

English Level 6

Chapter 5 — Literacy: contexts, analysis and creating texts

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How texts, including media texts, reflect the context in which they were created

Curriculum link — Victorian Curriculum 2.0, English, Level 6

Strand: Literacy · Sub-strand: Texts in context

Content description VC2E6LY06: examine texts, including media texts, that represent ideas and events, and identify how they reflect the context in which they were created

This section draws on elaborations **VC2E6LY06.E01**, **VC2E6LY06.E02** and **VC2E6LY06.E03**:

- **E01** identifying news reports of the same type of event over time and how they reflect their contexts
- **E02** comparing advertising posters for animated children’s films in different countries and explaining the impact of these choices on audience expectations of the film
- **E03** identifying how advertisements for the same products reflect the context in which they were created

The elaborations are VCAA’s examples of what teaching this content description may involve. This section is organised around the content description itself.

Level 6 achievement standard (Reading and Viewing): *“When demonstrating understanding of texts, students explore and compare ... information and ideas, from different historical, cultural or social contexts to build literal and inferred meanings. They explain how different types of texts, both print and digital, adapt text structures and language features for specific purposes.”*

Learn

1. Every text is made somewhere, sometime

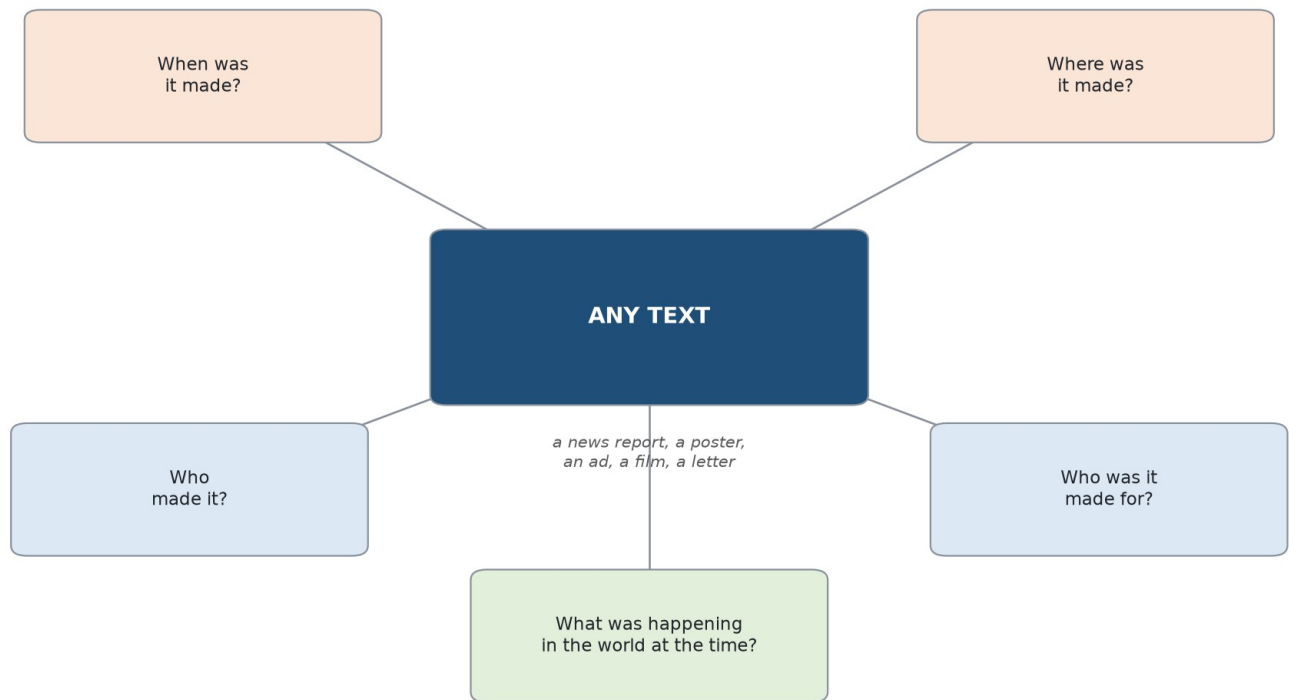
In English, a **text** is anything you can read, watch or listen to — a news report, a poster, an advertisement, a film, a letter, a song. A **media text** is a text made to reach lots of people at once: newspapers, radio, television, films, websites, social media, posters and advertisements are all media texts.

Every text was made at a particular time, in a particular place, by particular people, for a particular audience. That time and place and those people are the text’s **context**.

Defining the term. The Victorian Curriculum uses the term *context* but does not define it. This section therefore treats the **context** of a text as the world the text was made in: **when** it was made, **where** it was made, **who** made it, **who it was made for**, and **what was happening in the world at the time**. Every task in this section is answerable on that definition alone.

And here is the big idea of this section: a text **reflects** its context. To say a text *reflects* its context means the text carries clues to the world it came from — the way wet sand carries footprints of the person who walked on it. You can follow the clues back, from the text to its world.

The context of a text: five questions



Answer the five questions and you know the text's context.

A mind map with the words 'any text' in the middle and five question boxes around it: when was it made, where was it made, who made it, who was it made for, and what was happening in the world at the time.

Answer the five questions about any text and you know its context. The rest of this section is practice at reading the clues.

2. The clues a text carries

Context clues come in a few common kinds. Once you know the kinds, you start seeing them in every text you meet.

Context clues to look for

Kind of clue	What it can look like	Example
Technology	The tools, machines and devices the text mentions or uses	"a new app for booking swim lessons"
Words and names	Words people of the time use — and words they never use	"the pictures" to mean the cinema
People and roles	Who is spoken about, who is quoted, and what they do	only the mayor is quoted in the report
Money and prices	What things cost, and how they are paid for	a pool that cost the town 2,000 pounds
Design and making	How the text was made — lettering, pictures, colours, sound	a black-and-white drawing, not a colour photo

Every clue is a key to the time, the place and the people who made the text.

A table of five kinds of context clues — technology, words and names, people and roles, money and prices, and design and making — with what each kind can look like and a short example of each.

One more kind of clue is the quietest and the best: **what the text takes for granted**. A text almost never announces its own world. It simply assumes it — the way a text from today might mention "the app" without explaining what an app is. The things a text never explains are strong clues to its time.

3. Same kind of event, three times

News reports are media texts, and they are full of context clues. Below are three reports of the same **type** of event — a town swimming pool opens — written for this book, each set in a different time. Read all three before you look at the table under them.

The Riverbend Herald — Saturday 18 January 1936

NEW POOL FOR RIVERBEND. Riverbend's new swimming pool was opened on Friday afternoon by the town's mayor, Mr J. B. Watson. More than two hundred people stood in the sun to watch the ribbon cut. The pool took eight months to build and cost the council two thousand pounds. After the ceremony, the children of the district lined up for their first swim. The pool will be open every day from seven in the morning until sunset, and the mayor said he hoped every child in Riverbend would learn to swim.

The Riverbend Mail — Tuesday 21 January 1986

POOL SPLASHES OPEN. More than five hundred people came to Saturday's opening of the Riverbend Swim Centre. The centre cost \$3.2 million and has a 50-metre pool, a learners' pool and a big car park. Pool manager Mrs L. Carter said the car park would fill early on hot days. A colour photograph of the first race will be in Thursday's paper. The centre opens to the public this weekend.

Riverbend Mail online — Sunday 15 March 2026

Riverbend's swim centre has reopened after a two-year rebuild, with solar panels on the roof and a new app for booking swim lessons. About 900 people booked free tickets online for the opening weekend. Centre manager Priya Nair said the rebuild was paid for with state and council money. "We want every child in Riverbend to learn to swim," she said. A live video of the opening was shared on the centre's social media pages.

The three reports tell the same kind of story. But each one is soaked in its own time. A price in shillings, a ribbon and a sunset closing time; millions of dollars, metres and car parks; apps, online tickets and live video. The table sorts the clues.

Same kind of event, three times: a town pool opens

	1936	1986	2026
Where people meet the news	the town newspaper, on a Saturday	the local newspaper, on a Tuesday	the news site, and short videos shared online
Time-clue words	2,000 pounds; the mayor cuts a ribbon; the district	\$3.2 million; a 50-metre pool; a learners' pool; a big car park	an app; tickets booked online; solar panels; a live video
Who is quoted	the mayor	the pool manager	the centre manager, named in full
What the text takes for granted	everyone reads the town paper; pools close at sunset	families come by car; photos go in the paper	most people carry a phone and can book and watch online

The event is the same. The clues are not — because the world was not the same.

A table comparing the three pool-opening reports of 1936, 1986 and 2026 by where people meet the news, the time-clue words, who is quoted, and what each text takes for granted.

Notice the "takes for granted" row. The 1936 report never explains why the pool closes at sunset — in 1936 that needed no explaining. The 2026 report never explains what an app is. **The things a text does not explain are the things its first readers already knew** — and that is exactly what gives the time away.

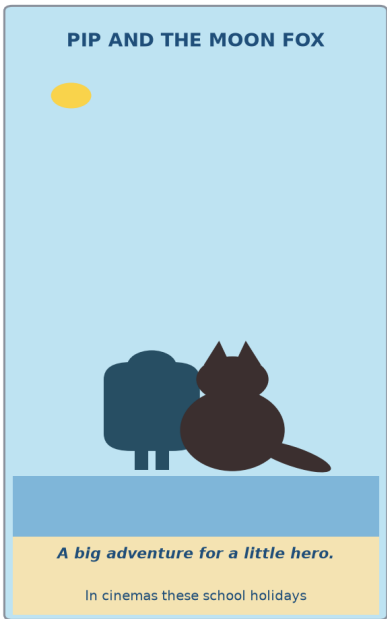
4. One film, three countries

Context is not only *when* — it is also *where*. The same text can be remade for different places, and each remaking shows what its makers think that audience cares about. Advertising posters for animated children's films do this clearly.

Below are three posters for one **invented** film, *Pip and the Moon Fox*. The film, the posters and all the names on them were made up for this book. They stand in for the choices real poster makers make when the same film is sold in

different countries. (Real posters would also be printed in each country’s own language; ours stay in English so you can read every word.)

One invented film, three posters for three countries



Poster A — made for Australia



Poster B — made for Japan



Poster C — made for the United States

These posters were drawn for this book, about an invented film. They show the kinds of choices real film posters make.

Three sketch posters for the same invented animated film, *Pip and the Moon Fox*: poster A made for Australia with bright sun, sea and sand colours and a school-holidays release line; poster B made for Japan with a big pale moon, the fox at the centre and the voice actors’ names at the top; poster C made for the United States with a *THIS SUMMER* banner, a leaping fox and star voice names.

Each poster makes a set of choices — colours, the biggest thing in the picture, the tagline (the short line that sums up the film), and the names it uses to sell the film. And each set of choices builds **audience expectations**: what the audience thinks the film will be like *before* they have seen a single frame. A poster is a promise.

Three posters, three sets of choices

Choice	Poster A (Australia)	Poster B (Japan)	Poster C (United States)
Colours	Bright sun, sea and sand	Soft night blues and a pale moon	Dark sky, bright stars, action banner
Biggest thing in the picture	Pip and the fox together on the beach	The Moon Fox itself, big and gentle	Pip leaping across the moon
The tagline	"A big adventure for a little hero."	"A friend found under the moon."	"One little fox. One giant journey."
Names used to sell the film	School holidays — a time when kids are free to go	The voice actors' names, right at the top	"Featuring the voices of..." and "THIS SUMMER"
What the poster leads you to expect	A fun outdoor adventure with a friend	A gentle story about friendship	A big, exciting ride with famous voices

Same film, three countries — the people who made each poster picked what they thought would work best for their own audience.

A table of the choices in each of the three posters — colours, the biggest thing in the picture, the tagline, and the names used to sell the film — with a final row saying what each poster leads its audience to expect.

The film is the same in all three countries. The promises are not — because the posters were shaped to fit three different audiences. When you compare real posters for a real film, ask: *what does each poster think its audience wants?* The answer is a clue to each place.

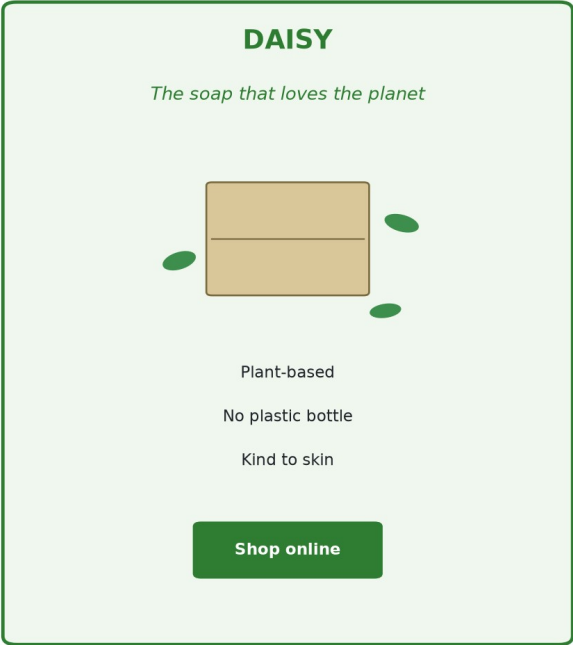
5. Same product, two times

Advertisements are media texts too, and they reflect their context twice over: they show the tools of their time (where they live, how they are made) and the values of their time (what they think buyers care about). Here is one invented brand, **Daisy Soap**, with one ad from 1956 and one from 2026. Both ads were drawn for this book.

One invented product, two times: Daisy Soap



1956 — newspaper ad, in black and white



2026 — screen ad, in colour

Daisy Soap is an invented brand, made up for this book.

Two sketch advertisements for the invented brand Daisy Soap: a black-and-white 1956 newspaper ad claiming the soap washes clothes brighter, cuts washing time in half and costs one shilling, and a green 2026 screen ad calling it the soap that loves the planet, with a shop-online button.

The product’s name is the same in both ads. Almost everything else moved with its time.

Same soap, two ads from 1956 and 2026: what changed, and why

What to look at	The 1956 ad	The 2026 ad	What this reflects
Who the ad speaks to	The person doing the washing at home	The whole family, shopping on a screen	Home and family life have changed
The main claim	Washes faster and brighter	Kind to the planet and to skin	What buyers are asked to care about has changed
Where the ad lives	A newspaper, in black and white	A phone or computer screen, in colour	The tools for making and reading ads have changed
The words it uses	"Cuts the washing time in half!"	"Plant-based. No plastic bottle."	New words enter the language as the world changes

The product's name stayed the same. Almost everything else moved with its time.

A table of what changed between the 1956 and the 2026 Daisy Soap ad — who the ad speaks to, the main claim, where the ad lives, and the words it uses — with a column saying what each change reflects about its time.

Here is where this section joins Section 1B. In 1B you learned that an advertisement always **leans** — it wants you to feel and buy, and that lean is not hidden, it is the ad’s job. The lean is also a context clue. The 1956 ad leans on the idea that the reader washes clothes by hand and counts the cost; the 2026 ad leans on caring for the planet. What an ad thinks it can lean on tells you about its world.

6. The context checklist

Pulling it all together, here is the habit this section is training: whenever you meet a text, run the five steps.



The context checklist

1

Find out when and where the text was made. Look for a date, a place and a maker's name.

2

Ask who it was made for. Who was meant to read it, watch it or hear it?

3

Gather the clues: technology, words and names, people and roles, money and prices, design and making.

4

For each clue, say what it reflects about the time and the place.

5

Put it all in one sentence: "This text reflects its context because ..."

Use the checklist on anything — a news report, a poster, an ad, a film, a letter.

A five-step checklist titled 'The context checklist': find out when and where the text was made; ask who it was made for; gather the clues of technology, words and names, people and roles, money and prices, and design and making; for each clue say what it reflects about the time and the place; then put it all in one sentence beginning 'This text reflects its context because'.

The last step matters most. A list of clues is only evidence; the sentence is the analysis. "This text reflects its context because ..." is the move you will keep using in Section 5B and beyond.

Worked examples

Worked example 1 — modelled analysis

Take the 1986 pool report from part 3 and run the context checklist on it.

Step	What we find	What it reflects
1. When, where, maker	Tuesday 21 January 1986; Riverbend; the local paper, the <i>Riverbend Mail</i> .	A town that gets its news from a printed paper twice or more a week.
2. Who it was made for	Readers of the local paper — families of the town.	The paper assumes the whole town reads it.
3. Gather the clues	"\$3.2 million"; "50-metre pool"; "a big car park"; "a colour photograph ... in Thursday's paper".	Money counted in millions of dollars (not pounds); cars are how families travel; a colour photo is still worth mentioning, so colour is not yet

Step	What we find	What it reflects
4. What the clues reflect	The report takes cars, big building costs and printed photos for granted.	ordinary. A 1980s town: car-first, paper-first, before phones and screens.
5. One sentence	“This text reflects its context because it reports a million-dollar public pool for a car-coming, newspaper-reading town, and treats a colour photo as news.”	—

Watch the pattern. The analysis is not “this report is old”. It is: *named clue* → *what that clue reflects*. Every mark in tasks like this comes from that arrow.

Worked example 2 — modelled composition

Now make texts that reflect a context on purpose. The plan: one invented product, two ads in two times. The product is **Zoom Fizz**, a lemon drink. The old-time ad is set in 1966 — the year Australia switched from pounds to dollars, which gives us a built-in clue.

First, the two ads.

Zoom Fizz — newspaper ad, 1966

ZOOM FIZZ MAKES YOU ZOOM! The lemon drink for growing kids. Ask your mum for Zoom Fizz, only five cents a bottle. Sold at grocers in every town.

Zoom Fizz — screen ad, 2026

Zoom Fizz Zero. All the fun, no sugar. Made with real lemon, in a can that recycles. Find us online.

Now the planning grid that built them:

	Product and its name	Who the ad speaks to	The main claim	Words and pictures	Two context clues
1966	Zoom Fizz, a lemon drink	The family shopper — “ask your mum”	Makes you zoom; cheap at five cents	Bold caps, a bottle drawing, “grocers”	Five cents (new decimal money, 1966); sold at grocers, not supermarkets; kids ask mum, not the family together
2026	Zoom Fizz Zero	Anyone with a screen, the whole family	Fun with no sugar; the can recycles	Green colours, a button, short lines	“no sugar” and “recycles” (today’s cares); “Find us online” (today’s tools)

Check the ads against the grid: every choice in each ad — who it speaks to, the claim, the words, the tools — matches its row. That is what “reflecting a context” looks like from the maker’s side. When it is your turn, the blank planning grid in the produced outcome works the same way.

Practice tasks

Scaffolded

Q1. (E01) Sort each clue from the pool reports into the report it came from: **1936, 1986 or 2026**.

- a) “two thousand pounds”
- b) “a new app for booking swim lessons”
- c) “the ribbon cut”
- d) “\$3.2 million”
- e) “a live video of the opening”
- f) “open every day ... until sunset”

Q2. (E01) Pick two clues from the 1936 report. For each, write one sentence beginning “This reflects ...” to say what the clue shows about 1936 Riverbend.

Q3. (E02) Look again at the three posters in part 4. For each poster, name **one** choice (a colour, a picture choice, a tagline or a name) and the audience expectation that choice builds.

Q4. (E02) Poster C was made for the United States. Name two things its audience would expect *before* seeing the film, and the exact poster choice that builds each one.

Q5. (E03) Look at the two Daisy Soap ads in part 5. a) Who does each ad speak to? b) Find one clue in each ad that gives away its time, and say what the clue reflects.

Q6. (E03) Each claim below could only appear in one of the two Daisy Soap ads. Say which ad — **1956** or **2026** — and why.

- a) “Kind to your hands.”
- b) “No plastic bottle.”
- c) “Cuts the washing time in half.”
- d) “Shop online.”

Unscaffolded

Q7. (E01) Read this report, written for this book and set in an unnamed past.

TELEVISION COMES TO RIVERBEND EAST. Riverbend East Primary School has bought a television set for the Grade 6 room. The head teacher, Mr Hartley, said the set would be used for the news and for spelling lessons. The set cost sixty pounds and stands on a trolley so it can roll from room to room. Children will take turns to watch, twenty at a time.

Find three context clues. For each, say what it reflects, and use your clues to argue for **when** the report was set (a decade is enough — for example, “the 1950s” or “the 1970s”).

Q8. (E02) The film *Pip and the Moon Fox* gets a fourth poster, made for a country of your choice (not Australia, Japan or the United States). Plan three choices — colours, the biggest thing in the picture, and a tagline — and for each, say what expectation it would build for that audience.

Q9. (E03) Here is a third Daisy Soap ad, written for this book.

NEW! DAISY SOAP — NOW IN A BOX! The wash that wins on price. Only 99 cents. Look for the big yellow pack at your supermarket.

Name two clues that place this ad in the 1980s rather than 1956 or 2026, and say what each clue reflects.

Q10. (E01, E03, joins 1B) Read this fourth Daisy ad, written for this book.

MUMS KNOW BEST. Mums know Daisy Soap washes brighter. Mums know Daisy Soap costs less. Be a good helper — ask your mum for Daisy.

- a) Name the lean (the 1B skill): what does this ad take for granted about who does the washing?
- b) Name two context clues and the time they point to.
- c) In one sentence: is the lean a context clue here as well? Explain.

Produced outcome

One product, two times. Invent a product (a drink, a soap, a snack, a toy — your choice). Then make **two** advertisements for it: one set in a past time you choose (1950s, 1960s, 1970s or 1980s), one for today.

1. Fill in the planning grid first — copy it into your workbook.

Plan two ads for one invented product

	Product and its name	Who the ad speaks to	The main claim	Words and pictures	Two context clues
My old-time ad (I choose the year)					
My ad for today					

Fill in the grid before you make your ads. Each row should read like a different time.

A blank planning grid with two rows, 'my old-time ad (I choose the year)' and 'my ad for today', and five columns: product and its name, who the ad speaks to, the main claim, words and pictures, and two context clues.

2. Make each ad: about 40 words, with a slogan (a short line that sells the product) and one simple drawn picture. The old-time ad must carry at least **two** context clues from the checklist kinds (technology; words and names; people and roles; money and prices; design and making). So must the one for today.
3. Write two sentences of reflection, one per ad, each beginning “This ad reflects its context because ...” and pointing at a named clue.

Success criteria. Each ad’s who/claim/words match its row of the grid. Each ad carries at least two clues a reader could find without being told. Each reflection sentence names its clue and says what it reflects, not just that the ad is “old” or “new”.

Marking note: marks are for the quality of the matching — how clearly each ad’s choices fit its time — not for which time you chose or how well you draw.

Answers

Q1. a) 1936. b) 2026. c) 1936. d) 1986. e) 2026. f) 1936.

Q2. Samples. “Two thousand pounds” reflects that Australia counted money in pounds in 1936, not dollars. “Open until sunset” reflects that the pool had no lights for night swimming. “The ribbon cut” reflects a ceremony style that is still with us, but in 1936 it was the ordinary way to open a public thing.

