

YEAR 11 **ENGLISH**

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

FOR THE ATAR ENGLISH COURSE

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TEXTS AND THEIR FEATURES

CHAPTER 1

IN THIS CHAPTER YOU WILL:

- explore the different types of texts in the ATAR English course
- understand the difference between genre, form, mode and medium
- differentiate between types of textual features
- consider the skills required for engaging with texts
- define the metalanguage associated with interpreting texts.

The Year 11 ATAR course requires you to be able to comprehend, respond to and construct a range of texts. Later chapters in this book will explore the skills and knowledge needed to do so successfully. But firstly, you might begin by considering the question, what even *is* a text? What sorts of texts do you need to be familiar with? What are the textual features you need to recognise?

In this chapter, you will explore these foundational concepts. In particular, you will revise the types of texts and textual features relevant to the ATAR English course, as well as the modes and media for which they are constructed. Our purpose here is to give you a solid grounding in the metalanguage of the course, to help you better approach the chapters that follow.



What is a text?

Essentially, a **text** is anything that can be 'read'. It is a collection of signs that are organised in a way that conveys meaning. Novels, plays, feature films, TV shows, magazine articles, photographs, video games, advertisements: they are all texts. Even you are a text – your clothes, your manner of speaking and your hairstyle are all signs or symbols that convey meaning to others about the kind of person you are.



What types of texts are studied in the English course?

The ATAR English course refers to four broad categories of texts: **imaginative**, **persuasive**, **interpretive** and **analytical**.

IMAGINATIVE TEXTS

Texts whose primary purpose is to entertain or provoke thought through their imaginative use of literary elements; they are recognised for their form, style and artistic or aesthetic value.

PERSUASIVE TEXTS

Texts whose primary purpose is to put forward a point of view and persuade a reader, viewer or listener; they form a significant part of modern communication in both print and digital environments.

INTERPRETIVE TEXTS

Texts whose primary purpose is to explain and interpret personalities, events, ideas, representations or concepts.

ANALYTICAL TEXTS

Texts whose primary purpose is to identify, examine and draw conclusions about the elements or components that make up other texts; analytical texts develop an argument or present an interpretation.

School Curriculum and Standards Authority (2020). Definition of types of texts in English ATAR course Year 11 syllabus, p.20. The School Curriculum and Standards Authority does not endorse this publication or product.

Text forms

Form is a type of category of text. Within each broad **text type**, there are several specific forms. Form refers to the shape and structure of these specific kinds of text. Of course, the various forms can overlap the four broad text types, but the main forms within each text type include the following.

IMAGINATIVE TEXTS	PERSUASIVE TEXTS	INTERPRETIVE TEXTS	ANALYTICAL TEXTS
Novels	Advertisements	Autobiographies	Essays
Short stories	Debates	Feature articles	Reviews
Plays	Arguments	Documentary films	Commentaries
Poetry	Essays	Current affairs programs	Panel discussions
Feature films	Speeches	Expository texts	Reports
TV dramas, sitcoms and miniseries	Infomercials	Podcasts	
Comics and graphic novels	Opinion pieces and editorials	Reviews	
Computer games		Blogs and vlogs	

Each form has its own specific features and conventions. These describe the structure and language we typically find within each form. Appendix 2 (pages 221–32) provides an overview of the textual features of some common forms, which may help when you are composing or analysing texts.

TAKING IT FURTHER

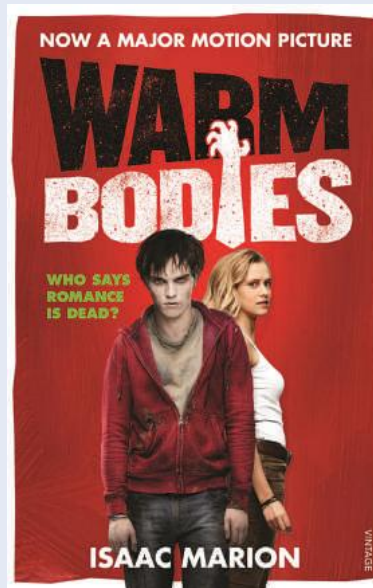
Hybrid texts

Hybrid texts are composite texts that combine elements of different text types.

Hybridity works in various ways. A hybrid text might draw on different genres, forms, modes or text types, as the examples below and on the next page demonstrate.

HYBRID GENRE

The novel *Warm Bodies* relates a love story between a zombie and a human. It blends the zombie-apocalypse genre with romance – maybe a surprising mix!





HYBRID FORM

The Walking Dead, developed from the original graphic novel, blends the forms of animated series, graphic novel and computer game into a user-directed narrative experience.



HYBRID MODE

SMS, or text messaging, combines the informality and conversational nature of the spoken word with the written mode. Emojis and GIFs add a visual mode as well.



HYBRID TEXT TYPE

Many reality television shows are partially scripted and can be considered hybrid, blending imaginative and interpretive textual features. *The Hills: New Beginnings* is a hybrid of documentary and television drama.



ACTIVITY

Categorise texts

- 1 Create a four-column table with the four main text types as headings.
- 2 Check your course outline and note the main texts you are going to be studying this year. Categorise them according to text type.
- 3 Make a list of the texts you engaged with in the last week. They may be text messages and social media posts, YouTube videos, television shows via streaming services, magazines, posters, cereal boxes or computer games. Brainstorm as many as you can! Add them to your table in the appropriate categories.
- 4 Do some of the texts you have listed belong in two columns? Are there any that are hybrid text types? Mark these with an asterisk.
- 5 Discuss your table with a partner or small group. Are there any differences of opinion regarding the categorisation of particular texts? Why might that be?

What skills are required in the English course?

There are three main skills that you will develop and apply in this course: **comprehending**, **responding** and **composing**. Comprehending requires you to analyse the construction and meanings of texts. Responding calls for the interpretation of how texts engage with purposes, contexts and audiences, as well as consideration of specific course concepts such as representation, voice and perspective. Finally, composing refers to the creation of your own texts.

Within these broad skills are embedded a number of more specific skills. The terms in this table all appear in the syllabus, so you need to have a clear understanding of what they require of you.

SKILL	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE
Close reading	The careful and critical reading of a text to identify its meanings and construction	In the exam, you will undertake close reading of short extracts and images.
Analysis	The detailed examination of the features or elements of a text's construction	A short-answer question might ask you to analyse how voice has been constructed in a biographical extract.
Interpretation	The meanings gained from reading, considering and analysing a text	You might write an essay presenting your interpretation of a feature film.
Explanation	Giving reasons for how an interpretation was made or the text constructed	In a class discussion, you might explain a particular inference you made about an article.
Investigation	To explore more widely or thoroughly; to research underlying factors	To understand how a documentary represents refugees, you might investigate the issue to consider other perspectives.
Comparison	To determine the similarities or differences between two or more texts or their interpretations	You might compare two science-fiction films to see how they use features of their genre.
Reflection	To critically consider or review a text or its interpretation	After writing your own short story, you might be asked to reflect on its effectiveness as a narrative.
Evaluation	Making a considered judgement about the text, based on evidence	As an audience member, you might evaluate the credibility of a speech by examining the quality of its evidence.
Creation	The act of designing and composing a text	After studying a series of open letters, you might create one of your own on an important issue.



Meanings of texts

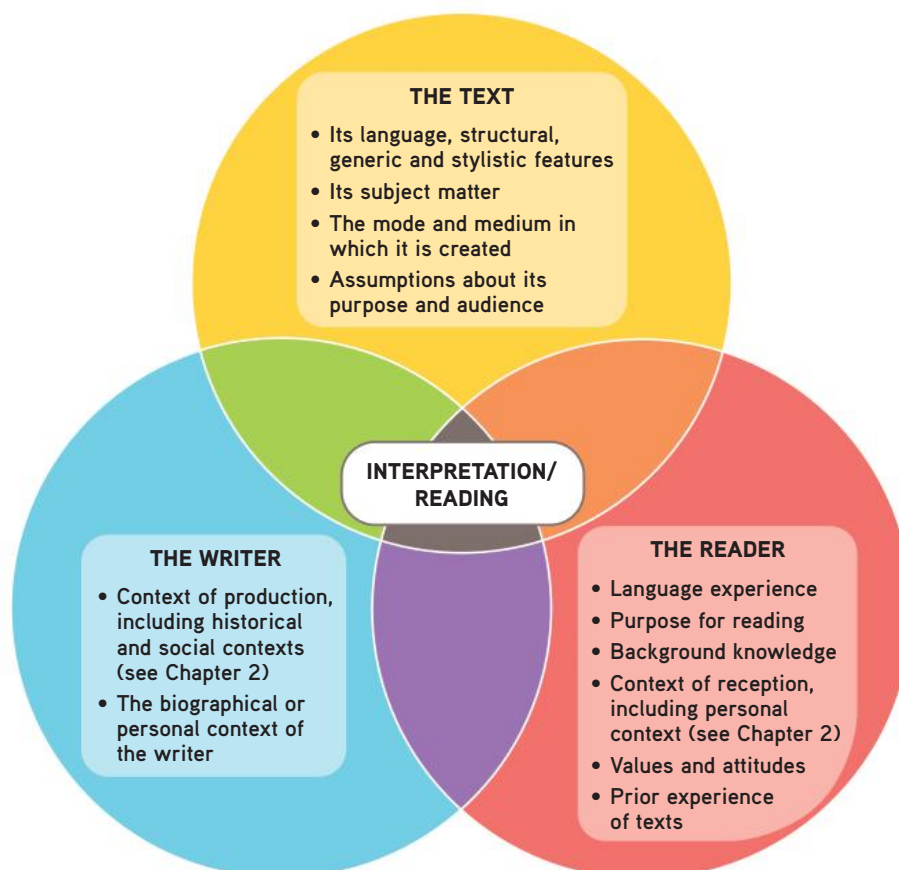
When engaging with your various texts, you will be expected to develop **interpretations**, also known as **readings**, of them. We use the term 'readings' even when we are talking about a visual, oral or multimodal text.

You are probably already aware that texts can communicate different meanings to different readers. Another way of looking at this concept is that it is the readers who generate many different readings of any text.

Developing an interpretation involves more than picking out the main themes or ideas. Of course, these are important, as is our understanding of the text's construction. But we also draw on factors *outside* of the text when we interpret it. These factors include:

- our broader understanding of language and how it works
- our previous experiences of other texts
- our knowledge of the contexts in which the text was created or produced
- our understanding of the text's purpose and audience
- our prior knowledge of the text's subject matter
- our personal, social and cultural contexts when we read
- our own values, attitudes and perspectives
- our purpose for reading.

A **critical** interpretation or reading of a text takes into account a range of factors, as shown in the diagram below.



Developing an interpretation of a text requires you to apply particular strategies as you read. Meanings don't just sit there on the page, waiting to be stumbled over and picked up. Reading is an active process, requiring you to make inferences based on both textual features and your contextual understandings. A text's meanings, ultimately, are produced by the reader, and because of changes to those external factors, even one reader's interpretation of a text may change over time.

EXAMPLE Film poster for *The Book Thief*

You might be familiar with the 2013 film *The Book Thief*, based on Markus Zusak's 2005 novel of the same name. The following comments highlight different aspects that readers might draw on when constructing an interpretation.

LANGUAGE FEATURES

I'm curious about this film because of the contrast between the word 'thief', which has negative connotations, and the picture of a well-dressed blonde girl – which is not the stereotypical image of a thief! Given the image of burning books behind her, I'm assuming she is stealing a book to save it from destruction.

PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE OF TEXTS

The Nazi flag, the historical nature of the image, and the dull colours remind me of the war genre. Other war films I've seen typically focus on the experience of soldiers at war. Instead, this poster features an urban setting and a young woman as the central figure. This suggests the film will focus on the civilian experience of war rather than soldiers'.

KNOWLEDGE OF AUTHOR CONTEXT

I know Zusak wrote the novel, and that his parents emigrated from Germany to Australia after the war. I imagine that this period of history featured significantly in Zusak's family. The poster shows an ordinary girl, so I expect that the film will focus on the impact of Nazism on ordinary families like Zusak's.

PERSONAL CONTEXT

My family is Jewish so the Holocaust is an important and tragic feature of our culture. I hope the film will treat this topic respectfully as it is still distressing for people in my family. I am a bit worried about the film being told through the eyes of an Aryan-looking main character, and what this means for how Jewish people and our struggles might be represented.

PURPOSE FOR READING

I'm watching this film for entertainment because I loved the novel. I hope it stays true to the book, but I'm a bit anxious because the girl on the poster doesn't look how I imagined Liesel. I didn't expect her to be as prim and well-dressed as she is on the poster. The poster reveals a key scene from the novel, when Liesel steals a book from the bonfire, suggesting her bravery and resourcefulness.

PRIOR KNOWLEDGE OF SUBJECT MATTER

The image of book burning and the Nazi flag reveals that this film is set in Hitler's Germany, when many books considered subversive were destroyed. This was a prelude to World War II and the Holocaust, and the poster hints at this tragic part of history.



VALUES AND ATTITUDES

As a teenage girl, I value positive female role models and I appreciate that the main character is a girl. So many war films focus on the experiences of men but here is a female character who seems active and heroic.

ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT PURPOSE AND AUDIENCE

Zusak writes for a young adult audience, so it is no surprise that the main character is an adolescent girl. Despite the fire, there is little sense of the violence that accompanied book burnings, and the character doesn't seem distressed. The poster seems to have watered down the horrors of Nazi Germany to suit this audience.

The examples on the previous page show how various students made **inferences** about the poster – conclusions based on **evidence** and **reasoning**. Each student looked at the evidence in the text and combined it with their general understanding of how texts function and their knowledge of the world. They drew these details together to form a well-reasoned belief about the text's meaning. Interpreting is like being a detective: finding clues and drawing on experience to make insightful connections between them. This is a useful analogy, as a detective also has to make sure that others can follow their reasoning – your reading of a text needs to make sense to others as well as yourself!

ACTIVITY

*Develop an interpretation of *The Book Thief**

The following text is an extract from the novel *The Book Thief*. It is narrated by the personified figure of Death. A reading of this passage might be that it reveals Death's despair over human nature and the tragedy of war.

- 1 Read the extract and briefly outline your interpretation. Do you agree with the statement above?
- 2 What evidence is there in the extract to support your reading of the character?
- 3 What understandings outside of the extract did you draw on to support this reading?

The last time I saw her was red. The sky was like soup, boiling and stirring. In some places it was burned. There were black crumbs, and pepper, streaked amongst the redness.

Earlier, kids had been playing hopscotch there, on the street that looked like oil-stained pages. When I arrived I could still hear the echoes. The feet tapping the road. The children-voices laughing, and the smiles like salt, but decaying fast.

Then, bombs.

This time, everything was too late.

The sirens. The cuckoo shrieks in the radio. All too late.

Within minutes, mounds of concrete and earth were stacked and piled. The streets were ruptured veins. Blood streamed till it was dried on the road, and the bodies were stuck there, like driftwood after the flood.

They were glued down, every last one of them. A packet of souls.

Was it fate?

Misfortune?

Is that what glued them down like that?

Of course not.

Let's not be stupid.

It probably had more to do with the hurled bombs, thrown down by humans hiding in the clouds.

Personal responses to texts

All interpretations are **responses** to texts, but sometimes you will be asked for a specific kind of response – the **personal response**. This can be thought of as your emotional and/or intellectual reaction to a text, which is a little different from an interpretation of its meaning. You need to consider how you *feel* in response to the text, as well as what you *think*.

Sometimes, when we first read a book or watch a film, our immediate reaction is to say, 'That was boring', 'I loved the characters' or 'I was offended by its attitudes'. Without reflection, it can be difficult to explain exactly what we are reacting to. A considered personal response requires us to interrogate our reactions and determine the factors that prompted them.

Such factors include those shown in the diagram below.



EXAMPLE**Billboard advertising Coca-Cola**

During the 2017 marriage equality plebiscite, Coca-Cola altered this Sydney billboard to show support. The original slogan read 'Say yes to the taste you love' and the logo was red and white.



The advertisement generated many responses. All took into account its positive representation of marriage equality, but other factors meant people had quite different responses, as outlined in the table below.

PERSONAL RESPONSE	POSSIBLE FACTORS INFLUENCING RESPONSE
Some thought it was inappropriate for the brand to support same-sex marriage.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personal values and attitudes Particular religious or cultural context
Others, including some who identified as LGBTQ+, were heartened that a powerful brand would support same-sex marriage.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personal context Awareness of the text's social justice purpose
Others were amused, thinking it was a clever adaptation of the original billboard.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Previous experience of the original text
Still others were unimpressed, believing it was a marketing ploy to cash in on marriage equality.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Awareness of the text's advertising purpose The context of the text's publication
The executive creative director of the media company that worked with Coca-Cola on the sign stated that he was proud to have worked with the brand on this campaign.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personal values and attitudes The text's subject matter Social context of inner Sydney as a liberal society
Some declared they were 'bored' by the ad and its engagement with the same-sex marriage debate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Previous experience of many other texts on marriage equality at the time A feeling of not being the target audience
Some were bewildered by the link between marriage equality and a soft drink.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The text's subject matter

Explore responses to a text

Coca-Cola released the advertisement below in 1945, at the end of World War II. The Admiralty Isles (now known as the Admiralty Islands) are north of New Guinea. During the war, the islands were occupied by Japanese forces, until US forces drove them out and established an airbase there. The islands became part of Manus Province when Papua New Guinea attained independence in 1975.

Now you're talking ... Have a Coca-Cola



...or tuning in refreshment on the Admiralty Isles

When battle-seasoned Seabees pile ashore in the Admiralty's, the world's longest refreshment counter is there to serve them at the P. X. Up they come tired and thirsty, and *Have a Coke* is the phrase that says *That's for me*—meaning friendly relaxation and refreshment. Coca-Cola is a bit of America that has travelled 'round the globe, catching up with our fighting men in so many far away places—reminding them of home—bringing them the pause that refreshes—the happy symbol of a friendly way of life.

* * *

Our fighting men meet up with Coca-Cola many places overseas, where it's bottled on the spot. Coca-Cola has been a globe-trotter "since way back when".

You naturally hear Coca-Cola called by its friendly abbreviation "Coke". Both mean the quality product of The Coca-Cola Company.

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- 1 Write down your initial personal response to this advertisement. Make sure you identify an emotional reaction as well as your initial thoughts.
- 2 Identify three factors that influenced this initial response.
- 3 Do you think your response would be similar to or different from that of the advertisement's target audience of Americans in the postwar period? Explain your answer.
- 4 Study the advertisement carefully, paying attention to the written text as well as the image. Keep in mind the context described earlier. What is your interpretation or reading of the advertisement?
- 5 Explain whether your response changed as a result of this more considered reflection on the text.

TAKING IT FURTHER

Dominant, alternate and resistant readings

The **dominant reading** of a text is the interpretation most people within a given context will make. This is because those people will have shared cultural knowledge leading them to draw similar conclusions. Often this aligns with the meaning foregrounded by the text's creator. A dominant reading of 'Little Red Riding Hood', for example, might be that it is a warning to children to be wary of strangers.

Alternate readings are other interpretations of the text that can be made. Some people in the audience might focus more on minor aspects of the text, such as a subplot or a particular character, or particular themes that resonate with them personally. An alternate reading of 'Little Red Riding Hood' is that it teaches young women to be obedient and to stay on the path determined by their parents.

Resistant readings arise when we read 'against the grain' of the text. We can resist the meanings the text seems to encourage by questioning its assumptions, evaluating its gaps and silences, or challenging the ideas it seems to normalise. A resistant reading of 'Little Red Riding Hood' might critique the way in which the wolf is cast as the villain simply for attacking the humans who encroach on its territory.

Word bank for discussing meanings of texts

TERM	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE
Interpretation/reading	A particular understanding of a text's meanings. Interpretations are produced by the reader, based on their engagement with the text and various external factors.	The superhero television series <i>Cleverman</i> might be read as a challenge to dominant representations of First Nations peoples in Australia.
Themes	Ideas, concerns or arguments that are developed throughout the text. Texts often have several themes.	Doris Lessing's short story 'Through the Tunnel' explores ideas about the rites of passage involved in coming of age.
Ideas	The specific understandings, thoughts, views and beliefs in the text, or considered by the reader in response to it.	An idea within the documentary <i>Fast Fashion</i> is that cheap clothing is often produced in sweatshops that exploit workers.
Issues	Topics of concern for individuals or the public. Typically, they cause controversy or debate.	Stan Grant's speech 'Racism is Destroying the Australian Dream' responds to the issue of institutional racism in Australia.
Concepts	Abstract ideas that are explored within a text.	The feature film <i>The Dressmaker</i> explores the concept of revenge.
Subject matter	The general topic of the text; the people, places, events, issues and concepts it is concerned with.	Tim Winton's short story 'Big World' has the experience of leaving school and outgrowing old friends as its subject matter.
Representations	The way people, places, events, issues and subjects are constructed within a text.	The film <i>The Terminator</i> represents Artificial Intelligence as a future threat to humanity.
Perspectives	The viewpoints expressed in a text. Perspectives are shaped by the contexts of those who express them.	The expository text <i>Affluenza</i> offers the perspective of an ethicist and economist that consumerism threatens the physical and mental health of Australians.
Reading strategies or practices	Particular ways of reading a text. For example, a reader may read for entertainment, themes, analysis, review or to interrogate the text's representations.	A contextual reading of the play <i>No Sugar</i> sees it as a response to the celebration of colonialism during Australia's Bicentenary.

Mode and medium

Throughout the course, you will be expected to engage with texts from a range of modes and media.

Mode refers to both the processes of communication and the types of language that we use in communicating with each other. Modes include listening (auditory), speaking, writing/creating, reading and several categories of viewing; see below.

MODE	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE LANGUAGE FEATURES	EXAMPLE TEXTS
Written	Communication through written language	Sentence structures, lexical choice, grammar and word order, punctuation, figurative language, rhetorical devices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Novel • Feature article • Autobiography
Spoken	Communication through spoken language	The same features as for written language, but when spoken aloud	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phone conversation • Podcast • Debate
Auditory	Communication through sounds and the nature of vocal delivery	Music, sound effects, ambient or diegetic sound, silence; also pace, pitch, tempo, volume	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Music in a feature film • Diegetic sounds in a computer game
VISUAL	Visual	Colour, texture, setting, saturation, costume, lighting, camera angle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Photojournalism • Film stills • Print advertisements
	Spatial	Scale, proximity, layout, boundaries, foregrounding, framing, camera movement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set of a dramatic performance • Layout of a webpage
	Gestural	Facial expressions, gestures, posture, body movement, gaze, as well as rhythm, speed, timing and repetition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gesture during an oral presentation • Action within a film or drama performance

Texts incorporating more than one mode are called **multimodal** texts. For example, a documentary film may combine spoken, auditory, visual and written elements, while a graphic novel combines visual and written modes of language.

Markers will expect you to analyse the language features specific to the mode of any text you are studying. For example, when studying a narrative, you should acknowledge whether a character is constructed through written language (in a novel, say) or through visual, spoken and auditory language (in a television drama).

Medium (plural: media) refers to the channel of communication. For example, a written text such as a newspaper might be delivered in print or digital form. A feature film might be viewed in the cinema, on free-to-air television, or online. The particular medium can change the audience experience considerably. Think how streaming services changed television dramas, with creators structuring a series differently to account for binge-watching. Similarly, digital media platforms changed the nature of the feature article to include hyperlinks, multimodal content and reader comments.



See the digital bonus material for an activity on mode and medium.

Textual features

Creators can employ a number of features in the construction of texts for different purposes, audiences and contexts. There are four main types of textual features within the ATAR English syllabus: generic, language, structural and stylistic.

Generic features

All texts can be divided into categories. The syllabus defines **genre** in terms of the **form** and **structure** of a text, or its **subject matter**. Genres of form and structure include novel, feature film, speech and website. Genres of subject matter, such as dystopian or romance narratives, are determined by content and style. Each genre has particular features common to it. A short story is relatively brief, with few characters and a plot focused on a single incident. A science-fiction text will typically have futuristic settings. An audience's expectations can be reinforced, challenged or subverted by a text's use of generic features.

Language features

Each mode of **language** has particular features. Written language, for example, is organised into sentences and controlled by punctuation. We might notice specific language features such as figurative language or rhetorical devices. Spoken language features include cadence, tone, pace and volume. Visual language incorporates subjects, settings and facial expressions, organised through rules of composition.

Structural features

Structural features are the organisational elements of a text. A feature article might employ features such as a headline and by-line, an introductory statement, several paragraphs exploring interrelating ideas in a cause-and-effect sequence, subheadings and a conclusion. A film may incorporate an opening sequence, title screen and narrative features such as exposition, rising action, climax and resolution.

Stylistic features

Style refers to the textual features typical of a particular author or filmmaker, a particular period, or a particular genre of text. Over time, individual creators of texts, or those writing in particular genres or literary periods, develop certain commonalities in the way they use textual features. This becomes known as their style.

MICHAEL BAY [FILMMAKER]	GOthic NOVEL [GENRE]	VICTORIAN [LITERARY PERIOD]
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Action-driven plotsCGI special effectsEasily recognisable character typesFast-cut editingHigh-energy soundtracks	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Isolated settingsSupernatural elementsDarkness and mistsPlot devices such as secrets and dual identities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Serialised narrativesLong and complex syntaxHighly descriptive languageA concern with changing social landscapes

EXAMPLE

Film poster for *Top End Wedding*

The following example identifies the textual features in a poster for the 2019 romantic comedy film *Top End Wedding*, in which a bride-to-be searches the Northern Territory for her mother, taking her future husband along for the ride.

GENERIC FEATURES (SUBJECT MATTER)

Romantic comedy conventions such as:

- representation of heterosexual couple from different backgrounds
- obstacles to relationship implied through cultural difference
- happy ending implied through calm waters and smiling couple
- humour implied through the presence of cute dog.

Image supplied by
Goalpost Pictures.



STYLISTIC FEATURES

Stylistic choices such as:

- peaceful setting that foregrounds happy ending
- Aboriginal imagery in the use of painted dots, ochre colours and the pattern in the gown
- iconic Australian setting
- juxtaposition of costumes to highlight cultural differences.

GENERIC FEATURES (FORM AND STRUCTURE)

Film poster conventions such as:

- eye-catching image
- foregrounded film title
- major actors' names
- production credits
- visual language that alludes to the narrative
- 'From the makers of' to promote film based on prior success.

LANGUAGE FEATURES

Written and visual elements such as:

- the colloquial term 'Top End' for the northern NT
- combination of 'Top End' and 'Wedding', clearly establishing the subject matter
- font choice and colour, as well as dress pattern, which allude to Aboriginal culture
- the juxtaposition of the groom's tuxedo with the bride's non-traditional gown
- remote Australian setting.

Bringing it all together: *Dundee*

In 2019, a film trailer was screened at the NFL Super Bowl for an audience of almost 100 million viewers. It featured Chris Hemsworth playing a character who welcomes the American son of the iconic Mick 'Crocodile' Dundee to Australia. The 'movie', however, was a fake. In reality, it was an elaborate advertisement by Tourism Australia to appeal to the US market. You can watch the ad at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NNJKWVmK-GM>.



Text type

This is an example of a **hybrid** text, blending **persuasive** and **imaginative** features. It is persuasive in encouraging viewers to holiday in Australia, and imaginative in constructing a fictional narrative featuring Crocodile Dundee's son.

Form

As a hybrid text, this blends two forms. It is an **advertisement**, promoting Australia as a tourist destination, but mimics the form of a **film trailer**, promoting a non-existent adventure/comedy film called *Dundee*.

Mode

It is a **multimodal** text, employing the following modes:

- **Written:** film title and tagline, as well as intertitles throughout the advertisement
- **Spoken:** dialogue
- **Auditory:** music and diegetic sound effects
- **Visual:** images of Australian settings, actors, costumes and props.

Medium

It was created primarily to be screened simultaneously on a **digital billboard** and on **television**, though it was released **online** as well.

Textual features

Some of the key features of the text and their effects are outlined below.

- In an early scene, a bus stops on an outback road and an American tourist stumbles off to be met by Chris Hemsworth. When the tourist is introduced as the son of the famous Crocodile Dundee, Hemsworth repeatedly asks, 'Really?' This is a **generic convention** of an adventure/comedy film, where a 'fish out of water' scenario is created by placing a character in an unlikely setting for humorous effect.
- The ad incorporates sweeping aerial and extreme long shots of iconic Australian landscapes, including the outback, beaches and Sydney Harbour. This **visual language feature** introduces setting as a film would do, while also advertising Australia.
- The ad is composed of snippets of a longer narrative, including a scene in which Dundee tries to hypnotise a bullock, like his father did in the original *Crocodile Dundee* film. This is a **generic convention** of the film trailer form. His costume, a **visual language feature**, is also a direct allusion to the original *Crocodile Dundee*.
- At times, the **auditory language feature** of dialogue reveals the ad's persuasive nature, such as in the scene where Hemsworth asks, 'Did you know Australia makes some of the finest wines in the world?'
- Further adding to the humour, a **generic feature** of the action/comedy film, is a cameo by Paul Hogan, the star of the original *Crocodile Dundee*.
- The final scene of the ad returns to more typical **advertising conventions**, with the Tourism Australia logo and Hemsworth mentioning flight specials to Australia. The sunset provides a natural conclusion, a **structural feature** of the text.



Write about texts and their features

Comprehending

Make annotations on one of the images on the previous page. Then write a 250-word short-answer response to the following question:

Explain how visual language features reveal the hybrid nature of the text.

Responding

- 1** Compare how *Dundee* and one other text you have studied are constructed within a particular form.
- 2** Explain the factors that influenced your personal response to *Dundee*.

Composing

Construct a brief text that blends the features of two forms for a particular purpose.

CONTEXT, PURPOSE AND AUDIENCE

CHAPTER 2

IN THIS CHAPTER YOU WILL:

- explore how texts are created within and for a variety of contexts
- consider how responses to texts are influenced by different contexts
- learn to identify audiences and purposes of texts
- examine the relationship between context, purpose, audience and language choices.

No text is neutral. The meanings of every text are influenced by its contexts – that is, the circumstances in which it was created, and also those in which it is read or viewed by an audience.

In order to better understand a text, we should study the conditions of the time in which it was created. For example, we might consider what was happening historically or politically and whether this is reflected in the text. It is also important to consider the creator's own upbringing and personal experiences, which may have influenced their text. Just as important is a study of the conditions in which a text is read or viewed. How might current events shape the audience's understanding of a text? What about an individual's cultural background or gender?

Such questions highlight the close connection between context, audience and purpose. All three are intertwined in both the creation and interpretation of a text. Overall, a close study of these concepts will enable you to better appreciate the role texts play in communicating experiences of the world.



Context

Context refers to the cultural and situational factors surrounding a text. We must look at what has influenced both a text's creation (**context of production**), as well the way in which it is received (**context of reception**). This can help us understand the language and structural choices made by the text's creator, the text's purpose, and the ways in which audiences respond.

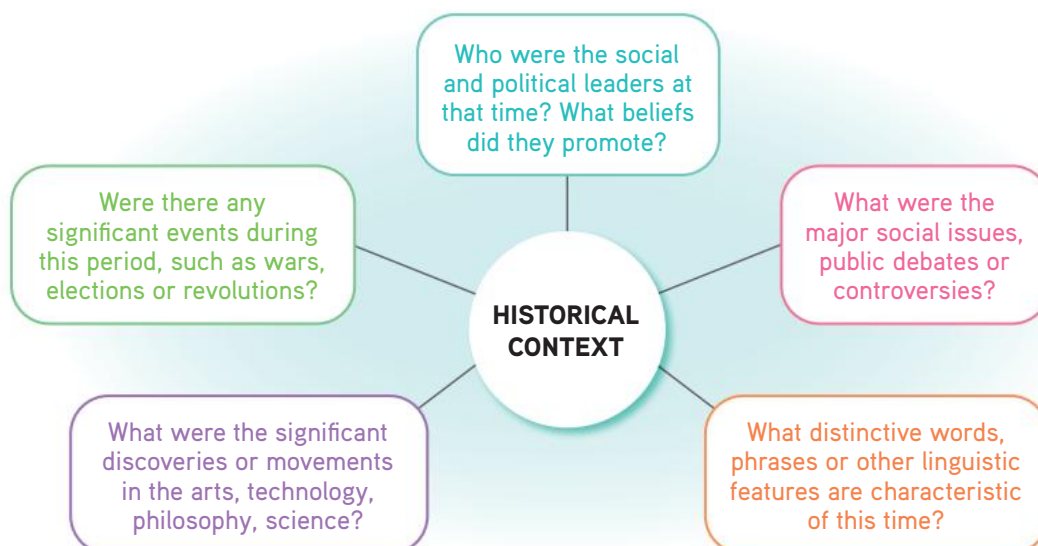
Throughout the course, you will be asked to consider a range of **contextual factors** and how they may have influenced both the shaping and the reception of a text. Four important contexts to consider are **historical**, **social**, **cultural** and **personal contexts**. There is a strong overlap between social and cultural contexts, which are often considered together as the **sociocultural context**. All contextual factors can be considered from the perspective of either the text's production or its reception.

	CONTEXT OF PRODUCTION	CONTEXT OF RECEPTION
Context of culture	The broad cultural factors, including the general social and historical conditions, of the time and place in which a text was produced	The broad cultural factors, including the general social and historical conditions, of the time and place in which a text was received by the audience
Context of situation	The specific or immediate situation, including the creator's personal context, that influenced a text's production	The specific or immediate situation, including the audience member's personal context, that influenced their reception of a text

Remember that context exists *outside* the text, although it may be *represented* within it. That is, what we see in the text is only a representation of context, rather than reality.

Historical context

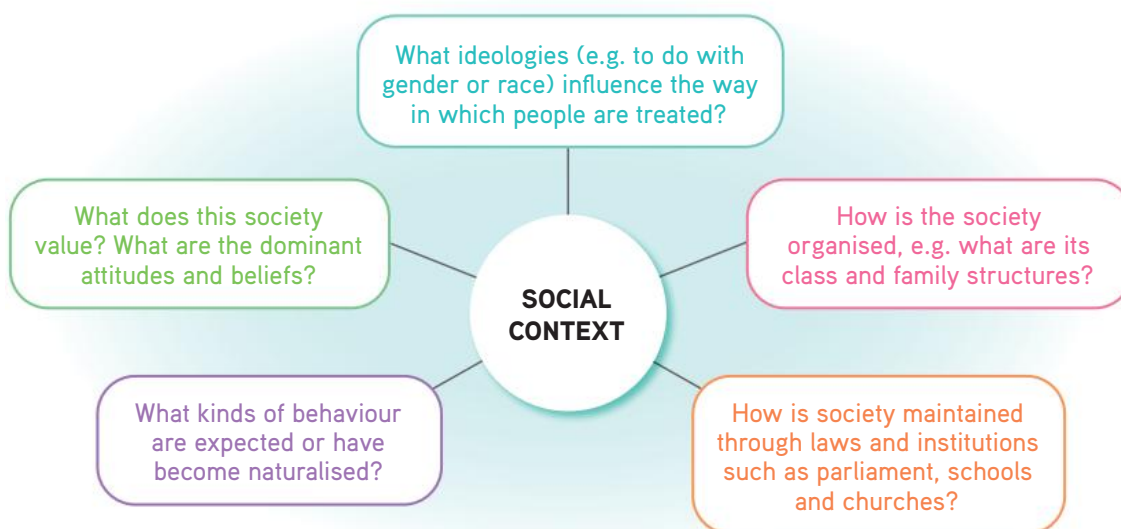
Examining the **historical context** of a text can reveal who had power at that time, how they used it, and who may have been silenced. Understanding the beliefs and values operating at the time helps us appreciate the representations constructed in the text.



Social context

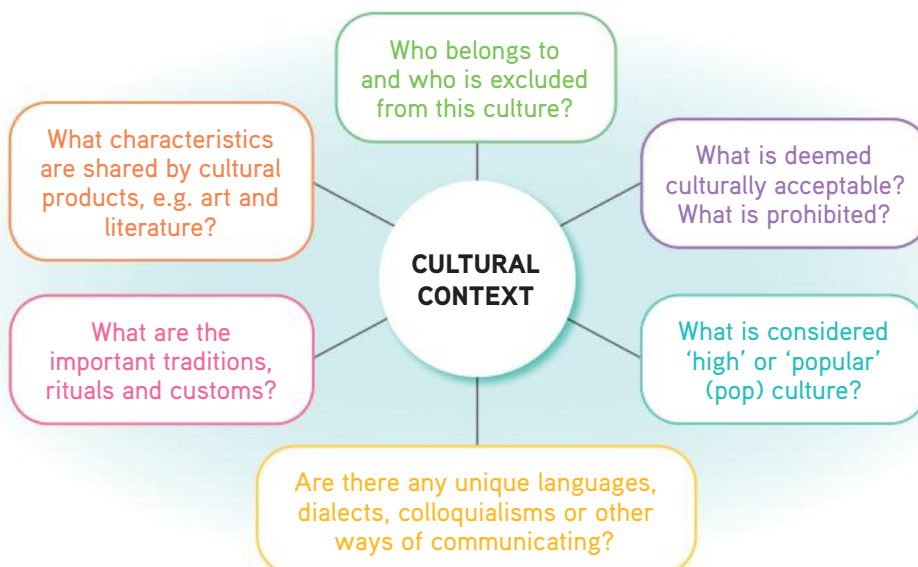
When we consider **social context**, we think about what connects those within a community. This includes geography but, more importantly, it includes the society's political and economic systems, beliefs, institutions, ideologies and standards.

A study of a social context considers prevailing attitudes and values and how they are reflected in a text. These attitudes and values often become naturalised in a society, so that they seem self-evident and are not questioned. It is important to consider whether these attitudes and values are being endorsed or condemned in texts, by analysing how characters and their interactions are represented, and the language choices of the text's creator.



Cultural context

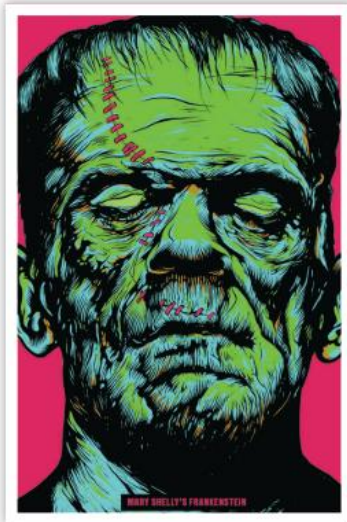
Cultural context encompasses the belief systems, traditions, practices and customs passed down from generation to generation in a particular social group, including its art, literature and other cultural products. When studying a text, we might consider the cultural context of a large social group like Australians or a specific subculture, such as Italian-Australians, young people or gamers.



EXAMPLE***Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley**

First published in 1818, Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* is a novel about science student Victor Frankenstein, who becomes obsessed with creating life. He animates a body composed of human parts, but it horrifies him and he casts out his creation. Lonely and rejected, the 'Monster' desires companionship and eventually seeks revenge on its creator for its painful existence.

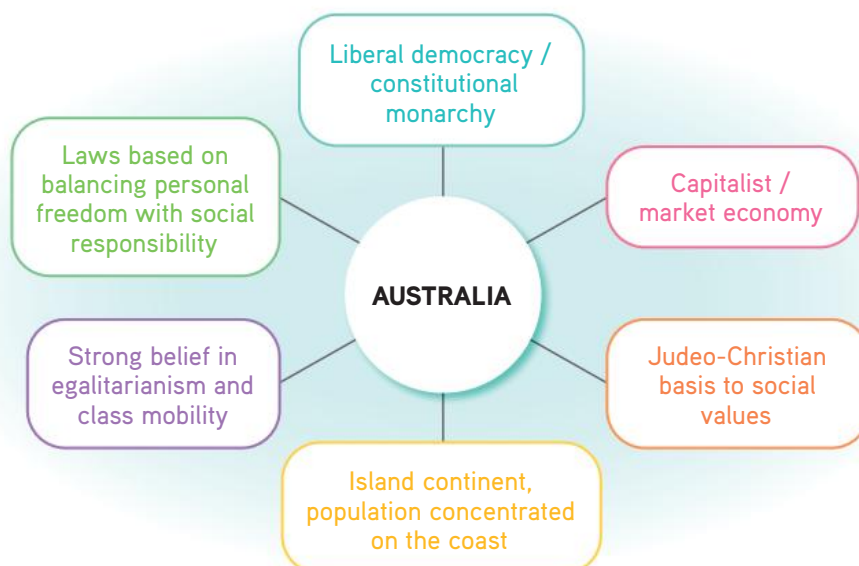
Various aspects of context influenced Shelley to write a warning about the personal, ethical and moral implications of scientific progress.



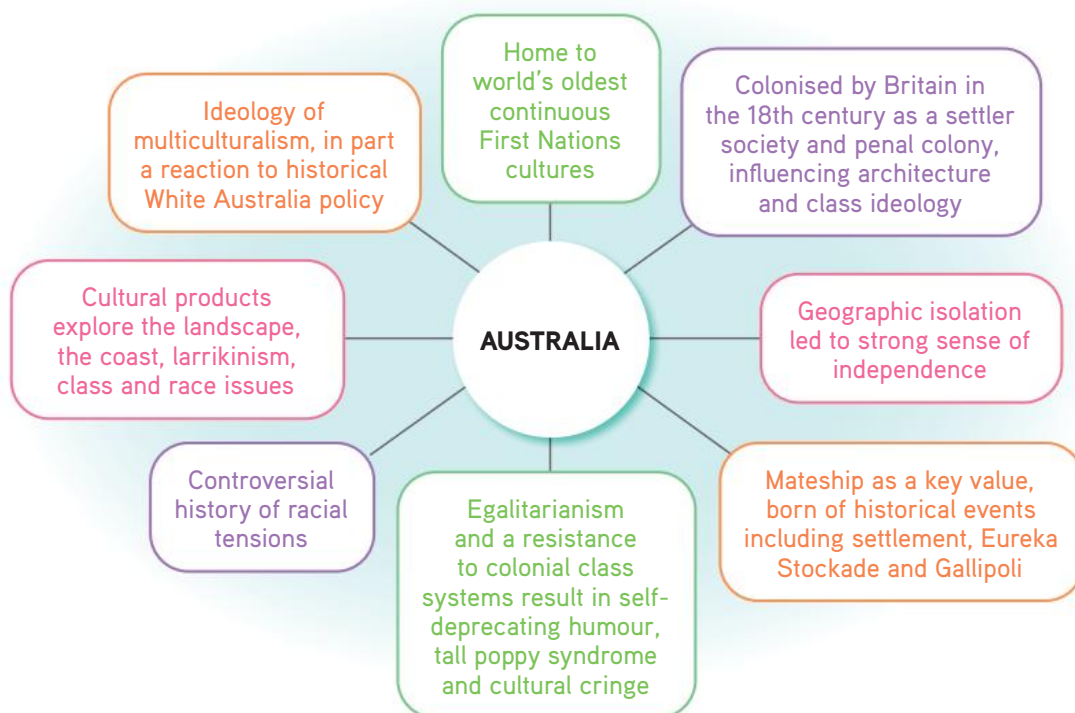
HISTORICAL CONTEXT	CULTURAL CONTEXT
<i>Frankenstein</i> was written during the late Enlightenment period. Scientific advances were made in areas such as anatomy and physics, including in experiments involving generating movement in lifeless muscle tissue by applying electrical currents.	The Church of England was an influential force during this period, competing with a growing secularism (move away from religion) as a result of the increasing popularity of scientific rationalism. This led to significant philosophical debates about religion and morality.
PERSONAL CONTEXT	SOCIAL CONTEXT
Shelley's mother died as a result of complications from giving birth to Mary, who also lost a child of her own before she wrote <i>Frankenstein</i> . This may have influenced her choice to write a novel about the potential horrors of bringing life into the world and the Monster's experiences of loss.	Shelley lived an unconventional life in the rational and conservative society of the early 19th century. Her immediate society consisted of fellow Romantics, including her husband, the poet Percy Shelley, and his friends. The Romantics were artists and writers who privileged nature and personal experience over religion and scientific rationalism.

TAKING IT FURTHER**Australian society and culture**

In considering a broad Australian social context, we would take into account some or all of the following features.



This next diagram shows how some aspects of Australia's historical and social contexts are reflected in its culture.



Of course, our culture is pluralistic, which means that it consists of many small cultural and social groups forming a larger whole. Not everyone in Australia reflects or even believes in the qualities and attributes that we might see as typically 'Australian'. Therefore, we should be wary of making generalisations about Australian – or any – culture and instead see culture and cultural identity as complex and dynamic.

ACTIVITY

Consider a historical representation of Australia Day

View these National Australia Day Council advertising campaign posters from 2010.



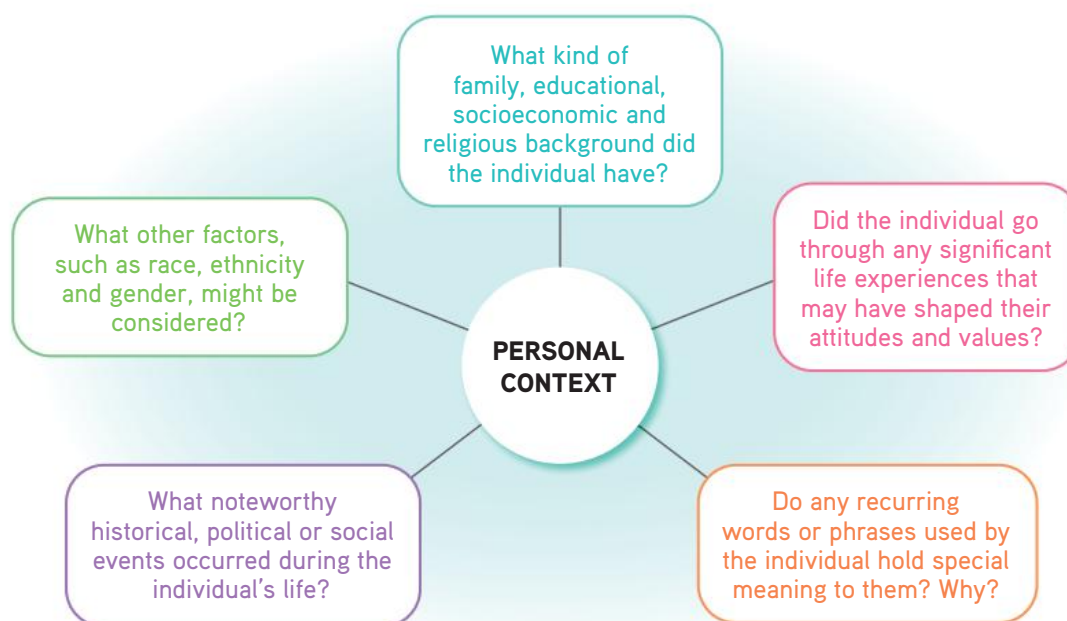


- 1 For each poster, consider social and cultural contextual factors in reflecting on the following questions.
 - What message about Australia Day and/or being Australian is promoted?
 - What values do these images of Australia seem to endorse?
 - What traditions or rituals are valued or normalised?
 - What historical events are alluded to? What cultural values does this imply?
 - What stereotypes or representations are revealed? Who do they empower and/or disempower?
- 2 Do you think these posters would be published today? What changes to our society have happened in the last decade? You might consider the debate over Australia Day and the Black Lives Matter movement, for example.

Personal context

Personal context refers to the background circumstances of the creator of a text, and is sometimes referred to as authorial or biographical context. We consider significant environmental factors, personal experiences and overall upbringing, as well as identity markers of gender, ethnicity and socioeconomic status, and how these elements may have influenced the work.

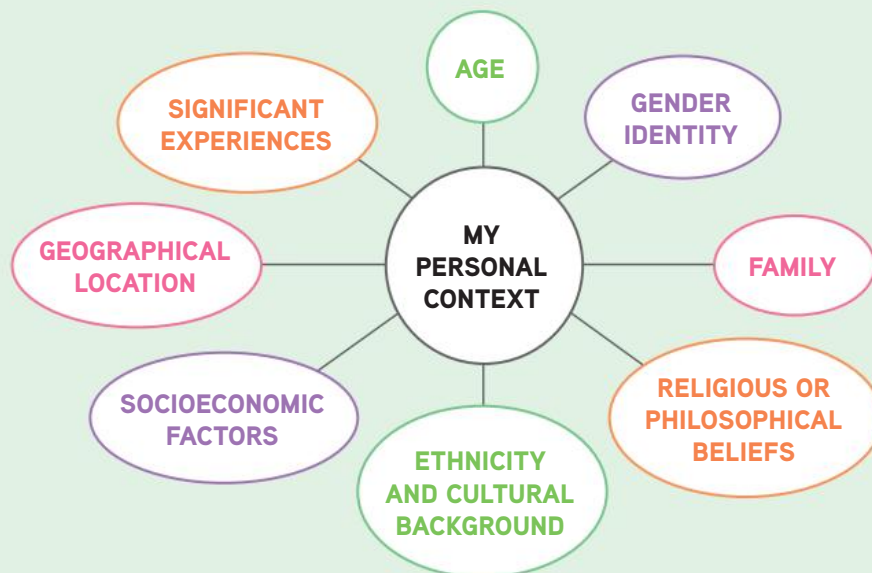
As well as thinking about the personal context of the creator of a text, we may also consider the context of individuals in nonfiction texts such as documentaries. You should also consider your own personal context, and how this leads to you respond to texts in particular ways.



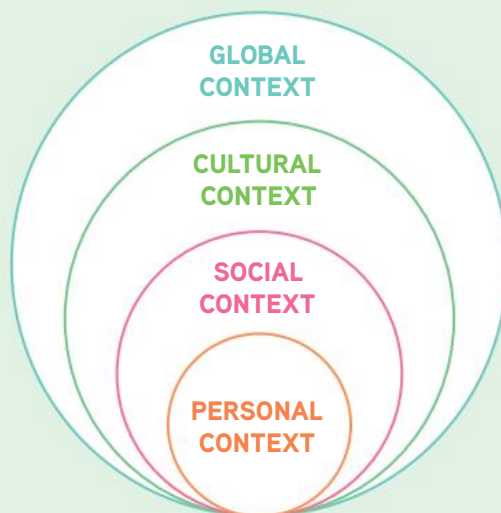
ACTIVITY

Determine your own context

- 1 The following diagram draws attention to some of the key aspects of personal context. Re-create this diagram, adding your details.



- 2 The next diagram shows how contextual influences are layered, both for you and for the creator of any text. For each layer, identify three key aspects that you believe shape your sense of identity.



Understand contexts

In her 2013 article 'Doctor's Orders', published in *The West Australian West Weekend Magazine*, journalist Ros Thomas nostalgically reflects on her summer experiences as a child in suburban Perth. Thomas is highly aware of her audience and their context, carefully selecting language and detail to encourage certain responses.

Read the extract from the article, then answer the following questions.

'Doctor's Orders'

What is it about growing up in Perth that sticks to me like beach sand whipped up by the Freo doctor? Remembering mums and dads struggling to wrap wet kids in flapping towels. Brothers and sisters duck-diving under waves trying to stall their departure until someone shouts over the howling wind: "Icecreams for kids who help carry!" Everyone searching for their thongs.

Try explaining to someone who's not a native: "Hey! I think the doctor's in" – that bastard-saint of bluster and balm so familiar to Perth beach-goers. The sea breeze that's welcome relief from yet another stinking hot day, but the killjoy that makes the beach so unpleasant everyone packs up and heads back to the baking car. As a kid, the bitumen was always so hot you had to stand on your towel until there was a break in the traffic. Back then, as we drove away from the sinking sun with all the windows open, I would take one last look back at the ocean, sun-dappled but choppy now. One last laugh at the seagulls being buffeted sideways as they swooped down to the fish and chip wrappers on the grass.

Thirty years later, these are the memories that hallmark an Australian childhood. We must tell our children how we tortured the Hills Hoist in the backyard, how it made terrible creaks and groans that brought Mum outside to tell us off. We, too, now have the buffalo lawn, and another generation of kids knows the sting of grass cuts from rolling around on it. Someone still gets sent inside to fetch the calamine lotion. And little ones still go to bed in shortie pyjamas with the fan on full bore, legs covered in pink calamine dots.

I want my children to know by instinct all these ways of being Australian.

1 Answer the following questions in note form.

- The article was published in *The West Australian West Weekend Magazine*. Why is this information useful? What kind of people would read the weekend edition of a local paper, and what would they expect it to contain?
- Consider the phrase 'Freo doctor'. How is this phrase typically Western Australian? (This is an example of cultural context.) What is the writer assuming about her audience by using this term?
- Consider the significance of the statement, 'Try explaining to someone who's not a native'. Consider the target audience – who is included and who is excluded?
- When the author refers to 'memories that hallmark an Australian childhood', which behaviours are being valued? Which are devalued?

Purpose is typically a combination of two elements:



In learning to recognise a text's purpose, you might consider the following focus questions.

Context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When and where was the text published? • Does the text respond to a particular event, text or issue? • Who is the creator and what do their previous texts do?
Form and genre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What type, form and genre of text is it? • What does this type/form/genre of text typically do?
Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What type of language features do you notice? • How do language features draw attention to particular details? • How would you describe the tone and/or style of the text?
Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the subject matter of the text? • What details have been included or omitted? • How is the subject matter represented?
Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which particular details are emphasised through structural features? • What do you notice about the order of details? • What seems to be emphasised by the ending of the text (if applicable)?
Audience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who seems to be the intended audience of the text? • What response seems to be invited?

Writing about purpose

The student response opposite shows how some of these focus questions have been used to interpret the purpose of comedian Hannah Gadsby's one-woman show, *Nanette*. It was broadcast on Netflix in 2018, not long after the same-sex marriage plebiscite dominated Australian media, as did several high-profile cases of sexual violence.



Hannah Gadsby's stand-up comedy show, *Nanette*, has several purposes. As comedy, it seeks to entertain through humour, indicated by the fact that it is filmed in an entertainment venue – the Sydney Opera House. Being a reflection on the discrimination Gadsby has experienced, the show also becomes a harsh critique of the culture of sexism and homophobia in Australia. Understanding her context helped me to identify this purpose, as Gadsby first performed *Nanette* around the time when Australia was debating same-sex marriage, and a number of violent attacks against women had been reported in the media. *Nanette* is a response to this context. Gadsby's language and tone is often comical, but as *Nanette* progresses her language becomes less funny and more critical. This transition is evident when Gadsby explains she was too ashamed to report being assaulted, saying, 'that's what happens when you soak one child in shame and give permission to another to hate'. As the show progresses, Gadsby's voice becomes harsher. Occasionally she almost yells at the audience in rage, at one point shouting, 'you need to learn what this feels like'. Knowing about the genre of stand-up comedy means that I expected *Nanette* to entertain, but Gadsby subverts this purpose by turning her performance into more of an interpretive text in which she criticises homophobia and sexism in Australian culture by revealing the damage that has been done to her.

Word bank for writing about purpose

PURPOSE	RELATED TERMS
To persuade	advise, argue, exhort, promote
To inform	describe, explain, illustrate, notify
To interpret	clarify, comment, evaluate, review
To entertain	amuse, delight, divert, evoke
To reflect	contemplate, memorialise, record, remember
To speculate	consider, imagine, predict, wonder
To provoke	challenge, dispute, protest, question
To imitate	mimic, mock, parody, satirise
To evaluate	assess, critique, judge, review
To compare	contrast, correlate, distinguish between, juxtapose
To investigate	analyse, explore, research, study
To respond	address, answer, react, reply
To educate	instruct, outline, teach, train
To request	canvas, demand, implore, solicit

Write about purpose

- 1 Referring to the word bank on the previous page, check the definitions of any terms that you are unfamiliar with.
- 2 Use a thesaurus to find further related terms.
- 3 Define the purpose(s) of each of the following texts. For each, provide three pieces of evidence that helped you determine the purpose.

Text 1: Advertisement from Motor Accident Commission's anti-speeding campaign



Text 2: Extract from “‘Helicopter parenting’ and ‘tiger mothers’? Relax, Australian kids are alright” by Carla Pascoe Leahy, published on *The Conversation* website (<https://theconversation.com/helicopter-parenting-and-tiger-mothers-relax-australian-kids-are-alright-128057>)

It would be easy to believe, if you pay attention to the media, that Australian children are in poor shape.

Kids, we are told, have too much screen time, too little exercise, too many scheduled activities and not enough risk and freedom. Earnest commentators constantly critique ‘helicopter parenting’, ‘tiger mothers’, ‘intensive mothering’ and ‘bubble-wrapped children’.

There is certainly some basis to these fears. But it’s also instructive to take an historical perspective, because while childhood has changed in important respects since the second world war, there are surprising continuities.

Every generation of elders has worried about ‘young people of today’, from the 1950s to the 2010s. Some of the changes to childhood and parenthood could even be characterised as positive. So how has the idea of childhood, and the relationship between children and parents, changed since the 1950s?

Audience

Audience refers to anyone reading, viewing or listening to a text. The creators of a text will always have a particular audience in mind, such as women in their twenties, senior secondary school students or competitive cyclists, before they create their text. This is the intended or target audience.

The likely beliefs, values and attitudes of the intended audience of a text will influence the generic, language, structural and stylistic choices made, as well as the selection of content. When you are identifying an intended audience, you should consider its social and cultural contexts, its values and attitudes, its experiences and its expectations regarding the subject matter of the text. This will help you determine how the creator of a text has attempted to appeal to, cater for or sometimes even challenge their audience.

EXAMPLE

An open letter in *The Guardian*

This extract from an open letter protesting against budget cuts to the arts, signed by a range of Australian cultural figures such as writers Christos Tsiolkas, JM Coetzee and Hannah Kent, was published in *The Guardian* in 2014. The annotations identify key ways in which the text takes into account specific audiences.

Dear Prime Minister Tony Abbott, Treasurer Joe Hockey and Minister for the Arts George Brandis,

We view with dismay the many proposed changes to health, education and welfare support announced in the 2014 budget, and fear that the consequences these changes are likely to have will be dire for our most vulnerable citizens: the young, the elderly, the disadvantaged and Indigenous Australians.

We also strongly object to the reduction in arts funding, specifically the Australia Council's loss of \$28.2m (not to mention the attack on Australian screen culture with cuts of \$38m to Screen Australia's budget and a massive \$120m cut from the ABC and SBS over the coming four years). This decrease in federal support will be devastating to those who make art of any kind in this country, and many important works, works that would inform national debate and expand the horizons of Australia and its citizens, will simply never be made. Ultimately, these cuts will impoverish Australian culture and society.

... In 2009, 11m people visited an art gallery. To give that number context, it's more people than went to the AFL and NRL combined.

Those numbers tell us what many already know: that art is as crucial a part of our national identity as sport. Australians are passionate about creating, attending, consuming and investing in art.

Although the letter clearly addresses these senior politicians, its publication in a national newspaper

- reveals a second audience: the Australian public, specifically the politically left readers of *The Guardian* who are likely to support the writers' perspective.

The opening paragraph begins with issues that many would consider more pressing than arts funding, appealing to the values of the general public.

- Formal language is appropriate for the audience of senior politicians, and helps to give the letter a well-reasoned tone.

- While a more specific group is acknowledged as being devastated, the impact of the loss of this group's contributions on the general public audience is made clear.

- Inclusive language draws the audience into the argument.

Additional appeals to other values likely held by *The Guardian* readership – of equity, education and affordability – are incorporated.

Strongly negative diction creates an appeal to fear.

The closing statements directly address the politicians. The 'we' subtly includes both the writers of the letter and *The Guardian* readership, who 'look forward' to a response.

... The loss of funding indicated in the 2014 budget will devastate these smaller organisations and practitioners, robbing Australia of a whole generation of artists, writers, publishers, editors, theatre makers, actors, dancers and thinkers. Crucially, it will deprive people, particularly in rural and regional areas and in remote communities, of the opportunity to create, educate, learn and collaborate. These proposed funding cuts endanger us intellectually, artistically and severely damage our reputation internationally. Moreover, we fear the prospect of a world of culture and art that is unaffordable to the majority of Australians.

You have an opportunity now to restore and increase funding to the arts. We ask you that you don't devalue our artists or their work, and instead recognise what art offers Australia.

We look forward to your response.

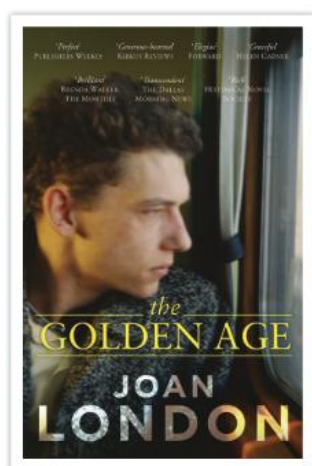
ACTIVITY

Consider audiences

- 1 Research *The Guardian* newspaper. What sorts of issues does it frequently address? What does this imply about the context and values of its readers?
- 2 While the letter includes statistics that highlight the economic value of the arts, the focus of its argument is on the potential damage to Australia's cultural identity. What might be the focus of a letter protesting arts funding cuts that is published
 - a in a conservative newspaper?
 - b in a school newsletter to parents?
 - c via a mailing list for WAMI, an organisation that supports local musicians?
- 3 Choose a magazine or website that you regularly read. Identify its target audience and, by surveying its typical content, note down five key values and attitudes likely held by this audience.



See the digital bonus material for an example of the way in which different book covers appeal to different audiences.



Bringing it all together: *The Golden Age*

The Golden Age was the name of an old hotel in Leederville, Western Australia which, between 1949 and 1959, was used as a convalescent home for children affected by polio. Joan London's 2014 novel *The Golden Age* tells the story of 13-year-old Frank Gold, who migrated to Australia with his parents from war-torn Hungary. After contracting polio, Frank is sent to the Golden Age to recuperate. Here he learns about both love and death, and discovers poetry as a means of expressing himself and his feelings.

Historical context

The novel is set in 1950s Australia, an era often characterised as carefree and innocent – the Australian economy was booming and there was high employment, as well as a good standard of living for many.

Australia's dominant culture at this time was still largely defined by its British heritage and links with the Commonwealth. This decade saw the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II and her subsequent tour of Australia, during which people came out in large numbers to support and hail the royal family. At the same time, American culture was increasingly influential. The arrival of rock-and-roll music and television heralded a growing cultural and generational clash between the 'old' world and the 'new'.

The 1950s also signalled a dramatic increase in migration, particularly from war-torn Europe. Many of the refugees came from Greece, Italy, Poland and Germany. These migrants were called New Australians and, although generally welcomed, they were also often misunderstood and at times treated with suspicion or discriminated against.

Sample extract and response

The annotated extract below is taken from Chapter 22 of *The Golden Age*, 'The Concert'.

Afterwards, balancing his glass of ginger beer in one hand, a plate of passionfruit sponge in the other, Rodney Bennett confronted Ida. World class! he said again. He wondered, did she hire herself out? He and Tikka and some friends from the golf club were thinking of putting on something special, like an old-fashioned *thé-dansant*. They needed a top-hole pianist.

Ida replied that her repertoire was entirely classical.

'I'd bet on everything I've got that you could play whatever you wanted,' Rodney said, bending low, looking into her eyes, dimpling. Weren't these New Australians always complaining about poverty? You'd think they'd leap at a chance to get ahead.

Especially members of her race.

'Yes,' Ida said, as if she read his thoughts. 'But I am very expensive.' She turned away. Elsa's father was waiting to speak to her.

'A prima donna, I'm afraid,' Rodney reported to Tikka. 'And, you know...' He lowered his eyelids and rubbed his thumb and fingers together. Tikka saw that she had lost the chance to ask Ida for the name of her dressmaker.

Ida, Frank's mother, is in fact a world-class pianist, so Rodney's comment seems patronising.

The subject matter and language choices clearly suggest an adult audience.

The phrase 'New Australians' was used to refer to the wave of refugees who migrated to Australia after World War II.

Rodney's condescending attitude is a reflection of the dominant cultural attitudes towards migrants and refugees at a time when Australian identity was largely aligned with having British heritage.

Ida and her family are Jews, a group historically persecuted, notoriously throughout World War II.

Rubbing thumb and fingers together like this is a gesture indicating money, reflecting a common prejudice towards Jewish people. An adult audience is likely to be aware of this contextual information.

Now read the following student response identifying the influence of context on the extract.

References the author's personal context.

Historical context is clearly identified.

Relevant aspect of cultural context discussed.

The context of the audience is noted.

Ida's characterisation positions her experience as a representation of the social and cultural context of Jewish refugees.

Specific attitudes of this social context are identified.

Purpose of the text in contesting sociocultural attitudes is stated.

In this extract from the novel *The Golden Age* by Joan London (2014), Ida, the protagonist's mother and a world-class pianist, has just performed a charity concert for staff and parents of the children at the polio convalescent home, a choice of setting based on London's own childhood memories of this terrible disease. In this scene the writer reveals some of the prevailing attitudes Australians had in the 1950s towards post-World War II European migrants. However, a reader would also need to have contextual knowledge of how Jewish people were persecuted at the time in order to fully appreciate London's purpose.

