

English Level 9

Chapter 2 — Language: expressing and developing ideas

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Varying sentence structures for effect: fragments and lone dependent clauses

Curriculum: VC2E9LA05 — *Language, Language for expressing and developing ideas*. Students learn to: “explore how authors vary sentence structures for effect, such as using a sentence fragment, or intentionally using a dependent clause on its own”. **Draws on:** VC2E9LA05 .E01 — identifying the effects of an interrupting clause inside another clause, intentionally using a dependent clause on its own, or using a sentence fragment. **Achievement standard (Reading and Viewing):** “They engage with vocabulary and grammatical knowledge, including the ways that sentence structures are varied for creative effect...” **Builds from Level 8:** VC2E8LA05 (clause structures, including embedded clauses, add information and expand ideas). **Hands to Level 10:** VC2E10LA05–LA06.

The idea

Most sentences you write are **complete sentences**: they have a subject (who or what the sentence is about) and a verb (what happens), and they make a full point on their own. “The storm rolled in.” That is the default, and it does most of the work in any text.

But skilled writers do not always use the default. Sometimes they break the complete-sentence rule **on purpose** — and the break is not a mistake, it is a choice made for a reader. This section is about three of those choices:

1. the **interrupting clause** — a dependent clause slipped inside another clause;
2. the **lone dependent clause** — a dependent clause left standing on its own as if it were a sentence;
3. the **sentence fragment** — a word or phrase punctuated like a sentence even though it is not one.

A word about “effect”. In this section, *effect* means the likely impact a choice has on a reader or listener — how it shapes pace, emphasis, mood or voice. *Effect* is a **response word**: two sensible readers can feel the same break differently, and neither is “wrong”. What you are marked on is the quality of your reasoning — naming the choice, and giving a reason for it that a reader could follow — not on matching one fixed feeling.

Theory: the parts you need to know

Clause. A clause is a group of words that contains a subject and a verb. A **main clause** (also called an independent clause) can stand alone as a complete sentence. A **dependent clause** also has a subject and a verb, but it begins with a joining word such as *because*, *if*, *when*, *although* or *which*, so it cannot stand alone — it leaves you waiting for the rest.

Sentence fragment. A fragment is a word or phrase that is punctuated like a sentence but is not one. It usually lacks a verb, or leaves out most of the clause. “Silence.” “The grand final.”

Interrupting clause. An interrupting clause is a dependent clause placed *inside* a main clause, usually set off by two commas, two dashes or two brackets. Lift it out and the main clause still makes sense.

VCAA’s own examples of the three moves (VC2E9LA05 .E01) are:

Move	VCAA’s example
Interrupting clause	“His friend, who had left home the previous year, suddenly returned.”
Lone dependent clause	“If you see what I mean.”
Sentence fragment	“Breathtaking!”

The overview below shows the same three moves with original examples and the job each one does.

Three ways writers break the complete-sentence rule on purpose

Each move drops or interrupts part of a sentence to create an effect.

The move	Example (original)	What it does
Interrupting clause	The goalkeeper, who had rarely touched the ball all game, made the save of the season.	Slips extra detail inside the main clause. Slows the pace, builds up the moment.
Lone dependent clause	She finally told the truth. Because nobody else would.	Leaves a dependent clause standing alone. Sounds like a voice mid-thought; adds a reason that lingers.
Sentence fragment	The crowd went quiet. Silence.	A word or phrase with no full clause. Punchy. Adds emphasis, speed or strong feeling.

Key idea: none of these is a mistake. Each is a choice made for a reader.

Used too often they lose their power. Used well, they shape how a text feels.

Overview table of the three sentence moves with an original example and the effect of each

What is inside each one? The same three questions, asked of a complete sentence and of the two breaks, show why each break “feels” unfinished — and why that is the point.

What is inside each structure?

The same three questions, asked of a complete sentence and of the two breaks.

