples should be counted as part of the population. Before this they were not counted in the census and did not have equal rights as citizens, suggesting they were not viewed as human.

Scan the code or click **here** to access the video of Meyne Wyatt performing this monologue.

Using this mentor text

Born in 1989, Meyne Wyatt is a First Nations actor and writer. This monologue is taken from his 2019 play *City of Gold.* His performance of the monologue on ABC's *Q+A* went viral in June 2020. The play focuses on Breythe Black, a Wongutha-Yamatji man. He leaves Kalgoorlie in Western Australia in an attempt to launch his acting career, but is called back home when his father dies. Wyatt's play is an exploration of how grief, culture and racism intersect. Some of the features of the monologue you might use in your own writing include the following.

- **Voice:** The more passionate you are, the more engaged the audience will be and the more persuasive and convincing your argument. Infuse your writing with a tone that conveys how you genuinely feel (e.g. angry, outraged or sorrowful).

- **Structure:** As monologues capture an individual's inner dialogue, your writing style can reflect the way that you think (stream-of-consciousness writing) or be unfiltered, conversational and colloquial, like everyday speech. Yet your piece still needs some structure. For instance, you could build your protest around the criticisms or barriers you face, to develop a strong theme. Like Wyatt, you could begin with the problem and build to a solution or a call for change. Use deliberate pauses and line breaks for emphasis. You could use a rhythm similar to a slam poem or a rap rather than a traditional speech.

- **Literary techniques:** Although this piece uses casual language, other purposeful devices elevate the writing. Rhetorical questions are an effective way to engage an audience and confront listeners with your arguments. Consider using alliteration or rhyme to emphasise key points. You might also refer to recent social or cultural events to give your issue a wider context.

Using other mentor texts

You could also consider using some of the writing strategies employed in the following mentor texts.

'Freedom or Death' by Emmeline Pankhurst

Emmeline Pankhurst (1858–1928) was a leader of the British suffragette movement, advocating for women's right to vote. Her famous 'Freedom or Death' speech was delivered in Hartford, Connecticut, USA on 13 November 1913.

- **Voice:** What makes Pankhurst's speech so persuasive is her distinctive voice. She commands respect (all the more remarkable at a time when women were not encouraged to speak publicly). Her tone is calm and measured, despite the obvious frustrations and obstacles she has endured.

- **Audience:** Pankhurst strategically appeals to men, to get their support, as well as to political leaders who could change legislation. Her speech also serves as inspiration for female listeners. For your protest, consider who the stakeholders are and who has the power to change things. You might tailor your arguments and language for this audience but could also consider multiple audiences, as Pankhurst does, simultaneously appealing to your adversaries while empowering and inspiring your allies.

- **Structure:** Pankhurst's rebuttals, pre-empting criticisms or counterattacks, give the speech much of its shape and momentum. She lists her credentials as a leader in the suffragette movement (i.e. ethos: presenting the speaker's values, credentials and authority). She explores the suffering endured by women who have been ignored, imprisoned, force-fed or starved (pathos: eliciting the audience's emotions and compassion). She appeals to the audience's reason (logos) with logical arguments: women are simply adopting the same tactics as men and are just as capable.

- **Extended metaphor:** Pankhurst's speech includes references to 'soldiers' and 'warfare', presenting her ideas through familiar analogies and implicitly demanding the respect her audience would give to a military leader. To avoid your writing being too literal, repetitive or dull, consider adopting a similar technique. War is an effective metaphor for protest, but there are numerous alternatives (e.g. climbing a mountain, cooking a meal, giving birth or creating a work of art).

'Friday Essay: On the Sydney Mardi Gras March of 1978' by Mark Gillespie

Mark Gillespie is an anthropologist and educator who marched with the 'Original 78ers' at the first Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras.

- **Structure:** Gillespie's focus shifts between the past and the present throughout. This allows the author to contextualise the initial 1978 protest and make connections with the current LGBTQIA+ movement. The concluding paragraphs return to the question raised in the introduction: whether a formal apology from the government is warranted. This ties the essay's ideas together and underpins its purpose: meaningful social change.

- **Audience:** Gillespie's intended audience is broad; the piece works to inform those who may be ignorant of the topic as well as those already interested in it. It highlights the historical work of queer elders for younger generations. Consider exploring a protest from the past and connecting it with the present, conveying the progress that has been made but also the importance of maintaining the fight.

- **Anecdotes and evidence:** Gillespie's piece is effective because it captures a firsthand experience, using specific details and incidents, in an authentic voice. He uses purposefully chosen emotive language, imagery, repetition and colloquial language. If you've ever attended a protest in person or contributed to a social justice movement online, you could tell your story of that experience. Otherwise, you could see yourself as a historian, archivist or journalist: research a past protest and present these facts to inform your audience.

'Harrison Bergeron' by Kurt Vonnegut

'Harrison Bergeron' is a dystopian short story by American writer Kurt Vonnegut, first published in 1961. The narrative focuses on totalitarian rulers in the near future who go to absurd lengths to maintain their power and discourage dissent.

- **Setting:** Writing in the 1960s, Vonnegut sets his story in the year 2081. He avoids naming a specific city, state or political party, which suggests his story could be set anywhere in the world. The ordinary domestic setting – a couple sitting in front of the television at home, typically a safe and private space – is contrasted with the sadistic intrusion of a totalitarian regime. Consider what Australia or the world might look like in 100 years' time. Then contemplate the worst-case scenario.

- **Structure:** The story's linear narrative follows the traditional structure of exposition, rising action, climax and resolution. Short stories often focus on a brief moment in time: consider creating a snapshot that reveals the importance of protest or the consequences of remaining silent.

- **Narration:** The story's omnipotent third-person narrator is somewhat detached from the other characters, showing readers the bigger picture that characters such as George and Hazel cannot see. Vonnegut employs a satirical tone to illustrate a tragic point.

Annotate a text

Choose one of the three mentor texts discussed on pages 105–6. Select a passage of between 300 and 500 words. Annotate the passage, following the example on pages 103–4.

Generating ideas about protest

As you read the mentor texts and explore their literary features, think about how they connect to ideas relating to protest. You should also reflect on your own experiences and how you could incorporate them into your writing.

A graphic organiser like the one below can help you to generate ideas.

Prompts	Notes
What does the word 'protest' mean to you?	
Why is protesting important? What are the consequences of doing nothing or staying silent?	
Have you ever been personally discriminated against, stereotyped or misjudged? Have you faced any injustice in your life?	
Have you ever protested, taken a stand or objected to something? What motivated you? Why was this important?	
Who inspires you? Are there any political leaders or activists who appeal to you? What do they stand for? Why are they so effective?	
What makes you angry or sad about the world today?	
Who do you think are the most ignored, marginalised or mistreated people in our community? Why do you think this is? What needs to be done about this?	
If you could change one thing about the way our society or world is run, what would it be?	
What is the best way to appeal to others and get their support for your cause?	

Discuss protest

1 Make notes in the graphic organiser above or in your workbook, answering the stimulus questions.

2 Discuss your answers with a partner. What did you agree on? Which questions did you answer differently? Why do you think this might be?
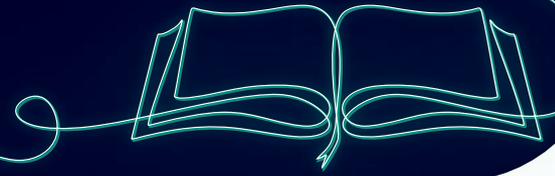
Scan the code or click **here** to see a list of possible supplementary texts for Writing about protest.

Writing, drafting and editing

In this chapter, you will learn how to plan, write, draft and edit texts for Unit 3, Outcome 2. For the SAC, you will need to create two texts, and annotate one or both of these with comments on your writing process.

Understanding purpose

The **purpose** of a text is 'what the author sets out to achieve for the audience, when reading, listening to or viewing the text' (VCAA 2023 English/EAL Study Design). There are four main purposes: **to express**, **to explain**, **to reflect** and **to argue**.

The table below presents definitions of each of these broad categories of purpose, with examples of text types that could achieve each purpose.

Purpose	Definition	Text types
To express	to convey your thoughts and feelings, usually creatively	short stories, scripts, monologues, poems, songs, journal entries, speeches, letters, recounts
To explain	to make an idea or thought clear by describing it to someone, usually providing reasons and evidence, and examining cause and effect	essays, blog posts, feature articles, speeches, podcasts
To reflect	to think deeply about something, usually your own personal experience	journal entries, letters, speeches, memoirs, biographies, blog posts, recounts
To argue	to give reasons in support of an opinion or idea, usually to persuade someone to share your point of view on an issue or topic, often also offering solutions	essays, opinion pieces, blog posts, speeches, podcasts, letters

Remember that a text may have more than one purpose.

Identify purpose

In the table below, add the mentor texts you are studying and place ticks in the cells that match their purpose(s). You may tick more than one purpose for each text.

Mentor text	To express	To explain	To reflect	To argue

For examples of writing for different purposes, see Chapter 11.

Writing for an audience

In the SAC for this outcome and in the exam, the audience you are writing for might be specified, or you may be able to select an audience. When thinking about a specific audience you will need to consider:

- age (e.g. children, teenagers, young adults, adults, elderly people)
- gender
- location (e.g. local, national, specific country)
- job
- social roles (e.g. parents, community leaders)
- interests (e.g. people who play a musical instrument)
- background (e.g. people who have migrated to Australia, people who grew up in a rural area).

Different audiences will respond differently to a particular idea. They will also have different responses to the style and language of a written piece. Consider the following examples.

- An audience of teenagers and young adults might be more persuaded by informal and colloquial language.
- An audience of people interested in gardening might respond more positively to metaphors and similes involving flowers and growing plants.
- An audience of second-language learners might appreciate shorter sentences and clear, simple language choices.

When you are writing your two texts for this outcome, you need to consider your audience for each piece, and the style and language you should choose in order to persuade or get a positive response from this particular group.

Identify audience characteristics

1 Look at the extracts from mentor texts, below, and identify who you think the main audience might be. Use the list on page 109 to be as specific as possible.

Mentor text	Extract	Audience	What information suggests that this is the audience?
'Freedom or Death' by Emmeline Pankhurst	Now, I want to say to you who think women cannot succeed, we have brought the government of England to this position, that it has to face this alternative: either women are to be killed or women are to have the vote. I ask American men in this meeting, what would you say if in your state you were faced with that alternative, that you must either kill them or give them their citizenship?		
Monologue from *City of Gold* by Meyne Wyatt	'How are we to move forward if we dwell on the past?' That's your privilege. You get to ask that question. Ours is we can dance and we're good at sport. You go to weddings, we go to funerals. No, no, no, no, you're not your ancestors. It's not your fault you have white skin. But you do benefit from it.		

Mentor text	Extract	Audience	What information suggests that this is the audience?
'About the Boys' by Tim Winton	But before any of that is possible we need to attend to them. Yes, boys need their unexamined privilege curtailed. Just as they need certain proscribed privileges and behaviours made available to them. But the first step is to notice them. To find them worthy of our interest.		
'An Open Letter to Doubting Thomas' by Chelsea Roffey	Dear Thomas, Where has the time gone? The past decade as an AFL umpire has flown, and there's one question that continues to surface, second only to 'Are you allowed to date the players?' The question is: 'What barriers have you faced as a female in a male domain?'		

2 Below are some potential audiences. Identify some possible stylistic or language choices you might make to suit each audience. The first one has been done for you.

Audience	Style and language choices
Parents who want to keep their children safe, and avoid harm	• hyperbolic or exaggerated language describing the dangers children are exposed to • second-person pronouns • modal verbs (e.g. could, should, must) • formal language to provide facts and evidence, to convey the writer's authority
Teenagers who like studying science	

Audience	Style and language choices
Adults who have recently travelled overseas	
Young women who want to play AFL	

Writing in a context

When you consider your audience, you will also need to think about the context of your piece of writing. For example, consider:

- what type of writing it is
- where it might be published
- when it might be published
- the circumstances in which it is written.

Examples of possible contexts include:

- a speech given at a school assembly at a Melbourne secondary school
- a blog post published in 2011 and updated in 2021
- a poem appearing on a poster in a train
- a short story published in an American newspaper in 1900
- a journal entry published after the writer's death in 2024
- a monologue streamed online during Melbourne's lockdown in 2021.

Identify elements of context

1 Identify the different elements of the context of the mentor texts listed below. The first one has been done for you.

Mentor text	Context
Monologue from *City of Gold* by Meyne Wyatt	• a monologue performed out loud • performed on ABC television program *Q+A*, a political discussion show, then published on YouTube • performed in June 2020

Monologue from *Cyrano* by Virginia Gay	
Chapter 2 of *The Hate Race* by Maxine Beneba Clarke	
'bidngen' by Maya Hodge	

2 Brainstorm three other possible contexts you might choose for your own writing.

	Text type	Place of publication	Time of publication	Relevant circumstances
Example 1				
Example 2				
Example 3				

Planning

The first step to successfully creating your texts for this unit is to write a plan. Even if you already have a great idea of what you want to write, planning will help you refine your ideas. Use the activities in this section to inspire your brainstorming and planning.
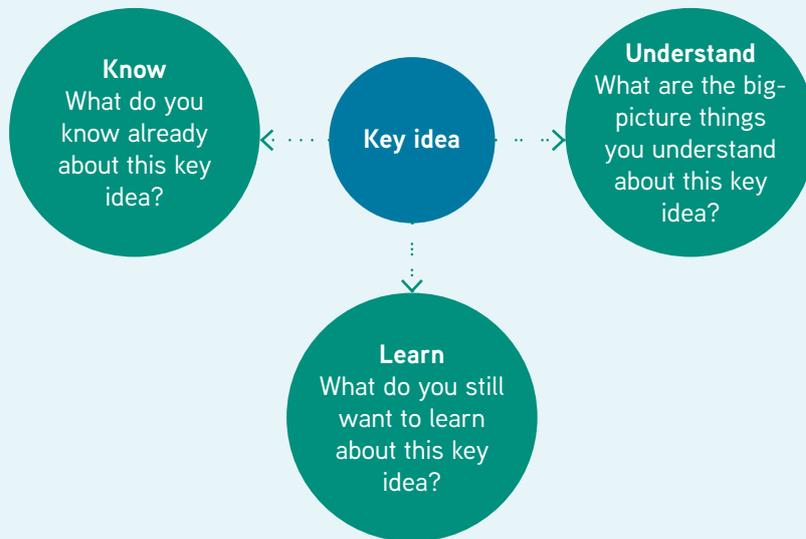
Gather ideas

1 Your starting point for the texts you write in this unit should be the mentor texts for the key idea you have studied. Which of the mentor texts that you have read do you like the most? Why?

_____

_____

2 Use graphic organisers like the ones on the next page to brainstorm some ideas for the texts you will write.

Graphic organiser 1

Know
What do you know already about this key idea?

Key idea

Understand
What are the big-picture things you understand about this key idea?

Learn
What do you still want to learn about this key idea?

Graphic organiser 2

Key idea:		
Experiences		
What personal connections do you have to this key idea?	What else have you learnt about this idea?	What have you read or watched outside of the classroom that has added to your understanding of this idea?
Thoughts		
What would you like other people to know about this idea?	How have your thoughts about the key idea and mentor texts changed throughout this unit?	What type of people will be most interested in this idea?
Feelings		
What are the ideas or issues that inspire you?	Which ideas or issues make you angry?	What would you like to change about the world?

Scan the code or click **here** to access a student sample of a completed graphic organiser.

Scan the code or click **here** to view a video about generating ideas for your writing.

Interview a partner

Interview a partner and record their answers to the following questions.

1 What types of texts do you like reading or watching?

2 What types of texts would you like to write?

3 Which aspects of the writing do you think you will find easy?

4 Which aspects of the writing do you think you will find challenging?

5 Which of the mentor texts have you most enjoyed discussing?

6 Which of the mentor texts would you recommend to a friend? To a family member?

7 What questions would you like to ask your teacher about this part of the course?

Scan the code or click **here** to access a planning template for a text.

Responding to stimulus material

It is possible that for your assessed pieces of writing you will be prompted to respond to stimulus material. This stimulus may take various forms, such as a quote or a short passage from a text, an image, or even a combination of image and text. Below are several strategies to incorporate stimulus material into your writing.

- **Direct incorporation:** Use the quote or image directly in your response. For instance, include the quote within your argument to strengthen your perspective. For an image, work a description of what is shown into your narrative.

- **Character expression:** In an imaginative piece, you could have a character express a sentiment or idea equivalent to the idea expressed by the stimulus material.

- **Reflection:** Reflect on the stimulus, considering its deeper implications. Use this reflection as a launching point for your piece.

- **Argument:** Use the stimulus as a basis for an argument. Discuss its relevance to your key idea, agreeing, disagreeing or proposing a nuanced view.

- **Explanation:** Explain the meaning of the stimulus, focusing on its potential interpretations and considering their implications and significance.

- **Contrast or paradox:** If appropriate, draw a contrast or paradox between the stimulus and your main argument or narrative, sparking interest and engagement.

Remember, the aim is not merely to use the stimulus but to integrate it meaningfully and naturally into your work. Effective engagement with stimulus material can enrich your writing, adding depth and demonstrating your ability to think critically and creatively.

Scan the code or click **here** to see examples of stimulus material and approaches to incorporating them into written pieces for each of the four Framework ideas.

Drafting and editing

Unlike in an exam or when writing essays under timed conditions, in this outcome drafting is an important part of your writing process. This means that you do not need to craft your text perfectly on the first attempt. Experimenting with language and trying out new ways of using structures and language provides valuable experience, and the skills you learn through this process will help you in all areas of writing.

The activities in this section are designed to encourage you to play with word choices, text structures and language features, and extend your vocabulary.

Create a verb table

Work on including interesting and powerful verbs in your writing. Use the table below to help you, then add your own interesting verbs underneath.

commute	appreciate	assume	anticipate	gaze
depart	bear	comprehend	desire	glance
go	confront	conclude	need	observe
journey	endure	determine	request	peer
travel	experience	fathom	stir	scan
trek	undergo	infer	want	seek

Practise drafting

1 Write the sections or subheadings of your piece of writing on sticky notes (e.g. Post-it Notes) and put them in order on a blank piece of paper. Aim to have at least five. Remove one of the notes and replace it with something new. Repeat. Try reordering your sticky notes. Do you still feel that your original notes capture what you are trying to achieve with your writing?

2   Give your piece of writing a title. Then, brainstorm three other possible titles. Which one works best? Why?

3   Highlight three sentences in your writing that you're proud of. What do you like about them?

4   Change or edit two other sentences so that they have more of the qualities of the sentences you are proud of.

Editing checklist

Use this editing checklist to refine your piece of writing.

- ☐ You have given your piece a title.
- ☐ Your piece connects to the key idea.
- ☐ Your piece has a clear opening, body and conclusion.
- ☐ Your piece matches the purpose you intended.
- ☐ You have used text structures and language features that suit the audience you have chosen.
- ☐ You have used text structures and language features that suit the context you have chosen.
- ☐ You have shown your writing to a peer who has given you feedback.
- ☐ You have used a variety of ways to start your sentences.
- ☐ Each paragraph contains one clear idea.
- ☐ You have used a range of vocabulary, focusing on your verb and noun choices.
- ☐ The piece includes text features and language features of the mentor texts.

Annotating texts

To meet the outcome for this unit, you will need to complete a set of annotations, reflecting on your writing processes. It is likely that you will need to annotate both the texts you craft for this outcome. Your annotations should explain:

- the vocabulary you chose
- text features you used
- language features you selected
- conventions of the text type you used
- ideas that you used, including ideas inspired by the mentor texts
- the implications of your authorial choices (i.e. how you think an audience might respond).

Here are some sentence starters you can use when writing your annotations.

- The purpose of my text is …
- I intended to …
- In my piece I aimed to … by …
- It was important to me that my audience felt … so I used …
- I took inspiration from the mentor text when I …
- One of the language features I used was … The intended effect of this is …
- Throughout the piece I chose to …
- Overall, I encapsulated the atmosphere of …
- Here, I experimented with … by …
- I wanted to provoke feelings of … so …
- In describing … I hoped to …

Sample text

The following piece draws mainly on two mentor texts, Virginia Gay's monologue from *Cyrano* and Tim Winton's speech 'About the Boys'. Read the annotations to see how the student has made decisions about vocabulary, text structures and language features.

WILD BOYS

I want to run with you into the surf. I want to feel the waves crash over us as we clutch each other's hands. I want to taste the salt on my tongue, feel it soak in through my eyelids and sting the scars on my fingers.

Let's dance across the sand. Gotta be proper sand. The kind that squeaks between your toes and clings to the hairs on your ankles.

Let's get very rich and buy one of the beach huts – the painted ones that are so close to the water they must flood when there's a storm. We can paint it any colour you like. What colour do you like? Green? Let's paint it bright green. We'll set up two mattresses on the floor and watch the sunlight dim between the slats and eat chips from the local shop and lick the chicken salt from our fingers.

The title of my text connects to Winton's argument that 'wildness in children is beautiful … regardless of gender'.

I have chosen to begin my monologue in a similar way to Gay, using repetition as she does, to build rhythm.

Winton uses surfing as a hook, and I wanted to also. I like the idea of surfing as a sport that doesn't favour one gender. I also think the setting of the beach connects well with the key idea of play, because it's often a place where people go to relax and have fun.

I've tried to mimic Gay's use of sentence starters here. Inclusive language is powerful in her text and I intended to achieve a similar intimate effect.

Let's forget that we have to go back to school. That there will be football games to win, and teachers to impress, and fathers to go home to. Let's forget what AG said in the locker room about you. About that girl you like. Let's forget that there are locker rooms at all. I'll paint them bright green in my mind and tattoo them with a memory of me punching AG in the face. No, no punching. I'll tattoo them with a memory of me eviscerating AG with my words.

Let's put ourselves back together with spare parts. But not the cheap, defective stuff. The stuff we've trawled through car yards to find, that we've rescued and polished and breathed on with warm breath until we can draw our initials on it.

Let's lie awake on the sand, after the sun's vanished from sight. Let's listen to the sound of the beach in the dark. The waves slapping the shore. Koalas grunting. The door of one of those beach huts banging in the wind. A kid chucking a bottle into the surf. A dog barking. The wildness and brokenness of the world.

This section draws on Winton's arguments about toxic masculinity, and the way he describes problems with how men communicate. I've made my text darker in tone and style than Gay's, and also given more identifying features to the character my narrator is speaking to.

I wanted to write about the instinct boys sometimes have for violence, and have my narrator purposefully choose another action here. This is a response to Winton's call to action at the end of his piece. I hope that some people listening to this monologue might also see this as a call to action.

These sentences are inspired by Winton's lines: 'young men in particular are forced to make themselves up as they go along. Which usually means they put themselves together from spare parts, and the stuff closest to hand tends to be cheap and defective. And that's dangerous.'

Gay concludes her monologue with a moment of calm, as she observes the world around her, and I tried to echo that in my piece. I like the symbolism of the sea as a place that is eternal but changeable. I modelled my final sentences on hers, using short phrases and descriptions of sounds to evoke the peace of this moment for the characters.

I experimented with turning this metaphor into something more positive, as Gay does with much of her imagery.

Finally, like Gay, I have used assonance in my concluding line. However, I have returned to Winton's ideas about children as wild, feral creatures, and his exploration of boys and men as being 'disfigured' and in need of 'fixing'.

Annotate a text

Practise annotating one of your texts for this outcome. Remember that this is your opportunity to show your teachers and examiners what you have learnt during this unit, and to draw their attention to the specific and purposeful choices you have made in your writing.
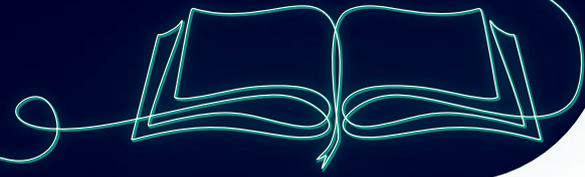
Scan the code or click **here** to view a video about annotating texts.

Sample writing

Each section of this chapter gives an overview of the sorts of writing associated with each of the four main purposes. It outlines the features of a particular text type and provides ideas and examples of ways you could use these features, and the models provided by the mentor texts, to create original texts of your own. Annotated extracts from sample student texts provide guidance for your own writing.

> Remember that you do not have to select a single purpose for your writing. You might write with the aim of achieving more than one purpose, and draw on the features of more than one text type.

Writing to express

When you are writing to express, you are using your imagination and creativity to explore and communicate ideas. Novels, short stories, plays, poems and films are all forms of writing to express. They involve imagined characters, places, situations and events through which writers explore aspects of human behaviour.

Imaginative texts contain tension and conflict, as characters seek to achieve their goals, and as their values and beliefs are tested. Often these tensions come to a peak in the narrative climax and are then resolved – but not always. If you are exploring ideas in this way, you might choose to leave some things unresolved, so the reader continues to ask questions and wonder.

Writing a short story

A **short story** is a fictional narrative, no longer than 10 000 words, that often centres on a particular theme or idea, and usually has a limited range of characters.

Complete a brainstorming template

Look at the sample brainstorm below, for a text about play, then complete the final column with ideas for your own short story.

Text element	Example ideas	Your ideas
Key idea	play	
Ideas that might be interesting to focus on	playing with fire – something about trying something risky or dangerous playing pretend – a story about a young girl pretending to be grown up a story about siblings playing video games as a form of escape a game that's gone too far and ends in someone getting seriously hurt	
Characters	a young girl who's recently moved to Australia; she doesn't speak English yet and makes friends through games an adult man who is unhappy in his career two brothers: the older one tries to protect the younger one	
Possible problems, complications or conflicts	main character doesn't fit in at school main character regrets past actions parents are fighting – main characters are children who are trying not to hear	
Message you might want to convey	Children notice more than you think. Children can be dangerous. It's important to have moments of play as an adult, too.	
Setting	a child's bedroom on the second floor a train a playground a hospital	

Structuring a short story

Like novels, short stories often follow a traditional narrative arc (see Chapter 2 for more information). You can also write a short story that acts as a window into a character's life, showing just a moment or glimpse: you might describe a decision a character is making or reflecting on, but not necessarily use a typical structure with a beginning, middle and end.

Examine structure

Choose one of the mentor texts below and answer the following questions to examine its use of structure.

- 'All That We Know of Dreaming' by Penni Russon
- 'bidngen' by Maya Hodge
- 'Gooseberries' by Anton Chekhov
- 'Harrison Bergeron' by Kurt Vonnegut
- 'Split' by Cassie Lynch

1 What are the main events that happen in the story?

_____

_____

2 Does the story follow a traditional narrative arc (exposition, inciting incident, rising action, climax, falling action, resolution)?

