

English Level 5

Chapter 2 — Language: expressing and developing ideas

This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International License. To view a copy of this license, visit <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/> or send a letter to Creative Commons, PO Box 1866, Mountain View, CA 94042, USA.

Attribution: Classbasics Pty Ltd, vwx.au

Distribution note: this document may be distributed, and whole pages may be removed from it, provided only WHOLE pages are removed (never part of a page). This allows teachers to remove tests, exams and subtopics they do not want to issue.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander content has been excluded as accuracy cannot be guaranteed, and it is better to be respectful than cover the entire curriculum inaccurately.

Significant effort has been made to ensure this content is legal. Please send any areas of concern to admin@vwx.au with appropriate document/legal references so errors can be verified and changes be made.

Contents

Section	Page
Complex sentences: dependent clauses used for effect	2
Expanding noun groups for fuller description	18
Checkpoint	28
Sequences of images and the use of sound: how they make meaning	30
Vocabulary precision: specialist and technical terms	44
Checkpoint	54
Punctuation: commas for prepositional phrases; apostrophes for possession	55
Checkpoint	65
English Level 5 — Construction task C2: Informative report	69
English Level 5 — Construction task C2 (Informative report) — Solutions and marking key	76

Complex sentences: dependent clauses used for effect

This section owns **VC2E5LA05** and draws on **VC2E5LA05.E01**. It feeds both faces of the Level 5 standard: the Reading and Viewing standard (students read using “grammatical knowledge such as complex sentences and the use of clauses for effect”) and the Writing standard (“They use grammar and punctuation, including complex sentences to provide additional information and description.”).

Curriculum focus — This section teaches **VC2E5LA05** (Victorian Curriculum F–10 Version 2.0, English, Level 5 — Language, Language for expressing and developing ideas):

“Understand that the structure of a complex sentence includes an independent clause and at least one dependent clause, and understand how writers can use this structure for effect.”

It draws on the elaboration id below. This is a linkage key for the question bank and coverage records — an illustration of the CD, not a lesson checklist (TOC D9):

- **VC2E5LA05.E01** — “knowing that complex sentences make connections between ideas to provide a reason (for example, ‘He jumped up because the bell rang.’); state a purpose (for example, ‘She raced home to confront her brother.’); express a condition (for example, ‘It will break if you push it.’); make a concession (for example, ‘She finished her work even though she was feeling tired.’); or link 2 ideas in terms of various time relations (for example, ‘Nero fiddled while Rome burned.’)”

Builds on, does not re-teach: Level 4 delivered the structure of the complex sentence (VC2E4LA06 — an independent clause plus a dependent clause joined by a subordinating conjunction, the stand-alone test, and time and cause links). This section builds on that knowledge without re-teaching it (TOC §4) and takes the next step the CD names: *why* writers choose this structure. **Hands forward:** dependent clauses used for effect feed VC2E6LA05 (embedded clauses) at Level 6; embedded clauses are not taught in this section. Punctuation of dependent clauses set off from the main clause (VC2E6LA09) is also Level 6 content — commas are modelled correctly in this section’s examples but are not taught as new learning here.

Learn

Beat 1 — The words we will use, and what “effect” means

You built complex sentences in Year 4, so the words below will be old friends. Here they are again, ready to use.

clause — a group of words built around a subject and a verb. In this section, *clause* is used in the sense given by the Victorian Curriculum F–10 Version 2.0 (VCAA).

independent clause — a clause that can stand alone as a full sentence.

dependent clause — a clause that cannot stand alone. It leaves the reader waiting for the rest of the sentence.

complex sentence — a sentence with one independent clause and at least one dependent clause, used in the sense given by the Victorian Curriculum F–10 Version 2.0 (VCAA).

conjunction — a joining word that links clauses.

subordinating conjunction — a conjunction that starts a dependent clause and makes it dependent: *when*, *because*, *if*, *although*, *while* and their friends.

Say a clause out loud on its own. If it is a full sentence, it is independent. If it leaves you waiting, it is dependent. That quick test still works this year.

This section is about **choices** and their **effects**.

effect — what a writer’s choice does for the reader: what the reader notices, feels, wonders or remembers.

Writers do not grab a complex sentence because it is long. They grab one because it does a job that short sentences cannot do. Let’s see which jobs those are.

Beat 2 — Five jobs for a dependent clause

Every dependent clause links its idea to the main clause in one of five ways. It gives a **reason**, states a **purpose**, sets a **condition**, makes a **concession**, or pins down a **time**.

reason — the job of telling *why* something happened.

purpose — the job of telling what someone wanted to happen.

condition — the job of saying that one thing will happen only if another thing happens first.

concession — the job of saying that something happened even though something else stood in the way. In this section, *concession* is used in the sense given by the Victorian Curriculum F–10 Version 2.0 (VCAA).

time relation — the job of pinning down *when* one thing happened, compared with another thing.

The conjunction is your clue to the job. Figure 1 sorts the five jobs, the questions they answer, and the conjunctions that do them.

The five jobs of a dependent clause			
Job	Answers the question	Joining words	Example
reason	Why did it happen?	because	We tested again because the arm kept dropping the ball .
purpose	What did they want to happen?	to ..., so that	We rebuilt the arm so that it could hold the ball .
condition	What has to happen first?	if, unless	If the arm holds the ball , our robot can score.
concession	What stood in the way?	although, even though	Even though the motor kept stopping , nobody gave up.
time	When did it happen?	when, while, before, after, until, as soon as	As soon as our robot scored , the crowd cheered.

A table with five rows, one for each job of a dependent clause, showing the question each job answers, the joining words that do the job, and an example sentence for each

Figure 1 — The five jobs of a dependent clause.

Beat 3 — Reason and purpose: looking back, looking forward

A reason clause looks **back**. It tells you why something already happened.

- “We tested the robot again **because the arm kept dropping the ball**.”

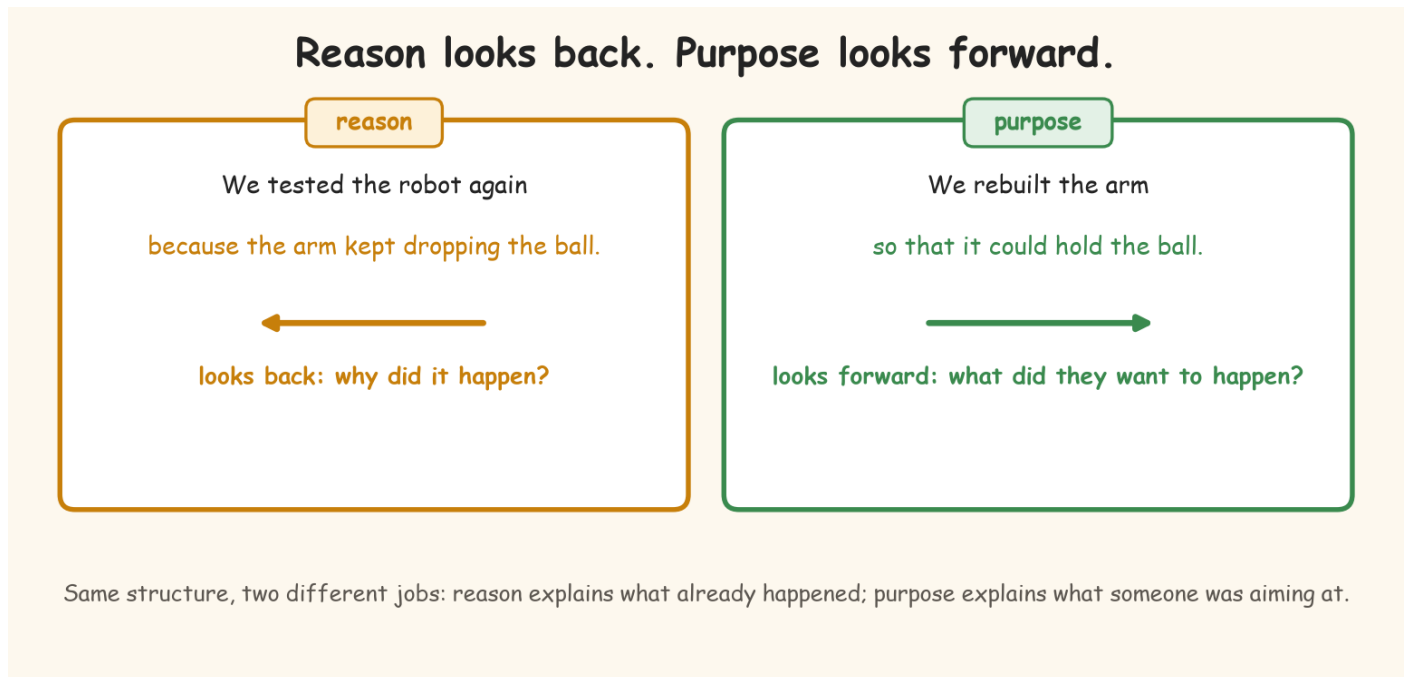
Why did we test it again? The dependent clause answers the question.

A purpose clause looks **forward**. It tells you what someone wanted to happen next. Purpose can wear two outfits: a *to* + verb clause, or a *so that* clause.

- “We rebuilt the arm **to hold the ball**.”

- “We rebuilt the arm **so that it could hold the ball.**”

Same job, two outfits. Compare the two looks: reason explains what already happened, purpose explains what someone was aiming at.



Two panels side by side: the left panel shows a reason sentence with an arrow pointing back to the question why did it happen, and the right panel shows a purpose sentence with an arrow pointing forward to the question what did they want to happen

Figure 2 — Reason looks back. Purpose looks forward.

Beat 4 — Conditions: the if-fork

A condition says one thing will happen **only if** another thing happens first. The story forks into two paths.

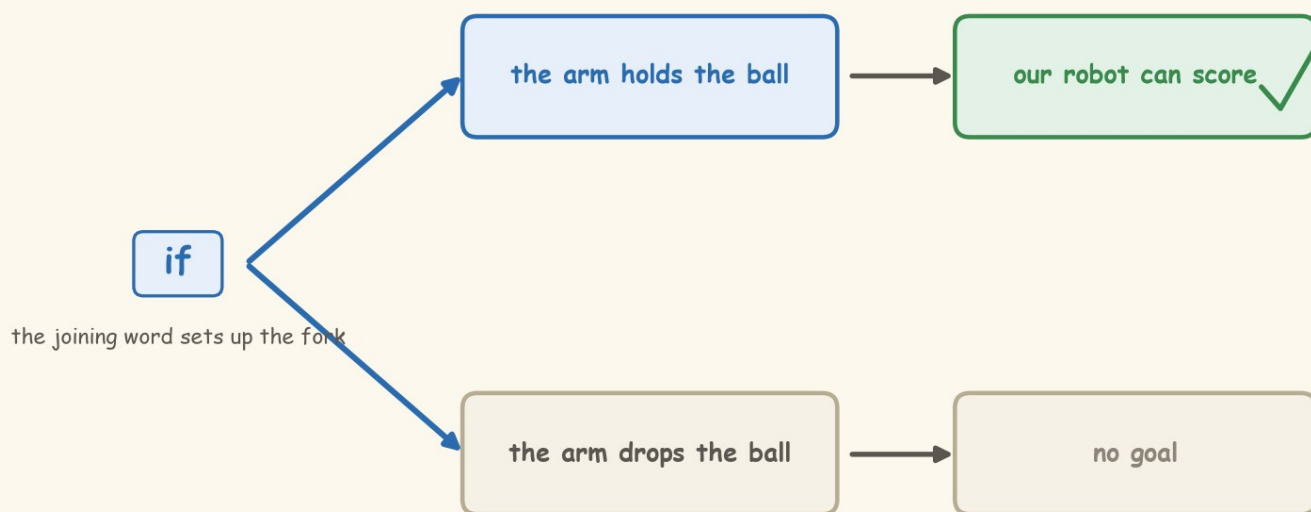
- “**If the arm holds the ball**, our robot can score.”

Holds the ball → the robot can score. Does not hold it → no goal. The conjunction *if* sets up the fork. *Unless* is its twin: *unless* means “if ... not”.

- “**Unless we fix the latch**, the hens will get out.”

Figure 3 draws the fork. Notice the effect on the reader: a condition pulled to the front of the sentence sets the rule first, so the reader watches to see which path the story takes.

A condition forks the story into two paths



If the arm holds the ball, our robot can score. One thing happens only if another thing happens first.

A fork in a road drawn as two paths: the top path is labelled the arm holds the ball and leads to the robot can score, and the bottom path is labelled the arm drops the ball and leads to no goal, with the word if on the signpost at the fork

Figure 3 — A condition forks the story into two paths.

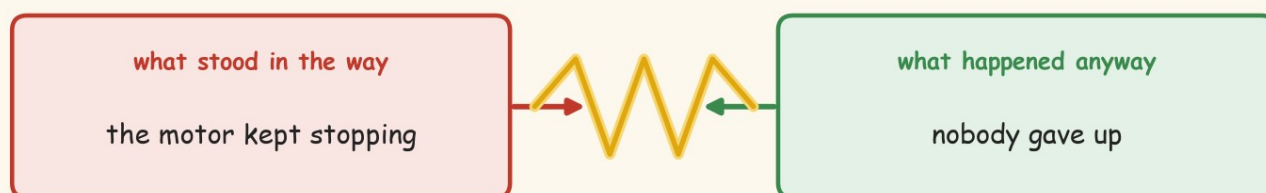
Beat 5 — Concessions: the surprise link

A concession says: something stood in the way — and the thing still happened. Read this one twice and notice the surprise.

- “**Even though the motor kept stopping**, nobody gave up.”

You might expect the club to give up when the motor kept stopping. The concession tells you the opposite happened. Writers choose it to show that something was hard and someone kept going anyway. The spotlight falls on the clause that beat the odds: *nobody gave up*.

A concession pushes two ideas against each other



Even though the motor kept stopping, nobody gave up. The spotlight falls on the clause that beat the odds.

Two arrows on one line pointing against each other: the left arrow is labelled what stood in the way and reads the motor kept stopping, and the right arrow is labelled what happened anyway and reads nobody gave up, with a lightning bolt between them

Figure 4 — A concession pushes two ideas against each other.

Beat 6 — Time relations: pinning down when

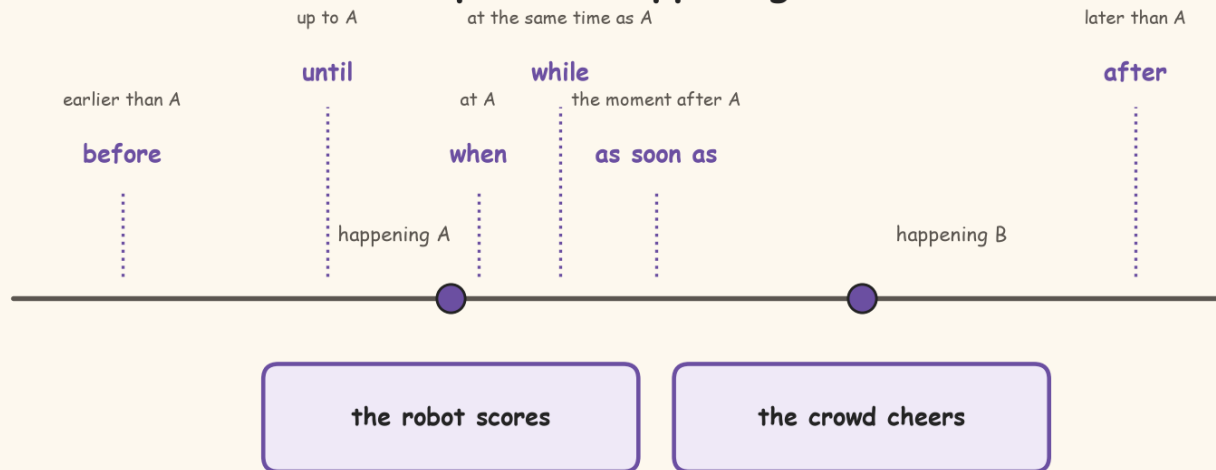
Time clauses pin one happening to another: *when, while, before, after, until, as soon as*. They answer “when, exactly?”

- “**As soon as our robot scored**, the crowd cheered.”

The cheering is pinned to the very moment of the goal. Figure 5 shows how the time words sit between two happenings on a line.

- “We practised **until the hall lights came on.**” (up to that moment)
- “**While Mia held the ball**, Sam checked the wheels.” (at the same time)

Time words pin one happening to another



As soon as our robot scored, the crowd cheered. The cheering is pinned to the very moment of the goal.

A timeline with two happenings marked as dots, the robot scores on the left and the crowd cheers on the right, with the time words before, as soon as, while, when, after and until placed along the line to show where each one points

Figure 5 — Time words pin one happening to another.

Beat 7 — Effect one: flow

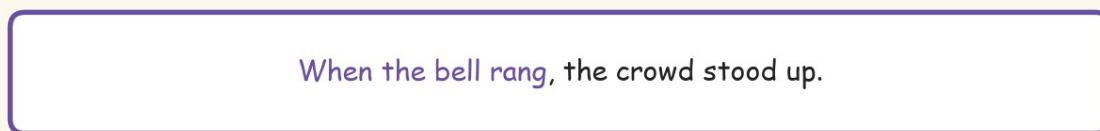
Short sentences are great when you want punch. But a long run of them feels bumpy, like riding over washboard. Complex sentences join ideas into one smooth move.

- Bumpy: “The bell rang. The crowd stood up.”
- Flowing: “**When the bell rang**, the crowd stood up.”

Same facts. The second version carries both ideas in one wave, and the reader feels the two things happen together. Writers choose complex sentences to make writing flow.

From choppy to flowing

two short sentences — a bumpy ride



one complex sentence — both ideas ride one smooth wave

Two rows of sentence cards: the top row shows two separate short cards labelled *the bell rang* and *the crowd stood up* with a bumpy zigzag line between them, and the bottom row shows one long card reading *when the bell rang, the crowd stood up* riding on one smooth wave line

Figure 6 — Two choppy sentences become one flowing sentence.

Beat 8 — Effect two: the spotlight

Here is the biggest writer's choice of all. In a complex sentence, the **independent clause carries the main message**. The dependent clause carries the extra: the reason, the time, the condition, the thing in the way. So the writer decides what the reader remembers by deciding which idea gets the independent clause. Let's call that the **spotlight**.

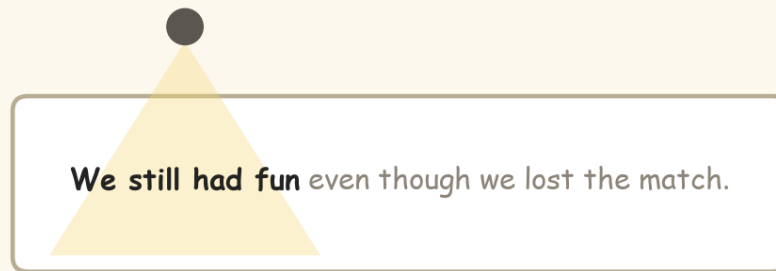
Read these two sentences. They use the same two facts — *we had fun* and *we lost the match* — but the spotlight lands on a different fact each time.

- “We still had fun **even though we lost the match.**” Spotlight on *we still had fun*. The loss is pushed into the shade.
- “**Even though we had fun,** we lost the match.” Spotlight on *we lost the match*. The fun is pushed into the shade.

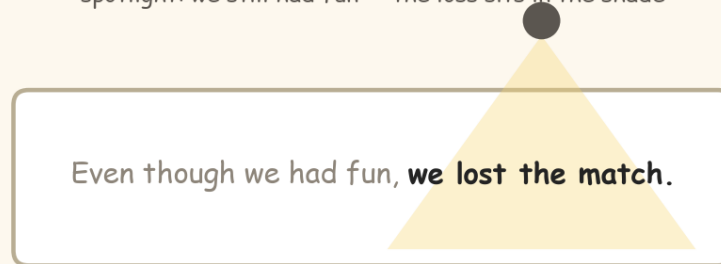
One swap, one different story. When you write, ask: *what do I want my reader to remember most?* Put that idea in the independent clause.

The independent clause holds the spotlight

Same two facts. A different clause gets the light each time.



spotlight: we still had fun — the loss sits in the shade



spotlight: we lost the match — the fun sits in the shade

What do you want your reader to remember most? Put that idea in the independent clause.

Two sentence cards, each with a torch shining a pool of light on one clause: the top card lights up we still had fun and leaves we lost the match in the shade, and the bottom card lights up we lost the match and leaves we had fun in the shade

Figure 7 — The independent clause holds the spotlight. Same facts, two different stories.

Beat 9 — Effect three: the order you meet the clauses

Writers can also move the dependent clause to the front of the sentence. Then the reader meets it first.