Q3. Samples. Poster A: the bright beach colours and the school-holidays line build the expectation of a fun, sunny, outdoor adventure for kids on holiday. Poster B: the big gentle moon and the fox at the centre build the expectation of a calm, friendly story. Poster C: the THIS SUMMER banner and the leaping fox build the expectation of a big, exciting ride; the voice names add star power.

Q4. Sample. Expectation 1: the film will be big and exciting — built by the action banner “THIS SUMMER” and the fox leaping across the moon. Expectation 2: famous voices will be in it — built by “Featuring the voices of Riley Banks and Dana Cole”.

Q5. a) The 1956 ad speaks to the person who washes clothes at home; the 2026 ad speaks to the whole family, shopping on a screen. b) 1956: “one shilling” — old Australian money, so before 1966. 2026: “Shop online” and “no plastic bottle” — today’s tools and today’s cares.

Q6. a) 1956 — hands sore from hand-washing was a daily fact then; a 2026 ad would not lead with it. b) 2026 — plastic bottles and the wish to avoid them are today’s concern. c) 1956 — washing speed was what buyers cared about when washing was hand work. d) 2026 — only a screen ad can offer a button to press.

Q7. Sample. Clue 1: “a television set” as a special purchase for one room — TVs were new and dear, so before most schools had one. Clue 2: “sixty pounds” — pounds means before decimal money (1966). Clue 3: “take turns to watch, twenty at a time” — one set for the whole school. Argument: the clues point to the 1950s or early 1960s — after television arrived in Australia (1956) and before dollars replaced pounds (1966).

Q8. Answers will vary. A strong answer names a country, makes three concrete choices, and ties each to an expectation (for example, a poster for Norway might use snow colours and a winter release line, building the expectation of a fun trip to the cinema on a cold winter day).

Q9. Sample. Clue 1: “99 cents” — decimal money, so after 1966, and the 99-cents price style of supermarket times. Clue 2: “supermarket” and “big yellow pack” — self-serve supermarket shopping, not the grocer’s counter; but no online words, so not 2026.

Q10. a) The ad takes for granted that mums do the washing and that children “help” by asking for the brand. b) Clues: “Mums know best” as a selling line, and “costs less” aimed at the home shopper — both point to a mid-1900s ad world (like the 1956 ad), before ads spoke to whole families. c) Sample: yes — the lean is a context clue, because what an ad can take for granted is part of its world; a 2026 ad leaning on “mums know best” would sound as old as the shilling.

Produced outcome. Answers will vary. Check against the success criteria: the two ads’ choices match their grid rows; each ad carries at least two findable clues; each reflection names a clue and says what it reflects (for example, “my 1970s ad reflects its context because it prices the snack in cents and sends kids to the corner shop, and my 2026 ad reflects its context because it has a recycle line and an online shop button”).

How text structures and language features work together to meet a purpose

Chapter 5 · Literacy: contexts, analysis and creating texts · Section 5B

Curriculum trace — Victorian Curriculum F–10 Version 2.0, English, Level 6

Owens: VC2E6LY07 — “analyse how text structures and language features work together to meet the purpose of a text and engage and influence audiences”

Draws on: VC2E6LY07.E01 “comparing the structure and language features of different texts, including print and digital sources on similar topics, and evaluating which features best aid navigation and clear communication about the topic”

Level 6 achievement standard (Reading and Viewing): “They explain how different types of texts, both print and digital, adapt text structures and language features for specific purposes.”

Theory

1. Every text has a job

Look at two short texts about the same wet floor.

Text A: Wet floor. Do not run.

Text B: Our floor sparkles after the morning clean — please help us keep it that way by walking carefully today.

Same floor. Same fact. But Text A’s job is to **instruct**: it tells you what to do, in six words. Text B’s job is to **persuade**: it wants you to *choose* to walk, so it gives you a reason and makes you feel part of the “us”. Every difference between the two texts — the short sentences, the polite please, the picture word *sparkles* — comes from the difference in the job.

Defining the term. The Victorian Curriculum uses the word *purpose* but does not define it. This section therefore treats the **purpose** of a text as **the job the text is meant to do**, and every task here is answerable on that meaning alone. Four jobs cover most texts you will meet.

Four common purposes — and the toolkit each one reaches for

A text's purpose is the job it is meant to do. A text can have more than one job, but usually one is in charge.

Purpose	The text's job	Structures you often see	Language features you often hear
Inform	Give the reader true facts about a topic	headings, ordered parts, fact boxes, captions	plain words, names, numbers and dates
Persuade	Move the reader to agree or to act	opening claim, reasons in order, closing call	loaded words, "you" words, questions that pull the reader in
Instruct	Show the reader how to do something	numbered steps, short parts, diagrams	command words: pack, click, fold
Entertain	Give the reader a story to enjoy	a hook, a complication, a resolution	vivid words, comparisons, character voices

A table of four common text purposes — inform, persuade, instruct and entertain — each with the job it does, the structures you often see in it, and the language features you often hear in it.

A text can carry more than one job — Text B informs you the floor is wet at the same time as it persuades you to walk. But one job is nearly always in charge, and your first move as a reader is to name it.

2. The two toolkits

Every text is built from two toolkits.

The first is **text structure** — the way a text is organised and laid out: the order of its ideas, its stages and phases (the shapes you met in Section 1C), its **headings** (the titles that name each part), **subheadings** (smaller titles inside a part), **paragraphs**, **bullet lists** (points set out one per line with a dot or number), **captions** (the words fixed under a picture), boxes and sidebars, and on screens its **menus**, **links** (words you click to jump to another page) and **tabs**.

The second toolkit is **language features** — what the writer picks at the level of words and sentences: plain words, **vivid** words, **loaded words** (words that carry a judgement, from Section 1B), kinds of sentences, repeated key words that glue a text together (Section 1D), feeling words, picture-painting comparisons (Section 2D), and talking straight to the reader with *you*.

The two toolkits of every text

Structure is the shape of the text. Language features are the choices inside its sentences.

Text structure — the shape	Language features — the word choices
<i>the way a text is organised and laid out</i>	<i>what the writer picks at the level of words and sentences</i>
the order of ideas — what comes first, next, last	word choice — plain, vivid or loaded (Sections 1B, 2D)
stages and phases (Section 1C)	kinds of sentences — short, long, command, question
headings and subheadings	repeated key words that glue a text (Section 1D)
paragraphs and bullet lists	feeling words and judgement words
boxes, sidebars and captions	picture-painting comparisons (Section 2D)
on screens: menus, links and tabs	talking straight to the reader with “you”
Alone, each tool does one small job. Together, the two toolkits serve the text's purpose.	

Two panels side by side: text structure listed as the shape of the text, and language features listed as the word choices inside its sentences, with a note that together the two toolkits serve the text's purpose.

Here is the key idea of this whole section, and the one the content description is built on: **the two toolkits do not work separately. They work together.** A heading on its own is just a label. A loaded word on its own is just a pushy word. Put the loaded word *under* the heading at the top of the page, and the reader meets the push in the first second — that is the pair doing one shared job.

3. Working together: engage and influence

The curriculum names two things texts do to their readers with these paired choices: they **engage** and they **influence**.

Defining the terms. The Victorian Curriculum uses *engage* and *influence* but does not define them. This section treats them as follows, and every task here is answerable on these meanings alone.

- A text **engages** you when it gets and keeps your interest — when you want to keep reading.
- A text **influences** you when it moves what you think, feel, say or do — when you finish the text leaning a certain way.

Engaging and influencing are different jobs, and texts choose different pairs for each. A big **headline** and a **hook** (an opening that grabs you) work with **vivid words** to engage. **Numbers and checkable facts** set out in a **fact box** work with **plain words** to influence, because they give you reasons you can trust. And the pairs change with the purpose, as the next figure shows.

Working together: one purpose, one shared job

Each row pairs a structure choice with a language choice. The last column shows what they do together.

Purpose	Structure choice	Language choice	What they do together
Instruct "How to pack a waste-free lunchbox"	three numbered steps, one job per step	command words: pack, swap, rinse	The reader can follow in order and never gets lost.
Persuade "Join the walking bus"	a big headline claim, then short parts	"you" words and a warm picture of friends walking together	The reader feels invited, not ordered.
Inform "Reading week by the numbers"	a fact box and a captioned photo	numbers and plain words	The reader finds the news fast and trusts it.
Change one side and the whole job changes. Drop the numbers from row three and the news loses its proof. Drop the steps from row one and the command words have no path to follow.			

Three worked pairings, each with a purpose, a structure choice and a language choice, and a final column showing what the pair does together for the reader.

Notice what the last column always answers: not "what is the feature?" but "**what does the pair do for the reader?**" That question is the heart of analysis. Naming a heading is spotting. Saying that the heading works with plain words so a scanning reader finds the news in one second — that is analysing.

4. The three-step routine

Analysis in this section always runs the same three steps.

The three-step routine for analysing a text

Step 1 — Name the purpose

What job is this text meant to do:
inform, persuade, instruct or
entertain?

Step 2 — Find the choices

List the structure choices on one
side and the language choices on
the other.

Step 3 — Say how they work together

For each pair, say what it does
for the reader.

Sentence stem: "The ... (structure choice) works with the ... (language choice) to help the reader ..."

Keep going until every big choice in the text has a job in your answer.

The three-step routine: name the purpose; find the structure and language choices; say how each pair works together for the reader, with a sentence stem to use.

Use the sentence stem in every answer you write. It stops your analysis from dissolving into a shopping list of features, because a stem only makes sense when the two choices and the reader's gain are all in the one sentence.

5. The same topic, two texts: print and digital

The same job can be done by a **print** text (on paper) or a **digital** text (on a screen), and the two kinds of text reach for different tools. Below are two original texts written for this section. Both are about the same topic at the same school — a waste-free lunch week — and both carry the same three rules and the same facts. Read them side by side and watch the shapes differ.

Waste-free lunch week starts Monday

By the Waste Watchers, Year 6

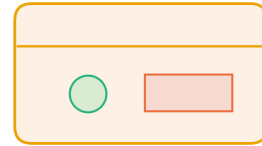
From Monday, Riverbend Primary School will hold its first waste-free lunch week. Every class will aim to send home zero rubbish from lunch.

Students are asked to pack food in a reusable box, choose fruit without wrapping, and bring a drink bottle instead of a juice box. Each class will weigh its lunch bin every day and chart the results.

The class with the lightest bin on Friday will win the Golden Lunchbox trophy at assembly.

Lunch bins by the numbers

Our three lunch bins hold about 15 kilograms of waste each day.
Goal for the week: half that.
Weigh-in every day at 1:30 pm.

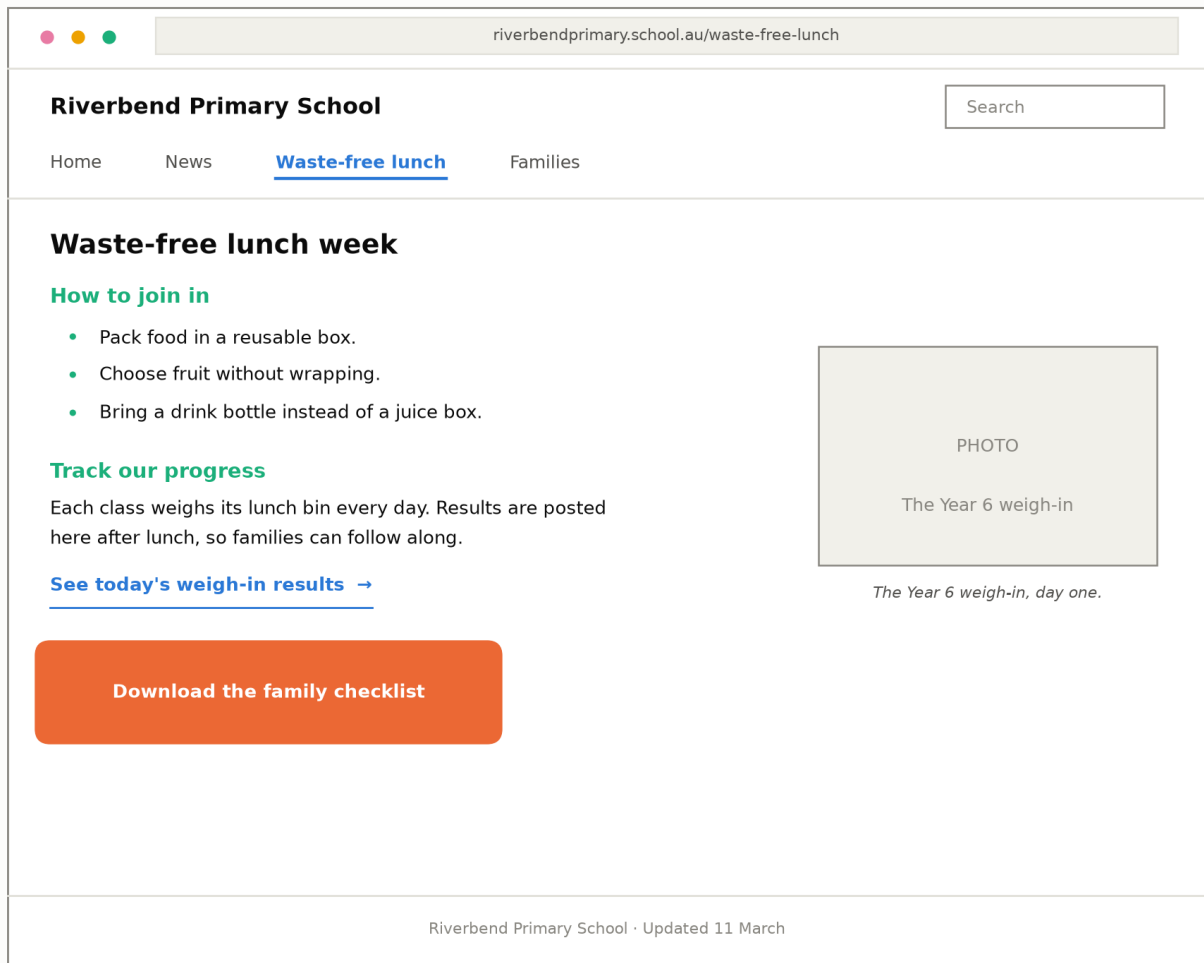


Year 6's reusable boxes, ready for the weigh-in.

Also inside: assembly news (page 4) · canteen menu (page 5) · sports day sign-ups (page 6)

A print source: one full page of a school newsletter with a headline, three paragraphs, a fact box of numbers, and a picture with a caption, all about a waste-free lunch week.

A digital source — one page of the school website



A digital source: one page of a school website about the same waste-free lunch week, with a menu, a search box, subheadings, a bullet list, a link, a photo and a download button.

The newsletter tells its story top to bottom, like a story on paper: headline, then the news, then the rules folded into a paragraph, then the trophy at the end. The web page chops the same facts into named parts — a subheading for joining, a subheading for following — and hangs a menu, a link and a search box over the top. Same purpose, same facts, different machines.

6. Navigation: how a text helps you find your way

The digital machine carries tools the paper one cannot. The curriculum's word for what those tools give you is **navigation**.

Defining the term. The Victorian Curriculum uses *navigation* but does not define it. This section therefore treats navigation as **the ways a text helps you move around it and find what you need**, and every task here is answerable on that meaning alone. (Section 4E uses the same idea the other way round: you use a text's structure to navigate to what you need.)

Navigation: how a text helps you find your way

Navigation means the ways a text helps you move around it and find what you need. Every feature below is a structure choice built to help the reader.

Print texts

Contents list

shows what is inside, and where

Headings and subheadings

name each part before you read it

Page numbers

let you jump away and come back

Bold words

catch your eye when you scan a page

Captions

tell you what each image shows

Digital texts

Menus

list the main parts of the site

Links

jump you to another page in one click

Search box

type a word and go straight to it

Tabs and buttons

open and close parts of a page

Back button

takes you home the way you came

Two columns comparing navigation features: print texts offer a contents list, headings, page numbers, bold words and captions; digital texts offer menus, links, a search box, tabs and buttons, and a back button.

Every one of these is a **structure** choice, built to help the reader move. Clear **communication** is the other half of the evaluation you will do next: a text communicates clearly when its parts are in a follow-able order, its words are right for its audience, and its pictures and captions add meaning instead of filling space. (Tables, diagrams and graphs do the same job in information texts — the tools you met in Section 2C.)

7. Evaluating which features help best

To **evaluate** a text is to judge how well it does its job. Evaluation is the top end of analysis: after you can say *how* the choices work together, you ask *how well* — and which choices do the most work. This section asks you to compare texts on similar topics and evaluate which features best aid navigation and clear communication. That is exactly what the checklist trains.

Judging what works best

To evaluate a text is to judge how well it does its job. Ask these six questions of any print or digital text.

☐	1. Can I find what I need quickly? Which feature helped me?
☐	2. Is the order of the ideas easy to follow?
☐	3. Do the headings tell me what each part will be about?
☐	4. Do the images and captions add meaning — or just fill space?
☐	5. Are the words clear for the audience?
☐	6. Which single feature helps navigation most? Which helps clear communication most?

A good verdict names the feature and gives a reason — “the menu helps most because ...”, not just “it is good”.

A six-question evaluation checklist: can I find what I need quickly, is the order easy to follow, do the headings tell me what each part is about, do the images and captions add meaning, are the words clear for the audience, and which single feature helps navigation and clear communication most.

Two warnings before you use it. First, “which feature helps most” has no fixed answer — it depends on the reader and the moment. A search box is fastest when you know the word you want; a menu is better when you are browsing and do not know the site yet. That is not a trick: it is why your verdict — your call on which features help best — must carry a reason. Second, judge both texts with the same questions, at the same depth. If the web page’s menu looks clever next to the newsletter’s plain page, ask the newsletter the same questions anyway — a fair evaluation weighs both sides with the same weights.

Worked examples

Worked example 1 — modelled analysis

The task: Take the newsletter text from Part 5. Run the three-step routine on it and show how its choices work together to meet its purpose, engage its readers and influence them.

Step 1 — the purpose. The text’s job is to persuade: it wants families to pack waste-free lunches and students to care about the bins. Informing is along for the ride; persuading is in charge.

Steps 2 and 3 — the choices, and what they do together.

Modelled analysis — the newsletter's choices, working together

Each row finds one choice in the print text and says what it does for the purpose.

The choice	Structure, language, or both?	What it does
Headline: “Waste-free lunch week starts Monday”	Structure: the heading that names the whole page. Language: plain words, plus the day it starts.	A reader scanning the page knows the news, and when it matters, at a glance.
The three asks, in order: box, fruit, bottle	Structure: one short part holding a list. Language: plain words for each item.	Families can pick up all three rules without missing one.
Fact box: “15 kilograms a day ... Goal: half that”	Both: a box that catches the eye (structure) carrying numbers (language).	The goal feels real and checkable, not just nice words.
“Golden Lunchbox trophy at assembly”	Language: trophy and contest words. Structure: kept for the very end.	Ends on a reason to join in — the reader leaves wanting to win.
Caption: “Year 6’s reusable boxes, ready for the weigh-in”	Structure: words fixed under the picture. Language: names who and what.	Ties a picture of real students to the week's goal.
The shape of every answer: name the choice → sort it as structure or language → say what it does for the purpose.		

A modelled analysis table with one row per choice in the newsletter text: the choice, whether it is structure or language or both, and what it does for the purpose.

Watch the shape. Every row does three jobs: it names the choice, it sorts the choice as structure or language (or both), and it says what the choice does *with the others* for the purpose. Row three is the one to copy first: the fact box is a structure choice carrying a language choice — numbers — and the pair makes the goal feel real. That is “working together” in one sentence.

Worked example 2 — modelled composition

The task: Now work the toolkits yourself. Here are the facts for a different school program, the **walking bus** — a group of students who walk to school together with two parent helpers.

The walking bus leaves the corner of Park Street and Second Avenue at 8:15 am. It runs every morning, in all weather. Two parent helpers walk with the group. New walkers are welcome any day.

The purpose is set: **persuade families to join**. Plan the pairs before you draft.

Choice	This composition	Why it serves the purpose
Structure: opening	A headline claim before any facts	The reader meets the invitation first, not a timetable.
Language: voice	“You” and “your” words	A family reads themselves into the picture.
Structure: the rules	The where, when and who in one short part	Families can check the facts in one look, without hunting.
Language: close	A warm picture word (<i>ready to learn</i>) plus the skip-the-queue gain	Ends on two reasons to say yes.
Structure: action	A button at the end	The yes has somewhere to go.

The drafted text — a short page for the school website.

Walk to school the friendly way

The Riverbend walking bus leaves the corner of Park Street and Second Avenue at 8:15 am, every morning, in all weather. Two parent helpers walk with the group, and there is always room for one more.

Your child will arrive calm and ready to learn — and you will skip the car queue.

[**Join the walking bus** →]

Check the pairs in the draft: the headline claim works with the “you” words so the reader feels invited in the first two lines; the single short fact part works with plain where-when-who words so a busy parent misses nothing; the button works with the closing reasons so the “yes” is one click away. Every structure choice has a language partner, and every pair serves the one purpose. That is what composition looks like when the toolkits work together.

Practice tasks

Scaffolded

Q1. (E01) Sort each feature below into **text structure** or **language feature**.

- a) numbered steps · b) a vivid verb · c) a heading · d) a repeated key word · e) a fact box · f) a question aimed straight at the reader · g) a caption · h) a feeling word

Q2. (E01) Each opening below is doing one job most of all: **inform**, **persuade**, **instruct** or **entertain**. Name the job, then give one structure clue and one language clue that helped you decide.

- a) Step 1: Click the link. Step 2: Type your name. Step 3: Press send.
b) Nobody should walk past the library this week without going in.
c) The concert raised \$412 for the animal shelter.
d) The day the chooks escaped, Grandad swore the gate had opened itself.

Q3. (E01) A class wants to **persuade** families to come to the twilight concert. Two pairs of choices are offered.

- Pair 1: a headline claim up top + loaded words like *unmissable* and *one night only*
- Pair 2: numbered steps + command words like *arrive*, *park*, *enter*

Which pair better serves the purpose? Use the sentence stem from Part 4. Then say, in one sentence, what Pair 2 would be exactly right for.

Q4. (E01) Look again at the newsletter text in Part 5. a) Name the purpose in charge. b) Find two structure choices. c) Find two language choices. d) Pick one structure choice and one language choice and join them with the sentence stem.

Q5. (E01) Look again at the web page text in Part 5. a) Name two navigation features and say what each one helps the reader find. b) A parent has ten seconds. Which single feature gets them to the three rules fastest? c) Find one language choice that engages, and say what it does.

Q6. (E01) Evaluate the two texts in Part 5 with questions 1–5 of the checklist. a) Which text helps navigation more, and which feature wins it? b) Which text communicates the three rules more clearly, and why? One reason each.

Un scaffolded

Q7. (E01) Read this notice from the school noticeboard.

Movie night — this Friday

Friday, 6 pm, in the hall. Tickets \$2 at the front office. Bring a cushion — the seats are hard. Every dollar goes to the new playground.

Analyse it with the three-step routine. Write four to five sentences, and use the sentence stem at least once.

Q8. (E01) Here is the walking-bus information as one unbroken paragraph, the way a plain letter might carry it.