Complete sentence <i>"The storm rolled in."</i>	Lone dependent clause <i>"Because the lights went out."</i>	Sentence fragment <i>"Total darkness."</i>
Has a subject and a verb? Yes — the storm / rolled	Has a subject and a verb? Yes — the lights / went	Has a subject and a verb? No verb at all
Is the main clause missing or split? No	Is the main clause missing or split? Yes — begins with Because	Is the main clause missing or split? Yes — most is missing
Can stand alone as a full sentence? Yes	Can stand alone as a full sentence? No — leaves you waiting	Can stand alone as a full sentence? No — not a full clause

A complete sentence answers the last question yes. The other two say no on purpose —
and that "no" is exactly where the effect comes from.

Comparison of a complete sentence, a lone dependent clause and a fragment by subject, verb and ability to stand alone

Move 1 — the interrupting clause

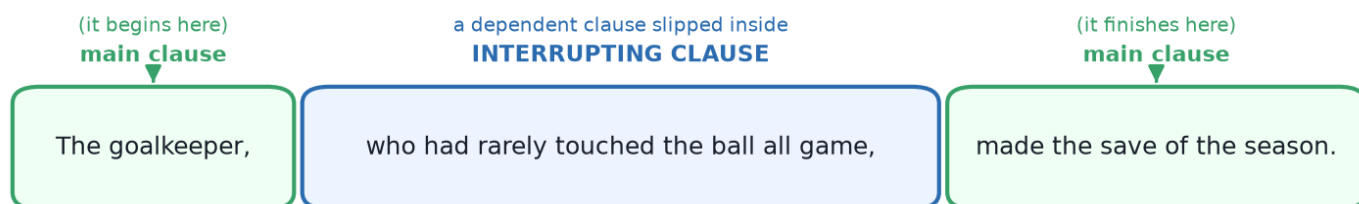
An interrupting clause slips extra information into the middle of a sentence without starting a new one. It slows the pace and builds up the moment before the main clause finishes.

Original example: The goalkeeper, *who had rarely touched the ball all game*, made the save of the season.

The anatomy diagram shows how the main clause is split around the interrupting clause, and the lift-out test proves the interrupting clause adds detail rather than doing the main job.

Anatomy of an interrupting clause

A dependent clause is slipped inside the main clause, between two commas.



The lift-out test: remove the interrupting clause.

The goalkeeper made the save of the season.

A complete sentence still stands — so the interrupting clause adds detail; it is not doing the main job of the sentence.

Interrupting clauses are usually set off by two commas, two dashes or two brackets.

Labelled diagram of a main clause split by an interrupting clause, with the lift-out test

Move 2 — the lone dependent clause

A lone dependent clause is a dependent clause that the writer has left standing on its own, with no main clause attached. It reads like a voice caught mid-thought, and it leaves a reason or a doubt hanging in the air.

Original example: She finally told the truth. *Because nobody else would.*

The second “sentence” begins with *because*, so it cannot stand alone in formal writing — but here that is exactly the effect: an afterthought that lingers.

Move 3 — the sentence fragment

A fragment is the shortest, punchiest break. Because it carries so few words, it lands hard: it adds emphasis, speed or strong feeling.

Original example: The crowd went quiet. *Silence.*

Punctuation steers the fragment. The mark you end a fragment with changes how it lands.

Punctuation steers the fragment

The same word can land differently depending on the mark that ends it.

Mark	Example	What it signals
.	<i>Silence.</i>	States it flatly — calm, matter-of-fact.
!	<i>Deafening!</i>	Strong feeling — shock, excitement, surprise.
—	<i>I opened the door — nothing.</i>	Ties the fragment on as an afterthought.
...	<i>And then...</i>	Trails off — uncertainty, suspense, a pause.

Choose the mark that matches the feeling you want the reader to have.

Table of punctuation marks (full stop, exclamation mark, dash, ellipsis) with an example fragment and what each signals

Worked examples: reading the moves in real texts

Model text A — narrative. Read this original passage and watch the tags. The two fragments chop the action into quick beats; the lone clause at the end makes you lean back in.

Reading the moves in an original passage

Each line is tagged. Notice how the breaks change the pace of the moment.

The corridor was empty.

Complete sentence

My footsteps echoed off the tiles.

Complete sentence

A shuffle.

Sentence fragment

My heart, which had been steady a moment ago, began to race.

Interrupting clause

I turned around.

Complete sentence

Nothing.

Sentence fragment

Which was exactly the problem.