Rodney, a member of the audience, is portrayed at first as a well-meaning but culturally narrow person. Australia at this time was still heavily influenced by British traditions and rituals, seen in our introduction to Rodney as he carefully balances a combination of sponge cake and ginger beer for his afternoon tea. Rodney begins praising Ida, claiming her performance was 'world class' and suggesting that she 'hire herself out' for tea parties at places such as his golf club. His review of her recital seems kind, but rather condescending, as Ida is, in fact, world class – not just in his estimation. Rodney is also physically imposing and possibly patronising in his manner, bending down to Ida as he talks to her.

Rodney's character challenges contemporary Australian adults to question their cultural beliefs that Australia is welcoming and egalitarian. It becomes clear as soon as he is rejected that Rodney sees Ida first and foremost as a Jewish refugee, not as an individual. He labels her as a 'prima donna' who should accept his generous offer, since 'members of her race' are 'always complaining about poverty'. Rodney's reaction to her statement that she is 'very expensive' only serves to reinforce his pre-existing anti-Semitic beliefs that Jews only care about money, revealed when he is described rubbing his thumb and fingers together. Rodney's behaviour exposes readers to the unfair stereotyping, wariness and hostility many Australians adopted towards European migrants. Readers might be positioned to reflect on contemporary attitudes regarding new migrants, and whether these attitudes are any different from those of the 1950s.



*Write about context, purpose and audience***Comprehending**

Read the extract below from *The Golden Age* (from Chapter 11: 'Bellbirds') and the accompanying annotations, then write a short-answer response to the following question:

Explain how the extract from The Golden Age reveals the attitudes of a particular context.

Workbooks were handed out. The lessons were tailored to each child's needs; the aim was for all of them to rejoin their own age group when they returned to school in the outside world.

Frank's workbook today was Social Studies. Mrs Simmons had ascertained that he was quick with maths but must catch up, as a New Australian, on history and English literature. This morning his task was to memorise the dates of the Monarchs of England and read a poem, Henry Kendall's 'Bellbirds'. He had to write a page on what the poem was about.

...

'These kings of England. I don't see the point.'

'That's our history, Frank. That's where we come from.'

'I don't.' Before he'd come here, he'd never even heard of The Royal Family. Here, they were everywhere. Mugs, pencil cases, newspaper headlines. The King Dies. The Coronation. The Royal Visit. They were like film stars.

'But you're in the British Empire now! She's our Queen too. The British rule the world.'

He couldn't stand the thought that he had come to a country which once again was inferior to another, like a servant or a child. It enraged him ... Australians were like good children. They frowned at you if you didn't stand up for 'God Save The Queen' at the start of the picture show.

The word 'must' indicates how essential people considered education on Australian culture for new migrants, which included studying English rather than Australian literature.

Emphasis on the history of the English monarchy is evidence of how closely Australia's culture was associated with the British.

A famous Australian poem published in 1869 about the mountain landscape. The bellbird is native to the Eastern states. Again, for a Western Australian setting, this is quite foreign.

Frank struggles with the idea that studying the history of a country on the other side of the world should be so important to Australians.

The teacher's reply reflects a Eurocentric attitude, suggesting that Australia's history is irrevocably associated with Britain's.

As an outsider – a European migrant – Frank highlights to readers how unimportant the British royal family was to anyone outside of the Empire.

Here Frank refers to specific historical events: the death of King George VI on 6 February 1952, the coronation of his daughter Queen Elizabeth II on 2 June 1953, and her visit to Australia with husband Prince Philip in 1954.

An old-fashioned term; since the 1920s, Britain realised it could no longer afford to protect or rule an empire. The Empire was replaced with a voluntary association called the Commonwealth. This outdated term used by the teacher reflects the outdated attitude many Australians had about being associated with the British.

The use of a simile here suggests that in the 40s and 50s, Australia still lacked a strong national identity, although technically it was already an independent nation under the Commonwealth.

This traditional custom confuses Frank, as again it seems that Australians preferred to recite the British anthem rather than proudly recite one of their own.



Frank's perceptive reaction to the idea that the British still ruled the world highlights the changing postwar global economic and political landscape.

The teacher's response here highlights the reluctance of Australian society to accept and adapt to these changing times.

'No,' he said, 'the Americans do.'

Mrs Simmons raised her eyebrows.

'Not over here they don't.'

Responding

- 1 Explain how the language features used reveal the text's purpose and audience.
- 2 Explain how understanding the historical context of a text influenced your response to its attitudes.

Composing

Compose an interpretive text in which you reflect on a key aspect of your personal context.

VOICE

CHAPTER 3

IN THIS CHAPTER YOU WILL:

- explore the concept of voice
- identify different voices in texts
- analyse how voices are constructed in written and visual texts
- examine the relationship between voice and the purpose, audience and context of texts.

One of the central concepts in the English course is that of voice. In this chapter, you will learn to analyse the construction of voices in texts in order to consider how texts represent the world and human experience. Understanding voice is important because it reveals who is being heard or foregrounded in texts. It means that we consciously recognise that there is a persona behind what we hear in a text, an authorial or narratorial presence crafting language to shape our response and endorse particular values and attitudes.

In reflecting on texts, we can evaluate their effectiveness in representing voices, attitudes and values, and understand the ways in which texts position their audiences.



What is voice?

Voice refers to the persona we 'hear' communicating with us as we engage with a text. It can refer to the persona constructed by the writer of a speech, the focaliser of a documentary or the narrator in a novel, for example. Voices are not accidental or merely 'natural' but are a consciously constructed element of any text. Understanding voice is important because of its relationship with perspective and the way it reveals the viewpoints and context of the writer or narrator.

Word bank for identifying voice

BY TONE	Critical	Cynical	Satirical	Warm
BY REGISTER	Colloquial	Formal	Neutral	Vulgar
BY PURPOSE	Affirmative	Condemnatory	Critical	Persuasive
BY SOUND	Clear	Distinct	Loud	Quiet
BY IDENTITY	Childlike (age)	Female (gender)	First Nations (cultural)	Middle-class (class)
BY POSITION OR STATUS	Authoritarian	Collegial	Dominant	Marginal
BY CREDIBILITY	Artificial	Authentic	Feeble	Subjective
BY AUDIENCE RESPONSE	Amusing	Engaging	Impressive	Objectionable

Note that some of the adjectives in the table above can also be used to describe tone. Tone and voice are closely linked; voice refers to the personality or individuality writers and speakers convey to the audience, while tone conveys their attitudes and feelings towards a subject.

Word bank for describing tone

Aggressive	Colloquial	Disappointed	Horried	Patronising
Amused	Conciliatory	Dismissive	Hysterical	Poetic
Argumentative	Condescending	Dispassionate	Imperious	Precocious
Articulate	Confident	Distant	Judgemental	Reflective
Bewildered	Considered	Distressed	Melancholic	Regretful
Bombastic	Conversational	Embarrassed	Mocking	Scornful
Brash	Critical	Enthusiastic	Moody	Strident
Calm	Cynical	Formal	Objective	Surprised
Coarse	Didactic	Friendly	Outraged	Thoughtful

The relationship between voice, purpose and audience

Voice is also an important way in which the writer or speaker achieves their purpose and engages with the audience. In a persuasive text, for instance, a distinctive persona can express a strong, condemnatory voice that positions readers to reject otherwise popular ideas. Or, a writer might construct a warm and familiar voice to create a bond with the audience.

The examples in the following table highlight the relationship between purpose, audience and voice.

PURPOSE	AUDIENCE	VOICE
To persuade readers to accept the urgency of climate action	Young adults transitioning to independent living	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authoritative, credible and knowledgeable • Urgent, direct, formal • Emotional, appealing to the audience's hope for a long, successful future
To entertain readers with an amusing memory of adolescence	Adult Australians who grew up in the 1970s	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Humorous and self-deprecating regarding the persona's fashion and lifestyle choices • Colloquial and conversational to engage audience • Reflective and nostalgic
To thrill readers with an exciting crime narrative	Fans of the crime genre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Often shady and unreliable • Appropriate jargon to add authenticity • Cynical, gritty and possibly coarse

How voices are constructed

Language features and stylistic choices are the most significant ways through which voices are constructed, often supported by other structural or generic features, such as narrative point of view, focalisers and voice-overs. The table below shows some of the strategies used to construct voices in texts.

IN WRITTEN TEXTS	IN SPOKEN OR MULTIMODAL TEXTS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Narrative point of view • Dialogue • Narration • Diction or lexical choice • Punctuation • Sentence length and type • Figurative language such as metaphor, symbolism and allusion • Rhetorical devices • Register and modality • Tone • Colloquialism, dialect, idelect 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Voice-over or to-camera pieces • Dialogue • Diction or lexical choice • Figurative language such as metaphor, symbolism and allusion • Rhetorical devices • Register and modality • Colloquialism, dialect, idelect • Rhythm and pace • Volume • Intonation and tone • Pauses and silence • Facial expression and gestures, which can enhance the sense of voice • Certain aspects of composition, such as framing and perspective, which can enhance the sense of voice

Types of voices

In the English course, you are expected to differentiate between the different voices within a text, including those of the author or creator of the text, the personas or narrators they may construct and the multiple other voices they may include, such as characters, interviewees or experts.

AUTHORIAL VOICE	The voice of the author – a voice behind the characters' and narrators' voices in imaginative texts or behind the persona(s) and quoted sources in persuasive, analytical and interpretive texts – is reflected in the style of writing.
NARRATIVE VOICE	This is the voice of the narrator, often a first- or third-person narrator in fiction texts. The voice of the narrator in nonfiction texts presents via the persona, voice-over or focaliser.
MULTIPLE VOICES	Texts include numerous voices: of characters, a narrator or narrators and, in nonfiction texts, experts or interview subjects. These voices represent views, ideas, attitudes and perspectives and offer ways of speaking (or of being silenced).

Authorial voice

Authorial voice is present in both fiction and nonfiction texts. Authorial voice is the overall voice or distinctive style of the author in a text or texts, and reflects their perspective. Consider the voice of Michael Moore in his documentaries such as *Bowling for Columbine*, *Fahrenheit 9/11* and *Capitalism: A Love Story*. Throughout these films there is a consistent voice: one that is provocative, satirical and politically left-wing. Another example is the writings of Tim Winton, which are characterised by lyrical prose along with colloquial or everyday patterns of speech and introspection, as well as a masculine tone and environmentalist attitude.

TAKING IT FURTHER The author or the persona?

While many people presume the voice of the text to be the voice of the writer, we must always be aware that this voice is a construction. Writers create personas to serve particular purposes and to appeal to certain audiences. Writers of letters, emails, Facebook posts, reviews and other interpretive, persuasive and analytical texts adopt a persona or mask that often aligns with their own personal attitudes, but we cannot presume them to be the same.

You might be familiar with the cantankerous, sarcastic voice of television host and writer, Jeremy Clarkson. In the extract opposite, from his 2019 book *Really?*, Clarkson uses a colloquial tone and the second-person pronoun 'you' to engage his audience of fellow car enthusiasts. Devices such as hyperbole and vivid metaphors add humour, but also create a caustic, critical tone. Note that in addition to its humour, the voice is informed about its subject matter: cars.

WHO CARES IF IT'S SLOW? IT'S GOT MORE TOYS THAN HAMLEYS

Lexus NX 300h Premier

When a new Mercedes comes along, you know before you've even opened the door what it will be like. All Mercs feel broadly similar until the company changes direction, which happens about once every 4,000 years, and then, ever so slowly, they all start to feel slightly different.

It's the same story with BMW. Its cars were all fast and light for a long time, and then they all became heavy and a bit terrible, and now they're all as good as cars can be (except the X3, obviously).

With Lexus you never know what you're going to get. It's not swings and roundabouts; it's rollercoasters and big buckets full of steaming excrement.

ACTIVITY

Explore authorial voice

Create a table like the one below to identify the authorial voice within your studied texts.

Author/ Director	FAVEL PARRETT	JRR TOLKIEN	TAIKA WAITITI
Description of voice	restrained, literary, subtle, direct, rhythmical	calm, elegant, descriptive, old-fashioned	humorous, vulnerable, irreverent, colloquial, childlike
Example	<p><i>There Was Still Love</i> (2019)</p> <p>'There are suitcases everywhere. They cover the country. Little brown suitcases on trains, and on carts – suitcases strapped to the top of buses. There are suitcases being carried along old country roads by women, by men, dragged by children. There are suitcases abandoned in ditches, suitcases left broken in stairwells.'</p>	<p><i>The Hobbit</i> (1937)</p> <p>'In a hole in the ground there lived a hobbit. Not a nasty, dirty, wet hole, filled with the ends of worms and an oozy smell, nor yet a dry, bare, sandy hole with nothing in it to sit down on or to eat: it was a hobbit-hole and that means comfort.'</p>	<p><i>Jojo Rabbit</i> (2019)</p> <p>'You're not a Nazi, Jojo. You're a ten-year-old kid who likes dressing up in a funny uniform and wants to be part of a club.'</p> <p><i>Hunt for the Wilderpeople</i> (2016)</p> <p>'Ricky: I'm more like the Terminator than you!</p> <p>Paula: I said it first, you're more like Sarah Connor, and in the first movie too, before she could do chinups.'</p>

Narrative voice

A narrative is a story, and **narrative point of view** is the position from which the story is told. **Narrative voice** incorporates narrative point of view, and can involve a first-, second- or third-person narrator. Voice also incorporates the choice of narrator and the way in which they speak to the reader. It should not be assumed that the voice of a narrator is the voice of the author. While often authors construct narrators that express their *own* views, ultimately the narrator is a construction.



EXAMPLE Narrative voice in *The Hunger Games*

In Suzanne Collins' *The Hunger Games*, Katniss' first-person narrative voice is often blunt and defiant, reflecting her harsh upbringing in District 12. In the first extract below, this is evident in the short sentences and series of questions that imply her resistance to Effie, who represents the authoritarian Capitol. The series of questions conveys Katniss' rebelliousness as she challenges the more politically powerful Effie.



Effie's voice is condescending and superior.

"[But] I've done my best with what I had to work with. How Katniss sacrificed herself for her sister. How you've both successfully struggled to overcome the barbarism of your district."

The narrative voice of Katniss sounds sarcastic and resistant.

Barbarism? That's ironic coming from a woman helping to prepare us for slaughter. And what's she basing our success on? Our table manners?

In contrast, the following extract reveals a shift in Katniss' voice, and we see that she can be tender and protective towards her fellow competitor, the young girl Rue.

For a while, we dig roots, we gather berries and greens, we devise a strategy in hushed voices. And I come to know Rue, the oldest of six kids, fiercely protective of her siblings, who gives her rations to the younger ones, who forages in the meadows in a district where the Peacekeepers are far less obliging than ours. Rue, who when you ask her what she loves most in the world, replies, of all things, "Music."

The long sentence slows the pace of the narrative and creates a reflective, tender voice as Katniss gets to know Rue.

"Music?" I say. In our world, I rank music somewhere between hair ribbons and rainbows in terms of usefulness. At least a rainbow gives you a tip about the weather. "You have a lot of time for that?"

The dismissive phrase reveals how highly Katniss values survival.

"We sing at home. At work, too. That's why I love your pin," she says, pointing to the mockingjay that I've again forgotten about.

Again, Katniss's narrative voice is sarcastic and dry, evident in choices such as 'at least'.

"You have mockingjays?" I ask.

Rue's simple and positive language creates a childlike and innocent voice.

"Oh, yes. I have a few that are my special friends. We can sing back and forth for hours. They carry messages for me," she says.

Phrases such as 'special friends' contribute to Rue's childlike voice.

Writing about narrative voice

Read the analysis of Katniss' voice below.

In the first extract, Katniss' narrative voice is blunt and defiant, typical of a dystopian protagonist. It is created partly by the short sentences and series of questions that imply her resistance to Effie. Her sarcastic tone is created through her word choices, such as her use of the word 'slaughter', which emphasises the irony of Effie praising Katniss and Peeta for overcoming their barbarism, despite the Hunger Games themselves being barbaric. The questions emphasise her rebelliousness, as Katniss is challenging the status quo represented by Effie. Furthermore, the satirical reference to their 'table manners' criticises the superficiality of the wealthy who assume that because they eat politely they are more civilised. 'Barbarism' is an extreme, exaggerated term to describe bad manners, and Katniss' questioning of the way Effie uses this word reveals her views on the hypocrisy of the Capitol.

In contrast, the second extract reveals a shift in Katniss' voice. We see that she can be tender and protective towards the young girl, Rue. In a long sentence that draws attention to Rue's many positive qualities, Katniss' narrative voice is respectful and gentle. Despite this, Katniss' cynicism still comes through in the one-word question 'Music?', which reveals her dismissive attitude towards something she regards as frivolous. This is reinforced by her hyperbolic image of music ranking 'somewhere between hair ribbons and rainbows'. Her voice here is a little patronising, while revealing her own values of survival and practicality. Although Katniss can be tender, her predominant voice is tough, pragmatic and critical of the Capitol.

Explore narrative voice

- 1 Compare the narrative voice in one of the extracts on the previous two pages to the opening of Dickens' *Great Expectations*, available at <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/1400/1400-h/1400-h.htm>. What do these two narrative voices have in common? How do they differ? Consider sentence length and lexical choice in particular. Once you have made a list of similarities and differences, write the opening of a story of your own that develops a distinct narrative voice.
- 2 In a novel or short story you have studied in class, find two extracts that construct a strong sense of narrative voice. Annotate them (as modelled in the examples from *The Hunger Games*) with information such as:
 - the point of view from which the story is told
 - who the narrator is, and their nature
 - the tone
 - any language or stylistic features that make the voice distinct or noticeable.
- 3 'A Mother's Fondness' by Marion Rachel Stewart is a short story about a mother-daughter relationship. It highlights how people can misunderstand one another, as both characters reveal their perspectives on an incident when the daughter, Cathie, stays late at a friend's house without telling her mother. Read the extracts, then create a Venn diagram to compare and contrast the narrative voices of The Mother and The Daughter.

The Mother

I began to worry and fidget by half past five. Two buses had gone by and she had not come home from school. I thought of all the places she could go to and became afraid because there were so many. My husband was working in Glasgow and my father, who stayed with us, was on holiday.

The house was empty. I was afraid. Not of being alone but she would have phoned to tell me if she was going away anywhere. My stomach turned, I felt hungry but could not eat, tired but could not sleep, tormented by my imagination.

The Daughter

I didn't feel like going home anyway – perhaps it was because I was getting annoyed with my mother – well, not annoyed but it had become too tense being with her. We couldn't have a conversation without it becoming a row. I think she resented me a bit. I don't know why. It made things easier when I went out; I didn't have to face up to her. She really annoyed me sometimes because any row was forgotten too quickly, as though it was a routine, as though she wasn't bothered. Any arguments were never about anything important but she made them seem trivial immediately afterwards. She made me feel foolish and small. It was horrible, I hated it happening. I had begun to keep out of her way as much as possible.

Multiple voices

In addition to creating a main voice, a writer will often include other voices and their corresponding perspectives. By presenting multiple voices and perspectives, texts can offer greater and more varied insights into their subject matter.

Creators of texts can privilege some voices and marginalise or silence others. A documentary that includes an expert holding an opposing viewpoint to the director might relegate the expert to near the end of the text, or overwhelm their voice by including the viewpoints of three experts who support the director.

When analysing multiple voices in texts, ask yourself:

- Who is speaking? Who is not, and why are they silent?
- When and how often do people get the opportunity to speak?
- How are the voices connected to power?

EXAMPLE

Multiple voices in a narrative text: *The Bone Sparrow*

In her novel *The Bone Sparrow*, Zana Fraillon tells the story of Subhi, a young boy who was born in an Australian detention centre. The novel represents the experience of children in detention centres by giving them, and asylum seekers more widely, a voice. Through the choice of narrator, Fraillon develops a child's naive voice.

Maá tells me never to look too closely at the food, and whenever I find flies or worms, she says I'm extra lucky because they give me protein. Once I even found a human tooth in my rice. 'Hey, Maá, is this lucky too?' I asked, and Maá looked at it and said, 'If you needing tooth.' She laughed a long time at her own joke. Longer than it was really worth in my opinion.

Subhi voices the experiences of refugees, constructing humour and warmth despite the harsh conditions. This is the dominant voice as readers follow Subhi's version of events. The novel also voices concerns about mental health issues and the lack of support available in rural Australia. One way it does this is by including multiple voices, such as those of Maá (a mother) and the Jackets, the guards at the centre.

They say it was Eli's fault. They say he started all the craziness. But he was just a kid. He didn't want to be grown yet.

They are saying Eli was on the roof. That he was angry. They are saying he went for Beaver. That he fell. That Beaver tried to save him. They are saying ...

In this example, the voice of the Jackets is conveyed as insistent and frightening through Subhi's repetition of the pronoun 'they', which constructs them as the enemy. Note that the voice is conveyed through narratorial comment, not direct speech. This is an example of including other people's voices indirectly with paraphrase.

EXAMPLE**Multiple voices in an interpretive text**

Taylor Nicole Rogers includes multiple voices in her opinion piece ‘Scientists blast Jonathan Franzen’s “climate doomist” opinion column as “the worst piece on climate change”’, published in *Business Insider* in 2019. Rogers reports on the furore created when US journalist and author Jonathan Franzen published his essay ‘What if We Stopped Pretending?’, in which he claimed that there is no point trying to stop climate change because environmental destruction is inevitable. The voices included in Rogers’ piece – specifically those of Franzen, John Upton and Rogers herself – represent various perspectives on climate change.

“It’s hard to imagine major outlets publishing essays declaring efforts to reduce poverty hopeless. Or telling cancer patients to just give up,” John Upton, an editor at Climate Central, wrote on Twitter. “Yet this Climate Doomist trope flourishes – penned, best I can tell, exclusively by older, comfy white men.”

The scientific consensus is that reducing emissions can still slow climate change. An October report by the United Nations’ Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change found that keeping global warming below 1.5 degrees Celsius above preindustrial average temperatures could reduce the frequency of the most dangerous climate events, such as severe drought and extreme heat.

Franzen disagreed with the notion.

“If you’re younger than sixty, you have a good chance of witnessing the radical destabilization of life on earth—massive crop failures, apocalyptic fires, imploding economies, epic flooding, hundreds of millions of refugees fleeing regions made uninhabitable by extreme heat or permanent drought,” Franzen wrote in *The New Yorker*. “If you’re under thirty, you’re all but guaranteed to witness it.”

ACTIVITY**Understand multiple voices**

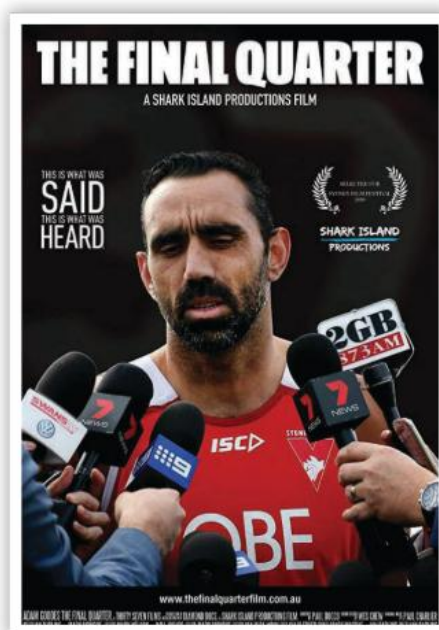
- 1 Annotate the different voices in the extract above. How are the voices different? How are the quotations structured and composed differently?
- 2 Consider the voices created in a written text you have studied. Create a table that compares how the writer has created each distinct voice. You might identify particular language features, the narrative point of view or other stylistic features.
- 3 Find a website that shares migrant stories. Read some of the stories, and compare the voices constructed in them. How does voice reflect the nature of the migrant experience? Create an interpretive text in which you incorporate the voice of one of the migrants you have researched.
- 4 Rewrite one of these migrant stories as an imaginative text. You might write it as a diary entry or short story, for example.

Bringing it all together: *The Final Quarter*

The 2019 documentary *The Final Quarter*, directed by Ian Darling, examines the final three years of Adam Goodes' football career, which were marred by crowd booing and media scrutiny. Also highlighted is the disconnection between Goodes' Aboriginal identity and the predominantly white Australian sports media.

The documentary uses archival material, including photos, segments of television panels, news headlines and interviews, to historicise the conflict and encourage national conversations about racism and Australian cultural identity. Director Darling explains, 'Everyone had an opinion; from politicians to people in the street, they had expressed their opinions on Goodes and his actions, and their views on why he was being booed. I didn't feel the need to film any new commentary, new opinions or new conversations.'

The target audience is non-Indigenous Australians, suggested by the way the documentary emphasises Australia's racist attitudes through comments on the poor behaviour of the sports media and those who booed Goodes. The large size of this audience explains, in part, why the documentary was screened on free-to-air Australian television.



Context

- Champion AFL player and proud Aboriginal man, Adam Goodes is named the 2014 Australian of the Year.
- Goodes calls out racism – in 2013, a 13-year-old girl is escorted from a stadium for calling Goodes an 'ape' during an AFL match. Goodes advocates protection and education for the girl.
- Goodes is accused of 'staging' (deliberately falling to the ground during match play) for free kicks.
- Goodes performs a war dance after kicking a goal. It is a celebratory dance, directed at Carlton supporters.
- Goodes is booed at every match for the next three years, until his retirement in 2015. He does not attend the Grand Final tribute to retiring players that year for fear he will be booed.

Analysing the voice of Stan Grant

Values endorsed through the voice of journalist Stan Grant, who narrates the documentary, include:

- equality
- diversity
- unity
- respect
- courage
- acceptance.

Ideas represented through Grant's voice include:

- speaking out against injustice
- Australia's racist cultural identity
- the power of one person to make a difference
- respect for Aboriginal people.



The following student response analyses the voice of Stan Grant.

Identifies focaliser and describes voice.

Journalist Stan Grant creates a voice of reason and reconciliation through his voice-over. Prompting the audience to reflect on their own experiences of being offended or insulted, he says, 'I would like to think that in a civilised society that if someone says to you, "That hurts. This is hurting me. It is hurting Indigenous people. It has racist overtones," we stop.'

Analyses how the voice is constructed through language choices.

The repetition of the word 'hurt' emphasises that the booing and racism has an emotional cost. This repetition and the collective pronoun 'we' represent racial vilification as both a personal experience (for Goodes) and a collective social experience that hurts the nation. In addition, Grant's use of the word 'civilised' alludes to the discourse of historical white government protectionist policies in Australia that enforced legal discrimination, claiming to be helping 'civilise' Aboriginal people. Grant inverts this by suggesting that some non-Indigenous Australians are uncivilised or primitive because they continue to boo Goodes.

Acknowledges how visual codes help to frame the voice as not just Grant's own, but as representing Goodes too.

Grant's words are accompanied by a mid-shot of Adam Goodes that focuses on Goodes' eyes. He is looking up as though unsure what he will encounter, suggesting his vulnerability and the hurt referred to by Grant in the voice-over. He is central in the frame but surrounded by his teammates, suggesting that the vitriol is strong enough to permeate the protective layers around him. The visual language here helps to frame Stan Grant's voice, and collectively Goodes and Grant represent an Indigenous Australian voice.

Recognises that a voice can be constructed for a group, rather than an individual.

Multiple voices in *The Final Quarter*

In analysing the voices present in texts, it is important to recognise how they relate to one another and how the creator blends them to create an overall perspective. In *The Final Quarter*, multiple voices are included to represent a range of perspectives and are given varying amounts of airtime. Some are marginal, such as Eddie McGuire's and Sam Newman's, and given little airtime. Charlie Pickering's voice is also marginal but acquires greater status because his perspective aligns with the dominant voice, which identifies the racism behind the booing. It is also satirical because he uses biting humour to call out the racist behaviour towards Adam Goodes. (The Indigenous Round in AFL celebrates Indigenous players and culture.)

VOICE	EXAMPLE
Adam Goodes	'You know, racism had a face last night and you know it was a 13-year-old girl but it's not her fault. She's 13. She's still so innocent. I don't put any blame on her.'
Waleed Aly	'Australia is generally a very tolerant society, until its minorities demonstrate that they don't know their place.'
Alan Jones	'[The Indigenous Round] is a form of, a reverse form of apartheid, isn't it?'
Caroline Wilson	'It feels like people want to have the Indigenous Round in their own comfortable neat little box, that doesn't threaten them or make them think or challenge them.'

Voices in the opening audio montage

The voices included in the opening audio montage dramatise the conflict by juxtaposing those who are sympathetic towards Goodes with those who are not. Ryan Fitzgerald, Caroline Wilson and Grant Hansen claim that racism is divisive, unjustified and 'not good enough'. Journalists Stan Grant and Kelli Underwood, and AFL CEO Gillon McLachlan, also voice their views that Goodes is 'forcing our nation to talk' and that 'it's ugly'. This montage, accompanied by chilling, haunting music, represents the antagonism towards Goodes as an indictment of many Australian football fans. Collectively, these voices come to represent Darling's authorial voice.

The voices in defence of Goodes are interrupted by the opposing voice of football commentator Sam Newman, heard as footage from the AFL *Footy Show* plays. A mid-shot of Newman is framed by a black outline. He stares directly at the camera and aggressively points while accusing Goodes of failing to use his Australian of the Year status 'for good'. He claims Goodes is provoking and dividing the Australian people. Newman's hostile voice is emphasised since it is given more airtime than previous voices in the documentary. Acting as a motif, Newman's angry voice is repeated throughout the documentary to present his view as relentless, combative and dominant.

Write about voice

Comprehending

Watch the first ten minutes of the documentary, available at <https://thefinalquarterfilm.com.au>. Explain the nature of Adam Goodes' voice and the language features used to construct it.

Responding

'We don't hear just a boo; we hear the howls of humiliation that we often grew up with as Indigenous people, the howls that echo across two centuries of dispossession and injustice and suffering.' (Stan Grant)

Discuss how a text can use the voice of an individual to represent the experience of a group.

Composing

Write a review in which you express your opinion of the documentary *The Final Quarter*. Consciously adopt a persona – e.g. a media commentator – and develop your voice as you write. An example here by Luke Buckmaster is worth reading and even using to help guide your writing: <https://www.theguardian.com/film/2019/may/30/the-final-quarter-review-exhilarating-adam-goodes-documentary-pulses-with-urgency>

ATTITUDES AND VALUES

IN THIS CHAPTER YOU WILL:

- develop an understanding of attitudes and values
- distinguish between personal, societal and cultural attitudes and values
- consider how attitudes and values are influenced by context
- analyse the ways in which attitudes and values are communicated in imaginative, persuasive and interpretive texts
- learn strategies for identifying and interrogating attitudes and values.

The English course requires analysis of the multiple ways in which texts represent attitudes for particular audiences, contexts and purposes. This chapter provides guidance about how to identify the attitudes communicated in a variety of texts. Language, structural and stylistic features work in texts to reveal their creators' attitudes and to influence their audiences' attitudes.

An exploration of attitudes necessarily requires an understanding of values. This is because values underpin attitudes. Values determine what we believe is ethical or morally 'right', and thus influence how we act or respond to others.

This chapter will highlight the relationship between values and attitudes, and also explore personal, social and cultural attitudes and values.

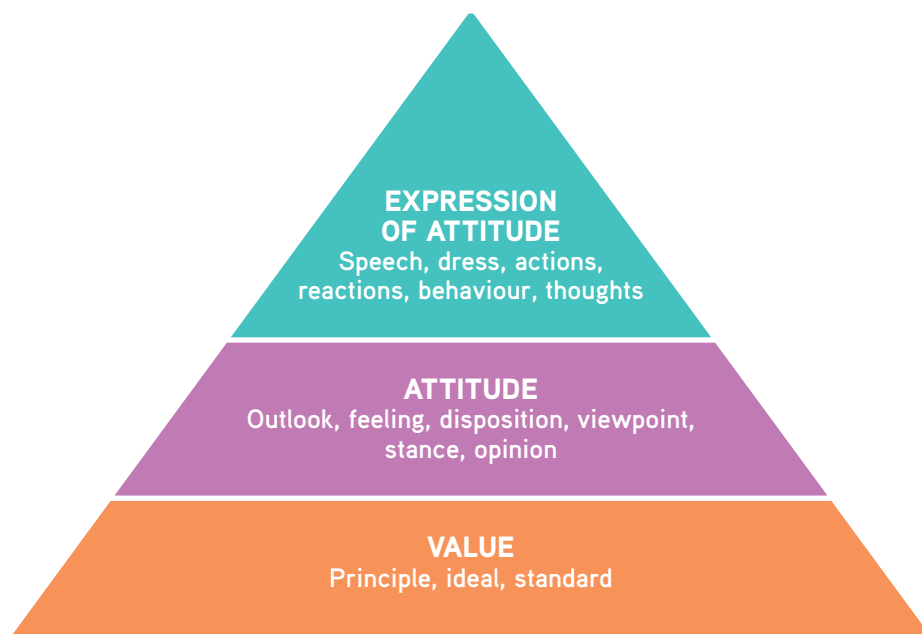


What are attitudes and values?

Attitudes are general outlooks, viewpoints or feelings *towards* or *about* something, such as an idea or issue. Attitudes are evident through our writing, thoughts, speech, actions and behaviour. **Values** can be thought of as the principles, ideals and notions considered important: literally, what is 'valuable' to a person or group. Attitudes and values are not fixed; they vary between cultures and societies, and individuals' attitudes and values can change over time or in response to new experiences.

How are attitudes connected to values?

Values and attitudes are separate concepts but are frequently discussed together because they share a close relationship. Values *underpin* attitudes, providing the foundation upon which attitudes are formed.



The following examples articulate **attitudes** and **values** as connected but separate concepts.

- The value of **justice** *underpins* the attitude that people should be held accountable for their wrongdoings.
- The value of **honesty** *supports* the attitude that deception is not acceptable, and that the truth is always preferable.
- A committed, dedicated attitude towards academic study *reflects* the underlying value of **education**.

Attitudes are expressed not just in words, but also by our actions and even styles of dress. Consider the different ways in which the image opposite conveys a rebellious attitude, critical of society's apathy.



Articulating attitudes

Attitudes can be expressed in the following two ways.

IN ADJECTIVE FORM <i>TOWARDS</i> SOMETHING	AS A VIEWPOINT <i>ABOUT</i> SOMETHING
He had a contemptuous, critical attitude towards keeping animals in captivity.	His attitude was that animals should be in their natural environment rather than in captivity.
She expressed a frustrated, disgusted attitude towards littering.	She expressed the attitude that littering is a disgusting practice.
I have an optimistic, enthusiastic attitude towards travel.	My attitude is that travel is an exciting, adventurous experience.

Word bank for describing an attitude towards something

Ambivalent	Concerned	Disdainful	Neglectful	Scornful
Apathetic	Condescending	Dismissive	Optimistic	Selfish
Benevolent	Confident	Flippant	Patronising	Selfless
Carefree	Considerate	Hopeful	Reckless	Superior
Careful	Critical	Ignorant	Regretful	Sympathetic
Caring	Defiant	Indifferent	Relaxed	Thoughtful
Compassionate	Determined	Mature	Responsible	Thoughtless

ACTIVITY

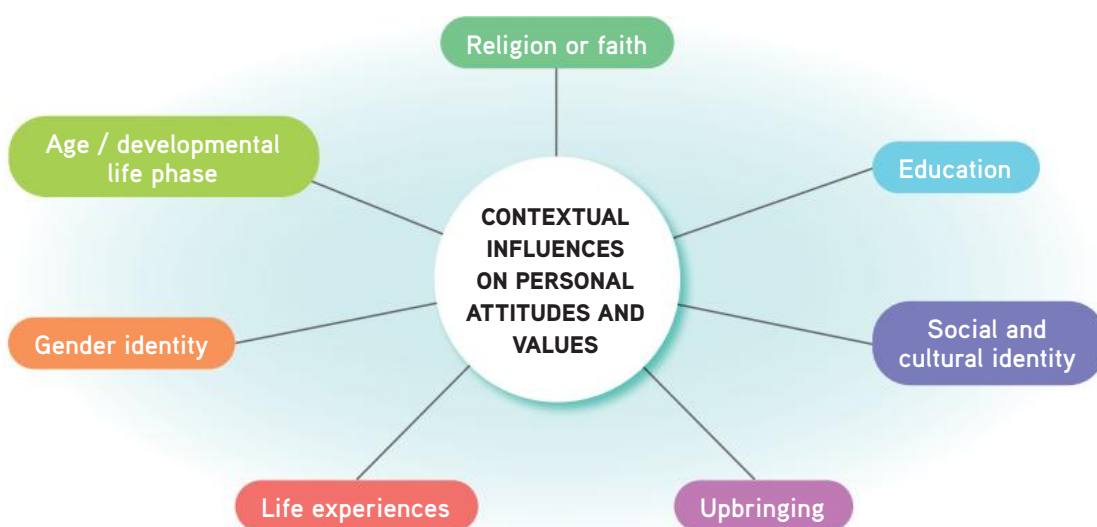
Practise expressing attitudes

Note down your attitudes towards the following topics in both adjective and viewpoint form.

- The banning of mobile phones in WA public schools
- Pill testing at music festivals
- Gender quotas in the workplace

Personal attitudes

Personal attitudes are the viewpoints or outlooks that are personal to us. This doesn't necessarily mean they are *exclusive* to us; our attitudes can be shared by many others. For example, the attitude that climate change is a pressing issue could reflect your personal feeling about the topic, but it is also an attitude shared by other young people, evidenced by their strong representation at school strikes and protests.



ACTIVITY

Understand your attitudes

Respond to the following statements to help clarify your personal attitudes.

	AGREE	DISAGREE
My attitude is that social media is only valuable as a tool for self-promotion.		
My attitude towards a sugar tax is a supportive one.		
I have a cynical, suspicious attitude towards telemarketers.		
My attitude is that the elderly should be treated with respect and patience.		
I have a dismissive attitude towards eating healthy food.		
My attitude towards my studies is one of determination.		
I have an apathetic attitude towards getting my driver's licence.		
My attitude towards technology is different from that of my peers.		

Personal values

Personal values are those we consider especially important to our own lives and wellbeing. They may differ from others' or change over our lifetime due to a range of contextual influences. For instance, someone who has experienced a serious, life-threatening illness may value their physical health more than someone who has not endured this situation.

Word bank for common personal values

Acceptance	Education	Leisure	Privacy	Success
Appearance	Fame	Love	Religion	Travel
Beauty	Family	Loyalty	Safety	Trust
Belonging	Friendship	Popularity	Security	Wealth
Comfort	Health	Power	Status	Work

ACTIVITY

Understand your values

- Respond to the following statements to help clarify your personal values.

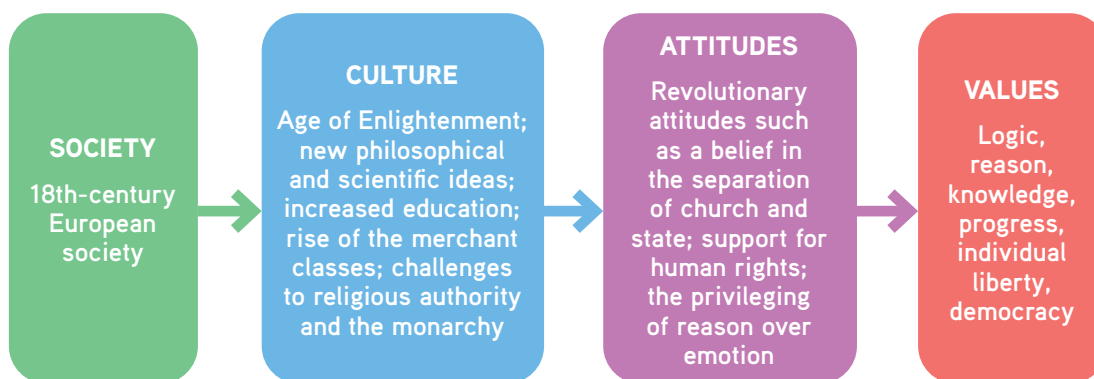
	AGREE	DISAGREE
In my friendships, honesty is more important to me than fun.		
I value my appearance more than my health.		
Acceptance is one of the most important things to me.		
I would much prefer to travel than to be wealthy.		
Popularity is more important to me than feeling safe.		
I would sacrifice my privacy for fame.		
I would rather be successful at school than in love.		
I am only friends with people who are loyal.		

- Choose five values from the word bank and rank them from most to least important to you.
- Discuss your personal values with a peer, noting similarities and differences. Refer to the contextual factors on page 54 that might influence your values.



Social and cultural attitudes and values

In Chapter 2 we defined what is meant by society and culture. Simply, society is a structure held to by a group of people and culture is the evidence of a particular way of life. For example:



Societal and cultural attitudes and values are often so naturalised that we accept them without question, although within a society there may be multiple countercultures that challenge dominant attitudes and values.

Word bank for societal and cultural values

Community	Environment	Inclusiveness	Order
Creativity	Freedom of religion	Integrity	Patriotism
Diversity	Freedom of speech	Justice	Respect for elders
Education	Honesty	Liberty	Tolerance

TAKING IT FURTHER

Introduction to perspective

The important course concept of **perspective** comprises two related components: a *viewpoint* that is informed by a *context*. The viewpoint or attitude associated with a perspective results from considering something from a particular position.



For example, a person's perspective on celebrating Leavers Week in Bali might be informed by their personal context as a parent, as a Year 12 student, as a Balinese local, or as a person who has experienced Leavers Week in Bali themselves. A parent may have the viewpoint that Leavers Week in Bali poses a risk to their child due to the distance of the location, while the viewpoint of a Year 12 student may be that it offers a celebratory adventure in an exciting environment. Perspectives are as individual and diverse as we are.

Attitudes and values in imaginative texts

In imaginative texts, attitudes and values are often revealed through the **representations** constructed. These representations are constructed using the following narrative conventions, which are typical of imaginative texts such as novels, short stories, plays and feature films:

- setting
- characterisation
- narrative structure / plot
- atmosphere/tone
- narrative point of view
- figurative and descriptive language.

Characterisation

Sometimes a character in a fictional text will directly express their attitude towards something or overtly state that they value a particular principle. More often, though, their attitudes, and the values that underpin their attitudes, will be evident in the character's actions, dialogue, thoughts, appearance and behaviour. The following aspects of characterisation individually and/or cumulatively work to this end.

- **Dialogue:** e.g. the dismissive, patronising dialogue of the driving instructor in 'The Test', by Angelica Gibbs, reveals his sexist and racist attitudes toward Marian.
- **Behaviour and actions:** e.g. during Leonard Mead's nightly walk in Ray Bradbury's 'The Pedestrian', he closely examines and smells a leaf; this action indicates the strong value he places on the natural world and his contemptuous attitude towards intrusive technology.
- **Relationships and interactions with others:** e.g. in the *Black Mirror* episode 'Nosedive', Lacie's values of popularity and social status are evidenced by her superficial, inauthentic interactions with other characters.
- **Appearance and/or costumes:** e.g. in the film *Australia*, directed by Baz Luhrmann, Lady Sarah Ashley's inappropriate attire and numerous Prada suitcases suggest not only her materialistic values but also her ignorant attitude towards the rural Australian lifestyle.
- **Thoughts:** e.g. the first-person narrative point of view used in Tim Winton's *The Shepherd's Hut* reveals the protagonist's thoughts, and consequently his determined attitude towards remaining hidden from society.



EXAMPLE

Attitudes and values in *Out of Time*

The following extract is from *Out of Time*, a 2019 novel by Western Australian writer Steve Hawke, published by Fremantle Press.

The character's admiring attitude towards her natural surroundings is showcased through the deliberate action of note-taking and her desire to 'absorb' the setting by consciously observing it.

Third-person limited narrative point of view reveals Anne's thoughts and perceptions, highlighting her personal value of attachment to the natural environment, contrasted with the human-made tankers on the horizon, which are represented as less significant to her.

Anne continues to display an appreciative, reverent attitude toward the landscape, which she asserts holds 'an ancient power'; she is drawn to the bird eggs that 'she cannot resist' touching, a seemingly compulsive action linked to her value of admiration for wildlife and the natural world.

The sea eagle glides out of sight beyond the ridge line. Anne lowers her binoculars, notes the date and details in her field book, then relaxes against the boulder at her back to absorb the vista. Just down to her left a single bright-red desert pea catches her eye. There are random clumps of pale, wiry spinifex amongst the jumble of angular, deep-brown rocks tumbling down to a narrow, white beach. A thin fringe of mangroves curves out toward a small headland. The sea is a vibrant azure, glinting with sun sparkles, dotted with rocky islets. The mammoth, low-slung iron-ore tankers out beyond the islands seem toy-like at this distance.

She can feel herself opening up to this country ... amidst the gritty industry of the ore wrought from the earth, there is an ancient power in the land, with the mysterious engravings of the Burrup bearing eternal witness. The boulder she has chosen as her backrest is the canvas for her favourite, a pair of grouse-like birds in plump profile, and a clutch of eggs. She knows it's frowned upon, but she cannot resist the urge to reach up and briefly feel a connection to the pocked outline of this creature from a time beyond memory.

ACTIVITY

Identify a character's attitudes and values

Select a character from one of your studied imaginative texts. Explain how the following elements of characterisation reveal their attitudes and values:

- thoughts
- actions
- body language and facial expressions
- dialogue.

Narrative structure and plot

The narrative turning points in an imaginative text can work to consolidate particular values and attitudes, or to show them being challenged. Sometimes a character's attitudes and values will change over the course of a text. Central characters are usually complex and dynamic, so aim to identify their multiple or changing attitudes and values.

EXAMPLE

Changing attitudes and values in 'Stolen Car'

The 1978 short story 'Stolen Car' by Indigenous author Archie Weller depicts a significant transformation of the personal attitudes and values of the Aboriginal protagonist, who endures several instances of police brutality. This change is due to various points of dramatic tension within the plot.

PLOT DEVELOPMENTS	ATTITUDES	VALUES
Exposition – Johnny's arrival in Perth from his small country town	Naive, hopeful attitude towards city life and its offer of new opportunities and adventures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunity • Exploration • Independence
Violent physical assault by police	A shocked, confused and affronted attitude towards the brutal actions of the police	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Justice • Safety • Self-preservation
Climax in which Johnny speeds away from police in a stolen car	Resigned, accepting and apathetic attitude towards the police pursuing him; uncaring attitude to his life beyond this present moment of freedom, during which he feels empowered by his control of the car	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Freedom • Power • Control

ACTIVITY

Track shifts in a character's attitudes and values

Refer to a character in a studied imaginative text to answer the following questions.

- 1 What are the character's attitudes and values during the text's exposition? Provide textual evidence.
- 2 Locate two complications or points of rising tension in the text. Explain how the character's attitudes and values are strengthened or challenged at these points.
- 3 Compare the attitudes and values of the character in the exposition and in the resolution. Have they shifted or solidified? Why?

Figurative and descriptive language

Imaginative texts commonly use figurative language, sensory imagery and descriptive detail. These language choices can reveal the attitudes and values of characters, as well as those of the text's creator(s). Throughout 'Stolen Car', Johnny reflects on his country home with a sense of nostalgia and fondness. By contrast, Johnny's first experience of the city is described in the following way:

He had hitched a ride with the truckie that morning from the country to the ragged outskirts of the city. Red and white houses pimple the hills that circle it like a sleeping snake. Orchards have tamed the crude wilderness, but now a new savageness, the city itself, squirms like the awakening pupae of some cruel, giant insect, between the hills and the ocean.

Writing about attitudes and values in 'Stolen Car'

Identifies techniques used to reveal attitude.

Specifies what the personal attitude *is* and what it is directed *towards*; attitudes expressed in adjective and viewpoint form.

Analyses textual examples.

Connects effect of language techniques to attitude.

Relationship established between attitudes and values.

Attitude attributed to the character and potentially author.

The cumulative effect of using unpleasant imagery to depict the city setting in the passage, starting with the unwelcoming, unkempt nature of its 'ragged' outskirts, suggests a contemptuous, derisive attitude towards the city. The representation of houses that 'pimple' the setting evokes an unattractive cityscape, while the simile 'like a sleeping snake' creates a sinister, foreboding tone connected to the setting. Use of a simile to describe the city's kinetic likeness to the 'squirms' of 'awakening pupae' is particularly unsettling and repellent. This nauseating description, furthered by reference to the 'cruel, giant insect' the pupae will mature into, ominously foreshadows Johnny's later experiences in the city. The use of similes with consistently dangerous connotations suggests that the city is an unforgiving, threatening environment. The negative, suspicious attitude of the protagonist towards the unfamiliar setting highlights his values of safety, acceptance and nature. This suspicious, apprehensive attitude may even be read as representative of Weller's own attitude, given the deliberate selection of language to create an ominous, foreboding introduction to the city setting.

Attitudes and values in persuasive texts

The attitudes and values conveyed in persuasive texts can be easier to detect than those in imaginative texts. This is because creators of persuasive texts usually overtly state their attitude towards a particular issue or topic in an attempt to convince an audience to accept their viewpoint. The techniques used to communicate attitudes and values in persuasive texts include rhetorical appeals and the construction of a convincing authorial voice. A list of common persuasive language features is provided in Appendix 1 (pages 215–20).

Rhetorical appeals

There are three main types of rhetorical appeals used to communicate attitudes and values in persuasive texts:

- **Ethos** (character/spirit) – establishes credibility, constructs a convincing authorial voice, often uses personal pronouns
- **Logos** (logic) – uses statistics, facts, expert opinions, jargon, formal language, evidence
- **Pathos** (emotion) – can use anecdotes, emotive language, inclusive language, rhetorical questions.

The following speech was delivered by Sir David Attenborough at the opening of the World Economic Forum in early 2019.

I am quite literally from another age.

Personal pronouns draw attention to the presenter's biographical context.

I was born during the Holocene – the name given to the 12,000-year period of climatic stability that allowed humans to settle, farm and create civilisations.

Scientific and anthropological discourse employing statistics.

Those conditions fostered our unique minds, giving rise to international trade in ideas as well as goods making us the globally-connected species we are today. Much of what will be discussed here is the consequence of that stability.

Inclusive diction.

Global businesses, international co-operation and the striving for higher ideals – these are all possible because for millennia, on a global scale, nature has largely been predictable and stable.

Juxtaposition between former stability and new era of unpredictability.

Now in the space of one human lifetime - indeed in the space of my lifetime – all that has changed.

Relationship established between attitudes and values.

The Holocene has ended. The Garden of Eden is no more.

Attitude attributed to scientists and potentially also the speaker.

We have changed the world so much that scientists say we are now in a new geological age – The Anthropocene – The Age of Humans.

Direct address to audience.

When you think about it, there is perhaps no more unsettling thought. The only conditions modern humans have ever known are changing and changing fast.

Negative consequences of shift outlined.

It is tempting and understandable to ignore the evidence and carry on as usual or to be filled with doom and gloom.

Disjunction used to introduce an alternative option.

But there is also a vast potential for what we might do.

We need to move beyond guilt or blame and get on with the practical tasks at hand. We did not get to this point deliberately – and it has happened astonishingly quickly.

Sense of urgency and pragmatism established.

When I made my first television programmes most audiences had never even seen a pangolin – indeed few pangolin had ever seen a TV camera! When in 1979 I made a series tracing the history of life on earth, I was aware of environmental problems but I didn't imagine we were fundamentally changing nature.

Returns to personal pronouns and several historical anecdotes, all references to well-known professional work, covered in chronological order.

In 1999, whilst making the *Blue Planet* series about marine life, we filmed coral-bleaching, but I still didn't appreciate the magnitude of the damage that had already started.

Now, however, we have evidence, knowledge and the ability to share it on a scale unimaginable even just a few years ago.

Inclusive language and phrases that emphasise ease of human connection and universality of a common goal.

Movements and ideas can spread at astonishing speed ...

If people can truly understand what is at stake, I believe they will give permission to business and governments to get on with the practical solutions.

Identify attitudes and techniques in a persuasive speech

- 1 Read the annotated speech on the previous page and complete the following table.

DEVICE IDENTIFIED IN THE MARGIN ANNOTATIONS	DEFINITION OF THE DEVICE	ETHOS, LOGOS OR PATHOS APPEAL?
Personal anecdotes		
Inclusive diction		
Scientific discourse		
Juxtaposition		
Statistics		

- 2 In a short paragraph, summarise the attitudes and values highlighted by Attenborough in his speech.



See the digital bonus material for another persuasive speech, by Stan Grant, and a related activity.

Persuasive appeals

Persuasive texts typically appeal to the values of their target audience. Advertisements – a form of persuasive text – may appeal to such values as popularity, family, financial savings, patriotism, tradition and custom.

The following advertisement uses written and visual language to appeal to the values of its target audience.



Writing about appeals to audience values in a Toyota advertisement

The Toyota RAV4 advertisement appeals to viewers' values of adventure, action and independence through its compositional arrangement. By juxtaposing the dynamic, kinaesthetic movement of the kayak emerging from the car's boot with the static urban building in the background, the advertisement suggests the car will offer a sense of escapism from mundane city living. The forward momentum of the subject and his open-mouthed, excited facial expression indicate the speed and adrenaline associated with the activity – characteristics that audiences will likely connect to the RAV4 itself. For those with an adventurous or spontaneous attitude towards life, the advertisement may appeal to the desire for excitement. Given that only one person is pictured, the advertisement also appeals to those who value independence and the freedom to pursue activities on their own.

In addition to the visual elements of the text, the alliterated tricolon 'Whatever. Wherever. Whenever.' suggests that the car is versatile and suited to a wide range of conditions, further making it an attractive option for its target market – those who value travel, adventure, action and an outdoor lifestyle. Placed in close proximity to the Toyota logo, the slogan 'Let's Go Places' is also consistent with the advertisement's overall premise: that purchase of the RAV4 will allow audiences to fulfil their desire for action.

- Specific personal values identified.

- Implied narrative is examined using visual textual evidence.

- Personal attitudes and values connected to the appeals; a sense of the audience is established.

- Effect of written textual features in developing the appeals is explored.

ACTIVITY

Practise writing about appeals to values

- Find an advertisement online or in a print magazine.
- Using the example analysis above as a model, construct a response of between 200 and 300 words to your selected advertisement, addressing the question:
How does the text appeal to audience values?



Attitudes and values in interpretive texts

Given that their primary purpose is to interpret events, issues, people and places, interpretive texts can appear to offer a more balanced or impartial representation by exploring different attitudes related to a topic. This is not to say that interpretive texts do not promote certain attitudes or values. They do, but in subtle ways rather than directly.

EXAMPLE Attitudes and values in an interpretive text

The following extract is from 'Time for horses to come first' by Tom Percy. The text is a 'comment' piece, published in late 2019 in the *Weekend West* newspaper. It responds to the controversial treatment of former racing horses in Australia.

Personal anecdote suggests mare had no financial benefit but the writer valued its right to life anyway.

Juxtaposition implies criticism of commercial racing industry.

The values of the racing industry are revealed as being focused on economics and efficiency.

Hypothetical scenario reveals the value of one's reputation or brand.

Euphemisms suggest the euthanising of old racehorses is controversial.

Short sentence implies euthanasia is no longer an acceptable option.

About 20 years ago I bought a young mare who was never able to race. I bred a few foals from her – none were really any good or paid their way on the track. I still pay for her on the stud farm where she lives, and will do until the end of her days. I imagine most hobby owners do much the same. At the commercial end of the racing industry, however, it is probably somewhat different. The turnover is high and the need to place retired horses is more urgent. Sometimes, the easy option is to quickly dispose of them. Quickly and without any ongoing cost.

The prospect of a horse with your brands coming to the attention of the authorities in a malnourished condition on a remote property somewhere, many years after you have in good faith 'rehomed' it, is a fear that is always in the mind of an owner or trainer who is retiring an ex-racehorse.

One way of avoiding this, is to have the horse more 'permanently dealt with'. Although this has been tolerated for years as being an unfortunate but necessary service to the industry, times have changed. As have attitudes.

ACTIVITY

Identify conflicting attitudes and values

- 1 Identify the attitude towards horse racing expressed above and rewrite it in your own words as a viewpoint *about* the topic or an adjective *describing* the topic.
- 2 Explain the language features used in the text to represent the writer's attitude.
- 3 Explain how the extract reflects:
 - personal values
 - societal values
 - cultural values.



See the digital bonus material for responses to Percy's piece and a related activity.

Attitude and tone

Tone is the mood or feeling conveyed by the voice of a text. The tone reflects the attitude of a text's creator(s) towards their subject matter. In fact, the words used to describe tone can also be used to describe the attitude being conveyed. Tone can be constructed through an author's choice of words, modality and other stylistic choices. A highly critical tone, for example, will be created by the selection of negative vocabulary, while a sentimental tone will emerge from the use of warm, positive details.

Describing an attitude or tone as 'positive', 'negative' or 'neutral', without further clarification, is simplistic. Instead, try using some of the more precise words shown in the table below.

Word bank for describing tone

POSITIVE	NEUTRAL	NEGATIVE
Admiring	Ambivalent	Accusatory
Cheerful	Bland	Aggressive
Encouraging	Diplomatic	Contemptuous
Humorous	Nonchalant	Cynical
Lighthearted	Noncommittal	Dismissive
Optimistic	Nostalgic	Outraged
Reverential	Serious	Pessimistic
Sentimental	Uncertain	Sarcastic
Whimsical	Unconcerned	Scathing

ACTIVITY

Practise identifying tone

- 1 Read the following extract from the 2015 text *Island Home: A Landscape Memoir* by Western Australian author Tim Winton.

At thirteen or fourteen I had only the fuzziest apprehension of the natural world, but this is where my reverence for it began. This growing awareness had a mystical tinge to it, it's true, but by and large its inspiration was material, the result of long immersion in the physical facts. In my case it was a very literal suspension and absorption, for when you're in water all day, with dolphins and sea lions, when you swim in a shoal of salmon beneath a halo of diving birds, it's hard for even the most dull-witted boy to ignore the inkling that you're a small part of a larger process.

- 2 Select three adjectives from the word bank above to describe the tone of the text.
- 3 Describe the primary attitude conveyed through the tone of the text.
- 4 Explain how language, structural or stylistic features contribute to the tone.

Bringing it all together: *Ride Like a Girl*

Ride Like a Girl is a biographical feature film inspired by the true story of Michelle Payne, the first female jockey to win the Melbourne Cup. Released in 2019 and directed by Rachel Griffiths, the film recounts the numerous challenges faced by Payne throughout her early life and career. Much of the drama focuses on Payne's tireless attempts to establish her credibility in the male-dominated horseracing industry. Her triumphant win at the 2015 Melbourne Cup is the climax of the film and depicted as the well-deserved reward for her determination.

Ride Like a Girl promotes the values of family, loyalty and gender equality, as well as personal qualities such as perseverance, discipline and courage. In doing so, it represents the somewhat idealistic overarching attitude that a strong work ethic will lead to success.



Audience: Australians, sports fans

Purpose: to entertain and inspire; to highlight themes of courage and perseverance; to explore the issues of social expectations versus personal aspirations and female empowerment

Type: multimodal interpretive text

Form: biographical drama film (biopic)

Attitudes and values represented

The film highlights some of the chauvinistic **societal attitudes** entrenched in the horse-racing industry. Various examples of character dialogue in the film reveal that Payne is constantly overlooked as a serious competitor. For instance, her manager experiences difficulty securing racing opportunities for Payne when disclosing her gender. This example illustrates the unfairness of discriminatory societal attitudes that favour the **values** associated with traditional gender roles.

The fact that Payne is undeterred by her marginalisation emphasises her determined attitude towards achieving her goals. This **personal attitude** is in conflict with the broader societal and cultural attitudes she must contend with. Thus, the film endorses gender equality as an important **societal value** and determination as an admirable **personal value**, while challenging some of the sexist attitudes perpetuated by the racing industry.

Some of the ways in which the attitudes above are depicted include:

- recurring scenes and close-up shots revealing Payne's perseverance, particularly during her challenging rehabilitation following a near-fatal fall
- the positive portrayal of Payne's strict fitness regime and the extreme measures she takes to meet weigh-in requirements
- the dialogue of Payne and other characters, such as when her trainer informs her that the betting odds of her winning the Melbourne Cup would be multiplied if she were male
- recurring extreme close-ups of horses' hooves and of jockeys' facial expressions during races that capture their determined and highly focused attitudes
- the increased volume in racing scenes, which enhances the thunderous noise created by the horses galloping, emphasising the potential risks of the sport and thereby representing jockeys as fearless and courageous.



The audience is encouraged to feel respect and admiration for Payne, support for women in sport, frustration at Payne's setbacks, joy and relief at her ultimate success and a strengthening of values such as family and determination.

TAKING IT FURTHER

Interrogating attitudes

Though the film challenges sexist societal attitudes, other attitudes related to the racing industry are largely overlooked. The most obvious of these is the attitude that the unethical treatment of horses is perpetuated by the racing industry. With the exception of one fleeting frame depicting protesters outside the Melbourne Cup, and the memory of Payne's father instructing the children not to use whips, the film portrays horse racing as exciting, glamorous and fiercely competitive. Of course, the omission of negative attitudes surrounding horse racing is unsurprising; drawing attention to any criticism of the industry would undermine the complimentary representation of Michelle Payne at the heart of the film.

Write about attitudes and values

Comprehending

Read the following extract from a review by the ABC of *Ride Like a Girl*, then respond to this question:

Explain how language features reveal the reviewer's attitudes towards Ride Like a Girl.

When it comes to Melbourne Cup movies, it's a pretty small field.

There's the winner — Simon Wincer's much-loved 1983 *Phar Lap* — and the loser, Wincer's cumbersome 2011 failure *The Cup*. For the filmmakers of *Ride Like a Girl*, these are the ones to beat.

This celebration of history-making jockey Michelle Payne can't surpass *Phar Lap*, but thanks to a strong finish, it at least leaves *The Cup* for dead.

Ride Like a Girl's real strength is it never lets anything get in the way of telling the superb true story at its heart (something *The Cup* couldn't manage).

It follows Payne (played with grit by Teresa Palmer) from her rambunctious childhood with her nine siblings and widower dad (Sam Neill) through her hard-fought attempts to gain a foothold as a jockey in a male-dominated sport.

Bookended by file footage of the real-life Payne, *Ride Like a Girl* tackles the dangers of her profession and the sexist attitudes she had to overcome to follow her childhood dream and etch her name in the history books of 'the race that stops a nation'.

It's this struggle, and the way it builds to an emotional ending, that makes the film worthwhile. Actor-turned-first-time-director Rachel Griffiths said she set out 'to make a PG feminist sports film that would make men cry' and by focusing purely on Payne, she achieves that.

It's unfussy storytelling, which is why it works. Andrew Knight and Elise McCredie's script keeps the story's lens almost entirely on Payne, and Griffiths's competent, straightforward direction helps build the film to its climax.

But if anything, *Ride Like a Girl* is too straightforward. There's certainly nothing that elevates it from the middle of the field to the head of the pack.

Responding

- 1 Explain how *Ride Like a Girl* has been constructed to highlight a conflict between personal values and societal or cultural values.
- 2 Discuss how the attitudes evident in a text you have studied are communicated through the construction of voice.

Composing

Compose a persuasive text in which you seek to change the attitudes of a particular audience.

REPRESENTATIONS

IN THIS CHAPTER YOU WILL:

- explore the concept of representation
- analyse how texts represent people, places, events and ideas
- analyse how texts represent perspectives, values and attitudes
- examine how representations are constructed.

Representations are reconstructions or interpretations of the world presented in, and through, texts. They produce meanings through which we make sense of the world and our experiences in it. 'Representation' is an important concept in the English course because it encourages critical reading and exposes the attitudes and values underpinning texts.

As you analyse representations of ideas, beliefs and voices in texts, you confront, challenge and affirm the ways in which you think about others and the world. This is because it involves considering the social effects of these representations – the ways in which a text naturalises or normalises certain ideas, behaviours and images.



What is representation?

Representation refers to the ways in which people, groups, events and ideas are constructed to appear within texts. The concept relies on the understanding that texts are constructions and their creators 're-present' the world to their readers. Because texts have been constructed, they offer versions of reality. That is, they are crafted by writers or directors who make decisions about what is to be included, omitted, emphasised and de-emphasised.

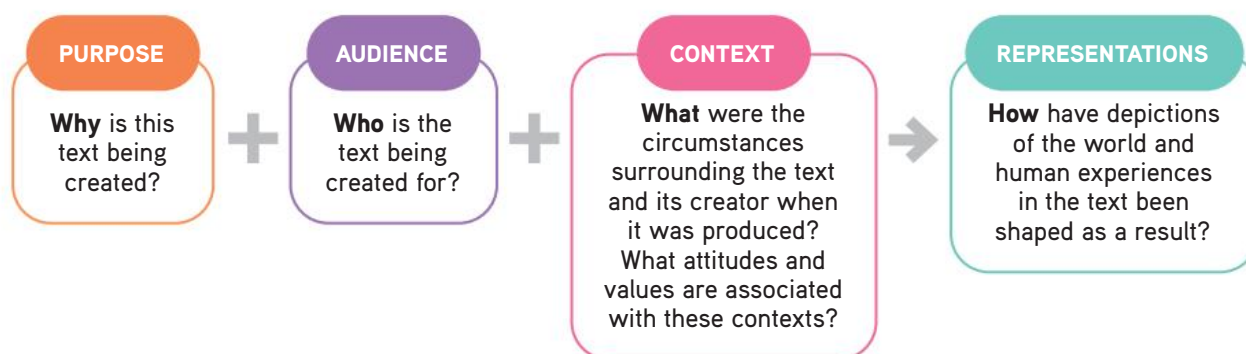
Because of this, representations are never neutral. Whether they seem to be realistic or not, representations have been constructed – either deliberately or unconsciously. A writer may choose to craft a particular representation, or it may be an unconscious reproduction of their beliefs about the world. As a result, representations can be interrogated and challenged by readers and audiences. We need to consider representations actively, acknowledging how they are shaped by the writer's own **context, purpose, perspectives, values and attitudes**.