_____

3 Does the story have a clear beginning, middle and end or does it simply provide a window into a character's life?

_____

4 Does the character have a choice or decision to make? What is it?

_____

5 How does the story end?

_____

Characters

You might like to write about a character who is similar to you, or you might want to take advantage of the freedom this text type offers you and write about characters who are completely different from you.

The following table shows some examples of characters from the mentor texts.

Mentor text	Characters
'All That We Know of Dreaming' by Penni Russon (Writing about play)	Narrator: a mother, reflective, anxious, describes herself as 'haunting' and does not want to become her own mother
	Mimi: a child, brave, tidy, compassionate
'bidngen' by Maya Hodge (Writing about personal journeys)	The girl: creative, had a childhood full of 'pain and love', reflective
	Nanna: loving, encouraging, warned the girl about cockatoos
'Harrison Bergeron' by Kurt Vonnegut (Writing about protest)	George: a father, physically strong, intelligent
	Hazel: a mother, kind, unintelligent, helpless
	Harrison: George and Hazel's son, a genius, very strong, a beautiful dancer, seven feet tall

Create a character

1 Below is a planning tool for developing characters for your short story. Choose an element from each column to create a character.

Age	Career	Physical attribute	Characteristic 1	Characteristic 2
7	not applicable	wears glasses	gentle	funny
12	student	bald	outspoken	frightened
16	florist	has asthma	creative	selfish
21	actor	curly, brown hair	reflective	curious
33	footballer	freckles	shy	hostile
45	teacher	a loud laugh	ambitious	generous
74	politician	poor posture	solitary	clingy
89	carpenter	tall	charismatic	powerful

2 Now choose a problem that your character faces. For example:

- has to choose whether to lie to protect a friend
- injures themselves before an important event
- is betrayed by someone they love
- moves house
- loses something important
- is blamed for something they didn't do
- keeps something secret they shouldn't
- wins something they don't deserve.

3 Use these elements to create a plan for a short story.

Using the mentor texts

In your story you will need to use text structures, language features and vocabulary from your mentor texts. Look at the example from Cassie Lynch's short story 'Split', a mentor text for the key idea of country, and how you might use these structures and features in your own writing.

I'm standing in Perth, a city located on the banks of a river on the south-west coast of the Australian continent. I'm in the central business district, on a long, wide road with deep kerbs, surrounded by a rectangular gorge of skyscrapers. I am walking north and in between the glass and concrete buildings I see glimpses of the Swan River, a blue snaking body of water.

It is the afternoon. Office workers hurry past carrying document wallets and laptop bags. Couriers push trolleys stacked with boxes. Road crews peer into excavated cable tunnels. Charity volunteers shake tins.

Each sentence in this paragraph starts with 'I', placing the first-person narrator at the centre of the action.

Commas are used for parenthesis: to add additional detail.

Natural imagery is used to describe something human-made.

The directional detail emphasises the importance of physical location.

Short sentences, each describing one action by different groups of people, create a sense of bustle and busyness.

The following extract from a student text draws on some of the features of 'Split'.

I'm standing in my grandmother's backyard, in Myrtleford, in the northeast of Victoria, with Mount Buffalo looming in the distance. I'm in the long grass, the wire fence to the west sagging between each pine post peak. I am walking towards the lemon tree, my feet trampling the grass and sending ants scurrying in the heat.

It is the morning. Magpies call rudely to one another. Cicadas click loudly underfoot. Cars accelerate along the flat stretch of road past the back fence. My own thoughts bubble up through the melee and threaten to burst into the sticky summer air.

Sentences starting with 'I' place the first-person narrator at the centre of the action.

Commas allow additional detail to be added to sentences parenthetically.

Directional details emphasise the importance of physical location.

A metaphor from nature is used to describe a human-made item (fencepost).

A series of short sentences creates a sense of action and busyness.

Writing to reflect

When you are writing to reflect, you are focusing on the past, and the ways that the present has been shaped by the past. It is usually an autobiographical form of writing, using the first-person voice and the past tense.

However, as the writer reflects from the perspective of the here and now, the present tense may also be used. Connections can be drawn between past and present, and there can also be a reflection on lessons learned, perhaps moving from personal experiences to draw conclusions about broader human experiences.

Reflective writing involves exploring feelings and psychological responses. Descriptive language, imagery and a variety of sentence types enable the writer to convey their experiences meaningfully and memorably to the reader.

Writing a reflective essay

A **reflective essay** draws on the writer's personal experiences, thoughts and feelings, but may also include other information and evidence. Like other types of essay, it is usually formal in tone and style, but may be less formally structured than the essays you are used to seeing in the classroom. Reflective essays are written in the first person.

Some features of a mentor text in the form of a reflective essay are listed below.

Text	Features
'Friday Essay: On the Sydney Mardi Gras March of 1978' by Mark Gillespie (Writing about protest)	written in the first person short paragraphs includes historical facts and evidence of research hyperlinks subheadings use of images and captions

Structuring a reflective essay

To structure a reflective essay, consider the message or idea you want your audience to come away with. Then, build your essay backwards from there. For example, Gillespie's essay calls for an apology from the government to the protesters at the 1978 Mardi Gras. The author uses his personal story of his own involvement in the protest to explore and explain why this is important.

Plan a reflective essay

Look at the sample plan, below, for an essay related to the key idea of protest, then complete the right-hand column to plan for your own reflective essay.

Text element	Example	Your idea
Key idea	protest	
Topic	climate change	
Personal experiences related to the topic	Students at my school got in trouble for attending the climate change protest when I was in Year 7. My parents would not have let me go even if I'd wanted to, because they think school is more important.	

Text element	Example	Your idea
Personal feelings on the topic	I am angry about this issue, but also exhausted. I don't know if I would go to a protest about climate change now, because it doesn't seem there's any point. I think my parents' generation should have done more to stop climate change and their apathy frustrates me.	
Research required	School strike for climate 2019: how many attended and what was said about it at the time? Find facts and statistics about climate change. Which protests have made a difference: March on Washington 1963? Gandhi's Salt March? The Orange Revolution? What are people doing now to combat climate change? Is there hope?	
Overall message or idea	Even if it feels hopeless, it's still important to try to make a difference.	

Using the mentor texts

In your reflective essay you will need to use text structures, language features and vocabulary from your mentor texts. Look at the example from Mark Gillespie's essay and how you might use these structures and features in your own writing.

Looking out at the angry crowd the police inside the station must have been apprehensive about what would happen next. They were greatly outnumbered and for some moments as we inched closer and closer, you could sense an urge on the part of the crowd to take over the police station, to demand the jailer's keys and so to release our brothers and sisters.

The writer imagines how others might have been thinking and feeling at this point, in the historical context.

Builds tension through choice of verb and slowed pace.

Use of the second person engages the reader and makes them part of the narrative.

Over the years I have often wondered why we didn't storm the building then and there. Strangely after a short period of silence somebody started to sing the Afro-American spiritual "We shall not be moved" and the whole crowd joined in:

We shall not, we shall not be moved
We shall not, we shall not be moved
Just like a tree that's standing by the water
We shall not be moved

Use of the first person and a reflective tone is appropriate for the adult writer looking back on his life.

Lyrics are italicised and set out as a separate paragraph.

The following student sample text draws on some of the features of 'Friday Essay: On the Sydney Mardi Gras March of 1978'.

Looking at all the blank squares in the Google Meet, my teacher must have been frustrated by our lack of engagement. Unlike in the classroom, there was nothing she could encourage or threaten us with to guarantee our participation. As we crawled slowly towards the end of the lesson you could sense her growing annoyance in her clipped tone and terse questions.

Since then, I have often wondered why so many did stay in the Google Meet despite our reluctance to join in the lesson. We could so easily have claimed internet issues or even illness and no one would have checked up on us. Our parents were factory workers and bus drivers, labourers and retail assistants. There would have been no one home to corroborate or contradict our lie.

The writer reflects on the feelings of others in the same situation as themselves.

'Crawled slowly' evocatively conveys the students' boredom.

Use of the second person invites the reader to imagine themselves in the classroom with the narrator.

A phrase taken directly from the mentor text is used to lead into a reflection on a very different situation – an online class rather than a public protest.

Writing to explain

When you are writing to explain, you are looking at cause and effect, considering logical connections and using the language of reason. However, there is still a creative element to writing that explains. You might explore multiple perspectives on a topic. You might also imagine a consequence or a future situation.

Poetic language can be as much a part of writing to explain as the language of facts and logic. Writing to explain can also have a personal element, as you can present your own view on the topic.

Writing a podcast

A **podcast** is an audio text. It is similar to a radio program, but is accessed online or via an app, often in a series of episodes. Podcasts may be fictional or nonfictional. Because of the broad range of topics and audiences that podcasts cover and cater to, they may be formal or informal, of varying length, and have one, two or many speakers.

For this outcome, you must produce a written text. So, while it is important to think about how your podcast might sound, if you choose this as your text type you will be writing a podcast **script**.

Note the features of the podcast transcript below.

The extract below is from an episode of NPR's podcast *Invisibilia*, called 'Power Tools'. Scan the code or click **here** to access the full episode and transcript.

YOWEI SHAW, HOST: From NPR, this is INVISIBILIA. I'm Yowei Shaw. So earlier this season, we did a story about how negative feelings about power can make some of us want to avoid power in our personal lives, which can have consequences.

... But first, we're going to start with a conundrum – what organizational behavior researchers call the self-selection problem, which asks a basic question. Is one reason we so often see bosses handling power badly – you know, leaders who manipulate, take credit for others' work, who put profits over people – actually a problem with who ends up going after positions of power in the first place?

PETER BELMI: There are people who claim to be chickens and actually are, in fact, snakes. [Laughter].

SHAW: That's after the break.

(MUSICAL SOUNDBITE)

Names of speakers are usually capitalised and their full names and roles are given at the first mention. The speaker's name is followed by a colon, then what they say. After the first mention, only the surname is used.

Platform and podcast name are introduced.

Line breaks are used between each speaker.

Verbal cues and other sounds made as part of the dialogue are included, in square brackets.

Sound effects are written in capital letters, and placed in parentheses on a new line.

The features used in the example above are conventions, rather than rules. Look online for transcripts of podcasts you like listening to, and see how they are formatted. The important thing is that you use a consistent style throughout your own piece of writing.

Brainstorm ideas

Look at the suggestions below for podcast ideas connected to the key ideas. Brainstorm three more suggestions for your key idea.

Key ideas	Podcast ideas
Writing about personal journeys	One host interviews a guest about their life story.
	One host introduces a theme, and three speakers share their stories.
Writing about play	One host interviews a range of people about the ways they played as children.
	Two hosts argue about the benefits and dangers of a new leash-free dog park in their suburb.

Key ideas	Podcast ideas
Writing about country	One host reads an email from a listener about a place they travelled to recently, and comments on the listener's experience.
	Two hosts discuss one of the mentor texts and what it means to them.
Writing about protest	One host investigates a historical protest and its consequences (with audio footage of the protest included).
	Two friends discuss ways to protest against the injustice of the world they live in.
My key idea:	

Using the mentor texts

Look at the example of a script below, an extract from the monologue from *Cyrano* by Virginia Gay, a mentor text for the key idea of play. Consider the text structures, language features and vocabulary you could use in your own writing. Even though this monologue is an imaginative text, you can still draw on elements of it when you are writing to explain (or even for other purposes).

Let's go and see bad comedy in a back room in the East Village. Let's get lost in a Turkish spice market and come out with our skin dry-rubbed with clove and cinnamon. Let's drink 50-cent mimosas in Cuba on days so hot we can't sit down, the seats will scald the back of our legs. And then let's get headaches from the day drinking and have to go to bed in the afternoon and listen to the world pootling on outside our window. Car horns. Shouts of people. A hammer drill. Smell of someone pressing waffle cones. Gasoline. Jasmine. The mess and the fuss of living.

Inclusive language indicates the target audience is the speaker's love interest; it also draws the listening audience into the speaker's world.

Playful word choice contributes to an intimate and joyful tone.

Specificity of these sounds and smells bring the speaker's imaginings vividly to life; some of these sounds and smells usually have negative connotations, but the context encourages the audience to see the beauty in these less obvious examples.

Assonance contributes to a poetic style.

The following extract from a student text draws on some of the features of the monologue.

The sample student text on the next page uses a short extract from one of the mentor texts. If you choose to do this, be sure to quote only briefly from the text and only if there is a good reason to do so. Remember that you will be assessed on your own original writing.

[SFX: OPENING THEME MUSIC]

> Square brackets (and the label 'SFX') indicate sound effects.

NGOC TRAN: Hello, hello. This is *Hearts and Minds*. I'm your host and fellow explorer of the human condition, Ngoc Tran, and today we're chatting about Virginia Gay's monologue from her play *Cyrano,* which aired on *Q+A* last week.

> Speaker's name is capitalised, followed by a colon to introduce speech/dialogue.

> Speaker introduces themselves, the podcast and the focus of the episode.

[SFX: TAPE RECORDER CLICKING ON]

VIRGINIA GAY: Car horns. Shouts of people. A hammer drill. Smell of someone pressing waffle cones. Gasoline. Jasmine. The mess and the fuss of living.

> Extract from the mentor text, smoothly incorporated into the student's own original text.

[SFX: TAPE RECORDER CLICKING OFF]

> Sound effect indicates transition.

TRAN: That was a clip from the monologue. If you haven't seen it, go and check it out before listening to the rest of this episode. We'll put the link in the show notes.

> Reference to podcasting convention of show notes.

As you know, one of the things we often discuss here at *Hearts and Minds* is the beauty of the everyday. As a society, too often we focus on productivity, on striving and achieving, on reaching the next goal, getting that promotion, making more money, acquiring that new house, or car, or fancy handbag. Too often, we reduce our worth, and the worth of others, to a dollar value. We think of hard work as a virtue and relaxation or play as an indulgence or, worse, as a sin.

> Responds to an idea in the mentor text; elaborates on this idea in a way that is typical of writing that explains.

> Focuses on the key idea.

But, as Gay's monologue reminds us, there is so much pleasure to be had in the ordinary delights of life. In sharing time with those we love. In attuning ourselves to the particular sights, sounds and smells of the world around us. These moments, that so often either go uncelebrated or are even criticised for not being 'productive', are in fact one of the greatest treasures associated with being human. What if, instead of measuring the quality of a day by how much money we earned or how many tasks we ticked off our to-do list, we measured it by how many moments of joy we experienced? What might that mean for our mental, physical and emotional health? Our relationships? And how might we start the process of retraining our minds and hearts to focus on moments of magic rather than on money? We're going to answer all these questions and more, but first, let's check out what social media had to say.

> Repetition and the use of sentence fragments contribute to a poetic tone, helping the presenter to explain their feelings and values.

> Repeated questions engage the listener and create a sense of rhythm.

> Informal language contributes to a conversational tone.

[SFX: BIRDS CHIRPING]

> Many of the features of a podcast transcript, such as stage directions, music and sound effects, apply to other types of script, such as for a play or film.

Writing to argue

When you are writing to argue, you are trying to convince others to agree with your point of view. Argumentative writing often combines elements of logic and reasoning with emotive language and appeals. First-person or third-person voice could be used, depending on how much the writer wants to make use of their personality and personal experiences as part of their argument.

Structure is an important feature of an effective argument. The text should begin and end strongly, establishing the topic at the outset and presenting a clear point of view – at least at the end, and perhaps also at the beginning. The middle sections of the text should present supporting reasons and evidence.

Writing a speech

A **speech** is an address or presentation to a live audience. It is written in the first person, and is usually formal in tone, although this depends on the intended audience. If you choose to write a speech for this outcome, you can write from your own perspective, or from the perspective of someone else, either real or fictional.

You have probably written and presented speeches before, either in class or in other settings. The speech you produce for Unit 4, Outcome 2 will present your point of view on an issue, but in the Creating texts area of study you can write a speech for a range of contexts and purposes.

Speeches usually:

- are written in first person
- use a formal or semi-formal tone
- address the audience using second-person pronouns
- use paragraphing and signposting to organise ideas
- include notes about delivery, in parentheses (for example, hand gestures or pauses)
- use rhetorical devices.

Take notes on a speech

Watch Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's speech 'The Danger of a Single Story', and make notes using the template on the next page. (You can complete this activity even if you are not studying the key idea of personal journeys.)

Scan the code or click **here** to view the speech.

Content features (what does she say?)	Delivery features (how does she say it?)

Using the mentor texts

In your speech you will need to use text structures, language features and vocabulary from your mentor texts. Look at the extract of a speech below and consider how you might use these structures and features in your own writing to argue. The extract is from Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's speech, a mentor text for the key idea of personal journeys.

Now, what if my roommate knew about my friend Fumi Onda, a fearless woman who hosts a TV show in Lagos, and is determined to tell the stories that we prefer to forget? What if my roommate knew about the heart procedure that was performed in the Lagos hospital last week? What if my roommate knew about contemporary Nigerian music? Talented people singing in English and Pidgin, and Igbo and Yoruba and Ijo, mixing influences from Jay-Z to Fela to Bob Marley to their grandfathers. What if my roommate knew about the female lawyer who recently went to court in Nigeria to challenge a ridiculous law that required women to get their husband's consent before renewing their passports? What if my roommate knew about Nollywood, full of innovative people making films despite great technical odds? Films so popular that they really are the best example of Nigerians consuming what they produce. What if my roommate knew about my wonderfully ambitious hair braider, who has just started her own business selling hair extensions? Or about the millions of other Nigerians who start businesses and sometimes fail, but continue to nurse ambition?

Use of first-person pronouns appropriate to a speech.

Parenthetical commas used to add additional detail.

Repetition of 'what if' creates a feeling of endless possibilities and reinforces the idea of many stories, rather than one.

Specific examples add weight to the speaker's argument.

Intensifiers (e.g. 'so', 'really') emphasise the importance of these people and actions.

Wide range of examples demonstrates the breadth of experiences and stories of people in Nigeria.

The following student sample text draws on some of the features of the speech by Adichie.

This is a story about a journey. It begins on a train. The same train, in fact, that I have taken to school every day for the last three years. Now, let me ask you: do you remember the last time you caught a train? Can you recall the smell of a hundred bodies pressed close on a 5pm train in summer? Do your hands begin to itch at the thought of having to clutch onto a metal bar for 40 minutes? Do you sometimes fall asleep at night to the memory of a monotonous listing of stations in a robotic announcer's voice?

There may be other train commuters sitting here today, but let me tell you: it is one thing to be a commuter, but it is quite another to be a student who must navigate the claustrophobic environment of the train carriage with a full-to-bursting backpack and a heavy laptop case, in a stiflingly uncomfortable school uniform, and the expectation that you must stand for the entire journey because someone older than you might want to sit.

Use of first-person pronouns contributes to a confiding, intimate tone.

Signposting is used to introduce a new point.

Repetition of questions ('Can you', 'Do you') creates a feeling of increasing pressure as more detail is added.

Acknowledges different groups of people in the audience, and their lack of expertise in this particular topic compared to the speaker.

Hyperbolic language emphasises the discomfort of this situation.

Use of the second person personalises the situation and encourages the listener to imagine themselves in the train carriage.

Scan the code or click here to see a complete annotated creative piece, which draws on the key idea of Writing about country and aims primarily to express.

Area of Study 2 in Unit 4: Analysing argument

This area of study focuses on understanding how argument and persuasive language are used in the media to persuade readers and viewers. You will:

+ analyse the use of argument and persuasive language in media texts
+ present a sustained and reasoned point of view on an issue, as an oral presentation.

Understanding persuasive texts

In this chapter you will learn the main metalanguage and concepts you need in order to analyse persuasive texts. Chapters 13 and 14 will look more closely at the two main elements of this area of study – argument and persuasive language – and how to write analytically about them.

IN THIS CHAPTER:

+ Issues
+ Argument
+ Context
+ Purpose
+ Audience
+ Language
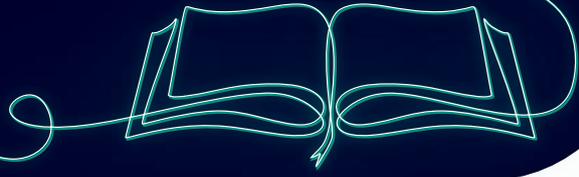
Issues

An **issue** is a problem or topic that is discussed or debated. Issues are often expressed in a few words. Have a look at the following examples:

- free public transport
- controlling Australia's wild horse population
- lowering the voting age
- pet licences.

In most discussions of issues, people argue **for** or **against** a proposal or situation. For example, some people support the idea that school canteens should ban junk food, while others oppose such a rule.

However, in some instances, the debate may be about possible solutions to a problem. For example, a previous VCE EAL exam included a persuasive text on truancy (that is, a student staying away from school without permission). The debate was about the best way to solve the problem of truancy, not whether truancy was good or bad.

Issues can emerge from various sources, including new discoveries or inventions and news items. For example, in 1992 surgeons successfully transplanted a baboon liver into a human who was suffering from liver disease. This created a debate about the ethics of using animals in medical research or for 'spare parts'. The way that an issue emerges is part of the context surrounding it, and can affect how different points of view are expressed.

Some issues are contentious, with many people on opposing sides, but other issues can bring communities together in agreement. For example, the 2017 Australian Marriage Law Postal Survey revealed that many Australians supported marriage equality, but a significant proportion of the population opposed it. However, in the 1967 Referendum, hardly anyone in Australia opposed the idea that the Constitution should be changed to recognise First Nations Australians as part of the population.

Every issue will have a variety of **stakeholders**. Stakeholders are people who have a connection to the issue, and something to lose or gain from decisions made about it.

> *e.g.* For the issue of whether the voting age in Australia should be lowered to sixteen, stakeholders include political parties and young teenagers who would become eligible to vote.

Argument

When we hear the word '**argument**', we often imagine a personal quarrel. However, in this area of study, 'argument' has a more specific meaning: it is a point of view or opinion supported by reasons and evidence.

Have a look at the difference between an opinion and an argument below.

> *e.g.* **Opinion:** It'd be good to have a high-speed train from Melbourne to Sydney.
>
> **Argument:** The government should provide a high-speed train service from Melbourne to Sydney because it will reduce demand for flights and therefore cut fuel emissions.

Contention

When analysing a persuasive text, as well as identifying the issue, you need to identify the writer's **contention**. While an issue can be broad, a contention is the specific point of view a writer presents.

> *e.g.* An issue such as secondary school zoning – which defines the geographical area a school's students can be drawn from – could lead to various contentions, including the following examples.
>
> • Schools should rigidly enforce school zoning boundaries.
>
> • Schools should have complete freedom to enrol students from outside their zone boundaries.
>
> • Zone boundaries should be abolished.
>
> • The zone boundaries for Lower Valley Secondary College should be redrawn to reflect the current population in the surrounding area.

A writer's contention may be clearly stated in the heading or first paragraph of their text, or might not appear until the end, after the writer has presented their argument. Sometimes the contention might not be explicitly stated at all, but be implied by the writer's reasons and evidence.

Explore arguments

1 Identify whether each of the following examples is an argument or an opinion, by placing a tick in the appropriate column.

	Argument	Opinion
The government should buy back public transport from private operators.		
Greater regulation of the gambling industry is needed because Australians lose approximately $25 billion to gambling each year, according to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare.		
If V/Line transport fares are capped at $9.20 per day far more people will visit regional centres such as Bendigo and Ballarat, and spend money on food and entertainment there. Trains and buses that are often almost empty will be filled with passengers. Therefore V/Line income from regional travel will increase, making the service more profitable.		
Australia should remain a constitutional monarchy, because the current system works well but a republic might not.		
I feel that all vaccines should be free.		
Public transport fares to regional areas should not be reduced, as taxpayers who never travel on V/Line trains will have to subsidise the cost of transport.		
Australia should become a republic because it's right.		

2 Read the text below carefully, then answer the following questions.

Four weeks ago, while cycling, I was a victim of a serious dog attack. A vicious monster lunged at me and sunk its teeth into my leg.

And what was the response of the dog's owner? Did he have the decency to apologise, and offer to help me? No! When I showed this gutless individual the teeth marks, he told me that his dog did not cause the injury. Like too many dog owners, he was in denial about the potential for harm posed by his 'pet'.

It took weeks for my injury to heal. I had to pay the medical expenses and for a taxi from the hospital out of my hard-earned money. Is this fair? Furthermore, I am still suffering mental trauma and anguish.

Recent media reports indicate that incidents of dogs attacking people are on the increase. My own experience was one of more than 1000 attacks this year alone, indicating a serious and growing problem.

> When is society going to take the threat posed to ordinary people by menacing dogs seriously? They are not 'man's best friend', as dog owners would like to believe. If this were true, there would be no dog attacks. In fact, they are animals designed to hunt and kill. It's about time the government started to take this threat seriously and implement much harsher punishments for owners who do not control their wild beasts.

a State the writer's main contention in your own words.

_____

b In your own words, write down three reasons given by the writer to support their point of view.

_____

_____

_____

c Which do you think is the most important reason the writer presents? Why do you think this?

_____

_____

d Circle or highlight all the examples of negative language the writer uses to describe dogs.

Context

The **context** is the circumstances in which a persuasive text is produced and delivered. To analyse a text effectively, it is essential to understand its context. Important elements of the context of a persuasive text include the following:

- the issue
- how the issue emerged
- the text type
- the creator of the persuasive text and their connection to the issue.

These factors all affect the writer's point of view, how they communicate it, and how different audiences receive it.

When analysing a persuasive text, it is a common mistake to ignore or pay little attention to the context. This causes the following two main problems.

- Students write a **generic explanation** of how argument and language work. Generic explanations are too broad and general to demonstrate a good understanding of the text. An example of a generic analytical sentence is: 'The writer uses emotive language to evoke the audience's emotions.' A sentence like this does not identify the *specific* language choices the writer is making, the *precise* emotion they aim to encourage, or why these choices might have been made for this context and the *particular* target audience reading this text in this place of publication.

- Students **misunderstand the intended effect** of the argument. Different contexts will lead to different responses to the same argument and language choices. It is important to understand what the writer is doing to respond to their particular context and how the characteristics and background knowledge of a specific audience within that context might affect how they receive the text.

Text type and place of publication

The texts you are asked to analyse will often be accompanied by background information that will identify the **type of text** (e.g. opinion piece, blog post, letter to the editor, review, speech or radio interview). Different text types are associated with distinct conventions, features and methods that the writer will use to persuade their audience. For example, a report might include subheadings and a blog post might use colloquial language.

The **place of publication** should also be identified – for example, on a website, in a newspaper or as a newsletter addressed to a defined group of readers. The place a text is published will be associated with a type of reader, and writers will shape their texts to appeal to that audience. For example, a magazine about medical research is likely to be read by doctors, while a website focused on solutions to climate change is likely to attract environmentally conscious and politically active readers.