The walking bus leaves the corner of Park Street and Second Avenue at 8:15 am every morning and it runs in all weather and two parent helpers walk with the group and new walkers are welcome any day and families can join by phoning the front office.

Redesign it as a web page. Add at least: two subheadings, one bullet list, and one link or button label. Then write one sentence each explaining two of your choices — each sentence must say what the choice does for the reader.

Q9. (E01) For a school website, which helps navigation more: **a menu at the top of every page**, or **a search box**? First give the best reason for each side — the strongest reason a fan of each one would offer. Then give your own call, with your reason.

Q10. (E01) Pick one topic you know well (a sport, a game, a craft, an animal). Name one **print** text and one **digital** text about it that you have actually used. For each text: one structure choice and one language choice that suit its purpose. Then one sentence: which of the two communicates more clearly for you, and why.

Produced outcome

One topic, two texts — your analysis and your call. Use the newsletter and the web page from Part 5. Fill the planning frame first, then write your piece.

Planning frame — your comparison and your verdict

Use the two texts from this section. Fill each box before you write your analysis.

P	Purpose The newsletter's job is ... The web page's job is ...
S	Structure choices I found Newsletter: ... Web page: ... (two or more each)
L	Language choices I found Newsletter: ... Web page: ... (two or more each)
M	My verdict The feature that helps navigation most is ... because ... The feature that helps clear communication most is ... because ...

Write your comparison in three or four sentences, then your verdict in two — one reason for each call.

The planning frame: four boxes for the purpose of each text, the structure choices found in each, the language choices found in each, and a verdict naming the features that best help navigation and clear communication, each with a reason.

Write, in order:

1. A **comparison** of three to four sentences: how the structure and language choices of each text work together to meet its purpose and engage or influence its readers. Use the sentence stem at least once per text.
2. A **verdict** of two sentences: which features best aid navigation, and which best aid clear communication — one reason in each sentence.

Success criteria. Your comparison names at least two structure choices and two language choices per text, and every named choice has a job in a “works with” sentence. Your verdict names a feature and gives a reason for each call. Your sentences about the two texts use the same questions at the same depth.

Marking note: marks are for the quality of your reasoning — how carefully you pair choices with the jobs they do — not for which text you rank first. Two students can put the texts in a different order and both earn full marks, if both reason well from named choices.

Answers

Q1. Structure: a) numbered steps, c) a heading, e) a fact box, g) a caption. Language feature: b) a vivid verb, d) a repeated key word, f) a question aimed at the reader, h) a feeling word. (Captions and fact boxes are structure because they are choices about layout; the words *inside* them are language choices.)

Q2. a) Instruct — structure clue: numbered steps; language clue: command words (*click, type, press*). b) Persuade — structure clue: one short claim up front; language clue: *should* and *nobody should* push the reader to act. c) Inform — structure clue: a single plain statement; language clue: a number and a plain fact that can be checked. d) Entertain — structure clue: it opens a story (a hook); language clue: vivid, funny picture words (*the chooks escaped, the gate had opened itself*).

Q3. Sample: Pair 1 better serves the purpose, because the headline claim works with the loaded words to make the night feel special before the reader knows any facts — the stem: “the headline claim works with words like *unmissable* to make the reader feel this is the one night to be there.” Pair 2 would be exactly right for an instructing text — for example, “how to get to the hall” on the back of the ticket.

Q4. a) Persuade (to pack waste-free lunches and care about the bins). b) Any two of: the headline; the fact box; the picture with a caption; the trophy kept for the end. c) Any two of: plain words for the three rules; numbers in the fact box; trophy and contest words (*Golden Lunchbox trophy*); *zero rubbish*. d) Sample: “the fact box works with the numbers to make the goal feel real and checkable, so families believe the week can work.”

Q5. a) Sample: the menu helps the reader find the main parts of the site; the link “See today’s weigh-in results” takes the reader straight to the results. (Search box, subheadings and the back button also acceptable with a matching job.) b) The bullet list under “How to join in” — the three rules are the first things on the page, one per line, so a scanning parent cannot miss them. c) Sample: a choice that engages is the button label “Download the family checklist”, which talks to the family directly and offers help; or the words “so families can follow along”, which invite the family into the story.

Q6. Samples. a) The web page helps navigation more: the subheading “How to join in” names the part before the reader reads it, so a family jumps straight to the rules; the newsletter hides the rules inside the second paragraph. b) The web page communicates the rules more clearly, because the bullet list gives one rule per line; in the newsletter the rules sit inside a sentence with other words. A fair answer for the newsletter: its fact box communicates the goal more clearly than anything on the web page, because the numbers sit together in one box.

Q7. Sample. Step 1: the purpose in charge is persuade — every dollar to the playground is the reason to come; informing (when, where, cost) rides along. Step 2: structure choices — a bold headline naming the event; the facts in a short, clear order (when, where, tickets, then the good cause at the end). Language choices — plain numbers (*Friday, 6 pm, \$2*); a dash and a short honest joke (*the seats are hard*); *every dollar* as a loaded phrase. Step 3, stem: “the short fact order works with the plain numbers so a parent knows everything in five seconds, and the joke works with the headline to make the notice feel friendly, so the reader leans yes.”

Q8. Sample redesign. Subheading 1: **When and where**, with the bullet list: “• Leaves the corner of Park Street and Second Avenue • 8:15 am every morning • Runs in all weather”. Subheading 2: **How to join**, with the sentence about parent helpers and new walkers, then a button label [**Join the walking bus** →]. Sample explanations: “the bullets work with the where-when-who facts so a parent checks all three in one look”; “the button works with the joining words so the yes is one click away.”

Q9. Sample. Best reason for the menu: a reader who does not know the site yet can see all its main parts at once and browse — the menu shows the map before you ask. Best reason for the search box: a reader who knows the one thing they want goes straight to it in seconds, with no map-reading at all. Own call (either way, with a reason): sample — “for a school site most readers visit for one thing at a time, the menu helps more, because most families do not know the word to type until they have seen the parts.”

Q10. Answers will vary. Check: each text has one structure choice and one language choice named, each paired with the purpose it serves; the closing sentence names one text and gives a reason about clear communication (order, plain words, helpful pictures), not just a liking.

Produced outcome. Answers will vary. In the comparison, check that each text supplies at least two structure choices and two language choices, and that the choices are joined in “works with” sentences carrying a job for the reader. In the verdict, check that each call names a feature and gives a reason — for example, “the bullet list aids clear communication most, because one rule per line cannot be missed”, and “the menu aids navigation most, because it shows every part of the site before the reader has to ask”. A verdict that puts the texts in a different order but reasons this way still earns full marks.

Comprehension strategies; connecting and comparing ideas to build literal and inferred meanings

Chapter 5 · Literacy: contexts, analysis and creating texts · Section 5C

Curriculum trace

Level / strand	Victorian Curriculum 2.0 English, Level 6 — Literacy strand, sub-strand <i>Analysing, interpreting and evaluating</i>
Content description	VC2E6LY08 — <i>use comprehension strategies, such as visualising, predicting, connecting, summarising, monitoring and questioning, and connect and compare ideas from a variety of sources to build literal and inferred meanings</i>
Linkage keys	VC2E6LY08.E01 (connections: text-to-self and text-to-text) · VC2E6LY08.E02 (connections between information in print and images) · VC2E6LY08.E03 (prior knowledge and information in the text, to infer) · VC2E6LY08.E04 (asking and answering questions) · VC2E6LY08.E05 (graphic organisers for connections, categories and hierarchies) · VC2E6LY08.E06 (summarising a text or part of a text)
Achievement standard links	<i>When demonstrating understanding of texts, students explore and compare ... information and ideas ... to build literal and inferred meanings</i> (Reading and Viewing).
Feeds forward to	5D (planning and organising ideas for writing) · 3B (comparing texts) · every later reading task in this book

Theory

1. Reading is something you do

Comprehension (say *kom-pre-HEN-shun*) means understanding. When you comprehend a text, you build meaning from it. Good readers do not just let words wash over them. They *do* things while they read — they picture scenes, they think ahead, they ask questions, they check that they still understand. Each of these moves has a name. We call them **comprehension strategies**.

A **strategy** is a plan you follow to get something done. A comprehension strategy is a move a reader makes on purpose to build meaning. You have already used many of these moves in earlier years. This section gathers them into one toolkit that you can pick from with any text, in any subject.

One idea sits under all of it. A text gives you two kinds of meaning:

- **Literal** meaning is right there on the page. The words say it and you can point to it. In Section 2D you met *literal* — words that mean exactly what they say. If a question asks *who pushed the trolley?* and the text says *Zara pushed the trolley*, the answer is sitting in the sentence.
- **Inferred** meaning is not said directly. You work it out. You join what the text gives you to what you already know.

To **infer** (say *in-FER*) is to work out something the text does not say in words. The ideas you build this way are called **inferences**. Reading is half-literal and half-inferred: the writer puts down the words, and you do the joining. This section teaches you to do that joining on purpose.

2. The six strategies

The Victorian Curriculum names six strategies. Learn the name, learn what it does, and you can use it with any text.

Strategy	What you do	When it helps
Visualising	Build a picture, sound or feeling in your mind from the words.	Stories, poems, and any text that paints a scene.
Predicting	Think ahead about what will happen or what you will learn, then check and adjust.	Before you start, and at every turning point.
Connecting	Join the text to what you already know — your own life or other texts.	When a text feels far from your world.
Summarising	Keep the main ideas in your own words; let the small details go.	At the end of a page, a part, or a whole text.
Monitoring	Watch your own understanding as you read; notice when meaning breaks down and fix it.	All the time — especially when a text gets hard.
Questioning	Ask the text questions before, during and after reading.	Whenever you want to read actively, not passively.

Figure 5C.1 puts the six strategies on one page — a good first stop when you start a new text.

The six comprehension strategies

Strategy	What you do	When it helps
Visualising	Build a picture, sound or feeling in your mind from the words.	Stories, poems, and any text that paints a scene.
Predicting	Think ahead about what will happen, then check and adjust.	Before you start, and at every turning point.
Connecting	Join the text to what you already know — your own life or other texts.	When a text feels far from your world.
Summarising	Keep the main ideas in your own words; let the small details go.	At the end of a page, a part, or a whole text.
Monitoring	Watch your own understanding; notice when meaning breaks down and fix it.	All the time — especially when a text gets hard.
Questioning	Ask the text questions before, during and after reading.	Whenever you want to read actively, not passively.

They are tools, not a checklist: pick the move the job needs.

The six comprehension strategies in a table, each with what the reader does and when the strategy helps

Two things to notice. First, the strategies are not a list you tick off in order. They are tools. A carpenter does not use every tool on every job; they reach for the one the job needs. You do the same. Second, the strategies lean on each other. *Monitoring* tells you when you are lost; *questioning* and *connecting* help you find your way back; *summarising* checks what you have built so far.

Visualising is your side of the job you met in 2D. There, you saw how writers build pictures with imagery and vivid words. Here, *you* build the picture in your mind. You use what the words tell you plus what you already know, and you see, hear and feel the scene. If a text says *the shed was cold and dark*, you do not just read those words — you picture the dark, you feel the cold.

Monitoring is the strategy that watches all the others. When you read, part of your mind keeps asking *does this still make sense?* The moment the answer is no — the words are on the page but no picture comes, or a word you do not know blocks the way — you have noticed a breakdown. That noticing *is* monitoring. Then you fix it: slow down, re-read, read on, or look the word up. Re-reading and self-correcting are the same habits you built in 4E.

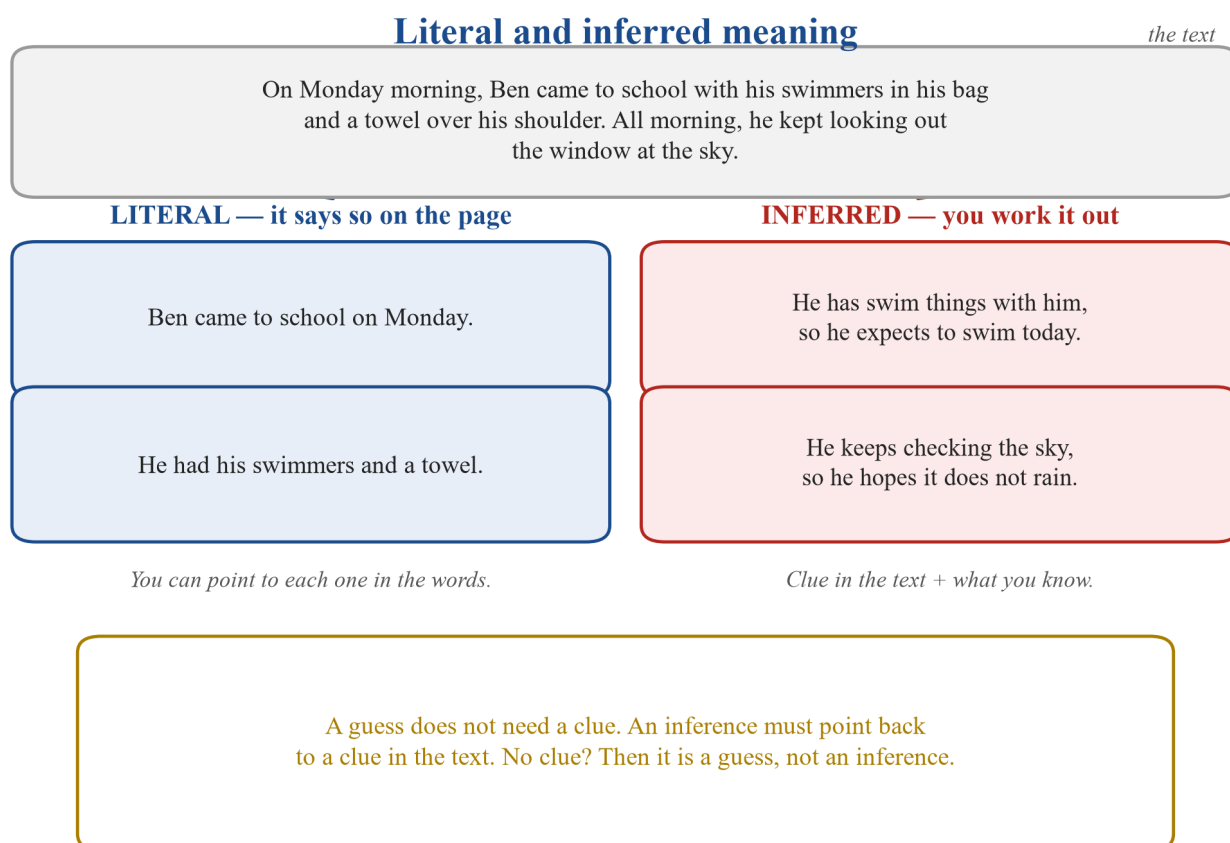
3. Literal and inferred meaning

Here is the heart of the section. Read this short passage, written for this book.

On Monday morning, Ben came to school with his swimmers in his bag and a towel over his shoulder. All morning, he kept looking out the window at the sky.

Some things are stated. Ben came to school on Monday. He had his swimmers and a towel. Those are **literal** facts — you can point to each one in the words.

Some things are not stated. *Why does Ben have his swimmers?* The text never says. But you can work it out: he has swim things, so he expects to swim today. That is an **inference**. *Why does he keep looking at the sky?* You join the clue (he keeps checking the sky) to what you know (swimming outside needs good weather) and you infer: Ben is hoping it does not rain. Figure 5C.2 sorts the two kinds of meaning in this passage.



The passage about Ben, with the literal facts boxed and the inferences shown as arrows from each clue to what the reader works out

An inference is not a random guess. A guess does not need a clue. An inference must be able to **point back to a clue in the text**. If you cannot show where the clue is, you are guessing, not inferring. So every time you make an inference, ask yourself two questions:

1. What is the clue in the text?

2. What did I already know that helped me join it?

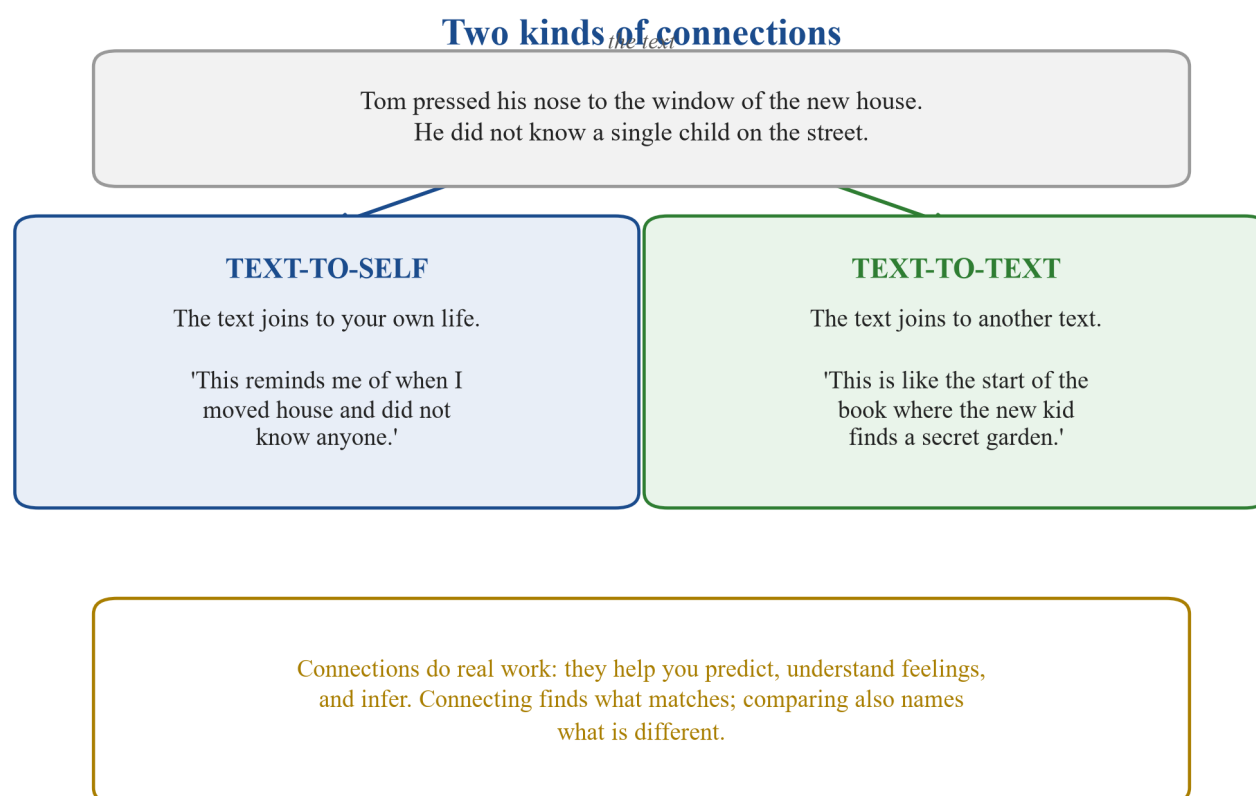
Writers leave things unsaid on purpose. Spelling out everything would make a text slow and flat. When you infer, you join in the work — and that joining is what makes reading active.

4. Connecting: text-to-self and text-to-text

A **connection** is a join between the text and something you already know. Making connections is one of the six strategies, and it comes in two main kinds.

- A **text-to-self** connection joins the text to your own life — something you did, felt, or lived through. When a character loses a game, you remember how that felt for you.
- A **text-to-text** connection joins the text to another text you know — a story, a poem, a film, a song, or another article. You notice how the two texts treat the same idea.

Figure 5C.3 shows both kinds beside one short passage.



A short passage with two connections drawn from it: a text-to-self connection to the reader's own life and a text-to-text connection to another story, each in its own box

Connections are not just for talking about. They do real work. They help you predict (this story is like another one, so I can guess where it goes), understand feelings (I have felt that, so I know what the character feels), and infer (the text is leaving out something that the other text showed me).

Connecting finds what matches. Comparing goes one step further. When you compare two ideas or two texts, you line them up and name what is the same *and* what is different. The content description for this section asks you to *connect and compare* — the two moves belong together. You will practise both in the worked examples and the tasks below.

5. Connecting print and images

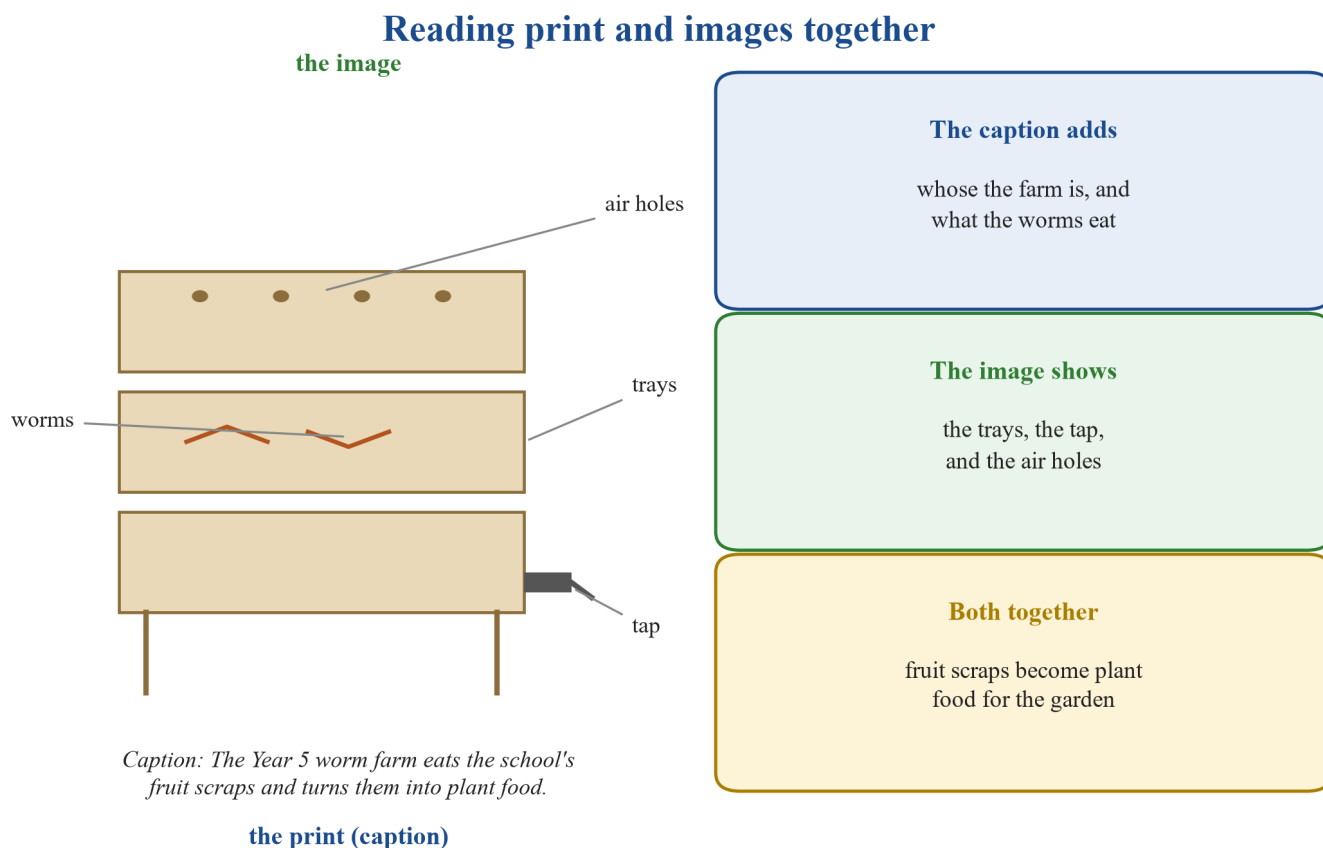
Many texts are not only words. They are words **and** images: picture books, news stories with photos, posters, web pages, and the textbooks you use in every subject. The words are called **print**. The pictures, photos, diagrams and maps are the images.