The relationship between representation and context, purpose and audience

Representations are intrinsically connected to the **contexts, purposes and audiences** associated with a text, as well as its particular **form**. The representation of a cafe in an advertisement will differ from its representation in a health inspection report. The purpose of promoting the cafe to entice customers means the ad will represent the very best features of the product – perfectly brewed coffee, fresh and delicious food, comfortable and appealing interior design. In a report for the health department, however, cleanliness and safe food handling processes will be the features the audience – ultimately the Minister for Health – expects to be represented. Similarly, an advertisement for an Australian cafe will differ markedly from that of a Turkish coffee house, just as an advertisement aimed at Instagramming millennials will differ from one for retirees.



Three key factors will inform your readings of, and responses to, representations in texts:



Texts represent many worlds

In any single text many worlds are represented. These include literal worlds, as in places and settings, as well as more abstract, experiential worlds. One way of conceptualising 'the world' in a text is to start small, with an individual or personal world, and expand it by concentrically adding circles that represent social and cultural worlds that the individual is a part of.



When reading texts for representation, first locate physical or literal worlds of the persona, narrator or characters and extend beyond these to consider metaphorical or conceptual worlds, such as those defined in terms of relationships and identity.

For example, Sam Mendes' 2019 film *1917* represents the physical worlds of the British and German trenches in Northern France during World War I. In addition, it represents the human experiences within those worlds – experiences of war, as well as of family, mateship, trust, solidarity, heroism, separation and grief. The poster for the film captures the experiences of action, urgency, courage and tragedy in war.



Writing about representations of worlds

Read the following sample student response analysing the 1917 poster.

The 1917 movie poster represents the world of the trenches during World War I as harrowing and frantic. Set on the frontline of war, the soldier featured in the centre of the poster gazes in the direction of the enemy; the image connects to the tagline, 'time is the enemy'. The image's composition shows him standing alone despite the warfare around him. War can therefore be read as isolating and stressful. Furthermore, prior knowledge of the plot – that the main soldier is charged with relaying a message that may save thousands of lives, including his brother's – allows for an interpretation regarding the terrible responsibilities combatants can face. The grey and black colours of the background are symbolic: along with the images of smoke and fire, they represent the horror, bleakness and tragedy of war, as well as its stifling effects. The camera angle, mise en scène and symbolic codes together establish this world as tense and oppressive.

ACTIVITY

Analyse worlds and experiences represented in texts

- 1 Watch the film trailer for 1917 at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YqNYrYUiMfg> and make a list of the worlds and experiences represented. The following word bank might help you.

Belonging	Defence	Fear	Responsibility	The military
Brotherhood	Duty	Loss	Survival	Trust
Collaboration	Family	Patriotism	The futility of war	World war

- 2 Identify the worlds and experiences represented in the images below.

Image A



Image B



Image C



Image D



How representations are constructed

Representations are constructed through language, structural and generic features. Reading for representation requires us to be critical, since we must look beyond the literal depictions of people, places and things to the ideas, attitudes and values tied up in their construction. This involves active analysis of how the subject is constructed, that is, *how* people, places and events are *shown to be*.

Textual features that construct representations include the following.

LANGUAGE FEATURES	STRUCTURAL FEATURES	GENERIC FEATURES
In written or audio texts:	• Repetition	In narrative texts:
• Sentence structure	• Symbols and motifs	• Characters
• Punctuation	• Beginnings and endings	• Point of view
• Descriptive language	• Juxtaposition or incongruity	• Setting
• Figurative language	• Foreshadowing and flashbacks	• Plot
• Tone	• Allusions	• Narration
In visual and multimodal texts:		• Dialogue
• Aspects of composition such as camera work or framing		In persuasive or interpretive texts:
• Mise en scène		• Focaliser
		• Selection of detail
		• Examples and evidence

When analysing representations, we look for how they are created and how they appear to be, in very specific terms. For example, if you identify the fact that a text represents the experience of adolescence, you should specify *how* adolescence is represented and *how* that representation is constructed.

Ask yourself the following questions.

- *How* would you describe the representation?
- *Where* in the text does it show this?
- What *textual features* are used?
- What *purposes* does the representation serve?
- Whose *perspective* does it offer?
- How do you, or other audiences, *respond* to it?

Representations of individuals

In the following example, the writer constructs a representation of Nat Fyfe, the captain of the Fremantle Dockers in the AFL. It is written by a Perth-based journalist for *The Age*, a Melbourne-based newspaper, and was published in March 2018, during the AFL pre-season. While the readership of *The Age* is primarily Victorian, the newspaper also reaches other Australian states and territories.

NAT FYFE TO CAPTAIN DOCKERS AGAIN

Nat Fyfe has been appointed Fremantle's skipper for a second-straight season, while defender Alex Pearce has won a spot in the leadership group despite not having played an AFL game in 21 months.

Fyfe was solid in his first season as skipper, and he committed his long-term future to the club with a bumper six-year contract extension.

The 26-year-old starred in Fremantle's pre-season loss to Adelaide last week, and he appears primed to recapture his Brownlow medal form of 2015.



Fremantle skipper Nat Fyfe in action in the pre-season competition. David Mariuz. ©2007 AAP.

"I learned a lot in my first year, and I've got enormous growth still to go," Fyfe said. "I'm really keen to lead this club for the next couple of years, and see what we achieve."

'Solid' implies Fyfe's strong performance as captain.

Positive diction and references to the future suggest Fyfe's dedication and integrity.

'Starred' and 'primed' have positive connotations, suggesting he is a standout despite his team's loss.

Reference to past success suggests Fyfe's enduring skill.

The photograph adds to the positive representation of Fyfe (right) as capable and ahead of his competitor.

Including this quote suggests Fyfe is humble.

Writing about representations of individuals

Read the following sample student response analysing the representation of Nat Fyfe.

This newspaper report represents Nat Fyfe as a reliable leader who is committed to football and to the Fremantle Dockers. He is portrayed as being a good player, suggested by the choice of the verb 'starred', alongside the prediction that 'he appears primed to recapture his Brownlow medal form of 2015'. The emphases on 'again' (in the heading) and 'second-straight season' suggest he is consistent and loyal to the team. The accompanying photograph is an active shot, the mise en scène capturing a fierce opposition player in pursuit of Fyfe, which constructs Fyfe as fast, agile and determined. With Fyfe to the right and foreground of the photo he appears to be leading, consistent with the sentiments of the article's title. In this multimodal text, the visual and written elements work together to generate interest in the season and to promote Fyfe as a competent leader and athletic player at the top of his game, in the context of the 2018 AFL pre-season.

Representations of groups

When you read for representation of individuals, you should also be open to analysing groups, since individuals in texts can operate as representations of groups in the wider world. For example, consider how the cartoon characters on the right operate as representations of police in general. The top image on the right represents the police as traditionally masculine, strong, alert and ready for action, whereas the second one represents the police as greedy, ineffectual and perhaps lazy. The texts employ visual satire, shaping different representations of the police by exaggerating certain characteristics.



EXAMPLE

Representation of children

The following photograph represents children as sociable, happy and comfortable playing in the outdoors.

The eye-level shot encourages an empathetic view of the children, rather than looking down from a high angle.

The sunny, green, well-maintained parkland setting contributes to the positive depiction.



Children are participating in simple play. There is some evidence of competition, though all are smiling and happy.

The children are framed in the centre of the image, suggesting their importance in society.

The children are young, white, well-dressed, conventionally attractive and able-bodied. The shot includes two boys and two girls of similar age.

The image represents the world of the child in a western country, a world characterised by innocence, outdoor play and friendship. Gender is no barrier to friendship and their experience seems largely carefree. A resistant reader (see Chapter 1, page 12) might consider the exclusion of children of colour, or those with disabilities, or they might consider the social context in which these children are free to play innocently without fear, and conclude that this image offers a representation of a privileged childhood.



See the digital bonus material for another example of representations of a group (adolescents).

ACTIVITY

Explore representations of family

- 1 Collect several images that represent families. Label each one with an adjective describing their representation.
- 2 Examine family representations in young adult films such as *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* and *Love, Simon*, or from television sitcoms such as *Modern Family* and *The Simpsons*. Do they represent families in traditional or progressive ways? What values are associated with specific families?
- 3 How are these North American examples like or unlike screen representations of the Australian family? Consider examples such as *The Family Law*, families in *Neighbours* and the Rafters in *Packed to the Rafters*; older examples like the Twists in *Round the Twist* or the Sullivan family in *The Sullivans*; or families in films such as *The Castle*, *Paper Planes* and *Ride Like a Girl*.

Representations of places

As with all representations, the way places are constructed to appear in texts is heavily shaped by the writer's context, as the following example demonstrates.

EXAMPLE

Representation of school

In the extract opposite, from Sally Morgan's 1987 memoir *My Place*, Morgan recounts her first day at school. It is a story of courage and resilience, constructing a sense of place from the perspective of a young First Nations girl. The school is represented as a cold, joyless and life-sapping institution, devoid of colour and humanity. Moreover, the extract offers the perspective of a First Nations person on a British educational system; the school can thus be read as especially alienating for someone with this personal and cultural context, and as a site of recolonisation that works to erase a cultural identity.



The chapter title suggests a place where children are dehumanised as products to be churned out.

THE FACTORY

Mum chattered cheerfully as she led me down the bitumen path, through the main entrance to the grey weatherboard and asbestos buildings. One look and I was convinced that, like The Hospital, it was a place dedicated to taking the spirit out of life.

After touring the toilets, we sat down on the bottom step of the verandah. I was certain Mum would never leave me in such a dreadful place, so I sat patiently, waiting for her to take me home.

‘Have you got your sandwich?’ she asked nervously when she realised I was staring at her.

‘Yeah.’

‘And a clean hankie?’

I nodded.

‘What about your toiletbag?’

‘I’ve got it.’

‘Oh.’ Mum paused. Then, looking off into the distance, she said brightly, ‘I’m sure you’re going to love it here.’

Alarm bells. I knew that tone of voice, it was the one she always used whenever she spoke about Dad getting better. I knew there was no hope.

Onomatopoeic verb suggests the warmth and friendliness of her mother.

Sterile, drab, bleak description of school buildings, focusing on hard materials; setting seems lifeless, especially in contrast to her mother’s energy.

Narrative comment uses high-modality term ‘dedicated’, suggesting school’s only purpose is to destroy her spirit.

Foregrounding of undesirable places the ‘toilets’ and ‘the bottom step’ add to the negative representation and Morgan’s marginal place within this world.

Specific attitudes related to the social context of the family are identified.

Blunt syntax and dismal tone highlight Morgan’s bleak attitude towards the school.

ACTIVITY

Explore representations of schools

- 1 Use the annotations provided to write a brief paragraph explaining the representation of school in the extract.
- 2 How does the representation of Morgan’s mother contribute to the way in which the school is represented?
- 3 Anh Do also describes what it was like to go to school in Australia from a marginalised perspective:

It was 1982 when I started school at St Bridget’s Primary, a local Catholic school with an abundant mix of nationalities: Greeks, Lebanese, Vietnamese and a huge number of Portuguese, which mum couldn’t pronounce – she’d always be saying things like “I like these Pork and Cheese people.”
(*The Happiest Refugee*, Allen & Unwin, 2010)

How does Do represent his experience of schooling in Australia in the above extract?

Representations of events

Representations serve particular purposes in texts. To be critical readers, we can ask whose interests are being served by representing an event in a certain way. Reading the descriptions of Australian Day below you will see how the day is represented differently according to the purpose of each text, and the funding and aims of its creator(s): those organisations invested in promoting these particular versions of the day.

EXAMPLE Representations of Australia Day

Example 1 (from Tourism Australia's website)

EVENTS AND FESTIVALS – AUSTRALIA DAY

Australia's national day celebrates everything that's great about being Australian.

Australians celebrate their national day – Australia Day – on 26 January with a public holiday. The day marks the anniversary of the First Fleet's arrival in Sydney in 1788.

A huge line-up of events takes place around the country, including concerts, beach parties and parades that bring together communities from all cultures. Here's how to enjoy it.

'National day' suggests unity and a shared national story.

Optimistic tone created by word choice of 'celebrates' and the phrase 'everything that's great'.

Inclusivity implied by this phrasing ignores the fact that Australia Day is hotly contested by some Australians.

Details focus on celebration, rather than commemoration.

Example 2 (from Amnesty International Australia's website)

GUIDE TO INVASION DAY EVENTS

Australia Day is not a celebration for all Australians.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples mark this day as Invasion Day.

Since colonisation, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have been subjected to government-sanctioned violence, policies that removed children from families, the removal of people from their lands and the denial of self-determination.

Alternative name

• 'Invasion Day' represents the experience of First Nations peoples having their lives brutally disrupted by the arrival of the First Fleet in 1788.

'Not a celebration for all Australians'

• sarcastically contradicts the Tourism Australia message.

Recognises the

• First Peoples of Australia.

Includes the

story of ongoing dispossession and • disempowerment of First Nations peoples of Australia.

If you consider that the first extract is from the website of a government agency responsible for attracting international visitors to Australia, you can see why it might omit the controversy and hurt associated with the day, and indeed with Australia's history. Privileging the celebratory perspective on the day and the 'greatness' of the country makes Australia more appealing to potential visitors. Amnesty International, however, is a human rights organisation. The text on this organisation's website emphasises Australia's fraught national history and the trauma of its colonisation. Whose interests are being served in these examples?

Representations of ideas

As any text contains many, sometimes competing, themes and ideas, consider how a text comments on or expresses an attitude towards its ideas through their representations. Which ideas are foregrounded or shown to be important? Which seem to be disregarded or criticised? In considering how particular ideas are presented in a text, you will gain insight into which experiences or ways of living are being privileged by its creator, and the attitudes and values that underlie those experiences.

EXAMPLE

Representations of ambition

If you were reading or watching a performance of William Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, in which a general plots to assassinate his king and take his place, you would encounter ideas relating to jealousy, desperation, self-doubt and internal conflict through the experiences of the characters. Some of these ideas are revealed in the extract below.

Two truths are told
As happy prologues to the swelling act
Of the imperial theme – I thank you, gentlemen –
This supernatural soliciting
Cannot be ill, cannot be good. If ill,
Why hath it giv'n me earnest of success,
Commencing in a truth? I am Thane of Cawdor.
If good, why do I yield to that suggestion
Whose horrid image doth unfix my hair
And make my seated heart knock at my ribs,
Against the use of nature?

'Imperial theme' points to Macbeth's ambition.

Macbeth is aware that the others are waiting for him, and doesn't want them to hear what he says, adding to the tension.

Speaks in riddles, echoing the witches' earlier 'fair is foul, and foul is fair'; links with the ideas of equivocation and deception throughout the play.

Alliteration: the repeated 's' sound creates a sense of unease.

Asking a question with no answer (a rhetorical question) shows doubt in his mind.

Points to unnatural deeds – a hint of what is to come.

What is this image? A few lines later he says 'murder' – has he already thought of murdering the King?



Writing about representations of ideas

Read the following sample student response analysing the representation of the idea of ambition in *Macbeth*.

Identifies representations in the topic sentence.

Background to explain the ideas as they appear in the text.

Examples are paraphrased.

Provides evidence in the form of a quote.

Incorporates short quote into sentence.

Sums up point; a stronger analysis would give evidence of Lady Macbeth's ambition being punished, perhaps by the guilt that leads to her suicide.

In William Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, Macbeth and Lady Macbeth are dramatic constructs through which ambition is represented as all-consuming, self-destructive and punishable. Together they conspire to kill King Duncan so Macbeth can assume the Scottish throne. While initially Macbeth is unwilling to be involved in the murder of his king, his ambition simmers and develops. Eventually, he carries out Duncan's murder, after which he is named King. The events that follow reveal the consequences of Macbeth's blind ambition. He and Lady Macbeth are crippled by overwhelming guilt, experiencing apparitions that confront them with their wrongdoings and eventually drive them insane. In a soliloquy, Macbeth acknowledges that what has motivated him is 'only / Vaulting ambition'. He realises that his is an extreme ambition 'which o'erleaps itself, / And falls on th' other', personifying the ambition that consumes him and foreshadowing his downfall. Later, Macbeth comments that 'Things bad begun make strong themselves by ill.' This comment conveys how the cycle of evil feeds on itself. For Macbeth, the thing 'bad begun' was his taking the throne after murdering Duncan, fuelled by his ambition. He realises too late, however, after his wife throws herself from the castle walls, that there is no positive way to end this cycle. The ways in which Macbeth and Lady Macbeth are punished for their ambition represent it as destructive, all-consuming and immoral, and the source of their downfall.



See the digital bonus material for an example of the representation of ambition in a film about Winston Churchill.

TAKING IT FURTHER

Representations of perspectives

Perspectives are viewpoints that are informed by the context of the person holding or presenting that viewpoint. Texts can include multiple perspectives that offer alternative ways of thinking about the subject matter. Typically, though, these are represented in ways that ultimately endorse the perspective of the text's creator.

Texts can present contrasting perspectives on ideas, issues and themes by:

- developing different forms of a theme through a variety of situations
- asking 'big questions' about the main ideas and issues
- incorporating others' voices in texts, such as experts, interview subjects or a range of characters
- incorporating different texts within the main text
- using structural strategies, such as multiple narrators or focalisers
- locating characters and events in contrasting historical, social and cultural contexts.

EXAMPLE

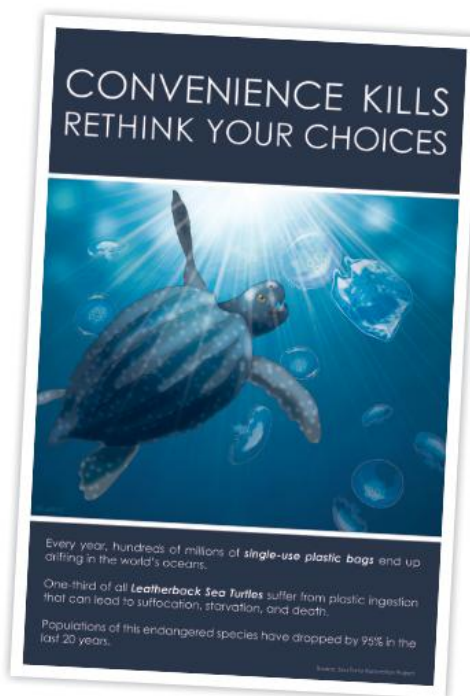
Representations of perspectives on environmentalism

The issue of environmental degradation is represented as an object of war in the promotional image below for the ABC series *War on Waste*. First broadcast in 2017, this series explores waste production and disposal in Australia as this country continues to produce millions of tonnes of waste each year. The program represents a perspective that is critical of human irresponsibility. The sense of battle is furthered by the combative posture of Craig Reucassel, host of *War on Waste*.



Similarly, the educational poster on the right, illustrated by Meg Sodano on behalf of the Turtle Island Restoration Network, represents a critical perspective on plastic pollution. Sodano is an illustrator who values the natural world and environmental stewardship. The poster shows a vulnerable turtle surrounded by plastic bags, contrasting the loss of innocent marine lives with the trivial privilege of human 'convenience'.

These examples highlight the ways in which representation connects to a creator's purpose. In aiming to persuade their audiences to change their behaviour, each text connects written and visual elements to present an emotive environmentalist perspective.



ACTIVITY

Analyse representations of perspectives

- 1 In a short-answer response, explain the perspective on single-use plastics that is promoted in the turtle poster.
- 2 In a short-answer response, compare and contrast how perspectives on environmental degradation are represented in an episode of *War on Waste* (available at <https://iview.abc.net.au/show/war-on-waste>) and in the turtle poster.

Bringing it all together: *The Armstrong Lie*

The Armstrong Lie (2013) is a documentary directed and narrated by Alex Gibney. In 2009, Gibney started working on a documentary about US cyclist Lance Armstrong, *The Road Back*, which was intended as a success story of Armstrong's comeback in the Tour de France race following cancer treatment. By 2013 the documentary was released as *The Armstrong Lie* and exposed Armstrong as a user of illegal performance-enhancing substances throughout his career. You can watch the trailer at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ukOJ_1b-8lQ.



Context

- Between 1989 and 1996 Lance Armstrong established a formidable career in cycling. A high point was competing for the US in the 1996 Atlanta Olympic Games.
- Armstrong was diagnosed with testicular cancer in 1996. It spread to his abdomen, lungs and lymph nodes, and eventually to his brain.
- Armstrong received treatment and modified his diet, and in 1997 was pronounced cancer-free.
- Beginning in 1999, Armstrong won seven Tour de France races as part of the US Postal Service team.
- In 2006, Armstrong raised \$600 000 for his Livestrong campaign (in aid of cancer sufferers) by running the New York City Marathon.
- In 2012 he was stripped of his Tour de France titles because he had used performance-enhancing drugs.
- After denying it for many years, Armstrong admitted during an interview with Oprah Winfrey in 2013 that he had used performance-enhancing drugs.

Representations in the film

- Worlds – elite sport, cycling, masculinity, sporting heroes
- Human experiences – success, championship, competition, temptation, greed, dishonesty
- World of cycling represented as corrupt, competitive and guilty of perpetuating cover-ups
- Experience of being a champion – heroic, trusted, exhilarating, the ultimate achievement
- Individuals – Lance Armstrong as untouchable and powerful but also dishonest and a drug cheat
- Organisation/body USADA – ineffectual, incompetent
- US Postal Service team – dysfunctional, untrusting, competitive



This medium shot of Armstrong positions him above and ahead of the cyclists in the background: those he has defeated. He wears a yellow jersey – given to leaders of the Tour de France – and he holds up seven fingers, the number of his victories. These visual language features of costume, composition and gesture contribute to a representation of Lance Armstrong as a champion, part of the fraudulent image he cultivated.

Armstrong is also represented in the documentary as a 'real' or ordinary man. Here he appears to be captured in a natural moment: barefoot, informally dressed and surrounded by journalists and photographers. He appears relaxed and casual, suggesting he has nothing to hide. The lounge room setting suggests Armstrong has invited the press and the audience into his personal space. The high angle de-emphasises his champion status, representing him as humble and approachable. This kind of relatability is part of the 'lie' that fooled so many in the cycling world for so long.



Finally, Armstrong is represented as a corrupt, fallen hero. The setting and costume here imply that he has just left court and he is surrounded by photographers and other spectators as his world comes crashing down. These other figures are slightly blurred, suggesting urgency or anxiety on Armstrong's part; his body language indicates that he is trying to escape their attention. The fact that he isn't making eye contact contributes to the representation of Armstrong as guilty of the drug crimes of which he was accused.



Write about representations

Comprehending

Read the two texts below and answer the following questions in short-answer form.

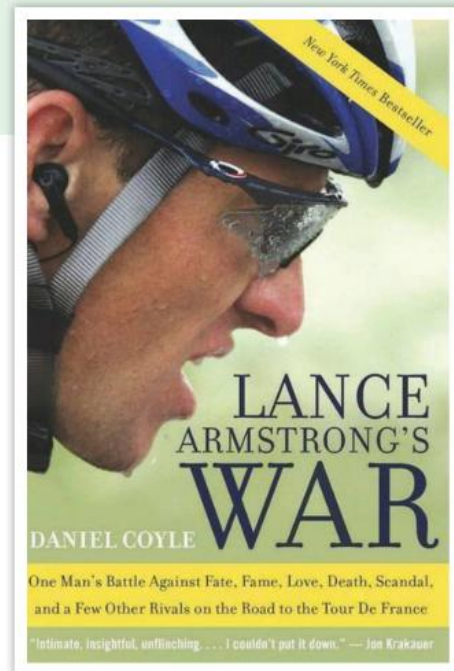
- 1 Explain how Text 1 uses language features to construct a representation of Lance Armstrong.
- 2 Explain how written and visual elements combine to position the reader of Text 2.

Text 1 is the blurb from the biography *Lance Armstrong's War* by Daniel Coyle (2010). It was published before Armstrong's titles were revoked in 2012.

Lance Armstrong's War is the extraordinary story of greatness pushed to its limits; a vivid behind-the-scenes portrait of perhaps the most accomplished athlete of our time as he competes in the toughest sporting event on the planet. The incomparable will to win that famously lifted Armstrong beyond his humble Texas roots, beyond cancer, and to unparalleled heights of success is revealed by acclaimed journalist Daniel Coyle in new and startling dimensions. It is the true story of a superlative sports figure fighting on all fronts – made newly vulnerable by age, fate, fame, doping allegations, a painful divorce, and an unprecedented army of challengers – while mastering the exceedingly difficult trick of being Lance Armstrong, a combination of world-class athlete, celebrity, regular guy, and, for many Americans, secular saint.

A fascinating journey through the little-known landscape of professional cycling, *Lance Armstrong's War* provides a hugely insightful look into the often inspiring, always surprising core of a remarkable athlete and the world that shapes him.

Text 2 is the cover of the biography.



© 2010 by Daniel Coyle. Used by permission of HarperCollins Publishers.

Responding

- 1 'Representations are versions of reality that reflect particular interpretations of people and events, and shape readers' responses to them.' Discuss this statement with close reference to at least one text.
- 2 Explore how the representations constructed in a text you are studying reveal the attitudes and values of its creator.

Composing

Write a feature article or opinion piece that represents Lance Armstrong as a hero.

ANALYSING TEXTS

CHAPTER 6

IN THIS CHAPTER YOU WILL:

- develop strategies for analysing texts
- examine language, structural, generic and stylistic features in a range of text types
- consider how textual features shape meanings and responses
- learn how textual features construct syllabus concepts such as ideas and perspectives.

Analysis of texts lies at the core of the English course. This chapter outlines the key skills required for effective analysis of texts, including strategies for identifying and understanding the effects of language, structural and stylistic features. The ways that these features operate within different text types to produce particular effects, convey ideas or perspectives, and shape interpretations will also be examined.

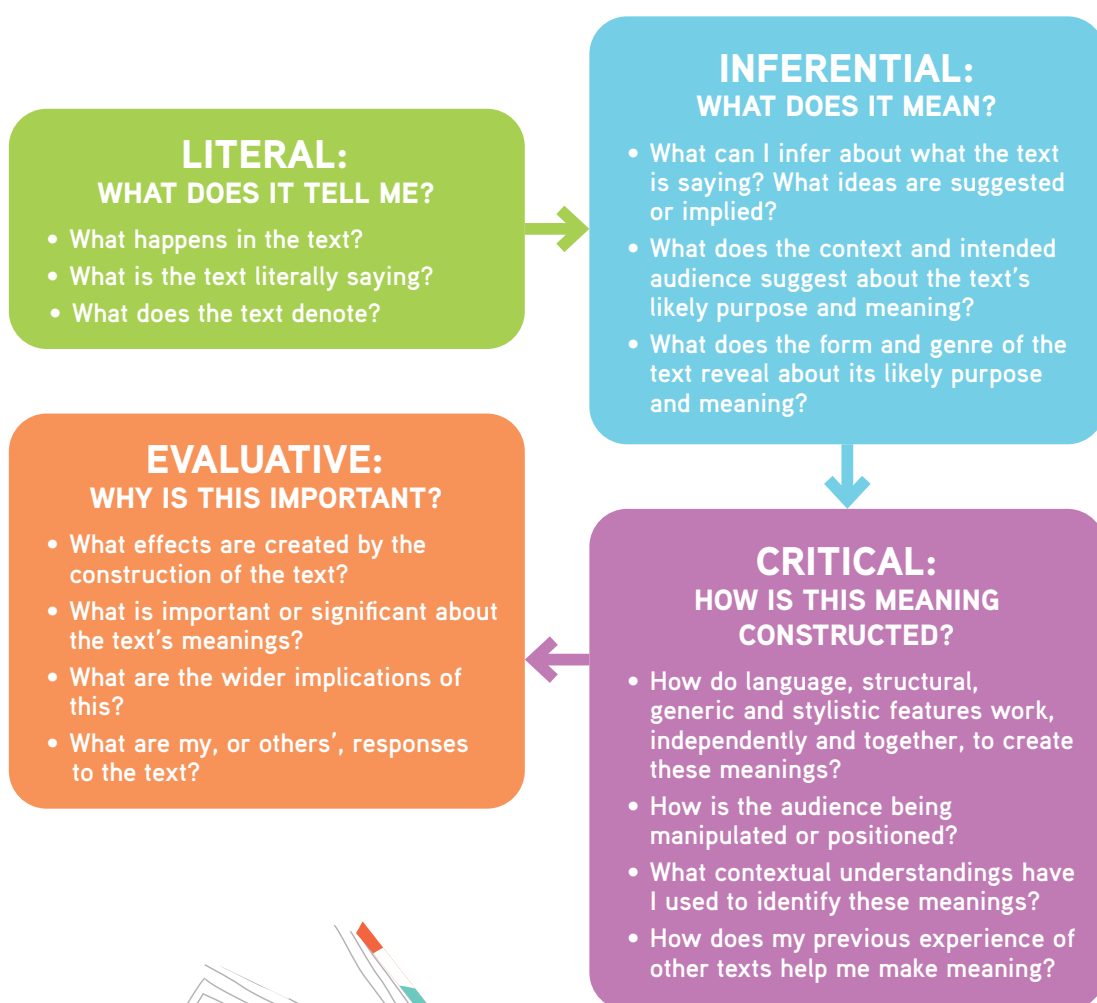
Awareness of the thinking processes involved in the analysis of texts can be advantageous; it will deepen your understanding of texts and how they function, including how they position their audiences. It can even help you to compose effective texts of your own. Moreover, the critical literacy skills developed through analysing texts can help you to become a more aware, informed and engaged global citizen.



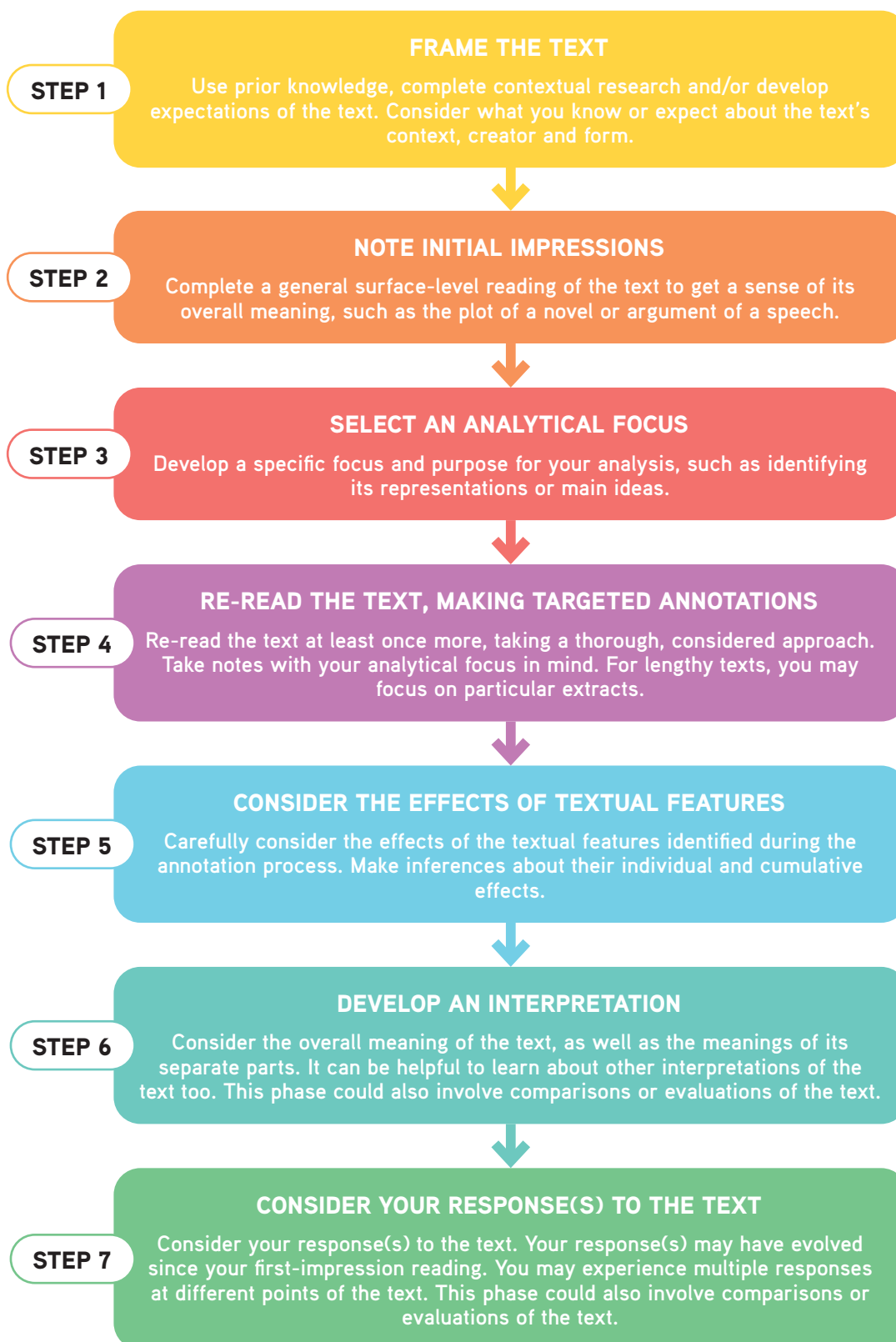
What does it mean to analyse a text?

Analysing a text involves deconstructing its language, structural, stylistic and/or generic features to understand exactly *how* its **meanings** and various **effects** are generated. These features should be explained in terms of how they function both separately and together. The focus of analysis is often on such aspects as a text's ideas, representations, perspectives, attitudes or values, purpose, and audience positioning. Analysing a text is the first step towards developing an interpretation.

The following framework can be applied to the study of a text; it works sequentially through different levels of meaning, starting with the literal and finishing with higher-order evaluation.



Seven steps to successful analysis



Analysing language features

All texts are constructed through language, including written, visual, auditory and spoken language features. A list of language features can be found in Appendix 1 (pages 215–20).

Imagery

Writers often make particular vocabulary choices, such as descriptive and figurative language, to evoke images in the minds of readers, a feature referred to as **imagery**. While many different types of imagery, such as religious imagery or Australian landscape imagery, can be analysed, the term is most often used in reference to evocative descriptions of physical sensations – that is, sensory imagery, which can be divided into the categories shown in the table below.

TYPE OF SENSORY IMAGERY	DESCRIPTION OF IMAGERY
Visual	Sight: appearance, colours, size, physical attributes etc.
Tactile	Touch: texture, physical quality, roughness/smoothness etc.
Kinaesthetic/kinetic	Movement: speed, action etc.
Olfactory	Smell: aromas, odours, scents etc.
Gustatory	Taste: flavours, sweetness/sourness etc.
Auditory/aural	Sound: noises, onomatopoeia, music, pitch/volume of dialogue etc.
Organic	Internal sensations or emotions: thirst, hunger, fear, love, pain etc.

ACTIVITY

Identify and analyse sensory imagery

Read the following extract from a short work of fiction titled 'The Things We'll Leave Behind' by Australian author Sophie Overett, then answer the questions that follow.

There's a light blurring hazy through the glass behind her brother's head, the *red-blue* of a police car or ambulance. A fire truck. The siren whirs, sings, sets off the great, lumbering sheep dog at her father's feet, barking at the door until she pulls it open.

'*Mee-mah-mee-mah*,' her niece cries, her little feet pounding against the unpolished floor. Ash pays her no mind, leaning against the doorframe, fingers itching for a cigarette as she watches her father's dog race over the Mars-red dirt of the farm, leap the paddock fence and disappear through a flock of newly shorn sheep.

'Probably a bush fire,' she says, and she feels her brother nod more than she sees it, feels him step into the hall – doesn't see him until he comes to a stop behind her, hooking his chin over her shoulder, digging it sharp into the valley between her bones.

- 1 Identify one example of each of the following types of sensory imagery used in the extract.
 - Visual
 - Tactile
 - Kinaesthetic
 - Auditory
 - Organic
- 2 Explain the ideas about the characters and/or setting implied by each type of sensory imagery.

Connotative language

Authors often choose to use a specific word for its strong connotative meaning – that is, the associations of a word or phrase beyond its literal meaning. For example, the word ‘mansion’ refers literally to a type of residential property, but its connotations include associations with wealth, grandeur and extravagance. Strong analysis considers both **denotative** (literal) and **connotative** meanings of particular language choices. Always consider not just the meanings but the *effects* of the connotations.

EXAMPLE	CONNOTATIONS	EFFECTS
The cluttered metropolitan environment can be a sensory minefield for those with autism or learning difficulties.	Connotations of the city being overcrowded, disorderly and chaotic; connotations of a life-threatening war zone that might be overwhelming and frightening to look at, listen to and experience.	The connotations convey the idea that busy urban settings can be uncomfortable, distressing and alienating for some people. This idea may encourage empathy and understanding from readers who might otherwise be unaware of the impact of such an environment on learning-disabled or autistic people.

ACTIVITY

Identify the connotations of words

Write a list of both the denotations and the connotations of the words and phrases in bold below:

- She took the **rose** from him hesitantly.
- The **sharpened dagger** glinted in the dappled light.
- A set of **piercing** eyes peered from beneath the **cloak**, watching them **closely**.

Figurative language

Figurative language includes words and phrases with meanings that extend beyond the literal, often by creating comparisons. Think about the ideas suggested by a figurative device, its connotations or associations, and also how it encourages you to respond in a certain way. Consider the example below.

EXAMPLE	FIGURATIVE DEVICES	EFFECTS
The book – the physical object – is almost like a person. I mean, it has a spine and it has a backbone. It has a face. Actually, it can sort of be your friend.	Simile personifies books. Physical and emotional similarities drawn between book and human create an extended personification of books.	The idea of books as human-like encourages audiences to reflect on their own relationships with books and emphasises their emotional importance.

TAKING IT FURTHER

Identify specific types of lexical choices and diction

All written and spoken texts will include diction or lexical choices as these terms simply refer to the selection of particular words or phrases. Strong analysis needs to extend beyond stating this obvious point; it needs to explain exactly which types of words have been chosen and their function within the text. Apply the checklist below to a studied text to consider the types of lexical choices being made.

LANGUAGE FEATURE	YES	NO	EFFECTS
Figurative language (e.g. metaphor, metonymy, personification, simile, symbolism)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
Descriptive language (e.g. adjectives, adverbs, connotative diction, pejoratives)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
Sensory imagery (e.g. auditory, kinaesthetic, olfactory, organic, tactile, visual)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
Connotative language (e.g. high-inference words, loaded language)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
Rhetoric (e.g. anaphora, emotive language, hyperbole, inclusive diction)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
Sound devices (e.g. alliteration, assonance, consonance, onomatopoeia, rhyme)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
Modality (e.g. high modality: certainly, definitely, inevitably, undeniably, will; low modality: could, likely, may, might, ought, probably)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
Register (e.g. informal: colloquialisms, contractions, expletives, idioms, slang; formal: full words, sophisticated vocabulary, uncommon words)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	

Punctuation

Punctuation is a feature of written texts that is often taken for granted until it is used in an interesting way or missing altogether. Punctuation can generate numerous effects, including the following.

PUNCTUATION DEVICE	POSSIBLE EFFECT/S
Non-standard capitalisation	Creates emphasis; indicates tone, increased volume etc.
Ellipsis	Suggests the omission of words, incomplete thought, silence etc.
Punctuation omissions	Creates ambiguity or confusion; contributes to an informal style.
Frequent dashes	Creates a disjointed effect, slows pace, adds dramatic effect etc.

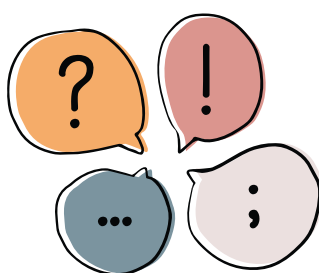
ACTIVITY

Identify the effects of lexical choice and punctuation in a text

Read the following extract from 'real land' by Australian writer Joanne Burns, from her 1981 collection *Ventriloquy*, published by Sea Cruise Books, then answer the following questions.

this must be the fifth bloody time this month ive spent the day sittin in this corridor. it's a real cold hole deadset. might as well be in Siberia. as if theyd care all them jerks of teachers sittin with their bums on top of heaters in the classroom all day. she said that Miss Lovall i'm putting you out here near my office for your own good Cheryl. yeah i say theres no need to bung it on i get the picture. that will be enough she said Cheryl. here is a book of maps for you to draw. this will keep you busy. i want you to complete the first ten maps before lunch time. you might learn something. at least when you're holding your pen you might be able to hold your tongue. she goes back to her office. and ive been sittin here for ages at this grotty little table and wobbly chair.

- 1 What specific lexical choices have been used to characterise the protagonist?
- 2 How does the subversion of punctuation conventions shape the representation of the character?
- 3 Consider the effect of punctuation choices in a text you are studying. Write a paragraph analysing the ways in which purposeful use of punctuation contributes to the meaning of the text. Consider frequency of particular punctuation features, the use of particular features at moments of tension or transition, or associated with certain characters, and whether any conventions have been subverted.



EXAMPLE

Annotation of language features in an imaginative text

The following extract is from the short story 'Sacred' by Western Australian author Susan Midalia. The annotations target language choices including sensory imagery, varying types of lexical choice (specified throughout) and punctuation.

Personification of train through first-person pronouns to mimic dialogue, demanding Carlo's attention.

Kinaesthetic imagery and conjunctions lengthen these sentences to reveal the reliable, repetitive nature of the train's movement as a 'comfort' to Carlo.

Repeated phrase separated by commas evokes the 'sing-song' rhythm of Lizzie's voice.

A disjunction begins this sentence, implying Carlo's sleep is interrupted by unwanted thoughts.

Lying in bed that night, the throbbing tooth quiet now, Carlo listened to the train, the bright, high hooting as it neared the station. Here I come, here I am, welcome me, and then slowing down and stopping, starting up again and chugging quietly til you couldn't hear it any more. Trains came and went and then came back again, and there was comfort. That's what he'd written at school. They had to write a story about what you could hear, but Miss Perry gave it back to him marked all over in red. And there was no story, she wrote, *just a bunch of rambling sounds*. Lizzie had spied over his shoulder and said in a sing-song voice, *rambling sounds, rambling sounds, like an idiot*. Carlo had wanted to give her a shove, push her off her chair, but you couldn't do that to a girl. And then the bell rang, ugly and wailing. Maybe he should have used that sound as well. The bell first thing in the morning and the train last thing at night. That might be a story.

But still he couldn't sleep. Sums and equations kept floating in his head and he thought about tomorrow, Mr Tweedie yelling and making him feel dumb. Then Carlo remembered that thing like a game they'd taught him in the relaxation class, going through the whole alphabet in your head. *Just breathe deeply*, Carlo, the counsellor had said. *Think of the names of kids at school*. So he started: *Angie, Bevan, Carmella, Dan, Ellie, F...* there was no *F...* G for Georgie and H for Harry, I for Imran, J for Jack, K for Kirsty ...

Auditory imagery establishes contrast between quiet interior and noisy exterior.

Colloquial insult reveals painful memory of being mocked.

Kinetic and auditory imagery exposes Carlo's internal conflict.

Italicised phrases indicate the remembered words of the counsellor

Ellipsis indicates a pause in Carlo's thoughts.

ACTIVITY

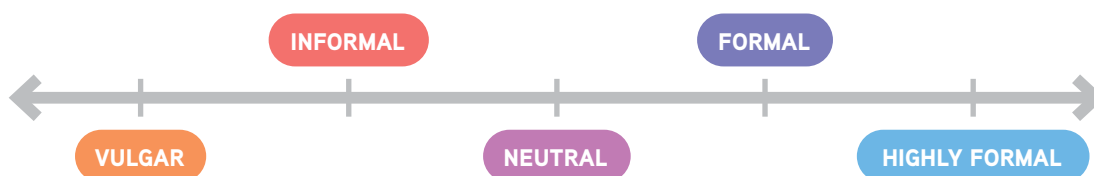
Understand the effects of language features

Read the annotated extract above and, in 200–300 words, respond to the following question:

Explain how the language choices in the text work to construct its character and setting.

Register

Register is the degree of formality of a piece of writing or speech; it can determine the style of a text. Register can be measured on the following continuum.



The table below outlines the main characteristics of informal and formal registers. 'Standard register' combines aspects from both of these columns.

INFORMAL REGISTER	FORMAL REGISTER
Contractions (e.g. we'll, it's)	Few contractions
Slang and colloquialisms	No slang or colloquialisms
Simple vocabulary	Sophisticated vocabulary
Frequent use of first-person pronouns	Minimal use of first-person pronouns
Frequent use of active voice (the subject of the sentence performs the action)	Frequent use of passive voice (the subject receives the action)

Rhetorical devices

Rhetoric is the language of persuasion and therefore features heavily in persuasive texts and some interpretive forms also. Rhetoric includes such devices as direct address, high-modality words or phrases, and emotive and inclusive language.

EXAMPLE	EFFECTS
You have to feel for residents of those suburbs where houses are being felled like dominoes and replaced by the execrable and ubiquitous 'McMansion' or the equally hideous vertical, multi-storey dwellings that resemble termite colonies stacked upon each other. Previously amenable suburbs are becoming hellholes as a result of appalling planning by government.	<p>Direct address, 'you', followed by the high-modality phrase 'have to', contributes to a confident, forceful tone.</p> <p>Emotive language positions readers to respond sympathetically.</p> <p>Simile using the strong connotative verb 'felled' indicates deliberate, irreversible and spreading destruction.</p> <p>Multiple pejorative terms meaning repulsive and appalling.</p> <p>Colloquialism suggesting a cheap and tacky product, devoid of quality or individuality.</p> <p>Likening the housing to overcrowded 'termite colonies' creates an image of uncomfortable, overpopulated conditions.</p> <p>Dichotomy created with comparison between past situation and modern living.</p> <p>Hyperbole and metaphor used to express the writer's critical viewpoint about modern suburban redevelopment.</p>

Modality

Modality refers to the degree of certainty conveyed by particular words. High-modality words are definitive or absolute in their meaning. Their inclusion often makes the creator of the text seem confident about their argument. Examples include 'absolutely' and 'certainly'. Low-modality words, such as 'perhaps' and 'might', carry less conviction.

HIGH MODALITY	LOW MODALITY
We <i>must not</i> turn our backs on this <i>inevitable</i> environmental disaster.	<i>Perhaps</i> now we <i>could</i> consider this a <i>potential</i> problem for the environment.

EXAMPLE

Annotation of language features in a persuasive text

Title summarises opinion; 'obsession' connotes a manic fixation, characteristic of poor mental health.

First-person pronouns help to convey the author's own viewpoint and cynical attitude towards wellness companies.

High-inference adjective emphasises the unrealistic expectation that consumers can source recommended products.

Connotations of toxicity contrast with the company's promotion of natural products.

Short syntax with lexical choice 'alarming' suggests a matter of grave concern.

High-modality language strengthens the author's tone of conviction.

AN UNHEALTHY OBSESSION

All these celebrities using charcoal, moon milk and turmeric and going gluten free while doing their aerial yoga and long hikes in nature. It's making me want to log off Instagram forever.

In fact, I don't know what half the things they're talking about even are, such as adaptogens. I wonder about the effectiveness of all these wellness trends. I'm in favour of just finding a balance of food and exercise on our own, not taking advice from wellness companies.

The director of Stride, Marie Paulson, told me that she really works almost every hour of the day. "You can't be a hugely successful business without a lot of work," she said, noting that she herself does not have time to get up early and shop for elusive ingredients. She's had her hair chemically straightened so that she doesn't have to do it in the morning. Stride advocates for screen-free weekends, but Paulson doesn't have that luxury; her 100,000 Instagram followers constantly need updates.

The hypocrisy is alarming. Making millions by selling 'health' is the same as making millions selling anything else – extremely long hours, no social life, and little exercise. While the industry might preach to its customers, its advice is empty and should not be listened to.

Wellness and health terminology used and then rejected as irritating to the writer.

Includes a quote from an industry representative; the emphasis on third-person pronouns highlights the juxtaposition between this viewpoint and the writer's own.

Hyperbole presents 'screen-free weekends' as a 'luxury'.

This phrase has connotations of being unwelcome and untruthful.

Analysing language in multimodal texts

Multimodal texts require you to analyse different types of language features and understand how they work together.

EXAMPLE Annotation of language in a multimodal text

This wartime poster is a multimodal text that promotes the donation of household materials for repurposing as ammunition and other war-related products.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The main figure is a caricatured representation of an adult female dressed in an apron, a commonly understood symbol of domesticity and femininity. The subject's broad smile indicates her pride in contributing to the war effort, potentially appealing to the target audience's patriotic values. The dominant written text, which ends with an exclamation mark, reads as an imperative command; together with the repetition of an exclamation mark after 'Housewives', these elements reveal the specific target audience of the text and aim to appeal to their sense of responsibility and support for the military. Assonance within the text creates a catchy, internal near-rhyme, likely to aid viewers' retention of the cause. The separate sections of written text work as vectors, leading readers to follow a left to right, top to bottom reading path through both the text and the images that detail the transformation of recycled raw materials.
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ACTIVITY

Analyse a film or television text

Select a scene from a multimodal televisual text and apply the following questions to it.

- 1 What is included in the frames? Consider setting, characters/subject, body language, costumes etc.
- 2 Explain the composition, including foreground, mid-ground and background. What elements appear to be dominant?
- 3 What is the implied narrative suggested in the frames?
- 4 Explain the effects of the different camera angles and distances, as well as any edits used to connect shots (e.g. dissolve, cut, fade).
- 5 Describe any written or spoken elements, including dialogue or voice-over, noting the tone of voice, volume, pace, pitch etc. How do these develop the ideas in the text?
- 6 Explain the effects of any extra-diegetic sounds, such as background music.

Identify rhetorical devices in persuasive texts

Using the definitions provided in Appendix 1 (page 216), identify the types of rhetoric used in these persuasive extracts and list them in the right-hand column below.

If you have any love for animals DO NOT visit Bali Safari Marine Park. We were appalled not only by the animal exploitation we witnessed but by the hordes of ignorant tourists happy to line up for a photo with a chained lion cub or a drugged chimp and to watch the miserable elephants forced to perform tricks by being poked with sticks.

Dogs really are our best friends, according to a Swedish study that says canine ownership could reduce heart disease. A study of 3.4 million people between the ages of 40 and 80 found that having a dog was associated with a 23% reduction in death from heart disease and a 20% lower risk of dying from any cause over the 12 years of the study.

Until we have a national data collection regarding sports injuries we will not know what injuries occur in sport, to whom and why. We will not know what preventative measures could be implemented. We will not have key agencies taking leadership to ensure such measures are widely adopted. More worryingly, we will continue to put our children and ourselves at risk of injuries that could have significant health implications.

Visual language

Just like written language, visual language can be analysed for its effects and the meanings it generates. A list of visual and multimodal language features with their definitions is included in Appendix 1 (pages 218–20).

Word bank for visual language features

Balance	Contrast	Framing	Proportion	Size
Body language	Depth of field	Gaze	Proxemics	Symbolism
Camera angles	Empty space	Juxtaposition	Rule of thirds	Symmetry
Colour	Facial expression	Lighting	Salience	Typography
Composition	Focus	Mise en scène	Shot type	Vectors

EXAMPLE

Analysis of language features in a visual text

Mise en scène captures a heavily populated pedestrian crossing.

Blurred camera focus creates distortion, conveying a sense of perpetual movement, forward momentum, anonymity and uncertainty.



Wide-angle shot captures a chaotic composition suggestive of a busy, ever-moving city lifestyle where there is little time to interact with one another or appreciate the surroundings.

Vertical bodies of people and the vibrancy of their dress contrast with the static, monochrome lines of the crossing.

Despite their proximity, the body language of the walkers suggests they are on individual paths, with their own agendas and preoccupations.



See the digital bonus material for further sample analyses of visual texts.

ACTIVITY

Annotate a visual text

Using the features listed in the word bank opposite, and the example above as a model, analyse the following image, thinking about the ideas it suggests.



Analysing structure

A thorough analysis of structure involves examining the way that a text's content has been organised and sequenced. You should be able to identify different parts of a text and understand their relationships to each other and to the text as a complex whole.

The form and genre of a text will largely determine its overall structure. A news article will include a headline and by-line, for example. Next is the text's internal structure, such as the development of a cause-and-effect argument or a three-act narrative. Then there are the ways that various sections are structured – such as with the use of subheadings or by breaking a story into chapters – and the devices used to connect these to the whole text. Finally, there is the structure of individual sentences.

Whole text structure

Common approaches to the structure of texts include the following.

IMAGINATIVE TEXTS	PERSUASIVE TEXTS
<p>Traditional narrative: The sequence of a narrative can often be plotted against the following conventional order:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • exposition • setting and conflict • crisis or turning points • climax • denouement • resolution. 	<p>Case study: A key case study or multiple case studies are provided as credible anecdotal evidence in order to justify a contention.</p>
	<p>Compare and contrast: The text highlights the similarities and differences between two or more things; juxtaposition or binary construction may emphasise one aspect as superior.</p>
	<p>Cause and effect: The cause of a problem or issue may be established before the effects of the problem are outlined.</p>
<p>Circular/cyclical: The plot may return at the end to the same starting point, perhaps suggesting a sense of repetition; persuasive and interpretive texts can also use this structural sequence.</p>	<p>Occurrence and possibility: The frequency or prevalence of a particular problem or circumstance is the basis for assumptions about its probable occurrence in the future.</p>
<p>Framed/embedded: The plot contains a 'story within a story'; often the main narrative is recounted by a character external to the events.</p>	<p>Problem and solution: A problem is established and then a solution offered; the solution may take the form of a call to action.</p>
<p>Alternating structures: The plot may unfold using shifting or alternating narrative points of view, perspectives, time frames etc.</p>	<p>Proposition and support: A proposition is provided at the outset of the text and then various examples are provided as proof.</p>

The structure of an interpretive text is dependent on whether it conforms more to an imaginative form, such as a memoir, or a persuasive form, such as a feature article. Interpretive texts can follow any of the structures above and often include multiple perspectives on a topic.

ACTIVITY

Analyse the structure of a text

- 1 Identify how a studied text's content has been organised. Consider whether it follows one of the structures outlined on the previous page.
- 2 Explain how this structure adheres to your expectations of the text's form and/or genre.

Section structure

The division of texts into separate, smaller sections can also be analysed. The following checklist can be applied to a studied text.

The text is divided into the following sections. (Tick all that apply.)

- ☐ Chapters
- ☐ Scenes
- ☐ Episodes
- ☐ Paragraphs
- ☐ Frames
- ☐ Columns

The effects of these divisions include the following. (Tick all that apply.)

- ☐ Controlling the pace and delivery of the text
- ☐ Driving the plot or suggesting forward momentum
- ☐ Indicating a shift in setting, time, tense or character
- ☐ Foreshadowing later events or increasing interest
- ☐ Allowing the audience time for processing
- ☐ Building suspense, tension or rhythm
- ☐ Enhancing readability
- ☐ Meeting audience expectations about the conventional layout for a particular text type or form

Within the text or different sections of it, you can also make observations about the **internal structural features** at play, using the following checklist as a starting point.

The text contains the following internal structural features. (Tick all that apply.)

- ☐ Foreshadowing
- ☐ Flashback (analepsis)
- ☐ Flashforward (prolepsis)
- ☐ Binarism
- ☐ Chronology
- ☐ Juxtaposition
- ☐ Motif
- ☐ Anachrony (disruption to time)
- ☐ Dichotomy
- ☐ Fragmentation
- ☐ Titles
- ☐ Subtitles
- ☐ Rebuttal (procatalepsis)
- ☐ Segue
- ☐ Comparison

The effects of these internal structural features include the following.

(Tick all that apply.)

- ☐ Creating interest or variety
- ☐ Generating persuasive or stylistic effect
- ☐ Emphasising one part of a sentence
- ☐ Challenging grammatical expectations
- ☐ Developing tone and atmosphere
- ☐ Assisting with the audience's retention of information
- ☐ Building suspense and tension
- ☐ Controlling pace, pause and rhythm
- ☐ Emphasising a point
- ☐ Surprising or unsettling readers

EXAMPLE

Annotation of structure in a persuasive text

The following opinion piece by Jane Fynes-Clifton was published in *The Courier Mail* in 2018.

This short, impactful sentence may surprise readers through its subversion of typical beach representations.

A contrast is created between those who appreciate the conditions and those who are unprepared for it; the dash indicates an additional consideration.

Elaboration justifies the main argument, with juxtaposition created between 'then' and 'now'.

Alliteration creates an engaging, effective pattern of language.

RED AND YELLOW FLAGS ARE BEING IGNORED. WHAT NOW?

Our beaches are violent places at the moment.

The seas are heaving, roiling and spewing in reaction to cyclones and major weather events.

Mother Nature plays no favourites and the swell takes no prisoners.

While that may be just how our experienced surfers like it, too many novices and visitors are forgetting to pay heed – or simply ignoring what keeps them safe.

The red and yellow flags have lost their pulling power.

They used to be universally respected and lauded: a kind of bubble of safety for which all beachgoers were grateful. Now, for too many, the direction given is just noise, the signage seemingly meaningless.

Figures released last month by Surf Life Saving Queensland showed that of 2650 rescues last year, more than 2000 were outside the flags.

The swimmers in trouble were saved more by good luck than good management.

It takes three minutes to drown if you are taking in water and if the sentinels of the surf can't see you, they can't save you.

The title

- immediately outlines the problem, then asks a rhetorical question for readers to consider.

Several consecutive

- verbs and subsequent description personify the ocean as volatile and brutal.

The main contention

- is reiterated clearly and succinctly in a stand-alone sentence.

Statistics provide

- evidence to support the earlier observation: an example of the 'proposition and support' structure.

Sentence structure

Analysis of the structure of individual sentences, or syntax, can home in on the following aspects and their possible effects.

- Grammar and punctuation
- Subject–predicate order
- Sentence length
- Use of sentence fragments or deliberately incorrect grammar, punctuation or vocabulary choices
- Sentence composition (i.e. simple, complex and compound sentences)
- Sentence types: interrogative (questions), declarative (statements), imperative (commands) and exclamatory (crying out)

EXAMPLE**Annotation of sentence structure in an imaginative text**

The extract below is from 'Death Star', a short story by Indigenous author Tony Birch.

A shorter sentence breaks the lengthening effect.

Starting this sentence with 'Roadside memorials' emphasises their visual dominance in the setting.

Many years earlier the town fathers voted to commemorate the war dead of the district with an Avenue of Honour. A mournful sentry of ghost gums was planted stretching along both sides of the highway just south of the town. Each tree represented the life of a young soldier fallen in battle. The trees grew tall and healthy. No one at the time could have predicted they'd become the site for more young deaths, drawing speeding cars and the bodies of teenagers like moths to a deadly flame. Roadside memorials – hand painted white crosses, photographs, stuffed toys, and unopened bottles of whiskey and beer – accumulated over the years to mark the carnage.

Lengthy sentences mirror the stretch of highway.

Frank, abrupt explanation of the trees' growth and health, juxtaposed with the next long, descriptive sentence, highlights the unexpected outcome.

Listing numerous items associated with grieving families suggests the passing of time.

ACTIVITY*Identify the effect of syntax in a studied text*

Using the example above as a model, select five consecutive sentences from a studied text. For each sentence, identify the effects of:

- the sequence of its words
- its length
- the use of conjunctions and disjunctions
- punctuation.

Structure of visual texts

Analysing the structural features of visual texts requires an understanding of composition. While *mise en scène* refers to all of the visual elements within the frame, composition refers to their arrangement within the image and relative to each other. When analysing the structural features of a visual text, consider the following.

- What has been foregrounded in the image? What is placed in the background and mid-ground?
- Are particular aspects of the image partially cut off or sidelined by the framing?
- Is the image balanced or asymmetrical?
- Are contrasting features juxtaposed?
- What reading path are viewers encouraged to follow? How do design or layout features guide the movement of the viewer's eyes around the image?

- Is one part of the image prominent? How is this achieved?
- If the image is a photograph, what kind of camera angle is used? Where is the camera placed in relation to the subject?

EXAMPLE**Annotation of structural features in a multimodal text**

The following promotional poster for the feature film *The Dressmaker* is annotated with a focus on mise en scène and composition.

Names of high-profile actors listed at top of text creates celebrity appeal.

Centred title of the film connects to the protagonist, inviting readers to perceive them as one and the same.

The title is a dominant feature due to its prominent placement, size and font type; its content suggests the protagonist's interest in fashion and appearance.

Tagline including connotative words 'revenge' and 'fashion' suggests the film belongs to the drama genre and that its conflict revolves around betrayal, vengeance and shifting ideas of style.

Sewing-machine case held by main subject suggests she is a new arrival to the setting.

Direct gazes of characters, along with their earnest facial expressions, imply the film is concerned with serious content, although the contrast between setting and costume creates an ironic, comical undertone.

Characters' body language suggests confidence and defiance.

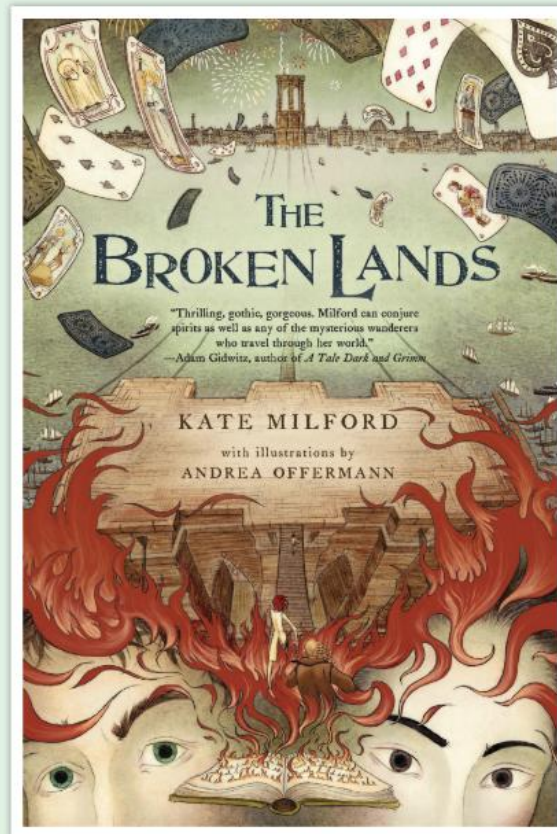
Central figure is foregrounded, implying her role as the film's protagonist.

Juxtaposition created by the stylish attire and glamorous female characters who appear out of place against the rural, undeveloped background setting.

Male characters are omitted from the image, suggesting they play a less significant role.

Analyse the structure of a multimodal text

Using the example on the previous page as a model, annotate and analyse the structural elements of this text, paying special attention to the implied narrative created by compositional elements.



Analysing style

In the same way that an artist's choice of brushstrokes, colour scheme or degree of realism contribute to the style of a painting, the style of a written or multimodal text develops from the language and structural choices made by its creator. Style may be common to a genre or characteristic of a particular author, director or literary period.

Word bank for describing style

Articulate	Conversational	Evocative	Introspective	Prosaic
Authoritative	Descriptive	Expressive	Lyrical	Rhythmical
Candid	Eloquent	Forceful	Moody	Serious
Colloquial	Embellished	Graphic	Passionate	Suggestive
Commanding	Emotive	Humorous	Personal	Verbose
Confident	Emphatic	Idiomatic	Pleading	Vitriolic
Confronting	Engaging	Insistent	Poetic	Whimsical

It can be useful to 'backward map' when analysing the style of a text. Start by identifying its overall style, perhaps using a few of the adjectives from the table on the previous page, and then analyse *how* this style has been achieved through aspects of the text's construction. (Note that language, structural and generic features can be considered stylistic, but only if they contribute to the particular nature – or style – of the text or its creator.)

EXAMPLE**Annotation of the stylistic features of an interpretive text**

The following extract is from a chapter titled 'The Kimberley in the Wet Season', from Stephen Scourfield's nonfiction book *Beautiful Witness: In a world of travel*.

Rain is hammering on the roof and the frogs are calling. It is 3 am, and I have been lying in bed listening to this symphony of the Kimberley's wet season. The pulsing white-noise of rain on tin, now lighter, now heavier and heavier; the chainsaw and motorbike and rhythmically croaking frogs, and the violent percussion of occasional thunder.

Similes, metaphors, assonance and kinaesthetic and auditory imagery create an evocative, descriptive style.

I am warm and dry and comfortable in my bed, but it's all too enticing, and I get up and walk to the door.

The narrator draws attention to his actions in the present-tense, anecdotal recount to create a personal, reflective style.

Lights in the tropical gardens show palm leaves glistening, their fronds waving under the fall of rain.

And I step out into it – the gorgeous just warm rain, not sharp as needles, but like a stiff gossamer falling in sheets, solid.

Several paragraph breaks, each starting with a conjunction, as well as polysyndeton (using several conjunctions close together), imply an unfolding narrative.