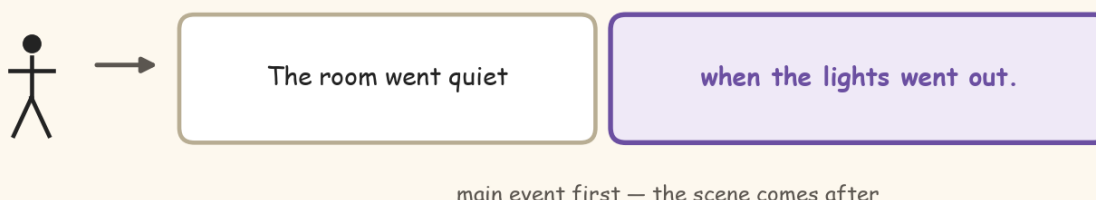
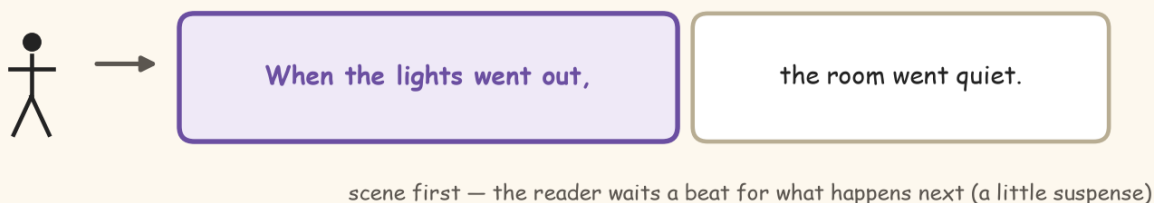
- Scene first: "**When the lights went out**, the room went quiet." The time clause paints the scene, and the reader waits a beat for what happened next. Starting with the dependent clause builds a little suspense.
- Rule first: "**If you push it**, it will break." The condition sets the rule before the reader meets the result.

(Notice the comma after a dependent clause that comes first — you met that rule in Year 4.)

Read the pair below out loud. Same clauses, different order, different feel.

- "The room went quiet **when the lights went out**." — the main event lands first.
- "**When the lights went out**, the room went quiet." — the scene lands first.

The reader meets the first clause first



Same clauses, different order. Moving the dependent clause to the front changes what the reader meets first.

Two film frames of the same sentence in different orders, with a reader walking in from the left: the top frame meets the room went quiet first, and the bottom frame meets when the lights went out first, with the words scene first and main event first labelled under each frame

Figure 8 — The order you meet the clauses changes the feel of the sentence.

Beat 10 — Effect four: packing more into one sentence

One complex sentence can carry a happening **and** its reason, purpose, condition, concession or time. That is how writers pack more into a paragraph without starting a new sentence for every fact. Look how much one sentence can hold:

- “As soon as the judge nodded, the race started because every team was ready.”

Two happenings, a time and a reason — all in one sentence. The Level 5 writing standard names exactly this move: complex sentences let writers provide extra information and description.

Beat 11 — Our model text: “Robot Night”

Here is a short piece we will use all the way through this section. Read it once for the story. Then read it again as a writer: can you find all five jobs?

Robot Night — our model text

1 Robot Night is the biggest night of the year for our club.

simple

2 *Because the showcase was only two weeks away*, we worked faster than ever.

reason

3 We rebuilt the robot's arm *so that it could hold the ball*.

purpose

4 *If the arm held the ball*, our robot could score a goal.

condition

5 *Even though the motor kept stopping*, nobody gave up.

concession

6 *As soon as our robot scored*, the crowd cheered.

time

7 We celebrated with hot chips *because we had earned them*.

reason

Each dependent clause is printed in the colour of its job.

reason

purpose

condition

concession

time

The model text *Robot Night* shown as seven numbered sentences, with each dependent clause shaded and labelled with its job: reason, purpose, condition, concession or time

Figure 9 — Our model text, “Robot Night”, with the jobs of the dependent clauses labelled.

1 Robot Night is the biggest night of the year for our club. 2 Because the showcase was only two weeks away, we worked faster than ever. 3 We rebuilt the robot's arm so that it could hold the ball. 4 If the arm held the ball, our robot could score a goal. 5 Even though the motor kept stopping, nobody gave up. 6 As soon as our robot scored, the crowd cheered. 7 We celebrated with hot chips because we had earned them.

Find the five jobs in “Robot Night”:

- **reason** — sentence 2 tells *why* we worked fast. Sentence 7 tells *why* we celebrated.
- **purpose** — sentence 3 tells *what we wanted* the new arm to do.
- **condition** — sentence 4 sets the rule for scoring.
- **concession** — sentence 5 says we kept going *even though* the motor kept stopping.
- **time** — sentence 6 pins the cheering to the moment of the goal.

Writers keep a checklist in their head while they write. Here is yours.

My writer's checklist

☐

I picked the job my dependent clause does (reason, purpose, condition, concession or time).

☐

My independent clause carries my main message.

☐

I tried starting at least one sentence with the dependent clause.

☐

I read my sentence aloud to check it makes sense.

Use it every time you build a complex sentence.

A checklist poster with four steps: I picked the job my dependent clause does; my independent clause carries my main message; I tried starting at least one sentence with the dependent clause; I read my sentence aloud to check it makes sense

Figure 10 — The writer's checklist. Use it every time you build a complex sentence.

Worked examples

Example 1 — with help

Name the job of the dependent clause, then say what the sentence does for the reader.

“When the kite caught the wind, it jumped into the sky.”

Working

Find the conjunction: **when**.

Stand-alone test: “it jumped into the sky” is a full sentence.

When pins one happening to another.

The dependent clause comes first.

Why

The conjunction starts the dependent clause and shows the job.

That is the independent clause. “When the kite caught the wind” leaves you waiting.

The job is **time**.

The reader meets the moment the wind arrived first, then waits a beat for the jump — a little suspense.

Answer: Job: time. The clause that comes first paints the moment everything changed, and the spotlight lands on *it jumped into the sky*.

Example 2 — with help

Two writers use the same two facts but choose different jobs. Compare them.

Facts: *We added vinegar. The mixture bubbled over.*

Writer A: “The mixture bubbled over **because we added vinegar.**” Writer B: “**As soon as we added vinegar,** the mixture bubbled over.”

Working	Why
Writer A’s conjunction is because .	Job: reason — it answers <i>why</i> the mixture bubbled over.
Writer B’s conjunction is as soon as .	Job: time — it pins the bubbling to the very moment the vinegar went in.
Writer B starts with the dependent clause.	The reader meets the action of adding vinegar first, then gets the bubbly surprise — more suspense.
Writer A keeps the main event first.	The spotlight lands on <i>the mixture bubbled over</i> straight away.

Answer: Writer A tells you **why** it happened. Writer B tells you **how fast** it happened and makes you wait one beat for the mess. Same facts, different effects — that is the writer choosing the structure.

Practice questions

With help

Q1. Name the job of the dependent clause in each sentence: **reason, purpose, condition, concession** or **time**. *Hint: use the questions in Figure 1.* (a) We saved our paper scraps so that we could make cards. (b) Unless the wind drops, the kites will stay on the ground. (c) Although the path was muddy, the walk went on. (d) The team clapped when the winners were named.

Q2. Circle the conjunction in each sentence. Then write the job it does. (a) We packed up before the rain started. (b) I wrote a list so that I would not forget anything. (c) Even though my boots were wet, I kept walking.

Q3. Pick the best conjunction: **because, if, even though, while** or **so that**. (a) _____ you press the switch, the bulb lights up. (b) She trained every morning _____ she wanted to make the team. (c) We whispered _____ the play was on. (d) He finished the race _____ his ankle hurt. (e) We brought a torch _____ we could see the path.

Q4. Purpose hunt. Underline the purpose clause in each sentence. Then write what the person wanted to happen. (a) We watered the seeds every day so that they would grow. (b) She saved her coins to buy a sketch book.

Q5. Sorting game. Cut out the cards in Figure 11, or copy them onto paper. Sort the twelve conjunction cards into the five job boxes.

Conjunction cards — sort them into the job boxes

— because	— so that	— if	— unless
— even though	— although	— when	— while
— before	— after	— until	— as soon as

Cut out the cards. Sort each one into the box where it belongs.

reason ?	purpose ?	condition ?	concession ?	time ?
-------------	--------------	----------------	-----------------	-----------

A set of twelve conjunction cards — *because, so that, if, unless, even though, although, when, while, before, after, until and as soon as* — with five empty boxes labelled *reason, purpose, condition, concession and time*

Figure 11 — Conjunction cards. Sort each card into the job box it belongs to.

Q6. The spotlight. Underline the independent clause in each sentence — that is the idea in the spotlight. What does the writer want you to remember most? (a) We still had fun even though we lost the match. (b) Although the hall was full, the concert went on.

Q7. Move the dependent clause to the front of each sentence. Then write one short sentence about what changes for the reader. (a) The crowd went quiet when the lights went out. (b) Our robot can score if the arm holds the ball.

Q8. Comma check, the Year 4 rule. Look at your two answers in Q7. Did you add a comma after the dependent clause when it came first? Tick one. Yes, I added the comma. ☐ No, I need to add it. ☐

On your own

Q9. Write one complex sentence of your own for each job below. Underline the conjunction you chose. (a) a reason sentence: _____ (b) a condition sentence: _____

Q10. Fix the choppy writing. Join these five short sentences into fewer, smoother sentences. You may use *when, because, even though* and *and*. “The sun came up. We picked up our bags. We started the walk. The track was hard. We kept going.” My smoother version: _____

Q11. Same facts, two spotlights. Facts: *the power went out* and *the concert went on*. Write two sentences with the same facts. (a) Spotlight on the concert going on: _____ (b) Spotlight on the power going out: _____

Q12. Read this short text. Find the complex sentences and name the job of each one.

The Hen Run 1 Every morning, Maya opens the hen coop. 2 She fills the water tank before the sun gets hot. 3 If the latch is loose, the hens get out. 4 Yesterday a fox came by because the gate was open. 5 Even though Maya was scared, she shut the gate. 6 She mended the latch so that the hens would be safe.

Sentence _____ — job: _____ Sentence _____ — job: _____ Sentence _____ — job: _____
 Sentence _____ — job: _____ Sentence _____ — job: _____ Sentence _____ — job: _____

Show what you know

Teacher note — this is the section's assessed task, assessed as a Writing product. The Reading and Viewing face of the CD (using knowledge of clauses for effect while reading) is covered by the text tasks Q11–Q12 and the model-text work in the Learn beats. Assess against the Level 5 Writing achievement-standard sentence: "They use grammar and punctuation, including complex sentences to provide additional information and description."

Writing — a time you kept going

Write a short piece about a time when something was hard, but you kept going. You could write about building something, learning something new, fixing something, or helping someone. You may pick your own time.

Your piece needs:

- 4 to 6 sentences
- at least 3 complex sentences doing **three different jobs** (for example, one reason, one time and one concession)
- at least one sentence that starts with its dependent clause
- a star next to the sentence you are most proud of, with the job of that sentence named underneath it

My checklist — tick each one when you can say yes.

Can I ...	Yes
write at least 3 complex sentences with three different jobs?	☐
start at least one sentence with the dependent clause?	☐
put my main message in the independent clause?	☐
name the job of my starred sentence?	☐

Answers

Q1. (a) purpose. (b) condition. (c) concession. (d) time. **Q2.** (a) *before* — time. (b) *so that* — purpose. (c) *even though* — concession. **Q3.** (a) If. (b) because. (c) while. (d) even though. (e) so that. **Q4.** (a) “so that they would grow” — they wanted the seeds to grow. (b) “to buy a sketch book” — she wanted to buy a sketch book. **Q5.** reason: *because*. purpose: *so that*. condition: *if, unless*. concession: *even though, although*. time: *when, while, before, after, until, as soon as*. **Q6.** (a) “We still had fun” — the fun, not the loss. (b) “the concert went on” — the concert going on, not the full hall. **Q7.** (a) “When the lights went out, the crowd went quiet.” (b) “If the arm holds the ball, our robot can score.” In both, the reader meets the scene or the rule first, and the main event lands last. **Q8.** Yes — a comma after the dependent clause when it comes first. **Q9.** Answers will be different. One answer: (a) “We stayed inside because the wind was strong.” (b) “If the timer rings, the bread is ready.” **Q10.** For example: “When the sun came up, we picked up our bags and started the walk. Even though the track was hard, we kept going.” **Q11.** For example: (a) “The concert went on even though the power went out.” (b) “The power went out even though the concert was on.” **Q12.** Sentence 2 — time. Sentence 3 — condition. Sentence 4 — reason. Sentence 5 — concession. Sentence 6 — purpose. **Show what you know.** Answers will be different. Check the four points on My checklist.

Full answers

Q1. Use the question each job answers. (a) *so that we could make cards* tells what we wanted to happen — **purpose**. (b) *Unless the wind drops* sets what has to happen first — **condition** (*unless* means “if ... not”). (c) *Although the path was muddy* puts something in the way, and the walk went on anyway — **concession**. (d) *when the winners were named* pins the clapping to a moment — **time**.

Q2. The conjunction starts the dependent clause. (a) *before* — it pins the packing up to a time. (b) *so that* — it tells what the list was for. (c) *even though* — wet boots stood in the way, and the walking went on anyway.

Q3. Ask which job fits. (a) The bulb lights up only when the switch is pressed — **If**. (b) The second clause tells *why* she trained — **because**. (c) The whispering and the play happen at the same time — **while**. (d) A hurt ankle stands in the way, and he finished anyway — **even though**. (e) The torch is for seeing the path — what they wanted — **so that**.

Q4. A purpose clause tells what someone wanted to happen. (a) Underline “so that they would grow”. They wanted **the seeds to grow**. (b) Underline “to buy a sketch book”. She wanted **to buy a sketch book** — purpose can wear the *to* + verb outfit.

Q5. *Because* answers “why?” — reason. *So that* tells what someone wanted — purpose. *If* and *unless* set what has to happen first — condition. *Even though* and *although* put something in the way — concession. *When, while, before, after, until* and *as soon as* all pin down “when?” — time.

Q6. The independent clause holds the spotlight. (a) “We still had fun” stands alone; *even though we lost the match* leaves you waiting. The writer wants you to remember **the fun**, not the loss. (b) “the concert went on” stands alone. The writer wants you to remember **that the concert went on**; the full hall is just the scene.

Q7. Move the whole dependent clause to the front, then add the comma. (a) “**When the lights went out**, the crowd went quiet.” (b) “**If the arm holds the ball**, our robot can score.” What changes: the reader meets the scene (a) or the rule (b) first, waits a beat, and the main event lands last — a little more suspense.

Q8. Yes. A dependent clause that comes first is followed by a comma — the rule you met in Year 4. Both Q7 answers need one.

Q9. Answers will be different. Check each sentence: one independent clause, one dependent clause, and a conjunction doing the right job. One answer: (a) “We stayed inside **because** the wind was strong.” — reason. (b) “**If** the timer rings, the bread is ready.” — condition.

Q10. Look for pairs of ideas you can join with a time, reason or concession clause. One answer: “**When the sun came up**, we picked up our bags and started the walk. **Even though the track was hard**, we kept going.” Five choppy sentences become two flowing ones, and nothing is lost.

Q11. The spotlight falls on the independent clause, so choose which fact gets it. (a) “**The concert went on** even though the power went out.” — the concert is the news. (b) “**The power went out** even though the concert was on.” — now the power going out is the news, and it sounds surprising on purpose. Same two facts; the writer chose a different story each time.

Q12. Sentence 1 has one clause only — not complex. The other five are complex: Sentence 2 — *before the sun gets hot* pins the filling to a time: **time**. Sentence 3 — *If the latch is loose* sets what has to happen first: **condition**. Sentence 4 — *because the gate was open* tells why the fox came by: **reason**. Sentence 5 — *Even though Maya was scared* puts fear in the way, and she shut the gate anyway: **concession**. Sentence 6 — *so that the hens would be safe* tells what Maya wanted: **purpose**.

Show what you know. Answers will be different. Check the four points on the checklist: at least 3 complex sentences doing three different jobs; at least one sentence starting with its dependent clause; the main message in the independent clause; and the job of the starred sentence named. A strong answer reads like this:

“Last holidays, I decided to build a cubby in our back yard. Because the planks were heavy, my dad helped me carry them. I measured the door twice so that it would fit. Even though one wall leaned, I kept going. When the last nail went in, I stood back and grinned.”

It has five sentences, four of them complex, four different jobs (reason, purpose, concession, time), and one sentence starting with its dependent clause. The starred sentence might be “Even though one wall leaned, I kept going.” — job: concession.

Expanding noun groups for fuller description

English 5 · Chapter 2 — Language: expressing and developing ideas · Section 2B · Owns VC2E5LA06

Read these two sentences out loud.

The dog sat.

The two old brown cattle dogs sat on the cool grass by the shed.

The first sentence is correct, but it is plain. How many dogs? What do they look like? Where are they? The second sentence answers all of those questions before you ask them. The difference is made by **noun groups**, and this section shows you how to build them so your writing paints a fuller picture for the reader.

Owns — VC2E5LA06 (Language strand, sub-strand: Language for expressing and developing ideas):

“understand how noun groups can be expanded in a variety of ways to provide a fuller description of a person, place, thing or idea”

Draws on — VCAA elaborations, verbatim (ids per TOC §3):

- **VC2E5LA06.E01** — “learning how to expand a description by combining a related set of nouns and adjectives, for example ‘two old brown cattle dogs’”
- **VC2E5LA06.E02** — “observing how descriptive details can be built up around a noun or an adjective, forming a group (for example, ‘this very smelly cleaning cloth in the sink’ is a noun group and ‘as pretty as the flowers in May’ is an adjective group)”

Builds on (from Level 4, not re-taught here): in Year 4 you learned how prepositional phrases add *where*, *when* and *which one* details to a sentence (VC2E4LA07). This section uses them as one way to grow a noun group, but does not re-teach them.

Sets up (for Level 6, not taught here): at Level 6, noun groups grow again when a whole clause tucks inside them, and writers learn how verb choice shapes a sentence. Those jobs wait until next year. This section stays in its own lane.

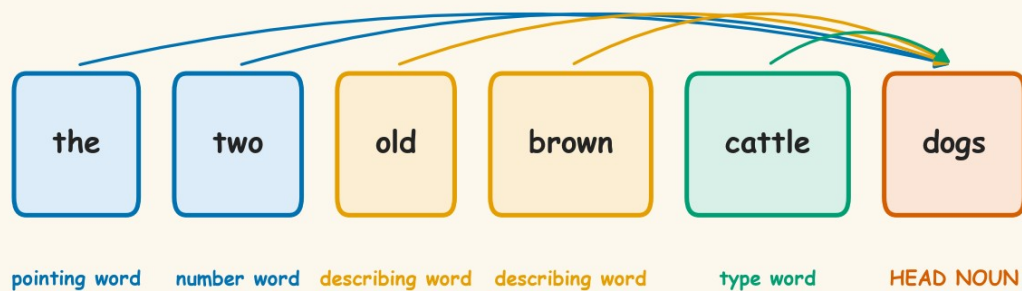
Theory

Part 1 — Noun groups: a noun and its team

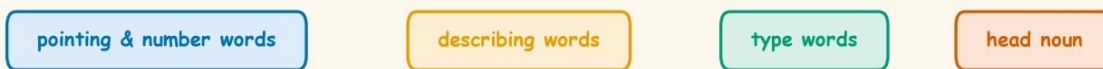
Nouns and adjectives: a quick look back. A **noun** is a word for a person, place, thing or idea — *girl*, *beach*, *ball*, *dream*. An **adjective** is a describing word — it tells you something about a noun: *old*, *brown*, *soft*, *three*. You have used both since your first years of school. Now watch what happens when they team up.

What is a noun group? A **noun group** is a noun together with all the words gathered around it that help describe it, all working together as one unit. In this section, that is exactly what *noun group* means: the noun and its describing words, read as one piece. *The two old brown cattle dogs* is one noun group. *Dogs* all by itself is the smallest noun group there is. The noun that the rest of the group is about is called the **head noun**. In *the two old brown cattle dogs*, the head noun is *dogs* — every other word in the group points at it.

The parts of a noun group



Every word in the group points at the head noun — the word the group is about.



A labelled diagram of the noun group *the two old brown cattle dogs*, showing the pointing word, the number word, the describing words, the type word and the head noun, each in its own colour

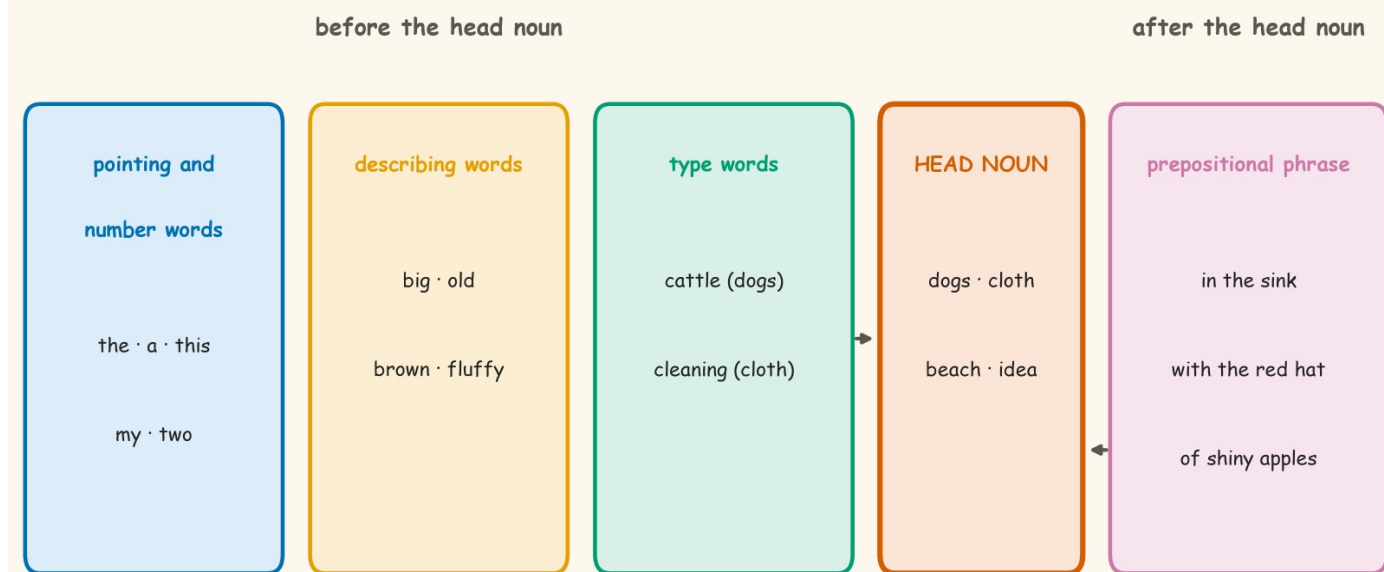
Figure 1 — Every word in the group has a job, and the head noun is the word the group is about.

