TICKING MIND

The Senior English Writing Handbook

About The Senior English Writing Handbook

This is not just another textbook filled with endless descriptions and information about the English and EAL study design. Instead, The Senior English Writing Handbook shows students how to write successfully for each area in the new English and EAL study design. Each chapter focuses on a different area of study, guiding students through its aim and purpose and showing them how to develop their vocabulary and write purposeful, meaningful and sophisticated sentences and paragraphs. By providing students with a range of annotated examples and step-by-step instructions on how to write with clarity and purpose, this textbook helps every VCE English and EAL student achieve success.

The Senior English Writing Handbook

A Ticking Mind Publication

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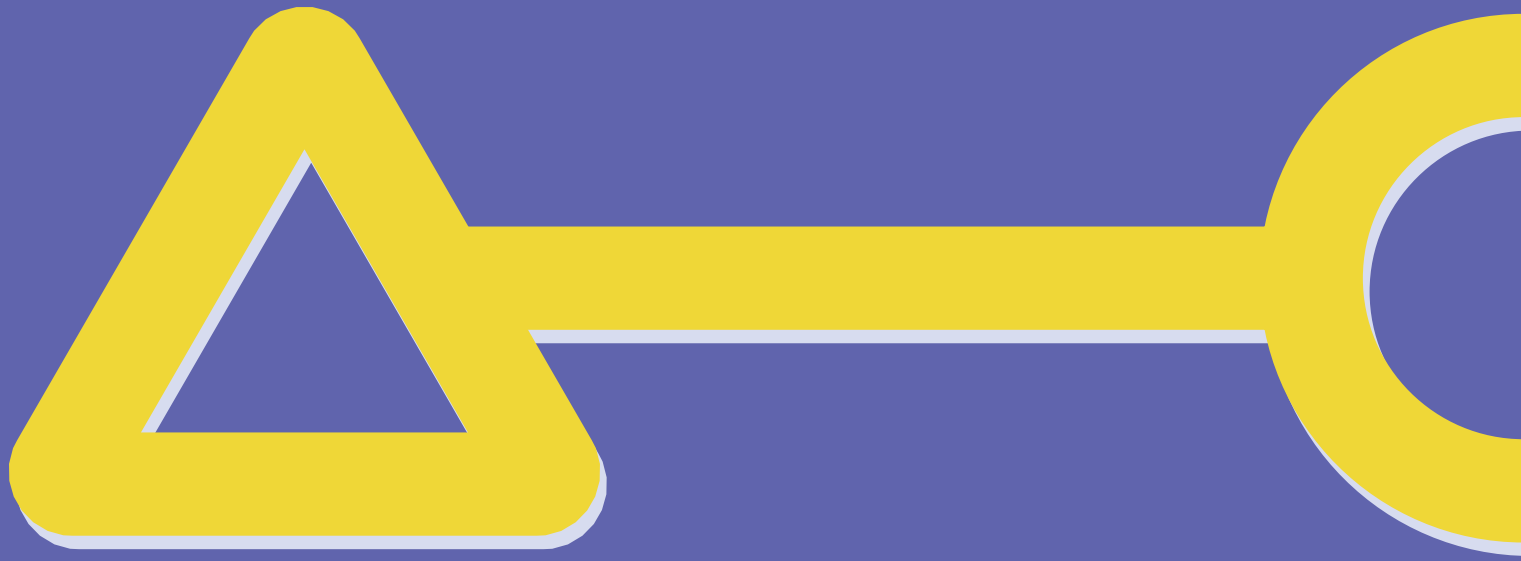
Text Response

Writing a great text response is partly about knowing the text –its themes, characters, techniques and symbols. But it's also about responding to an essay topic. It doesn't really matter how much you know about the text you are studying if you can't respond to the essay topic. To create a great text response, you need to think about the best examples and symbols you can use to respond to an essay topic, not all of the examples you can think of. It's all about the essay topic.

This chapter will show you three groups of strategies to help you write great text responses.



1. Read the text strategically

Before you read or watch a text for the first time, you should look at some essay topics about the text. This will help you to understand the ideas in the text far better.

This section will show you:

- what type of essay topics you can expect
- how to take notes as you read or watch a text for the first time.

2. It's all about the essay topic

Whenever you learn something new about a text, you should consider how it might help you to answer an essay topic.

This section will show you how to:

- identify key words in a topic
- brainstorm examples and topic sentences
- plan body paragraphs.

3. Micro writing practice

The key to improving writing is to do lots of short practice.

This section will demonstrate how to practise writing:

- introductions
- body paragraphs
- conclusions
- for film, novels, non-fiction, graphic novels and plays
- for short stories and poetry.

Read the text strategically

Reading a new text and understanding its themes, ideas, characters and symbols is super hard. So it's important to be strategic with your reading. You will remember key ideas and examples much more clearly if you do some thinking and planning first. This section is full of strategies and tables that will help you to know what to look for when you begin to read (and study) a new text for the English classroom.

Read essay topics first

Before you read or watch a text for the first time, you should look at some essay topics about the text. When you look at essay topics first, you can see the types of ideas you need to think and write about.

There are a few ways you can look at essay questions before you read or watch a text. If the text has been studied in previous years, you can look up past exams and read questions. Your teacher might also give you essay topics.

If you don't have access to essay topics, you can think about the four general categories of essay topics. Let's have a look at them now:

1. How do we think about characters?

If you are studying a novel, film, non-fiction text or play, this is the most common type of essay question you will come across.

Here's an example:

> Dr Ibaraki not only fails others, he also fails himself.

For this type of question, you are being asked to consider whether the text presents a character in positive or negative ways. So, to have some ideas for this type of essay task, think about these questions as you read a text:

- Is a character good or bad?
- What are a character's strengths and weaknesses?
- What motivates a character?
- Does a character change or stay the same?
- Does a character succeed or fail?
- Does a character help or hurt others?
- How do groups behave?

Study alert:

Look up past exams by searching for 'VCE past English exams'

2. What do characters do in response to an event or setting?

This type of question is also common for novels, films, non-fiction texts and plays.It is also a very common question type for short stories. Often, these types of questions require you to think about what the world of the text is like – what is happening in the world of the text and what kinds of behaviours are normal in the world of the text. You should think about how this world affects the decision making of characters.

Here's an example of this type of question:

> *All the Light We Cannot See* shows that war affects different people in different ways.

To have some initial thoughts for this type of essay task, think about these questions as you read a text:

- What is the biggest problem in the text?
- How does a character or group respond to a situation?
- What beliefs or behaviours are valued in the world of the text?
- How does the setting impact on different characters or groups?

3. What is the main message, concern or emotion of a text?

This type of essay task is asking you to think about the main focus of the text. You get these types of questions for all forms of texts, because all texts are about ideas. This is the hardest sort of question to prepare for before you have read the text unless you look at past exam questions or get ideas about the themes from your teacher.

Here are a few examples:

> What do the poems of Kinsella and Papertalk Green teach us?
>
> The importance of kindness and compassion is highlighted in Kennedy's stories.

This can be a tricky type of question to think about when you're reading a text for the first time. Your teacher will give you a lot of help answering these types of questions during a unit. However, here are some questions you can consider as you look at a text for the first time:

- What behaviour is rewarded or punished at the end of the text?
- What feelings or ideas are the characters or the poet mostly concerned by?
- What images, symbols or ideas come up again and again as you read through the text?

Study alert:

Reading the blurb at the back of your print text, or an online description of a text, will give you some of the key theme or idea words you can think about as you read through the text

4. How is a text constructed?

These types of questions are common for all texts. These tasks ask you to think about how an author, director, playwright or poet uses a particular feature, like symbolism or narrative structure, to achieve a certain effect. Here's an example:

> How does Wilder create a foreboding atmosphere in *Sunset Boulevard*?

Like the questions about the main idea of a text, they can be tricky to think about on your own. However, here are some questions you can consider as you look at a text for the first time:

- Whose perspective does an author focus upon?
- Is the narrative continuous, fragmented or circular (starts at the end and then goes back to the beginning)?
- Are some scenes in a film light or dark?
- What stage directions does a playwright use?
- What images does a poet use again and again?
- How does an author make an idea important or not important?

Put it into practice

There are two things for you to do now:

1. Before you read or watch the text, look at past essay topics for the text or consider the types of topics you might get if it's new.
2. Choose one of the table formats below to take notes as you read or watch the text.

For a novels, films, plays and non-fiction

Character's name	Problem the character faces	Positive responses to the problem	Negative responses to the problem	Outcome for the character

For a collection of short stories

Name of story	Main problem	Positive reactions to problem	Negative reactions to problem	Positive or negative ending?

For a collection of poetry

Name of poem	Main idea or feeling	Positive images or feelings	Negative images or feelings	Overall, is the poem positive or negative about the main idea?

Study alert:

Download digital copies of these tables from: www.tickingmind.com.au/tables

It's all about the essay topic

To write an effective essay, you need to first clearly understand what a topic is asking you to write about. Often, students know a text well but end up getting an average mark for an essay because they didn't respond to the topic they were given. This section looks at the steps you can practise to avoid this pitfall.

This section is close to the beginning of the chapter because no matter what you learn about a text, you must respond to an essay topic. Whenever you learn something new about a text, you should consider how it might help you to answer an essay topic. Every week throughout your text response unit you should practise unpacking essay topics and connecting what you've learnt about a text to the topic.

The next few pages outline three phases in the planning process.

Over the course of your VCE, you will need to become very efficient at planning so that you can do it in 5–10 minutes for a SAC or the exam.

Study alert:

Practising the steps in this section is a highly effective 5-minute study strategy in the lead up to SACs and the exam

Phase 1:

Brainstorm alternative vocabulary:

→ Identify key terms: brainstorm similar and different terms to expand your vocabulary

→ Identify modifiers: brainstorm alternative modifiers

Phase 2:

Brainstorm examples:

→ Use a checklist to make sure you have a range of different types of examples that show something important about the topic

AND

Write topic sentences:

→ Use the alternative vocabulary from Phase 1 to write topic sentences that have a paragraph focus and respond to the topic

Phase 3:

Plan body paragraphs in detail:

→ Put your topic sentences in order

→ Organise examples under the appropriate topic sentence

Phase 1

Phase 1: Brainstorm vocabulary

Flames *demonstrates* the *importance* of *interconnection* between *people* and *nature.*

demonstrates	interconnection	people	nature
portrays	communities	characters	landscape
represents	ecosystems	protagonists	animal companions
emphasises	relationship	range of people	cycles of life
highlights	isolated	perspectives	natural world
creates a picture of	insular	humans and gods	essential nature
	alone	human world	personal nature
			suburban landscape
			environmental destruction

Phase 2

Phase 2: Examples and topic sentences

Examples	• Levi → connects to seal at end "kept afloat" • Karl → "a man couldn't hunt it alone, and neither could a seal" • Thurston = thirsty, isolated • disconnection from suburban world • set in the natural world of Tasmania • detective symbolised by ice • Gibson = desert = isolated • Nicole balances Charlotte • "roars back into the physicality of her body"
Topic Sentences	• Arnott's novel emphasises how essential it is for his characters to have some kind of relationship with the natural world around them. • Each of the protagonists in the text must come to accept and appreciate their own essential nature. • Throughout the novel, there are dreadful consequences for those who fail to value the ecosystems around them and instead choose to live in an isolated and vindictive way.

Phase 3: Plan body paragraphs

BP1: Arnott's novel emphasises how essential it is for his characters to have some kind of relationship with the natural world around them.

- *"A man couldn't hunt it alone, and neither could a seal" (Karl's relationship with the seal).*
- *Charlotte needs the "sky" – not the suburban world of "white-picket fences".*
- *The detective is symbolised by ice, illustrating how she is frozen and separate from the world; her alcoholism shows further withdrawal from the world.*

BP2: Throughout the novel, there are dreadful consequences for those who fail to value the ecosystems around them and instead choose to live in an isolated and vindictive way.

- *Thurston Hough (= thirsty) kills the Esk god and then goes crazy.*
- *Hough creates coffins to isolate and preserve bodies in an unnatural way.*
- *Allen Gibson is named after a desert, which symbolises his isolated nature; his attitude towards the wombats becomes vindictive.*

BP3: Each of the protagonists in the text must come to accept and appreciate their own essential nature.

- *Charlotte "roars back into the physicality of her body".*
- *Nicole comes to understand that she has the power of balancing Charlotte's heat.*
- *Levi connects to the seal and is "kept afloat" by the ocean, literally and metaphorically.*

Phase 3

Phase 1: Identifying key words and modifiers

The most basic strategy to use in unpacking an essay topic is to identify key words.

At the heart of every essay topic is a description of a key idea or element in a text. These are either individual words or phrases and should be the first thing you circle or underline. Responding to the ideas in these words will be at the core of your essay.

Here are three topics about different types of texts. Words about the key idea or element have been circled:

Novel – '*Flames* demonstrates the importance of interconnection between people and nature.' Discuss.

Film – In *Rear Window*, Hitchcock demonstrates that appearances are often misleading.' Discuss.

Poetry – How is grief explored in *False Claims of Colonial Thieves*?

Then, for each of the words or phrases you have circled or underlined, you should begin to brainstorm alternative ways of discussing these ideas. This brainstorming process will help you to understand exactly what the key terms mean and what they imply about the topic. You should think about brainstorming words and phrases that mean similar things (so that you can agree with the topic) and words and phrases that mean different things (so that you can disagree with the topic).

Let's have a look at an example of this brainstorming process for one of the above essay topics:

demonstrates	interconnection	people	nature
portrays	communities	characters	landscape
represents	ecosystems	protagonists	animal companions
emphasises	partnerships	range of people	cycles of life
highlights	isolated	perspectives	natural world
creates a picture of	insular	humans and gods	essence of self
	alone	human world	personal character
			industrial landscape
			degraded landscape
			manmade objects
			human greed

Another type of word to look for in an essay topic is a modifier. Modifiers are words or phrases such as 'only', 'all' or 'it is important'. These words and phrases are asking you to consider the extent to which an idea or element is present in a text. Two of the example topics had modifiers in them – these have been underlined:

Novel – '*Flames* demonstrates the importance of interconnection between people and nature.' Discuss.

Film – In *Sunset Boulevard*, every character is focused upon their own desires.

Picking out the modifiers in a topic is important to understanding the full scope of ideas and examples you need to write about. For example, the modifier 'every' in the *Sunset Boulevard* essay topic above, invites you to discuss whether it is all of the characters or only some who are motivated by self interest.

This is a list of common modifiers that feature in essay topics:

How many	How often	How important
all	always	most
every	often	it is essential
many	usually	it is important
some	sometimes	it is necessary
only	never	more important than
a few		must
nothing		should

Phase 2: Brainstorm examples and write topic sentences

In this phase of the essay planning process, you will need to do two things:

- write topic sentences that focus on the topic itself
- think of the best examples for responding to the topic.

You can do these two steps in any order you prefer. Sometimes you might be able to easily think of the best examples first; at other times, you might have a whole lot of examples you can think of, but writing your topic sentences first may help clarify your thoughts.

A) Brainstorm topic sentences

Rather than immediately thinking about examples after you've unpacked the essay topic, you might find it easier to use the alternative vocabulary from Phase 1 to generate topic sentences. It's essential to put topic sentences into an essay plan because these sentences really help you to focus your analysis around the topic itself.

Many students skip this step and just make a very vague plan like this:

Body Paragraph 1: characters who like animals

Body Paragraph 2: bad characters who do the wrong thing

Body Paragraph 3: protagonists' super-powers

The reason that the plan above is not very useful is because, although it helps you to sort examples into different groups, it doesn't actually show how the student is analysing the topic. And a great text analysis must always respond to the topic. That's why topic sentences are so important.

Topic sentences are a way of signalling two things:

- what the focus of the paragraph is
- how you are responding to the topic.

By using the alternative vocabulary from Phase 1 when writing a topic sentence, you will clearly link your ideas to the topic. Let's have a look at a few examples of topic sentences that use the vocabulary from the brainstorming table *and* indicate what the focus of the paragraph is. In these examples, the words from the brainstorming table are highlighted in purple and the paragraph focus is underlined:

1. *Arnott's novel **emphasises** how **essential** it is for his **characters** to have some kind of **relationship** with the **natural world** around them.*
2. *Throughout the novel, there are dreadful consequences for those who **fail to value** the **ecosystems** around them and instead choose to live in an **isolated** and vindictive way.*
3. *Each of the **protagonists** in the text must come to accept and appreciate their own **essential nature**.*

For specific strategies about constructing effective topic sentences, see page 25.

B) Brainstorm examples

During Phase 1, you may naturally begin to think of examples you can use to respond to the topic. A good brainstorming process should be more structured than simply listing the first examples that occur to you. To identify the best examples to respond to an essay topic, you should aim to consider a range of examples from different aspects of the text. An effective habit to develop is to use a checklist to ensure you are considering the full range of possible examples.

Here is an example of a simple checklist you could use:

Novels, films, plays, non-fiction texts and graphic novels	Poetry and short stories
☐ Major characters	☐ Stories or poems most relevant
☐ Minor characters	☐ Setting
☐ Setting	☐ World of the poems
☐ Symbols	☐ Poetic techniques
☐ Techniques	☐ Narrative techniques
☐ Key events	☐ Symbols/imagery
☐ Interactions between characters	☐ Quotes
☐ Quotes	

Phase 3: Plan body paragraphs in detail

The final phase of planning is dedicated to mapping out each paragraph in detail. The aim of this phase is to do most of the analytic thinking you'll need for your essay. This means that when you actually write your essay you will be thinking about the best words and sentences to use, rather than coming up with ideas.

This phase of planning should include:

- looking at the topic sentences you developed in Phase 2 and putting them in the best order
- arranging your examples underneath the appropriate topic sentence and listing them in the best order
- changing or adding any examples you think would be better
- making any brief notes that will guide your analysis.

For example:

BP1: Arnott's novel emphasises how essential it is for his characters to have some kind of relationship with the natural world around them.

"A man couldn't hunt it alone, and neither could a seal" (Karl's relationship with the seal).

Charlotte needs the "sky" – not the suburban world of "white-picket fences".

The detective is symbolised by ice, illustrating how she is frozen and separate from the world; her alcoholism shows further withdrawal from the world.

BP2: Throughout the novel, there are dreadful consequences for those who fail to value the ecosystems around them and instead choose to live in an isolated and vindictive way.

Thurston Hough (= thirsty) kills the Esk god and then goes crazy.

Hough creates coffins to isolate and preserve bodies in an unnatural way.

Allen Gibson is named after a desert, which symbolises his isolated nature; his attitude towards the wombats becomes vindictive.

BP3: Each of the protagonists in the text must come to accept and appreciate their own essential nature.

Charlotte "roars back into the physicality of her body".

Nicole comes to understand that she has the power of balancing Charlotte's heat.

Levi connects to the seal and is "kept afloat" by the ocean, literally and metaphorically.

Introductions

A good introduction is purposeful – every sentence is designed to respond effectively to a topic. This section of the book will show you how certain words and phrases will indicate that your introduction is on track.

Rather than showing you everything at once, we're going to annotate example introductions in three different ways so that you can see all of the elements that make up a great introduction. These are:

- the different sentence types you will need in an introduction
- how to introduce the text type, author and setting
- words and phrases to discuss the tensions and messages of a text.

Sentence Types

In your introduction, you should have about three sentences.

These sentences should include:

- a direct response to the topic, using alternative vocabulary (such as synonyms) for the key terms
- an understanding of the implications and tensions in the topic
- an explanation of the message of the text.

In *Sunset Boulevard*, every character lies. Discuss.	
Set in the world of Hollywood filmmaking, *Sunset Boulevard* portrays characters who seek shelter within fantasy and fiction because they are unable to distinguish between real life and the movies they write or act in. While Norma Desmond's self-delusion that she is still a great star is the most dramatic example of a character who lies, each of the other characters in the film deludes either themselves or others in order to escape the reality of their lives. In the end, Wilder's film shows the emotional destruction created by a failure to confront the truth.	direct response to topic implications and tension message

Put it into practice

Now it's your turn. Have a go at writing a three-sentence introduction, using the example above as a model. When writing a sentence that directly responds to the topic, use alternative vocabulary (such as synonyms) for the key words.

Text type, author and setting

It's important in your introduction that you show an understanding of how the text has been constructed by someone and how it represents a particular type of world. To do this, an introduction should:

- refer to the text and author (or director, playwright or poet)
- identify the significance of the setting or context of the text
- use a range of analytic verbs to show you are analysing how the text is constructed, not just retelling certain parts of it.

Here are two annotated examples:

In *Sunset Boulevard*, every character lies. Discuss.	setting or context phrases analytic verbs text type author (in this case a director and two poets)
Set in the world of Hollywood filmmaking, ***Sunset Boulevard*** portrays characters who seek shelter within fantasy and fiction because they are unable to distinguish between real life and the movies they write or act in. While Norma Desmond's self-delusion that she is still a great star is the most dramatic example of a character who lies, each of the other characters in the film delude either themselves or others in order to escape the reality of their lives. In the end, Wilder's film shows the emotional destruction created by a failure to confront the truth.	
How do Kinsella and Papertalk Green explore the importance of connection to land in *False Claims of Colonial Thieves*?	
Throughout their collection, Kinsella and Papertalk Green's poetic dialogue demonstrates not only a significant personal and cultural connection with Australia's rural landscape but also a profound grief for the degradations wrought upon it. Kinsella's poems explore the landscape through a scientific and academic lens, reflecting on the consequences of ignoring the interconnectedness of landscape and life. In response, Papertalk Green's raw emotions permeate her poetry as she draws parallels between the corruption of her land and her people, peppering her poems with Amangu language that emphasises her connectedness to the ancient landscape.	

Put it into practice

Have a go at editing your introduction, making sure you have referred to the text type, author and setting. You should also make sure you have plenty of analytic verbs throughout your introduction.

Use the table below to help you:

Setting	Analytic verbs	Text types
charting* the experiences of...	demonstrates	novel
in a world where...	depicts	chronicle
set against a backdrop of...	examines	play
set in a world where...	explores	drama
unfolding at a time of..., events in...	portrays	stories
set in the...environment of (put in an adjective here to describe the environment e.g. *Set in the claustrophobic environment of...*)	represents	collection
depicting an era of...,	reveals	poetry
the fictional world of...	underscores	verse
a re-creation of...	highlights	collection
	critiques	
	reflects on	
	emphasises	

Alternative sentence alert

*Any of the words ending in '-ing' could end in 's' and be used in a different place in a sentence: charts the experience of...

Tensions and messages

Every essay topic is asking you to discuss an issue, tension or complication within the text. You should also analyse the message the writer has about this issue, tension or complication. Analytic verbs will help you do this, but there are other words and phrases that are just as important:

- complication and tension phrases that explain how there are different sides to an idea within a text
- metalanguage to explain the main features or techniques (such as characters) a writer uses to explore a tension or complication.

Here are two examples:

How does WWI change the lives of Indigenous characters in *Black Diggers*?	Complication and tension phrases metalanguage
Charting the experiences of fictional Indigenous veterans, Wright's play explores the range of ways First Nation's people struggle to make sense of their time at war. Many of the characters are outraged that the camaraderie and equality they experienced overseas cannot be found in their own communities, while some of them are consumed by grief and sorrow. Through these fictionalised characters, Wright emphasises that the experiences of Indigenous troops have not only been varied but also overlooked.	
How do Kinsella and Papertalk Green explore the importance of connection to land in *False Claims of Colonial Thieves*?	
Throughout their collection, Kinsella and Papertalk Green's poetic dialogue demonstrates not only a significant personal and cultural connection with Australia's rural landscape but also a profound grief for the degradations wrought upon it. Kinsella's poems explore the landscape through a scientific and academic lens, reflecting on the consequences of ignoring the interconnectedness of landscape and life. In response, Papertalk Green's use of a raw, emotional tone represents both the corruption of her land and her people, as well as her connectedness to the ancient landscape.	

Put it into practice

Now it's your turn to have a go writing an introduction. Use some words from each of the categories below to ensure you are discussing the complication or tension in a text and the writer's message about it:

Complication and tension words	Metalanguage
characters who... seek...because... struggle to/against...because... are/is torn between...	characters protagonist antagonist minor characters
conflict between... consequences of... the importance of... the problems that arise when...	tone
not only...but also... both...as well as...	poetic
while despite although even though	imagery of symbolism of motif
however, yet, moreover, furthermore,	dialogue dramatic
	fictionalised re-creation of re-imagining of

Body Paragraphs

Body paragraphs are where the in-depth text analysis really happens. Although many of you will be familiar with a TEEL structure (Topic Sentence, Example, Explanation, Link), there is a lot more going on in a great body paragraph. This section of the book will explain what other elements are in a great body paragraph.

There are three different types of things you need to incorporate in your body paragraph:

- writing about ideas
- writing about evidence
- links between ideas and evidence.

Let's have a look at an annotated body paragraph, so you can see how these phrases work:

***Mandel's* Station Eleven *reveals the reliance that humans have on each other.* Discuss.**

In the desolate and ravaged landscape of the post-collapse era, Mandel reveals that, above all else, survivors desire community. The ruin of civilisation and the extermination of the majority of the population have made these characters realise how much they require each other in order to survive and flourish. Mandel describes how initially people scattered to avoid the fatal disease and stay safe. However, soon they "clustered close together" in an "archipelago of small towns" because their temporary distance had made them aware of how much they needed others. Not only does Mandel suggest that community is necessary to a more fulfilled life, but she also explicitly states that it is essential to long-term survival as well because it gives her characters a reason to endure. Her post-collapse characters "survived against unspeakable odds… only by holding together", thus demonstrating the importance of reliance on others. This concern is further built upon by Mandel's focus on the Travelling Symphony. For the members of the theatrical group, the only "bearable" elements of the new world are the "friendships" and "camaraderie" they have with each other. Mandel overtly shows this through the slogan that symbolises the group – "survival is insufficient". While all of the members want to survive, it is their community that provides them with a reason to live. Without the people they "long for" such as each other, the members of the Symphony feel they are in "hell" and so have no greater purpose to their lives. Their individual survival is inconsequential compared to the purpose community gives them. This thinking is echoed in the character of James who bursts into tears upon arrival at the Severn City Airport because he "thought [he] was the only one". Finding a thriving community offers him immense relief and joy, because of his need for other people. Through these examples of the necessity of community in a world with a limited number of people, Mandel highlights the dependence her characters all have on other people. Without a community to be part of and live for, the survivors are untethered and so in "hell".

idea phrases (all of these phrases are directly connected to the key words in the topic)

phrases that introduce and analyse examples

phrases that link examples and ideas

Writing about ideas

Your body paragraphs need to refer to and discuss the ideas in an essay topic. Students often make the mistake of just providing examples in a paragraph, rather than discussing how these examples demonstrate different aspects of an idea. This is why thinking about ideas is so important.

In your body paragraph, you can discuss ideas through:

- idea phrases to link to key words in an essay topic
- cause, effect and significance words to analyse what ideas do, where they stem from and why they're important
- topic and synthesising sentences that provide a framework and conclusion to the discussion of ideas in a body paragraph.

Idea phrases

Idea phrases are sets of two or more words that refer to the key ideas in an essay topic. For example, the phrase 'natural and unscathed landscape' is an idea phrase that connects to the key word 'land' in the following topic:

> How do Kinsella and Papertalk Green explore the importance of connection to land in *False Claims of Colonial Thieves*?

By using idea phrases to respond to key ideas in a topic, a student can demonstrate a richer and more complex understanding of the ideas a text is expressing. In the annotated example below, the words in blue are all examples of idea phrases that refer to the key words 'importance of connection to land' in the essay topic.

How do Kinsella and Papertalk Green explore the importance of connection to land in *False Claims of Colonial Thieves*?

From the very beginning of their poetic discourse, Kinsella and Papertalk Green elucidate the profound **cultural degradations and disconnections** that occur when **powerful and self-serving institutions** destroy the natural landscape. Kinsella is particularly concerned with the **rapacious attitudes of mining corporations** who use the land for their own monetary gains, creating **uneven power dynamics** that are driven by wealth. This position is made clear when Kinsella writes in his 'Prologue' that mining companies are filling students "with propaganda". His point is that mining companies are both exploiting the land and then corrupting educational institutions with a certain viewpoint that entirely ignores the importance of a **natural and unscathed landscape.** On the other hand, Papertalk Green's concerns are more visceral and immediate. For her, the changing landscape erases her own cultural history and exports "our precious earth onto foreign shores". **The destruction of the landscape** by mining companies is just another way of destroying the powerful connections that First Nations people had with the land. Her own 'Prologue Response' points out the ways many cannot see "what lies on or within country" and how this "blinds them" to **cultural divisions and inequities.** By beginning the dialogue in this way, Papertalk Green and Kinsella demonstrate just how fundamental it is that we learn new ways of connecting with the landscape and all that it has to offer.

Developing good idea phrases begins when you first unpack the essay topic, identify key words and brainstorm alternative vocabulary (see page 11 for a reminder of what this involves). From there, you can turn any individual words you brainstorm into richer, more complex phrases.

Let's look at an example of this process:

How do Kinsella and Papertalk Green explore the importance of connection to land in *False Claims of Colonial Thieves*?	
1. Brainstorm an alternative vocabulary for key words in an essay topic	**connection:** *disconnection, understanding, memory, respect, spiritual, division* **land:** *landscape, nature, country*
2. Turn individual words into phrases by adding more information with adjectives or extra information words like and, in, of, etc…	**landscape** → *natural and unscathed landscape, destruction of the landscape* **disconnection** → *degradations and disconnection*

Put it into practice

Now it's your turn. Write out single words that respond to the ideas in an essay topic. Then turn these words into idea phrases. The list below provides a starting point to help you with step two – but you should also think of your own words or use a thesaurus for this step to come up with the best words for your idea.

Negative	Positive	Extra information words to extend ideas
destructive violent ignorant blind arrogant desperate selfish naive cold passive	successful effective natural unselfish selfless humane active insightful	and of in at towards from with by

Cause, effect and significance of ideas

Writing about ideas often involves discussing what causes them, what they lead to and why they're important. Here is the first part of a paragraph on the novel Station Eleven. The annotations show how the sentences discuss the cause, effect and significance of ideas in the essay topic.

Mandel's *Station Eleven* reveals the reliance that humans have on each other. Discuss.

In the desolate and ravaged landscape of the post-collapse era, Mandel reveals that, above all else, survivors desire community. The ruin of civilisation and the extermination of the majority of the population has led to these characters realising how vital they are to each other in order to survive and flourish. Mandel describes how initially people scattered to avoid the fatal disease and stay safe. However, soon their need for community drives them to cluster "close together" in an "archipelago of small towns". Their temporary distance had made them aware of how much they needed others. Not only does Mandel suggest that community is necessary to a more fulfilled life, she also demonstrates that it is essential to long term survival as well because it gives her characters a reason to endure. Her post-collapse characters "survived against unspeakable odds…only by holding together", thus demonstrating the importance of reliance on others.

cause and effect words

significance words

idea phrases

Put it into practice

It's time for you to have a go. Using the idea phrases you developed in the previous activity, write some sentences discussing the cause, effect or significance of these ideas. Try using some of the words from the chart below to help you.

Cause	Effect	Significance
arises from	has led to	profound*
stems from	leads to	significant*
results from	has made	crucial*
is based in	results in	important*
is influenced by	shifts	necessary
is a response to	creates	vital
because	causes	essential
since	drives	the importance of
	means	how important it is to
	demonstrates	the necessity of
	highlights	the dire consequences of
	destroys	
	underscores	

Alternative sentence alert

*Any of these words can be changed to end in '-ly' and used like this: *profoundly impacts upon…*

Topic sentences

Topic sentences are idea sentences, but they are always at the start of a body paragraph.

At their heart, topic sentences only require two specific things:

- a link to the topic
- paragraph focus.

These two elements are very important because they signal that you are responding to the essay topic and that you have decided how this paragraph is going to analyse something different from your other paragraphs.

In order to link your topic sentence to the essay topic, you will need to use the idea words and phrases that you have already brainstormed. To create a paragraph focus, you can choose from any of the following options: a specific character (or group of characters)

- the setting of a text
- a sub-idea that relates to the topic
- the symbolism of a text
- a literary technique that you can analyse in detail
- how an idea is represented in a certain part of a text
- how an idea changes in the text.

Importantly, a topic sentence doesn't always need to fit into one sentence – you may need to use two.

Let's look at some examples:

Essay topic: How do Kinsella and Papertalk Green explore the importance of connection to land in *False Claims of Colonial Thieves*?	link to topic paragraph focus
From the very beginning of their poetic discourse, Kinsella and Papertalk Green elucidate the profound cultural degradations and disconnections that occur when powerful and self-serving institutions destroy the natural landscape.	
Essay topic: Mandel's *Station Eleven* reveals the reliance that humans have on each other. Discuss.	
In the desolate and ravaged landscape of the post-collapse era, Mandel reveals that, above all else, survivors desire community. The ruin of civilisation and the extermination of the majority of the population has led to these characters realising how vital they are to each other in order to survive and flourish.	