And I leave my towel on the teak table under the roof and step into the lap pool. Diluted by the exotic mixer of the freshwater deluge, it has been cooled from the tepid, blood-like temperature of the day – a temperature that seemed so equal to the body's that I felt foetal.

And I stand in the chill and then slide forward and swim, twelve strokes a lap, and then turn and see the sky from the other direction.

ACTIVITY***Practise writing about stylistic features***

Write 200–300 words explaining the way stylistic features communicate a human experience in this passage.



See the digital bonus material for advice on annotating texts.

Comparing the features of texts

Any two or more texts can be compared on the basis of their textual features. As a first step to comparative analysis, establish whether the texts belong to the same genre or have the same form. This will help you to determine whether these aspects contribute to similarities or differences in the texts' use of textual features. For instance, two persuasive texts are likely to similarly feature the use of rhetoric. The checklist below can assist with the comparison of language features in two texts.

	TEXT 1	TEXT 2
Does the text include figurative language devices?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Does the text include sensory imagery?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Does the text include connotative language?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Does the text include rhetoric?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Does the text use a formal language register?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Does the text include high-modality language?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Does the text have a conventional approach to punctuation?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Now consider the texts' individual approaches to each of these aspects. For example:

- If both texts use figurative language devices, are these similar or different? Do they both use metaphors, or does one use metaphors and the other similes, for example?
- Does the figurative language feature more prominently in one text than the other? What is the effect of this?
- Does the figurative language within both texts work to develop similar or very different ideas?

ACTIVITY

Compare textual features in two texts

- 1 Complete the checklist provided above by applying it to two (written) studied texts.
- 2 Find specific examples from each of your texts to support your observations of their similarities or differences.
- 3 Using the checklist above as a model, design another checklist to compare the structural and stylistic features of two studied texts.

Bringing it all together: 'Nosedive'

'Nosedive' premiered in 2016 as an episode of the British TV series *Black Mirror*. Written by Charlie Brooker and directed by Joe Wright, the target audience included Netflix subscribers (mostly aged 16–34 years) and sci-fi fans.

Through its hyperbolic representation of a dystopian setting in which every person's value and opportunity is almost entirely dependent on their social media rating, the episode explores the trend of assessing and ranking people based on fleeting, artificial interactions. Protagonist Lacie Pound's life spirals out of control due to a series of mishaps that see her social media rating decline abruptly.



STYLISTIC FEATURES

- Pastel colour scheme constructs a picture-perfect but artificial, plastic-like aesthetic; contrasts with monochromatic final scene.
- Stylised dialogue delivered in excessively high-pitched tones highlights the prevalence of fake, superficial relationships.
- Framing mimics selfie and live-streaming conventions.

IDEAS

- Social interactions using technology are deceptive and inauthentic.
- Social media leads to unhealthy competition and unrealistic expectations.
- Classist divisions are reinforced through unfair social practices.
- Social media affects self-worth and personal values.

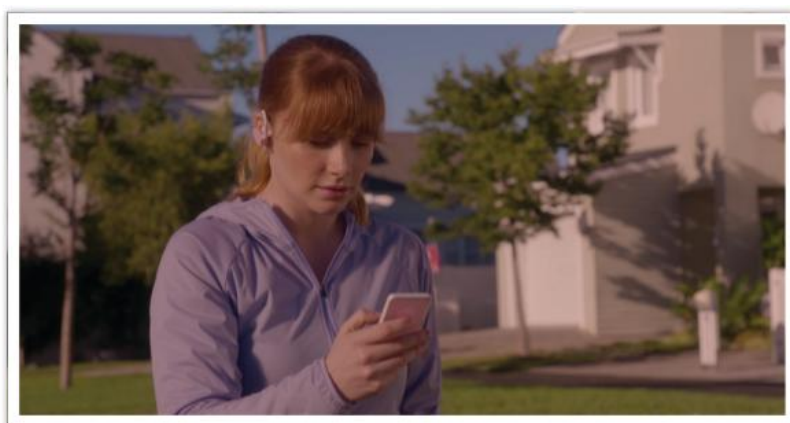
ACTIVITY

Explore 'Nosedive'

Read the scene analysis on the next page. Under the following headings, compile a list of the effects of:

- camera angles / shot types
- visual language
- sound.

Scene analysis



'Nosedive' opens with the pleasant sound of birds chirping, signalling daybreak, as a lone figure jogs towards the foreground on a suburban street lined with manicured lawns and grand houses. The morning light and peaceful, non-diegetic music initially creates an attractive, calming setting. As the figure comes into view, the camera movement reveals a young woman whose gaze is directed intently at the mobile phone she holds. Subtle electronic sounds of repeated phone alerts maintain the character's attention; a greeting from a passing jogger provides us with her name, Lacie. A shot/reverse shot shows Lacie continuing her exercise, but absorbed for the entire time in her phone and seemingly unaware of her picturesque surroundings. A cutaway to her stretching post-jog, during which she poses for a selfie, features a close-up of Lacie's phone as she generously rates the posts of others, using a star-system. Lacie's immersion in the social media world is therefore established in the opening scene through her actions and the camera work.

In another cutaway, Lacie is depicted standing in an enclosed bathroom setting, in front of a mirror. A lingering extreme close-up of her eye as she stares at her reflection reveals what appears to be some kind of retinal implant or contact lens that registers her rating as 4.2, portrayed via a cut to a front-on angle from the perspective of the mirror. Lacie is framed beside her rating, as she repeatedly laughs hysterically and then abruptly returns to a natural expression, suggesting she is not responding to anything genuinely amusing, but merely observing how she would be perceived by others. This inauthentic behaviour suggests Lacie's superficial concern with her public image and implies that she places a high value on her popularity and social status.

ACTIVITY

Identify the effects of language features in a text

Using this 'Nosedive' scene analysis as an example, consider the meanings created by a scene within one of your studied multimodal texts. Consider such elements as visual, spoken, auditory and written language, as the sample analysis above does.



See the digital bonus material for analytical practice with a nonfiction text – *Notes on an Exodus*.

COMPOSING ANALYTICAL RESPONSES

CHAPTER 7

IN THIS CHAPTER YOU WILL:

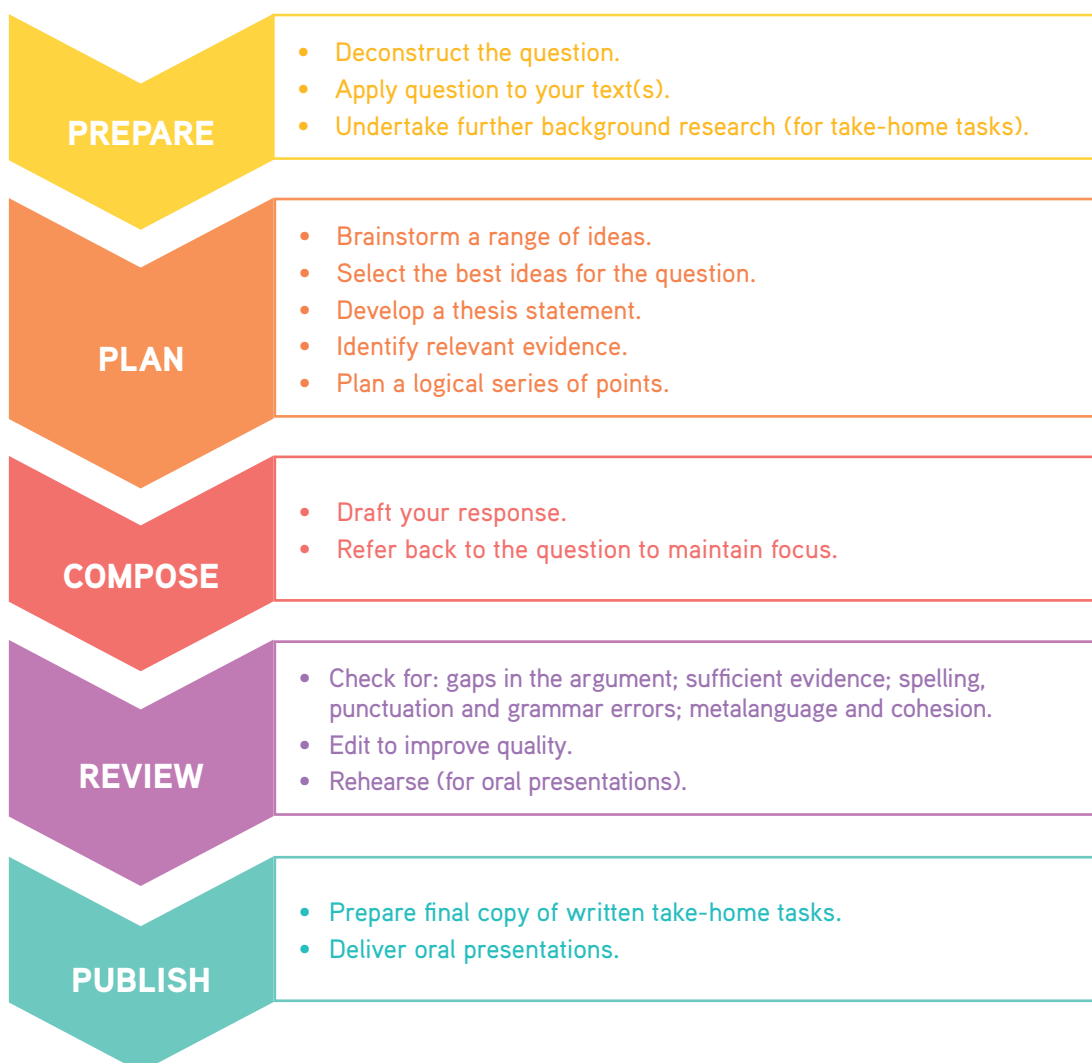
- learn about the importance of preparing for analytical responses
- consider effective planning strategies
- examine the features of different types of analytical responses
- learn how to use evidence effectively
- revise proofreading and editing strategies.

An analytical response is a formal text offering a logical and well-expressed argument or discussion. In it, you will demonstrate your ability to comprehend how texts communicate ideas about the world and human experience, analysing how they are constructed for particular purposes, contexts and audiences.

This chapter outlines the skills and processes required for approaching, planning and constructing short answers, essays and oral presentations. The sample responses in this chapter provide useful models, with annotations that offer guidelines for improving your own analytical writing.



Process for developing an analytical response



Preparing for your analytical response

The following steps show how to break down a question and begin to formulate a response.

Deconstructing the question

Deconstructing the question means identifying each key word and considering the relationships between key words, so that you understand what is required in your response. There are three main types of key words to consider: command, concept and condition words.

Command words are the instructional verbs that tell you what kind of argument or discussion is required in your response.

Common command words and their definitions

COMMAND WORD	DEFINITION
Analyse	Identify components, the relationships between them and their functions
Argue	Make a case for and/or against a viewpoint, based on appropriate evidence
Comment on	Make reference to and expand upon; offer a personal reflection
Compare	Show how things are similar and different
Consider	Reflect on and make a judgement or evaluation
Contrast	Show how things are different or opposite
Discuss	Identify ideas and explore different aspects
Evaluate	Carefully consider and make a judgement
Explain	Relate cause and effect; make the relationships between things evident; give reasons why and/or how
Explore	Investigate; consider widely
Show / show how	Give information; illustrate with examples

Concept words refer to the syllabus concepts you need to address, for example 'representation', 'context' or 'perspective'.

Condition words outline the parameters of your response. This might be, for example, to respond 'with reference to a studied text', to discuss 'two texts of different forms' or to analyse 'the representation of young adults' in a text.

Consider relationships between key words

The question is not a checklist of items to tick off in order. You must take into account the relationships between key words within it.

Consider the following example:

The command word 'discuss' requires you to explore various ways your contextual understanding influenced your interpretation.

'Context' is a concept word, meaning the circumstances of the situation or culture surrounding the production or reception of a text.

Discuss how your understanding of context influenced your interpretation of a character in a text you have studied.

'Character' is a narrative element, another concept, but here it is also a condition – you must focus your response on a single character.

'Interpretation' is a concept, meaning your reading or understanding of, in this case, a character.

'A text you have studied' is another condition; you must write on class texts.

In your response to this question, you must show your understanding of the role of context in shaping your interpretation of the character – for example, how your knowledge of the Holocaust influences your interpretation of the young Jewish character Shmuel in John Boyne's *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas*.



If, however, you wrote about your interpretation of Shmuel, and what his character revealed to you about the Holocaust, you would not be answering the question correctly because you have inverted the relationship between the concepts.

Here are two more examples of deconstructed questions.

EXAMPLE A Comprehending-style short-answer question

The command word 'explain' means you need to give examples and show how they work. ●

Explain how language features create a mood in Text 1.

'Language features' is a syllabus concept, referring to the various components of language that create meaning. ●

'Mood' is a concept, referring to the atmosphere or feeling created within the text. ●

'In Text 1' is a condition; you must only write about Text 1. ●

EXAMPLE A Responding-style essay question

The command words 'analyse how' require you to examine the construction of voices. ●

Analyse how at least two voices are constructed in a text to reveal different perspectives.

There are two conditions; you must discuss 'at least two' voices and they must represent 'different' perspectives. ●

'Voice' is a syllabus concept that means the personality evident in a piece of writing. Texts can have multiple voices, represented by different characters, narrators or individuals. ●

'Perspective' is a concept, meaning a position or viewpoint from which things are considered. ●

Deconstruct questions

Following the advice on the previous three pages, deconstruct the following questions by annotating the terms they use.

- Explain how three visual elements influenced your response to Text 3.
- Analyse the language features used to construct the setting in Text 2.
- Show how the purpose of Text 1 was enhanced by structural features.
- Explain the use of narrative point of view in Text 2 to position readers.
- Compare how two texts offered different perspectives on a similar issue.

Planning your analytical response

Thoughtful planning, even under timed conditions, will almost always result in a better response.

Brainstorm ideas

Never launch into your response with the first idea that pops into your head. According to Nobel Prize-winning chemist Linus Pauling, 'the way to get good ideas is to get lots of ideas and throw the bad ones away.' This is the essence of brainstorming.

In subjects such as English, questions are typically broad. It is important to consider different possible approaches before choosing one you feel confident about.

For example, consider the following question:

Explore how a text constructs a representation of an individual or group for a particular purpose.

If you were studying the TV drama *Stranger Things*, you could look at the representations of:

- Mike Wheeler, Will Byers, Dustin Henderson and Lucas Sinclair as individuals, or as a group of self-confessed 'geeks', young teenagers, males or friends
- Jonathon Byers as a loner or outsider
- Eleven as a girl isolated by her difference
- Joyce Byers as a single mother
- several characters as a group representing small-town America.

In terms of purpose, you could consider the show's intentions:

- to entertain
- to validate unlikely heroes, challenging social attitudes
- to critique how society treats otherness
- to explore themes of loneliness, corruption or friendship.

You always have several options, so choose thoughtfully.

Develop a thesis statement

A thesis statement is a clear, concise sentence or two that sets out your overall argument. The rest of your response adds the explanations and evidence to support your thesis. Your thesis statement should appear in the introduction to an essay, or in the opening sentence of a short answer.

A good rule of thumb is to take each key word in the question and replace it with a specific term related to your text. Here is an example for a Comprehending-style question:

Explain how language features create a mood in Text 1.

Thesis

Unusual metaphors, dark descriptive language and sentence fragments are used to create a mood of anxiety and tension in the extract from 'Another Ghost Story'.

You could rearrange the sentence:

'Another Ghost Story' features unusual metaphors, dark descriptive language and sentence fragments to create a mood of anxiety and tension.

Now here is a more complex, Responding-style question:

Explore how a text constructs a representation of an individual or group to achieve a particular purpose.

Thesis

The creators of television drama Stateless use flashbacks, a horrifying setting and visual language features to construct Sofie Werner as a sympathetic woman illegally detained by border security, in order to spark outrage at the treatment of asylum seekers.

If your sentence becomes too lengthy, you could break it into two:

The creators of television drama Stateless use flashbacks, a horrifying setting and visual language features to construct Sofie Werner as a sympathetic woman illegally detained by border security. This sparks outrage at the treatment of asylum seekers.

Word bank for constructing a thesis

For identifying a theme, idea or viewpoint <i>promoted</i> by the text	asserts, condones, encourages, endorses, posits, promotes, proposes, recommends, supports
For identifying a theme, idea or viewpoint <i>rejected</i> by the text	challenges, condemns, criticises, critiques, dismisses, refutes, rejects, resists, undermines
For identifying a theme, idea or viewpoint <i>illustrated</i> by the text	conveys, demonstrates, explores, illustrates, implies, indicates, reveals, shows, suggests

ACTIVITY

Create a thesis statement

- 1 Using one of the questions from the previous activity, write a clear thesis statement that summarises your position on the question.
- 2 Experiment with rearranging your thesis statement until you reach a version that is clear, concise and addresses all aspects of the question.
- 3 Improve your thesis using different verbs from the word bank on the previous page, to add nuance.

Identify your evidence

For a Comprehending-style short-answer response, the text is provided, right there in front of you, and you will be expected to quote from it extensively. Choose the clearest and most appropriate evidence from the text to support each point. Use one main example which you thoroughly analyse, ideally supported by a brief second example.

For a Responding-style essay, you don't always have the text in front of you. Many students memorise a series of individual quotes, which is not best practice. Instead, familiarise yourself with a few short scenes or excerpts from your text that can be used for a variety of purposes depending on the essay question. You don't have to memorise the whole scene, but learn key quotes from it and be able to explain their context. Importantly, identify the language and structural features that construct your examples, as well as the syllabus concepts they reflect.

Here's an example from 'Growing up Beige', a memoir by Ian Dudley published in *Growing Up Aboriginal in Australia*. This extract could be good evidence for the following annotated concepts.

Generic features of memoir: recounting incidents in the subject's life, using first-person narrative point of view.

Voice and language features such as colloquialism and indirect speech.

Perspective on the bullying received; also represents the experience of those who can 'pass' for white.

For a while a few school peers tried to rag me with 'throwback' and 'coony', but it never seemed to stick. Probably because by then I was starting to see it as a badge of honour rather than a source of shame. *Chip me if ya want, but unless you're serious I'm gunna ignore you.* The abuse I got was more along the lines of 'Why don't you put a land claim in for the detention room? Tell them it's a sacred site ... so we don't have to go.' Pretty harmless, really.

Ideas about identity – potential for pride or shame in Aboriginal heritage; also works for perspective.

Multiple voices showing different perspectives on Aboriginal identity; also reveals issues such as First Nations land rights.

Plan the order of points

Having brainstormed possible points of argument and the evidence to support them, it is now time to select the best ones and order them appropriately. When selecting the best points, ask yourself the following questions.

- Which are my strongest points of argument?
- Which do I have the best evidence for?
- Which do I know the most about?

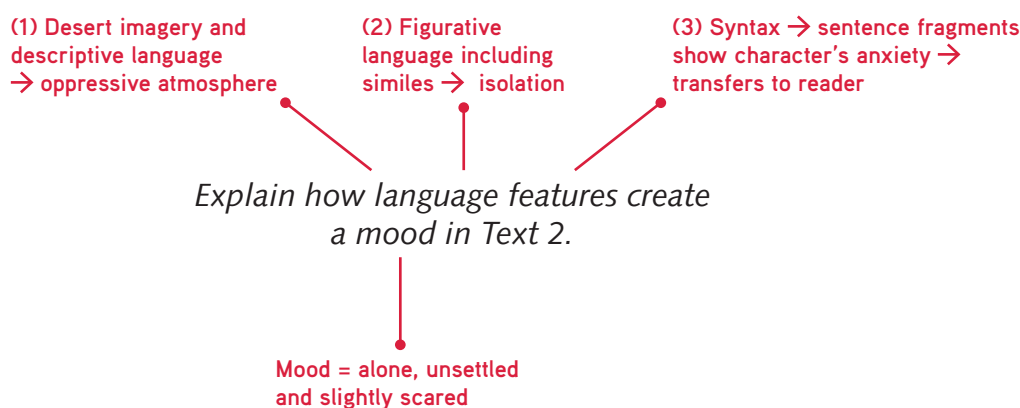
When thinking about the order of points, ask yourself:

- What is the relationship between each point?
- Which order will make the most sense for a marker?
- Which might be the strongest points to start and finish with?

A plan should be brief. Use bullet points, abbreviations and symbols.

Short-answer response

One approach is to plan around the question itself, numbering your points in the order in which you will write about them.



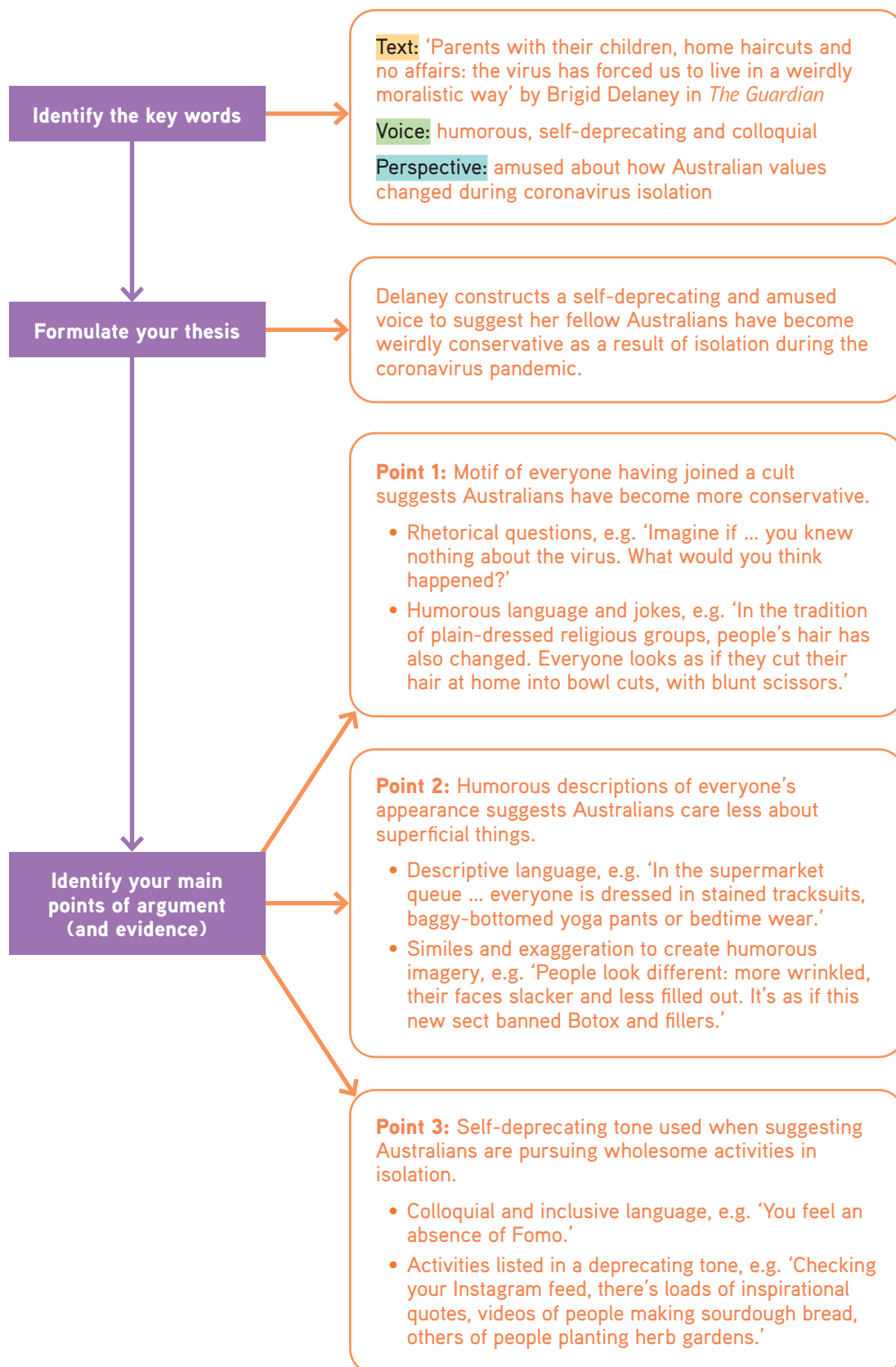
Essay or oral presentation

With a longer response, such as an essay or oral presentation, you should take the time to construct a more thorough plan, especially in a take-home situation.

The sample plan on the opposite page responds to the question with reference to an opinion piece published in the *Guardian* newspaper (<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2020/apr/01/parents-with-their-children-home-hair-cuts-and-no-affairs-the-virus-has-forced-us-to-live-in-a-weirdly-moralistic-way>). Note how textual evidence has been carefully selected to support each point and how each point relates back to the thesis statement.

QUESTION

Explain how at least one **text** has constructed a **voice** to offer a **perspective** on human behaviour.



Composing an analytical response

This section provides advice, guidelines and examples to help you compose analytical responses in the form of short answers, essays and oral presentations.

Short-answer responses

Short-answer responses require you to write in a clear, concise manner in 200–300 words. A short-answer response does not require an introduction or conclusion.

Typically, one detailed paragraph is expected for a short answer, but for some questions you might find that two or three shorter paragraphs are suitable. For example, if you are asked to consider three language features, you might choose to write three brief paragraphs. However, a stronger response would look at how those three language features work *together*, and thus explore them in a single paragraph.

Here are two important tips for succinct writing.

- **Be precise.** Use specific language when introducing and explaining your points. For example, 'the author uses persuasive language' could be better written as 'the author provides confronting statistics in a matter-of-fact tone.'
- **Be concise.** Get to the point quickly. Outline the point you are making, provide an example or two, explain them and *move on*. For example: 'The audience of the interpretive text, a feature article titled "Losing our Minds: Screen Time Linked to Shorter Attention Spans", is teenagers who rely on technology. They are likely to respond with shock at the article's findings, which suggest that excessive screen time can impact on their attention span, dramatically decreasing it.' This could easily be condensed to half the original length: 'The tech-reliant teenage audience of "Losing our Minds" would likely be shocked to learn that excessive screen time is linked to a decreased attention span.'

Types of short-answer responses

There are two approaches to structuring short answers: the feature-led approach and the idea-led approach. The most appropriate choice will depend largely on the question.

FEATURE-LED APPROACH	IDEA-LED APPROACH
1 Start with a concise topic sentence identifying a particular textual feature operating in the text and connect it to the specific idea or effect it generates.	1 Start with a concise topic sentence identifying an idea, syllabus concept or effect arising from the text, and connect it to one or more textual features that contribute to that idea or effect.
2 Provide a clear example, with evidence from the text.	2 Provide a clear example, with evidence from the text.
3 Give a clear explanation of how that example functions.	3 Give a clear explanation of how that example functions.
4 Repeat 2 and 3 as necessary.	4 Repeat 2 and 3 as necessary.

EXAMPLE

Sample short-answer response

This short answer responds to an extract from the article '2020: The Year of Reckoning, not Reconciliation' by Teela Reid, a Wiradjuri woman, published in *Griffith Review*.

Explain how two language features have been used to suggest an idea about belonging in Text 1.

In '2020: The Year of Reckoning, not Reconciliation', Teela Reid uses descriptive language that suggests alienation and anaphora to emphasise her struggle as an Aboriginal woman to feel any sense of belonging to Australian culture. Descriptive language creates the idea that Reid feels alienated from Australia. In particular, Reid suggests she feels caught between two cultures as her Aboriginal heritage prevents her from identifying with Australia's dominant cultural identity. Attending school, where she was taught the colonial history of Australia, 'was like entering a foreign world', the simile highlighting her feeling of being alienated and that the image of Australia being taught was unrecognisable to her. This is reinforced when she writes that she felt 'lost' in her 'own country'. She also graphically describes her experience as 'a constant battle of two worlds colliding', as well as a 'struggle' and 'fight', creating a strong and violent image of the cultural conflict she feels.

Furthermore, Reid uses anaphora to highlight her deliberate exclusion from an Australian identity. She writes that she 'was deceitfully taught' that Australia was peacefully settled, following this up with 'I was told that only white ANZACS went to war' and 'I was made to believe' that Aboriginal history was irrelevant. This repetition suggests multiple deliberate attempts to marginalise Reid and her Aboriginal culture. It explains the 'struggle' she experienced to reconcile her identity. Together, these two language features emphasise how difficult it has been for Reid to feel any sense of belonging to Australia, as the dominant culture marginalises Aboriginal people and their histories.

Clear topic sentence identifies two specific language features and an idea about belonging – a feature-led approach.

Sentence builds on the idea about belonging.

Appropriate metalanguage used.

Several well-explained quotes are used.

Transition marker connects the two parts of the response.

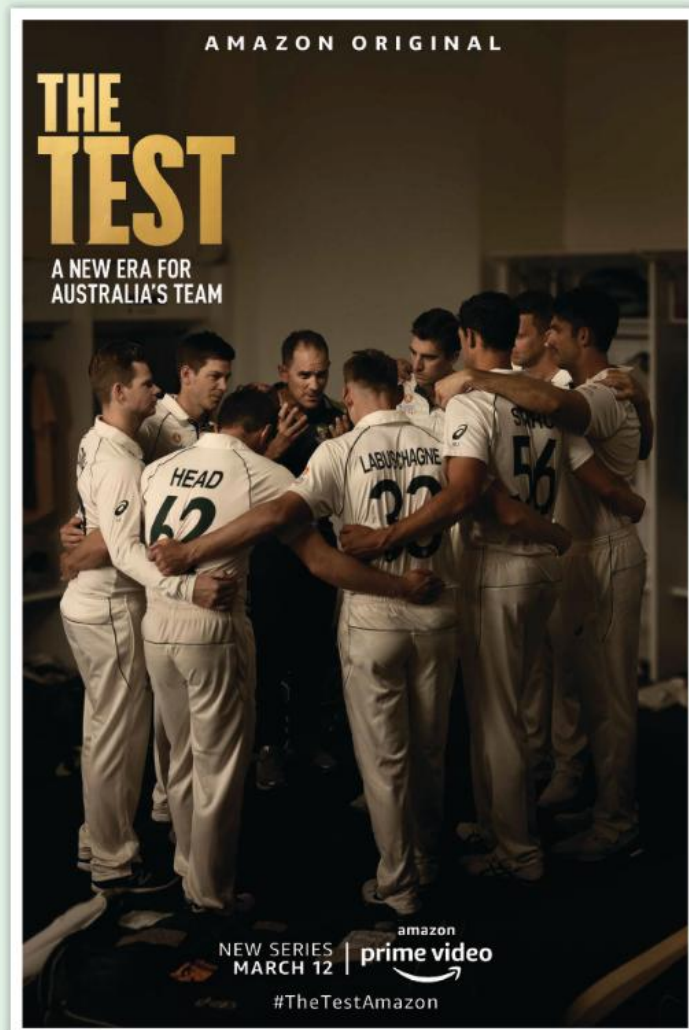
Succinct concluding sentence reinforces the idea introduced in the topic sentence.

Tips for successful short answers

- Don't waste time writing mini-introductions or conclusions that simply restate the points explored in your response.
- Make sure that every sentence earns marks by developing, rather than repeating, ideas in previous sentences.
- Use evidence from the text, and analyse it, rather than assuming the significance of the quote or reference is self-evident.
- Use appropriate metalanguage and avoid vague generalisations such as 'diction'.

Answer Comprehending questions

Consider the following still image and the accompanying Comprehending questions.



This is a promotional poster for the Amazon Prime Video 2020 docuseries *The Test*, which explores the Australian Men's Cricket Team's recovery following an international cheating scandal.

- Analyse how three visual language features in Text 1 work to represent the Australian Men's Cricket Team.
 - Explain how written and visual language features combined to shape your interpretation of Text 1.
 - How does Text 1 suggest a perspective on the Australian Men's Cricket Team?
- 1 Deconstruct the questions and annotate the image.
 - 2 Briefly plan a response for each question, taking no more than two or three minutes for each.
 - 3 Write three short-answer responses, aiming for 250 words each. Set a timer with a target of 16 minutes for each response.
 - 4 Review and edit each response using the advice in this section.

Essay responses

An analytical essay is, essentially, an argument. That is, it offers a series of propositions, based on evidence, which lead to a thoughtful conclusion. As you are aware, there are three main parts of an essay: the introduction, main body paragraphs and the conclusion.

Introductions

The introduction is where you clearly outline your argument or discussion and is the first impression a marker has of your writing. An introduction should:

- demonstrate your engagement with the question
- introduce your text
- clearly state your thesis, outlining how the question applies to your chosen text
- give a general overview of your argument.

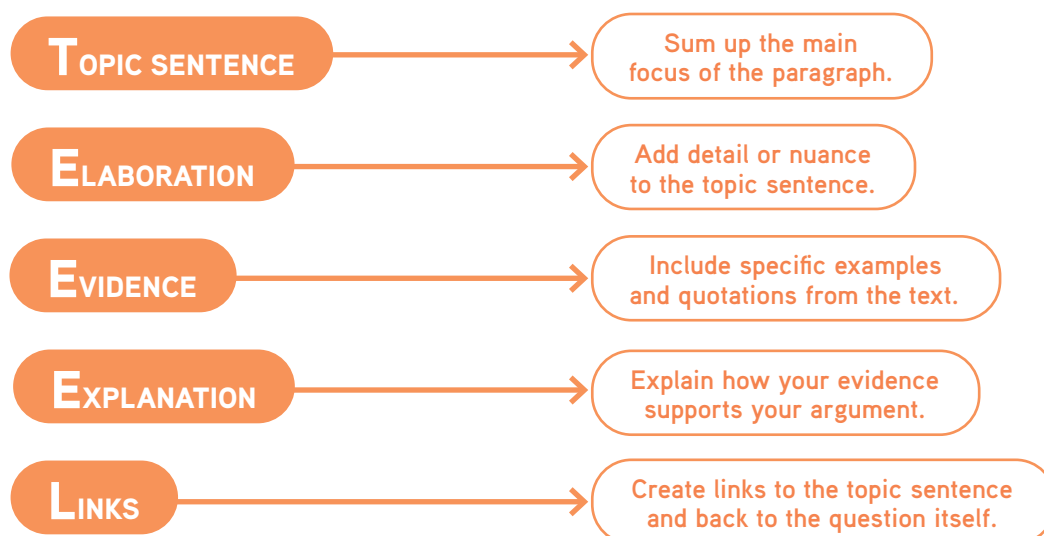
Effective body paragraphs

Body paragraphs develop and support your thesis. They need to:

- offer a single point of argument in support of your thesis
- use evidence from the text
- explain how this evidence supports your argument and interpretation of the text.

The TEEEL structure

The TEEEL paragraph structure is a useful mnemonic for creating well-structured paragraphs within your essay. TEEEL stands for Topic sentence, Elaboration, Evidence, Explanation, Links. It is not the only way to structure an effective paragraph, but it is a good model to have in your toolbox.



Connecting your points

Paragraphs should be linked in a logical progression of points that develop your argument. Use transition markers to signpost the relationship between each paragraph.

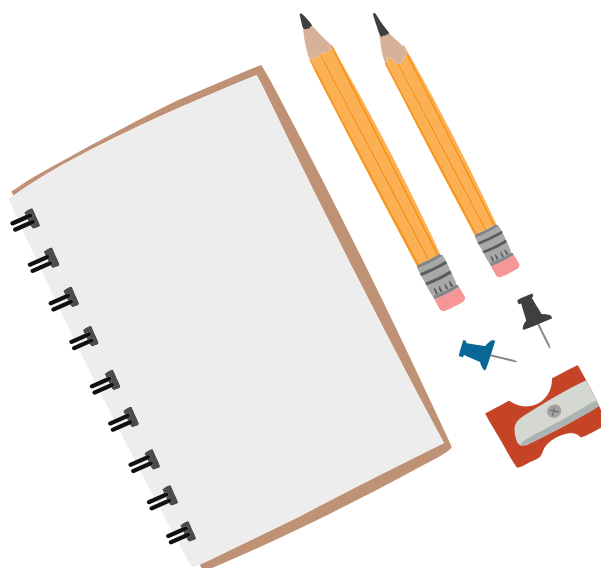
TYPE OF RELATIONSHIP	EXPLANATION	APPROPRIATE TRANSITION MARKERS
Chronology	The point shows a transition in time from the previous point.	after, afterwards, at the same time, before, eventually, every time, finally, initially, simultaneously, since, then, until, while
Clarification	The point illustrates, clarifies or emphasises the previous point.	especially, for example, for instance, in fact, in other words, namely, particularly, specifically, that is, to illustrate
Conclusion	The point draws a conclusion from the previous point(s).	in brief, in conclusion, in short, in summation, so, thus, to conclude
Consequence	The point is a direct effect of the previous point.	accordingly, as a result, because of this, consequently, due to, hence, in light of this, therefore, thus
Continuation	The point continues in sequence from the previous point.	additionally, also, finally, furthermore, initially, secondly (thirdly etc.), subsequently, then, to begin
Conversion	The point shows a variation or change in direction from the previous point.	alternatively, despite this, however, in other ways, on the other hand

Conclusions

The conclusion provides a summation of your argument. It should:

- clearly refer to the question and your chosen text
- restate your thesis, but avoid using exactly the same phrasing as the introduction
- include a big-picture statement about the significance of your discussion.

Once you become confident in your essay writing, you might experiment with varying the structure of your argument. Until then, this provides a solid template.



EXAMPLE

Essay on *The Club*

The following sample response analyses Australian playwright David Williamson's play *The Club*, about an Australian Rules football club.

Discuss how the characters in a text are constructed to offer a particular representation of gender.

Australian society witnessed significant changes to gender roles during the 1970s. As women fought for equal rights and began to challenge the patriarchy, many men felt their traditional power and dominance was at risk. As a consequence, some began to demonstrate 'fragile masculinity'. This is defined by behavioural scientists as when a man's sense of masculinity is vulnerable and easily threatened, and he responds aggressively to protect his perception of what it means to be a man. David Williamson's 1974 play *The Club* represents this fragile masculinity through its characterisation of the administrators of a football club who lash out when their egos are compromised. Ted Parker and Jock Riley are characterised as tough, 'old-school' and domineering men, this exterior masking an insecurity that causes them to respond violently when challenged by others, particularly women.

As characterised by Williamson, Jock Riley's dialogue and actions demonstrate an inflated sense of masculine pride and a reputation for being violent both on and off the football field. Jock is a former coach and current Vice President of the Club, a position he maintains with ruthless aggression. He cuts off others when they speak and uses blunt and coarse language to intimidate. When Laurie, the current coach, criticises Jock's interference in his coaching of the team, Jock turns menacing, reinforcing Laurie's subordinate position by stepping closer and reminding him 'I had to lay you out behind the lockers in your first year' as a player. Despite his senior role, Jock responds by threatening physical violence. Saying he 'had' to punch Laurie highlights how naturalised the use of violence is to a man like him. Jock is also violent with women, revealing that when his wife said another player outperformed him, he 'thumped her one'. He then states, 'She apologised later but by that time the damage was done.' By portraying himself as the victim of his wife's 'damaging' criticism, Jock tries to justify his use of physical violence to reassert his masculine superiority. Jock's speech and actions represent his sense of masculinity as delicate, having to be defended by acts of violence against anyone who questions his superiority.

The Club President, Ted Parker, is characterised similarly to Jock, also representing masculinity as fragile and violent. As a non-player, Ted always seems to be defensive in his interactions with the rest of the characters, aware that he has not proven himself in the hypermasculine arena of the AFL. He compensates by using aggressive and threatening

Introductory sentences set the scene for the argument to follow.

Chosen text is introduced and the link to characters made.

Clear thesis statement connects the construction of characters to a particular representation of gender.

Topic sentence clearly introduces the first character and how he has been constructed.

Both actions and dialogue are referred to in support of the characterisation.

Clearly explains how the student has interpreted the evidence.

Linking sentence connects this paragraph to the thesis.

Transition markers create cohesion between the two paragraphs.

Use of evidence referencing metalanguage (such as dialogue and stage directions) shows an understanding of the text's form (a play).

Linking sentence clearly shows how the playwright constructs a particular representation of masculinity, linking back to the thesis.

By highlighting that this third example is slightly different, this response shows a critical understanding of the text and a thoughtful approach to the question.

Here, the response clearly connects with the overall thesis, that these characters represent fragile masculinity.

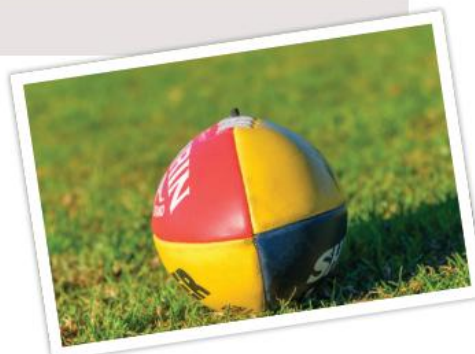
In the conclusion, the response clearly returns to the thesis and the key aspects of the question.

Final sentence offers a relevant big-picture statement, suggesting the student has thought critically about the question.

dialogue to impose his will on the Club. When challenged by Laurie, he is described in the stage directions as 'exploding', shouting that 'if anybody tries to stop me I'll crush them'. Ted also has a history of beating women 'with a closed fist' and blaming them for provoking him, notably a dancer who he said 'egged me on all through her act' before treating him as if he was 'dirt beneath her feet'. Demonstrating that his masculine pride feels threatened, Ted shrieks 'I'm the greatest President in the history of the game and I won't have some little trollop laugh in my face.' This dialogue reveals the extremity of Ted's reactions when his frail sense of superiority is challenged: hitting a woman who resisted his advances and becoming defensive when criticised. In constructing two characters with similarly fragile egos, Williamson represents this as an all-too-common masculine identity.

The play's protagonist, Laurie, is characterised to represent a somewhat more evolved masculine identity. He usually remains calm in his dialogue, using few words even in the face of Ted's ranting. Unlike Jock, he refuses to resort to violence or create a culture of fear among his team. However, he still demonstrates some elements of fragile masculinity, mostly in his shame that one player, Geoff Hayward, refuses to follow instructions. He tries to drop Geoff, before realising 'it isn't easy to admit that you can't control one of your players'. This suggests his response to Geoff's challenge was driven by wounded pride. Towards the end of the play, however, even Laurie gets caught up in the cycle of aggression that permeates the Club. In one argument, the stage directions reveal that 'Laurie is in a towering rage' and he tells another administrator who threatens to sack him as coach to get out 'before I bloody well tear you apart'. Although Laurie calls out other characters for their violence, his own aggression when his authority is challenged seems to be simmering just below the surface, suggesting he is not so different from Jock and Ted.

Throughout *The Club*, Williamson constructs a representation of masculinity that is violent yet fragile. Employing dialogue, stage directions and reported action, he characterises various members of a football club as responding aggressively and defensively to any perceived threat to their masculine authority – but even more so if the provocation comes from a woman. In a 1970s context, when the feminist movement in Australia was highly active, this representation of masculinity seems to reflect a society in which some men felt their patriarchal power was being threatened. Over fifty years since the play was first published, violence against women is still shockingly prevalent, and suggests that Australia still has a long way to go in addressing damaging concepts of masculinity.



Tips for successful essays

- Work hard on your thesis; this is the most important part of your essay.
- Always assume the marker is unfamiliar with your text; you must explain yourself clearly and explain the context of your evidence.
- Make sure you *analyse* your evidence and not just simply *interpret* it; rather than saying x means y, always say x means y *because* z.
- Incorporate appropriate metalanguage into your discussion.
- Ensure every paragraph clearly links back to your thesis.
- Avoid repeating the same or similar phrases in each topic or linking sentence.

ACTIVITY

Plan and write an essay

- 1 Choose one of the following questions.
 - Explain how your personal context has influenced your response to the ideas or issues explored in a studied text.
 - Discuss how a text you have studied was constructed to achieve a particular purpose.
- 2 Deconstruct the question and choose a studied text you could use to answer it.
- 3 Brainstorm three different approaches to the same question, thinking carefully about how you could apply your understanding of your text in different ways.
- 4 Write a plan for each of your three approaches. This will help you develop flexibility in approaching essay questions.
- 5 Write the introduction and one body paragraph for each of your three plans.
- 6 Evaluate which of these seems to be the most convincing or credible. Complete a full essay based on your plan.
- 7 Revise your essay using the advice above.



This section includes strategies to construct an effective comparative response.

Planning

A Venn diagram is a good planning tool, as it encourages you to consider what is both similar and different about the two texts. The following diagram compares two films: *District 9* (2009) and *Guardians of the Galaxy* (2014).



A T-chart can also be useful.

DISTRICT 9 VS GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY

SIMILARITIES	DIFFERENCES
Genre: science fiction Form: feature film Medium: cinema release Mode: multimodal	Genre: allegory vs comedy Themes: racism vs family/community Setting: Earth (South Africa) vs space / alien planet (Xandar)

Alternatively, you could use a table.

ELEMENT	DISTRICT 9	GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY
Genre	Science fiction	Science fiction
	Allegory	Comedy
Mode and language features	Multimodal	Multimodal
Setting	Earth (South Africa)	Space / alien planet (Xandar)
Themes and ideas	Racism and apartheid	Family and community

Language

Use transition markers to highlight similarities and differences. Beware of stating that your texts work in identical ways, though, as this is rarely the case. Explaining the degree to which they are similar, or acknowledging that there are differences as well as similarities, will suggest a more critical understanding of your texts.

TYPE OF RELATIONSHIP	EXPLANATION	APPROPRIATE TRANSITION MARKERS
Comparison	The point highlights a similarity with the previous point.	either ... or, equally, in a similar fashion, in comparison, just as, likewise, neither ... nor, similarly, so too
Contrast	The point highlights a difference from the previous point.	although, conversely, however, in contrast, instead of, on the contrary, on the other hand, otherwise, whereas, while
Concession	The point highlights instances where the previous point may not apply.	although, despite this, even though, granted, however, in spite of, nevertheless, somewhat, to a degree, to an extent, yet

Structure

There are three main models for writing a comparative essay: the block approach, the alternating approach and the integrated approach.

The **block approach** deals with each of your two texts individually, in sequence. As you discuss the second text, use transition markers to highlight the similarities and differences between it and the first. This can be useful when the two texts work in quite different ways.

The **alternating approach** switches between texts with each paragraph. After making one point about your first text, you switch to the second text and explain whether it is similar or different in this instance. This is useful if you are comparing several different aspects of the texts.

The **integrated approach** addresses a point of similarity or difference between both texts in the same paragraph. This often makes for a more coherent argument when you discuss each text equally. However, for an inexperienced writer the danger is that, in addressing two texts in one paragraph, either the discussion will be too superficial or the paragraph will become too long.

Irrespective of which approach you take, your introduction and conclusion must address both texts and clearly state the degree to which you found them similar or different. Of course, your argument must relate to what the question asks you to compare!

EXAMPLE

Comparative essay on *Never Let Me Go* and *Ex Machina*

The following sample response compares Kazuo Ishiguro's novel *Never Let Me Go* with the film *Ex Machina*, directed by Alex Garland.

A common strategy to begin an essay is to reframe the question as a new statement.

Transition marker indicates the shift between texts; a brief overview of each text is supplied.

Thesis statement addresses the key words in the question – mode and idea – and gives an overview of similarities and differences.

Both texts addressed in one paragraph.

Transition marker 'similarly' signals shift to second text.

Metalinguage is used throughout, maintaining focus on modal language features.

Compare how two texts of different modes are constructed to reveal a similar idea.

Although texts may be constructed in different modes, they can present a similar idea in equally thought-provoking ways. This is the case for Kazuo Ishiguro's 2005 novel *Never Let Me Go* and Alex Garland's 2015 feature film *Ex Machina*. Through the use of conventions specific to their modes, each text critiques the ethics of artificial intelligence by suggesting that clones are entitled to the same rights and dignity as humans. *Never Let Me Go* is set in a dystopian world where cloning people is commonplace. It explores the lives of several cloned children bred to 'donate' their organs to wealthy humans. *Ex Machina*, on the other hand, follows tech genius Nathan, who recruits Caleb to test a robot named Ava. The test evaluates Ava's ability to demonstrate 'human' qualities – logic, humour and manipulation. Through visual and auditory language, robots are represented as largely indistinguishable from humans. Although the mode and plot of each narrative is different, both *Never Let Me Go* and *Ex Machina* present a similar idea in exploring the ethics of giving 'clones', whether biological or artificial, human personas while exploiting them as tools to serve society.

Both *Never Let Me Go* and *Ex Machina* represent their cloned characters as distinctively human, although each text uses the specific language features associated with its mode. *Never Let Me Go* relies on written narrative conventions such as voice, using the intimacy of first-person narrative point of view from the perspective of the clone Kathy. Kathy uses a familiar tone, as if we are part of her society. She does not explain terms such as 'donations' or 'Spring Exchange' because she assumes we already know them. She directly addresses the reader in phrases such as 'If you're one of them, I can understand how you may be resentful' and 'I don't know how it was where you were', creating a close bond. She describes relatable childhood memories such as fights with friends and secret crushes. This voice represents Kathy as just as human as the reader, an effect *Ex Machina* similarly achieves using multimodal language features. Ava is a highly evolved robot who demonstrates human logic, reasoning and emotion. Ava's seemingly sincere dialogue, humanlike facial features and gentle gestures represent her as recognisably human to the audience, at least initially. Ava's voice is warm and friendly as she tells Caleb she has 'never met anyone new before', seeming excited to meet him. This is juxtaposed with a subsequent close-up shot of her torso revealing wires and circuits, and digital sound effects in the background as she moves. Although Ava is clearly robotic, Garland uses auditory and

visual language to represent her as behaving and thinking like a human when making a new friend. Furthermore, Ava's face is conventionally feminine and beautiful, encouraging Caleb's interest in her. Ava's humanlike, attractive characteristics promote a sympathetic response when the camera zooms out, revealing the glass observation room she is trapped in – conditions we wouldn't accept for humans.

Never Let Me Go uses extensive description to construct a setting in which, despite their human qualities, the clones are second-class citizens. Aside from being raised in an institution, Hailsham, the young clones seem to have lives like any other valued members of society. This setting of Hailsham has been constructed through descriptive language as a protective sanctuary for the clones, giving them the chance to experience a normal childhood before their organs are harvested. It is a 'spacious house [that] contains plenty of classrooms and dorm huts for all [their] schooling needs.' In addition, it features 'a large sports pavilion' and 'ample grounds', details that make it sound like a desirable boarding school. There are symbolic clues that it is a prison, though, as it is 'surrounded by a fence' and 'secluded from the world', suggesting the clones are marginalised from society. This setting raises the moral dilemma about whether it is right to let the clones grow up thinking they are regular children when they are nothing more than 'bags of organs' for elite society. This theme is explored through Miss Lucy, a disillusioned teacher. Miss Lucy tells the students that they were 'brought into this world for a purpose, and [their] futures ... have been decided', that they've been 'told and not told' the truth about their lives. She leads the audience to see the truth about the Hailsham setting. It is not a country retreat, but a detention facility that keeps the clones away from regular humans, in the same way that other 'undesirables' are marginalised.

Ex Machina offers a similar idea, although in a more extreme fashion. Its robot characters are never led to believe they are equal, as Ava and the other clones are used as slaves and kept in glass cages. In contrast to *Never Let Me Go*, the setting in *Ex Machina* is visually cold, clinical and a monochromatic grey. Everything is concrete, metal and glass, suggesting the unnaturalness of the environment in which the robots are kept. In one scene Nathan is shown building and then destroying robots in his laboratory. In close up, a robot screams 'why won't you let me out?', beating the glass until she disintegrates, completely ignored by Nathan. His callous actions confront the audience, a position reinforced when Nathan is later seen hauling bodies out of his laboratory. This characterisation suggests his scant regard for the robots, as he discards them like rubbish. Constructing the scene to resemble security camera footage adds to the uneasy mood, as if we are watching a crime take place. The unsettling music in the background, as well as the shadowy lighting, creates a tense scene as the audience witnesses the humanoid

Topic sentence builds on idea previously established, rather than simply repeating it; while normally you would stick to one approach to a comparative essay, the following two paragraphs model the alternating approach.

- Refers back to the thesis statement and the question.

Topic sentence uses transition markers 'similar' and 'although', highlighting that this text is similar in some ways while conceding some difference.

- Transition marker highlights the difference in mode between the texts.

Linking sentence connects paragraph back to the thesis.

Final sentence summarises the comparison between the two texts.

Although a little too similar, perhaps, to the introduction, this sentence clearly returns to the question.

robots being 'murdered'. Through the setting, *Ex Machina* suggests that artificially intelligent beings will be discriminated against and maltreated in the future, despite their humanlike qualities. In this way, it offers a similar idea to *Never Let Me Go* regarding the ethics of artificial life.

Texts may be constructed in different modes, yet convey a similar idea. *Never Let Me Go* and *Ex Machina* rely on, respectively, written and multimodal language features to present the idea that all clones, even robotic ones, deserve the dignity and rights extended to humans. By using their various language features to construct humanlike protagonists and the settings they exist in, both texts critique the ethics of giving clones human personas yet using them as tools to serve our society.

Tips for successful comparative essays

- Use transition markers to guide your reader through your discussion, emphasising whether successive points are similar or different.
- Try to devote roughly equal space to both texts in your discussion.
- Make sure your introduction and conclusion refer to both texts.
- Avoid generalising about your texts in order to say they work in the same or opposite ways. Even texts that seem quite similar will have their own nuances.

Using textual evidence

It is essential in analytical writing that you incorporate textual evidence. This can take a range of forms, including:

- direct quotes from written or spoken texts
- paraphrasing
- descriptions of structural features or multimodal evidence
- excerpts from texts, which can be shown on a screen in oral presentations.

Quotes should be succinct and transcribed accurately. They should also be:

- smoothly incorporated into your own sentences
- enclosed in quotation marks
- contextualised appropriately
- varied, reflecting a range of generic features.

And remember, *quotes never prove anything by themselves*. You must always explain how your chosen evidence supports your point.

EXAMPLE

Using textual evidence

This annotated excerpt is from the sample short-answer response on Teela Reid's '2020: The Year of Reckoning, not Reconciliation' (page 119).

Attending school where she was taught the colonial history of Australia 'was like entering a foreign world', the simile highlighting her feeling of being alienated and that the image of Australia being taught was unrecognisable to her. This is reinforced later when she writes that she felt 'lost' in her 'own country'. She also graphically describes her experience as 'a constant battle of two worlds colliding', as well as a 'struggle' and 'fight', creating a strong and violent image of the cultural conflict she feels.

The quote fits within the grammar of this sentence and is indicated by quotation marks.

Metalinguage used in the analysis of the quote.

Offers a clear interpretation.

Second example adds credibility.

Quotes are short, with just the relevant text included.

ACTIVITY

Compare texts

- 1 Read and annotate the following two texts.

Text 1 is an extract from an article for *SBS News* by Amelia Dunn and Stephanie Corsetti.

Appearance activist Carly Findlay wants to change how Australians think about disability. Her ongoing work in the advocacy space has now been honoured with a Medal of the Order of Australia. She's a writer, speaker, and activist who has garnered tens of thousands of followers on social media. She's fought online trolls, taken a taxi company to the Australian Human Rights Commission and written her own book.

Carly Findlay's disability has never stopped her, something, she tells *SBS News*, that goes back to her childhood.

'I think that my parents have really helped raise me in a way that I'm proud and confident. I think my dad probably regrets me being too assertive,' she jokes.

She says some people don't consider her 'disabled' because they see disability in 'another way'. But, she says, all disabilities look different.

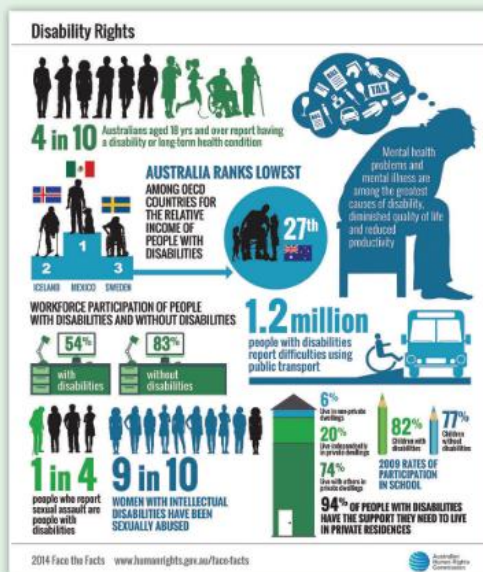
'I'm disabled by society's barriers that they put up, by the low expectations of me. Our bodies aren't disabling, it's society that is disabling.'

Because of ignorant attitudes to her appearance, Carly has often been the target of discrimination or bullying. Just last month, she took to Twitter to recount the moment a taxi driver harassed her in his cab.

'The driver asked what happened to my face, I said nothing,' she posted. He asked her multiple times before saying he didn't want her in his car as he'd 'have to clean it'.



Text 2 is an infographic produced by the Australian Human Rights Commission.



- 2 Experiment using Venn diagrams, T-charts and tables to compare these two texts, based on the following questions.
 - Compare the perspectives on disability offered by Text 1 and Text 2.
 - Compare how language features have been used in Text 1 and Text 2 to achieve a purpose.
 - Compare your responses to the ideas in Text 1 and Text 2.
- 3 Select one of the questions above, and write a comparative essay response. When planning your essay, consider which approach – block, alternating or integrated – would be most suitable.

Oral presentations

Two of the more common types of oral presentations you might be asked to give are speeches and panel discussions.

Speeches

Analytical or discursive speeches are structurally quite similar to essays. Unlike an essay, however, speeches are listened to by the audience, typically just once. Audiences don't have the luxury of reading back over a paragraph to follow your line of argument. As a result, the structure of a speech tends to be straightforward and well signposted. Here are some suggestions.

- **Begin with a hook.** Engage your audience with a strong opening, such as an anecdote, quote or provocative statement, and consider using an image or prop to keep their attention.
- **Use a linear structure.** Recognisable structures, such as question–answer or three sequential points, are easy for audiences to follow.

- **Use a motif.** Repeating key phrases, as well as using lists, acronyms, diagrams or images that you return to throughout your speech, can focus the audience's attention.
- **Consider the order of your points.** Audiences are more likely to remember the first and last points you make, so ensure these are your strongest.
- **Reinforce key points with visual aids.** Showing diagrams, charts, illustrations, summary slides or text extracts will make your points easier to follow.
- **Recap key points.** At your conclusion, quickly revisit your key points.
- **Leave a lasting impact.** End with a thought-provoking statement, a real-world parallel or an analogy related to the text and the audience's own context. Returning to the image, example or quote you began with can also help create cohesion.

Tips for successful speeches

- Rehearse so that you are familiar with your material.
- Maintain eye contact with your audience; don't read to them.
- Involve your audience through questions, analogies and provocations.
- Use palm cards to prompt you.
- Modulate your voice, using pace, volume and tone to enhance your point.
- Use gestures and movement to maintain audience engagement (but don't overdo it!).
- Consider your audience's background knowledge when including detail.
- Avoid too many 'bells and whistles' that distract audiences from your message.

Panel discussions

Panel discussions usually feature three to five speakers and a moderator. The speakers offer their perspectives on the topic being discussed. Sometimes a speaker will try to persuade the others to adopt their viewpoint, but often it is simply a sharing of ideas.

Unlike speeches, panel discussions are not scripted and rehearsed. They are more organic, interactive conversations, although you may use palm cards to remind you of key points.

The role of the moderator is to facilitate the discussion. They introduce each speaker and the topic, giving context for the discussion. For example, they might introduce the issue of the exploitation of overseas workers as a way to lead into a discussion of the documentary *Fast Fashion*. Moderators also:

- **ask questions** of the speakers to prompt discussion
- **clarify** points when a speaker has been unclear
- **mediate** if disagreements break out
- **keep speakers focused** on the topic
- **maintain the pace** of the discussion, with an eye on the time limit
- **ensure balance** between each speaker's airtime.

At the end, the moderator will draw the discussion to a conclusion, perhaps inviting a final comment from each speaker before offering a comment of their own. Unlike a debate, there is no 'winner' in a panel discussion. Sometimes, the audience is invited to ask questions at the end, addressed either to an individual speaker or to the whole panel.

Tips for panel members

- Be prepared: the more familiar you are with the text or topic being discussed, the quicker you will be able to respond to others and engage in the conversation.
- Listen carefully to others, so that you can respond appropriately.
- Challenge others' perspectives if you disagree, but do so respectfully.
- Modulate your voice, using pace, volume and tone to enhance your point.
- Acknowledge your audience, but keep your focus on fellow panel members.
- Inject some personality into the discussion, making it lively and interesting for your audience.

Using multimodal features

In delivering a speech, you are already engaging with two modes: the spoken and the gestural (an aspect of the visual mode). Your body language, gestures and movement contribute to the communication of your text.

Other ways you can incorporate multimodality into your presentation include:

- using visual aids such as diagrams, charts and images
- providing a written handout or listening activity
- creating a digital presentation
- showing short excerpts of the text(s) being analysed
- pre-recording your speech and applying post-production elements such as music, voice-over, captions and intertitles
- workshoping an activity using the whiteboard, providing handouts or screen sharing your device
- using engagement tools such as game-based learning platforms.



ACTIVITY

Create an oral presentation

- 1 Turn your comparative essay from the activity on page 132 into a speech. Use the advice on the previous pages to edit your essay to make it an effective spoken text.
- 2 Rehearse and perform your speech, recording yourself so you can review your performance.
- 3 Create a digital presentation, using slides to highlight key points.
- 4 Get together with some of your peers and use the texts on pages 131 and 132 to hold a panel discussion on the topic:

Evaluate whether Text 1 or Text 2 would be more likely to appeal to an everyday audience.

7

Proofreading, editing and rewriting

It is important to proofread your work, to correct errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar. But first you should re-read and edit your writing to improve its quality and style.

This paragraph is the original draft for the response on page 119. Annotations have been added to draw attention to where improvements needed to be made in order to produce the more polished version on that page.

In 'Text 1', Teela Reid has used descriptive language and anaphora to suggest the idea that, as an Aboriginal woman, she struggles to feel belonging to Australian culture. Descriptive language creates the idea that Reid feels excluded from Australian culture. Caught between two cultures as her Aboriginal heritage prevents her from identifying with Australia's dominant cultural identity. Attending school where she was taught colonial history of Australia 'was like entering a foreign world'. This shows she felt alienated and that the image of Australia being taught was unrecognisable to her. She felt 'lost in her own country'. She also describes her experience as 'a constant battle of two worlds colliding', as well as a 'struggle' and 'fight', creating imagery of the cultural conflict she feels.

- Vague – add detail to characterise the descriptive language.
- Awkward phrasing – reword to improve expression.
- Repetitive – use synonyms or reword.
- Sentence fragment – needs a subject.
- Vague – needs clarifying detail to explain.
- Lacks analysis – explain how this is shown.
- Simple retelling – develop this sentence to make it more analytical.
- Vague – add detail to explain the imagery.

Proofreading for common errors

When you check your work for spelling, grammar and punctuation, be mindful of these common errors that students make in analytical responses.

ERROR	EXPLANATION
Homophone confusion	Using the wrong homophone, such as 'their' instead of 'there' or 'they're'
Interpretation of evidence without analysis	Offering an interpretation of your selected evidence, but failing to explain how your evidence led to that interpretation
Misuse of apostrophes	Omitting or unnecessarily including apostrophes
Quote-stringing	Adding lots of quotes into your own sentences, to the point where you restate the text rather than discuss it
Repetition	Re-using phrases or even whole sentences multiple times throughout a response, often in topic or linking sentences
Run-on sentences	Accidentally connecting two or more sentences with commas, instead of separating them with full stops and capital letters
Sentence fragments	Writing in incomplete sentences

Essential elements checklist

High-level analytical responses will do the following.

- ☐ Offer a clear thesis that responds directly to the question.
- ☐ Present a sustained interpretation of the text.
- ☐ Justify such an interpretation through close analysis.
- ☐ Show awareness of a text's purpose, intended audience and context.
- ☐ Frame the analysis within the context of the syllabus concepts within the question.
- ☐ Support arguments with relevant textual evidence, including short quotations, integrated into the discussion.
- ☐ Structure the discussion clearly and logically, with an effective introduction and conclusion, and several points of argument that support the thesis.
- ☐ Use metalanguage accurately to discuss textual features.
- ☐ Use an expressive, fluent and clear writing style with few errors.

CREATING TEXTS

CHAPTER 8

IN THIS CHAPTER YOU WILL:

- learn strategies for analysing prompts and crafting imaginative, persuasive and interpretive texts
- explore ways of shaping texts for particular purposes, audiences and contexts
- experiment with language to develop your voice and style
- explore the language, structural and stylistic features of texts
- revise strategies for editing, reflecting on and improving your responses.