Writers and their positions

The background information might also provide details of a writer's connection to the issue they are writing about. There might also be a **by-line** at the start or end of the text that identifies the writer, their qualifications, their job and any other connection they might have to the issue.

Sometimes writers include such personal details in their text, to establish their authority and gain the audience's trust, encouraging the audience to believe that the writer's opinion must be based on expert knowledge.

e.g. A writer of a letter responding to and opposing a government proposal that will affect disadvantaged people might begin with the phrase, 'As a social worker with twenty years of experience'. By identifying their job and years of experience, the writer aims to persuade readers that this is a well-informed opinion based on firsthand knowledge of the issue.

> When writing an analysis, identify the writer of the text by name, rather than just referring to them as 'the writer'. On the first mention, use their full name (if known). Thereafter, refer to them by their surname (if this is given), not their first name.

Purpose

The **purpose** of a text is what the writer wants to achieve. For persuasive texts, the writer's main aim is for the intended audience to share their point of view and to feel a certain way about an issue. However, sometimes the writer also wants the audience to take a specific course of action, such as signing a petition, purchasing a product or voting for a political party.

Identifying a writer's primary purpose will help you to understand the choices they have made about how to present their argument.

Audience

As noted above, writers present an argument with the intention of persuading a particular **audience** to accept their point of view. While in some instances the author's intended audience may be the general public – that is, anyone who reads, listens to or views the text – often the audience is a more specific group of people. The intended audience might be clearly stated in the background information accompanying the text or texts; or you may need to read the text carefully to work this out.

In past examination papers, the intended audience has included the following:

- residents of a country town
- residents of a Melbourne suburb
- parents of children in a sporting club
- a school principal
- leaders in the trucking industry
- parents of a school's students
- supermarket customers.

Different audiences might have varying points of view on an issue. For example, if a local council proposes building a skateboard park, young people might be more likely to support it while some older local residents might oppose it due to concerns about noise or unruly behaviour.

Writers will usually give reasons for their point of view that emphasise the benefits for their target audience: what they can gain by agreeing with the writer.

Needs and wants

In the next chapters, a variety of persuasive argumentative and language techniques will be explored. However, at this stage it is worth noting that many persuasive appeals are based on the writer's understanding of their audience's **needs** and **wants**.

The most basic drive is to survive. Therefore, humans need adequate food, water, clothing and shelter. Linked to this is the need for a sense of safety and security. Humans also need to feel a sense of belonging and acceptance by other people.

Humans desire freedom, personal autonomy and freedom of expression, as well as happiness and personal fulfilment. Other wants include personal financial benefit and convenience.

Not all needs and wants are equal. For example, food and water is more vital to survival than feeling accepted by others.

Needs and wants of different audiences

Different groups within the community have different goals, aspirations, needs and wants. Consider the following examples.

e.g. Young people – fun and enjoyment, friendship, opportunities for further education, a job/career that will provide them with enough money to buy a house etc. Many younger people want to see social values change.

versus

Older people – fear of loss of independence and autonomy due to health conditions; fear of loneliness (e.g. loss of partner and friends). Some older people do not want to embrace changes, particularly new technologies and/or changing social values.

Other needs and wants may be culturally based. For example, in some communities, obedience to authority figures and senior members of the community is highly valued. By contrast, in other communities freedom and self-expression are valued more highly.

e.g. Most Australians obey laws restricting the possession and use of guns, believing this leads to a safer society. However, in the US many people and state governments consider personal liberty more important, so restrictions on the right to own a gun are resisted.

Appeals to needs and wants are sometimes explicitly identified in a persuasive text. In other instances, they are presumed or implicit.

Competing needs and wants

In some instances, a clash of various rights, needs and wants is at the heart of the debate.

For example, some people believe that the police should be allowed to hold people who are suspected of committing violent crimes for an indefinite period of time. Those who argue this would likely say that this power is necessary for community safety. However, those who oppose such a proposal would argue that it is a violation of human rights. Hence, the dispute is partly about community safety versus individual rights.

Consider audiences

1 Complete the table by identifying:

- the likely target audience for each of the text extracts
- the want or need targeted by the writer
- the main emotion the audience is being positioned to feel.

Text	Target audience	Audience need or want	Emotion the audience is positioned to feel
Secure, affordable housing is a fundamental human right. The Renters' Rights Coalition calls on the government to act now to place limits on rent increases and prioritise building more homes for renters.			
Tastes just like the real thing! Try the ethical meat alternative preferred by nine out of ten volunteers in a blind taste test.			
Still buying fast fashion? Come on. You're better than this. You have a mind of your own. You don't need some greedy company telling you what to wear or pushing you to turn a blind eye to their exploitative practices.			
The proposal to build a drug rehabilitation centre next to Lansdown Primary is so absurd and dangerous it seems like a joke. Unfortunately for our kids, it's deadly serious and, unless we get enough signatures on this petition, likely to be a terrifying reality within months.			

2 For each of the following issues, identify two different groups whose needs or wants are likely to conflict.

    a A proposal to demolish a street of houses to make way for a new freeway

Group 1: _____

Group 2: _____

How their needs/wants conflict: _____

    b Compulsory driver's licence re-testing for drivers aged seventy and over

Group 1: _____

Group 2: _____

How their needs/wants conflict: _____

    c Banning dogs from a local park

Group 1: _____

Group 2: _____

How their needs/wants conflict: _____

Language

Persuasive writers not only consciously select and construct their arguments in order to convince their audience, they also use carefully chosen language techniques, **tone** and **vocabulary**.

> For more information about specific persuasive language techniques, see Chapter 14.

Tone

The tone of a text refers to the mood (or, informally, the 'vibe') of a text, which conveys the writer's feelings about their subject. For a written text, think about how it would sound if it was read aloud. For spoken texts, you can hear tone through the speaker's delivery.

Tone can remain consistent throughout a text. However, more commonly it shifts throughout a line of argument. Often these shifts occur when the writer introduces a new point or idea. One strategy for identifying tone is to associate a tone word with each section of a persuasive text.

Scan the code or click **here** to view a video about analysing tone in persuasive texts.

You can use the following table to begin developing your own list of words to describe tone. It is colour-coded to indicate the relative strength of the tone words.

Tone word	Example
Outraged: conveying a strong sense of injustice	The government's inaction on pollution is disgusting!
Cynical: showing distrust of others' credibility and integrity	The company's supposed commitment to sustainability is just a lie to improve their public image.
Sarcastic: contemptuous or ironic; may be used in a humorous way	Oh, of course, let's just trust politicians to do the right thing and look after our best interests.
Concerned: worried; feeling that something has gone wrong	The rising levels of pollution in our environment are a serious cause for anxiety.
Authoritative: conveying a sense of command and implying that the opinion should be listened to	We must act now! The safety of our citizens and the health of our environment depend on it.
Direct: going straight to the point with honesty, often using simpler expression	The government must take action to reduce pollution.
Restrained: characterised by moderation and keeping emotions under control	We must carefully consider all options and work together to find a solution that is effective and sustainable.
Sincere: free from pretence, expressing genuineness and honesty	I genuinely believe that we can solve the pollution crisis, but it will require effort and cooperation from all of us.
Enthusiastic: showing intense interest or eager approval	Let's work together to make it happen!
Optimistic: hopeful and confident about the future	With determination and cooperation, I know we can succeed.
Inspirational: expressing a strong feeling that something can be done, urging others to take action	Together, we can make a difference and leave a lasting legacy of sustainability and environmental stewardship.

When identifying a writer's tone, avoid broad terms such as 'angry', 'happy' or 'sad'. Try to be more specific. For example, depending on the context, 'angry' could be replaced with one of these: frustrated, annoyed, outraged, enraged, exasperated, furious, indignant.

Vocabulary

Writers make particular **vocabulary** choices to elicit certain emotions from their intended audience.

Two aspects of a word that you might choose to analyse are its **connotations** and **associations**. We often refer to the positive or negative connotations of particular words.

Consider the following examples.

e.g. The following words and phrases have negative connotations.

cowardly, scheming, manipulative, sly, time-wasters, malicious

e.g. The following words and phrases have positive connotations.

brave, heroic, strong, honest, decent, upright, righteous, hardworking, kind, empathetic

Connotations and associations are the ideas that an audience connects to a particular word. Often this occurs when a word is used in an idiomatic or figurative sense, as opposed to a literal sense. One way to add depth to your analysis of a text is to examine in some detail the associations and connotations of specific words and phrases. Consider the following example.

e.g. 'Toxic youths are trashing our town.'

By describing the youths as 'toxic', with its associations of poison, illness and even death, the writer wants readers to believe that the youths are highly dangerous and a serious threat. Furthermore, by using the colloquial verb 'trashing', which has associations with waste, damage and violence, the writer underscores the destructive nature of the youths' behaviour. This positions readers to be fearful of and outraged by it.

Scan the code or click here to access a bonus activity on language in persuasive texts.

Analysing argument

In the previous chapter, we reviewed the metalanguage associated with analysing persuasive texts. This chapter will look more closely at how writers develop arguments, supporting their opinions with reasons and evidence. It will also present advice and guidelines for analysing argument.

In Unit 2, your class would have explored one issue through multiple persuasive texts. This year, your teacher will select a new issue for you to explore throughout this area of study. In preparation for your assessment, it is a good idea to track main contentions and supporting arguments across the texts that you study. In this way, you will become familiar with the common arguments and ideas that feature in the debate.
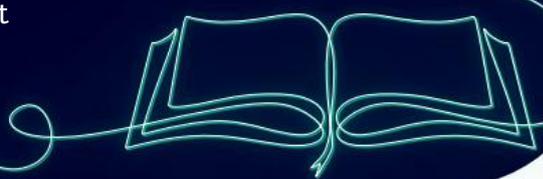
Reasons

A good argument includes supporting **reasons**, which are the ideas that back up the main contention with some kind of logic or justification. To identify a writer's reasons for their point of view, start by stating their contention, followed by 'because'.

> *e.g.* Naipaul argues that gambling advertising should be banned because gambling is associated with family breakdown, poverty and mental illnesses such as depression.

A writer's supporting reasons are not always obvious or clearly stated. They may be implied or presented in abstract ways – for example, through rhetorical questions or an assertion that seems like a statement of fact.

> *e.g.* Nussbaum cites the example of 'Jane', whose gambling problem led to the loss of her job, her house and, ultimately, her family. The writer then follows this case study with the rhetorical question, 'Who would want their lives to turn out this way?', emphasising that the financial problems and family breakdown caused by gambling have long-term consequences.

Evidence

An effective argument will include not just reasons for the writer's point of view but also **evidence** to support those reasons. Evidence can include:

- facts
- statistics
- expert opinion
- personal experience.

Facts

A **fact** is a piece of information that can be proven to be true. It is different from an opinion, which is one person's belief about something and cannot be proven to be true or untrue. For example, the statement, 'Mushrooms contain Vitamin B' is a fact. It has been scientifically proven. But the statement, 'Mushrooms should be part of every Australian's daily diet' is an opinion. While such a view could be supported with reasons and evidence, it will always be open to being disputed and challenged by those who disagree (for example, people who dislike or are allergic to mushrooms).

Sometimes a writer or speaker might state something as if it is a fact, when really it is closer to an opinion. For example, a writer might state that 'residents of aged care facilities are much more likely to catch airborne viruses than older people who live with their families', without saying where this information comes from or providing proof that it is accurate. It might sound like a statement of fact – and it might be true – but it would be more convincing if accompanied by firm evidence and details of its source.

Statistics

Statistics are numerical facts that tell us something meaningful about a group of people or a set of data. They summarise information and help to present an overall picture. Such information can be very persuasive when presenting a point of view. But it is also important to consider the source of the statistics and how the data was obtained.

For example, if a survey shows that ninety per cent of respondents support a tax on foods that have high levels of sugar and salt, this would be much more persuasive if 1000 people responded, rather than just ten. Similarly, data provided by an independent researcher is likely to be seen as more trustworthy than if the survey was conducted by a health-food company, which might have a financial interest in encouraging a tax on unhealthy foods.

The demography (age, occupation etc.) of the people surveyed or studied to produce a statistic should also be considered. For example, if the respondents to the survey about taxing high-sugar and high-salt foods were all personal trainers, the results couldn't be considered representative of the attitudes of the general population.

Expert opinion

Expert opinion includes statements or information from people or organisations considered to have specialised knowledge of a particular subject. Expert opinion can be highly persuasive because it suggests that the writer has researched the issue thoroughly, and also that well-informed people agree with the writer's opinion.
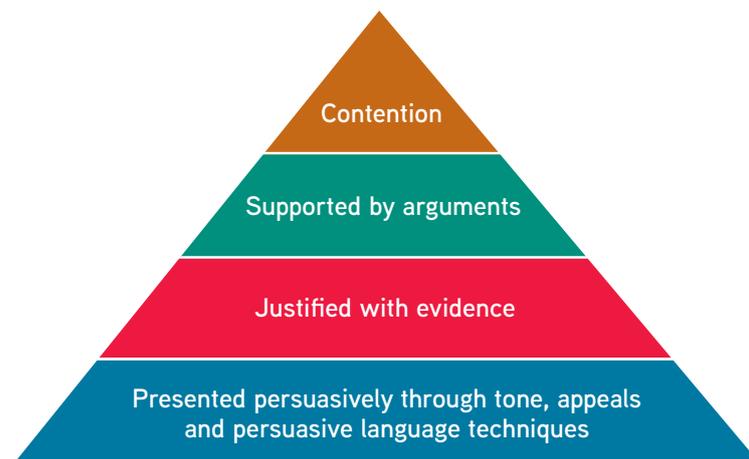
Expert opinion is most persuasive when the expert has a strong knowledge of or connection to the issue. For example, a doctor might be considered an expert on immunisation, but would probably not be the best expert to refer to on the issue of whether learning an additional language should be compulsory in secondary school.

Personal experience

Referring to **personal experience** can be persuasive because it suggests the writer has firsthand knowledge of the issue they are addressing. However, a close personal connection to an issue can also mean that the writer has a bias towards a particular point of view and might be less open to other ideas and opinions. While personal anecdotes can vividly illustrate a point, the writer might be implying that others' experiences will be the same, which is not necessarily true. It is not safe to draw general conclusions from one person's experience, without the support of more evidence. For example, if someone has a bad reaction to a vaccine, that does not mean all vaccines are harmful to everyone.

Structure

To persuade an audience, the writer will make choices about the piece's **structure**, which includes how it begins and ends, where the main contention is placed and the order in which reasons are presented. The diagram below shows the basic elements of structure for persuasive texts.

Contention

Supported by arguments

Justified with evidence

Presented persuasively through tone, appeals and persuasive language techniques

Consider the order in which a writer presents the reasons that support their argument. An author might put their **strongest reason first**, hoping to weaken or refute their opponents' point of view immediately, then follow their strongest or main argument with secondary arguments. An alternative approach would be to start with the least important reason and **finish with the most important**, so that the argument gradually develops to a strong conclusion, leaving the reader with a convincing impression.

Another way to structure a persuasive text is the **'why, followed by how'** approach. Early in the text, the writer presents reasons why the audience should believe their point of view. They then present a model or solution that demonstrates how their proposal could be implemented. Readers are typically positioned to believe that the proposal is realistic or practical.

Another approach is the **'elimination of other possibilities'**. The writer might not directly state the reasons why their point of view should be accepted. Instead, they focus on demonstrating that the alternatives are not reasonable or effective, positioning the audience to accept their point of view on this basis.

Line of argument

When reading or listening to a persuasive text, you need to follow how the argument is developed, or the **line of argument**.

When analysing a persuasive text, dividing the text into meaningful chunks can help you to write clear topic sentences for your extended response.

Texts are often divided into paragraphs that clearly focus on separate reasons. Sections might also be identified by subheadings, pull-out boxes or bold or enlarged text that highlights the writer's main points.

> When you are analysing a written text, you can make notes on the text to identify the line of argument. If you are analysing an audio or audiovisual text, listen to it a few times and write down notes in a separate document.

The following opinion piece by Susie O'Brien was published in the *Herald Sun*. Read it, then look at the graphic organiser that identifies the line of argument.

Cyclist push just a hipster fantasy for Melbourne

Deluded Melbourne leaders believe Lycra-clad cyclists will revive the CBD but we need a vibrant, safe city, not one that alienates drivers.

Despite the best efforts of many councils, there is little sign of Melbourne turning into a Copenhagen-style cycling paradise.

A Lycra-led recovery is not the solution to the CBD's [Central Business District's] woes.

City of Melbourne leaders believe cyclists will save the city and bring people back.

It's a delusional hipster fantasy.

Lord Mayor Sally Capp insists she is not anti-car, but the council's recent decisions have done much to repel and demonise drivers.

Capp says bike lanes take up one per cent of the city's total road space, but the vacant vanity symbols dominate some thoroughfares, taking up the same amount of space as busy car lanes.

Commuters are frustrated that traffic flows and on-street parking have been reduced due to eco-friendly bike paths.

Delivery drivers now have to park unsafely and wheel their goods due to the proliferation of empty bike lanes.

And people wanting to come in at night for the theatre or restaurants are put off due to expensive parking and late-night congestion.

Although the council has temporarily paused its rollout of new bike lanes, the council's priorities are clear. There is a further 70km of separated bike paths planned by 2030.

As the *Herald Sun* revealed on Monday, the City of Melbourne is projected to spend twice as much on footpaths and bike lanes over the next four years as on roads.

Ratepayers will fork out $69m on footpaths and bike lanes but only $31m on roads.

The council's website says the lanes "provide a safe, efficient, sustainable transport alternative that will support physical distancing and get the city moving again as Covid-19 restrictions ease".

They're right that there is great physical distancing on bike lanes – it's because no one is using them.

Even VicRoads – long the champion of drivers – has 100km of new bike routes planned across eight inner-city council areas.

Making matters worse, the bike lobby wants speed limits on roads without separated bike lanes to be reduced from 50kmh to 30kmh.

Preachy and self-entitled, these cyclists expect city streets to be designed solely for their convenience. They don't pay the same registration fees as motorists, but expect generous accommodation at everyone else's expense.

With the city struggling to attract people back, initiatives like free parking at night and cheaper parking during the day would do much to make the CBD more accessible and appealing.

What we need is a vibrant, busy, safe city, not one that alienates and annoys the vast majority of users.

I am not anti-cycling and believe there needs to be safe passages into the city for all users and commuters.

But rather than just considering the needs of self-satisfied inner-city cyclists, councils should also cater for everyone.

They need to remember that not everyone wants to ride into the city in the middle of winter, particularly to a good restaurant or up-market bar.

Councils need to accept the reality that Victorians are among the biggest car users in the country due to our spread-out city and public transport black spots.

The fact that we're willing to spend $27,000 for a five-year-old Toyota Corolla – which costs $23,490 new – shows our addiction to cars is not abating. Second-hand car prices are up 40 per cent over two years.

It's absurd that a major car-reliant city like Melbourne could only have one lane of traffic each way in the middle of the city grid.

While hipster baristas can ride their fixies from Fitzroy to Hardware Lane, the vast majority (89 per cent or so) of city users rely on cars or public transport.

It's easy to argue, as one member of the Moreland Bicycle User Group told the council, that people should be "riding to work and to the shops and everywhere else".

But this eco-privilege is a lifestyle choice only available to those in the inner suburbs.

Despite the best efforts of many councils, there is little sign of Melbourne turning into a Copenhagen-style cycling paradise.

2021 Census data shows 53 per cent of households have access to two or more cars – higher than the national city average. And 17.6 households have three or more cars – an increase of 65,000 cars from the 2016 Census.

As someone who regularly drives into the city during both peak and off-peak times, I'd suggest the biggest safety issue is not drivers like me, but death-wish scooter riders. They are usually helmetless, dressed in black and weaving in and out of traffic.
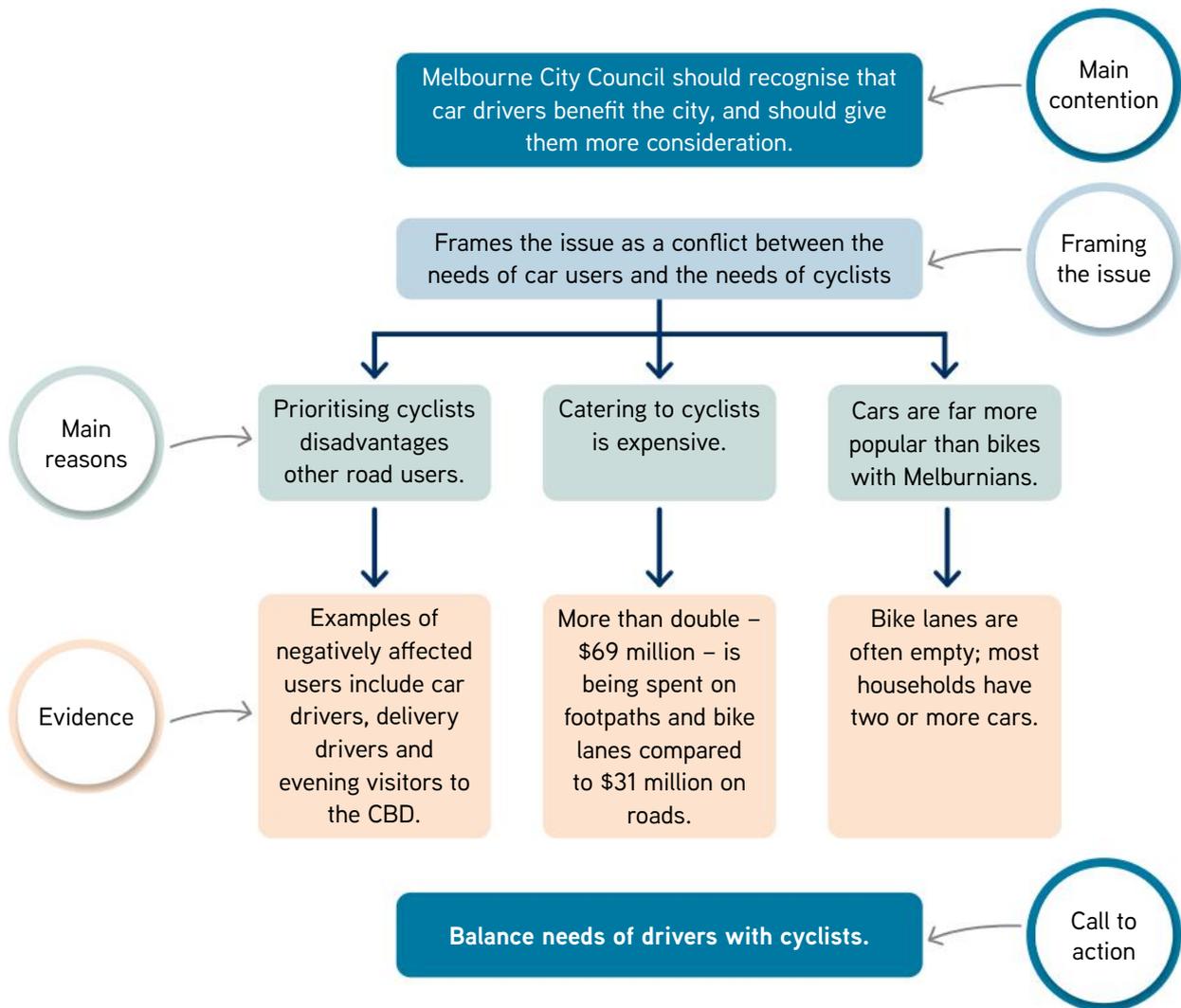
These urban pests are the real city menace.

City users should be given a range of options that do not start and end with demonising car users.

With motorists still paying handsomely for the privilege of owning a car, but cyclists contributing little, there is a desperate need for balance – not to mention mandatory high-viz vests and helmets for all scooter riders.

Susie O'Brien is a
Herald Sun **columnist**

Summary of a line of argument

The following flow chart summarises the line of argument in O'Brien's opinion piece. As you read through a persuasive text, think about how you can track the line of argument and document it through a similar visualisation.

Melbourne City Council should recognise that car drivers benefit the city, and should give them more consideration. ← **Main contention**

Frames the issue as a conflict between the needs of car users and the needs of cyclists ← **Framing the issue**

Main reasons →

| Prioritising cyclists disadvantages other road users. | Catering to cyclists is expensive. | Cars are far more popular than bikes with Melburnians. |

Evidence →

| Examples of negatively affected users include car drivers, delivery drivers and evening visitors to the CBD. | More than double – $69 million – is being spent on footpaths and bike lanes compared to $31 million on roads. | Bike lanes are often empty; most households have two or more cars. |

Balance needs of drivers with cyclists. ← **Call to action**

Comprehend a text

The following questions refer to the text on pages 149–51.

1 Highlight a place in the article where the writer shares her contention.

2 a What is O'Brien's attitude towards cyclists? _____

   b Highlight any words or phrases in the text that reveal this attitude.

3 What is O'Brien's attitude towards car users? How do you know?

_____

_____

4 Describe the group of readers that this text is most likely to appeal to. Justify your answer with evidence from the text.

_____

_____

Scan the code or click **here** to view a video about identifying the argument in a text.

Argument strategies

This section summarises some of the most common argument strategies used by writers to develop their persuasive text.

Framing the issue

Often persuasive texts will begin by describing and developing a shared understanding of the issue. This can be referred to as framing the issue, because it provides a framework or lens through which the reader is encouraged to consider events. This may involve expressing a shared value, describing a recent event or defining a key term. For example, O'Brien does this by emphasising that making provision for cyclists in the CBD disadvantages other road users, appealing to the reader's sense of fairness.

> *e.g.* Johnson begins his speech by framing the school board as 'the most important influence' on the direction of the school.

Building and attacking credibility

Credibility is the quality of being trusted and believed. Persuasive texts often start by establishing the writer's credibility, so that their subsequent arguments are more likely to be accepted. Anecdotes can build credibility by demonstrating that the writer has personal experience of an issue or showing that an issue has real-world consequences.

Writers often place an anecdote at the beginning of their persuasive text. Alternatively, they might give a descriptive account of an event involving someone who either agrees or disagrees with the writer's viewpoint. This can be a strategy to boost a supporter's credibility or attack an opponent's credibility.

> *e.g.* Turning his attention to the current situation, Johnson attacks the credibility of 'the liars on the school board', accusing them of rorts and corruption.

Illustrating a problem

As discussed in Chapter 12, sometimes debating an issue is in fact a way of looking for solutions to a problem. When a writer outlines this problem and argues for their proposed solution they will often include multiple reasons. When reading, viewing or listening to a persuasive text, try to identify all the reasons given that something is a problem.