Put it into practice

Using the ideas you've brainstormed from earlier sections, have a go writing a topic sentence.
Try using some of the words from the list below to help you:

in	reveals*
from the outset	suggests
from the very beginning	elucidates
throughout	illustrates
by the end of the text	emphasises
while	demonstrates
despite	characterises
although	underscores
through	
by focusing on	

Alternative sentence alert

*Any of these words can be changed to end in '-ing'

Synthesising sentences

A synthesising sentence (sometimes called a 'link' sentence) is at the end of a body paragraph and ties – or *synthesises* – all of the ideas and examples together. So, a good synthesising sentence has:

- a linking phrase
- an idea phrase that links to the essay topic
- a reference to how the main ideas or examples are connected.

Here are some annotated examples:

By beginning the dialogue in this way, Papertalk Green and Kinsella demonstrate just how fundamental it is that we learn new ways of connecting with the landscape and all that it has to offer.	linking phrase idea phrase that links to the essay topic a reference to how the main ideas or examples are connected
Through these examples of the necessity of community in a world with a limited number of people, Mandel highlights the dependence her characters all have on other people. Without a community to be part of and live for, the survivors are untethered and so in "hell".	

Put it into practice

Write a synthesising sentence that connects the main examples and ideas in your paragraph. Use the words and phrases below to help you.

Opening linking phrase	Analytical verb	Words to connect ideas
By…in this way…	celebrates*	and
Through these examples…	cautions	not only…but also
Ultimately…	highlights	since
By comparing…	demonstrates	because
Despite…, there is evidence…	underscores	by
Thus, [author]…	warns against	with
While…, it is…	illustrates	while
Hence [idea phrase] leads to…	emphasises	despite
		while
		although

Alternative sentence alert

*Any of these words can be changed to end in '-ing

Writing about evidence

To show how much you know about a text, you will need to use evidence. There are many different kinds of evidence and you should aim to incorporate lots of different evidence (i.e. don't just use quotes) in your body paragraphs.

This section of the text will show you how to use:

→ quotes (page 29)

→ characters (page 31)

→ key scenes (page 33)

→ setting (page 35)

→ symbols (page 38)

→ techniques (each different text type has specific techniques you can analyse, and these are shown on page 40)

Inserting and analysing quotes

Quotes are an essential element of any text response.

This section will show you a range of ways to insert and analyse quotes.

Editing quotes

A good quote is short: One to two words in length is ideal, but if you want to use a longer quote, you should ensure it is no longer than seven words. When your quote is short, it means you're highlighting the most important word or idea. If your quote is too long, then you probably haven't picked the most significant part and you'll clog up your paragraph with unnecessary and irrelevant evidence.

Here are two key rules to think about when editing a quote to use in an essay:

Quote just one or two words on their own if they make sense	"~~He also learnt that his heat not only ended life: it could~~ nourish ~~it~~." **Example:** *Karl discovers at the end of* Flames *that heat can "nourish" life, highlighting the importance of emotion and passion to everyday existence.*
Delete pronouns: Removing *I, he, she, it, you, they, us and we* from a quote makes it easy to insert seamlessly into a sentence.	"~~You~~ used to be big" **Example:** *Norma grieves for a time when she "used to be big" and is unable to accept that she no longer has a role in the world of filmmaking.*

Inserting quotes into a sentence

Quotes from a text can be inserted as evidence into a sentence in many ways. Here are examples of five common ways:

→ After 'is':

> *Norma's sense of herself is built on the belief she* ***is "a big star"****, driving her to ignore the reality that people no longer remember or care about her films.*

→ Before an idea or the name of someone or something:

> *Jeffries' unwillingness to commit to his* ***"too perfect" Lisa*** *emphasises the cynicism of men towards women.*

→ Directly after 'he', 'she', 'it', 'they' or the name of someone or something:

> *Although the* ***Symphony "faces the same problems as every group"****, their musical community offers them a "home" and a rare source of safety in an unhinged world.*

→ After a reporting verb:

> *Miranda* ***declares "I repent nothing"*** *as she retreats from relationships to throw herself into the solitary projects of her work and art.*

→ After an action verb:

> *Charlotte* ***loathes the "white-picket fences"*** *of suburbia, fleeing from a world that seeks to restrict and confine her.*

Put it into practice

If you have a list of quotes from your text, the first thing that you should do is make all of these quotes as short as possible (a bonus of this is that they will be easier to memorise). Practise putting quotes into a sentence in a few different ways. This list of words to the right are reporting verbs and will help you with the 'After a reporting verb' method of inserting a quote.

- believes
- thinks
- feels
- says
- understands
- asserts that...
- declares
- describes...as...
- refers to...as

Analysis of quotes

A quote should always be linked to analysis within a sentence or a following sentence. Where you place a quote in a sentence will normally govern where you place the analysis. Here are some examples of where analysis can go in a sentence:

→ **Quote then analysis:**

Karl discovers at the end of Flames *that heat can "nourish" life,* ***highlighting the importance of emotion and passion to everyday existence.***

Jeffries' unwillingness to commit to his "too perfect" Lisa ***emphasises the cynicism of men towards women****.*

Throughout the film, Norma has an unalterable belief that she is still a "big" star and that fans constantly send her fan mail. This delusion ***underscores*** *how the world of Hollywood can immerse its inhabitants in fantasy and lies.*

→ **Analysis then quote:**

For Papertalk Green, the changing landscape erases her own cultural history and exports *"our precious earth onto foreign shores".*

→ **Quote embedded in analysis:**

For the members of the theatrical group, the only ***"bearable" element*** *of the new world is the sense of community they share with each other.*

Put it into practice

Practise writing a few sentences where you insert and analyse quotes in different ways.

The words below will help with sentences where the analysis comes after the quote:

conveys	illustrates
demonstrates	portrays
denotes	reveals
emphasises	represents
exposes	suggests
evokes	underscores
highlights	

Alternative sentence alert

*Any of the words ending in 's' could also end in '-ing' to introduce analysis: i.e. *Jeffries has an unwillingness to commit to his "too perfect" Lisa, emphasising the cynicism of men towards women.*

Writing about characters

Apart from poetry, all the texts you study will feature characters (or real people) in them. One of the main ways that you will use evidence is analysing what characters do and say and how they're presented. Throughout this chapter, you'll be shown a range of ways you can analyse characters. This section focuses on just two.

Using specific verbs to discuss characters

Throughout your essays, you'll often refer to what characters do or feel. If you use very vague or general verbs when you do this, like went, did, is or was, your sentences can end up summarising (or retelling) the text rather than analysing it:

> *Travis **goes on** the mission to find Baywara because he is upset about the 1919 massacre.* ✗

However, if you use more specific verbs to discuss what a character does or feels, your writing will be more analytic:

> *Having **repressed** his guilt at his involvement in the 1919 massacre for a decade, Travis craves redemption on his mission to find Baywara.*

Another way to effectively discuss what characters do or feel is to use action, feeling or thinking phrases like in this example:

> *As a result of his **unwillingness to** be open with Gutjuk about the 1919 massacre, Travis is ultimately destroyed by Gutjuk's anger and confusion.*

Put it into practice

Have a go at writing some sentences about what characters do, think or feel in a text. Use some of the words in the table below to be specific and analytic.

Verbs to discuss what a character thinks, feels or wants	Verbs to discuss what a character does or responds to		Action, thinking or feeling phrases
believes	accepts	escapes	ability to...
craves for	allows	hides from	inability to...
desires	challenges	ignores	desire for...
discovers	confronts	prevents	unwillingness to...
experiences	conforms to	resists	understanding of...
finds	creates	responds to	ignorance of...
learns	destroys	represses	sense of...
needs	disregards	struggles with	insensibility of...
realises	endures		belief in...
seeks			disregard for...
strives for			
understands			

Comparing and contrasting characters

Most texts you study with characters in them will have a range of major and minor characters. Texts will often emphasise individual aspects of a character by showing the similarities and differences they have with other characters.

Here are some example sentences that demonstrate what it looks like to compare and contrast characters in essay writing:

Throughout the text, Arnott ***contrasts*** *the repressed, isolated nature of Levi with Charlotte's inner, burning self and her desire to connect to others.*

Unlike *Bertie, whose experiences of the trauma of war render him "expressionless" and unable to enjoy life any longer, Archie is invigorated by his experience of equality in the trenches and agitates for change on his return to Australia.*

Put it into practice

Now it's your turn. Write a few sentences comparing or contrasting characters. Use some of the words in the table below to help you:

Words to use to start a sentence comparing or contrasting characters	Words to use to discuss how a text or writer compares or contrasts characters
Unlike…,	contrasts
In contrast to…,	juxtaposes
In opposition to…,	underlines the difference between…and…
Just as…,	parallels
Similarly to…,	likens
Like…,	links
	connects
	emphasises that connecting…and…is…

Evidence from key scenes

All texts (except poetry) have key scenes, or turning points, in them. These can be really important pieces of evidence because they will often illustrate the conflict in an idea or theme. However, the danger of using key scenes as evidence is that sometimes students will fall into the trap of "retelling", like in the example below.

> *When Norma Desmond arrives at Paramount Studios, lots of people recognise her and they crowd around her, calling out her name, until even the lighting man realises who she is and puts the spotlight onto her and Desmond feels like she is still a star.*

The problem with the writing above is that, although the student realises this is a key scene, there is no analysis of why this key scene is important. Instead of retelling the key scene in such detail, the student could have referred to this scene in a much shorter way.

Here are two methods to refer to key scenes more briefly:

Using extra information words to briefly refer to a scene

This method uses place or time words like 'when' or 'during' at the start of a sentence to introduce an example in ten words or less:

> ***When*** *Desmond is surrounded by adoring people at Paramount studios, the audience can see just how important fame is to her.*

Put it into practice

Using fewer than ten words to refer to a key scene, write some sentences that introduce and then analyse an example. Use some words from this list to help you:

When…,	see
At the point when…,	realise
During…,	the audience see
As…,	her/his…is highlighted
At…,	her/his…is emphasises
	her/his creates…
	her/his leads to…

Using a phrase to refer to a feeling or action

Another way to briefly refer to key moments in a text is to use a phrase that labels a character's actions or feelings:

> ***Levi's futile attempts to have a coffin built*** *for Charlotte so that she will not rise from her death exemplify his wish to control the natural world.*
>
> ***Juror 10's biased attitudes towards the defendant*** *are revealed in Act III, when he rants about "those people", demonstrating the difficulty of achieving justice in a world filled with prejudice.*

Phases like this can refer to one key moment or a series of moments across a text.

Put it into practice

Write a few different sentences referring to examples of character feelings or attitudes. Use the chart below to help you label and analyse the feelings or actions.

Descriptions	Actions	Feelings and views	Analytic verbs
violent*	attempt to...	desire for...	exemplify
destructive	effort to...	attitude towards...	embody
traumatic	response to...	blindness to...	illustrate
continual	reaction to...	prejudice towards...	underscore
desperate	experience of...	hatred of...	reveal
futile	escape from...	fear of...	highlight
blind	disregard of...	dread of...	create
prejudiced	insistence that...	delight in...	cause
biased	perseverance in...	love of...	result in
deep	struggle to...	belief in...	destroy
profound		commitment to...	manifest
selfish			
naive			
innocent			
instinctive			
misguided			
misplaced			
willful			

Alternative sentence alert

*Any of these words can be changed to end in '-ly' and used like this: *violently rants about...*

Setting

Every text depicts a world or setting. This is most obvious in films, novels, short stories and plays where characters are impacted by the world in which they live. However, poems also depict and describe a world because they show a poet's perception of the world around them. Whatever text you're writing about, it's important that your essays only discuss how the text itself presents the setting. Although you might read or watch supplementary texts such as Youtube documentaries or Wikipedia pages to help you understand the historical context of a text, it is unnecessary to write about this in your text analysis. This is because you should be focusing on the way the world is presented in the text you are analysing.

The most important thing in writing about setting is to analyse the cultural values that are being represented. You need to analyse the message that the text gives about these cultural values, like in these examples:

> *The taxidermist's description of Nigel as a "perfect specimen"* ***embodies the racist views of a white, colonial society*** *that sees first Australians as primitive and subhuman.*
>
> *Throughout* High Ground*, shots of the burning landscape and blood-red horizons represent* ***the destructive violence of white settlement****.*

→ Let's have a look at the different ways you can analyse the cultural values of a text.

Character and setting

An important way narrative texts represent the setting is through the experience of characters. The things characters say and do will often reveal important aspects about the cultural and historical values of a society. These can be positive or negative. You can discuss setting by analysing:

1. How characters' actions, words or beliefs represent the values of their setting:

> ***Doyle's dismissal of Lisa's "feminine intuition" as a "fairytale"*** *underscores the pervasive misogyny of 1950s America.*
>
> ***The taxidermist's description of Nigel as a "perfect specimen"*** *embodies the racist views of a white, colonial society that sees first Australians as primitive and subhuman.*

2. How the cultural values of a setting impact upon actions and experiences:

> *The pervasive materialism of Hollywood society* ***drives Gillis' belief*** *in the importance of status symbols and that his car is as valuable as his "legs".*
>
> *The way Travis continually looks at others through the scope of his gun emphasises* ***how he is trapped in*** *the violent mindset of a white society that fears Indigenous people.*
>
> *Throughout* False Claims of Colonial Thieves*, Papertalk Green depicts how the destructive greed of mining companies ravages the beauty of the natural world and* ***destroys the connection*** *of her people to the land.*

Put it into practice

Now it's your turn. Write a few sentences about how the actions or views of a character or writer represents or is shaped by the values of the world they live. Experiment with using some of the words from this table to help you:

Verbs to write about how a character shows societal values	Adjectives	View and values words	Verbs to write about what social values make characters do
represents	societal	views of...	restricts*
underscores	violent	value society puts on...	traps
illustrates	brutal	attitudes of...	imprisons
demonstrates	oppressive	attitudes towards...	represses
embodies	conservative	approach to...	fuels
evinces	narrow	importance of...	drives
manifests	misogynistic	significance of...	motivates
contrasts to	racist	mindset of...	creates
	materialistic	nature of...	allows
is a representation of	dominant	belief in...	forces
is an illustration of	entrenched	desire for...	destroys
is emblematic of	powerful	priority society gives to...	
is defined by	restrictive	aspiration to	
is based on	destructive	fear of...	
is rooted in	selfish	anxieties of...	
	controlling	misogyny	
	normative	prejudice	
	aspirational	racism	
	underlying		

Alternative sentence alert

*Any of these words can be changed to end in '-ing'

Places, objects and setting

Texts often use physical places – such as buildings or landscapes – or objects within them to represent positive or negative qualities of the setting.

Here are some examples:

> *In* Flames, *the* ***vast, open spaces of the natural world stand in contrast*** *to the restriction and confinement offered by the "white picket fences" of the urban environment.*
>
> *Throughout* High Ground, *shots of the* ***burning landscape and blood-red horizons represent*** *the destructive violence of white settlement.*

Put it into practice

Now it's your turn. Write a few sentences about how something from the physical setting of a text shows us something about the world of the text. The words in the table below may help you label and describe a part of the physical setting of the text. Use any of the words from the previous table to help you analyse what the physical setting shows about the world of the text.

Adjectives	Place words
natural	community
unnatural	world
harsh	society
vast	landscape
open	wilderness
vivid	nature
grim	environment
confined	
cold	
broken	
isolated	
derelict	
sterile	
dangerous	

Writing about symbols

All texts have some kind of symbolism in them, but most students are unsure about how to analyse them. Actually, analysing symbols can be quite simple.

Let's look at a few examples from 'real life':

The colour red symbolises danger, showing us that we must be careful.

The use of the word "green" in the product name highlights the environmental credentials of this product.

By gesturing rudely with her hand, the driver showed her contempt for other road users.

In all of these examples, the symbol shows us an important idea or concept.
It's exactly the same in a text response.

The derelict mansion that Norma Desmond lives in symbolises how she feels that she has been abandoned and neglected by Hollywood institutions.

The endurance of civilisation and art is exemplified by the Travelling Symphony's success in performing Shakespearean plays, works that have been considered relevant to humanity for centuries.

In order to successfully analyse symbols, you have to identify the symbol and then connect the symbol to an idea or theme using an analytic verb. You'll probably notice that the text response examples are much longer and more descriptive than the 'real life' examples.That's because the writers of these text response examples want to describe how the symbol connects with the idea. Let's look again at the text response examples.

This time, notice the words in red.

*The **derelict** mansion that Norma Desmond lives in symbolises how she feels that she has been **abandoned and neglected** by Hollywood institutions.*

*The **endurance of** civilisation and of art is exemplified by the Travelling Symphony's success in performing Shakespearean plays, works that have been considered **relevant to humanity for centuries**.*

In both examples, the description of the symbol is connected to the analysis of the idea. When you are writing about symbols, you should brainstorm words and phrases that describe both the symbol and the idea you are analysing. When brainstorming words, you first need to consider the particular aspect of a symbol you want to discuss. For example, the phrase "derelict mansion" focuses on the physical appearance of the symbol.

Use these categories below to help you brainstorm interesting words to describe a symbol:

Size and Longevity	Power and force	Physical appearance
i.e.	i.e.	i.e.
vast	intense	scarred
enduring	extreme	vivid
ephemeral	weak	large
transient	insipid	small
Morality or behaviour	**Importance**	**Connectedness**
i.e.	i.e.	i.e.
immoral	significant	isolated
selfish	fundamental	alone
principled	meaningless	communal
loyal	trivial	shared

Put it into practice

Analyse one of the symbols in your text by connecting the symbol to a key idea or theme. Use the categories above to help you brainstorm interesting words to describe how a symbol is connected to the idea. Use one of the words in the list opposite to help you analyse what the symbol shows about an idea:

- symbolises
- highlights
- shows
- exemplifies
- embodies
- signifies
- connotes
- is emblematic of
- mirrors
- illustrates
- references
- serves to/as
- operates as
- parallels

Specific textual techniques

So far, what we've explained about the elements of writing about evidence could be applied to analysing any text – whether it's poetry, film, a novel or non-fiction. However, there are also some specific techniques used for different text types.

Over the next few pages, we'll show you some basic ways you can write about the techniques in different text types.

Look through this section to find the text type that you are studying for this unit.

Narrative texts

This section is about written texts that tell a story through lots of author description: novels, non-fiction or short stories. Narrative texts have two specific techniques that you should analyse in your text responses:

→ ***narrative arc:*** how does the story begin, continue and end?

→ ***perspective:*** who's telling the story (and do we trust them)?

Narrative arc

Usually, we think of stories as having a beginning, middle and end; but they don't always happen in that order. When you are reading your text, you might find that it has a different structure. Different structures will influence how you interpret the events and characters within the text.

Let's have a look at some of the most common structures you will encounter:

Chronological structure: This is where all of the events are told in the 'right' order. It means that you should analyse how characters change and grow throughout the text and how they learn things from each other. If you are studying a text with this structure, you should use words like those below to analyse how the characters change:

What they learn	How their behaviour changes	How others influence them
come to understand	alter the way they	have been affected by…
realise	have transformed from…to…	have been persuaded that
learns that	change from…to…	are inspired to…
sees that they	adapt to	respond to…

Circular structure: In this sort of structure, the author starts at the end of the narrative – so the reader knows how the story ends – and then circles back to the beginning, so that the reader learns how this final situation came about. With these sorts of structures, you will be analysing what the reader learns, rather than what the characters learn. You can use the words from the left-hand column of the first table to help you to analyse what the reader learns.

Episodic structure: This sort of structure can be confusing at first, because there might be flashbacks or flash forwards and, as a reader, you have to sort out and think about which events came first, second and third. When you are analysing this sort of text type, you should write about the impact of this type of structure. You can use words from the table below to help you with this:

Words to describe the text structure/ episodes in the text	Words to analyse the impact of structure
episodic	creates a parallel between…and…
flashforward	emphasises the connection between…and…
flashback	contrasts…with…
disjointed	likens…to…
vignette	juxtaposes…with…
interwoven	
parallel	
shifting narrative	

Perspective

Stories are told from the perspective of different characters (or from the perspective of the author). When you are analysing the perspective of a text, you will write about the point of view (person) it was written in.

Here are the different points of view a story can be written in:

First Person: This is when one of the characters is writing the narrative ("I did that, I thought that…"). It gives the reader a clear insight into the thoughts of the narrator and the narrator's judgement of other characters.

When you are analysing a text written in first person, it's important to remember that you can't always trust the narrator (do you always tell the truth? Always?) and you can't necessarily trust their opinions about other characters. You should analyse the difference between what the characters do and what they say. You might want to use phrases like:

> *"While [narrator] believes...their actions reveal..."*
>
> *"As [narrator] focuses on/omits/ignores...the reader can see..."*
>
> *"[Narrator's] judgement of [character] is fuelled by their belief that..."*
>
> *"Although the reader is sympathetic of [narrator], it is clear that..."*

Third Person: In this style of narration, the author takes on a godlike perspective and writes about all of the characters ("S/he did this, and then s/he thought…"). Writing in the third person allows the reader to see what all of the characters are doing or thinking and apparently gives a more unbiased perspective. When you're analysing texts written in third person, you need to regularly analyse how the author presents the characters, like this:

> *Arnott presents Levi as a repressed individual but someone who is ultimately able to change and connect.*

Film

There are loads and loads of different film techniques that you could analyse and you might learn lots of technical terms, but a good analysis usually focuses on a few key things.

These are:

→ lighting

→ costume

→ camera work

→ mise en scene.

Lighting

Light and shadows are really important for how we interpret a film scene and the characters in it. Characters who live in the shadows seem shady, whereas characters who are surrounded by light seem charismatic or good.

Let's have a look at an example analysis of this:

> *The darkened and claustrophobic rooms of Norma Desmond's mansion emphasise the sense of her hiding and closing herself off from the larger world.*

The table on the opposite page will help you describe and analyse the impact of different types of lighting:

Put it into practice

Type of lighting	Words to describe light	Words to analyse what light represents
dark	hidden repressed cloaking foreboding dim darkened claustrophobic	threat of… danger of… desire to keep hidden… blindness to… corrupt nature of… misanthropic nature of…
light	hallowed angelic spotlighted exposed vulnerable	angelic nature of… the focus upon… exposed position of… virtuous nature of… force of good
contrasting (black and white)	stark split broken sliced divided	the conflicted nature of… the difference between… the divide between… the complex nature of… ambiguity of…
sepia tones	nostalgic old-fashioned tones of yesteryear softens	nostalgic world of… yearning for… desire for… the simplicity of…
bright colours	cheering childlike naive vibrant lively open	the innocence of… the openness of… the connectedness of… humanity of…

Costume

Just as we judge other people on the clothes that they wear, we judge and analyse characters based upon what they wear. When you are analysing costume, you will need to give a brief description of the most important details of the clothes a character wears before analysing how this affects your interpretation of the character, like in the example below:

> *The masculine shirt dresses worn by Stella emphasise her no-nonsense, practical approach to life and the people she meets.*

Put it into practice

You can use the table below to help you with your descriptions

Colours	Overall effect	Feminine/masculine	Class representation
bright	revealing	frilly	expensive
black	plunging	lacy	made-to-measure
soft	short	feminine	designer
white	scanty	prissy	formal
pastel	homemade	ladylike	cheaper
drab	tattered	masculine	well-worn
dark	shabby	tailored	ill-fitting
gothic	second-hand	severe	
	worn		
	old-fashioned		
	demure		
	formal		
	modest		

Camera work

Everything you see in a film is through a camera and the camera does a lot of things to emphasise certain things about a scene or a character. Look at the table below to see a list of different camera shots and angles. Keep in mind that the suggested effects in the third column are just suggestions – you should also think of your own interpretations of the film scenes you are analysing.

Camera shot/ angle	What it looks like	What effect it has	Phrases for analysis
Long shot	Shows an entire room or setting. Could also be used to show a group of characters.	Establishes which characters are involved in the scene and how they move or interact with the world and each other. If it is only of the scenery, it illustrates something important about the physical setting.	*In the establishing shot,...* *The panoramic view of the scenery illustrates...* *The long shot of...shows...*
Close up	Shows a character's facial expressions or reactions.	Helps the audience to understand what a character is thinking or feeling.	*Looking at [character] in close up, the audience sees...* *The extreme close up of [character] highlights...*
Panning shot	A slow-moving shot that shows an entire setting (and the people or things in it).	Illustrates something important about the setting.	*The slow panning shot of... reveals...* *In a long panning shot, [director] shows...*
High camera angle	The camera is high up, so it is 'looking down' on a character.	Makes the character look like they have limited power, are shorter or uncertain and childlike.	*As the audience looks down on [character] it is clear that the director is condemning...* *The high camera angle highlights the reduced status of...*
Low camera angle	The camera is low down, so it is 'looking up' at a character.	Makes the character look like they are more powerful, taller or more important.	*By looking up at [character], the audience is impressed by...* *The low camera angle emphasises the power and...of [character] and...*

Mise en scene

This is a French phrase that means everything you can see on the set. Although it sounds sophisticated and complex, it's really just a complicated way of labelling the physical setting and you can use any of the tips from page 35 to help you with this.

Plays

When you analyse a play in English you are actually reading and discussing a written script, not a live performance. Because you're reading the play – as opposed to watching it – you can more clearly understand some things, like how a play is divided into acts, and the stage directions a playwright includes. These elements are important to refer to in an analysis of a play. This section shows you how you can write about them.

Five act structure

Many Shakespearean and Ancient Greek plays follow a clear narrative structure. Shakespearean plays always have five acts. Greek plays have a similar structure, but the five acts are not necessarily labelled. There are two possible endings for these sorts of plays: happy or sad. If it's a happy ending, it's called a comedy; if it's a sad ending and the stage is covered in dead bodies, it's a tragedy.

When you're analysing a play, you'll often be given essay topics that ask you to discuss how a play demonstrates the consequences of certain actions or decisions. When responding to these types of questions, it is important to discuss how the structure of the play illustrates the cause and effect of a character's decisions.

In the table opposite you can see how the structure of a play works and some phrases that might help you analyse it:

	Explanation	Words and phrases to write about structure
Orientation	The scene is set, and a protagonist with strengths and weaknesses is introduced. Other characters who enable or moderate their behaviours are also introduced.	*From the outset of the play, [character] is...* *At the opening of the play, [playwright] depicts [character] as a flawed character who...*
Complication and conflict	In this act, the protagonist responds to a problem in a flawed way. Other, additional problems (often caused by other characters) also further complicate the situation.	*[Character's] blindness to...leads them to...* *[Character's] misguided belief in...spurs them to...*
Rising action	In this part, things begin to spiral out of control. If it's a tragedy, the protagonist makes even worse decisions that will have fatal consequences. If it's a comedy, the protagonist listens to advice and thinks they may need to do things differently.	*[Character's] flawed commitment to... results not only in..., but also...* *Unlike [protagonist] who..., [minor character] believes that...*
Climax and falling action	If it's a tragedy, all of the bad decisions the protagonist has made leads to one momentous point or conflict. If it's a comedy, the protagonist must show that they've learned to change or sacrifice in order to do the right thing.	*At the centre of the drama is the conflict between [protagonist's] attempt to...and...* *When [protagonist] is overcome by..., the action of the play inexorably leads to...* *At the crux of the play, [protagonist] confronts...and realises...* *The action of the play turns when [protagonist] is finally able to overcome [her/his]...and...*
Denouement	In the final part of a tragedy, catastrophe has occurred. The main character is killed, exiled or punished in some other way. In a comedy, the protagonist is rewarded for their change or redemption and they come to understand something important about themselves or the world.	*Ultimately, [playwright] reveals the destructive nature of...through the way [character] is punished...* *By the end of the play, [character]...is completely destroyed by...and...* *By the end of the play, [protagonist] has transformed from...to...* *Ultimately, [protagonist] realises that "..."*

Stage directions

Playwrights convey ideas in their plays not just through the words characters speak but also the stage directions that outline how the play should be presented. Stage directions are any pieces of information the playwright includes that describe:

→ ***staging:*** how the stage should look

→ ***sound and light:*** any accompanying sound or light effects

→ ***delivery:*** how characters look or sound as they deliver their lines.

So, when discussing a play, it's important to analyse not just the things characters say, but the playwright's stage directions. Here are some examples of how to analyse stage directions. In each of the quotes, the words are from the stage directions, not from something a character says.

	Examples	Word lists to help you write about this type of stage direction
Staging	*The play's initial setting – the aftermath of a devastating flood that leaves everything "destroyed" – underscores the wider dispossession that white settlement has inflicted on Indigenous people.*	Writing about setting, page: 35
Sound and light	*In Act IV of The Crucible, the "darkness" that cloaks the stage symbolises the ignorance and fear that has led characters towards their destruction at the end of the play.*	Writing about symbols, page: 38
Delivery	*The traumatic impact of the war on Bertie is emphasised through the ways he walks "stiffly" and is "expressionless" on his return to Australia.*	Writing about character and setting, pages: 31, 35

Writing about the Chorus in Ancient Greek theatre

In ancient Greek theatre, the Chorus was a small group of people who represented the general population. They provide the audience with important background information about the action of the play and offer a commentary on the thoughts and actions of the main characters. The opinion of the Chorus provides the audience with an important insight into whether we should sympathise with a character or if a character's thoughts and actions are wrong.

The Chorus also helps the audience to understand what the views and values of the playwright are.

These are some sentence starters to help you write about the Chorus:

In the Chorus' support of..., [playwright] emphasises...

Through the Chorus' expression of..., [playwright] shows how...

By having the Chorus attack..., [playwright's] critique of...is highlighted.

Through their espousal of..., the Chorus embodies society's support for...The Chorus collectively highlights dominant attitudes of society by expressing...

[Character's] position in society as...is underlined in the Chorus' description of [him/her] as...

The depth of [character's] transgression against society is underscored in the Chorus' description of [his/her] actions as...

The Chorus' horror at...highlights the degree to which [character] has transgressed against...

Poetry

Unlike the analysis of narrative texts, the analysis of poetry requires students to analyse words more closely. Students will also need to identify and discuss particular types of techniques in poetry. This section will help you with the basics of this type of close analysis.

Writing about form and purpose

When analysing poetry, you'll need to discuss the purpose of individual poems or sets of poems. If you're studying older poems, you will find that the form of the poem is linked to its purpose. But most modern poems don't have these sorts of rules, so you can simply analyse the purpose of the poem, like this:

> *In 'Culture Bath', Papertalk Green celebrates the rejuvenating nature of a connection to traditional culture.*

Use the table below to identify a purpose for a poem or set of poems and verbs and idea phrases you can use to discuss this purpose.

Form	Purpose	Verbs to discuss purpose	Idea phrases
Sonnet 14 lines (8 lines about one idea, 6 about the other)	Compare two ideas to show a whole	*compares, contrasts, links, parallels, likens*	*experiences of...* *nature of...* *essence of...* *meaning of...* *reality of...* *cycle of...* *impact of...* *loss of...* *beauty of...* *wonders of...* *moments of...* *difference between...*
Ode	Praise a person, object or idea	*celebrates, exalts, lauds, pays tribute to*	
Elegy	Express sadness for a tragic event, especially a death	*mourns, grieves for, eulogises*	
Lyric	Explore an idea, emotion or event	*reflects on, explores, meditates on, muses on, considers, imagines*	

Writing about techniques

Writing about poetry will require you to **label certain poetic techniques**, **describe the idea they convey** and **analyse their impact**.

Here's an example:

> *In 'Undermining', the **rhyme** of 'hold' and 'old' **invokes a vivid sense** of the powerful bond between the country and uranium, **highlighting** that mining this "poison" from the ground is violating something sacred.*

This table will help you to identify and understand the purpose of some basic poetic techniques. It's important to remember that the effects listed here are not the only effects – you should try to think of your own; this table is just a way of getting started with your analysis.

Technique	How it works	What effect might it have?
Repetition	When a word is repeated one or more times throughout a poem.	Emphasises an idea.
Rhyme	Usually, it's the last word in a line that rhymes. Sometimes, there might be an *internal rhyme* where the word in the middle of a line rhymes with a word elsewhere.	Connects words and ideas together.
Rhythm	This is how fast or slow the lines of a poem go. There are many different poetic rhythms, which you can look up online.	Makes a poem go faster or slower and therefore makes it seem more urgent or relaxed.
Alliteration	Words begin with the same letter (e.g. ***r**aging **r**ivers*).	Connects words and their images together.
Assonance	Like a rhyme 'gone wrong' – the words sort of rhyme, but it's not an exact match.	Connects words and their images together.
Onomatopoeia	When the word makes the sound it is describing (like the word 'bang').	The reader can 'hear' what the poet is describing.

Use this table to analyse the impact of poetic techniques:

Words to describe the idea a technique conveys		Words to analyse the impact of a technique
conjures*	a sense of	emphasising**
creates	a feeling of	representing
invokes	an impression of	illuminating
highlights	an atmosphere of	illustrating
underlines	an image of	creating
emphasises	the sound of	expressing
illustrates	an association with	conveying

Alternative sentence alert

(*Any of these words can be changed to end in '-ing'

**Any of these words can be changed to end in 's'

Writing about images

Many poems use interesting words to create a vivid picture of something. These pictures are important to analyse when discussing how the poet conveys an idea.