Print and image each carry part of the meaning. The strategy is to read **both**, then ask three questions:

1. What do the words tell me that the image does not?
2. What does the image show me that the words do not?
3. What do I learn only when I put the two together?

A **caption** (say *KAP-shun*) is the short piece of print under or beside an image that tells you what you are looking at. Captions are small but they matter — they often carry facts the picture cannot show on its own. In 2C you saw how images create a point of view; here you are joining the image to its print to build the full meaning.

Figure 5C.4 shows a labelled diagram with its caption, and sorts out what each part gives you.



Read both, then ask: what does each give me, and what do I learn only from both?

A labelled diagram of a school worm farm with its caption, with notes that show what the caption adds, what the image shows, and what you learn only from both together

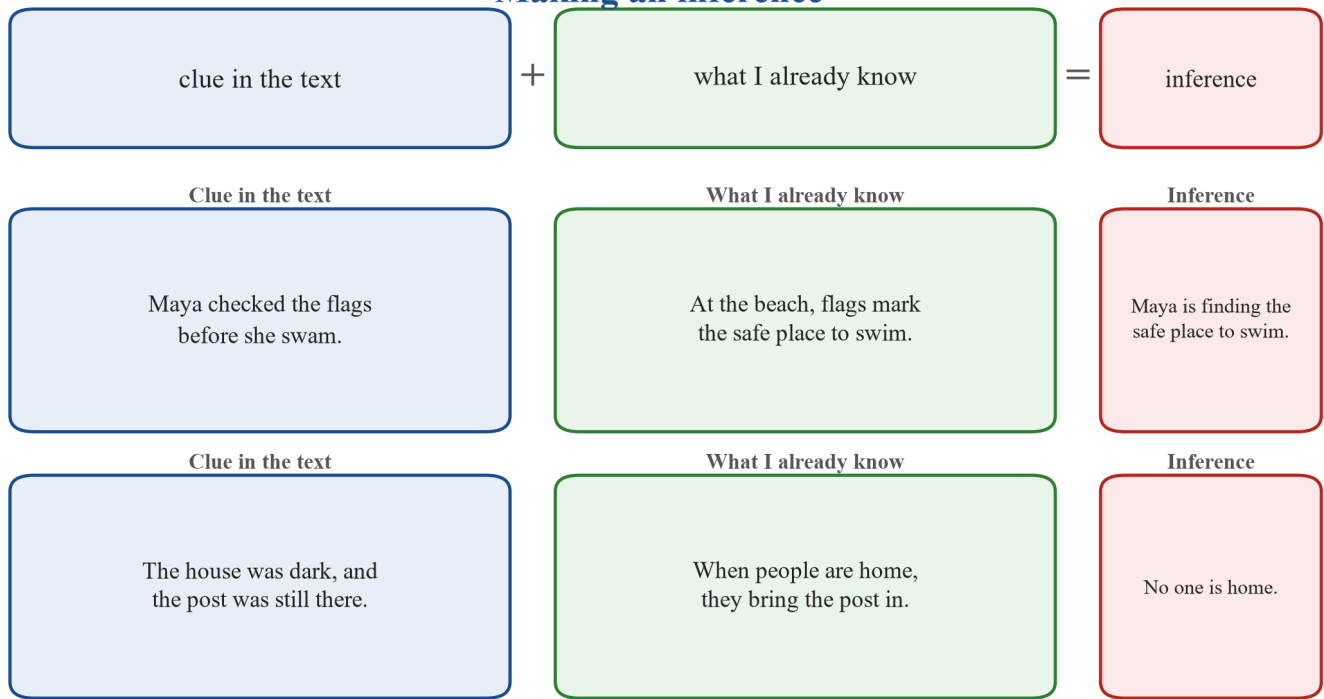
6. Making inferences: prior knowledge plus text clues

You have seen that an inference joins two things. One is a **clue in the text**. The other is **prior knowledge** — what you already know before you read, from your life, from other texts, and from other subjects. *Prior* means “coming before”. Put the two together and you can work out what the text leaves unsaid.

text clue + prior knowledge = inference

Figure 5C.5 shows this join with two worked examples.

Making an inference



Then test it: can you point back to the clue?

The inference join with two worked examples, each showing a text clue, the prior knowledge the reader brings, and the inference that results

After you make an inference, test it. Point back to the clue. Then ask: *could a different inference fit this clue?* If your idea is the best fit for the clue and your knowledge, keep it. If another idea fits better, change your mind — that is not a mistake, that is good reading.

7. Asking and answering questions

Questions keep you reading with your mind switched on. Readers ask questions at three times:

- **Before** reading: *What will this be about? What do I already know about this?* These questions get your prior knowledge ready.
- **During** reading: *Why did she do that? What does this word mean? What happens next?* These questions keep you checking meaning as you go.
- **After** reading: *Did the text answer my questions? What did I learn? What do I still wonder?* These questions help you look back.

Questions also sort by **where the answer lives**. Some answers are right in the text — you find them and point to them (literal). Some answers need you to join a clue to your knowledge (inferred). Figure 5C.6 is a question tracker showing both sorts.

A question tracker

When?	Find it in the text	Work it out (infer)
Before reading	What kind of text is this?	What do I already know about this topic?
During reading	Where does it say why she left?	Why did she do that? What happens next?
After reading	What does the text say happened first?	What did I learn that I did not know?

Find-in-the-text answers are literal. Work-it-out answers need an inference.

A question tracker with before, during and after rows, and example questions sorted into answers you find in the text and answers you work out by inferring

When you answer a question in a task, name where the answer came from. *I found it in the second line* is a literal answer. *I worked it out because the text said this, and I know that* is an inferred answer. Saying which one you did is part of showing your thinking.

8. Graphic organisers

A **graphic organiser** is a drawing that sorts information so you can see its shape. *Graphic* means “shown as a picture”. Instead of holding ideas only in your head or in long sentences, you lay them out where you can look at them. You have already used some in this book — the timelines, flow charts and tables in 2C are all graphic organisers.

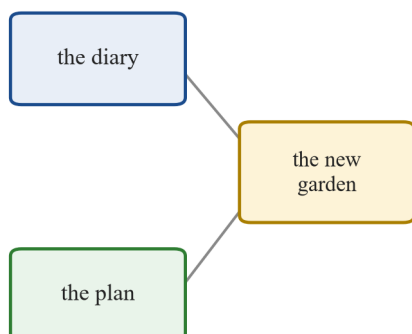
Three shapes do most of the work in this section.

- A **connections map** puts ideas in boxes and joins them with lines. It shows which ideas link to which. Use it to show how ideas in a text connect to each other or to what you know.
- A **categories** chart sorts one big idea into groups. A **category** is a group of things that belong together. Use it when a text gives you a lot of facts and you want to sort them.
- A **hierarchy** (say *HY-er-ar-key*) orders ideas from the most general at the top to the most specific at the bottom, like a family tree. Use it when one idea is made of smaller ideas under it. For example: *reading* sits above *comprehension strategies*, and *comprehension strategies* sits above *visualising*.

Figure 5C.7 shows all three, each with a small example filled in.

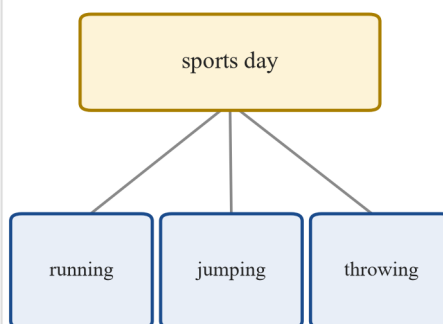
Three graphic organisers

Connections map



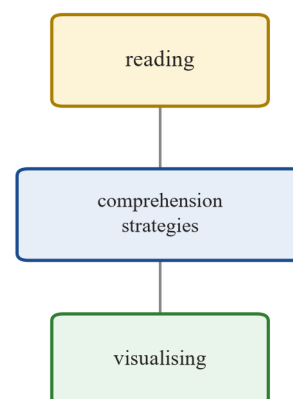
Use it to show how ideas link.

Categories chart



Use it to sort facts into groups.

Hierarchy



Use it to order ideas from big to small.

A graphic organiser is a drawing that sorts information so you can see its shape.
Choose the shape that fits the job.

Three graphic organisers side by side: a connections map, a categories chart, and a hierarchy, each with a short example filled in

Choose the shape that fits the job. If you are showing how ideas link, use a connections map. If you are sorting facts into groups, use categories. If you are ordering ideas from big to small, use a hierarchy. You will build one in the practice tasks.

9. Summarising

To **summarise** is to keep the main ideas and let the small details go, in your own words. A summary is shorter than the text and holds only what matters most.

Summarising is one of the hardest strategies, because you have to decide what matters. These steps help:

1. Re-read the part you are summarising.
2. Ask: *who or what is this about?*
3. Ask: *what is the most important thing about them?*
4. Say it in one or two sentences, in your own words.
5. Check: did I leave out anything big? Did I leave in anything small?

Summarising also works as a check on your monitoring. If you cannot put a part into your own words, that is your understanding telling you to go back and re-read. Figure 5C.8 shows a summarising move — what a reader keeps and what they let go.

Summarising: keep it or drop it?

On Saturday the whole school came to the fete.	KEEP
There were stalls, a jumping castle and a cake table.	DROP
It was sunny and warm, and everyone stayed to the end.	DROP
The money raised will buy new library books.	KEEP

*main idea?
or small detail?*

Summary (one sentence)

The whole school came to the fete, and the money raised will buy new library books.

A short passage with its main ideas marked 'keep' and its small details marked 'drop', and a one-sentence summary underneath

10. Putting it together: the strategy tracker

You will not need all six strategies for every text. You pick the moves that fit the job. Over time the moves get fast and natural, and you stop noticing them. But when a text gets hard, you can always slow down and choose one on purpose.

A simple way to keep track is a **strategy tracker**: three columns where you write the strategy you used, what you did, and what it helped you work out. Figure 5C.9 is one you can copy for any text.

Strategy tracker

Text:

Strategy	What I did	What it helped me work out
Predicting	I guessed the lost dog would come home.	It gave me something to check as I read.

Copy this for any text. Pick the moves the job needs.

A three-column strategy tracker with a strategy, what the reader did, and what it helped them work out, shown with one row filled in as an example

Every reading task in this book — in English and in every other subject — uses some of these moves. From here on, you will be able to name the move you are using, and that makes you a stronger reader in all of them.

Worked examples

Example 1 — modelled analysis

The task: Read Passage A. Use the comprehension strategies as you read, then answer one literal question and one inferred question, showing your thinking.

Passage A — The library box *(written for this book)*

Every Tuesday after school, Zara pushed the squeaky trolley between the shelves and slid books back into place. Today, one book did not fit on any shelf. It was thin with a green cover, and it had no title. Inside the front cover, someone had drawn a map of the school — but with one room Zara had never seen, marked with a small red circle.

Zara looked up. The librarian, Mrs Chen, was watching her.

“Found something interesting?” Mrs Chen said.

Zara hesitated. “This room,” she said. “It is not on any map I have seen.”

Mrs Chen smiled. “Some rooms,” she said, “are not on the maps. Not yet.”

Step 1 — read with the strategies. Here is one reader’s thinking, one row per strategy.

Strategy	What I did as I read	What it helped me work out
Visualising	I pictured the squeaky trolley and the tall shelves. I could hear the squeak.	The library feels real, and a little old.
Predicting	A book with no title, and a map with a hidden room — I predict Zara will go looking for that room.	Where the story is heading.
Connecting	Text-to-self: once I found something that did not belong, and I could not	Why Zara keeps staring at the book.

Strategy	What I did as I read	What it helped me work out
	stop thinking about it.	
Questioning	Which room is it? Why is it not on the map? What does <i>Not yet</i> mean?	The questions the story wants me to ask.
Monitoring	When I read <i>Not yet</i> I got confused — was Mrs Chen joking? I re-read the line.	Her smile tells me she knows more than she is saying.
Summarising	A girl who helps in the library finds a book with a hidden map, and the librarian hints at a room no one has shown her.	The main idea of the passage.

Step 2 — a literal question. *On which day does Zara help in the library?*

The answer is **Tuesday**. This is literal: the first line says *Every Tuesday after school*. I can point to it.

Step 3 — an inferred question. *Does Mrs Chen know about the hidden room? How do you know?*

The answer is **yes** — and this is inferred, because the text never says it directly. Here is the thinking:

- **Clues in the text:** Mrs Chen was already watching Zara. She smiled. She said, *Some rooms are not on the maps. Not yet.*
- **What I already know:** a person who answers like that, with a smile and no surprise, is not hearing the news for the first time. They already knew.
- **Inference:** Mrs Chen knows about the room.

Notice the shape of a good inferred answer: **quote the clue** → **say what you know** → **state what you worked out**. That three-part shape is the heart of building inferred meaning.

Example 2 — modelled composition

The task: Read two sources about the same thing. Connect and compare the ideas in them, and build one inference that you can only make by reading both together.

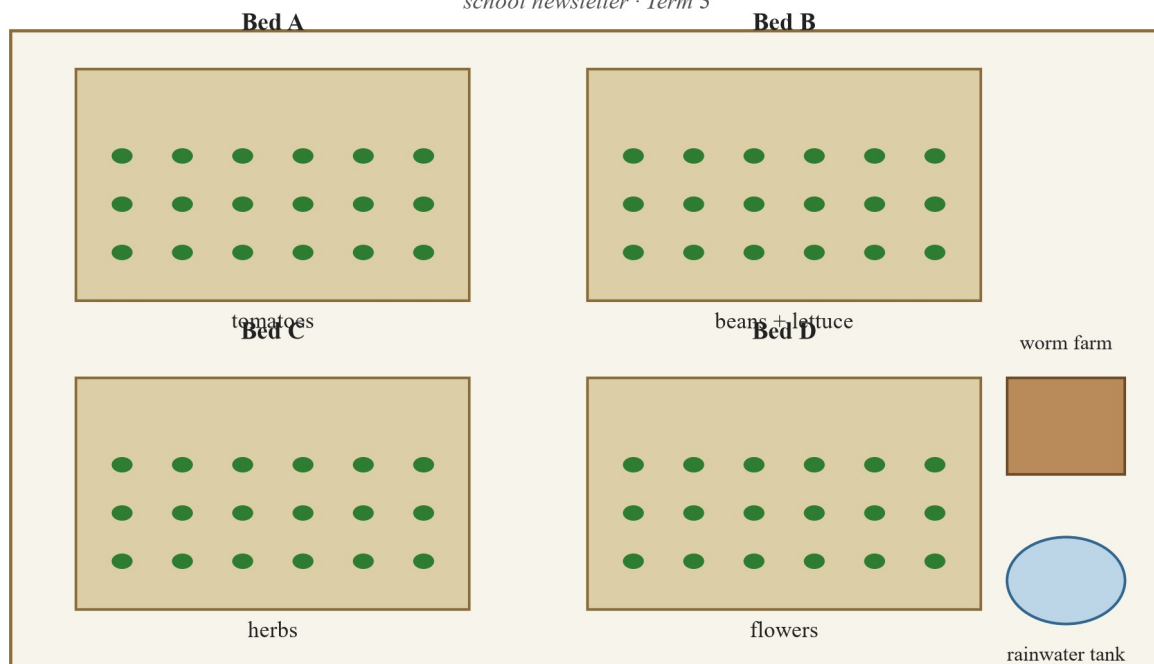
Source 1 — Garden diary, Term 3 (*written for this book*)

Thursday. We finally got the new garden beds ready. The soil was hard and dry after the hot summer, and we had to break it up with forks before anything could go in. Ms Lee let us plant the seedlings first — tomatoes, beans and a whole tray of lettuce. I got the beans. I pushed each seed into the dirt with my thumb and hoped it would grow. Next week we start the worm farm. I am a little scared of the worms, but someone has to feed them.

Source 2 (Figure 5C.10) is a labelled plan from the school newsletter. It is print **and** image, so read both parts.

The new Year 6 garden

school newsletter · Term 3



*The new Year 6 garden, planned by the garden club.
Beds A to D were planted in the first week of Term 3.*

caption

A labelled plan of the new Year 6 garden with four beds, a worm farm and a rainwater tank, with a caption underneath

Step 1 — what does each source tell me?

Source 1 (diary)

The new beds were planted on a Thursday.
The soil was hard and dry.

The writer planted the beans.
The writer felt hope, and a little fear of the worms.

Source 2 (plan)

There are four beds, named A to D.
Bed A has tomatoes; Bed B has beans and lettuce; Bed C has herbs; Bed D has flowers.

There is a worm farm and a rainwater tank.
(The plan shows no feelings.)

Step 2 — connect and compare. Both sources are about the same thing: the new Year 6 garden, planted at the start of Term 3. That is the connection. But they are different kinds of text. The diary is one person's own words about the day, and it carries feelings — hope, and being a little scared of the worms. The plan is a diagram with labels, and it carries facts about where things are. It shows no feelings at all. So each source does a different job: the diary tells you **how** the day felt, and the plan tells you **where** things went.

Step 3 — build an inference that needs both sources. The diary says the writer *got the beans*. The plan shows the beans in Bed B. On its own, each source leaves it unsaid, but put them together and you can infer: **the writer worked on Bed B**. That inference only exists because you read both sources and joined them.

Model paragraph. Here is the whole answer written up, with the moves named.

Both sources are about the new Year 6 garden, planted at the start of Term 3 [**connection**]. The diary is one student's own words about the day, while the plan is a labelled diagram from the newsletter [**comparison — kinds of text**]. The diary tells us how the day felt: the soil was hard and dry, and the writer hoped the beans would grow. The plan tells us where things went: four beds, a worm farm and a rainwater tank [**comparison — what each does**]. Putting the two together, we can infer that the writer worked on Bed B,

because the diary says they planted the beans, and the plan shows the beans in Bed B [inference across sources].

Practice questions

Scaffolded

Q1. Each row below is something a reader does while reading. Write the name of the strategy it matches. Choose from: *visualising, predicting, connecting, summarising, monitoring, questioning*.

What the reader does

Strategy

- (a) I read a line and it made no sense, so I went back and read it again.
- (b) I built a picture of the beach in my mind as I read.
- (c) I guessed that the missing dog would come home at the end.
- (d) The character felt left out, and I remembered a time I felt that too.
- (e) At the end I said the main idea in one sentence.
- (f) I asked, *Why did she give away her lunch?*

Q2. Read this short passage, written for this book.

When Maya got home, her bag was already by the door and her shoes were on. She kissed her mum goodbye and ran to the car.

For each statement below, write **L** if it is literal (stated in the text) or **I** if it is inferred (you work it out). For each inferred one, write the clue that helped you.

- (a) Maya's bag was by the door.
- (b) Maya is about to leave the house.
- (c) Maya is in a hurry.
- (d) Maya kissed her mum goodbye.

Q3. Read the opening of this story, written for this book.

Tom pressed his nose to the window of the new house. The street was quiet, and he did not know a single child on it.

Here are three connections a reader might make. Label each one **text-to-self** or **text-to-text**.

- (a) *This reminds me of when I moved house and did not know anyone.*
- (b) *This is like the start of the book where the new kid finds a secret garden.*
- (c) *I felt lonely on my first day at a new school, just like Tom.*

Then write one **text-to-self** connection of your own for this passage.

Q4. Look back at Figure 5C.4 (the worm farm).

- (a) Write two things the caption tells you that you could not get from the image alone.
- (b) Write two things the image shows you that the caption does not say.
- (c) Write one thing you learn only when you read the print and the image together.

Q5. Read the first line of this text: *The old shed at the back of the farm had been locked for twenty years.*

- (a) Write one question you ask **before** you read on.
- (b) Write one question you ask **during** your reading.
- (c) Write one question you ask **after** you finish.
- (d) Look at your three questions. For each one, say whether the answer will be **found in the text** or whether you will have to **work it out by inferring**.

Q6. Here is a short paragraph and a summary that kept too much.

Paragraph: On Saturday the whole school came to the fete. There were stalls, a jumping castle and a cake table. The weather was sunny and warm, and everyone stayed until the very end. The money raised will buy new library books.

Summary that kept too much: On Saturday the school came to the fete, and there were stalls and a jumping castle and a cake table, and it was sunny and warm, and everyone stayed until the end, and the money will buy new library books.

Rewrite the summary as **one sentence** that keeps only the main ideas.

Un scaffolded

Q7. Read the passage below, written for this book.

The morning of the camp, Josh was the first one awake. He lay still in his sleeping bag and listened to the birds he did not know. The tent was cold, and his torch was flat. He thought about the long walk to the lookout, and the map the leader had shown them the night before. Josh had never read a map on his own. He took a deep breath and began to pack his bag.

- (a) Write one literal fact from the passage. Quote the words that tell you.
- (b) Make two inferences about Josh. For each one, write the **clue in the text** and **what you already know** that helped you.
- (c) Name one place where a reader might lose the meaning, and say which strategy you would use to fix it.

Q8. Read these two short texts about the same event, both written for this book.

Source 1 — a student's recount: The sports day was the best day of the year. I ran in the relay and we came first. My legs were shaking at the start, but when I heard my class cheering, I ran as fast as I could. I will never forget the feeling of crossing the line first.

Source 2 — the school newsletter: Sports day was held on Friday on the main oval. All year levels took part in running, jumping and throwing events. The day ended with the relay races and a presentation of trophies.

- (a) Write one thing both sources tell you.
- (b) Write two ways the sources are different. Think about what each one cares most about.
- (c) Write one inference you can make only by reading both sources together.

Q9. Choose one graphic organiser from Figure 5C.7 — a connections map, a categories chart, or a hierarchy. Use it to sort the ideas from the two sources in Q8. Draw your organiser in the space your teacher gives you. Underneath, write one sentence saying why that shape fit the job.

Q10. Read the poem below, written for this book.

First Day

The gate swings wide, the yard is loud, I hold my bag and find the crowd. A smile from someone I don't know makes the big school feel less so.

Copy the strategy tracker from Figure 5C.9 and fill in **three** rows for strategies you used while reading the poem. Then write two sentences: which strategy helped you most, and why.

