

English Level 8

Chapter 1 — Language: relationships, roles and text structure

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Contents

Section	Page
How language shapes relationships and roles	2
Layering meaning in evaluation: simile, metaphor and rhetorical devices	11
How texts are structured for their purpose, including hybrid texts	23
Cohesion: strengthening internal structures with evidence, quotations and substantiation	38

How language shapes relationships and roles

Victorian Curriculum 2.0 English · Level 8 · Language strand · Language for interacting with others · Code VC2E8LA01 · draws on elaboration .E01

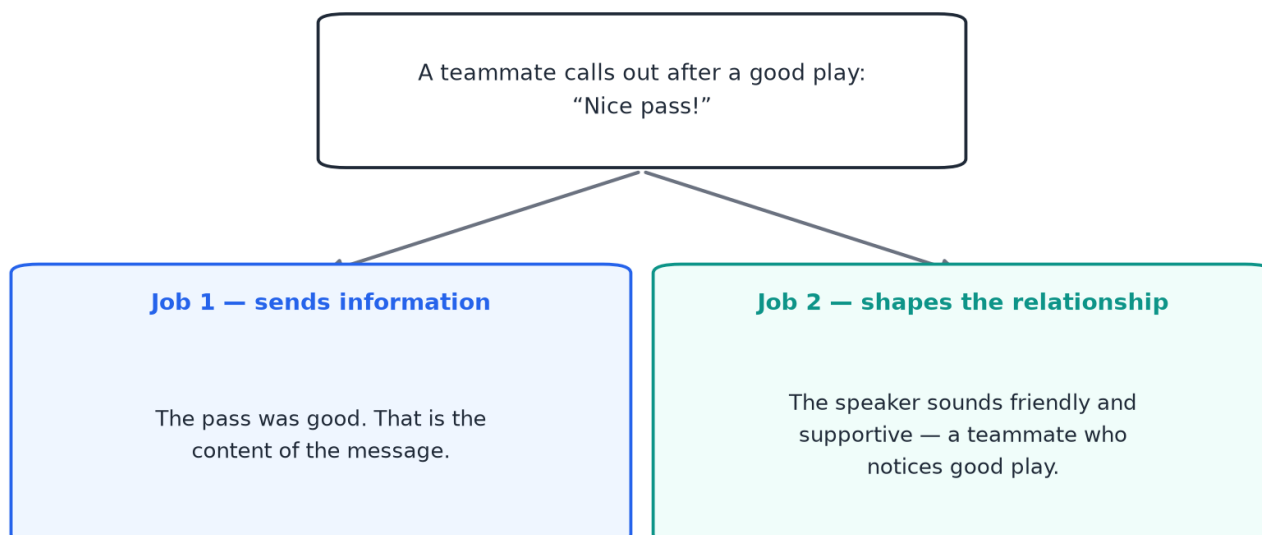
What this section teaches (content description, verbatim): *Students learn to understand how language shapes relationships and roles.*

Theory

Language does two jobs at once.

Every time someone speaks or writes, their words carry information — and at the same time they say something about the people involved. A teammate who calls out “Nice pass!” tells you the pass was good (job 1) and shows what kind of teammate they are — someone who notices and supports (job 2). You already know that people use words to show who they are. This section follows what those word choices do *between* people: how they build relationships and mark out roles.

One message, two jobs



Every message does both jobs at once. This section studies Job 2: how the words people choose build their relationships with others and mark out the roles they hold.

A diagram titled “One message, two jobs”, showing a speech bubble with “Nice pass!” branching to two boxes: “Job 1 — sends information” and “Job 2 — shapes the relationship”.

Group identity is built out of language.

Words we use in this section. The Victorian Curriculum uses the idea of *group identity* but does not define it. This section treats *group identity* as the feeling that people belong to a group and are set apart from people outside it, and every question here is answerable on that definition alone. *Solidarity*, the curriculum’s word for members standing together, means here the feeling of connection and support between people who share something. *In-group* words are words that belong inside the group — its members know them, outsiders do not.

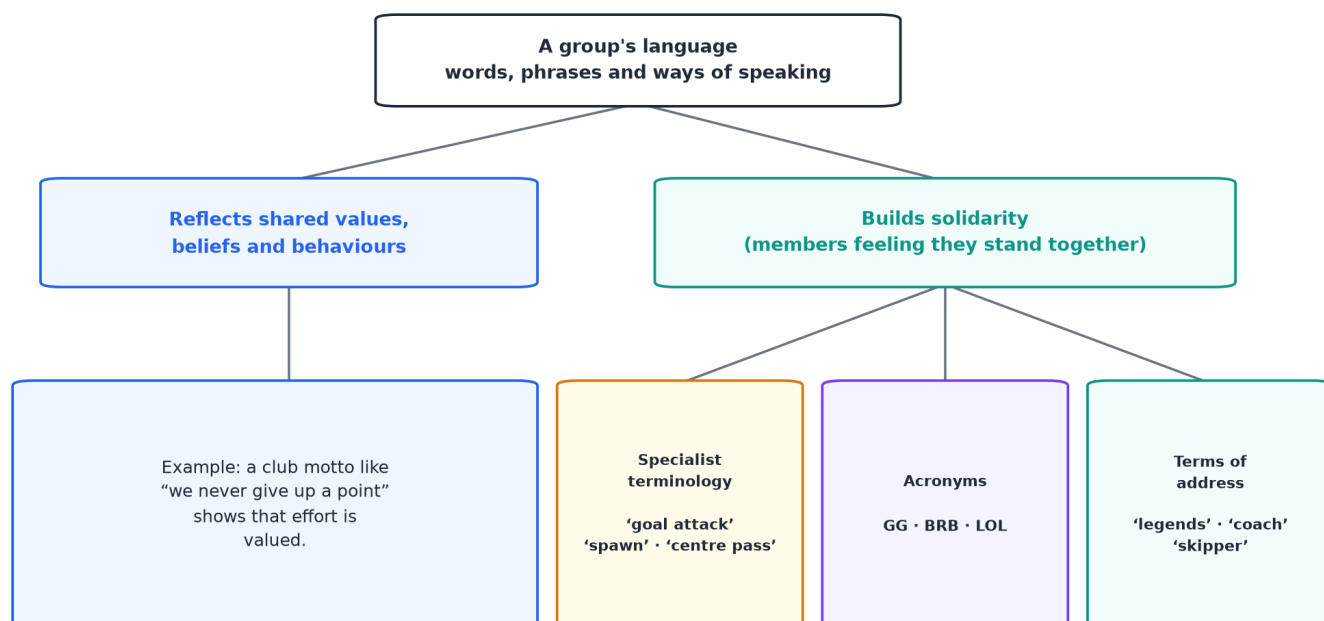
A group forms its identity in two linked ways, shown in the map below:

- **Its language reflects shared values, beliefs and behaviours.** The words a group repeats show what the group prizes.
- **Its language builds solidarity.** The curriculum names three choices that do this: **specialist terminology**, **acronyms** and **terms of address**.

Those three choices, defined:

- **Specialist terminology** — words only members of a group really use. Netball has its own (*goal attack*, *goal defence*, the *centre pass*); Australian rules football has its own (*ruck*, *half-back flank*); online games have theirs (*spawn*, *buff*).
- **Acronym** — a short form built from the first letters of a longer phrase: *GG* (good game), *BRB* (be right back), *LOL* (laughing out loud), *GS* (goal shooter).
- **Term of address** — the word you use to call or greet someone: *legends*, *mate*, *skipper*, *Coach*, *Mr Nguyen*, *Dr Lee*.

How language builds a group identity



A group's words do two things at once: they show what the group believes, and they pull members closer together. Both build the group's identity.

A concept map titled “How language builds a group identity”: a top node “A group’s language” branches to “Reflects shared values, beliefs and behaviours” and “Builds solidarity”, and the solidarity branch splits into three boxes labelled “Specialist terminology”, “Acronyms” and “Terms of address”, each with short examples.

The table below puts the three choices side by side across three sample groups. The elaboration for this content description uses teenage groups and sportspeople as its examples, so those are the groups sampled here.

Three groups, three kinds of group words

Sample groups created for this book

Group	Specialist terminology	Acronyms	Terms of address	Shared values on show
School netball club (sample)	goal attack · centre pass · steal	GG (good game) · GS (goal shooter)	legends · squad · coach	effort and team spirit matter
Online game squad (sample)	spawn · buff · nerf	GG (good game) · BRB (be right back)	squad · mate · team	everyone gets a turn to play
Teen friend group (sample)	nicknames for the usual hang-out spots	LOL (laughing out loud) · IKR (I know, right)	bestie · bro · legends	humour and loyalty

GG (good game) is a real acronym used widely in online games, and GS is the real short form for goal shooter in netball. The other words are samples chosen to show the pattern.

A table titled “Three groups, three kinds of group words” with rows for a school netball club, an online game squad and a teen friend group, and columns for specialist terminology, acronyms, terms of address and the shared values on show.

Acronyms are membership badges.

Short forms are quick to type and hard to mistake — and they do a second job. Knowing what *GG* means without being told is part of being inside the group.

An acronym: built from first letters, worn like a badge



Short forms like this are fast to type and hard to mistake. They also do a second job: if you know what *GG* means, you are inside the group; if you have to ask, you are outside it.

Other examples: BRB (be right back) · LOL (laughing out loud) · GS (goal shooter, in netball)

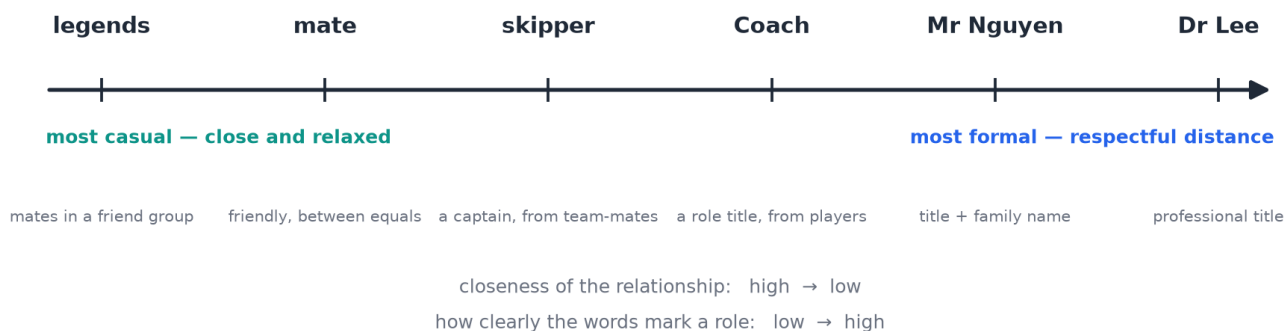
Sportspeople and teenage groups both build these short forms. The words change; the pattern is the same.

A diagram titled “An acronym: built from first letters, worn like a badge” showing the phrase “good game” reduced to its first letters “G G” and then to the acronym “GG”, with notes that short forms mark who is inside the group.

Terms of address shape roles and formality.

The word you choose for someone places the relationship on a scale. Role words (*Coach*, *Captain*) name the part a person plays. Title plus family name (*Mr Nguyen*, *Dr Lee*) shows respect and a little distance. Casual forms (*mate*, *legends*) show closeness. Changing the word changes the relationship: a student who called the principal “mate” would be changing the rules of that relationship — on purpose, or by accident.

Terms of address sit on a formality scale



The same person can be “mate” to a friend and “Mr Nguyen” to a student. The address chosen helps make the relationship what it is.

A horizontal formality scale titled “Terms of address sit on a formality scale” with the terms “legends”, “mate”, “skipper”, “Coach”, “Mr Nguyen” and “Dr Lee” placed from most casual to most formal, noting that closeness falls while clarity of role rises along the scale.

The same words draw a boundary.

Language that pulls members together also marks who is outside. If you have to ask what *the calls* mean, you are not yet inside the group. That is not a flaw in group language — it is part of how groups work. Noticing both sides, the pulling-in and the marking-out, is a key analytical move in this section.

How to analyse group language.

When a task asks what language is *doing* to relationships and roles, use four moves: make a **claim**, quote the **evidence**, write the **explanation** (what the choice makes of the relationship or role), and **link** back to the question. The scaffold at the end of this section shows one worked point.

Worked examples

Example 1 — scaffolded

The sample group chat below was created for this book. Small raised numbers mark features of group language; the key sits beside the chat.

Sample group chat with features of group language marked

A netball club team chat, created for this book

Zoe: BIG W today, legends¹!

Marcus: Our full court press³ worked a treat.

Zoe: Shoutout to Ivy for that steal³ at the end. Ice cold⁴.

Ivy: GG² squad¹, proud of us all.

Marcus: Coach¹ says training Tuesday 5 pm sharp.

Zoe: Bet⁴. See you all there.

What the marks mean

¹ term of address

² acronym

³ specialist terminology

⁴ in-group expression

Shared values on show

effort ("worked a treat"),
support ("proud of us all"),
humour ("ice cold")

Nobody explains these words to a new reader. Knowing them — or not knowing them — is part of what makes you a member or a visitor to this chat.

A sample netball club group chat with small raised numbers on words such as “legends”, “full court press”, “steal”, “GG”, “squad”, “Coach”, “ice cold” and “bet”, beside a key labelling them as terms of address, an acronym, specialist terminology and in-group expressions, plus a panel listing the shared values on show.

Marked word	Feature	What it shows about the relationship or role
legends ¹	term of address	One warm name for the whole group includes everyone at once.
full court press ³ , steal ³	specialist terminology	Only people who know netball can follow — shared knowledge pulls members together.
GG ²	acronym	A badge: members know it without being told.
squad ¹	term of address	Names the players as one unit, not as separate people.
Coach ¹	role word used as address	The word itself carries the role of the adult in charge.
Ice cold ⁴ , Bet ⁴	in-group expressions	A shared style that shows humour and support.

Comment. Nobody in that chat explains a single word to an outsider. The chat still does job 2 in every line: it keeps building the team even while it passes on news about the win and Tuesday’s training.

Example 2 — unscaffolded

The sample scene below was created for this book: the first training of the season at a netball club.

One club, three roles, three voices

First training of the season — a scene created for this book



Each speaker’s role — coach, captain, newcomer — is built by the language they use. Change the words and the roles change too.

A diagram titled “One club, three roles, three voices” with three cards — Coach Mr Nguyen, Priya the captain, and Ava a new player — each showing one line of sample speech and short notes on how the language builds that speaker’s role.

A model analytical paragraph about this scene:

At the Falcons’ first training, each speaker’s role is built by the language they use. The coach makes the official welcome and places Ava in a position — “she’s joining us in goal attack” — and those words carry the role of the adult in charge. The captain pulls Ava in with “we” (“we’ll run through the centre pass setups”) and takes the mentor’s part by offering to teach the calls. Ava’s own words mark her as the newcomer: “I don’t know all the calls yet” admits she is outside the group’s specialist terminology — for now. Together the three voices show how terms of address and specialist terminology shape both roles and relationships in a club.

How the paragraph works. It opens with a claim, quotes exact words as evidence, explains what each choice makes of the role or relationship, and links back to the question in the last line. The same four moves run in the product task below.

Practice questions

Scaffolded

Q1. Sort these words under the three headings *specialist terminology*, *acronym* and *term of address*: GG · goal attack · legends · BRB · spawn · skipper.