Part 2 — Growing the group in front of the noun

Words that come before the head noun fit into a natural order. Listen for it: *brown old two cattle dogs the* sounds tangled, but *the two old brown cattle dogs* sounds right. English likes the slots in this order:

1. **Pointing and number words** — *the, a, this, my, two* — say which ones or how many.
2. **Describing words** — *big, old, brown, fluffy* — say what it is like. Size, age, colour and feel usually line up in that order.
3. **Type words** — a noun can work as a describing word to name the type: *cattle dogs* are a type of dog, and a *cleaning cloth* is a type of cloth.

The slots of a noun group



You do not have to fill every slot — choose the ones that matter to your writing.

A chart of the word slots in a noun group, with three slots before the head noun (pointing and number words, describing words, type words), the head noun in the middle, and one slot after it (a prepositional phrase)

Figure 2 — The slots of a noun group. You do not have to fill every slot — choose the ones that matter to your writing.

Part 3 — Growing the group after the noun

A noun group can keep growing after the head noun too. The new words say *which one* or *where*:

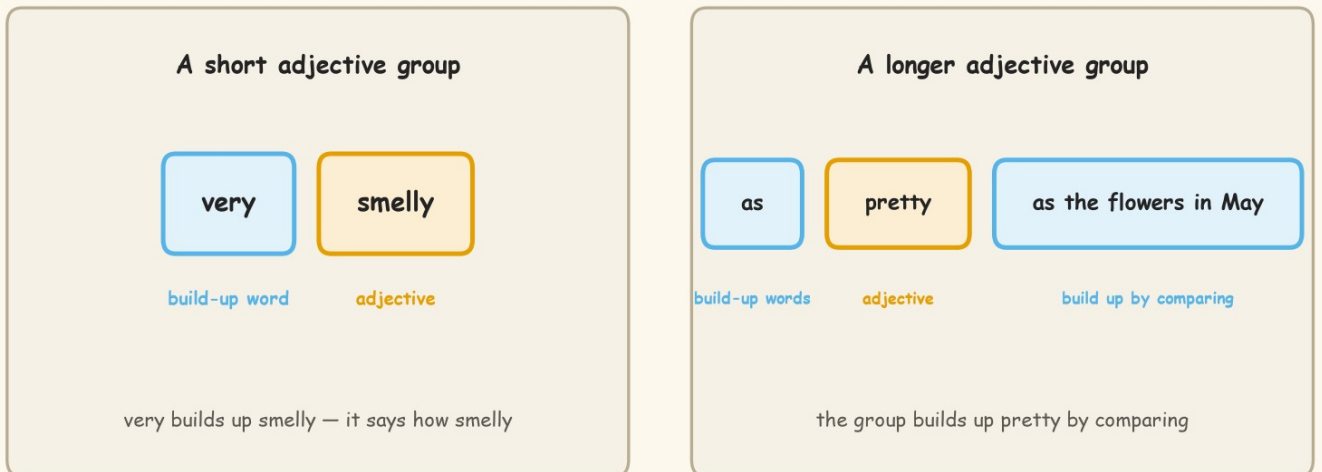
- the cleaning cloth **in the sink**
- the girl **with the red hat**
- a basket **of shiny apples**

Groups like *in the sink* start with small words such as *in*, *on*, *at*, *under* or *with*. You met them in Year 4: they are called **prepositional phrases** (a word group that begins with one of those small words and tells you where, when or which one). When a prepositional phrase sits straight after a noun like this, it belongs to that noun's group.

Part 4 — Adjective groups

Descriptive details can also be built up around an adjective, forming an **adjective group** — an adjective with the words gathered around it to build up its meaning. *Very smelly* is an adjective group: *very* builds up *smelly*. *As pretty as the flowers in May* is an adjective group too: it builds around *pretty* by comparing something with the flowers. You can make your own: *as cold as ice*, *as fast as a racing car*, *very, very hungry*.

Adjective groups



Adjective groups build up around an adjective, just as noun groups build up around a noun.



Two labelled adjective groups, very smelly and as pretty as the flowers in May, showing the adjective and the words built up around it

Figure 3 — Adjective groups build up around an adjective, just as noun groups build up around a noun.

Part 5 — Why writers expand noun groups

Writers expand noun groups to hand the reader a fuller, clearer picture — and to show exactly which person, place, thing or idea they mean. Compare the same news told two ways:

Same news, two ways

Plain

The dog sat on the grass.

Fuller

The two old brown cattle dogs sat on the cool grass by the shed.

The expanded noun group answers the questions before you ask them:

How many? two. What like? old, brown. What kind? cattle dogs. Where? by the shed.

pointing & number

describing

type

head noun

A table comparing a plain sentence with a fuller sentence that uses expanded noun groups, with the describing words picked out in colour

Figure 4 — Same news, two ways. The expanded noun groups do the describing work.

One warning: do not cram every slot. *The two old brown cattle dogs* is strong because each word earns its place. If a detail does not matter to your writing, leave it out. Notice too that noun groups can describe ideas, not just things you can touch: *a bright new idea, the best day of the year, her kind words*.

Worked examples

Model text — Market day (original)

Read this short piece. Every coloured stretch is an expanded noun group.

Market day — model text (original)

- 1 Every Saturday, a friendly old **baker** sets up his little wooden **stall** at the busy **market**. heads: baker · stall · market
- 2 Two small **girls** in bright yellow coats wait for him each week. head: girls
- 3 They always buy the sweet strawberry **jam**. head: jam
- 4 The kind **baker** gives them a free **sample**. heads: baker · sample
- 5 The girls skip home with sticky **smiles**. head: smiles

Each yellow stretch is one expanded noun group. The head noun of each group is in bold.

An original model text called *Market day* with its expanded noun groups highlighted in colour

Figure 5 — Market day. Find each noun group, then ask: which word is the head noun, and what does each describing word add?

Talking it through:

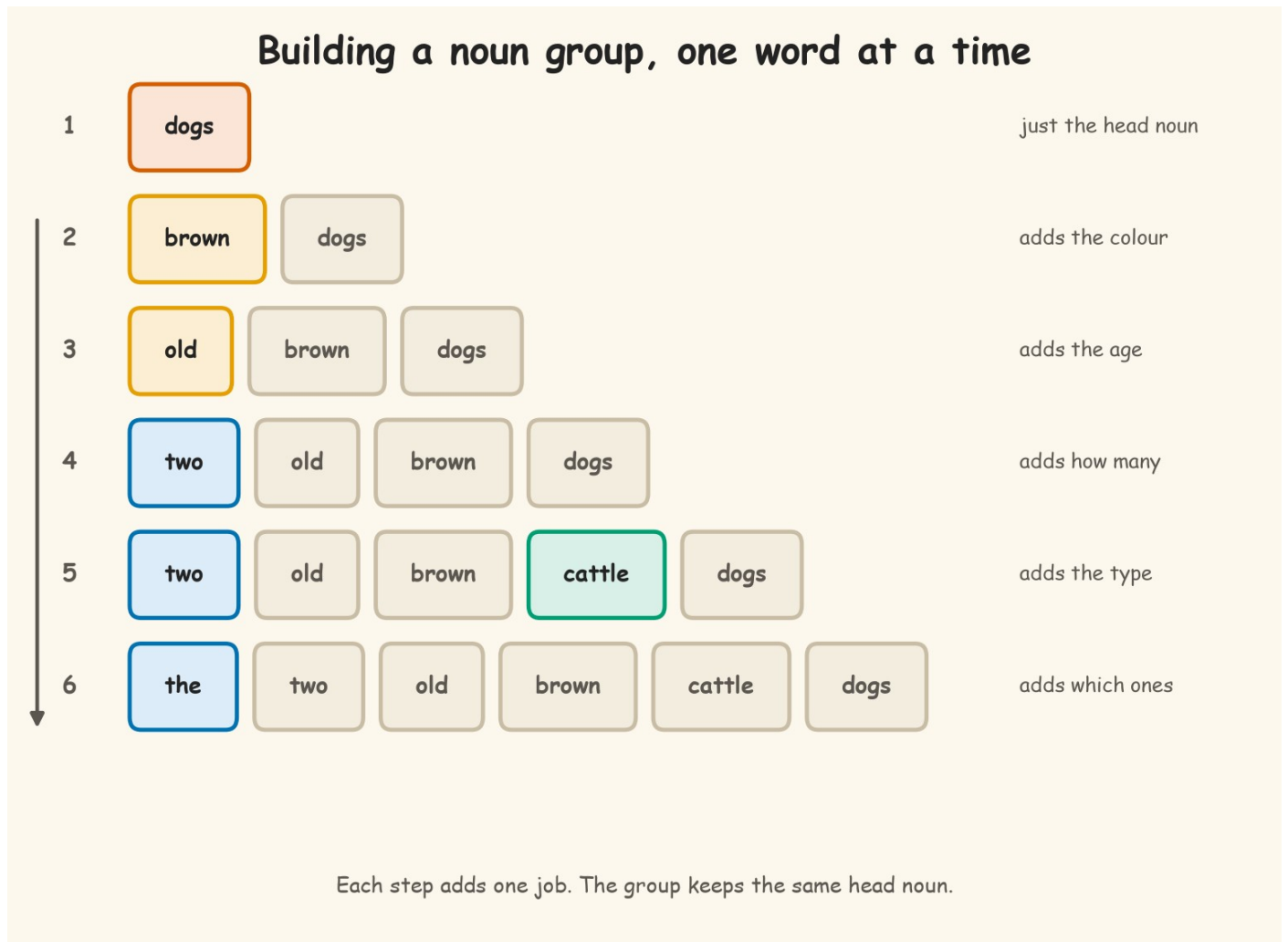
- *A friendly old baker* — the head noun is *baker*; *friendly* tells you what he is like, *old* tells you his age.
- *Two small girls in bright yellow coats* — the head noun is *girls*; the group even tells you what they are wearing, because *in bright yellow coats* sits after the noun and belongs to the group.
- *The sweet strawberry jam* — the head noun is *jam*; *strawberry* names the type of jam.

Example 1 — Build up a noun group, one word at a time

Build up a noun group one word at a time, starting with the head noun *dogs*. This follows VCAA example VC2E5LA06.E01, which grows the description into ‘two old brown cattle dogs’.

Step	Noun group so far	What the new word adds
1	dogs	Just the head noun — we know nothing about the dogs
2	brown dogs	An adjective gives the colour
3	old brown dogs	Another adjective gives the age
4	two old brown dogs	A number word says how many
5	two old brown cattle dogs	A type word names the kind of dog

Step	Noun group so far	What the new word adds
6	the two old brown cattle dogs	A pointing word says which dogs — the ones the writer has in mind



A step-by-step diagram showing the noun group growing from the word *dogs* to the *two old brown cattle dogs*, one word at a time, with each new word in its job colour

Figure 6 — The same build-up as a picture. Each step adds one job to the group.

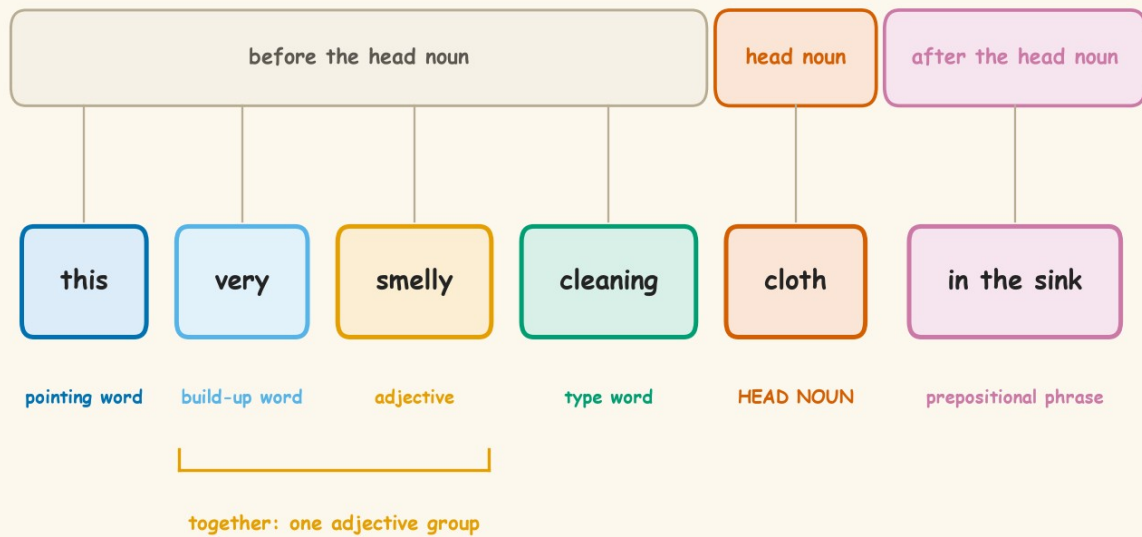
Example 2 — Open up a noun group and name each job

Open up the noun group and name the job of every word. This follows VCAA example VC2E5LA06.E02: ‘this very smelly cleaning cloth in the sink’ is one noun group.

Words	Job in the group
this	Pointing word — says which cloth
very smelly	An adjective group — <i>very</i> builds up <i>smelly</i> to say what the cloth is like
cleaning	Type word — says what kind of cloth
cloth	Head noun — the word the whole group is about
in the sink	A prepositional phrase after the noun — says where

And the adjective group from the same VCAA example, *as pretty as the flowers in May*: the adjective is *pretty*, and the words around it build up *how* pretty by comparing.

One noun group, five jobs



The describing details are built up on both sides of the head noun.

A labelled diagram of the noun group *this very smelly cleaning cloth in the sink*, split into the words *before the head noun*, the *head noun*, and the words *after it*

Figure 7 — One noun group, five jobs. The describing details are built up on both sides of the head noun.

Practice questions

With help

Q1. Underline the whole noun group in each sentence. Circle the head noun inside it. (a) The little grey kitten slept on the warm stone wall. (b) My big brother kicked the new red ball over the tall fence. (c) A bright yellow bus stopped at the corner.

Q2. Build a noun group for each head noun below. Use at least three words from the word box before the noun, in a natural order.

Word box: *two — old — brown — the — little — muddy — my — shiny*

- (a) pony
- (b) boots

Q3. Match each noun to the phrase that tells *which one* or *where*.

Noun	Phrase
the old gum tree	in the sunny window
the girl	by the creek
a basket	with the red hat
the kitten	of shiny apples

Q4. Put the describing words in a natural order. (a) bikes: *red — two — shiny* (b) chicks: *little — three — grey* (c) shed: *brown — big — old*

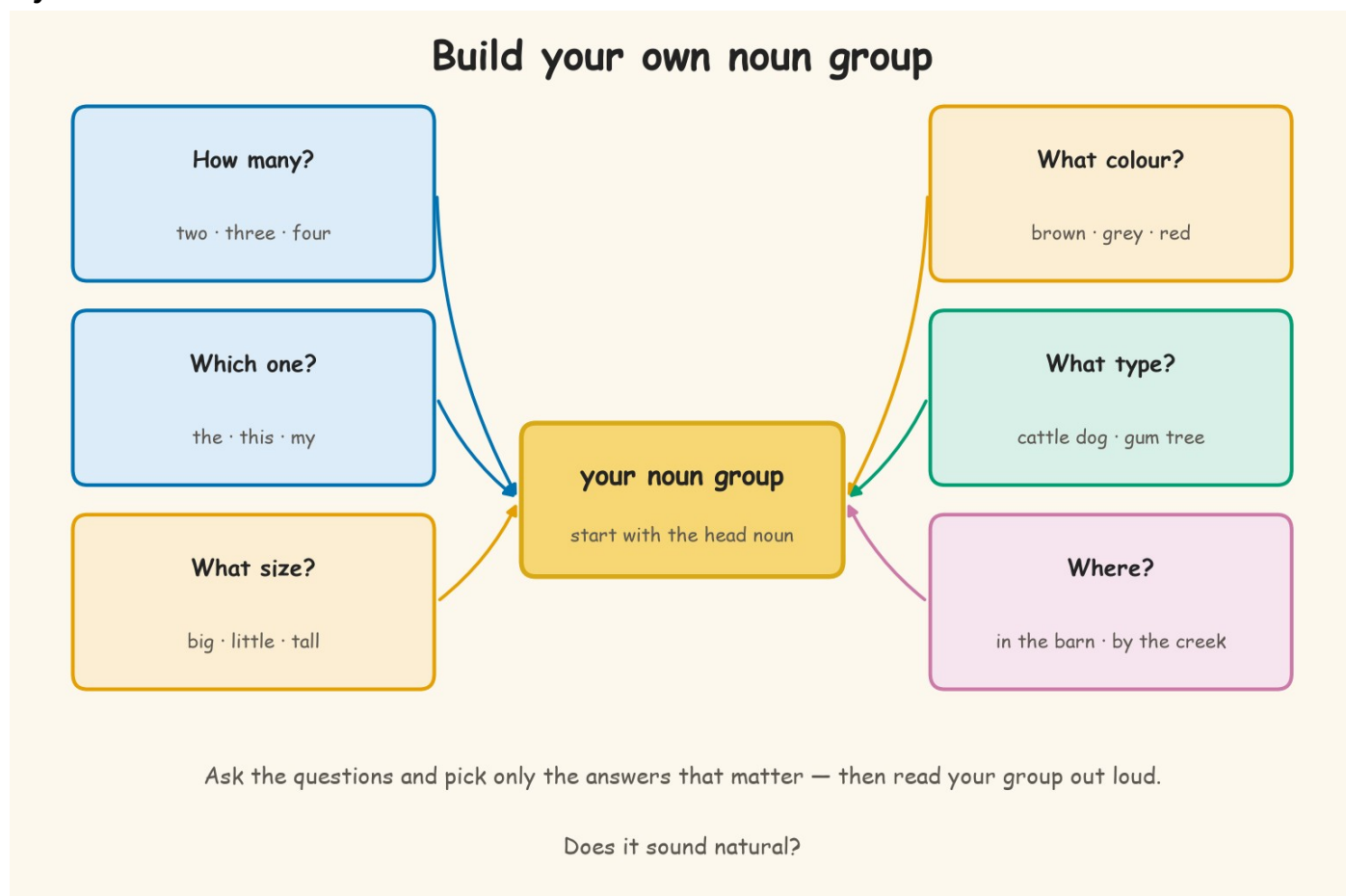
Q5. Finish each noun group with a phrase that tells *which one* or *where*. (a) the cleaning cloth **(b) a bird** (c) the boots

Q6. Expand each adjective into an adjective group. (a) Use *very*: cold → **(b) Use as ... as ...: fast** → (c) Use *as ... as* ...: soft →

Q7. Word detective. Look at the noun group *the three little fluffy chicks in the barn*. Write down: (a) the pointing word; (b) the word that tells how many; (c) the word that tells size; (d) the word that tells what the chicks feel like; (e) the head noun; (f) the part that tells where — and what kind of group it is.

Q8. Rewrite each plain sentence in a fuller way using every word in the box once. (a) The dogs ran. Word box: *two — old — brown — cattle — across — the — dusty — yard* (b) A bird sang. Word box: *small — grey — magpie — in — the — wattle — tree*

On your own



An idea map for building your own noun group, with question branches for how many, which one, what size, what colour, what type and where

Figure 8 — Use the map when you build your own groups: ask the questions, pick the answers that matter, then read your group out loud to hear whether it sounds natural.

Q9. Write your own expanded noun group — one for a person, one for a place and one for a thing. Each group needs at least four words. Read each one out loud. Does it sound natural?

Q10. Think of a place you like. Write three sentences about it. Use at least two expanded noun groups, and underline them.

Q11. Be the writer. This passage is correct but plain. Rewrite it with expanded noun groups so the reader can picture the scene. Keep the meaning the same.

We went to the beach. The dog ran into the water. A bird flew over the waves.

Q12. In your own words, explain why a writer chooses to expand a noun group. Use one of the noun groups you wrote in Q9, Q10 or Q11 as your example.

Checkpoint

CP. Choose a person, a place or a thing. Write three to five sentences describing it. Expand your noun groups so the reader can picture exactly what you mean, and include at least one adjective group (for example, *very ...* or *as ... as ...*).