Here's an example:

> *Papertalk Green creates a violent image of industrialised mining destroying the land with "deep cuts" and "gaping wounds".*

Put it into practice

Use this table to help you label and describe the pictures a poet creates:

Picture verbs	Phrases to label a picture	Words to describe a positive picture	Words to describe a negative picture	Words to describe an attention-grabbing picture
creates draws casts evokes generates	image of... picture of... vision of... account of... description of... impression of...	lush warm enticing soft joyful peaceful magnificent natural superior picturesque luminous incandescent	grim dark bleak cold lonely violent broken hard isolated alienating unnatural inferior damaged stark	vivid powerful strong startling striking immense profound deep complex intricate grave dramatic

Writing about sounds

In poetry, analysing the sound of words is often just as important as analysing their meaning.

Here's an example:

> *The violence of mining is emphasised through the harsh, metallic sound of 'mechanical', which stands in contrast to the melodic and soft 'dream time animals'.*

Put it into practice

This table has some useful words to describe different sounds in the poems you are analysing:

Hard sounds	Soft sounds	Happy sounds	Sad sounds
percussive	whispering	babbling	wailing
jarring	smooth	burbling	mournful
metallic	sighing	rapid	keening
explosive	melodic	chattering	weeping
clattering	fluid	gleeful	lonely
clapping	flowing	exuberant	tearful
harsh	lilting	warm	melancholic
cold	chiming	chuckling	dirge-like
abrupt	sweet		
vibrating			
shivering			
shuddering			

Graphic novels

Since graphic novels are often fictional narratives with lots of text, many of the strategies you'll use to refer to and analyse quotes and scenes will be the same as for other narrative texts such as novels, films and plays. However, there are some unique ways you'll need to discuss evidence relating to the print visual element of graphic novels. That's what this section is about.

Referring to graphic novel elements

There is a range of elements to the visual layout of a typical graphic novel page. While each of these elements has a technical name, you don't really need to use most of these in good analytic writing.

Here are a few that you will need to write about:

→ ***Panels:*** These are the pictures or images. Often they're laid out in comic book style boxes or frames, but sometimes they have no borders or they occupy more of the page (maybe even the whole page). In writing about panels in a graphic novel, you can use the terms panels or frames as well as any of the other terms listed in the table below.

→ ***Speech bubbles:*** This is the text that comes directly from the mouths or minds of characters. In writing about speech bubbles in a graphic novel, you can use any of these terms: dialogue, dialogue bubbles, speech balloons, thought balloons.

→ ***Captions:*** Captions are the words of a narrator as opposed to the thoughts or dialogue of a character within a panel. Captions usually accompany a panel as a sectioned off box or words. You can refer to captions as: narrative text, narration, accompanying text.

Describing and analysing visuals

Analysing visuals in a graphic novel is similar to writing about symbols. You'll need to use a phrase to both label and describe the visual (just as you do with a symbol), before using a verb to analyse its impact.

Here's an example:

> *The **dramatic panel of the narrator** metamorphosing from a boy into a bull fills most of a page and **evokes** his sense of being taken over by a "beast".*

You'll be able to use the words in the second, third and fourth columns to analyse visuals from any graphic novel. However, the words in the first columns are just suggestions. You'll need to think of your own words to describe the feeling or tone of a visual.

Words to describe a picture	Words to label a picture	Words to describe the size of an image or connection to other images	Words to label the impact of a picture
dramatic	panel of...	fills the entire page	evokes
extreme	series of panels in which...	covers most of the page	symbolises
intense	image of...	is overlayed against a background of...	captures
powerful	set of images in which...	overlaps images of...	dramatises
haunting	portrait of...	centres on...	creates
vivid	close up of...	blends images of...	emphasises
stark	rendering of...	combines images of...	illustrates
simple	representation of...	adds to...	represents
lone	frame in which...	contrasts to...	leads the viewer to...
visceral	scene of...	juxtaposes...	
foreboding	panorama of...		
	vista of...		

Non-fiction texts

When writing about non-fiction, you need to discuss real examples of people and events as opposed to imaginary ones in fictional texts.

There are a few things to consider in doing this:

Discuss the use of background information

In a non-fiction text, a narrator tells the true story of their own life or the life of someone else. To do this, the narrator creatively recounts events to tell a story and present a certain perspective. However, in addition to telling a story, non-fiction texts also often give the reader background information so they better understand the events being described inthe text.

Here's an example analysis of how Trevor Noah does this in *Born A Crime*:

> *By providing historical background about the divisions between the Xhosa and Zulu tribes, Noah helps the reader to see the opening chapter 'Run' within the wider context of interracial violence in South Africa.*

Put it into practice

The words in this table will help you describe and analyse the impact of background information in a text:

Words to describe the use of background information	Words to label the use of background information
provides	factual background
establishes	historical background
summarises	interviews
outlines	real historical documents
interweaves creative recounts of...with...	excerpts of
intersperses stories of...with...	

Words to analyse the purpose of background information
that focuses on...in order to...
highlights...so that...
frames the story within a wider context of...so the reader realises...
orients the reader to...
exposes the reader to...
allows the reader to understand...
underscores for the reader...

Analysing people in the text

Non-fiction is about real people, not fictional characters. This means students are sometimes uncertain about whether they can refer to people in a non-fiction text as 'characters'. The short answer is yes, you can. However, there are other words you can use to **refer to people** in a non-fiction text. This example shows one such way and also demonstrates how to analyse the way a **writer shows** what a person is like in a non-fiction text:

> *Throughout his memoir, Noah's mother is a **central figure** who is a fundamental influence on his life. Noah **portrays** her as a fiercely independent woman who would "never have stood for" taking orders from "some white lady".*

Put it into practice

These words will help you label people in a non-fiction text and analyse the way they are presented by the writer:

Words to refer to people in a text	Words to analyse how a narrator shows what a person is like in a non-fiction text
figure	presents…as…
central figure	characterises as…
central protagonist	depicts…as…
recurring figure	describes…as…
minor figure	portrays…as…
character	draws a portrait of…as…
	creates a picture of…as…

Links between ideas and evidence

A good body paragraph is not a list of sentences, but a series of linked ideas, examples and analysis. Links help to create "flow" between your ideas and examples.

To create a paragraph like this, you need to:

→ link ideas, examples and analysis ***between*** sentences

→ link ideas, examples and analysis ***within*** sentences.

The example body paragraph below demonstrates a variety of links being made between and within sentences:

Mandel's *Station Eleven* reveals the reliance that humans have on each other. Discuss.

In the desolate and ravaged landscape of the post-collapse era, Mandel reveals that, above all else, survivors desire community. The ruin of civilisation and the extermination of the majority of the population have made these characters realise how much they require each other in order to survive and flourish. Mandel describes how initially people scattered to avoid the fatal disease and stay safe. However, soon they "clustered close together" in an "archipelago of small towns" because their temporary distance had made them aware of how much they needed others. Not only does Mandel suggest that community is necessary to a more fulfilled life, but she also explicitly states that it is essential to long-term survival as well because it gives her characters a reason to endure. Her post-collapse characters "survived against unspeakable odds…only by holding together", and as a result demonstrate the importance of reliance on others. This concern is further built upon by Mandel's focus on the Travelling Symphony. For the members of the theatrical group, the only "bearable" elements of the new world are the "friendships" and "camaraderie" they have with each other. Mandel overtly shows this through the slogan that symbolises the group – "survival is insufficient". While all of the members want to survive, it is their community that provides them with a reason to live. Without the people they "long for" such as each other, the members of the Symphony feel they are in "hell" and so have no greater purpose to their lives. Their individual survival is inconsequential compared to the purpose community gives them. This thinking is echoed in the character of James who bursts into tears upon arrival at the Severn City Airport because he "thought [he] was the only one". Finding a thriving community offers him immense relief and joy, because of his need for other people. Through these examples of the necessity of community in a world with a limited number of people, Mandel highlights the dependence her characters all have on other people. Without a community to be part of and live for, the survivors are untethered and so in "hell".

Link between sentences

Links within sentences

The example on the opposite page demonstrates the following important things:

- Most sentences should begin with some type of linking word or phrase.
- Within all sentences, use a word or phrase to extend the sentence and an example or idea to further information.
- The most common way of linking things *within* a sentence is to use 'and'.

Put it into practice

Write a body paragraph. Focus on creating links at the start of sentences and within sentences.
Use the words and phrases in the table below to help you:

Links between sentences				Links within a sentence
However, Moreover, Yet Nevertheless In contrast Similarly Although While When Since Despite * See note 1	Through Throughout By In From Without With For	Ultimately In the end Consequently As a result	This These Her His Their Through this Through these By these ** See note 2	and and so because but by since through further built upon by to in order to as as well as a result that such as not only...but also... *** See note 3

***Note 1:** Also, you can use a '-ing' word at the start of a sentence to link to an action in the previous sentence (i.e Having..., Resulting from..., Realising...,)

****Note 2:** If you are using any of these words at the beginning of a sentence, you should follow it with an idea word or phrase that links to the previous sentence (i.e. "This concern...", "Her post-collapse survivors...")

*****Note 3:** Also, you can use '-ing' words to introduce analysis (i.e demonstrating, revealing, illustrating etc...)

Conclusions

At the end of your analytic essay is a conclusion. This shouldn't be a giant paragraph summing up everything you have already said. Instead, a good conclusion should briefly do three things:

→ summarise your analysis of the essay topic

→ emphasise the message the text gives about the essay topic

→ reiterate the most important tension/complication.

Let's have a look at how this is done in an example conclusion:

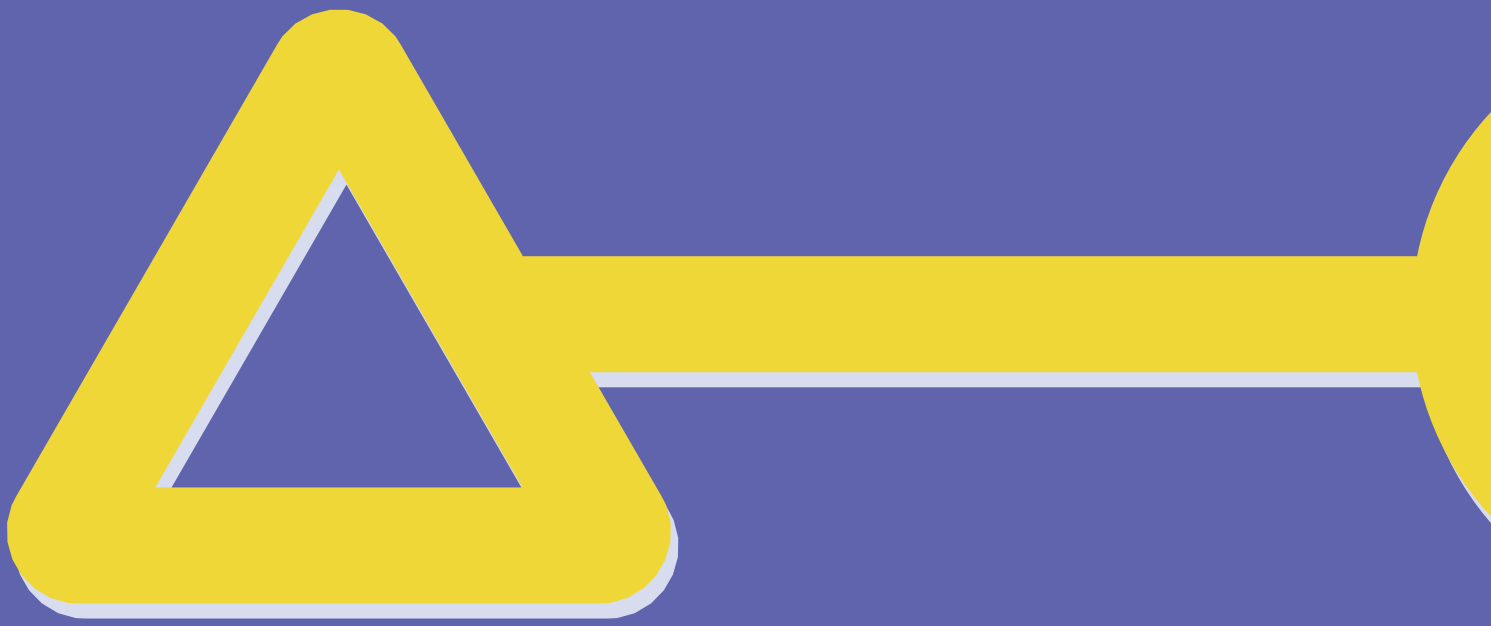
Mandel's *Station Eleven* reveals the reliance that humans have on each other. Discuss.	
Ultimately, Mandel demonstrates how the cataclysm of the Georgia Flu forces the survivors to have an appreciation for others, which the people in the old world did not have. While the survivors aim to create a community to survive with and live for, the people of the old world take their society for granted and are self-absorbed and "impersonal ", lacking connection with others. However, Mandel reveals that nostalgia and the survivors' inability to accurately remember events cause them to think of the old world as a place of deeper connection than it really was.	summarising link word (see previous section) message of the text analysis and link to essay topic important tension/ complication

Put it into practice

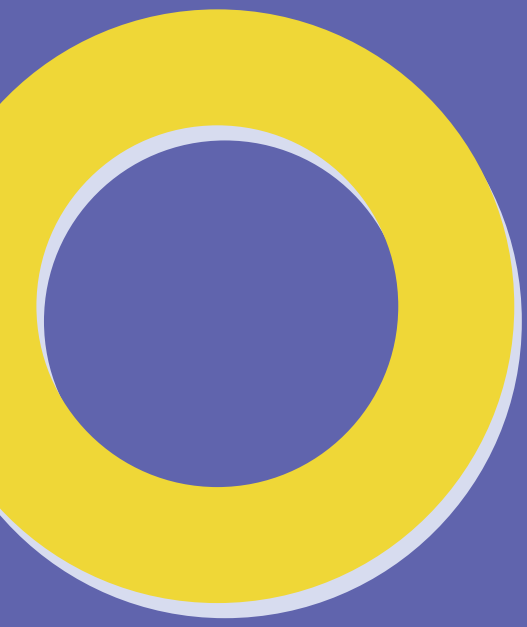
In order to link to the essay topic, you will continue to use the words and phrases you brainstormed in your planning process. To write about the message of the text and the tension or complication you explored in your essay, you can use words and phrases from the table below:

Message verb	Tension of complication phrases
warns	against the threat of…
cautions	the dangers of…
exposes	the dire consequences of…
condemns	how society can focus on…
critiques	how society can become…
demonstrates	that…can/can't triumph over…
portrays	how can…succeed against…when…
highlights	a grim vision of…
provides	in order to…must first…
offers	
emphasises	humans' ability to…
	a society in which…
affirms	the capacity to…
celebrates	the beauty of…
endorses	
admires	

Personal Text Response



Sometimes you will be asked to write a personal text response essay. This means that you will write about your own thoughts and responses to the text you are studying. You will need to back up your thoughts and opinions with examples from the text itself, to show how well you understood the text. The earlier sections of this chapter will help you to write about the text and use examples well, but this section will show you how to make your personal opinions sound sophisticated and thoughtful.



Responding to an essay topic

Before you read or watch a text, you should look at and understand the types of topics you will respond to. There are two ways a personal response topic might appear.

Firstly, you might be given a statement and asked whether or not you agree with it, like in these examples:

> It is Lisa who is the real hero of the film. Do you agree?
>
> *Frankenstein* is still as relevant today as when it was written. Do you agree?

Secondly, you might be asked a direct question about your opinion of a topic, like in these examples:

> Do Kennedy's short stories represent an Australia you know?
>
> Is Macbeth a selfish, evil murderer or a victim of circumstance?

No matter how a topic appears, your first reaction upon reading a topic will be to make a simple choice. It might be a 'yes' or 'no' or it might be a choice outlined in the question – like in the *Macbeth* example. However, responding with a simple choice makes for a fairly boring essay. A better personal response essay is more nuanced and discusses *how much* you think something is true. It is very unusual to completely agree with one thing or another; usually, you will have an answer somewhere along a spectrum or an answer that is 'yes, but…'.

For all of these responses, you need to acknowledge what you think is true about a topic and then discuss the degree to which you think it is true.

For example, when responding to the essay topic:

It is Lisa who is the real hero of the film. Do you agree?

You might respond with

'Yes, she is the hero, but she doesn't really look like a hero and it's not until the end of the film that we understand how heroic she is'.

Or, when responding to the topic:

Do Kennedy's short stories represent an Australia you know?

You might respond with

'Some of the characters and stories are like white people I know, but there are other stories about experiences I don't know anything about'.

In responding to:

Is Macbeth a selfish, evil murderer or a victim of circumstance?

You might think,

'While Macbeth is a totally selfish and evil murderer, he is also a victim of the world he lives in.'

Study alert:

For further strategies for thinking about and planning responses to essay topics, refer to pages 11-15

Read the text strategically

In order to respond to a text personally, you'll need to make notes about the feelings and reactions you have to it. It's important to recognise that your initial feelings about a text might change as you study the text more in class. Or they might stay the same. Either way, when you write your personal response you'll need to refer to your initial thoughts, so it's important to keep a record of your feelings and reactions. This section shows how you can take notes about your feelings and reactions to texts.

Making notes about narrative texts

Narrative texts tell stories with characters. They can be films, plays, novels, short stories or memoirs.

Making notes about characters

Often your main opinion about a narrative text will reflect how you feel about the characters in them. However, your first response can't simply be 'I don't like the main character'. You need to think more specifically about why you like or don't like a character. Here are some more specific reasons you might like or not like a character:

You can like a character because you...		You can dislike a character because you...	
admire respect are entertained by ....their personality, values or actions	empathise with understand relate to can connect with ....their situation, motivations or interactions with others	are irritated by disagree with are disgusted by are bored by ....their personality, values or actions	don't understand are confused by don't sympathise with... ....their situation, motivations or interactions with others

Put it into practice

The table below will help you make notes about characters as you look at a text for the first time. Here are some more details on how to fill it out:

- **Character actions and personality traits:**
  In these columns, put examples of things a character does and words to describe what they're like. For the main characters in a text, try to write at least 3–4 things in each of these columns. For minor characters, you only need to write 1–2 things.
- **Your initial opinion about the character:**
  Refer to the list of specific reasons why you might like or dislike characters from above to help with the third column.
- **Reasons why you would or wouldn't act the same way as this character:**
  It's really common to compare a character to yourself. Sometimes you like a character because you are like them or wish that you could behave or look like them. You might dislike a character because you would never act as they do or because they represent things that you don't like about yourself.

Study alert:

Download digital copy of the table from: www.tickingmind.com.au/tables

Character name	Character actions	Character personality traits	Your initial opinion about the character	Reasons why you would or wouldn't act the same way as this character

Making notes about techniques

As well as thinking about the characters and what they do, you will have some initial reactions to the way a text is constructed. Below is a chart of different ways you might think about or react to the construction of a text.

Techniques	Things to consider
Narrative voice	• Did you find the text easy to read, or was it written in a complicated style? • Did you like the style of this text? • Were the sentences too long to make sense of? • Did this text have a style that you liked or didn't like? • Did you find the events fast-paced or too slow?
Relevance of topic or ideas	• Do you think the ideas in the text were relevant to today's world? • Did this text contain ideas that were important to you? • Although the ideas in the text might be important to some people, did you think that they weren't important in your life? • Were the ideas in the text really only important to people of a different class, gender or ethnicity?
Characterisation	• Were most of the characters of an ethnicity or gender that you couldn't relate to? • Were the characters presented in a stereotypical way? • Did you like the way the characters looked? • Did you think the text could have been improved if the characters were presented in a different way? • Did the characters represent a society that you know and are familiar with?
Plot structure	• Could you follow the plot easily? • Did you understand what was happening when you were experiencing the text for the first time? • Did the plot jump around in a way that you found confusing? • Do you like having to 'figure out' what is happening? • Was the plot chronological, circular or episodic and what did you like or dislike about this?
Ending	• Did you think the ending was fair? • Did the ending make sense to you? • Were you left with questions at the end of the text? • Would you have preferred a different type of ending?

Put it into practice

Using the questions in the table above as a guide, write a sentence or two about your opinion of each text element.

Making notes about poetry

Reading poetry can be tricky, so your first thoughts about poetry might reflect your confusion.

Sometimes this confusion might mean that your initial thoughts and feelings are "I hate this" or "this is stupid". Although these are valid thoughts, they're not very specific or insightful. The table below has phrases to help you express yourself in a way that is more appropriate for a personal essay.

You can like a poem because it...	You can dislike a poem because it...
makes you think about ideas in a new way has interesting words and phrases creates pictures in your head about… is short has feelings you can understand or empathise with	has sentence fragments that at first don't make sense has complicated words that you are unfamiliar with is not the kind of text you would normally read is about feelings or experiences that you don't have

Put it into practice

Make notes about your initial response to each poem in the table below. Use the phrases above to help express your specific thoughts.

Name of poem	What did the poem seem to be about?	Your initial opinion about the poem

Study alert:

Download digital copy of the table from: www.tickingmind.com.au/tables

Introductions

In a personal text response, you are both analysing the text *and* analysing your own response to it. This means that just like any text analysis, the introduction to your personal text response should address the topic itself. However, because this is a *personal* response to the text, you should also include references to your own opinions and explain how or why you think you have these opinions.

To help you address the topic you can use the brainstorming activities and ideas from pages 11-15.

Let's have a look at two examples that do this.

It is Lisa who is the real hero of the film. **Do you agree?**	
Although Hitchcock's 1954 film, *Rear Window*, focuses mostly upon the actions and thoughts of Jeffries, it is easy for the modern and careful viewer to see **that** it is Lisa who is the real hero of the film. As I get older, I have realised that I should look beyond the spotlight that is given to men's thoughts to what it is that women are doing. In *Rear Window*, Lisa is doing almost everything. Although she doesn't look like how I think a traditional hero should look – with big muscles and a raspy deep voice – she is the only character who thinks critically and acts bravely.	response to topic reference to personal understanding of the topic
***Frankenstein* is still as relevant today as when it was written.** **Do you agree?**	
Reading *Frankenstein* in the 21st Century, when the world is dominated by science and innovation, I found Shelley's novel had important things to say about how we approach our lives in a technological age. On the surface, the most relevant connection between the novel and our times would seem to be its focus on Frankenstein's unethical approach to science and the destruction that can stem from this. However, for me, the most relevant thing the novel has to say about our own modern world is the danger of isolation. Through the tragic demise of both Frankenstein and his creature, Shelley demonstrates that when the individual is isolated from community and friends, they are dehumanised and ultimately destroyed.	

Put it into practice

Use page 16 to help you write an introduction that responds to the topic. To help you analyse your own personal response to the text, use the phrases from the table below.

Phrases to introduce your own response	Phrases to contextualise your response
as I have matured	in the 21st Century
I have come to realise	our world is dominated by
my preference for	we are fascinated by
how I think	in this technological age
for me	for the modern viewer
to me	in the urban/rural world, I am familiar with
I found	our own world
I am used to	
I prefer	

Body paragraphs

Body paragraphs of a personal text response need to have topic sentences, analysis of evidence, links and synthesising sentences just like a regular text response.

In addition to these things, they also need to include personal perspectives of the ideas you are discussing.

In the two example body paragraphs below, the personal perspectives have been put in red.

Frankenstein is still as relevant today as when it was written. Do you agree?

For me, one of the most powerful ways *Frankenstein* connects to the modern world is through Shelley's depiction of the destructive way Frankenstein isolates himself from other people. From the outset of the novel, Frankenstein is intent on pursuing his scientific dream of unlocking "the secrets of heaven and earth" – not with others, but on his own. As he becomes engrossed with his studies at university, he also becomes "insensible to the charms of nature", breaks off communication with his family and isolates himself in his laboratory. The "dreary" night on which his creature comes "alive" and the season of autumn in which it happens are both symbols of the extent to which his own life is dying while he tries to create new life. When Frankenstein mentally breaks down at the "horror" he has created, I felt this was a symbol of the "horror" any of us might feel in our own century at the realisation that we've shut ourselves off from the real world, connecting to it only through the internet. Through the sickness that Frankenstein subsequently suffers after creating his creature, Shelley demonstrates to me the very real dangers we face today from isolation leading to physical and mental destruction.

It is Lisa who is the real hero of the film. Do you agree?

When I was growing up, my idea of a hero was someone who looked like Christian Bale in *Batman*. A hero was a man with huge muscles, a deep raspy voice and lots of action moves. So a character like Lisa Fremont challenged my picture of what a hero can be. From the first moment we see her – in extreme close-up and framed with a halo of light – Lisa looks like the love interest: a beautiful woman who cares more about clothes and makeup than saving the world. However, as the film evolves, I was forced to confront my own prejudicial stereotypes about beautiful women and what they are capable of. Although Lisa doesn't "wear the same dress twice", she is still able to climb the fire escape in high heels and frilly petticoats and find important evidence to implicate Thorwald. Furthermore, it is her knowledge of clothing and accessories that demonstrates how logically and critically she thinks when she challenges Doyle about "the trunk and the jewellery". Although Lisa doesn't look like the stereotypical champions I tend to think of, throughout the film, her actions and thoughts are those of a hero.

Put it into practice

Write a personal text response paragraph. Refer to page 28 to help you insert and analyse evidence as well as page 40 to help you discuss specific types of texts (i.e. films, novels, plays, poetry, etc). The table below includes a range of phrases you can use to discuss your own personal perspective about ideas in your body paragraph.

Ideas you have before you read a text	The way your ideas can be changed as you engage with a text	The things a text can personally show you
before reading/watching the text...	as I listened to the views of others,	the character of...
when I was growing up...	as I became more familiar with the text,	the scene where...
my idea of...	when I looked beyond...,	the moment when...
my sense of...	while studying this text,	the symbol of...
my understanding of...	by shifting my focus from...to...,	[text name]...
my picture of...	when I discussed the text with others,	[author name]...
the usual way I thought about...	looking more closely at the text...,	underscored to me the...
I have usually thought that...	rewatching the scene when...,	represented for me the...
it's important to me that...	I was confronted by...	demonstrated to me that...
my experience of the world has taught me that...	I could see...	reflected my own...
I have always believed in the importance of...	I realised...	changed the way I...
I have always preferred to read...	I felt that...	challenged my...
my favourite thing to watch has always been...	I sympathised with...	now appears to me as...
I have never liked reading...	I connected to...	cemented my initial feeling that...
when I first read/watched the text...	I understood...	deepened my first reaction...
on the surface, ... at first seemed to me to...	I was appalled by...	seems to me to be a symbol of...
my initial response to...was...	I was critical of...	

Conclusions

The conclusion of a personal response to a text should be short and do three things:

- provide a personal response to (or answer) the topic
- summarise the main arguments or complications of the topic
- explain your interpretation of the topic.

Either your response to the topic or your interpretation of the topic should be the first sentence.

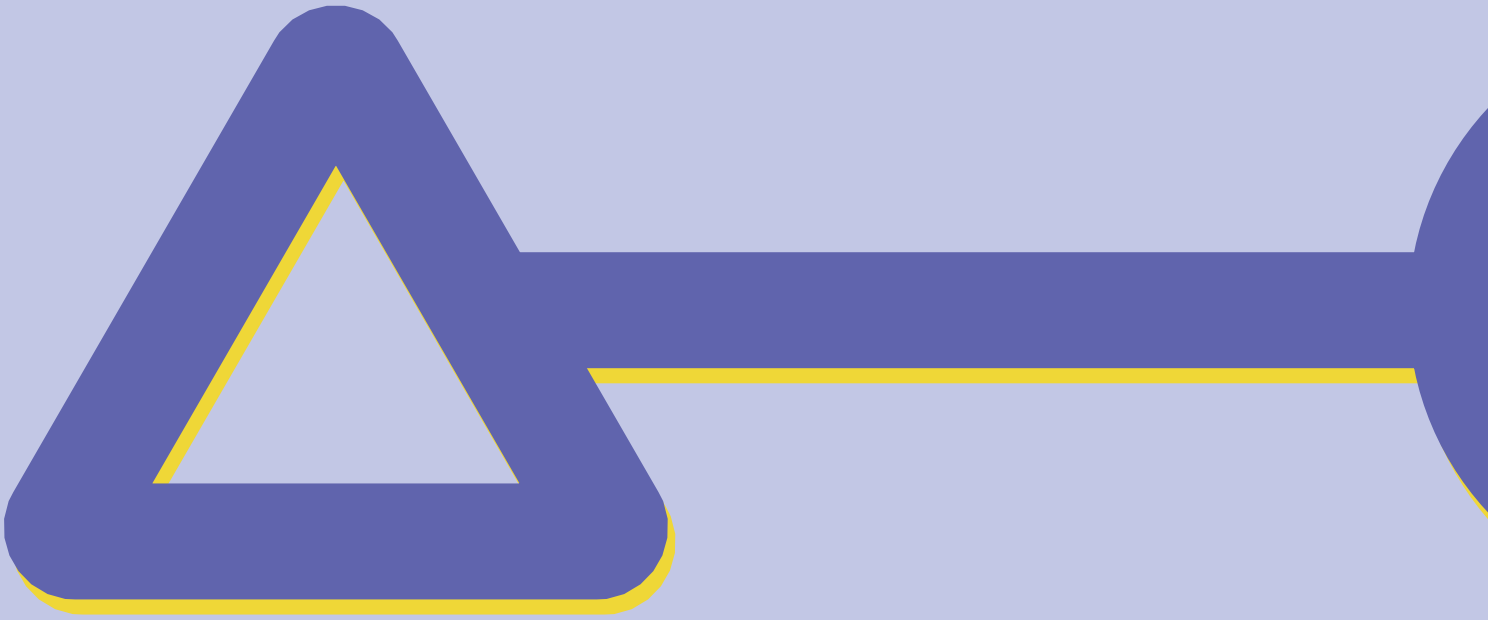
Let's have a look at two different examples of conclusions:

It is Lisa who is the real hero of the film. Do you agree?	
I have always thought that a hero is someone who is able to think and act bravely and is the character who drives most of the action in a text. While Hitchcock's leading lady doesn't look much like a hero, it is Lisa who leads the action and is thoughtful, critical and courageous. In comparison, the protagonist of the film, Jeffries, sits around all day judging people and getting others to do the hard work for him. That's why – for me – Lisa is the real hero of *Rear Window*.	direct response to the topic summary of main complications of the topic
***Frankenstein* is still as relevant today as when it was written. Do you agree?**	
Although the prose style of Shelley was difficult and old-fashioned for me to read, ultimately I found *Frankenstein* was a story that is as much about our times as Shelley's. Her alarm about science represented our older generation's fears of technology, but I felt that the most important aspect of her novel was Frankenstein's self-destructive arrogance and isolationism. This was almost a parable of the experiences people have today when we rely more on the internet than connecting to actual people around us. In the end, Shelley's novel tells us that we need to consider our responsibilities to others, not just our own selfish desires.	interpretation of the message/ meaning of the topic

→ Once again, in order to link to the essay topic, you will use the words and phrases you brainstormed in your planning process. You can use the table below for other phrases that will help you write your conclusions.

Phrases to summarise the complications	Phrases to introduce your interpretation
the most important aspect while….it is… while at first it seems… in comparison represented not just is as much about…as	for me I have always thought I felt I found people have today around us we should/need to

Listening Task



In this section, we'll be referring to two types of texts:

Main text:

This is the novel, film, play, poem, short story or memoir you are studying.

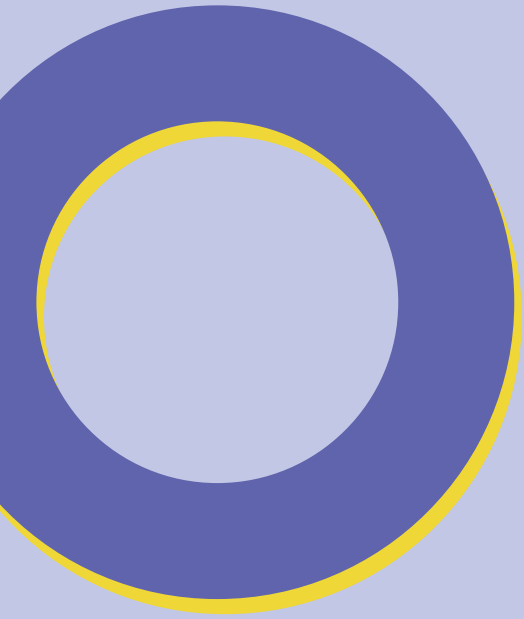
Listening text:

This is the short audio or video text that will provide information about the main text.

During your text analysis unit, you will be required to complete tasks in response to a listening text. These tasks will include:

1. Taking notes about the listening text
2. Answering questions about the listening text

These two tasks are designed to help you understand and analyse the main text of the unit.