Q2. *Sample post, created for this book.* A club captain writes: “Huge win today. Our goal defence read the game all afternoon, and the whole squad backed each other. MVP goes to Ivy. Legends, every one. Training Tuesday — see you there.” Find one example of each: specialist terminology, acronym, term of address.

Q3. A club’s motto is “we never give up a point”. State the shared value this motto reflects, in one sentence.

Q4. Put these terms of address in order from most casual to most formal: *Dr Lee* · *mate* · *skipper* · *bestie*. Then state, in one sentence, what changes as you move along the scale.

Q5. A team message reads: “hey, training’s at 5, don’t be late :)”. Rewrite it for a formal club newsletter. Keep the information; change the relationship. (Hint: full sentences, a greeting, and no casual shortcuts.)

Q6. Copy the table and complete the row for a group of your choice (for example, a school chess club or a dance crew): one specialist term, one acronym or short form, one term of address, and the shared value they show.

Un scaffolded

Q7. Return to the sample chat in Example 1. In three to four sentences of connected prose — no table — explain how the language in the chat builds solidarity. Quote at least two exact phrases.

Q8. The word *mate* can warm a friendship or, from a stranger, sound like a challenge. Explain how the same word shapes two different relationships depending on who says it to whom.

Q9. Someone claims: “Slang always brings a group closer together.” List what this claim assumes. Then test it: does the claim survive if *always* is swapped for *sometimes*? What would that tell you about the original claim?

Q10. Think of a group you belong to — a team, a family, an online group, a crew. Name one word or phrase the group uses that an outsider might not understand, and explain what it shows about the group’s values and about who is inside.

Product task — analytic response

Sample spoken text, created for this book. **Ravenswood Basketball Club, under-14s, first training of the season.**

The captain, Jackson, speaks to the group:

“Welcome to the Ravens, everyone. Look around — this is your squad now. Some of you have been here for years and some of you are new. From today, none of that matters. In this gym, we are one team.

You’ll hear us say a few things that might sound new. When we call *freeze*, that means stop and listen. When someone yells *hot*, help is needed on defence. Learn the calls and you’ll never be lost out there.

New players — the older members will look after you. That’s how this club works. Everyone who wears this jersey had a first training once.

Alright, Ravens. Shoes on. Let’s get to work.”

Task. Write an analytic response of two to three points (200–300 words) answering: *How do the captain’s language choices shape relationships and roles in this club?* Build each point with the four moves below.

Scaffold for your analytical response

One worked point, in four moves

1 • Claim

Answer the question directly.

"The captain uses words that welcome new players into the club."



2 • Evidence

Quote the exact words from the text.

"He says, 'Everyone who wears this jersey had a first training once.'"



3 • Explanation

Show what those word choices make of the relationship or role.

"'Wears this jersey' makes the club one family. 'Had a first training once' reminds older members that they were once new too."



4 • Link

Tie back to the question, or hand over to your next point.

"These choices shape a club where newcomers belong from day one."

Repeat the four moves for each new point. Marks go to the reasoning: terms defined, evidence quoted, explanation made clear.

A four-step scaffold titled "Scaffold for your analytical response": Claim, Evidence, Explanation and Link, each box holding a one-line worked example drawn from the captain's speech.

How marks are decided. Marks go to the quality of your reasoning — terms defined, evidence quoted exactly, explanation made clear — not to the conclusion you reach. Two students can argue different readings of the captain and both earn full marks if both reason well.

Pairs with: Section 4A, interaction skills — the speaking-and-listening half of how language works between people.

Answers

Q1. Specialist terminology: goal attack, spawn. Acronym: GG, BRB. Term of address: legends, skipper.

Q2. Specialist terminology: *goal defence*. Acronym: *MVP* (most valuable player). Term of address: *Legends*. (*Squad* also works as a group term of address.)

Q3. The motto says effort matters more than the scoreboard: the group values trying until the very end.

Q4. Most casual to most formal: bestie → mate → skipper → Dr Lee. Moving along the scale, closeness falls and the words mark role or status more clearly.

Q5. Sample rewrite: “Dear players, please note that training begins at 5 pm this Tuesday. Please arrive on time.” The information is unchanged; the greeting, full sentences and polite “please” make the relationship formal.

Q6. Sample row (chess club): specialist term *checkmate*; short form *blitz* (a fast game); term of address *board one*; shared value: thinking before you move. Any consistent row earns the mark.

Q7. Points a good response makes: the warm group address (*legends, squad*) includes everyone at once; specialist terminology (*full court press, steal*) assumes shared knowledge and pulls members together; in-group expressions (*ice cold, bet*) show a shared style of humour and support. A sentence per feature, each with a quoted phrase, is the shape.

Q8. Between friends, *mate* says we are equals and close; the word builds warmth. From a stranger in an argument, the same word can skip the usual politeness and sound like a challenge — it changes the relationship by pretending to a closeness that is not there. Same word, different relationship, because the speakers and setting differ.

Q9. The claim assumes: slang is one thing; groups want to be closer; “closer” is measurable; and no group ever uses slang to keep people out. Swapping *always* for *sometimes* weakens the claim to something easily true — which shows the original word *always* was doing heavy lifting. A claim that only survives when weakened was stronger than its evidence.

Q10. Responses vary. A strong one names the word, explains the value it shows (loyalty, humour, effort, care), and states who is inside and who is outside it.

Model responses

Product task — one full model response.

The captain’s language choices build one club out of two kinds of members, and they give him the role of leader.

First, the captain uses words that make newcomers belong. He greets the whole group as “the Ravens” and calls it “your squad”, and the word *your* hands the club to the new players on their first night. He backs this with the claim “none of that matters”, which draws a line under the difference between old players and new ones. These choices shape a relationship in which a newcomer is a member from day one, not a visitor.

Second, the captain teaches the calls — “when we call *freeze* ... when someone yells *hot*” — and teaching is a leader’s role. By promising that “the older members will look after you”, he also gives the older players the role of guides and the new players the role of people being looked after. The line “everyone who wears this jersey had a first training once” holds those roles together: it reminds older members they once stood where the newcomers stand.

Together these choices shape a club where relationships run on care between old and new members, and where the captain’s role is to welcome, teach and join the two groups into one team.

Marker’s notes. Every point runs claim → evidence → explanation → link; every quotation is exact; the explanation always says what the choice *makes* of the relationship or role. A response arguing a different reading — for example, that the captain’s words keep the older members on top — earns equal marks with the same reasoning moves.

Layering meaning in evaluation: simile, metaphor and rhetorical devices

Curriculum link

Victorian Curriculum 2.0 English, Level 8. This section owns content description **VC2E8LA02**: “understand how language features such as simile and metaphor can add layers of meaning to the language of evaluation and substantiation”. It draws on the CD’s single elaboration, **VC2E8LA02.E01**: “identifying how authors use rhetorical devices that reveal the dark or serious aspects of a topic in humorous or amusing ways; for example, by making a statement but implying or meaning the opposite (irony), exaggerating or overstating something (hyperbole), imitating or mocking something (parody), and making something appear less serious than it really is (understatement)”. The matching line in the Level 8 achievement standard is: “They explore rhetorical and literary devices when evaluating and substantiating.”

How the device words are used here. *Irony*, *hyperbole*, *parody* and *understatement* each carry other meanings in everyday talk — a surprise twist at the end of a film is often called “irony” too, even though nobody said the opposite of what they meant. That other sense is real, but it is not the one this section works with. In this section the four words are used in the sense given by the Victorian Curriculum 2.0 English elaboration quoted above (VCAA, export dated 29 July 2026): a statement that implies the opposite is **irony**; an overstatement is **hyperbole**; an imitation meant to mock is **parody**; a statement that makes something seem less serious than it really is is **understatement**. Other senses exist, but this section does not use them.

The language of evaluation, in one sentence. *Evaluation* is a writer’s judgement about something, and *substantiation* is the backing for that judgement — the reasons and evidence given for it. Level 7 students learn to use that language; this section takes it one step further. A judgement can be plain, or it can carry layers.

Theory

Layers of meaning. Read the judgement “The homework centre is good.” and you get one layer: a thumbs-up. Read “...settled into the work like rain finding soil” and you get the thumbs-up *plus* a picture of how it felt — calm, natural, soaking in. The second reading says more with the same number of words, and it gives the reader more to feel, picture and agree with. That is what a language feature adds to an evaluation.

The same judgement, with and without layers

Plain evaluation

Layered evaluation (simile)

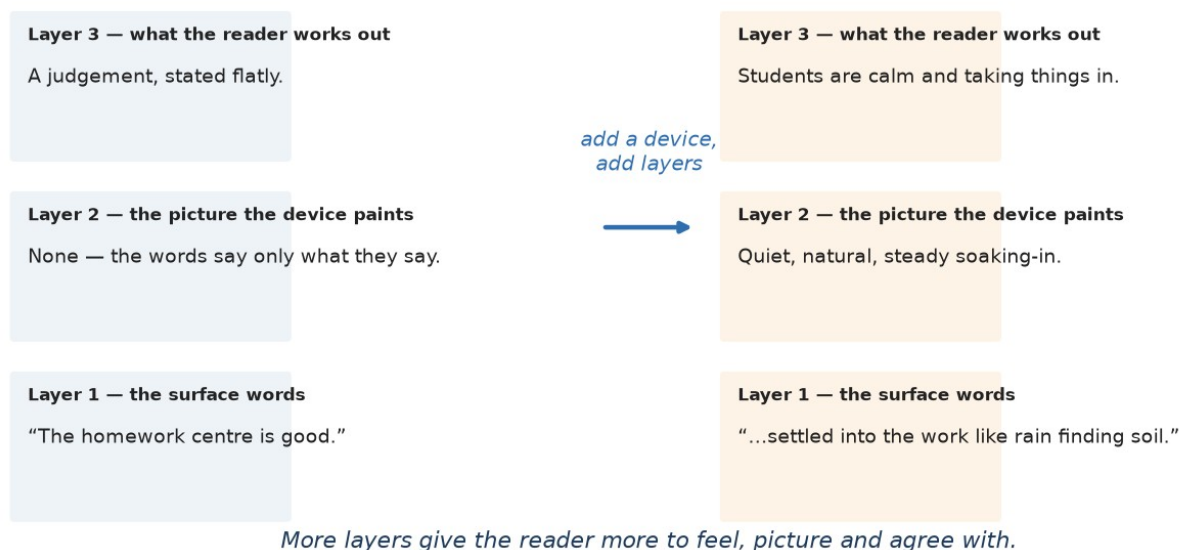


Diagram comparing a plain one-layer evaluation with a layered evaluation that carries three layers: the surface words, the picture the device paints, and what the reader works out

Simile and metaphor. A *simile* is a comparison that says one thing is *like* another; it uses the flag words “like” or “as”. A *metaphor* is a comparison that says one thing *is* another — it renames the thing instead of flagging the comparison. Both carry a picture from one thing across to another, so both can add a layer to an evaluation.

Simile and metaphor — two ways to layer an evaluation

	Simile	Metaphor
What it is	A comparison that says one thing is LIKE another.	A comparison that says one thing IS another.
How to spot it	Uses “like” or “as”.	No “like” or “as” — the thing is renamed.
Sample (written for this book)	“...forty students settled into the work like rain finding its way into soil.”	“The new homework centre is a quiet engine room for our year level.”
Layer it adds to evaluation	A picture of how it felt: calm, natural, soaking in.	A judgement: this place is where the real, quiet work happens.

Both compare. A simile waves a flag (“like”, “as”); a metaphor simply renames.

Table comparing simile and metaphor: what each is, how to spot it, an original sample of each, and the layer each adds to an evaluation

Four devices that joke on the surface and mean business underneath. The elaboration names four *rhetorical devices* — deliberate language choices that shape how a reader takes a point. These four all let a writer reveal the dark or serious side of a topic in a humorous or amusing way, and each steps away from plain, literal meaning in its own direction: irony says the opposite of what it means, hyperbole says it bigger than it is, understatement says it smaller than it is, and parody copies a style in order to laugh at it.

Four devices that make a serious point in a funny way

The words step away from plain, literal meaning — so the reader does the last bit of work.

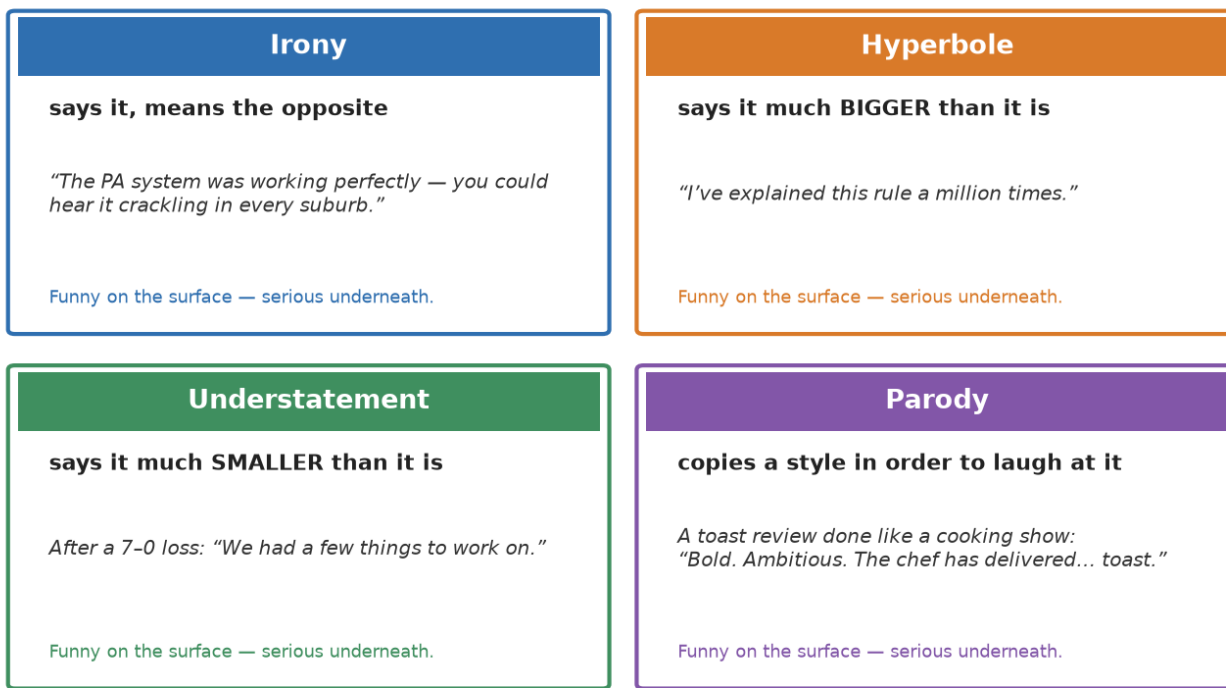


Chart of the four rhetorical devices — irony, hyperbole, understatement and parody — each card giving the direction the words travel away from their literal meaning and an original sample sentence

Hearing irony: a three-step habit. Irony is the easiest of the four to mis-hear, because its surface words are the opposite of the point. The habit is to walk three steps every time: what the words **say**; what the writer **means**; and what **serious point** lands because of the joke. The sample sentence below is written for this book.

Worked example — hearing the irony

Sample sentence (written for this book):

"After forty minutes in the queue, I was delighted to receive a bread roll so fresh it was still frozen in the middle."

Step 1 — What do the words SAY?

"delighted", "fresh" — happy feelings; praise for the roll.



Step 2 — What does the writer MEAN?