Scored against the Level 5 Writing achievement standard, which says of students: “They use grammar and punctuation, including complex sentences to provide additional information and description. They use precise vocabulary, such as specialist and technical terms.”

What to look for: the noun groups are truly expanded (words gathered before and/or after the noun to add description), the describing words sit in a natural order with details chosen for a reason, at least one adjective group builds up a description, and the student can name what they did using the words of this section.

My checklist — tick each one when you can say yes.

Can I ...	Yes
expand my noun groups, with words gathered before and/or after the noun?	☐
put my describing words in a natural order, and pick details that matter?	☐
use at least one adjective group to build up a description?	☐
name what I did, using this section’s words: noun group, head noun, adjective group?	☐
use capital letters and full stops correctly?	☐

Answers

Q1. (a) *The little grey kitten* (head noun *kitten*), *the warm stone wall* (head noun *wall*). (b) *My big brother* (head noun *brother*), *the new red ball* (head noun *ball*), *the tall fence* (head noun *fence*). (c) *A bright yellow bus* (head noun *bus*), *the corner* (head noun *corner* — a noun group can be small). **Q2.** Samples: (a) *my little brown pony*; (b) *the two old muddy boots*. **Q3.** the old gum tree → by the creek; the girl → with the red hat; a basket → of shiny apples; the kitten → in the sunny window. **Q4.** (a) *two shiny red bikes*; (b) *three little grey chicks*; (c) *big old brown shed*. **Q5.** Samples: (a) *the cleaning cloth in the sink*; (b) *a bird in the gum tree*; (c) *the boots by the back door*. **Q6.** Samples: (a) *very cold*; (b) *as fast as a racing car*; (c) *as soft as silk*. **Q7.** (a) *the*; (b) *three*; (c) *little*; (d) *fluffy*; (e) *chicks*; (f) *in the barn* — a prepositional phrase. **Q8.** (a) *The two old brown cattle dogs ran across the dusty yard*. (b) *A small grey magpie in the wattle tree sang*. **Q9–Q12.** Answers will be different. See Full answers for samples. **Checkpoint.** Answers will be different. Check the five points on My checklist. See Full answers for a sample.

Full answers

These are sample responses for the open tasks. Yours can be different and still be right — check it against the job each task asks for.

Q9 (sample). A person: *my kind old grandad*. A place: *the quiet sandy beach*. A thing: *her shiny red bike*. Each group has at least four words, the describing words sit in a natural order, and the head nouns are *grandad*, *beach* and *bike*.

Q10 (sample). *My favourite place is the big old gum tree at the back of the park. On warm days, the soft green grass under the tree feels cool on my feet. I like to sit in the shade and read my favourite books.* The expanded noun groups are *the big old gum tree*, *the soft green grass* and *my favourite books*.

Q11 (sample). *On the hot Saturday, our family went to the wide sandy beach. The young black dog ran into the cool blue water. A white sea bird flew over the big rolling waves.* The meaning is the same as the plain passage, but each noun group now carries describing words, so the reader can picture the scene.

Q12 (sample). A writer expands a noun group to put a clear picture into the reader's head and to show exactly which person, place, thing or idea is meant. *The dog* could be any dog at all. In my Q11 response, *the young black dog* tells the reader the age and colour of the dog, so the picture in their head matches the picture in mine.

Checkpoint (sample response). *My nan's garden is as pretty as a picture. The red roses by the stone wall feel as soft as silk. On warm days, the little dirt path between the flowers smells as sweet as honey. I think the garden is the best place to sit with a good book.* Checklist: expanded noun groups (*the red roses*, *the stone wall*, *the little dirt path*, *a good book*) ✓; natural word order and chosen details ✓; adjective groups (*as pretty as a picture*, *as soft as silk*, *as sweet as honey*) ✓; section words named (*noun group*, *head noun*, *adjective group*) ✓; capital letters and full stops ✓.

Sequences of images and the use of sound: how they make meaning

This section owns **VC2E5LA07** and draws on **VC2E5LA07.E01**, **VC2E5LA07.E02**, **VC2E5LA07.E03** and **VC2E5LA07.E04**. It feeds the Level 5 Reading and Viewing achievement standard: students “explain how the sequence of still images, and moving images and sound, create or affect meaning.”

Curriculum focus — This section teaches **VC2E5LA07** (Victorian Curriculum F–10 Version 2.0, English, Level 5 — Language, Language for expressing and developing ideas):

“Explain how the sequence of still and moving images and the use of sound in texts affect meaning.”

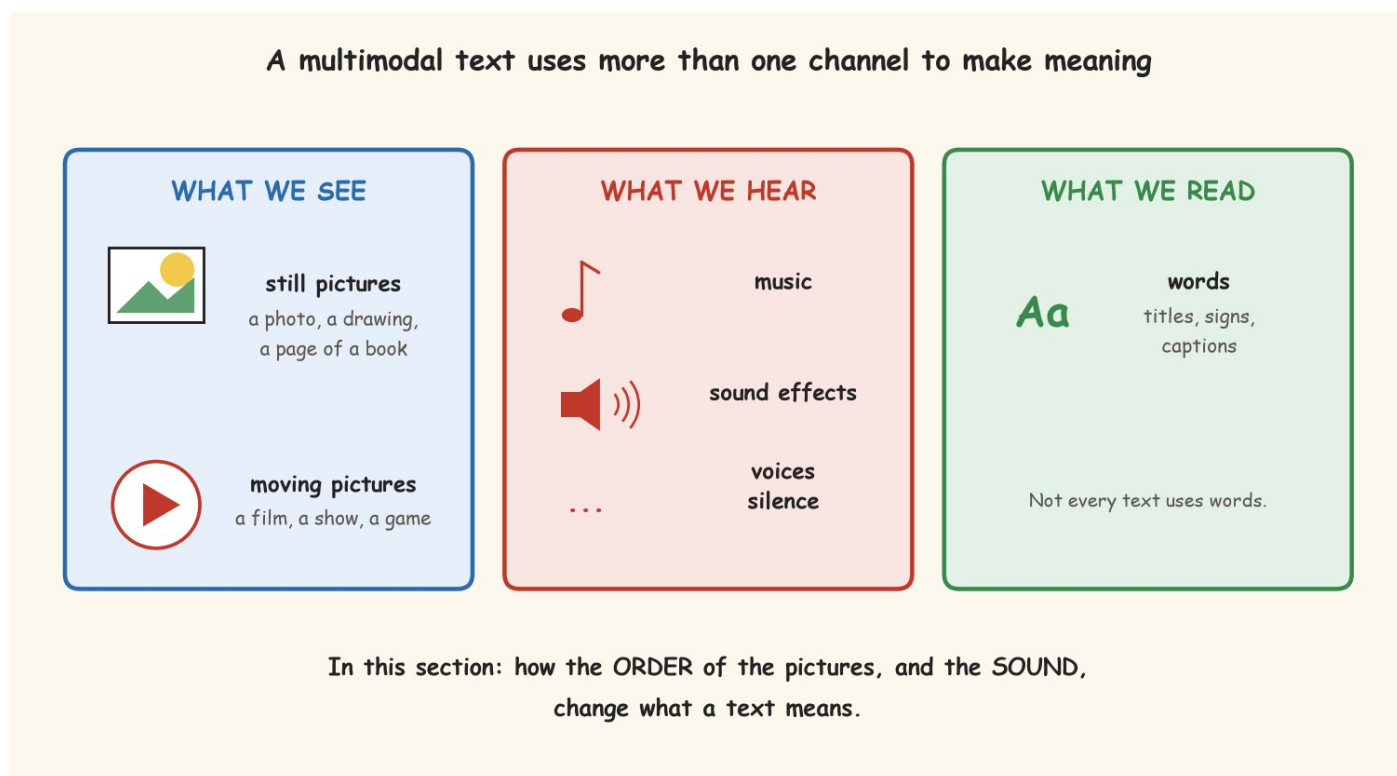
It draws on the elaboration ids below. These are linkage keys for the question bank and coverage records — illustrations of the CD, not a lesson checklist (TOC D7):

- **VC2E5LA07.E01** — “interpreting narrative texts told through wordless picture books”
- **VC2E5LA07.E02** — “identifying and comparing sequences of images revealed through different hyperlink choices”
- **VC2E5LA07.E03** — “viewing a short film or segment from a film without sound and comparing interpretations after viewing it with sound”
- **VC2E5LA07.E04** — “recognising how the sequence of images in texts creates meaning”

Builds on, does not re-teach: Level 4 taught that sound, and the framing and placement of images, make meaning (VC2E4LA09). This section builds on that knowledge without re-teaching it (TOC §4). **Hands forward:** image sequences and sound feed VC2E6LA07 at Level 6 (still and moving images and sound in informative and persuasive texts). That Level 6 step is not taught here.

Learn

In this section we are viewers. We read texts made of pictures and sound, and we ask two big questions: **what order do the images come in?** and **what is the sound doing?** Both change what a text means.



A poster with three labelled channels: **WHAT WE SEE** in blue with a picture icon, **WHAT WE HEAR** in red with a speaker icon, and **WHAT WE READ** in green with an open book icon; a strip along the bottom reads: *In this section: how the ORDER of the pictures, and the SOUND, change what a text means*

Figure 1 — The three channels. A viewer takes in what they see, what they hear, and what they read.

Beat 1 — A look back at Year 4 viewing

You already know these from Year 4.

frame — the edge of a picture; the line around what we can see.

still image — a picture that does not move: a photo, a drawing, a page in a book.

moving image — pictures that change over time, like a film or a video. A moving image can carry sound.

shot — one piece of film from one camera, before it cuts to the next shot.

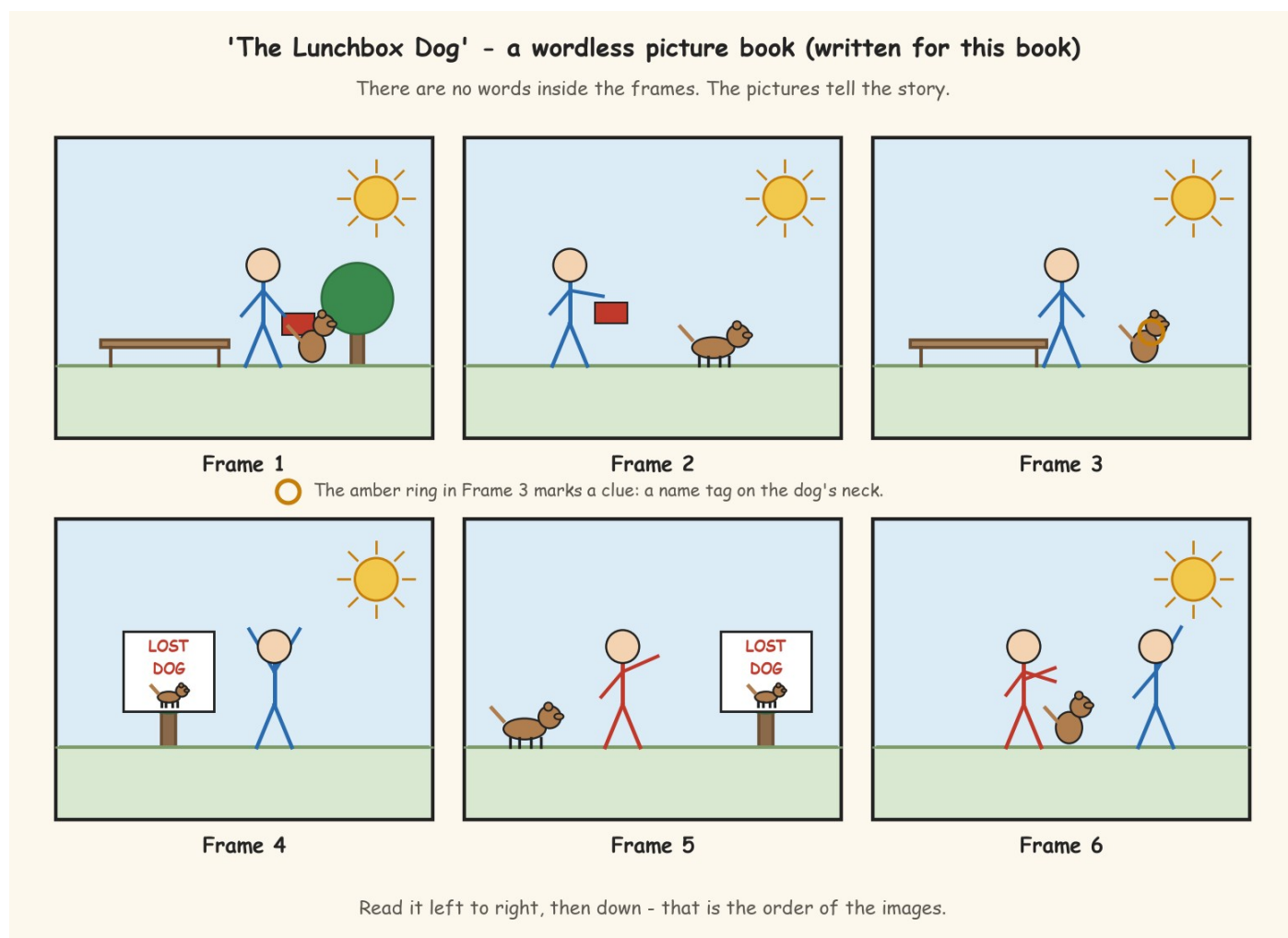
viewer — the person watching or looking at a text. When you watch, you are the viewer.

storyboard — a plan for a story drawn as empty frames in order, like a comic before the words go in.

A picture book is made of still images in frames. A film is made of shots — still images that move, one after another, with sound.

Beat 2 — Wordless picture books

Now meet our class text. It is called “The Lunchbox Dog”. It is a **wordless picture book** — a book that tells its whole story with pictures. There are no words inside the frames, so the viewer does the reading.



Six framed pictures of the original wordless picture book 'The Lunchbox Dog': Frame 1 a boy with a red lunchbox stands by a bench while a dog hides behind a tree and watches the lunch; Frame 2 the boy holds out the lunchbox and the dog steps closer; Frame 3 the boy looks at a name tag on the dog's neck, marked with an amber ring; Frame 4 the boy puts up a LOST DOG poster on a tree; Frame 5 a girl points at the poster and runs towards the dog; Frame 6 the girl hugs the dog and the boy waves; a legend explains that the amber ring in Frame 3 marks a clue, a name tag on the dog's neck

Figure 2 — “The Lunchbox Dog”, a wordless picture book written for this book. Read it left to right, then down. That order is the **sequence** — the order the images come in.

Read it once, just for the story. What happens? A boy shares his lunch with a hungry dog, finds a name tag, puts up a poster, and the dog’s family finds it. You worked all of that out from pictures alone. That is what a viewer does.

Beat 3 — Clues: what you see, what you work out

A wordless book gives you **clues** — things you can see in a picture that help you work something out. The viewer does the reading.

clue — something you can see in a picture that helps you work something out.

Reading the clues in 'The Lunchbox Dog'		
Frame	The clue you can see	What you work out
Frame 1	The dog hides behind the tree and watches Ben's lunch.	The dog is hungry. It is scared too.
Frame 3	The dog wears a band around its neck with a name tag.	Someone owns this dog. The dog is lost.
Frame 5	Zoe points at the poster and runs to the dog.	Zoe knows this dog. Its family has found it.

A wordless book gives you clues. You do the reading.

A worked table with three columns, Frame, The clue you can see, and What you work out; row one: Frame 1, the dog hides behind the tree and watches Ben’s lunch, so the dog is hungry and it is scared too; row two: Frame 3, the dog wears a band around its neck with a name tag, so someone owns this dog and the dog is lost; row three: Frame 5, Zoe points at the poster and runs to the dog, so Zoe knows this dog and its family has found it

Figure 3 — Reading the clues in “The Lunchbox Dog”.

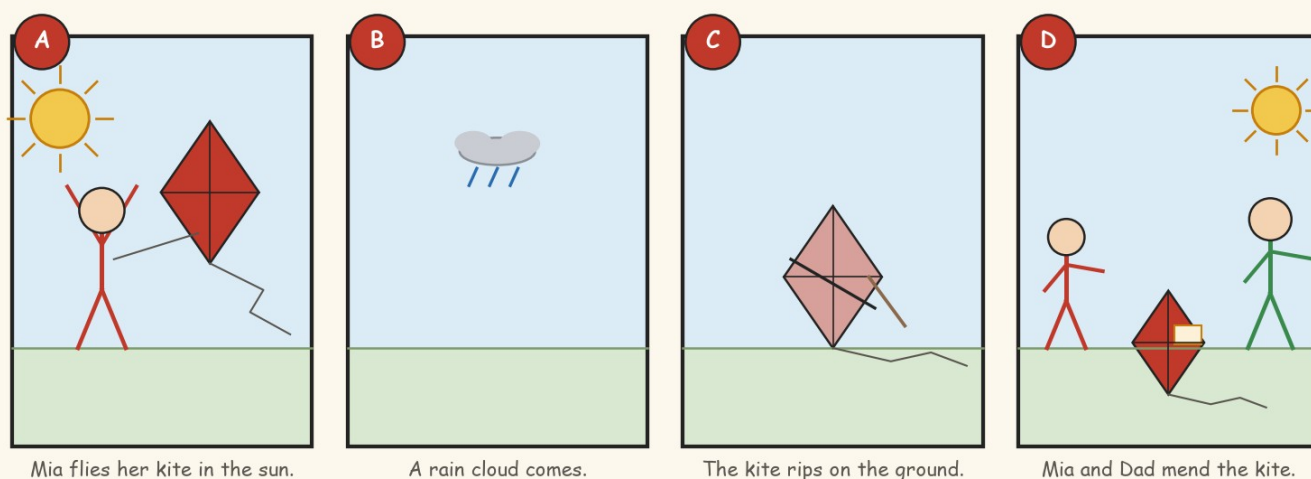
Look at Frame 3 again. The amber ring marks the clue: a name tag. A name tag means someone owns this dog. So the dog is not a park dog — it is lost. One small clue changes what the whole story means.

Beat 4 — Still images in a sequence

Wordless books are not the only texts built from a sequence of still images. Comics, photo stories and storyboards are too. Here are four still images about Mia’s kite day.

Four images, A to D

Mia's kite day, drawn as four still pictures.



Mia flies her kite in the sun.

A rain cloud comes.

The kite rips on the ground.

Mia and Dad mend the kite.

Same four images. What if we change the order?

Four framed still images labelled A to D: A, Mia flies her kite in the sun; B, a rain cloud comes; C, the kite rips on the ground; D, Mia and Dad mend the kite; a line below reads: Same four images. What if we change the order?

Figure 4 — Four still images, A to D.

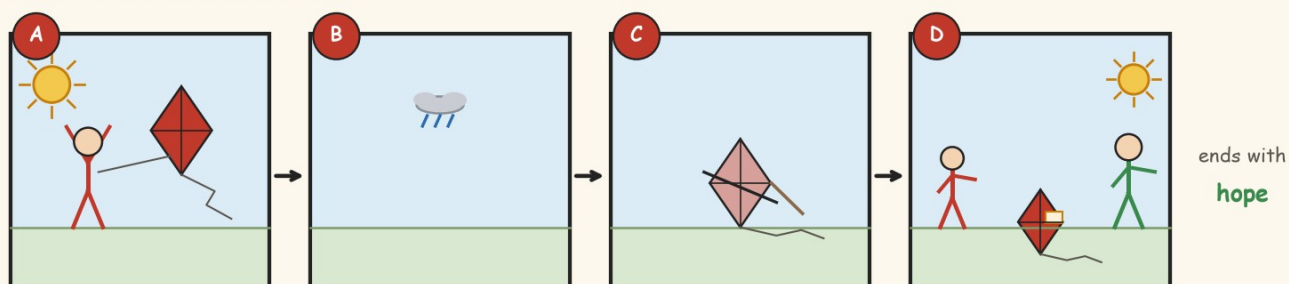
Put in the order A, B, C, D, they tell one clear story: a good day goes wrong, then gets mended. The sequence does real work. Image C means “oh no” *because* it comes after A and B.

Beat 5 — Change the order, change the story

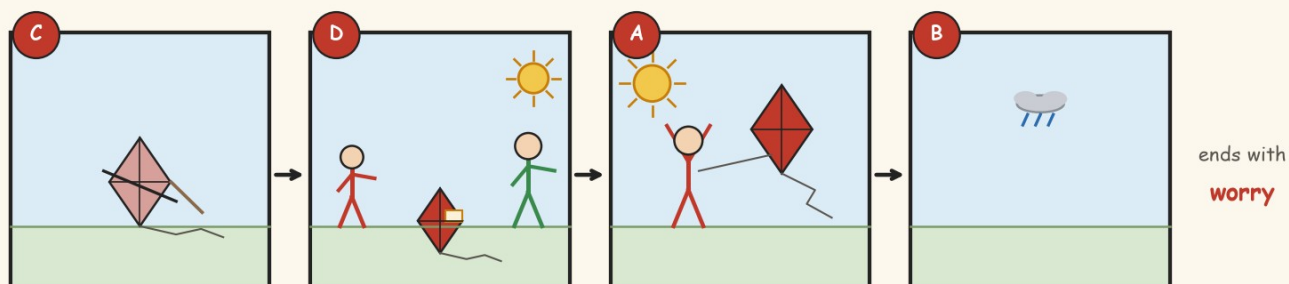
Same four images. A new order. Watch what happens to the meaning.