Lone dependent clause

The two fragments (A shuffle. / Nothing.) chop the action into quick beats.

The lone clause at the end (Which was exactly the problem.) makes you lean back in.

Try reading it aloud once with the breaks and once without — hear the difference.

Original suspense passage with each line tagged as complete sentence, fragment, interrupting clause or lone dependent clause

Why it works (a model of the reasoning):

- “A shuffle.” and “Nothing.” are fragments. They are short, so the reader moves through them fast — the pace quickens and each word carries more weight. The effect is tension.
- “My heart, which had been steady a moment ago, began to race.” is an interrupting clause. It pauses the action to add detail, slowing the pace at the key moment.
- “Which was exactly the problem.” is a lone dependent clause. Ending on it leaves the thought hanging, which suits a suspenseful close.

Model text B — same moment, two deliveries. Compare a flat, all-complete version with a varied version of the same event.

Same moment, two deliveries

Version A — every sentence complete

The final whistle blew. Our team had won the grand final.

The players ran onto the field. The fans cheered very loudly.

It was a very exciting moment.

All the information is there — but the delivery is flat and even.

Version B — the same moment, varied

The final whistle blew.

We had won.

The grand final.

fragment — adds punch

Players sprinted onto the field.

The roar of the crowd. Deafening.

fragment — adds punch

A moment none of us will forget.

fragment — adds punch

Version B uses fragments to make you feel the speed and noise of the moment.

Neither is wrong. They simply do different jobs for a reader.

Side-by-side comparison of the same sporting moment written as uniform complete sentences and as varied sentences with fragments

Both versions carry the same information; neither is “wrong”. Version B simply uses fragments to make you feel the speed and the noise. That is what varying sentence structure for effect means: you choose the structure that produces the feeling you want.

The effect map below summarises what each move tends to do for a reader.

The effect on the reader

The same event can feel different depending on the structure you choose.

Sentence fragment	Lone dependent clause	Interrupting clause
Punch and emphasis	A reason that lingers	Extra detail, no new sentence
Speed — the reader moves fast	Suspense — leaves you leaning in	Slows the pace
Big feeling in few words	A voice caught mid-thought	Builds up the moment
A dramatic pause	An informal, spoken feel	Adds rhythm and information

Effect is a reader's likely response. Different readers may feel it differently —

what matters is that you can explain the choice you made and why it fits.

Chart mapping each of the three sentence moves to the effects it tends to create for a reader

Practice

Reading and viewing.

Q1. In Model text A, find one fragment and one lone dependent clause. For each, state the effect it creates and the evidence (the words or the punctuation) that tells you so.

Q2. Look at Version A and Version B in the before-and-after figure. Identify two complete sentences in Version A that became fragments in Version B, and explain what the change adds.

Q3. Read this original sentence: “The old house, which had been empty for years, still had lights on.” Identify the interrupting clause, then use the lift-out test to show the main clause still makes sense without it.

Writing.

Q4. Rewrite this flat paragraph twice. First keep every sentence complete. Then vary it using at least one fragment and one lone dependent clause. > The bus was late. I waited in the rain. I was soaked. I was annoyed. When it finally arrived I got > on.

Q5. Write a short narrative paragraph (5–7 lines) about a moment of suspense or surprise. Use at least one of each move: an interrupting clause, a lone dependent clause and a fragment. Then label each one in the margin.

Speaking and listening.

Q6. Read Model text A aloud twice with a partner: once exactly as written, and once with every break joined into a complete sentence. Discuss what changes in the pace and the feeling, and which version you would choose for a reading-aloud performance.

Q7. In pairs, take one paragraph you have written for another subject and read it aloud. Decide together whether one well-placed fragment or lone clause would add emphasis — or whether it would be out of place for that audience and purpose.

Checkpoint

This section connects to the Level 9 achievement standard (Reading and Viewing): “They engage with vocabulary and grammatical knowledge, including the ways that sentence structures are varied for creative effect...”. You are on track when you can:

- name a main clause, a dependent clause, a fragment and an interrupting clause in a text you read;
- explain, with reasons a reader could follow, the likely effect of a chosen break;
- use at least one break on purpose in your own writing, and say why it fits the purpose and audience.

Before you keep a break in your own work, run it past the five questions.