Produced outcome

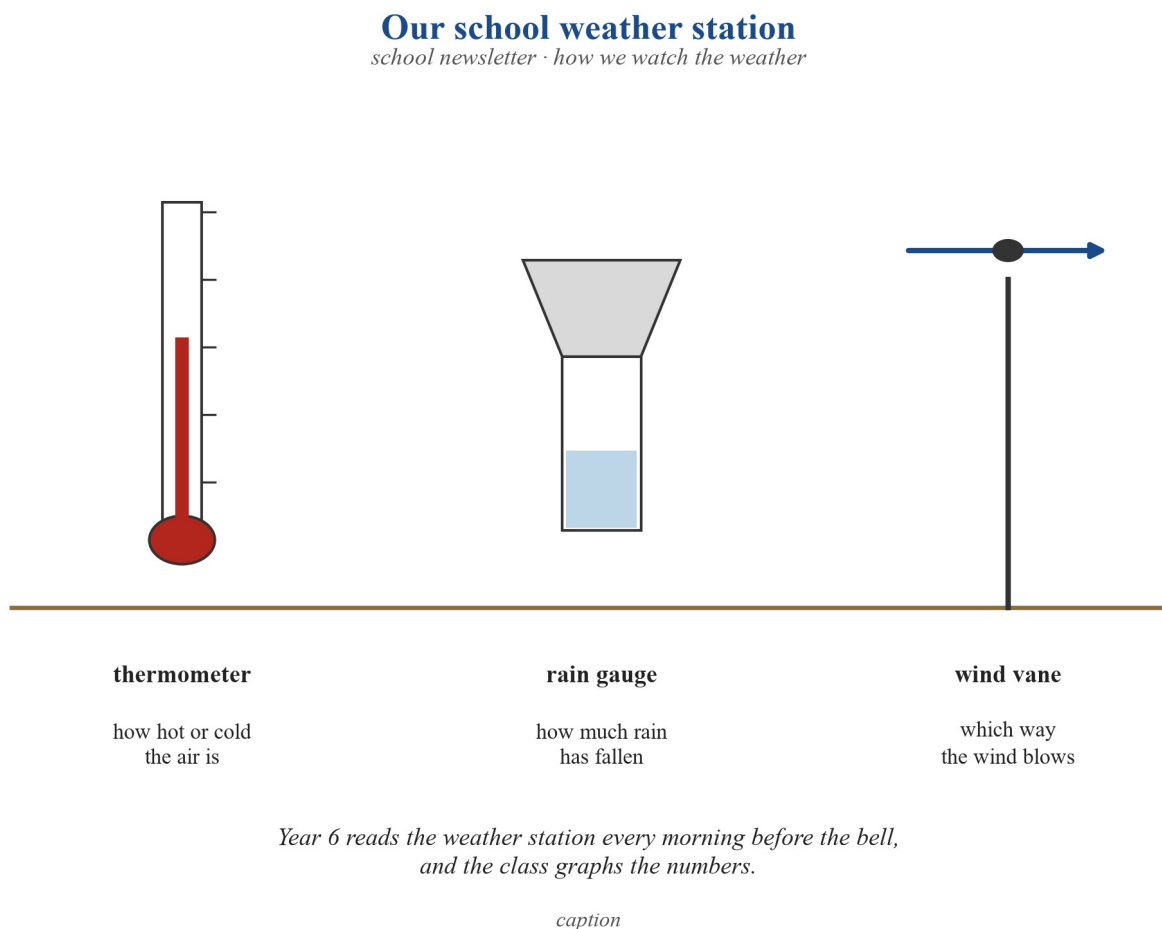
Q11. You will connect and compare two sources and build meaning from them, then show the strategies you used.

Source 3 is a diary entry, written for this book.

My weather watch — Pri's diary

Every morning before the bell, I climb the steps to the school's weather station and write down the numbers. Today the air felt cold on my fingers. The rain gauge was almost empty, which made me think about the long dry spell we have had. I read the thermometer twice to be sure, then checked the wind vane. It pointed the same way it has all week. When I get the numbers wrong, the whole class graph is wrong, so I have learned to take my time.

Source 4 (Figure 5C.11) is a labelled diagram with a caption, from the school newsletter.



A labelled diagram of the school weather station showing the thermometer, rain gauge and wind vane, with a caption underneath

Do these three things.

- **(a)** Choose a graphic organiser from Figure 5C.7 and use it to sort and connect the ideas in the two sources.
- **(b)** Write a paragraph of 100–120 words that connects and compares the two sources. Your paragraph must name one thing both sources tell you, one way the sources are different, and at least one inference you built by reading both together.
- **(c)** Write two sentences of **strategy notes**: name the strategies you used and say what each one helped you work out.

Checklist before you hand it in:

- ☐ Your organiser sorts the ideas from both sources
- ☐ Your paragraph names one thing both sources tell you

- ☐ Your paragraph names one way the sources are different
 - ☐ Your paragraph has at least one inference built from both sources
 - ☐ Your strategy notes name the moves you used and what they did
-

Model responses

Short model answers for Q1–Q10. Q11 is your own writing — check it against the checklist above. Your answers to Q3 (your own connection), Q7(b), Q9 and Q10 will differ from these models; they are shown so you can check the shape of a good answer.

Q1. (a) monitoring (b) visualising (c) predicting (d) connecting (e) summarising (f) questioning.

Q2. (a) L — the text says her bag was by the door. (b) I — clue: her shoes were on and her bag was ready; I know that when your things are packed and your shoes are on, you are about to leave. (c) I — clue: she *ran* to the car; I know that running means you are in a hurry. (d) L — the text says she kissed her mum goodbye.

Q3. (a) text-to-self (b) text-to-text (c) text-to-self. Own connection model: *This reminds me of standing in a new playground and not knowing what to do.* Any connection to your own life earns the mark.

Q4. Models against Figure 5C.4 — (a) the caption tells you the worm farm belongs to Year 5 and that the worms eat the school's fruit scraps; the image alone does not say either. (b) the image shows where the tray, the tap and the air holes are; the caption does not point to those parts. (c) Model: the school turns its fruit scraps into food for the worms, so less goes to rubbish. Any answer built from both parts earns the mark.

Q5. Models — (a) *Why has the shed been locked so long?* (b) *What is inside the shed?* (c) *Will anyone ever open it again?* (d) Model: (a) and (b) will need inferring — the text does not say why or what; (c) is a prediction about what will happen. Answers will differ; what matters is saying whether the answer is found in the text or worked out.

Q6. Model: *The whole school came to the fete on Saturday, and the money raised will buy new library books.* A good one-sentence summary keeps who, what and why, and lets the small details (the stalls, the weather) go.

Q7. (a) Model: Josh was the first one awake — *Josh was the first one awake.* (b) Model inference 1: Josh is nervous about reading the map — clue: *Josh had never read a map on his own*; I know that doing something for the first time can feel scary. Model inference 2: it is early and cold — clue: *the tent was cold* and he is *the first one awake*; I know that on a camp, being first awake in a cold tent means it is early morning. (c) Model: the line *his torch was flat* might confuse a reader — monitoring: re-read it, and use the context to work out that *flat* means the battery is gone.

Q8. (a) Model: both tell you there was a sports day with running. (b) Model: Source 1 is one student's own words and carries feelings — shaking legs, never forgetting; Source 2 is a short report and carries facts — the day, the place, the events. Source 1 cares about how it felt; Source 2 cares about what happened and when. (c) Model: the student in Source 1 ran in the relay, and Source 2 says the relays ended the day — so the student's race was one of the last events. Any inference that needs both sources earns the mark.

Q9. Model: a categories chart works well, because you can sort the facts into two groups — what Source 1 tells you (feelings, one person) and what Source 2 tells you (facts, the whole day). A connections map or a hierarchy can also work if the sentence explains why that shape fits.

Q10. Model tracker rows: visualising — I pictured the loud yard and the big gate; connecting — text-to-self, I remembered my own first day; questioning — I asked what *makes the big school feel less so* means. Model final sentence: *Connecting helped me most, because remembering my own first day helped me understand how the child feels.* Any three strategies with honest notes earn the mark.

Where this takes you

- **5D** turns a graphic organiser into a writing plan — the same shapes you used here become the frame for your own texts.
- **3B** compares whole literary texts; the connect-and-compare moves here are the ones you will use there.

- **4E** and this section meet at monitoring: re-reading and self-correcting are what you do the moment monitoring tells you that meaning broke down.
- From here on, every reading task in this book runs on these six moves. You can now name the move you are using — and that makes you a stronger reader in every subject.

Creating written and spoken texts with developed, organised ideas for purpose and audience

Curriculum trace — Victorian Curriculum 2.0 English, Level 6

Owens: VC2E6LY09 — “create different types of texts, written and spoken, with developed and organised ideas for purpose and audience, and multimodal elements as appropriate”

Draws on: VC2E6LY09.E01 “planning a report on a topic, sequencing ideas logically and providing supporting detail (including graphics, sound and visuals) to enhance audience engagement and understanding” · VC2E6LY09.E02 “creating informative texts for 2 different audiences that explore a topic using text structure and language features for the identified audiences, noting the changes required to appeal to each audience” · VC2E6LY09.E03 “using rhetorical devices, images and modal verbs for persuasive effects, for an identified audience” · VC2E6LY09.E04 “selecting and combining digital tools to create texts”

Level 6 achievement standard (Writing): “When creating written and spoken texts for specific purposes and audiences, students explore ideas ... and include appropriate multimodal elements.” · (Speaking and Listening): “They select language appropriate for purpose and audience.”

Learn

1. Two questions before anything

Every text you will ever make is built to answer two questions. If you can answer them, you know what your text should look like before you start.

- **Purpose** — *why* am I making this text? Am I informing (telling people facts), persuading (moving people to think, feel or act), or telling a story?
- **Audience** — *who* is it for? One class, the whole school, or adults?

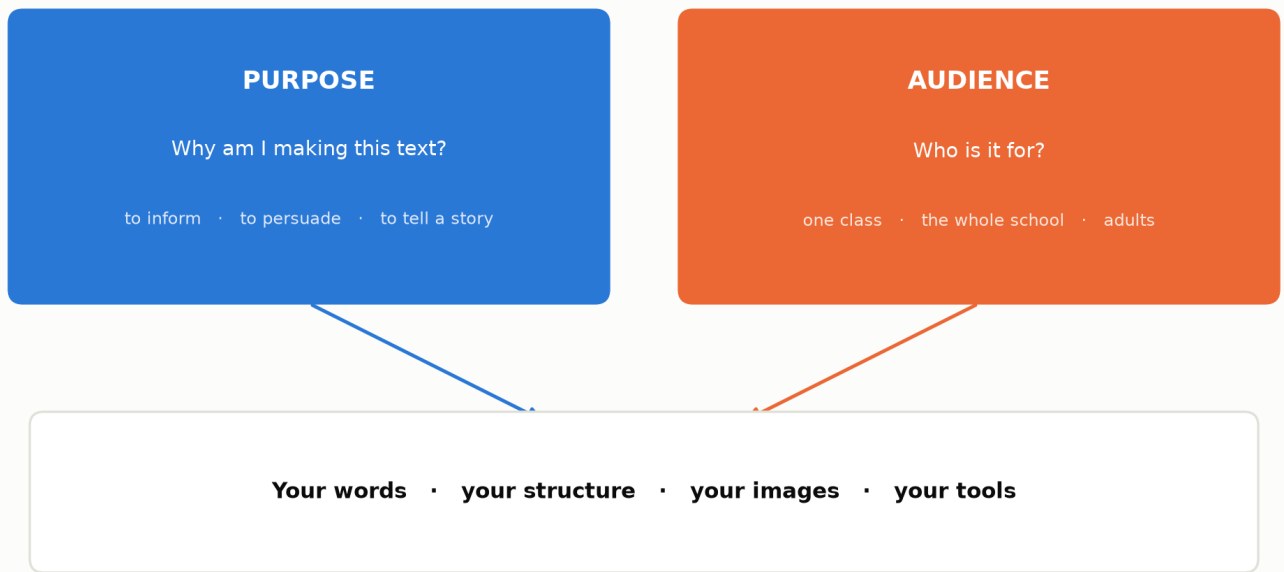
Defining the terms. The Victorian Curriculum uses the words *purpose*, *audience*, *informative* and *persuasive* but does not define them. This section therefore treats them as follows, and every task here is answerable on these definitions alone.

- The **purpose** of a text is the job it is trying to do.
- The **audience** of a text is the person or group it is made for.
- An **informative text** is a text whose job is to give the audience facts and ideas.
- A **persuasive text** is a text whose job is to move the audience to think, feel or act a certain way.

Purpose and audience together drive every choice you make — your words, your structure, your images and your tools.

Before you create anything

answer two questions. They drive every choice you make.



Two big question boxes side by side: purpose, asking why am I making this text, and audience, asking who is it for, with arrows pointing down to a bar that reads your words, your structure, your images, your tools.

2. Planning a report (ideas in logical order)

A **report** is an informative text that gives the audience facts about a topic, set out in a clear order. Before you write a report, you plan it. A plan is simply your ideas lined up so each one follows the one before it.

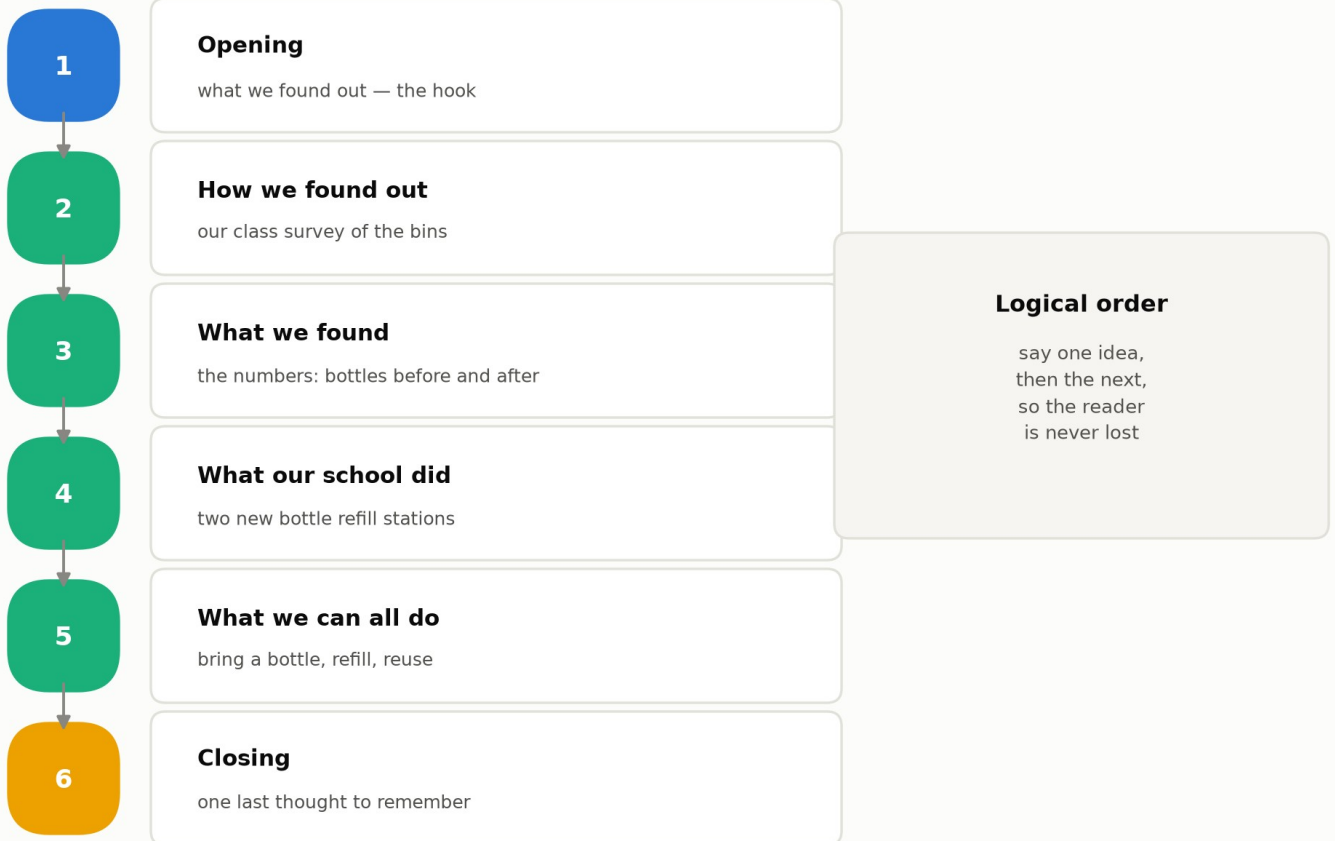
Defining the term. A report is in **logical order** when each idea leads to the next, so the reader is never lost.

“Logical” here means the order makes sense — you say one thing, then the thing that follows from it.

Our class did a survey of water bottles at Riverbend Primary School. Here is the plan for a report of what we found. Each numbered idea follows the one before it.

A report plan: ideas in logical order

Where do our water bottles go? Each idea follows the one before it.



A report plan for the topic where do our water bottles go, showing six numbered stages in order: opening, how we found out, what we found, what our school did, what we can all do, and closing, with a side note that says logical order means one idea then the next so the reader is never lost.

Supporting detail. A plan is only ideas. A good report adds **supporting details** — extra pieces that help the audience engage with the topic and understand it. The curriculum names three kinds: graphics, visuals and sound.

Defining the term. A **supporting detail** is a graphic, a visual or a sound that backs up an idea in your text, so the audience sees, hears or pictures what you mean.

Supporting details that help your audience

the topic stays the same — these details make it engaging and easier to understand

Graphics	Visuals	Sound
a chart or a table helps the audience see the numbers 300 → 120 bottles	a photo or a drawing helps the audience picture the thing the refill station	a recorded voice or music helps the audience hear the message a spoken report

Three columns showing the three kinds of supporting detail: graphics, a chart or a table that helps the audience see the numbers; visuals, a photo or a drawing that helps the audience picture the thing; and sound, a recorded voice or music that helps the audience hear the message.

Here is the finished report, written from that plan. Notice how each part of the plan became a part of the report, in the same order.

Model report — *Where do our water bottles go?*

What we found out Every day, our bins fill up with plastic water bottles. We wanted to know where they all came from, and where they went.

How we found out Our class counted the bins for one week in Term 1. We counted every plastic bottle that was thrown away.

What we found We counted about 300 plastic bottles in one week. That is about 60 a day. After the school put in two bottle refill stations in Term 2, we counted again in Term 3. This time we found fewer than 120 bottles a week — less than half.

What our school did The school installed two refill stations: one near the library and one near the oval. Each one can fill up to 200 bottles a day. They cost \$850 each, paid for by last year's school fete.

What we can all do Bring a bottle, refill it, and use it again.

Closing Fewer bottles in the bin means less waste for our school.

A report like this could carry supporting details: a chart of the bottle counts (a graphic), a photo of the refill station (a visual), or a short recording of a student explaining the survey (a sound). Each one would help the audience see, picture or hear the facts.

3. The same topic, two audiences

The same facts can be written for different audiences — and the text must change to fit each one. Here are the same water-bottle facts written twice: once for the Prep class, and once for the school council (the adults who run the school).

Model text — **for the Prep class**

Do you have a bottle? Bring it to school! You can fill it at the new water station. It is free. Fill it up and drink. Then fill it again. One bottle, again and again. No more bottles in the bin. You can help. Bring your bottle today!

Model text — for the school council

In Term 1, a class survey counted about 300 plastic bottles thrown away each week. After two refill stations were installed in Term 2, the Term 3 count went down to fewer than 120 per week — a reduction of more than half. Each station, funded by the school fete at \$850, fills up to 200 bottles daily. We recommend the council consider funding a third station to reduce waste further, and we request a decision this term.

Same facts. Two very different texts. That is the point of this skill: you do not write *a* text, you write a text *for someone*.

One topic, two audiences

the same information — our water bottles — written for two different readers

Our topic: our water bottles

for the Prep class

- short, simple words
- short sentences
- warm and friendly
- tells them what to do

for the school council

- full, exact words
- longer sentences
- polite and serious
- gives facts, asks for a decision

One topic, our water bottles, split into two audience columns: for the Prep class, with short simple words, short sentences, warm and friendly, telling them what to do; and for the school council, with full exact words, longer sentences, polite and serious, giving facts and asking for a decision.

When the audience changes, certain things change too. Noting those changes is the skill — it means you changed them on purpose, not by accident.

When the audience changes, what changes too

noting the changes helps you write for each audience on purpose

What changes	Prep version	School council version
The words you pick	small, everyday words	full, exact words
Sentence length	short sentences	longer sentences
The feeling (tone)	warm and friendly	polite and serious
Which fact comes first	what they can do	what was found
What you leave out	big numbers	playful jokes

A table with three columns reading what changes, Prep version, and school council version, and five rows: the words you pick, sentence length, the feeling (tone), which fact comes first, and what you leave out.

4. Persuading: rhetorical devices, images and modal verbs

Sometimes the job is not just to inform but to **persuade** — to move the audience to think, feel or act. Three tools do a lot of that work: rhetorical devices, images and modal verbs.

Defining the terms. The Victorian Curriculum uses the terms *rhetorical device* and *modal verb* but does not define them. This section therefore treats them as follows, and every task here is answerable on these definitions alone.

- A **rhetorical device** is a way of using words that works on the reader or listener — it makes a message stick or push. Three common ones are the **rhetorical question**, the **rule of three** and **repetition**.
 - A **rhetorical question** is a question asked for effect, not to get an answer. You ask it so the audience answers it in their own head.
 - The **rule of three** is saying three things in a row, because three feels complete and is easy to remember.
 - **Repetition** is saying the same word or phrase again, to hammer it home.
- A **modal verb** is a small helper verb — *must, should, can, could, might* — that changes how strong a sentence pushes.

Three tools for persuasive texts

writers use these to move an audience to think, feel or act

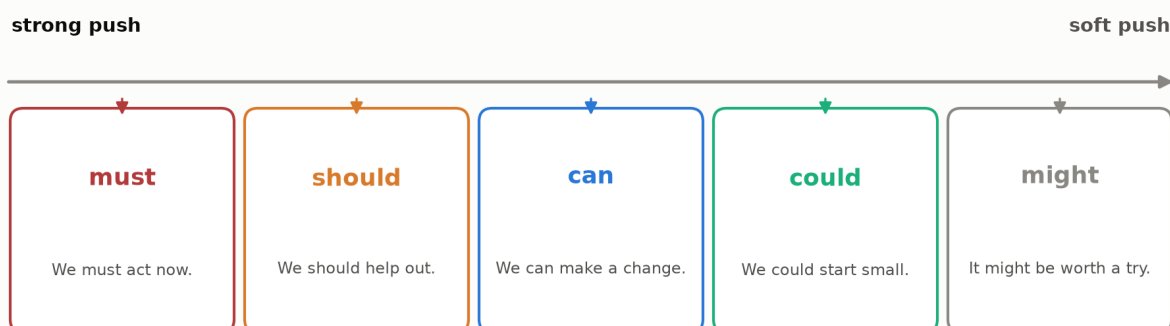
Rhetorical devices	Images	Modal verbs
• a rhetorical question • the rule of three • repetition	• a photo • a drawing • a bold poster	• must · should • can · could • might
words that work on the reader	a picture that grabs attention	words that change how strong the push is

Three columns of tools for persuasive texts: rhetorical devices, with a rhetorical question, the rule of three and repetition; images, with a photo, a drawing and a bold poster; and modal verbs, with must, should, can, could and might.