Same images. Different order. Different story.

Order 1: A then B then C then D



Order 2: C then D then A then B



The same four kite images in two orders: Order 1 runs A then B then C then D and ends with the word hope in green; Order 2 runs C then D then A then B and ends with the word worry in red

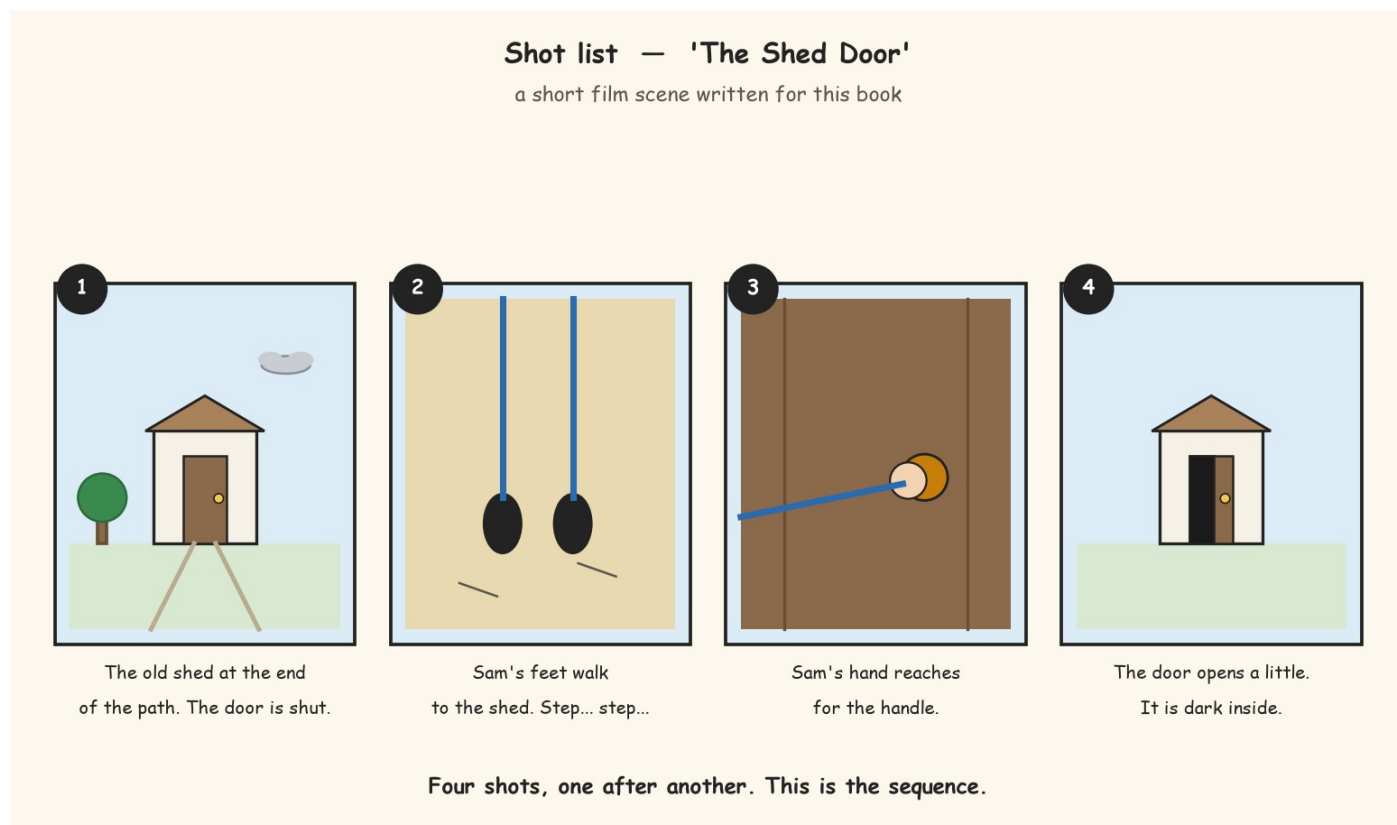
Figure 5 — Same images. Different order. Different story.

- **Order 1** (A, B, C, D) ends with the mending. The last thing the viewer sees is help. The story feels like *hope*.
- **Order 2** (C, D, A, B) ends with the rain cloud. The mending already happened, so the new rain feels like *worry*. Will the kite rip again?

Nobody changed a single picture. The sequence alone changed the meaning. This is what VC2E5LA07.E04 names: the sequence of images in a text creates meaning.

Beat 6 — Moving images are still images in a sequence

A film is a sequence too. Its still images move so fast they look smooth, but a film is built shot by shot, in an order the maker chose. Here is the shot list for “The Shed Door”, a short film scene written for this book.



A shot list of four numbered frames for the short film scene ‘The Shed Door’: shot 1 the old shed at the end of the path with the door shut; shot 2 close view of Sam’s feet walking on the path; shot 3 close view of Sam’s hand reaching for the door handle; shot 4 the shed door open a little with darkness inside; a line below reads: Four shots, one after another. This is the sequence

Figure 6 — The shot list for “The Shed Door”.

The order is doing the same job as in the kite story. Shot 4 (the dark, open door) means so much *because* shots 1 to 3 made us walk slowly up the path first.

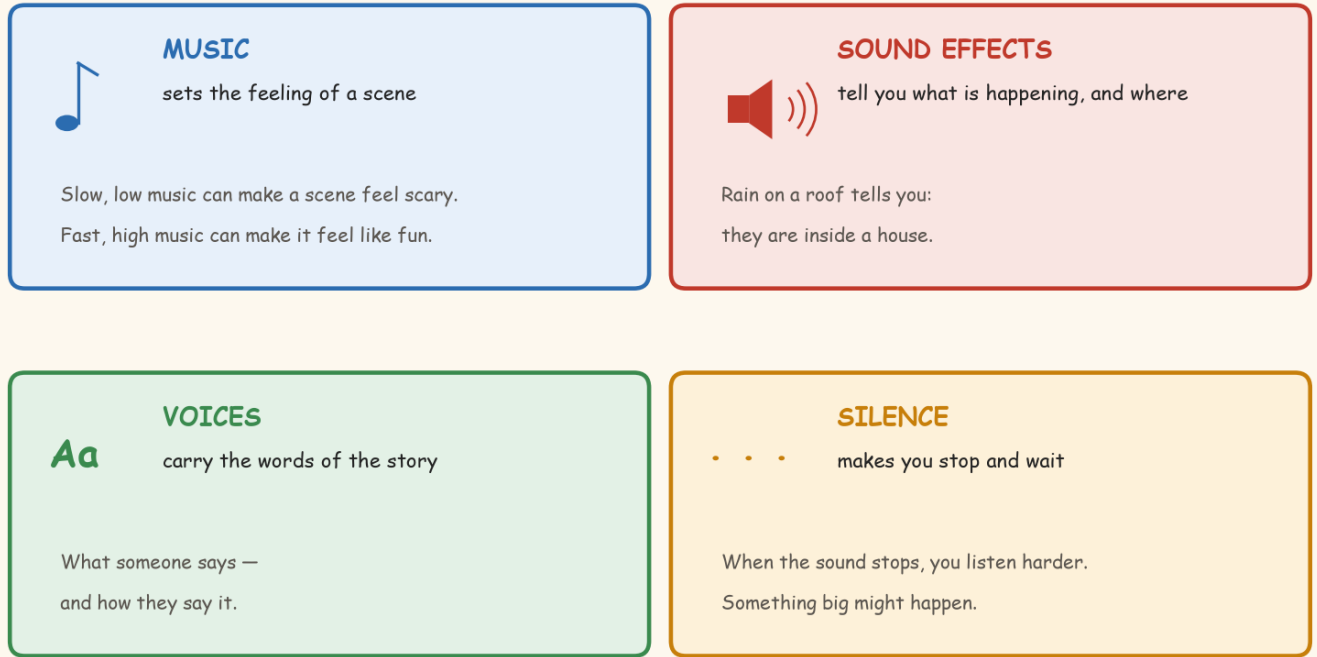
Beat 7 — The jobs of sound

A film also tells its story through sound. Sound is not extra. It is part of the story.

sound effects — the sounds a film adds so we hear what is happening: rain on a roof, feet on a path, a door squeak.

The four jobs of sound

Sound is not extra. It is part of the story.



A poster of four labelled boxes: MUSIC in blue, sets the feeling of a scene; SOUND EFFECTS in red, tell you what is happening and where; VOICES in green, carry the words of the story; SILENCE in amber, makes you stop and wait; a line across the top reads: Sound is not extra. It is part of the story

Figure 7 — The four jobs of sound.

Beat 8 — Sound off, sound on

Now the big viewing trick. Watch “The Shed Door” with **no sound**. What do you know? Only this: Sam walks to a shed and opens the door. Now add sound — and watch the meaning change.

'The Shed Door' — same shots, two sound tracks

What you SEE



Sam walks to the shed
and opens the door.

With no sound, that is
all you know.

Sound choice 1



Low, slow music. Drip... drip... The door creaks.

Now the scene feels scary.

We think something hides inside.

The sound chose the feeling for us.

Sound choice 2

Bright music. Birds sing. Sam laughs.

Now the scene feels like fun.

We think Sam is exploring.

The sound chose a new feeling.

Same pictures. Different sound. Different meaning.

The same four shots of 'The Shed Door' with two sound tracks: on the left, what you see with no sound, Sam walks to the shed and opens the door; sound choice 1 in red, low slow music, drip drip, the door creaks, so the scene feels scary and we think something hides inside; sound choice 2 in green, bright music, birds sing, Sam laughs, so the scene feels like fun and we think Sam is exploring; a line below reads: Same pictures. Different sound. Different meaning

Figure 8 — Same shots, two sound tracks.

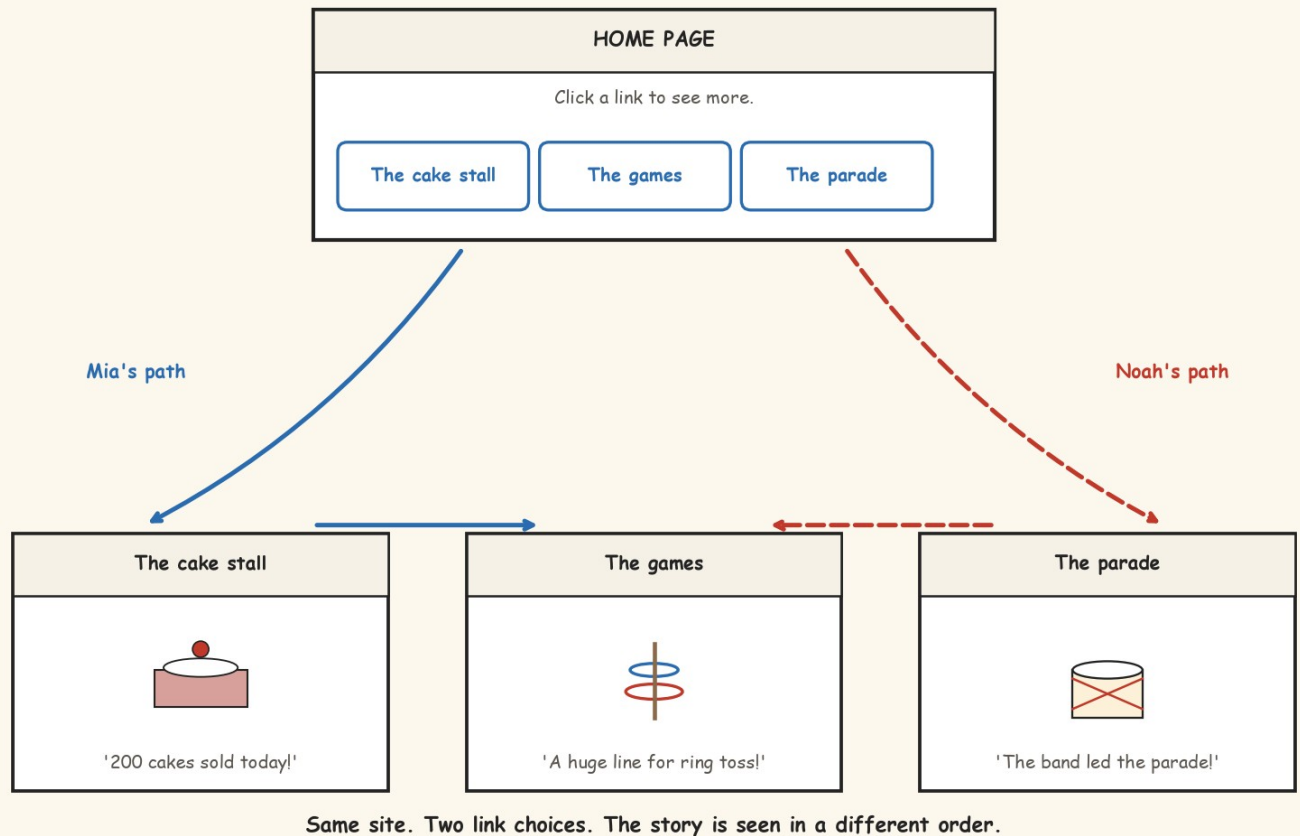
interpretation — what a viewer thinks a text means. Two viewers can have different interpretations of the same scene.

With sound choice 1, your interpretation is *something hides in there*. With sound choice 2, your interpretation is *Sam is off on a fun explore*. The pictures never changed. The sound chose the feeling for us. That is the “use of sound” half of what this section teaches.

Beat 9 — Hyperlinks: you choose the sequence

Some digital texts let the viewer pick the order. A **hyperlink** is a link you click that takes you to another page or another part of a text. When you choose the links, you choose the sequence — and the sequence, as we now know, makes meaning.

'Our School Fete' — a little site, one story



A site map for 'Our School Fete': a home page with three links, *The cake stall*, *The games* and *The parade*, above three pages; Mia's path in solid blue goes home, then the cake stall, then the games; Noah's path in dashed red goes home, then the parade, then the games; the cake stall page says 200 cakes sold today, the games page says a huge line for ring toss, and the parade page says the band led the parade; a line below reads: Same site. Two link choices. The story is seen in a different order

Figure 9 — "Our School Fete": one site, two paths.

Mia clicks *The cake stall* first, then *The games*. Her story is: the cakes sold out, and now everyone is lining up for ring toss — of course, cake buyers want games! Noah clicks *The parade* first, then *The games*. His story is: the band led the parade, and now there is a huge line — of course, the band drew a crowd! Same three pages. Different link choices. Different sequence. Different meaning.

Beat 10 — Put it all together

Every time you view a text — a wordless book, a film, a site — run the toolkit.

My viewing and listening toolkit

Ask these questions every time you view a text.

☐

1. What do I see? (subject, framing, angle)

☐

2. What order do the images come in? Would a new order change the story?

☐

3. What do I hear — music, sound effects, voices, or silence?

☐

4. What does the sound make me feel?

☐

5. What did the maker choose to show me — and leave out?

Tick each one as you use it.

A checklist poster titled *My viewing and listening toolkit* with five tick boxes: 1 *What do I see? (subject, framing, angle)*; 2 *What order do the images come in? Would a new order change the story?*; 3 *What do I hear — music, sound effects, voices, or silence?*; 4 *What does the sound make me feel?*; 5 *What did the maker choose to show me — and leave out?*

Figure 10 — My viewing and listening toolkit.

Worked examples

Example 1 — with help

Look at “The Lunchbox Dog” (Figure 2). Find the clue in Frame 1 and say what a viewer works out from it.

Working	Why
Look only at Frame 1. List what is in it: Ben, his lunchbox, a bench, a tree — and a dog half-hidden behind the tree.	A clue is something you can <i>see</i> .
Ask: what is the dog doing? It is not playing. It is watching the lunch.	The dog’s eyes tell us what the dog wants.
Work it out: the dog is hungry. It stays hidden, so it is scared too.	Clue → what the viewer works out.

Answer: Clue: the dog hides behind the tree and watches Ben’s lunch. A viewer works out that the dog is hungry and a little scared.

Example 2 — with help

Watch “The Shed Door” with no sound, then with sound choice 1 (Figure 8). Compare the two interpretations.

Working	Why
Sound off: what do I know for sure? Sam walks to the shed. Sam opens the door. That is all.	Without sound, the shots give only the bare story.
Sound on (choice 1): what do I hear? Low, slow music. Drip... drip... A door squeak.	Music sets the feeling; sound effects tell what is happening.
Compare: sound off, I say “Sam opens a shed”. Sound on, I say “something scary hides in there”.	The sound changed my interpretation.

Answer: With no sound, the scene is just “Sam opens a shed”. With sound choice 1, the low music and the drips make my interpretation *scary*. Same shots — the sound made the meaning.

Practice questions

With help

Q1. Look at Frame 2 of “The Lunchbox Dog” (Figure 2). Ben holds out the lunchbox. What does a viewer work out about Ben? Pick the best answer. (a) Ben is scared of the dog. (b) Ben is kind and wants to help. (c) Ben wants the dog to go away. *Hint: look at what Ben’s hands are doing.*

Q2. In Figure 5, Order 1 ends with image D. What does that ending make the viewer feel: hope or worry? *Hint: what is happening in image D?*

Q3. Match each sound to its job in Figure 7. Draw lines. (a) low, slow music (b) rain on a roof (c) Sam says “hello?” (d) the sound stops
 1. voices — carry the words 2. music — sets the feeling 3. silence — makes you wait 4. sound effects — tell what is happening

Q4. Look at Figure 8. Circle the sound choice that makes the scene feel scary. Then underline the two words in that box that told you.

Q5. Look at “Our School Fete” (Figure 9). Which page does Mia see first? Which page does Noah see first? *Hint: follow the blue line, then the red line.*

Q6. These two frames are mixed up. Put them in the order they happen in “The Lunchbox Dog”. Write 1 and 2. ☐ Zoe hugs the dog. ☐ Zoe points at the poster. *Hint: Zoe must know the dog before she can hug it.*

On your own

Q7. Pick any one frame of “The Lunchbox Dog” (Figure 2). Write the clue you can see and what a viewer works out from it. Clue: _____ What a viewer works out: _____

Q8. The kite images A to D (Figure 4) can run in other orders too. Choose your own order. Write it down, and say what the ending makes the viewer feel. My order: _____ The ending feels like: _____

Q9. A film maker gives you shot 4 of “The Shed Door”: the door opens a little, and it is dark inside. You may add one sound track. Pick one: (a) birdsong and bright music, or (b) a slow door squeak and low music. Write what your choice makes the viewer think is inside the shed.

Q10. Plan a wordless story of your own. Use the blank storyboard (Figure 11). Draw or describe one clear thing in each frame. Then write one line under each frame: what does a viewer work out from this frame?

Plan your own wordless story

Four frames. No words. Make each frame show one clear thing.

1	2	3	4
---	---	---	---

Think: what does a viewer work out from each frame?

A blank storyboard of four empty numbered frames, each with two writing lines under the picture space, titled Plan your own wordless story

Figure 11 — A blank four-frame storyboard for Q10.

Text task

Back to “The Lunchbox Dog” (Figure 2). View it again, slowly, frame by frame.

T1. How many frames tell the story? Name the two people and the animal we meet.

T2. Look at Frame 3 and the amber ring. What is the clue, and what does a viewer work out from it?

T3. Why must Frame 4 come after Frame 3? What would a viewer miss if the order were swapped?

T4. Imagine “The Lunchbox Dog” as a short film. Choose one frame and give it a sound (a music, a sound effect, voices, or silence). Write what your sound adds to the meaning.

T5. Viewer response: how do you feel at Frame 6? Name one clue in the pictures that made you feel that way.

Show what you know

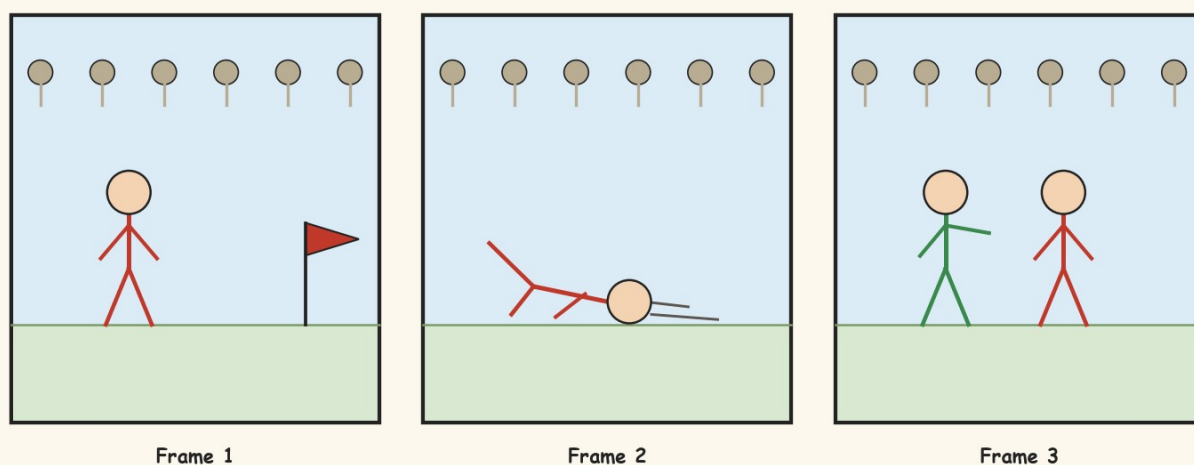
Teacher note — this is the section’s assessed task, assessed against the Level 5 Reading and Viewing achievement-standard paragraph, in particular “They explain how the sequence of still images, and moving images and sound, create or affect meaning.” The viewing stimulus is original to this book.