Before you keep a break: five questions

A deliberate break is a tool. An accidental one is an error. These tell them apart.

1

Deliberate?

Did I break the rule on purpose, for a reason — not by accident?

2

Effective?

Does it add punch, pace, mood or voice? If not, it is just unfinished.

3

Sparing?

Have I kept breaks few, so each one still has power?

4

Clear?

Will the reader still follow? If they get lost, rejoin the clause.

5

Suitable?

Does it fit the audience and purpose?
Rare in a formal report; often right in a story or speech.

All five yes → keep it. Any no → rewrite it as a full sentence, or move it.

Checklist of five questions to ask before keeping a sentence fragment or lone dependent clause

Sample responses and notes

Q1 (sample). Fragment: “Nothing.” Effect: it is one word, so it lands hard and quickens the pace; the full stop states it flatly, which adds to the emptiness. Lone dependent clause: “Which was exactly the problem.” Effect: it begins with *which*, so it cannot stand alone; ending on it leaves the thought hanging and suits the suspense.

Q2 (sample). “Our team had won the grand final” became the fragment “The grand final.”; “The fans cheered very loudly” became “The roar of the crowd. Deafening.” The change drops the verbs and lets the images do the work, adding speed and punch.

Q3 (sample). Interrupting clause: “which had been empty for years”. Lift it out: “The old house still had lights on.” — a complete sentence, so the interrupting clause only adds detail.

Q4 (sample varied version). The bus was late. I waited in the rain. Soaked. Annoyed. When it finally arrived, I got on — because I had nowhere else to be. (Fragment: “Soaked. Annoyed.”; lone dependent clause: “because I had nowhere else to be.”)

Teacher note: responses are judged on the quality of reasoning, not on one fixed “effect”. Two students may describe different feelings from the same break and both be right, provided each names the choice and supports it from the words on the page.

Abstract nouns as summaries of ideas

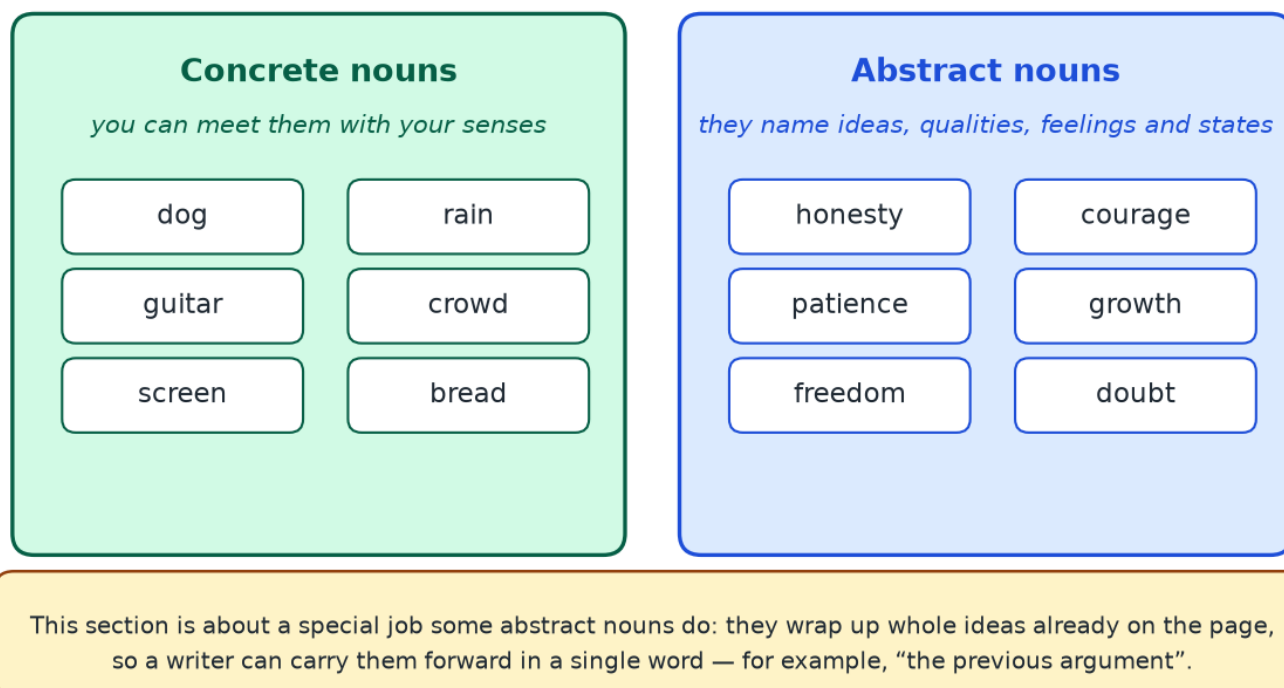
Curriculum: VC2E9LA06 — *Language, Language for expressing and developing ideas*. Students learn to: “understand how abstract nouns can be used to summarise ideas in text”. **Draws on:** VC2E9LA06.E01 — exploring sections of academic and technical texts, and analysing the use of abstract nouns (for example, ‘the previous argument’ or ‘the prologue’) to summarise and distil information, structure the argument and summarise preceding explanations. **Achievement standard (Reading and Viewing):** “They engage with vocabulary and grammatical knowledge, including the ways that sentence structures are varied for creative effect...” **Builds from Level 8:** VC2E8LA08 (the role and use of academic vocabulary). **Hands to Level 10:** VC2E10LA06 (abstraction in noun groups).