Take notes

In order to take notes efficiently and quickly, you'll need to have some strategies. Since taking good notes is about noticing the most important information that you hear, one effective strategy is to read the questions you have been given first. This will help you understand what you need to listen for.

Another strategy is to use abbreviations as you take notes. By using abbreviations, you'll be able to take notes more efficiently. Here are some common abbreviations you can use:

List of common abbreviations for note-taking	
b/c	because
ea	each
eg	example
ie	that is, that means, in other words
imp	important
sim	similar
w/	with
w/o	without
+	and, also, in addition
↑	increase (two arrows for rapid or great increase)
→	leads to, causes

Organise your note-taking

When you begin to take notes of the listening text, you will notice that it's really hard to keep listening and not get distracted. To remain focused while listening, it's helpful to use a table that makes you write something down a couple of times each minute, like the one below:

Time	What is being said
0.30	
1.00	
1.30	
2.00	
2.30	
3.00	
3.30	
4.00	
4.30	
5.00	
5.30	
6.00	

On the next couple of pages are an example transcript of a listening text and the notes a student took.

This is an extract from a podcast called *Out of the Darkness – a forgotten history of Indigenous Australians.* Students who are studying the film *High Ground* might listen to a text like this.

Roper River Mission – A Dark History of 'Protection'

A mission was a place white settlers set up in the areas they colonised. It involved setting aside some land and forcing Indigenous people to live there. Usually, schools, churches and basic housing was built on a mission.

Early in the 20th Century, five missions were established in the Northern Territory. These missions were designed to 'protect' Indigenous Australians, although there was really no official explanation of what they needed protection from. Unofficially, of course, white community leaders felt that Indigenous Australians needed to be protected from themselves. There was the sense that Indigenous people were uncivilised 'savages' who needed to become a part of the white Australian community.

Missions were often set up and run by church organisations and Roper River Mission was no different. This mission was supposed to bring the teachings of the Christian church to Indigenous people so that they could become 'civilised'. What this actually meant was that young children were taken from their families, given a very basic education and trained to do menial work. Indigenous children were being brought up to be servants for white people. Boys were trained in basic gardening and carpentry and girls were trained to do housework.

These children were removed from their own culture and only taught the basics of a white, European culture. They were not taught to be equals or taught to think for themselves: they were taught that they were inferior and their own culture and people was worthless. They were taught to become reliant upon white Australians.

Of course, many of the missionaries really did think that they were protecting Indigenous people. At the time, it was a common practice for white settlers to murder Indigenous people who lived on land that they wanted for their own purposes. It did not matter if these Indigenous people were men, women or children – no one was spared in these massacres. By providing missions for Indigenous people to live on, missionaries were protecting them from slaughter, but at the cost of their traditional way of living. Indigenous Australians were refugees in their own land.

Time	What is being said
0.30	– Missions = Indigenous ppl forced to live – set up by white ppl
1.00	– 1900s: 5 missions in NT – missions for protection (protection?? why??) – white ppl thought Indig. ppl=savages
1.30	– Roper River Mission (HG mission) – run by church – children > servants
2.00	– white culture taught – Indig. culture bad
2.30	– missionaries protecting Indig. ppl from massacres – white settlers murderers

Take notes for interviews

You might be asked to listen to an interview.

If you are listening to an interview, you could take notes in a format like the one below:

Question	Response

Questions

In the listening task, you'll be required to answer a set of questions.

These questions will ask you to:

- identify key information
- show understanding of particular words and phrases
- show understanding of how speakers deliver information
- link information in the listening text to the text you are analysing.

Example listening tasks at the beginning of a unit

Your teacher might do a listening task at the beginning of a unit in order to give you important information about the main text before you study it. The questions below are examples of ones you might do for the listening text *Roper River Mission – A Dark History of 'Protection'*. This text gives information about the historical setting of the film *High Ground*.

Identify questions

'Identify' tasks will ask you to list information, fill in tables, identify facts or respond to the question 'What was…?'.

Here are some examples:

a) According to the listening text, what was the real reason missions were set up in the Northern Territory?

b) Identify one way that missionaries thought their missions could actually protect Indigenous people.

c) In the table below, list one thing missions were *supposed* to teach Indigenous children and one thing they *actually* taught Indigenous children.

What missions were supposed to teach	What missions actually taught

Put it into practice

Use these phrases to help you answer identify questions:

- One example of…
- [Speaker name] says one reason for…is…
- [Speaker name] asserts that…
- [Speaker name] says that…

Questions about meaning

When you're asked to show understanding of words and phrases, you'll be asked to define what a word or phrase means in the context of the listening text.

> What does this listening text mean when it says Indigenous children were given "menial work"?
>
> The listening text says that Indigenous people were "not taught to be equals". Give an example of how they were not taught to be equals.

Put it into practice

Use these phrases to help you answer questions about meaning:

- The phrase...means that...
- When [Speaker name] says...she/he means that...
- An example of what...means is...
- By saying..., [Speaker name] means...

Questions about delivery

Another type of task you'll be required to do is to show your understanding of how someone is speaking to achieve a purpose. Usually, the purpose of the texts you'll be listening to will be to *explain* or *inform*.

Here's a typical task you might be given:

> The text wants its listeners to understand the racist history of missionaries. Explain how it tries to achieve this purpose. Use examples to support your answer.

Put it into practice

Use these phrases to help you answer questions about delivery:

- One way...
- One method...
- A technique the [Speaker name] employs...
- [Speaker name] employs words like "..." in order to...
- The speaker emphasises...
- The speaker engages the listener by...
- The speaker helps the listener to understand the information more easily by...

Example listening tasks during a unit

Instead of doing a listening task at the start of the unit, you might do it during a unit when you've had time to study the main text and already know something about it. Your teacher might do the listening task here so you can use information from a listening text to extend your understanding of the main text.

Identify information and link to main text

For this type of listening task, you'll be asked to identify information from a listening text and link it to what you already know about the main text.

Here are some examples:

a) The listening text indicates that Indigenous people were treated as inferiors at missions. Identify two ways Indigenous people were treated as inferiors.

b) Give three examples of the ways Gutjuk is treated like this at the mission in *High Ground*.

a) The listening text says that Indigenous Australians were "refugees" in their own land. What does the listening text mean by this?

b) Give one example of how *High Ground* shows that Indigenous Australians are refugees?

Put it into practice

Use these phrases to help you link information to a main text:

- One example of... in [main text name] is when...
- One way the [main text name] demonstrates...is when...
- [Main text name] shows how...when...

Creating Texts

In this area of study, you get to creatively present your thoughts about an idea in any kind of text you like. The process of crafting your pieces will include coming up with a specific idea to write about; considering how you'll write about it and who your audience is; drafting and producing your creative pieces; and writing a commentary reflecting on the process of crafting each of your pieces.

This chapter will show you strategies you can use at each stage of the creating texts process.

1. Think about idea and purpose

At the beginning of the writing process, you'll need to consider a big idea and how you might write about it.

This section will show you how to:

- Have a purpose for your writing
- Break the big idea into smaller ideas that are easier to write about
- Have some initial thoughts or arguments

2. Consider mentor texts

Other texts will show you different ways to write about or think about the big idea.

This section will show you how to:

- Use mentor texts
- Identify the idea in mentor texts
- Identify purpose in mentor texts
- Take notes on mentor texts
- Refine and develop your ideas

3. Craft your writing

Good writers experiment with different ways of writing.

This section will show you how to:

- Identify audience and context
- Edit and refine your work
- Write openings
- Write bodies:
  - Overall structure
  - Write whole body paragraphs
  - Body techniques
- Write closings

4. Reflect upon the writing process

Finally, you need to reflect on the writing process and explain your authorial decisions. This section will explain how to do this.

Idea and purpose

Throughout this Area of Study, you will be investigating one big idea and writing about it. Before you start thinking about the big idea, you need to know *why* you're thinking about the big idea. You're thinking about the big idea in order to produce two pieces of writing. These two pieces should be written with a specific purpose in mind.

This section will show you three things you can do at the beginning of the unit to think about idea and purpose:

→ Have a purpose for your writing.

→ Break the big idea into smaller ideas that are easier to write about.

→ Have some initial thoughts or arguments.

Purpose

A specific purpose doesn't mean something general like this:

I'm going to write a short story about play.

I'm going to write a blog about my favourite place in the country.

A specific purpose means stating how you are going to write about a particular aspect of a big idea.

Here's a good example:

I'm going to write a reflection discussing how the isolation of the landscape I grew up in represented my emotional isolation.

There are four different purposes that you can choose from:

- **Express:** to show what an idea looks, sounds or feels like
- **Explain:** to provide information that highlights important aspects of an idea
- **Reflect:** to discuss different aspects of an idea through personal experience or understanding
- **Argue:** to present a point of view about what people should think or do in response to an idea

It is important to realise that to achieve a specific purpose you can use both creative *fiction* forms (such as short stories), as well as creative *non-fiction* or factual forms (such as feature articles, blogs, recounts and biographies).

Later in this chapter, you will come across examples and strategies of how to write for different purposes in fiction and non-fiction forms.

Break the big idea into smaller ideas

The big idea you will be looking at will be very big. It's so big that it would be difficult to write about every aspect of it. Instead, you need to think about how you can break this idea into smaller and more manageable ideas like this:

Other words for big idea	What are alternative words you could use to think of this idea?
What examples are there of this idea being...	positive or negative? shared or individual? in the virtual or physical world? physical or emotional? real or imagined?
What is your personal experience?	Have you ever experienced this idea, or can you think of someone who has?
How has it changed?	Throughout history, have people changed the way they think about or experience this idea?
How does it affect people differently?	Are some groups of people likely to experience this idea differently because of who they are or because they belong to a certain cultural or physical group?
What opinions do people have about it?	What different opinions are there about this idea or the people who represent this idea?

Over the next few pages are a series of questions that can help you understand the different ways to think about specific big ideas.

Idea	Other words for big idea	What examples are there of...	What is your personal experience?
Country	atmosphere environment home landscape nation nature place world	...country being... real or imaginary? rural or city? natural or built? beautiful or horrifying? inclusive or alienating? threatening or comforting? strange or familiar? free or controlled?	• Do you have a favourite part of the country? • How do you feel about being in nature? • Has your landscape influenced how you see the wider world?
Protest	advocacy challenge confrontation dissent resistance social justice struggle	...protest being... peaceful or violent? individual or collective? historical or contemporary? online or in-person? successful or failed? to advocate or resist? public or private?	• Have you ever protested about anything? • What makes you angry about the world at the moment? • Who or what do you think it's important to stand up for?
Personal Journeys	change development experience learning growing transition turning point quest	...journeys being... personal or someone else's? celebrated or ignored? physical or emotional? forced or chosen? an escape or an exploration? a turning point or a continuation? successful or unsuccessful?	• What is a significant turning point for you in your life? • Who do you admire for the way they have lived their life? • How would you like your life to change in the future? • What stories have you heard about your own or others' formative experiences?
Play	acting fantasy games make-believe performance sport	...play being... solitary or collaborative? digital or physical? imaginative or boring? inventive or formulaic? rule-based or rule-breaking? competitive or amusing?	• What do you like to do for relaxation and play? • How do your friends or family use their leisure time? • How did you play when you were a kid?

How has it changed?	How does it affect people differently?	What opinions do people have about it?
• How has climate change altered the country? • How do people change the landscape? • Once, there was no 'Australia'; how does our understanding of a nation change?	• Who is in control of the countryside? • Who has lost control? • Do young people have as much say as older people? • Who can afford to own land? • How do people create their own landscape?	• How do people feel about the landscape? • Do people want the landscape to change? • Do people have different ideas about how the land can be managed? • Is there a particular part of the landscape people are concerned about?
What did protest look like for: • suffragettes • the Australian and American civil rights movements • environment • before and after social media?	Who is more likely to: • want to protest • object to protestors • be listened to?	What opinions do people have about: • peaceful vs. violent protest • marching in the street • hunger strikes • wearing certain clothes • writing letters • expressions of anger • cancel culture?
• In the past, did people have the opportunity to develop themselves as much as now? • Do we think differently about personal development now, compared with in the past? • How has the internet shaped the way we develop?	Are some people: • more likely to be able to journey • forced to journey • prevented from journeying or developing?	How do different groups of people: • react to others changing • think about the importance of developing?
• How did people play in the past (also think about whether some groups of disadvantaged people had time to play)? • What kinds of play were more important for your parents, grandparents, great-grandparents…?	• Does everyone have time for play? • Does everyone have the same access to opportunities for play? Do… • women and men • children • different cultural groups …play differently?	Do people think: • play is important • some kinds of play are better than others • some kinds of play are harmful?

Idea	Other words for big idea	What examples are there of...	What is your personal experience?
Influences	inspiration pressure leaders guidance authority ambition role models	...influences being... real or imagined? positive or negative? virtual or known personally? from your past or present life? strong or weak? person or trend, or cultural force?	• Is there someone who is a big influence in your life? • Does a celebrity or online person inspire you? • Is there a trend in society that has shaped you? • Do you know someone who has had a negative influence on your life? • What do you aspire to become?
Other worlds	foreign countries different landscapes fantasy different cultures alien worlds	...other worlds being... exciting or frightening? real or imagined? possible or impossible? exotic or boring? appealing or unappealing?	• Have you ever travelled to somewhere that feels completely unfamiliar to you? • Do you imagine fantasy or alien worlds? • Do you watch or read about other worlds or different cultures? • Do you feel like you belong in the culture you live in? • Do you know people who seem to live in a completely different world to you?
Resilience	strength recovery hardiness adaptability rebounding stoicism endurance capability	...resilience being... personal or someone else's? celebrated or ignored? physical or emotional? forced or chosen? a turning point or a continuation? achievable or hopeless?	• When have you felt or demonstrated resilience? • What helps you be resilient? • Who do you admire for their resilience? • In the future, when do you think you will need to be resilient? • Is there something that you find hard to be resilient about?
Power and prejudice	bias bigotry dominance pre-eminence authority control chauvinism discrimination xenophobia privilege	...power and prejudice being... solitary or collaborative? digital or physical? personal or directed against a group? conscious or unconscious? accepted or challenged?	• Have you ever felt discriminated against? • Have you ever discriminated against someone else? • Do you have friends of different genders, abilities or ethnicities? • How do your friends or family members speak about people of different genders, classes, ethnicities or abilities? • How have you seen people exercise power over others?

How has it changed?	How does it affect people differently?	What opinions do people have about it?
• Are we influenced more by famous people than we used to be? • Do people feel more pressure to be 'perfect' than they used to? • Do public institutions have less influence over us than they used to?	• What sorts of people are more likely to influence us – are they more likely to be rich, white, lead a certain lifestyle…? • Are some people more susceptible to being influenced by others?	What opinions do people have about: • celebrity influencers • public institutions (schools, churches, charities, government) • community leaders • sporting leaders • fictional inspiration • 'good' trends or 'bad' trends?
• Have our attitudes to different cultures changed? • Are we more interested in dystopian worlds than we used to be? • Do TV programs and books show us a greater or reduced range of other worlds? • Has the world become less diverse and created fewer truly exotic places?	• How are different genders treated in different worlds? • Are people of different ages treated differently in other places? • Do some people have more opportunities to travel to other worlds? • Are some people forced into new cultures?	What opinions are there about: • people with different ideas • fantasy and role play • different cultures • travel • the difference between the real world and dystopia?
In the past, did people have to be: • more resilient to hardship than they do now? • have a greater mental resilience? • have a greater physical resistance? • just as resilient as they are now?	Are some people: • in a better position to be resilient • supported in a way that helps with resilience • so broken that they cannot be resilient • forced to endure more because of their gender, class, ethnicity or abilities?	What opinions do people have about: • their own resilience • the resilience of younger people • the endurance of refugees • the stoicism of sportspeople • the resilience of people with different abilities?
Over the years, how have these people had power, or been discriminated against: • men • women • other genders • people in the LGBTIQ+ community • people of colour • upper classes • lower classes • different cultural groups • people with a disability?	• Does everyone have equal opportunities for jobs and education? • Does everyone have the same access to leisure and play? • Can everyone find a partner or friends equally? • Do we see different people represented online and in the media?	What opinions do people have about: • their own prejudices • whether groups of people 'deserve' to be prejudiced against • the difference between different genders • whether they would be willing to give something up for a person who is discriminated against?

Put it into practice

Now you've done some initial thinking about different aspects of a big idea, you can also consider whether you have some first thoughts about ideas to write about and how you might write about them. These steps will help you pinpoint possible ideas to write about:

1. Look through the first column of the table below. Did you think about any of these things as you read the questions in the question grid?
2. Look at the second and third columns of the table. What purpose and text type might you use to explore an aspect of an idea?

As you looked at the questions, did you think...	This means you could do some writing that...	To achieve this purpose, you could write a...
• I have a story or experience to share about this • I can imagine a story or experience about this	**expresses** what an aspect of the idea looks, sounds or feels like through a story	• fictional story • recount of a personal experience • biography of someone else's story or experience
• I'd like to find out more about this question • I know some interesting or important facts to answer this question	provides information that highlights and **explains** important aspects of an idea	• feature article • single podcast from a series • blog on a website about this idea
• I have conflicted feelings about this question • I have more questions	**reflects** on and discusses different aspects of an idea through personal experience or understanding	• reflective blog • personal essay • reflective letter to someone
• I have an opinion about this	**argues** what people should think or do in response to an idea	• persuasive speech • community blog • persuasive letter to someone

It's a good strategy to keep notes about the ideas you come up with for your writing. That way you don't forget them, and you can return to the ideas and refine them later on. When you take notes about your ideas, try and add as much detail as you can about the possible purpose of your writing and a specific aspect of an idea you might explore.

Here are some examples:

I could write a recount about my personal experience being in a climate change rally expressing how powerful a group protest can feel when you're working together.

I could write a biography about my grandmother's migration to Australia from Vietnam and express the alienation and homesickness she initially felt.

I could write a feature article about how board games became really popular during lockdown and explain the social benefits of this.

Mentor texts

In this Area of Study, you will be asked to read and listen to 'Mentor Texts'. These texts aren't supposed to help you come up with life goals (they're not that sort of mentor); they're chosen to help you see the different ways that your big idea can be thought about and written about. You will read or listen to at least three different texts (and your teacher might bring in even more). None of these texts will be particularly long. They are chosen to be read or listened to in less than twenty minutes, so you should *definitely* read them more than once.

The role of mentor texts

Because mentor texts are short, they will help you to understand how you can create your own short text in response to your big idea. Of course, no text can tell you everything about the big idea, they will instead show different or smaller aspects of the big idea and they might even show you a surprising or unexpected aspect of the big idea.

When you read or listen to a mentor text, you should take notes about a number of things:

- What aspect of the big idea is this text concerned with?
- What is the purpose of this mentor text?
- What techniques or stylistic devices is this mentor text using?
- Is there anything in this mentor text that inspires you to do something similar (or completely different)?

Identify the idea in mentor texts

It's not enough for you just to say, "this text is about *play*," or "this text is writing about *power and prejudice*". You need to be more specific, and doing so will help you to become more specific in your own writing. So, try to use a phrase to label the exact aspect of an idea that is being presented, as the examples do:

> *This speech is about the **problematic nature of a Welcome to Country**, and Kennedy is pointing out that a welcome requires reciprocity and a response.*
>
> *This short story is about the **competitive nature of play and how play** is so often a contest of skill and strategy.*

Identify purpose in mentor texts

Once you have identified the main idea of the mentor text, you should think about its purpose – that is, why was it written (or spoken) in the first place? At the beginning of this chapter, we pointed out that there are four main purposes of a text, but as you read or listen to your mentor text, you might think:

> *"This text is **reflecting** on the speaker's experience AND **explaining** how things could be done better."*

OR

> *"This text is **expressing** a story AND **reflecting** on the competitive nature of play."*

Take notes on mentor texts

Mentor texts will be really helpful for showing you different ways of writing about the big idea you are studying. Although you won't want to write a text that is exactly like a mentor text, you might like some of the strategies a mentor text uses, such as descriptive words, humour or repetition. Then you could think about how to use them in your writing. So, you should read or listen to a mentor text closely and take careful notes about how the text works.

Put it into practice

To help you take detailed notes, use the table opposite to note down what the mentor text does and how you might use this in your own writing. The dot points are a guide only. Take notes about anything that interests you as you read or watch the text. In the column labelled 'Your own thoughts', you might like to take notes about:

- words or phrases you could use in your writing
- ideas you could adapt
- techniques you might like to use
- techniques you found boring and want to avoid
- descriptions that inspire you
- ideas you would like to argue with.

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	Notes about what the text does	Your own thoughts
Vocabulary: What interesting words were used to label, explain or discuss the idea?		
What did the opening do to engage you with the idea? • describe the idea • create a picture • address the audience		
What did the body do to help you understand how ideas, events or information are connected? • divide information or events into logical chunks or steps • use linking words and phrases to connect information or events		
What did the text focus on to explore an aspect of an idea? • events • people • feelings • interactions • objects • sensory information		
What techniques did the text use to present the idea in an interesting way? • evidence • similes • short sentences • repetition • questions		
What did the closing do to leave you with a key understanding of an idea? • provide a takeaway message • focus on a key feeling		

Refine and develop your ideas

After you've looked at how a mentor text presents an idea, you should then consider your thoughts about what you will write about.

This might involve:

→ refining or changing your purpose

→ thinking about how you might use ideas or techniques from a mentor text

→ thinking about how you might use any other idea or techniques that have occurred to you.

Put it into practice

Create a document where you can list and organise notes for each of your pieces. At this stage, this document shouldn't be structured like a plan, but as a place for keeping track of and refining ideas for your writing. The example table below shows how you can organise your notes:

Purpose:

I'm going to explain how the daily journey to and from school is important and reflect on the different ways it's changed my life

Ideas to write about	Techniques to use
• *The bond that develops with friends when you go to and from school with them* • *Discuss the importance of school trip routines (e.g. going to fish and chip place Friday after school)* • *The impact of losing school trip time during COVID lockdown*	• *Opening funny anecdote* • *Simile comparing trips to school to hordes of animals*

Craft your writing

So far, you've thought about the big idea you are studying and have narrowed it down to a smaller, more specific idea to write about. Although you might choose to write a creative story, that's only one kind of writing. Most of the writing that you read every day is actually non-fiction and is written to explain ideas, provide news, argue about the best way to do things or reflect upon important issues or feelings. For this area of study, you might choose to write one creative piece of fiction and one piece of non-fiction. Of course, you could write two pieces of non-fiction or (if you're a really good writer) two completely different pieces of fiction.

No matter whether you're writing fiction or non-fiction, you'll need to follow these three steps:

1. Think about where your piece will be published and who the audience is.
2. Identify strategies to use in your opening, body and closing to achieve your purpose and engage your audience.
3. Produce a detailed plan for your piece and write it.

Identify the context and audience of your piece

Each of your pieces of writing needs to have a context – a place where it would (theoretically) be published in the real world (not just for a school assignment) and be read or listened to by a real audience.

To help you identify the context and audience of your piece, there is a table on the next four pages with some detailed options. Please be aware that these are not the only options, it's just a helpful start. If this table makes you think of a different option, discuss it with your teacher for more advice.

This table will help you identify contexts audiences for the purposes of *express*, *explain* or *reflect*.

If you are writing to *argue*, refer to the '<u>Persuasive Writing and Presenting</u>' chapter for ideas.

Form, audience and context

Text form and purpose it supports	Audience and context	Authorial decisions
Letter/email Generally, letters are used to *express* feelings and experiences from your personal life, but they can also be used to help you *reflect* on what you have learned about your feelings and ideas. Sometimes, letters are used to *argue* for change.	Reflective or expressive letters will be personal in nature. This means your audience would be a person you know and have a personal relationship with, such as a good friend or relative who lives somewhere far away. Writing in this text form means you might write a single letter in response to a letter someone has written to you. You might also write a series of shorter letters. A letter that argues for an idea might be published in a newspaper or magazine.	• Who are you writing to and what is your relationship with this person? • How will you establish a personal tone in your letter that shows the relationship you have with the person you're writing to? • How will you include content that shows the person you're writing to knows who you are and previous experiences you've had?
Personal column/essay A personal column is usually to *reflect* on personal experiences or feelings, but these experiences and feelings can also be a springboard to *argue* or advocate for change.	Most personal columns are written for magazines or newspapers. If you're writing a column for a general circulation newspaper, it might be part of a regular column series about topics of general interest. For example, the columnist might write about: • *The weekend files* (reflecting on things they have done on the weekend) • *What I'm watching* (reflecting on something they're watching on tv) • *Overheard* (reflecting on something they overheard other people saying) You could also write a column for a specific type of magazine – e.g. a food, sport, travel, lifestyle, music or technology magazine. This means you'd be writing a column for a series that is of interest to the magazine's specific audience. For example a series on: • *What cooking has taught me* (from a food magazine) • *Have you tried turning it off and on again?* (from a technology magazine)	• Will your column be for a general circulation newspaper or a specific interest magazine? • What column series will it belong to? • What is this series normally like? What might an audience expect from it (e.g. funny stories, personal stories, honesty)? • How will you show a shared understanding of a feeling or experience with your audience? • What experiences or anecdotes will your audience be able to relate to? • How will you include descriptions that help your audience to understand your feelings and experience?

Text form and purpose it supports	Audience and context	Authorial decisions
Blog A blog can be used to *reflect* upon an idea or experience, *explain* how an idea works or why it's important, or *express* experiences by recounting parts of the author's life.	Blogs are published on a website that is dedicated to a particular idea or interest. Sometimes blogs can focus on giving tips and advice to readers or sometimes they are about sharing and reflecting on the personal story of the blogger. So if you're going to write a blog, consider what type of website it might be on and if it's an advice or reflection-based blog. Here are some examples: • *Waste-free*: a blog for an environmental website that provides tips on reducing the amount of waste you create • *Push-ups suck*: a frank and funny blog on a fitness website reflecting on personal journeys of trying to get fit	• How will you establish the importance of the idea you will be discussing in this blog? • How will you show your audience that this idea is important to them? • What recommendations will you give your readers? • What sort of tone would appeal to your readers (amusing, informative, enthusiastic, sarcastic)?
Feature article Feature articles are used to *explain* ideas and experiences, but they might also *reflect* on how ideas have changed or how experiences are different for different people.	Feature articles are generally published in newspapers and magazines. Often, feature articles are called 'interest' or 'human interest' pieces because they use an interesting story about a person, group or event to tell a bigger story about something like climate change. For example: • The feature article 'The grandmas who are fighting deforestation' can be used to tell a bigger story about more people who became involved in activism. • The feature article 'The one and a bit storey tree house' can be used to tell the story of how books can inspire children to play and imagine.	• How are you focusing on a person, group or event that is interesting or different? • How will you present facts and information in an interesting and engaging way? • How will you explain why these facts and information are important? • How will you show that you are an expert on this topic?

Text form and purpose it supports	Audience and context	Authorial decisions
Podcast Podcasts are mostly used to *explain* ideas and information to people who are interested in them, but part of the explanation might also involve *reflecting* on ideas and experiences.	Podcasts usually aren't produced as a one-off show but as part of a podcast series about a particular topic or area such as history, true crime or popular culture. An audience listens to a podcast series for a few reasons: • they're interested in the topic • they like the tone and style in which a podcast is presented Here are some example series a podcast could belong to: • A mental health podcast series about emotional journeys (example series title: *The blue train*) • A series about protesting against injustices (example series title: *Everyday ways to change the world*) • A series on how to keep fun in your life (example series title: *Why so serious?*) • A nature series on amazing aspects of the country (example series title: *The wonders of everyday nature*)	• What series does your podcast belong to? • What tone or style will your podcast be delivered in? Humorous? Informal? Personal? Fast-paced? • Although you'll be writing your podcast, not recording it, how might you include in your podcast script reference to audio features such as: music to create tone, audio sound bites of interviews/people speaking, sound effects, fade ins and outs?
Short biography Biographies are obviously mostly a way of *expressing* a person's life story, but can also be used to *reflect* what a person shows us about an idea or to *explain* how a person's life is important or significant.	Short biographies can be published as a part of podcast, blog or book anthology. You might write a biography of someone you know, such as parents or grandparents, that belong to a series like: • *The wisdom of nonnas* • *Stories of mothers who shaped the world* You could also write about a well known or overlooked historical figure. Biographies for these types of people could belong in series like this: • *The difference makers* • *Untold stories of heroines of the civil rights movement* • *Forty people you've never heard of who changed the world*	• What type of series might your biography belong to? • Because of the title of the series, what expectations might the audience have about reading this biography? To learn something new or important? To find out something which connects to their own stories? • What information might you include to meet audience expectations?

Text form and purpose it supports	Audience and context	Authorial decisions
Recount/memoir A recount or memoir is a good way of *reflecting* upon things an experience taught you, as well as *expressing* what you have learned and how you feel about it.	A recount or memoir could be written in the form of a letter to someone (see the section on letters above) or as part of a book anthology or as part of a podcast series that focuses on the experiences of children or teenagers: • *Best day ever!* • *Growing up under lockdown in Australia* • *Stories from the anxiety generation* • *The day I decided to...*	• What type of collection might your recount belong to? • Because of the title of the collection, what expectations might the audience have about reading this recount?
Short story A short story is almost always written to *express* what a fictional experience was like for a character, but part of this expression should also be to *reflect* upon what this character's experience shows us about an idea or emotion.	A short story could be written in a particular genre, such as science fiction, horror or fantasy, and appear in an online or book anthology such as: • *Twenty New YA Horror Stories* • *Next Generation Fantasy* If your short story isn't written in any particular genre style, it could be for an anthology or an entry for a short story competition that focuses on a particular idea such as: • *School: the worst days of our lives* • *Tales from suburbia* • *Cosplay: how costumes shape and define us*	• Will your story be written in a particular genre style? • How will you use or subvert genre conventions to meet or challenge the expectations of your audience? • What sorts of things will you describe in detail? • What sorts of characters will be in your story (keep it limited to four or fewer)? • What interactions will your characters have?

Edit and refine your work

No matter what form or purpose you have chosen, you will need to practise writing. Throughout the rest of this chapter, we will show you a range of forms, structures and techniques you can apply to your writing. Some of them will appeal to you, and some of them won't. But an important part of writing is to experiment, draft and re-draft.

This means that throughout the writing process you should:

1. plan your work
2. experiment with different structures and techniques
3. think about which sentences or paragraphs are the best so far
4. re-write your plan to reflect any changes in your thinking
5. get feedback and apply it
6. re-write parts of the piece that need improving.

As you can see, writing effectively is not about just making a plan and sticking to it. The best writers are those who think carefully about what they are doing well and adapt their writing to make sure that they are always writing at their best. Don't just wait until your teacher gives you feedback, but think about the advice that you can get from your peers or other people who might read your work. When you are thinking about your writing, there are some basic strategies you can apply to make sure you are being as critical as possible about what you have written.

On the opposite page are a few editing techniques you can use for your own work, or when you are providing feedback to a peer.

Strategy	How it works
BAR – Bigger, Add, Remove	**A basic way of assessing anything you've written is to ask yourself these three questions:** • What can be *bigger*? What's interesting that I could make more important or emphasise more? • What can I *add*? What is missing? • What can I *remove*? Is there any boring or irrelevant information I can cut out? Every time you use this technique, try to answer two of the questions to change and revise your writing. Be ruthless about cutting boring or irrelevant writing out so that you can put more of the good stuff in.
Read aloud	Good creative writing should have a rhythm and a 'flow'. The length, pace and mood of sentences should help a piece achieve its purpose. When you silently read a piece, you can't always 'hear' what it sounds like. Try reading your writing out loud to a peer or getting a peer to read your work out loud back to you. You can even record yourself reading your own writing and then listen back to it. Think about whether any sentences would sound better if they: • *Were longer or shorter*: Writing can be more interesting when it has a range of different sentence lengths. A long sentence followed by a very short sentence (or vice versa) can add interest. • *Had different punctuation*: When you are reading your piece aloud, you might notice that you naturally break the sentences up differently. Listen to a recording of your piece and try to annotate your writing with the pauses you can hear. • *Used other words*: Think about whether the words you are using are appropriate for the 'vibe' you want your piece to have. For example, are you using very complex words when you are trying to sound casual?
Sentence re-write	Often, people get into the habit of starting sentences in a similar way. Highlight all of the beginnings of your sentences. Identify any sentences you've written that start in the same way and re-write some of them so they start in a completely different and more interesting way.

Openings

No matter what purpose or form you choose, your opening should somehow be engaging. There is a range of different strategies to achieve this in an opening. In this section of the book, we will show you a number of different ways to begin your writing, and show you some of the differences and similarities between these beginnings.

Look through the different strategies here, but be aware that there might be other strategies that you can use – you might read or listen to a mentor text that has a different kind of opening strategy.

Being a good writer is about being able to adapt the ideas and strategies you are aware of.

You might even choose to write an opening that is a *hybrid*, or combination, of some of these strategies.