Modal verbs sit on a scale from a strong push to a soft push. Picking the right one changes how your text lands with its audience.

Modal verbs: how strong is the push?

a modal verb (must, should, can, could, might) changes how hard a sentence pushes



A scale from strong push to soft push showing five modal verbs on cards, from strongest to softest: must, we must act now; should, we should help out; can, we can make a change; could, we could start small; and might, it might be worth a try.

Here is a short persuasive poster about the same water-bottle topic, aimed at all the students in the school. The tools are doing real work in it.

Model persuasive poster — Don't bin it — refill it!

Every day, our bins fill with bottles. Every week, the pile grows. Every term, it costs our planet more.

One refill station can save hundreds of bottles. You must try it. You should bring a bottle. You could start today.

[image: a sad-looking bottle standing next to a full bin]

Would you like to be part of the fix?

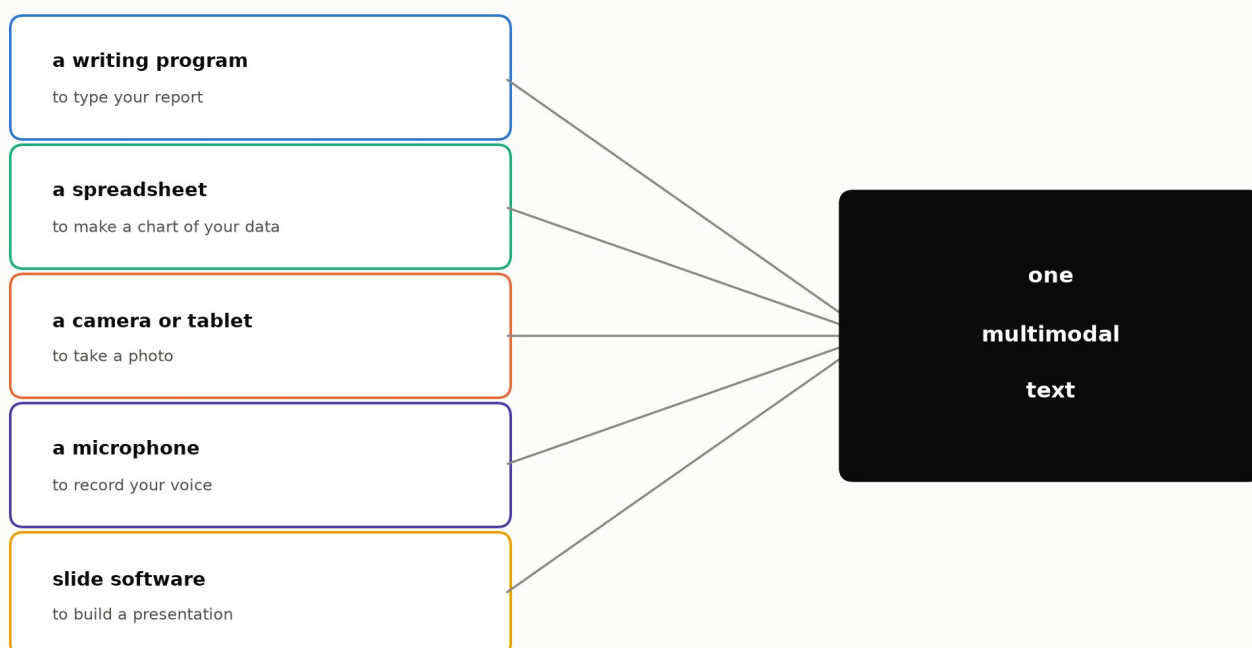
You have met some of these tools already. The vivid and feeling words you collected in Section 2D do the same persuasive job, and in Section 3E you experimented with devices when you created your own stories and poems. In this section you choose those tools on purpose, for a chosen audience.

5. Selecting and combining digital tools

Texts today are often made with digital tools. The skill is to **select** the tools that fit your purpose and audience, then **combine** them into one text. You do not use every tool — you use the ones your text needs.

Select and combine digital tools

pick the tools that fit your purpose, then combine them into one multimodal text



Five tool boxes on the left, a writing program, a spreadsheet, a camera or tablet, a microphone and slide software, each with arrows pointing to one dark box on the right that reads one multimodal text.

For the water-bottle report you might combine a writing program (to type the report), a spreadsheet (to make the chart of bottle counts) and a camera (to take a photo of the refill station). For a spoken version, you might add a microphone to record your voice over the slides — that makes it a **spoken** text as well as a written one, and the voice choices you learned in Section 4B (tone, volume, pace) matter again. Selecting and combining tools is how one idea becomes a finished, multimodal text.

Worked examples

Worked example 1 — modelled analysis

Read this short persuasive text, then look at how each tool is named and explained.

Our bins are full. Our planet is not.

Every bottle you throw away stays in the world. Every bottle you refill does not.

You can change that. You should change that. You must.

[image: a full bin overflowing with bottles]

Which side are you on?

Tool	Example from the text	What it does for the audience
Repetition	“Every bottle ... Every bottle ...”	Hammers the same idea twice, from two sides, so it sticks.
Rule of three	“You can ... You should ... You must.”	Three pushes in a row, getting stronger, ending on the strongest.
Modal verbs	can → should → must	The push grows from soft to strong across the three sentences.
Rhetorical question	“Which side are you on?”	Not asking for an answer — making you pick a side in your head.
Image	a full bin overflowing with bottles	Makes the waste real and a little uncomfortable, so you want to fix it.

Watch the pattern. The analysis does two jobs for every tool: it *points to the exact words or picture*, and it says *what that does to the audience*. Naming the tool without saying what it does is only half the job.

Worked example 2 — modelled composition

Now build an informative text for one chosen audience: the school newsletter (read by parents and teachers). We will use the same water-bottle facts. Plan, write, check.

Step 1 — Plan.

Choice	Plan for the newsletter
Purpose	Inform — give families the facts.
Audience	Parents and teachers (adults, but friendly).
Words	Clear and friendly, not as formal as the council letter.
Which fact first	The good news: bottles are down by more than half.
Supporting detail	A chart of the counts (a graphic).

Step 2 — Write.

Bottle waste down by more than half

Good news from our bottle survey. In Term 1, students threw away about 300 plastic bottles a week. Since the two refill stations went in during Term 2, that number has gone down to fewer than 120 a week — less than half. The stations, paid for by last year’s fete, fill up to 200 bottles a day. If your child brings a bottle, they can refill it for free, all day. A small habit at home — one bottle, washed and reused — makes a big difference at school.

Step 3 — Check.

Check	Yes
Does it inform (give facts), not just persuade?	✓ — it gives the counts, the dates and the cost.
Is the audience clear?	✓ — it speaks to parents (“your child”).
Did I change the words from the Prep and council versions?	✓ — friendly but exact, not baby talk, not stiff.
Is there a supporting detail I could add?	✓ — a chart of the counts would fit beside it.

Notice the newsletter version is a third way of telling the same facts — different again from the Prep version and the council version. Same topic, three audiences, three texts.

Guided tasks

Q1. (E01) These ideas for a report on the school vegetable garden are mixed up. Put them into a logical order (1–5): the one that must come first, then the one that follows, and so on.

- a) What the garden grew this term (the numbers)
- b) Closing — one last thought
- c) Opening — what we set out to find
- d) How we kept track (our class jobs)
- e) What we can all do with the vegetables

Q2. (E01) Match each supporting detail to the kind it is: **graphic**, **visual** or **sound**.

- a) A photo of the refill station
- b) A bar chart of bottle counts before and after
- c) A recording of a student reading the closing line
- d) A table of the weekly counts
- e) A short clip of the station filling a bottle, with a voice explaining it

Q3. (E02) Look again at the Prep version and the council version in Section 3. For each feature below, write **P** (Prep) or **C** (council): uses the word “free” and lots of “you”; gives the exact cost of \$850; asks for a decision; uses very short sentences; says “again and again”.

Q4. (E02) Here is a sentence from the council version: “*We recommend the council consider funding a third station.*” Rewrite it for the Prep class in one short, friendly sentence. Then write one sentence saying what you changed and why.

Q5. (E03) Label each sentence with the rhetorical device it uses: **rhetorical question**, **rule of three** or **repetition**.

- a) Refill it, reuse it, repeat it.
- b) Who wants a bin full of bottles?
- c) One bottle, one refill, one happy planet.
- d) Every day. Every single day.

Q6. (E03) Put these modal verb sentences in order from the strongest push to the softest push: “You might bring a bottle one day.” · “You must bring a bottle.” · “You could bring a bottle.” · “You should bring a bottle.”

Tasks on your own

Q7. (E01, E04) Choose one topic: the school canteen, the school library, or the school oval. Write a report plan of five ideas in logical order (like the plan in Section 2). Then name one supporting detail (a graphic, a visual or a sound) you would add, and say which idea it would support and why.

Q8. (E02) Pick one fact from the water-bottle survey (for example, “about 300 bottles a week were thrown away”). Write it twice: once for the Prep class and once for the school council. Then write two sentences noting exactly what you changed between the two versions.

Q9. (E03) Write a persuasive opening of two to three sentences for a poster telling students to bring a reusable bottle. Use at least one rhetorical device and one modal verb. Underline the rhetorical device and circle the modal verb.

Q10. (E04) You want to make a **spoken** text about the water-bottle survey to play at assembly. Name the digital tools you would select and combine, and for each one say what job it does in your text.

Produced outcome

One topic, your purpose, your audience. Using the water-bottle facts (or another topic your teacher agrees to), create a finished text of your own.

1. Answer the two questions first: state your **purpose** (inform or persuade) and your **audience** in one line each.
2. Make a **plan** with ideas in logical order (at least four).
3. Create the text — written, spoken, or both. It must include at least **one supporting detail** (a graphic, a visual or a sound).
4. If your purpose is persuade, include at least **one rhetorical device** and **one modal verb**.
5. Add a short note (2–3 sentences) naming the changes you made for your audience, and the tools you selected and combined if you used any.

Success criteria. Your purpose and audience are stated and match the text. Your ideas follow in logical order. Your supporting detail genuinely helps the audience. Any persuasive tools are named in your note and do real work. The vocabulary fits your audience. When your text is drafted, you will edit it against agreed criteria in Section 5E.

Marking note: marks are for how well your choices fit your stated purpose and audience — not for which purpose or audience you chose.

Answers

- Q1.** Logical order: c (opening), d (how we kept track), a (what the garden grew), e (what we can all do), b (closing). The opening comes first, the closing last, and the middle ideas follow the order “how we found out → what we found → what to do”.
- Q2.** a) visual. b) graphic. c) sound. d) graphic. e) both a visual and a sound (a moving picture plus a voice) — if you said either, you are right; the point is it is not a graphic.
- Q3.** “free” and lots of “you” — P. The exact cost of \$850 — C. Asks for a decision — C. Very short sentences — P. “again and again” — P.
- Q4.** Sample Prep version: “The school can make one more water station!” What changed and why: the council words “recommend”, “consider” and “funding” are too big and too polite for five-year-olds, so I used “can make”, and I used an excited mark to keep it friendly.
- Q5.** a) rule of three (three actions in a row). b) rhetorical question. c) rule of three. d) repetition (“every day” said twice).
- Q6.** Strongest to softest: must → should → could → might.
- Q7.** Answers will vary. Check that the five ideas follow each other (opening first, closing last) and that the named supporting detail is a graphic, visual or sound matched to a specific idea.
- Q8.** Answers will vary. The two versions should differ in words, sentence length and tone, and the note should point at the exact changes.
- Q9.** Answers will vary. Check that one rhetorical device is underlined and one modal verb is circled, and that both fit a poster for students.
- Q10.** Sample: a microphone to record my voice (the spoken part), slide software to show the plan and a chart, a spreadsheet to make the chart, and a camera for a photo of the station — combined into one presentation to play at assembly.

All model texts, reports, posters and student responses in this section were written for this book. The water-bottle survey and its numbers are an original teaching example; Riverbend Primary School is a fictional school used across this book.

Re-reading and editing own and others' texts using agreed criteria

Chapter 5 · Literacy: contexts, analysis and creating texts · Section 5E

Curriculum trace

Level / strand	Victorian Curriculum 2.0 English, Level 6 — Literacy strand, sub-strand <i>Creating texts</i>
Content description	VC2E6LY10 — <i>re-read and edit their own texts and the texts of others using agreed criteria and exploring editing choices</i>
Linkage keys	VC2E6LY10.E01 — <i>discussing the setting in a literary text with a peer during the editing process, and experimenting with literary devices that may enhance the setting</i> · VC2E6LY10.E02 — <i>re-reading and editing their own and others' work using negotiated criteria for text structure, meaning and accuracy of grammar, spelling and punctuation, and explaining editing choices as required</i>
Achievement standard links	<i>They edit their texts using an agreed set of criteria and explore editing choices</i> (Writing).
Feeds forward to	5F (sustained writing) · Level 7 VC2E7LY09 (reviewing and editing: removing repetition, reordering and tightening ideas)

Theory

1. A draft is a start, not the finish

At Level 5 you learned to edit your writing against agreed criteria — to check it against a list and fix what needed fixing. Level 6 takes that habit further: you will learn to re-read like a reader, edit against criteria the class helped to make, and explain every choice you make along the way.

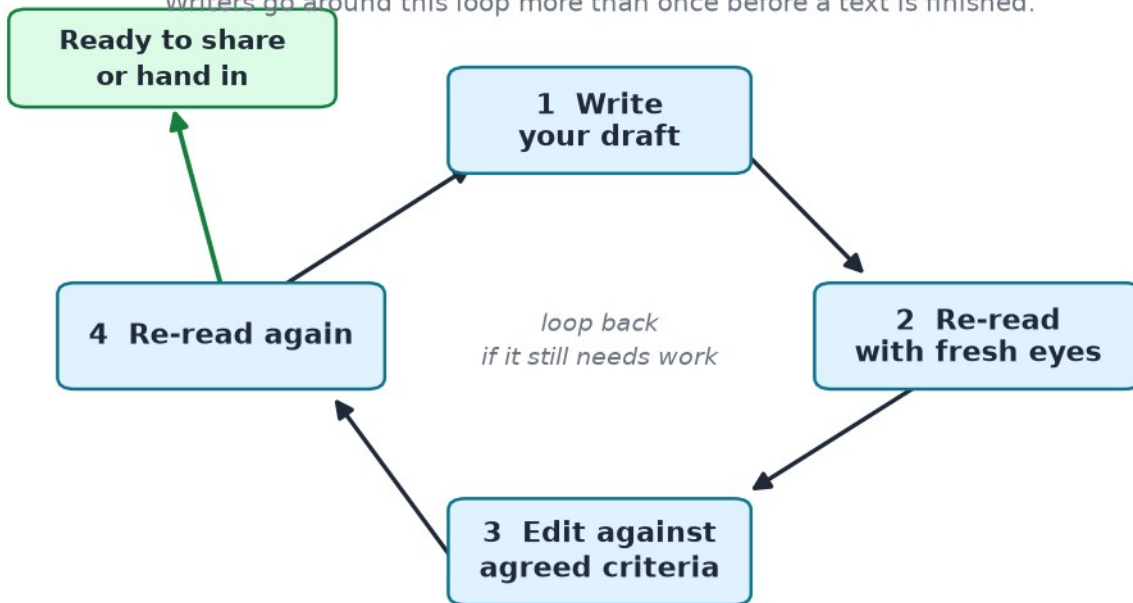
Start with two words this section uses all the time.

- A **draft** is a version of a text you are still working on. It is meant to have rough parts — that is what drafts are for.
- **Editing** is re-reading a draft with a purpose: looking for what to fix, what to move, what to cut, and what to leave alone.

Writers almost never get a text right on the first try. They go around a loop: write, re-read, edit, re-read again. Each time around, the text gets closer to ready.

The re-read and edit loop

Writers go around this loop more than once before a text is finished.



A diagram of the re-read and edit loop: write a draft, re-read with fresh eyes, edit against agreed criteria, re-read again, and loop back if the text still needs work, until it is ready to share or hand in

Figure 5E.1 The re-read and edit loop. Most writers go around it two or three times before a text is finished.

Notice the way out of the loop: a text is ready when a re-read finds nothing left to fix against the agreed criteria — not when you feel like stopping.

2. Agreed criteria: the shared checklist

To edit, you need something to edit *against*. That something is a set of criteria.

- A **criterion** (say *kry-TEER-ee-on*) is one rule about what a good text looks like.
- **Criteria** is the plural: two or more of those rules together.

In this section the criteria are **agreed** — talked over and settled by the class together before anyone starts editing. The curriculum’s word for this is **negotiated**: everyone gets a say, then the class settles on one shared list. Agreed criteria matter because they turn editing from a feeling (*I think this bit is bad*) into a check (*this bit does not meet criterion 2*). Two writers can disagree about taste. They cannot disagree about a checklist they both signed up to.

One honest note: people do not always agree about what makes writing “good”. A poem and a news report aim at different things, and two strong readers can look at the same text and see different things in it. That is why this section never asks you to make a text “better” by feeling. Every question here can be answered against the agreed criteria — the shared checklist the class settled on.

The criteria wall in **Figure 5E.2** covers the five areas the curriculum names for Level 6: text **structure**, **meaning**, and accuracy of **grammar**, **spelling** and **punctuation**.

Our agreed criteria

Talked over and agreed by the class before anyone starts editing. Tick each one as you re-read.

Area	The question we ask	What it looks like when met	
STRUCTURE	Does my text open with a hook, and does every part belong?	My opening pulls the reader in. Events are in the best order.	☐
MEANING	Can a reader follow my ideas with no gaps and no repeats?	My ideas are clear. Nothing is said twice for no reason.	☐
GRAMMAR	Does every sentence make sense and read well?	No run-on sentences. No sentences that stop too soon.	☐
SPELLING	Is every word spelled right?	I checked the words I was unsure about.	☐
PUNCTUATION	Are capitals, commas, full stops and apostrophes in place?	Capital letters for names and days. Full stops at the end of sentences.	☐

Criteria are the shared yardstick: you edit against them, not against a feeling.

A table of agreed criteria for one narrative task, with five rows for structure, meaning, grammar, spelling and punctuation, each with the question the class asks, what it looks like when met, and a tick box

Figure 5E.2 An agreed-criteria wall for a narrative task. The class talks it over and agrees on it before editing starts. Tick each criterion as you re-read.

- **Structure** is how a text is built: its parts, and the order they are in — opening, middle, ending.
- **Meaning** is what the text says: clear ideas, no gaps, no repeats.
- **Grammar** is whether each sentence is built so it makes sense and reads well.
- **Spelling** is whether every word is written with the right letters.
- **Punctuation** is the signs that guide a reader: capital letters, commas, full stops, apostrophes.

3. Big things first: five editing passes

You could ask all five criteria at once — but your brain gets crowded and things slip past. Editors work in passes: one job at a time, big jobs first.

Five editing passes

Start with the big things. Finish with the small marks.

big
picture



Fix the big things first. There is no point polishing a sentence you are about to cut.

Five editing passes stacked from top to bottom: pass 1 structure, pass 2 meaning, pass 3 grammar, pass 4 spelling, pass 5 punctuation, with a big-picture-to-small-marks arrow beside them

Figure 5E.3 Five editing passes, from big picture down to small marks.

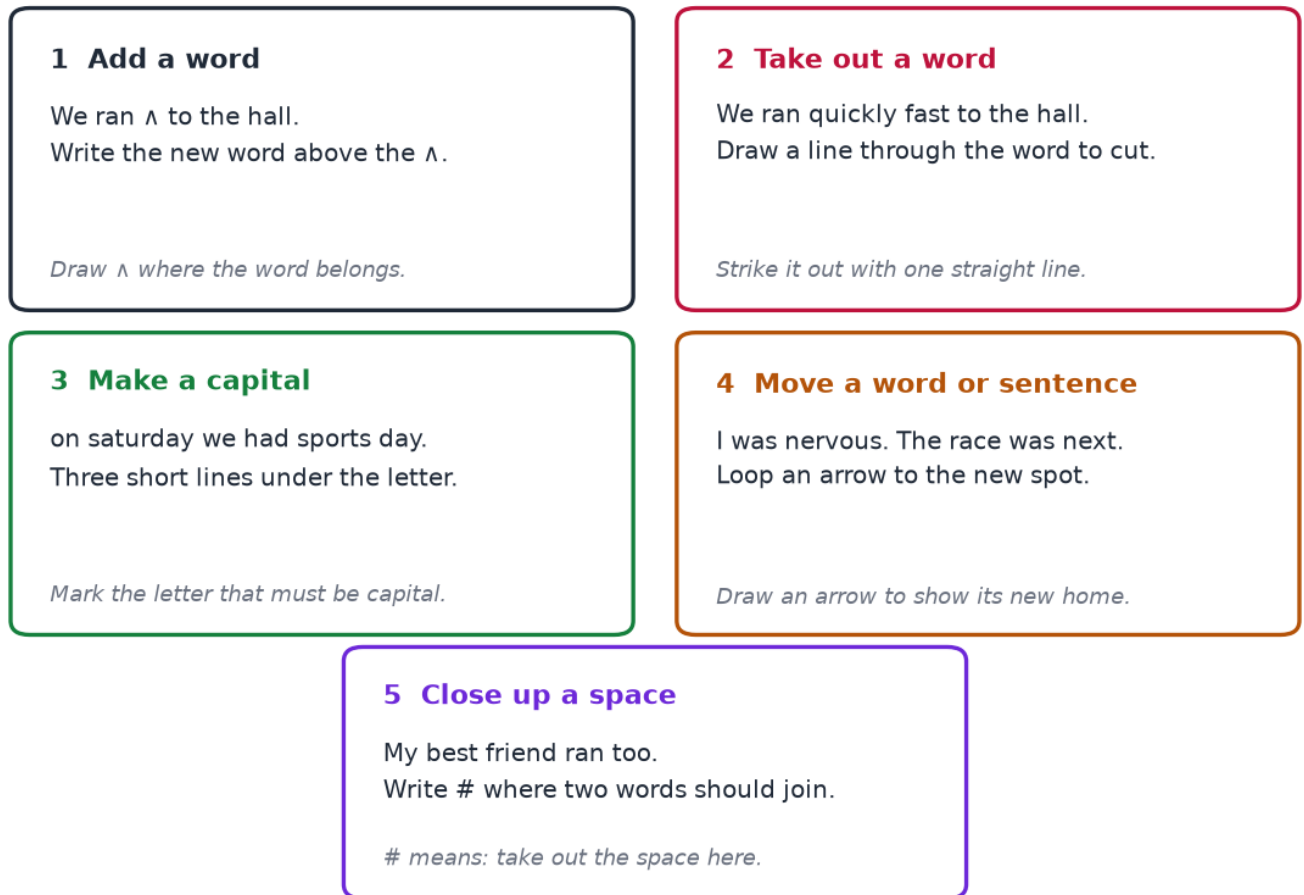
Why structure first? There is no point making a sentence perfect if you are about to cut it. Big changes move whole parts of a text; small marks move single letters. Do the big changes first, so every small mark you make lands on text that stays.