Theory

Two kinds of nouns. A **noun** is a word that names a person, place, thing or idea. A **concrete noun** names something you can meet with your senses — something you can see, hear, touch, taste or smell. An **abstract noun** names something you cannot meet with your senses: an idea, a quality, a feeling or a state. In this section, *abstract noun* is used in that everyday grammar sense — a noun for an idea rather than an object — and every task is answerable on that definition alone.

Two kinds of nouns

A noun names a person, place, thing or idea. The split below is the one that matters here.



A diagram contrasting concrete nouns such as dog, rain and guitar with abstract nouns such as honesty, courage and growth

Most of the time you use abstract nouns for what they name: *honesty* in “I admire your honesty”. This section is about a second job some of them do — the job that carries academic and technical writing.

The summarising move. An abstract noun can wrap up a whole idea that came earlier, so a writer can carry that idea forward in a few words. The wrapping unit is a **noun group** — a small team of words built around one noun. In the noun group *the previous argument*, the noun is *argument*, and *the* and *previous* tell the reader which argument: the one already made.

Two examples are worth keeping in your head: *the previous argument* and *the prologue*. The first wraps up an idea — everything argued so far. The second wraps up a part of the text itself — the pages you have already read. Some summary nouns point at ideas; some point at pieces of the text. Both let a writer treat a lot of earlier material as one thing.

These nouns come in families. Three families do most of the wrapping: **idea nouns** pack a claim, a finding or an argument; **text-part nouns** name a piece of the text itself; and **quality and state nouns** name feelings, qualities and states.

A toolkit of summary nouns

Three families do most of the wrapping in academic and technical texts.

Idea nouns — pack a claim, finding or argument

idea	view	claim	argument	belief
theory	reason	cause	finding	result
conclusion	solution	difference	pattern	change
growth	risk	benefit	aim	plan

Text-part nouns — name a part of the text itself

introduction	prologue	chapter	section	paragraph
example	diagram	table	quote	appendix
summary	opening			

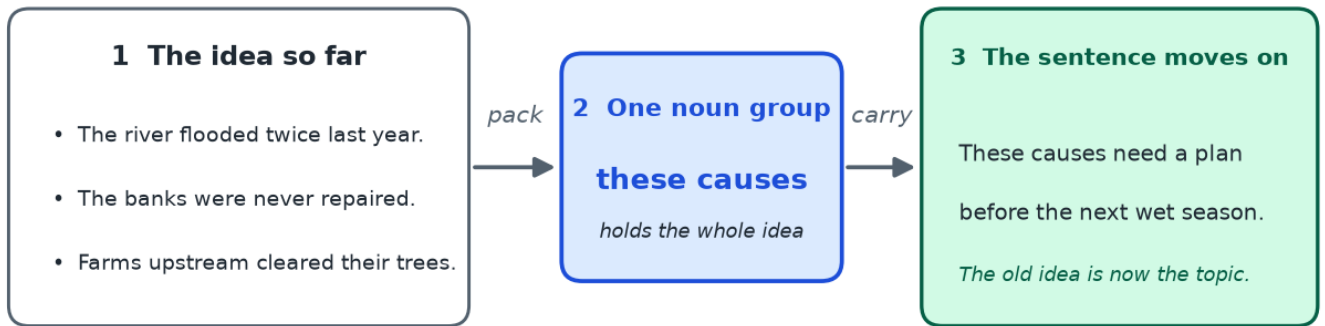
Quality and state nouns — name feelings, qualities and states