Describe the setting

By beginning your writing with a description of the setting, you help your reader to imagine the particular environment you are writing about and the sorts of values or beliefs of the people who are in it.

This is an example of an opening to a feature article about the idea of *resilience*. The purpose of the feature article is to *explain* and *express* how a group of older swimmers demonstrate strength in their daily swim:

	Annotations
The thin, early morning sun barely penetrates the clouds and the air has the crisp chill of autumn. Here, on the Altona beach, the water looks grey and uninviting. Standing with the bare feet in the cold shallows is a small group of people. Their skin is goose-pimpled and none of them look like seasoned swimmers, but here, at the edge of the water, they are giggling and shrieking with nervous bravado.	Present tense Gives the specifics of place (Altona beach) Puts people (the focus of the story) within the setting

This is an example of an opening to a short story about the idea of *other worlds*. The purpose of the short story is to *express* the struggle to survive in a dystopian environment:

	Annotations
In front of me, the arena was bare and lifeless. Heat rose from the gravel in stifling waves that distorted the air and made it difficult to see the opposite side. The glare from the gravel made me squint, but when I focused, I could see the dark splotches on the gravel around me. I preferred not to think about those and instead concentrated on the hushed quiet of the crowd all around me. Into this silence, the grinding sound of the gate on the far side targeted everyone's attention.	Multi-sensory (looks like, sounds like, feels like) Overall description of setting and description of specific details The character is less important than the setting

Introduce a person or character

Starting with a short description of a character or group of people works well for pieces that are focusing on the actions of a person or group, such as a feature article, biography or short story.

This is an example of an opening to a short story about the idea of *protest*. The purpose of the short story is to *express* how people can be moved to outrage and then protest:

	Annotations
If you could divide the world into two categories – complainers and non-complainers – then Esme was a non-complainer. She put up with everything. When her older brothers hogged all the chocolate for dessert, she said nothing. If someone rudely shoved past her in a crowd, she shrugged her shoulders. If the teachers at school forgot her name from time to time, she simply accepted it as her fate. On the outside, nothing seemed to ruffle her. But on the inside, something was seething.	Labels a key characteristic of a person Describes a situation that demonstrates a person's defining characteristic Signposts how this characteristic will be important to the story

Personal experience

If you're writing any type of piece that involves personal reflection – such as a reflective column, memoir, letter, reflective blog or podcast – then you might open your piece by retelling how a personal experience led you to consider a big question.

This podcast is on the idea of play. It is the beginning of an episode called "Exercise will kill you" and is part of the podcast series *(Dis)ability – living life differently*. The podcast seeks to *explain* and *reflect* on what life is like for people with disabilities.

	Annotations
There I was, in downward facing dog, breathing deeply and concentrating on the idea of inner peace. Beside me, someone farted gently and I stopped trying to breathe in and instead concentrated on holding my breath. And I wondered what the heck I was trying to prove. I mean, it's hard enough trying to find your zen when you're blind and in a group class, where all around you are the weird sounds of other people's joints cracking and deep breathing, but stewing in someone else's fart juice as well? It's a lot.	Establishes what the narrator was doing A complication or problem that resulted in reflection First person

Action sequence

Action sequences are an engaging way of getting your reader involved from the very beginning of your writing. An action sequence should demonstrate a typical quality of a person or group.

This is the opening to a short story about the idea of *play*. The purpose of the story is *express* how the protagonist's imaginative experience of the world allows her to cope with reality.

	Annotations
Peering cautiously around the bush she is hiding behind, she sees no robbers. Good. The coast is clear. She drags her (motor)bike out from behind the bush, checking to see that the piece of cardboard is still firmly pegged to the prongs of her wheel. She jumps onto the seat of her (motor) bike and pedals furiously away, the cardboard making a satisfying roaring sound as it whips against the spokes of her (motor)bike, sounding like a real-life motorbike.	Opening sentence describes a person and provides a glimpse of action Following sentences provide more details about the person, action and place

This is the opening to a feature article about the idea of *other worlds*. It reports on people who claim to be able to speak with the dead. The purpose of the feature article is to *explain* how people feel there are other, spiritual worlds, even if the facts don't support this.

	Annotations
The medium, Tanya, lights a candle, closes her eyes and begins her chant, "Erath, come, Erath come – let me speak to the other world". In a circle around her sit five middle-aged men and women who all look like they have just come from the office or dropped their teenage children off at piano lessons. They hold hands and look at her intently. There is not a hint of a smirk or smile. It's clear they all think they are about to commune with spirits.	Opening sentence describes a person and provides a glimpse of action Following sentences provide more details about the situation

Statement of belief

Starting with a statement of belief works well in reflective columns or blogs, first-person narrated stories or podcasts where a person is explaining something they have learnt.

This is an example of a recount about the idea of *journeys*. The purpose of the recount is to *reflect* on the writer's realisation that it's important to arrive somewhere on a journey.

	Annotations
You know the saying 'it doesn't matter about the destination, it's the journey that's important'? People say it all the time, usually when you've got lost as hell and you want to make everyone feel okay – like it really was fun to spend all that time in the car and go to a crappy takeaway store for a greasy, cold lunch. But this story is about how I learnt the hard way that it's all rubbish about the journey being important.	Summary of a belief Indication of how or why it's important Signposting of how the belief will be important to the rest of the text

Outlining key facts and context

Any piece that involves an explanation of people or events will involve facts and information. An effective way of starting a piece like this is to highlight one particularly important fact and to give this fact some context that shows why it matters.

This is an example of a letter about *resilience*. The writer is corresponding with an old friend. The purpose of the letter is to *reflect* on and *explain* the qualities we need to develop to achieve goals.

	Annotations
Darling Liz, **remember my new year's resolution to learn Spanish?** Well, after barely a week of online lessons, I have said "adios" to it. The immense, gravitational pull of Netflix, laziness and doing absolutely nothing has won out. **I'm consigning Spanish to the black hole of New Year's resolutions, which include running a marathon, learning an instrument and making no more New Year's resolutions.**	**Specific fact** **Broader context or significance of fact**

This is an example of a podcast about the idea of *journeys*. The podcast is part of a series called *Devolution*, which focuses on how modern life is changing humans. The purpose of this podcast is to *explain* and *reflect* on our evolutionary need to travel.

	Annotations
The earliest humans were nomads, travelling across the earth in search of more food, better shelter and water. Travel is a part of the human condition, but during the recent pandemic, it suddenly wasn't. People stayed in their homes, barricading themselves against the invisible invaders that threatened their health.	**Specific fact** **Broader context or significance of fact**

Put it into practice

Now you've looked through some example openings, try writing an opening for one of your pieces in two different ways. Use the checklist below to make some decisions about what strategies to use and what you might describe.

Writing decisions	Will you write in:	
Person and tense	☐ 1st person ☐ 2nd person ☐ 3rd person	☐ present tense ☐ past tense
Opening strategy	**Will you choose to use a:**	**Notes:**
	description of setting	
	description of a character	
	personal experience	
	action sequence	
	statement of belief	
	outline of key facts/context	
Description and detail in your opening	**Will you describe:**	**Notes:**
	people	
	objects	
	feelings	
	sounds	
	smells	
	actions	
	facts	

Study alert:

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Bodies

When you experiment with and practise writing body paragraphs for your pieces, there will be three things you need to consider:

- Overall structure of the body
- Writing whole paragraphs
- Techniques to use in your paragraphs

Overall structure of the body

Broadly speaking, there are four ways of structuring the body of your pieces. Within each of these broad categories, you can experiment with and modify individual paragraphs to suit the purpose of your piece.

1. Chronological narrative

A chronological narrative begins at the start of a story and goes step by step through events in the order they occurred until the end. This is how a chronological structure can be applied to different text forms:

Short story	This is the most obvious place to use a chronological structure, as you can narrate the events of your story in the order they happened. Keep in mind that good short stories are short – they don't cover events that happened over a long period of time, but things that occur in a single 'scene' or 'moment'.
Feature article, biographies	Feature articles or biographies can use a chronological narrative if they are trying to explain the cause and effect of certain events. The body of this type of feature article usually begins by discussing the root cause of something. If it's a chronological biography, the piece should begin by describing the beginning of important events in the person's life.
Reflective letter, podcast or blog	A reflective piece of writing can use a personal experience as the 'anchor' for its reflection. To do this, you can narrate part of a person's experience, reflect on it, narrate some more, and reflect on it again right through to the end of the story.

This is an example of chronological body paragraphs on *journey*. The story starts with the beginning of the woman's journey.

Liz Keeney's epic quest to swim around Australia began at a family outing to Breamlea beach near Geelong.

The family often went to Breamlea because it was close to the family farm. Keeney's parents were both strong swimmers and, unlike other children who were told to 'stay close to the edge', Liz was encouraged to take risks in her swimming. On this day, the surf was good, but the rip – the unseen currents that swirl beneath the ocean water – was also strong. Liz swam about twenty metres out, just beyond the breaking waves. She bobbed in the water, looking around, and waved at her parents, lying on the beach, idling the afternoon away. Around her, the rip began to curl and wrap, like an unseen snake. Soon, she was no longer twenty metres from the shore, but forty, then fifty and then a hundred.

2. Non-chronological narrative

This structure doesn't tell things in the order they happen. Instead, it goes back and forth in time. It can do this in different ways. One common way is to start in the present, go back in time through a flashback, and then return to the present. A non-chronological narrative is a way of connecting events that share a theme or idea. This is how a non-chronological structure can be applied to different text forms:

Short story	A short story could begin at the midpoint in the story and then go back to an earlier time to explain how things started. It could also use flashbacks to the past to explain a character's feelings or actions in the present. It could even flash forward to show how a character will think or feel in the future about something they are doing now.
Feature article, explanatory podcast or blog	Like a short story, an informative piece of writing could begin its body by outlining a current situation before going back in time to explain how it has come about.
Reflective letter	A reflective letter could be based on outlining a personal experience or current predicament and then backtrack to explain how the writer arrived at this point.

This is an excerpt from the body of a story about *country*. The story shifts from the present to a memory of the past and then back to the present.

The view of the horizon hollowed out my stomach so that I was yawning and empty with sadness. Like the view. It was years since I'd left here, turning away from the emptiness and driving toward the city. Toward crowded, busy life. I'd vowed never to come back to this place that I'd grown up in.

I'd grown up here, on this empty block. Empty, that is, except for the dispiriting rectangle of grey and beige bricks that stood in the exact centre and was called our house. It had been built in the early 80s and was a monument to the ugliness of a lack of imagination. Out the front of the block was a highway that provided the constant roar of diesel motors – the soundtrack to my childhood. It was hard to imagine these trucks going anywhere because there was nowhere to go.

I grew up in ugly country. In the flat former floodplains of the Murray River where people farmed flat monocultures of wheat and canola and spoke in the flattened vowels of a broad 'strine' accent. It was a place where people looked back to the old glory days of white settlement and sideways to see what the other farmers were doing, but never forwards to think about possibilities and never up because dreams and ambition were for others.

Now I was back and, if anything, the desolation was worse than it had ever been.

3. Grouped information

This is the basic structure for any type of informative piece because the writer divides the information or ideas into chunks or categories that belong together. This information is then organised into a logical series of linked paragraphs. This is how the grouped information structure can be applied to different text forms:

Recount or biographies	Rather than just retelling a life story from beginning to end, recounts or biographies can organise information into thematic paragraphs that include a range of stories or facts about the one idea. For example, a biography about someone's resilient grandmother might include a paragraph about different ways she endured poverty, and another paragraph might focus on stories of how she raised her children to be resilient.
Feature article	Feature articles often chunk information into the most important facts (what and who), the next most important facts (where, when and how) and then interesting or related facts. They also might group information based on how different groups of people experience an idea – for example, a feature article on *play* might have different paragraphs about how people of different ages play. Feature articles can also use subheadings to organise information into categories.
Explanatory podcast or blog	Like feature articles, explanatory podcasts and blogs often organise and sequence information from the most important facts through to interesting details. However, podcasts and blogs might choose to sequence information in unexpected ways in order to present facts in a new or fresh light. For example, they might begin their body by focusing on a seemingly obscure detail but then go on to show how this obscure detail is important.

This is an example of grouped paragraphs from a feature article about the evolutionary need for *journeys*. The paragraphs are grouped according to these ideas: the difference between the past and the present; the consequences of these differences; and the evolution of human movement.

The earliest humans were nomads, travelling across the earth in search of more food, better shelter and water. Travel is a part of the human condition, but during the recent pandemic, it suddenly wasn't. People stayed in their homes, barricading themselves against the invisible invaders that threatened their health.

Without travel, humans became fearful – of each other, of their environment and of what might happen. And without travel, humans became mentally unwell – depressed, tired and anxious.

Humans have evolved to move. To begin with, this movement was through walking. But that wasn't enough, they had to run. After a while, they could see how to go faster if they domesticated animals and rode them. Then they figured out how to make vehicles – carts, rafts, boats, carriages, trains, bicycles, cars, planes, helicopters... The story of human development is the story of travel. Wherever humans are, they want to be somewhere else, to see something else,
to discover.

4. Alternative perspectives

This structure works by presenting the perspectives of two or more people one after the other. This is how the 'Alternative perspective' structure can be applied to different text forms:

Short story	A short story could be narrated by two different people – each sharing their own version of an event. The short story might also be told in first person ("I did this and then I did something else…") and then have a third-person narrator who gives a different perspective on what the character is doing ("She had no idea what was just around the corner…").
Podcast	A podcast could be hosted by two people. Each person could take turns sharing their reflections and explanations of an idea. This kind of structure also allows you to demonstrate the different opinions or beliefs people might have about an idea.
Feature article	A feature article could have two halves. The first half could focus on the experiences of one person or group and the second half could focus on the experience of a different person or group.

This is an example of paragraphs from a short story about *play*. The paragraphs alternate between a third person and a second person perspective.

Peering cautiously around the bush she is hiding behind, she sees no robbers. Good. The coast is clear. She drags her (motor)bike out from behind the bush, checking to see that the piece of cardboard is still firmly pegged to the prongs of her wheel. She jumps onto the seat of her (motor)bike and pedals furiously away, the cardboard making a satisfying roaring sound as it whips against the spokes of her (motor)bike, sounding like a real-life motorbike.

(You might be thinking that it makes no sense to hide and then make a huge noise riding away, but if that's what you're thinking you must be a grown-up and have no idea about what it's really like being a policeman. And it's the early 1990s, so no one even thinks of saying policewoman, because, duh, everyone knows that the coolest people are policemen.)

From out of the corner of her eye she sees one of the robbers. He's rolling his sleeves up even higher to show the (skinny and sunburned) muscles of his arm. She leaps off her bike, dropping into the grass and quickly points her gun at the robber. Before he knows it, he's dead. But that doesn't stop him complaining.

(You might be thinking that dead people don't complain or that kids shouldn't shoot at each other but that's just stupid. Dead people always complain that it's unfair and that they weren't ready and then they claim time out. But it's too late for time out when you're dead and anyway, you shouldn't complain about being dead when you were shot fair and square and you're a robber so you're supposed to lose.)

Put it into practice

It's now time to start creating a detailed and structured plan for your piece of writing. Use the planning template below to help you:

- make decisions about how your piece will be structured
- plan the content and techniques you'll use throughout your piece.

Study alert:

Download a digital copy of this table from: www.tickingmind.com.au/tables

Writing decisions	Will you write in:		
Person and tense	☐ 1st person ☐ 2nd person ☐ 3rd person	☐ present tense ☐ past tense	
Opening strategy:	Notes of detail and description in your opening:		Important vocabulary:
Body structure: ☐ chronological ☐ non-chronological ☐ grouped info ☐ alt. perspectives	Detail and description in your body:	Notes (remember that some paragraphs might be only a couple of words or sentences long):	Important vocabulary:
	Body Paragraph 1		
	Body Paragraph 2		
	Body Paragraph 3		
	Body Paragraph 4		
	Body Paragraph 5		
	Body Paragraph 6		
	Body Paragraph 7		
Closing strategy:	Notes of detail and description in your closing:		Important vocabulary:

Write whole paragraphs

No matter what type of writing you're doing, a paragraph is always a tool for organising information into logical chunks. So, any type of creative fiction or non-fiction writing you do will need to be divided into paragraphs (even if you're writing the script for a podcast!). These paragraphs will need to follow two important rules of paragraphing:

- A paragraph should be about one point.
- A paragraph should logically connect to a paragraph before or after it.

Keep in mind that paragraphs can be any length, even just one sentence long. Sentences can also be any length. Even just one word. Seriously. Here are some examples of different types of paragraphing:

This is an example of two paragraphs from a story about a zombie dystopia written in response to the idea of *other worlds*.	
Everywhere you looked, all you could see were grey houses, dead lawns and rubbish blown about by the wind. One building had the words 'get out now' scrawled all over it. Covering another, was a great vine that had erupted from a crack in the driveway. In the middle of the main road, cars with open doors creaking in the wind butted up against each other as if they were discarded toys left by some child. **It was an empty and lonely place.**	First sentence introduces main idea of a place being deserted Sentences begin in different ways One sentence paragraph – summarises main idea from previous paragraph

This is an example of two paragraphs from a blog about how to build your *resilience*.

Do you know that feeling of having an annoying song stuck in your head? It just keeps replaying over and over again. Sometimes bad experiences get stuck in our minds like annoying songs. We keep mentally replaying something awful that happened and reliving all the terrible feelings it gave us. This process is called rumination: it's what stops us moving on from things. One way of getting past the destructive cycle of rumination and becoming more resilient is to change the song or story we keep rehashing in our minds.

There are a variety of ways we can change the bad ruminations in our minds, but they all start with expressing your feelings about an experience rather than just bottling them up in your brain. You can go tell a psychologist, a friend or a parent all about your feelings or you could just write them down. Yep, just write it down. A 1988 study found that people with significant trauma who spent just 20 minutes each day writing about their feelings were happier and healthier six months later than people who hadn't.

First sentence creates interest through posing a question

Paragraph builds to the main idea

First sentence shows the connection of this paragraph with the preceding one

Put it into practice

From this point forward, you should regularly practise writing paragraphs and sentences. Every time you do any type of writing, reflect on what you can improve and try redoing and editing your writing, or refining your plan. Use the strategies listed in the section on 'Edit and refine your work' on page 106 to help you with this process.

Body Techniques

Throughout the body of your writing, you will use a range of techniques, and this section will give you some advice and examples of how you can:

- describe ideas and things
- use examples and evidence effectively
- link ideas and sentences together
- use important markers of time to help your reader understand when things happened
- reflect on ideas.

Describe things

No matter what type of writing you do, one of the main creative techniques you'll use is to describe things: people, places, objects, feelings and actions. Remember that your writing is supposed to explore a key idea: the main purpose of descriptions in your creative writing will be to show an idea rather than directly state it.

The examples over the next few pages demonstrate how to describe different things in a range of ways.

Description of characters and people

This is a descriptive passage from a story about a farmer's connection to *country*.

Her blue eyes are a faded reflection of the sky and the lines at their corners are reminders that she has spent a lifetime squinting into the distance. Her hands are brown, tanned and spotted by the sun, but surprisingly soft from the lanolin in her sheep's fleece.

How the description shows the key idea: To show that this person has a connection to country, this excerpt describes how specific features – eyes and hands – have been shaped by natural things.

Techniques it uses:

Word choice shows the key idea

A series of descriptions

This is from a memoir about a person who has spent their life advocating for people with different abilities and is part of a response to the idea of *protest*.

Although forced to spend her life in a chair, Amara never took anything sitting down. She moved her arms vigorously, in defiance of the legs which she described as "purely for decorative purposes".

How the description shows the key idea: To show that this person is a protestor, the excerpt describes how active she is.

Techniques it uses:

Word choice shows the key idea

Active verb and adverb

Describes what someone is not like

Descriptions of feelings

This is for a feature article about racial *prejudice* in Australian workplaces.

When I ask him about his experiences of prejudice in the workforce, he looks away at the ceiling and laughs awkwardly. He then shakes his head and repeats, "I am happy to be here in Australia. I work hard to come here and work hard in my job. That is who I am".

How the description shows the key idea: To show that this person has experienced prejudice but is reluctant to discuss it, this excerpt describes how the person avoids a question.

Techniques it uses:

- Active adverb
- Active verb

Descriptions of ideas and processes

This is for a feature article about social *influencers*.

Their presence is pervasive in our lives. They permeate the way we view ourselves and others, pushing themselves upon us as a persistent template for living and being. Rather than thinking about ourselves in the abstract, we compare ourselves to the standard they provide, measuring our lives and appearance against them.

How the description shows the key idea: To show that social *influencers* have a big impact on our lives, this piece describes the way they impact on every aspect of our lives.

Techniques it uses:

- Short sentence
- Uses just a few adjectives
- Active verbs
- Describes what something is not like

Descriptions of place and objects

This is from an email to a friend about cleaning up after a flood and is part of a response about the idea of *country*.

You wouldn't believe the stink of rotting carpet. It's like a sheep has wandered into our lounge room and died there. We spent yesterday pulling up the carpet and each time we lifted a segment, a new waft of rancid death fumes reached our nose. It's seeping into my skin and even after I've showered, I can still smell mouldering wool.

How the description shows the key idea: To show the powerful effect of nature and country, this piece describes the detrimental impacts of a flood.

Techniques it uses:

- Describes what something is like
- Uses just a few adjectives
- A series of descriptions

Put it into practice

Think about a person, place, thing, action or idea you can describe. Use the checklist below to identify specific aspects of something you can describe to show how it represents an idea.

Big things you can describe	Details within the larger thing
The setting	sounds smells light weather the size of the space temperature buildings objects or furniture within the space the shape of the space
Objects	things a character interacts with decorations or interesting features food furniture
How a character	speaks gestures moves holds their body has different expressions feels or thinks looks (specific features of their body, such as hands, face, hair, scars or feature of what they are wearing)
Feelings and ideas	how big or deep a feeling is the familiarity of an idea (is it new or old) how widespread a feeling or idea is how people react to it

Practise writing a range of sentences to describe this thing. Try using some of the techniques that have been modelled. These tips will help you apply the techniques:

Technique	Things you can try
Using just a few adjectives	Think of a range of adjectives to describe something. Pick just one to use.
Using short sentences	A short sentence should be five or fewer words. Try using them for impact after a long sentence or at the start or end of a paragraph.
Choosing words to show the key idea	Every time you describe something, consider how you can use words that connect to the idea you are writing about: – e.g. A description for the idea of influences: *My post had been liked by no one. The only* ***impact*** *I'd made was on the energy I'd sucked from the electricity grid.* – e.g. A description of a person for the idea of protest: ***In defiance*** *of the legs which she described as "purely for decorative purposes".*
Describing what things are like or *not* like	• Use like and as if to create similes: – e.g. *Grandma would always stride ahead of us* ***like*** *a general leading troops.* – e.g. *I felt* ***as if*** *I'd just eaten something rotten and it was festering inside me.* • Use didn't, wasn't, never, although and despite to describe what someone or something isn't: – e.g. ***Despite*** *her fear of confrontation, Annabelle walked up to the shouting passenger and said, "Stop. Just stop".*
Using active and specific verbs and adverbs	• Use strong verbs to describe what things do: – e.g. *Instead of the sun* ***is*** *hot, write the sun* ***scorches*** *the earth.* • Use specific verbs to describe what things do: – e.g. Instead of *she* ***looked*** *at the sun, write she* ***squinted*** *at the sun.* • Use '-ly' adverbs to describe how something is done: – e.g. *hopefully, angrily, miserably, slowly, painfully*
Writing a series of descriptions of a person or thing	Add more descriptions with extra information words: and, but, or in, on, to, for, from above, over, under, upon across, beyond, behind, near

Use evidence

Whenever you provide information in your writing there are things you can do to present it in a meaningful and interesting way.

There are three main types of evidence you can use:

→ quotes (expert, witness, inspirational or common sayings)

→ statistics or numbers

→ studies.

But whatever kind of evidence you choose to put in your writing, the most important thing that you must do is to explain and interpret this evidence. Putting evidence in your writing without explaining it is fairly pointless. **Instead, you should:**

- use dashes and brackets to insert additional explanatory information
- define technical terms
- put evidence into an understandable or personal context
- explain the significance of evidence.

Here are some examples:

This example is from a podcast explaining how society has become less resilient and what we can do about it.	
Recent research carried out by *Driven* – a mental health organisation that works with tens of thousands of people around the nation every year – found that nine out of ten Australians do not have the resilience necessary to protect themselves against mental illness. To put this into a personal context, this translates to most of your family, friends or the people who live on your street being at risk of suffering mental health problems during times of hardship. Experts are labelling this a resilience crisis.	Using dashes to insert additional information Put evidence into a personal context Defining technical terms

This example is from a recount about a differently abled person's experiences of protesting.	
Bob Marley once wrote "Get up, stand up. Stand up for your rights," which is an inspirational idea for many people who want to protest, but quite useless for those of us in wheelchairs. Getting up and standing up is the one thing we can't do. It's hard to stand up for your rights when you are forced to sit down. It's hard to stand up for your rights when you're still looking for the wheelchair access ramp so you can meet everyone else.	Using and explaining quotes (inspirational) Puts evidence into a personal context

This example is from a feature article about prejudice in the workplace.	
When I ask him about his experiences of prejudice in the workforce, he looks away at the ceiling and laughs awkwardly. He then shakes his head and repeats, "I am happy to be here in Australia. I work hard to come here and work hard in my job. That is who I am". His reluctance to speak about his experiences is not isolated.	Puts evidence into a personal context Using a quote and then explaining its significance

Put it into practice

If you're using facts, statistics or quotes in your piece of writing, experiment with using some of the words, sentence elements and structures below to write about them.

Referring to research	Explaining what it means	Using and defining technical terms
According to the latest research from… Recent research carried out by… A study of…by… Scientists from…have found… Researchers from…have discovered…	In other words,…To put this into context… Another way to put this is… What this means… In comparison… …which is… …which means…	Experts call this… The technical term for this is… This process is called…or in simpler terms… *use dashes to insert an explanation of a technical term after you have used it (e.g. *There are consumers – the people who just listen to music – and players – the people who actually create music.*)

Inserting expert or witness quotes	Inserting inspirational quotes or common sayings
Use the Name-Expert Role-Quote formula for referring to expert quote: e.g. *Lisa Sulley, a psychologist at Mind Lab, says "the brain is shaped by how we play".* When referring to a witness quote, identify or describe these things: • who they are • what they do or have experienced • how they feel or act • what they say. **For example:** *Jamal has worked in logistics centres in Melbourne for 20 years since his arrival from Somalia. When I ask him about his experience of racism in the workforce, he looks away at the ceiling and laughs awkwardly. "I am happy to be here in Australia", he says shaking his head. "I work hard. This is who I am".*	…once said… …once wrote… In the words of… It is often said that… Many people believe… Conventional wisdom has it that…

Reflect on ideas

Obviously, reflective writing will require you to do some sort of reflection. But lots of other styles of writing – like letters, podcasts and even feature articles – might need some kind of reflection too.

Writing reflectively means you need to show your personal thought processes and the different responses you have to an idea.

These are some basic strategies you can employ to do this:

- Use thinking, feeling, or believing verbs or phrases.
- Directly address the audience.
- Ask questions and ponder answers.
- Write conversationally.

Here's an example:

This is an excerpt from an Instagram post by an influencer. The person is reflecting on how being a popular influencer shapes their life.

As you probably already know about me, I like to post about my daily life: what I'm wearing, eating, doing or where I'm going. Everyday. Rain. Hail. Shine. It's important to me that you wear your heart on your sleeve. And Insta. But recently I've started asking myself why I'm doing the stuff I do each day. Why am I wearing that shirt or going to that place? The thing is, I like taking a selfie and sharing it, but I've also come to loathe taking a selfie sometimes because it means I'm not in the moment. I'm realistic enough to see that I'm living a life to Insta it, not living it to be in the moment. It kinda sucks.	Conversational writing Believing phrase Asking questions and pondering answers Feeling phrase

Put it into practice

If you're writing a reflective piece, try using some of the phrases below to help you.

Think words	*Feel* words and phrases	*Believe* phrases
I see	I appreciate	I like to believe
I acknowledge	I have the impression that	I know for certain
I realise	I suspect that	It's important to me that
I reckon	I feel in my gut that	I'm convinced that
I understand	I am ashamed to admit	I love that
I imagine	I am realistic enough to see	I hate that
I know	I am clear-eyed enough to see	I hate the way that
I accept		I completely loathe
I consider		I depend on
		I put great trust in
		I have faith in

Ask questions	Ponder answers
I've started asking myself…	The thing is…
I wonder why…	I can't work out whether that answer is…or…
I can't help but wonder…	The answer that keeps coming to me is…
More and more, I've come to wonder…	What I'm coming to realise is…
All I can think of is why…	It's becoming obvious to me that…
I can't help thinking about…	Events have made me realise that…
…has made me wonder whether…	I like…but…
Why is it that…?	

Address the audience	Ways to write conversationally
As you might already have guessed…	Write single word sentences – e.g. *I like to post about my daily life…**Everyday. Rain. Hail. Shine.***
Well, you know I…You're probably thinking that…	Start sentences with 'and' – e.g. *It's important to me that you wear your heart on your sleeve. And Insta.*
You're probably wondering why…	Use conversational words and phrases – i.e. *I guess, it kinda sucks, hmmm, WTF? Yep, huzzah! What a joke.*
For those of you who…	
I might have given you the impression that…	
I should explain to you…	

Markers of time and sequence

In your writing, you will need to help your reader to understand how events or pieces of information connect so they can build a clear picture in their heads. To do this, you will need to incorporate markers of time or sequence, like in the examples below:

> ***To begin with**, the land was cleared of all its original inhabitants. **Then**, it was stripped of ancient trees and forests. And **finally**, all of the grasses and microflora were razed to the ground. It was only **after** all of this, that the violated and denuded land was **ultimately** deemed "useful".*
>
> ***Of course, in the end**, I felt guilty about never owning up. So here goes: It **was** me who left that giant poo on the principal's desk. It was an act of guilty protest – childish, but **ultimately** the best thing I ever did at school.*
>
> ***From the very beginning of our lives**, we value playful interactions: peekaboo, cheerful songs, kisses and tickling. This early delight never quite leaves us.*

Put it into practice

Try using some of the words or phrases below to write (or rewrite) a series of paragraphs that connect events or information.

Markers of...			
Time	to begin with from the very beginning at the outset for decades for years initially	as time went by after a while fast forward [*a year, a decade, etc...*] and... in time then later in the meantime	in the end ultimately after all of this finally
Sequence	first before anything else let's start by looking at early	while this was happening at this point during this never ever	consequently therefore as a result of this inevitably

Create Links

So that your writing is cohesive and 'flows' together, you will need to create links between sentences, ideas, examples and paragraphs. One of the most basic links that you will use is the word 'and', but there are a whole lot of other links that you will need:

→ at the beginning of sentences

→ within sentences

→ between ideas

→ between examples.

Put it into practice

Read through a paragraph you have already written and highlight the ways you have started each of the sentences. Think about whether you could incorporate any of the sentence starts below to link your ideas and create more variety in your writing.

	At the beginning of sentences	Within sentences
Links for similar things	For one thing This [idea] is best shown by At its heart this means... This [idea] is best exemplified by Another A further In addition This is based on the idea that	and so since in for this reason because
Links for contrasting things	However, Yet, Despite this, On the other hand, In contrast, This [idea/example] is contradicted by Another perspective is offered by It's not...but...	but yet however while nevertheless rather than or though

Closings

It's often difficult to know how to end your writing so that it feels 'finished'. Looking at your mentor texts again and thinking about the ways they close will be a very important strategy, but this section will also show you a range of ways you can finish your piece.

Looking back

This kind of ending works particularly well for reflective writing because it's about thinking back over events and trying to make sense of them. However, it can also work really well for a letter, feature article, short story or biography.

Here are the important things a 'Looking back' closing should have:

- an indication of something you've learned
- statements that connect to the key idea.

This is from a reflective piece about the idea of *country*.	
I'd never felt at home here. It was a place that took away pieces of my soul, leaving me lonely and empty. Coming back had been a mistake.	statements that connect to the key idea of *country* key learning

This is from a memoir about the idea of *resilience*.	
We probably should have known she was sick at the time, but we wanted to believe in the persona she presented. A lover of bawdy humour and laughing loudly in public. An aficionado of loud costume jewellery piled all over her. A fan of drinking single malt whisky and gesticulating wildly with her cigarillo. It was a persona that was larger than life and illness.	key learning statements that connect to the key idea of *resilience*

Person has a final action

In these sorts of endings, the person or character you are writing about goes back to their lives as your writing finishes. It is a good way to end a short story, feature article, memoir or podcast.

In this sort of ending, you should include:

- an action
- a reference to the key idea.

This is from a feature article about the idea of *protest*.	
He grins cheekily at me and reaches for the can of spray paint. "Unless you want to be part of a criminal act, you'd better leave now," he says and starts to shake the can.	phrases that connect to the key idea of protest actions

Looking forward

This kind of closing is particularly useful for a podcast or a feature article because it tells the reader what to expect next about this idea. It can also be used for a letter or a short story.