Forty minutes is far too long, and a "fresh" roll that is frozen is not fresh at all. The praise means the opposite.



Step 3 — What serious point lands because of the joke?

The canteen service is slow and the food is poorly made — criticism that is hard to argue with, because it smiles.

Worked example tracing an ironic sentence about a canteen queue through three steps: what the words say, what the writer means, and the serious point that lands because of the joke

The third step is the one that makes irony worth the trouble. A flat complaint — "the canteen is slow" — can be argued with. The ironic version walks the reader to the complaint, and a reader who reaches a point on their own holds it more strongly.

Hyperbole and understatement: one fact, two directions. Hyperbole blows a fact up; understatement shrinks it down. The joke in each case is the gap between the words and the fact — and the gap is also the evaluation, because it tells the reader how big the fact really felt.

One fact, two directions of travel

Plain fact: the school team lost the grand final 7-0.

Hyperbole — blows it UP

*"It was the saddest day in the history of sport;
the sun itself should wear a black armband."*

The words run far past the tick.



*The tick marks where the fact ends.
The joke is in the gap.*

Understatement — shrinks it DOWN

"Well — we had a few things to work on."

The words stop far short of the tick.



*The tick marks where the fact ends.
The joke is in the gap.*

Both make the same serious point: the loss was huge. Each lets the reader feel the size of it.

Diagram showing one plain fact evaluated two ways: hyperbole stretches the words far past the size of the fact, understatement stops the words far short of it, with a tick marking where the fact ends

Parody: the copy with a twist. A parody borrows the style of a text or a way of speaking that the reader knows, then aims that style at a subject too small or too silly for it. The copied style is the set-up; the mismatch is the twist; and what the laughter is aimed at is the point.

Worked example — spotting the parody

Sample review, written for this book:

*“And the dish we asked for? Bold. Ambitious. The chef has delivered...
toast. On a plate. Truly, a master at work.”*

Step 1 — Which style is being copied?

A TV cooking-show judge: big pauses, fancy words,
huge praise for small things.



Step 2 — Where is the twist?

The praise is aimed at a piece of toast. The grand style
and the tiny subject do not fit — that gap is the joke.



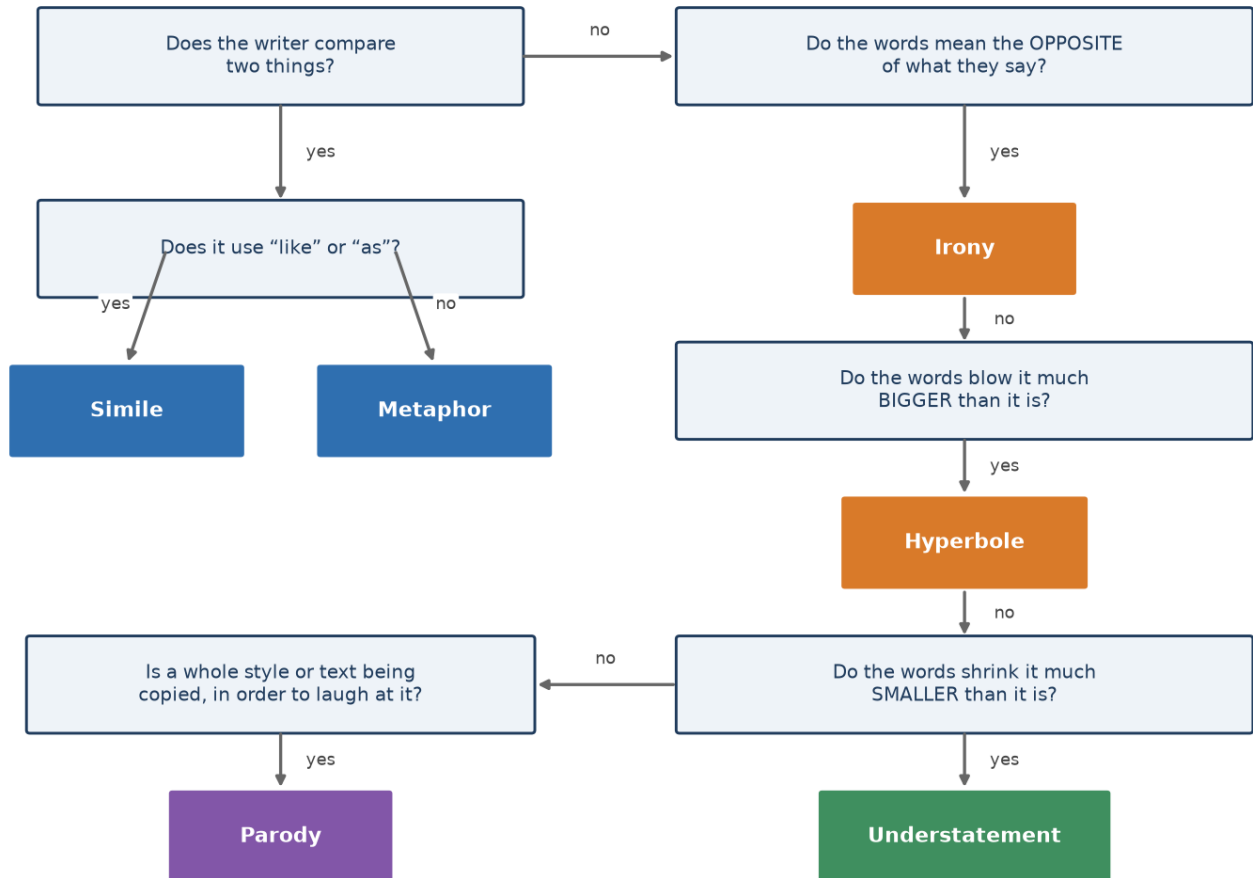
Step 3 — What is the parody really saying?

It laughs at shows that turn tiny things into drama — and it
can also evaluate: style here is doing the work that substance
should be doing.

Worked example of a parody review written like a TV cooking show judging a piece of toast, traced through three steps: the style being copied, the twist, and what the parody is really saying

Naming the device in front of you. When a sentence is in front of you and you need a name for what it is doing, follow the picker. Walk every “no” branch until a “yes” lands you somewhere — and remember that one sentence can hold two devices at once.

Which device is it? A picker you can follow



Two checks beat one: name the device, then say what layer it adds to the evaluation.

Flowchart for naming the device in a sentence: comparisons branch to simile or metaphor by the like-or-as test; other sentences walk a chain of yes-or-no checks that end at irony, hyperbole, understatement or parody

Worked examples

Example 1 — layered evaluation (simile and metaphor)

The sample below was written for this book. Read it once for the judgement, then read the table to see where the layers sit.

Sample text — “The homework centre, term 3” (written for this book)

The new homework centre is a quiet engine room for our year level. On Monday I watched forty students settle into the work like rain finding its way into soil. Nobody was shouting; nobody was showing off. The tutors moved from table to table, and every question got an answer. Last term, the library at lunchtime was a circus. This term, the centre has turned that noise into focus.

Words from the sample	What they add
“is a quiet engine room”	Metaphor. The centre is renamed as a machine that makes work happen without fuss — the judgement “this place works”, as a picture.
“settle into the work like rain finding its way into soil”	Simile. The picture is calm, natural soaking-in — students at ease, learning going in deep.
“the library at lunchtime was a circus”	Metaphor. A circus is chaos put on as a show — last

term in one picture, which makes this term's calm count for more.

Underneath all three layers sits one plain judgement: *the centre is a real improvement*. The devices do not change the judgement; they make the reader feel it and picture it, and a reader who feels a judgement is a reader who agrees with it.

Example 2 — a serious point delivered by jokes (irony, hyperbole, understatement)

The second sample was also written for this book. Every joke in it is one of the four devices, and every joke carries the same serious point.

Sample text — “House sports day” (written for this book)

House sports day began at 8:30 am, which gave the organising team plenty of time to lose the score sheets twice before lunch. The PA system was working perfectly; you could hear it crackling in every suburb for ten kilometres. When the final relay was called off because the only stopwatch went missing, our house captain summed the day up: “Well, at least the weather held.” It had rained since breakfast. Underneath the jokes sits a real point: the day was badly organised, and saying it with a smile made the criticism land harder than a complaint would.

Words from the sample	Device	Serious point underneath
“plenty of time to lose the score sheets twice”	Irony — praise for the timetable means blame for it.	The day was badly planned.
“working perfectly ... every suburb for ten kilometres”	Irony carrying hyperbole — the crackle is praised and blown up huge.	The sound gear let everyone down.
“Well, at least the weather held.”	Irony carrying understatement — the weather did not hold, and calling the disaster “at least” makes it feel bigger.	Even the backup plan failed.

Notice the pattern the two examples share: the devices never replace the judgement. They layer it. Plain first, layers second — a writer who cannot say the judgement plainly cannot layer it either.

Practice questions

Scaffolded

Q1. Use the picker in the flowchart figure to name the device doing the main work in each sentence. (a) “The choir’s version of the anthem was so slow that we aged a year between notes.” (b) The trip began with a broken bus and a three-hour delay. “A smooth start,” said the trip leader. (c) “The new goalie moves across the grass like a cat on a warm fence.” (d) “The group chat was a storm of last-minute panic.” (e) After the science lab flooded: “It was a bit damp.” (f) A movie-trailer voice reading the lunch menu: “In a world... where the pasta is never plain...”

Q2. Simile or metaphor? Name the device in each sentence and underline the word or words that told you. (a) “Her explanation was a ladder; every rung took us one step closer to the answer.” (b) “The crowd went quiet as a library at midnight.” (c) “His excuse was a paper shield.” (d) “The canteen queue moved like a snail in thick mud.”

Q3. Complete the irony table for sentences (a) and (b). The first row is done for you as an example.

Sentence	What the words say	What the writer means	Serious point
“The PA system was working perfectly; you could hear it crackling in every suburb.”	Praise: “perfectly”.	It was broken and painfully loud.	The sound gear let the day down.
(a) “After forty minutes in the queue, I was delighted to receive a bread roll so fresh it was still frozen in the middle.”			
(b) “Well, at least the weather held.” (It had rained since breakfast.)			

Q4. Rewrite each plain judgement twice: once as a simile, once as a metaphor. The first one is done for you. Plain: “The library is quiet.” Simile: “The library is as quiet as a Sunday morning.” Metaphor: “The library is a quiet harbour in a noisy school.” (a) “The canteen toasties are great.” (b) “The new oval is muddy.” (c) “The choir sounded lovely.”

Q5. For each plain fact, write one hyperbole and one understatement that evaluate it. The first one is done for you. Fact: the excursion bus was 45 minutes late. Hyperbole: “We were so late that the bus arrived to its own welcome party.” Understatement: “The bus was a little behind schedule.” (a) Fact: you waited two hours for a table at the pizza shop. (b) Fact: your team scored 12 goals.

Q6. Read the sample, written for this book, then answer (a)–(c).

Sample text — “Fete forecast” (written for this book)

Good evening. A sausage sizzle front is moving in from the car park, with a ninety per cent chance of onions by midday. Expect a cake stall high of record height near the hall, and a lucky-dip low over the junior courts. Bring an umbrella: the water slide is forecast to burst its banks.

- (a) Which style or kind of text is being copied? (b) Quote one line where the copy stops matching the original. (c) What is the parody really saying about the fete?

Unscaffolded

Q7. Read the sample review, written for this book. Choose **two different devices** from this section and, for each, climb the five-step ladder in one analytic paragraph: name the device, quote the exact words, say what they mean on the surface, say what the writer really means, and state the serious point that lands because of the device.

Sample text — “The canteen, reviewed” (written for this book)

After forty minutes in the queue, I was delighted to receive a bread roll so fresh it was still frozen in the middle. The queue itself was a river with no sea: it wound through the hall and never reached the counter. When I finally asked about the wait, the server smiled and said, “We’re quick today.”

Q8. Write your own evaluation, 6–8 sentences, of a school event you have actually been part of — a concert, camp, carnival, fete or canteen special. Use at least one simile, one metaphor and one of the four rhetorical devices. Underline each one, then add a final sentence stating the plain judgement underneath your layers.

Q9. Two versions of the same judgement. **A:** “The concert was too loud and too long, but the finale was good.” **B:** “The concert shook the fillings in our teeth and outstayed its welcome by a season; then the finale arrived like sunrise, and nobody remembered the cold.” Argue which version is the more effective evaluation. Support your choice with two reasons that name specific words.

Q10. “Irony lets a writer criticise without sounding bitter.” Do you agree? Support your answer with two sentences from this section, and test your own answer once by asking: would the serious point still land if the words were said plainly? Show your reasoning.

Product task — analytic response

Read the sample review, written for this book, then write the response described.

Sample text — “The Lucky Wombat takeaway” (written for this book)

Five stars for the slowest kitchen in the state. I ordered a pizza at six o’clock, and it arrived at seven, steaming with pride. The cheese had the texture of a rubber eraser. The chef — or possibly his shadow — called three times to say it was “coming right out”. When the box finally landed on my desk, it was as warm as a fridge. The manager apologised for “a small delay”, which is one way to describe sixty-five minutes. As theatre, it was outstanding. As dinner, it was a lesson in patience.

Task. In 250–300 words, analyse how this review layers its evaluation. Your response must discuss at least one simile or metaphor and at least two of the four rhetorical devices. For at least two of the devices you discuss, climb all five steps of the ladder in the figure below. End with one sentence stating the serious point the humour delivers.

The five-step ladder for an analytic response

Climb it for each device you discuss.

Step 1 Name the device.

“The writer uses irony...”

Step 2 Quote the exact words.

“...‘delighted to receive a bread roll so fresh it was still frozen’...”

Step 3 Say what the words mean on the surface.

The words sound like praise.

Step 4 Say what the writer really means.

The wait was too long and the roll was not fresh.

Step 5 State the serious point that lands because of the joke.

The canteen service lets students down.

A response that stops at Step 2 has identified. A response that reaches Step 5 has analysed.

The five-step ladder for an analytic response: name the device, quote the exact words, say what the words mean on the surface, say what the writer really means, and state the serious point that lands because of the joke

Where the marks sit. Marks are awarded for the reasoning steps, not for reaching the same conclusion as anyone else: naming and quoting accurately (steps 1–2); separating the surface meaning from the meant meaning (steps 3–4); and stating the serious point the device delivers (step 5). Two students who pick different devices can both earn full marks if their reasoning holds.

Answers

Q1. (a) hyperbole. (b) irony. (c) simile. (d) metaphor. (e) understatement. (f) parody.

Q2. (a) metaphor — no “like” or “as”; the explanation is renamed as a ladder. (b) simile — “quiet as”. (c) metaphor — the excuse is renamed as a paper shield. (d) simile — “like a snail”.

Q3. See solutions for model rows; check yours against the three-step irony habit: say, mean, serious point.

Q4. Answers will vary; a worked set is in the solutions. Check: similes carry “like” or “as”, metaphors rename, and both must keep the original judgement.

Q5. Answers will vary; a worked pair is in the solutions. Check: the hyperbole is far bigger than the fact, the understatement far smaller, and both keep the same fact.

Q6. (a) a TV or radio weather report. (b) e.g. “a sausage sizzle front is moving in from the car park”. (c) The fete is huge, loud and almost too big for the grounds to hold; saying it with a smile makes the point land as fond as well as funny.

Q7–Q10, product task. These are judged, not matched; see the solutions for worked models and the marking guide.