honesty	courage	patience	kindness	loyalty
trust	doubt	fear	joy	grief
pride	silence			

You do not need to memorise this page. You need to notice these words doing their job in what you read — and to start choosing them on purpose in what you write.

A reference chart of the three families of summary nouns, listing idea nouns such as claim, argument and result, text-part nouns such as prologue, paragraph and table, and quality and state nouns such as courage, trust and doubt

Packaging: many clauses become one noun group



Why writers package

Without packaging, the next sentence must repeat all three clauses before it can say anything new.

“These causes” compresses three sentences into two words, so the writer can build on the idea instead of restating it. The reader recognises the package and unpacks it automatically.

A flow diagram showing three clauses about a flooded river packaged into the noun group these causes, which then opens the next sentence

Where you meet them: academic and technical texts. In this section, an **academic text** is writing that reports, explains or argues about research and ideas — the writing you meet in essays, articles and studies. A **technical text** is writing that explains how something works or how to do something — manuals, guides and reports. Both lean on summary nouns, because both must carry earlier information forward without repeating it.

Excerpt A — an academic text

Written for this book. Academic texts report and argue research and ideas.

Researchers have long argued that sleep helps the brain sort the day's learning.

One early view held that the brain simply rests, and that rest alone explains better recall. More careful testing has since challenged **this view**.

In one study, students who slept after learning a word list recalled more words than students who stayed awake. **Such results** suggest that sleep does more than end tiredness. **The leading explanation** is that the brain replays the day's events during deep sleep and moves them into long-term memory. If **this explanation** holds, shortening sleep in exam weeks may harm the very thing exams are meant to measure.

Highlighted: summary nouns. Each one points back and wraps up an idea so the text can build on it.

A short academic text about sleep and memory, with the summary nouns one early view, this view, such results, the leading explanation and this explanation highlighted

Read Excerpt A twice. The first time, follow the argument: an old view, a test that challenges it, a newer explanation. The second time, read only the highlighted noun groups — *one early view, this view, such results, the leading explanation, this explanation*. The argument still stands. That is the test of a summary noun: strip the packages out and the skeleton of the text is what remains.

Excerpt B — a technical text

Written for this book. Technical texts explain how something works or how to do it.

How to test your soil — field guide

Step 1: Dig a hole 30 cm deep and fill it with water. Let it drain fully.

This first flush wets the dry soil, so do not time it.

Step 2: Fill the hole a second time and time how long it takes to empty.

This is **the measure** that matters.

Step 3: Read **the result** against the guide's table. Under one hour means fast drainage; over six hours means slow drainage.

If **the result** sits in the slow band, **the fix** is usually to mix compost through the top layer. **This change** opens spaces in the soil and gives water somewhere to go. Repeat **the test** after **the change** to confirm it worked.

Highlighted: summary nouns. Each step ends with one, so the reader always knows what to do with what came before.

A technical field guide for testing soil, with summary nouns such as this first flush, the measure, the result, the fix and this change highlighted

Excerpt B does the same work in a different register. Every step ends by packing itself — *the measure, the result, the fix, this change* — so the reader always knows what to do with what came before. Technical writing is not hard because its words are long; it is hard when the packages are missing and you cannot tell which step builds on which.

The three jobs a summary noun does.

1. **Compress.** A noun group holds what took several clauses to build, so the next sentence can spend itself on something new instead of repeating the old.
2. **Connect and order.** *This* and *these* point backwards; *the first reason, the next step* and *the final result* put the packages in order. The reader always knows where they are.
3. **Evaluate.** The noun you choose carries a judgement. Call an outcome *a result* and you sound neutral; call it *a failure* or *a triumph* and you have taken a side. Section 1B showed that wording can judge without adjectives; a summary noun is one of the sharpest tools for it.