Viewing — “The big race”

View “The big race” (Figure 12). It is a wordless story in three frames, with sound cues for the film. Imagine you are watching the film with the sound on.

'The big race' — a story in three frames

a wordless story made for this checkpoint



Sound cues for the film:

cheering at the start

the music stops

soft, warm music

the cheering comes back — louder

Three framed pictures of the original wordless story 'The big race': Frame 1 a runner waits at the start line under a red flag while a crowd watches; Frame 2 the runner has fallen on the track with skid marks behind her; Frame 3 another runner stops to help her up while the crowd watches; below, a sound cue strip reads: cheering at the start, the music stops, soft warm music, the cheering comes back — louder

Figure 12 — “The big race”, a wordless story written for this checkpoint.

C1. Tell the story the sequence makes, in three or four sentences.

C2. Find one clue in Frame 2. Say what it makes a viewer work out.

C3. The sound cues say the music stops at Frame 2. What does that silence make the viewer feel, and why?

C4. At Frame 3 the cheering comes back, louder. What does that sound tell the viewer about the crowd?

My checklist — tick each one when you can say yes.

Can I...	Yes
explain how the order of the images makes meaning?	☐
find a clue in a picture and say what it makes me work out?	☐
say what a sound, or a silence, does to the feeling of a scene?	☐
use the words sequence, still image, moving image and sound in my answers?	☐

Answers

Q1. (b). **Q2.** Hope — the story ends with help, not with the rain. **Q3.** (a)→2, (b)→4, (c)→1, (d)→3. **Q4.** Sound choice 1; underline any two of: *low, slow, drip, creaks, scary, hides*. **Q5.** Mia sees the cake stall first. Noah sees the parade first. **Q6.** 1: Zoe points at the poster. 2: Zoe hugs the dog. **Q7.** Answers can be different. One answer: Frame 4 — clue: Ben puts up a LOST DOG poster with a picture of the dog; a viewer works out that Ben wants to find the dog's family. **Q8.** Answers can be different. One answer: B, C, D, A — the ending (Mia flying her kite in the sun) feels like hope after the storm. **Q9.** Answers can be different. One answer: (b) makes the viewer think something scary is inside; (a) makes the viewer think it is a safe, fun explore. **Q10.** Answers will be different. Check that each frame shows one clear thing and that each line says what a viewer works out. **T1.** Six frames; Ben, Zoe and the dog. **T2.** The clue is the name tag; a viewer works out that someone owns the dog, so the dog is lost. **T3.** Frame 3 gives Ben the clue (the name tag); Frame 4 is what Ben does about it (the poster). Swapped, the poster would come before Ben knows the dog is lost, and a viewer would not understand it. **T4.** Answers can be different. One answer: Frame 5 with soft, fast music — it adds the feeling that Zoe is excited to find her dog. **T5.** Answers can be different. One answer: happy, because Zoe hugs the dog and Ben waves. **C1–C4.** Answers will be different. Check against the four points on My checklist.

Full answers

Q1. In Frame 2, Ben holds out the lunchbox towards the dog. His hands are giving, not pushing away. A viewer works out that Ben is kind and wants to help — answer **(b)**.

Q2. Order 1 ends with image D: Mia and Dad mending the kite together. The last thing the viewer sees is help and fixing, so the ending feels like **hope**.

Q3. (a) Low, slow music sets the feeling → **2**. (b) Rain on a roof tells what is happening → **4**. (c) “Hello?” is a voice carrying words → **1**. (d) The sound stopping is silence, which makes you wait → **3**.

Q4. Sound choice 1 (the red box) makes the scene feel scary. The words that tell you are any two of: *low, slow, drip, creaks, scary, hides*.

Q5. Follow the solid blue line: Mia clicks *The cake stall* first, then *The games*. Follow the dashed red line: Noah clicks *The parade* first, then *The games*. Both start at the same home page and end at the same games page — but they see the story in a different order.

Q6. Zoe points at the poster first (1), because the poster tells her the dog is the lost dog. Then she hugs the dog (2). The hug only makes sense after the poster.

Q7. Answers can be different. One answer: Frame 4. Clue: Ben puts up a LOST DOG poster with a picture of the dog on a tree. What a viewer works out: Ben wants the dog's family to find it — he is helping, and the story is about a lost dog.

Q8. Answers can be different. One answer: B, C, D, A. The story now starts with the storm and the rip, and ends with Mia flying the mended kite in the sun. Ending on image A makes the viewer feel hope — the bad weather passed and the kite still flies.

Q9. Answers can be different. One answer: choice (b), the slow squeak and low music. The dark gap plus the low music makes the viewer think something scary hides inside. With choice (a), the birdsong and bright music would make the viewer think the shed is safe — maybe a surprise like a puppy or a bike is inside.

Q10. Answers will be different. A strong storyboard shows one clear thing per frame, in an order that makes sense, and each line names what a viewer works out — for example, Frame 1: a boy drops his ice cream (a viewer works out: oh no, he is sad).

T1. Six frames tell the story. We meet Ben (the boy with the lunchbox), Zoe (the girl who runs to the dog) and the dog.

T2. The clue is the name tag on the dog's neck (the amber ring). A viewer works out that someone owns this dog — so it is not a park dog, it is a lost dog.

T3. In Frame 3, Ben sees the name tag. That clue tells him the dog is lost. Frame 4 is what Ben does about it: he puts up the LOST DOG poster. If the order were swapped, the poster would appear before Ben has any clue the dog is lost, and a viewer would not understand why Ben put it up. The sequence carries the meaning.

T4. Answers can be different. One answer: Frame 5, with soft, fast music and Zoe's voice calling the dog's name. The music adds excitement, and the voice tells us Zoe knows this dog — the sound helps the meaning "the family has found it".

T5. Answers can be different. One answer: I feel happy and relieved at Frame 6. The clues are Zoe hugging the dog and Ben waving — a hug means the dog is home, and a wave means a friendly goodbye.

C1. Answers will be different. One answer: A runner waits at the start while the crowd cheers. She trips and falls, and the music stops. Another runner stops to help her up. The cheering comes back, louder, and the crowd cheers for kindness, not just for winning. The order matters: the fall only means something because the start came first, and the help only means something because the fall came first.

C2. Answers will be different. One answer: in Frame 2, the skid marks behind the runner are the clue; they make a viewer work out that she tripped and went down fast — it was an accident, not a choice.

C3. Answers will be different. One answer: the silence makes the viewer feel worried and sad; when the sound stops, we hold our breath and think "is she hurt?" The silence makes the fall feel big.

C4. Answers will be different. One answer: the louder cheering tells the viewer that the crowd thinks the helper did a kind thing — they are cheering for the help, not for the race. The sound changes what the crowd means.

Vocabulary precision: specialist and technical terms

Section 2D · Chapter 2 — Language: expressing and developing ideas · Owns VC2E5LA08 · Draws on VC2E5LA08.E01

Curriculum focus — quoted exactly as VCAA wrote it. VC2E5LA08: “understand how vocabulary is used to express greater precision of meaning, including through the use of specialist and technical terms”.

VC2E5LA08.E01: “using precise words for naming; for example, instead of ‘mammal’ or ‘whale’, using ‘humpback whale’”.

Why exact words matter

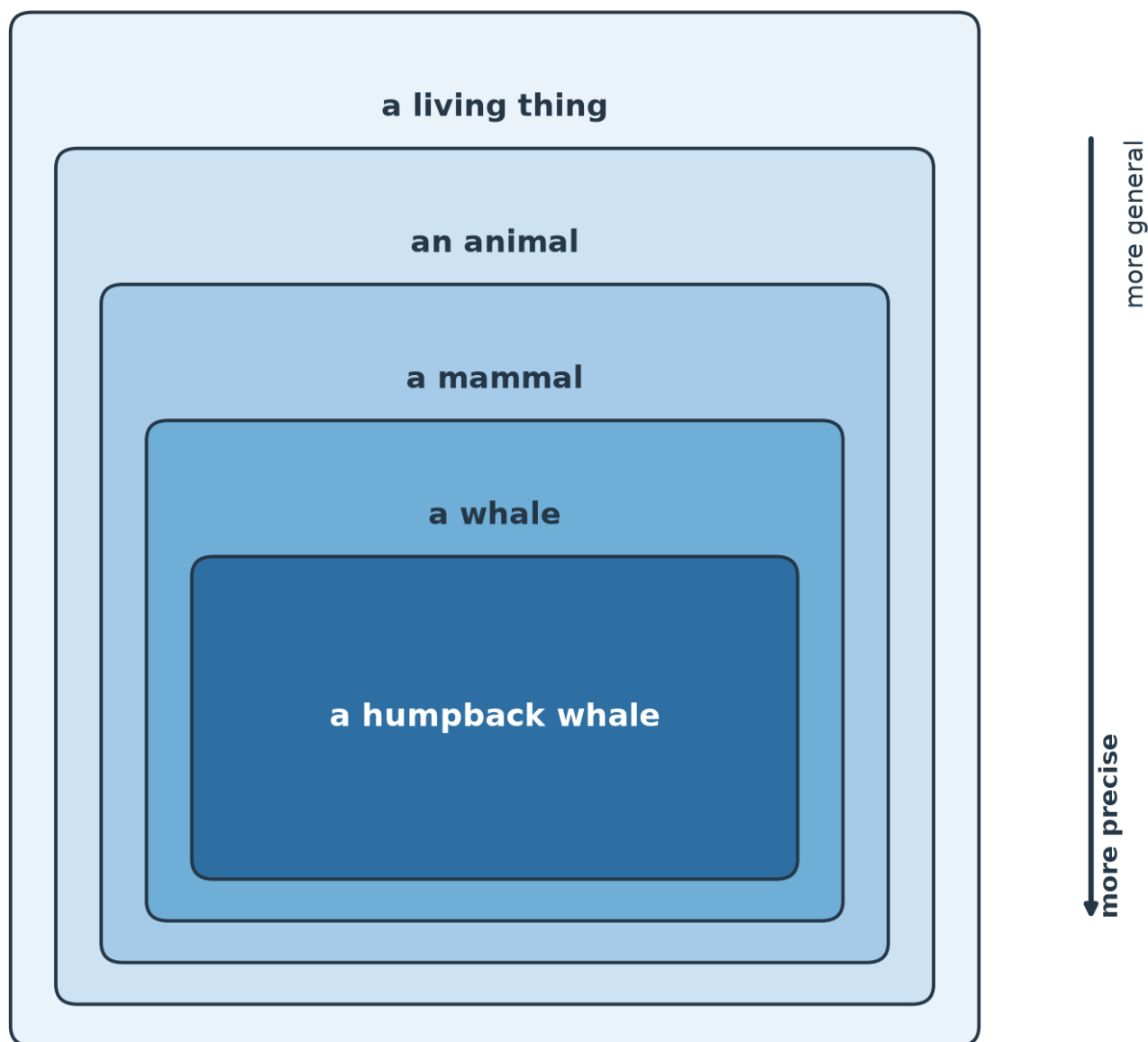
Think about the word **thing**. It is one of the busiest words in English, and one of the least helpful. A *thing* could be a shoe, a storm, or a whale. The reader has to guess.

Writers have a better plan. They pick words that say exactly what they mean. A word is **precise** when it points to one clear thing, with nothing fuzzy about it. Your **vocabulary** — all the words you know and can use — is your toolbox for this job. Every new word you learn is one more tool in the box.

In Year 4 you learned that different words can share nearly the same meaning. Now you will take the next step: choosing the word that fits *exactly*.

The naming ladder

One way to see how words get more precise is to climb down a **naming ladder**. Each step names the very same animal, but more exactly.



The naming ladder: every step names the same animal, more exactly.

A naming ladder with five steps, from the general name 'a living thing' at the top down to the precise name 'a humpback whale' at the bottom, with an arrow labelled 'more general' pointing up and an arrow labelled 'more precise' pointing down

Step on the ladder	What the reader now knows
a living thing	It is alive. It could be a plant or an animal.
an animal	It is not a plant. It moves and feeds.
a mammal	It breathes air and feeds milk to its young.
a whale	It is a huge mammal that lives in the sea.
a humpback whale	It is one kind of whale, with long flippers and a bumpy head.

Two things are worth noticing about the ladder.

1. Every step down gives the reader free information. Write *humpback whale* and the reader already knows it is alive, that it is an animal, that it is a mammal and that it lives in the sea — all from two words. The precise word does the work of many vague ones.

2. The ladder also works going up. When you read a word you do not know, climb up the ladder to make sense of it. A *kelpie* is a kind of dog. A dog is a kind of animal. Soon you know something about the new word, even if you have never met it before.

Specialist and technical words

Every field has its own words. A **field** is any area that people learn about or work in — like weather, cooking, music or football. In this section:

- A **specialist word** is a word that belongs to one field and has one exact meaning there. *Drizzle* belongs to weather talk. It does not mean just any rain — it means rain with very small drops.
- A **technical word** is a specialist word that names a part of something, or a step in how something works or is done. *Blowhole* names a body part of a whale. *Whisk* names a kitchen tool, and also the job that tool does.

People who know a field well — the experts — use these words to say a lot with very few words.

Four fields, and some of their specialist words

WEATHER drizzle rain with very small drops downpour very heavy rain forecast what the weather will be like	COOKING whisk a tool for mixing fast boil to cook in very hot water dough the thick mixture bread is made from
MUSIC rhythm the beat pattern of a song melody the tune you sing along to chorus the part of a song that comes back	FOOTBALL referee makes sure players follow the rules coach teaches and trains the team opponent the player or team you play against

Four panels showing the fields of weather, cooking, music and football, each listing three specialist words with short plain meanings

There is one catch. Specialist words can lock a reader out. If you have never watched a football match, the word *offside* means nothing to you. Good writers help their readers. They pick a plainer word, or they define the new word the first time they use it. This book does exactly that: every new term comes with its meaning, right where you meet it.

A model text

Here is a short passage from a fact book about whales. (Like every text in this book, it was written just for this section.) The labels point to the writer's precise choices.

Humpback whales

Each June, humpback whales begin a long journey.

They swim north from the cold Southern Ocean

to the warm waters off the east coast of Australia.

A humpback whale is a mammal, not a fish.

It breathes air through a blowhole on top of its head.

A full-grown humpback whale can grow to

16 metres long and weigh about 30 tonnes.

a precise name:
which whale it is

a precise word:
a mammal, not just
any sea animal

a technical word:
a body part

exact numbers:
how big it grows

A model text — the labels point to the writer's precise choices.

A short model text about humpback whales with four labels pointing to precise choices: the precise name 'humpback whale', the precise word 'mammal', the technical word 'blowhole', and the exact numbers '16 metres' and '30 tonnes'

Look at the model text and find these things.

1. Find one precise name in the passage. What extra information does it give the reader, compared with just *whale*?
2. Find one technical word. What part of the whale does it name?
3. What do the numbers *16 metres* and *30 tonnes* do for the reader?

Where definitions live

When you meet a specialist word you do not know, the meaning is usually close by.

In a glossary. A **glossary** is a list of specialist words and their meanings. In fact books it usually sits at the back of the book, sorted from A to Z. Here is the glossary page from an imaginary whale fact book.

Glossary

blowhole

the hole on top of a whale's head that it breathes through

fluke

one half of a whale's tail

krill

tiny sea animals that whales eat

migrate

to travel from one place to another at the same time each year

Entries are sorted from A to Z.

A glossary page from an imaginary fact book about whales, with four entries from A to Z: blowhole, fluke, krill and migrate, each with a short definition

In the text itself. Writers often define a new word as soon as they use it: *The fluke, or tail, helps the whale to steer.* Watch for a meaning hiding just after a new word.

In a dictionary. Dictionaries do the same job for everyday words. Looking a word up takes a minute, and it stops you guessing.

Worked examples

Worked example 1 — with help: upgrade a sentence

Make this sentence more precise: *The big bird flew down and caught a little fish.*

Step	What you do	Why it helps
1. Spot the vague words	Underline <i>big</i> , <i>bird</i> and <i>little</i> .	Vague words hide what the writer really saw.
2. Ask questions of each one	<i>What kind of bird? How small was the fish?</i>	Every answer points to a more precise word.

Step	What you do	Why it helps
3. Swap in precise words	<i>bird</i> → <i>eagle</i> ; <i>big</i> → drop it (an eagle is already big); <i>little</i> → <i>tiny</i>	The exact words carry the picture for you.
4. Read it back	<i>The eagle dove over the bay and caught a tiny fish.</i>	The reader can now see the moment. No guessing.

Before — vague words

The big bird flew down and caught a little fish.

swap the vague words for precise ones

After — precise words

The eagle dove over the bay and caught a tiny fish.

Same moment — but now the reader can see it.

A before-and-after panel for worked example 1: the vague sentence with its vague words marked in red, an arrow, and the upgraded sentence with its precise words highlighted in green

Worked example 2 — with help: sort specialist words

Each word below is a specialist word. Which field does it belong to, and what does it mean in plain words?

Specialist word	Field	Plain meaning
drizzle	weather	rain with very small drops
whisk	cooking	a tool for mixing fast; also the job it does
chorus	music	the part of a song that comes back again and again
referee	football	the person who makes sure the players follow the rules

How did we sort them? Look at the plain meaning. If the meaning talks about rain, the word belongs to weather. If it talks about a tool, the word belongs to cooking. The meaning tells you the field.

Worked example 3 — on your own: model response

Rewrite these vague sentences with precise words. Then compare your version with the model response.

Vague version: *Someone at our place made food. It was nice.*

Model response: *On Saturday, my dad baked a loaf of bread. It was fresh and warm.*

The model response names *who* (dad), *what* (a loaf of bread), *how* (baked) and *when* (Saturday). *Nice* is a feeling, not a fact — *fresh and warm* tells the reader something exact. Precise words turn a foggy sentence into a clear one.

Practice tasks

With help

Q1. Complete each naming ladder. The first one is done for you.

- a) a living thing → a plant → a flower → **a rose** ✓
- b) a living thing → an animal → a mammal → a whale → _____
- c) a living thing → an animal → a bird → _____
- d) food → a meal → lunch → _____
- e) weather → rain → _____

Q2. Match each weather word to its meaning. Draw a line from the word to the right meaning.

Weather word	Meaning
drizzle	a report of what the weather will be like
downpour	a tool that shows how hot or cold it is
forecast	rain with very small drops
thermometer	very heavy rain

Q3. Circle the most precise word in each group. Be ready to tell a partner why.

- a) creature — animal — dog — mammal
- b) rain — drizzle — water — storm
- c) rose — plant — flower — tree
- d) song — sound — noise — music

Q4. Choose the right specialist word from the word box for each sentence.

referee

dough

chorus

migrate

- - a) The part of a song that comes back again and again is the _____.
- - b) Bread starts as a thick, soft mixture called _____.
- - c) In a football match, the _____ makes sure the players follow the rules.
- - d) Each winter, humpback whales _____ to warm waters.

Q5. Use the glossary figure above to answer in full sentences.

- - a) What is a fluke?
- - b) Which glossary word means *to travel from one place to another at the same time each year*?
- - c) Why do fact books keep a glossary?

Q6. Copy the sorting chart below into your book. Sort the eight word cards into the right column.

Sort the word cards into the right column

animal	kelpie	rain	drizzle
food	sandwich	bird	magpie

↓

General words

a big group

Precise words

one exact thing

A sorting chart with eight word cards to sort: animal, kelpie, rain, drizzle, food, sandwich, bird and magpie, and two empty columns headed 'General words — a big group' and 'Precise words — one exact thing'

On your own

Q7. Rewrite each sentence with more precise words. There is no word box — the words are yours.

- a) *The big plant in the garden is nice.*
- b) *We played a game outside.*

Q8. Pick a field you know well — a sport, a hobby or a school subject. List three specialist words from your field, and write a short definition for each one, the way the glossary does.

Q9. Write two or three sentences about an animal you know well. Use a precise name at least twice, and include one technical word — a word for a body part, or for a step in how something works.

Answers

Q1. b) a humpback whale (any kind of whale, such as a blue whale); c) a magpie (any kind of bird); d) a sandwich (any lunch food); e) a drizzle (any kind of rain — downpour, hail). **Q2.** drizzle → rain with very small drops; downpour → very heavy rain; forecast → a report of what the weather will be like; thermometer → a tool that shows how hot or cold it is. **Q3.** a) dog; b) drizzle; c) rose; d) song. **Q4.** a) chorus; b) dough; c) referee; d) migrate. **Q5.** a) A fluke is one half of a whale's tail. b) migrate. c) So readers can find the meanings of specialist words quickly, without guessing. **Q6.** General: *animal, rain, food, bird*. Precise: *kelpie, drizzle, sandwich, magpie*. **Q7.** Answers will vary. Check that each vague word (*big, plant, nice, game, outside*) has been swapped for an exact one. Sample: *The tall gum tree in our garden has white flowers. / We played soccer on the back lawn.* **Q8.** Answers will vary. Each definition should give the word's exact meaning, like the glossary entries. **Q9.** Answers will vary. Look for a precise name used at least twice (for example, *magpie* rather than *bird*) and one technical word used with its exact meaning.