Fully-worked solutions

Q3. (a) Say: “delighted”, “fresh” — praise and happy feelings. Mean: the wait was far too long and the roll was not fresh at all. Serious point: the canteen service lets students down. (b) Say: comfort — at least one thing went right. Mean: nothing went right, not even the weather. Serious point: the day had no backup plan at all.

Q4. One worked set. (a) Simile: “The canteen toasties are like a warm handshake from the cook.” Metaphor: “The canteen toastie is a hug you can eat.” (b) Simile: “The new oval is like a sponge that swallowed a storm.” Metaphor: “The new oval is a chocolate milkshake with goals sunk in it.” (c) Simile: “The choir sounded like rain on a tin roof, if rain could tune itself.” Metaphor: “The choir was one voice with forty hearts in it.”

Q5. One worked pair each. (a) Hyperbole: “We waited so long for a table that I did my homework twice.” Understatement: “There was a bit of a wait.” (b) Hyperbole: “We scored so many goals the scoreboard ran out of numbers.” Understatement: “We had a pretty good day in front of goal.”

Q6. (a) The style of a broadcast weather report: fronts, chances, highs and lows, warnings. (b) Any one of: “a sausage sizzle front is moving in from the car park”; “a cake stall high of record height”; “the water slide is forecast to burst its banks”. (c) The parody says the fete is an event of weather-scale size and chaos — busy, smelly, loud and fun. The serious layer is an evaluation: the fete is big to the point of bursting, and the school should be proud and a little worried at once.

Q7. Two worked paragraphs, one per device. *Irony*: The writer uses irony when the server says, “We’re quick today.” On the surface the words praise the service. In fact the reviewer has waited forty minutes, so the praise means the opposite: the service is slow. The serious point — that students lose lunch breaks to the queue — lands harder because the reader walks to it through the joke. *Metaphor*: The writer uses metaphor in “the queue was a river with no sea”. On the surface this names the queue as a river. What the writer means is that it moved and wound on and on and never arrived, since a river with no sea never reaches an end. The serious point is the same complaint made into a picture: the queue wastes students’ time.

Q8. A worked sample (written for this solution, not a recipe to copy). “The year 8 concert was a ship in a storm for the first half: wrong notes breaking over us like waves, and the conductor steering through it all with a face of stone. Then the choir stood up, and the ship found its harbour. The last song was as warm as a kitchen on a cold night. We left cheering for the very songs that had nearly sunk. Plain judgement: the concert started badly and finished brilliantly.” The simile (“like waves”, “as warm as a kitchen”), the metaphors (“a ship in a storm”, “found its harbour”) and the irony (“cheering for the very songs that had nearly sunk”) each layer the one judgement stated plainly at the end.

Q9. A worked argument. Version B is the more effective evaluation. First reason: B layers the complaint instead of just stating it — “shook the fillings in our teeth” is hyperbole that makes the reader feel the volume, and “outstayed its

welcome by a season” is hyperbole that turns “too long” into a picture, so the criticism is substantiated by feeling as well as fact. Second reason: B’s simile “the finale arrived like sunrise” does the evaluation’s other half — it makes the praise for the finale physical, light and warmth after noise and cold — so the contrast between the two halves is felt, not just reported. A fair point for A: it is plainer and quicker, which suits a short note; but as an evaluation meant to persuade, B’s layers carry more weight.

Q10. A worked response. I agree. Irony wraps a criticism in a joke, so the writer sounds wry rather than bitter, and the reader does the work of reaching the complaint. In “The PA system was working perfectly; you could hear it crackling in every suburb”, the flat version — “the PA system was broken” — sounds like a complaint; the ironic version sounds like shared humour, yet the serious point (the gear let the day down) lands just the same. The substitution test shows the device doing its work: say the words plainly and the point survives but the warmth goes, and the writer sounds cross. So irony is not decoration; it changes *how* the criticism is heard, which is exactly what the elaboration means by revealing a serious aspect in a humorous way.

Product task. A worked model response (288 words). *The Lucky Wombat review layers every judgement it makes. The opening line, “five stars for the slowest kitchen in the state”, is irony: star ratings are praise, and the words it praises are blame, so the reader knows at once that the review’s ratings mean their opposites. The same line carries hyperbole — “slowest kitchen in the state” blows one bad night up to state scale — and the pair of devices sets the review’s whole method: say the opposite, say it big. The cheese simile, “the texture of a rubber eraser”, compares the cheese to something nobody eats, so the picture does the insulting and the writer stays clean. The box that was “as warm as a fridge” is a second simile doing colder work: a pizza box should be hot, so the comparison is really a verdict. The manager’s “a small delay” is reported understatement; the review then shrinks it further with irony — “which is one way to describe sixty-five minutes” — so the gap between the manager’s words and the fact becomes the joke and the evidence at once. The closing lines, “as theatre, it was outstanding; as dinner, it was a lesson in patience”, are metaphor: the meal is renamed twice, first as a show, then as a test of character, and the two renamings together state the review’s whole case in a single balanced pair. Every device climbs the same ladder: praise on the surface, blame underneath, and a serious point at the bottom — that the takeaway’s service and food failed a customer for a full hour. The humour is not there to soften that point. It is there to make the reader reach it, agree with it, and remember it.*

Every sample text in this section — the homework centre, house sports day, the fete forecast, the canteen reviews and the Lucky Wombat takeaway — was written for this book. No published text is quoted.

How texts are structured for their purpose, including hybrid texts

English 8 · Chapter 1 — Language: relationships, roles and text structure · Section 1C Strand: Language · Sub-strand: Text structure and organisation Content description VC2E8LA03: *explain how texts are structured depending on their purpose and how language features vary, recognising that some texts are hybrids* Draws on: VC2E8LA03.E01 (how critical responses, expositions, text interpretations and discussions are typically structured), VC2E8LA03.E02 (how the placement of images and written text in linear and non-linear online texts serves purpose), VC2E8LA03.E03 (the structures and language features of narratives, literary recounts, memoirs, drama scripts, poems, formal speeches, comparisons, creative responses, discussions and debates — and the hybrid texts that combine them) Coming in from Level 7: VC2E7LA03 — identify and describe how texts are structured differently depending on their purpose, and how language features vary in texts · Handing on to Level 9: VC2E9LA03 — explore the ways that text structures and language features can be adapted and altered according to purpose

Theory

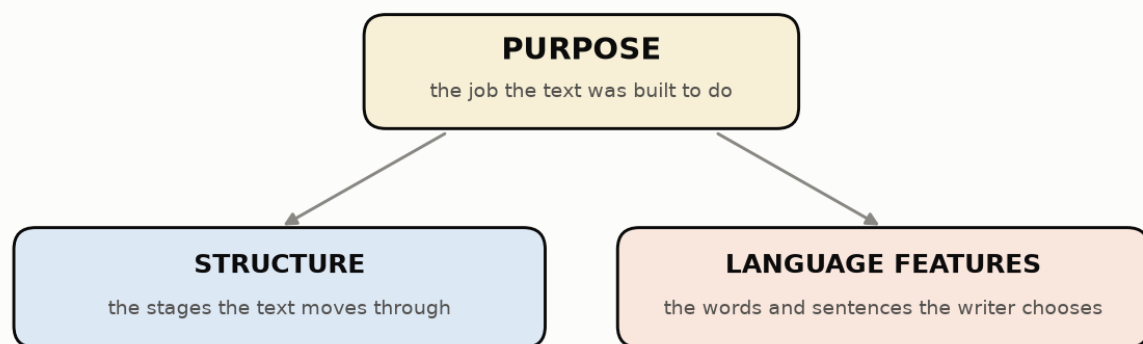
Two students are asked the same question about the same speech: *why does the speech open with a story?*

Answer 1. The speech opens with a story about the speaker's worst school day.

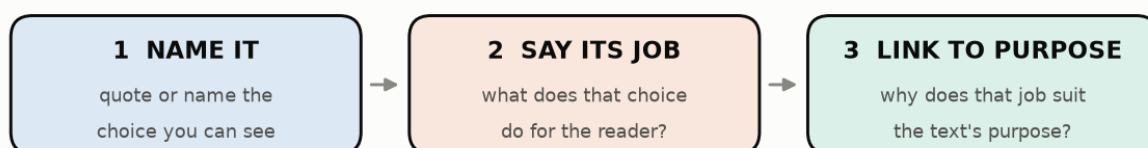
Answer 2. The speech opens with a story about the speaker's worst school day so the audience feels she has lived the problem she asks them to fix. Once they trust the story, they are readier to accept her argument.

Both answers are true. Only the second one **explains**. In Level 7 you learned to *identify* and *describe* how texts are structured for their purpose — to see the stages a text moves through and the language features it uses. Level 8 takes the next step: **explain** — show *how* a structural or language choice serves the purpose of the text.

A text's **structure** is the ordered stages it moves through from start to finish, and its **language features** are the choices the writer makes with words and sentences. Purpose decides both, and the explain move has three steps:



At Level 8 you do more than spot these. You EXPLAIN them, in three moves:



Worked on one choice from a story's tense moment:

NAME IT: "the sentences get short" → ITS JOB: slows the reader right at the moment of choice
→ LINK TO PURPOSE: making us wait makes us feel the character's wait — and a story's purpose is to make us feel it

Flow diagram. A gold PURPOSE box, "the job the text was built to do", points with arrows to a blue STRUCTURE box, "the stages the text moves through", and an orange LANGUAGE FEATURES box, "the words and sentences the writer chooses". Below, a three-step explain chain: 1 NAME IT — quote or name the choice you can see; 2 SAY ITS JOB — what does that choice do for the reader?; 3 LINK TO PURPOSE — why does that job suit the text's purpose? A worked line applies the chain to short sentences at a story's tense moment.

About the word "hybrid". The Victorian Curriculum uses the word *hybrid* here but does not define it. This section therefore treats it as: **a hybrid text is a text that combines the structures or language features of two or more text types** — a speech that tells a story, an article that argues. Other writers use the word in slightly different ways; every task in this section is answerable on this definition alone.

Part 1 — Texts that respond

Some texts are written *in response to* other texts, or to issues people argue about. The curriculum names four. Meet them first as definitions; the table after them is your map.

- A **critical response** takes a position about a text — a film, novel, poem, game — and argues for that position with evidence from the text. Unlike a review, which helps a reader decide *is it worth my time?*, a critical response argues *how does this text work, and how well?* Its body paragraphs run **point** → **evidence** → **explanation**.
- An **exposition** takes one side of an issue and builds the case for it across several arguments. It is the formal, developed form of the one-sided argument you met in Level 7. Its map: **thesis** (the position, stated up front) → arguments with reasons and evidence → an answer to the other side's best point → a strong close that restates and calls for action.
- A **text interpretation** explores what a text could *mean* beneath the surface. It points to details that seem to carry more than their surface meaning, offers a reading of them, and supports that reading from the text. It asks *what is this really about?* rather than *is it good?*
- A **discussion** weighs both sides of an issue before it judges — the balanced shape you met in Level 7: **issue** → **arguments for** → **arguments against** → **recommendation**.

Four texts that respond — each built for a different job

Model texts and definitions in this section are written for this book.

Text type	Purpose	Typical structure	Key language features
Critical response	to take a position about a text and argue for it	name the text and state the position → points backed with evidence from the text → conclusion that extends the position	present tense · evaluative words (powerful, unconvincing) · short quotations · “the writer...”
Exposition	to win the reader to one side of an issue	thesis (position) → arguments with reasons and evidence → answer to the other side's best point → strong close	modal verbs (should, must) · connectives (firstly, however) · inclusive we and our
Text interpretation	to explore what a text could mean beneath the surface	name the text → point to details that carry hidden meaning → offer a reading → support it → say what the reading opens up	firm-but-careful words (suggests, could stand for, reads as) · quotations · present tense
Discussion	to weigh both sides of an issue before judging	raise the issue → arguments for → arguments against → position or recommendation	balancing words (some say... others say...) · contrast connectives (on the other hand) · a judged close

Table of four response text types with columns for purpose, typical structure and key language features. *Critical response: take and argue a position about a text; name and state the position, points backed with evidence, conclusion that extends; present tense, evaluative words, short quotations. Exposition: win the reader to one side; thesis, arguments with reasons and evidence, answer to the other side's best point, strong close; modal verbs, connectives, inclusive we and our. Text interpretation: explore what a text could mean beneath the surface; name the text, point to details, offer a reading, support it; firm-but-careful words such as suggests, could stand for, reads as. Discussion: weigh both sides before judging; issue, arguments for, arguments against, recommendation; balancing words and contrast connectives.*

About interpretations. An interpretation is a *reading*, not *the* reading. Two careful readers can offer different interpretations of the same text and both be worth listening to — what matters is whether the reading is supported by the text. When you offer one, a reader must be able to point at your evidence and say, “yes, that is really there.”

A strong exposition does one thing beginners often skip: it meets the other side's **best** point, states it honestly, and answers it. Ignoring the other side is easy; answering its strongest reason is persuasive. Read a model exposition with its stages marked — an original text written for this book.

Model text A — “Later starts, better learning”

An original exposition written for this book. The claims are the kind a student could test at their own school.

Our school day should start later. At the moment the first bell rings at 8:30 am, and many students arrive half asleep. A later start would lift learning and protect health.

THESIS

First, students learn more when they are awake. In the teenage years the body's sleep pattern shifts later, so most young people cannot fall asleep early even when they try. A student who sleeps at 11 pm and rises at 6:30 am is not ready to think in period 1 — and teachers can see it. Ask any morning class: the hardest work of the day is staying awake.

ARGUMENT 1

Second, a later start protects health. Teenagers need eight to ten hours of sleep a night, and many get far less. A student short of sleep is more likely to fall ill, and less likely to keep up with training, homework and friends.

ARGUMENT 2

The strongest case against change is the timetable: buses, sport and parents' work all run around the current hours. That is a real cost, and it deserves an answer. But timetables are tools we made, and tools can be remade. One term's trial would show us what needs to shift.

THE OTHER SIDE — AND THE ANSWER

For better learning and better health, the first bell should ring later. Put the question to the school council: trial a 9:30 am start next term, and let the results speak.

CONCLUSION AND CALL

One position, argued in order — and the other side's best point met head-on before the close.

Model text A, an original exposition titled “Later starts, better learning”, printed as five short paragraphs with coloured stage bars. Paragraph 1 THESIS: the school day should start later, for learning and health. Paragraphs 2 and 3 ARGUMENT 1 and ARGUMENT 2: awake students learn more; a later start protects health. Paragraph 4 THE OTHER SIDE — AND THE ANSWER: the timetable is a real cost, but timetables are tools we made and can remake. Paragraph 5 CONCLUSION AND CALL: trial a 9:30 am start next term.

Part 2 — The wider family

The curriculum names a whole family of texts whose structures serve their purposes. The table is your reference for all ten; the samples under it show the family at work.

The text family — ten types, ten jobs

Structures are maps, not cages: writers bend them. All terms are defined in this section.