Using them yourself — writing. The modelled edit below takes five loose sentences and packs them into two connected ones. The ideas are the same; the packing is new. The habit to build is this: when a sentence repeats an idea your reader already has, pack the idea into a noun group and spend the sentence on something new.

A modelled edit: packing loose sentences

Before — five loose sentences

Students wanted a recycling bin.

Students signed a petition.

Students gave the petition to the principal.

The principal agreed with the students.

The principal said the school would trial three bins.

Every sentence starts over. Nothing carries forward.

edit



After — packed and linked

Students wanted a recycling bin,
a request they backed with a signed petition.

This support convinced the principal,
whose decision was to trial three bins.

Bold noun groups carry each idea into the next sentence.

The edit: "Students signed a petition" became "a request they backed with a signed petition".
"The principal agreed" became "This support convinced the principal". The ideas are the same — the packing is new.

A before-and-after comparison showing five loose sentences edited into two packed, connected sentences

Using them yourself — speaking and listening. Summary nouns work out loud too. The cleanest discussion move you will ever learn is the **recap**: before you answer someone's point of view, wrap it up in their ears. If your recap is right, your answer lands; if it is wrong, your partner corrects it and your answer still lands. You are listening for the other person's *claim, reasons* and *evidence* — and naming them is what proves you heard.

The recap protocol — speaking and listening

A discussion move: before you answer a point of view, summarise it in summary nouns.

1 Speaker A makes a point of view (60 seconds)

Claim, reasons, evidence. Example topic: "Our school should trial recycling bins in the canteen."

2 Speaker B recaps before answering

"So your claim is ..., your first reason is ..., and your evidence is ..."

Summary nouns — claim, reason, evidence — carry Speaker A's whole argument in a few words.

3 Speaker A confirms or corrects the recap

"Yes — and the main reason is the cost of the waste." or "Not quite: my claim is about the bins, not the canteen menu." Only then does Speaker B respond.

4 Swap roles

This time the recap must use different summary nouns — view, support, example.

A four-step flow chart of the recap protocol for speaking and listening

Two sides of the same tool. Writers disagree about how much packing good writing wants, and both sides have a real case.

- **The case for packing.** An essay that packs can say in two words what took three sentences to build, so the argument moves faster and its shape is easier to see. That is why academic and technical texts read the way they do — the density is the efficiency, and a reader who knows the packages can skim the skeleton of an argument in seconds.
- **The case against over-packing.** A packed noun can hide who did what. *The decision was made* never says who decided; plain clauses do. Heavy packing also stacks idea on idea, and a reader who misses one package loses the whole chain.