> *e.g.* Moving on, Johnson demonstrates why the school board's behaviour is problematic by describing a 'series' of mismanaged school projects, including the cost blow-out of the 'fancy new indoor swimming pool'. He also points out the board's denial of financial mismanagement and the lack of transparency around their decision-making.

Offering a solution

Where there is a problem, hopefully there will be a solution. After identifying a situation and describing just how bad it is, writers will often put forward their solution. This might be illustrated with an example of another context where the solution has been successfully implemented. Sometimes the solution might be purely hypothetical, requiring the writer to present a clear vision of the desired outcome.

> *e.g.* His critical tone becoming more optimistic, Johnson shares his solution: the school board should comprise a 'diverse' group that reflects the school community.

Rebuttal

A common persuasive technique is to refer to an alternative or opposing point of view in order to **rebut** it; that is, to demonstrate why that argument does not work. This is different from **conceding a point** – that is, agreeing with an element of the opposition's point of view while still opposing their overall argument. Writers often concede a point to make themselves appear reasonable and logical.

A rebuttal of **counterarguments** can often be found towards the end of a text. This is an opportunity for the writer to convince even their most sceptical opponents, who may have reservations about the proposed solution. You need to identify two aspects to convey your understanding of rebuttal. First, you should recognise the counterargument (see the colour-coded text below). This is an opponent's opinion. Second, establish the writer's rebuttal of their opponent's idea.

> *e.g.* Coming to the end of his speech, Johnson calls out the school board's memo in which they justify their actions as 'in line with community standards'. He asserts that this further demonstrates that they are out of touch with the community that they claim to serve.

Call to action

At the end of a persuasive text, the writer will often leave their audience with a **call to action**. This is normally a short explanation of the next steps the writer wants the reader to take. Depending on the text, it could be a powerful climax that the writer has been building towards through their line of argument.

> *e.g.* To conclude his speech, Johnson emphatically states that the parent community must 'sack the school board' with immediate effect.

Purpose

Remember that a writer's intended **purpose** shapes all their decisions about their persuasive text, from the structure of their argument to the language they use. When analysing a persuasive text, ask yourself: what does the writer want the reader to **think**, **feel** or **do** in response to their argument?

In the following examples, a statement of purpose has been added to some of the sample sentences featuring Johnson.

e.g. Johnson begins his speech by framing the school board as 'the most important influence' on the direction of the school. This <u>positions the audience to accept</u> that any decisions made by the school board could have a big impact.

e.g. His critical tone becoming more optimistic, Johnson shares his solution: the school board should comprise a 'diverse' group of people who reflect the school community. Johnson's solution <u>encourages his readers to imagine the benefits</u> that this change could bring.

Persuasive appeals

Using **persuasive appeals** is an important strategy for writers of opinion texts. This technique is flexible, as writers can choose and adapt appeals from a range of types, according to their knowledge of the intended audience. Consider a text on climate change published in a local newspaper. You might predict that the writer would make an appeal to progress, emphasising that a shift to renewable energy would be innovative and modern. However, if the community consists mostly of people whose employment and financial wellbeing depends on coal mining, such an appeal might be less effective. Therefore, the writer might make an appeal to economic gain by pointing out the commercial and employment potential of establishing new wind and solar farms, making the idea seem appealing and rewarding to this demographic.

The table below shows some common persuasive appeals used by writers.

Persuasive appeal	Purpose	Example
Appeal to common sense: practical everyday knowledge that is accepted as obvious	appeals to the audience's natural ability to reason and make judgements	Come on, you know that smoking is bad for your health.
Appeal to economic gain: refers to money and finances; sometimes called the 'hip-pocket nerve' because traditionally this is where the wallet sits	highlights the potential financial benefits or warns of wasted money	Did you know that you could save hundreds of dollars a year by switching to a different energy provider?
Appeal to family values: based on the belief that traditional family life should be prioritised	focuses the audience's attention on 'what really matters', which is family	Protecting children from the emotional damage caused by family breakdown should be our top priority.
Appeal to fear and insecurity: identifies elements of the topic that are likely to cause concern in the audience	scares the audience, encouraging them to follow the author's advice	Every year many Australians are deceived by online scams, losing not only money but reputation.

Persuasive appeal	Purpose	Example
Appeal to justice and fairness: relies on the audience's innate desire for things to be equal and rules-based	arouses sympathy for those treated unfairly and criticises those who cheat the system	We cannot leave the problem of climate change to future generations who have done nothing to cause it.
Appeal to nostalgia: focuses on evoking the audience's happy memories of the past	develops a connection when author and reader share some common experiences	Remember the good old days when we used to be able to finish work at 5pm and enjoy some leisure time?
Appeal to patriotism and loyalty: based on the assumption that the author and reader share membership of a group or have an identity in common, such as being Australian	highlights what author and audience have in common, particularly shared values and beliefs	As loyal colleagues, we need to pull together and help get the company through this tough time.
Appeal to progress: targets the desire to see things change for the better in the future	encourages the audience to embrace change	We all want to live in a better world, and we have the power to make a difference.
Appeal to tradition and custom: targets the wish for traditions and rituals to continue	encourages the audience to maintain connection with the past	You should try this new casserole. It is just like the food we grew up eating together.

Consider the table above as a starting point. Depending on the context of the text, many more kinds of appeal can be used by authors, such as appeals to intelligence, mateship, environmental concerns or beauty standards.

Analyse persuasive appeals

1 Look at the table of appeals and examples on pages 155–6. Choose three of the examples in the right-hand column and write an analytical sentence about each, using a verb from the list below. Use a different verb for each example.

e.g. Appealing to older readers, the writer **reassures** them that the 'new casserole' is actually very similar to the food that they 'grew up eating'.

confirms	outrages	stirs
ignites	reassures	supports
motivates	reminds	targets

Analytical sentence 1: _____

Analytical sentence 2: _____

Analytical sentence 3: _____

2 Analyse the images below and list the appeals you can identify. Then explain the intended effect on the audience. The first one has been completed for you as an example.

Image	Appeals	Intended effect
	tradition nostalgia patriotism and loyalty	This visual appeals to Melbourne's proud history of 'council meetings' through its vintage depiction of Melbourne Town Hall. Melburnians are encouraged to consider the long tradition of justice and due process since 1842.

3 Visit the website of Eat Up, an Australian charity that provides free school lunches for students.

Scan the code or click **here** to access the website.

Read the home page and watch the *Welcome to Eat Up Australia* video embedded on that page. Then answer the following questions.

a What is the organisation's main purpose?

_____

b From the Eat Up video or home page text, identify two of the argument strategies discussed in this chapter.

_____

_____

c Write a paragraph analysing one of the argument strategies you identified in question 3b.

Writing about argument

The following tables provide model sentences and useful vocabulary for analysing the structure and argument strategies of a persuasive text.

Introducing the writer's contention			
The writer …			
accepts	claims	endorses the view that	outlines the idea that
advances the argument that	concludes	frames	points out
advocates	condemns the idea that	highlights	proposes
asserts	contends	is critical of	puts forward the view that
believes	continues	maintains	refutes
… [a particular idea].			

Writing about the reasons and evidence a writer uses to support their argument		
The writer's use of (reason/evidence) …		
bolsters	highlights	strengthens
develops	proves	sustains
enhances	reinforces	underlines
their argument that … [argument being presented].		

Referring to a point of view rejected by the writer		
The writer …		
attacks	criticises	rebuts
condemns	denigrates	refutes
contradicts	mocks	rejects
… [the opposing opinion].		

Writing about an argument strategy		
The writer's use of [strategy] …		
aims to convince	intends to sway	prepares
encourages	leads	positions
inclines	predisposes	seeks to persuade
the audience to …		
accept	fear	respond to
believe	feel sympathy for	see
consider	lose sympathy for	think
distrust	reject	understand
… [the proposition].		

Scan the code or click here to access a bonus activity on writing about argument.

Analysing language

In Chapter 12, you reviewed some of the main terms associated with analysing the language used in a persuasive text. This chapter will take a closer look at specific language techniques used by writers to position an audience to agree with their point of view. It also presents advice and guidelines for writing analytically about persuasive language.
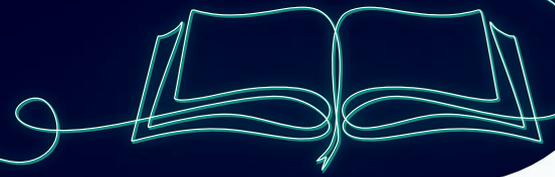
Persuasive language techniques

Writers and speakers make use of **persuasive appeals** (see Chapter 13) and **language techniques** to position audiences. Ultimately, they aim to encourage their intended audience to **feel** the way they do about the issue, share their way of **thinking** and **take action** in line with their proposals. A significant portion of your extended response will involve identifying and analysing language, so it is important to understand how to write about it.

The diagram below outlines the 'What, How, Why' approach to analysing argument and language in persuasive texts.

WHAT?	What is the writer doing?	Identify the writer's reason, tone, persuasive appeal or language technique.
HOW?	How is the writer doing it?	Identify examples and details (language, anecdotes etc.) the writer uses to persuade.
WHY?	Why is the writer doing it?	Analyse the specific effect the writer intends to have on the audience.

By taking this approach, you can analyse a combination of examples together where they share a similar effect. This means that it is not always necessary to discuss 'how', 'what' and 'why' separately for each example.

Every time you analyse intended effect, focus on the specific use of the language. This requires you to refer to the target audience and the text's context.

> *e.g.* In the opening paragraph of his opinion piece, Paulides creates a ⟵ **What?**
> negative portrayal of victims of financial scams. The use of attacking, ⟵ **How?**
> dismissive language such as 'ignorant' and 'pathetic' suggests that the
> victims themselves are to blame for their losses. The intention is to ⟵ **Why?**
> make readers feel annoyed by scam victims and position readers to
> dismiss calls for the government to take action against scammers.

> Remember that persuasive language techniques are not only used by creators of written texts. They are also used in audio and audiovisual texts, as well as in visual texts that include written material.

Summary table of persuasive language techniques

Texts presenting opinions draw on a range of persuasive language techniques. A writer's choice of techniques will reflect their style and register and their understanding of the intended audience. In the table below, the persuasive language techniques have been colour-coded according to their purpose. Be aware, though, that there is some crossover between the categories.

- Yellow shading identifies techniques that aim to emphasise, describe or simplify an idea.

- Green shading identifies techniques that aim to justify an idea.

- Blue shading identifies techniques that aim to provoke an emotional response to an idea.

Persuasive language technique	Purpose	Example
Alliteration: repeating the same sound at the beginning of two or more words in a series	makes text more memorable and catchy	We need to protect our planet, preserve our people and promote progress for all.
Analogy, metaphor and simile: comparing two things, that are typically unlike each other, to explain or clarify a concept or idea	helps the audience understand a complex idea by relating it to something familiar	Just like a house needs to be built on a strong foundation to be secure, your town needs a strong education system to thrive and prosper.
Anecdote: telling a short story to illustrate a point or provide an example of something	creates a personal connection between the author and the topic	When I was a child, my parents struggled to afford my medical treatment. If it wasn't for Medicare, I might not be here today.

Persuasive language technique	Purpose	Example
Attack: belittling or reducing someone's credibility; an *ad hominem* attack is an attack on a person's character or behaviour, rather than on their argument	creates doubt about the opponent and their opinion, positioning the audience to dismiss them	Why should we trust the words of someone who has at least three speeding fines to her name?
Comparison: identifying a similar example or situation from the past or a different context	demonstrates that something comparable has been successful (or unsuccessful) in another context	Off-shore wind turbines have been incredibly successful in the United Kingdom, so it is time to introduce them here.
Connotation: conveying the emotional, cultural or implied meaning of a word or phrase	influences the audience's feelings either positively or negatively	Witness folds during trial
Emotive language: evoking specific feelings from the audience through deliberately selected language	generates an emotional reaction for or against something	Graffiti vandals are turning our city into an ugly mess of childish scribbles.
Euphemism: replacing an offensive or embarrassing expression with a milder or indirect phrase	makes a topic or idea more comfortable and palatable for the audience	Our government should support those who are between jobs by increasing the rate of welfare payments.
Evidence: justifying through information such as statistics or facts, to sound more reasonable and logical	provides concrete evidence that can be difficult to refute	According to a recent report, people who engage in regular exercise are 25% less likely to develop depression.
Exaggeration and hyperbole: describing something as larger or more extreme than it really is, to create emphasis	hooks the audience by creating a sense of urgency or drama	The impact of climate change on our planet is catastrophic.
Generalisation: implying that facts or beliefs relating to a specific example are true in general or more broadly	broadens an argument to apply to many different situations or groups of people	Australians are generally supportive of protecting the environment – as long as they don't have to do anything about it.
Humour: being amusing or comical to make the audience laugh or feel relief from a serious topic	makes the audience more likely to be receptive to the argument	I might look like the healthy outdoors type but by the time I've applied my tan and done my gym sessions it's too dark to go outside!

Persuasive language technique	Purpose	Example
Imagery and descriptive language: creating a mental image in the audience's mind through vivid language and sensory detail	illustrates and clarifies an idea or concept	One of life's great pleasures is hiking through the bush, surrounded by eucalypts and wildlife. If we don't act now on climate change, it could all disappear.
Inclusive language: including the audience as part of a group or community, sometimes in contrast with another group	creates a feeling of belonging and loyalty	As parents, it is time we had a serious discussion about the emphasis we place on Year 12 results.
Irony and sarcasm: conveying a meaning that is the opposite of the literal meaning of the words	positions the audience to share the author's ridicule for something	Oh wow, just what I wanted! A new bin to throw my scraps into. I can't wait to spend my weekend sorting through my rubbish.
Precedent: using a past example to provide rules or justification for future situations	demonstrates that similar ideas have been successful or unsuccessful in the past	We have tried to get a bridge built over the river for years, but it always gets knocked back. Trying again is a waste of time.
Pun: using a word with multiple meanings or words that sound similar, to create a play on words	makes text more entertaining and memorable	Poodunnit? Authorities seek source of fecal water contamination
Repetition: repeating a word or phrase	emphasises an important point and creates momentum for a key idea	It's time for an end to fossil fuels. It's time for higher taxes on the big polluters. It's time to take climate action seriously.
Rhetorical question: asking a question without the expectation of a response	encourages the audience to consider that the answer to the question is obvious	Would you make a small donation if you knew it could make a big difference in someone's life?
Trusted source: referring to an expert, celebrity or other familiar figure	encourages the audience to have confidence in evidence from a known or trusted source	Jemimah, our local librarian, believes that reading makes you smarter, and she's right!

Scan the code or click **here** to view a video about implied meaning in persuasive texts.

Analyse persuasive language techniques

1 Choose three examples from the right-hand column of the table on pages 161–3 and analyse the intended effect by using one of the verbs or verb phrases below.

e.g The author refers to the opinion of community librarian 'Jemimah', which **reassures** the audience that someone they trust believes that reading is important.

amuses	blames	downplays	draws a comparison between
emphasises	establishes	evokes	forces the audience to acknowledge
highlights	illustrates	intensifies	invites
reassures	reminds	ridicules	visualises

_____

_____

_____

2 For each of the examples below, identify the language's implied meaning and explain the intended effect. The first one has been completed as an example.

Example	Implied meaning	Intended effect
My EAL teacher is a saint. She always explains the key terms and offers extra help.	The teacher is kind, generous and supportive.	The student wants to convey their admiration and gratitude for their EAL teacher, who has many positive attributes.
It's time to call out the biggest polluters. They are profiting from the destruction of our environment and leaving future generations to deal with the mess!		
All night long I can hear my upstairs neighbours banging around, making a hubbub.		

3 Scan the code or click **here** to access a YouTube video about protecting the environment. Watch the video, then answer the questions.

a Complete the following table by identifying examples of persuasive language in the video and their intended effects.

Example	Name of technique	Intended effect
	repetition	
Are you proud of what we have done to them?		
		to evoke the audience's alarm

b How would you describe the speaker's tone? Why do you think she has chosen to use this tone to deliver her opinion?

_____

_____

_____

c Choose two images from the video. Write two or three sentences about each, analysing how they support the spoken and written content of the video.

Image 1: _____

_____

Image 2: _____

_____

Visual language

Visual language refers to images, such as photographs, cartoons, drawings, graphs, charts and infographics. (These are discussed in Chapter 17.) It also refers to design features, such as **colour**; **font styles and sizes**; **logos**; **borders**, **frames and lines**; **headings**; and **layout**.

As with all persuasive elements of a text, when analysing visual language, ask yourself the following questions:

- **Why** has the creator of the visual feature decided to present it in this way?
- **How** might this visual feature affect the viewer's response to the issue?

This section will focus on design features. For more information on texts whose primary mode is visual, see Chapter 17: Analysing visual texts.

Design features

The visual appearance of a text can affect how the audience interprets it. Two main design elements of a text that can be changed or manipulated to influence the audience's response are layout and font.

Layout

The **layout** influences the audience's expectations and understanding of a text. Some questions to consider are listed below.

- Do headings, pull-out boxes or dot points draw attention to key information?

- Are images, graphs or tables used to add extra information, to present information in a way that is quickly understood, or to subtly influence the audience to agree with a point of view?

- What are the dominant colours? Do these colours have any symbolic associations? For example, a website dedicated to saving the environment might use the colour green to provide a visual connection to the concept of 'green' environmental values.

- What other decorative features does the text include? For example, are there borders or images? Is there a lot of white space on the page, or is it mostly full of text?

Font

The choice of **font** (size and style of type) conveys information to the audience and can also be subtly persuasive. Consider the following questions.

- Are bold or italic font or capital letters used to emphasise particular words or phrases?

- Do larger fonts draw attention to headings or other important information?

- What information about the text does the font suggest to the reader? Some fonts are associated with particular types of text. For example, print newspapers usually use a serif font (one in which the letters have little 'tails' or strokes on the end, like this), while online texts typically use a sans serif font (plain, without end strokes, like this).

- What other associations do the fonts convey? For example, *Comic Sans* is associated with informal texts and may make a text appear to be less serious, while a font such as Times New Roman is very traditional and, therefore, can appear authoritative.

> The body language and gestures of the speaker of an oral text may also be considered a type of visual language.

Scan the code or click **here** to access a bonus activity on writing about persuasive language.

Writing about language

This section presents sentence starters for writing analytically about persuasive language, including visual language.

Sentence starters for analysing intended effect

When writing an extended response, it is important to vary your sentence structure throughout the body paragraphs. The following sentence starters provide some examples of different structures.

- The intended audience is positioned to consider that …

- The use of the phrase '…' encourages the audience to reflect on …

- This example implies that …

- The writer's use of … is intended to cause the reader to feel …

- … is used by the writer to show the reader that …

- The intended effect of this persuasive strategy is …

- By referring to …, the writer prepares the reader to accept …

Sentence starters for analysing visual language

- By presenting high numbers in … [font variations], the infographic draws the viewer's attention to …

- The graph shows earlier data in … [colours and shading], eliciting feelings of …

- The photograph captures the natural environment in detail, showing … [colours], encouraging the viewer to feel …

- Placing the humorous cartoon in the middle of the article provides readers with some relief from the serious subject matter, inclining them to …

- The headline is presented in a large, bold font that dominates the page, suggesting that the issue is …

- The publication's masthead uses … [font] that communicates …

- The organisation's … [noticeable features] logo appears at both the top and bottom of the webpage, immediately capturing readers' attention and reminding them that …

- A photograph of the writer accompanying the piece presents them as …, encouraging the reader to feel …

Analysing written texts

This chapter looks in detail at some of the most common persuasive text types that are primarily in written form. These include texts published in newspapers, magazines and journals, both in print and online. They might be written by professional writers or journalists, or by members of the public who want to persuade others to agree with their point of view on an issue. These persuasive texts might include visual or audiovisual elements, but their main method of persuasion is the written word.
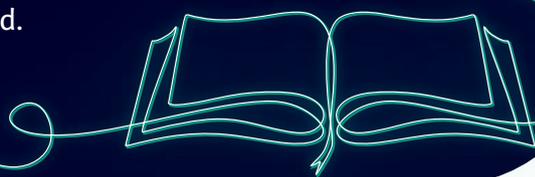
Opinion pieces and blog posts

Opinion pieces are often written by journalists or people with particular knowledge about or interest in an issue. They are usually published in print or online newspapers and magazines. **Blog posts** may also be written by experts and published in newspapers or magazines. However, they might also be written by 'ordinary' people with no journalistic training or special expertise. Texts published on personal blogs or websites are not always fact-checked and edited to the same degree as pieces published in major newspapers.

Both opinion pieces and blog posts usually employ highly persuasive argument and language techniques, but opinion pieces are more likely to be written in a formal and sophisticated style.

The following blog post was published on the website dreamstime.com, a website that, for a fee, lets clients use images provided by a large number of photographers and artists. The piece was written by an artist whose creative works are available through the site.

Is AI-generated Art Real Art? My Two Cents

Philip Sebastian Volkmar

In recent years, artificial intelligence (AI) has been making headlines in various industries. One of the most intriguing applications of AI is its ability to generate art. AI-generated art is a controversial topic, with some arguing that it cannot be considered 'real' art. In this article, we will delve into the world of AI-generated art, explore its definition, history, and controversies, and ultimately make a case for why it should be considered a form of real art.

What is AI-generated Art?

AI-generated art refers to artwork that is created with the help of AI algorithms. This can take many forms, including digital paintings, music and even poetry. AI-generated art is often created using a technique called machine learning, where a computer program learns from large datasets of existing artwork and creates new artwork based on that knowledge.

History of AI-generated Art

AI-generated art has been around for several decades. The earliest examples date back to the 1960s, when computer graphics programs were first developed. However, it wasn't until the 1990s that AI-generated art became more advanced, with the development of neural networks and other machine-learning techniques.

Controversies Surrounding AI-generated Art

One of the main controversies surrounding AI-generated art is whether it can be considered 'real' art. Some argue that because it is created by a machine, it lacks the creativity and emotion associated with traditional forms of art. Others argue that AI-generated art is just as valid as traditional art, and that the creativity and emotion come from the human artists who create the algorithms.

Search

Another controversy surrounding AI-generated art is the question of authorship. Who should be considered the 'artist' when AI is involved in the creation of artwork? Should it be the human who created the algorithms, or the machine itself? This is a question that has yet to be fully answered.

Why AI-Generated Art Should be Considered Real Art

Despite the controversies surrounding AI-generated art, it should be considered a form of real art. Here are a few reasons why:

AI-generated art requires creativity and skill. While the algorithms may be created by humans, the actual artwork is generated by the machine based on its own learned knowledge. This requires a high degree of creativity and skill on the part of both the human creators and the machines.

AI-generated art can evoke emotion. The use of color, texture, and other artistic elements can create powerful works of art that speak to the human experience.

AI-generated art is pushing the boundaries of what is possible in art. By combining the power of technology with the creativity of humans, AI-generated art is opening up new possibilities in the world of art. This has the potential to lead to new forms of artistic expression that have yet to be imagined.

Analyse a blog post

1 Circle or highlight a place in the text where the writer states their main contention.

2 In your own words, give the three main reasons the writer presents to support their point of view.

_____

_____

_____

3 Why do you think the writer has used subheadings in his blog post?

_____

_____

4 How does the image included in the piece help to support the writer's argument?

_____

_____

_____

Editorials

Editorials are written by a newspaper's senior editor or a group of editors. They express the newspaper's position on an issue, usually using formal language and reasoned argument.

The following editorial was published in the Queensland newspaper *The Courier-Mail*.

Editor's View: Small Price to Pay for Safer Roads

The state government is getting tough on the small number of ignorant and inconsiderate drivers who flout the rules and cause senseless carnage on our roads, and now it is time for all Queenslanders to do their part.

After an urgent roundtable meeting earlier this year to address the horrific carnage on our roads, Transport Minister Mark Bailey will today announce a tranche of measures to target bad drivers. One of the major measures being considered is a test on the road rules whenever drivers renew their licence, and another is immediate roadside licence suspensions for drivers travelling more than 40 km/h over the speed limit.

The prospect of undergoing a test on the road rules during the licence renewal process may seem daunting – and to some, unnecessary – but it could be a small price to pay for better drivers on our roads.

Last year, 299 people died on Queensland roads. It was the most deaths in the state since 2009. That's 299 people who did not get home to their families, and the impact of that should not be underestimated. Those families are still grieving, and will be for a long time to come.

Since 2017, the road toll has increased by an average of 40 deaths per year. Many road deaths are preventable, and perhaps a refresher test every few years could make all the difference.

The government and police have introduced a range of measures in recent times to catch the worst of the worst, including greater penalties for offences such as mobile phone usage, and more cameras on our roads to catch speedsters.

Immediate roadside licence suspensions for drivers busted travelling more than 40 km/h over the speed limit seems to be a no-brainer. These people don't deserve to have a licence. It's a dangerous, high-risk activity to travel at such outrageous speeds and there should be no sympathy for those whose licences are suspended immediately. Speed is, after all, one of the biggest killers on our roads and it is not an issue to be taken lightly.

Other measures to be announced which are aimed at boosting road safety include scrapping fees for the PrepL supervisor course, which is an online program to assist supervisor drivers who are coaching learner licence holders.

At the end of the day, the government can introduce as many measures as it wants and police can set up as many roadside breath test and speed stings as they want. But it is up to each and every Queenslander to do the right thing.

Having a licence to drive is a privilege, not a right, and it should not be abused. The families of Queenslanders who have died in horrific crashes will tell you as much.

Analyse an editorial

1 Highlight the places in the editorial where statistics have been cited.

2 What is the intended impact on the reader of the use of statistics?

3 What is the main emotion the first sentence aims to evoke in the reader?

4 Circle all the words in the sentence that contribute to evoking this emotion.

Letters to the editor and online comments

Letters to the editor are published in newspapers and are usually written by members of the general public. They often respond to an issue that has appeared in the paper. They can also be written by people with expert knowledge or experience related to an issue. **Online comments** respond to an article published on a website, and tend to be more informal than letters to the editor.

The following letter to the editor was published in the newspaper *The Guardian*.

The Danger of Seeing Vaccines as a Cure-all

The claim by Moderna's chief medical officer that vaccines may save millions of lives is misleading and will only fuel the perception that somehow medicine can eliminate death ('Cancer and heart disease vaccines "ready by end of the decade"', 7 April). This in turn leads to a disproportionate fear of death and a belief that dying is somehow a failure.

There will be instances in which vaccines could prevent young, active people with a good quality of life from developing cancer, which might be welcomed. But cancer is a disease that is much more prevalent in late middle age and in elderly people. In these cases, a vaccine, while not preventing someone from dying from cancer, will enable them to live a little bit longer, by which time they will have developed other ailments.