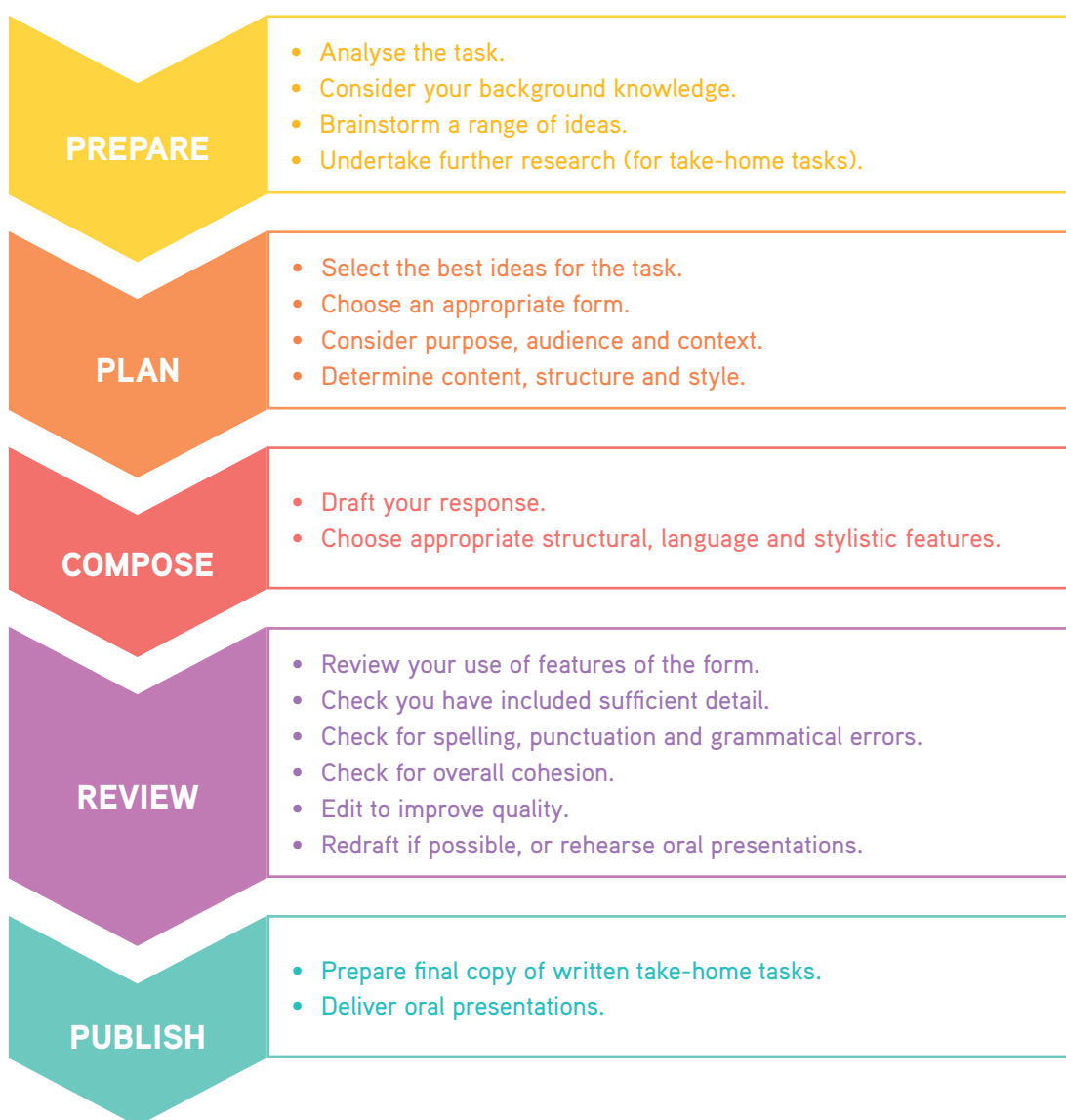
Creating a range of imaginative, persuasive and interpretive texts is a significant part of the English course. More than that, the ability to craft engaging and original texts is important both for personal enjoyment and for communication skills that will be of benefit in your future studies and employment.

This chapter explores the types of texts you may compose in this course. We will consider how language, structure and generic conventions function within these, as well as some of the general skills required for composing any sort of text.

Many examples are provided, demonstrating how you can incorporate various strategies and techniques into your own writing. There are also three complete sample responses, all addressing the same question, showing how imaginative, persuasive and interpretive text types can be used to present and explore ideas in contrasting yet equally effective and engaging ways.



Process for creating a text



See the digital bonus material for advice on planning a creative response, with examples.

Types of tasks

There are two main sorts of tasks you can be given in which you have to create a text: responding to a studied text and responding to a prompt.

Responding to a studied text

Some tasks ask you to respond to a studied text. For example, you may:

- adapt a text for a new audience
- retell the text from a different perspective
- change the form of the text
- reply to the text, such as by writing an open letter or review
- extend the text, such as by writing an epilogue or a missing scene.

Your response must stay true to the studied text. You shouldn't fundamentally change a character, for example, or misrepresent the text's main ideas.

Responding to a prompt

Prompts are designed to assess your composition skills as well as your understanding of syllabus concepts. The most common types of prompts to compose your own texts are **direct instructions, images and quotes**.

As with all assessment tasks, you must deconstruct the prompt carefully, considering its key words.

- **Command words:** For creative writing tasks the command word is likely to be *create, compose, construct* or *write*.
- **Concept words:** These are the syllabus concepts within the question, such as *language features, audience, perspective* and *mood*.
- **Condition words:** These place limitations on your composition, such as whether it needs to be a *persuasive text, the opening of a narrative, incorporating the quote* or *accompanying the stimulus image*.

Instructions

Here is an example of a prompt in the form of an instruction.

Command word: *create*
means to produce
something original.

Condition: the response
must be an imaginative text,
in any appropriate form.

Create an imaginative text where a character
confronts a past mistake or wrongdoing.

Concept: this
refers to character
and aspects of
characterisation.

Condition: the character
must confront a past error.

Before attempting this question, brainstorm possible approaches.

- Which forms of imaginative texts feature characters?
- What situation might lead a character to confront a past mistake?
- What might be the outcome of this confrontation?
- How would the text differ if it were written from the perspective of the character confronting their past wrongdoing, or from someone else's perspective?
- What is my purpose or theme? What do I want my reader to understand and feel in response to my text?
- Who is my audience? What is the context – real or imagined – in which they might read this text?

Images

Images can be powerful prompts for creative writing. Use your skills of visual analysis to consider all aspects of the image, including its symbolic potential.

Command word: **compose** means to carefully design and construct.

Condition: the response can be in any appropriate form.

Concepts: use language features and mood (the feeling or atmosphere of a text, as experienced by the audience).

Compose a text in a form of your choice using language features to re-create the mood captured in this image.

Condition: the mood re-created must reflect the mood in the image.



Things to consider:

- What is the mood captured in this image? How does it make me feel?
- What situation does it depict? How might I develop this situation in an imaginative, persuasive or interpretive text?
- What language features might capture this mood?
- What is my purpose or theme? What do I want my reader to understand and feel in response to my text?
- Who is my audience? What is the context – real or imagined – in which they might read this text?

Once you have thought through the question in these ways, you are ready to begin planning.

Quotes

When faced with a quote, take the time to consider it thoroughly. Make sure you clearly understand not just its literal meaning, but also its implications or possibilities.

Command word: **compose** means to carefully design and construct.

Condition: the response must be an interpretive text, in any appropriate form.

Compose an **interpretive text** that explores an **idea** from the following quote.

Concept: an idea is a thought, notion or understanding.

'The hilltop would not be half so wonderful if there were no dark valleys to traverse.'
(Helen Keller)

Condition: the idea must be logically drawn from the quote.

Things to consider:

- How might I interpret the quote? What might the 'hilltop' and the 'dark valleys' symbolise? What does the quote suggest about the world and human experience?
- Will I include the quote, or just use it as inspiration?
- What content would develop the ideas in the quote?
- What is my purpose or theme?
- Who is my audience? What is the context – real or imagined – in which they might read this text?

If you are directed to incorporate the quote into your text, think about a way to do this naturally. You may need to match your writing to the style of the quote, or structure your text in such a way that the quote is seamlessly integrated.

ACTIVITY

Analyse a prompt

Deconstruct the following questions, and brainstorm two different ways you might answer each.

- 1 Compose a persuasive text in which you promote your opinion on an issue to a particular audience.
- 2 'And just like that, things would never be the same between us again.' Create an imaginative text using this as the final line.
- 3 Create a text in the form of your choice, written from the perspective of the person in this image.



Creating imaginative texts

Most imaginative texts are narratives; they include short stories, novels, monologues, drama scripts, and film and television screenplays. Imaginative texts should immerse the reader within an imagined world; engage, entertain and move the audience; and develop a theme or central idea.

Preparing for your imaginative text

To compose an effective narrative, prepare as thoroughly as you can.

- **Decide on a theme.** What message or idea do you want to communicate?
- **Determine your subject matter.** Narratives are driven by conflict. What situation or problem experienced by your protagonist might contribute to your theme?
- **Develop a narrative arc.** All narratives have a **plot**: a chronological series of events that begins with the inciting incident and ends with a resolution. The **narrative structure** is created by the way you order the series of events. For example, a short story might begin at a point of tension, then reveal past events through a series of flashbacks and finally lead into the climax.
- **Decide on a narrator.** Choosing the perspective of your story is a key part of preparation. Whose version of events do you want to narrate?

Example plan

The table below shows a plan for an imaginative response to this question:

In a form of your choice, create a text that explores the following idea.

*'Even the technology that promises to unite us, divides us.
Each of us is now electronically connected to the globe,
and yet we feel utterly alone.'* (Dan Brown)

PURPOSE	To highlight how dependent teenagers are on their mobile phones, and on the social connections phones facilitate
AUDIENCE	Young Australian adults
CONTEXT	Contemporary Australian school
FORM	Short story
PERSPECTIVE	A teenage student who is stressed about misplacing their phone
VOICE	Panicked, concerned and slightly melodramatic
STRUCTURE	Chronological structure following a day in the life of a student
CONTENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motif of physical illness to symbolise loss of phone • Various events in a school day: sitting in class, lunchtime, tests • Focus on use of tech for social connections • Finds phone at the end of day, feels reconnected

Structuring a narrative



TAKING IT FURTHER

Nonlinear structures

Not all narratives follow a linear structure as outlined above. Manipulating the order in which you reveal details to your audience can create memorable effects. Try using one or more of the following techniques to create nonlinear narratives.

- In medias res:** Beginning in the middle of action can engage your reader instantly. This opening is typically followed by a flashback or some sort of expository dialogue to show the audience how the action came about.
- Flashback:** Slipping back in time, either through a character's recollections or through a shift in time, can reveal important background details.

- ▶ **Cyclical:** The narrative ends with a situation similar to the inciting incident, implying that a similar plot line will play out again, or offering a sense of completion and closure.
- **Episodic:** The narrative builds in a series of discrete events, sometimes switching between characters.
- **Converging:** Two plot lines involving different characters eventually intersect.
- **Frame:** One storyline (the frame) involves characters recounting other storylines.



See the digital bonus material for advice on creating settings, paragraphing and developing a theme.

Developing characters

Characters are usually the key element of a narrative. They engage the reader, and it is through their actions and reactions that the story develops and themes are revealed.

In short fiction, it is best to use no more than two main characters. Thoroughly planning your main character or characters should enable you to make them speak, think and behave cohesively and realistically. Thinking about a character's values and dreams will help you determine what motivates them, while their flaws will suggest the mistakes they might make. Considering their appearance and mannerisms will help you describe them in a way the reader can visualise, while providing some history (or backstory) will make your characters more rounded.

When you are developing characters it is important that you show, rather than tell: reveal your characters' personalities through their actions, reactions, thoughts and speech. The following example, about an amateur comedian's debut performance, illustrates some ways to do this.

Noting how others are reacting to Ellis' comedy routine starts building character before we even meet him.

Physical character detail incorporated naturally when it is relevant.

These details convey Ellis' anxiety without needing to spell it out to the reader.

These interior details convey Ellis' panicked state of mind to the reader.

These fragments of dialogue reflect what Ellis is hearing, but also provide the reader with confirmation about his stage fright.

Someone shuffled in the first row. Another stared expectantly at Ellis, arms folded. A couple two seats away kept looking at each other. There was a cough, some muttering. Mostly, though, there was silence.

The spotlight seemed to burn brighter, and Ellis could feel sweat trickling down his rounded face. He squinted at the audience sitting in the shadows. His shirt was a clammy embrace and a sharp odour was starting to leach from his armpits.

The silence dragged on.

Ellis racked his brain. It was there, somewhere, he just had to find it.

The crowd, meagre as it was, grew restless. The muttering grew into audible conversation, people not even bothering to whisper.

'What's he waiting for?'

'I'm heading to the bar.'

'How much were these tickets?'

Come on! He shrieked to his brain. He clawed through the material he had meticulously memorised for his big debut at Lazy Susan's. He'd rehearsed in front of the mirror a million times, entertaining his reflection with hysterical anecdotes, witty one-liners, the occasional laddish nudge, nudge, wink, wink ...

He'd cracked himself up – and his wife. Everyone said he was born to be a comedian. Everyone! He'd been able to imagine his name on the Comedy Festival program. Maybe even a TV gig.

It was there, somewhere. Like some elusive fish he was trying to catch with his bare hands, the punchline twisted and turned just out of his grasp.

The verb choices contribute to the sense of the character's rising panic.

These details reflect Ellis' interiority – his thoughts about his own rehearsals.

These details offer part of Ellis' backstory, revealing his motivation.

Selecting narrative point of view

The narrative point of view provides the perspective through which the reader experiences your story. The choice of narrative point of view also determines how close the reader feels to what is happening.

POINT OF VIEW	EFFECT	EXAMPLE
First person	First-person pronouns (e.g. 'I') suggest the narrator is the protagonist, relating their experiences directly to the reader.	I cast a line far out into the gently rippling surface of the river. The sun was mild on my face as I waited patiently for the fish to begin biting.
Second person	The use of second-person pronouns (e.g. 'you') implies the reader is the protagonist, immersing them in the story.	You feel a tug on the rod in your hand, and then another. Slowly, you start to reel in your line, anticipating the sizzle of fresh fish over the camp fire.
Third person	The reader observes the story from an external position. A third-person point of view can be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • omniscient – the reader is given godlike access to the thoughts and feelings of all characters • limited – the reader has access to the thoughts and feelings of only one character • objective – the reader only has access to what is observable, as in a news report. 	Ripples agitated the water as Aidan drew the fish close to the shore. The water was stained the colour of tea by the eucalypts, and he couldn't see the fish. It was a fighter, though, he thought. Behind him, Tom grinned as his brother reeled in a limp plastic bag. Score one for the fish!

As well as deciding on the narrative point of view, consider the choice of narrator. Whose perspective or version of events do you want to present? Some of the most intriguing perspectives come not from the main characters, but from those observing from the sidelines. Each possibility will have its own advantages in terms of the themes that will become apparent and the effects on the reader.

Consider some of these suggestions for creating interesting narrative perspectives.

- **An unreliable narrator:** Not all narrators can be trusted. Do they have something to hide? Are they misleading the reader by misrepresenting events?
- **The antagonist:** Adopting the villain's perspective can be effective, confronting the audience with unpleasant attitudes.
- **Multiple narrators:** Some imaginative texts alternate between narrators, offering different or even contradictory accounts for the reader to piece together.
- **A non-human narrator:** This is tricky to do well, but some imaginative texts are recounted by animals or even inanimate objects.

Using descriptive and figurative language

Descriptive language can help your reader visualise the world of your text. While adjectives and adverbs have descriptive functions, it is better to use interesting and active verbs and nuanced choices of nouns to make an impact on your reader.

- 'Harrison was tired and sleepy at breakfast' could become 'Harrison *yawned* his way through coffee and toast', by deleting the adjectives 'tired' and 'sleepy' and changing the verb 'was' to 'yawned'.

Similarly, adverbs can often be discarded. Consider this example:

- 'I hate you!' Sarah shouted angrily.

Both the verb 'shouted' and Sarah's exclamation of 'I hate you!' imply that she is upset without needing the adverb 'angrily'.

Figurative language – such as metaphors, similes and personification – can add further colour to your writing. Beware of including too many devices, or devices that suggest quite different things or feelings, which can undermine the power of the image you are trying to create.

In the following table, the use of figurative language is weak in the first example but stronger in the second, as the notes explain.

EXAMPLE	DESCRIPTION
The angry sea bayed at the shore. Like a whirling samurai sword , the waves slashed at the beach. Spray was tossed into the air like confetti at a wedding , and Amrik felt his face whipped by the stinging wind.	<p>Personification suggests the sea has an animal-like quality.</p> <p>This simile constructs a completely different image, of a Japanese warrior.</p> <p>Although spray might look like confetti, a wedding conveys the wrong tone and clashes with the image of a warrior.</p> <p>The verb choice also conflicts, as neither an animal, a samurai nor a wedding guest would use a whip.</p>
The sea bayed in anger. Its jaws snapped at the shore, shaking it like a caught rabbit until spray flew through the air. Amrik felt its heaving breath on his face, and a knot of fear formed in the pit of his stomach.	<p>This example again creates an animal-like image of the sea.</p> <p>This continues the imagery through the reference to jaws and the simile of hunting rabbits.</p> <p>Analogising the wind as the animal's breath is consistent with the zoomorphic image.</p>

Using dialogue

If you listen closely to a conversation, you will notice it is full of pauses, incomplete sentences and phrases like 'you know'. Moreover, when we speak we communicate a lot through non-verbal cues such as gestures and facial expressions.

Good writers include just enough of the inconsistency of natural speech to make it sound authentic, while ensuring the dialogue remains meaningful and interesting. Use the following tips and strategies to create effective dialogue.

- **Dialogue should have a purpose.** It should advance the plot, reveal ideas, convey emotions, develop relationships or showcase conflict.
- **Dialogue should develop character.** The way a character speaks says a lot about who they are. You can also slip details of the character's backstory into their conversations.
- **Use speech tags sparingly.** Speech tags denote who is speaking (e.g. *he said*, *Ani shouted*). Not every line of dialogue needs a speech tag (see the example below). Vary where you place the speech tag – at the start of the sentence, within it or at the end. Keep speech tags simple; don't overuse verbs such as *queried* or *screamed*, or adverbs such as *excitedly* or *mournfully*.
- **Vary the length of each utterance.** Sometimes a character might need two or three sentences, while at other times a single word or two is enough.
- **Break up dialogue with action.** People rarely stand still while speaking. They'll gesture or do something, like making a cup of tea. Also, people *think* and *react* while they talk, such as taking a deep breath before they speak or widening their eyes in surprise. Your dialogue will seem more natural if you include such details.

The following example demonstrates some of these techniques.

'So what are you saying?' Emma asked, a hard edge to her voice.

I sighed. 'I'm just saying that maybe you should think a little more before quitting uni and taking off overseas.'

'Mum, you're always stepping on my dreams!'

'No, I'm not. I just don't want you to throw your life away. You've only got a year left of your degree.'

Emma turned away and folded her arms, her mouth set in a familiar thin line.

'Look, Emma,' I started again. 'Your father and I are just worried that if you take a break now, you'll never finish your degree.'

Obviously, there has been conversation prior to this point. However, the reader doesn't need every detail. Starting at this point of conflict makes the dialogue more engaging.

As this is the first time Emma speaks, a speech tag is useful.

This small character action removes the need for a speech tag.

As there are only two speakers, speech tags are unnecessary at this point.

Breaking up the dialogue with action makes the conversation seem more natural.

Vary the placement of speech tags; here it is in the middle of the utterance.

This detail suggests how Emma is feeling, without the need for a speech tag.

This speech tag is necessary to clarify that it is Emma who continues speaking, not her mother.

‘But what better education could I have than spending a year in Europe? The art, the history, the culture. It’s just what I need!’ Tears threatened to spill over Emma’s cheeks.

‘I’m old enough to make my own decisions,’ she continued.

Sample imaginative composition

This short-story response builds on the plan on page 142.



See the digital bonus material for another sample imaginative response.

An interesting title creates intrigue. Its meaning becomes clear late in the story.

The in medias res opening launches the reader straight into the action. The use of first person engages the audience.

This detail is all that is needed to provide some backstory for the character.

Characterisation starts to build a picture of the narrator.

This simile reinforces the feeling of an upset stomach. Using moths instead of butterflies contributes to the negative image.

Sensory details help the reader imagine the narrator’s situation.

Setting is established with a mix of general and specific details.

PHANTOM LIMB

My stomach gurgled so loudly that Charlotte, doodling in her file next to me, smothered a giggle. I risked a glance. From under her fringe, she stared at me with a mix of grossed-out horror and barely contained hysteria.

I had been fine when I strolled into first period, but now, less than an hour later, my stomach was broadcasting a symphony of burbles and rumbles.

I contemplated going to the sick bay, but I had a Chemistry test later that I was both dreading and desperate to get over with. I’ve always hated balancing equations, but not enough to make my stomach twist and flutter this way, as if a thousand moths were swarming round a light bulb in my guts. I felt clammy, as if the heating was up too high. I had taken time washing my hair and waving it before school, but now it felt oily and lifeless, and the illicit hint of make-up I’d added was quickly sweating off.

Light streamed through the large windows, but still the classroom seemed slightly blurry, out of focus somehow. The whiteboard was smeared with Mrs Beech’s handwriting. The clock above it, strangely, was in sharp focus, the hands dragging themselves around its face in microscopic increments. I could hear my pulse thumping in my ears. Was that normal? Did I always hear that rhythmic thud-thump? At least it was a sign that my heart was pumping blood. I was alive. Breathing. But all the same, something was seriously wrong with me.

I tried to pick up my pen, fumbling as it rolled off the desk and under the heel of the boy sitting in front of me. He shifted his

position, sending the pen skidding across the floor. Another giggle from Charlotte. My right hand was trembling. Was 16 a reasonable age to develop Parkinson's? That must be it. A freak case. My parents would be devastated. I'd have to hold off telling them their only daughter was ill. I'd not say anything until it was really bad. I'd put on a brave face.

These details of the narrator's thoughts contribute to the slightly melodramatic voice.

It was then I decided I needed to get a hold of myself. I recalled some mindfulness techniques I'd searched on Instagram while studying. My stomach flipped again. I wish mum had never found that tuna mornay recipe on Pinterest. Tuna and cheese are not a natural pairing. Then I was brought back to reality.

The references to technology begin to tie the response to the question.

'Meg?' Mrs Beech called, with what sounded suspiciously like boredom. Weren't teachers paid to be enthusiastic? I mean, we had every right to be bored in class, but *teachers*?

Dialogue, balanced with narration, is used to advance the plot and add to characterisation.

I looked up as her eyes drilled into mine.

'Any thoughts?'

This was tricky. Should I be honest and tell her I was thinking about my parents mourning my awful diagnosis or should I wing it?

Wing it.

'I would say that *Othello* is a purposeful misdirection. A more suitable title would be *Iago*.'

Mrs Beech paused for a moment and readjusted her glasses. I knew I wasn't her favourite student, but I did know my stuff. I waited in tense silence as she weighed up what to do with me.

Short sentences add impact and reflect the narrator's panicked state of mind.

'Not quite what we were talking about, but an insightful point all the same. Do try to keep up, please.'

Unscathed. If I could fudge that question, surely I could handle those equations later on. One more quick glance at that YouTube tutorial and I'd ...

The ellipses add tension as the reader is not quite sure what the narrator is thinking.

Then it dawned on me. Mindfulness tips from Instagram, tuna mornay from Pinterest, YouTube-induced test stress ... I wasn't sick – no, the problem was my phone. Or the lack thereof. My hands darted to my blazer pockets. Nothing. My phone was missing. Gone. Amputated.

The lexical choice of 'amputated' relates the missing phone back to the title, as well as emphasising the importance of the device.

I asked to be excused, resisting the urge to sprint to my locker. It had to be in there, sleeping peacefully in my school bag. A quick rummage revealed nothing. I started to pull out books and papers

Personification is used to characterise the phone as human, symbolising its significance to the narrator.

The choice of imaginative details here again suggest the narrator's melodramatic character, and add humour.

Anaphora is used to emphasise the phone's importance for social connection.

The extended metaphor of a zombie suggests the loss of humanity experienced by the narrator because of her lost phone.

Repetition adds tension, reflecting the narrator's panic.

Again, the title is referenced, creating cohesion in the text.

The simile represents the phone as valuable.

Anaphora is used again, but the last sentence is used for humorous effect.

This metaphor connects with the question.

The reader realises the irony in that the narrator has been with people all day but needs her phone to feel connected. It is humorous while revealing a serious theme based on the question.

and my lunch went flying. No luck. At that point I couldn't have cared less about how long I had been out of class, so I retraced my steps. I rummaged through bushes and peered into drains. Nothing. I couldn't even recall when I last had it.

My phone. I imagined all the terrible things that could have happened. I saw it lying on the open road as a rubbish truck came hurtling towards it. I saw it at the bottom of the pool, thrown in by some bratty Year Seven too heartless to hand it in. I saw it being held hostage by some schoolyard bully, who was waiting till I was freaked enough to pay anything for its return. It was out there all alone with no-one to Snapchat from it, no-one to like posts on Instagram, no-one to retweet my friends' one-liners.

The rest of the day was straight out of a B-grade post-apocalyptic film where I was the starring zombie. I staggered mindlessly to my classes. I responded to every question at lunch with a moan. In the Chemistry test, my equations stayed dismally unbalanced, as my brain chewed itself into mush. I swear I was drooling by the end of the day.

The 3.15 bell was an adrenaline shot to my failing system. I broke the land-speed record getting home. I burst through the front door and ran straight to my room. It had to be there. There was no sign of it anywhere. Worrying. I lifted some textbooks on my table. No sign. Worrying. I went through the box of make-up on my dresser. No sign. Worrying. I was growing more frantic and stressed by the minute. I was in actual physical pain by now. The only thing I could do was go to bed early and try to accept my terrible loss.

As I peeled back my doona, a familiar sound startled me. I could hear a gentle, harmonious ringing. There it was. Glowing like a jewel against the sheets, peeking out from under my pillow. My phone. I felt euphoric. I felt grateful. I felt the satisfying swipe of my thumb through the unlock sequence. There were 32 unread messages, 26 emails, ten friend requests waiting. I couldn't recall a single detail about the day I'd had. I couldn't remember any interactions with friends, any conversations, any work I did. It was a blur, a smudge on the screen of my life. But none of that mattered. And there was no need to go to sleep early – I had people to reply to, socials to catch up on.

I was reconnected.

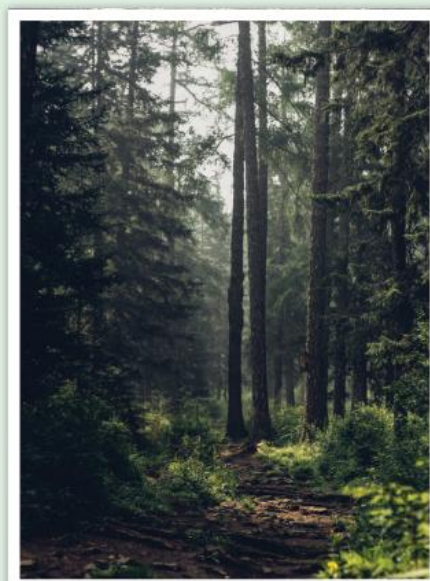
Tips for effective imaginative texts

- **Show, don't tell.** Rather than telling your reader the facts directly, let them see, hear and sense what is going on.
- **Balance dialogue with narration.** A good story combines the two.
- **Create the right storyteller.** Choose your narrator carefully and use language features to craft a voice for them.
- **Keep your purpose in mind.** What do you want your audience to take away from your text?
- **Be creative.** Add interest to your text through creative choices in language, structure and style.

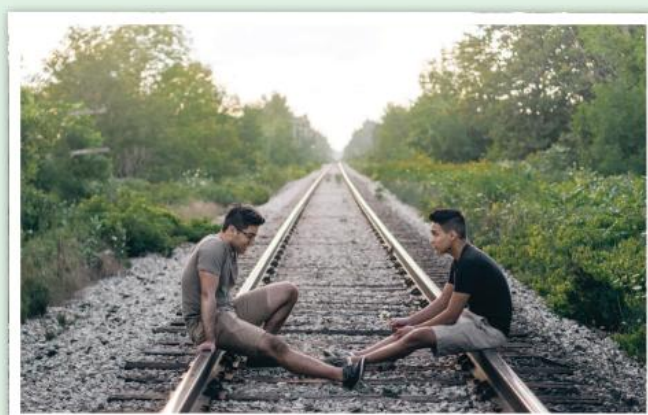
ACTIVITY

Develop your imaginative writing

- 1 Use sensory details to write a description of the room or surroundings you are in right now.
- 2 Use descriptive and figurative language to depict the setting in one of these images.



- 3 Practise writing dialogue by scripting a conversation between these two characters.



Creating persuasive texts

Persuasive texts advance an argument and encourage an audience to adopt a particular viewpoint or undertake some action. They include speeches, advertisements, open letters and debates. To be effective, persuasive texts need to communicate a clear perspective and viewpoint; provide evidence to support that viewpoint; and convince an audience to share that viewpoint.

Preparing for your persuasive text

To compose an effective persuasive text you need to prepare thoroughly.

- **Choose your topic thoughtfully.** To be convincing you need to be knowledgeable and confident, which can only come from writing about what you know.
- **Develop a focus.** 'Reversing global warming' might be a noble aim, but you are unlikely to resolve this in a short text. Instead, narrow your focus to something like, 'recycle more household waste to reduce your carbon footprint'.
- **Brainstorm supporting points.** Don't be satisfied with the first three ideas that pop into your head. Brainstorm several and choose the most compelling.
- **Find relevant evidence.** To be convinced, audiences need to be presented with evidence. Find data, case studies and expert opinions to support your points.

Example plan

The table below shows a plan for a persuasive response to the question on page 142:

In a form of your choice, create a text that explores the following idea.

*'Even the technology that promises to unite us, divides us.
Each of us is now electronically connected to the globe,
and yet we feel utterly alone.'* (Dan Brown)

PURPOSE	To persuade a private school to implement a mobile phone ban, reinforcing the quote's suggestion that technology divides us
AUDIENCE	School administrators as well as fellow parents
CONTEXT	School forum / P&C meeting
FORM	Speech
PERSPECTIVE	A concerned parent who believes children spend too much time on their phones and other devices, and that the school has a duty of care in this issue
VOICE	Rational and informed about the issue, but clearly concerned about the welfare of children; firm in regard to the school's responsibility
STRUCTURE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce the issue by referencing the ban on phones in state schools. • First, argue the school has a responsibility to adopt a similar ban. • Second, show that the school is sending mixed messages about phone use. • Finally, acknowledge the benefits of phones, but reiterate the need for regulation.
CONTENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thank the school for the opportunity to speak (building connection to audience). • Give background as parent to provide credibility and get other parents onside. • Present anecdotal experience of children on their phones. • Clearly repeat the belief in the school's responsibility.

Structuring an argument



Using persuasive features

Rhetoric, or the art of persuasion, involves the use of three types of persuasive features.

- **Logos:** In order to appeal to the audience's sense of logic and reason, rhetoric employs devices such as statistics, formal language and jargon.
- **Ethos:** In order to establish their credibility and character, writers include features such as anecdotes, endorsements and references to their qualifications.
- **Pathos:** In order to appeal to the audience's emotions, techniques such as hyperbole, emotive language and metaphor are used.

Using these techniques in combination will contribute to the **voice** you construct for your persona and develop the overall **tone** of your argumentative text. Consider the voices constructed in these three excerpts from persuasive texts; the notes in the right-hand column explain the language features used to create each voice.

Excerpt 1

Much discussion fills the pages of this paper regarding the state government's billion dollar investment in its flagship project, Metronet. Many have called for this not-insignificant sum to be spent in other areas, such as social housing.

While I am certainly not against reducing Homeswest's waiting lists, there are many social benefits that this visionary project will deliver. Metronet has been forecast to serve almost 12 000 extra passengers a day. Metronet will make it easier for these people to work, connect with their families and access vital services; a point echoed by urban planner Maria Ebbert, who states 'a greater sense of connectedness clearly improves the social fabric of a city'. Metronet has the ability to unite Perth, too long divided by a public transport network that leaves many relegated to the fringe.

An informed, reasoned and logical voice, focusing on broad social benefits, is constructed through many **logos** devices, such as a formal style, sophisticated language, the use of statistics and the opinion of an expert.

Excerpt 2

We moved to Ellenbrook eight years ago, buying an affordable block of land big enough for the kids to actually have a backyard to play in. My wife and I signed those mortgage papers full of excitement, despite her job as a nurse in the city, believing the government's promise of a new rail line would make it an easy commute.

Well, eight years later and we're still waiting. My wife has to spend three hours a day on slow buses. That's if there even is one running at the end of a late shift. On those days she is forced to take the family car, paying \$30 for parking and leaving me to figure out how to ferry the kids to sport, the library and birthday parties.

Enough with the talk, McGowan. Put your money where your mouth is and get Metronet done!

A more colloquial, family-centred voice of an outer-suburban resident is evident. The conversational style and descriptions of family life would resonate with readers from a similar context, establishing **ethos**. Frustration is evident in blunt syntax, imperative mood and the structure that contrasts the dream with reality.

Excerpt 3

Once again, the white elephant that is Metronet has raised its head, trumpeting loudly as we approach election day. And once again, the clueless masses listen, only too eager to empty the state coffers for some new shiny toys.

The Perth metro area spreads over 150 kilometres from north to south, making it one of the biggest cities by area **IN THE WORLD!** And all for a population of less than two million. This is **staggeringly poor urban planning**. But instead of encouraging us to get over our nostalgic obsession with the quarter-acre block, encouraging urban infill and promoting higher-density living, the government wants to encourage even greater expansion. This is an **environmentally criminal viewpoint**. Don't listen to the electioneering hype – we need to radically re-imagine a more sustainable future for Perth.

Anger and defiance characterise this voice of a passionate environmentalist. **Striking imagery**, an **assertive tone** and **intense, hyperbolic diction** are **pathos** devices employed to demand change.

TAKING IT FURTHER

Appealing to an audience's emotions, values and desires

The following appeals are common in persuasive texts such as advertisements and speeches.

APPEALS TO EMOTION		
Compassion	Compassion for the disadvantaged, marginalised or innocent	...
Fear	Fear of the law, of losing someone or something, or of attack	...
Guilt	Guilt for being more fortunate than others, for turning a blind eye to others' misdeeds or for doing something we know isn't right	...
Loyalty	Loyalty to one's family, friends, community or culture	...
APPEALS TO VALUES		
Family	Valuing the family unit as sacred, as requiring protection or as the norm	...
Justice	Valuing the rule of law, equality, or punishment that fits the crime	...
Patriotism	Valuing loyalty, honour or duty to one's country	...
Tradition	Valuing old ways or norms as preferable, or believing they are under threat	...
APPEALS TO DESIRES		
Health and safety	Desiring health and protection from harm	...
Financial security	Desiring wealth or financial solvency	...
Popularity	Desiring to be well liked, included or a role model	...
Positive future	Desiring a bright, successful or peaceful future	...

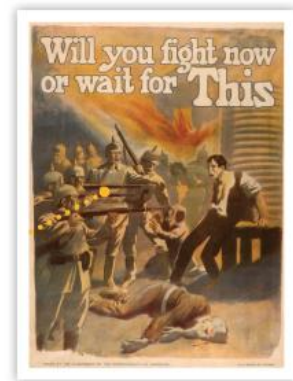
These three wartime posters clearly demonstrate some of the appeals described on the previous page.



The shape of the flag, repetition of its colours and the command to 'keep them flying' (referring both to the planes and to the flag) create an appeal to **patriotism** to encourage women to join the WAAAF (Women's Auxiliary Australian Air Force).



Through the image of the mother and child, an appeal to **family** and the traditional protective role of fathers is created. The rhetorical question adds an element of guilt to the appeal.



This threatening image creates a blunt appeal to **fear**, encouraging men to enlist in order to prevent Australia being invaded by the enemy.

Sample persuasive composition

This persuasive speech was developed from the plan on page 152.

The context for the text is made clear, as is the audience.

The speaker's context is established, giving background to their perspective. This is also an ethos device, revealing the persona's qualification to speak as a parent.

Further context is revealed by highlighting a recent event to which the speaker is responding.

The purpose of the text becomes clear in this thesis statement.

DISCONNECT FROM PHONES, INCREASE THE CONNECTION

Firstly, I'd like to thank Principal Withers for holding this parent forum tonight. The last thing I would want is for anyone here to think I am some kind of 'helicopter parent'. I assure you, I'm really not. I let my sons – Max in Year 9 and Daniel in Year 11 – eat junk food, play video games and use their mobile phones. Within reason. I felt it important to attend tonight's forum as a concerned parent. I am concerned because I couldn't help but notice the state government recently banned the presence of mobile phones in all public schools, yet our College seems to be actively encouraging their use. Our children's dependency on their phones is nothing short of an obsession and it is my sincere hope that the leaders of our fine school will see sense and put a stop to the redundant, mindless and antisocial use of mobile phones during school hours.

Five days a week, I see the same thing at drop-off. We see our children walking through the gates with their necks craned and their eyes towards the ground. Is it because of their backpacks, perhaps? If only this posture was caused by the weight of actual learning. Sadly, it's because they have slipped out of their parents' cars, eyes still glued to their phones, and slumped into the school. They pass each other. No connection. They walk towards the lockers. No connection. They shuffle off to classes. No connection. However, you can guarantee they are 'liking' each other's posts or watching mindless 'challenges' on TikTok. Even worse, the teachers at the gates allow students engrossed in their screens to sail right past. There's no rule about phone use, so why call them out for it? In fact, I often see teachers on their own phones. Research suggests that teachers are the second-most influential people in a child's life, after parents. If students are not connecting with each other and students and teachers are not connecting, then how can we be sure that our children are being actively engaged, cared for and supported? This is a valid question and I know I am not the only parent who feels this way. It's time for decisive action to decrease the culture of technological reliance in this wonderful institution before our precious children lose the capacity to socialise and interact altogether.

This brings me to my second point, which relates to the reliance on technology actively promoted by teachers in the College. It has come to my attention that certain teachers encourage students to bring their phones to class. My son often comes home with photos of the whiteboard or recordings of important lesson content on his phone. He revealed to me the other day that one of his teachers even told the students to 'start a group chat' and to 'share the recordings with anyone who was absent'. We can all see how preposterous that is, can't we? Surely it is the responsibility of the absent student and the teacher to follow up on any missed work, and this reliance on technology is perpetuating the distance between all members of the community. This brings us to the issue of inconsistency. Not all teachers are open to technology in their classrooms. What is acceptable in one class is lambasted in another, with phones even confiscated by some teachers. This is absolutely unfair. There can't be one rule for one class and a different rule for another. It would be far more logical for the College to stand firm and declare that mobile phones simply are not needed during the school day.

A number of language features that create pathos are used in this paragraph, developing a parental perspective on students being mindlessly glued to their phones, including:

- descriptive language
- rhetorical questions
- emotive language
- repetition for emphasis
- cumulation.

Language and structural features used to create logos effects include:

- clear transition markers to signpost sequence of argument
- specific example with quotes
- formal, sophisticated language
- high-modality vocabulary.

Inclusive language incorporates all parents into the argument.

Imagery creates a picture that parents can relate to.

Counterargument acknowledges other viewpoints before clarifying speaker's own.

Conclusion clearly reiterates the perspective, using:

- **tricolon (three parallel phrases) to reinforce the speaker's desire for the best for their children**
- **inclusive language to imply that the speaker is speaking for all parents**
- **emotive language to suggest seriousness and urgency**
- **thesis restated in a simple sentence.**

It is time to recognise that **our** children already spend an inordinate amount of time on their phones outside of school hours. They use them as alarms in the morning, scroll through Instagram while they inhale their breakfast and muck around on Snapchat on the school bus. Now, you're probably asking yourselves why I let them have phones in the first place. I'm not denying the value of this technology. I'm not asking for an outright ban; that's neither feasible nor necessary. What I'm asking for is recognition that phones are absolutely not needed during the school day, but genuine face-to-face communication and connection is. This is why I would like the school to make a positive change, to restore the focus on human connection and ban the presence of mobile phones at the College from the time students enter the gates to the final bell at 3.20 p.m.

I am sincerely grateful for the opportunity to speak today and I hope my request is taken seriously, on behalf of **all parents**. We love our children, we respect this College, and we recognise that we all want what is best for our bright young scholars and the leaders of tomorrow. Please act now to end the incessant phone use that is **stunting** our children's growth by keeping them **divided** from each other and their teachers. **A ban on phones at school will do just that.** It is time to restore human connection, and there really is no device or app for that.

Tips for effective persuasive texts

- **Include a clear, memorable thesis early in your text** and restate it at the end.
- **Include evidence and examples** to convince your audience.
- **Include solutions or suggested actions** so that your audience has a clear understanding of the position you expect them to take.
- **Use a blend of logos, ethos and pathos devices** (see page 154) to construct a well-rounded argument.



Develop your persuasive writing

- 1 Re-read the three text excerpts on Metronet (pages 154–5).
 - a For each excerpt, write an additional paragraph, mimicking the style and voice of the text.
 - b Write a 150-word persuasive text on Metronet, offering your own perspective on its value.
- 2 To deal with WA's waste-treatment issues, imagine the state government has proposed building a recycling plant in your local area.
 - a Brainstorm the pros and cons of the facility and its impacts on local residents.
 - b Determine your own perspective on the issue, and write a brief letter to your local council persuading it to adopt or reject the plan. Include ethos devices in the opening of your letter to establish your credibility, and use a range of logos and pathos devices throughout.
 - c Imagine you are going to doorknock to invite other residents to a community forum to debate the issue. Plan a brief script that would convince the following people to attend:
 - a busy parent with three small children
 - a retiree
 - the organiser of a local community garden.
- 3 Plan and draft a persuasive text responding to the following prompt:

Compose a text in a form of your choice that challenges a common belief.

Creating interpretive texts

Interpretive texts offer interpretations of events, people, issues, experiences or even other texts. They include feature articles, blogs, reviews, opinion columns, documentaries, biographies and long-form expository texts.

They differ from persuasive texts in that they share their creator's opinions and beliefs without overtly trying to change the audience's own. Some interpretive texts discuss different perspectives on their subject without seeming to favour one viewpoint. Of course, like all texts, they do position their audiences in some way, but usually more subtly than persuasive texts.

Interpretive texts should:

- construct a clear representation of their subject
- offer an interpretation of, or opinion about, the subject
- invite the audience to consider that interpretation.

Interpretive texts often blend the features of imaginative and persuasive texts, constructing a clear representation of a subject while positioning audiences to accept that interpretation as valid and credible.

Preparing for your interpretive text

To compose an effective interpretive text, it is important that you prepare thoroughly.

- **Choose your topic thoughtfully.** Write on a subject with which you are familiar and about which you are well informed.
- **Decide on your opinion.** Carefully evaluate your opinion by reflecting on what you think and why you think it. It is important to communicate the reasoning behind your viewpoint.
- **Brainstorm ways of representing your subject.** Representation refers to how the subject is constructed to appear in your text. Consider the image you want to create in your audience's mind.
- **Consider the best way to communicate with your audience.** Will this be a story, a discussion weighing your subject's pros and cons, or an exposition that provides clear explanation?

Example plan

The table below shows a plan for an interpretive response to the question:

In a form of your choice, create a text that explores the following idea.

*'Even the technology that promises to unite us, divides us.
Each of us is now electronically connected to the globe,
and yet we feel utterly alone.'* (Dan Brown)

PURPOSE	To share an interpretation of the experience of staying connected throughout school closures, resisting the quote's suggestion that technology divides us
AUDIENCE	Fellow students
CONTEXT	Responding to the issue of COVID-19 on a student blog about surviving high school
FORM	Blog
PERSPECTIVE	A Year 11 student who was concerned about social isolation during school closures, but found unexpected benefits
VOICE	Conversational, humorous, articulate and reflective
STRUCTURE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start with anecdote describing the experience of finding out about school closure. • Explain initial beliefs and expectations about isolation. • Describe the personal experience of isolation. • Reflect on a new interpretation of isolation.
CONTENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use descriptive details to set the context of school closure. • Clearly characterise the persona to reveal their social nature. • Present positive representations of socialising through technology. • Include an expert quote for added credibility.

Interpretive texts such as memoirs, autobiographies, biographies, allegories and fables resemble the narratives associated with imaginative texts. Other interpretive texts, such as essays, articles, blogs, vlogs and opinion columns, are more discursive or expository. Because of this, there is no single template for an effective interpretive text. You might consider some of the following options.

insight YEAR 11 ENGLISH: WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Interpretive voices

Voices in interpretive texts range from the highly personal to the objective. The persona may offer a quiet personal reflection or a chatty conversation with an implied audience; they might present a passionate opinion or remain distant and impartial, carefully weighing up evidence.

Narrative interpretive texts can be a little trickier to compose. How do you distinguish between an imaginative narrative (such as a short story) and an interpretive one (such as a memoir)? One trick is to ensure that the narrative voice is clearly reflective, interpreting the significance of past events rather than just recounting them. This short excerpt demonstrates how one writer manages the transition.

Using features associated with imaginative texts, a vivid sense of setting is established for the narrator's memory.

The first-person narrative point of view, recollection of past events and a reflective tone establish this text as autobiographical.

Here the writer clearly offers an interpretation, considering the significance of their childhood play in the context of modern childhood entertainment.

In the middle of the paddock were two rocky outcrops that rose just a couple of feet higher than the dusty soil. Nearby was an old bathtub, once filled with water for the ancient, sway-backed horse that used to wander the farm. These boulders, bursting through the ground like granite mushrooms, were the bane of our father's life, invariably catching the plough as he tried to till the soil each autumn.

But to us kids, they were a Neverland of possibilities. Some days they were strange planets, landing sites for our BMX spaceships as we did battle with aliens (in reality, two excitable kelpies). Or remote islands – the old bath our pirate ship – where daring raids were undertaken to steal each other's hoard of treasure (also known as Arnott's Family Assorted). Or complex games of chasey where leaping off the rocks meant certain death, surrounded as they were by sharks, crocodiles or piranhas (or a nightmare of evolution that combined all three).

Those granite outcrops are, in many ways, the most enduring memory of my childhood, a symbol of the inventiveness of my brothers and me as we occupied ourselves through the endless summer holidays. In a world where many kids are raised on a steady diet of TV and tech, I wonder how many could fill the long summer holidays with such imaginative play, how many could construct convoluted narratives that played out over days, with a cast of characters conjured by our imaginations. To us, though, the worlds we invented were infinitely more vivid than any absorbed through a screen.

Sample interpretive composition

This response builds on the plan on page 160. Its form – a blog post – is evident in its discursive structure, conversational voice, engagement with an audience and reflection on personal experience.

DANCING ON MY OWN: MY EXTROVERTED ISOLATION

I'm sure we each have our own unique interpretation of the event. You know the one I'm talking about: that strange day in early March when we finally acknowledged that a mysterious, incurable, highly virulent, lung-eating, economy-destroying virus was making its way across the continent, heading west one cough at a time.

We were in English when we all got called to the gym for a major announcement. Of course, social media was providing a constant feed of COVID news (giving new meaning to going viral!) but the drastic step of closing schools had seemed like an after-the-siren three-pointer from mid-court – sure it's possible, but too unlikely to genuinely hope for. After hundreds of students were directed to a space large enough to socially distance, through a doorway so narrow we were sardine-packed in a shuffling bottleneck, we heard the news that thrilled us – school was shutting. We had to take our books, our bags and our laptops, and work from home. Alone. The time frame? Uncertain.

A cause for celebration, you might think. Sleeping in every day, doing schoolwork in your PJs, Snapchatting friends whenever you like. Believe me, I was thankful. But underneath that feeling of release, a quiet fear was stirring in me. As an extrovert, I thrive on connection. My idea of heaven is a Friday-night sleepover with the living room filled with the laughs of my friends, until my parents finally shut us down at 3 a.m. I love a full calendar, punctuating the tedium of school routines with catch-ups and movie nights and house parties.

How would I cope in the confines of my cramped bedroom?

Turns out I didn't need to be worried. If anything, we proved that some connection can be replicated just as well (if not better, in some cases) online.

FaceTiming friends quickly morphed into Houseparty dates. We watched films together on Netflix Party, sharing our reactions through a constant stream of messages, meaning we'd invariably miss key plot moments. I swear, fully half of our messages were

The context for this text is established with reference to the pandemic. The audience, while general, is clearly acknowledged as fellow Western Australians in the same situation.

The writer's context as a school student is established.

Figurative language devices create evocative images.

Short syntax contrasts with the long descriptive sentences, emphasising key ideas about isolation.

Tricolon highlights the potential positives for a student working from home.

Contrast highlights a potential negative.

These details help characterise the persona and construct a youthful, chatty voice.

Rhetorical question highlights the writer's main concern.

The thesis, the writer's interpretation of the experience of lockdown, is made clear.

Descriptive details illustrate the sense of community experienced by the writer, supporting their thesis; creating effective imagery; and constructing a positive, humorous tone.

‘What’s going on? I’m lost!’ followed by a confused emoji. We rifled through our mums’ wardrobes, finding the most outrageous outfits to film ourselves doing mundane chores – taking out the bins, cleaning the loo and keeping the siblings out of our parents’ rapidly thinning hair – to bond hilariously over.

Psychology professor Dr Andrea May confirmed that my experience wasn’t uncommon. ‘Humans are naturally social creatures who crave connection,’ she explained in a clip that came across my socials. ‘We have in-built mechanisms to ensure we adapt and work through any obstacles that might cut off that sense of connection. It’s not surprising at all that people were so quickly able to adjust. Thankfully we were at a point where we had the technology to make that adjustment possible.’

If you look to what came next, it is clear that my fellow extroverts had similar ideas about maintaining connection. Those ‘connection mechanisms’ really started to bloom. Musicians adjusted to making music and videos at home which could be easily replicated by fans. I watched adoringly as Drake released ‘Toosie Slide’. TikTok went wild. Next, HAIM released an isolation song, ‘I Know Alone’, complete with a highly addictive dance routine. The band even offered online Zoom classes to teach the dance to adoring fans. I’ll admit I got up at a ridiculous hour to join the call and perfect my moves. It was awesome. Never did I imagine I’d be dancing on my own with 3000 other people. I’d never felt more connected.

My fears about isolation and losing connection were never actually realised, but perhaps the difference was that we were all isolated; we were all equally dependent on each other to keep the connection going. I have no doubt it would have been a very different story if it was just me – solo – as life kept going on outside. I was an extrovert who did just fine during isolation, but I can understand that this in itself is a very privileged thing to say and that many others struggled.

The world is starting to switch back on and we are reluctantly starting to crawl back out of hibernation. Things aren’t over yet, and the situation could change at any moment, but what we have proven is that connection is possible, no matter where we are. I have been thinking about what I want to keep from my time in isolation, as it has been all too easy to revert back to my old face-to-face ways. I think I’ll keep in mind that even dancing on my own I can be kicking it with a crowd.

Expert opinion adds credibility to the writer’s interpretation of events.

In this paragraph, the writer shifts from personal experiences to broader social ones, extending their interpretation of the experience of social isolation.

This detail links to the title and the thesis, creating cohesion within the text.

The text becomes clearly reflective in the final two paragraphs, interpreting the significance of the lockdown experience at both a personal and a social level.

The final sentence offers a catchy overall comment that links back to the title and the thesis.

Tips for effective interpretive texts

- **Focus on sharing a personal experience or understanding**, rather than pushing an audience towards a response or action.
- **Ensure that your text *interprets* its subject matter** and doesn't just describe it.
- **Create a voice that will engage your audience** without browbeating them.

ACTIVITY

Develop your interpretive writing

- 1 Re-read the memoir excerpt on page 162.
 - a Annotate the language features that have been used by the writer.
 - b Pick three examples and explain how they represent the concept of childhood.
- 2 Reflect on one of your own childhood memories.
 - a Craft a brief autobiographical text that represents your memory, using language features to create a particular mood.
 - b Craft a more expository text in which the memory is an anecdote that supports a discussion of an idea.
 - c Compare the two texts you have created, evaluating the success of each in achieving their purpose.
- 3 Pick a place in WA that you have visited. Construct two brief interpretive texts that represent this place, in the form of:
 - a a brief review for the travel section of *The West Australian* newspaper
 - b an email to a friend to entertain them with an anecdote.

Creating multimodal texts

The syllabus suggests that you create multimodal texts as well as written ones. You don't need to be a tech wizard to do so! Here are some suggestions you might consider.

Imaginative texts

- Direct a short film using your friends and family as actors. Edit it using free software apps – such as Magisto, Microsoft Movie Maker 10 or Apple iMovie – on your computer or your phone. Some apps include special effects and a music library for your soundtrack.
- Write and perform a monologue, using costuming, make-up and props to aid characterisation.
- Write a poem and record it as a voice-over for a photomontage, using a program such as PowerPoint or Sway.
- Use an online platform, such as Powtoon or Moovly, to create a short animation.
- Create a comic book or graphic novella. You could hand-draw it or use online platforms such as Storyboard That or Pixton.

Persuasive texts

- Script a persuasive or interpretive speech and deliver it to the class in the style of a TED Talk, accompanied by a digital presentation.
- Film an advertisement for a product, using your phone.
- Design an advertising campaign for a public-awareness message. Create sketches for billboards, print ads, internet ads and so on. Include a report that explains your strategy, branding, audience and theme.
- Host a debate on a hot topic with a small group of peers.
- Create a storyboard, on paper or using a platform such as Storyboard This, for a documentary.

Interpretive texts

- Write and record a vlog post on your computer, sharing your opinion on an issue.
- Using a free online web design site, design a webpage to share information about a local event; or a fan site for your favourite musician, writer or artist.
- Organise a panel discussion reviewing a film or documentary. Show brief excerpts of the text to prompt discussion.
- Keep a video diary interpreting an experience such as camping, a school excursion, or your participation in the school production.
- Write a director's commentary for a text you have studied, recording your commentary as a voice-over to excerpts from the text.

Editing and reflecting on your creative response

Before you submit your response, edit it using the following checklist.

- ☐ **Re-read the question.** Does your piece clearly respond to the task?
- ☐ **Revisit your plan.** Have you included everything?
- ☐ **Reconsider your purpose, audience and context.** Have you clearly addressed each?
- ☐ **Review your form.** Does your response use or adapt features of your chosen form?
- ☐ **Reflect on your content.** Does it develop a clear theme, argument or interpretation? Is there sufficient detail, examples or evidence to make it credible?
- ☐ **Reassess your structure.** Is it cohesive and well ordered?
- ☐ **Refine your style.** Edit your language choices to improve voice.
- ☐ **Get a second opinion.** Ask a parent or peer to give you feedback.
- ☐ **Check spelling, grammar and punctuation.**

After receiving your teacher's feedback, review your work.

- ☐ **Carefully read the feedback,** noting strengths and areas for improvement.
- ☐ If your teacher uses a **rubric or marking key**, note the specific areas where you could increase your marks.
- ☐ **Create a clear goal** for your next creative response.

CASE STUDY 1: GRAPHIC NOVELS

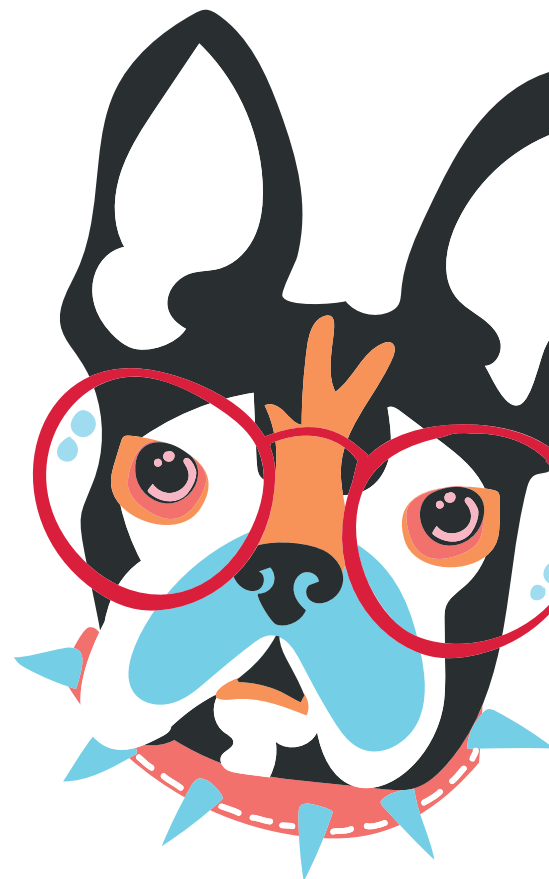
CHAPTER 9

IN THIS CHAPTER YOU WILL:

- learn about the evolution of the graphic novel
- develop knowledge of the language and structural features of graphic novels
- explore how visual and written elements combine to create meaning in multimodal texts
- analyse aspects of multimodal texts.

This chapter synthesises Unit 1 and 2 content to focus on a particular form of text: the multimodal hybrid form of the graphic novel.

Firstly, we will look at the conventions of graphic novels and picture books, including the metalanguage you should use when analysing these texts. This knowledge will then be applied to a case study of key works of Western Australian writer and illustrator Shaun Tan. You will explore the form's construction, how it conveys meaning and how it has evolved. You should be able to apply the knowledge, skills and strategies covered in this chapter to the texts you are studying in your course. The chapter also includes practical strategies for creating your own texts.



History of the graphic novel

The use of a sequence of pictures to tell a story – now known as **sequential art** – has a long history, from prehistoric cave art to Australian First Nations rock and sand drawings, and from Egyptian hieroglyphics and tomb paintings to medieval European tapestries.



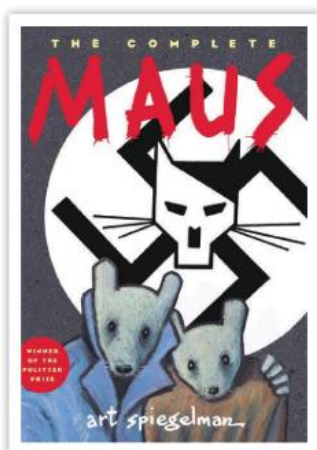
The graphic novel is a **multimodal hybrid** text form that combines written and visual language to convey meaning. In other words, graphic novels are essentially extended comic strips, both being a form of sequential art.

Early examples of the form include the sorts of **hand-drawn illustrations** that appeared in newspapers across Europe and America in the 1800s, often used to satirise or mock popular figures. British magazine *Punch* (established in 1841) used satirical **political cartoons** to mock government figures, a tradition that continues today.

In 1896, the first US newspaper comic strip, 'The Yellow Kid' by Richard Felton Outcault, appeared in the *New York World* and *New York Journal* Sunday supplements. This was one of the first comic strips to use word balloons or speech bubbles.

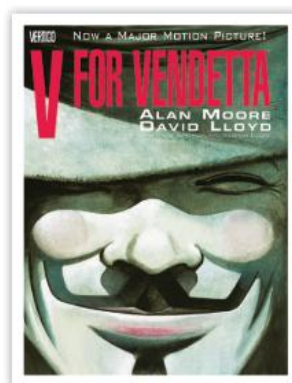


As comic strips developed through the early 20th century, they eventually emerged into their own standalone form as the **comic book** in 1933. The Golden Age of comics began in 1938 with the publication of *Action Comics* #1 which saw the debut of Superman and the emergence of superheroes such as Wonder Woman and Captain America. The so-called Silver Age of comics began in 1956 with the publication of *Showcase* #4 from DC Comics, which introduced The Flash. This period saw the form develop through the art of notable comic book creators and illustrators Stan Lee and Jack Kirby, who introduced the likes of Spider-Man, the Fantastic Four and the Incredible Hulk.



In the 1970s, the political counterculture produced more alternative comics by artists such as Robert Crumb. Texts such as *Zap Comix*, *Arcade* and *Fritz the Cat* were underground comics – or **comix**, as they were known. These were mostly self-published or small press runs of texts in the usual form, yet containing more adult content, and demonstrating irreverence for social norms. An influential member of the American comix movement is Art Spiegelman, whose text *Maus* was serialised from 1980 to 1991 and published in full graphic novel form in 1991. In 1992 it became the first ever graphic novel to win a Pulitzer Prize.

The 1980s saw the further development of Marvel and DC Comics, and their growth into television through animated cartoons. Writers in this decade began producing standalone novel-length comics – the **graphic novel**. Key graphic novels such as Alan Moore's *Watchmen*, *From Hell* and *V for Vendetta* were also adapted into films.



"V for Vendetta"
© DC Comics.

With the emergence of digital technologies, the form has continued to evolve. Comics and graphic novels can be optimised for viewing on tablets and computers, and have been adapted for both the big screen (e.g. superhero movies set in the DC or Marvel universes) and television (e.g. *The Walking Dead* and *Daybreak*).



"A Contract with God, and Other Tenement Stories"
© DC Comics.

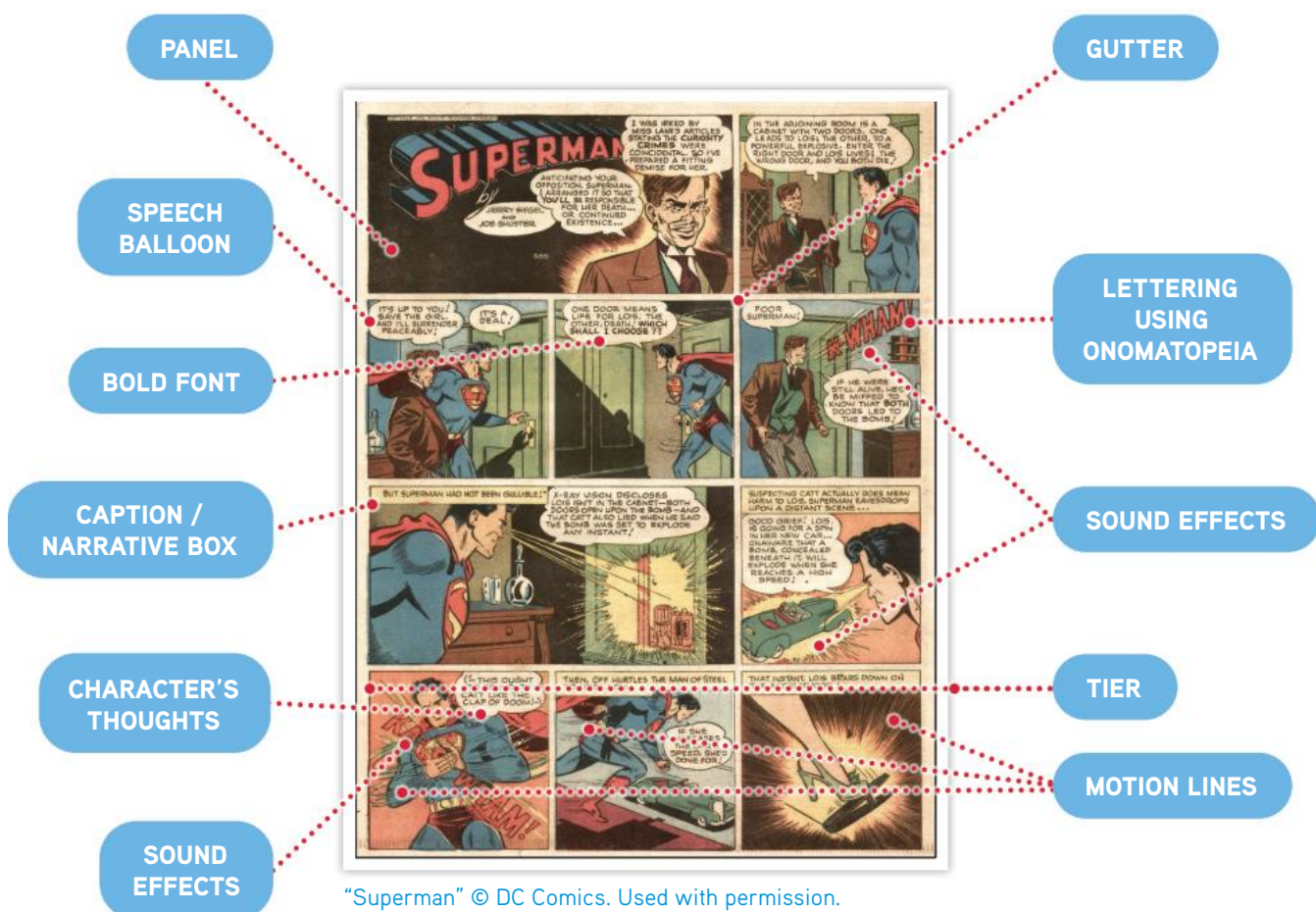
Features and conventions of the form

Comic books, picture books and graphic novels have features specific to each form, but they have many narrative, visual language and structural features in common.

Key structural features include the following.

- **Panel:** a box or area that contains the images and the written language. The sequence of panels creates the narrative sequence.
- **Panel border:** the border or frame that encloses the actions of the scenes. Panel borders are not always the same shape; sometimes they are not used at all.
- **Gutter:** the space between panels on a page. The white space separating panels marks transitions between scenes, narrators, time and perspective. It lets the reader know where each panel ends. Images or text in the gutter can be the equivalent of action or dialogue that is 'offstage' in a play.
- **Tier:** a single row of panels.
- **Splash:** a full-page illustration (sometimes two pages) designed to capture the audience's attention; a splash might also establish time, place and mood.
- **Spread:** an image that spans more than one page. The two-page or double-page spread is the most common, but there are spreads that span more pages, often by making use of a **fold-out**.
- **Caption / Narrative box:** separate text that describes the scene, provides insight into the characters or contains additional information to enhance readers' understanding of the story. A caption box contains extra narrative which cannot plausibly be spoken by any particular character. Captions add to the speech and artwork. They do not repeat what the artist has drawn. Their purpose is to fill in the gaps. They might indicate time and place, or expand on the action.