4. Marks on the page

Editing happens on the draft itself, in pencil. You are not writing the fixed version yet — you are leaving clear signs for yourself (and for any peer who reads the draft after you). Five marks cover almost every job.

Editing marks

You do not need special pens. These five marks show any reader exactly what you mean.



Five panels showing common editing marks: adding a word with a caret, taking out a word with a strikethrough, making a capital with three lines under a letter, moving a word with an arrow, and closing up a space with a # mark

Figure 5E.4 Five editing marks. Each one says exactly what you mean, so anyone can read your marked-up draft.

Two rules keep your marks readable. First, make each mark once, in the spot it belongs. Second, write new words and replacement sentences just above the line — never over the top of the old text, so the old text can still be read.

5. The Level 6 step-up: explaining editing choices

At Level 5, fixing was the goal. At Level 6 you also **explore editing choices** — you can say *why* each change was made, and why some things were left alone. Two sentence stems carry the whole skill:

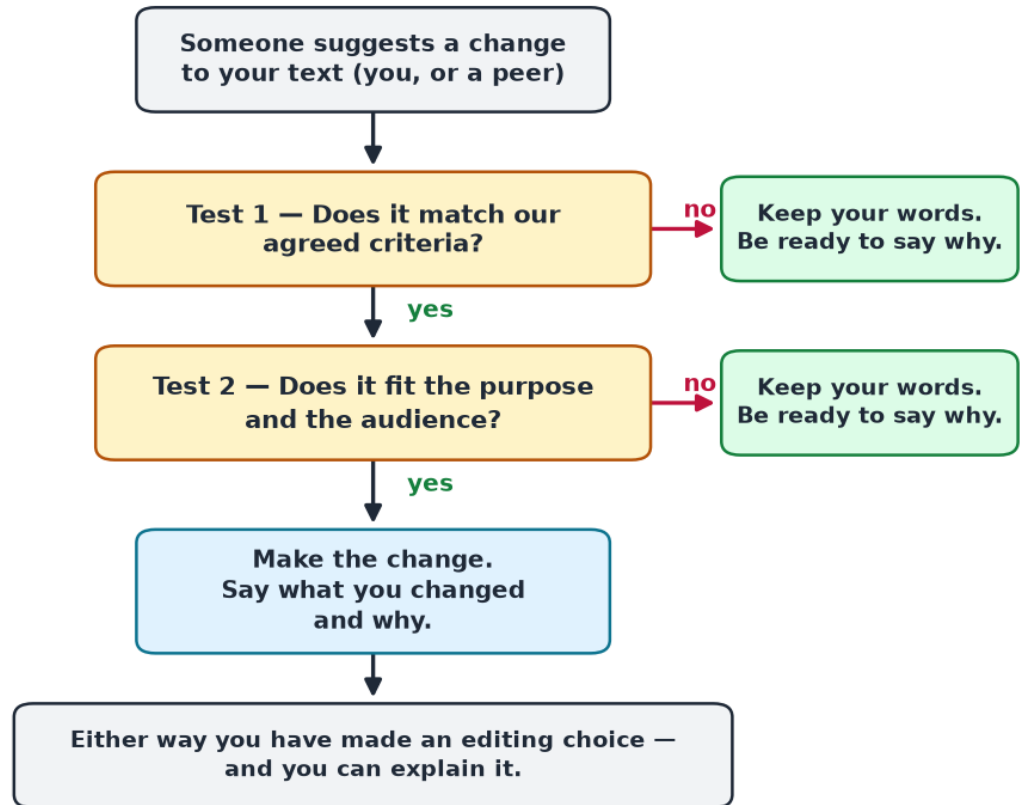
- **I changed ... because ...**
- **I kept ... because ...**

Keeping is a choice too. If a line already meets the criteria, leaving it alone is a decision worth naming — it is not just running out of time.

What about a suggestion that fails the test? A suggested edit is not an order. Run it through the two tests in **Figure 5E.5** before you act on it.

Change it or keep it?

A suggested edit is not an order. Test it, then decide — and know why.



A flowchart for deciding on a suggested edit: test it against the agreed criteria, then test it against the purpose and audience, then either make the change and say why, or keep your words and say why

Figure 5E.5 Every suggestion gets tested before you act on it. Either way, you end with an editing choice you can explain.

Purpose is what a text is for — to tell, to explain, to persuade. **Audience** is who it is written for. A change that helps a funny story for your class might not help a formal letter to the principal, so the same suggestion can be a good edit in one text and a poor one in another.

6. Editing someone else's text

The content description says you edit *the texts of others* as well as your own. The reader of your draft is usually a **peer** — another student in the class.

Why does a peer see things you miss? When you re-read your own work, your brain remembers what you *meant* and quietly fills the gaps. A peer meets only what is on the page. Their confusion is useful information: the exact spot where they get lost is the exact spot where the text still needs work.

Peer feedback follows three rules and a handful of starters. **Figure 5E.6** is the poster to keep beside you while you swap drafts.

Editing someone else's text

A peer is another person in the class who reads your work. Good peer feedback is a gift, not a grade.

Three rules for peer feedback

Kind Talk about the writing, not the writer.	Specific Name the exact spot: 'in line 3...'	Useful Give the writer something to try.
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Sentence starters for the peer

Praise first	I liked the part where ...
Ask a question	I got lost at ... — can you tell me more about it?
Offer a try	You could try ... because ...
The writer makes the final call. Think each suggestion over, then decide. If you keep your words, be ready to say why — that is an editing choice too.	

A poster for peer editing: three rules (kind, specific, useful), three sentence starters for praise, questions and suggestions, and a note that the writer makes the final call

Figure 5E.6 The peer editor's rules and sentence starters — and who makes the final call.

If you are the writer receiving feedback: read it, thank your peer, then decide. You do not have to make every change — but you do have to give every suggestion a fair test against the criteria, the way Figure 5E.5 shows.

7. The setting pass: peer talk and literary devices

In a literary text — a story, poem or play — one part rewards an extra editing pass again and again: the **setting**, the where and when of the story. The Level 6 elaboration asks for exactly this: *discussing the setting in a literary text with a peer during the editing process, and experimenting with literary devices that may enhance the setting*.

The move is simple. Hand your setting to a peer and ask the sense questions:

- Can you **see** it?
- Can you **hear** it?
- Can you **smell** it or **feel** it?

Where the answer is *not yet*, that is the spot to try a device. You already know the naming words from Sections 2D and 3D: imagery for each sense, personification and simile. **Figure 5E.7** lines them up with the job each one does in a setting.

Devices that can lift a setting

Ask a peer: can you see it, hear it, smell it? Then try one of these. (Naming words from 2D and 3D.)

Device (naming word)	What it does	Example in a setting
Sight imagery	word-pictures for the eyes	The last light lay in long gold stripes across the floor.
Sound imagery	word-pictures for the ears	The hall hummed with chairs scraping and shoes squeaking.
Smell and touch imagery	word-pictures for the nose and skin	The shed smelled of hay and old metal; the air felt cold and damp.
Personification	giving human jobs to things that are not human	The old gate groaned when the wind pushed it.
Simile	comparing with like or as	The fog crept in like a slow grey tide.

One device in the right spot beats three dumped in a pile. Pick one, try it, re-read.

A table of literary devices that can lift a setting: sight imagery, sound imagery, smell and touch imagery, personification and simile, each with what it does and an example in a setting

Figure 5E.7 Devices that can lift a setting, with the job each one does and one example each.

Experimenting is the key word. Try a device, re-read the setting aloud, and test it against the criteria: does the reader's picture get sharper? If yes, keep it. If the device draws attention to itself instead of the place, take it out. One device in the right spot beats three dumped in a pile.

Worked examples

Example 1 — Modelled analysis: editing a draft against agreed criteria

Here is a first draft, exactly as it was written. The task: a short narrative for the class magazine. Purpose — hook the reader. Audience — students at the school.

Draft 1 — The big race

On saturday morning I went to sports day. I was in the 100 metre sprint. There were lots of people. I was nervus. My legs felt like jelly. I ran fast. I ran faster than everyone. I came first. There were lots of people cheering. It was fun.

Step 1 — Re-read with fresh eyes. The writer reads the draft aloud once, as if someone else wrote it. Three things jump out: it starts flat, two lines repeat, and two words look wrong.

Step 2 — Mark it up, pass by pass. Structure first (the opening), then meaning (the repeats), then spelling and punctuation. **Figure 5E.8** shows the marked draft.

A first draft, marked up

Draft 1 · The big race — marks show what the editor (the same writer, re-reading) decided.

Draft 1 — The big race

My heart was drumming before my race even started.
✓ add this hook line at the very top

On saturday morning I went to sports day.
Saturday = capital letter

I was in the 100 metre sprint.

There were lots of people.

I was ~~nervus~~ **nervous** fix spelling

My legs felt like jelly.

~~I ran fast~~ cut: line 7 says this already

I ran faster than everyone.

I came first.

The whole side of the oval cheered.
~~There were lots of people cheering~~ repeated from line 3

It was fun.

STRUCTURE
missing hook at the start
→ add one

MEANING
'lots of people' twice
→ say it once, say it exactly

MEANING / STRUCTURE
'I ran fast.' adds nothing new
→ cut it

SPELLING
nervus → nervous
→ check tricky words

PUNCTUATION
saturday → Saturday
→ days are capital letters

A first draft of a story called *The big race* marked up with editing marks: a hook line added above the opening, a capital letter marked on *saturday*, the word *nervus* struck through and fixed, a repeated sentence struck through, and margin notes naming the criterion for each edit

Figure 5E.8 Draft 1 marked up. Every mark points to a criterion: structure, meaning, spelling or punctuation.

Read the marks one at a time:

- Above line 1, a ^ and a new opening line — *My heart was drumming before my race even started*. The draft opened with a plain fact; the hook pulls the reader in. (Structure.)
- Under *saturday*, a capital-letter mark — days of the week take capitals. (Punctuation.)
- Through *nervus*, one straight line, with the fix *nervous* written above. (Spelling.)
- Through *I ran fast*. — line 7 already says it more strongly. (Meaning.)
- Through the repeated *There were lots of people* in line 9, with the replacement *The whole side of the oval cheered*. written above — exact detail beats a repeated phrase. (Meaning.)

Step 3 — Log the choices. Explaining the edits is half the learning at Level 6. **Figure 5E.9** is the writer's choices log.

Editing choices log — The big race

Every change has a reason. So does every keep.

Decision	What happened	Why (which criterion)
Change	Added a hook line: 'My heart was drumming before my race even started.'	STRUCTURE — the draft opened with a plain fact. The hook pulls the reader in.
Change	Cut 'I ran fast.'	MEANING — the next sentence already says it. No repeats.
Change	Replaced the second 'lots of people' for 'the whole side of the oval'.	MEANING — exact detail beats a repeated vague phrase.
Change	saturday → Saturday; nervus → nervous	PUNCTUATION and SPELLING — days take capitals; check tricky words.
Keep	Kept 'My legs felt like jelly.'	It is a simile. It shows the nerves, so it stays. Keeping can be a choice too.

Sentence stems: I changed ... because ... · I kept ... because ...

An editing choices log for *The big race* with four changes and one keep, each with the criterion it answers to and a reason

Figure 5E.9 The choices log for Draft 1. Four changes and one keep — every one with a reason.

Step 4 — Write the finished version, then re-read it once.

The big race — final

My heart was drumming before my race even started. On Saturday morning I went to sports day, and I was in the 100 metre sprint. There were lots of people. I was nervous. My legs felt like jelly. I ran faster than everyone. I came first. The whole side of the oval cheered. It was fun.

One last re-read against the wall: hook — yes; no repeats — yes; spelling and capitals fixed — yes. Ready to share.

Example 2 — Modelled composition: lifting a setting with a peer

Now the same skills in the other direction: composing new language for a setting during the editing process, the way elaboration E01 describes.

Step 1 — Find the flat spot. In this story draft, the hero walks towards a shed. The setting reads:

The shed was old. It was at the back of the farm. The door was open. It was dark inside.

Four true sentences — and nothing a reader can see, hear or smell.

Step 2 — Peer talk. The writer hands those four lines to a peer and asks the sense questions from Part 7.

Peer: Can I see it? Sort of — but *old* could be anything. Is it leaning? Rusty? **Writer:** It leans a bit. And the door creaks when the wind pushes it. **Peer:** Say that. Can I hear anything else? A farm shed has wind in it. **Writer:** The wind, and the creak. **Peer:** What about smell? I want to walk inside the place. **Writer:** Hay. And that rusty-metal smell.

Step 3 — Try devices, keep what works. The writer tries three devices and keeps four pieces of new language.

Figure 5E.10 shows the before and after, with the devices named.

One setting, two drafts

The same shed in a story — before and after an editing pass on the setting.

Draft — flat setting

The shed was old.
It was at the back of the farm.
The door was open.
It was dark inside.

*Four facts. No picture, no sound,
no smell — the reader stands outside.*

After the edit — lifted setting

The old shed hunched at the back of the farm like a sleeping animal. Its door yawned open, creaking in the wind. Inside, the dark smelled of hay and rust.

edit the setting

personification: hunched, yawned

simile: like a sleeping animal

sound imagery: creaking

smell imagery: hay and rust

The facts did not change. The reader's picture did. That is what editing a setting is for.

Two panels showing the same shed setting before and after an editing pass: four flat sentences on the left, and a lifted version with personification, a simile, sound imagery and smell imagery tagged on the right

Figure 5E.10 One setting, two drafts. The facts are the same — but the reader now stands inside the place.

Step 4 — Explain the choices. *I changed “was old” to “hunched ... like a sleeping animal” because the personification and the simile give the shed a shape a reader can see. I kept the facts — back of the farm, open door, dark inside — because the story still needs them. I added “hay and rust” because smell imagery puts the reader inside the shed.*

Notice what did *not* change: the facts. Editing a setting is not about adding more story. It is about making the place land in the reader’s senses.

Practice questions

Scaffolded

Question 1 — Match the edit to the criterion. Each editing note below belongs to one of the five areas: structure, meaning, grammar, spelling, punctuation. One area is used twice. Write the area next to each note.

- “My ending happens in the middle — move it to the end.”
- “I wrote *beleive* — the right spelling is *believe*.”
- “I say the fete was fun twice — cut one of them.”
- “My last sentence has no full stop.”
- “This is not a full sentence — it has no doing word: *The tall tree in the corner.*”
- “*mum* needs a capital letter when I use it as her name: *I asked Mum.*”

Question 2 — Order the passes. Here are five editing jobs. Number them 1–5 in the order the five passes say to do them: big picture first, small marks last.

- Check that *because* is spelled right — I always mix up the middle of it.
- Move my third paragraph so the story ends in the right spot.
- Add the missing capital letter to *Tuesday*.
- Rewrite the middle of my race story so a reader can follow what happened.
- Fix a sentence that runs on for three lines without stopping.

Question 3 — Make the marks. Draw the right editing mark on each sentence and write the fix, using the marks from Figure 5E.4.

- One word is missing: *We ran to the hall the disco started.* (Hint: the missing word is *when*.)
- One word should go: *She was very really fast.*
- One letter should be capital: *We played on friday.*

Question 4 — Name the area, give the reason. Each edit below has already been made. Name the criterion area (structure, meaning, grammar, spelling, punctuation), then finish the because-sentence.

- I was scared. I was really scared.* → *I was scared. My hands went cold and shaky.* I changed it because ...
- the dog ran home* → *The dog ran home.* I changed it because ...
- We played footy. We played soccer. We played cricket.* → *We played footy, soccer and cricket.* I changed it because ...

Question 5 — Judge peer feedback. A peer reads this one-line review and makes four comments. For each comment, decide: does it meet all three peer rules (kind, specific, useful)? If it breaks a rule, name the rule it breaks.

The canteen pizza on Friday was the best thing all week.

- “This is rubbish.”
- “I liked the bit about the pizza.”
- “After *best thing all week*, you could say what made it the best — the cheese? the crunch? — because then I can picture it.”
- “Your handwriting is messy.”

Question 6 — Write one useful suggestion. Use one of the starters from Figure 5E.6 to write a specific, useful suggestion for the pizza review in Question 5. Your suggestion must give the writer something to try.

Un scaffolded

Question 7 — Edit a passage. Here is a short informative text about a class garden. It has at least one problem in each of the five areas. Re-read it, list your edits pass by pass (structure first), and write a choices log with at least three entries using the stems *I changed ... because ...* and *I kept ... because ...*.

Our class garden is growing. We planted seeds in Term 1. We watered the plants every week. The plants is big now. We have tomatos and beans. The beans climb up the stakes. the beans grow fast. I think gardens are good.

Question 8 — Be the peer. Read Sam’s paragraph. Write peer feedback that follows the three rules: one praise that names an exact spot, one question about a part that feels thin, and one useful suggestion with a reason.

On Friday our school band played in the hall. I played the drums. We played three songs. The last song was my favourite. Everyone clapped at the end. I felt proud.

Question 9 — Lift a setting. Here is a flat setting from a story draft.

The market was busy. There were lots of stalls. People walked around. It was noisy.

With a partner, ask the sense questions — can you see it, hear it, smell it? Then rewrite the setting using at least two devices from Figure 5E.7. Under your rewritten version, name the devices you used and say what each one adds for the reader.

Question 10 — Change or keep? Here is the opening of a story about a storm.

The wind picked up at lunchtime. By one o'clock, the sky had gone green-grey. Miss Patel told us to stay under the shelter.

A peer suggests three edits. For each, decide *change* or *keep* — then write your reason, testing your decision against the criteria and against the text's purpose (a story, not a report).

- Change *The wind picked up* to *The wind woke up and started shoving the trees*.
- Change *green-grey* to *bad*.
- Add this sentence at the end: *Storms form when cold air pushes under warm air*.

Produced outcome

Question 11 — Write, edit, explain. Write the opening of a story (80–120 words) with a setting your reader can step into. Purpose: hook your reader. Audience: your class.

Then run the whole loop from Figure 5E.1:

- Re-read your draft with fresh eyes. Swap with a peer: give and receive feedback using the rules from Figure 5E.6.
- Edit your draft against the five criteria in Figure 5E.2. Leave clear marks (Figure 5E.4) — or list your edits if your draft is typed.
- Write a choices log with at least four entries, including at least one *keep*.
- Write the finished version. Re-read it one last time against the criteria wall.

Checklist before you hand in:

- ☐ My opening hooks the reader. (Structure)
 - ☐ My setting has at least one detail for the senses. (Meaning)
 - ☐ No repeats and no lines that wander off the topic. (Meaning)
 - ☐ Every sentence makes sense. (Grammar)
 - ☐ Tricky words checked. (Spelling)
 - ☐ Capitals, commas and full stops in place. (Punctuation)
 - ☐ Every change and every keep has a reason. (Choices log)
-

Model responses

Question 1. a. structure · b. spelling · c. meaning · d. punctuation · e. grammar · f. punctuation.

Question 2. 1 — b (structure) · 2 — d (meaning) · 3 — e (grammar) · 4 — a (spelling) · 5 — c (punctuation).

Question 3. a. Draw ^ between *hall* and *the*, and write *when* above it: *We ran to the hall when the disco started*. b. Strike through *really* (or *very* — one of the two goes): *She was very fast*. c. Three short lines under the *f* in *friday*: *We played on Friday*.

Question 4. a. Meaning — the second sentence now shows the fear instead of repeating it. b. Punctuation — a sentence starts with a capital letter and ends with a full stop. c. Grammar — one clean list sentence does the job of three short, choppy ones.

Question 5. a. Breaks all three rules — not kind, not specific, and it gives the writer nothing to try. b. Kind, but vague — it does not name what worked, and it gives nothing to try next. c. Meets all three rules: it names the exact spot, offers something to try, and gives a reason. d. Breaks the kind rule — it talks about the writer rather than the writing.

Question 6. Sample: “You could try naming one topping — the stretchy cheese, the hot crust — because one exact detail makes the whole review easier to picture.” It meets the rules: it names a spot, offers something to try, and gives a reason.

Question 7. One possible set of edits. Structure: cut *I think gardens are good*. — it is an opinion, and it wanders away from informing the reader about the garden. Meaning: the beans get two lines — combine them (*The beans climb up the stakes and grow fast*); three sentences start with *We*, so combine two of them (*We planted seeds in Term 1 and*

watered them every week). Grammar: *The plants is big now* → *The plants are big now* — a plural subject takes a plural verb. Spelling: *tomatos* → *tomatoes*. Punctuation: *the beans grow fast* starts with a small letter — make it a capital *T*. Sample log entries: *I changed “is” to “are” because “plants” is plural — that is the grammar criterion.* · *I kept “Our class garden is growing” because it already names the topic in the very first line.*

Question 8. Sample. Praise: “I liked that you named your instrument — *I played the drums* puts me right in the band.” Question: “You say the last song was your favourite — which song was it, and why?” Suggestion: “You could add the sound of the clapping at the end, because then the reader hears the hall instead of just being told people clapped.”

Question 9. Sample rewrite: *The market hummed. Stalls crowded the path under striped roofs, and the air smelled of hot bread and oranges. Voices rose and dipped over the crowd like waves.* Devices used: sound imagery (*hummed; voices rose and dipped*), smell imagery (*hot bread and oranges*), sight imagery (*stalls crowded the path under striped roofs*) and a simile (*like waves*). Each device puts the reader at the market instead of just telling them it was busy.

Question 10. a. Change — for a story. The personification lifts the opening and fits the purpose of a narrative. (For a weather report, the plain words would be the better choice.) b. Keep *green-grey* — it is exact, and its strange colour suits a storm; *bad* is vague and misses the meaning criterion. c. Keep it out — that sentence is report talk, and it breaks the purpose and audience of a story opening.

Question 11. Sample finished opening (one possibility — answers will vary):

The old shed at the back of the farm had one rule: nobody goes inside. Of course, that was exactly where Mia went on the first day of the holidays. The gate groaned as she pushed it. The yard was buried in long grass, and the shed hunched in the far corner like something asleep. Its door stood a hand’s width open. From inside came a smell of hay, cold metal and something else — something sweet, like honey left too long in the sun. Mia took one step closer. The door creaked wider, all by itself.

Sample log entries for that opening: *I changed my flat first line to the “one rule” line because it hooks the reader — structure criterion.* · *I kept “a hand’s width open” because the exact detail is more unsettling than “a little bit open”.* · *I cut a sentence about the weather because it wandered off the topic — meaning criterion.*

Where this takes you

- **Section 5F — sustained writing.** The loop from Figure 5E.1 is what keeps sustained writing strong: drafting, re-reading and editing are the work, and fluent handwriting is what carries it. Your produced outcome here is one piece of evidence for 5F.
- **Every writing task in this book.** The criteria wall comes back whenever you write. The purpose-and-audience checks you used in 5D now live inside your editing, and the devices from 2D and 3D have become editing tools.
- **Level 7, VC2E7LY09.** Reviewing and editing continues — removing repetition, reordering and tightening ideas — and the habit of agreed criteria comes with you.