In this sort of ending, you should have:

- a statement about what is going to happen in the future (or what to look forward to)
- phrases that connect to the key idea.

This is from a feature article about the idea of *country*.	
It's hard to know how we can restore this land to what it once was, but it's clear that this group are determined to do it, one tiny sapling at a time.	statement about the future phrases that connect to the key idea of *country*

This is from a reflective autobiography about the idea of *resilience*.	
Everyone keeps asking me how I'm so brave about the past, but I'm not. I couldn't care less about the past, unless it's got a funny story I can tell at the dinner table. I want to know whether the last book in the Game of Thrones series is ever going to be published.	phrases that connect to the key idea of *resilience* statement about the future

Take-away message

In this sort of closing, the writer gives the reader some kind of important message about how to feel in response to what is written. It is a good way to end a letter, podcast or feature article.

When you are writing this sort of an ending, you should have:

- a way of connecting the reader to the key idea you have explored
- a reference to something important you have learned.

This is from a feature article about the idea of *play*.	
Looking at them, it's hard to see them as a group of oldies who are past it. All I can see is a group of people who are determined to keep playing until the very end. And it's inspiring.	key learning connecting the reader to the key idea of play

This is from a letter about the idea of *protest*.	
What I've realised most is that we've all got a fight inside us. We all have the courage to confront what we're afraid of and to make a difference.	key learning connecting the reader to the key idea of protest

Put it into practice

Read through the different types of closings. Identify a closing that might work best with your piece. Experiment with writing it. Keep in mind that your closing only needs to be a few sentences long. Reflect on the writing process.

Reflect on the writing process

This task requires you to produce a commentary that explains the decisions you made in creating your two written pieces. In particular, your commentary should explain these things about each of your pieces:

→ the purpose

→ the audience and context

→ how the structure achieves the purpose and is appropriate for the audience

→ how vocabulary and techniques achieve the purpose and are appropriate for the audience

→ the role of mentor texts in your writing.

This commentary needs to be a substantial piece of writing because it should reflect the learning you have done in this unit and how you understand the writing choices that you have made. To ensure your commentary is detailed and reflects the writing process, refer back to the notes and plans you made for each of your pieces.

The structure of a commentary

When you structure your commentary, include an introduction about both of your pieces, then write paragraphs that focus on one piece, followed by paragraphs about the second piece. You don't need to write a conclusion.

Introduction structure

The introduction of your commentary should explain these elements of the writing process:

- your understanding of the big idea you are responding to
- the purpose of piece one
- the specific idea explored in piece one
- the purpose of piece two
- the specific idea explored in piece two.

Read through the example below to see how to write about these elements:

As a student in rural Victoria, I feel intimately connected to the countryside and when I think about the idea of country, I think of the people who have been shaped by the landscape they live in, as well as how they have shaped their land. In my first piece, I wrote a profile about one of the local farmers to express how she has grown to resemble the landscape that she works in. However, for my second piece, I produced something quite different: a persuasive podcast about how farming takes place upon land stolen from First Nations people and then how it ruined the natural landscape. This idea makes me quite angry, so in this piece, I wanted to argue passionately against monocultural farming.	Understanding of the big idea Purpose Specific idea of each piece

Put it into practice

Have a go writing the introduction of your commentary. The sentence starters and phrases below will help you explain your understanding of the big idea:

Phrases to show your understanding of an idea

As a..., I have had a very personal experience of the idea of...and when I think about it...

The idea of...to me means...

When I think about the idea of..., I think of...

To me, the idea of...means more than just...but also...

For me, at the very heart of...is...

This idea raises the question of...

One of the important issues at the heart of this idea is...

As well as reminding me of...this idea also makes me think about...

To finish your introduction, the phrases below will help you write about the form, purpose and specific idea. Remember, you need to do this for both pieces.

You can use these phrases in any order you like.

Phrases to introduce the form of the piece	Phrases/words to link to the idea	Links between the two pieces
My first piece is a...that...	to express...how/why...	While my second piece also explores..., it uses a different...
One of my pieces is a...which...	to reflect...on how...	However,
I wrote a...to...	to argue...that/why...	In my second piece, I wanted to...
For one of my pieces, I created a...about...	to explain...how/why...	In a departure from my first piece, my second piece...
I produced a...that focuses on...	The idea of...makes me feel...so in this piece I wanted to...	In contrast to this, my second piece...
This piece was written in the form of a...	Through this piece, I aimed to represent how...	
This piece is a...		

Body paragraph structure

The body of your commentary should have two sections. The first half will focus upon one piece while the second half will focus on the other. In each half, comment on these things:

- → Form and purpose
- → Context and audience
- → References to the structure of your piece
- → Influence of mentor text
- → Analysis of techniques and word choice

Below is an example of the first half of a commentary.

My first piece was an expressive feature article that celebrates the hard work of farmers by painting a word portrait of a farmer I know and respect. I wrote this piece for the local newspaper, which is very popular amongst the farming population as I thought that this audience would empathise with and understand my purpose. I began my piece with description, much like Conrad begins his Heart of Darkness, but instead of separating my protagonist from her surrounds, I chose to connect my character with the land, using words such as 'like' and 'just as', so that the audience could also create links between the natural landscape and the farmer. I did not want to use the sophisticated language of Conrad, because none of the farmers I know have ever read literature like this and they probably wouldn't want to read it in their local paper while they are relaxing with a cuppa either. Throughout the body of my expressive piece, I created a lot of similes that compared the farmer to the countryside around her. Around here, the weather is quite harsh and dry and I wanted to show how the farmer had to be tough like the weather, so I used words like 'rugged, resistant and resilient' to emphasise her determined nature. I thought that this metaphor would make sense to the farming audience I was writing for. Although my writing was mostly looking back on the career of the farmer, I also wanted to describe how farming has to be a profession about looking forward to the next season. To emphasis this aspect of farming, I chose to end my piece by having the farmer look towards the sun rising over the horizon to show how she is looking to the new day. It was a bit of a cliche, but sometimes people like this sort of familiarity and our local paper is full of cliches, so I thought readers would like it.	Form and purpose of piece one Context and audience Section of piece being commented upon Influence of mentor text Analysis of techniques and word choice

Reflecting on the writing process for EAL students

If you are an EAL student, your reflection on the writing process only needs to be two paragraphs long. In the first paragraph, you will explain your purpose and choices as a writer for one of your pieces. In the next paragraph, you will do the same thing for your other piece.

Here is an example paragraph:

As the oldest of six kids, creativity and play is not something I've ever really had time for. So Ken Robinson's speech about "How schools kill creativity" really interested me. After listening to his speech, I wrote a persuasive letter to my parents, arguing that I should be allowed to study dance, as well as science and maths. Robinson talked about people who had to "move to think" and this made a lot of sense to me. I really liked the phrase "the richness of human capacity", because it sounded very poetic and made me think that I want to work on having a rich, varied and full life that isn't just about going to school to do "academic" studies and then come home to look after my siblings and do homework. I repeated phrases like "rich, full life" and "joyful" because I wanted my readers (my parents) to understand that making money and going to work aren't the only ways to be rich, but that it's better to have a creative and enjoyable life that makes you feel lucky to be alive.	Understanding of the big idea Form, purpose and audience Influence of mentor text Analysis of techniques and word choice

Put it into practice

Choose a structure for the body of your commentary. Use the phrases below to help you to write a commentary that discusses your authorial choices and your understanding of how these affect an audience. Note that you can experiment with using these phrases in different places in a sentence – they don't always need to be at the beginning of a sentence.

Phrases to discuss form, purpose and context	Phrases to introduce sections or discuss structure
My first/second piece was a…that… I wrote this piece for a… This piece is designed to be part of a series called…that… This piece is intended to be published in… For this piece, I created the fictional context of a… This piece has been written to appear on/in…	In my [opening/body/closing], I sought to… The overall structure of my piece is designed to… I have structured my piece in order to first…then…and ultimately… I began my piece with a…to… At the start of my piece, I used a…to… Throughout the body of my….piece, I… In the body paragraphs of my…piece, I… At the end of my piece, I… Although during the body I had…, in my conclusion I wanted to…
Phrases to discuss techniques	**Phrases to discuss mentor texts**
I… employed words such as…so that… created a sense of…by… focused on…through using… evoked a feeling of…with… adopted the technique of…that is designed to described things such as…in order to… In particular, I… For example, I… In one instance, I… …used words such as… …used a… …referred to… …described…	…like [name of mentor text], which… …in the same way that the mentor text [insert name of text]… In [beginning/closing/structuring my piece] like this, I was influenced by [name of mentor text]… In developing the structure of my piece, I was very influenced by… My opening wasn't influenced by any particular mentor text but by…
Phrases to introduce further analysis of techniques	**Phrases to discuss authorial decisions and audience**
Furthermore, I… However, I also wanted to… I emphasised this by…	I thought that these…would be ideas that are…to the audience… I thought…was particularly effective to use here…because my audience… Through the use of these…, I felt like my audience would… I thought I could appeal to the audience's… By creating a sense of…, I felt I could show the audience that… On one hand, this might seem…, but I also thought that the audience of…would

Study alert:

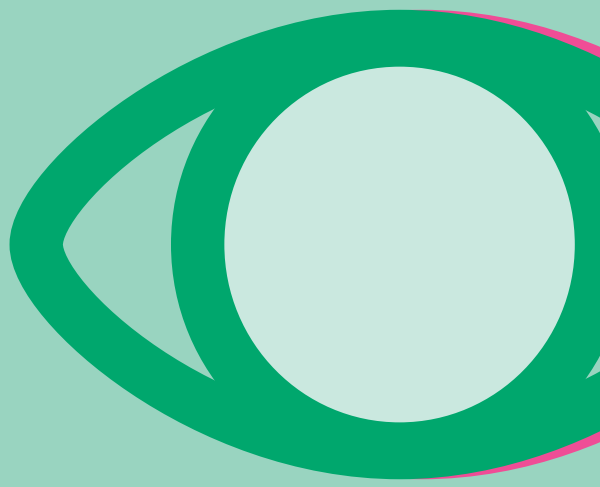
Download digital copies of this table from: www.tickingmind.com.au/tables

Analysing Argument

In this area of study, you will be required to analyse written, spoken or audiovisual persuasive texts. To analyse these persuasive texts, you'll need to be able to identify and discuss how a text uses three key elements:

- particular arguments to persuade its audience
- a structure to develop those arguments and persuade an audience
- specific techniques and language to emphasise its arguments and persuade an audience.

The rest of this chapter is divided into three sections that will show you how to identify, think and write about each of these elements.



1. Think about audience and author

You will be able to identify and think about arguments and techniques in a persuasive piece more effectively if you first think about the values and interests of different audiences.

This section will help you identify audiences who:

- agree with the values of a publication
- have a specific interest or connection to a text
- value a particular author or presenter.

2. Annotate and take notes

Effective annotation and note-taking will help you focus your analysis and structure your writing better.

This section will show you how to annotate or take notes on:

- written and audio texts
- the author or presenter
- the intention
- the sections and arguments

3. Engage in micro-writing practice

You'll improve your writing more by practising specific elements of an analysis, rather than just writing whole pieces.

This section will show you how to:

- write introductions
- write body paragraphs
  - write topic sentences
  - analyse evidence
    - quotes
    - common techniques
    - visuals
    - speech
  - link analysis and sentences
    - write synthesising sentences
- write conclusions

Audience and author

The authors or producers of persuasive pieces have chosen arguments that they believe will persuade their audience. So, to analyse how a text has been constructed, you must think about who this audience is, what they value or are interested in and how a persuasive text is attempting to engage these values or interests. These three steps will help you think strategically about the audience before you read or watch a persuasive text:

1. Identify the publication, media outlet or author/presenter who has produced the text.
2. Consider why the audience has decided to engage with this text.
3. Think about what arguments or values might persuade this audience.

This section will explain the types of publications you will come across. But first, let's think about the three reasons audiences have for engaging with texts:

- They agree with the values of the publication.
- They are interested in or value the opinion of the author of the text.
- They have a specific interest or connection to the topic.

Audiences who agree with the values of a publication

Every person has values or beliefs, such as *we should look after the environment* or *we should be free to say whatever we want.* Every person also has a sense of their own identity – such as *I'm just an ordinary Australian* or *I'm someone who cares deeply about the environment.* These types of values or identity statements can be labelled as progressive, moderate or conservative. Mostly, people will read or watch material produced by media that has the same values or affirms their sense of identity.

Let's look more closely at what progressive or conservative values are.

The table below provides basic examples of progressive or conservative values and sense of identity. People with moderate values have beliefs and identities that are somewhere in between these two sides.

	Progressive	Conservative
Identity	view themselves as modern and willing to try new things or adopt new ways of thinking view themselves as caring for others and responsible for the welfare of wider society	view themselves as ordinary, everyday people with common-sense, practical approaches view themselves as individuals who are protecting their families and close communities
Education and health	in favour of publicly funded schools and hospitals	in favour of individual choice, private schools and private hospitals
Tax and the economy	believe 'big business' should be taxed at a higher rate	in favour of business and tax breaks for business people
Environment	protective of the environment	sceptical of climate change / believe that climate change is not as important as business
Law and order	believe in being compassionate to victims and perpetrators more likely to be interested in drug reforms	believe in a 'tough' approach to law enforcement, including strong punishments
Tradition	sceptical of traditions	believe traditions are important
Diversity	protect and celebrate minority groups	believe minority groups should 'fit in'
Free speech	likely to be in favour of limiting 'hate speech' or misinformation, (possibly in favour of 'cancelling' other conservative or bigoted voices)	likely to be in favour of 'free speech' (although more concerned with protecting the free speech of religious and patriotic groups)

Progressive, moderate and conservative Australian media

Although news is supposed to be impartial, most publications or media outlets present issues in a way that they think will appeal to their audiences. Therefore, different media publications and outlets have progressive, moderate or conservative values.

The chart below includes many of the newspapers and media outlets that produce or publish the persuasive material you'll study. It will help you identify whether it is progressive, moderate or conservative and then you'll be able to figure out the values of its audience:

	Progressive	Moderate	Conservative
Newspapers	The Guardian green left	THE AGE The Sydney Morning Herald	THE AUSTRALIAN The Courier Mail The Daily Telegraph
Websites and blogs	JUNKEE. Crikey THE CONVERSATION	MamaMia	Institute of Public Affairs
TV shows, digital or audio platforms	TEDx THE PROJECT	60 minutes 7.30	sky news 3AW 693 NEWS TALK A CURRENT AFFAIR

Media outlets sometimes publish alternative views

WARNING

Even though a newspaper or media outlet might have a mainly conservative or progressive audience, this does not mean it will always publish persuasive pieces that align with their views. Many media outlets believe in trying to present a balance of viewpoints about an issue. This means that a conservative newspaper like *The Australian* or T*he Courier Mail* might publish a very progressive viewpoint about an issue or a progressive newspaper like *The Guardian* might print a conservative argumentative piece.

If you are analysing a persuasive piece that has a viewpoint that goes against the usual values of the outlet, you need to think about the following question:

How is this piece designed to challenge or change the view of readers?

Audiences who have a specific interest or connection to a text

While newspapers or TV shows have audiences with a particular set of values, they are read or watched by people all around the country of different ages, genders and interests. This is true of newspapers like *The Age* and *The Herald Sun* or TV shows like *A Current Affair* or *60 Minutes*. These sorts of texts are called 'general circulation texts'. The opposite of this type of general circulation text is a 'specific interest text'. This type of text engages an audience who is interested in the specific thing a text is about.

Here are the main categories of specific interest texts you'll come across:

Text types	Things of interest or value to this audience	Examples
Texts for people who live in an area or belong to a particular group*: • Local newspapers • Community newsletters, blogs or social media pages	• The health and wellbeing of their local community or group • The future of their local community or group • Their sense of identity as belonging to a local community or group	• *The Brunswick Voice* (website for people who live in Brunswick) • *The Cobram Courier* (local newspaper for people who live in Cobram)
Texts for people who support particular political parties: • A political party's blog, website or social media • A political party's advertising material (pamphlets, whole page ads, extended video ads)	• The progressive or conservative values of the party • A belief that other political parties or values are wrong	• Labor Party letterbox pamphlets • Interview with a Liberal politician • The Reason Party website
Texts such as magazines, blogs and websites for people who are interested in a specific topic, issue or hobby	• This interest, hobby or topic is important and worthwhile • A sense of themselves as knowledgeable about this particular topic or subject	• An animal rights website • A website that reviews new computers • A fashion magazine • A podcast about a particular topic such as mental wellbeing

Study alert:

*The exam often has these types of pieces. Complete past exams to get plenty of practice writing about this type of audience.

Audiences who value a particular author or presenter

Sometimes readers or viewers decide to read or watch a text because they are interested in or value the opinion of the person who has produced it.

	Examples	Reasons an audience might value this author or presenter
Well-known journalists	• Andrew Bolt – *Herald Sun* / *Bolt Report* • Rita Panahi – *Herald Sun* • Waleed Aly – *The Age* • Peta Credlin – *Sky News* • Stan Grant – A*BC* • David Koch – *Sunrise* • Allison Langdon – *Today* • Neil Mitchell – *3AW*	• They share the values of this person • They are used to listening to or reading the opinions of this person • They believe this person has expertise or experience that should be listened to • They believe this person offers an opinion that can effectively rebut an opposing view • The video or post has been recommended to them • They believe this person is worth listening to because of the number of followers the person has
Political leaders	• Leaders such as the prime minister, premiers, party leaders • Controversial politicians • Leaders of political movements or groups	
Experts	• People in charge of organisations or companies • Scientists • Professors or academics from universities • People who are leaders in particular fields (i.e. successful writers, athletes, artists)	
Social media influencers	• Popular YouTubers, Instagrammers, TikTokers, etc • Celebrities	

Before you read or watch a text, look at who has written or produced it and think about these questions:

Does the person have an identity or role that could be a major factor in the audience reading or watching this piece?

What might the audience think or feel about the identity or role of this person?

Print persuasive pieces will often include information about the author.

Put it into practice

It's time to look at a persuasive piece and think about its audience. Use the checklist below to practise identifying the audience of a persuasive piece and the things that might interest or engage this audience.

Is this a text designed for a specific or general audience?	☐ Specific interest text ☐ General circulation text
Why has the audience engaged with this text?	☐ They share the values of the text ☐ They have a specific interest in or connection to the topic of the text ☐ They are interested in the author or presenter
Does the text offer an opinion that the audience is likely to agree with or disagree with?	☐ Agree with ☐ Disagree with
What values or interests of the audience might the text attempt to engage?	☐ Progressive values such as... ☐ Conservative values such as... ☐ Moderate values such as... ☐ Local concerns such as... ☐ Interests or values about the specific topic such as... ☐ A sense of their own identity as...

Annotate and take notes

To analyse a persuasive piece successfully, you will need to read or listen to it a number of times. Each time you read or listen to the text, you should pay attention to different things so you can analyse it more deeply. This section will explain and demonstrate what to look for and how to annotate a written text or take notes on an audiovisual text:

First read or listen	• Identify author or presenter • Identify intention • Identify and annotate sections
Second read or listen	• Identify and annotate persuasive techniques and language

First read or listen

On the first reading or listening of a text, you should identify its intention and structural features.

Let's look at these things in more detail.

1. Identify author or presenter

When you read or listen to a text the first time, you should pay attention to any information you can find about the author or the presenter. In a written text, information about the author will often be under their name and tell you if they are an expert in the field or have an important role. If you are listening to a text, the presenters will provide information about themselves and the people they speak to.

Turn to page 143 for more advice about how to analyse this information.

2. Identify intention

The intention of a piece is the way the author or presenter wants its audience to think, feel or act about the issue. Identifying the intention of a piece is particularly important because you will need to analyse how people use arguments and strategies to achieve their intention.

On page 151, there is a table that will help you identify the intention of a piece.

3. Identify sections or arguments

After you first read or listen to a persuasive piece, you should divide it into sections. Every persuasive piece has some type of opening, body and closing. By identifying these sections, you can begin to think about how a piece is structured to persuade an audience.

On pages 151-152, there are two tables that will help you identify the sections or arguments of a piece.

Second read or listen

The second time you read or listen to a text, you should pay attention to the words and techniques that make arguments stronger. If you are reading a text, you should underline or circle words that *contribute to the strategy of a section*. By paying particular attention to the words and techniques that contribute to the strategy, you will link pieces of information and make your analysis more cohesive.

If you are listening to a text, the second time you hear it, you should note down the words and techniques that enhance the argument or strategy of the section you are analysing.

Over the next few pages are examples of annotations and note-taking.

Example annotated sections in written text

The following opinion piece is on the issue of banning the sale of petrol cars and boosting the take-up of electric cars. It's from *The Melbourne Mail*, a moderate daily newspaper.

This piece has been divided into four sections:

- → the opening,
- → two parts of the body, and
- → the closing.

The strategies and arguments are annotated in **green**, the techniques and language are in **blue** and the intention and author are annotated in **red**.

The Era of the Combustion Engine is Dead

By Selima Demir

Traditional, petrol-driven cars were invented way back in 1886. Back then, men wore top hats and women wore long skirts with lots of petticoats. Television wasn't invented. The internet wasn't invented. No one had a smartphone.

The world has changed since then. A lot. But for some reason, car manufacturers just haven't quite caught up. They've made cars faster, more comfortable and put in far more cup holders, but the basic machinery hasn't really changed. Except that there has been a huge change: electric engines.

Opening

Strategy = provide background to the issue and connect to the audience as progressive and modern

emphasises how old petrol engine technology is

highlights how much things have changed in the present

By now, we all know that petrol cars are a disaster for the environment – they cause significant air pollution that contributes to greenhouse gases and global warming. According to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in America, a typical car emits 4.6 tons of carbon dioxide every year. And many households have more than one car. Each year, road traffic contributes a staggering 20% of all carbon dioxide emissions. All due to us using technology from the 19th century.

But we live in the 21st century. An era when we should know better. An era when many of us are suffering from climate grief and watching with horror as polar ice caps melt and extreme weather events are becoming more common. An era when we should be using newer, cleaner technology. It's time to ban petrol-driven cars.

Body

Strategy = present facts

Argument = environmental damage of petrol cars

facts appeal to audience's desire for evidence and their environmental values

targets audience's sense of themselves as modern

While some people may be horrified at the thought of abandoning their petrol car and asking themselves things like: "But how will I get the kids to school?" or "I need my car to get to work", it's important to remember that we are asking people to switch to an electric car next time they buy a car, rather than get rid of a car altogether. It is by making small changes – such as swapping the type of car you use – that we will be able to halt climate change together. We don't need to renounce our current lifestyles, we just need to commit to small but vital changes together.

Many countries, including the UK, plan to ban the selling of petrol vehicles by 2035. Some countries have decided to do this even earlier. But not Australia. At the moment, only about 0.8% of cars sold in Australia are electric. And we have fewer public charging stations per person than many other countries. At the moment, our government has no plans to improve this sorry state.

Body

Strategy = acknowledge concerns and present solution

reassures the audience

diminishes the size of effort required

Argument = for the feasibility of changing to electric cars

taps into audience's desire to be modern and like other countries

It's up to us to ask our government to make changes. The government is elected by us, to do the work that we ask of them. We must compel them to make improvements. The government must commit to creating more public charging stations for electric vehicles. The government must introduce a plan to phase out archaic, petrol-driven cars. The government must wake up and realise that we are living in the 21st century. The era of the combustion engine is dead. We're living in a whole new world and we must have vehicles that represent this.

Closing

Strategy = call to action

Intention = audience to advocate for change in government policy about electric cars

re-emphasises how out of date petrol car technology is

Selima Demir is The Melbourne Mail's motoring reporter.

Example notes on an audiovisual text

If you're analysing an audiovisual text, you often won't have access to a transcript of it. Instead, you will need to use a table to take notes about it as you listen to or view it. Below is a transcript from a persuasive TV show and on the following page is an example of a table that has been used to take notes about it.

The following is a transcript of a television presentation from the popular program *The Real Truth*, a show that presents a conservative viewpoint of current issues. In this show, it is presenting a perspective on the affordability of electric cars.

ELECTRIC CARS

[A television news studio with a well-groomed white female presenter sitting at a desk. Behind her, is a blue screen with the logo of *The Real Truth*.]

PRESENTER (TRACY): And now to an issue that concerns all Australians, particularly those struggling with the current cost of living: electric cars. We all know that electric cars are supposed to help us save the environment, but they are an expensive, luxury item that many Aussies can't afford. Instead, they are a symbol that inner-city hipsters like to buy to show off their environmental credentials. Let's look at this report by Graham White for more information.

[Camera pans across an inner-city cafe strip then focuses upon a series of shiny, new black cars. Camera then focuses upon a white man in his thirties with a microphone.]

GRAHAM: Look at any shopping strip in the inner city and you're likely to see them, parked out the front of expensive boutiques and cafes spruiking single-origin coffee. Electric cars. Here, in suburbs that most of us can't afford to live in, people are buying electric cars to make a statement. A statement about how environmentally friendly and "woke" [presenter makes inverted commas with his hands] they are.

[Camera focuses upon a young woman with short hair and large earrings walking towards a car. The presenter, Graham, walks towards her.]

GRAHAM: Excuse me, madam, can I ask you a few questions about your car?

WOMAN: Sure.

GRAHAM: Is this an electric car?

WOMAN: Yes, it is. I thought that if I was going to buy a car, it should really be environmentally friendly. That way I wouldn't feel bad about using it.

GRAHAM: Do you mind if I ask how much this car cost?

WOMAN: **[Close up of woman looking uncomfortable]** Well…it wasn't cheap.

GRAHAM: Do you think that the average Aussie could afford a car like this?

WOMAN: Ahhh…

[Camera shows Graham walking up to another man. This time it's a man in a suit approaching his car.]

GRAHAM: Excuse me, sir, do you mind if I asked how much your car cost?

MAN: I think you probably already know the answer to that question.

GRAHAM: It's not cheap, is it?

MAN: I don't think you're really asking a question, are you?

[Cut to a new scene. This time, Graham is standing outside a suburban shopping centre. A white woman is holding a full shopping trolley with a toddler in the baby seat. Beside her stands a pre-school-aged child.]

GRAHAM:	Excuse me, madam, can I ask about your car?
WOMAN:	Go for it.
GRAHAM:	Is it electric?
WOMAN:	[Laughs] No! They cost a ton. I'm just trying to keep a roof over my head and buy groceries **[Close up of baby in shopping trolley].** There's no way I can afford an electric car.
GRAHAM:	But wouldn't you save on petrol?
WOMAN:	Yeah, but I'd still have to buy a brand new car. I just can't do that at the moment... not with all the bills I've got.

Media outlet and audience: The conservative TV show *The Real Truth*. The audience would be interested in seeing their conservative values represented, such as their right to drive whatever car they want.

Intention: To show electric cars as a luxury that only rich, out-of-touch people can afford

First viewing	Second viewing		
Strategy/Argument	**Persuasive words**	**Persuasive manner of speaking**	**Persuasive images and sounds**
Opening: *Connects with the audience as ordinary Australians* *Poses a problem of electric cars being too expensive*	*"all Australians"* *"struggling"* *"luxury item"*	*Presenter speaks in a concerned, serious way at start*	*Logo 'Real Truth'*
Body: *Builds a picture of electric car owners as rich and out of touch* *Interviews ordinary car owners and shares their stories*	*"most of us can't afford" (judgemental)* *"average Aussie"* *"not cheap"*	*Cuts off woman's answer to question about affordability of electric cars* *Questions in an interrogating way*	
Closing: *Leaves a lasting image of the problem of electric cars being too expensive*	*"not with all the bills I've got"*	*Asks questions in a more sympathetic way*	*Close-up of baby in trolley* *Reporter nods in response to woman, face shows sympathy*

Study alert:

Download a blank copy of this table from www.tickingmind.com.au/tables

Put it into practice

Annotate intentions:

Read or listen to a persuasive piece once. Use this list of common intentions to help you identify how an audience is meant to think, feel or act by the end.

Feel

- ☐ be energised, excited, hopeful, inspired
- ☐ be outraged, horrified, concerned
- ☐ feel reassured, affirmed, listened to
- ☐ feel responsible for
- ☐ feel disdainful, judgemental of

Think

- ☐ view people with a different opinion in a certain way
- ☐ realise that there is a strong case for something
- ☐ change their minds about something
- ☐ realise that action is urgent
- ☐ accept that there is only one way ahead

Act

- ☐ take a particular action
- ☐ change the way they do something
- ☐ join a movement, become part of something
- ☐ put pressure on a powerful group

Arguments

Combine a word from the first column with something from either the second or third column to label an argument. For example, *environmental benefits.*

Description	Plus	Minus
environmental	benefits	drawbacks
economic	progress	threats
financial	advantages	difficulties
social	solutions	harms
local	opportunities	consequences
community	importance	disadvantages
cultural	significance	concerns
health	possibility*	damage
practical	feasibility*	dangers
long-term		impossibility*
immediate		
practical		

*These words don't need a description from the first column.

Annotate strategies or arguments:

Put a rectangle around the opening, body and closing of the persuasive text.

Bodies are normally the longest part of a text and may be broken in two (like in the example annotated text). Use both the tables below to help you annotate each section with the strategy or argument being used.

Strategies

While these strategies have been grouped into 'openings,' 'bodies' and 'closings', keep in mind that these strategies could be used in any place in a persuasive piece.

Openings

- establish seriousness of issue
- pose a problem
- connect with the audience's sense of identity as...
- establish the author's identity as...
- outline facts
- shock the audience
- re-frame the issue as...
- provide background to the issue

Bodies

- present facts
- present examples
- interview experts
- interview ordinary people who...
- rebut opposing views
- acknowledge concerns
- pose problems
- present solutions
- provide personal stories
- Wcreate a word picture of...
- present an analogy

Closings

- provide a clear instruction
- condemn actions that...
- condemn people who...
- present a next step
- call for governments to...
- place responsibility on...
- suggest a common-sense solution
- re-emphasise a problem
- leave a lasting image of a problem
- suggest a moral responsibility
- emphasise the urgent nature of...

Introductions

The first thing you should do in your analysis of argument is to write an introduction. Your introduction won't actually contain much analysis of argument, so you want to keep it fairly short so you can get down to some really detailed and insightful analysis in your body paragraphs. This section will show you how you can write a brief, snappy introduction in a short space of time.

The introduction of your analysis of argument should do these four things:

- outline the two sides of the issue that you are studying
- provide text and author information
- describe the contention or intention of the text
- describe the audience of the text.

Let's look at an example introduction.

→ The first row shows an introduction for just one piece.

→ The second row demonstrates how you would introduce a second piece:

While cars are viewed as an essential form of transport for many people in Australia, the increasing effects of climate change have prompted some people to advocate for electric cars, which are more environmentally friendly. In an article published for the moderate newspaper, *The Melbourne Mail*, motoring journalist Selima Demir argues that traditional, petrol-driven cars are outdated and consumers must advocate for the government to ban them from purchase in Australia. Demir targets the more progressive, forward-thinking values of her readership, asking them to turn their backs on old-fashioned technology.	Issue Text and author info Contention/ Intention Audience
In contrast, the television program *The Real Truth* presents electric vehicles as expensive and out of reach for the average Australian consumer, appealing to its viewers' conservative identification as people who look for common-sense approaches to purchasing.	Linking phrase for second piece

Put it into practice

Write a short introduction to the persuasive piece/s you are analysing. Use the sentence starters below to help you write sentences that include each of the four necessary pieces of information.

Information	Sentence starts	
Issue	Recently, A perennial concern of... The debate about... A recent	While... Following the... The issue of... Many people are concerned with...
Author and text type	In her...entitled..., [name]* In a...published by..., [name] Writing a...called...,[name] Speaking at...[name]	Speaking on behalf of...[name] In contrast, [name]** Refuting this... Arguing against this in...[name]
Contention/Intention	...asserts ...argues ...praises ...advocates for	...debunks ...repudiates ...criticises ...presents
Audience	appeals to^ targets addresses	affirms^ plays on petitions
Linking phrases (if analysing two pieces)	Unlike... In contrast to... While...	Also concerned with... Another...

Alternative sentence alert

Any of the words in this category can be used as an '-ing' word

*Note: the [name] should be filled by the speaker's or author's name

**This can either be the speaker's, the author's or the program's name

Body paragraphs

Each of your body paragraphs should analyse a different section or argument of a persuasive piece. You will need to analyse how the language and techniques within a particular section work to persuade the audience.

In this section, we'll show you how to use:

- effective examples
- body paragraph structure
- topic sentences
- evidence
- linking sentences.

Select effective examples

WARNING

You *should not* identify and annotate every example of persuasive language or techniques you notice in a persuasive piece. You should pick a few examples that best demonstrate the argument or strategy being used within each section. Look back at the example annotated persuasive piece on pages 148 and 150 to see how *just a few* examples have been selected in each section.