They are condemned to living out their latter years while enduring the many debilitating conditions of old age.

In a health service that is stretched financially, we need to be much more realistic about what medicine can and cannot achieve. Scarce resources could prioritise adequate staffing levels and preventive measures rather than hugely expensive new technologies (if no one were obese or smoked, cancer rates would also be vastly reduced). A more timely message for the public would be: we all die and sometimes death is a better outcome than the continuation of life. It is sometimes preferable for medicine to stop curing, but never stop caring.

Dr Tabitha Winnifrith
Cheltenham, Gloucestershire

Analyse a letter to the editor

1 What might be the writer's connection to the issue she is writing about?

_____

2 Which statement best summarises her main contention?

- ☐ Vaccines are more harmful than helpful.
- ☐ Young people should not receive vaccinations for cancer and heart disease.
- ☐ As the health care system is overburdened, older people should not receive health care.
- ☐ Health funding should focus on improving basic services and preventative measures, not unrealistic attempts to avoid death.

3 The writer uses inclusive language in several places. What do you think is the intended effect on her audience?

_____

Letters, newsletters and emails

Persuasive **letters**, **newsletters** and **emails** are often sent to members of the public by organisations such as charities and political groups who are focused on particular issues. Emails from such organisations might include images and embedded videos, in addition to the written text. Individuals might also send letters to other individuals or to organisations to persuade them to take action on an issue.

The following email was sent by animal rescue organisation Edgar's Mission to its supporters.

Celebrating Five Years of Five Dollar Fridays

Hay Jess! I'm Harmony, a sheep with a big heart and a lot of love to give.

I was born with some challenges – angular limb deformities in both of my front legs, a slight curvature of my spine, and a heart condition – but that hasn't stopped me from living my best life.

Thanks to the baa-ewe-tiful team at Edgar's Mission, I've had access to physiotherapy, laser treatments, and walking exercises to help me grow strong and healthy. Now, I spend my days cuddling with the humans who care for me and hanging out with my best friend Miss T'fy. On hot days, we're brought inside an air-conditioned nursery to listen to our favourite music.

That's why I'm grateful for the kind-hearted humans who have joined our Five Dollar Friday community.

Five years ago, an idea was born: that for the price of a soy latte each week, why not chip in and help the rescued animals of Edgar's Mission? Since then, over 1600 supporters have jumped on board!

This is incredibly humbling and life-altering, for it empowers the good folks of Edgar's Mission to continue rescuing, rehabilitating, and providing sanctuary for rescued farmed animals just like me.

It also allows them to continue advocating for a kinder world for all through sanctuary tours, outreach and community engagement.

From humble beginnings 20 years ago, thousands of animals have been rescued by Edgar's Mission. We are currently home to 431 residents, many of whom are ageing gracefully or have disabilities requiring ongoing treatment and care.

Right now, we need your help more than ever to build a new vet room at the sanctuary to meet our ongoing needs. To mark the five-year anniversary of Five Dollar Fridays, our dream is to reach 230 new members to help us raise the $60,000 needed for this project.

Jess, can you please help us achieve this goal?

If you haven't already done so, we'd love you to join our community by pledging to donate $5 each week. And if you are already a Five Dollar Fridayer or one of our stellar regular donors, high hooves to you! If you can please help us spread the word, we'd be so grateful.

Jess, every single human has the power to make a difference. Together, you truly can create a kinder world for animals like me.

Yours in kindness,
Harmony 🐑

Analyse an email

1 The email is written from the point of view of Harmony the sheep. Why do you think Edgar's Mission chose to do this?

_____

2 Identify two places where the recipient is addressed by their first name. How do you think this is likely to make them feel about Edgar's Mission and Five Dollar Fridays?

_____

3 Identify two words or phrases that appeal to the reader's sympathy. Write a sentence for each, analysing how they aim to evoke this response.

_____

_____

4 Write a paragraph analysing the photograph included in the email, and how it supports the written text.

Petitions

Petitions are formal requests signed by multiple people, directed at a person or an organisation with the power to act on the request. Usually, the more people who sign a petition, the more likely it is that the request will be granted, or at least considered. Petitions are usually written in formal language and often employ an urgent tone.

The petition below appears on the website change.org.

Thousands of Aussie Kids Are Living in Poverty. We Need a Child Poverty Reduction Act, Now.

Valuing Children Initiative started this petition to Anthony Albanese (Prime Minister of Australia) and 43 others

'I spent three years sleeping on a blow-up mattress, bouncing between relatives' houses with my four siblings. This was after my mum escaped an abusive relationship and couldn't find permanent housing for our large family of six. I just wanted a quiet place to do homework, a cupboard for my clothes. I wanted a birthday party like the ones all my friends had. I just felt really overwhelmed. I was stressed that my classmates might find out. Eventually, I started to get behind in my schoolwork and lose focus in class because I was constantly worried for myself and my siblings.'

- Shayna (name changed)

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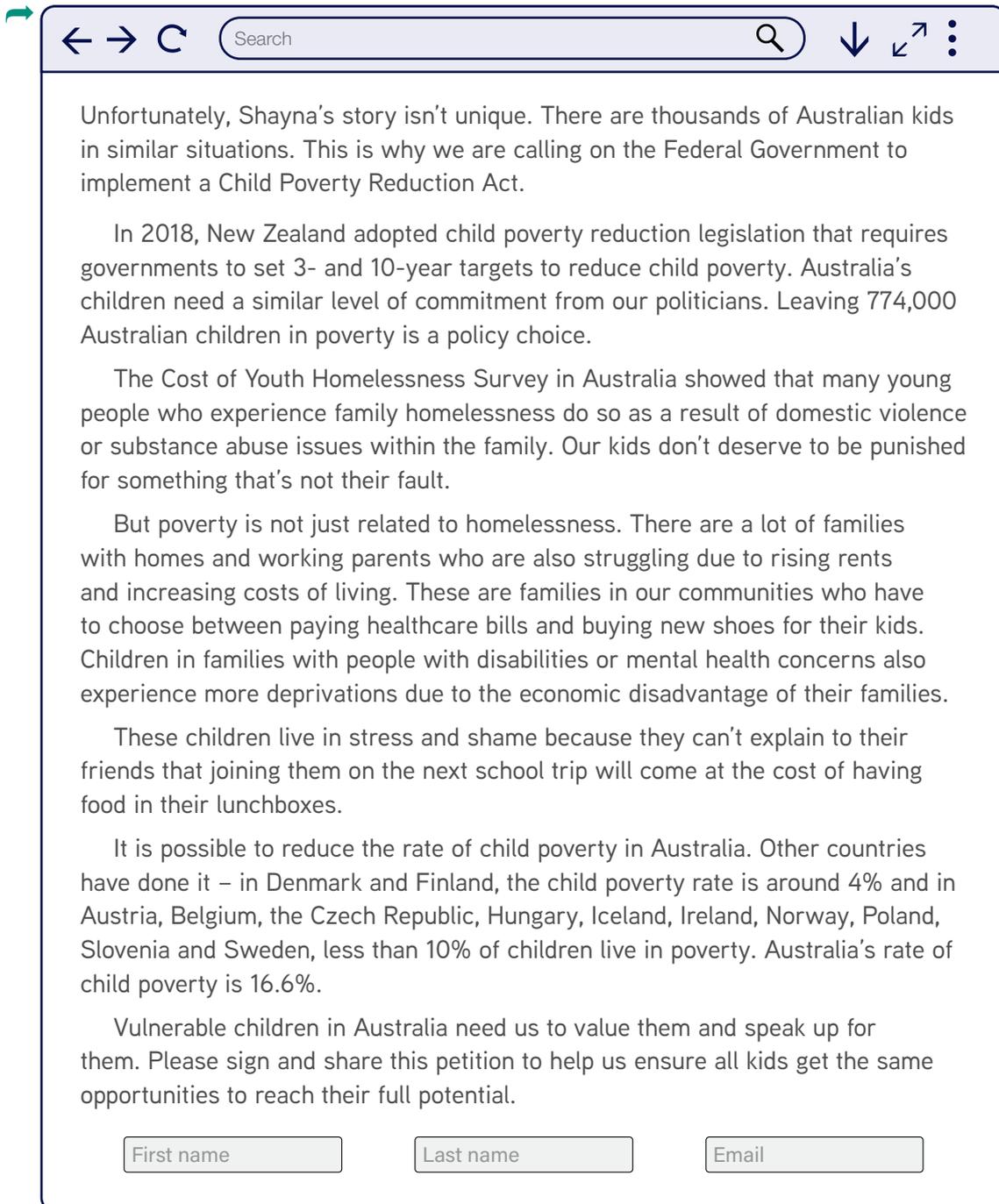
Unfortunately, Shayna's story isn't unique. There are thousands of Australian kids in similar situations. This is why we are calling on the Federal Government to implement a Child Poverty Reduction Act.

In 2018, New Zealand adopted child poverty reduction legislation that requires governments to set 3- and 10-year targets to reduce child poverty. Australia's children need a similar level of commitment from our politicians. Leaving 774,000 Australian children in poverty is a policy choice.

The Cost of Youth Homelessness Survey in Australia showed that many young people who experience family homelessness do so as a result of domestic violence or substance abuse issues within the family. Our kids don't deserve to be punished for something that's not their fault.

But poverty is not just related to homelessness. There are a lot of families with homes and working parents who are also struggling due to rising rents and increasing costs of living. These are families in our communities who have to choose between paying healthcare bills and buying new shoes for their kids. Children in families with people with disabilities or mental health concerns also experience more deprivations due to the economic disadvantage of their families.

These children live in stress and shame because they can't explain to their friends that joining them on the next school trip will come at the cost of having food in their lunchboxes.

It is possible to reduce the rate of child poverty in Australia. Other countries have done it – in Denmark and Finland, the child poverty rate is around 4% and in Austria, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Norway, Poland, Slovenia and Sweden, less than 10% of children live in poverty. Australia's rate of child poverty is 16.6%.

Vulnerable children in Australia need us to value them and speak up for them. Please sign and share this petition to help us ensure all kids get the same opportunities to reach their full potential.

First name   Last name   Email

Analyse a petition

Annotate the text, identifying an example of each of the following persuasive strategies and briefly explaining their intended effect:

- statistics
- inclusive language
- appeal to a sense of justice
- international examples
- emotive language.

Analysing audio and audiovisual texts

Your school-based assessment for this area of study will include analysis of one audio or audiovisual text. Analysing these texts requires excellent listening skills and attentive note-taking. Therefore, it is important that you practise these skills regularly throughout the year.

There is a wide variety of types of audio and audiovisual texts. This chapter takes a detailed look at some of the more common types that you might be asked to analyse in this section of the course.
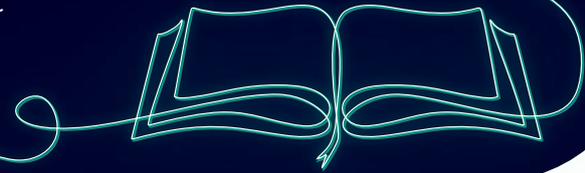
Oral language features

While many argument and persuasive language techniques discussed in Chapters 13 and 14 apply to spoken persuasive texts, such texts also include some non-verbal and interpersonal elements that should be identified and analysed. **Non-verbal** refers to communication that is not word-based. **Interpersonal** refers to the relationship between speakers.

The table below provides a summary of some of the main **oral language features**.

Oral language feature	Non-verbal example	Verbal example
Affirming agreement: speakers support one another through active listening noises and body language	nodding, eye contact	hmm, okay, right
Creating emphasis: speakers use a range of strategies to emphasise key points	raised volume, modulated tone, pausing	And this is the key point.

Oral language feature	Non-verbal example	Verbal example
Expressing anger: speakers show their displeasure with a person or idea	slow pace, enunciated words, raised volume, modulated tone	I cannot believe you!
Expressing disappointment: speakers show that they do not approve of something	lowered volume, modulated tone	Wow, this is really disappointing.
Expressing frustration: speakers demonstrate that something is annoying	sighing, modulated tone	Ugh, this is extremely irritating.
Expressing pleasure: speakers demonstrate their approval and joy	laughing, exclamation, modulated tone	That's wonderful!
Expressing sadness: speakers reveal negative feelings they have experienced	pausing, crying, modulated tone	It was really hard for me.
Expressing surprise: speakers show shock that something has occurred	exclamation, modulated tone	Oh wow!
Interrupting: speakers cut one another off to make their own point	forcefully beginning with the start of a sentence until the other speaker stops talking	But I … but I … but I …
Questioning: speakers ask questions to demonstrate interest or to reveal information that supports their own views	raised pitch towards end of sentence	What makes you say that?

Analyse oral language features

1 For three of the examples in the right-hand column of the table on pages 177–8, analyse the intended effect by writing a sentence that includes a verb or verb phrase from the list below. An example has been done for you.

> *e.g.* The words and sounds 'hmm', 'okay' and 'right' are used by a listener to **demonstrate support for** a speaker's words, encouraging them to continue.

demonstrate approval of   provoke

demonstrate support for   reveal

emphasise   share frustration about

highlight the importance of   share the impact of

indicate   shock

_____

_____

_____

2 Find an example in an audio text or texts of three of the oral language features in the table on pages 177–8. Complete the table below to analyse their intended effects.

Oral language feature	Example	Text	Text creator	Target audience	Intended effect

Audio texts

Before television was widely available, the radio was a major form of mass communication and home entertainment. In modern times, as well as video content, we have access to more **audio texts** than ever. When you walk around your school or neighbourhood or use public transport, you will likely see many people wearing earbuds to listen to music, podcasts or phone calls. If you enjoy listening to audio texts, make sure that you include some English-language content as part of your daily mix.

This section considers the persuasive features of texts whose primary mode is audio.

Radio interviews

Talkback radio is a kind of radio program that features a regular host who invites guests and everyday listeners to speak about issues. Some talkback programs focus on a specific topic, such as gardening or music, but most are of a general nature and include discussions on recent events and politics. These radio programs often feature traffic reports, weather reports and news bulletins interspersed among the talkback segments.

The following transcript is an extract from an interview between journalist Virginia Trioli and artist Mike Hewson on ABC Radio Melbourne. They are discussing the 'risky' Southbank playground Hewson designed. Prior to this extract, Trioli shares her concerns that the new playground looks too dangerous.

A photograph of Hewson that accompanied an article in *The Age* about the playground. (Luis Ascui)

 Scan the code or click **here** to listen to the radio interview. The transcript begins at 7:15 and ends at 9:10. (Note that it has been edited for clarity when speakers stumble or speak over one another.)

Virginia Trioli: Well, I can tell you that my team doesn't agree with me. In fact, they abandoned me yesterday and went and played on the playground and then sent me taunting videos of themselves on the swings, saying, 'This is great – we love it.' So, you know, they've voted with their feet there.

Mike Hewson: What are the chances that we'll see you coming down the slide at some point?

Virginia Trioli: I don't know about that. [*Laughs*] I mean look … As much as I resist the surface of those plastic playgrounds, and really dislike those, as someone who lives and works in the inner city and who craves green, there's something about an entirely flinty, rocky, hard surface that immediately repels me. Because I am craving something that's a bit softer, that's a bit greener. I guess I want a playground that is a version of the Botanic Gardens, but in playground form. You know, entirely green hills

that I can roll down. This just may be a personal preference. But that's a challenge for people in the inner city where green open space is at a premium. It's almost like you need to overcompensate, it seems, for the fact that we don't have it.

Mike Hewson: Yeah, it's really hard in the sense that little feet just trample green, you know. The stuff doesn't last. And this is the thing: we wanted to put in green. But you sort of have to fence it off, especially while it gets established … And that's why I worked with these boulders. Like with open climbing faces, there's no handrails. And actually in the playground standards, which I have come to know very well, you know these open climbing structures actually provide a lot of possibilities. So rather than one platform where you can only just be on the platform, you can actually scale every surface of the stone. So in terms of value, yeah, it's kind of amazing what kids can do. And this is, I guess, what my proposition is: that you just make things that are quite amorphous and almost you're not sure what they are. And because kids don't have this, like, baggage about what you're meant to do, they just discover things for themselves and, you know, move in ways that they might not have previously.

Analyse a radio interview

Listen to the radio interview from 7:15 to 9:10 and respond to the following questions.

1   At the beginning of the extract Trioli emphasises 'This is great, we love it'. Describe her tone and the likely intended effect on her audience.

   _____

   _____

2   Select the statement that best describes the kind of playground that Trioli would like to see.

   ☐   a creative playground with more opportunities for children to create their own adventures

   ☐   a fun playground with more equipment and slides for children to enjoy

   ☐   a natural playground with fewer rocky surfaces and more grass

3   How does Hewson respectfully disagree with Trioli? Describe his rebuttal with a direct quotation and a reference to his oral language features.

   _____

   _____

   _____

4   Identify one point that Trioli and Hewson agree on and one point they disagree on.

   Point 1: _____

   Point 2: _____

Podcasts

Podcasts are digital audio texts made available over the internet. Typically they are a series with regular instalments. They can explore a broad range of topics, from discussions about popular culture to news and current affairs, and can be presented in various formats. For instance, they might have multiple hosts discussing a topic (e.g. *Chat 10 Looks 3* with Leigh Sales and Annabel Crabb), a single host interviewing guests (e.g. *The Good Life* with Andrew Leigh) or a journalistic team that reports stories (e.g. *7am* from Schwartz Media).

Health reporter Tegan Taylor and Dr Norman Swan discuss the COVID-19 pandemic in Australia in their podcast *Coronacast* for the ABC. The following transcript is an extract from an episode.

Scan the code or click here to listen to the episode. The transcript begins at 0:56 and goes until 2:42.

Does anyone give a rat about RATs anymore?

Tegan Taylor: But enough about other podcasts. Let's do *Coronacast*, a show all about the Coronavirus. I'm health reporter Tegan Taylor, coming to you from Jagera and Turrbal land.

Norman Swan: And I'm physician and journalist Dr Norman Swan, coming to you from Gadigal land. It's Wednesday, November 9th, 2022.

Tegan Taylor: And Norman, if you get Covid today, it's a very different picture as to what you're required to do compared to the beginning of this year. There are no mandatory isolation requirements anymore, except for if you're in specific settings like aged care and healthcare. First, we had PCR tests, which were very accurate, but you had to do them at a clinic and it takes a couple of days to get a result. And then we had rapid antigen tests or RATs – not as accurate, but you could do them yourself at home and get a result within minutes. But the accuracy of RATs has always been a bit of a question. And with the virus continuing to mutate and evolve, we're getting a lot of questions from our listeners about whether they're still effective enough to actually be useful at all.

Norman Swan: And that's a really important question. So why do we care? Well, first of all, they're taking the base load of testing now, rather than PCR, which is what you're saying, even with the inadequate testing that's going on. Secondly, it's how general practitioners decide whether or not you merit an antiviral. … If there's underperformance on the RAT test, then people are going to be missed who could have had an antiviral. They are relied upon in aged care to help control COVID-19 outbreaks in the most vulnerable population. And they're relied upon in hospitals as the initial screening for whether or not you might go into a Covid ward or a single ward or a shared ward.

Tegan Taylor: So we're leaning on them pretty heavily then; they'd better be working.

Analyse a podcast segment

Listen to the podcast from 0:56 to 2:42 and respond to the following questions.

1 Podcasts often begin with a regular introduction. Identify two features of the introduction to this segment from *Coronacast*. How do these features set the tone for the podcast?

_____

_____

2 Compare the register of the two speakers. Describe each speaker's tone and level of formality.

Tegan Taylor: _____

Norman Swan: _____

3 a Identify two facts in the podcast.

_____

b Why do you think it is important that the hosts present factual information to their listeners?

_____

4 The title of the episode is 'Does anyone give a rat about RATs anymore?' Identify and explain the pun used in this title.

_____

5 In response to the question in the title, identify Taylor and Swan's main contention.

_____

Audiovisual texts

Audiovisual texts can include film, television, streaming content, online videos and social media. The purpose of much of this content is to entertain or to inform. However, modern advertising and marketing strategies blur the boundaries between entertainment, information and persuasion.

Persuasive texts whose primary mode is audiovisual can use the same argument and persuasive language strategies as written persuasive texts. They also use many of the persuasive oral communication techniques discussed in the previous section. Additionally, they use visual language to communicate a point of view. This visual language can include the speakers' appearance, gestures and body language, as well as visual effects associated with film texts, such as moving images, camera angles and sets.

Visual communication strategies

Persuasive audiovisual texts often include a speaker or speakers, whose presentation can help to position their audience. It is important to analyse speakers' **visual communication strategies** in addition to the oral language features they use. Some important strategies are summarised in the table below.

Speakers' visual communication strategies	Examples
Body language: the way a person holds their body can convey their feelings and emotions	posture, eye contact, shaking head, nodding
Clothing: the way that someone dresses can convey their attitude or level of formality	business suit, school uniform, hi-vis vest
Facial expressions: a person's face conveys a lot of feeling and emotion	smiling, scowling, furrowing brow, winking, yawning
Hand gestures: the movement of hands can create emphasis	pointing, fist-pumping, crossing fingers, gesticulating
Visual aids: the speaker may present some information via supporting visual aids	photos, videos, slides

Filmic features

Additionally, filmed texts incorporate some or all of the features described below, which can be used to persuade audiences.

Still and moving images

The content of **still and moving images** in an audiovisual text can be highly persuasive. Consider not only the subject of the images, but how they are lit, the angle from which they are shot, how they are framed, and how any accompanying music, sound effects or voice-over encourages the viewer to feel about the subject.

Sets

Many audiovisual texts, such as news programs and panel discussions, are filmed on sets that include **props** such as desks, chairs and microphones. Consider what the arrangement of props suggests about the role of the person or people who appear in the text. **Lighting** is also used to create deliberate effects. For example, a spotlight might be used to focus the viewer on a particular speaker. Bright or colourful lighting might contribute to a joyful or lighthearted mood, while dark lighting or shadows might communicate seriousness or sorrow. The **backdrop** is placed behind the presenter or speakers to provide a visual context. Consider the colours or images that are used, and the mood they create. Does the backdrop provide extra information about the topic of the text?

Voice-overs

Spoken commentary or narration from an unseen speaker in a video text can communicate a point of view not only through *what* is said but *how* it is said. **Paralinguistic** elements such as pace, pausing, volume, tone and pitch all shape how the audience is likely to respond to the ideas presented in the text.

Music and sound effects

Music can be used to communicate and evoke emotions such as joy, sadness and anger. It can also help establish a social or cultural context for the issue the text is exploring. **Sound effects** can be paired with what appears on the screen to create humour, realism or drama.

Intertextuality

Creators of texts often include references to other texts as supporting evidence for their point of view, or for humorous or dramatic effect. These references can be embedded as sound bites, video excerpts or screenshots, for example. The associations the viewer has with these other texts helps to shape their response to the creator's text.

Editing

Various elements of a video segment are deliberately selected, combined and sequenced to present information and perspectives in particular ways. Consider how the text begins and ends. What does this suggest is the main focus of the text? Consider, too, what information and perspectives the text's creator has chosen to include and what they have chosen to leave out. Why might they have made these choices?

See Chapter 3: Analysing film and Chapter 17: Analysing visual texts for more information about visual methods of communication.

Analyse visual communication strategies

1 For each of the strategies on page 184, analyse the possible intended effect of one of the examples in the right-hand column, by using one of the verbs from the list below. An example has been done for you.

e.g. The speaker stands up straight and pumps her fist to **emphasise** the important point that she is making, seeking to convey her passion to the audience.

connect	express	reflect
convey	highlight	represent
emphasise	reference	symbolise

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

2 For three of the features of filmed texts listed on pages 184–5, find an example in an audiovisual text or texts. Make notes below to analyse their intended effects.

Feature 1: _____ Example: _____

Text: _____ Text creator: _____

Target audience: _____

Intended effect: _____

_____

Feature 2: _____ Example: _____

Text: _____ Text creator: _____

Target audience: _____

Intended effect: _____

_____

Feature 3: _____ Example: _____

Text: _____ Text creator: _____

Target audience: _____

Intended effect: _____

_____

Speeches

When a speaker's intention is to persuade their audience on a particular topic, **speeches** can be presented as persuasive texts. In addition to considering the script of a speech, you should identify persuasive features of non-verbal aspects of their delivery (see pages 177–8 and page 209). If you are watching the speaker, you can also identify persuasive features of their visual communication strategies (see pages 184 and 209).

Paralympian and tennis Grand Slam winner Dylan Alcott was awarded Australian of the Year in 2022. The following transcript is an excerpt from his acceptance speech.

Scan the code or click here to listen to the speech. The transcript begins at 2:30 and goes until 5:25. Some brief sections have been edited out below.

> I've been in a wheelchair my whole life. I was born with a tumour wrapped around my spinal cord that was cut out when I was only a couple of days old.
>
> I've known nothing but having a disability, and if I'm honest with you, I cannot tell you how much I used to hate myself.
>
> I used to hate having a disability. I hated it so much, I hated being different and I didn't want to be here anymore. I really didn't.
>
> Whenever I turned on the TV, or the radio or the newspaper, I never saw anybody like me.

➥

And whenever I did, it was a road safety ad where someone drink drives, has a car accident and what's the next scene? Someone like me in tears because their life was over.

And I thought to myself, 'that's not my life', but I believed that was going to be my life …

And when I reached the end of my teenage years, I started seeing people like me.

I also stand on the shoulders of giants, not literally, um, still can't stand. But Paralympic athletes like Louise Sauvage, Kurt Fearnley, Danni Di Toro, people that are the reason that I got into sport, advocates like Stella Young, they paved the way so I could be here tonight.

They should have been Australian of the Year as well. And I'm honestly so honoured to be up here and it's because of them and everybody in my life that I sit here as a proud man with a disability tonight.

I love my disability. It is the best thing that ever happened to me. It really is, and I'm so thankful for the life that I get to live …

But I know for the 4.5 million people in this country – one in five people that have a physical or non-physical disability – they don't feel the same way that I do and it's not their fault.

But it's up to all of us to do things so they can get out and be proud of their disability as well and be the people that they want to be.

We've got to fund the NDIS, first and foremost, and listen to people with lived experience and ask them what they need so they can get out and start living the lives that they want to live and remind ourselves that it is an investment in people with disabilities, so they can get off pensions and start paying taxes, just like their carers and their family members as well.

Comprehend an audiovisual text

Watch the video recording of Alcott's speech from 2:30 until 5:25 and respond to the following short-answer questions.

1 Which of the following statements best describes Alcott's contention?

☐ Alcott contends that Australia should provide free healthcare for those who have a disability.