Writing legibly, fluently and automatically for sustained periods

English 6 · Chapter 5 — Literacy: contexts, analysis and creating texts · Section 5F · Owns VC2E6LY11

Every other section in this chapter asks you to write something: a story in 3E, a report or a persuasive text in 5D, a careful edit in 5E. This section is about the *how* of all that writing — how your hand keeps up with your ideas, and how your letters stay clear from the first line to the last. It is a workshop, not a new topic. There is nothing new to learn here; there is a skill to build, a plan to follow, and a log to keep.

The curriculum states the skill in four words and adds no notes of its own — the export’s only line is a placeholder saying the content description does not require elaboration. So this section does three things: it says plainly what the four words mean, it gives you a plan for building the skill across the year, and it gives you a log and a self-check so you can see the skill growing. The evidence is the writing you already do in 3E, 5D and 5E.

By the end of this section you will be able to:

- say what each of the four words means — legibly, fluently, automatically, for sustained periods — and judge your own writing against those meanings
- keep your letters in their zones and your words spaced, all the way to the last line of a long write
- pick a keep-going move when you get stuck, instead of stopping
- build your stamina from 10–12 minutes of non-stop writing to 25–30 minutes
- log every episode honestly and set your next goal from what the log shows
- complete the checkpoint: a 25–30 minute write that is clear and steady to the end

Owns — VC2E6LY11 (Literacy · Creating texts): write legibly, fluently and automatically for sustained periods

Draws on — export note for VC2E6LY11: Content description does not require elaboration.

The question bank keys this content description to two ids of its own — VC2E6LY11.E01 (sustained writing) and VC2E6LY11.E02 (maintaining legibility over sustained writing). Those ids are join keys for the bank, not a lesson list (TOC §2, D7). This section is scored against the content description text itself.

Builds on (from Level 5, not re-taught here): VC2E5LY10–VC2E5LY12 — you already write legibly and fluently. Level 5 got your hand working; this section stretches that work over longer stretches of writing.

Sets up (for Level 7, not taught here): Level 7 has no handwriting content description of its own — sustained writing becomes the medium for VC2E7LY08 and VC2E7LY09, where the ideas, structure and style carry the marks. The stamina you build here is what Level 7 spends.

Theory

Part 1 — What the four words mean

The Victorian Curriculum 2.0 uses these four words but does not define them. This section therefore treats them as follows, and judges your work on those meanings alone.

The four words in the content description

What each word means when you write

Word	What it means	What it looks like
legibly	your writing is clear and easy for anyone to read	letters are well formed, sit on the line, with space between words
fluently	you write at a steady pace, without many stops	your hand keeps up with your ideas
automatically	you form letters without thinking about each one	you think about what to say, not about how to write it
for sustained periods	you keep writing, without a break, for a long time	your writing on page two is as clear and steady as on page one

The curriculum uses these words but does not define them. This section uses the meanings above.

Figure 1 — The four words, in plain English.

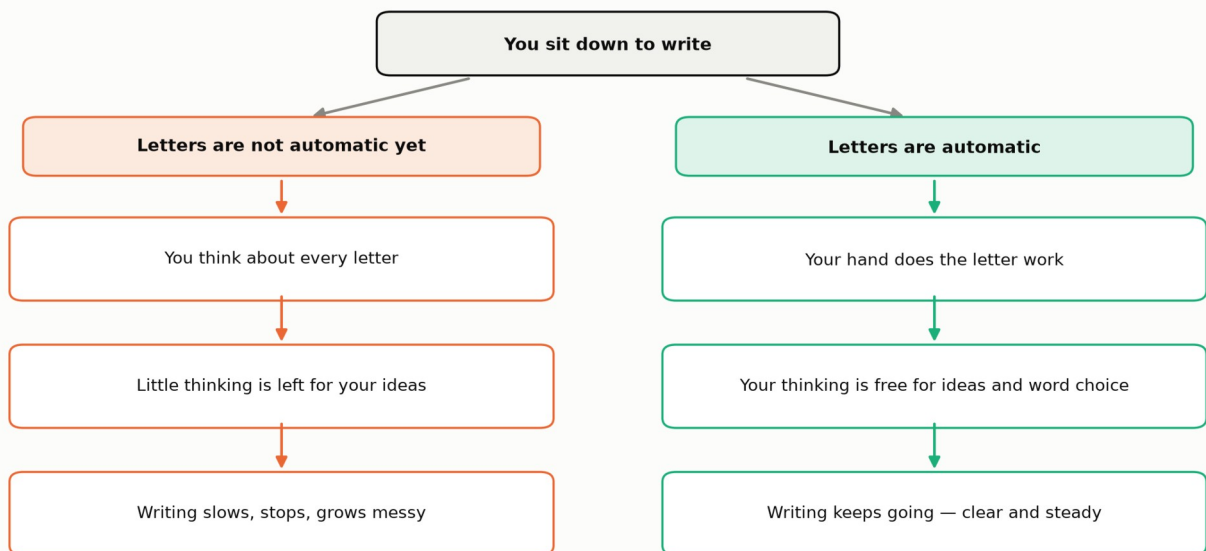
- **Legibly** means anyone can read your writing without extra work. The test is simple: hand the page to someone who was not in the room, and they can read every word.
- **Fluently** means you write at a steady pace, without many stops. Your hand keeps up with your ideas.
- **Automatically** means you form letters without thinking about each one. (In this section's own sentences we say your letter work is *automatic* — same meaning, different word form.) You think about what to say, not about how to write it.
- **For sustained periods** means you keep writing, without a break, for a long time. In Year 6 that grows across the year — see the plan in Part 4. The curriculum sets the skill, not the minutes.

Part 2 — Why automatic writing matters

You only have so much attention to go around. If forming letters still takes thought, that thought has to come from somewhere — and it comes from your ideas.

Automatic writing frees your thinking

You only have so much attention to go around



When the letter work is automatic, your thinking is free for ideas — and that is what lets you keep going.

Figure 2 — Automatic letter work frees your thinking for ideas.

This is why the four words sit in one content description. Automatic letter work is the engine; fluent writing is the pace it gives you; legibility is what the reader sees; and a sustained period is how long the engine runs. If any one of the four fails, the long write fails with it.

Part 3 — Clear letters, all the way through

Legibility (the noun from *legible*) is the quality of being easy to read. On ruled lines, legible writing keeps every letter in its zone.

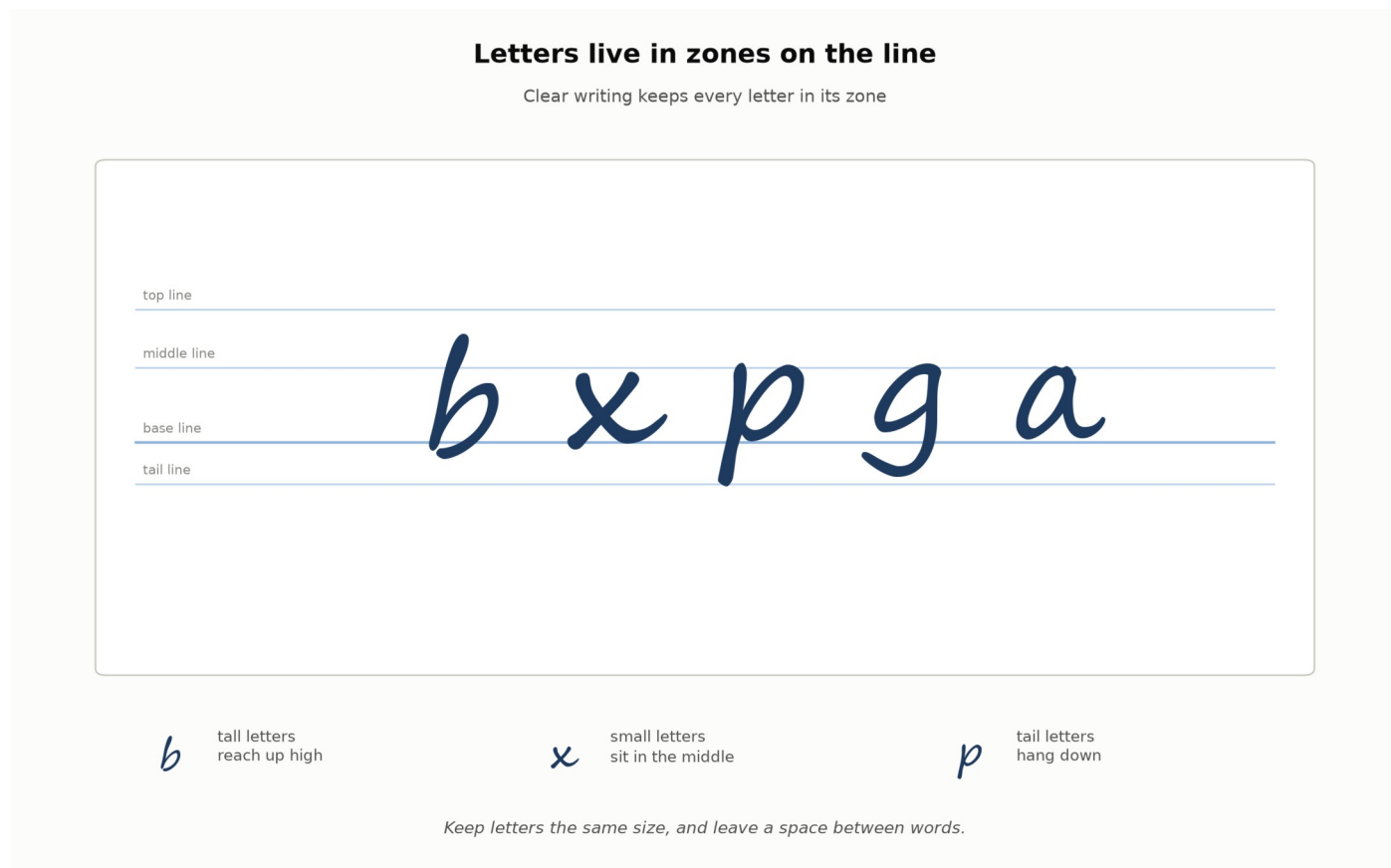


Figure 3 — The four zones, and where the letters b, x and p live.

- **Tall letters** (b, d, h, k, l, t) reach from the base line up to the top line.
- **Small letters** (a, c, e, m, n, o, r, s, u, v, w, x, z) sit between the base line and the middle line.
- **Tail letters** (g, j, p, q, y) hang from the base line down to the tail line.

Three habits keep a long write clear:

1. **Keep letters the same size.** When letters start growing or shrinking, the reader has to work.
2. **Leave a space between words.** Words that run together are the fastest way to lose a reader.
3. **Watch your last lines.** In a long write, legs get tired and lines start to drift. If your writing starts to get messy, slow down for a line or two, or shake out your hand and begin again. Your last line should be as clear as your first.

Part 4 — Building stamina

Stamina is how long you can keep going. An **episode** is one sitting of non-stop writing — the clock starts, you write, and you do not stop until the minutes are up. Stopping for ideas is allowed and expected; stopping because the writing is hard is what the plan trains out of you.

Building your writing stamina

How long you write without stopping grows across the year

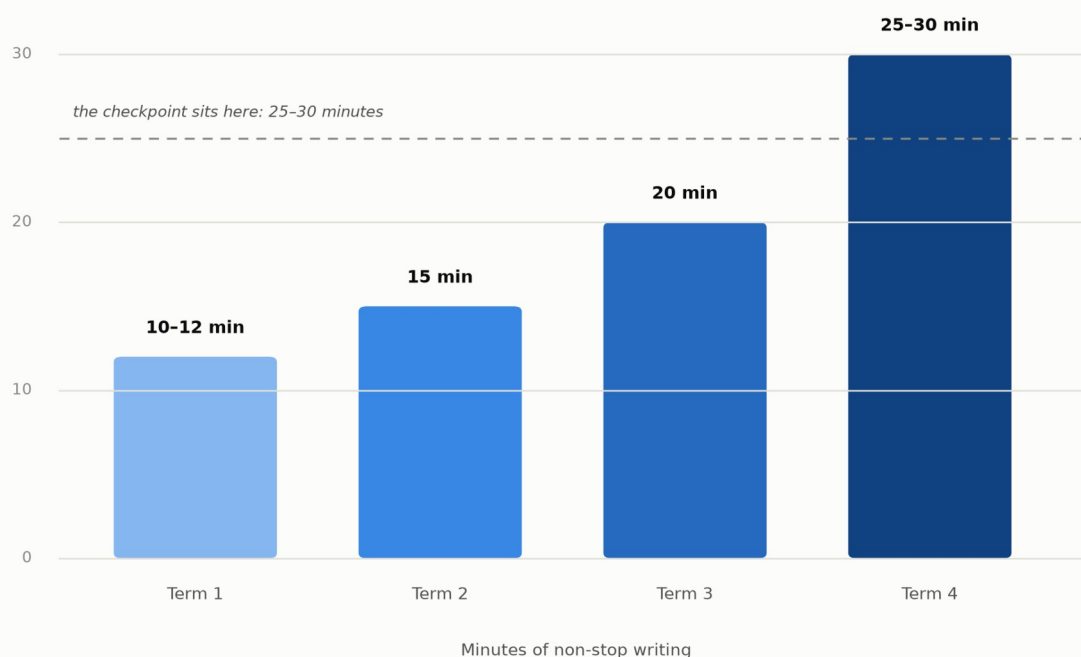


Figure 4 — The stamina plan. Each term adds a few minutes.

The plan grows slowly on purpose. Adding five minutes at a time is easy; jumping straight to half an hour is not. By Term 4, the checkpoint length — 25 to 30 minutes — is just what you do.

Where does the writing come from? Most of it is already set by the rest of the book.

Where you already write for long stretches

The evidence for this section is the writing the rest of the book asks for

Section	The writing	What to log
3E — Creating literature	stories and character pieces you invent and adapt	a full piece in one sitting
5D — Creating texts	reports and persuasive texts for a purpose and audience	a full piece in one sitting
5E — Editing	re-reading and improving your own and others' work	the whole editing pass
5F — This section	three practice episodes and the checkpoint	15, then 20, then 25-30 minutes

Log every long write you do in this book. Your log is the evidence.

Figure 5 — The rest of the book supplies the writing; this section supplies the log.

Every episode goes in the log — one honest row each time.

The writing log

One row for every episode — honest numbers only

Date	Task and section	Minutes	What you wrote	Legibility check	Next goal
12 Mar	story ending (3E)	15	finished my story's ending	clear to page one; last lines ran off the base line	leave more room at the bottom of the page
4 Jun	group report (5D)	20	our report on saving water	clear all the way; one word hard to read	leave more space between words
3 Sep	letter (5D)	28	letter to the school council	clear and steady to the end	hold 30 minutes next time

How to fill in a row

Date and task copy them from the set task	Minutes the honest number from the clock	Next goal one habit to work on next time
---	--	--

Three sample rows. Your log grows with every episode you write.

Figure 6 — The writing log. Three sample rows show what honest looks like.

The log is the evidence for this section. A row with honest numbers and a real next goal is worth more than ten rows of “all good”.

Worked examples

Example 1 — Reading a log row (modelled analysis)

Mai writes a 15-minute story ending for 3E and logs it. Here is her row, read slowly.

Working	Comment
<i>15 minutes, wrote to the end</i>	The minutes are honest and she kept going — the engine ran for the full time.
<i>stopped twice for ideas</i>	Stops for ideas are planning, not a problem with pace. Every writer stops to think; the pen hovers, the idea lands, the writing goes on.
<i>left a gap when I could not spell “bridge”, came back at the end</i>	A keep-going move, not a stop. The gap kept the pace; the spelling got fixed on the way back.
<i>last two lines are bigger than the first</i>	Legibility slipped at the end — the zones let go. That slip is not a failure; it is the next goal.
<i>next goal: slow down for the last three lines</i>	The goal comes straight from the slip. One goal, one habit, next episode.

The row does four jobs at once: it records the time, it separates planning stops from hard stops, it names the keep-going move, and it turns one legibility slip into one next goal.

Example 2 — A modelled long write (modelled composition)

The prompt is one line: *The gate was left open*. The model below was written in one sitting, in 18 minutes, and it kept going to the last line.

The gate was left open. Milo saw it first, because the yard was too quiet. The chickens were gone. He called his sister, Anh, and they ran to the fence together. Small tracks led down the dry hill toward the creek. ‘They went for water,’ Anh said. The sun was hot, so the chickens would look for shade and a drink. They followed the tracks past the old shed and through the long grass. There, under the big gum tree, all six chickens sat in the shade. The smallest one had fallen asleep with its head tucked in. Milo laughed out loud. Anh picked up the sleepy chicken and carried it home like a parcel. They shut the gate and checked it twice. After that day, checking the gate became Milo’s job, and he never missed it once.

A model long write

Prompt: The gate was left open.

The gate was left open. Milo saw it first, because the yard was too quiet. The chickens were gone. He called his sister, Anh, and they ran to the fence together. Small tracks led down the dry hill toward the creek. 'They went for water,' Anh said. The sun was hot, so the chickens would look for shade and a drink. They followed the tracks past the old shed and through the long grass. There, under the big gum tree, all six chickens sat in the shade. The smallest one had fallen asleep with its head tucked in. Milo laughed out loud. Anh picked up the sleepy chicken and carried it home like a parcel. They shut the gate and checked it twice. After that day, checking the gate became Milo's job, and he never missed it once.

Written in one sitting

Time: 18 minutes

Kept going to the last line

Every word can be read

Figure 7 — The model long write as it looks on the page.

Read it as a long write, not as a story to mark. Four things make it a model for this section:

1. **Every word can be read**, on line one and on line thirteen. The zones hold to the end.
2. **The pace is steady**. Short sentences keep the hand moving; nothing stalls the writer for long.
3. **Simple, sure words**. "Carried it home like a parcel" is quick to spell and quick to write. The writer never stops for a hard word.
4. **It kept going to the last line**. The story lands, the gate gets checked twice, and the final sentence closes the door on time.

Practice questions

With hints

Q1. Match each word to its meaning. (i) legibly, (ii) fluently, (iii) automatically, (iv) for sustained periods. Meanings: (a) you form letters without thinking about each one; (b) you keep writing, without a break, for a long time; (c) your writing is clear and easy for anyone to read; (d) you write at a steady pace, without many stops. *Hint: Figure 1 is the key.*

Q2. Look at the last full page you wrote for any subject. Find one line where a letter leaves its zone, or two words run together. Write down the line, and what you see. *Hint: Use the zone names from Figure 3 — top line, middle line, base line, tail line.*

Q3. Set a timer for two minutes. Write about **rain** and do not stop. If you run dry, write the word *rain* again and again until a new thought lands. When the timer goes, count how many times you stopped. *Hint: The count is the useful number, not the writing.*

Q4. Pick the keep-going move you will use in your next episode, and say in one sentence why: (a) leave a gap and come back later; (b) reread your last sentence and push on; (c) swap in a simpler word you can spell. *Hint: There is no wrong pick — the point is choosing before you need it.*

Q5. Set your first target: a starting time of 10–15 minutes, plus one line from the self-check (Figure 8) to work on. *Hint: Pick the self-check line you most often cannot tick.*

Q6. After your next long write in this book, fill in your first log row. *Hint: Copy the shape of the sample rows in Figure 6 — honest minutes, one slip named, one next goal.*

On your own

Q7 — Episode 1 (15 minutes). Choose one prompt and write for 15 minutes without stopping. Then log the episode.

- The last light in the street went out.
- She found the key, but the door was already open.
- The message in the bottle was from next door.

Q8 — Episode 2 (20 minutes). A new prompt, five more minutes. Write, then log.

- The storm ended, and everything was quiet.
- He built it from things nobody wanted.
- The dog came home with someone else's hat.

Q9 — Episode 3 (25 minutes). This time the writing is real: take the next full piece 3E, 5D or 5E sets you, and write it in one sitting. Log it as an episode too.

Q10 — Look back. After your three episodes, write three sentences: what got easier, what is still hard, and your goal for your next long write.

Checkpoint

CP1 — The sustained write (25–30 minutes). Choose one prompt. Write for 25 to 30 minutes without stopping, at least one full page. Then complete a log row and the self-check (Figure 8).

- The map said there was nothing there. There was.
- The lighthouse went dark at nine o'clock.

Scored against — VC2E6LY11: write legibly, fluently and automatically for sustained periods

Achievement standard (Writing, Level 6): They write legibly and fluently for sustained periods.

The episode self-check

Run it straight after each episode, then fill in your log

☐ My letters sit on the line, from the first line to the last

☐ There is space between my words

☐ I kept a steady pace, without long stops

☐ When I got stuck, I kept going and came back later

☐ My last line is as clear as my first

☐ My log row is complete and honest

Tick every box you can say yes to. Each 'no' becomes your next goal.

Figure 8 — The self-check. Tick what is true; each unticked box is a next goal.

What to look for: a full page or more, written in one sitting; every word readable on the last line as on the first; spaces between words held to the end; a log row with honest minutes and one real next goal; a self-check ticked honestly.

Answers

Q1. (i)–(c), (ii)–(d), (iii)–(a), (iv)–(b).

Q2. Answers vary. A sample is in the full solutions.

Q3. Answers vary. The number of stops is the point — most writers stop more than they think.

Q4. Any one move, with a one-sentence reason that fits you.

Q5. A time of 10–15 minutes, plus one named self-check line.

Q6. One complete log row: date, task and section, minutes, what you wrote, legibility check, next goal.

Q7–Q9. The episode plus its log row. Strength is judged by the self-check, not by the story.

Q10. Three honest sentences: easier, still hard, next goal.

CP1. The write (one sitting, full page, 25–30 minutes) plus the log row and the self-check, scored against the content description text.

Full solutions

Q1. Legibly — your writing is clear and easy for anyone to read (c). Fluently — you write at a steady pace, without many stops (d). Automatically — you form letters without thinking about each one (a). For sustained periods — you keep writing, without a break, for a long time (b).

Q2. A sample answer: *Line 9 — the words “and then” run together; there is no space between them. Line 14 — the tail of my g stops reaching the tail line.* Your page will show its own slips; naming them in the zone words is the skill.

Q3. A typical two-minute count is three to six stops. If yours is higher, that is not bad news — it is the baseline your stamina plan starts from.

Q4. A model reason for (a): *I will leave a gap and come back later, because last time one hard word stopped me for a whole minute.* The reason matters more than the letter.

Q5. A model target: *12 minutes, and I will work on “there is space between my words”.* Short time, one habit — both easy to check in the log.

Q6. A model first row: *24 Jul | story opening (3E) | 12 | wrote my opening twice | clear, but two words ran together | leave a space between every word.* Honest minutes, one slip, one goal.

Q7–Q9. A strong episode shows four things: the minutes are honest; the writing kept going (planning stops do not count); a keep-going move was used at least once; and the log row names one slip and one next goal. The story itself is marked by 3E, 5D or 5E — this section marks the writing *as* writing.

Q10. A model look-back: *Fifteen minutes is easy now. My last lines still get big when I hurry. Next time I will slow down for the last three lines.* Three sentences, all honest, all checkable.

CP1. The checkpoint is scored against the content description text itself. Legibly: hand the page to someone else — every word reads. Fluently and automatically: one sitting, steady to the end, no long stalls. For sustained periods: 25 to 30 minutes, a full page or more. The log row and the self-check are the paperwork that closes the loop.