Body paragraph structure

In an effective analysis of argument, a body paragraph should contain the following elements:

Element	Explanation	Find more information on...
Topic sentence	This sentence focuses your body paragraph, identifying which section and argument you will be writing about, as well as the impact it has on the audience.	Page 157
Evidence and analysis	These sentences focus on analysing the evidence that best demonstrates the strategy or argument of a section.	Pages 159-172
Links	The words that connect examples and analysis within and between your sentences to create a cohesive paragraph	Page 173
Further evidence and analysis	In the second half of a body paragraph, you should have sentences that analyse additional evidence that demonstrate a section's argument or strategy.	Pages 159-172
Synthesising sentence	The synthesising sentence links all of the evidence and analysis of this body paragraph.	Page 175

Let's start by looking at an annotated example of a good paragraph:

Throughout the body of her opinion piece, Demir refers to the environmental destruction wrought by petrol-driven cars, in order to activate her audience's concern for the environment. She begins by labelling traditional cars as a "disaster", evoking the sense that they wreak havoc on the environment, destroying everything in their path. She underscores this point by referencing the figures provided by the Environmental Protection Agency, which reassures her readers that she is not being alarmist, but has well-researched facts and evidence to support her argument that petrol-driven cars are detrimental. Rather than continuing to focus on the negative, Demir labels electric cars as "newer, cleaner" energy, highlighting how advanced they are and appealing to the audience's sense of themselves as modern members of the 21st century. Describing these cars as both newer and cleaner, she further appeals to her audience's collective desire to create an immaculate and untainted environment to live in. She also emphasises that "it's time" we ban electric cars to heighten the audience's sense that petrol cars are out of date. By structuring the body of her writing with both problems and solutions, Demir is able to create the sense that she has considered the dilemma of cars and climate from all angles and is providing her climate-conscious audience with solutions that are researched and thoughtful.	Topic sentence Evidence and analysis Links Further evidence and analysis Synthesising sentence

Topic sentences

Writing clear and focused topic sentences will really improve the quality of your analysis of argument. This is because topic sentences signal what your paragraph is about and link your body paragraphs into a cohesive whole analysis. The beginning of each paragraph should start with a couple of topic sentences that indicate these things:

the section + **the specific argument or strategy** + **the effect on the audience**

Often, you'll be able to put all of this into one sentence, but sometimes you'll need two. Let's have a look at a few different examples of this:

During the main part of *The Real Truth's* story, Graham White interviews several electric car owners about how expensive their cars are, creating the sense that these cars are out of reach for the average, financially conservative viewer.	section specific argument or strategy effect on the audience
Throughout the body of her opinion piece, Demir refers to the environmental destruction wrought by petrol-driven cars, in order to activate her audience's concern for the environment.	
At the very beginning of *The Real Truth's* segment on electric cars, presenter Tracy highlights the costs of electric cars for viewers who consider themselves 'ordinary Australians'.	

Put it into practice

Use the phrases in this table to refer to the section, argument and strategy in your topic sentences:

Indicate the section	Refer to the argument or strategy
In the beginning	establishes
Early on in this...	offers
At the very beginning	evokes
From the outset	refers to
In the opening	interviews
At first	highlights
To begin with	considers
During	appeals to
In the middle of	prioritises
Throughout the body of	discredits
Midway through	disputes
Towards the end	contests
At the closing of	rebuts
The final section of	substantiates
The culmination of	underscores
	supports
	validates
	corroborates
	reassures

Use the examples and word lists below to help you refer to the audience in your topic sentence or any other part of your analysis:

1. Use adjectives to describe the audience like this:

Graham White interviews several electric car owners about how expensive their cars are, creating the sense that these cars are out of reach for the average, ***financially conservative viewer****.*

Here are some words you can use:	
environmentally minded	moderate
community-oriented	….viewer
forward-thinking	….reader
conservative	…listener
progressive	

2. Refer to the audience's interests or values in one of these ways:

a) *Tracy highlights the costs of electric cars for viewers who consider themselves 'ordinary Australians'.*

Here are some words you can use:	
for viewers	think of themselves…
for listeners	identify as…
for readers	are concerned about…
…who…	are interested in…
consider themselves…	

b) *Demir refers to the environmental destruction wrought by petrol-driven cars to activate her audience's concern for the environment.*

Here are some words you can use:
the audience's sense of…
the audience's identity as…
the audience's value of…
the audience's belief in…
the audience's concern for…

Analysing evidence

At the heart of each of your body paragraphs will be the analysis of evidence. To analyse evidence, you'll need to use analytic verbs, think analytically and use a range of evidence. This section will show you how to do these things.

Use analytic verbs

These verbs are called 'analytic' because they *analyse*, rather than just describe. By using them effectively, you can better analyse:

- the action of an author or presenter
- the impact of these words on the audience

Analytic verbs are words like *labels, describes, targets* and *creates.*

Let's look at an example:

Author or presenter action	Impact on the audience
*The presenter **attacks** electric cars as "luxury" items,*	***priming** the audience **to view** the cars as something only for rich people and not an item necessary for everyday life.*

The more specific you are in your word choice, the better your analysis will be.

Study alert:

Use the list of verbs on the opposite page to help you annotate or take notes about persuasive words in a text. By noting down analytic verbs at the annotation or note-taking stage, you'll create a plan for how you'll analyse persuasive language later in your writing.

Put it into practice

The table below lists a range of specific verbs and phrases you can use to analyse the action of an author or presenter and the impact it has upon the audience. Use the list to write a series of sentences analysing the evidence you have selected.

Author action		Audience impact	
connects to the audience	emphasises shared experience of… highlights the universality of… speaks to the audience as a group who… reaches out to the audience as… links themselves with the audience by…	reassures builds trust creates belief causes fosters develops primes prompts heightens increases strengthens generates activates triggers engenders galvanises inspires confronts forces establishes highlights emphasises	the audience to believe… the audience to think… the audience to recognise… the audience to view… the audience to associate… the audience to acknowledge that… the audience to see… the audience's sense of… the audience's value in… the audience's interest in… the audience's desire for… the audience's concerns about… the audience's fear of…
connects to the audience's identity or values	appeals to invokes affirms validates recognises acknowledges places to the fore		
says something negative	criticises attacks lambasts demeans denigrates derides ridicules		
says something positive	praises lauds celebrates champions		
uses evidence	cites refers to supports their case with points to		
makes something seem important	emphasises highlights reinforces reiterates exaggerates generalises		
puts a name or picture to a thing	describes characterises portrays labels equates…with…		

*you can replace 'audience' with *readers*, *listeners*, *viewers* or other, more specific words. See page 140.

Alternative sentence alert

Any of the verbs in the middle columns can be used as '-ing' verbs (i.e.…*emphasising how*, *ridiculing the…*)

Use a variety of sentence structures

Good analysis of argument will use a variety of sentence forms. If your sentences always start and end the same way, you will tend to say the same types of things in all of your sentences and your writing will become formulaic. You definitely want to avoid writing like this:

> *Demir describes petrol cars as being a "disaster", positioning her audience to see them in a bad light. She then says that petrol cars contribute a "staggering" amount of pollution, making the audience think they are really bad for the environment. Demir says after this that electric cars are "newer, cleaner" technology, making the audience think that they are better.*

By structuring your sentences in a variety of ways, you will show that you have greater control over your writing and you will keep your reader more engaged. You are also likely to say more insightful and interesting things.

A good analytic sentence can contain up to four things:

- an introduction of evidence (i.e. an analytic verb such as *describes, attacks*)
- evidence
- analysis
- linking word (i.e. *and, because*).

The example sentences below show how these elements can be used in different orders.

Sentence Structure	Sentence start	Sentence end
1. Introduce evidence 2. Evidence 3. Analysis beginning with '-ing' verb 4. Link	*Demir labels electric cars as "newer, cleaner" technology*	*, highlighting how advanced they are and appealing to the audience's sense of themselves as modern members of the 21st century.*
1. Evidence 2. Analysis	*The words "newer, cleaner"*	*appeal to the readers' sense of themselves as both modern and environmentally conscious.*
1. '-ing' verb to introduce evidence 2. Evidence 3. Analysis 4. Link	*Labelling electric cars as "newer, cleaner" technology*	*, Demir appeals to her audience's sense of themselves as modern members of the 21st century and so positions them to view the ban of petrol cars as a necessity.*
1. Analysis 2. Introduce evidence 3. Evidence	*In order to appeal to her audience's sense of themselves as modern consumers, Demir presents these types of cars as advanced and modern*	*through her description of electric cars as "newer, cleaner" technology*

Put it into practice

Write sentences analysing three different quotes. Practise structuring each sentence in a different way. Use the words and phrases in the table below to help you construct your sentences in a variety of ways:

Sentence starts	Sentence ends
By…	and
Through…	and so
In order to…	and consequently
In an attempt to…	in order to
	since
The description of…as "…"	so that
The characterisation of…as "…"	by
The reference to…as "…"	through
The word "…"	with
The words "…"	to
The phrase "…"	for
'-ing' words, i.e.	'-ing' words, i.e.
Attacking…as "…"	highlighting
Describing…as "…"	emphasising
Labelling…as "…"	underscoring
	appealing
	targeting
	activating

Think twice

When you are writing your analysis, you might be tempted to use as many different examples as possible. This means you might just write the first thing that pops into your head about each example and then move on to analysing another example, like this:

> *Demir labels electric cars as **"newer, cleaner"** energy, highlighting how advanced they are and appealing to the audience's sense of themselves as modern members of the 21st century. She also emphasises that **"it's time"** we ban electric cars, which heightens the audience's sense that petrol cars are out of date.*

Both of these sentences contain good analysis, but the student hasn't really given an in-depth analysis of either of the quotes they have chosen. Instead, it would have been better if the student had thought twice about each of the examples they had used and done something more like this:

> *Demir labels electric cars as **"newer, cleaner"** energy, highlighting how advanced they are and appealing to the audience's sense of themselves as modern members of the 21st century. By describing these cars as both newer and cleaner, she further appeals to her audience's collective desire to create an immaculate and untainted environment to live in. She also emphasises that **"it's time"** we ban electric cars, which heightens the audience's sense that petrol cars are out of date.*

To make this a truly outstanding analysis, the student could go on to add more analysis of the second quote.

Put it into practice

Practise writing two sentences that analyse the impact of one example.

Analysing quotes

Whether you are analysing a written or an audio text, one of the important pieces of evidence you'll analyse is quotes. When you're using a quote in your analysis, you should be analysing how a specific word or phrase creates a particular impact on the audience. This means you should ideally keep your quotes to 1–2 words in length.

Here's an example:

> *Demir labels electric cars as **"newer, cleaner"** energy, highlighting how advanced they are and appealing to the audience's sense of themselves as modern members of the 21st century.*

You should never quote an entire sentence: students who do this are *summarising* what a text does, not analysing it. You want your analytical essay to be full of *analysis*, not just retelling the main points of the persuasive text.

The impact of specific words

When you keep your quotes short, you can focus on how specific words or phrases are persuasive. Authors and presenters choose specific words or phrases to create a picture, feeling or association in the minds of their readers and viewers. A good analysis will unpack how this works. Here's an example of the thinking process to analyse the persuasive impact of specific words and phrases:

Specific word or phrase	Picture, feeling or association it creates
luxury item	something unnecessary, wasteful
vital	something required, urgent

Study alert:

To help you think of other words to describe the picture, feeling or association words or phrases create, look them up in a dictionary.

Here are some examples of what analysis of specific words can look like once you've brainstormed the picture, feeling or association it creates*:

Specific word or phrase	Specific impact
By labelling electric cars as a "**luxury item**",	**the presenter characterises them to the audience** as an unnecessary and wasteful thing that only rich people can access.
Demir emphasises that changes to our lifestyle are "**vital**"	**creating a sense for the audience that** such changes are not only required but urgent.

Alternative sentence alert

Of course, you can always reverse the order of these sentences and put the analysis of impact before introducing the specific word or phrase.

Analysing common techniques

There are some techniques that are particularly common in persuasive texts. Because these techniques are so common, students often write about them in a very general way and end up saying nothing specific about the text being analysed. In fact, rather than analysing these techniques, students often make the mistake of simply *identifying* the techniques and labelling them. But identifying and labelling is *not* analysis.

Here's a list of common persuasive techniques and examples of poor analysis:

Techniques	General and poor analysis
Inclusive language	Makes the audience feel included
Statistics	Makes the audience believe in the facts
Statistics about money	Appeals to the 'hip pocket nerve' of the audience
Rhetorical questions	Makes the audience think
Emotive language	Makes the audience feel

It's important to realise that you shouldn't just use the names or labels of techniques. Instead, you should be describing the technique and analysing how it will affect the audience.

Let's have a look at a high-level analysis. Although the student is analysing the effect of inclusive language, the student doesn't just *label* the technique, but analyses how the technique works:

> *Throughout the second half of the body of her piece, Demir repeatedly uses language* ***that creates a bond with her audience.*** *She says "we live", "we should" and "many of us",* ***to establish that she shares environmental values with her readers.*** *By establishing this connection, Demir* ***presents herself to her readers as a representative*** *of their views.*

Put it into practice

Practise writing about a common technique in a persuasive piece. Try to describe the technique by using words or phrases other than the name from the left-hand column. Use or adapt any of the phrases in the right-hand column to help you write about how this strategy impacts on a particular audience.

Techniques	Phrases to introduce specific analysis
Inclusive language *establishes a bond with…* *creates a connection with…* *emphasises shared values of…* *repeats shared pronouns…* *employs second-person pronouns…*	*presents (writer or speaker) as a representative of….* *demonstrates (writer or speaker's) understanding of…* *cultivating a sense of…*
Statistics *numbers that show…* *figures representative of…* *data about…* *figures revealing…* *graphs of…* *percentages of…*	**Statistics that show something is big***:* *emphasises the size of…* *confronts the audience with the magnitude of…* **Statistics that show something is small:** *illustrates the minor nature of…* *reduces the size of…* *presents…as only a…*
Statistics about money **use any of the phrases from the cell above to describe statistics about money in different ways	*targets a fear that money has been…* *targets the reader's concern that their own money could be…* *appeals to the…value that money should be…* *taps into the fiscal concerns of…*
Questions *poses…* *lists a series of…* *asks the reader…* *challenges the…*	**Questions with obvious answers:** *anticipates the audience's own question about…* *puts to the fore the primary concern about…* *emphasises that the (writer or presenter) is logically unpacking the issue and…* **Questions without obvious answers:** *shifts the audience from focusing on…to…* *prompts the audience to consider for the first time…* *presents (writer or speaker) as someone who has considered…*
Emotive language ***neutral*** *uses a description of…* *evoking…* **negative** *incendiary* *inflammatory* *inciting* *provocative* *warns* **positive** *idealises* *reassures*	**Negative responses:** *plays upon the sympathy of the audience towards…* *makes the audience feel ashamed of…* *creates a sense of fear about…* *elicits a sense of disgust in…* *cues the audience to feel outraged about…* **Positive responses:** *spurs the audience to a sense of excitement about the idea of…* *rouses the audience to…* *stimulates a sense of anticipation in…* *energises the audience to feel…*

Analysing visuals

Often, a persuasive piece might use a visual to support its arguments. These visuals can come in two forms.

1. **Clearly persuasive images:** These are any types of visual that are obviously intended to have some kind of persuasive impact. They could include:
   - icons, logos
   - cartoons, persuasive graphics or art
   - graphs, charts and tables
   - dramatic photos or footage.

2. **Ordinary images:** These are usually photos of people, places or things that – at first glance – don't initially seem particularly persuasive.

   No matter what form the visual is in, your task is to analyse how it is being used to support the arguments and overall intention of a persuasive piece. To do this, you need to do three things:
   - Link the visual to arguments in the text.
   - Identify key persuasive features of the visual.
   - Analyse the impact of persuasive features on the audience.

No matter what type of image you are presented with, you shouldn't spend too long analysing them: 2-3 sentences of analysis is a good length. Let's look more closely at how to do these things for the two types of visuals you will come across.

Clearly persuasive images

As an example, let's say that the persuasive piece on banning petrol cars from page 148 included the visual below. This is what a good analysis of the visual should look like:

Demir reinforces her argument about the significant environmental damage of petrol cars through the inclusion of a visual that depicts various vehicles producing a huge cloud of pollution. By showing a small car, alongside a bigger car and a truck, the picture vividly emphasises Demir's argument that all petrol cars are toxic to the environment.	links visual to arguments identifies key features in visual analyses impact of visual

Put it into practice

Try analysing a clearly persuasive image. Use some of the phrases in the table below to help you.

Words to link visual to argument:	Words to identify key features:	Words to analyse impact
reinforces strengthens underscores adds to highlights accompanying visual inclusion of a visual	portrays depicts represents includes features revolves around by showing through depicting by illustrating through characterising as	vivid, graphic, clear, powerful, dramatic, stark, comic, laughable, startling* a…sense that… a…picture of… an…image of… …representation of… …reminder of…

Alternative sentence alert

Instead of using these words as adjectives, turn them into adverbs by adding an '-ly' to the end (i.e. *vividly, graphically*). You can then use them with verbs such as 'emphasises', 'illustrates' and 'represents' to analyse the impact of a visual (i.e. *vividly emphasises…*)

Ordinary images

Ordinary images are typically photos of people, places or things. When you first see these types of images, they won't strike you as persuasive. However, the key to analysing them is to point out that someone or something is being presented in an ordinary or relatable light. For instance, the image below could have been included as an accompanying visual to the persuasive written piece on banning petrol cars from page 148.

This is what a good analysis of the visual should look like:

In order to make Demir's arguments more relatable to those of her readers who drive cars, the article is accompanied by a typical scene of petrol-driven vehicles on a busy highway. This highlights the ubiquitous nature of petrol-driven cars in society.	links visual to arguments briefly describes key features in visual analyses impact of visual on audience

Put it into practice

Try analysing an ordinary image. Use some of the phrases in the table below to help you.

Words to identify key features	Words to analyse impact
presents depicts shows ..... as a... relatable ordinary typical everyday	puts a face to shows the audience the reality of suggests to the audience that allows the audience to see the writer as strengthens the audience's sense of the writer as the ubiquitous nature of the everyday occurrence of the ordinary nature of

Analysing speech

When you are writing about an audio text, you will have to analyse word choice and techniques, but you will also have to consider the way speakers use their voices to persuade.

These are some of the things that change the way you think about an audio text:

- tone (excited, happy, angry…)
- pace (the speed of speaking)
- volume
- pauses
- interruptions or people speaking over each other
- sighing
- emphasis on particular words
- hesitation before responding.

When you are listening to an audio text for the second time, you should use the right-hand columns of the table on page 150 to ensure you are taking notes about the way an audio text is delivered.

When you begin to analyse the examples you have noted, it is helpful if you have some kind of understanding of the ways that voices are conventionally used to persuade people. On the page opposite is a table that shows you some of the ways that voices are often used to persuade. *However*, it is important to remember that the interpretations in the right-hand column are only some of the 'possible intentions' a speaker may have – as you practise listening to and analysing audio texts, you should make sure that you are thinking of your own analyses.

Here are some example analyses of how the delivery of speech influences an audience:

> ***When Graham interrupts*** *the electric car owner, cutting her off by saying, "Thanks for your time", he dismisses any points that she may have made, diminishing the value of any opinions or insights she may have offered.*
>
> *To highlight how ridiculous Graham's question is,* ***the woman with the shopping trolley laughs****, strengthening the audience's concerns that electric cars are simply unaffordable for the average Australian.*

Over the next two pages is a table that will help you identify and analyse ways of speaking.

Put it into practice

This table provides both a checklist of methods of speech to listen for in an audio text as well as some ideas about how these different elements might be persuasive. When analysing the impact of a method of speaking, use the verb table on page 160 as well as the suggestions in the right-hand column of the table to help write your sentences.

Ways of speaking	How it is used
Volume of voice	Louder
	Softer
Speed of voice	Faster
	Slower
Silence	Length of pause
	Hesitation or pause before answering a question
Conventional phrases	• Thanks • Thank you • It's a privilege to be here • It's exciting to be here
	• That's a good question • Thanks for asking that question • That's a good point
	• You might be thinking • You might be asking yourself • You might want to know
Emphasis on particular words	Some words are said more loudly or more slowly
Interruptions when another person is speaking	Someone speaks over the top of another person or doesn't allow them to finish their point
Sighs	A loud exhale of air
Tone	Serious/angry
	Positive/enthusiastic

	Possible intention
	Indicates passion (either anger or excitement)
	Suggests that an idea is a secret or secretive (or perhaps a little bit forbidden)
	Suggests excitement or enthusiasm for an idea and that there is so much information to learn
	Indicates that this is an important point that must be listened to extremely carefully
	Gives audience time to think about or consider what is being said
	Can be used to indicate that the speaker is thinking carefully about the answer to the question Could also mean that the speaker is unsure about how to answer the question
	By being polite or enthusiastic, a speaker comes across as someone reasonable and respectful of others
	By being positive about questions or points others make, a speaker appears more agreeable and less argumentative
	The speaker understands what people are thinking about this issue, but wants to gently point out their mistakes
	To indicate that a word and the ideas the word contains are particularly important
	• Shows contempt for another person's point of view • Suggests that the person who is interrupting thinks they have a better or more important point of view
	Indicates frustration or impatience with an idea Could also indicate satisfaction at a point well made
	These sorts of tones indicate that the speaker thinks the issue shouldn't be dismissed and underlines that it is grave, important, significant or critical
	A more positive tone indicates a speaker's excitement or enthusiasm for a new idea and invites listeners to feel energised, inspired or galvanised

Links

Throughout the paragraphs of your essay, you'll need to link your sentences and ideas together into a cohesive whole. When you are writing, you will need to create:

- links within sentences
- links between sentences
- synthesising sentences that link to the intention.

Links within sentences

Using linking or extra information words within a sentence will help you write with more detail. Typically, you should try to use at least one extra information word in each sentence. Very detailed sentences will have 3–4 extra information words like this:

> *She underscores this point by referencing the figures provided by the Environmental Protection Agency,* ***which*** *reassures her readers that she is not being alarmist,* ***but*** *has well-researched facts* ***and*** *evidence to support her argument that petrol-driven cars are detrimental.*

Put it into practice

Write a sentence that analyses a piece of evidence. Use the table below to practise using at least two extra information words in your sentence.

Give more information	Explain why something is done	Explain how something is done
and	because	by
and also	since	through
but	in order to	with
not only…but also	'-ing' words (i.e. highlighting, creating, causing)	
that		
which		

Links between sentences

Throughout an effective body paragraph, each sentence will build upon the analysis in previous sentences. To do this, you need to use linking words. In these body paragraph sentences, the linking words have been put in bold:

She begins by labelling traditional cars as a "disaster", evoking the sense that they wreak havoc on the environment, destroying everything in their path. ***She underscores this point by*** *referencing the figures provided by the Environmental Protection Agency, which reassures her readers that she is not being alarmist, but has well-researched facts and evidence to support her argument that petrol-driven cars are detrimental.* ***Rather than continuing*** *to focus on the negative, Demir labels electric cars as "newer, cleaner" energy, highlighting how advanced they are and appealing to the audience's sense of themselves as modern members of the 21st century.* ***Describing these c****ars as both newer and cleaner, she* ***further appeals*** *to her audience's collective desire to create an immaculate and untainted environment to live in.* ***She also emphasises*** *that "it's time" we ban electric cars to heighten the audience's sense that petrol cars are out of date.*

Put it into practice

Write 3–4 sentences analysing a section of a persuasive piece.

Use words from the table to practise linking these sentences.

Sentence starts	Verbs
Here	again uses
Rather than	repeats
Instead of	furthers
Moreover,	emphasises
Furthermore,	underscores
By	strengthens
Through	intensifies
In order to	
'-ing' this...as... (i.e. *Describing this idea as...*)	

Synthesising sentences

A synthesising sentence is the final sentence of your body paragraph. It performs a critical function by doing three things:

→ linking all of the individual examples within the body paragraph

→ linking the strategy or argument to the persuasive piece's overall intention or structure

→ analysing how this strategy works for this particular audience.

To do this, synthesising sentences should label the section and strategy being analysed, before introducing an analysis of the section and its link to the overall intention or structure of a piece.

Here are some examples:

By structuring the body of her writing with both problems and solutions, Demir is able to create the sense that she has considered the dilemma of cars and climate from all angles and is providing thoughtful solutions for her climate-conscious audience.	section and strategy link to overall intention or structure impact on audience
Ultimately, by ending the segment with a portrait of a struggling suburban mother they can identify with, *The Real Truth* is appealing to an audience who view themselves as ordinary Australians.	
To trigger her audience's sense of themselves as modern and thoughtful, Demir's opening description of outdated technology primes readers to see cars as a relic of the past that must be replaced.	

Put it into practice

Write a synthesising sentence for a body paragraph. Use any of the words and phrases in the table below to help write your sentences. In addition, you can use any of the verbs on page 160 to analyse the impact of a section within the whole persuasive piece.

Section and strategy	Analysis of impact of section and link to overall intention or structure		
By structuring the...with...	and so	paves the way for	triggers
By utilising...throughout the...	consequently	leads into	stokes
Through opening with...	and as a result	lays the foundation for	activates
Through focusing on...in...	which in turn	builds on	primes
Through this strategy of...		capitalises on	frames
By ending the piece with...		creates	galvanises
Ultimately, this...		provides	marshalls
The overall impact of...in...is to...		strengthens	impels
The net effect of...in...is...		underscores	returns to
The combined result of..is...			impresses upon
Cumulatively, these techniques combine to...			leaves the audience with

Conclusions

No matter whether you are analysing one piece or two, your analysis does not require a separate paragraph for a conclusion. Instead, your final body paragraph, where you analyse the closing of a piece, will serve as the end of your analysis. In this final paragraph, it's particularly important to analyse how the closing of a piece brings its arguments to a culmination and finally results in the audience thinking, feeling or wanting to do something.

Look at the example below.

Note how the topic sentence and the synthesising sentence work together to emphasise how the closing achieves a purpose:

In the final section of his report on electric cars, Graham interviews a woman at a suburban shopping centre ***to underscore how much*** *electric cars are beyond the means of ordinary people. The shot of the woman next to a shopping trolley laden with groceries and accompanied by two children emphasises that this person represents the everyday, real experience of trying to look after a family. The sympathetic tone in which Graham asks "is it electric" primes the audience to approve of her response. The impossibility of being able to buy an electric car is further emphasised through the way the woman laughs at the idea of buying one and labels them as costing a "ton". Ultimately, this final portrait of an ordinary person who scoffs at the idea of being able to afford an electric car* ***leaves the audience with the lasting impression*** *of such cars being only a "luxury" item for the elite.*

Put it into practice

To find some good words to analyse how the closing of a piece brings arguments to a culmination, look at the tables for topic sentences on pages 157-158 and synthesising sentences on page 175.

Persuasive Writing and Presenting

As part of your English studies, you will be required to complete a persuasive presentation – either in person or via a screencast.

You might also choose to write a persuasive piece for the Creating Texts area of study. Regardless of why you are drafting a persuasive piece, there are a number of steps that will help you with the process.

That's what this chapter is all about.

1. Choose an issue

To develop an interesting persuasive piece, you need to choose an issue you care about.

This section will show you how to:

- choose an issue:
  - for exploring and analysing argument
  - for crafting and creating texts
- develop a contention.

2. Brainstorm and plan

Your persuasive piece needs to be built on a detailed and purposeful plan.

This section will show you how to:

- plan in detail
- brainstorm arguments
- identify specific purposes
- choose strategies.

3. Micro writing practice

There are many different ways to write each part of your persuasive piece.

This section will show you examples of persuasive writing and different strategies you can use in your:

- openings
- bodies
- closings.

4. Presentation strategies

If you're delivering your persuasive piece as an oral presentation, you'll need to practise your presentation.

This section will provide you with:

- tips for all presentations
- tips for live presentations
- tips for recording screencasts.

Choose an issue

Coming up with an issue to write about can be tricky. To help you choose an issue, here are two tables that contain a whole range of common issues to think about. Use these tables as a starting point for selecting an issue. Your teacher will provide you with other suggestions and you can also come up with your own ideas.

Study alert:

The website www.procon.org lists many recent issues and pro and con arguments about them

Issues for exploring and analysing argument

Big issue	Common specific issues
Environment	climate change (bushfires, floods, unpredictable weather) green technologies (i.e. electric cars, renewable energies) animal extinction animal rights public transport farming practices (pesticides, fertilisers, land clearing) vegetarianism and veganism
Inclusivity and social justice	quotas pay gap between men and women violence towards minorities inclusivity in fashion diversity of representation on TV, in literature, in government accessibility of facilities to all people discriminatory employment freedom of religion hate speech
Public health	unhealthy behaviours: vaping, gambling, poor diet ads for unhealthy behaviours/foods drug reform effective training of health professionals cost of healthy food ease of access to health services (mental health, abortion) suicide prevention promoting exercise
Leadership	political leaders/parties not representative of wider society sporting leaders being flawed lack of voice for young people
Technology	impact of social media trolling mobile phone addiction power of tech giants robots replacing humans
Local issues	lack of access to opportunities lack of facilities controversial development names of public parks, streets, buildings

Issues for crafting and creating texts

Study alert:

These issues have been worded as opinions to help you choose something you are interested in. You don't need to agree with the statements – you can choose to argue against them, or develop your own ideas

Framework for ideas	More specific ideas
Play	some types of play are better than others play is essential to learning technology is destroying imaginative play schools destroy our ability to play being 'busy' interferes with leisure people who don't play are boring breaking the rules is important to play
Journeys	risk-taking is essential in life everyone should travel we should celebrate our failures the most important journeys are the ones we take inside our own heads companionship is important in travel
Country	humans always exploit the country they live in country is more important to some people than others community is more important than country when we control the country, we control others urban life offers richer cultural choices than country life
Protest	protest is the only way we can control our lives violence has no place in protest protest builds communities defiance is important in democracies everyday defiance is important getting along with others is more important than anything else
Influences	social media has too much power over our lives the most important people in our lives are our parents friends influence people more than leaders TV changes how we see each other we need to restrict the influence of advertising

Framework for ideas	More specific ideas
Other worlds	we must go to Mars other cultures can teach us important things we need to preserve indigenous cultures everywhere the world is becoming more homogenous preserving diversity is vital fantasy is the most important genre
Power and prejudice	white men control too much of the world no one has the right to say hateful things about others indirect racism is more harmful than blatant racism able-bodied people don't understand how difficult it is to live with a disability institutions must be more representative to make them fairer
Resilience	anxiety is the biggest problem facing young people today young people are snowflakes who need to harden up failure teaches resilience helicopter parents are raising kids who can't cope with the real world compassion is more important than 'getting over' something

Develop a contention

A really good persuasive piece will have a clear contention that is an integral part of every section of the piece. You want to leave your audience with no doubt about your opinion of the issue.

Often, when students think about an issue, they think about it in very general terms, like this:

We should do more to prevent climate change.

We need to pass laws so certain groups are treated more fairly.

We need to ban unhealthy things.

The problem with all of these statements is that they're quite vague. They don't nominate a specific action or a specific group of people who are responsible for the action. The reader is left with the questions – Do more what? What sort of laws? Ban what?

When you are arguing about an issue, you will do a much better job persuading your audience if you are specific about who or what is involved, like this:

All households *should install* ***solar panels****, in order to prevent climate change.*

Hate speech *must be banned so* ***minority groups*** *aren't attacked.*

Governments *need to introduce a* ***sugar tax*** *to combat the obesity epidemic.*

Study alert:

When you choose an issue, a contention might occur to you straight away, but for some students, you might need to think about some arguments to do with your issue before you're ready to state your contention **(the 'Brainstorm arguments' section on pages 188-190 will help you with this).**

Put it into practice

To develop a specific contention, you should think about who is involved and what actions they should take. The table below will help you to do this.

should	stop/start	stakeholders
must	do more	women
need to	adopt	men
ought to	promote	members of the LGBTIQ+ community
it's essential to	pass laws	Indigenous people
a matter of urgency	develop	immigrants
now is the time to	fix	refugees
it's vital	improve	differently-abled people
it's important	stop	children
	prevent	teenagers
	protect	young adults
	ban	families
	regulate	parents
	help	students
		government
		political leaders
		schools
		people starting a career
		the elderly
		retirees
		homeless
		unemployed
		business owners
		people who live in the city
		people who live in the country

Brainstorm and plan

Ultimately, in any persuasive piece, you are aiming to manipulate your audience into thinking and feeling a particular way about an issue. A good plan will help you do this better. This section will guide you through these four steps to produce a detailed persuasive plan:

Phase 1

Phase 1: Brainstorm arguments

Here's an example:

Contention: *Elite sports people should behave as role models.*

- If people continue to handle this issue in the same way, they will only get the same results: the front pages of newspapers will continue to have stories of sports people behaving badly.
- We need sports stars to be leaders.
- What's happening now is hypocritical and unfair. We need to have one rule for everyone: sports stars are getting away with the type of bad behaviour that ordinary people don't.
- This will create a fairer society: everyone will be expected to conform to the same rules.
- We admire sports people for their discipline.