☐ Alcott contends that everyone with a disability should be given the opportunity to feel proud.

☐ Alcott contends that television networks should feature more representation of people with disabilities.

2   Identify two supporting arguments for the contention you selected above.

_____

_____

3   Describe the emotions that Alcott expresses, and the way he expresses them, at the beginning of the clip. In your response, use the vocabulary from the oral language features table on pages 177–8.

_____

_____

4   Throughout his speech, Alcott uses humour; for example, 'I also stand on the shoulders of giants, not literally, um, still can't stand.' Explain his intended effect on the audience.

_____

_____

5   At 4:14 in the video recording, Alcott emphasises the phrase 'I love my disability' through his sincere tone and by pausing afterwards. Identify three other moments when Alcott creates emphasis.

Moment 1: _____

Moment 2: _____

Moment 3: _____

In the final paragraph of the transcript, Alcott turns his attention towards some actions that can be taken. Research the function of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) and describe Alcott's purpose.

_____

_____

_____

Panel discussions

A **panel discussion** is a public debate or conversation between selected people, usually a range of stakeholders who have expertise or an interest in the topic for discussion. Panel discussions often include questions or comments from the audience and usually include a range of different opinions. They commonly take place at arts festivals or in television current affairs programs. Today something akin to a panel discussion can be conveyed through a series of short social media posts, but social media platforms can use algorithms that only present individual viewers with opinions they are likely to agree with, while silencing opponents' views.

The Uluru Statement from the Heart seeks to implement a First Nations Voice to Parliament as part of Australia's constitution. This would create a formal mechanism for First Nations people to share their views on how proposed new federal laws and regulations will affect their communities. An ABC *Q+A* program addressed this topic in a discussion between a range of panellists. View the video, which begins with an audience member asking a question about the purpose of the First Nations Voice to Parliament.

Australian First Nations activist and community leader Noel Pearson signing the Uluru Statement. (Photo by James Croucher / Newspix)

Scan the code or click here to access a video of the program.

Before watching, you may need to do some research on:

- the panellists (listed from left to right on panel): Grace Tame, Nova Peris, Allegra Spender, Matt Kean and Josh Szeps
- the host Stan Grant
- **constitutional recognition** for First Nations people in Australia
- **'closing the gap'** between First Nations and non-First Nations people in Australia
- **incarceration rates** for First Nations Australians, particularly those under the age of eighteen
- the 2017 Australian **marriage equality** postal survey
- vocabulary: **mob**, **treaty** and **sovereignty was never ceded**.

Analyse a panel discussion

Watch the video recording of the *Q+A* panel discussion about the First Nations Voice to Parliament proposal. If you need them, the video allows you to turn on auto-generated subtitles. After watching, respond to the following questions.

1   Identify whether or not each panellist supports the proposed Voice to Parliament. They are listed in order of their contribution. Where possible, also summarise their main contention.

Panellist	Position on Voice to Parliament	Contention (if identifiable)
Nova Peris		
Josh Szeps		
Matt Kean		
Allegra Spender		
Grace Tame		

2   Two audience members ask questions. The first appears at the beginning of the video and the second occurs at 5:05. Identify whether or not they support the Voice to Parliament and their main contentions.

First questioner: _____

Second questioner (Pengarte Bray): _____

3   At 10:55 in the video recording, identify how Josh Szeps inserts himself into the discussion. Describe his body language and oral language features.

_____

_____

_____

4   Throughout the panel discussion, many of the panellists support each other's opinions. Explain how this is achieved, and include direct quotations and references to their oral language features.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Social media posts

Social media posts include a wide variety of platforms and text types. Some are primarily text-based, including X (formerly Twitter) and Facebook. Increasingly, however, social media users are spending time on audiovisual content using platforms such as TikTok, Instagram, Snapchat and BeReal. A key modern trend is for younger users to desert a platform as soon as their older relatives start making use of it, and flock to new platforms. Therefore, by the time you read this there will probably be many new and more popular social media platforms not listed here.

Key features of social media posts include short duration, heightened emotions, references to internet jokes (**memes**) and use of symbolism. They often also feature a comment section. Content shared via social media is rarely fact-checked and it is usually presented more informally than in other text types.

The term **social media influencer** is used to refer to popular users who generate content. Tara Bellerose is a social media influencer who lives on a farm in rural south-west Victoria. She is a passionate environmentalist and many of her TikTok videos have **gone viral**, which means that they have been watched by a large number of social media users. There are links to two of her videos below. Text 1 features Bellerose's reaction to another TikTok creator's views on the aftermath of the Australian bushfires. Text 2 features Bellerose criticising a gender reveal party that featured pyrotechnics.

Social media influencer Tara Bellerose. (*The Age*)

Scan the code or click **here** to access Text 1.

Scan the code or click **here** to access Text 2.

Analyse social media videos

Watch Text 1 and Text 2, then respond to the following questions.

1 Text 1 alternates between Luis Angel Cordova's video and Bellerose's reaction. Identify each social media influencer's main contention about the Australian bushfires.

Luis Angel Cordova: _____

Tara Bellerose: _____

2 Contrast each speaker's approach. Refer to their tone and use of oral language features, as well as the use of visuals/music.

Luis Angel Cordova: _____

Tara Bellerose: _____

3 Text 2 begins with Bellerose emphatically stating, '… just because you can, doesn't mean you should.' Describe how her tone of voice and hand gestures aim to catch the audience's attention and support her contention.

_____

_____

4 A common feature of Bellerose's videos is intertextuality. Specifically, she quotes other texts (videos, screenshots and sound grabs) in her videos as evidence, or for comedic effect. Identify three texts that Bellerose includes in her videos and explain the intended effect of each on her audience.

Quoted text 1: _____

Quoted text 2: _____

Quoted text 3: _____

5 Bellerose makes frequent use of humour throughout her videos. Describe the implied meaning when this line is delivered sarcastically: 'Great! I'm sure the animals that survived the fire but then died of starvation are thrilled.' Then explain the intended effect on the audience.

_____

_____

_____

Scan the code or click **here** to access tips and a bonus activity on writing about audio and audiovisual texts.

Analysing visual texts

In addition to persuasive texts that are in written, audio or audiovisual form, you will also analyse visual texts. That is the focus of this chapter.

There are numerous types of visual texts, including both static (e.g. printed) and moving images. They can accompany a written text or stand alone; but they all communicate their message mainly through visual language, utilising imagery, colour, framing and perspective to persuade an audience.
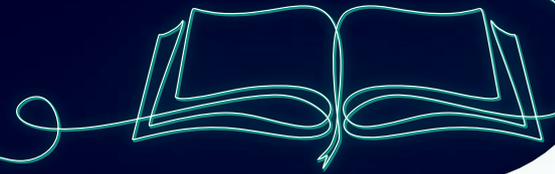
Features of visual texts

While a visual text will have certain features that are specific to its particular form, some elements are shared by them all. This section outlines the general features of visual texts that you should be prepared to analyse. This can also be a useful checklist to work through when you encounter a new visual text.

Composition or layout

The **composition** or **layout** of a visual text means the way the elements are combined or organised. This is a good starting point when looking at a visual text for the first time. Begin by identifying all the elements that have been included and where they have been placed. Has anything obvious been left out? If so, why might the creator have made this choice?

When considering the composition of the image, identify which element or part of the visual you focus on first. This is the most significant feature, or the **salient feature**. This will often be the most important element conveying the main point. When you have identified the salient feature in the visual, ask yourself why its creator would want you to focus on it.

Colour

Colour can be used to convey emotions or feelings, or to illustrate connections. Most colours have a variety of associations – some of which can be contradictory – so you need to consider the context, to help you identify the appropriate or intended meaning. The table on the following page shows some common associations with particular colours. Can you think of any others?

red	anger, danger, love, blood, communism/socialism, fire
blue	water, calm, tranquillity, peace, masculinity
green	environment, nature, sustainability, jealousy, envy, poison, money, permission to proceed (i.e. 'go')
white	purity, innocence, cleanliness, hygiene/sterility
black	power, evil, death, unhappiness
yellow	sunshine, warmth, summer, caution
purple	royalty, wealth, religion
pink	femininity, love, romance, spring

When colours are used together, the meaning can change. For example, in the US, France and the UK, the use of red, white and blue together (the colours of their national flags) can suggest patriotism or could symbolise something relating to the nation. Despite Australia's flag also being red, white and blue, its official national colours, used by sporting teams and for other purposes, are green and gold (yellow). These colours represent Australia's national flower, the golden wattle.

If a visual text you are analysing is black and white, not colour – which is likely in your VCE EAL exam – then look at how shading and degrees of darkness and lightness are used.

Sizing

If there are multiple elements within the visual, look at their relative **size**. Is one object noticeably larger than others? Does a certain colour, shape or element dominate the image? Are items in proportion or has a particular feature been emphasised?

Allusions and prior knowledge

Some visuals will make **allusions**, or connections, to other images or to pop culture, and some will rely on commonly held **prior knowledge** or preconceptions. Consider the associations of these references, and the emotions that the creator of the text might want to evoke.

Vectors

The **vector** is the line or path that your eyes follow as you 'read' the message of the visual. Australian audiences usually read from left to right, so images are often constructed with this in mind.

Photographs

Because **photographs** capture real-life images, we have a tendency to trust them and to treat them as though they show the truth. However, it is important to remember that photos are often 'staged', meaning that the subjects in the image are posing for the photograph, and the shot has been taken in a particular way. Even photos that are taken candidly (not posed or staged) may not be as 'true' as they initially appear, as they may have been cropped, colour-adjusted or photoshopped.

Consider the two versions of the image below.

(Tom Bullock)

In the first, cropped, version of the photograph, the dog appears to be aggressive and threatening. The image is dominated by its open mouth, with bared teeth and staring eyes. The photo is taken from above, making it seem as though the dog is jumping up at the photographer, possibly to attack. This close-up image provides no context for the situation – all that is shown is the dog's head.

(Tom Bullock)

The second, full, version of the photograph tells a different story. While the image of the dog is exactly the same, the presence of the ball gives context to the dog's behaviour, and results in the image being far less confrontational. We can now see that the dog is completely focused on catching the ball, rather than being aggressive towards the photographer.

Analyse photographs

Consider the two photographs below, which both depict climate change protests that took place in various countries around the world in 2019.

(https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/20/climate/global-climate-strike.html)

(https://www.schoolstrike4climate.com/)

1 Which part of each photo do your eyes focus on first? Why is this part of the image important?

_____

_____

2 What are the emotions that each image positions you to feel? Which elements in the photograph encourage you to feel like this?

_____

_____

_____

3 What message or point of view is being conveyed by each photograph? Write a sentence that provides a possible contention for each visual text.

_____

_____

_____

4 What are the differences in the ways these photographs convey their messages? Which one do you think is more powerful? Why?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Cartoons

One of the most commonly used persuasive visual texts is the **cartoon**. Cartoons can be found in various media; most major daily newspapers feature a cartoon that presents a view on a current issue. They usually convey a perspective on the issue in a humorous or satirical way. Cartoons often use allusions, clichés or associations to communicate their message.

Cartoons can vary significantly, from simple line drawings in black and white to complex and detailed coloured texts featuring multiple elements and characters. With any cartoon – and, indeed, any visual – begin by focusing on what you see, then try to work out how it connects to the issue and context, and how the different elements are intended to position the audience to think or feel in particular ways.

Analyse a cartoon

The cartoon by Mark Knight below appeared in the *Herald Sun* newspaper. A controversial safe injecting centre for drug users opened near a Richmond primary school. The cartoon responds to media reports of local residents' concerns about this.

1   Which elements suggest that having a safe injecting centre next to a school is a bad idea?

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

2   Identify one visual feature discussed on pages 194–5 that is used in the cartoon, and write three or four sentences analysing how it is used to persuade.

Infographics

Infographics typically blend together information, data and visuals to convey complex information in a simple and easy-to-understand way. They may include more written text than other types of visual texts, but words will be kept to a minimum.

The infographic on the next page was produced as part of Victorian water company Wannon Water's Permanent Water Saving Plan. The purpose of this text is to highlight the issue of wasting water and to educate people about ways to reduce wastage. It conveys a lot of information in a simple and straightforward way. A structured layout, familiar imagery and the use of bold, capital letters and varying sizes of print work together to help make the complex information easy to follow.

Direct, simple, capitalised title introduces the issue.

Reassuring language – 'common-sense rules', 'help us' – presents the information neutrally, rather than attacking or blaming readers for water wastage.

Smiling water drop character projects a friendly impression that encourages viewers to perceive the water rules as helpful rather than punitive.

Presenting each rule in its own white 'bubble' with accompanying image makes the rules clear and easy to understand for a broad audience that may include people whose first language isn't English or who have limited reading ability.
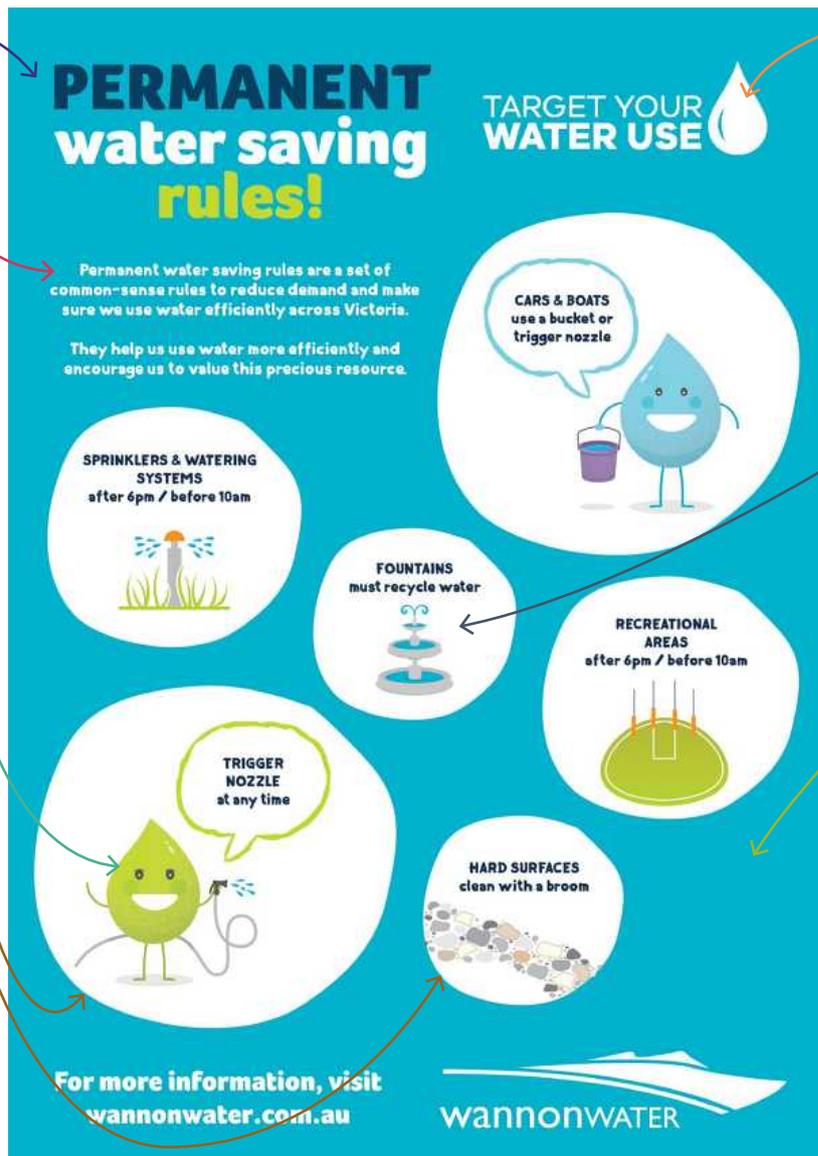
Water imagery (droplet) maintains consistency and connection to the issue.

Images of familiar water uses throughout make the issue relatable to homeowners.

Simple, consistent colour scheme throughout – predominantly blue and white. Blue connects to the focus on water and also reflects Wannon Water's logo. Use of simple blue and white supports the infographic's claim to be presenting factual information without bias.

Graphs, charts and tables

Graphs, **charts** and **tables** are often used to convey statistical information or to illustrate trends in data. Because many people find numbers difficult to interpret, graphs and charts can be effective ways of depicting information visually, in order to shape an audience's opinion.
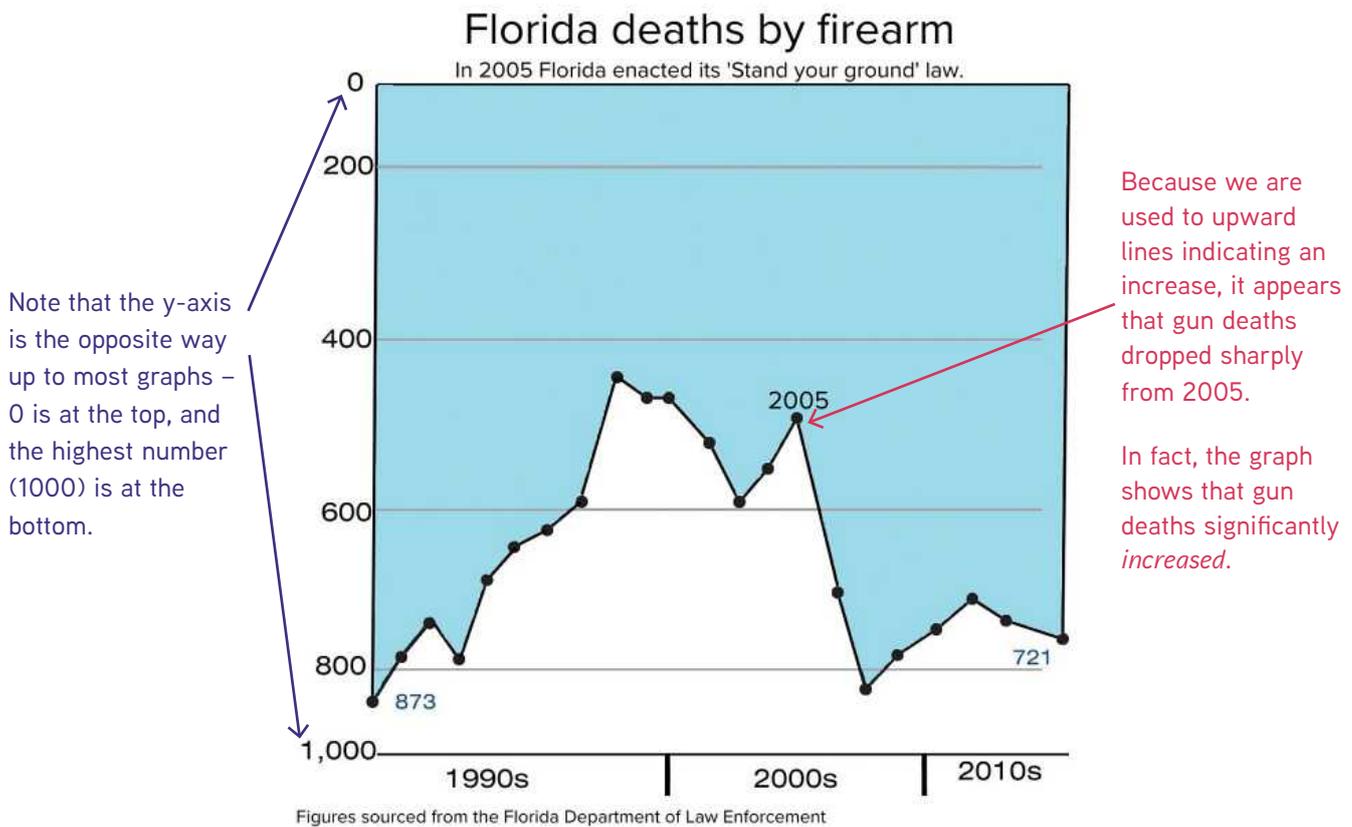
While tables are often not as visually appealing as charts or graphs, they can still be effective as persuasive tools. A display of data implies that there is evidence to support the ideas in the accompanying text. It suggests that the table's creator has either conducted their own research, or that independent research backs up their point of view. Tables present information more clearly and more prominently than if the same data was listed within the body of the text. They can include more precise and detailed information compared to charts and graphs, which tend to focus on overall trends and patterns.

Remember that, while they give an impression of objectivity and accuracy, tables, charts and graphs are still intended to persuade and manipulate. As media consumers, we tend to trust statistics and data more than words, as we assume this sort of information is unbiased, but this often isn't the case. Remember to ask yourself the following.

- What is the source of the data?

- Is the visual impression influenced by the unconventional labelling of axes or manipulation of data?

- Has the layout or colour scheme been designed to influence the audience's interpretation, or to draw attention to certain information?

- Where in the text is the table, chart or graph placed? Does this impact how the audience interprets the data?

Consider the graph below relating to gun deaths in Florida over a period of time.

Florida deaths by firearm

In 2005 Florida enacted its 'Stand your ground' law.

Note that the y-axis is the opposite way up to most graphs – 0 is at the top, and the highest number (1000) is at the bottom.

Because we are used to upward lines indicating an increase, it appears that gun deaths dropped sharply from 2005.

In fact, the graph shows that gun deaths significantly *increased*.

Figures sourced from the Florida Department of Law Enforcement

Analyse a graph

Compare the examples of data relating to the number of internet subscriptions in Australia between 2001 and 2020, on the next page. Both contain exactly the same information. Then answer the questions that follow.

Figure 1

Landline internet subscriptions in Australia

Information sourced from the International Telecommunications Union (via World Bank)
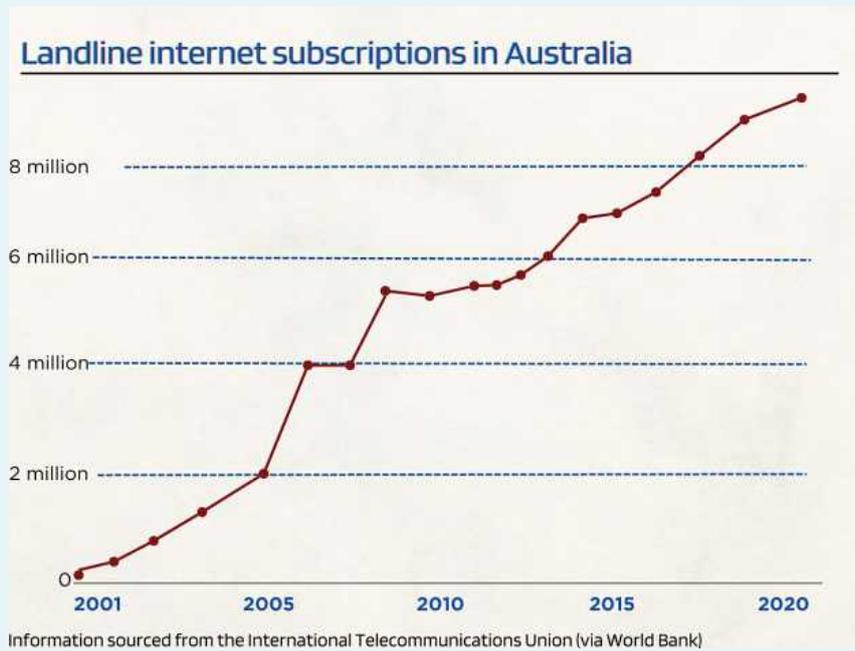
Figure 2

Year	Number of subscriptions	Year	Number of subscriptions
2001	122800	2011	5552000
2002	258100	2012	5735000
2003	516800	2013	5981000
2004	1012000	2014	6536000
2005	2016000	2015	6828000
2006	3900000	2016	7374000
2007	3900000	2017	7922000
2008	5315000	2018	8427316
2009	5221000	2019	8802600
2010	5510000	2020	9099619

(https://ourworldindata.org/grapher/landline-internet-subscriptions?tab=chart&country=AUS)

1 Which is easier to read and understand? _____

2 What features of this image help you to understand the information?

_____

3 How could the one you found harder to understand be improved?

_____

_____

Symbols and logos

We encounter **symbols** and **logos** all the time in our daily lives, and we 'read' and infer their meaning, often without thinking. Visual texts associated with big brands might convey messages about wealth, status or areas of interests. Others might convey a message about an action that can, should or should not occur.

What information, messages or connotations can you 'read' from the symbols and logos below?

Particularly in exam texts, you may encounter fictional companies and organisations with accompanying logos. Analysing the logo and the messages conveyed by its various features will demonstrate your understanding of the persuasive effects of visual language.

Analyse a logo

1 The logo below is for a public school, Eastview Grove Secondary School. Study it, then complete the table on the next page, describing what you see in each part of the school badge, and explaining the message being conveyed by each image.

LEARN, FLOURISH, ACHIEVE

Badge section	What is depicted	The message
Top left corner		
Top right corner		
Bottom left corner		
Bottom right corner		

2 Explain how the images in the logo and the motto at the bottom of the badge are connected.

_____

3 What overall image of the school does the Eastview Grove Secondary School badge aim to present? Explain your answer.

_____

_____

Moving images

While you won't encounter any **moving images** in your end-of-year exam, you could be asked to analyse them as part of the audiovisual component of a SAC. The use of moving images encourages greater audience engagement, so these types of media can be highly effective in connecting with viewers.

A **gif** (a data format for image files) is a term typically used for a short, animated clip. It may be made from editing a short piece of video, or combining a number of still images. Gifs are often used to show reactions or responses to something specific, so can guide an audience towards a particular desired response.

Short-form video content such as TikTok videos or **reels** frequently target younger people and engage their audience with a combination of audio and visual language, and their short length. While primarily used for entertainment, short-form video content can also convey messages and target specific groups.

Scan the code or click here to access tips and a bonus activity on writing about visual texts.
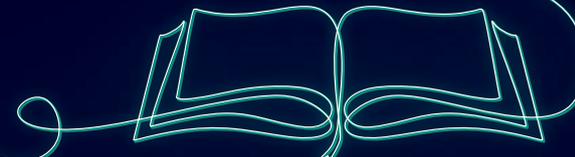
Writing an analysis

Outcome 2 of Unit 4 requires you to write an analysis of at least two persuasive texts on a contemporary issue. One text will be written and the other will be an audio or audiovisual text. The texts will have appeared in the media since 1 September of the previous year.

This chapter will explore how to write an analysis of a persuasive text, whether written, audio or audiovisual. It will take you through how to annotate a text, as well as how to plan, write and edit your analytical response.