Checkpoint

Scored against the Level 5 achievement standard (writing): students “use precise vocabulary, such as specialist and technical terms”.

Choose one field: **weather**, **cooking**, **music**, **football** or **animals**.

Write a short passage of three or four sentences that teaches your reader one true thing about your field. Use at least three precise or specialist words. Then check your work against the success list.

Checkpoint — success list

- ☐ I chose words that say exactly what I mean.
- ☐ I used at least three precise or specialist words.
- ☐ Every specialist word is used with its exact meaning.
- ☐ My reader does not have to guess what I mean.

Tick each box as you check your passage.

The checkpoint success list: four boxes to tick — ‘I chose words that say exactly what I mean’, ‘I used at least three precise or specialist words’, ‘Every specialist word is used with its exact meaning’, and ‘My reader does not have to guess what I mean’

Show what you know: your passage, with your three precise or specialist words underlined.

Punctuation: commas for prepositional phrases; apostrophes for possession

English 5 · Chapter 2 — Language: expressing and developing ideas · Section 2E · Owns VC2E5LA09

Punctuation is a set of road signs for readers. Full stops tell them where a sentence ends. Speech marks tell them someone is talking. In this section you will learn two more jobs:

- the job a **comma** does when a sentence *opens* with a time or place phrase;
- the job an **apostrophe** does when *more than one owner* shares something, and when the owner's plural is a tricky one.

Both jobs are about one thing: helping a reader group your words the same way you grouped them in your head.

Owns — VC2E5LA09 (Language strand, sub-strand: Language for expressing and developing ideas):

“understand how to use commas to indicate prepositional phrases, and how to use apostrophes where there is multiple possession in regular and irregular nouns”

Draws on — VCAA elaborations, verbatim (ids per TOC §3):

- VC2E5LA09.E01 — “learning that in Standard Australian English, regular plural nouns ending in ‘s’ form the possessive by adding just the apostrophe, for example ‘the students’ classroom”
- VC2E5LA09.E02 — “learning that in Standard Australian English, for proper nouns the regular possessive form is always possible but a variant form without the second ‘s’ is sometimes found, for example ‘James’ house’ or ‘James’ house”
- VC2E5LA09.E03 — “learning that when there is more than one owner, the apostrophe is usually used for the last owner in the list, for example ‘the cat and kitten’s bowls”
- VC2E5LA09.E04 — “using commas to signal a prepositional phrase, for example ‘On Saturday, before it rained, we went to the beach.”

Builds on (from Level 4, not re-taught here): you have already used prepositional phrases to add time and place details, and you have used punctuation to mark speech.

Sets up (for Level 6, not taught here): in Level 6 you will learn another comma job — commas around extra parts of a sentence that carry their own verb. That job waits until next year. This section stays in its own lane.

Theory

Part 1 — Opening phrases and their commas

What is a preposition? A **preposition** is a small linking word that hooks a noun onto the rest of the sentence. Prepositions usually tell you *when*, *where* or *how*:

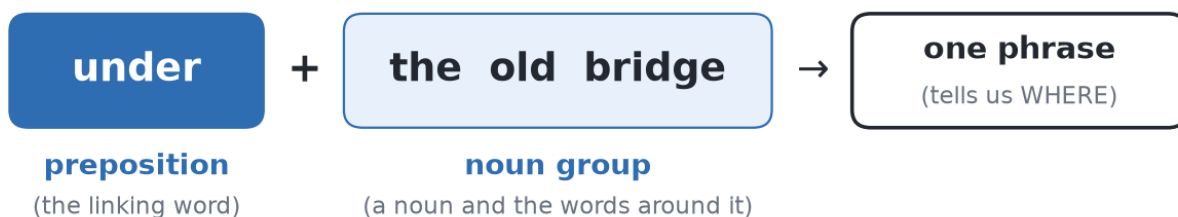
When	Where	Other links
before, after, during, until, since at noon, by Friday	in, on, at, under, over, above, below near, behind, beside, between, opposite across, around, through, towards, into	with, without for, of, like

What is a prepositional phrase? A **prepositional phrase** is a preposition plus the noun group after it. (A **noun group** is a noun and the words clustered around it, like *the old bridge*.)

- *on + Saturday* → **on Saturday** (when)
- *under + the old bridge* → **under the old bridge** (where)
- *with + a garden fork* → **with a garden fork** (how)

Here is the test that never fails: **a prepositional phrase has no verb inside it.** *Under the old bridge* — no doing word, no being word. It is a phrase.

What is inside a prepositional phrase?



Never-fail test: a prepositional phrase has NO verb inside it.

“under the old bridge” — no doing word, no being word → it is a phrase.

A labelled diagram of the prepositional phrase ‘under the old bridge’, split into the preposition ‘under’ and the noun group ‘the old bridge’, with a reminder that a prepositional phrase has no verb inside it.

The comma job. When a sentence *opens* with a prepositional phrase, put a comma at the end of that phrase. The comma tells the reader: *the opener is finished — here comes the main part.*

- **After the storm,** the beach was covered in seaweed.
- **Under the old bridge,** we found a quiet fishing spot.
- **During the holidays,** my cousin stayed with us.

Read one aloud. The comma is where you take a small breath and let the opener land before the action starts.

The comma job



The comma is a stop sign: the opener ends here,
and the main part of the sentence begins.

A sentence strip showing the fronted prepositional phrase ‘After the storm’ followed by a comma, labelled as a stop sign between the opener and the main part of the sentence.

Two openers? Two commas. Sometimes a writer stacks two opening phrases. Each one gets a comma after it:

- **After school, on most days,** we practise soccer on the back oval.

When the phrase comes later, no comma is needed. If the prepositional phrase sits at the end of the sentence, leave the comma out:

- We practise soccer on the back oval **on most days**.

Same words, same meaning — but only the sentence that *opens* with the phrase gets the comma.

Same words — two positions

A

After the storm

,

the beach was covered in seaweed.

The phrase opens the sentence → it takes a comma.

B

The beach was covered in seaweed

after the storm.

The phrase comes last → no comma needed.

The comma belongs to the opener, not to the phrase itself.

Two versions of the same sentence side by side: one opens with a fronted prepositional phrase and takes a comma, the other ends with the phrase and takes no comma.

The example that comes with this skill — a closer look. This skill comes with its own example sentence, quoted with the rules at the start of this section:

“On Saturday, before it rained, we went to the beach.”

The comma after **On Saturday** is today’s job: *on Saturday* is a prepositional phrase (no verb inside), and it opens the sentence. The middle part, *before it rained*, is different — it carries its own verb (*rained*). Commas around parts like that belong to the Level 6 job named at the top of this section, so we leave them be and move on.

Part 2 — Apostrophes for owners

You already know the basic belonging job: an apostrophe plus **s** shows that something belongs to someone — *the dog’s bone* (one dog, one bone). That was one owner. This part is about what happens when things get messier: lots of owners, tricky plurals, and names that already end in **s**.

One warning before we start. Apostrophes do two jobs. The other job is the squeezing job — *don’t* for *do not*, *can’t* for *cannot*. This section is only about the belonging job.

The big question is always: how many owners?

- **One owner** → add **’s**: *the student’s bag*.
- **More than one owner** → keep reading.

Rule 1 — Many owners, and the plural already ends in **s: add the apostrophe after the **s**.** The **s** is already busy making the word plural, so the apostrophe takes its place at the back of the line.

- the **students’** classroom (many students, one classroom)
- the **players’** jerseys (many players, many jerseys)

- the **birds'** nests (many birds, many nests)

Rule 2 — Many owners, but the plural does NOT end in s: add 's as normal. Some plurals are irregular — they change shape instead of adding s:

one	many
child	children
woman	women
man	men
person	people
mouse	mice
goose	geese

Because these plurals do not end in s, they take 's, just like a one-owner word:

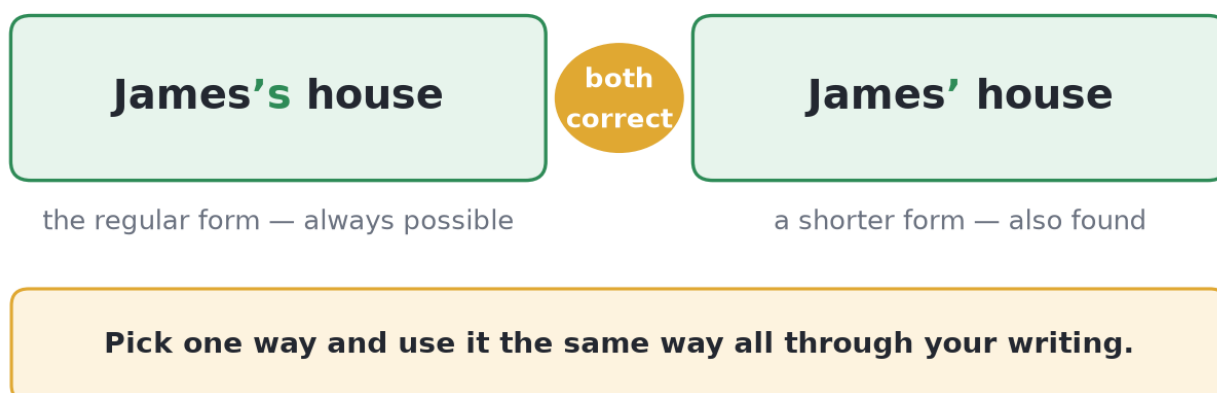
- the **children's** paintings
- the **women's** team
- the **geese's** pond

Rule 3 — Names that end in s. What about a name like *James*? The regular form adds 's — **James's house** — and that form is always possible. But you will also see the shorter form with no second s: **James' house**. In this book, **both are correct.**

The rules in this part are drawn from the rule list quoted at the start of this section, and those rules name their frame: they hold “in Standard Australian English”. That term is not given a word-for-word meaning there, so here is the one this book uses: *Standard Australian English* is the form of English most used in Australian schools, government, books and news. Other forms of English exist, in Australia and around the world, and their ways may not be the same — here we learn the form this book's rule list asks for.

One honest note: rule books for writers do not all agree about *James's* and *James'*. Some rule books tell writers to always add 's; some tell writers to stop at the apostrophe after a name ending in s. Writers really use both forms, and this book accepts both. Pick one way and use it the same way all through a piece of writing.

Names that end in s — two accepted forms



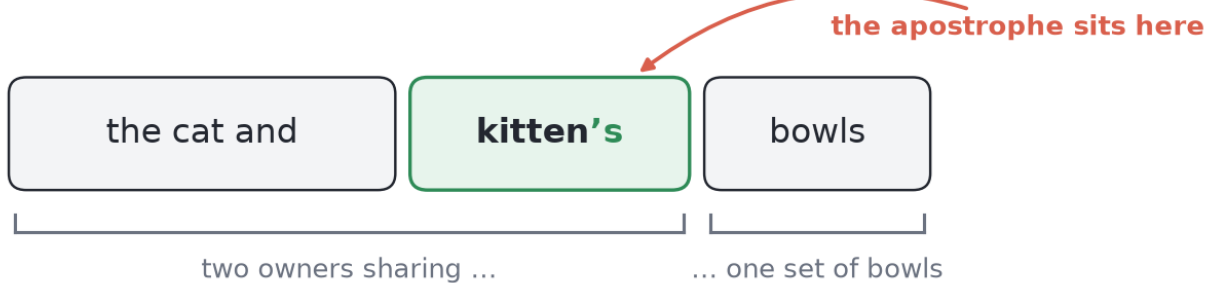
A diagram showing the two accepted possessive forms of the name *James* — '*James's house*' and '*James' house*' — with a note that both are correct and that writers should keep the same choice through a whole piece of writing.

Rule 4 — More than one owner sharing one thing: put the apostrophe on the last owner only. The thing belongs to the whole list, so one apostrophe is enough — and it goes on the last owner in the list.

- the cat and **kitten's** bowls (the cat and the kitten share them)
- Mia and **Noah's** science project (one project, two owners)

Stretch: if the owners have **separate** things, each owner gets their own apostrophe: *Mia's and Noah's lunch boxes* (two different lunch boxes). Rule 4 — apostrophe on the last owner — covers the sharing case, which is the one you will meet most.

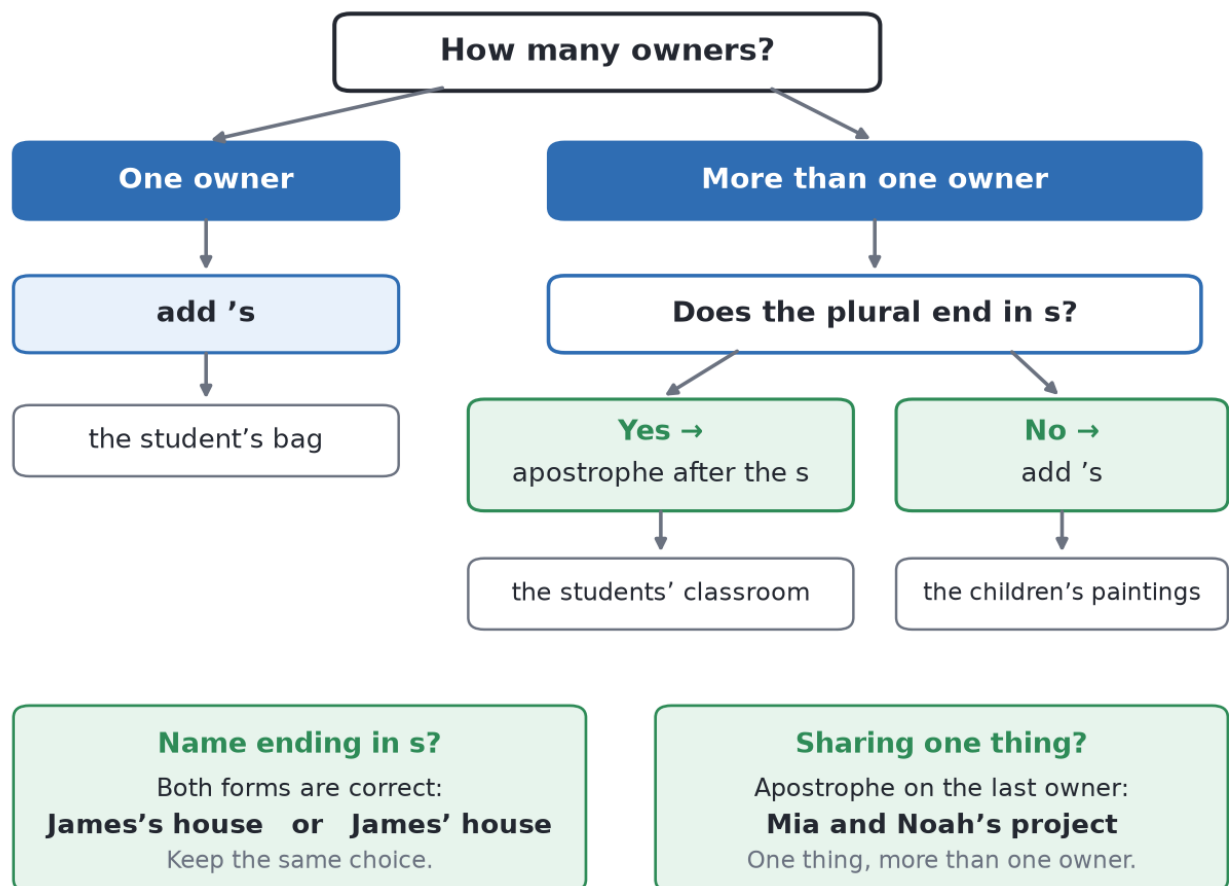
Sharing owners: apostrophe on the last owner



One apostrophe is enough — it sits on the LAST owner in the list.

A labelled sentence, 'the cat and kitten's bowls', showing one apostrophe on the last owner when two owners share the same thing.

The decision map below strings the whole of Part 2 together. When you are not sure where the apostrophe goes, walk down it from the top.



A decision map for placing possessive apostrophes: start with how many owners, then whether the plural ends in s, ending in the four rules with an example each.

You can't hear an apostrophe. Say these out loud:

- the **dog's** bone — one dog, one bone
- the **dogs'** bone — lots of dogs, one bone to fight over

They sound exactly the same. The apostrophe is silent, but it changes the picture in the reader's head. That is why the small mark earns its place.

You can't hear an apostrophe — say these out loud!

the dog's bone



one dog · one bone

the dogs' bone



many dogs · one bone

Same sound — a different picture in the reader's head.

Two picture panels side by side: 'the dog's bone' with one dog and one bone, and 'the dogs' bone' with several dogs and one bone — the two forms sound the same but mean different things.

Model text — both jobs at work

Here is a short piece written for this section. Read it once for the story, then hunt for the two skills: **bold** marks the opening phrases with their commas; the belonging apostrophes are shown in green in the figure below.

On Saturday, the garden club met at the shared garden. **Before eight o'clock**, Mrs Ivanova watered the seedlings. **Near the gate**, the children's wheelbarrow waited, full of dark soil. **With a garden fork**, James stirred the worm farm while the worms wriggled away. James's job was the worm farm, and he took care with it. **After an hour**, everyone's hands were damp and muddy, and the students' gloves were even muddier. **Under the old gum tree**, the group shared slices of orange. **On most mornings**, this little patch of ground belongs to everyone.

Found them? Seven opening phrases with commas (*On Saturday*, *Before eight o'clock*, *Near the gate*, *With a garden fork*, *After an hour*, *Under the old gum tree*, *On most mornings*), and four belonging jobs: *children's* (Rule 2 irregular plural), *James's* (Rule 3 name ending in s), *everyone's* (one owner: everyone), *students'* (Rule 1 plural ending in s).

Model text — both jobs at work



opening phrase + comma



belonging apostrophe

On Saturday, the garden club met at the shared garden. Before eight o'clock, Mrs Ivanova watered the seedlings. Near the gate, the children's wheelbarrow waited, full of dark soil. With a garden fork, James stirred the worm farm while the worms wriggled away. James's job was the worm farm, and he took care with it. After an hour, everyone's hands were damp and muddy, and the students' gloves were even muddier. Under the old gum tree, the group shared slices of orange. On most mornings, this little patch of ground belongs to everyone.

The model text about the garden club, colour-coded: opening prepositional phrases and their commas in blue, and possessive apostrophes in green.

Worked examples

Example 1 — Where does the comma go?

Add commas where they belong. If a sentence needs no comma, say why.

Sentence	Working	Comment
Before the game the team stood in a circle.	Before the game, the team stood in a circle.	<i>Before the game</i> opens the sentence and is a prepositional phrase (no verb inside), so it takes a comma.
In the shed the tools hung on hooks.	In the shed, the tools hung on hooks.	<i>In the shed</i> is the opener; the comma marks where it ends.
We had lunch under the big tree.	No comma.	<i>Under the big tree</i> comes at the end of the sentence, not the front, so no comma is needed.
After school on Tuesdays I walk to the library.	After school, on Tuesdays, I walk to the library.	Two stacked openers — each one gets its own comma. <i>To the library</i> stays at the end with no comma.

Example 2 — Choose the apostrophe

Write each owner phrase with the apostrophe in the right place.

Who owns what?	Working	Comment
One teacher owns one mug.	the teacher's mug	One owner: add 's.
Many students share one garden.	the students' garden	Many owners; <i>students</i> already ends in s, so the apostrophe goes after the s.

Who owns what?	Working	Comment
Many children made many paintings.	the children's paintings	Many owners, but <i>children</i> does not end in s , so add 's .
James owns the house.	James's house — or James' house	A name ending in s : both forms are correct (Rule 3). Pick one and stick to it.
Zoe and Jack share one boat.	Zoe and Jack's boat	Two owners sharing one thing: the apostrophe sits on the last owner.

Practice questions

With hints

Q1. *Hint: use the no-verb test.* Circle the prepositional phrase in each sentence.

- We waited under the verandah.
- The letter arrived after lunch.
- She climbed over the back fence.

Q2. *Hint: is the phrase at the front or the back?* Rewrite each sentence, adding a comma only where one is needed.

- Before sunrise the fishing boats left the harbour.
- My sister reads in her bunk every night.
- Near the creek we saw a platypus.

Q3. Finish each sentence with an opening prepositional phrase of your own, plus a comma.

- _____, the bell rang.
- _____, we toasted marshmallows.

Q4. *Hint: does the plural end in s?* Sort these owners into two columns — **plural ends in s** and **plural does not end in s**: *teachers, children, players, women, dogs, mice, students, geese*.

Q5. Add the apostrophe to each plural owner (all of these plurals end in **s**).

- the (players) jerseys
- the (girls) team bus
- the (parents) meeting

Q6. Add the apostrophe to each irregular plural owner.

- the (children) books
- the (women) coats
- the (men) boots

Q7. Write both accepted forms for each name, like *James's house / James' house*.

- Jess and her bike
- Marcus and his goal

Q8. *Hint: shared thing — last owner gets the apostrophe.* Rewrite each pair of owners sharing one thing.

- the cat + the dog + one bed → the ...
- Mum + Dad + one car → the ...

On your own

Q9. Write three sentences of your own. Each must open with a prepositional phrase followed by a comma. Use three different prepositions.

Q10. This paragraph has five punctuation slips — some missing commas, some missing or misplaced apostrophes. Find and fix all five.