Phase 2

Phase 2: Identify specific purposes

Here's an example:

For the audience…

- *to feel judgemental about the poor behaviour of elite sports stars*
- *to realise there is a strong case for elite sports stars changing their behaviour*
- *to understand and connect with my opinion that it is hypocritical for sports stars to behave like this.*

Phase 3: Select strategies

Here's an example:

Opening

Pose problem that makes audience judgemental of sports star's behaviour.

State solution that creates hope.

Body Part 1

Create a picture of why we admire sports stars.

Body Part 2

Rebut common arguments that sports people give to justify their behaviour.

Closing

What's happening now is hypocritical – we need a fair society where everyone is treated equally.

Phase 3

Phase 4: Plan in detail

At the end of the process of brainstorming ideas, you will need to outline a detailed plan for your persuasive piece. This plan should include notes about your contention, your purposes and what strategy, arguments and language you will use in each section of the piece to achieve your purposes or intention.

See an example of this on the next page.

Phase 4

Example plan

Although creating a detailed plan is the final step, it will be easier for you to complete the other steps of the planning process if you first know what you are working towards.

Below is an example plan on the issue of: *elite sports people should behave as role models.*

This plan is structured almost in the same way as you would take notes to analyse an argument. This is because you are using the same elements you identify in an analysis of argument to construct your own persuasive piece.

Contention: ***Elite sports people should behave as role models.***

Purposes: For the audience...

1. *to feel judgemental about the poor behaviour of elite sports stars*
2. *to realise there is a strong case for elite sports stars changing their behaviour*
3. *to connect with my opinion that it is hypocritical for sports stars to behave like this.*

Strategy/Argument	Notes	Vocabulary
Opening *Pose problem that makes audience judgemental of sports star's behaviour* *State solution that creates hope*	• *recent examples of bad behaviour: drugs, swearing, sexual assault* • *sports stars need to behave in thoughtful ways*	*self-deluded* *nonsense* *discipline and control*
Body Part 1 *Create a picture of why we admire sports stars*	• *training regimes* • *doing things we can't or won't*	*hypocritical* *impressive* *mental discipline*
Body Part 2 *Rebut common arguments that sports people give to justify their behaviour*	• *blame the media (even though they put up their own social media)* • *examples: quotes from social media*	*claims* *persecuted* *individual responsibility* *whining*
Closing *What's happening now is hypocritical – we need a fair society where everyone is treated equally*	• *Compare entitled athletes to real people*	*humility* *deserve* *lucky* *recognise* *privilege*

Study alert:

Download a blank copy of this planning template from: www.tickingmind.com.au/tables

Phase 1: Brainstorm arguments

After you've developed a contention, you'll need to brainstorm arguments to support this contention. Over the next few pages are some checklists that will help you think about arguments more strategically.

Common arguments

Many effective persuasive pieces don't rely on new or innovative arguments but in fact use tried and tested arguments that have been used many times before. The common arguments listed below work particularly well if you are arguing for or against implementing a new law, technology or process.

Put it into practice

Look through these arguments to identify any that might help you make your case. It's worthwhile reading through the arguments on both sides because you might find an argument on the 'opposite' side that will support your case.

Common arguments for trying something new	Common arguments against trying something new
• If people continue to handle this issue in the same way, they will only get the same results. • Progress is good. We need to live in the 21st century, not the past. • We all need to be responsible for change. We can't leave it to someone else. • What's happening now is hypocritical and unfair. We need to have one rule for everyone. • Even though change might be expensive or difficult, there are important long-term benefits. • If people don't change now there will be huge costs in the long term. • Other people, places or countries are doing this. We need to stay relevant and keep up with what is modern and best practice. • The evidence is clear. Experts agree. • We need to act in the best interests of the majority. • I've always found this attitude confusing because…	• A change like this is the first step to bigger and more destructive changes. If we let this happen…what worse change will happen next? • It's impractical. It's already been tried and hasn't worked. • It's too expensive. The money and time can be better used elsewhere. • The cost to people's personal freedoms and rights is too high. • This is simply change for change's sake. We need to keep some things the same. • People aren't ready for this type of change. • Jobs will be lost. • The evidence is unclear. We need to wait until experts agree. • It is inconvenient to make this change. • Undoubtedly, mistakes have been made, but this doesn't mean we need to change the whole system. • Let's not forget that history shows us…

Consider all factors

Looking at common arguments might help you to articulate some ideas you already have about your issue, but in order to have a really good persuasive piece, you need to have a range of different arguments and thoughts. On the opposite page is a Consider All Factors chart. Look through it to help you develop a range of arguments.

For example, if you were writing a persuasive piece about how all schools should create a four-day week, you might immediately go to the Education section on the CAF chart.

However, as you look through the chart, you could also consider these factors:

1. Economy and productivity: this might impact on teachers' jobs and how much they get paid.
2. Social welfare: a four-day week would create a more liveable society where students have a better school/life balance.
3. Justice, fairness and equality: Working parents need somewhere to send their children when they're at work.
4. Public health and safety: School-aged children need to be looked after by qualified staff.

Put it into practice

Look through the list and identify the one or two factors that you believe support one, central contention. Use the questions to help you develop arguments that will support your case.

Economy & Productivity	Public Health & Safety	Environment & Animal Rights
• Will this impact on people's jobs? • How much will this cost? • Long-term and short-term costs? • Who is paying? • What are the financial benefits? • Will this be an efficient use of resources? • Does this have practical benefits?	• Will this protect people from risks? • Will this impact upon people's health? • Is this overprotective? • Is this measure proportional to the risk or danger?	• Will this protect the environment? • Is this in response to scientific evidence? • Does this provide long-term solutions? • Will this have unforeseen consequences for the environment? • Should we give animals similar rights to humans?
Education	**Social Welfare, Culture and Tradition**	**Justice, Fairness & Equity**
• Is this about equal access to quality education? • Does this improve the educational opportunities for everyone? • Does this prioritise some types of education over others? • Do people need further education about this issue? • Should there be a public campaign about this?	• Will this help us look after each other better? • Will this create a more vibrant or diverse community? • Will this create a more liveable society? • Will this create a more inclusive or respectful society? • Does this preserve important traditions?	• Does this give some people more power than others? • Are some groups impacted by this more than others? • Is this likely to create a fairer society? • Have different voices and perspectives been listened to? • Is this best for a majority of people?
Public Popularity and Opinion	**Leadership**	**Individual vs. Group**
• Is this issue actually important to most people? • Do we know what people really think about this issue? • Is this important, even if it's unpopular? • Will this create protest, opposition or division in society? • Does this send a signal to people?	• Is this organisation/institution being run well? • Do leaders represent the views of the people? • Will this create better leaders? • Do we need leadership on this issue? • Who needs to be a leader about this issue?	• Is this more important for the individual or for wider society? • Does this allow people to preserve their own privacy? • Will people be able to choose what's best for themselves? • Should everyone be forced to change because of the actions of a few people?

Phase 2: Identify specific purposes

As you choose arguments to support your contention, you'll begin to develop a sense of how you want your audience to react to your arguments. For example, if you have chosen arguments that emphasise the importance of change to improve public health, you probably want your audience to think *that the need for action is urgent.* Often your piece won't have just one purpose, but multiple purposes. This is because you want your audience to feel and think different things as they experience your argument.

Let's look at an example of this:

Contention: *Elite sports people should behave as role models.*

Arguments	Purposes
• We need sports stars to be leaders. • What's happening now is hypocritical and unfair. We need to have one rule for everyone: sports stars are getting away with the type of bad behaviour that ordinary people don't. • We admire sports people for their discipline.	1. *For the audience to feel judgemental about the poor behaviour of elite sports stars.* 2. *To realise there is a strong case for elite sports stars changing their behaviour.* 3. *To connect with my opinion that it is hypocritical for sports stars to behave like this.*

Put it into practice

This table lists possible ways you might want your audience to feel, think or act in response to your persuasive piece. Choose, combine or adapt one or more of these statements to develop a set of specific purposes for your persuasive piece.

Connect	Feel	Think	Act
☐ empathise with the presenter ☐ identify with what the presenter does or says ☐ trust the presenter's integrity ☐ understand where the presenter is coming from ☐ feel affirmed, listened to, represented	☐ be energised, excited, hopeful, inspired ☐ be outraged, horrified, concerned ☐ feel reassured ☐ feel responsible for ☐ feel disdainful, judgemental of	☐ view people with a different opinion in a certain way ☐ realise that there is a strong case for something ☐ change their minds about something ☐ realise that action is urgent ☐ accept that there is only one way ahead ☐ think that this case has been well-researched	☐ take a particular action ☐ change the way they do something ☐ join a movement, become part of something ☐ put pressure on a powerful group

Phase 3: Select strategies

To achieve your specific purposes, you will want to use a range of strategies. Let's look at how you might match purpose and strategy:

Purpose	Strategy
To feel judgemental about the poor behaviour of elite sports stars	*outline facts*
To realise there is a strong case for changing their behaviour	*create a word picture of how dedicated sports stars are* *rebut arguments that they are treated unfairly*
To connect with my opinion that it is hypocritical for sports stars to behave like this	*suggest a common-sense solution*

Put it into practice

The table below includes a list of common strategies that can be used at different points in a persuasive piece. Use this list to select a strategy for each section of your persuasive piece.

Openings	Bodies	Closings
• establish seriousness of issue • pose a problem • connect with the audience's sense of identity as... • establish the author's identity as... • outline facts • shock the audience / challenge assumptions • re-frame the issue • provide background to the issue	• present facts • present examples • interview experts • share stories of ordinary people • rebut opposing views • acknowledge concerns • pose problems • present solutions • provide personal stories • create a word picture • present an analogy	• provide a clear instruction • condemn actions • condemn people • present a next step • call for governments to take action • place responsibility on someone • suggest a common-sense solution • re-emphasise a problem • leave a lasting image of a problem • suggest a moral responsibility • emphasise the urgent need for action

Phase 4: Plan in detail

To create a detailed plan like the one on page 187, download a planning template from www.tickingmind.com.au/tables

Openings

There are some common strategies that work particularly well in openings. These are:

→ provide background to establish the seriousness of the issue

→ connect with the audience

→ establish the author or presenter's identity

→ re-frame the issue or challenge audience assumptions.

These strategies can be carried out by using a range of persuasive techniques such as:

- telling an anecdote
- emphasising the most important information
- labelling or describing the issue
- creating a picture of what an experience, situation or problem is like
- directly addressing or involving the audience
- clearly stating a contention.

Let's look in more detail at some openings, so you can see how different strategies are achieved through a range of persuasive techniques.

Provide background to establish the seriousness of the issue

The aim of this type of opening is for the audience to understand how bad a situation is so they can see that it needs to be fixed. Often, this type of opening involves creating a picture of the situation, labelling the issue or emphasising the most important information the audience needs to focus upon. The two examples below show you this. However, it is also possible to use an anecdote to show the seriousness of the issue.

Elite athletes have been in the news this week for these sorts of behaviours: spitting, swearing at umpires, sexually assaulting people and drug taking. It's ironic because, in order to be an elite athlete, you need to have discipline and control – but for some reason, these people think that they only need to apply discipline to their sport, not to their lives. But this self-deluded nonsense has to stop. Now.	Create a picture of what the situation is like Clear statement of contention
There's a crisis of depression, anxiety and violence that is crippling the world. More people are unhappy than ever before. Our society is plagued by anti-social and aggressive behaviour. But there's an answer: we need to play more.	Labelling the issue Emphasising the most important information Clear statement of contention

Establish author's identity

The aim of this type of opening is to establish how the author or presenter is knowledgeable about this field. Often, this is achieved through an anecdote about the author's experience or by providing a picture of what sort of person they are.

Yesterday I was a tiger. Well, it was only when I was babysitting my three-year-old cousin that I was a tiger, but still – it happened. In that moment, stalking through the jungle of my auntie's living room, I was a tiger. And it was kinda fun. Embarrassing, but definitely fun. That's because playing is fun.	Tells an anecdote about a recent fun instance of playing Creates a picture of what playing is like Clear statement of contention
We should all be treated equally, right? I feel lucky that, unlike the stereotypical image of boys, I don't have to be interested in sport. I don't even know the rules of most games. So I've never paid much attention to the latest scandal involving a 'sports star'. Until this weekend, when one of my uncles was talking about the latest scandal with my mother and he shrugged and said, "Boys will be boys, right?" And she agreed. Right in front of me. And it made me wonder: as a boy, am I allowed to do things my sisters aren't?	Clear statement of contention Provides a picture of the sort of person they are Tells an anecdote

Connect with your audience

Persuasive pieces are much more effective if they connect with their audience. Some writers or presenters do this in the opening of their piece. They achieve this sort of connection by:

- showing how an issue affects the audience
- putting them in someone else's position so they feel empathetic
- establishing shared values or experiences.

Let's do a short quiz. Which of these do you think is acceptable? Urinating through the window of a nightclub. Making a TikTok video rating the attractiveness of women. Sharing nude pics of someone with your friends. If your answer is 'none,' then you'd have trouble being a sports star at the moment, because the current epidemic of athletes behaving badly shows they're all common practice.	Directly addresses and involves the audience Label the issue

Picture this: over the weekend, you head out to do some shopping with your friends. You're hoping to try on a few new styles, get a couple of new t-shirts and maybe even something you haven't planned for. But instead, what happens is that you get to the shops and go into store after store without being able to find your size. What's worse is that the only shop that seems to have your size stocks clothes that look like something your grandma would wear. Pretty demoralising, right? But that's the kind of shopping experience larger teenagers have been experiencing for years.	Puts the audience in a position to empathise with this experience Directly addresses audience

Challenge audience assumptions or reframe the issue

The aim of this type of opening is to tackle common misconceptions an audience might have about an issue or to introduce a new way of thinking about it. Typically, this is achieved by addressing the audience or presenting important information that many people wouldn't know.

A recent study by the University of California found that engaging in thirty minutes of cooperative play each day improves cognition, increases happiness and extends life expectancy. Interestingly, the research wasn't about children. It was about people aged over 80 and showed that play is just as important for adults as it is for children.	Presenting new information Clearly stating contention
A recent study by the University of California found that engaging in thirty minutes of cooperative play each day improves cognition, increases happiness and extends life expectancy. Interestingly, the research wasn't about children. It was about people aged over 80 and showed that play is just as important for adults as it is for children.	Presenting new information Clearly stating contention

Put it into practice

Experiment with writing openings for your persuasive piece. Try two different opening strategies and compare which works best. The table below provides some suggestions about particular phrases you can use to write with some of the specific persuasive techniques modelled in the examples.

Create a picture	Label or describe the problem	Directly address or involve the audience
Picture this:...	crisis in...	Who hasn't thought...?
Every day in the news there is another story of...	epidemic of...	We all know that...
All around us...	catastrophe	Everyone has had some experience of...
We live in a society where...	critical failure	You can't deny that...
Unlike many people, I...	disaster	Like me, you probably...
You might not know this about me, but...	plaguing	Put yourself in...
	crippling	You might not have thought about it much, but...
		If you could, would you...

Tell an anecdote	Emphasise the most important information	Clearly state a contention
Only the other day,	more people than ever before	solution
Last week,	our society is	turning point
I heard someone	every day, we're faced with	the way forward is
When I was	recent research has shown	opportunity
At the...I overheard...	experts all agree	chance
My parents are always telling me...	a poll of	just as important as
Over the weekend,		now is the time
My view about...changed when		should
		there's an answer

Body Paragraphs

This section will give you help with two aspects of a persuasive body paragraph:

- **body paragraph structures**
- **techniques to provide persuasive details and a description within a paragraph.**

Structures

There are different ways to structure a body paragraph, but every structure has the same two basic elements:

- an opening sentence
- persuasive details and a description that follows on from the opening.

The persuasive details and description will make up most of the paragraph and will include a key argument and strategy. This will be explained in more detail pages 199-204.

Opening sentences

The opening sentence of your persuasive paragraph sets up the argument and strategy that you will be using throughout your body paragraph. There are a few different ways you can structure the first sentence of a persuasive piece:

- assertion
- problem
- question
- information
- opposing claim.

Each of these opening sentences indicates the sort of information and detail that the rest of your body paragraph will have, like this:

- assertion → justification
- problem → solution
- question → answer
- information → explanation of its significance
- opposing claim → rebuttal.

Let's have a look at a paragraph that starts with an *assertion* and then goes on to include *justification* for that assertion:

One of the reasons that we admire athletes so much is that they can do things we cannot. They get up to train for hours every day. They eat well to improve their performance. They have the mental discipline to get up and exercise even when it's cold and rainy. While the rest of us are hitting the snooze button on our alarms and skipping gym sessions, these athletes are up and about, improving their fitness and abilities. It's impressive and we're right to be impressed. We know these athletes can control themselves when we can't. But for some reason, these individuals think that self-control only applies to their sporting performance. It's hypocritical and pathetic.	Assertion Justification

There are many other ways of structuring a persuasive paragraph. These are listed in the table below with examples. You should try to use a few different structures throughout your piece.

Paragraph starter	Next part
Problem	**Solution**
People who live in the country are disadvantaged in all sorts of ways – they have less access to cultural events, they don't have reliable access to public transport, but worst of all, they don't have easy access to health professionals.	*Fortunately, social media and tele-health are easy ways of overcoming this health problem...*
Question	**Answer**
But who really has the time to play?	*This is exactly the sort of attitude that suggests play is frivolous and 'extra' in our lives, rather than a vital part of maintaining imagination and curiosity. Psychologists and mental health experts suggest...*
Information	**Explanation**
Emerging evidence suggests that the amount of time that children spend on outside imaginative play has decreased by over 70% in one generation.	*What this means is that children are far less likely to be able to regulate their emotions and are more likely to develop depression than their parents...*
Opposing claim	**Rebuttal**
Some fashion labels claim that it's too expensive to produce a size-inclusive range.	*But this is ridiculous because by increasing the size options, fashion labels are accessing a whole new customer base...*

Put it into practice

Plan three or four body paragraphs for your persuasive piece. Choose a range of structures for these body paragraphs. Practise writing the first sentence of each paragraph.

Techniques to provide persuasive details and description

Throughout your body paragraphs, it's important you use a variety of strategies that support your opening sentence and provide persuasive details and a description. This section will help you understand and practise how to use a range of common strategies that provide details and descriptions.

Strong verbs

Verbs are the action words in our sentences. In persuasive writing, your sentences will be much more persuasive if you use verbs that have strong and dramatic positive or negative connotations.

In the example below, the two verbs in bold convey strong positive connotations about the benefits of play:

> *Engaging in just ten minutes of play each day significantly **enhances** brain function and **boosts** a child's ability to learn new things at school.*

In this next sentence, the two verbs in bold have strong negative connotations about the harm of joyless education:

> *Institutional, structured education **kills** play and **destroys** the capacity of our young people to learn how to have fun and use games as a way to learn and live.*

Put it into practice

Practise writing some persuasive sentences and focus on using strong verbs. Choose some verbs from this list to help you.

Verbs with positive connotations		Verbs with negative connotations	
augments	encourages	bars	kills
assists	enhances	chokes	narrows
builds	generates	damages	quashes
bolsters	launches	destroys	removes
boosts	promotes	eliminates	ruins
creates	stimulates	erases	stalls
elevates	strengthens	extinguishes	vaporizes

Persuasive Adjectives

Throughout your body paragraphs, you will need to describe the issue to your audience. It's important to remember that you are trying to manipulate your audience into *feeling* something about the issue. Strong feelings are very persuasive. So you will want to use describing words, or adjectives, that make your audience feel positively about what you're arguing for or negatively about what you're arguing against.

In this example, the adjectives in bold encourage the audience to feel negatively about the behaviour of athletes:

> *But for some reason, these individuals think that self-control only applies to their sporting performance. It's* ***hypocritical*** *and* ***pathetic****.*

In this example, the last adjective in bold encourages the audience to feel that play is necessary and not something that is silly:

> *This is exactly the sort of attitude that suggests play is* ***frivolous*** *and '****extra****' in our lives, rather than a* ***vital*** *part of maintaining imagination and curiosity.*

Put it into practice

Practise writing sentences that make your audience feel a certain way about the issue. Try using some words from this table.

Instead of *bad*...	Instead of *good*...	Instead of *silly*...	Instead of *important*...
dire	exceptional	hypocritical	vital
disastrous	fabulous	frivolous	significant
catastrophic	first-class	ridiculous	crucial
drastic	superior	poorly planned	serious
severe	on-the-ball	unintelligible	fundamental
problematic		vague	historic
painful		pathetic	remarkable
			necessary
Instead of *difficult*...	**Instead of *simple*...**	**Instead of *certain*...**	**Instead of *common-sense*...**
arduous	straightforward	sure-fire	practical
complicated	easy	beyond a doubt	reasonable
convoluted	basic	naturally	sound
over-involved	plain	surely	sensible
	simplistic	unquestionably	
		exactly	

The Rule of Three

By now, you've probably realised that effective persuasive writing isn't just about having sensible reasons and good evidence. You need to create a piece that makes people feel, that makes people think and that makes your writing memorable. In order to make your writing memorable, you often need to say something more than once. This is where the rule of three comes in: it's a really old writing technique and it works well because it creates a sense of 'flow' in your writing.

Let's have a look at a couple of examples:

> *We're living through an epidemic of **anxiety**, **depression** and **mental health** issues.*
>
> ***They** get up to train for hours every day. **They** eat well to improve their performance. **They** have the mental discipline to get up and exercise even when it's cold and rainy.*

Put it into practice

Here are a number of tips for using the rule of three:

Rule of three strategy	Example or phrases
Instead of just using one adjective to describe something, use three. Use the table of adjectives on page 200 to help you.	~~*This is a terrible idea.*~~ *This is a **ridiculous**, **poorly planned** and **stupid idea**.*
If you use a phrase such as 'we must' or 'we should', try describing three things that 'we must' do, instead of just one.	*We must make more room for **play**; we must make more time for **games** and we must fill our lives with more **joy**.*
Think of three groups of people who might be affected by an issue and list them in a sentence.	*This is bad for **families**. This is bad for **children** and it's bad for **society**.*
Use some of the phrases in the next column to help you write a sentence with a rule of three or three linking sentences.	• *It's not only…it's also…and…* • *The reasons for this are threefold: it's…it's…and it's…* • *We must…, …and…* • *They should…, …and…* • *It's…It's…It's…* • *You should…You should…You should* • *We must…We must…We must…* • *They…They…They…*

Inclusive language

Everyone likes to feel included. When you write a persuasive piece, you should use language that makes your audience feel that your argument concerns and affects them. It should also make them feel connected to you as a writer.

Here are some examples of sentences that use inclusive language:

> ***Just like you**, I want to make life a little bit easier for myself and a little bit more convenient.*
>
> ***We all** know that life is harder for people who are living with a disability and that's why **we all** must do something to make their lives easier, like advocating for more publicly accessible toilets, more ramps to public buildings and more updating of historic buildings.*
>
> *It's important to understand that it is **our** future at stake. If **we** don't do something to prevent climate change **we're** all going to be facing an uncertain future.*

Put it into practice

Use the phrases in the table below to help make your audience feel more included and involved in your argument.

We phrases	*You* phrases
we must	you all know
we all	you can't deny
we all believe	you have to ask yourself
we all feel	just like you
at some point, we've all had the experience of…	when you…
who of us hasn't…?	

Links

Just like for any good paragraph, the sentences in a persuasive body paragraph should link and flow into each other. These are three linking strategies that work particularly well in persuasive writing:

- 'Signpost phrases' at the beginning of a paragraph
- Linking words at the start of sentences
- Repetition of related words and ideas

The paragraph demonstrates some examples of these linking strategies:

Even more important than the way social media facilitates the **sharing** of information or **connects** individuals, is the way it builds **communities**. People can truly find their tribe online. **And not just** one tribe, but many. You name your interest – cloud watching, cosplay, handball, cooking things with artichokes – and there will be a social media **community** that **shares** this interest. Reaching out and finding that there is not just one person but **many** who **share** your interest and passion for a topic is a life-affirming experience. **These** meaningful **connections** make the world a better place – because the more **communal** we are, the kinder we are as well.	**Signpost phrase** **Repetition of related words or ideas** **Linking words at the start of sentence**

Put it into practice

Write a persuasive paragraph. This table will give you some concrete tips on how to use linking strategies:

Strategy	Tips or phrases
Signpost phrases	The first thing to know about this issue is... At the heart of this issue is... The most basic reason for...is... To understand why...you first need to understand that... Apart from..., there is also... On top of..., there is also... But this is not just about..., it's also about... Another key reason for... But of most importance... But even more important than... The final and most important reason for... But perhaps the most compelling reason for...is...
Repetition of related words	• To emphasise an important idea or feeling, use a key word in a variety of forms throughout a paragraph (i.e. *connects*, *connection*, *connected* / *community*, *communal*) • Use the rule of three to repeat related ideas – see pg...
Linking words at the start of a sentence	This... These... However,... Moreover,... Furthermore,... As if this isn't proof enough, there is also... What's more... On top of this... And... And not just...

Closings

A strong closing to a persuasive piece should be reasonably short (1–2 sentences is a good length) and leave the audience with a clear feeling or motivation for action. Here are five examples of simple ways to close a persuasive piece.

Takeaway message

This technique aims to summarise the core of your argument into a memorable, slogan-like final one or two sentences.

> *It's clear that bodies have changed over the years, all I'm asking is that fashion reflects these changes. It's as simple as that.*

Rule of three/list

The rule of three is a highly effective closing strategy: it summarises an argument in a memorable way and makes your case appear elegant and polished.

> *We should all take the time to reflect on the hard work that has gone into our food. We should all consider how long it takes for the vegetables on our plate to become nutritious and delicious food. And we should all think about the hard work farmers have done to provide us with food.*

Future prediction

This closing strategy seeks to motivate the audience to take action or change their attitude now by showing what things might look like in the future.

> *In years to come, we're going to look back on this epidemic of 'busyness' with bemusement and wonder why we didn't take more time to have fun while we could. Because, hopefully, in the future, we'll clearly understand just how important play is.*

Call to arms

With this type of conclusion, you challenge your audience to take immediate action.

> *Next time you go to a cafe and ask for a takeaway coffee, remember that the planet is not as disposable as a cup. So use a keep cup, because you're on this planet for keeps.*

Personal pledge

In this type of closing, you commit to taking action yourself in order to motivate your audience to also take action.

> *So from now on, I'm going to think carefully before I give a one-star review, because if I'm rich enough and lazy enough to pay someone to bring me cold takeaway I shouldn't make an overworked and underpaid delivery person feel worse about themselves.*

Put it into practice

Practise writing your closing in a few different ways. Use the table below to help write with different closing strategies.

Takeaway message
It's clear that…
The way forward is simple:
Really, it's as easy as…
In the end, the choice is straightforward:
It's impossible to argue with…

Rule of three
We must do this for…, for…and for…
We must commit to…, …and…

See more tips about this strategy on page 201.

Future prediction
In years to come…,
Within the next few years…,
Soon…,
There is a window now to act. If we don't…
If we don't take the opportunity to…now, the future will be…

Call to arms
Next time you…
Whenever you're next…
We can all choose to make a difference tomorrow by…
Change is possible if we all…
If we're to change things, each of us needs to…

Personal pledge
Next time I…, I will…
So from now on…
I'm going to start…
Fixing…requires each of us to…So I'll be…

Presentation strategies

When you deliver your persuasive speech, you need to consider your audience. You want to make your speech as interesting and engaging for them as possible. This is true whether you are presenting your speech in person or you are creating a screencast of yourself. Try to give the sort of presentation that you wouldn't mind watching yourself.

All presentations

Whether or not you are giving your presentation live or creating a screencast, here is a checklist for making your delivery as persuasive as possible:

- ☐ **Practise:** Just like you have to practise your writing skills, it's important to practise your presentation so that you do a good job. Don't just write your persuasive piece and then record it, actually practise speaking it several times over a few days. A valuable way of giving yourself feedback about your presentation when practising it is to record yourself. This way, you can see what other people see and you can practise the parts of your speech that need the most work. Also, the more you practise, the less you will need to use notes and your speech will start to sound more natural.
- ☐ **Find a natural and steady pose:** If you're standing up in front of your audience, try to stand in the one spot, because pacing up and down can make you look a bit unhinged. If you're creating a screencast of yourself, sit comfortably with both feet firmly on the ground (or one foot, if you prefer to cross your legs) so that you don't swivel in your chair or fidget too much. Lots of movement can be distracting for your audience.
- ☐ **Use hand gestures:** Some people naturally use a lot of hand gestures when they speak. Other people are more still. You should do whatever feels most comfortable and normal for you. The more you practise, the more your gesturing will become natural. However, make sure you gesture with one or both of your hands to emphasise important points.
- ☐ **Pace yourself.** When you are nervous, it's normal to want to speak more quickly so you can get your speech over and done with. However, it's difficult for your audience to understand how important your arguments are if you're always rushing. Pause between sentences and between arguments so that your audience has time to let your information sink in.
- ☐ **Vary your tone.** If you've ever had the experience of being told off, you already know that being shouted at for a long time is very tiring. But also, being spoken to calmly and quietly can become quite boring. Try to vary your tone so that you are sometimes speaking passionately and sometimes speaking calmly. This will help your audience to maintain focus throughout your presentation.

Study alert:

Record yourself practising your presentation. Watch the recording and think particularly about whether the speed of your presentation is right and your tone is natural and interesting.

Live presentations

If you are giving your presentation live, there are two things to take particular care with:

- ☐ **Eye contact** is perhaps the most important and difficult element to get right. Because you will probably feel nervous and a bit embarrassed or weird, it's tempting to try to avoid looking at anyone in the room. However, this will have the effect of making everyone feel ignored and like your speech is entirely irrelevant to them, which isn't persuasive. People can read faster than they can speak, so scan through each sentence and as you finish reading the last part of each sentence, look up at your audience. Make sure you sometimes look to your left, to the centre and to the right of the room. Looking at three parts of the room can work really well if you're using a rule of three.
- ☐ **Use cue cards.** It's hard to read a speech fluently from a whole page print out so you won't be able to make eye contact as effectively if you do this. Also, if you're nervous, the page can shake in a distracting way. Instead, use cue cards.

  Cue cards should:

  - be small enough to hold in one hand so you can gesture naturally
  - have only 3–4 sentences on each of them
  - be numbered.

Screencast

If you're recording your presentation as a screencast, here is a checklist of things to organise and consider:

☐ **Work out how to use the screencast software on your computer:** Using a computer rather than a phone to record your screencast has several benefits:

1. You can use teleprompter apps to read your notes.
2. It's easier to save and share your presentation.
3. A phone can move around too much and create a very amateurish recording.

☐ **Choose a quiet space to record:** Make sure you're in a room where you can close the door and you won't accidentally record the conversations of other people in your house, pet sounds or the sound of passing traffic.

☐ **Choose which type of screencast shot to use:**

- **Shot of just your face:** In this type of shot, you need to put your computer on a box or pile of books so it is at face height and you film yourself looking directly at the screen, not down at it. The advantage of this screencast shot is that it will give a clear view of the expressions on your face and allow you to scroll through the script of your presentation on your computer. The downside of this type of screenshot is that you can't record hand gestures and the presentation could be a bit boring.
- **Mid-length shot:** This is a shot of you from the waist up. For this type of shot, you would normally sit on a chair about a metre away from your computer. You need to put your computer on a box or pile of books so it is at face height. The advantage of this type of shot is that it allows you to film hand gestures and body language that create a more interesting presentation. While you can read from cue cards to record this type of presentation, it will look better if you use a teleprompter app to read your presentation from the screen of your computer. Teleprompter apps will automatically scroll through your script as you speak.

Study alert:

This is an excellent free teleprompter app that you can use on your computer: *https://telepromptermirror.com/telepromptersoftware.htm*

☐ **Make sure the lighting is right:** Make sure the light is shining on your face, not from behind. Light that comes from behind you puts your face in a shadow and makes it difficult for your audience to see you. This means that you either need to be facing any windows in your room or draw the curtains.

☐ **Listen back:** You should definitely practise your presentation a number of times and you'll probably need to record it a few times before you get it right. Remember: the advantage of doing a screencast is that you can record and re-record it again and again until you get it right.

Before you save and submit a screencast of your recording, make sure:

- the audio is clear the whole way through
- you're happy with your pace throughout – you don't go too fast
- you're happy with your expression, and you vary your tone and emphasise points.

About The Senior English Writing Handbook

This is not just another textbook filled with endless descriptions and information about the English and EAL study design. Instead, The Senior English Writing Handbook shows students how to write successfully for each area in the new English and EAL study design. Each chapter focuses on a different area of study, guiding students through its aim and purpose and showing them how to develop their vocabulary and write purposeful, meaningful and sophisticated sentences and paragraphs. By providing students with a range of annotated examples and step-by-step instructions on how to write with clarity and purpose, this textbook helps every VCE English and EAL student achieve success.

TICKING MIND