IN THIS CHAPTER:

+ Reading the text
+ Annotating the text
+ Writing your analysis
+ Analysing visual material
+ Analysing audio and audiovisual texts
+ Sample texts and analysis

Reading the text

Before you read (or listen to, or view) the text you will be analysing, it is important to read the background information carefully (if supplied). This will provide vital details about the context of the piece, although it won't necessarily clearly state all the significant elements. While you are reading through the piece for the first time, try to identify the following:

- the issue
- how the issue emerged
- the text type
- the writer and the writer's position
- the writer's contention
- the main points of the author's argument, and how the argument is structured
- the writer's main tone
- the writer's main purpose.

The purpose of your **first reading** is to gain a general understanding of the piece. It is better not to annotate the text at this stage, or take detailed notes, but to have a broader focus.

> References to 'reading' a text in this chapter can be understood to also include listening to or viewing an audio or audiovisual text.

In your first reading, you should also get a sense of the main ways in which the writer is trying to persuade the target audience. For example, does the writer appeal to the audience's values (and, if so, which ones)? Do they include a lot of facts and evidence to validate their argument? Do they present their point of view as being the most practical solution to a problem? Do they appeal to specific emotions (and, if so, which ones)?

In this reading, avoid looking up the meaning of every word you are unfamiliar with. Instead, try to work out the meaning of those words from their context and only use a dictionary if you cannot deduce the meaning. If a glossary (a list of unfamiliar words and their meanings) is provided, read it carefully.

Annotating the text

When you have familiarised yourself with the text and identified the main elements, read the text again. During your **second reading**, begin to annotate the text, using different coloured pens, pencils and/or highlighters. The following colour scheme is one suggestion.

- red – argument
- pink – evidence
- green – persuasive language
- blue – intended effect

Annotation involves underlining, highlighting and circling key words and phrases from the text, and making brief notes about them, focusing on persuasive strategies and their intended effects. Remember that you are annotating the text to help you prepare to write an analysis. In your SAC or the exam you will not be assessed on the annotations themselves so you can use personal shorthand or abbreviations. Here are some examples you might find useful.

- +ve conn = positive connotation
- -ve conn = negative connotation
- assn w = association with
- rhet qu = rhetorical question

Scan the code or click **here** to view a video about annotating persuasive texts.

Selecting evidence and examples

When selecting quotations and points of argument to analyse, keep in mind the following guidelines.

Analyse the elements you feel confident about analysing. In a SAC or an exam, if you try to analyse language that you cannot confidently evaluate, it may detract from your overall performance. In practice tasks, however, you should try to analyse some challenging examples of language usage, to extend and develop your analytical skills and the vocabulary you will need for writing an in-depth analysis of a persuasive piece.

Analyse representative samples. For example, if you are given a series of statistics, rather than attempting to discuss them all, you could mention them in general (e.g. 'the writer lists a series of statistics'), then focus on analysing one example.

Analyse the most important elements. Is there a particular persuasive technique and/or choice of words that is central to the way in which the argument is constructed? If so, include this in your analysis.

Balance breadth with depth. As well as showing your understanding of the argument and broad persuasive strategies used, you should also include detailed analysis of a few carefully chosen words and phrases. Discuss their associations and connotations to show your understanding of the ways in which language is being used to position the reader.

> For this task, you will not have time to write a detailed plan. Instead, your annotations should function as a plan.

Once you have annotated the text, re-read the piece for a third time, ensuring you have clearly identified how the argument is constructed, the main supporting reasons, and the argumentative and language devices you have decided to analyse, together with their intended effects.

During your **third reading** of the text, review your annotations and put in brackets or cross out notes about any aspects you do not plan to analyse.

Scan the code or click here to see a sample annotated media text and a high-level analysis based on the annotations.

Writing your analysis

Your written analysis should consist of a short introductory paragraph and three or four body paragraphs (and a short concluding paragraph, if your teacher advises you to include one).

Introductory paragraph

The purpose of the introductory paragraph is to demonstrate you have identified the main elements of the context: the issue, how it emerged, the writer (and their position/authority status), text type, contention, intended audience and purpose. Try to limit your introductory paragraph to two or three sentences.

You may also identify the writer's main tone in the introduction. However, if you do, make sure that, in the body of your analysis, you analyse how the writer uses it and its intended effect.

Body paragraphs

One possible approach to structuring body paragraphs is to begin each one by **identifying the point of argument** you are analysing. State it as concisely as possible. You should then explain how the writer supports and develops the argument. Identify persuasive strategies the writer uses – cause and effect, appeals, emotive language and so on – and explain how they are being used. Always identify the intended effect upon the target audience.

Another way to structure your body paragraphs is to **focus on a different significant persuasive strategy** in each paragraph.

Whichever way you structure your body paragraphs, your discussion should be supported with brief quotes from the text.

Concluding paragraph

If you write a concluding paragraph, it should be concise – preferably no longer than two sentences. You can sum up the writer's approach (or approaches, if analysing two texts) and the main persuasive strategies they rely on.

Scan the code or click **here** to see a planning template for analysing two persuasive texts.

Analysing visual material

The written text you will analyse for your SAC might include visual elements. These could be images, such as photographs or cartoons, or design and layout features such as subheadings, font changes, logos or decorative borders.

Your analysis of visual material should focus on how it complements and reinforces the argument and language strategies of the written text. You should not simply describe the visual material: focus on particular elements, explaining what they represent, their connotations and their intended effect. Consider which specific elements of the written text are reinforced, or perhaps challenged, by the visual material.

See Chapter 14 and Chapter 17 for more information on analysing static visual material.

Analysing audio and audiovisual texts

The advice in this chapter can be applied to analysing any persuasive text, whether its primary mode is written, visual or audio. However, there are some specific things to keep in mind when analysing an audio or audiovisual text.

Speakers, presenters and actors

Audio and audiovisual texts will be delivered by one or more speakers, presenters or actors. The way in which the spoken elements of an audio or audiovisual text are delivered will affect how the audience responds to the main message. Consider the following elements when analysing speakers and their delivery.

Appearance

A speaker or presenter's clothing, hairstyle, make-up and use of props or accessories will be carefully selected to appeal to their intended audience and specific purpose. For example, a speaker aiming to persuade an audience of businesspeople to donate to a cause might wear a suit, to convey seriousness, authority and trustworthiness.

In some audiovisual texts, the speaker might not appear at all, but deliver their message as a voice-over. This approach might aim to suggest that the individual speaker is less important than their message, or to encourage viewers to focus on other visual elements accompanying the voice-over, such as slides or moving images.

Body language

A speaker might use **gestures** such as pointing for emphasis, thumping a hand on the lectern to show conviction, or raising two hands in the air to convey a sense of victory. Keeping their hands in their pockets or walking around while they speak might give an impression of casualness, aimed at establishing a friendly rapport with the audience.

A speaker's **facial expressions** will also convey their attitude towards the topic. For example, they might smile frequently to engage the audience, or maintain a serious expression to convey authority.

Voice

Tone, pacing and pitch are three important aspects of a speaker's delivery. **Tone** refers to the emotional quality of the voice; it can be used to create a particular mood or emotion in the listener, and usually matches the tone of the speaker's language. **Pacing** refers to the speed and rhythm of the message, and can be used to create a sense of urgency or importance. The **pitch** (high or low) or the **volume** of a speaker's voice can also be used to convey emotion or emphasise a point. Changes in tone, pace, pitch or volume can signal a shift to a different point of argument or a change in the emotion the speaker is aiming to evoke in the audience.

Below are some sentence starters you can use to write analytically about speakers, presenters and actors.

- The presenter's ... tone, for example in the word/phrase ..., contributes to a ... mood.
- The pacing creates ... [specific effect] such as through ... [specific example], supporting the text's message.
- The speaker's ... [adjective] dress conveys a sense of ... to their audience, inclining them to ...
- By ... [body language example], the actor communicates that ...

Music and sound effects

Music may be used to create a particular mood or evoke a certain emotion in the listener. It can also help to reinforce the text's main message, either through lyrics or through the emotions it targets.

Sound effects, too, can be used to evoke emotions or contribute to atmosphere. They can also help a text seem more 'real' or authentic.

Below are some sentence starters you can use to write about music and sound effects.

- The sound effects used in the audio text create a ... mood/emotion/atmosphere that enhances the persuasive message by ...
- The accompanying music creates an emotional response / engages the listener by ...
- The voice-over / sound effects / music in the text emphasise/s ...

Visual elements

In an audiovisual text, visual elements will include moving and still images, lighting and colour.

Images can include moving footage (video) of real people or actors, photographs, illustrations, graphics and animations. Cinematography, editing and special effects contribute to the way in which an audiovisual message is 'packaged' and delivered to the audience, with the aim of evoking a particular response.

The dominant **colour** scheme will affect the mood or atmosphere of the text. For instance, bright, bold colours can be used to evoke a joyous or humorous mood, while darker or muted colours might convey seriousness or sorrow. Creators of visual texts also exploit common associations with particular colours, such as the connection between the colour green and the natural environment.

Similarly, **lighting** may be bright or dim, to convey an uplifting or a more sombre atmosphere or perspective on an issue.

Consider, too, the overall **visual style** of a text. Images, colour and lighting, as well as other visual features, all contribute to the 'big-picture' effect. For example, well-dressed presenters, a sombre backdrop, graphs and slides might contribute to a serious tone and an emphasis on facts and figures. Cartoons, colourful visual effects and an animated, casually dressed speaker could communicate a sense of fun or optimism.

Below are some sentence starters for writing about visual elements of audiovisual texts.

- The use of ... [adjective] lighting in the video creates a ... mood/atmosphere.
- Elements such as ... and ... contribute to an overall ... [adjective] visual style that aims to evoke ... in the audience.
- The ... [adjective] colour palette creates a sense of ...

Analyse an audio or audiovisual text

Write an analysis of one of the audio or audiovisual texts in Chapter 16.

Sample texts and analysis

Read and view the following two persuasive texts on the issue of e-cigarettes, or 'vapes'. Then read the high-level sample student analysis that follows.

> When analysing two texts, you are not required to compare them. You can analyse them separately, one after the other. However, if you like, you can briefly note the main differences in their approaches in your introduction or conclusion, or when transitioning from discussion of Text 1 to Text 2.

Text 1

The following opinion piece by a senior high-school student was published on the School-Based Health Alliance website, which promotes the health of children and adolescents.

The Honest Truth Behind E-cigarettes: A Teen's Perspective
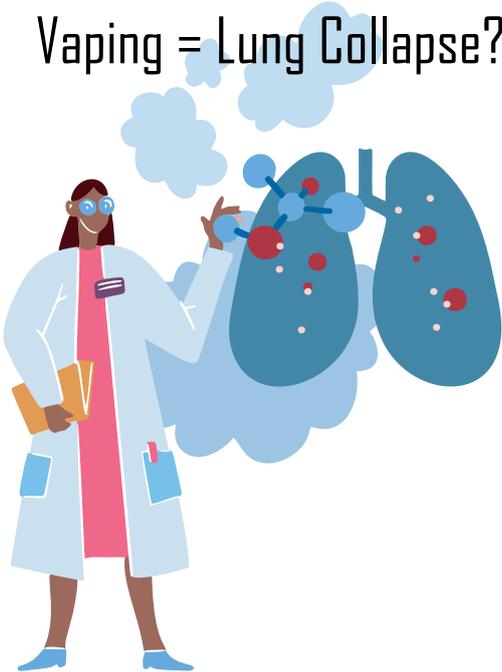
By Brooklyn Waller, Youth Advisory Council member

You see them everywhere: a commercial, the local grocery store, in people's hands. The popularity of e-cigarettes has reached a high in this generation. Across the nation, the usage of e-cigarettes by teens is steadily increasing and I have seen this at my own school. While the popularity of smoking has decreased with the creation of e-cigarettes, many teens are peer-pressured into thinking that vaping is a safe and healthier alternative. The role of the parents and the administration becomes making students aware that e-cigarettes are not safer than real cigarettes because they have the same amount of nicotine and harmful effects on the body.

'Across the nation, the usage of e-cigarettes by teens is steadily increasing and I have seen this at my own school.'

Have you ever heard a story that made your jaw drop to the ground? At my school in Arkansas, I had this jaw-dropping moment a few weeks ago when I heard about a girl in my grade. She was using her JUUL [a vape brand], when suddenly it blew up in her face. Her method of fun quickly turned into disaster. Not only was the inside of her mouth burned, but she also had substantial blisters on her lips. If that doesn't make you never want to vape, I don't know what will! She must now face the consequences. Many teens use nicotine before the age of 18, and don't think about the circumstances they might face: lung damage, blistered throats, breaking the habit. Students used to face pressure about the clothes they wore or the grades they received. Now the pressure has shifted into if they vape or how many pods they use in a week. How many more teens in our schools, neighbourhoods or communities are we going to let blow e-cigarettes up in their face?

Vaping = Lung Collapse?

I wish that I could tell you that the aforementioned story is the only one that I have heard this month. Unfortunately, that is not the case, and, in fact, that is just one of the many. Another story occurs in an unusual place. Three girls at my school were reported for using an e-cigarette in the bathroom. Imagine being so addicted to using that you must do it at school … in the bathroom. These girls were suspended. When I heard the story, I was genuinely shocked. I asked myself, 'How could someone want to damage their education by doing that?' Schools are where test scores are high and character is built, but parents and administration often forget that peer pressure is growing and so is vaping. I don't know how to fix the issue, and I'm not sure if anyone does. What I do know is that vaping is not worth the cost of ruining your path to success through education. The three girls had the opportunity to get a public education but were willing to risk it for the three-second good feeling they got from vaping.

'Students used to face pressure about the clothes they wore or the grades they received. Now the pressure has shifted into if they vape or how many pods they use in a week.'

It is understandable if you're thinking, 'Ok, but what now?' Now, we must act by reminding others of the issue. The reason we haven't seen a change in the vaping epidemic isn't from a lack of resources, but rather ignorance. If schools and parents believe that it is just a phase or that students already know the long-term outcome, they need to re-evaluate that belief. Vaping is not a phase, but rather a harmful addiction that can last a lifetime. By educating students on the lasting effects of their choice, we are creating a conversation of truth. By educating parents on seeing the signs of vaping, we can make a path

that is honest and shame-free. By educating administration on the growth of vaping among teenagers, we can form more reliable resources for the student seeking help. When we take time to educate, there is always a better outcome. How will a student know that using an e-cigarette is bad for them if we never talk about it? They won't.

We don't have time to avoid the subject when it's a subject that will affect a generation. The consequences of vaping shouldn't be taken lightly. I want to see a change in the growth in popularity; I want to see a decrease in product usage because I see the damage it has done to many at my school. What number of students being harmed will it take for the issue to be discussed in daily conversation? By speaking up on your experience with e-cigarettes, you are inspiring those around you to speak up too. If students, parents, and administration in schools are actively involved in the conversation, the harmful effects of e-cigarettes can't go unnoticed.

Text 2

The Vaping Health Crisis Is Only Getting Worse

Scan the code or click here to view a video about vaping, by cardiothoracic surgeon (lung and heart specialist) Dr Wilson Tsai.

High-range sample analysis

The following sample response analyses the two texts on vaping.

In response to the growing number of teenagers using e-cigarettes or 'vaping', Brooklyn Waller, a senior high-school student from Arkansas and member of the Youth Advisory Council in the US, has written an article published on the School-Based Health Alliance website, in which she argues teenagers should not vape because of the dangers. Waller hopes to convince her peers – that is, other teenagers reading this article – not to vape, as well as urging school administrators and other adults reading this article to be more proactive in educating teens about the dangers of vaping. American thoracic surgeon Dr Wilson Tsai also expresses his concerns about vaping in a YouTube video aimed primarily at parents of teenagers, using a serious tone and highly emotive language.

Arguing that people are vaping despite the harmful consequences, Waller elicits concern from her readers, reinforced by her observation that the 'usage of e-cigarettes by teens is steadily increasing'. By stating that many teenagers vape

because they believe it is safer than smoking, Waller implies that they are deluding themselves, particularly when she emphatically states that 'e-cigarettes are not safer than real cigarettes'. The image of an individual in a medical coat gesturing towards an oversized image of lungs, with the heading 'Vaping = Lung Collapse?', aims to bolster Waller's mostly anecdotal evidence by suggesting scientific support for this statement. Like the written text, the image targets the audience's sense of fear, while its colourful and cartoonish style balances this somewhat, helping to reinforce an impression of Waller as relatable and as speaking out of genuine concern for others.

Adopting an incredulous tone, Waller asks, 'Have you ever heard a story that made your jaw drop to the ground?', arousing readers' curiosity and preparing them to be shocked by her anecdote about a friend who was using a vape when 'suddenly it blew up'. The blunt language and graphic details – 'substantial blisters on her lips' – position readers to feel alarmed. This description is meant to serve as a cautionary tale to persuade readers never to vape. In addition, her statement 'If that doesn't make you never want to vape, I don't know what will!' encourages readers to feel guilty and foolish if they continue to vape. Waller reinforces this effect by referring to the 'lung damage, blistered throats' that vaping can cause, phrases with highly negative associations of significant harm. The cartoon image of a medical professional pointing to damaged lungs graphically underscores the point Waller is making.

Citing peer pressure as the cause of vaping, Waller presents herself to fellow students as someone who understands their motivation, positioning them to trust and relate to her. Waller then recounts an incident involving three girls at her school who were suspended for vaping in the bathroom. Adopting a surprised tone, she invites readers to share her shock, as well as her sense of disbelief when she asks, 'How could someone want to damage their education by doing that?' By stating that these girls lost the opportunity of a good education 'for the three-second good feeling they got from vaping', she suggests that the pleasures of vaping are brief and far outweighed by the dangers. The reader is positioned to feel both empathy for the girls and alarm at the long-term social effects of vaping.

Waller then calls on educators to be more proactive in educating young people about vaping. Her statement that vaping is 'not a phase' implies that educators and adults have trivialised the long-term negative effects of vaping and failed in their duty of care to students, evoking guilt in a segment of the audience. The question 'How will a student know that using an e-cigarette is bad for them if we never talk about it?' urges adults to fulfil their duty to educate students. Waller ends by asserting that, if those who have been negatively affected by vapes speak up, and educators and peers join the discussion, 'the harmful effects of e-cigarettes can't go unnoticed'. She aims to convince her audience to share her belief that lifting the taboo on discussing vapes is integral to a successful education program.

Tsai also aims to shock and alarm his audience of parents of teen vape-users. In his video, he is dressed in medical scrubs and identifies himself as a doctor, with the aim of conveying a sense of his authority and expertise to viewers, inclining them to trust him. The video's colour scheme is muted and plain – predominantly black, blue and white, underscoring the serious nature of Tsai's message and evoking associations with hospitals and medicine.

Tsai's tone is serious and his expression is unsmiling, conveying a sense of gravity to the viewer that supports his argument that vaping causes significant damage to health. Stark black text appears on the right of the screen, summarising Tsai's main points and reinforcing his message. The final image on the video is of the cover of the book he has co-authored about the dangers of vaping, revealing the secondary purpose of the video as a promotional tool.

Although his expression and tone are mostly even and neutral, Tsai's vocabulary choices are often emotive, aimed at evoking the viewer's alarm and concern for their own teenage children or loved ones who might use vapes. Words such as 'tragic', 'catastrophic' and 'crisis' suggest that the problem is widespread and severe, encouraging viewers to feel that action to prevent teens damaging their health through vaping is urgently needed. Such words have associations with destruction, harm and even death – concepts that parents viewing the video are likely to find disturbing in relation to their children. Tsai places pressure on parents to deal with the issue, invoking a sense of urgency when he firmly instructs them to talk to their children 'immediately'.

In her article 'The Honest Truth Behind E-cigarettes', published online, secondary student Brooklyn Waller lists the negative health effects of vaping and shares anecdotes about its social consequences. In doing this, she hopes to convince fellow students not to vape, and to encourage teachers and parents to educate young people about the dangers of vaping. Speaking from his professional medical experience, Dr Wilson Tsai has a similar message for parents. His simple, stark video emphasises the straightforward communication of information rather than special effects or visual imagery, highlighting the seriousness of the issue and positioning viewers to respond with fear, outrage and a desire to protect their children.

Analyse an analysis

Read the sample analysis on pages 213–15 again. Annotate the analysis to identify:

- one place in which the student analyses a point of argument in one of the texts
- one place in which the student analyses a specific word or phrase in one of the texts
- one place in which the student analyses a visual element of one of the texts
- one place in which the student analyses an audio element of one of the texts
- two strengths of the analysis
- two areas for improvement.
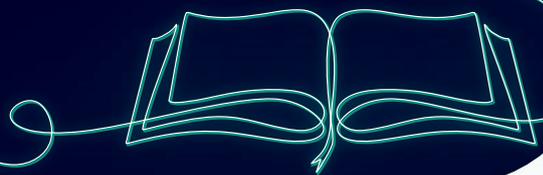
Presenting a point of view

The second part of Unit 4, Outcome 2 requires you to develop and present a point-of-view text in **oral** form. This involves choosing and researching an issue, developing a contention and supporting arguments, and shaping your language appropriately for the selected context and audience. The assessment task requires you to present a **point of view**, which means that you need to establish and justify an opinion on your chosen issue, then give reasons to support that position.

Information in this chapter should be used in conjunction with Chapters 12–17. While those chapters focus on the language and argument used in persuasive texts by others, you can draw on the same strategies and techniques to strengthen your own writing.

IN THIS CHAPTER:

+ Selecting and researching an issue
+ Planning your point-of-view piece
+ Writing your point-of-view piece
+ Delivering your point of view
+ Sample student point of view

Selecting and researching an issue

For Unit 4, the issue that you select must be 'a contemporary and significant national or international issue', which restricts what you can speak about. The issue must also have appeared in the media since 1 September of the previous year. Your teacher may specify the topic or provide suitable options. In some cases, you may be free to choose your own issue.

You will be required to deliver your point of view orally. You might be asked to present this as an individual speech, but you could also have the opportunity to deliver it as part of a debate, dialogue or discussion. Strategies for different presentation options are discussed in this chapter, but your teacher will tell you the specific conditions that apply to your own assessment task.

If you have the freedom to choose your own issue, or if your teacher provides a list of options, you'll need to do some preliminary investigation to help you decide which issue to choose. Aim to select a topic that interests you and that has the potential to generate different points of view. Remember that your chosen topic must be a contemporary and significant national or international issue.

Contemporary means current, relating to the present time. It must be an issue that has been in the media since 1 September of the previous year.

Significant means important, deserving of attention.

National or international means that issues that only affect a small number of people, or a local community (without wider implications), will not be suitable. For example, 'the removal of level crossings in Victoria' would not be a suitable issue, as it is not a national or international concern.

> If you are allowed to choose your issue, start gathering resources on several topics as soon as possible. By collecting material gradually, you can observe how the issues develop over time, enabling you to choose one that sustains your interest. You won't deliver your point-of-view presentation until the second half of the year (because it is part of Unit 4), so starting early will allow you to spread out the research work.

Once you've settled on an issue, and your teacher has approved it, the next step is to research the topic to develop an understanding of the issue, the points of view on the topic and associated arguments, and to collect potential evidence.

Aim to collect your information from a variety of trustworthy sources, which should provide a range of ideas and opinions, rather than a narrow view of the issue. Googling the issue and relying on the first few results is not an effective research plan! Some helpful resources are listed below. Also, check whether your school library subscribes to any relevant resources.

The Conversation	*The Age*	*Echo Online*
The Australian	*ABC News*	*The Washington Post*
SBS News	*Radio National*	*BBC News*
The New York Times	*The Guardian*	*Al Jazeera*

Remember to keep a record of the place and date of publication of any information you find, so that you can accurately acknowledge your sources when writing your presentation.

Evaluate research sources

1 When using a range of resources, you should think carefully about the potential pros and cons of each source. Complete the following table to identify the general advantages and limitations of the listed resources. Some answers have been completed for you as a starting point. Space has been left for you to add other sources of information.

Resource	Advantages	Limitations
Wikipedia	provides factual information about the issue – useful for background and a general understanding	limited opinions/arguments, as is focused on fact; info provided by voluntary contributors, may not be 100% reliable
The Age		
ABC TV news	audiovisual information, may assist with understanding	
TikTok		
Physical books in a library		
The New York Times		

2 Discuss your answers in small groups or as a class, to build an understanding of the pros and cons of a variety of research resources.

During the research stage, make sure you gather material covering a variety of opinions on the issue. Even if you have decided on the point of view you will present, being aware of opposing arguments and opinions will help you develop a stronger understanding of the issue as a whole.

Planning your point-of-view piece

Once you've selected your issue and conducted some research into it, it's time to start planning your point-of-view piece. This will involve determining your contention and selecting arguments and evidence that support that point of view.

Developing a contention

Your **contention** is the central idea that you are trying to persuade your audience to agree with. It is the basis for your whole presentation, so it's important to choose your words carefully. A well-worded contention will be:

- relevant – it should clearly address the issue and relate to current debate on that topic

- reasonable – it is a point of view that is rational and logical, and the proposed action or outcome should be potentially achievable

- refutable – there must be potential for people to disagree with or oppose it

- distinct – it must be clear and specific.

Aim to phrase your contention as a simple, straightforward sentence. The more elements it contains, the more difficult it will be to persuade your audience of your point of view. Clear and forceful contentions often contain the word 'should'.

e.g. Shark nets should be installed along Australian beaches.

Remember that issues are usually complex, and therefore can lead to many different contentions. A contention is usually not as simple as being 'for' or 'against' an issue. Even for a relatively simple issue such as school uniforms, there can be a wide variety of contentions, as shown in the diagram below.
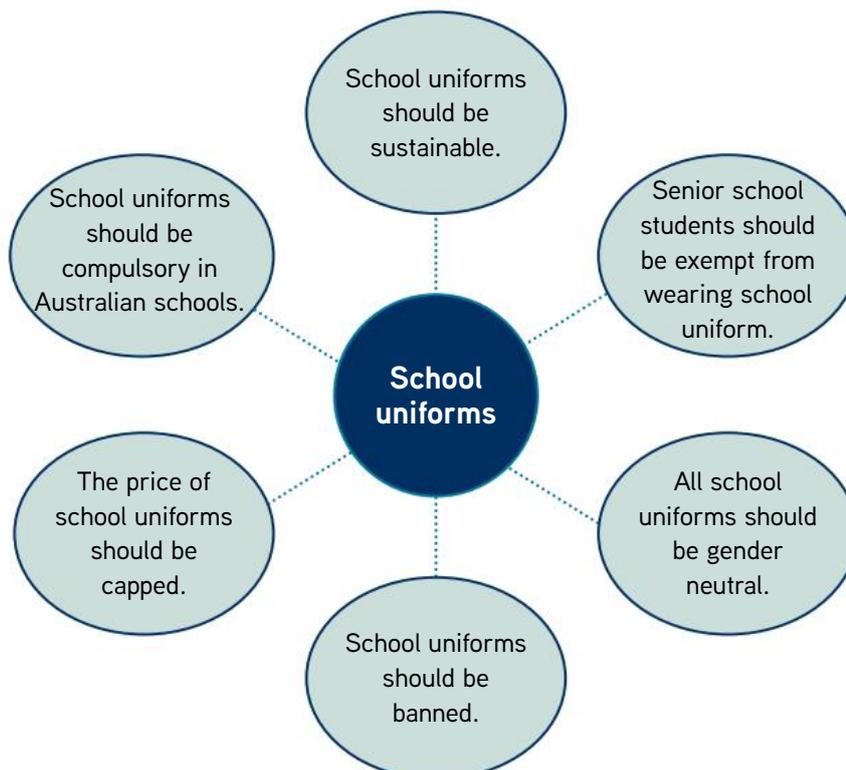
Develop contentions

1 Read the sentences below and identify which are suitable as contentions and which are not.

- People who watch reality TV are idiots.
- Australian teenagers should be required to work for a year after finishing school.
- Bike lanes are an inadequate solution to congestion problems.
- Why I think *Black Panther* is the best Marvel film.