Text type	Purpose	Structure	Key language features
Narrative	to draw readers in and move them with a story	orientation → complication → rising tension → resolution	scene-setting, words for the senses, sentence length used for tension
Literary recount	to retell real events with the craft of story	scene set → events in order → closing reflection	past tense, chosen detail, a shaping voice
Memoir	to look back on part of the writer's own life and make meaning of it	scenes from the past woven with what the writer sees now	first person, a then-and-now double view, honest feeling
Drama script	to be performed by actors to an audience	acts and scenes; characters' lines; stage directions	character names before lines, directions in brackets, words built to be spoken
Poem	to make meaning and feeling through patterned language	lines and stanzas shaped by sound and image	rhythm, rhyme, imagery, words chosen with care
Formal speech	to win a listening audience to a position	greeting → position → arguments signposted in order → strong close	spoken rhythms, rhetorical devices, direct address to the audience
Comparison	to place two texts side by side and show how they work alike and differently	point by point (or text by text), each point covering both texts	contrast connectives (while, whereas, both... but...), even-handed wording
Creative response	to answer a text by making something new	keeps some features of the source text, changes others for a new purpose	borrowed voice, character or moment; adds what the source leaves out
Discussion	to weigh both sides of an issue before judging	issue → arguments for → arguments against → recommendation	balancing words (some say... others say...), contrast connectives
Debate	to win a formal argument judged on rules and reasons	teams with set roles; opening case; rebuttals; closing appeal to the judges	formal address, signposted points, rebuttal of the other side's claims

Table of ten text types with columns for purpose, structure and key language features. Narrative: draw readers in and move them; orientation, complication, rising tension, resolution; scene-setting, words for the senses, sentence length for tension. Literary recount: retell real events with the craft of story; scene set, events in order, closing reflection; past tense, chosen detail, a shaping voice. Memoir: look back on part of the writer's own life; scenes from the past woven with what the writer sees now; first person, a then-and-now double view. Drama script: to be performed; acts and scenes, characters' lines, stage directions; character names before lines, directions in brackets. Poem: meaning and feeling through patterned language; lines and stanzas shaped by sound and image; rhythm, rhyme, imagery. Formal speech: win a listening audience; greeting, position, arguments signposted in order, strong close; spoken rhythms, rhetorical devices, direct address. Comparison: two texts side by side; point by point; contrast connectives, even-handed wording. Creative response: answer a text by making something new; keeps some features of the source, changes others; borrowed voice, character or moment. Discussion: weigh both sides; issue, for, against,

recommendation; balancing words. Debate: win a judged argument; teams with set roles, opening case, rebuttals, closing appeal; formal address, signposted points, rebuttal.

Narrative, literary recount, memoir — three ways of telling. A **narrative** is an imagined story built to move the reader: orientation, complication, rising tension, resolution. A **literary recount** retells real events but borrows the narrative's craft — scene, chosen detail, a shaping voice. A **memoir** looks back over part of the writer's own life, weaving what happened *then* with what the writer sees *now*. Read the difference between the last two in these two original samples.

A literary recount — written for this book. The last race of the day went to the smallest runner on the track. Elle Marsh sat behind the leaders for three laps, patient as a shadow, and when the bell rang she did not sprint — she simply refused to be passed. The crowd was still on its feet when she crossed the line.

Notice the craft: a shaped scene, the figure of speech (*patient as a shadow*), and a closing line that gives the event a meaning. A plain news list of the same race — *1st E. Marsh, 2nd ...* — would carry the facts and none of the feeling.

A memoir — written for this book. In the photo I am seven, standing on the jetty with my fishing rod held too high. I remember the weight of the rod and the smell of the bait. What I did not know then — what the photo never shows — is that it was the last summer my grandfather took me fishing. Now, every time I see still water, I see him standing beside me.

The memoir moves in two tenses of the self at once: the seven-year-old on the jetty, and the writer now, reading the photo. That then-and-now double view is the memoir's signature structure.

Drama script — built to be performed. A **drama script** is not written to be read quietly; it is a set of instructions for a performance. Its parts all serve that purpose.

Reading a drama script — every part has a job

An original script sample written for this book. A script is built to be performed, not just read.

ACT 1, SCENE 2 — The school hall, after the bell.

Chairs stacked, a half-painted sign.

(Jin tapes up a banner. Sasha enters carrying a box of jars.)

Sasha: The jam stall sends thanks. They needed every jar we had.

Jin: And the raffle tickets? Did anyone count them?

Sasha: (setting the box down slowly) Four hundred and twelve.

Jin: That is not enough. The fair is on Friday.

Sasha: Then we sell more tomorrow. Second period, front gate, first up.

Jin: (grinning) You already made signs, did not you?

Sasha: Obviously.

(Lights fade as Sasha pulls a roll of signs from under her coat.)

Scene heading

names the act, the scene, the place and the time

Stage direction

tells actors what to do — never spoken aloud

Character name

sits before the line and says who speaks

Dialogue

the spoken words — they must carry the whole story

Bracketed direction

a small note on how to say or play the line

Closing direction

hands the scene to the lights and set crew

Original drama script sample titled *ACT 1, SCENE 2*, set in a school hall after the bell, with two characters, Jin and Sasha, preparing a school fair. Labels on the right name each convention and its job: scene heading (names the act, scene, place and time), stage direction (tells actors what to do — never spoken aloud), character name (sits before the

line and says who speaks), dialogue (the spoken words — they must carry the whole story), bracketed direction (a small note on how to play the line), closing direction (hands the scene to the lights and set crew).

Poem — patterned language. A **poem** makes meaning through lines and **stanzas** (a stanza is a grouped set of lines, the poem's version of a paragraph), and through sound and image. An original four-line sample:

The last bell hums, the chairs all scrape, the year folds up and slips away; we leave our names scratched in the gate, and take the summer's first long day.

The shape does work here that prose cannot: four even lines, a rhyme that closes each pair, and a final line that slows like the start of the holidays.

Formal speech — written to be heard. A **formal speech** is built for a listening audience: a greeting, a clear position, arguments signposted in order, and a strong close. Listeners cannot re-read a sentence, so a speech repeats its key words and moves in short, spoken rhythms. You will meet a full model speech in Part 4.

Comparison — two texts side by side. A **comparison** places two texts together to show how they work alike and differently, usually **point by point**: each point covers both texts before the next point begins. Contrast connectives (*while, whereas, both... but...*) do the joining. A sample move:

Both texts open with a question, but they use it differently. The speech asks its question to unite the room; the poem asks its question to leave the reader alone with it.

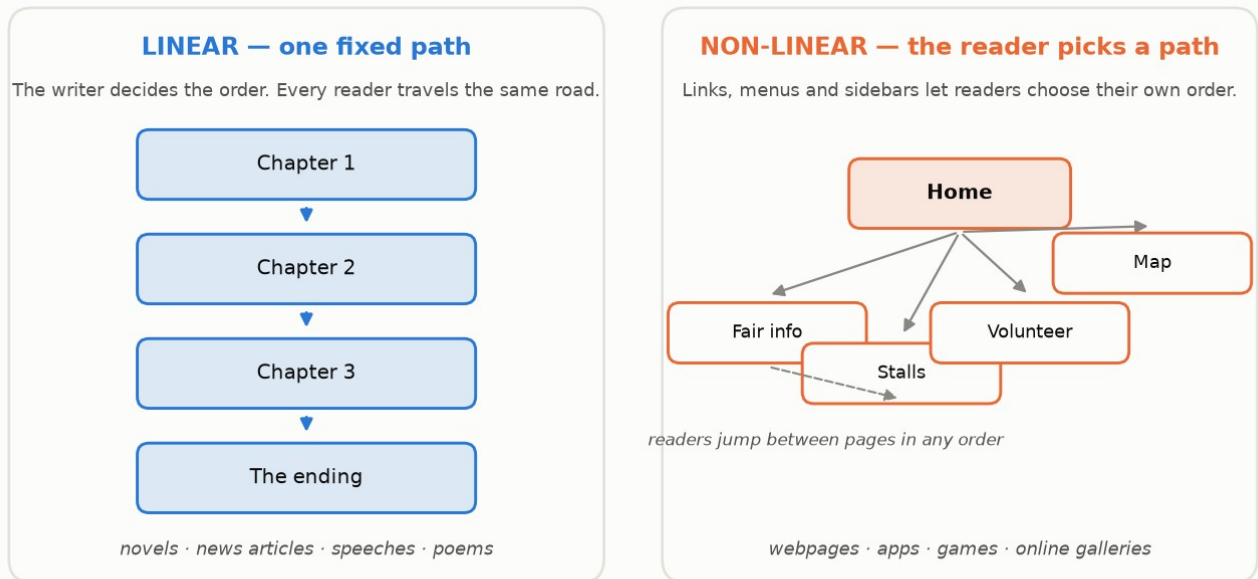
Creative response — answering by making. A **creative response** answers a text by making something new: a scene retold from another character's point of view, a missing chapter, a poem in answer to a novel. It keeps some features of the source — its characters, its moment, its voice — and changes others for its new purpose.

Debate — argument under rules. A **debate** is a formal spoken argument with teams, set roles and judges. Each side states its case, then **rebuttal** — a rebuttal is a direct answer to the other side's claims. A debate's structure forces what a good discussion chooses: the other side must be faced, out loud, in front of everyone.

Part 3 — Linear, non-linear, and where things sit

Some texts lead every reader down the same road in the same order: a novel, a speech, a news article. These are **linear** texts. Others let the reader choose the path — a webpage with a menu, links and sidebars is **non-linear**: two readers may move through it in different orders and both get what they need.

Two ways a text can lead a reader



Two panels. *LEFT — LINEAR, one fixed path: four blue boxes, Chapter 1 to The ending, joined top to bottom by arrows; note that the writer decides the order and every reader travels the same road; examples: novels, news articles, speeches, poems. RIGHT — NON-LINEAR, the reader picks a path: an orange Home box with arrows out to Fair info, Stalls, Volunteer and Map boxes that readers may visit in any order; examples: webpages, apps, games, online galleries.*

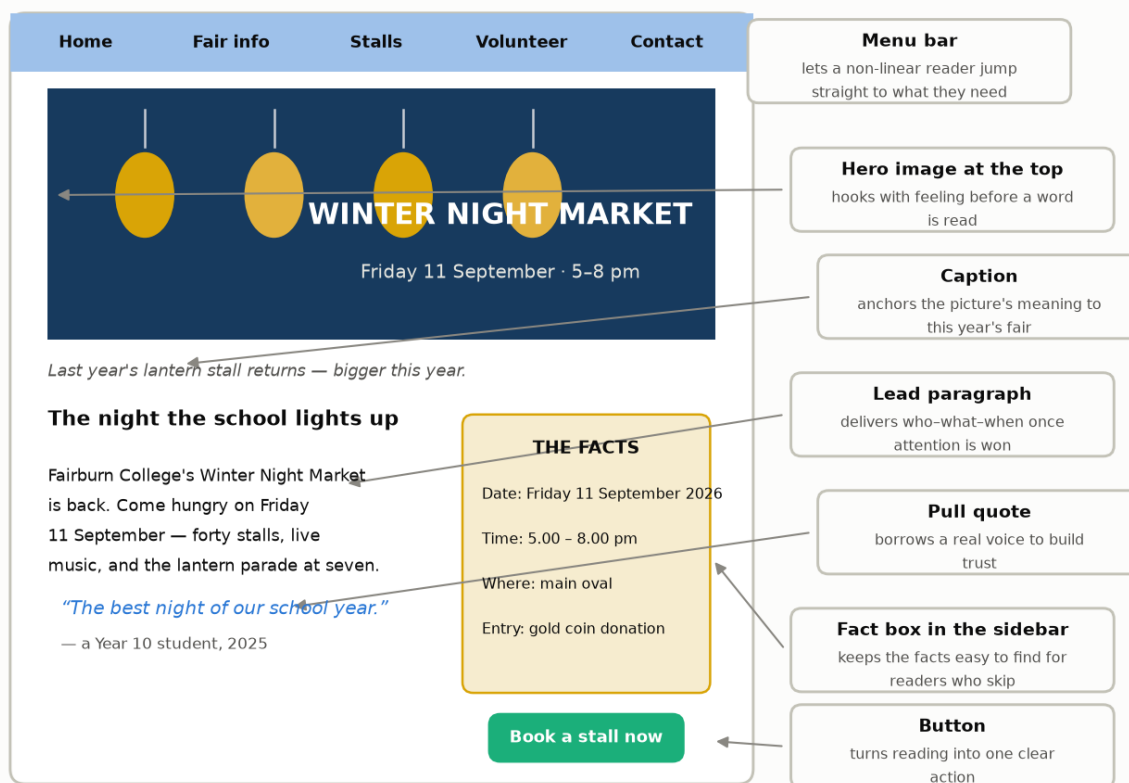
In a linear text, *order* carries meaning — a story's twist only works at the end. In a non-linear text, *placement* carries meaning instead: where a part sits on the screen tells the reader how important it is and what to do with it. The same is true of images and written text in any designed text:

- In a **news article**, the image sits under the headline to *show* the event the words report.
- In a **how-to page**, each diagram sits beside the step it explains.
- In an **event page**, the image sits at the very top, before any words, to hook with feeling.

Read an original webpage mock-up and its placement choices.

Where each part sits — and why (a webpage's placement choices)

An original mock-up written and drawn for this book. The school and event are imagined.



Original webpage mock-up for an imagined school event, the Fairburn College Winter Night Market, with callout labels naming each part and its job. Top menu bar (Home, Fair info, Stalls, Volunteer, Contact) lets a non-linear reader jump straight to what they need. A hero image of lanterns at the top, with the event name and date, hooks with feeling before a word is read. A caption under it — “Last year’s lantern stall returns — bigger this year” — anchors the picture’s meaning to this year’s fair. A lead paragraph delivers who-what-when once attention is won. A pull quote, “The best night of our school year”, borrows a real voice to build trust. A fact box in the sidebar keeps the facts easy to find for readers who skip. A “Book a stall now” button turns reading into one clear action.

Every placement on that page is a purpose decision. The picture comes first because feeling opens wallets and sign-up sheets; the facts sit in a sidebar because non-linear readers need to find them without reading everything; the button sits last because by then the page has done its persuading. Move the button to the top and the page demands before it asks; move the image below the fold and the hook is lost.

Part 4 — Hybrid texts

Now bring the two ideas together. A **hybrid text** combines the structures or language features of two or more text types. Hybrids are not messy texts — they are texts doing more than one job, and usually **one text type carries the main purpose while the others serve it**.

Read an original model speech, written for a school assembly, with its borrowed types colour-coded.

Model text B — “The room we need” (a speech at assembly)

An original hybrid speech written for this book: one text type inside another.

Personal recount — tells one lived moment Exposition — argues one side of an issue Answer to the other side, then the call

Good afternoon. Last winter, halfway through a writing task, the fire alarm rang. By the time we filed back inside, the hall was loud, the clock was running, and my ideas were gone. I sat with my pen in my hand, staring at the page while forty conversations happened around me. I wanted one thing: a quiet place, and ten minutes.

PERSONAL RECOUNT

I am not the only one. Plenty of students lose their train of thought in a noisy room and never find it again. That is why our school should open one small quiet room — a room with no phones, no talking, and no interruptions.

EXPOSITION — POSITION

The room would not need to be big. A spare classroom, some soft chairs, and a sign-up sheet on the door would be enough. Students could use it at lunch or in free periods to read, think, or finish work. Teachers would see fewer people drifting the corridors, and students who need calm would know exactly where to find it.

EXPOSITION — ARGUMENT

Some will say we already have the library, and they are right that the library is quiet. But the library is a place for books and study groups, and its desks are full by one o'clock. A small quiet room is not a copy of the library; it is what the library cannot be. Give us one room, one term, and one chance to show what calm can do.

THE OTHER SIDE — THEN THE CALL

The recount makes the audience feel the problem; the exposition argues the fix. Two text types, one purpose.