- ▶ **Speech balloon (or word balloon, speech bubble):** a delineated area that contains the characters' dialogue. They vary in size, shape and layout. The little arrow-shaped corner of the balloon that points to whoever is talking is called a pointer or a tail. The shape of the word balloon can be used to evoke different kinds of emotions. For instance, jagged edges make the dialogue seem figuratively 'sharper'. If the word balloon has a squiggly border, this might suggest that the character is unsure about what he or she is saying.
- **Thought bubbles:** a series of increasingly larger shapes (usually circles) conveying private and unspoken thoughts of characters. They can reveal characters' feelings and reactions, and indicate their internal dialogue.
- **Motion lines:** lines that indicate movement or action.
- **Font:** style of lettering. The choice of font can create a certain mood or tone; suggest a particular genre (e.g. horror); suggest phrasing and intonation; and add to the visual design.
- **Text size:** the size of lettering; can indicate the importance of what is being said or conveyed or, more usually, the volume at which something is said.
- **Placement:** position of text and graphic elements, which helps to guide the reader in the flow or direction of the narrative. In picture books the placement of text leads the reader through the narrative and to either the written language or the visual image first.
- **Icons:** symbols or punctuation marks, such as exclamation and question marks, often used to represent concepts and ideas (e.g. confusion, anger, frustration).



"Superman" © DC Comics. Used with permission.

Transitions

As with the movement between shots in a film, the movement between panels in a comic book is known as a transition. In film, these transitions include cuts, fades and dissolves. However, in *Understanding Comics: the Invisible Art*, Scott McCloud defines six key types of transition between panels in comic books.

TRANSITION TYPE	EXAMPLE	EXPLANATION
1 Moment-to-moment		Conveys the basic movements of a character; creates a sense of small detailed movement, such as eyes closing, arms moving, head turning
2 Action-to-action		Presents the actions of a subject progressing through a specific movement; creates a sense of motion
3 Subject-to-subject		Stays within the same scene but moves between two different subjects, allowing for change of point of view
4 Scene-to-scene		Presents different scenes in different places, allowing for movement through time and space
5 Aspect-to-aspect		Shows different events or aspects taking place simultaneously within the same scene
6 Non-sequitur		Presents seemingly illogical images, with no clear or rational connections between panels; can be used to create humour or absurd or surreal ideas

Images from *Understanding Comics* by Scott McCloud. © 1993, 1994 by Scott McCloud. Used by permission of HarperCollins Publishers.

Transition types 2–4 above are by far the most common: they provide action and clearly defined sequences, and are more frequently used in western comics. Types 5 and 6 are often used to establish a mood or a sense of place and are more often seen in Japanese comics.

Consider transitions

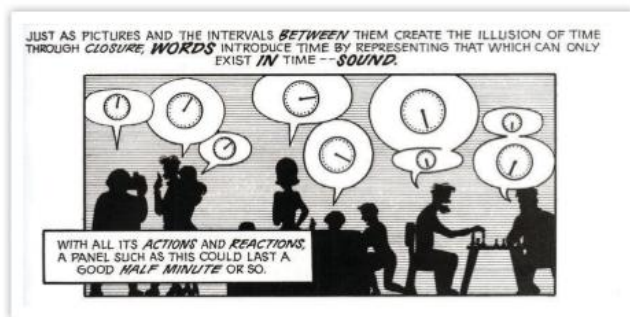
- 1 Collect a series of photographs, drawings or frames from an existing comic. You might want to photocopy a couple of pages and cut them up.
- 2 Now rearrange them, experimenting with a variety of transition types. Consider how the transitions and arrangement of your panels affect:
 - the narrative or sense of story
 - the meanings readers will find
 - the role of the audience in piecing together the story.

Panels and time

An impression of time is created in the space of the panel by the combination of image and words. Words create sounds in the reader's imagination – which take time to process. When designing comics, artists need to consider how much time they want readers to take to process the words and ideas, and make connections.

Perceptions of time in the story are managed via:

- the number of panels
- the space between the panels
- the size and style of the panel itself.



Silent panels, which have no words, create a sense of timelessness. **Closed panels**, or those with borders, suggest a limit to time and space.

Bleeds, where a panel runs off the edge of the page, create the effect of time continuing.

Panel breakouts are created when a part of the drawing, such as an object or body part, extends or breaks out of the panel's border.

Breakout: the arm and shoulder break out of the panel border.

Lines and synaesthetics

Using lines and shapes in the background to evoke emotions and sensations is called synaesthetics. These background patterns act as visual clues to convey emotions, mood, or the internal thoughts of a character.

These are some of the basic synaesthetic patterns used in comics and graphic novels.

Lines

- Vertical lines indicate stability and height, and separate elements in an image.
- Horizontal lines bring elements together and can create a calming effect.
- Diagonal lines suggest motion and movement.
- Wiggly lines can suggest strong emotion.
- Thin lines can suggest frailty or elegance.
- Thick lines suggest strength or provide emphasis.
- Short, sharp lines suggest fragility, fragmentation or anxiety.
- Longer lines suggest continuity, flow and unity.



Basic shapes or patterns

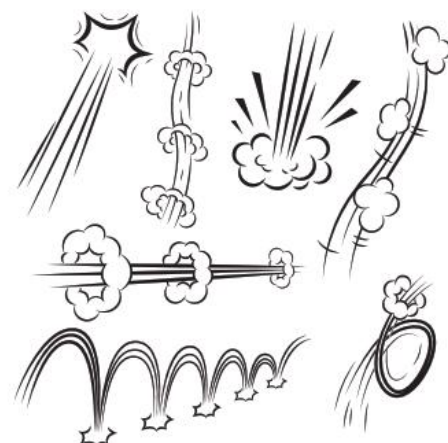
- Circles suggest comfort, protection or endlessness.
- Squares suggest stability, honesty or conformity.
- Triangles suggest dynamic tension, action or conflict.
- Repeated shapes or patterns suggest intense or ongoing emotions.

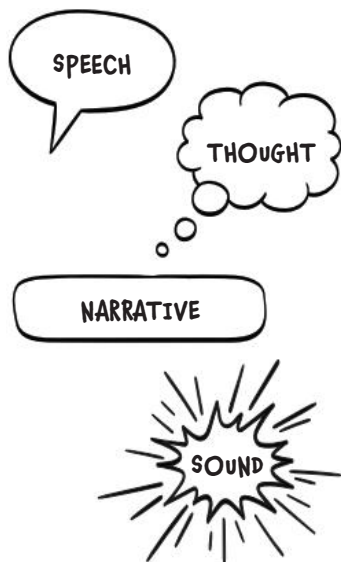
Conveying motion and sound

One of the reasons that graphic novels are considered hybrid texts is their use of techniques to mimic movement and sound, which are not usually features of written texts.

The illusion of motion between the various still images is created by:

- the mental process called **closure**, when a reader mentally 'fills the blanks' between panels
- the convention of **motion lines** or **zip ribbons** to re-create the physical movement or motion of people or objects.





Sound in the graphic novel and picture-book form is typically represented in four ways.

- **Word balloons or speech bubbles** present character dialogue and are created from continuous lines.
- **Thought bubbles** reveal thoughts or internal dialogue and take the form of cloud-shaped balloons.
- **Narrative boxes or captions** reveal narrative information, which can include information about dialogue or sound, and take the form of rectangle boxes in the top left section of panels.
- **Sound effects or lettering** reveal the sounds in the comic world and usually involve onomatopoeia (a word whose sound imitates the thing it describes, e.g. pop, snap, bang).

You may also consider the role of different bubble styles in conveying the type of sound, including its tone, volume or intensity. Font size and style, the use of bold, underlining or italics, and the use of illustrations or colours within the lettering can all convey further information.



Note how the flame illustration and the size suggest the intensity of the power and violence of the action, as well as the volume.



See the digital bonus material for information and activities related to adaptation and hybridity.

The work of Shaun Tan

Western Australian artist Shaun Tan commonly works with multimodal forms, in particular a hybridisation of comic, graphic novel and picture-book forms. On his website (<http://www.shauntan.net/>) he writes, about picture books:

I often like to think of words and images as opposite points on a battery, creating a potential voltage through a 'gap' between telling and showing. It requires the reader's imagination to complete the circuit, their thoughts and feelings being the current that fills the silent space, without prescription.

Using the metaphor of a battery, Tan emphasises the relationship between the written mode and the visual mode, and the role of the reader in making the connections between them, which is an essential element in comprehending these multimodal texts.

Focus texts

The Lost Thing (2000) is the humorous story of a boy who discovers an odd creature on the beach and tries to find out where it belongs, in the face of other people's indifference. A 2010 animated film adaptation won an Academy Award.

The Arrival (2006) follows a man's journey from leaving his family to his emigration to a new and strange land. It is a tale of refugees, immigration and belonging that is often described as a wordless or 'silent' graphic novel.

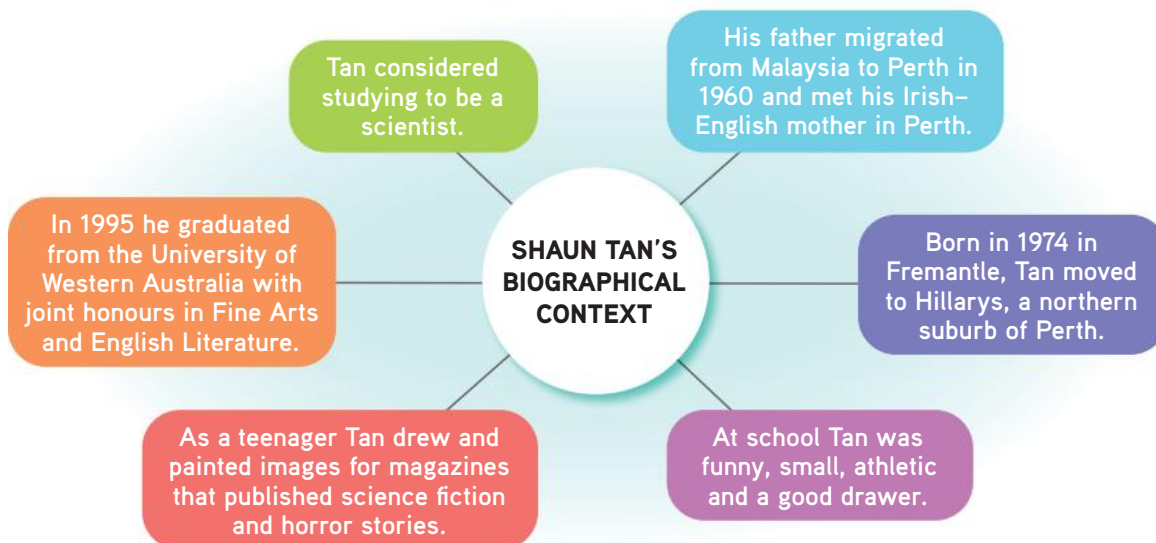
Cicada (2018) is an allegorical story of an insect who retires from his office job where he works with humans who mistreat him.

As we examine these texts, you will be encouraged to apply your learning to your own studied texts.



Understanding Tan's context

Researching the background and context of the text and author you are studying will reveal key or recurring ideas or themes that the writer explores, and the values, attitudes and beliefs they express. An important influence on Tan's work is his personal context, in particular his suburban upbringing in Perth and the fact that he is the child of migrant parents.



Shaun Tan's context deeply influences his work. This is evident in the way he uses multimodal features of a hybrid graphic novel / picture-book form to:

- encourage a deep empathy for his protagonists
- provide representations of the migrant experience
- explore ideas of identity, isolation and belonging
- create representations of marginalised voices

- shape representations of differing attitudes to nationality, cultural difference and displacement
- allow readers to create their own interpretations of his words and images.

ACTIVITY

Consider context

Do some research and create a diagram like the one on the previous page that captures key details about the biographical context of a writer you are studying.

The Arrival

Often described as a wordless or 'silent' graphic novel, *The Arrival* is a migrant story following the journey of a man leaving his family, emigrating to a new and strange land and experiencing difficulties in adapting to the new place. Tan elects not to use words in this text, relying solely upon the visual mode – a reflection of the original concept of sequential art. This wordless text provides an interesting case study for analysing how context affects meaning.

The influence of context

The main character and his wife are illustrations of Tan himself and his own wife. Tan's father appears in one of the photographs included in the book. Throughout, *The Arrival* contains biographical elements drawn from Tan's own family history of migration.

Tan also draws on historical accounts of migration. The two pairs of illustrations below and on the next page show, on the left, original images of migrants arriving in New York in the early 1920s and being processed at Ellis Island; and, on the right, panels from *The Arrival* depicting the same events. Look at the images on the left below and in the pair on the next page and compare them to Tan's interpretation, on the right. (You can also watch archival footage of European immigrants arriving in the USA in the early 1900s online at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PI9_7MOWHEY.)

Historical source



Tan's visual interpretation



Historical source



Tan's visual interpretation



Here we can see the relationship between Tan's historical sources and his visual interpretation of them. The historical context of European migration has influenced his choice of visual language so that his adaptation of the source images projects a more universal migrant experience. This reveals the relationship between context, visual language and meaning.

Analysing *The Arrival*

VISUAL FEATURE	MEANING CREATED
Style	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pencil drawings and the use of monochromatic sepia tones suggest old, faded photographs and bygone times; mirrors a historical source Cover design resembles an old, torn and battered family album Title pages include overlapping official stamps in various languages
Panel borders / Lines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Borders are faded – no strong lines – again suggesting old photographic negatives or slides
Shapes / Objects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the first image, huge objects on the boats as well as the statues' curves and triangular shapes represent the idea of difference, of displacement in a foreign and alien land
Lettering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The flag on the banner in the welcome hall in the second image contains unintelligible shapes or lettering, representing the inability of newcomers to understand a new language
Spread	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Images fill double-page spreads and single pages, emphasising the significance of the immigration experience: the approach and moment of arrival

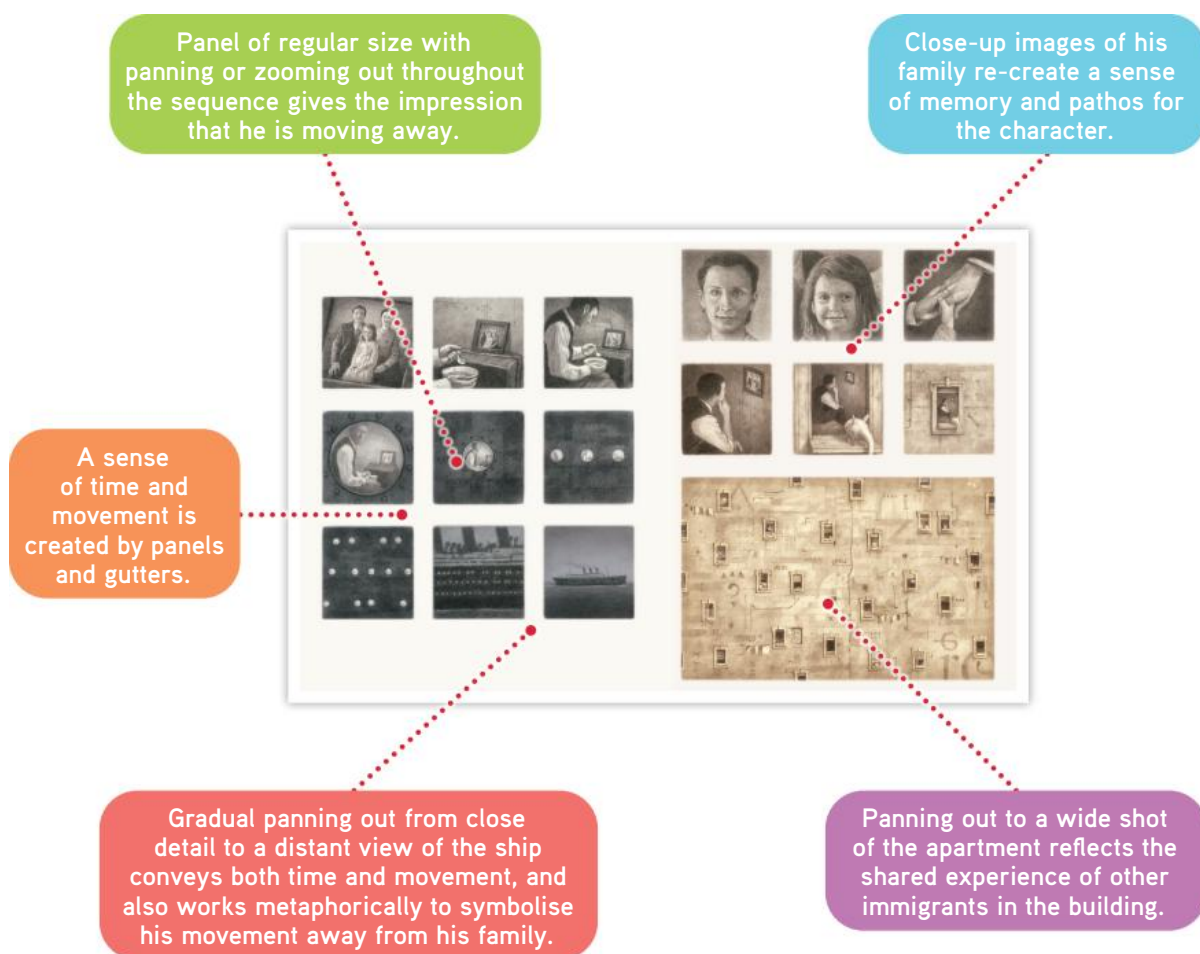
Hybridity in *The Arrival*

Despite being wordless, *The Arrival* can still be considered a hybrid text, for the following reasons.

- It does not conform to one specific traditional literary form, being part picture book, part graphic novel, part comic book, part collection of photos or film negatives, part art.
- Tan rejects the use of any written text in the narrative, relying on the visual mode to convey the story, making it more like a picture book, which often has minimal words.
- The subject matter, however, is complex, making it more akin to a graphic novel.
- Illustrations are varied in size, using panels, splashes and spreads.
- Film techniques are used to convey meaning.

Tan's use of cinematic techniques in *The Arrival* conveys the passage of time, and also develops action and meaning. In this way, Tan blends into his images visual language features typically associated with feature films.

The two pages reproduced below represent the protagonist's departure from his family and his arrival at an apartment in the new city.



ACTIVITY

Consider features of hybrid texts

- 1 Answer the questions below to assist you in the annotation and analysis of the following panels from *The Arrival*.



- Which transition types does Tan use in this sequence of panels?
 - How do these transitions create a sense of time?
 - What shot types are used in the framing?
 - Explain how the mise en scène, in particular the lettering, creates a sense of both strangeness and normality.
 - How does this sequence of panels assist in presenting the protagonist's perspective on the new world?
- 2 Select a hybrid text you are studying. Identify any elements that make it a hybrid form. They may be structural elements of the form, or they may relate to the subject matter or purpose. Make notes about the effects of these elements.

Cicada

Published in 2018, *Cicada* tells the story of a cicada, an insect employee in a human office, who is undervalued and ignored. Eventually, after 17 years of loyal service, he unceremoniously retires. He then evolves into a new form, following the life cycle of a cicada, leaving behind the human world. *Cicada* explores themes of belonging, identity and escape, and may be interpreted as a fable or an allegory – a social commentary on human interactions in the corporate and human world and a reflection on the immigrant experience in the workplace.



Analysing *Cicada*

Splash: full-page illustrations occupy the right-hand pages.

Text placement: text is on the left-hand pages, centred, until the final pages, which are mostly wordless.

Lines and shapes: repetitive use of bold lines and rectangular shapes reinforces the sterile workplace environment of modern cities.

Structural and written features: text is three lines long, followed by the cicada's 'Tok Tok Tok!' call. These line lengths mirror Japanese haiku, in particular those of the 17th-century Japanese poet Basho, one of which is printed on the final page of the book.

Written language: told in the third person, but from the cicada's point of view, using short, often grammatically incorrect sentence fragments; Tan is adapting the speech balloons feature of comics/graphic novels.



Symbolism: the maze-like structure of the identical cubicles suggests the repetitious and uninspiring nature of office life. The small size of the cicada suggests his unimportance and lack of status in this environment, while his natural green colour in the industrial grey setting implies that he doesn't fit in.

Framing and angle: the elevated angle and centralised framing of the cicada reinforces his industriousness (as he is working after the humans have left), as well as his isolation.

Onomatopoeia: the 'Tok Tok Tok!' represents the cicada's call, never responded to; this use of natural sound both reflects the fable-like quality of the insect protagonist and contributes to the rhythm of the text. It may also reflect how westerners 'hear' an Asian accent, and perhaps the writer's context: his multicultural upbringing and his father's difficulties adapting to working life in Perth.

Panel framing and symbolism: Tan omits human faces from his artwork, framing the panels so that humans are only torsos or body parts, suggesting the employees' dehumanisation and alienation.

Body language: humans are depicted ignoring or abusing the protagonist; his much smaller size reinforces his marginalisation.



No cicada allowed in office bathroom.
Cicada go downtown. Twelve blocks.
Each time company dock pay.
Tok Tok Tok!

Text/Language/Voice: the narrative represents the dehumanisation of those who are different through the voice of the cicada; the syntax accumulates from (1) the statement 'No cicada allowed' to (2) an effect – 'Cicada go downtown' – then (3) a consequence – 'company dock pay', evoking the reader's empathy for the protagonist.

Spreads: a series of five double-page spreads is used towards the climax and resolution of the text – the change in format reflects the transition of the cicada from the human to the natural world. Tan plays with the reader's expectation that the cicada is going to jump (to his death) when in fact he undergoes a transformation, and escapes.



Beginning and ending pages: the first page establishes the setting, mood and themes of the text, even before the narrative has begun; muted greys of the urban landscape suggest the gloom and anonymity of corporate office life. The final pages show a colourful forest, suggesting a new life cycle for the cicada, beyond his human experience.

Word bank to describe mood, tone, atmosphere or style

Authentic	Detailed	Gripping	Multilayered	Rich
Complex	Disturbing	Haunting	Mysterious	Sensitive
Contrasting	Elegant	Humorous	Provocative	Vibrant
Dark	Evocative	Imaginative	Realistic	Vivid

ACTIVITY

Explore style and mood

- Describe the colour palettes used by Tan. Which colours and shades dominate the settings? Which colours are used to create contrast?
- What are some of the possible effects of these choices of colour and shades?
- One of Tan's stylistic choices is to use oil paint on canvas (in addition to sculptures and digital editing) to create his panels. How does he create the effect of light and shadows in his illustrations? Why does he do this? How would you describe the texture or feel of the panels? What mood does this create?
- How does Tan's use of style and mood reveal his attitude to the bureaucracy of the human office?
- Now, apply the same analytical process to your own studied text(s). Ask yourself:
 - What is the colour palette?
 - How is light used in the panels/spreads?
 - What is the texture of the images like?
 - How do these choices reflect the author's style or create a mood?



- 6 Complete a short-answer response in which you compare Tan's construction of mood and style with that of another visual text in response to the following question.

Compare the use of three visual language features that establish mood in two texts.

- 7 Referring to a multimodal text you have studied, respond to the following question.

Explain how mood is created through the visual mode to reflect an attitude or perspective.

TAKING IT FURTHER

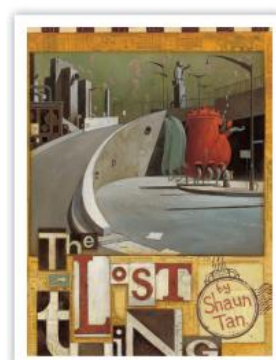
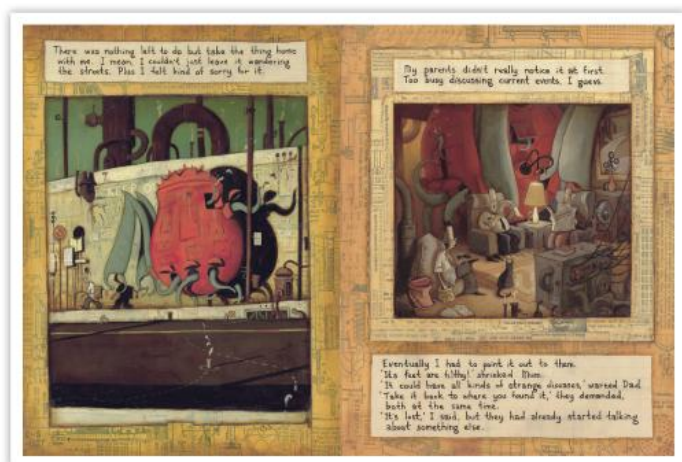
Mixed media

Tan often uses **mixed media**, an artistic style that blends different materials in the one artwork. He is also known for constructing sculptures prior to painting his texts. His artworks and sculptures have been exhibited in their own right.

Consider whether and how mixed media is used in your text to connote meaning or suggest that the text has additional layers or dimensions. Mixed media can involve any combination of materials: illustrations, photographs, documents, screenshots, handwritten text, and so on.

The Lost Thing

The Lost Thing follows a young man who discovers a strange out-of-place creature on the beach one day, in a world where nobody notices anything anymore. It is a tale of alienation and belonging, dreams and reality. Tan spent much time as a child drawing pictures on his father's architectural sketches. This context can be seen in *The Lost Thing* where the detailed background of pages and the frames of panels are collages of technical drawings and symbols.



Analysing *The Lost Thing*

Below is an annotated page from *The Lost Thing*.

The blend of horizontal and vertical lines represents the complexity of the modern world; their length suggests its continuity.

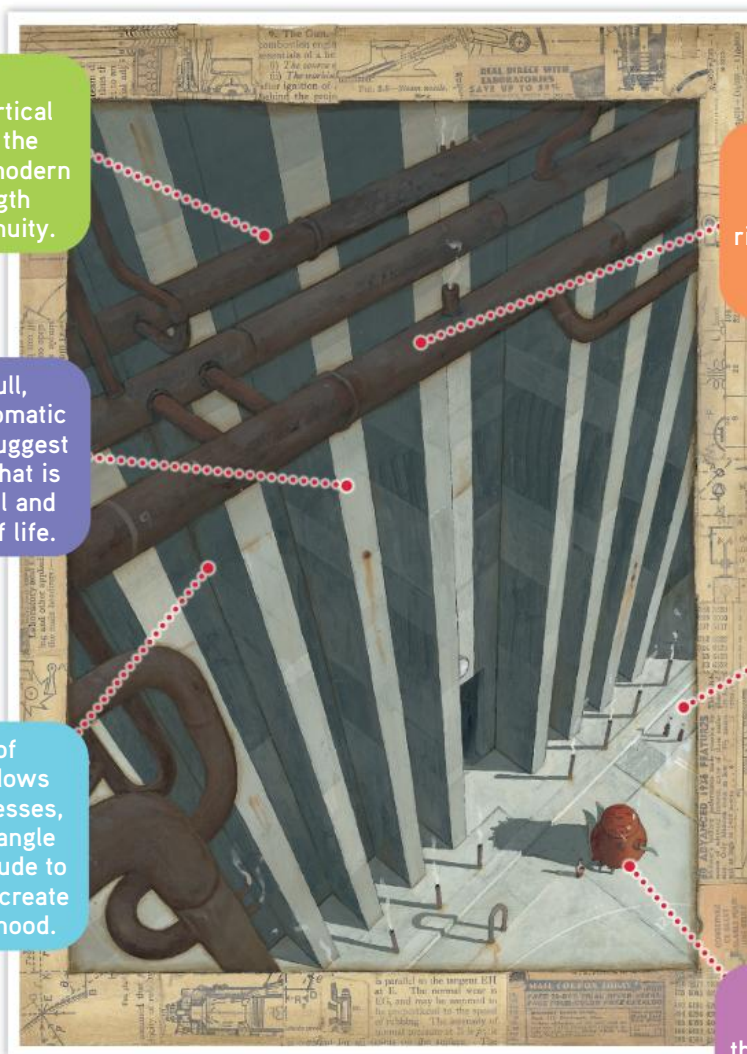
The dull, monochromatic colours suggest a world that is unnatural and devoid of life.

Thick lines of pipes and shadows of concrete recesses, along with the angle of the image, allude to prison bars and create an oppressive mood.

Thick lines of pipes suggest the strength and rigidity of a heavily industrialised society.

Small, thin lines of figures suggest their insignificance and powerlessness in this industrialised world.

The unconventional shape and colour of the 'lost thing' signifies its strangeness.



ACTIVITY

Analyse mood and atmosphere

Use the annotations on the page from *The Lost Thing* above to help you write a short-answer response to the following question:

What atmosphere or mood is created through this image's use of visual language features?

Considering style

Despite each text being unique, Tan's works do have a distinct style, much as the work of a particular film director, musician or fashion designer has its own style. This section encourages you to compare texts to explore the **stylistic features** of Shaun Tan's work.

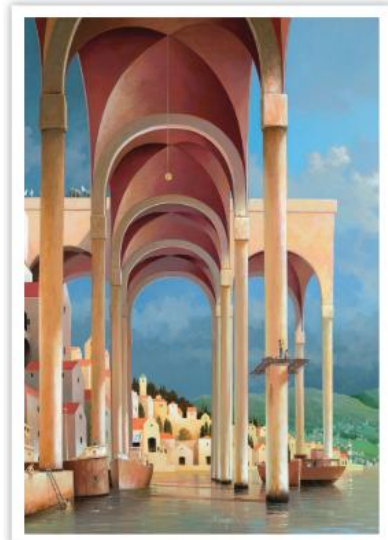
Tan often employs the use of shapes and objects in his images to construct surreal yet realistic settings, including:

- buildings, statues and objects with contrasting shapes and sizes, including long lines, curves and conical or cylindrical shapes
- strange animals or creatures
- flying objects or animals
- shadows and contrast.

Tan is also inspired by the surrealist art movement, including artists such as Michiel Schrijver (b. 1957) and René Magritte (1898–1967). The visual mode of *The Arrival* was influenced by early-20th-century photography, while the cover art for *The Lost Thing* draws on Australian artist Jeffrey Smart's 1962 painting *Cahill Expressway* (below, left).



Golconda by René Magritte, 1953.



Close to Happiness by Michiel Schrijver, 2014.

Jeffrey Smart
Cahill Expressway
1962 oil on plywood
81.9 x 111.3 cm
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Purchased, 1963 (1306-5)
© National Gallery of Victoria,
Melbourne.

Image courtesy of the National Gallery
of Victoria, Melbourne.



ACTIVITY

Analyse Tan's style

- 1 Considering his use of the visual mode (particularly shapes, objects and lines), analyse how Tan creates settings that seem recognisable yet alien.
- 2 How do these stylistic constructions represent the experience of immigrants or the marginalised?
- 3 How does your understanding of Tan's personal context influence your interpretation of his style?

- 4 By modelling his art on other works, Tan is using allusion or intertextual references. Why do you think he does this?
- 5 Write a short-answer response to the following question, comparing the style of Shaun Tan with a studied text of your own.

Compare how two texts/authors employ their own style, and account for their purpose in doing so.

Characters



A key element of Tan's style is his creation of ambiguous creatures. Apart from the man in *The Arrival* and the narrator of *The Lost Thing*, most of Tan's characters are animals, or part animal, or of indeterminate form. Tan's use of unusual creatures can be seen in the character of the cicada, the actual 'lost thing' in *The Lost Thing*, the creatures in *The Arrival*, and the characters that populate the 'Utopia' scene in which the lost thing finally finds a place where it can belong.



See the digital bonus material for information about the film adaptation of *The Lost Thing*.

ACTIVITY

Explore characterisation

- 1 Why do you think Tan uses characters whose form is ambiguous? What does this contribute to his overall themes or ideas?
- 2 *Cicada* is told from the point of view of the cicada, whereas neither the creature in *The Lost Thing* nor the man in *The Arrival* speak. What might Tan be conveying about these characters' perspectives or experiences through these different choices in characterisation?
- 3 Referring to a different multimodal text you have studied, identify the main function of each character, e.g. protagonist, antagonist, anti-hero, helper. How are particular characters used to represent the experiences of a particular person or group?

Composing your own graphic novel

As part of your English course, you will be expected to compose texts in different forms. Here are some guidelines for creating a graphic novel, or at least some sample pages.

- Begin by deciding on the topic, theme, plot, character/s, place etc. that will be the **focus of your text**.
- Spend some time exploring and planning ideas by drafting **storyboards** (graphic panels). This is where you can start to flesh out your story. Will you start with the text or the image?
- Decide on the **style** you are aiming for. If you are not confident with illustration, you could draw stick figures then use other features of the form, such as motion lines or **synaesthetics**.
- Consider how you will use **captions**, as well as **speech** and **thought bubbles**. Which **font(s)** will you use?
- Decide how many **panels** or **tiers** you will have per page, their size and shape, and whether they will vary. Will you use bleeds or silent panels?
- Choose how you will **frame** the action and characters. Will you use zoom shots, close-ups or establishing shots? Consider using a range of transition types and timings.
- Ensure your text has a strong **narrative flow**. Consider how to balance storytelling through text with storytelling through images.

ACTIVITY

Create multimodal texts

- 1 Watch an animated re-creation or a reading of a picture book on YouTube (try this version of Tan's *The Arrival*: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vAay4myoEDE>). As you watch, make notes on characterisation, setting and action. Then develop your notes into a short text analysing one of these aspects of the text.
- 2 Search online for a stimulus image to use as the first panel of a multimodal text. Add captions, speech bubbles or other written text to set up an exposition or a character. Then complete a full-page spread with six to nine panels.
- 3 Create a panel using drawings and lines only – no icons or symbols – to represent each of the following emotions: happiness, fear, anxiety, calm, anger.
- 4 Adapt a page from a studied prose text (imaginative or interpretive) into a series of graphic novel panels.
- 5 Adapt a poem into a picture-book spread by creating your own illustrations or photographs to accompany it. Some suggested poems on the themes of the refugee experience and the environment include the following.
 - *The Refugees* by Jason Fotso: <https://www.unhcr.org/innovation/a-poem-refugees-need-read/>
 - *Refugee Blues* by WH Auden: <https://allpoetry.com/refugee-blues>
 - *We Are Going* by Oodgeroo Noonuccal: http://famouspoetsandpoems.com/poets/oodgeroo_noonuccal/poems/4601

CASE STUDY 2: TRAVEL WRITING

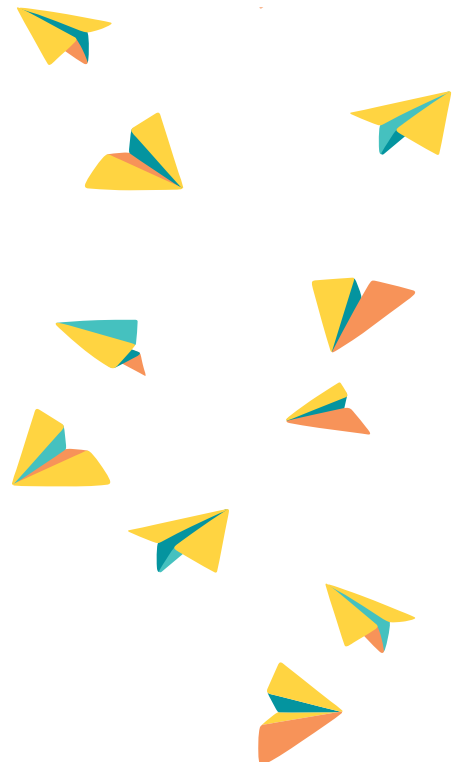
IN THIS CHAPTER YOU WILL:

- consider the history of travel writing
- explore different forms of travel writing
- develop skills and strategies for creating your own pieces of travel writing.

Travel writing is an ancient and diverse genre of interpretive texts. For as long as people have wondered about far-off places, they have travelled there, and recorded those travels either for themselves or for others.

Of course, travel writing isn't just about exotic foreign lands. Many writers document the places in which they live for the benefit of travellers who seek out their corner of the world; others write about journeys taken to nearby destinations.

Over the centuries, the genre of travel writing has broadened in scope to include a wide range of forms. As well as the explorer journals and travelogues of old, there are now guidebooks, reviews, feature articles, travel memoirs and podcasts, as well as travel websites, blogs and vlogs, docuseries and reality TV shows. In this chapter, you will explore some of these forms of travel writing and have the opportunity to compose some examples of your own.



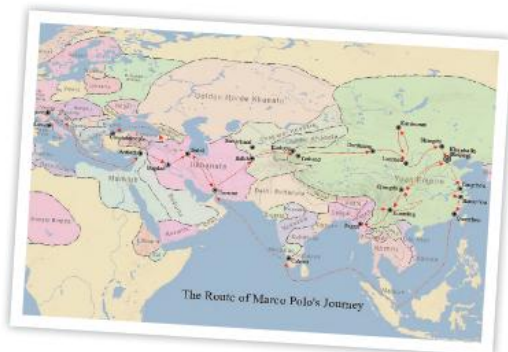
History of travel writing

One of the earliest known published examples of travel writing is by the Greek geographer Pausanias (110–180). In the 2nd century AD he toured the former city states of ancient Greece, recording their geography, history and culture. His record of the glories of ancient Greece filled ten volumes – a perhaps risky move considering Greece was by then part of the Roman Empire!

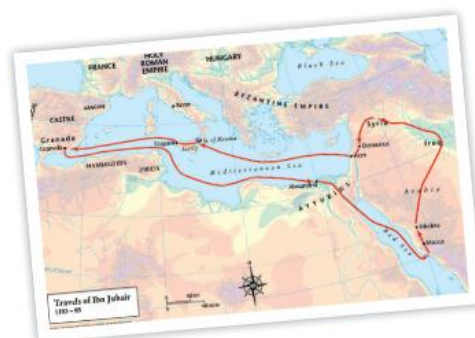
One of the most famous historical travel writers is Marco Polo (1254–1324), a Venetian merchant and explorer (see right) who travelled the Silk Road to China in 1271 (see map, centre right). There he became Kublai Khan's foreign emissary, and travelled throughout China and Southeast Asia on the Khan's behalf. When he returned to Italy, he was imprisoned and dictated stories of his travels to his cellmate; these stories were published in around 1300 as *The Book of Marvels of the World*.



Travel writing was a popular genre in Chinese cultures, especially during the Song dynasty (960–1279). The famed essayist and poet Su Shi (1037–1101) wrote many travel essays in which he used the experience of travel as a metaphor for moral or philosophical growth. This was an important development, and many contemporary writers today employ travel writing to reflect on their personal growth.



Arabian literature is also full of travel writing. For example, Ibn Jubayr (1145–1217) wrote an account of his pilgrimage to Mecca (see right), beginning in southern Spain, from where he sailed to Sardinia, Sicily and Egypt before crossing the Red Sea to reach the Arabian Peninsula. He documented the cultures he came across, creating an important record at a time when Islam and Christianity were competing for influence across the Mediterranean.



Travel writing flourished during the 18th century. Explorers' journals – including those of Captain James Cook – were popular with audiences hungry for depictions of life on the high seas and in exotic lands.

There have also been famous women travel writers, such as Lady Hester Stanhope (1776–1839), an aristocrat, explorer and archaeologist who travelled throughout the Middle East. Gertrude Bell (1868–1926, left), nicknamed 'the Queen of the Desert', was not only a traveller and writer, but also an important political figure who helped shape the modern Middle East. Daisy Bates (1859–1951)

emigrated from Ireland to Australia, and spent much of her life travelling, living with and documenting the lives of First Nations peoples in Western Australia. Her sympathetic, but at times controversial, writings are more truly anthropological than travel-focused, but they are nevertheless a record of a remarkable journey.

TAKING IT FURTHER

Postcolonial readings

It is perhaps unsurprising that interest in travel writing surged during times of historical exploration and settlement. People were intrigued by tales of 'new' worlds. Often, these narratives described foreign cultures from the traveller's cultural perspective, and represented them in a negative way – as strange, dangerous or uncivilised, for example. Many of the travellers referred to above have, in retrospect, been criticised for their depictions of other cultures.

Postcolonial criticism is a way of reading texts that interrogates the representation of cultures in the literature of a colonising nation, recognising how these representations can contribute to the disempowerment or delegitimising of different cultures and peoples from around the world.

Forms of travel writing

Within the genre of travel writing there are numerous subgenres. Sometimes these are determined by the form, at other times they are based on style and subject matter. The table below summarises some of the main subgenres of travel writing.

SUBGENRE	EXPLANATION	EXAMPLES
Journal	A diary-style record, typically written while travelling. Usually observational in style, and may include some reflection on the experience.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>The Voyage of the Beagle</i> – Charles Darwin <i>Suitcase Letters: A Memoir of Travel, Adventure and New Beginnings</i> – John Howse
Travelogue	Offers a detailed record of the writer's travel experience, in a way that gives the audience an insight into the place itself.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Down Under: Travels in a Sunburned Country</i> – Bill Bryson <i>Four Corners: A Journey into the Heart of Papua New Guinea</i> – Kira Salak
Travel memoir	Provides a detailed reflection on a personal journey or realisation arising from a travel experience.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Tracks</i> – Robyn Davidson <i>The People Smuggler: The True Story of Ali Al Jenabi</i> – Robin de Crespigny
Destination article	A common type of travel writing; offers an outsider's view of a particular place. Unlike memoirs and travel essays, destination articles focus on the place itself.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'Enjoy an Ellis Brook Escape' – Mogens Johansen, <i>The West Australian</i> 'The Kimberley's most unforgettable natural wonders' – Fleur Bainger, <i>Australian Traveller</i>
Travel essay	A short-form version of a travel memoir; often published as a feature article. While set in a particular place, it foregrounds a personal discovery.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'Back on track: my return to Interrailing 30 years on' – Dixie Wills, <i>The Guardian</i> 'A Seasonal Unease' – Jacqueline Wright, <i>Kimberley Stories</i>





Guide	Can come in many forms; typically provides practical information about a destination or experience. While focusing on factual details, it is also shaped by the writer's perspective and intended audience.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lonely Planet guidebooks • Rottnest Island tourism websites • Guide to the Coral Coast and Ningaloo – <i>Australian Traveller</i>
'Round-up' article	Collates information from various travel experiences and possibly even different writers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'The ten best beaches in Australia' – <i>Australian Geographic</i> • '24 Hours in Tokyo' – <i>Treksplorer</i>
Review	Provides an overview and critical evaluation of a particular travel experience for the audience. It is subjective but provides useful insights for readers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'A night in one of the most off-grid huts in Australia' – Meghan Loneragan, <i>Australian Traveller</i> • 'Relaxed, Simple & Fresh, Geraldton's Ocean West Has It All' – Stephanie Parker, <i>Big World Small Pockets</i>
Advertorial	Typically, a sponsored article in which the writer actively seeks to persuade readers to take up a travel experience. As the writer is being paid by a stakeholder, readers need to be discerning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Get Spooked In This Historic Prison With Guided Tours After-Dark' – Sophie Hart, The Urban List (sponsored by Fremantle Prison) • 'See an extraordinary bubblegum-pink lake in Western Australia' – <i>Australian Traveller</i> (sponsored by visitesperance.com)
Fictional travel writing	A text in which the writer uses the genre of travel writing as the basis for fiction. It can be based on real places, or the writer may dream up fantastic locations for their characters to travel to.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Around the World in 80 Days</i> – Jules Verne • <i>Antarctica's Frozen Chosen</i> – Hazel Edwards

Knowing the audience

Just as travel writing varies according to its form, it is also shaped to suit the needs and expectations of its intended audience. For example, the writer will consider these factors:

- Is the audience intending to travel, or just seeking some armchair escapism?
- Do readers just want the facts, or are they looking for a sense of someone else's experience?
- What is the likely level of the audience's background knowledge or experience of the destination?

If the audience is going to be travelling, the following questions are relevant.

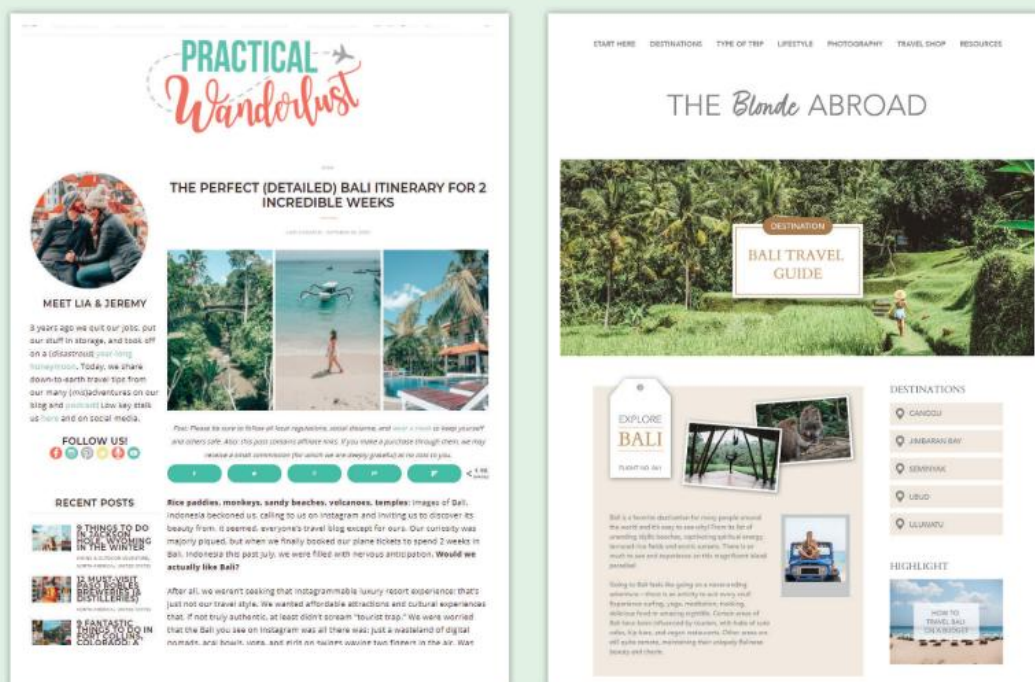
- What sort of travel experience are they seeking? Relaxation? Adventure? Shopping? Sightseeing? Immersion in nature? Cultural experience? Romantic getaway?
- What is their budget?
- Are they travelling solo, with a single companion, with family, with a group?
- How much time do they have for their trip?

ACTIVITY

Consider the audience

Look at these splash pages from two travel blogs.

- 1 What sort of travel experience does each website promote?
- 2 What sort of audience does each cater for?
- 3 How does the content of each reflect this audience's values and interests?
- 4 How does the language and design of each splash page appeal to its audience?

**Knowing the purpose**

Travel writing can have many different purposes. First and foremost, it needs to evoke a strong sense of place. Other purposes include the following.

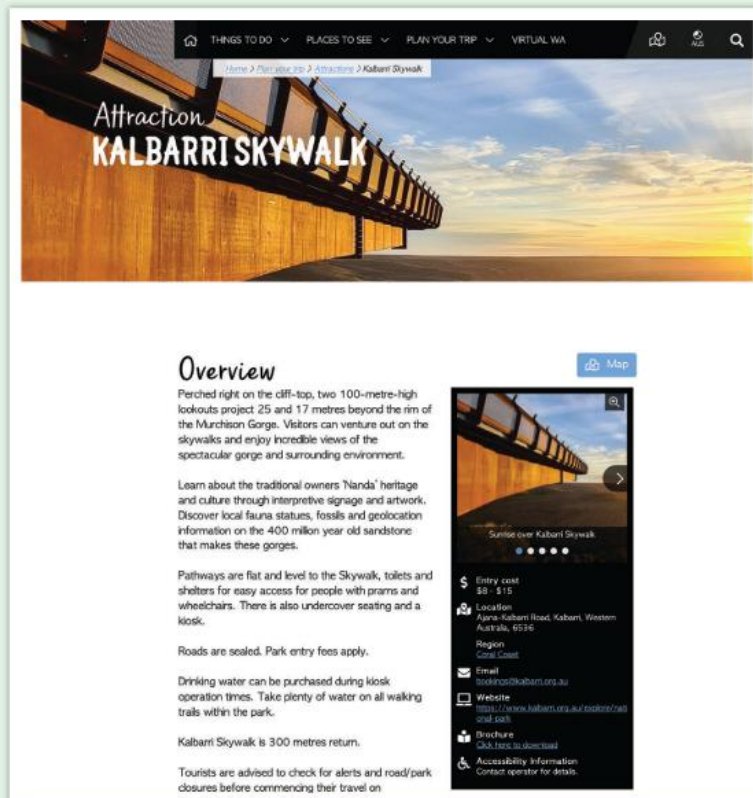
- Reviews evaluate the features of a place or experience.
- Advertorials promote a place or experience, persuading readers to travel.
- Travel memoirs and essays reflect on the effects a place or experience had on the writer.
- Travel guides and round-ups inform readers about a place or experience.
- Travelogues and destination articles provide a subjective interpretation of a place or experience.

Consider the purpose

Read the following two texts about the Kalbarri Skywalk.

- 1 Match each text with one of the following purposes.
 - To reflect on a personal experience of the Skywalk
 - To inform potential tourists about the Skywalk
- 2 How does the publication context of each text provide clues about its purpose?
- 3 Identify language features that suggest the text's purpose.

Text 1: Webpage on a state-government website, www.westernaustralia.com



©Bocal Constructions.

Text 2: Travel essay published on a personal blog

I gaze out over the rust-red landscape from the sinuous arc of the Skywalk. Far below me, the Murchison River winds its way through the rocky gorge, heading for the wild shores of the Coral Coast. I'm tired, hot and reeking of sweat after hiking all morning, but here, suspended in mid-air, the faintest trace of sea breeze bringing a salt tang from the ocean, I feel suddenly refreshed.

It seems hard to believe that just an hour or so ago I was at the bottom of the gorge, shadowed by the dramatic cliffs rising high above me. Now the gorge appears as a vast snake, its curves not unlike the twin oxbows of the Skywalk itself. I'm struck by how ancient this landscape is, and the patience of the gentle river to slowly carve its way through layers of iron-rich sandstone. Despite the bird's-eye view, I feel dwarfed by the immensity and age of this staggeringly beautiful place.

Representing place

In travel writing, place is – obviously – a key feature. Part of the writer's purpose is to transport readers there, if only in their imagination.

It is important to capture the physical details of the place – the wide, open spaces of a rural landscape, the crowded streets of a city, the pungent and exciting smells of a foreign food market. Equally important is to capture its atmosphere, whether that be homely and familiar, unsettling and strange, thrilling and new, or quiet and romantic.

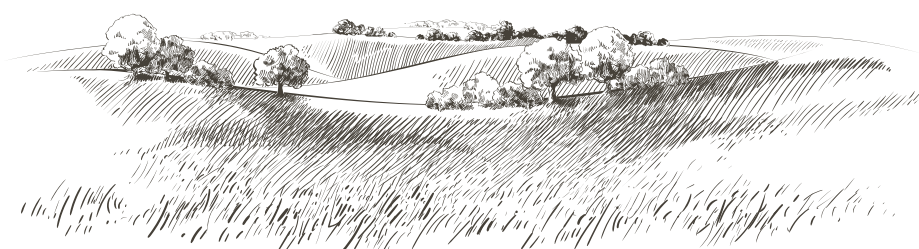
Sometimes, impact can be gained by focusing on small details within the broad brushstrokes of your description. A road trip to the south coast can be brought to life by the details of eating fish and chips on the beach with your family; a holiday to Broome by the colour contrast between the sea and the red rocks of the shoreline. Wandering the lanes of a foreign city can be personalised by the wave of a stranger from a balcony.

Place in travel writing can be more than just the physical landscape. It often encompasses the people and culture of those who occupy it. Travel writing that captures a sense of place in this way can convey something of the history, customs and lifestyle of a place's inhabitants.

It is important to provide readers with concrete details that enable them to visualise a place, as well as the more sensory details that allow them to imagine the experience of being there.

Tips for writing about place

- Treat the place as if it is a character in your narrative. How do you interact with it? What is its impact on you?
- Describe its physical attributes using sensory details. How does the place smell, sound, taste, feel and appear to you? Provide readers with specific details – but be selective. Don't overwhelm them with sensory overload.
- Use a range of language features to help readers imagine the place, such as metaphors, personification and similes.
- Focus attention on the unique. What makes this place special, different, surprising or complex?
- Avoid clichés. Travel writing is notorious for its overuse of descriptions of 'breathtaking views', 'charming villages' or 'untouched paradises' that are 'off the beaten track' and 'just waiting to be discovered'.
- Attach emotion to the piece by developing atmosphere.
- Make it meaningful. Share the significance of a place and not just its description.



TAKING IT FURTHER**Reflecting on your representations**

In documenting a place, it is important to be aware of how your own perspective – and the values and attitudes that underpin that perspective – will shape the way you represent that place, its people and its culture.

This extract from Stephanie Lai's 2016 article 'A short history of the dangers of travel writing' highlights the problems writers may expose in their travel writing.

When I read western travelogues, I know that I'm not the audience. Despite growing up in Perth, when I choose to leave the comfort of my inner-north Melbourne home, secure with my Australian passport in hand, it's for the comfort of the family home in Malaysia, with its squat toilets and mosquito netting and five grown adults in two bedrooms. I'm a person with a name that is, to many in Australia, unpronounceable (certainly, many people mispronounce it). My food is, many have suggested, indigestible. Things that are familiar to me, that are comforting, are put on display in the modern western travelogue and found alien. So in the dichotomy of the audience and the other, I'm pretty comfortable in assuming I'm the other, despite having an Australian passport and loving a good travelogue.

In Australia, and in English-language travel writing more generally, a travelogue is about the traveller and their experience – the ways in which the travel is different from being at home. This requires a dichotomy: an assumption around who is the audience and who is different, the alien, the one to be saved. There are few other ways those with whom the narrative and narrator comes in contact are represented. But this line is artificial, the dichotomy ideological.

ACTIVITY*Write about place*

- 1 Describe to a classmate a place you have travelled to. It might be a relative's house, the place where you had your first family holiday, or a place you travelled through on a road trip. Try to capture its significance to you.
- 2 Write two descriptions of your thoughts as you travel to school. In the first, use language features to represent your destination in a positive light, perhaps because it is a place where you will be with your friends. In the second, construct a less positive representation, maybe because you were dreading a test that day!
- 3 Compose a short description of a place that holds fond memories for you. Use sensory details to help evoke the appropriate atmosphere.
- 4 Find a photograph of a location that you have visited in the past. Use descriptive details to create a strong image that correlates with the photograph. Begin by giving a 'broad brushstrokes' overview, before homing in on details that draw attention to the location's unique qualities. Ask a peer to evaluate your written description alongside the photograph.

EXAMPLE

The destination article: 'Enjoy an Ellis Brook Escape'

The form of this text is a destination article, offering an interpretation of Ellis Brook, a bushwalking location in the Perth Hills. Its purpose is to provide an informative but descriptive representation of this place for Perth residents who enjoy bushwalking.

Destination articles may be published in newspapers, magazines or online. They tend to have features we expect of feature articles: headlines and by-lines; short paragraphs; text arranged in columns and supported by images and breakout boxes.

While remaining factual, this form of text also offers a subjective interpretation of the destination that encourages readers to visit and experience that place for themselves.

ENJOY AN ELLIS BROOK ESCAPE

Bush trails in suburban Martin delight MOGENS JOHANSEN

I feel like I've unearthed a secret ...
I'm only 24km from the Perth CBD
at the **Ellis Brook Valley Reserve**
in Martin. "Why haven't I been here
before?" I ask myself.

It's a slow reveal as I follow
the signs from Tonkin Highway to
the reserve, which is part of the
Banyowla Regional Park. First
along Gosnells Road East, then a
couple of 90-degree turns (don't
worry, it's well-signposted) before
turning into Rushton Road which
takes you directly into the Ellis Brook
Valley.

Once in the valley, I feel like I've
entered a different world. It's quiet,
tranquil, well-maintained and well-signposted.

Ellis Brook Valley is recognised as one of the richest wildflower locations
in the metropolitan area. It has more than 500 species and it's also a
breeding site for more than 115 species of birds and a popular hang-out
for kangaroos, echidnas, possums and other native wildlife.

There are two carparks in the reserve. The first, Honeyeater Hollow, has
a picnic area and it's the start point of three of the four walking trails in the
reserve.

FACT FILE

- Ellis Brook Valley Reserve is open from 6am to 7pm and entry is free.
- There's a picnic area with barbecue facilities, shelters and toilets at the Honeyeater Hollow carpark.
- Drinking water is not available so be sure to bring a water bottle and there are no bins on site, so please take your rubbish home.
- trails.wa.com.au
- gosnells.wa.gov.au



Blue Wren Ramble trail at Ellis Brook Valley.



A rest point at Eagle View Trail at Ellis Brook Valley.

The headline uses alliteration to create a catchy title.

The by-line draws attention to key features of the destination: bushwalking and Ellis Brook's suburban location.

A handy fact file in a breakout box summarises key details a traveller might like to know.

A hook referring to the 'secret' nature of the destination engages the reader.

The article begins with a clear description of place.

Unique features of the destination (flora and fauna) are highlighted.

Photographs are included to help readers visualise the location.



The old Barrington Quarry at Ellis Brook Valley. Pictures: Mogens Johansen

Further along, at Valley Head carpark you have access to two trails. The walks are named Sixty Foot Falls Trail, Blue Wren Ramble, Eagle View Trail and Easy Walk Trail and cater for all levels of fitness and abilities.

They take you through different country and each has its own charm but **Sixty Foot Falls Trail** is the most difficult and the most spectacular so I thought I'd start with that.

It's a 2km loop that leads to the top of Sixty Foot Falls (which unfortunately was dry during my visit) before descending again past the old Barrington Quarry.

It is a steep climb to the top but most of the steep sections have man-made steps to make the going easier.

There are a couple of viewing platforms along the way where I stop to take photographs and enjoy the views. Blue fairy wrens dart in and out of the foliage and the scent of the yellow wattle flowers drifts through the air as I scramble to the top where I'm rewarded with magnificent views of the valley and Perth CBD in the distance.

I follow the path over the top of the falls and down towards the quarry on the other side of the valley. I stop to take pictures again at the old Barrington Quarry which has a lake filled with emerald-green water at the bottom. It looks fantastic against the cliffs of the quarry.

My next walk is the **Blue Wren Ramble**. I start at the Valley Head carpark but you can also start at the Honeyeater Hollow carpark. It's 2.8km return and it's rated easy. It's a nice shaded walk that follows Ellis Brook and passes through wandoo woodlands. I see many small birds including blue fairy wrens and New Holland honeyeaters in the thickets along the brook; it seems to be a prime nesting and feeding area for birds and also a good place to spot wildflowers.

Next is the **Eagle View Trail**, which starts and finishes at the Honeyeater Hollow carpark. It is only 430m return and rated moderate; there are several steps to negotiate as you ascend the ridge to the top but they are low steps with a firm gravel base.

The Eagle View Trail is much more open with lower heathland and vegetation. There are some spectacular grass trees and stunning views up the valley and towards the Sixty Foot Falls and out over the suburbs in the other direction. There are also benches along the way where you can stop for a rest and enjoy the views.

Before heading home, I finish with a quick lap of the **Easy Walk Trail**. It's an easy 500m return loop from the Honeyeater Hollow carpark. It passes through wandoo woodland and it's a stabilised earth path that is suitable for wheelchairs.

Later, while heading back to the burbs, I reflect on a great afternoon in the bush and promise myself to come back when the wildflowers are out.

The article offers a personal interpretation of the destination, focusing on the writer's experience of its various walking trails.

Although first person is used, and there are examples of the writer's reflections on the place, the article focuses on descriptive detail.

ACTIVITY

Compose a destination article

Using the example on the previous two pages as a model, compose a destination article for a place or activity. Include the following features:

- an engaging headline
- a by-line including your name and a key feature of the place or activity
- an introductory paragraph with a hook that draws in the reader
- essential facts in a breakout box (like the 'fact file' on page 195), giving opening hours, costs, facilities, useful websites etc.
- descriptions of the place, including its unique features and available activities, and offering your own interpretation of the destination
- two or three photographs.

Documenting a journey

Except for simple travel guides, the most engaging examples of travel writing do more than just offer a representation of place. Instead, they document a journey, creating a narrative in which the traveller is the protagonist, sharing their observations and insights with the reader.

In a destination article, these observations may just be straightforward descriptions of the unique or special features of a place. In travel essays and memoirs, however, the sense of a journey is more pronounced. Travelling to or through a place becomes the catalyst for reflection on the writer's personal or emotional journey. They travel from a position of ignorance to a new understanding of themselves, the destination, or the world and its people.

In making your story personal, sharing not only the journey but what you learned from it, you'll create a stronger connection with your reader. The revelations you provide – about yourself, the place, or human nature in general – will be the themes that your audience will take away. Common themes in travel writing include self-discovery, overcoming grief or fear, coming of age, searching for a sea change, realising a common humanity, and environmental preservation.

Tips for documenting a journey

- Make your story a personal account, interwoven with facts, description and observation.
- Give the reader a sense of who you were before you began the travel experience, in order to make clear how it has changed you.
- Keep in mind that there are two journeys: a physical one and an emotional one.
- Start with a 'big picture' sense of the destination, before focusing on specific, important details.

- Avoid doing an ‘information dump’ – overloading your reader with a pile of facts about the destination. Carefully select the details you share.
- Relate your observations about place to your motivations for travel, your state of mind or your realisations. Every description should reveal something about you as well as the place.
- Offer a clear theme, lesson or observation for your reader.
- Use the tools of imaginative writing to bring your travel writing to life.

EXAMPLE The travel essay: ‘Cronulla to Papunya’

The travel essay, as opposed to a destination article, focuses more on the experience or understanding gained from the writer’s journey, rather than on the destination itself. The destination is the backdrop for the writer’s journey of personal growth or for a lesson learned.

Travel essays are deeply subjective, written in the first person and incorporating much personal reflection. While they can be narrative in form, they are a type of personal essay. They tend to follow a three-part structure:

- a hook that engages readers and sets out the thesis of the essay
- a discursive main body that uses the destination or physical journey as a context for personal reflection
- a concluding section that articulates the writer’s revelations.

Unlike paragraphs in analytical essays, paragraphs in personal essays can vary in style and length.

Marlee Silva’s travel essay ‘Cronulla to Papunya’ (in the 2018 collection *Growing Up Aboriginal in Australia*) documents her journey from the Sydney suburb of Cronulla to the remote community of Papunya, home to Pintupi and Luritja people. Silva shares the deeper understanding she gained, while living in community, of her own Aboriginal identity.



EXTRACT 1

Everywhere in Papunya is a road.

Hot winds, camp dog packs and bare feet with the night surveillance truck forming crop circles in the burnt sand outlining the town's boundaries. From the sky, the connecting curves and faint lines resemble a *tjupi*, or honeyant, an insect that looks like an everyday ant from above but with a swollen amber abdomen that is said to taste like a sweet treat. It is the animal that has represented the Dreaming for the area for over sixty thousand years.

On the outermost ring of the community, closest to the rest of the world, live the out-of-towners: the youth workers, the teachers, the owner of the convenience store, the floating professionals living in a government building, the occasional tradesman, a nurse or two, and volunteers from a charity who pass through for a picture and a story.

The inner circles of red dust have a higher density. A dozen or so identical Lego-block houses sit side-by-side, overflowing with sisters and mums and dads and aunts and uncs and cuddies and mutts and fleas and nits. They hug the final ring of buildings at the centre, where you'll find the shop that sells \$15 bananas, the Centrelink office and the church. And, most importantly, the town of three hundred's beating heart: Papunya School.

It's tough country out here, arid and still. The people who call this place home are not unaware of their disadvantages, but instead choose to focus on the parts of each day that sparkle in the Territory's everlasting sun; and I'm starting to think that they've got it all right.

The opening sentence of the hook engages the reader; it offers a surprising and oblique image, using the symbolism of the road to draw attention to the concept of a journey.

To engage readers, Silva offers a deeply descriptive representation of place; the imagery clearly shows Papunya's significance for the First Nations people who live there, as well as highlighting its isolation and disadvantage.

This final paragraph of the hook hints at the emotional journey or the lessons learned by Silva. The setting of Papunya, while important, becomes secondary to the life lessons learned there.

EXTRACT 2

I was twenty-one and a half when I decided to volunteer in remote Australia. I'd spent my entire adolescence spewing passionate words of equality and justice for our nation's first people onto deaf ears; I'd worked for an Aboriginal organisation from the moment I left high school and was sure that I knew everything about everything. By twenty-one and a half I was confident that I'd invested enough time into knowing my own Aboriginality, that I knew other people's too.

Now I am twenty-one and three-quarters and realise: I am wrong.

I once lived in a colourblind world, but in a blink so much of me became obsessed with blackness – *my* blackness. What it is, what it means, how it dictates who I am, and how I can prove to other people that it does in fact exist, if only below the surface.

The final section of the essay reiterates the intended purpose of the physical journey: to volunteer and advocate for Aboriginal people in Papunya.

This section also reiterates the starting point for the emotional journey: Silva's original 'wrong' understanding of her Aboriginal identity.

This section highlights the emotional journey undertaken – the writer's revelations, lessons or personal growth; Silva reveals her greater understanding of her identity.