2 Choose one of the issues listed below and write four possible contentions for it. Present a different point of view in each of the four contentions.

| euthanasia | genetically modified food | fast fashion |
| renewable energy | performance-enhancing drugs in sport | social media use |

Contention 1: _____

Contention 2: _____

Contention 3: _____

Contention 4: _____

Based on the issue that you have chosen for your point-of-view presentation, write three potential contentions that you could argue.

Contention 1: _____

Contention 2: _____

Contention 3: _____

Developing and selecting arguments

Once you've established your contention, you need to **substantiate** it with supporting arguments, reasons and evidence. Depending on the length and format of your presentation, you'll need three or four different points to support your contention. Your arguments could include a **rebuttal** or argument against opposing arguments.

Begin by brainstorming arguments that support your contention. Even though you'll only use some of these, try to think of as many as possible. Then you can select the strongest points from these, and may also be able to combine some arguments to make a stronger point. Brainstorming over a period of time can be useful – your first ideas are not always the best.

Using the school uniform issue as an example, the brainstorming diagram on the next page places the contention in the middle and potential supporting ideas around the outside.

It would acknowledge and reward senior students as leaders of the school.

Students in senior years have often outgrown their uniform, meaning an expensive new uniform is required.

Some students change schools for their senior years so a new uniform is a big expense for a short time.

Senior school students should be exempt from wearing school uniform.

Senior students might study at multiple locations so could need multiple uniforms.

To prepare for leaving school and entering the adult world, senior students should have responsibility for dressing appropriately.

Senior students are not always at school full-time – alternative dress could suit both school and part-time work.

Develop and select arguments

Review the school uniform example above, then answer the following questions.

1 Are there points that could be combined? If so, which ones and why?

_____

_____

_____

_____

2 In your opinion, what are the three strongest arguments to support the contention? Share your ideas as a class, and explain your choices.

3 For your chosen issue, using the resources you have collected during research, complete a table like the following to help you identify related arguments. For this task, focus on using *persuasive* resources that you have collected, rather than news reports or other purely informative material. Note that the number of supporting arguments or reasons will vary depending on the length and format of the text.

Text information – title, source, text type, date of publication and writer	Main contention	Supporting reason 1	Supporting reason 2	Supporting reason 3

4 Using your own knowledge and research results, and referring to the example on page 221, brainstorm the possible arguments for your chosen issue and contention. Aim to identify at least six.

Selecting and incorporating evidence

Now that you've identified your contention and arguments, you can turn your attention to evidence. While you will use your persuasive language skills to help you build a case for your point of view, it's also important to have material that substantiates the points you are making. The types of evidence you use will vary depending on the issue and audience, but you should aim to include several of the following elements.

- quotes and statements from relevant experts and reputable organisations (e.g. the World Health Organization, university professors in a relevant field)
- statistics and other numerical data from reputable sources (e.g. the Australian Bureau of Statistics)
- examples of personal experience – either your own, or other relevant people's (e.g. anecdotes from someone personally affected by the issue)
- evidence from research and formal studies (e.g. results of research by universities or government departments).

There are two key words to bear in mind when selecting your evidence for use: **relevant** and **reputable**. Evidence is only useful if it is relevant to the point that you are making, so be clear about what you are trying to prove, and check that the selected evidence helps to do that. This also applies to expert opinion: make sure that it is from an expert in a relevant field. For example, a nutritionist would generally be regarded as an expert, but if the issue you are discussing is the impact of rising house prices on young people, then their expertise is not relevant.

Equally, evidence needs to be from a reputable source if it is to add weight to your argument. For example, if you are discussing the benefits of vaccinations, evidence from a qualified immunologist strengthens your argument significantly more than a Facebook quote from a celebrity health influencer!

When planning your presentation, keep in mind that the elements of your speech should be cohesive (naturally or logically connected). Ensure that your selected evidence supports the reasons, and the reasons support your contention. The pyramid diagram below illustrates how this all works.
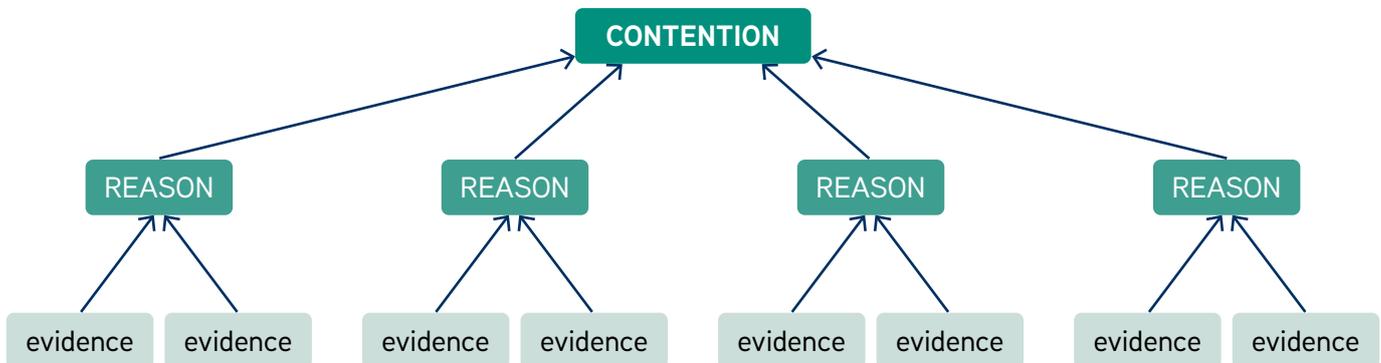
This diagram also helps to illustrate the balance of content. You should have multiple pieces of evidence for each point you make, and multiple reasons to support your contention.

Organise your reasons and evidence

Using the above pyramid as a template, plan out your point-of-view presentation. You can adjust the number of boxes to suit your content.

- State your contention at the top.
- List your reasons or arguments underneath. These could include a rebuttal.
- For each argument, identify the pieces of evidence that you'll use to support it. You may have more than two pieces of evidence for some arguments.

Writing your point-of-view piece

Now that you've decided on your contention, arguments and a rough outline of the evidence that you intend to use, you can begin writing your point-of-view presentation. Remember that the writing process involves drafting and editing your work over a period of time before you settle on the final version. Make sure that you save the drafts as separate files with different names (e.g. Draft 1, Draft 2). This will help you to demonstrate the development of your piece, which your teacher may need for the purpose of authentication (i.e. to prove that it is all your own work).

Before you write

Also consider the following elements before you start writing, as they will affect your choices regarding language and content.

Context

What is the situation in which you are delivering your presentation? Your teacher might specify the context, or you may have freedom to choose. Are you simply presenting to your peers in class, or are you envisioning a different situation, such as at the United Nations or a technology conference? Are you presenting live, or is your presentation being recorded, to be submitted digitally? Ensure you clearly understand the context for your presentation, as it will affect your choice of content and language.

Audience

As with context, your audience may be real – for example, your classmates – or it may be imagined. Will you be speaking to a live audience, or – as in the case of something like a podcast – will the presentation be listened to later? You also need to consider whether there is an existing relationship between yourself and the audience, as this will influence the way that you deliver your material.

Format

Your teacher will outline the arrangements for your presentation. Ensure you understand them clearly. Are you delivering a standalone speech or speaking as part of a debate or discussion? If the latter, you might need to be prepared to answer questions, or you might need to make it clear that you wish to speak in response to a particular point.

Where and how to begin

The strategies below focus predominantly on writing a standalone speech, but many of the same suggestions can apply to all types of point-of-view presentations.

The opening of your presentation is extremely important. It is your main opportunity to engage with your audience and capture listeners' attention. Your goal is to establish a rapport so that they are receptive to your point of view. If they lose interest at the beginning, it is very difficult to re-engage them.

> Avoid beginning in a tired, clichéd way such as, 'Hello, my name is [name] and today I'm going to talk about [issue].' This is a sure-fire way to send your audience to sleep! Instead of telling your audience what you're going to talk about, just start speaking about it!

How you begin your presentation will be partly influenced by external factors. To identify some of these, ask yourself the following questions.

- How much does your chosen audience know about the issue already? Do you need to provide some background information, or are audience members already likely to be well informed?

- Where is the presentation being given? Is it at a formal event, such as a conference, or is it in a more relaxed setting?

- What are the demographics of your audience (i.e. their age, social background, and so on)? Does it consist of predominantly one group (such as students), or is there a mix of age groups, backgrounds and professions?

Such factors will affect the way that you open your speech. For example, opening with a reference to a television series popular with young people might be more appropriate for a teenage audience than at an industry conference on climate change.

There are many ways to capture attention at the beginning of your presentation. A few suggestions are outlined below.

- **Make it human.** If you are talking about a big issue with a widespread effect, it is sometimes difficult for your audience to appreciate the impact on individual people. To help listeners empathise, use a specific example of someone affected by the issue and (briefly) tell their story.

- **Quantify the issue.** Starting with a shocking or surprising statistic or fact can be effective, as it gives listeners a sense of scale. But make sure that you present the information in a way that they can relate to, with context.

- **Ask a rhetorical question.** Asking a question can be an effective way of involving your listeners in the issue, by inviting them to consider something and how it affects them personally. However, it is usually best to ask rhetorical rather than direct questions, to avoid your presentation being derailed by unexpected audience responses. Aim for questions such as, 'Have you ever left the house without your mobile phone, then spent the rest of the day feeling completely disconnected from society?' rather than, 'Who here has ever left the house without their mobile phone?' Both questions relate to the same concept, and lead the audience in the same direction, but the first option positions listeners to think about an experience, whereas the second is asking for a direct response (such as a show of hands). The need for you to acknowledge their response will distract you from your purpose, or you might alienate audience members who are reluctant to answer.

Explore opening hooks

Working in small groups, brainstorm possible effective openings for the following scenarios. Discuss your suggestions as a class afterwards, to compare different approaches and ideas.

Contention	Audience	Context	Opening hook
that senior school students should not have to wear school uniform	the school community	a school assembly	
that there should be more punishments for people who do not control their dogs in local parks	members of local council and the local community	a council forum where views can be shared about the proposal	
that action must be taken to stop the impact of climate change	environment ministers, officials and other politicians	an international conference on global issues	

Rebutting and handling objections

Acknowledging and undermining objections and counterarguments can be an effective way of strengthening your own argument. It suggests that you can reject, downplay or refute those opposing ideas. This implies that you have considered the issue from all angles and reflected on other viewpoints before settling on a particular point of view.

Rebuttals do, however, need to be handled with care – otherwise you can end up contradicting your own point of view.

Do ✓

- Do be vague and general. Rebuttals often begin with phrases such as 'Some people might think …' Note the lack of specificity about who those people are. 'Some people' is a very general phrase, which is suitable for this purpose. Avoid anything more specific, such as, 'Many university professors have argued …' as this implies that the opposing view is supported by experts, which could undermine your own argument.

- Do be brief. Avoid exploring counterarguments in any detail, as this could add weight to them. Acknowledge the existence of one or two arguments, then focus on refuting or downplaying them.

Don't ✗

- Don't provide evidence supporting opposing points. While you want to sound balanced, you should simply acknowledge opposing ideas, not imply that they have depth or substance.

- Don't include numerous opposing ideas. One or two will suffice. While recognising that there are different viewpoints, you don't want to suggest that there are lots of reasons to oppose your contention.

Organising your arguments

From your earlier research and planning, you should already know the arguments that you want to include in your presentation. The challenge now is to decide on how best to arrange them, to have the strongest impact on your audience.

> Remember you are writing a cohesive presentation. Your arguments should work together to persuade listeners to agree with your contention. Think about how your arguments work in combination, rather than seeing them as separate points.

Consider the following.

- Are there existing connections between your points? If one argument relies on information provided in another point, then this provides a logical order for the ideas.

- Is there an increase in scale, or a chronological order to your points? If your arguments deal with the past, the present and the future, then this provides a logical structure that will make sense to your listeners. Equally, if your ideas address the issue on a local, national and international scale, again this suggests a commonsense order.

- Are some of your points similar in tone, while others are different? If so, group the similar points together, to give a logical tonal flow to your arguments. Jumping from an emotive argument to a logical one and back to an emotive point could be jarring for the audience.

- Is there one point that you consider your strongest? You could either start with this, or build towards it as your final point.

Play around with the order of your arguments. Read your presentation to a partner, and then change the order of the arguments and read it again. Which order is most effective?

Remember also to signpost your arguments. While you will be very familiar with the material you've written, your audience will only hear it once. Therefore, you need to use vocabulary and non-verbal strategies – such as pausing – to indicate where one argument ends and a new one begins.

Order arguments

Below are the outlines for five arguments that support the contention, 'Immediate action must be taken on climate change.' If developing a speech, which three points would you choose and why? How would you order the arguments, and why? Compare your answers with the rest of the class.

Social justice
Climate change disproportionately affects the most vulnerable communities.

Biodiversity
Climate change is causing the loss of biodiversity, which is essential for the environment to function.

Economic costs
The longer we wait to act, the more expensive it will be to address the problem.

Irreversible damage
The longer we wait to take action, the more difficult it will be to prevent irreversible damage.

Human health
Climate change is a threat to human health. It can cause heat stress, breathing problems and the spread of diseases such as malaria.

Ending effectively

The ending of your presentation is your opportunity to leave a lasting impression on your listeners. Below are some strategies for ending in a memorable way.

- **Reinforce your contention.** You should return to this throughout your speech, but it's particularly important to remind listeners of your contention as you conclude.

- **Make a call to action.** What do you want your audience to do as a result of your speech? It could be to sign a petition, use more or less of something, or vote a particular way. Tell listeners what action you want them to take.

- **Return to the beginning.** If you began your speech with an analogy or a story about a specific person, it can be effective to return to that opening scenario. A circular structure gives a speech cohesion.

- **Make it clear that you have finished.** The ending of your speech will be ineffective if your voice just quietly fades away, or you stand awkwardly in silence or move to sit down. Finish your final sentence, pause, then say 'thank you', then pause again. This is a clear indication to your audience that you have finished.

> If you're presenting a dialogue with a partner, work together to arrange the order of your points so that there is a logical flow.
>
> If your presentation is part of a debate or discussion, you may be relying on short notes rather than a formally written speech. Organise your ideas into key points with supporting evidence, so that you can deliver each point when appropriate.

Delivering your point of view

The content of your piece is obviously important, but you will also be assessed on how you present the material, so you should allow plenty of time to prepare your delivery. Make sure that you consider the following elements.

Practice

Most importantly, practise and then practise again. You need to know your presentation really, really well. While the assessment isn't a memory test, if you know the material well, you can focus on effective delivery, rather than worrying about remembering the content.

Pacing

Focus on slowing down your delivery. Nerves typically make us speak more quickly when we are in front of an audience, so be aware of this. If you speak too quickly, listeners won't be able to take in the information you are giving them.

Pauses

Remember that pausing is punctuation for speech. Include a short pause where you'd have a comma, a slightly longer one for full stops and a longer one at the end of a paragraph or point. These pauses provide the audience with information about the structure of your speech. Make sure that you pause at appropriate moments – pausing in the middle of a sentence or point can be confusing for listeners.

Volume

Make sure that the volume (loudness) of your voice is appropriate for the size of the audience and the type of venue. Everyone should be able to hear you clearly. You will need to project your voice more than normal, but avoid shouting – no one likes being shouted at! Aim to vary volume during your presentation, to suit the material being delivered. Where you want to sound angry or forceful, a louder voice may be appropriate. If you are speaking about something sensitive or emotional, speaking more quietly might be more effective.

Body language, eye contact and gestures

Consider how to use your facial expressions, body language and gestures to enhance your delivery. Gestures can be useful in emphasising key points – but avoid fidgeting, shuffling, or playing with your hair or clothes, which can imply nervousness and will distract your audience. Aim to make brief eye contact with listeners in different sections of the audience, to give the impression that you are looking at everyone, but avoid focusing on any one person or group of people, unless you are addressing them specifically.

Tone and pitch

Tone and pitch tend to work together. The tone of your voice conveys the emotion, and the pitch relates to how high or low your voice is. Lack of variety in pitch and tone is called monotone – this is where the word monotonous comes from, meaning boring. Aim to vary your tone and pitch to help maintain the audience's interest and convey emotion.

Pronunciation

Before your presentation, check the pronunciation of all unfamiliar words and practise saying new words. This is particularly important if your speech includes a lot of subject-specific terminology, foreign terms or unusual names.

Confidence

Even if you are feeling nervous, aim to appear confident and interested in your topic. You are trying to persuade your audience to agree with a particular point of view: if you don't sound interested in or confident about what you are saying, why would they believe you?!

Scan the code or click **here** to watch Chris Anderson, Head of TED, speaking about the secret of great public speaking.

Sample student point of view

Below is an annotated sample student response on the issue of lowering the age of voting in Australia to sixteen. The target audience is teenagers.

Imagine that you're in a supermarket, in the fruit and veg section, making choices about your purchases. You approach the bananas, and you can see immediately that they aren't ready. They're the right size, and the right shape, but – at the moment – they're still very green. These bananas need more time, you think. They're not yet ripe, not yet mature, not yet ready for use. And you know that if you were to eat one, it would taste horrible.

With bananas, it's easy to spot when they aren't yet mature. While people are very obviously different from bananas in many ways, there are also some similarities. A green banana clearly needs time to ripen, and, as young people, we also need time to mature and develop.

This unconventional but relatable opening hook is designed to grab the audience's interest. The speaker transitions smoothly from the hook to the issue, giving the young audience a clear image of something that isn't yet ready.

Because of this need, I believe that we should not lower the age at which Australians are allowed to vote, from eighteen to sixteen.

Critically, sixteen-year-olds lack the maturity and life experience required to make sound decisions. The psychology students among you will know that during adolescence the brain is still developing, and that the pre-frontal cortex – the part of the brain that controls rational thought and decision making – is the last part to develop. This means that teenagers are more prone to making rash decisions. In their 2004 study, 'Capacity and competence in child and adolescent psychiatry', adolescent psychologists Jacinta Tan and Jorg Fegert noted that, 'Although adolescents, even older adolescents, have the ability to make adult-level decisions, they frequently do not exercise that ability optimally, leading to decisions that differ from those that a typical adult would make.' This clearly denotes the differences in the decision-making process between adults and adolescents, and highlights why giving sixteen-year-olds the opportunity to make decisions that affect an entire nation would be a dangerous idea. Furthermore, we are surrounded by examples of teenagers making poor decisions or being influenced by others, and are likely to be guilty of such behaviours ourselves. We only need to look at the long list of 'challenges' or 'social media trends' over the years that have resulted in a young person being injured, or even killed, to see evidence of this. Are the people who think it's a good idea to eat laundry detergent, as in the 'Tide Pod challenge', or to strangle oneself in the 'blackout challenge', really the people we should be allowing to decide the future of our country?

Additionally, the majority of sixteen- and seventeen-year-olds lack the education and awareness necessary to make meaningful decisions about the political direction of the country. Like us, most of these teenagers are still in high school, and have limited understanding of politics. You might remember going to visit Canberra in Year 6, or you may have had some Civics and Citizenship classes, but are you confident about who is responsible for healthcare or taxes or maintaining facilities in your area? Australia has a complex political system, and voting occurs at three levels – local, state and federal. Each level of government looks after different things, and it can be difficult to know who does what. And that's even without thinking about the difference between the Senate and the House of Representatives, and what voting for them means! Because we are still at school, we sixteen-year-olds spend most of our time in a bubble, following timetables, wearing a uniform, doing homework and hanging out with our friends. We may have some exposure to the 'real world' through part-time work, or through conversations with our parents, but our world view is very narrow. We have limited understanding of how the healthcare system works, and whether it needs more funding, and – while we

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Clear statement of the speaker's contention.

Introduction of the opening argument.

The speaker makes regular reference to the target audience of students, providing connections to their knowledge and experience.

Throughout the speech, words have been carefully chosen to position the audience to view lowering the voting age as a bad idea. Decisions made by teenagers are described as 'rash' and 'poor', and the speaker refers to the potential impact of such decisions as 'dangerous'.

Reference to experts in a relevant field, highlighting that the speaker's opinion is supported by impartial research.

A rhetorical question is used to imply that teenagers are not competent to make major decisions, such as voting for a government.

Use of contemporary examples that would be familiar to the target audience to highlight the tendency of teenagers to behave in foolish ways.

Introduction of a second argument, clearly signposted by an appropriate connective.

The speaker provides further examples that relate to the audience's existing experience, before highlighting the things that they are less likely to know about, and suggesting that they are important to the issue of voting.

might be learning to drive – we haven't got the experience to know whether proposals about new roads or rail links are good options. Rather than lowering the age of voting, and adding to the stress that young people already feel, a better solution would be to introduce a program to educate Australia's next generation of voters, so that – when they turn eighteen – they can contribute to elections with confidence.

The speaker concludes their argument by suggesting an alternative approach, which they argue would prepare young people better for voting.

Some may argue that sixteen-year-olds have the right to do a number of 'adult' things, and thus should be allowed to make decisions about the direction of the country. Yes, it is true that, as adolescents, we can be in full-time work and pay taxes, in addition to a small number of other things. However, these matters largely do not require specific knowledge or the making of decisions – taxes are just taken from your pay without you needing to do anything. In Victoria, you cannot drink alcohol or hold a driving licence until you turn eighteen, and you are not considered an adult in the eyes of the law, so why should you be given the adult responsibility of voting? It's also important to remember that not being able to vote doesn't mean that young people can't participate in politics. There are, in fact, many ways that under-eighteens can get involved. Teenagers can join political organisations and volunteer for campaigns, and this is a valuable way of developing understanding and knowledge about political issues and parties in preparation for the time when they can contribute by voting.

The introduction of a rebuttal, acknowledging the opposing point of view.

Downplaying of the opposing argument, through a combination of techniques – reference to examples of what cannot be done at sixteen in conjunction with a rhetorical question.

As with the previous argument, the speaker concludes by emphasising what teenagers *can* do to become involved in politics, presenting themselves as not dismissing the importance of the issue completely, but proposing alternative options to voting.

The ability to vote and contribute to our country's democracy is an important right, and one that should be exercised with thought and maturity. As young people, we have much to offer, but also much to learn, and therefore we should commit to developing our understanding of government, politics, and the important social and economic issues that affect the country. We absolutely support the idea of providing more education to young people regarding government. But to suggest reducing the age of voting to sixteen? That's bananas!

Concludes with a humorous return to the banana analogy, but with a twist. Here, the slang use of 'bananas', meaning 'crazy', suggests it would be madness to change the voting age. This return to the opening hook provides a memorable end to the speech, while reminding the audience of the key message.

Scan the code or click here to view a video about oral presentation skills.

The exam

Chapter 20 will be available online following the release by the VCAA of exam specifications and a sample exam for VCE EAL. The exam chapter is expected to be available from March 2024.

Scan the code or click **here** to access Chapter 20: The exam.

Overview of assessment

The tables below show the tasks you will need to complete during your study of Units 3 and 4 of VCE EAL. The end-of-year examination will contribute 50 per cent to your study score.

Unit 3

Outcomes	Marks allocated	Assessment tasks
Outcome 1 Listen to and discuss ideas, concerns and values presented in a text, informed by selected vocabulary, text structures and language features and how they make meaning.	30	An analytical response to text in written form.
	20	Comprehension of an audio/audiovisual text focused on historical, cultural and/or social values in the set text, through: • short-answer responses • note-form summaries.
Outcome 2 • Demonstrate effective writing skills by producing their own texts, designed to respond to a specific context and audience to achieve a stated purpose; and	20	A written text constructed in consideration of audience, purpose and context.
• Comment on the decisions made through writing processes.	20	A written text constructed in consideration of audience, purpose and context.
	10	A set of annotations reflecting on writing processes.
Total marks	**100**	

Unit 4

Outcomes	Marks allocated	Assessment tasks
Outcome 1 Discuss ideas, concerns and values presented in a text, informed by selected vocabulary, text structures and language features and how they make meaning.	40	An analytical response to text in written form.
Outcome 2 • Analyse the use of argument and language in persuasive texts, including one written text (print or digital) and one text in another mode (audio and/or audiovisual); and	40	An analytical response to argument in written form.
• Develop and present a point-of-view text. *Students must analyse one written text (print or digital) and one other form of text (audio or audiovisual) that have appeared in the media since 1 September of the previous year.	20	A point-of-view oral presentation.
Total marks	**100**	

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Acknowledgements

VCE® Units 3 & 4

EAL YEAR 12

Insight's *EAL Year 12: VCE Units 3 & 4* provides comprehensive coverage of the new VCE EAL Study Design: 2024–2027. The combined textbook and workbook aims to develop skills progressively, via step-by-step processes and tools such as mind maps, word banks, sentence starters and models.

Practical strategies for writing both analytically and creatively aid students to produce fluent and well-structured responses for all outcomes. Numerous examples and a variety of engaging activities are designed to scaffold and develop students' listening, comprehension, analytical and expressive skills.

THE BOOK FEATURES:

- Guidelines and models for developing analytical responses to texts

- A comprehensive chapter on responding to audio and audiovisual material about the selected texts

- Detailed explorations of the four key ideas in the Framework of Ideas, and of the mentor texts associated with each

- Practical writing tips and tools to aid students in creating and annotating original texts in different forms, including in response to stimulus material

- Advice and models for analysing a range of contemporary media texts on national and international issues, including audio and audiovisual texts

- A variety of bonus digital content, including video tutorials, consolidation and extension activities, and additional sample responses

- A bonus digital chapter on the end-of-year exam (available in early 2024).

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