Model text B, an original hybrid speech titled “The room we need”, printed as four paragraphs with colour-coded bands and a key. Gold PERSONAL RECOUNT: the speaker recalls losing her ideas to noise when a fire alarm broke up a writing task. Blue EXPOSITION — POSITION: she is not the only one, so the school should open one small quiet room. Blue EXPOSITION — ARGUMENT: the room would be small and cheap to run, and students who need calm would know where to find it. Green THE OTHER SIDE — THEN THE CALL: the library is quiet but full by one o'clock, so give us one room, one term, one chance to show what calm can do.

To explain a hybrid, make three moves:

1. **Name the parts.** This speech opens as a personal recount — one lived moment, told in the past tense, with the speaker inside it — then turns into an exposition: position, argument, an answer to the other side, and a call.
2. **Name the carrier.** The exposition carries the main purpose. The speech exists to win support for the quiet room; the recount is in service of that.
3. **Say why the pairing works.** The recount makes the audience *feel* the problem once, so the argument speaks about something they already recognise. An argument alone can be doubted; a lived moment is harder to doubt.

That third move is the explaining. Anyone can list the parts; Level 8 asks *why this pairing serves this purpose*.

Worked examples

Example 1 — scaffolded: map the exposition

Map model text A onto the exposition's stages.

Stage	Where	Its job	Evidence from model text A
Thesis	paragraph 1	state the position up front	"A later start would lift learning and protect health."
Argument 1	paragraph 2	first reason, backed	"the hardest work of the day is staying awake"
Argument 2	paragraph 3	second reason, backed	"more likely to fall ill, and less likely to keep up"
The other side — and the answer	paragraph 4	state the strongest counter honestly, then answer it	"That is a real cost, and it deserves an answer. But timetables are tools we made..."
Conclusion and call	paragraph 5	restate and ask for action	"trial a 9:30 am start next term, and let the results speak."

Notice paragraph 4. A weaker writer would pretend the timetable problem does not exist. This writer names it, calls it real, and answers it — which is exactly what a persuasive text does with the other side's best point.

Example 2 — scaffolded: run the explain chain

Take one language choice from model text A and run the three moves.

Move	Done
1 Name it	"timetables are tools we made, and tools can be remade" — a comparison that turns the timetable into a tool.
2 Say its job	A tool is something humans built and can rebuild. The comparison takes the biggest block in the reader's mind ("nothing can change the timetable") and makes it movable.
3 Link to purpose	An exposition's purpose is to win the reader to one side, and the biggest block is the strongest reason to say no. Removing that block is the structure doing its job.

Example 3 — lightly scaffolded: read the hybrid

Look back at model text B.

- (a) Which two text types combine in it? (b) Which carries the main purpose? (c) Why does the pairing work?

Model reading. **(a)** A personal recount opening inside a formal speech that argues like an exposition. **(b)** The exposition — the speech exists to win the quiet room. **(c)** The recount gives the audience one lived moment of the problem, so the argument lands on feeling already built. The speaker even echoes it at the close: "show what calm can do" answers the noise of paragraph 1.

Practice questions

Scaffolded

Q1. Match each purpose to the response text type that usually carries it: (i) to weigh both sides before judging · (ii) to argue one side of an issue · (iii) to explore what a text could mean beneath the surface · (iv) to take and argue a position about a text. Types: critical response, exposition, text interpretation, discussion.

Q2. From model text A: (a) quote the thesis; (b) give the two arguments in one line each; (c) quote the sentence that answers the other side's best point; (d) quote the call to action.

Q3. Run the explain chain on one language choice from model text A: "Ask any morning class". Name it (what kind of move is it?), say its job, and link it to the exposition's purpose.

Q4. From the drama script figure: (a) which character says "That is not enough. The fair is on Friday."? (b) quote one stage direction; (c) stage directions are never spoken aloud. Why does a script still need them? Answer in terms of the script's purpose.

Q5. From the webpage figure: (a) why does the hero image sit at the very top? (b) what job does the caption do? (c) name two parts of the page that make it non-linear.

Q6. Copy the table and fill the three empty cells using the family table figure.

Text type	Purpose	Structure	Key language features
Memoir		scenes from the past woven with what the writer sees now	first person, a then-and-now double view
Poem	to make meaning and feeling through patterned language		rhythm, rhyme, imagery
Debate		teams with set roles; opening case; rebuttals; closing appeal	

Un scaffolded

Q7. Re-read the literary recount about Elle Marsh. (a) What is its purpose? (b) Quote two craft choices and, for each, run the explain chain in one or two lines. (c) A plain news list of the same race would carry the facts and none of the feeling. Name two things the recount has that the list would not.

Q8. Here are two opening speeches from an imagined school debate on the motion "*That homework should not be graded.*" Both are written for this book.

Team one, first speaker. Good morning, judges. We believe homework should not be graded. Homework is practice, and practice is where mistakes are meant to happen. Grade it, and students stop taking the risks that teaching needs. Tonight we will show you that ungraded practice builds better learning.

Team two, first speaker. Judges, our opponents want to protect students from pressure. We want to prepare them for it. Graded homework builds the habit of doing work that counts — the habit every exam, job and deadline will one day demand. We believe that homework should be graded, and we will show you why.

(a) State each team's position in one line. (b) Quote the place where team two answers team one's point rather than ignoring it. (c) Give two features that make this a debate rather than a discussion.

Q9. (*Transforming.*) Rewrite the webpage in the Part 3 figure as a **linear** news article of 80–100 words for the school newsletter. Keep the facts; change the structure completely — you decide the order now, and there is no sidebar, button or menu to hide behind.

Q10. (*Writing.*) The issue: *the canteen should run one meat-free day a week*. Write a discussion of 120–150 words. Put **each side in its strongest form** before you judge — the strongest reason you can find for each side, not the weakest. Close with your recommendation, and use at least two balancing or contrast signals.

Q11. (*Product task — analytic response.*) Choose model text A or model text B. Write an analytic response of 220–280 words explaining **how the text is structured for its purpose**. Name the stages in order, quote at least twice as evidence, and use the explain chain at least once on a language choice. If you choose model text B, also name the two text types it combines, say which carries the main purpose, and explain why the pairing serves that purpose. Success looks like: stages named in order · evidence quoted · every named choice explained, not just spotted · the hybrid named and justified, if text B.

Answers

Q1. (i) discussion · (ii) exposition · (iii) text interpretation · (iv) critical response.

Q2. (a) “A later start would lift learning and protect health.” (b) Argument 1: awake students learn more. Argument 2: a later start protects health. (c) “But timetables are tools we made, and tools can be remade.” (the answer; the fair statement of the other side is “That is a real cost, and it deserves an answer.”) (d) “trial a 9:30 am start next term, and let the results speak.”

Q3. Name it: a question aimed at the reader — it hands the claim to the audience to test. Its job: it turns “students are tired at 8:30” from the writer’s say-so into something any reader can check in their own classroom. Link to purpose: an exposition wins readers by giving them reasons they can test, not orders to obey.

Q4. (a) Jin. (b) Any one, e.g. “(Jin tapes up a banner. Sasha enters carrying a box of jars.)” (c) Because a script’s purpose is performance: the directions tell actors, lights and set crew what to do, so the words on the page become a scene. Without them the spoken lines would float with no world around them.

Q5. (a) To hook with feeling before a word is read — the picture sells the night first. (b) It anchors the picture’s meaning to *this year’s* fair, so the image is not just decoration. (c) Any two of: the menu bar, the sidebar fact box, the button (each lets a reader jump or act without reading in order).

Q6. Memoir purpose: to look back on part of the writer’s own life and make meaning of it. Poem structure: lines and stanzas shaped by sound and image. Debate language features: formal address, signposted points, rebuttal of the other side’s claims.

Q7. (a) To retell a real event with the craft of story — to make us feel the win, not just know it. (b) e.g. “patient as a shadow” — name it: a figure of speech comparing Elle to a shadow; job: it makes her waiting feel quiet and sure; link: a recount’s purpose is shaped feeling, and the comparison shapes it in five words. “she simply refused to be passed” — name it: a person-sized verb choice (refusal, not speed); job: it gives the win to character, not legs; link: the recount wants us to care about a person, not a result. (c) Any two: a shaped scene, a figure of speech, a closing line that gives the event a meaning, a voice with a view.

Q8. (a) Team one: homework should not be graded, because practice must be safe for mistakes. Team two: homework should be graded, because doing work that counts builds life habits. (b) “our opponents want to protect students from pressure. We want to prepare them for it.” (c) Any two: teams with set roles and a motion; direct address to judges; rebuttal of the other side’s point inside the opening; formal, signposted case statements. A discussion would balance both sides in one voice and then judge — these two speakers each carry one side to win.

Q9–Q11 are open tasks; see the sample responses below for models.

Sample responses

Q9 — sample linear article (94 words).

Night market returns Fairburn College’s Winter Night Market returns on Friday 11 September, from 5 to 8 pm on the main oval. Entry is a gold coin donation. Forty stalls will sell food and crafts, with live music through the night and the lantern parade at seven. The lantern stall, a favourite last year, returns bigger this year. “It is the best night of our school year,” said one Year 10 student. Stall bookings are open now; see the front office before the end of this week.

Order notes: who–what–when first (a news article leads with the facts the webpage’s sidebar held), the quote kept but moved down, and the booking line — the webpage’s button — becomes a closing sentence.

Q10 — sample discussion (138 words).

Whether the canteen should run one meat-free day a week is worth weighing honestly. For the change, some argue that plant-based meals are cheaper to make and kinder to the planet, and a weekly routine makes them feel normal so no one feels singled out. Against it, others argue just as strongly that students need protein for growing bodies and sport, that families expect choice for their money, and that a canteen's job is to feed students well, not to teach them a lesson. On balance, one meat-free day a week deserves a term's trial — but only if the meals are genuinely good, and only if the trial is measured by uptake, not by speeches.

Both sides carry their strongest reasons; the recommendation is judged, not automatic.

Q11 — sample analytic response on model text B (247 words).

“The room we need” is a hybrid text: a personal recount opening inside a formal speech that argues as an exposition, and every part of it serves one purpose — winning support for a quiet room.

The speech opens as recount. “The fire alarm rang” drops the audience into one lived moment, told in past tense with the speaker inside it: “I sat with my pen in my hand, staring at the page.” The job of that opening is feeling. Before any argument begins, the audience has lived forty conversations at once.

From there the text turns to exposition. The position arrives in paragraph two — “our school should open one small quiet room” — followed by a practical argument: a spare classroom, soft chairs, a sign-up sheet. The structure then does what strong expositions do: it meets the other side's best point honestly, “they are right that the library is quiet”, and answers it, “it is what the library cannot be”. The close is a call built in threes — “one room, one term, and one chance” — a spoken rhythm for a listening audience.

The exposition carries the main purpose; the recount serves it. The pairing works because the story makes the problem felt before the argument names it, so the closing call answers a moment the audience already remembers. Structure here is not decoration. It is persuasion, staged.

Every text in this section — the exposition, the speech, the recount, the memoir, the poem, the script, the debate speeches, the webpage — was written for this book. The school, the people and the events are imagined.

Cohesion: strengthening internal structures with evidence, quotations and substantiation

Curriculum trace — Victorian Curriculum 2.0 English (VCAA), Level 8. This section owns **VC2E8LA04**: “understand how cohesion in texts is improved by strengthening internal structures and sequence, with evidence, quotations and substantiation of claims”. Strand: Language; sub-strand: Text structure and organisation. Draws on elaboration **VC2E8LA04.E01**: “writing paragraphs of extended length that explain, substantiate and exemplify a particular viewpoint”. The level’s Writing standard begins: “They use evidence and substantiation to create cohesion; structure to create sequence.” This section is the writing half of that work; Section 5E later returns to reviewing and editing it. At Level 9, **VC2E9LA04** picks this up as cohesive devices that condense, link, expand and sequence.

About the sources in this section. Every fact, statistic and quotation inside this section’s sample texts comes from a source invented for this book and labelled **(sample data)** or **(sample source)**. They exist to show you how evidence and quotations work inside a paragraph. In your own writing, always use real sources that you can check and name.

Theory

1. What cohesion is

Defining the term. The Victorian Curriculum uses the word *cohesion* but does not define it. This section uses *cohesion* in the sense given by Halliday and Hasan, *Cohesion in English* (1976): a text has cohesion when its sentences are tied to one another, so that the text holds together as one connected piece of meaning instead of a pile of separate sentences. Other definitions exist and are not interchangeable with this one. Every task in this section is answerable on this definition alone.

You already use the raw materials. Cohesion is built from devices that signal, structure and sequence a text — connectives such as *however* and *next*, referring words such as *this* and *they*, and repeated key words. This section adds the next layer. A paragraph has to do more than hold together. It has to stand up.

Think of a paragraph as a brick wall. Your claim, your evidence, your quotations and your substantiation are the bricks. The cohesive devices are the cement that binds them. Strong bricks with no cement fall apart in a heap. Cement with no bricks is just a pile of glue. This section shows you how to build both, so your paragraphs are solid *and* joined.

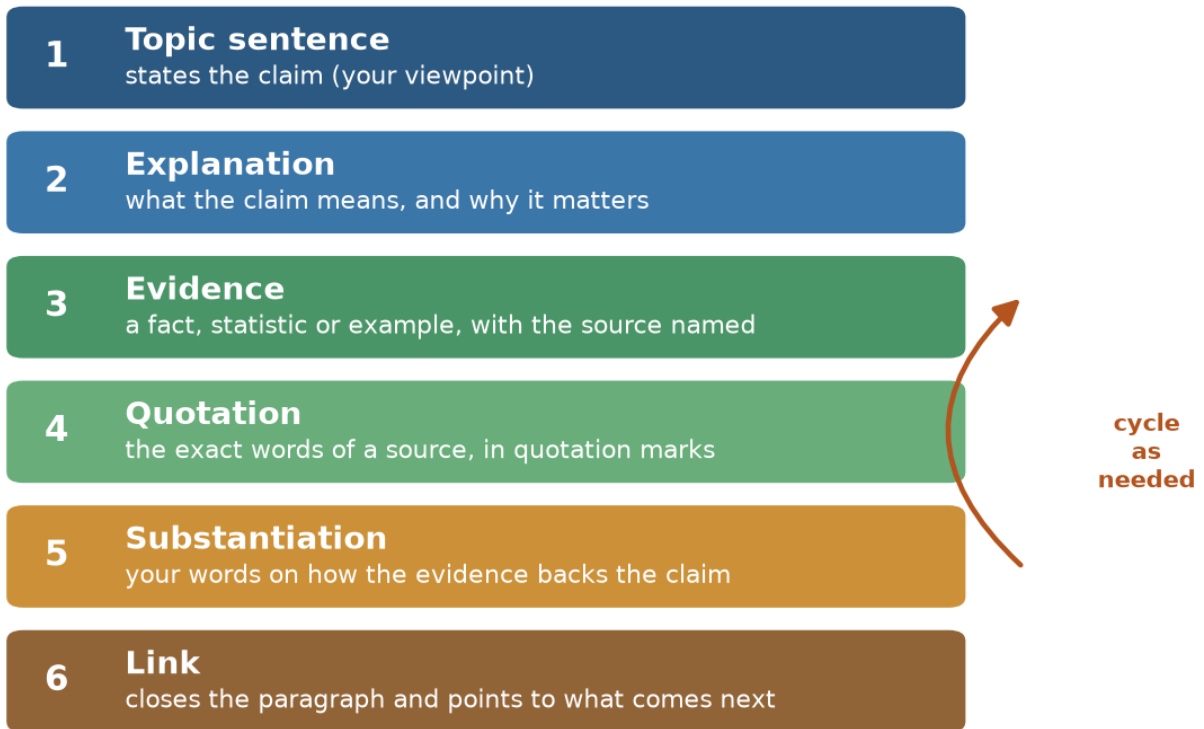
Here are the terms this section works with, defined at first use:

Term	Meaning
viewpoint	the position someone holds on an issue
claim	a statement that something is true, or that something should happen, offered for others to weigh up
evidence	information drawn from a source that helps to show whether a claim stands
quotation	the exact words from a source, kept word for word inside quotation marks
substantiate	to back a claim with support that shows it stands. Substantiation is that support: evidence <i>plus</i> your own words explaining how the evidence does the work
signal phrase	a short lead-in that names who is speaking and how, before a quotation: <i>the principal said, Ms Chen put it plainly</i>

2. The internal structure of an extended paragraph

A short paragraph might state a point and move on. A **paragraph of extended length** — the kind this section builds — explains, supports and gives examples of a viewpoint. Its internal structure has six layers:

The six layers of an extended paragraph



Layers 3-5 can repeat two or three times. That cycling is what makes the paragraph extended.