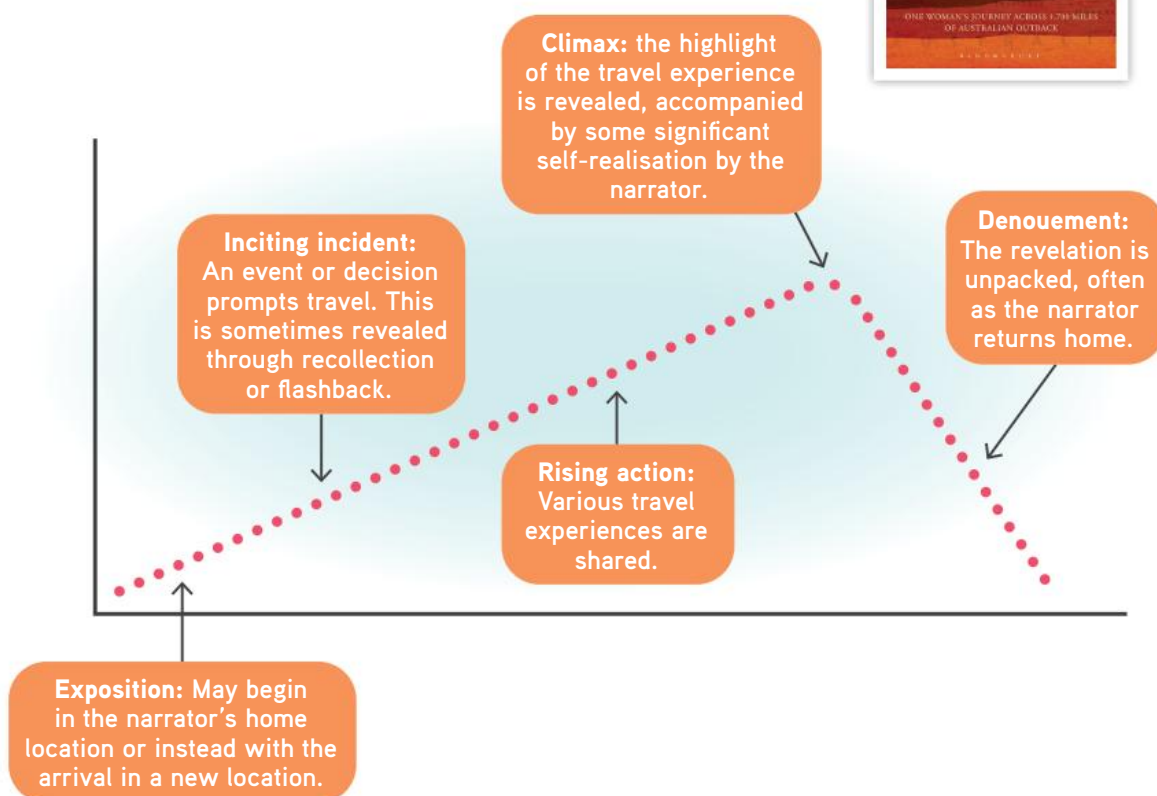
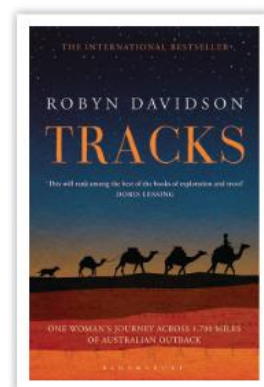
Then suddenly here I was, in Papunya, a place that's arguably one of the few communities left in our country that hasn't been irreversibly severed from our traditional ways of living, language and customs – and nobody cares what colour I am. They care only about *who* I am. Sure there is some question of why I have strange spots on my body, but there's more around whether I'm someone who can be their friend, can make jokes, tell stories or, most importantly, whether I can play basketball.

The conclusion offers a clear message for the reader to take away, in this case about a common humanity.

We hear so many stories about the difficulties and the heartaches from this part of the world, but this microcosm of hardship and resilience seems to have achieved the unachievable. Here exists a group of young, vibrant people who see others as, quite simply, fellow human beings. I don't know why it's taken me so long to realise, but now it's so obvious that underneath the invisible barriers and expectations we have constructed and placed on each other, we are all brothers and sisters; we are all just pink flesh and bone.

EXAMPLE The travel memoir: *Tracks*

Structurally, a travel memoir is a form of narrative, and thus uses the features of narrative such as point of view (first person, in this case), setting, plot and characterisation. It often uses a linear narrative structure that correlates with the physical journey undertaken.



Some travel memoirs follow a cyclical structure, with the narrator starting and finishing in their home location, in order to highlight the change in their character as a result of the journey. Others are episodic, offering various anecdotes in a chronological order.

Like an extended travel essay, memoirs are deeply reflective. They focus on the writer's emotional journey, using their physical journey as a structural device to chart their personal growth. The lessons the writer learns become the themes that the reader takes away.

Tracks is a 1980 travel memoir by Robyn Davidson, published by Bloomsbury Academic. It records her nine-month trek across the central Australian deserts, setting out from Alice Springs in 1978 and heading for the Western Australian coast. Davidson originally published an article about her experiences in *National Geographic* magazine, and later wrote her memoir.

These extracts offer contrasting and deeply subjective representations of place. In comparing the extracts, you can see how Davidson shares her emotional journey with the reader, drawing attention in the end to the healing effects of her experience in the Australian desert.

EXTRACT 1

I arrived in the Alice at five a.m. with a dog, six dollars and a small suitcase full of inappropriate clothes. 'Bring a cardigan for the evenings,' the brochure said. A freezing wind whipped grit down the platform as I stood shivering, holding warm dog flesh, and ... wondering what foolishness had brought me to this eerie, empty train station in the centre of nowhere. I turned against the wind, and saw the line of mountains at the edge of town.

The memoir's opening paragraph clearly establishes the sense of a journey; here Davidson opens with her arrival in Alice Springs, where she was to start her trek.

There are some moments in life that are like pivots around which your existence turns – small intuitive flashes, when you know you have done something correct for a change, when you think you are on the right track. I watched a pale dawn streak the cliffs with Day-glo and realized this was one of them. It was a moment of pure, uncomplicated confidence – and lasted about ten seconds.

A clear sense of character is established, suggesting their initial state prior to travelling; in this case, Davidson represents herself as optimistic and somewhat naive.

Diggity wriggled out of my arms and looked at me, head cocked, piglet ears flying. I experienced that sinking feeling you get when you know you have conned yourself into doing something difficult and there's no going back.

EXTRACT 2

My first impression as we strolled down the deserted street was of the architectural ugliness of the place, a discomforting contrast to the magnificence of the country which surrounded it. Dust covered everything from the large, dominant corner pub to the tacky, unimaginative shop fronts that lined the main street. Hordes of dead insects clustered in the arcing street lights, and

Descriptive, subjective representations of place are constructed; Davidson offers a critical representation of Alice Springs through details of dust, the 'tacky' shops and dead insects.

The depiction of Alice Springs contrasts with that of the MacDonnell Ranges, a source of beauty – and fear, as evident in the simile. Of course, its fearsome quality is very subjective, as the local Arrernte people are likely to have a different perspective.

Personal insights into place are offered, such as Davidson's comments that the MacDonnell Ranges has a profound psychological effect on the residents of Alice Springs.

The memoir clearly articulates an emotional experience of travel; here Davidson reflects on Wiluna, 1800km into her trek across the desert.

The lesson Davidson learns from the desert – about facing and overcoming her fears – becomes a theme for readers to take away as well.

- ▶ four-wheel-drive vehicles spattered in red dirt, with only two spots swept clean by the windscreen wipers, rattled intermittently through the cement and bitumen town. This grey, cream and hospital-green shopping area gradually gave way to sprawling suburbia until it was
- stopped short by the great perpendicular red face of the MacDonnell Ranges which border the southern side of town, and run unbroken, but for a few spectacular gorges, east and west for several hundred miles. The Todd River, a dry white sandy bed lined with tall columns of silver eucalypts, winds through the town, then cuts into a narrow gap in the mountains. The range, looming menacingly like some petrified
 - prehistoric monster, has, I was to discover, a profound psychological effect on the folk below. It sends them troppo. It reminds them of incomprehensible dimensions of time which they almost successfully
 - block out with brick veneer houses and wilted English-style gardens.

EXTRACT 3

There was a haunting hallucinatory quality about this place. I felt swelled by it, high as a kite. I was filled with an emotion I had not felt before – joy.

[...] I had learnt to use my fears as stepping stones rather than stumbling blocks, and best of all I had learnt to laugh. I felt invincible, untouchable, I had extended myself, and I believed I could now sit back, there was nothing else the desert could teach me. And I wanted to remember all this. Wanted to remember this place and what it meant to me, and how I had arrived there. Wanted to fix it so firmly in my head that I would never, ever forget.

ACTIVITY

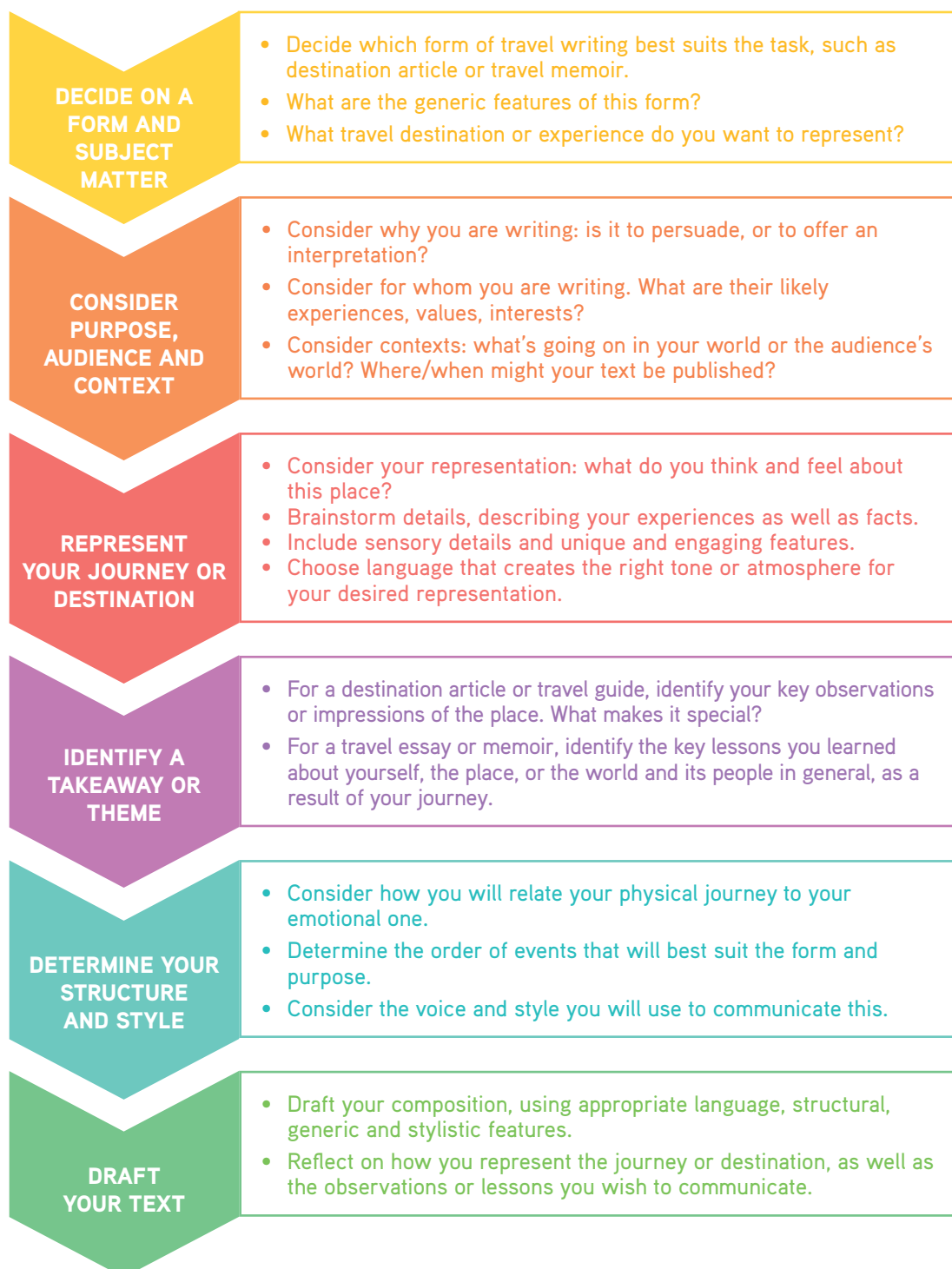
Explore travel essays

- 1 Compare the above examples of travel essay and memoir with the example of a destination article (pages 195–6). What do you notice about the following features?
 - The nature of the personal observations each provides
 - The ratio of personal observation to description of place
 - The extent to which they make use of narrative features
- 2 Travel doesn't always have to be to exotic locations. Compose a brief travel essay or memoir in which you reflect on something you learned about yourself, the destination or human nature in general as a result of a journey. Consider the following prompts.
 - A road trip taken with your family
 - A school camp or excursion
 - The first time you went into the city by yourself
 - A journey on public transport

- 3 Swap your composition with a peer. Read each other's work and try to determine the key lesson or takeaway it communicates. Provide feedback to your peer on how closely the theme is correlated with the experience of travel.

Composing your own piece of travel writing

This flow chart shows a process for creating a piece of travel writing.



The table below uses the process outlined on the previous page, and shows two possible responses to this exam-style question:

Compose an interpretive text in which you construct a particular representation of place.

STEP	IDEA 1	IDEA 2
1 Decide on a form <i>Brainstorm different options that might successfully respond to the topic.</i>	An extract from a travel memoir reflecting on a trip to Corrigin, the country town where my extended family is based.	A destination article encouraging readers to visit the Coral Coast, specifically Kalbarri and the Abrolhos Islands, where I went on holiday.
2 Consider purpose, audience, and context <i>Determine why and for whom you are writing, and where the piece might be published.</i>	Purpose: To show how I feel a strange sense of belonging to this place, despite never having lived there. Audience: Urban people, mostly those in Perth. Context: Current day, likely to be published on a blog or as a magazine feature.	Purpose: To encourage people to visit the Coral Coast by sharing my positive experience of it. Audience: Readers of the <i>West Australian</i> newspaper – local WA adult readers. Context: Current day, travel lift-out in the weekend edition.
3 Represent your journey or destination <i>What does this place or experience mean to you? What image of it do you want to leave with your audience? Which language and stylistic features will you use?</i>	Corrigin is represented as a small rural town, specifically in the Wheatbelt, where everyone knows everyone else. This is a little foreign to a city-dwelling teenager yet also strangely familiar because of historical ties to the place.	The Abrolhos and Kalbarri are represented as places of outstanding natural beauty, amazing landscapes that are nonetheless accessible for Western Australian travellers.
4 Identify a takeaway or theme <i>What do you want your audience to know, think or feel as a result of reading your text?</i>	The uncanny feeling that I belong to a place where I have never actually lived.	The Coral Coast is an amazing natural landscape practically on Perth's doorstep.
5 Determine your style and structure <i>What is the best style and structure for composing this text?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use a linear narrative structure that begins with being on the road and not really looking forward to visiting Corrigin. • Finish with the arrival in Corrigin and the surprising revelation that it is both comforting and alien. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin with a clear image of the coast to engage the reader. • Series of paragraphs explaining different experiences. • Conclude with a call to encourage readers to visit the Coral Coast.

EXAMPLE

Destination article

Morgan Klug was one of the winners of the 2020 Young Travel Writers competition run each year by the *West Australian* newspaper. This is a destination article he wrote about the trip he won as a prize.

NATURAL BEAUTY CLOSE TO HOME

Pristine clear water, covering turquoise 'honeycomb' reefs, with sharks, whales and stingrays frolicking about. This is just one of the many incredible sights you will be treated to when you visit the Houtman Abrolhos Islands off Geraldton. We were lucky enough to witness it from the sky in one of Geraldton Air Charter's GA8 air vans, which made it all the more picturesque.

This scenic flight was one of the many activities I experienced during a jam-packed two-day itinerary as part of the *West Australian* and Australia's Coral Coast's 2020 Young Travel Writer assignment to the beautiful Coral Coast of Western Australia.

The scenic flight over the Pink Lake and Abrolhos with a stop was spectacular. The Abrolhos Islands are a group of 122 isles, 65km off the coast of Geraldton. Each of the 122 isles is in one of the three main groups; Pelsaert, Wallabi and Easter groups. Their main purpose besides the odd tourism trip (snorkelling, scuba, or fishing) is for commercial crayfishing as well as a spot of pearl farming. In fact, you can't even sleep on any of the islands unless you have a commercial fishing licence or stay with someone who does. As much as this whole experience, led by the phenomenal pilot Blaze was great, it couldn't quite compare to the natural beauty of Kalbarri National Park.

We visited Nature's Window and the newly built Skywalk, which is an engineering masterpiece and blends in beautifully with the surrounding landscape. It also provides some key Aboriginal heritage and cultural information. But my favourite part was hiking for 15 minutes past Nature's Window to our own private little spot with caves and a beautiful ridge, overlooking what felt like the whole national park. It was just breathtaking; the majestic Murchison River snaking through rock cut valleys, lined with trees, native vegetation and brimming with local wildlife, like a lazy emu. The crunch of rock under my shoe brought me back to reality.

I travelled to the Grand Canyon when I was younger with my family, and I remember feeling like I was in a movie. I felt like it was almost beaten in aesthetic beauty by the underrated Kalbarri National Park. And you don't even have to quarantine for 14 days or travel halfway around the world to experience it. Thanks to the *West Australian* newspaper and Australia's Coral Coast for such an amazing trip!

Compose your own travel writing

The following Composing questions lend themselves to a form of travel writing.

- 1 Compose a text in a form of your choice inspired by the following image.



- 2 Create a text in which you reflect on a significant experience in your life.
- 3 Compose an interpretive text that constructs a surprising representation of place.
- 4 'The real voyage of discovery consists not in seeking new landscapes, but in having new eyes.' (Marcel Proust)
Compose a text in which the above quote is a central theme.
- 5 Compose a text that uses language features to re-create the setting in this image.



- 6 Compose a text in a form of your choice, in which the narrator learns an unexpected lesson.
- 7 'It is not the destination where you end up but the mishaps and memories you create along the way.' (Penelope Riley)
Compose a text that incorporates the above line at a key point in its structure.
- 8 Create an interpretive text based on a journey you have taken.

THE EXAM

IN THIS CHAPTER YOU WILL:

- become familiar with the structure of the exam
- review a number of strategies for exam preparation and performance.

This chapter outlines the keys to exam success, including familiarity with the exam format and effective preparation strategies. In addition, this chapter provides you with tips and advice regarding what markers are looking for in successful responses under exam conditions.

The exam is worth 20 to 30 per cent of your course mark. You need to be confident with the nature of the exam, including its structure, what is assessed in each section and how much each section is worth. You should also reflect on where your strengths lie and where you need to develop your skills and knowledge.



Exam structure

There are three sections to the ATAR English examination. It is likely that your paper will follow the format and timing of the final Year 12 English exam, as described below.

Reading time: Ten minutes

Writing time: Three hours

This table outlines the three sections of the exam.

SECTION	NUMBER OF QUESTIONS	NUMBER OF QUESTIONS TO BE ANSWERED	MARKS AVAILABLE	SUGGESTED WORKING TIME [MINUTES]	PERCENTAGE OF EXAM MARKS
One: Comprehending	3	3	30	60	30%
Two: Responding	6	1	40	60	40%
Three: Composing	4 or 5	1	30	60	30%

Section One: Comprehending

In the Comprehending section you comprehend and analyse unseen written and visual texts and respond in a concise, short-answer format. Each response in this section should be 200–300 words in length. The format of the Comprehending section is as follows.

- This section contains **two or three texts**. These will include both written and still image texts. One or more of these texts may be multimodal.
- Typically, there are **three** questions. You must answer all **three** questions. There may be a question requiring you to **compare** texts.
- Each question is **equally weighted** and usually worth 10 marks.
- This section is worth **30 per cent** of the total exam.

Section Two: Responding

The Responding section requires you to respond analytically to texts studied throughout the course. The format of the Responding section of the exam is as follows.

- This section contains a **choice of six** questions. You will answer **one** question.
- Questions may ask you to interpret, analyse, compare, contrast, reflect on and/or evaluate a studied text or texts.
- You should write an **analytical essay** with a clear introduction and conclusion, and three to five main body paragraphs. Ensure your response is detailed; but also remember that quality of analysis is preferred to quantity.
- This section is worth **40 per cent** of the total exam.

Section Three: Composing

The Composing section requires you to demonstrate your skills in composing a written text in a particular form for a specific purpose, audience and context. The format of the Composing section is as follows.

- This section contains a **choice of four or five** questions. You will answer **one** question.
- Questions or tasks will require you to construct an **imaginative, persuasive or interpretive text**.
- Questions may be **instructions or contain quotations or images as stimulus**.
- You may be asked to write a complete text or parts of one or more texts.
- This section is worth **30 per cent** of the total exam.

Preparing for the Comprehending section

The best way to prepare for this section is to be confident with the conventions, language features and structural features of a range of different text forms.

Written texts in this section might include extracts from novels, short stories, blogs, feature articles, speeches, essays or memoirs. Almost any type of imaginative, persuasive or interpretive text may be included, except for poetry and drama.

Visual texts in the Comprehending section may be still images and multimodal texts, and might include print advertisements, book or magazine covers, photojournalism, infographics, or stills from feature films. You should also prepare for texts such as webpages and excerpts from graphic novels or picture books.

Questions in this section are typically quite specific. You will be expected to closely analyse an aspect of the construction of the text and its effects, often in relation to a syllabus concept such as perspective or voice.

Responses

Each response in this section should be clear, well-structured and concise – no more than 300 words.

Students often ask, 'How do I structure a response in the Comprehending section? Should I write one longer paragraph or multiple shorter paragraphs?' The answer is: the question should guide your response. If a closed question asks about one feature or one concept, a single paragraph might work best. If the question asks you to identify two or three aspects of a feature or concept, then writing two or three short paragraphs might be more appropriate and make your response clearer. There is no right or wrong way, as long as your response is clear and succinct.

Deconstructing the question

Begin by identifying the significant points of the question and planning your response.

EXAMPLE

Sample Comprehending question

Identify two stylistic choices used in the text and account for the way they shape your interpretation.

- 1 Identify two stylistic choices used in the text. This means you must consider the language features and style of the writer.
- 2 Determine your interpretation of the text. You must have a good understanding of the subject matter and the meaning you make from the text.
- 3 Make a clear link between the stylistic choices and your interpretation of the text.

Potential hazards include:

- identifying *more than two* stylistic choices – you will not be awarded more marks for identifying more examples
- explaining your response to the text (such as an emotional response) and not explaining your *interpretation* of it.

ACTIVITY

Practise Comprehending

- 1 Explain how visual elements in Text 1 position the viewer to respond to the issue of cyberbullying.

Text 1: The following image is from UNICEF's 2015 'One Shot is Enough' advertising campaign. The text in the bottom left corner reads: 'Cyberbullying represents one of the main causes of depression and suicide among kids at school. If you have a smartphone use it wisely, don't kill anyone's self-esteem.'



- 2 Analyse the construction of mood in Text 2.
- 3 Compare an idea about human nature in Text 1 and Text 2.
- 4 Compare the representation of power in Text 1 and Text 2.

Text 2: The following is an extract from Mario Puzo's novel *The Godfather*. Published in 1969, *The Godfather* is the story of a Mafia family based in New York City, headed by Don Vito Corleone.

Luca Brasi was indeed a man to frighten the devil in hell himself. Short, squat, massive-skulled, his presence sent out alarm bells of danger. His face was stamped into a mask of fury. The eyes were brown but with none of the warmth of that color, more a deadly tan. The mouth was not so much cruel as lifeless; thin, rubbery and the color of veal.

Brasi's reputation for violence was awesome and his devotion to Don Corleone legendary. He was, in himself, one of the great blocks that supported the Don's power structure. His kind was a rarity.

Luca Brasi did not fear the police, he did not fear the society, he did not fear God, he did not fear hell, he did not fear or love his fellow man. But he had elected, he had *chosen*, to fear and love Don Corleone. Ushered into the presence of the Don, the terrible Brasi held himself stiff with respect. He stuttered over the flowery congratulations he offered and his formal hope that the first grandchild would be masculine. He then handed the Don an envelope stuffed with cash as a gift for the bridal couple.

...

The money in the envelope was sure to be more than anyone else had given. Brasi had spent many hours deciding on the sum, comparing it to what the other guests might offer. He wanted to be the most generous to show that he had the most respect, and that was why he had given his envelope to the Don personally, a *gaucherie* the Don overlooked in his own flowery sentence of thanks. Hagen saw Luca Brasi's face lose its mask of fury, swell with pride and pleasure. Brasi kissed the Don's hand before he went out the door that Hagen held open. Hagen prudently gave Brasi a friendly smile which the squat man acknowledged with a polite stretching of rubbery, veal-colored lips.



Preparing for the Responding section

The best way to prepare for this section is to know your texts and how they engage with syllabus concepts.

Questions in the Responding section typically combine two syllabus concepts. You need to consider the relationship between syllabus concepts raised by the question, and construct an argument that clearly communicates how this relationship is evident within your text(s).

Responding questions are fairly broad, allowing for a variety of texts and text types to be used. An important factor in this section is selecting the most appropriate combination of question and studied text(s). As not all texts will suit all questions, it is vital that you revise a number of texts prior to the exam, rather than focusing on just one or two.

Another important factor the markers are looking for is engagement with the question. It can be tempting to memorise a strong essay and try to re-create that in the exam, but you will certainly be facing different questions from those you've answered before. Pre-planned essays are unlikely to address the question and will not score highly.

Deconstructing the question

Begin by identifying the significant points of the question and planning your response.

EXAMPLE

Sample Responding question

Compare how two texts from different contexts work to offer similar or different perspectives.

- 1 Identify two texts, each from a different context. They might be from different times, places or cultures, or the circumstances of their creators might differ.
- 2 Identify the perspectives of the two texts, and establish the degree to which they are similar or different.
- 3 Explain the way that each text works to present these perspectives, as a result of their contexts. This means you must consider the construction of each text, its use of language features and the conventions of form or genre. A stronger response will clearly show how these have been influenced by context.

Potential hazards include:

- selecting two texts from similar contexts
- not explaining how the context affects the perspectives offered.

ACTIVITY

Practise Responding

- 1 Compare how two texts you have studied are constructed to represent certain ideas about human nature.
- 2 Examine the ways a text you have studied offers representations of particular social groups.
- 3 Analyse the ways a text has been constructed to communicate an attitude and generate mood.
- 4 Discuss how at least one text you have studied encourages its audience to respond to a particular perspective.
- 5 Compare how two texts reveal different values regarding a similar subject.

Preparing for the Composing section

The best way to prepare for this section is to practise writing imaginative, persuasive and interpretive texts that have been shaped for a particular purpose, audience and context. You need to demonstrate your understanding of a particular form, such as a speech or short narrative, and its associated language features.

Questions in this section typically come in three forms: a straightforward instruction, a prompt in the form of a quote, or a prompt in the form of a still image.

As with the other sections, the Composing section requires you to focus on particular syllabus concepts, namely composing a text within a particular form and for a particular purpose, audience and context. You may also be required to address an additional concept, such as voice, perspective or representation, or use textual features such as narrative point of view, rhetoric or figurative language.

Deconstructing the question

Begin by identifying the significant points of the question and planning your response.

EXAMPLE**Sample Composing question**

Compose an imaginative text in which the protagonist demonstrates both admirable and despicable qualities when faced with a conflict.

- 1 You must create a written imaginative text, in a form typical of imaginative texts.
- 2 You must demonstrate your understanding of characterisation in a narrative text. This means you must construct a central character – a protagonist – using narration, dialogue, character actions etc.
- 3 Your protagonist must display these contrasting qualities in response to a conflict. ►

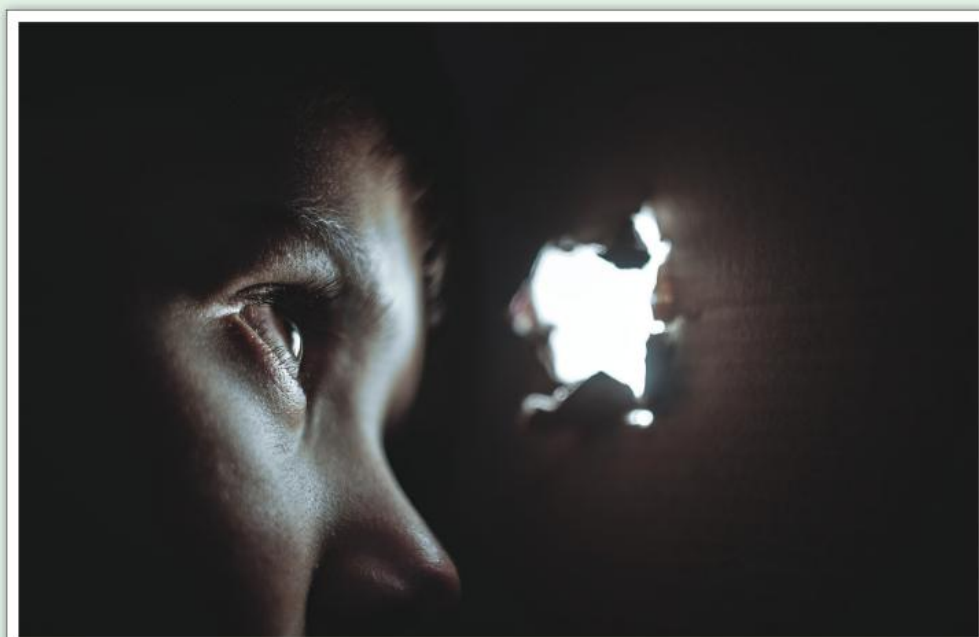
► Potential hazards include:

- not understanding the adjectives 'admirable' and 'despicable' and so creating a character that does not suit the task
- failing to demonstrate character qualities as a response to conflict.

ACTIVITY

Practise Composing

- 1 Using the image as inspiration, compose an imaginative text employing stylistic devices that give voice to a young person.



- 2 Compose a persuasive text offering a perspective on an idea expressed in the following quote. 'We live in an era of desire-based consumerism that has nothing to do with things we actually need.'
- 3 Create an imaginative text written from the perspective of a guilty character, where the primary aim is to evoke a specific emotion in the reader.
- 4 'Courage is not the absence of fear, it is going forward in the face of fear.'
Compose an interpretive text that incorporates this statement at a pivotal point.



See the digital bonus material for advice on how to study for the English exam and strategies to maximise your performance in the exam.

LANGUAGE FEATURES

Imaginative language features

There are literally hundreds of language and literary devices. Some of the more common ones are listed below.

DESCRIPTIVE LANGUAGE	Adjectives and adverbs	Adjectives are words that describe nouns; adverbs describe verbs.
	Connotation	Meaning that is suggested, rather than literal.
	Sensory details	Words and phrases that appeal to the reader's senses, typically of sight and hearing, but also of touch, taste and smell.
FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE	Anthropomorphism	Giving human qualities to an animal or object.
	Metaphor	A comparative device that describes one thing as being another.
	Metonymy	Using a word to represent a larger concept to which it is related, e.g. using 'the bottle' to refer to alcohol.
	Pathetic fallacy	Crediting nature with human traits, e.g. a description of the weather to symbolise a character's emotional state.
	Personification	Attributing human qualities to an object or phenomenon.
	Simile	A comparative device that describes one thing as being like another.
	Symbol	An object or phrase that embodies a range of meanings that extend beyond its literal definition.
	Synecdoche	Using a part to represent a whole concept, or something specific to represent the general, e.g. using 'hands' to refer to workers.
SOUND DEVICES	Zoomorphism	Giving animal-like qualities to something that is not an animal.
	Alliteration	Using words with the same initial sound in quick succession.
	Assonance	Using words with the same vowel sounds in quick succession.
	Cacophony	Combining words to create or imply a harsh or unpleasant sound.
	Consonance	Using words with the same consonant sounds, typically at the end, in quick succession.
	Euphony	Combining words to create or imply a pleasing sound.
	Onomatopoeia	Words that sound similar to the sound they are meant to depict.
PACE	Rhyme	Words that share the same or similar sounds.
	Caesura	A break in the rhythm of a line of poetry, created by splitting a sentence or interrupting its regular rhythm, resulting in a dramatic pause.
WORD PLAY	Rhythm	Patterns created through the arrangement of words according to syllables or the natural emphases created by their pronunciation.
	Irony	Using words with intended meanings that are different from, or even the opposite of, their literal meanings; often conveyed by the tone of delivery.
	Parody	The deliberate exaggeration of particular textual features of another work for humorous effect.
	Pun	A play on words, creating humour or irony through the fact that words have two or more meanings.
INTER-TEXTUALITY	Satire	Using humour or parody to draw attention to human flaws.
	Allegory	Exploring a complex or abstract concept through the creation of a more concrete example.
	Allusion	A casual reference to another literary work or real-world event.
	Analogy	Explaining something by comparing it with a similar thing that is more familiar to the audience.
INTER-TEXTUALITY	Quotation	Repeating the words of another work or person, to add meaning or authority to a text.

Persuasive language features

Dividing language and literary devices into imaginative and persuasive categories is somewhat arbitrary. All of the imaginative language features listed on the previous page may be found in persuasive texts and used for rhetorical effects. However, the following devices are specifically rhetorical, i.e. designed to persuade an audience.

It can be helpful to think about persuasive language devices in terms of those that appeal to the audience's emotions (pathos), those that appeal to their sense of logic and reason (logos) and those that aim to establish the writer or speaker's credibility and character (ethos).

PATHOS	Anaphora	The repetition of a word or phrase at the beginning of successive clauses.
	Attacks and praise	Affirming one idea or person while criticising their opposite.
	Colloquialism	Using vernacular or even slang language, often to appeal to the 'everyday' person.
	Cumulation	Sometimes called the 'rule of three', cumulation refers to the accumulation (heaping up) of descriptive words or phrases.
	Emotive language	Language that is highly emotional, designed to provoke an emotional response in the audience.
	Emphasis	The devices of repetition, alliteration or cumulation, used to add emphasis to or reinforce an idea.
	Generalisation	A statement that is expanded from a specific situation to a broad one, suggesting that what is true for some is true for most or all.
	Hyperbole	A deliberate exaggeration not meant to be taken literally.
	Inclusive language	Language, such as personal pronouns (e.g. 'we', 'us', 'our'), that makes the audience feel included in the writer's argument.
	Litotes	An ironic understatement in which an idea is expressed as not being its opposite (e.g. 'not at all bad').
	Repetition	The use of a key phrase, idea or image at multiple points.
	Rhetorical question	A question that is posed not to elicit an answer but to encourage the audience to think, or for which the answer is self-evident.
LOGOS	Aphorism	A short statement of belief or opinion that is expressed as a truth.
	Evidence	Facts or examples used to support an argument.
	Expert opinions	The inclusion of quotes or research from those who might be considered credible sources of information on the topic.
	Formal language	Language that conforms to the proper rules of grammar and is appropriate to address an educated or unfamiliar audience.
	Jargon	Terminology that is specific to or part of the discourse of a topic.
	Statistics	The presentation and analysis of data, often expressed numerically.
	Tricolon	A series of three words, phrases or sentences that are parallel in structure, length and/or rhythm, adding weight to a point.
ETHOS	Anecdote	A short, personal story about an experience of the speaker or writer, used to establish their familiarity with the topic.
	Credentials	Reference to the writer or speaker's qualifications or past experience to add credibility.
	Testimonials	Endorsements from experts or celebrities in support of the speaker or writer.

Spoken language features

The following table outlines some features associated with spoken language.

Accent	The ways in which words are pronounced, usually associated with a geographical region.
Back-channel	Words, phrases and non-verbal indicators that suggest the listener is paying attention to the speaker, such as 'I see', 'oh' or 'uh-huh'.
Dialect	Grammar and vocabulary that is particular to a specific region.
Diction or lexical choice	Word choice.
Elision	The omission or slurring of syllables or words, such as 'gonna' and 'g'day'.
Ellipsis	The omission of part of a sentence to create a casual tone, such as 'You going out tonight?' (missing 'are') or 'Don't know. You?' (missing 'I' and 'are').
Enunciation	The clear pronunciation of words.
Filler	Words and non-verbal indicators that allow a brief time to think or pause, such as 'um', 'ah' or an exaggerated thoughtful expression.
Fluency	The quality of speech in terms of its fluid and error-free delivery.
Idiolect	An individual person's style of speaking.
Intonation	The expression or tone carried by the voice; also refers to whether the voice is rising, falling or remaining at the same pitch.
Modality	The degree of uncertainty conveyed through language choices and spoken language features such as tone and fluency.
Non-verbal features	Features that inform spoken communication, such as eye contact, gesture, posture and movement.
Pace or tempo	The speed at which a person speaks.
Pause	A break or hesitation in speaking.
Pitch	The sound frequency (high or low) of a voice.
Register	The degree of formality of language used.
Rhythm	The measured flow of speech, established through patterns in diction, pace, intonation, stress etc.
Sociolect	A style of speaking associated with a particular social group.
Stress	Emphasis, created through diction, pauses, intonation etc.
Tone	Language choices that convey emotion or attitude.
Transition markers	Words and phrases that indicate transitions or relationships between ideas.
Volume	The loudness or softness of a speaker.

Visual and multimodal language features

The following tables outline some of the main language features for analysing images and multimodal texts.

Mise en scène

Mise en scène refers to all the visual elements within the frame.

LIGHTING	Colour	Establishes atmosphere and tone through the symbolic associations of certain colours. For example, a palette of yellows can create warmth, while red might suggest anger or passion.
	Contrast	The juxtaposition of light and dark areas of the image; can be used to draw attention to certain points.
	Key	High key lighting is bright, leaving few shadows; low key is the opposite. Key lighting helps to establish the atmosphere or tone of the image.
SETTING	Environment	The aspects of the surroundings that indicate the time and place of an image and the location of the subjects.
	Props	Short for 'properties' – objects within the image that contribute to the setting and characterisation of the subjects.
SUBJECT	Body language	Includes the postures, facial expressions and actions of the subjects.
	Costume	Subjects are the people – or objects – that are the focus of the image. Costumes are essential elements in establishing people's character.

Composition

Composition refers to the specific placement of elements within an image. For example, objects may be arranged along a horizontal or vertical plane, or along a diagonal or another leading line (vector) that draws the viewer's eye.

CAMERA ANGLE	Eye level	Puts the viewer on the same level as the subject, suggesting equality between them.
	High angle / bird's eye	Positions the viewer as looking down on the subject. This suggests the subject is powerless or inferior in some way.
	Low angle / worm's eye	Positions the viewer as looking up at the subject, giving the subject a sense of dominance or power.
	Oblique	Refers to an image that is captured on an angle.
SHOT TYPE	Close-up / extreme close-up	Close-ups force the viewer to get up close and personal with the subject; extreme close-ups can be confronting, forcing the viewer to focus on a particular detail of the subject.
	Establishing / long shot	Positions the viewer far away from the subject. This can work to create emotional distance, or it may be used to reveal the subject's small stature in their environment.
	Full / medium shot	Brings the subject closer to the viewer. In a full shot the subject fills the frame, whereas a medium shot only shows their torso and head. These are common techniques as they offer a detailed representation of the subject.

Density	Refers to how crowded the image is. Images that contain many elements appear busy or claustrophobic.
Depth of field	The degree to which the objects in a shot, from foreground to background, are in focus.
Film stock	The type of film used, such as black-and-white, sepia or colour.
Framing	The positioning of the subject within the image, e.g. centrally, or to one side of the image; including the whole of the subject, or only part.
Proxemics	The relative closeness of subjects within the image. The closer they are, the closer their relationship.
Salience	Refers to the dominant subject of the image, created through its size, the focus of the image, lighting and/or colour choices.
Staging positions	The direction the subjects face relative to the camera. Descriptive terms include full front, quarter turn, profile, and back to camera.

Text

Text refers to any words included in the image, such as titles, captions, speech bubbles, slogans and logos.

Position	Where in the image the text is placed. Position affects the degree to which the text draws the viewer's eye.
Ratio	The proportions of text and image in relation to each other. This determines which element has greater significance.
Typography	The style of font, including its colour and size. These elements contribute to the tone or atmosphere of the image.

Camera movement and focus

Dolly	The camera is mounted on a moving platform (dolly) and smoothly moves closer to (dolly in) or further away from (dolly out) the subject.	Gives the impression that the viewer is moving to/from the subject; creates a less artificial effect than zooming.
Handheld	The camera moves naturalistically, as if held by human hands.	Used to mimic human movement, or to create intimacy between the viewer and the subject, as if they are in the scene.
Pan	The camera rotates horizontally (left or right), from a fixed position.	Used to follow a moving character or take in a large scene, such as a landscape.
Pedestal	The camera moves vertically up or down without changing the angle of the shot.	Used to create a sense that the viewer is moving along with the subject.
Tilt	The camera moves vertically up or down, but from a fixed position.	Gives a sense of height and positions the viewer relative to the subject.
Truck	The camera moves horizontally, typically maintaining focus on a subject, without changing the angle of the shot.	Used to create a sense that the viewer is moving along with the subject.
Zoom	Changes the focal length of the lens, giving the impression of moving closer to or further away from the subject.	Used to highlight specific details, or manipulate the intimacy of the relationship between viewer and subject.

Editing

Crossfade	A gradual fade from one shot to the next.	A slow transition to create mood or indicate lengthy time passing.
Cut / cutaway	A sharp transition from one shot to another.	Used to switch to action that is happening elsewhere, or at a later time.
Fade	A gradual fade to or from a blank screen, typically black.	Often used to signal the beginning or ending of a film or complete sequence.
Jump cut	A type of cut between two sequential shots of the same subject, but from different positions or slightly later in the sequence.	Compresses time by progressing more quickly through a scene than it would take in reality.
L-cut	A cut in which the visuals transition while the audio continues (or vice versa).	Can be used to smooth the transition between scenes, or to create intrigue or tension by introducing sound before the viewer sees the visuals.
Match cut	A cut between two shots that are matched or linked through similar composition to create continuity.	Maintains visual continuity while switching between scenes.
Shot reverse shot	A cut between shots of two subjects within the same scene.	Often used to create tension, e.g. switching between characters having an argument.
Split screen	The screen is physically split, allowing two shots to be shown at once.	Used to indicate scenes happening simultaneously.
Wipe	Various types of gradual transitions whereby one shot blends into another.	Used to create a slower transition to new scene.

Sound

Diegetic	Sounds that are natural within the scene and are able to be heard by characters, such as dialogue, street noise, doors closing, and music on a radio.	Adds to the realism of a scene.
Extra-diegetic	Music and sound effects that are heard by the audience, but are not present within the scene, such as voice-over commentary, the music soundtrack, and sound effects for dramatic purposes.	Creates atmosphere and manipulates the audience's response.

This appendix explains the main conventions and features of a number of the common text forms that you are likely to analyse and/or create. See Appendix 1 for further definitions and explanations of many of these features.

Prose narratives

Prose narratives are stories told in continuous prose (as opposed to poetry and plays) and include novels and short stories. Knowledge of the conventions of narratives – such as plot, setting, narrative structure, narrative point of view, characterisation and themes – is essential for an accurate and effective analysis of texts in this form.

Example

Below is the exposition of the novel *The Alarming Palsy of James Orr* by UK writer Tom Lee, published in 2017 by Granta.

The diagram illustrates the analysis of a prose narrative excerpt. A central text block is surrounded by nine callout boxes, each with an arrow pointing to a specific part of the text. The callout boxes are:

- CHARACTER**: Opening introduces the protagonist through his name and thoughts. (Points to 'James Orr')
- BACKSTORY**: The narrator includes reference to the past or seemingly minor details that help to build a sense of characters and their relationships. (Points to 'James had been sleeping in the spare room for several weeks')
- DIALOGUE**: The speech of characters is presented as dialogue to accompany their actions. (Points to 'Oh!' said Sarah Orr)
- DESCRIPTIVE LANGUAGE**: Descriptive language builds sensory imagery. Types of imagery include visual (sight), tactile (touch), auditory (sound), olfactory (smell) and gustatory (taste). (Points to 'The left-hand side of James's face had collapsed, a balloon with the air gone out of it')
- NARRATIVE POINT OF VIEW**: This text is written in the **third person**. Variations of third-person narration include **omniscient** (unlimited knowledge of events and characters) and **limited** (the narrator tells the story from one character's viewpoint). Other narrative points of view are **first person** (a character tells the story using 'I') and **second person** (using 'you' to place the reader into the story). (Points to the entire text block)
- EXPOSITION**: The initial stage in a narrative, the exposition introduces the setting and character(s). (Points to the first sentence)
- CONFLICT**: The narrative must have a disruption, problem or **conflict**. Using a technique more often associated with the short-story form, this text establishes conflict extremely quickly, in the protagonist's sudden change in appearance. (Points to 'James continued to the bathroom and there, in the mirror, he saw the cause of her dismay')
- FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE**: Use of figurative language includes **metaphors**, **similes** and **symbolism**. (Points to 'a balloon with the air gone out of it')
- SENTENCE STRUCTURES**: Sentences include a mixture of **minor**, **simple**, **compound** and **complex sentences**. The writer uses different sentence structures to control the **pace**, **tone** and **style**. (Points to 'The left-hand side of James's face had collapsed, a balloon with the air gone out of it, a melted waxwork. The cheek was hollow and the skin hung in a bulge over the side of his jaw, a grotesque one-sided jowl. The side of his mouth had fallen, too, the pale line of his lips angling sharply downwards. Where the bottom of the eyelid had pulled down, the full white of the eye was exposed, as well as its veiny roots. The skin itself was different. Yellowed, bloodless, and a little shiny.')

Text Excerpt:

When James Orr woke up, a little later than usual, he had the sense that there was something not quite right, some indefinable shift in the normal order of things, but it was not until he bumped into his wife on the landing – James had been sleeping in the spare room for several weeks – that he had a clue as to what it might be.

'Oh!' said Sarah Orr, and put her hand to her mouth in genuine alarm.

James continued to the bathroom and there, in the mirror, he saw the cause of her dismay – and such dismay did not seem unreasonable.

The left-hand side of James's face had collapsed, a balloon with the air gone out of it, a melted waxwork. The cheek was hollow and the skin hung in a bulge over the side of his jaw, a grotesque one-sided jowl. The side of his mouth had fallen, too, the pale line of his lips angling sharply downwards. Where the bottom of the eyelid had pulled down, the full white of the eye was exposed, as well as its veiny roots. The skin itself was different. Yellowed, bloodless, and a little shiny.

Plays

Plays are dramatic texts written to be performed on the stage. Essential features of the form include narrative conventions such as dialogue, monologues, soliloquies, silences, avoidances and omissions; elements of plot and structure such as the number of acts and/or scenes; elements of stagecraft such as lighting, set design and props; and stage directions that can specify settings, entrances and exits, and the ways in which characters speak and move.

Example

The following extract is from the opening scene of Ray Lawler's play *Summer of the Seventeenth Doll*, published by Currency Press and first performed in 1955.

STRUCTURE

Traditionally plays have three to five **acts**, divided into **scenes**.

STAGE DIRECTIONS (SETTING)

Written in italics, stage directions at the start of a scene indicate the **setting** and **props**. They might include the playwright's comments on characters; they can be purely functional or highly descriptive and poetic. Here, the descriptions of Pearl's costume and actions suggest a woman who considers herself better than those around her, consolidated by the playwright's ironic final stage direction mocking Pearl.

ACT ONE

SCENE ONE

It is five o'clock on a warm Sunday afternoon in early December 1953. The sitting room table has been set for a celebration meal.

BUBBA is busily tying wide blue ribbons to a couple of red-and-white striped candy walking sticks. At the same time, she is chatting with shy but determined authority to PEARL CUNNINGHAM, who is sitting nearby, smoking and ostensibly leafing her way through a fashion magazine. PEARL is a widow in her early forties, driven back to earning a living by the one job she knows well, that of barmaid. Given the choice, she would prefer something of a more classy nature—head saleswoman in a dress salon, for instance. The pub game, she feels, is rather crude. She is wearing what she refers to as her good black, with a double string of pearls. Very discreet.

BUBBA: So—I was the only one went to the wedding. Autumn it was and the boys were away, though of course, when Olive wrote up and told them, they sent down money for a present. But I was the one who had to buy it and take it along. Olive wouldn't have anythin' to do with it. Wouldn't even help me pick anythin' out.

PEARL: *[a fishing expedition]* The—boys—didn't mind her getting married, then?

BUBBA: *[frowning a little]* Bound to. 'Specially Barney—must've been a shock to him—but like I say, they wouldn't do anythin' to stand in her way. That's how they are, see. Olive was the one really kicked up a fuss. Wouldn't believe, even up to the Saturday afternoon, that Nance'd go through with it.

PEARL: Seems to me this Nancy had her head screwed on the right way.

BUBBA: *[caught, forgetting the candy sticks for a moment]* She got tired of the waitin', I think. Olive doesn't mind it, she just looks forward to the next time, but it used to get on Nance's nerves a bit. And of course, she reads a lot, and this feller, this Harry Allaway—he runs a bookshop, and he'd bring books into the pub for her. I s'pose that's how he got around her, really. I don't reckon Barney's ever read a book in his life.

CHARACTERS

Names are indicated using capitalised letters prior to speech.

STAGE DIRECTIONS (CHARACTER)

Written in italics in brackets preceding a character's dialogue, stage directions indicate the tone, volume, attitude or manner in which a character speaks, and their location or movement. They can signal a character's personality, motivations and intentions.

DIALOGUE

Characters' speech is written as it is to be spoken by actors.

PUNCTUATION

Dashes (–) and ellipses (...) indicate pauses in speech. This re-creates the authenticity of spoken speech on the written page.

Screenplays

Screenplays are the scripts writers create for TV shows or films. They have their own structure and layout on the page (including specific margins, not covered here) and contain the dialogue as well as settings. Some contain detailed personal direction or instructions for directors; however, screenplay writers are often advised not to tell actors how to deliver lines or directors how to direct and film shots.

Example

This sample script illustrates some common conventions, metalanguage and structure of film/TV screenplays.

TRANSITIONS
All scripts open with the transition term **FADE IN** in capitals followed by a colon.

SCENE HEADINGS
Headings indicate the location of the scene; elements, separated by dashes, give the location, time and other details.
INT – internal shot inside a location.
EXT – external shot outside a location (often aerial or establishing shots).
EXT/INT – camera moves from exterior to interior (or vice versa) in a single uninterrupted shot.

CAMERA DIRECTION
Specific camera actions or shots are described in camera directions.

DIALOGUE
Characters' speech is presented as dialogue.

TRANSITIONS
All scripts end with the transition term **FADE OUT** in capitals followed by a full stop.

TITLE
The film title is written on page 1 of the screenplay, underlined and in capitals.

SLUG LINES
These give specific descriptions of a character's actions or settings.

ON-SCREEN TEXT
'Superimpose' is used for written text that will appear on screen.

CHARACTER CUES
The character name (in capitals) is followed by their lines of **dialogue**.

PERSONAL DIRECTION / PARENTHETICALS
As with stage directions in plays, text placed in brackets following **character cues** indicates **how** a character speaks. It is usually limited to a few words (1) or may be a full sentence, without brackets, if between actions (2).

THE INTERVIEW

FADE IN:

EXT/INT. CITY SKYLINE – ULTRA-MODERN GLASS SKYSCRAPER – DAY – TRACKING to follow a suited **INTERVIEWEE** into office as he meets **INTERVIEWER**.

INTERVIEWER wears a slightly worn suit and tie. **INTERVIEWEE** in black suit, black shirt, black tie; clean, expensive.

INTERVIEWEE looks around the room, calmly ignoring **INTERVIEWER**

INTERVIEWER'S P.O.V

SUPERIMPOSE: "YESTERDAY 09.00"

INTERVIEWER

Thank you for coming in today.

(Glances at **INTERVIEWEE**, no response) (1)

As you are aware, the organisation is looking to increase its pool.

We're looking for the best and you have quite an impressive resume.

INTERVIEWEE folds arms and stares with cold eyes directly at **INTERVIEWER**. (2)

INTERVIEWEE

I will not swim in your so-called pool.

(Slowly pulls out gun. Shoots **INTERVIEWER**.)

FADE OUT.

Feature films

Feature films are fictional full-length films or, more colloquially, movies. The name 'feature film' comes from a time when it was the main film in a cinema session that also included a short film, newsreel or other entertainment. Generally structured as narratives, feature films portray characters in plots with (usually) a resolution; they often conform to a particular genre or blend of genres. Feature films may be live-action, animated or a blend of the two. Hybrids may involve a blend of feature film and documentary forms.

Examples

These screenshots are taken from *Mad Max: Fury Road* (2015) directed by George Miller and *V for Vendetta* (2006) directed by James McTeigue.

CINEMATOGRAPHY

Cinematography, the art of photography and camera work, includes most technical elements of film such as **lighting, framing, composition, camera motion, camera angles, film selection, lens choices, depth of field, zoom, focus, colour, exposure and filtration.**



SHOT TYPE / SIZE

The distance from the camera to the subject. Shot types include:

extreme wide shot (EWS)
long shot (LS) / wide shot (WS)
full shot (FS)
over-the-shoulder shot (OSS)
medium long shot (MLS) / medium wide shot (MWS)
medium shot (MS)
medium close-up (MCU)
close-up (CU)
extreme close-up (ECU).



MISE EN SCÈNE

Meaning 'putting on stage', the mise en scène includes **setting, lighting, decor, props, costumes** and the **positions or actions of the actors.**



CAMERA MOVEMENT

The movement of the camera has specific terms including **zoom in/out, panning, tilt, dolly, truck, pedestal** and **rack focus.**

AUDIO

Audio codes include **dialogue, sound effects (SFX), diegetic and non-diegetic audio** such as **soundtrack songs** or **voice-over narration.**

EDITING

In the editing process, film is cut and arranged, creating **transitions** between shots using techniques such as the **cut, fade-in, fade-out, dissolve, cross dissolve, wipe, cutaway, cross-cut, jump cut, iris** and **shot reverse shot.**

Documentaries

Documentaries are interpretive texts that offer an interpretation of an event, person, place, issue or topic. Some are more persuasive and direct than others; these are called polemics. Documentaries contain interviews with real people, feature a range of footage types and involve careful editing and selection of detail. They may be the length of a feature film, shorter for a one-off TV program, or a series (as has been made popular through streaming platforms such as Netflix and Stan). Hybrid forms include docusoaps, docudramas and feature films that incorporate documentary conventions.

Example

These screenshots are taken from the documentary *Bowling for Columbine* (2002) directed by Michael Moore.

FOOTAGE

Various footage types are used in the construction of most documentaries, including the following.

Actuality footage – footage taken for the purpose of the documentary.

File/archive footage – previously filmed footage retrieved from other sources.

Reconstructed footage / re-enactments – new footage shot to re-enact a prior event.

Constructed footage – new scripted footage shot specifically for the documentary.



Michael Moore as director and on-screen focaliser.



Moore conducting an interview.

EVIDENCE

Evidence may be presented through **interviews** (direct or indirect) with experts, victims, opponents etc.; **case studies**; **facts and statistics**; **graphics, animations and charts**; **dramatisations / re-enactments / walk-throughs** and **vox pops**.

Photographs and historical references may also provide context.

EDITING

In the editing process, film is cut and arranged, creating **transitions** between shots using techniques such as the **cut**, **fade-in**, **fade-out**, **dissolve**, **cross dissolve**, **wipe**, **cutaway**, **cross-cut**, **jump cut**, **iris** and **shot reverse shot**.

FOCALISER

The focaliser is the person who guides the viewer through the documentary.

They may be an on-screen presence or simply a voice-over narrator. The focaliser may be an outsider, such as a reporter, or a player in the issue, such as a victim.

AUDIO

The soundtrack may include the following.

Voice-over – narrator or focaliser's voice that we hear while images are being shown.

Music – frequently used to enhance mood or tone.

Sound effects – used to add emphasis or generate particular emotional responses.

Diegetic sound – background sounds that offer authenticity to footage.

Dialogue – conversation between subjects.

TV series

Television series or serials are works in episode-to-episode format. TV series can be in a variety of genres – such as comedy and sitcoms – but most tend to be in the drama genre. They include soap operas (e.g. *Neighbours*); family dramas (*Empire*, *Friday Night Lights*); crime dramas (*CSI*, *Underbelly*); legal dramas (*The Good Wife*); medical dramas (*Grey's Anatomy*); sci-fi (*Mr. Robot*); fantasy (*Game of Thrones*); horror (*The Walking Dead*); and comedy dramas (*Shameless*, *Orange Is the New Black*). Series that consist of standalone episodes are called anthology series (e.g. *Black Mirror*).

TV series use many of the same conventions as feature films in terms of technical elements such as cinematography and mise en scène. In the past, TV serials had lower budgets and production values than big-budget Hollywood feature films, but this is no longer the case. Conventions of TV serials are constantly changing as the form evolves.

Examples

The images below are taken from the TV series *Glitch* and *Jessica Jones*.

DURATION

Designed to fill one-hour or half-hour slots, episodes of TV series typically run for around 25 or 55 minutes (or less, to accommodate advertisements),

EPISODES AND NARRATIVE ARC

Most TV series are **continuing story series** whose storyline continues each episode, building on the central narrative arc.

Narrative strands can also follow **subplots**. Often these strands will be tied together in the central narrative arc.

OPENING CREDIT SEQUENCES

Opening credit sequences tend to contain familiar theme tunes or cast lists, which traditionally set the tone and mood of the program. Some shows have **pre-credit sequences** revealing action or setting up the exposition of the episode. In 2004 *Lost* premiered with a 15-second **title card** – a minimalist sequence with eerie instruments and just the spinning title.

Now, without the need for advertisements, Netflix shows such as *Jessica Jones* have brought back the longer title sequence.



ABC's *Glitch*: an Australian supernatural drama TV serial (2015–19).

RECAP

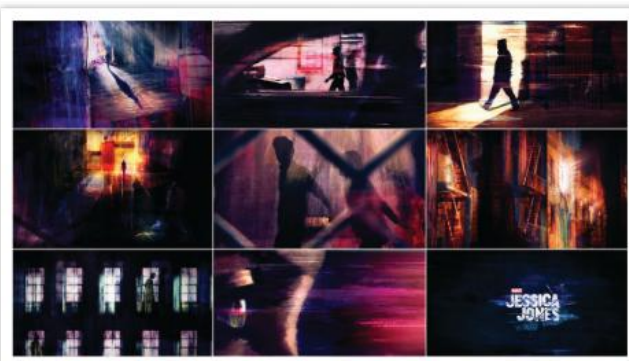
Most TV serials use a recap at the start of each episode to remind viewers what happened previously.

LACK OF RESOLUTION

Episodes rise to a dramatic **climax**, yet defer **resolution** from episode to episode. Often seasons end with major **cliff-hangers** to entice viewers to watch the next season.

CHARACTERS

TV series tend to be **character-driven narratives** as opposed to theme- or idea-driven (as with some feature films).



The title sequence to Netflix's *Jessica Jones* (2015–19): arty, slow and detailed.

Blog posts / Opinion pieces

Blog posts and opinion pieces allow a writer to convey personal opinions to a wider audience. They may be published on regularly updated, individually owned websites, or written as regular columns by journalists for digital publications such as newspapers and magazines. The writing style of personal blogs is often intimate and honest, and either funny or emotive. Opinion pieces published in newspapers and magazines often have a more formal style and rely more on research and evidence.

Example

This opinion piece by Mark Maslin and Carmen Nab was published on *The Conversation* website in 2021.

HEADLINE

The headline here summarises the writers' contention and contributes to a reassuring, helpful tone.

EMOTIVE LANGUAGE

Loaded terms such as 'worst offenders' and 'hefty' suggest the problem is serious and evoke anxiety in the reader.

EVIDENCE

Case studies, examples, facts or statistics are often used to support and strengthen an argument.

PARAGRAPHS

These vary in length, with short paragraphs adding emphasis to key points.

FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE

Using plays on words such as 'bitter taste' and 'costing the Earth' contributes to an engaging writing style and reinforces the argument.

COFFEE: HERE'S THE CARBON COST OF YOUR DAILY CUP – AND HOW TO MAKE IT CLIMATE-FRIENDLY

For many of us, coffee is essential. It allows us to function in the morning and gives a much needed boost during the day. But in new research, we revealed the effect that our favourite caffeine hit has on the planet.

Weight for weight, coffee produced by the least sustainable means generates as much carbon dioxide as cheese and has a carbon footprint only half that of one of the worst offenders – beef. And that's all before adding milk, which carries its own hefty environmental baggage.

Fortunately, there are greener ways of growing coffee. In our study, we calculated and compared the carbon footprints of conventional and sustainable Arabica coffee – the beans baristas use to make a high-quality brew – from two of the world's largest producers, Brazil and Vietnam. We found that changing how coffee is grown, transported and consumed can slash the crop's carbon emissions by up to 77%.

Growing a single kilogram of Arabica coffee in either country and exporting it produces greenhouse gas emissions equivalent to 15.33 kg of carbon dioxide on average. That's raw, pre-roasted beans (otherwise known as "green coffee") produced using conventional methods. But by using less fertiliser, managing water and energy use more efficiently during milling and exporting the beans by cargo ship rather than aeroplane, that figure falls to 3.51 kg of CO₂ equivalent per kg of coffee.

The average cup of coffee contains about 18 g of green coffee, so 1 kg of it can make 56 espressos. Just one espresso has an average carbon footprint of about 0.28 kg, but it could be as little as 0.06 kg if grown sustainably.

There are plenty of other ways to shrink the carbon footprint of sustainable coffee even further, like replacing chemical fertilisers with organic waste and using renewable energy to power farm equipment. Roasting coffee beans in their country of origin makes them lighter during transport too, so vessels can burn less fuel transporting the same amount of coffee.

Of course, it's not just carbon emissions that leave a bitter taste. The coffee industry is plagued by human rights abuses and other environmental issues, such as water pollution and habitat destruction. Certification schemes exist to ensure coffee meets a minimum ethical standard during its journey from crop field to shop shelf. These schemes need constant improvement as the industry grows. One way to do that would be including our recommendations for growing more climate-friendly coffee, so that people can buy certified coffee with confidence that their daily luxury isn't costing the Earth.

INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE

Inclusive language such as 'we' and 'us' aims to establish a rapport with the audience through reference to a common or shared experience.

VOICE

First-person pronouns, together with references to research and statistics, create an educated and authoritative voice.

ARGUMENT

The argument unfolds in a logical and easy-to-follow way, supported by research and evidence.

AUDIENCE

The audience is assumed to care about the environment and be eager to learn about ways to reduce their negative impact on it.

CONCLUSION

The conclusion often involves a **call to action**, a demand or a restatement of the main contention.

News articles

News articles report on events globally, nationally and locally. Reporting generally aims to be objective; however, all news publications are influenced by factors such as their owners, advertisers and target audience. News articles usually follow a standard format. The style, tone and language may vary and demonstrate allegiances or biases.

Example

The following news article by Sarah Steger was published on the *Perth Now* news website in 2019.

HEADLINE

This is usually a short attention-getting statement about the event.

ADVENTURE WORLD PUNTERS IN FIRE DRAMA

Families enjoying a day out at Cockburn Ice Arena have been forced to evacuate while Adventure World patrons have been held at a designated emergency meeting point after a bushfire ignited south of Perth.

LEAD

The lead is the opening paragraph, which provides the key facts, usually using the **5Ws**: who, what, where, when, why (and often how).

STRUCTURE

News articles use the **inverted pyramid** structure, beginning with the most important information and ending with the least important.

The structure usually proceeds as follows.

- Lead
- Background information
- Detail
- Further information
- Least important information

Aerial support assisted firefighters on the ground battling the blaze, which started near the intersection of North Lake Road and Discovery Drive in Bibra Lake just before 1pm.

An emergency warning was issued for people between Progress Drive, Bibra Drive and North Lake Road.

That has since been downgraded to an 'advice' alert level, with the fire contained and controlled as firefighters patrol the area and mop up.

There is no threat to lives or homes despite a lot of smoke in the area.

A spokesperson from the Department of Fire and Emergency Services said firefighters were dispatched to the area after a triple-0 caller reported the blaze.

Most at risk were Adventure World and Cockburn Ice Arena, which were both within the emergency warning area.

A witness described Adventure World as "packed" and said staff were handing out water to patrons.

A woman who took her children to the theme park today told *The West Australian* they had "been evacuated as there was a fire" but weren't being allowed to leave.

"I am at Adventure World and been evacuated as there is a fire. My car is in the car park where the fire is and all people are not allowed to leave the park," she said.

A spokeswoman for DFES said both the ice rink and Adventure World had been evacuated.

She said while no homes were currently under threat, it was a "fast-evolving situation".

ACCURACY

The story must be factually accurate, and include supporting facts, statistics, quotes and information.

INTERVIEWS/QUOTES

Quotes or paraphrases from people involved in the event, such as witnesses, or with related expertise, such as emergency services workers and politicians, are often included.

LANGUAGE

News articles are written in the **past tense** and in **third person**.

HYPERLINKS

Online news articles frequently include hyperlinks to related stories or additional information.