Before the grand final the players huddled together. The players boots were muddy from the rain. The coach held up a stray jacket with Jamess name on the label. The childrens cheer rang out from the hill. After the warm-up the whistle blew.

Q11. In two or three sentences, explain why *the student's bag* and *the students' bag* are different. Use the words *owner* and *owners*.

Q12. Choose the correct form and write one short reason for each.

- a. the (childrens' / children's) art wall
- b. the (dogs' / dog's) kennels, if six dogs share them
- c. (Jess's / Jess') scarf, if your class rule is to always add 's

Checkpoint

CP1. Write a short paragraph (5–7 sentences) about a place people share — a school garden, a sports ground, a park, a hall. Your paragraph must include:

- at least **two** opening prepositional phrases, each followed by a comma;
- at least **two** belonging apostrophes, including one with **many owners**.

Then check your work with the list below before you hand it in.

Checkpoint checklist

Tick each box as you check your paragraph.

- ☐ Every opener is a true prepositional phrase — no verb inside it.
- ☐ Each opening phrase has a comma after it.
- ☐ One owner → add 's (the student's bag).
- ☐ Many owners, plural ends in s → apostrophe after the s (the students' classroom).
- ☐ Many owners, plural does not end in s → add 's (the children's paintings).
- ☐ Owners sharing one thing → apostrophe on the last owner (Mia and Noah's project).
- ☐ A name ending in s: James's or James' — keep the same one all the way through.

Every box ticked? You are ready to hand in.

An editing checklist for the checkpoint task: check opening phrases and commas, apostrophe placement for one owner and many owners, irregular plurals, and names ending in s.

Scored against the Level 5 Writing achievement standard, which says of students: “They use grammar and punctuation, including complex sentences to provide additional information and description.”

What to look for: the opening phrases are true prepositional phrases (no verb inside each one), every opener has its comma, and every apostrophe sits where Part 2's rules put it (after the **s** for plurals ending in **s**, **'s** for irregular plurals, on the last owner when owners share).

Answers

Q1. a. under the verandah · b. after lunch · c. over the back fence. **Q2.** a. Before sunrise, the fishing boats left the harbour. · b. no comma (phrase at the end) · c. Near the creek, we saw a platypus. **Q3.** Answers will vary; each opener must be a prepositional phrase followed by a comma. Sample: a. At nine o'clock, the bell rang. b. Around the fire, we toasted marshmallows. **Q4.** Ends in s: teachers, players, dogs, students. Does not end in s: children, women, mice, geese. **Q5.** a. the players' jerseys · b. the girls' team bus · c. the parents' meeting. **Q6.** a. the children's books · b. the women's coats · c. the men's boots. **Q7.** a. Jess's bike / Jess' bike · b. Marcus's goal / Marcus' goal. **Q8.** a. the cat and the dog's bed · b. Mum and Dad's car. **Q9.** Answers will vary; check for an opening prepositional phrase + comma in every sentence, and three different prepositions. **Q10.** Five fixes: comma after *Before the grand final*; *players'* boots; *James's* (or *James'*) name; *children's* cheer; comma after *After the warm-up*. **Q11.** Sample: *The student's bag* belongs to one owner — one student. *The students' bag* belongs to more than one owner, because the apostrophe sits after the s of the plural. **Q12.** a. children's — *children* is a plural that does not end in s, so it takes 's. b. dogs' — six dogs is many owners and *dogs* ends in s, so the apostrophe goes after the s. c. Jess's — the class rule is to always add 's, and Rule 3 says that form is always possible. **CP1.** Check against the standard quoted with the task and the checklist figure: two comma-marked openers, two belonging apostrophes including one plural owner, all placed by the rules of this section.

Full solutions

Q1. The no-verb test finds each phrase: *under the verandah*, *after lunch* and *over the back fence* each begin with a preposition (under, after, over) and contain no verb.

Q2. a. *Before sunrise* opens the sentence, so it takes a comma: **Before sunrise, the fishing boats left the harbour.** b. *In her bunk* sits at the end of the sentence, so no comma: **My sister reads in her bunk every night.** c. *Near the creek* opens the sentence: **Near the creek, we saw a platypus.**

Q3. Any preposition + noun group works, as long as it opens the sentence and a comma follows it. Sample: **At nine o'clock, the bell rang.** *At nine o'clock* tells when; the comma marks the end of the opener. **Around the fire, we toasted marshmallows.** *Around the fire* tells where.

Q4. Plurals ending in s follow Rule 1 (apostrophe after the s): *teachers, players, dogs, students*. Plurals that change shape follow Rule 2 (add 's): *children, women, mice, geese*.

Q5. Each owner is a plural ending in s, so the apostrophe goes after the existing s: **the players' jerseys, the girls' team bus, the parents' meeting.**

Q6. These plurals do not end in s, so Rule 2 says to add 's: **the children's books, the women's coats, the men's boots.**

Q7. Names ending in s accept both forms (Rule 3): **Jess's bike** or **Jess' bike**; **Marcus's goal** or **Marcus' goal**. A writer may pick either form, but the same choice should run through the whole piece of writing.

Q8. Sharing case, so Rule 4 applies — the apostrophe sits on the last owner only: **the cat and the dog's bed; Mum and Dad's car.**

Q9. Sample set: **After training, we shared orange slices. In the car park, Dad waited with the towels. On the way home, we planned the next game.** The openers use three different prepositions (after, in, on), and each opener is followed by a comma.

Q10. Fixed paragraph: **Before the grand final, the players huddled together. The players' boots were muddy from the rain. The coach held up a stray jacket with James's name on the label. The children's cheer rang out from the hill. After the warm-up, the whistle blew.** The slips: two missing commas after opening phrases (*Before the grand final*, *After the warm-up*), and three belonging jobs — *players'* (many owners ending in s), *James's* or *James'* (name ending in s; the text had no apostrophe at all), *children's* (irregular plural; the text had the s but no apostrophe).

Q11. The mark changes the number of owners. In *the student's bag*, the apostrophe comes before the s, so there is one owner: a single student. In *the students' bag*, the apostrophe comes after the s of the plural, so the owners are many students sharing the one bag. You cannot hear the difference — the apostrophe is silent — so the writer has to place it with care.

Q12. a. **children's** — *children* is a plural that does not end in s (Rule 2), so it takes '**s**'; ***childrens*' is not a word at all, because *children* is already plural.** b. **dogs'** — six dogs means many owners, and *dogs* ends in s (Rule 1), so the apostrophe goes after the s. c. **Jess's** — under the class rule of always adding 's, and Rule 3 says the regular form with 's is always possible for names ending in s.

CP1. Sample response: **On Friday, our class met at the school garden. Under the lemon tree, the students' gloves lay in a heap. With small trowels, we made holes for the new seedlings. Mia and Noah's watering can did most of the work. After lunch, everyone's hands were brown to the wrists. On the way inside, someone hung the children's sun hats on the fence.** Openers with commas: *On Friday, Under the lemon tree, With small trowels, After lunch, On the way inside.* Belonging apostrophes: *students'* (Rule 1), *Mia and Noah's* (Rule 4, shared can), *everyone's* (one owner), *children's* (Rule 2). Meets the standard: grammar and punctuation are used to add information and description.

English Level 5 — Construction task C2: Informative report

Construction task C2 · Informative construction on a supplied fact frame · 15 marks

English Level 5 (Year 5) · Victorian Curriculum 2.0

Task coverage: planning and building an information report — an opening that states the topic, paragraphs ordered and grouped by aspect, facts matched to the paragraph they support, headings and captions, and the stages of a report.

Content descriptions assessed:

- VC2E5LY10 — create different types of texts, written and spoken, with relevant, elaborated and sequenced ideas, using text structure appropriate for topic, purpose and audience, and multimodal elements as appropriate (the creating spine of this task)
- VC2E5LY08 — explain characteristic features used to meet the purpose and audience in different types of texts (knowing the features of an information report)

Marks and structure: 15 marks over 15 items — choosing the opening that states the topic, items 1–2 (2 marks) · planning and ordering paragraphs, items 3–6 (4 marks) · matching facts to the paragraph they support, items 7–9 (3 marks) · heading and graphic-caption choice, items 10–12 (3 marks) · structure cloze of report stages, items 13–15 (3 marks). Every item is worth 1 mark.

Timing: guidance time 20 minutes. This is a classroom check, not an exam. There is no strict time limit; your teacher will let you finish.

Permitted materials: none. No dictionary, no notes. Answers are given on screen (H5P); for paper administration, write your answers in the spaces your teacher gives you.

This is a school-designed task. It is not a VCAA instrument. Achievement in the Victorian Curriculum is reported against the Level 5 achievement standard, not against a mark on this task.

Conditions

- Your teacher may read any question or option aloud to you (live teacher read-aloud; no recorded audio is needed for this task). The teacher will not help with answers.
- Every item is objective and is marked against a fixed key.
- Attempt every item.

Words you need (read these before you start; every term used on this paper is defined here first):

- **information report** — a text that presents facts about one topic to inform the reader
- **topic** — what a text is about
- **opening** — the first part of a text; in a report, it names the topic and says what kind of thing it is
- **fact** — something that can be checked and shown to be true
- **aspect** — one side or part of a topic, such as what an animal eats
- **heading** — a short title above a section that tells the reader what that section is about
- **caption** — the words under a photograph or diagram that tell the reader what it shows
- **section** — a part of a text, usually with its own heading
- **fact bank** — a list of facts gathered ready to use in a text
- **mammal** — an animal that feeds its babies milk from its body
- **bill** — the flat part of a platypus's face, shaped like a duck's bill but soft and leathery
- **waterproof** — not letting water through
- **webbed** — with skin stretched between the toes, to help with swimming
- **prey** — an animal that another animal hunts for food
- **burrow** — a tunnel dug into the ground, used as a home
- **venomous** — able to inject poison through a bite or sting

- **spur** — a sharp point on the back leg of a male platypus
- **yabby** — a small Australian freshwater crayfish

The supplied fact frame — every item on this task builds the one report planned here. Read it first.

Meet the Platypus — fact frame

Planned title: Meet the Platypus

Planned headings (in no order yet):

- ‘What kind of animal is a platypus?’
- ‘Built for water’
- ‘Food and hunting’
- ‘Home and staying safe’

Fact bank:

- **F1.** The platypus is a mammal, but it lays eggs.
- **F2.** Its bill senses tiny electric signals from its prey underwater.
- **F3.** Its thick, waterproof fur traps air to keep it warm in cold water.
- **F4.** Its webbed front feet act like paddles when it swims.
- **F5.** Its flat tail stores fat and helps it steer.
- **F6.** It eats worms, yabbies and insect larvae from the riverbed.
- **F7.** Male platypuses have a venomous spur on each hind ankle.
- **F8.** A mother platypus lays her eggs in a deep burrow in the riverbank.

Figure: Diagram 1 shows a platypus diving under the water.

Frame written for this book.

Part 1 — Choosing the opening that states the topic (2 marks)

Item 1 — The opening that states the topic. [1 mark]

Which opening best starts an information report about the platypus?

- A. ‘I once saw a platypus, and it was the coolest thing ever.’
- B. ‘The platypus is one of Australia’s most unusual mammals — a furry animal that lays eggs and hunts underwater.’
- C. ‘Have you ever seen a platypus? Let me tell you a funny story about one.’
- D. ‘Once upon a time, a platypus lived in a river.’

Item 2 — Why that opening fits the purpose. [1 mark]

Why is that opening suited to an information report?

- A. It tells a story to entertain the reader.
 - B. It asks the reader a question.
 - C. It names the topic straight away and tells what kind of thing it is.
 - D. It gives the writer’s feelings about platypuses.
-

Part 2 — Planning and ordering paragraphs (4 marks)

Item 3 — Ordering the sections of the report. [1 mark]

Drag the heading cards into the order the four sections should come in the report, from first to last.

Word cards: **‘Food and hunting’** · **‘What kind of animal is a platypus?’** · **‘Home and staying safe’** · **‘Built for water’**

Write the order in the answer box.

Item 4 — The section that follows the opening. [1 mark]

Which section should come straight after the opening section?

- A. ‘Home and staying safe’
- B. ‘Built for water’
- C. ‘Food and hunting’
- D. the report should end after the opening

Item 5 — Planning one paragraph. [1 mark]

Which plan would give one paragraph a single, clear main idea?

- A. ‘Write about platypuses, and my dog, and rivers I like.’
- B. ‘Write about how a platypus finds its food underwater.’
- C. ‘Write about everything there is to know about platypuses.’
- D. ‘Write about why platypuses are better than every other animal.’

Item 6 — Ordering the sentences inside a paragraph. [1 mark]

These three sentences belong in the ‘Built for water’ paragraph. Drag them into the best order, from first to last.

Word cards: **‘Its webbed front feet act like paddles.’** · **‘Its thick, waterproof fur traps air to keep it warm.’** · **‘Its flat tail stores fat and helps it steer.’**

Write the order in the answer box.

Part 3 — Matching facts to the paragraph they support (3 marks)

Item 7 — Match the facts to their paragraphs. [1 mark]

Match each fact from the fact bank to the section it supports. Each section is used once.

- Fact F3 ‘Its thick, waterproof fur traps air to keep it warm in cold water.’
- Fact F6 ‘It eats worms, yabbies and insect larvae from the riverbed.’
- Fact F8 ‘A mother platypus lays her eggs in a deep burrow in the riverbank.’

Sections: **‘Built for water’** · **‘Food and hunting’** · **‘Home and staying safe’**

Item 8 — Where does fact F7 belong? [1 mark]

Fact F7 reads: ‘Male platypuses have a venomous spur on each hind ankle.’ Which section does it belong in?

- A. ‘What kind of animal is a platypus?’
- B. ‘Built for water’

- C. 'Food and hunting'
- D. 'Home and staying safe'

Item 9 — Where does fact F2 belong? [1 mark]

Fact F2 reads: 'Its bill senses tiny electric signals from its prey underwater.' Which section does it belong in?

- A. 'What kind of animal is a platypus?'
 - B. 'Built for water'
 - C. 'Food and hunting'
 - D. 'Home and staying safe'
-

Part 4 — Heading and graphic-caption choice (3 marks)

Item 10 — Choosing a heading. [1 mark]

Which heading best fits the paragraph about the platypus's fur, webbed feet and tail?

- A. 'A Very Funny Animal'
- B. 'Built for Water'
- C. 'Why Swimming Is Fun'
- D. 'My Favourite Creature'

Item 11 — Choosing a caption. [1 mark]

Diagram 1 shows a platypus diving. Which caption best goes under it?

- A. 'A platypus dives, closing its eyes, ears and nose to hunt underwater.'
- B. 'Cool picture!'
- C. 'Platypuses are the best animals.'
- D. 'Once, a platypus dived into a river.'

Item 12 — Why reports use headings. [1 mark]

Why do information reports use headings?

- A. to make the report look longer
 - B. to help readers find the section about one aspect of the topic
 - C. to tell a story in the right order
 - D. to show the writer's feelings
-

Part 5 — Structure cloze of report stages (3 marks)

Complete each sentence about how information reports are built. Type one word in each blank. Choose from the word bank.

Word bank: grouped · stating · summary

Item 13 [1 mark]

‘The opening of an information report is about ____ the topic and saying what kind of thing it is.’

Item 14 [1 mark]

‘In the middle of the report, the facts about one aspect are ____ together in the same paragraph.’

Item 15 [1 mark]

‘Many information reports end with a short ____ of the main facts.’

End of Construction task C2. The solutions, full model text and marking key start on the next page.

English Level 5 — Construction task C2 (Informative report) — Solutions and marking key

Teacher copy · 15 marks · Keep this key with the task. The task is auto-marked on screen against these keys; this copy is for the teacher's record and for paper administration.

Content descriptions assessed: VC2E5LY10 (creating spine) and VC2E5LY08 (feature knowledge).

This is the marking key for a school-designed task. It is not a VCAA instrument.

How to administer. One sitting; guidance time 20 minutes; no strict time limit. The teacher may read any question or option aloud (live read-aloud; no recorded audio needed). Every item is objective and worth 1 mark. The supplied fact frame 'Meet the Platypus' is printed in the task; no item presumes any text read outside it.

Marking key

Item	Family (H5P)	Family per §7.5	Answer	Mark
1	H2 Multiple Choice	choosing the opening that states the topic	B. 'The platypus is one of Australia's most unusual mammals — a furry animal that lays eggs and hunts underwater.'	1
2	H2 Multiple Choice	choosing the opening that states the topic	C. It names the topic straight away and tells what kind of thing it is.	1
3	H3 Drag-text / ordering	planning and ordering paragraphs	'What kind of animal is a platypus?' → 'Built for water' → 'Food and hunting' → 'Home and staying safe'	1
4	H2 Multiple Choice	planning and ordering paragraphs	B. 'Built for water'	1
5	H2 Multiple Choice	planning and ordering paragraphs	B. 'Write about how a platypus finds its food underwater.'	1
6	H3 Drag-text / ordering	planning and ordering paragraphs	'Its thick, waterproof fur traps air to keep it warm.' → 'Its webbed front feet act like paddles.' → 'Its flat tail stores fat and helps it steer.'	1
7	H5 Matching	matching facts to the paragraph they support	F3 → 'Built for water' · F6 → 'Food and	1

Item	Family (H5P)	Family per §7.5	Answer	Mark
			hunting’ · F8 → ‘Home and staying safe’ (all three pairs correct for the mark)	
8	H2 Multiple Choice	matching facts to the paragraph they support	D. ‘Home and staying safe’	1
9	H2 Multiple Choice	matching facts to the paragraph they support	C. ‘Food and hunting’	1
10	H2 Multiple Choice	heading and graphic-caption choice	B. ‘Built for Water’	1
11	H2 Multiple Choice	heading and graphic-caption choice	A. ‘A platypus dives, closing its eyes, ears and nose to hunt underwater.’	1
12	H2 Multiple Choice	heading and graphic-caption choice	B. to help readers find the section about one aspect of the topic	1
13	H1 Fill in the Blanks	structure cloze of report stages	stating (accepted: <i>stating; naming</i>)	1
14	H1 Fill in the Blanks	structure cloze of report stages	grouped (accepted: <i>grouped; kept</i>)	1
15	H1 Fill in the Blanks	structure cloze of report stages	summary (accepted: <i>summary</i>)	1
			Total	15

Full model text assembled from the correct choices (P2)

Meet the Platypus

The platypus is one of Australia’s most unusual mammals — a furry animal that lays eggs and hunts underwater.

What kind of animal is a platypus?

The platypus is a mammal, but it lays eggs. Mammals feed their babies milk, and most have live babies — the platypus does both things.

Built for water

Its thick, waterproof fur traps air to keep it warm. Its webbed front feet act like paddles. Its flat tail stores fat and helps it steer.

[Diagram 1: A platypus dives, closing its eyes, ears and nose to hunt underwater.]

Food and hunting

A platypus hunts underwater with its eyes, ears and nose closed. Its bill senses tiny electric signals from its prey underwater. It eats worms, yabbies and insect larvae from the riverbed.

Home and staying safe

A mother platypus lays her eggs in a deep burrow in the riverbank. Male platypuses have a venomous spur on each hind ankle, which helps keep them safe.

From its waterproof fur to its egg-laying ways, the platypus is an animal built for life in the water.

Alternative model (where the task allows genuine variation)

The opening in items 1–2 may take another form, provided it states the topic and says what kind of thing it is, for example:

‘Few animals are as unusual as the platypus. This small Australian mammal lays eggs, and it hunts underwater with its eyes shut.’

Both openings satisfy items 1–2; the platform key ships the primary model. The middle sections may swap ‘Food and hunting’ and ‘Home and staying safe’ without breaking the report’s logic, but the platform key ships the order in item 3, and both models open with the classification section and move to aspects.

Construction principle each item evidences (against the Writing-mode achievement standard)

Item	Construction principle	Achievement-standard sentence it feeds
1, 2	an opening states and classifies the topic	‘text structure appropriate for topic, purpose and audience’
3, 4	ordering sections from general classification to aspects	‘paragraphs ... to create prominence and build sequence’
5	one paragraph, one main idea	‘relevant, elaborated and sequenced ideas’
6	ordering sentences within a paragraph builds a description	cohesion and sequence within paragraphs
7–9	facts grouped into the paragraph they support	‘relevant ... ideas’ grouped by aspect
10–12	headings and captions as characteristic features serving purpose and audience	‘explain characteristic features used to meet the purpose and audience’ (VC2E5LY08)
13–15	the stages of a report: opening, grouped middle paragraphs, closing summary	‘text structure appropriate for topic, purpose and audience’

Marks by content description: VC2E5LY10 7 marks (items 3–9); VC2E5LY08 8 marks (items 1–2, 10–15).

Level discipline notes: items stay at identifying and choosing the features of an information report for purpose and audience (VC2E5LY08 scope); no objective/subjective bias analysis (VC2E6LA02 stays out), no argument-analysis vocabulary, no author-style characteristics. Distractors that mention feelings or opinions serve only to sharpen what an informative opening is — they are not analysed as bias.

Sourcing: the fact frame, every item and both model texts are original compositions for this book (TOC D10, §6; P5). The platypus facts are common-knowledge animal facts retold at the Year 5 reading level. No published report, NAPLAN or VCAA content is reproduced or required.

End of C2 solutions. This block is removable as a whole page unit (L1).