The six layers of an extended paragraph: topic sentence, explanation, evidence, quotation, substantiation and link, with a loop showing that the middle layers can repeat

1. **Topic sentence** — states the claim (your viewpoint) in one clear sentence.
2. **Explanation** — says what the claim means and why it matters, in your own words.
3. **Evidence** — information from a source: a fact, a statistic or an example.
4. **Quotation** — the exact words of a source, worked into your sentence with quotation marks.
5. **Substantiation** — your own words showing *how* the evidence and quotation support the claim.
6. **Link** — closes the paragraph and joins it to whatever comes next.

Two things matter about this structure:

- **The middle layers cycle.** Evidence → quotation → substantiation can repeat two or three times in one paragraph. That cycling is what makes the paragraph *extended*.
- **Sequence is part of the strength.** The reader meets the claim *before* the evidence that supports it, and each sentence arrives where the one before it pointed. Put the reader where you want them, one step at a time.

3. Kinds of evidence

Evidence comes in four common kinds. Each does different work, and a strong extended paragraph often mixes them.

The four kinds of evidence

A strong extended paragraph often mixes them

Kind of evidence	What it is	Sentence starter
Facts	Things known to be true, from a source you can check	"Records show that ..."
Statistics	Numbers that measure something	"In a 2026 survey, 68 per cent of ..."
Examples	One real case showing the claim at work	"For example, at one sample school ..."
Expert opinion	Words from someone whose job or study gives them standing	"According to the principal ..."

Table of the four kinds of evidence: facts, statistics, examples and expert opinion, with what each one is and a sentence starter for each

When you name evidence, name where it came from: *in a 2026 survey, according to the school annual report, at one sample college*. An unnamed fact is hard to trust and easy to forget.

4. Working quotations in

A quotation is the most concentrated evidence you can use: the source speaks in its own words. There are three common moves for working a quotation into a paragraph.

Three moves for working in a quotation

Every quotation needs a lead-in. Never drop a quotation into a paragraph on its own.

Move 1 — signal phrase + full quotation

According to the principal, "Students compared three quotes for every job."

punctuation guide: comma after the signal phrase · quotation marks around the exact words

Move 2 — blended quotation

Students called the trial budget "the most real maths lesson of the year".

punctuation guide: the quotation sits inside your own sentence

Move 3 — quotation + your comment

"A mistake made with \$500 now is a cheap lesson," said Mr Okafor, and that is the whole case for a trial.

punctuation guide: quote first, then your own voice follows it up

Table of three moves for working in a quotation: signal phrase plus full quotation, blended quotation, and quotation with follow-up comment, each with a sample sentence

Three rules keep quotations cohesive instead of clutter:

1. **Never drop a quotation.** A sentence that is *only* a quotation — no signal, no blend — floats free of your paragraph. Give every quote a lead-in.
2. **Punctuate it.** Quotation marks go around the exact words. A signal phrase takes a comma before the quote. If the quoted words form a complete sentence, the full stop sits inside the closing quotation marks.

3. **Follow it up.** A quotation needs your voice after it as well as before it. The follow-up sentence is the substantiation — see the next part.

5. Substantiation: the move that makes evidence work

Evidence on its own does not argue anything. It just sits there. The reader has to be shown *what the evidence proves* — and that is the job of substantiation. Compare:

- **Evidence only:** *In a 2026 survey, 173 of 240 students said they read for fun less than once a week.*
- **Evidence + substantiation:** *In a 2026 survey, 173 of 240 students said they read for fun less than once a week. That is not a small gap. It means that for most students, the only reading they ever do is the reading someone sets them — and that is exactly why a daily reading block is needed.*

The second version ties the number to the claim. Without that tie, the survey sits inside the paragraph like a stone in a sandwich.

Useful sentence starters for substantiation:

- *This shows that ...*
- *This matters because ...*
- *The point here is not ... but ...*
- *As this example suggests, ...*
- *If this is true, then ...*

The same claim, before and after strengthening

The After panel adds bricks (evidence, quotation, substantiation) as well as cement (connectives)

Before — the claim repeats, nothing backs it

claim

Everyone knows reading is important.

repeat

Reading is good for students.

repeat

Students should read more.

repeat

Schools should make time for reading.

After — bricks and cement

claim

Schools should make time for reading every day.

explanation

Reading is the base that most subjects stand on, yet many students finish the week without choosing a single page.

+ evidence

In a 2026 survey at a sample school, 173 of 240 students said they read for fun less than once a week (sample data).

+ quotation

The librarian put it plainly: “Daily reading is the cheapest teaching tool we own” (sample source).

+ substantiation

That is the point: the habit costs minutes, but it pays back across every subject.

+ connective

Some will say there is no time. However, twenty quiet minutes is less than one recess.

Before-and-after comparison of a weak paragraph and the same paragraph strengthened with evidence, a quotation, substantiation and connectives

6. Cohesive ties: the devices that bind

While evidence and quotations strengthen a paragraph from the inside, **cohesive ties** bind its sentences together on the surface. There are three kinds this section uses.

Connectives — words and phrases that join ideas and signal which way the join goes.

Connectives: words that show which way the join goes

The connective must match the join — a contrast word on an adding sentence misleads the reader

The job of the join	Connectives that do it
Add	also · in addition · as well
Contrast	however · on the other hand · although
Show a result	as a result · therefore · so
Give an example	for example · for instance · such as
Sequence	first · next · after that · finally
Conclude	in short · overall · on balance

Table of connectives sorted by job: adding, contrasting, showing a result, giving an example, sequencing and concluding

Reference — pronouns and pointing words that look back to something already named: *this survey*, *those results*, *her words*, *they*, *it*. Reference keeps the reader tracking the same thing from sentence to sentence without you repeating the whole noun each time. One warning: the word you point with must have exactly one clear thing to point at. If *this* could mean two different things, name the thing: *this result*, *this habit*.

Repeated key words — the subject of your paragraph should keep appearing, in the same form or a near form: *reading ... reading block ... the daily habit*. Repetition is not a flaw in extended writing. It is one of the strongest ties a paragraph has.

Three ties holding three sentences together

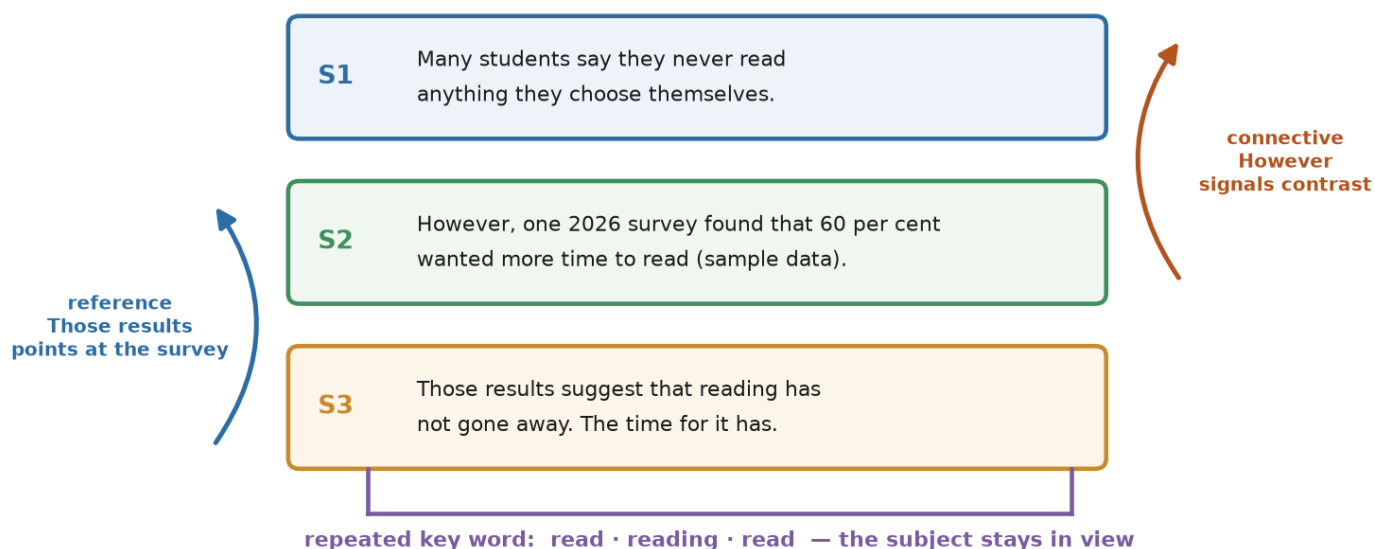


Diagram of three sample sentences with arrows marking three cohesive ties: a connective, a reference and repeated key words

7. Putting it together: the tie check

When you draft an extended paragraph, work in this order: state the claim, explain it, gather your evidence and quotations, draft the cycle, then check every tie. Before you hand a paragraph in, run this ladder:

The tie check — seven questions before you hand it in

- 1 Is my claim stated once, clearly, in the first sentence?
- 2 Does every later sentence earn its place — explain, evidence, quote or substantiate?
- 3 Does every quotation have a lead-in and a follow-up?
- 4 Does every piece of evidence have my words saying how it backs the claim?
- 5 Can I draw a line from every sentence back to the claim?
- 6 Do my connectives point the right way — add, contrast, result, example or close?
- 7 Read it aloud: where I stumble, something is loose.

Checklist diagram: seven questions for checking a paragraph's cohesion, drawn as rungs of a ladder

Section 5E returns to reviewing and editing in depth. This checklist is your first pass.

Worked examples

Example 1 — scaffolded

Read the paragraph of extended length below, written for this book as a model (all sources inside it are samples). Then follow the table, which takes the paragraph apart layer by layer.

Schools should set aside twenty minutes of silent reading every day, for every year level. Reading is the base that nearly every subject stands on, yet many students finish the day without ever reading anything they chose themselves. A daily reading block would give them that time inside the school day, not as extra homework. In a 2026 survey of 240 students at a sample Victorian secondary college, 173 said they read for fun less than once a week (sample data). The college librarian, Ms Chen, put it plainly: “Students who read for twenty minutes a day meet thousands of words they would never find in a worksheet, and those words quietly build everything else” (sample source). Her words point to a kind of growth that no single lesson can show. Vocabulary builds slowly and out of sight, but a daily habit adds up, and over a term the gap between readers and non-readers grows wide. Some will say the timetable is already full. However, twenty minutes is less than one recess, and the payoff lands on every subject, not just English. If a school wants stronger reading, the simplest lever is time: twenty quiet minutes, every day.

A model paragraph, taken apart

Sample text written for this book — every source named inside it is a sample

1 · CLAIM	Schools should set aside twenty minutes of silent reading every day, for every year level.
2 · EXPLANATION	Reading is the base that nearly every subject stands on, yet many students finish the day without ever reading anything they chose themselves. A daily reading block would give them that time inside the school day, not as extra homework.
3 · EVIDENCE	In a 2026 survey of 240 students at a sample Victorian secondary college, 173 said they read for fun less than once a week (sample data).
4 · QUOTATION	The college librarian, Ms Chen, put it plainly: “Students who read for twenty minutes a day meet thousands of words they would never find in a worksheet, and those words quietly build everything else” (sample source).
5 · SUBSTANTIATION	Her words point to a kind of growth that no single lesson can show. Vocabulary builds slowly and out of sight, but a daily habit adds up, and over a term the gap between readers and non-readers grows wide.
6 · LINK	Some will say the timetable is already full. However, twenty minutes is less than one recess, and the payoff lands on every subject, not just English. If a school wants stronger reading, the simplest lever is time: twenty quiet minutes, every day.

The model paragraph above with each layer colour-coded and labelled: claim, explanation, evidence, quotation, substantiation and link

Text	Layer	How it is tied on
<i>Schools should set aside twenty minutes of silent reading every day ...</i>	1. Topic sentence — the claim, stated once and clearly.	Nothing before it. Every later sentence points back to <i>twenty minutes, every day</i> .
<i>Reading is the base that nearly every subject stands on, yet many students finish the day without ... A daily reading block would give them that time ...</i>	2. Explanation — what the claim means and why it matters.	Repeated key word <i>reading</i> ; <i>them</i> and <i>that time</i> refer back to <i>students</i> and <i>twenty minutes</i> .
<i>In a 2026 survey of 240 students ... 173 said they read for fun less than once a week (sample data).</i>	3. Evidence — a statistic, with its source named.	The number gives the claim something to stand on; <i>they</i> keeps tracking <i>students</i> .
<i>The college librarian, Ms Chen, put it plainly: “Students who read for twenty minutes a day ...”</i>	4. Quotation — worked in with a signal phrase and a colon.	The signal phrase names the speaker; <i>twenty minutes a day</i> echoes the claim’s own words.
<i>Her words point to a kind of growth that no single lesson can show. Vocabulary builds slowly ...</i>	5. Substantiation — the writer’s own voice explaining what the quote proves.	<i>Her words</i> is a reference tie pointing straight at the quotation.
<i>Some will say the timetable is already full. However, twenty minutes is less than one recess ... If a school wants stronger reading, the simplest lever is time ...</i>	6. Link — meets the counter-view, then closes.	<i>However</i> signals the contrast; the final sentence repeats the claim’s key words and ends the paragraph where it began.

Notice the shape: claim → explain → evidence → quotation → substantiation → meet the counter → link. The connectives (*yet, however*), the reference ties (*them, her words, that*) and the repeated key words (*reading, twenty minutes*) are what make those layers read as one paragraph instead of six answers.

Example 2 — unscaffolded

Read the second model paragraph below (again, all sources are samples). Then, without any table to help you:

1. identify the six layers in it,
2. find one connective, one reference tie and one repeated key word, and say what each one ties,
3. explain how the paragraph handles the counter-view, and why that handling makes the paragraph stronger rather than weaker.