For up-to-the-minute warnings visit [Emergency.wa.gov.au](https://www.emergency.wa.gov.au)

ATTRIBUTION

Attributed quotes are those for which the speaker is clearly identified, e.g. 'a spokesperson from the Department of Fire and Emergency Services'.
Unattributed quotes are those for which a specific speaker or organisation is not identified, e.g. 'a witness'.

Feature articles

Feature articles are in-depth articles usually published in print or online newspapers or magazines. Types of feature articles include profiles of an individual or organisation, investigative articles providing detailed coverage of an issue or event, and opinionative articles, in which a writer presents their opinion on an issue. Feature articles combine journalistic and persuasive techniques (statistics, rhetorical questions, expert opinion etc.) with literary fiction techniques (description, characterisation, dialogue, figurative language etc.), and usually include images such as photos, graphics and cartoons.

Example

The images and text below are taken from soccer website *FourFourTwo*'s profile feature article on Brazilian soccer player Richarlison.

HEADLINE
Attention-grabbing headlines often include a pun, a quote or **emotive language**.

TEASER / KICKER
The introductory or summary sentences, known as the kicker or teaser (or sometimes the **preamble**), set up the subject, content and tone of the text.

PROSODIC FEATURES
Particular language choices create powerful sound effects, e.g. **alliteration**, **sibilance**.

TEXT GRAB
Extended excerpts from the body of the text (**columns**), often quotations, draw attention to key information or ideas.

EXPOSITION
Setting or **situation** is established in the exposition to create a more literary, narrative style of writing.

DIALOGUE
Speech is written as dialogue, as in prose fiction.

MAIN IMAGE
This article includes a full-page main image.

DESIGN / COLOUR
Design aims to make text visually appealing and reflects the subject matter.

DROPPED CAPITAL
Large capital letter begins the text, orienting the reader.

COLUMNS
As with newspaper articles, the text is usually arranged in columns.

SECONDARY IMAGES
Additional images accompany the text and provide additional information or a different perspective.

CAPTIONS
Captions often accompany images and provide context.

CHARACTERISATION
Descriptive language, **detail** and **figurative language** develop the character of the subject being profiled.

Watford's wing wizard Richarlison had to grow up fast on Brazil's mean streets – that's why the 20-year-old is so determined and ready to make the most of his big break

WONDER AT A CAR WASH, THEN PROCEEDED AND MADE THOUGHTS. BUT I WON'T LIE IT – PLAYING FOOTBALL WAS ALL I COULD EVER THINK ABOUT

Richarlison stares blankly at the miniature pool table waiting at his feet. "Could you put one of the balls?" asks *FourFourTwo*'s photographer, in English.

The Watford forward turns to a Brazilian member of the crew for an explanation in his native tongue, but clarification doesn't cure the look of bemusement. Undeterred, he collapses his gangly 5ft 11in frame like a Transformer experiencing a malfunction, elbows and knees akimbo as he lines up his shot. As our snapper crouches to line up his own shot, Richarlison's agent, plus his agent's wife and a family friend, hang over the back of a sofa at the 20-year-old's Hertfordshire home, poised to capture the moment on camera phones.

CRACK! The white ball connects with its target at speed, propelling it into a corner pocket.

"YEEEEAAHHHH!!!" his trio of devotees cheer, throwing their hands up in celebration. "Got it," says *FFT*'s photographer.

It took just one take. Like most other things the Brazilian's attempted since coming to England last July, it all comes too easy.

He cost Watford £11.5 million to buy from Fluminense, but dealing with the pressure of a high transfer fee is a piece of cake when you're

Speeches

A speech is an oral text, usually initially written, that uses the art of rhetoric – oral language features – as well as gestures, body language and facial expressions to persuade, inspire, entertain or engage an audience.

Example

The following extract is from a speech given by Minister for Foreign Affairs Marise Payne at the 2019 opening of the Australian War Memorial's special exhibition, *The Courage for Peace*, which tells the stories of those who work to make, shape and keep peace for Australians and others around the globe.

AUDIENCE
The speaker addresses an audience presumably interested in the exhibition and supportive of its aims.

INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE
Inclusive pronouns 'our' and 'we' contribute to a sense of shared national identity.

APPEALS
Appeals to **values** assumed to be shared by the speaker, audience and wider nation.

ABSTRACT NOUNS
Abstract nouns (e.g. 'prosperity', 'harmony', 'courage') promote particular values and contribute to a formal **style** and serious **tone**.

CALL TO ACTION
The speech concludes with a call to collective action.

REpetition
Repetition of key words such as 'peace' reinforces the speaker's central message and contributes to an oratorical tone.

HISTORICAL REFERENCES
References to historical events provide **context** and contribute to a sense of occasion and importance.

EMOTIVE LANGUAGE
Vocabulary such as 'clear-eyed' and 'principled' aims to evoke pride and hope in the audience.

LISTING
Listing creates rhythm, and suggests an accretion of ideas. **Syndetic listing** uses conjunctions such as 'and' to separate items, while **asyndetic listing** uses commas.

In our history, Australia has contributed troops to a dozen wars. I believe, and the Memorial's new exhibition, *The Courage for Peace*, demonstrates that we should be equally proud that Australia has contributed to more than three times that many peacekeeping operations and most of those unarmed. While the numbers of those serving in peacekeeping operations don't match numerically those who served in those wars, we shouldn't lose sight of the fact that as a country we don't shrink from the task of bringing peace and saving lives even, as I've said, at the risk of our own. Indeed, generations of Australian governments have decided the building of peace is at least as important as the making of war.

We are a country that walks clear-eyed towards problems, willing to shoulder a burden. There are authors who write about wars of choice and wars of necessity, and this magnificent building records and preserves our experiences in both. But for peacekeeping the distinction is immaterial. It is both a necessity and a choice for principled nations like Australia to contribute to peace missions.

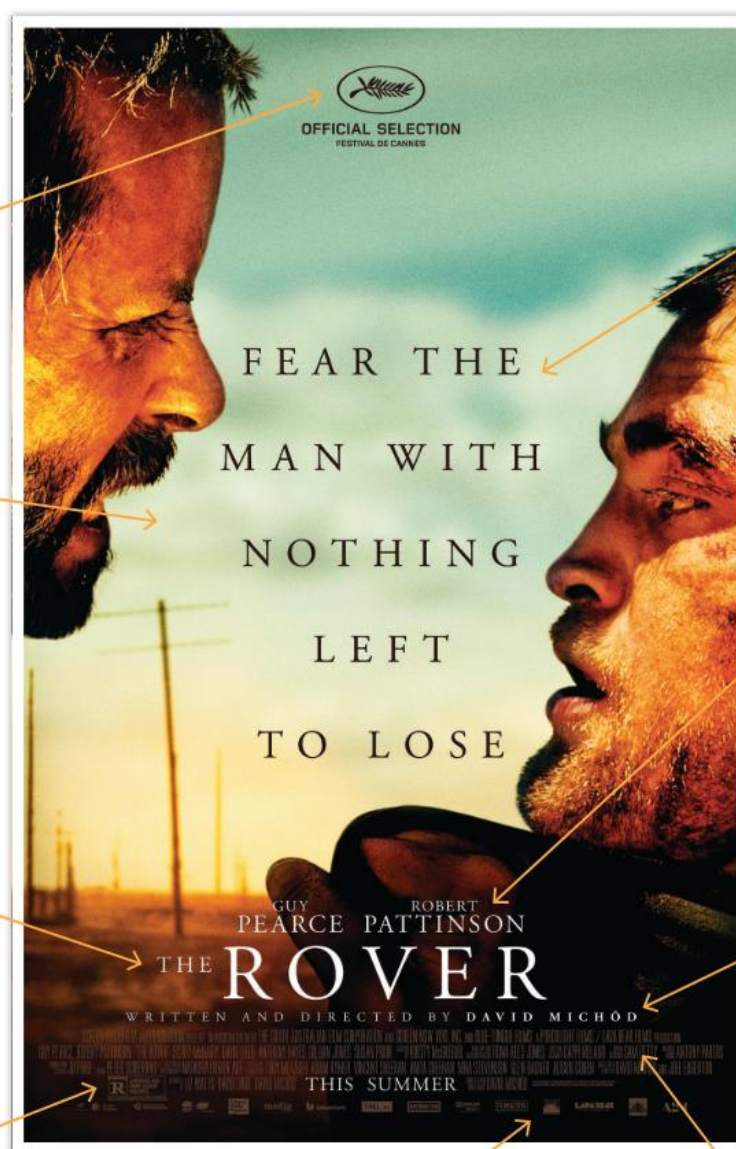
And if we are to live in a rules-based international order where we do not accept that coercion and force dictate the outcomes of disputes; if we choose a world where values and principles are worth defending, and the rights of nations to enjoy prosperity and harmony under international law are paramount; we genuinely believe that inhumanity, genocide, unchecked state-sponsored violence, perpetual instability have no place in the modern world; then we have no choice but to have the courage to stand up, step forward, share the burden of collective security, regional stability, and breaking the cycle of violence, so that peace has the room to re-establish itself.

Posters/Advertisements

Posters and print advertisements can be used to promote a variety of products, including texts such as films and books. They may also be used by governments or charity organisations in order to present such information as is contained in Public Service Announcements (PSAs) to promote an idea, a cause or an issue.

Example

The poster below advertises *The Rover*, an Australian dystopian film written and directed by David Michôd and released in 2014.



LOGO / CRITIC REVIEW

Logos of prestigious film festivals or quotations from film reviews suggest the popularity or high quality of the film.

MAIN IMAGE

The central image provides information about the **genre**, **style**, **setting** and **characters**.

TITLE

The title is prominent, using a large and often distinctive font.

CLASSIFICATION

Classification ratings advise audiences about the level of adult content (language, violence, sex etc.) and age recommendations or restrictions.

TAGLINE / SLOGAN

On film/book posters, taglines provide a catchy summary of the plot or themes of the text. In product advertising, the similar use of a catchy phrase to encapsulate the product's appeal is called a slogan, e.g. Nike's slogan is 'Just Do It'.

CAST / LEAD ACTORS

Names and images of leading cast members aim to persuade the viewer, through the appeal of 'star power', to watch the film.

DIRECTOR / PRODUCER

Including the director and/or producer's name can convey the likely **style** or **genre** of the film and allows viewers to select movies based on their knowledge of these contributors' prior work.

PRODUCTION CREDITS / BILLING BLOCK

The body of text at the bottom of film posters is often called the **billing block** as it contains the names or the 'billing' of the **cast** and **production crew**.

PRODUCTION LOGOS

The indication of the institutions involved in the production of the film can convey information about the **quality**, **style** or **genre** of the film. For example, Disney and Pixar are synonymous with children's films, while Blumhouse is a leader in the horror genre.

Photo essays

Photojournalism involves using photographs, rather than words, to tell a story, or to represent people, events or places. Photo essays may consist primarily of photographs, perhaps with brief captions, or they can take the form of written essays heavily illustrated with photographs. They can be published in magazines, supplements or online.

There are two types of photo essays. A narrative photo essay tells a story through a sequence of events or actions, by following an individual or activity over a period of time. The essay is often presented as a story in chronological order. A thematic photo essay explores a central theme (e.g. poverty, homelessness, war).

Example

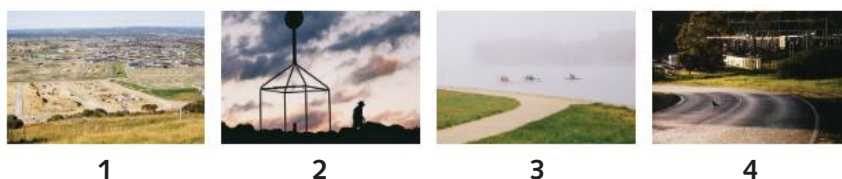
Below is series of shots from a photo essay by Richard Yan that explores the way in which human relationships with their immediate outdoor surroundings changed as a result of COVID-19 lockdowns.

THE STORY

An image or essay should be able to stand alone as a text, making sense to and provoking a particular response in the viewer.

ORIENTATION

Portrait orientation is taller than it is wide; **landscape** is wider than it is tall, as in this example.



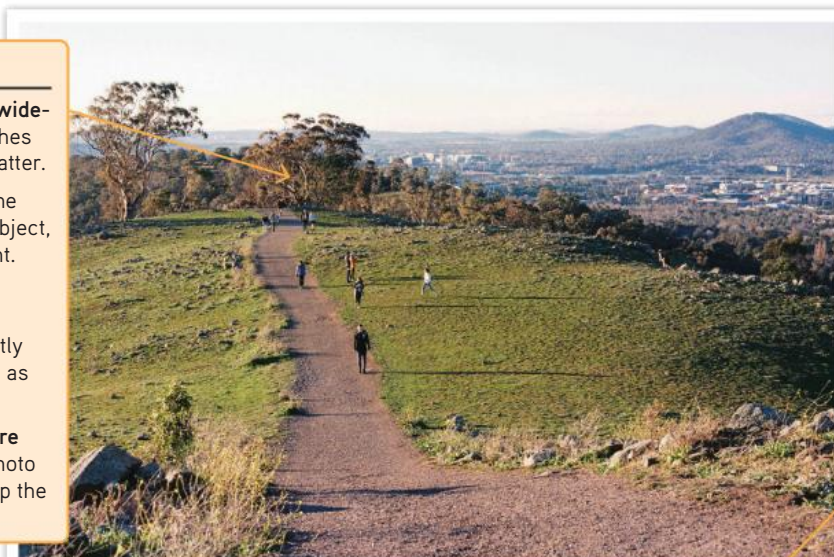
SHOT RANGE

The **scene** is usually a **wide-angle shot** that establishes the theme or subject matter.

Detail photos capture the detail in a place or an object, focusing on one element. They usually require an informative caption.

Close-up shots are tightly cropped and often used as detail photos.

The **clinch**er or **signature** shot is often the final photo in an essay and sums up the narrative or theme.



CAPTION

Written text accompanying an image provides **context** for an image's intended meaning.

5 With many leisure-time activities inaccessible or restricted, Australians are rediscovering the pleasures of exploring the natural world.

INFORMATION AND EMOTION

Photos should convey both emotion and information; viewers should be prompted to see a subject or situation from a new perspective.

COMPOSITION

The photographer considers elements such as **background/foreground**, the **focus**, the **rule of thirds**, **leading lines**, **props** and **mise en scène** to create meaning.

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DIGITAL BONUS MATERIAL

YEAR 11
ENGLISH **WESTERN
AUSTRALIA**
FOR THE ATAR ENGLISH COURSE



ACTIVITY

Understand mode and medium

1 Identify the mode(s) and medium of the following text types.

TEXT TYPES	MODE(S)	MEDIUM
Podcast		
Television sitcom		
Computer game		
Print advertisement		
Online article		
Social media post		
Short story		
Song		
Television advertisement		
Panel discussion		

- 2 Imagine you were to adapt the print extract from *The Book Thief* on page 8 into a trailer for a new television series. Which modes would you need to employ?
- 3 Describe three or four key shots that would appear in your trailer, summarising the extract. For example, the first shot might be of children innocently playing in the streets. For each shot, note the spoken, auditory and visual language features you would use in adapting the written text.
- 4 Identify another medium for which the extract might be adapted.

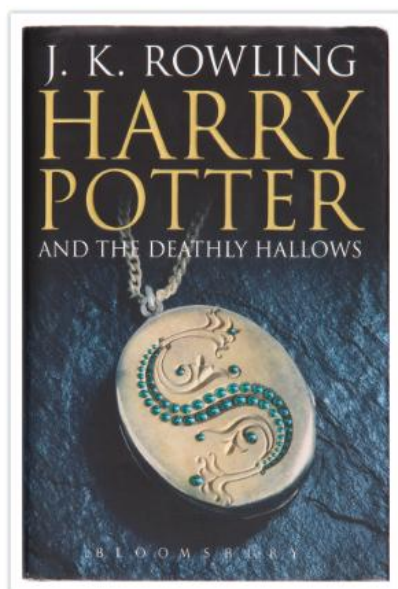


Audience (page 32)

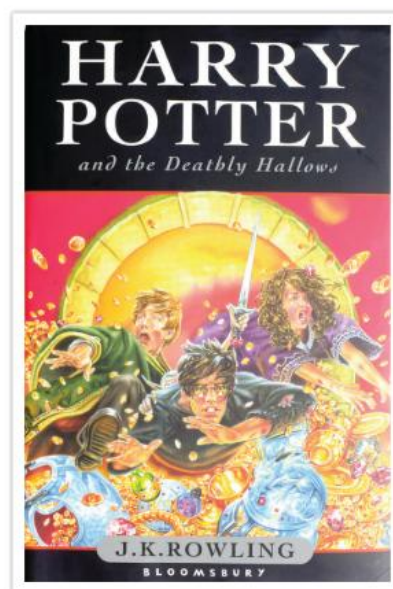
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EXAMPLE *Harry Potter* book covers

Both the covers below for J.K. Rowling's *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* use typical features of the book cover form, and both represent an image of treasure. However, the choices of language and stylistic features reveal their two very different audiences.



This cover appeals to a fantasy-reading adult audience; a marketing tactic that aims to cater to adult fans who might be embarrassed to read what is usually considered a child's book. It uses a subdued colour palette, a more abstract image to represent the novel's content, and a sophisticated font. The overall tone of the cover is dark, hinting at conflict and horror in the novel.



This cover appeals to the original adventure-loving child audience. Bright primary colours dominate, and the central image is a cartoon-style literal representation of the novel's content. The 'busy' composition suggests action and adventure and the overall tone is one of excitement, intended to engage younger readers.

ACTIVITY

Compare book covers

- 1 Many other books have been issued with different covers to appeal to different audiences. Find an example of:
 - a book whose different covers aim to appeal to different age groups
 - a book whose different covers aim to appeal to readers in different countries
 - a book whose different covers aim to appeal to audiences in different time periods.
- 2 Write a brief paragraph for each of these examples, comparing the ways in which the covers appeal to their different target audiences.

EXAMPLE Attitudes and values in a speech

The following speech by Stan Grant addresses the topic 'Racism is destroying the Australian dream'. The annotations indicate how the speech communicates his attitudes and values. Grant's speech was part of a 2015 live debate hosted by The Ethics Centre, a not-for-profit organisation in Australia. To watch the full debate, or to learn more, visit www.ethics.org.au

In the winter of 2015, Australia turned to face itself. It looked into its soul and it had to ask this question. Who are we? What sort of country do we want to be? And this happened in a place that is most holy, most sacred to Australians. It happened on the sporting field, it happened on the football field. Suddenly the front page was on the back page, it was in the grandstands.

Personification;
emotive language;
inclusive diction and
questions; superlatives.

Thousands of voices rose to hound an Indigenous man. A man who was told he wasn't Australian. A man who was told he wasn't Australian of the Year. And they hounded that man into submission.

Juxtaposition of
• 'thousands' of spectators
with a single 'man'.

I can't speak for what lay in the hearts of the people who booed Adam Goodes. But I can tell you what we heard when we heard those boos. We heard a sound that was very familiar to us.

• Connotative verb and noun;
• 'us and them' separation;
collective terms 'we' and 'us'.

We heard a howl. We heard a howl of humiliation that echoes across two centuries of dispossession, injustice, suffering and survival. We heard the howl of the Australian dream and it said to us again, you're not welcome.

• Anaphora and alliteration.

The Australian Dream.

• Listing of emotive
abstract nouns.

• Capitalised fragment.

We sing of it, and we recite it in verse. *Australians all, let us rejoice, for we are young and free.*

• Quote from the national anthem.

My people die young in this country. We die ten years younger than average Australians and we are far from free. We are fewer than three percent of the Australian population and yet we are 25 percent, a quarter of those Australians locked up in our prisons and if you are a juvenile, it is worse, it is 50 percent. An Indigenous child is more likely to be locked up in prison than they are to finish high school.

• Exclusive language and
personal pronouns.

• Allusion to anthem.

• Statistics.

ACTIVITY

Identify the attitudes and techniques in a persuasive speech

- 1 Read the annotated speech extract on the previous page and complete the following table.

DEVICE IDENTIFIED IN THE MARGIN ANNOTATIONS	DEFINITION OF THE DEVICE	ETHOS, LOGOS OR PATHOS APPEAL?
Personification		
Emotive language		
Inclusive diction		
Superlative		
Juxtaposition		

- 2 In a short paragraph, summarise the societal attitudes and values highlighted by Grant in the text.



 [Return to page 62.](#)

Conflicting attitudes and values

Tom Percy's interpretive text, 'Time for horses to come first', and a strong public reaction to the issue, revealed a range of conflicting attitudes and values related to the horse-racing industry. Some of these attitudes and values are evident in the quotes below.

- 'What seems on the face of it to be a good day out for everyone is actually built on a lot of cruelty.' (Federal Greens MP Adam Bandt)
- 'It's about ordinary, hard-working Victorian families who will be there in record numbers and many hundreds of thousands more who will watch the race that stops the nation.' (Premier Daniel Andrews, in response to celebrities revoking their commitment to attend the 2019 Melbourne Cup)
- 'But while individual celebrities might deem the Cup, and horse racing generally, damaging to their brand, big money remains invested in it. This year's purse, paid to the top horses, has jumped to \$8 million – around 10% higher than last year's \$7.3 million.' (*Business Insider* article)
- 'I really enjoy eating meat but I also think it's wrong to breed horses specifically for racing and then race them for drunken crowds of middle-class gamblers in silly hats till their bodies give out.' #NupToTheCup (Amplify Magazine)

ACTIVITY

Identify conflicting attitudes and values

- 1 For each of the quotations above, identify the attitude towards horse racing being expressed and rewrite it in your own words as a viewpoint about the topic or using an adjective describing the topic.
- 2 Explain the language features used in each quote to represent the writer's attitude.
- 3 Explain how each quote reflects:
 - personal values
 - societal values
 - cultural values.



Representations of groups (page 76)

 [Return to page 76.](#)

EXAMPLE Representations of adolescence

The images below demonstrate how adolescence can be represented in very different ways in different texts. In the first image it is represented as peer-centred, and a time of acceptance, happiness and learning – as evidenced by the visual language of the subjects' warm smiles, affectionate body language, close proximity, multicultural identities, relaxed stances and backpacks, as well as the school setting. It's the kind of image that might be used on a brochure to promote a contemporary educational institution to parents who value the qualities these subjects appear to embody.



A



B

By contrast, the second image represents adolescence as a time of angst and heartache. The composition reveals a young woman sitting alone in her room, suggesting loneliness through her closed body language. We cannot see her face because she has her head down, possibly crying, and the phone in her hand allows us to interpret her emotion as a response to receiving a message. If included in a feature article about cyberbullying, this image would clearly encourage readers to regard modern adolescence and the realities of bullying as a trial.

We can see from this contrast that representations are constructions or versions of reality, and thus can depict the same experience in quite different ways, depending on the purpose, audience, context and form of the text.

ACTIVITY

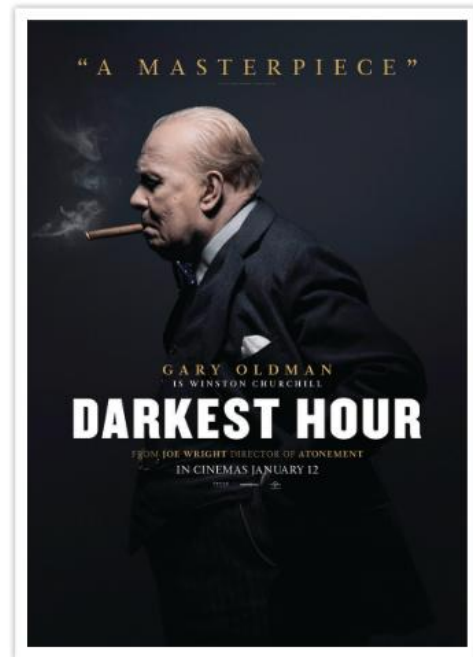
Compare representations of a group

Find examples of different visual representations of another group of your choice. Write a short paragraph analysing how visual language is used to construct these different representations.

EXAMPLE Ambition in a multimodal text

Another example of the representation of ambition, this time represented in a more positive light and in a different context and form, is in the film *Darkest Hour*. The film is about the political life of Winston Churchill, and in both the text and in Troy Bramston's review of it, below (first published in *The Australian*), ambition is represented as an inspiring, altruistic and noble quality.

Looking to the resolution of the film, where this idea is highlighted, we see that Churchill's decisions are shown to be the right ones because they save lives. When used for the good of others, to achieve freedom for instance, ambition such as Churchill's is endorsed as a positive attribute. As Bramston gushes, 'There are few clearer examples of how different history would be if not for that one person at that precise moment, determined to fulfil his destiny.' As the fulfilment of one man's destiny for the good of the people, the representation of Churchill's ambition contrasts starkly with the representation of Macbeth's, which is associated with a lust for power and extreme self-interest.



DARKEST HOUR: CHURCHILL AS MAN OF DESTINY

Darkest Hour shows Churchill in all of his raffish charm, drinking excessively and smoking cigars, barking orders at subordinates, losing his temper and working in odd locations at all hours. There are moving moments when, with immense self-assurance and utter conviction, he rallies the government and the people with his magnificent speeches to fight for the greatest cause there ever was: freedom from tyranny.

The enduring question is: would history be different without Churchill? "No one can know the outcome if things had been otherwise," Langworth [a Churchill expert] says. "The odds against victory were high. The case for a peace deal was credible. But Churchill had two unique qualities: supreme confidence and the skill to communicate. With these he inspired the nation and the Commonwealth."

Churchill believed it was his destiny to become prime minister. In the course of human events, there are few clearer examples of how different history would be if not for that one person at that precise moment, determined to fulfil his destiny.

Visual language (page 97)

 [Return to page 97.](#)

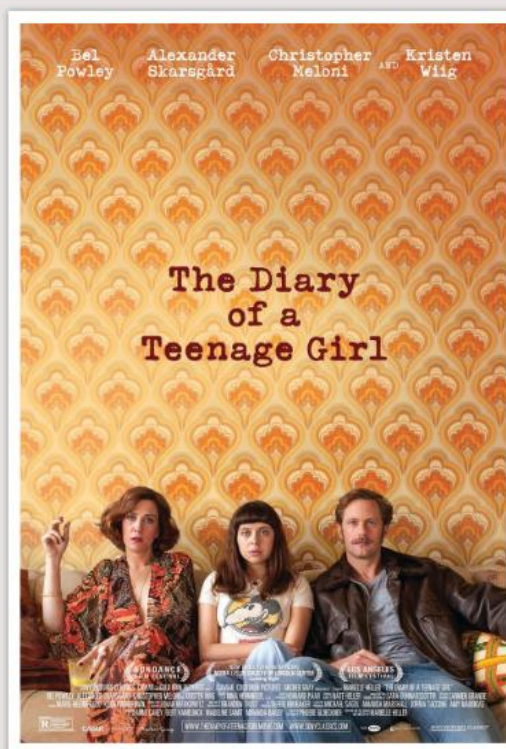
Writing about language features

Analysis of language features will lead you to develop an interpretation of a text, but this interpretation will not be dependent on the textual features alone. Your own context significantly shapes the meaning you make of texts.

EXAMPLE Analysis of a film poster

This example shows how a Year 11 student has developed an interpretation of the following text through a combination of analysis of its language features, together with aspects of their own context, such as their personal experiences and prior knowledge.

This film poster illustrates how teenagers are often frustrated and mortified by their parents' close involvement in their lives. I infer that the 'teenage girl' of the title is pictured in the centre of the couch and is the protagonist of the film, while other subjects are probably supporting characters. My experience of other film posters has taught me that often the main characters are foregrounded or centred to emphasise their importance. The wallpaper, clothing and hairstyles of the characters in this image appear dated compared to the current fashion typical of my context. These elements remind me of old photographs of my own parents who grew up in the 1970s. The facial expressions of the characters seem exaggerated, possibly for comedic effect, like in other dramatic comedy films or television series set in the 1970s, such as *Puberty Blues*. I recognise a sense of tension reflected in the text. This atmosphere is indicated by the close proximity of the characters to each other and the seemingly uncomfortable body language of the central character. The supporting characters are likely to be the parents of the teenage girl, given that they look middle-aged and are seated on a couch within a domestic setting. I expect that the film may explore conflict between the girl and her parents, who seem to be encroaching on her personal space. When my parents invade my privacy, I experience the same frustration that the text conveys. I keep a diary myself, so I understand that the 'diary' in the title implies a confessional, drama-filled text that privileges the perspective of the protagonist.



EXAMPLE

Annotation of structural features in a still image

The following example illustrates how visual language is used to convey a mood.

The shallow depth of field, in which only a small foreground zone is in focus, implies that the blurred end of the carriage is far away.

Camera angle captures the scene from the bottom centre of the carriage, creating symmetry and balance.



Converging lines of passengers' feet lead the viewer's eye to the blurred back section of the carriage.

The framing focuses the viewer's gaze on passengers' feet; the omission of the rest of their bodies and faces creates a sense of impersonal, detached anonymity. Together with the setting of a crowded train carriage, a peak-hour commuting experience is implied.

ACTIVITY

Analyse a visual text

Drawing on the example above, annotate a visual text of your choice, identifying the ways in which visual language is used to create a mood.

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Analysing style – imaginative text (page 105)

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TAKING IT FURTHER

Successful annotation of texts

Quality analysis involves more than just identifying the features of texts; it requires understanding and explaining their *effects*. Textual features work both in isolation and together to create meaning. Their effects should be specified in your annotations, otherwise the annotations will not be helpful. Consider the two approaches below, which similarly identify the language, structural and stylistic features of a text.

The extract below is from *The Windy Season*, a novel by Western Australian author Sam Carmody, first published in 2016 by Allen & Unwin.

Connotative vocabulary choice. ●

Two short sentences. ●●

Several strong verbs, adverbs and adjectives. ●

Metaphor. ●●●●●●●●

From the roadhouse windows Paul could see the long, crawling line of vehicles. Surfboards on car roofs. Camper trailers. A greyhound coach sat heavy on its wheels, inching forward in awkward, convulsive movements. He could make out the faces, their listless expressions within each window frame of the bus, a wall of tortured portraits.

Connotative vocabulary choice ● suggests slow movement.

Short sentences mimic the broken, interrupted journey ● of the traffic.

Strong verbs, adverbs and adjectives connote the jolting, painstaking nature of the journey and its tranquilising physical effect on passengers.

Metaphor creates a hyperbolic image of trapped, suffering individuals.

From the roadhouse windows Paul could see the long, crawling line of vehicles. Surfboards on car roofs. Camper trailers. A greyhound coach sat heavy on its wheels, inching forward in awkward, convulsive movements. He could make out the faces, their listless expressions within each window frame of the bus, a wall of tortured portraits.

Note how the first example correctly identifies some textual features and devices but does not explain their effects. The second example is better because it includes observations and inferences about the effects of these features, which is a critical part of the analytical process. An inference is like an educated guess, whereby evidence from the text, combined with the reader's own experience and knowledge, is used to draw a logical conclusion.

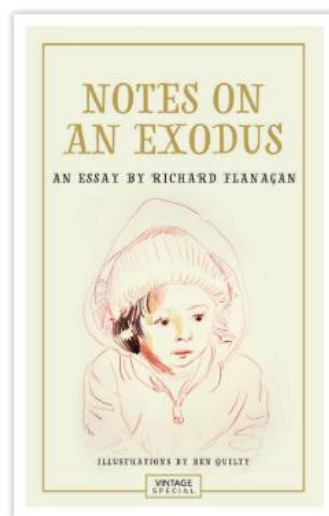
Analysing style – nonfiction text (page 108)

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Bringing it all together: *Notes on an Exodus*, an essay by Richard Flanagan

Key facts

- Published in 2016 as a short, complete text (80 pages)
- Written by Richard Flanagan
- Illustrated by Ben Quilty
- Audience: Contemporary Australian readers
- Purpose: To explore the Syrian refugee crisis; to draw comparisons between readers' experiences, values and attitudes and those of the refugees; to raise awareness and encourage support for refugee groups; to highlight themes of displacement and marginalisation
- Form: Multimodal interpretive text; illustrated essay



Synopsis

In his powerful nonfiction essay *Notes on an Exodus*, Richard Flanagan offers his perspective on the continuing Syrian refugee crisis. By giving a voice to the oppressed victims of the Syrian war and its destructive aftermath, Flanagan attempts to evoke compassion, understanding and empathy in Australian readers. Complemented by Ben Quilty's evocative sketched portraits, the essay is a series of moving written vignettes based on the harrowing stories that the text's creators encountered during their 2016 travels to Lebanon, Serbia and Greece, where they interviewed just some of the millions of displaced Syrian refugees.

Annotation of language, structure and style

Opening dialogue reveals someone has recently died, presumably a loved one of Yasmin's, given the attention of 'her family around her'.

Several short sentences and a fragment convey the distortion of Yasmin's face by grief.

Tricolon emphasises Yasmin's significance as the focus of her concerned extended family.

Metaphor connotes a turbulent, confusing lack of stability and familiarity.

'Yesterday was the funeral,' Ramadan says. 'It was very cold. We make sure Yasmin always has her family around her.'

Yasmin wears a red scarf, maroon jumper and blue jeans. She is small and slight. Her face seems unable to assemble itself into any form of meaning. Nothing shapes it. Her eyes are terrible to behold. Blank and pitiless. Yet, in the bare backstreet apartment in Mytilene on the Greek island of Lesbos in which we meet on a sub-zero winter's night, she is the centre of the room, physically, emotionally, spiritually. The large extended family gathered around Yasmin – a dozen or more brothers, sisters, cousins, nephews, nieces, her mother and her father, Ramadan, an aged carpenter – seem to spin around her.

And in this strange vortex nothing holds.

Contextual information aids the reader's understanding of Yasmin's 'backstory'; biblical allusions aim to appeal to Australian readers' spirituality and ethics.

Metaphor and connotative adjectives, verbs and nouns liken the fleeing refugees to an ever-moving, irrepressible river.

Yasmin's family has come from Bassouta, an ancient Kurdish town near Aleppo, and joined the great exodus of our age, that of five million Syrians fleeing their country to anywhere they can find sanctuary. Old Testament in its stories, epic in scale, inconceivable until you witness it, that great river of refugees spills into neighbouring countries such as Lebanon, Jordan and Turkey, and the overflow – to date more than a million people – washes into Europe across the fatal waters of the Aegean Sea.

Construction of voice

Silencing of Mohanad's 'strong, insistent' voice and his aimless staring 'into the distance' suggest his feelings of helplessness and hopelessness.

Flanagan interjects part way through the recount to voice his own inner conflict, indicated via access to his desperate, rapid thoughts.

Flanagan's cynical, sarcastic and frustrated tone of voice, constructed through rhetorical questions, reveals his suspicion that his attempt to give the refugees an opportunity to voice their perspectives through his writing is futile.

Mohanad has a strong, insistent voice. But now he says nothing. He stares into the distance.

I am searching for another question. There are no questions. There are no answers. Please God, I think, give me words. There are no words. I can see no further than Mohanad. I want to keep talking so we can pretend – what? That there is hope? That writing this later will mean something?

Representation of the world and human experience

Flanagan's sharing of a personal anecdote in this extract highlights significant similarities between his family's lives and those of the Syrian refugees. This insight encourages readers to similarly reflect on their own family history and its potential connections with the refugee experience. Flanagan's impassioned assertion that refugees '*are* you and me', not merely '*like*' himself and his readers, strongly encourages reader empathy; he suggests here that humans have an innate desire for belonging, safety, family and a place to call 'home', an idea emphasised throughout the text. The recurring river motif is also related to Flanagan's own family, implying that connections between people from different parts of the world are more profound than we may realise. Flanagan implores readers to understand that traumatic human experiences, such as being displaced by war, are commonly shared by our own ancestors, thereby encouraging compassion and urgent assistance from readers.

I have a photo in my writing room of my three daughters looking out over a mountain range in Slovenia that leads to the Austrian border – the same mountain pass to which Heba, Yasmin and Edris and Ramadan and so many countless others were now all headed. My daughters' grandparents fled over those mountains as refugees in 1958. And that same year, in a refugee camp in southern Austria, Majda, my wife, their mother, was conceived.

Refugees are not like you and me. They are you and me. That terrible river of the wretched and damned flowing through Europe is my family.

And there is no time in the future in which they might be helped. The only time we have is now.

25 February 2016

Explore the text

The original version of the text, published in *The Guardian*, can be read in one sitting (<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/mar/05/great-syrian-refugee-crisis-exodus-epic-inconceivable-witness-lebos-islamic-state>). The essay provides a strong stimulus for analysis of many course concepts, including perspective, voice, form, multimodality, audience and purpose. Access the text as further reading to complement your studied texts.

Draw on the extract and annotations on the previous pages to answer the following question in 200–300 words:

Analyse how textual features represent a human experience in the passage.



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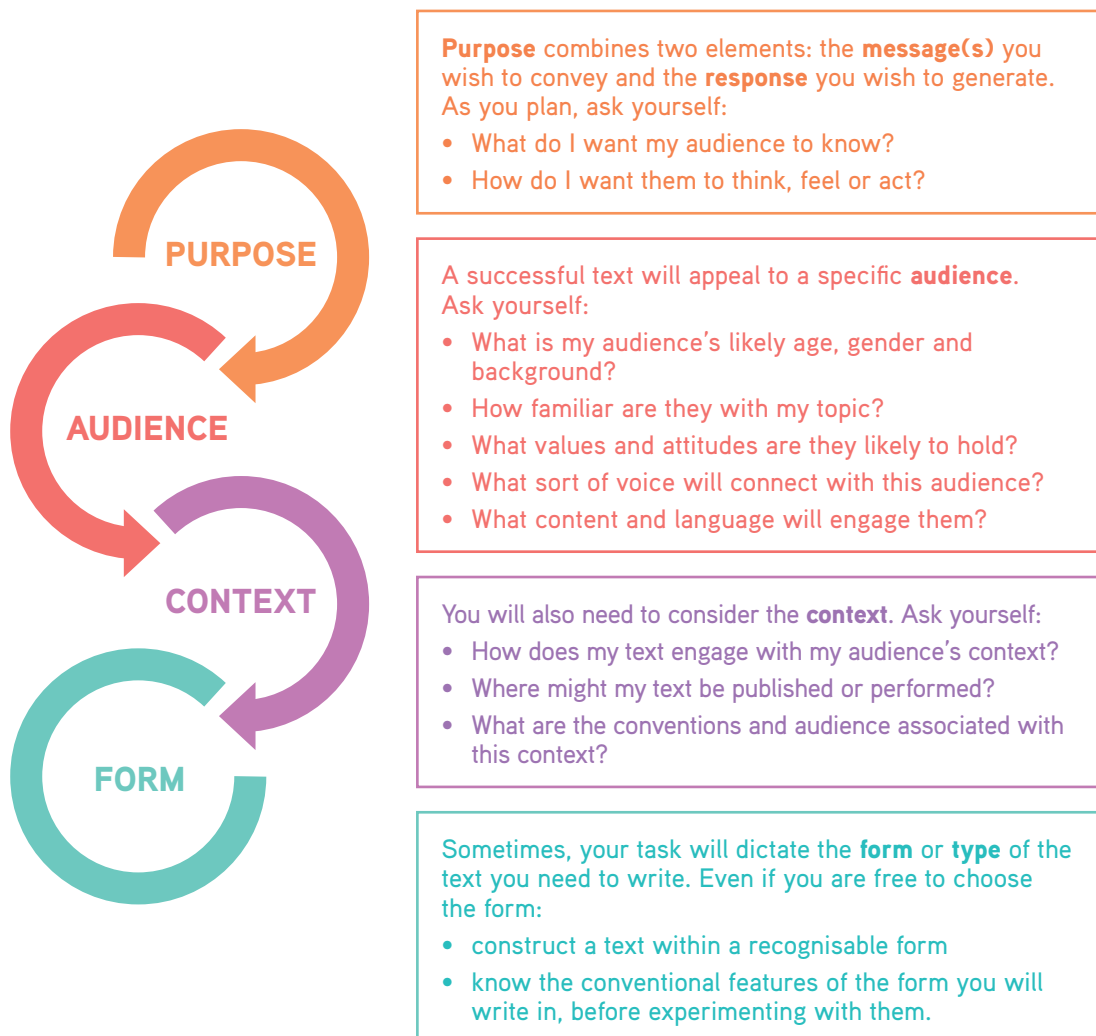
Process for creating a text (page 138)

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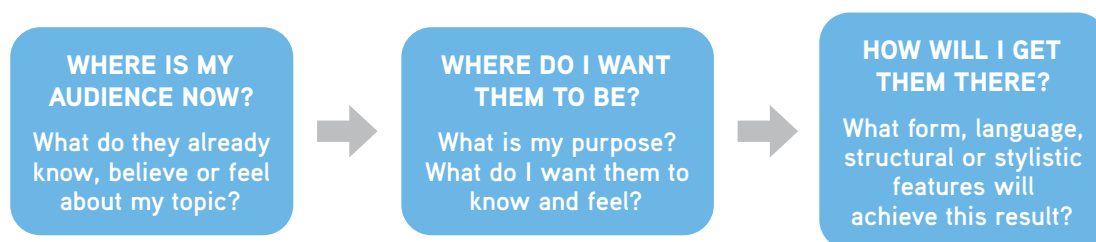
Planning your creative response

All tasks will require you to demonstrate control of a particular form and to shape your text for a specific **purpose**, **audience** and a real or imagined **context**. These factors are interrelated; decisions about one aspect will have implications for others.

Catering for purpose, audience and context



The following diagram summarises a way of considering purpose, audience, context and form when planning your text.



Explore purpose and audience

- 1 Think of a recent film or television show you have seen. Brainstorm its various purposes and evaluate how successfully they were achieved.
- 2 Pick a recent event or issue that has been in the news. Locate three texts that have responded to this issue. For each, identify its purpose, audience, context and form.
- 3 Using a Composing-style question from a previous exam or from elsewhere in this book (such as those in the activity on page 141), construct a plan for a possible response that identifies the purpose, audience, context and form of your text.

Developing voice, tone and style

Voice refers to the persona we 'hear' in the text: their attitude and personality. It may be a persona within interpretive or persuasive texts, or a narrator within imaginative texts. Texts can have several voices – characters, quoted sources, interview subjects or multiple narrators.

Voice is constructed through language features such as:

- diction or lexical choice
- syntax
- style and register
- tone
- descriptive, persuasive, emotive or figurative language devices.

Tone conveys the attitude or emotion behind the voice. It is developed through the writer's language choices: the words selected, the images created, and the ways in which sentences are shaped to create a particular feeling.

Like tone, **style** overlaps with voice. Style encompasses the nature or 'flavour' of the text as a whole – it is more than just the persona that we 'hear'. Style can be associated with a particular creator of texts, or it can reflect a genre, historical period, culture or movement.

The following three examples show contrasting voices, tones and styles for the three broad text types you can create.

Example one – interpretive

<p>The air is hot and thick with moisture, like pea soup. Three days in Broome, and I'm still not used to it. Now I understand the raised eyebrow when I mentioned my plans to spend Christmas up north, taking advantage of off-season rates. But it's the Wet, they said. Stinkin' hot and more-'n-likely bucketing down. So far it hasn't rained but, as I stand on the balcony of the hostel each evening, looking out over the deep green mangroves to the cruelly enticing ocean with its stinging swarms of jellyfish, thunder bruises the clouds a deep purple.</p> <p>Walking down Carnarvon Street, I am barely able to lift my feet from the pavement, resulting in a lazy sort of shuffle that wears away the soles of my too-hot sneakers. My feet stew in their sweat, and yet again I wish I'd worn thongs. I peel my damp shirt from where it clings limpet-like to my back, and try not to shudder as a trickle runs down my spine.</p>	<p>The voice uses diction that connotes heat and effort.</p> <p>A rueful tone reveals the persona's naivety.</p> <p>Reported speech brings an additional, colloquial voice.</p> <p>Long sentences and rich imagery contribute to this languid, descriptive style.</p> <p>Alliteration adds to the weary tone.</p>
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Example two – imaginative

<p>The cafe door opens and my jaw instantly clenches as it jangles the tinny bell hanging above it. My boss thinks it's cute, but then she doesn't have to listen to it three hundred and twenty-six times a day in tourist season.</p> <p>I chuck down the magazine I've been flicking through, imagining what sort of car I might eventually save enough cash to buy. According to <i>Wheels</i>, a Corolla is the hands-down winner, but the mag's at least six years out of date and it's highly unlikely my fifteen dollars an hour will get me into one before, oh I dunno, I turn forty-six. For a guy who hasn't even left school yet, that's a pretty demoralising thought.</p> <p>Anyway, I look up and plaster on a smile. It's a girl. She just stands there, eyes closed, practically standing on tiptoes to let the air-con wash over her. I'm struck by three things. One, she's a total babe. Two, she's clearly not from around here. And three, I think I'm in love.</p>	<p>Hyperbole adds a humorous edge to the narrator's exasperated voice.</p> <p>Dreaming of a first car helps construct a youthful voice, later revealed as male.</p> <p>Colloquialism and contractions help to create a casual, conversational tone.</p> <p>The listing, as well as being humorous, adds a direct style to the adolescent male voice.</p>
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Example three – persuasive

<p>As a regular visitor to Broome in the off-season, I'm always struck by how unprepared so many tourists seem to be for its generously warm embrace. It's the ideal time as far as I'm concerned – one avoids the hordes that fly north to escape Perth's chilly winter.</p> <p>Summer holidaying in the northwest requires just a few simple understandings.</p> <p>Dress lightly. Cool cottons and breezy linens are best. Nothing tight. Long sleeves and loose pants or dresses protect you from the sun without trapping heat. A wide-brimmed hat and good-quality sunglasses are essential.</p> <p>Keep movement to a minimum. Find yourself a perfect location from which to observe the world – a shady tree, balcony or cafe with a view – and park yourself there for the hottest part of the day with a good book.</p> <p>Hydrate. Sweating will be a fact of life and you lose more fluid this way than you might imagine. Sip plenty of water throughout the day. Fill a small spray bottle with filtered water and a drop or two of essential oils and mist yourself frequently.</p>	<p>The formal tone and the euphemism of 'warm embrace' suggest a knowledgeable if slightly superior voice.</p> <p>Syntax is direct and mostly in the imperative mood, creating an instructive voice.</p> <p>Diction such as 'just', 'few' and 'simple' reinforces the slight superiority.</p> <p>Diction is lightly descriptive in order to advise or instruct readers.</p> <p>Choice of details suggest an adult voice.</p>
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Setting

Setting involves both time and place. It needs to be clearly established in order to provide a believable location in which to situate your story. You should consider both macro (broad) and micro (specific) settings. Your story may be set in an eastern suburb of Perth (macro) but take place within the kitchen of the protagonist's home (micro).

People experience the world through their senses, so the best way to help your audience imagine themselves in your setting is by appealing to those senses. Enrich a simple visual description by incorporating elements of sound, physical sensation and smell.

This example shows how an effective setting can be created using sensory elements.

The room was all white leather, chrome and sharp corners.
A vase of pale pink roses teased the air with their perfume.
Tall windows were curtained with a sheer fabric, allowing . . .
light to flood the acres of carpet. But the whole room was
dominated by what Emily could only describe as the most
monstrous portrait ever to assault her eyes. Larger than life...
size, her dress a violent fuchsia, the former owner of the
house sneered down on all who stood before her. The real
estate agent shook her head. That would definitely have to ..
go, she thought, to have any chance of selling this place.

These three visual and tactile details give an overall sense of the room.

Olfactory and visual details add to the setting.

The focus on developing this single detail gives the setting originality and impact.

Importantly, the character engages with the setting.

Paragraphing

Paragraphs in imaginative texts should be varied in structure. A short story can include long, descriptive paragraphs punctuated with shorter ones, which might be as brief as a single sentence. A good rule of thumb is to begin a new paragraph for each change in the following elements.

- **Time:** Whether it is a few minutes, hours or days that pass, each change in time needs a new paragraph.
- **Place:** A character coming through the front door, dropping their bag in the hall and collapsing on the sofa has occupied three separate places, each likely best suited to a new paragraph.
- **Speaker:** Each change in speaker within a section of dialogue should begin a new paragraph.
- **Action:** If you want to describe your character surfing a wave, getting dumped and then staggering ashore, each of these actions requires a new paragraph.
- **Subject:** A switch in focus or point of view from one character to another, or to another object or place, requires a new paragraph.

Ray Bradbury once suggested that you start a new paragraph every time the camera angle would change if your story were a film.

► Developing a theme

At the core of effective writing is a memorable theme. But how do you create a theme that resonates with your readers? Here are six strategies to consider.

- **Characterisation:** Often it is the character's journey that leads the reader to the themes of the text. The lessons the character learns are the lessons the reader learns too.
- **Conflict:** Themes arise from the types of conflicts faced by characters. What is troubling them? What decisions do they have to make? The choices they make reveal your themes.
- **Dialogue:** The careful selection of dialogue should draw attention to the main ideas, without losing them in the clutter of a long conversation between the characters.
- **Repetition:** An idea can become a theme if it recurs throughout the text. It may arise in several situations, or with several characters. It may be reflected in both internal and external conflicts, or be examined from multiple perspectives.
- **Resolution:** The way your narrative resolves will reinforce the theme. Consider who is rewarded and who is punished. Think carefully about your final scenes, and the images and ideas you want to leave your reader with.
- **Symbolism:** Symbols can draw attention to themes. Aim to create an original symbol, but if you prefer to use an already well-known symbol there are many common ones you might experiment with, such as birds representing freedom, spring representing renewal, and fog representing uncertainty.



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Sample imaginative response (p.148)

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This imaginative piece is an alternative response to the short story on pages 148–50. It is in the form of an extract from a screenplay for a science-fiction film titled *Networked*.

101 INT. CONTROL ROOM

A touchscreen console sits in front of a row of flatscreen monitors. Each monitor reveals a different scene of the city outside: people jogging in the park, waiting to cross intersections, window shopping. The buildings are contemporary high-rises interspersed with newer, slightly futuristic skyscrapers. Behind the monitors is a large, darkened window.

ALICE (VOICE-OVER)

There was a time, once, before *they* arrived, when we thought we were connected. We thrived and built ourselves massive cities, monuments to our desperate need for contact. We lived on top of each other, squeezing more and more people into every square foot, so close we could hear each other's heartbeats through the walls we enclosed ourselves within. But that still wasn't close enough.

Slow zoom towards monitors, which routinely switch between different scenes of city life. Some show interiors of apartments: people cooking, arguing, kissing, watching TV.

ALICE (VOICE-OVER)

So we developed the means to feel even closer to each other, even as our walls grew taller.

Monitors show people speaking into mobile phones and staring at tablets; a couple texting while at a cafe together; parents video-calling their child at day care.

ALICE (VOICE-OVER)

But it wasn't enough. Still lonely, we reached out into the void. We called, again and again, yearning to hear someone, anyone, answer our cry.

Continued zoom. The darkened window looms larger. One monitor shows a lab in which people are separated into cubicles, each with headphones on, listening. Another shows a schoolroom in which students are staring at a screen in place of a whiteboard. Above the screen, cut-out letters spell 'HISTORY'. A teacher points at the screen, which shows a montage of satellite launches, vast aerial arrays, giant radio telescopes swivelling against the night sky.

ALICE (VOICE-OVER)

And then one day, they answered.

Zoom in to the single monitor showing the classroom scene, in which students watch footage of crowds in the streets and people waving banners with slogans

such as 'We are not alone' and 'The truth was out there'. The image changes and we see a street scene, then the interior of an apartment where a young man plays a computer game, then the couple sitting at the cafe again.

ALICE (VOICE-OVER)

But now we know we are truly one human race. Black, white, brown no longer matters. We are all together, all human.

And we are not alone.

A long, grey finger reaches forward and taps the console. The window blinks into light, revealing a cavernous space. Rows of humans lie on metal trolleys, with their heads encased in translucent helmets with thick cables. Each helmet glows a faint blue. The bodies are pale and thin. A drip is connected to each left arm.

The alien finger taps at the console. One helmet in the foreground glows red, the body convulses violently and then goes limp. The helmet stops glowing. On the monitor in the foreground, the young couple sip coffee while staring at their phones. The image flickers and the man vanishes, along with his phone and coffee cup. The woman does not notice. She glances out the window, and then begins texting again.

Two humanoid aliens disconnect the lifeless body and wheel the trolley away. Another two wheel in a human woman, who struggles against the straps that hold her down. One slips the helmet over her head, while the other attaches the drip. She slowly relaxes.

Another tap on the console and the monitor flickers again. Now the young woman in the cafe is sitting opposite another woman. They pick up their coffees, sip, smile, say something, then look at their phones.

The monitors fade into the foreground as the camera passes through the window. The rows of bodies seem endless as the camera crosses the space. Another window becomes visible. Through it, sharpening in focus as the camera moves closer, is a city. It is night. The streets are empty. Lightning flickers, revealing that the city is decayed. Buildings are crumbling, trees are dead.

ALICE (VOICE-OVER)

Now, we truly are connected.

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Adaptations and hybrids

From newspaper comic strips, to weekly then standalone superhero comics, to standalone graphic novels, the form has evolved in line with audiences, contexts and technology. The rise in **digital technologies** and **digital texts** has been a key factor in the development of the form of the graphic novel, as has a shift in audience expectations. Today, graphic novels are created as much for adults as they are for children, and focus on serious as well as humorous topics.

Adaptation

An adaptation is the result of a process of changing a text to a new form, mode, context or audience. The most common form of adaptation is a novel being adapted into a film or television show.

However, the multimodal form of the graphic novel and picture book provides rich opportunities for it to be adapted in multiple ways.

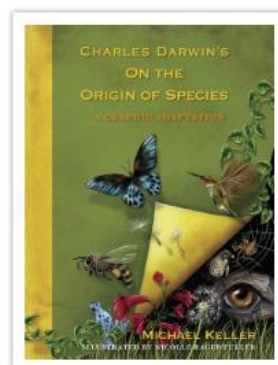
Some examples of adaptation from graphic novels or comics into other multimodal forms include:

- feature film adaptations – *V for Vendetta*, *300*, *X-Men*, *Spiderman*, *Kick-Ass*
- TV series adaptations – *The Walking Dead*, *Daybreak*, *The Umbrella Academy*
- computer/video games – *Superman*, *Batman (Arkham Asylum/Arkham City)*, *The Wolf Among Us*.

Hybridity

Hybrid texts are defined in the syllabus glossary as 'composite texts resulting from a mixing of elements from different sources or genres'.

The mixing or **hybridisation** of genres and forms means that the graphic novel form is no longer exclusively a form for fiction texts. Michael Keller's adaptation of Charles Darwin's *On the Origin of Species*, for example, is a hybrid text using the form of the graphic novel and blending the genres of scientific writing and picture book to communicate the scientist's ideas in a visually engaging and accessible way that is likely to appeal to new audiences.



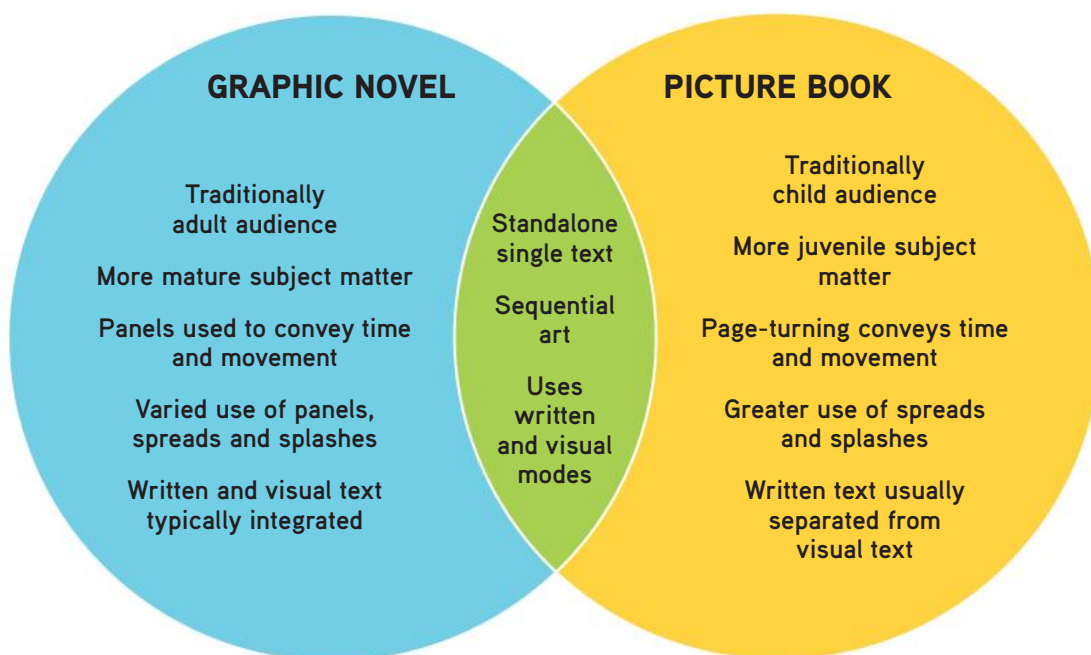
Michael Keller's graphic adaptation of Charles Darwin's *On the Origin of Species*.



► Graphic novel or picture book?

Developments in form force us to reconsider the definitions we once found comfortable. We have seen that comic books evolved into graphic novels, but there remain blurred boundaries between the graphic novel and another form: the picture book. The multimodality of these forms clearly indicates their close relationship; some people see them as interchangeable whereas others see them as quite distinct.

The following Venn diagram highlights the traditional distinctions between the two forms, as well as their similarities.



Modern picture books are no longer written exclusively for children but are often aimed at a mixed or older audience. They are increasingly regarded as 'serious' texts that can represent complex, mature and sometimes controversial topics and issues.

This fluidity is at the heart of what makes hybrid forms interesting. Hybrid texts lead audiences to consider the flexibility of textual forms, features and functions, and to appreciate how creators of texts continue to innovate and push boundaries.



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TAKING IT FURTHER

Adaptation of *The Lost Thing*

The Lost Thing was adapted into an animated short film and won an Oscar for Best Animated Short in 2011. You can watch it here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CVV7kxQd0IY>

Other notable adaptations of Tan's work include:

- *The Rabbits* adapted into an opera
- *The Red Tree* adapted into orchestral performance
- *The Lost Thing* adapted into a dance performance at the Royal Opera House
- *Rules of Summer* adapted into a digital app.

ACTIVITY

Compare representations of *The Lost Thing*



The Lost Thing picture book.



The Lost Thing film still.

- 1 Consider how the page from the picture book has been adapted for the film.
 - Describe the uses of lines, shapes and colours in the print version.
 - Describe how the sound is used to create mood and atmosphere. How does the mode of sound add to the overall text, the plot, the characters and the audience's response?
- 2 Shaun Tan has said, 'I see *The Lost Thing* as being very much a fable about the problems of adulthood, and the tension between dreams and reality.' Explain how this reading of the text is possible from the construction of image, text, sound and visual features.

**TAKING IT FURTHER****The ACMI website**

Go to the Australian Centre for the Moving Image (ACMI) website to explore a comprehensive 'From Book to Film' education resource that is highly recommended if the film is the focus of a unit of work (<https://www.acmi.net.au/education/school-program-and-resources/shaun-tans-lost-thing/>).



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Exam strategies

The following strategies will help you to maximise your chances of success in the exam.

Reading time

Do not underestimate the importance of the ten minutes of reading time. As well as giving you the opportunity to become familiar with the exam material, it also allows you the chance to breathe and to collect your thoughts. This will help you to avoid rushing into writing a hurried response that you have not properly thought through or planned.

Read the exam instructions carefully

Although you might know the structure of the exam, the recommended time to spend on each section and the equipment you'll need, it always pays to read instructions carefully to remind yourself of all the exam requirements. For example, one instruction is that you are not allowed to use texts from Section One to answer questions from Section Two. Some have tried. Don't be that person.

Read through all the questions

- Section One: Skim read each text and the question assigned to it. Read the contextual information provided at the top of the paper about the text.
- Section Two: Read through all the questions. Take into account the following when selecting the question you will answer.
 - Which questions best suit your studied text/s?
 - Which course concepts can you best write on?
- Section Three: Read through all the questions and select the question best suited to your skills and understandings.

Planning

When the writing time begins, do not rush straight into writing an answer. Instead, begin by making notes based on your thoughts and reactions during the reading time, and develop a plan. Here is a process to follow as you practise and revise for your exam.

- 1 Quickly write down any notes or ideas that came to you during the reading time, before you forget them. Do this for all sections.
- 2 Break down or deconstruct the questions you will answer, making sure you clearly identify and understand each key term.
- 3 Re-read the Section One texts, annotating them as you go. Do not annotate *everything* in the text, only what applies to the question being asked.
- 4 Plan and write your response to each question in Section One, and your chosen questions in Sections Two and Three.
- 5 Proofread and edit your responses.



Time spent planning is not wasted time; it is essential to fleshing out your initial ideas and thoughts. Plans should be brief. Use abbreviations, diagrams, dot points, symbols, flow charts – anything that helps you to lay out your thoughts quickly but clearly. The plan and notes only need to make sense to you and will not be marked.

Organise your notes and plans by numbering points in order of importance. This will help you to write a well-structured response.

Underline and annotate question key words. Write down synonyms for the key words in your chosen questions to help strengthen the expression and broaden the vocabulary of your response.

Writing

You can work through the exam paper in any order you choose, depending on your own strategy and strengths. Some students prefer to complete Section Two first, writing on their studied texts while the quotes they have memorised and content they have revised is fresh in their minds. Others prefer to begin with the Comprehending section, writing their three short answers as a way of building up to the longer responses in the other sections.

Regardless of your preferred strategy, consider the following advice.

- **Engagement with the question is crucial.** Make sure your responses clearly address the syllabus concepts embedded in each question.
- **Clearly identify which question you are answering.** This may seem obvious, but many students do not write a question number. Don't make your marker guess.
- **Allow time to edit and proofread your responses.** Correct spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors but, more importantly, identify gaps in your reasoning, a lack of evidence, inexplicable changes in direction or unclear ideas and arguments.

How to study for English

The following revision strategies will help you to be as prepared as possible for your English exam.

- **Set yourself specific goals.** Identifying goals or targets for what you want to achieve or improve upon is essential to your growth in any subject. Set a time line and identify the steps you might take to achieve your specific goals.
- **Seek and reflect on feedback.** Your teacher will provide you with feedback on your work via comments, rubrics or discussion. Identify the strengths and weaknesses of your responses and what you need to do to improve on the less effective areas. If you need more assistance, consult your teacher.
- **Create visual revision aids.** Information presented in diagrams and other visual forms can be easier to remember than text. Create revision aids with images, flow charts, mind maps and Venn diagrams to summarise your learning and to aid your recall in test situations.



- **Create summaries of the themes, ideas, arguments, representations, perspectives, attitudes and values in your texts.** Whether in note form or in a table or grid, record these details and the textual features used to construct or represent them.
- **Focus on key scenes in studied texts.** Study key extracts from a range of texts, focusing on their construction, ideas and key quotes. Choose scenes or extracts that will help you explain a range of syllabus concepts.
- **Create flashcards.** These can contain information on texts, characters, language features, text forms or syllabus concepts. Alternatively, record notes about these on your phone and listen as you exercise or do chores.
- **Research and review texts.** Reading widely will always expand your understanding of a text. Research the author or director, their works and their life. Read reviews of texts from different sources.
- **Stay up to date.** Texts are produced and received in cultural and contextual situations. Knowledge of contemporary news or history of the relevant period can give you an informed perspective on a text.
- **Make two-minute plans.** Take a practice question and write a plan in no more than two minutes. The plan should include your main points, evidence to support them and notes for your analysis.
- **Create your own questions.** Draw on questions from previous exams or your work in class to create your own sample questions, by substituting one syllabus concept for another. For example, change 'genre' to 'context' and then plan and write a response. You could also try converting syllabus content dot points from objectives or learning intentions into questions.
- **Practise.** Write in a range of forms, including short-answer responses, essays and various types of composition. Time yourself, but don't worry if at first it takes you a bit longer than the time allowed in the exam to complete a response. Work on reducing the time it takes you to produce a complete piece and briefly edit it. Use a stopwatch or countdown timer to help manage your time.



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YEAR 11 ENGLISH WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Year 11 English: Western Australia is an engaging and practical guide to Units 1 and 2 of ATAR English. Written by experienced Western Australian teachers, it includes student-friendly explanations of the course's key concepts, supported by annotated examples from a range of text types. Scaffolded sample responses assist students to develop successful analytical and comparative responses, as well as a range of creative texts.

A variety of activities and sample questions, supported by useful checklists and word banks, builds skills progressively throughout the book so that students are supported in achieving success in Units 1 and 2, while developing a solid foundation for their studies in Year 12.

THE BOOK FEATURES:

- Concise explorations of course concepts, and activities to embed associated metalanguage
- Succinct text studies to illustrate key analytical skills and understandings
- Thematic case studies that explain and model creative approaches to knowledge and skill development
- Innovative strategies for developing analytical, imaginative, interpretive and persuasive responses
- Handy reference lists of common language features and generic conventions
- Bonus digital-only material, including additional activities, annotated examples, sample student writing and exam strategies.



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