Students should have a real say in how part of the school’s money is spent. School councils already decide on things that touch students every day, from library books to sports equipment, yet the people who use those things most have no vote. A student share of the budget would teach planning, weighing options and living with a decision. At one sample Victorian secondary college, Year 8 students ran a \$500 trial budget in 2026 and voted to fund new shade sails and a second-hand uniform swap (sample data). The principal, Mr Okafor, said, “The students compared three quotes for every job and argued about every dollar, and that is the most real maths lesson I have seen in years” (sample source). His point shows that money decisions are not just about money. They are a safe place to practise planning and to live with a choice. Some argue that students might spend poorly. However, that is exactly why a guided trial matters, because a mistake made with \$500 now is a cheap lesson. A school that trusts students with small decisions is building the habits it will need when the decisions are bigger.

Work out your own answer first, then check it against the worked solution at the end of this section.

Practice questions

Scaffolded

Q1. Layers. Here is a short extended paragraph (all sources are samples).

Schools should grow at least some of their own food. A school garden is more than a patch of soil. It is a living classroom where science, maths and patience all meet. In one sample Victorian primary school, students planted a vegetable bed in 2026 and tracked its growth with weekly measurements (sample data). The garden coordinator said, “The students who struggle in the classroom are often the ones who lead in the garden” (sample source). Those words matter because they show a garden can change who gets to shine at school. Fresh food in the canteen is the bonus. The real harvest is confidence.

Copy the paragraph and label each sentence (or sentence pair) with its layer: claim, explanation, evidence, quotation, substantiation or link.

Q2. Quotation mechanics. Work each quotation into one sentence of your own, with correct punctuation.

- (a) Signal phrase: *the school captain, Priya, said* — quotation: *Every student I talked to wanted somewhere quiet to eat.*
- (b) Blend the quoted word *overcrowded* into a sentence of your own about the canteen.
- (c) Signal phrase: *according to the 2026 survey* — quotation: *students with a quiet study space finished homework on twice as many nights.*

Q3. Connectives. Fill each gap with one of: *First / For example / As a result / However*.

Secondary schools should start no earlier than 9 am. Many teenagers find early mornings hard, and a tired brain learns slowly. (1) ———, in a 2026 survey at a sample college, 71 per cent of students said they felt too tired to concentrate in first period (sample data). The college moved its start time to 9.15 am. (2) ———, teachers reported calmer starts and more students ready to work. A later start will not fix everything. (3) ———, it costs little and gives students back the one thing learning needs: a rested brain.

Q4. Repairing a dropped quotation. The middle sentence of this paragraph is a dropped quotation — it has no signal phrase and nothing follows it up. Rewrite *that sentence* with a signal phrase (the speaker is the school captain, Priya) and add one sentence of substantiation after it.

The canteen should open thirty minutes earlier. Many students skip breakfast because they cannot eat at home in time. “We skip breakfast not because we are not hungry, but because there is nowhere to eat” (sample source). An earlier opening would let students arrive, eat and settle before class.

Q5. Sequence. These five sentences make an extended paragraph about a free school breakfast, but they are in the wrong order. Put them in order, and name the connectives that helped you decide.

- (a) A free school breakfast would give every student the same start to the day.
- (b) First, hunger is a poor study partner, and a student who has not eaten spends the morning thinking about food instead of fractions.
- (c) In short, the cost is small next to what a fed classroom can do.
- (d) In a 2026 survey at a sample school, one in four students said they left home without breakfast (sample data).
- (e) As a result, teachers spend the first lesson settling stomachs before they can settle minds.

Q6. Matching evidence to claims. Match each claim to the evidence that best supports it, and write one sentence saying why the fit is a good one.

Claims: (i) Homework should be capped at 30 minutes a night. (ii) Every student should have a quiet place to work at school. (iii) Schools should keep libraries open at lunch.

Evidence: (A) In a 2026 survey at a sample college, 62 per cent of students said the library was the only quiet space they had on site (sample data). (B) At one sample college, students given a 30-minute homework cap reported sleeping 40 more minutes a night (sample data). (C) The librarian at one sample primary school recorded 90 lunchtime visits a week once the library stayed open (sample source).

Unscaffolded

Q7. Write a paragraph of extended length supporting this viewpoint: *Schools should cap homework at 30 minutes a night*. Use at least one statistic and at least one quotation from the sample source box below. Your paragraph must contain all six layers.

Sample source box (all sources are samples) - In a 2026 survey of 200 students at a sample Victorian secondary college, 84 per cent said homework often took more than an hour a night (sample data). - The same survey found that students doing more than an hour of homework a night reported sleeping 45 fewer minutes a night (sample data). - “The students who do every minute of homework are the same students who are already doing well.” — Ms Nguyen, teacher at the sample college (sample source). - “A short, sharp task they can finish well beats a long one they dread.” — Mr Ali, teacher at the sample college (sample source).

Q8. This paragraph is weak: it repeats its claim and offers no evidence, no quotation and no substantiation. Rewrite it as a paragraph of extended length, using the sample source box below.

Our school oval needs rebuilding. The surface is hard and bare, and students avoid it at recess. It is not a good space. Something should be done soon.

Sample source box (all sources are samples) - In a 2026 survey at the school, 8 in 10 students said they avoided the oval at recess (sample data). - “Half my lessons are spent managing a surface that fights back.” — Ms Ferreira, PE teacher (sample source). - After one sample college rebuilt its field, minor injuries dropped by a third within a year (sample data).

Q9. Steelman — argue the strongest case for the side you disagree with. Consider the viewpoint: *Mobile phones should be banned from classrooms*. Decide which side of it you disagree with — then write the strongest paragraph of extended length you can for that side, using the sample source box below. Marks go to the quality of your reasoning and the control of your structure, not to which side you end up on: two students reaching opposite conclusions can both do full marks.

Sample source box (all sources are samples) - *For a ban*: teachers at one sample college reported losing about eight minutes of every lesson to phone interruptions (sample data). “The phone is the loudest thing in the room, even when it is silent.” — Ms Novak, teacher (sample source). - *Against a ban*: at one sample college where phones stayed but sat in a pocket rack, most students said the rack taught them more self-control than any rule could (sample data). “Banning phones hides the problem. Teaching students to park them solves it.” — Mr Deng, year level coordinator (sample source).

Q10. Choose one viewpoint from the list below and write a paragraph of extended length supporting it. Then write three sentences about your own paragraph: name two cohesive ties you used and where they sit, and point to your substantiation.

- School assemblies should happen weekly.
- Students should help design the school rules they live under.
- The canteen should serve one free meal a week.

Product task — analytic response

Read the extended paragraph below (all sources are samples).

Public libraries should stay open until 8 pm on weeknights. A library is more than a room of books. It is one of the few warm, quiet, free places a student can sit and work. Many students share a house with noise, no spare room and no internet of their own, and for them the library is the only study room they have. In a 2026 survey across three sample council areas, 68 per cent of secondary students said they had no quiet place to study at home on weeknights (sample data). The manager of one sample branch, Ms Idris, said, “At 5.30 pm we turn away students who have nowhere else to go, and we know exactly who they are” (sample source). Those words show that the problem is not laziness but access. Closing early does not remove the need. It just moves it onto the students with the least. Longer hours cost councils money, but a desk, a light and a connection are cheap next to what students lose without them. A town that keeps its library open late is telling its young people that their learning matters.

Part A. Copy the paragraph and label each sentence with its layer: claim, explanation, evidence, quotation, substantiation or link. Then find one connective, one reference tie and one repeated key word. For each, name the exact words it ties and say what the tie does for the reader.

Part B. Write your own paragraph of extended length on the same viewpoint — or on the opposite one (*Public libraries should not extend their weeknight hours*). Use at least one piece of evidence, at least one quotation (use the boxes above or below, or invent one and label it as a sample), and substantiation.

Sample source box for the opposite side (all sources are samples) - Every extra hour one sample branch stayed open cost about \$180 in staff and power (sample council budget note). - For one sample council, each extra open hour cost the same as 50 new library books (sample data). - “We can lend, host and help in the hours we already have. What we cannot do is stretch one librarian across fourteen hours.” — sample council spokesperson (sample source).

Part C. In three sentences, explain how your Part B paragraph builds cohesion: name your strongest tie, say why you put your quotation where you did, and say what your substantiation adds that the evidence alone did not.

Marks for this task go to the quality of your reasoning and your control of structure — not to the side you argue. Two students reaching opposite conclusions can both do full marks, if both build their paragraphs well from defined terms and stated evidence.

Answers

Q1. Claim: sentence 1. Explanation: sentences 2–3. Evidence: sentence 4 (the vegetable-bed example). Quotation: sentence 5. Substantiation: sentence 6 (*Those words matter because ...*). Link: sentences 7–8 (*the bonus ... the real harvest*), which close by echoing the claim.

Q2. Sample answers: (a) The school captain, Priya, said, “Every student I talked to wanted somewhere quiet to eat.” (b) Many students described the canteen as “overcrowded”. (c) According to the 2026 survey, “students with a quiet study space finished homework on twice as many nights”.

Q3. (1) For example · (2) As a result · (3) However.

Q4. Sample repair: The school captain, Priya, said, “We skip breakfast not because we are not hungry, but because there is nowhere to eat” (sample source). Her words show that the problem is not appetite but access, and an earlier opening would turn the canteen into the breakfast table many students do not have.

Q5. Order: (a) (b) (d) (e) (c). *First* flags sentence (b) as the opening reason; *In a 2026 survey* in (d) supplies the evidence for that reason; *As a result* in (e) moves from the survey to the classroom; *In short* flags (c) as the close.

Q6. (i)–(B): the evidence measures exactly what the cap is meant to change. (ii)–(A): the survey shows the quiet space is missing, which is what the claim would fix. (iii)–(C): the visit numbers show what happens once the library stays open at lunch.

Q7–Q10, product task. These are writing tasks. Full model paragraphs are in the fully-worked solutions. Check yours against the tie check: claim stated once, evidence with a named source, quotation with a lead-in and a follow-up, substantiation in your own voice, and connectives that point the right way.

Example 2. Layers: claim = sentence 1; explanation = sentences 2–3; evidence = sentence 4; quotation = sentence 5; substantiation = sentences 6–7; link with counter-view = sentences 8–9. Connective: *yet* (joins the fact that councils decide to the point that students have no vote) and *however* (turns the counter-view back on itself). Reference tie: *His point* points at Mr Okafor’s quotation; *those things* points at library books and sports equipment. Repeated key words: *students, decisions/decide*. The counter-view is met head-on and answered with the trial’s own logic (a small mistake now is a cheap lesson), which makes the paragraph stronger because the reader sees the objection taken seriously and answered, not hidden.

Fully-worked solutions

Q7 — model paragraph.

Schools should cap homework at 30 minutes a night. Homework was meant to be practice, yet for many students it has become a second school day that eats the hours set aside for sleep, sport and family. In a 2026 survey of 200 students at a sample Victorian secondary college, 84 per cent said homework often took more than an hour a night (sample data). Ms Nguyen, a teacher at the sample college, put it sharply: “The students who do every minute of homework are the same students who are already doing well” (sample source). Her words show that heavy homework does not lift the students who need lifting. Instead, it piles more onto the ones already ahead. Some will say that short homework is thin practice. However, a cap is not a ban, and thirty minutes done well beats ninety minutes done in dread. In short, a school that caps homework is not lowering the bar. It is making sure the work fits inside the day.

Why it works: the claim comes first and never repeats as a bare assertion; the statistic and the quotation each carry a named source; *Her words* ties the substantiation straight to the quote; *However* manages the counter-view; the link returns to the claim’s key idea (thirty minutes).

Q8 — model paragraph.

Our school oval needs rebuilding, and the job cannot wait another year. The surface is hard and bare, and most students now avoid it at recess, which turns one field into a lost space. In a 2026 survey at the school, 8 in 10 students said they avoided the oval at recess (sample data). The PE teacher, Ms Ferreira, said, “Half my lessons are spent managing a surface that fights back” (sample source). Those words say it all: a playing field should be teaching movement, not causing harm. The numbers back the picture. After one sample college rebuilt its field, minor injuries dropped by a third within a year (sample data). The cost of a rebuild is real, but the cost of doing nothing lands on every lesson and every recess. A rebuilt oval is not a luxury. It is the cheapest way to give students back their break.

Why it works: the weak original’s repeated claim has been replaced with two pieces of evidence and a quotation, each tied on with reference (*Those words*, *The numbers*) and each followed by substantiation.

Q9 — model paragraph (arguing against a ban, steelmanned).

A ban is not the only way to clear phones from lessons, and it may not be the best one. Phones cause real trouble in classrooms, and no one in this argument denies that. The question is whether a ban fixes the habit or only hides it. At one sample college, students kept their phones but parked them in a pocket rack, and most said the rack taught them more self-control than any rule could (sample data). Mr Deng, the year level coordinator there, said, “Banning phones hides the problem. Teaching students to park them solves it” (sample source). His point is that schools are meant to build habits, not just enforce silence. A banned phone is simply a phone waiting to come back, while a parked phone is a small daily lesson in choice. Some will answer that racks depend on trust, and trust can break. That is fair, but a system that can break can also be repaired, and students learn from both. In short, the strongest classroom is not the one with the strictest rule, but the one where students practise the self-control the rule was always meant to teach.

Why it works as a steelman: it opens by granting the other side its truest point (*no one denies the trouble*), then argues on a defined question (fix the habit, or hide it), uses evidence and a quotation from its own side, and answers the strongest objection to *itself* (trust can break).

Q10 — model paragraph (viewpoint: students should help design the rules they live under).

Students should help design the rules they live under. Rules written without students are guesses about what students need, and guesses are a weak base for a whole school. When students help write a rule, they see the reason behind it, and a rule with a reason behind it is a rule people want to keep. At one sample college, a student panel rewrote the canteen queue rules in 2026, and waiting times fell by half within a term (sample data). The principal said, “The students spotted problems in that queue that no adult had ever noticed” (sample source). Those words show the real gain: students see the school from the inside, and their eyes find what adults walk past. Critics say students will vote for no rules at all. However, the panel in that sample kept the rules and improved them, which suggests that a voice in the rules makes students more responsible, not less. A school that lets students help write the rules is not giving away its authority. It is teaching students to carry it.

Three-sentence commentary (the task’s second part): the repeated key words *rules* and *students* keep the subject in view from sentence to sentence, and the reference tie *Those words* points back at the principal’s quotation. The substantiation sits in the sentence starting *Those words show the real gain*, because it says what the quotation proves instead of leaving the quote to speak alone.

Example 2 — full check. Already given in Answers; re-check yours against it before reading on.

Product task, Part B — model paragraph (opposite viewpoint).

Public libraries should not extend their weeknight hours, however good the reasons sound. Councils run on tight budgets, and every extra hour one sample branch stayed open cost about \$180 in staff and power (sample council budget note). For one sample council, each extra open hour cost the same as 50 new library books (sample data). A council spokesperson put the choice plainly: “We can lend, host and help in the hours we already have. What we cannot do is stretch one librarian across fourteen hours” (sample source). Those words name the real trade: late hours for a few are bought with books, programs and staff for the many. The need for study space is real, but that need can be met in ways that do not drain the one service the whole town shares. Schools, homework centres and study groups can hold the quiet hours without costing the library a single shelf. In short, a library’s first duty is to serve the many for the longest time, and longer nights work against that duty.

Product task, Part C — model commentary.

My strongest tie is the repeated key words *council* and *hours*, because they keep the argument pointing at the same thing — money and time — from the first sentence to the last. I put the quotation after both pieces of evidence so the numbers set up the trade before a person’s voice named it. My substantiation (*Those words name the real trade*) adds what the figures alone did not say: that the cost of late hours lands on every other reader in town.