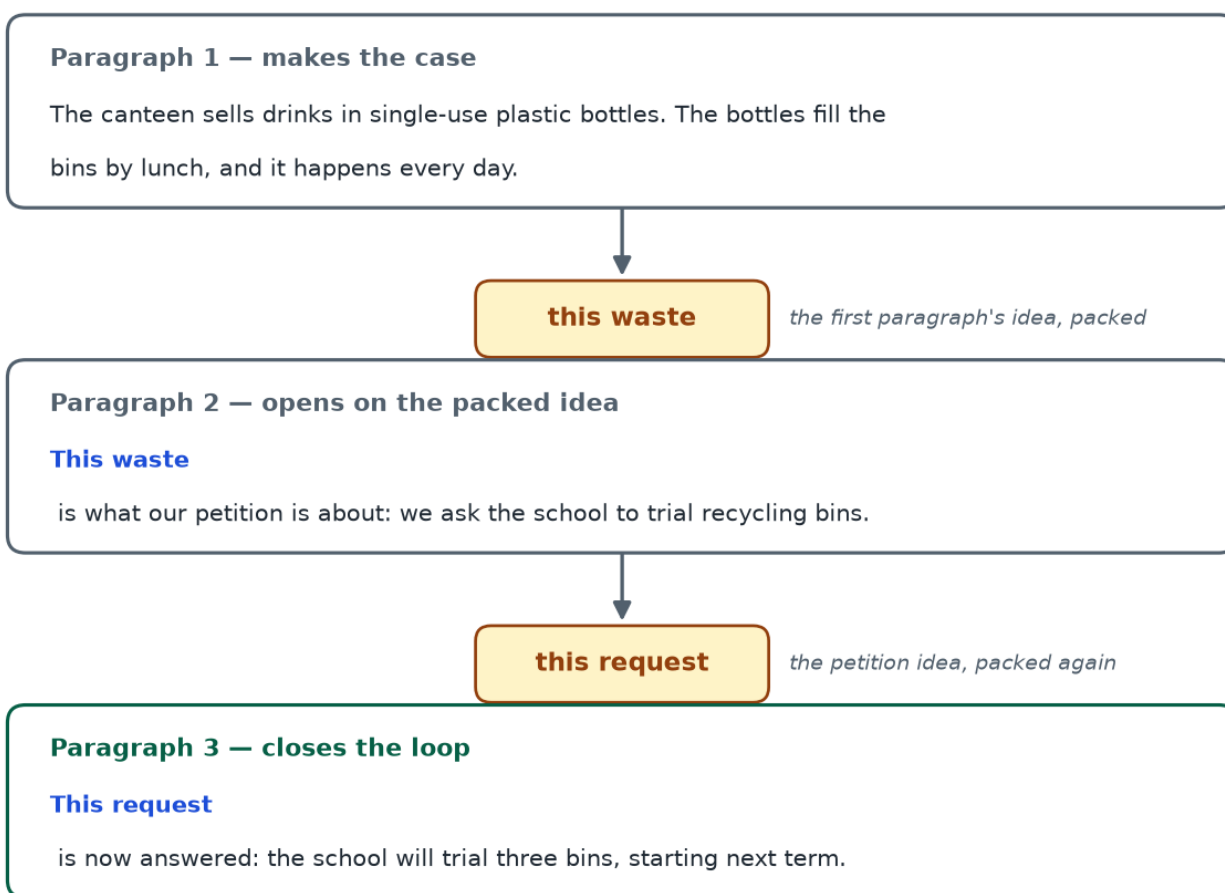
Both cases are true at once. The skill this section builds is **choosing**: pack on purpose when your reader holds the idea and you are building on it; unpack into plain clauses when you must show who did what, or when clarity matters more than speed. You will be marked on the reasoning behind the choice, never on one fixed answer.

A word on nominalisation. Turning a verb or an adjective into a noun — *decide* becomes *decision*, *grow* becomes *growth* — is called **nominalisation**, and section 1D put it to work as a cohesive device. Summary nouns are the same family at work: a package made out of what happened. You do not need the label to use the tool, but the label is yours to keep.

Summary nouns stitch paragraphs together. A paragraph usually ends having built an idea; the next paragraph can open by naming that idea in a noun group, so the old idea becomes the new starting point.

Summary nouns stitch paragraphs together

The same essay, three paragraphs — each opening reaches back with a noun group.



*A diagram of three essay paragraphs linked by the summary nouns **this waste** and **this request***

Checkpoint. You should now be able to:

- **Reading and viewing:** spot summary nouns in an academic or technical text and say what each one wraps up, including by reading the highlighted skeleton of a text.
- **Writing:** compress and connect your own paragraphs with noun groups chosen on purpose.
- **Speaking and listening:** recap a partner's point of view in summary nouns before you answer it.

Worked examples

Example 1 — scaffolded

In Excerpt A, three summary nouns do the heavy lifting. Find them and say what each one wraps up.

Working	Comment
<i>this view</i> — the sentence before it gives the view: the brain simply rests, and rest alone explains better recall.	The noun <i>view</i> names the whole earlier claim, so the writer can say it was challenged without restating it.
<i>Such results</i> — the sentence before it gives the results: sleepers recalled more words than students who stayed awake.	<i>Results</i> packs the study's findings; <i>such</i> points straight back at them.
<i>this explanation</i> — two sentences earlier gives the explanation: the brain replays the day in deep sleep and stores it.	The package lets the writer test the explanation ("if this explanation holds") without repeating it.

Each package points backwards so the text can move forwards. Read only the highlighted groups and the argument still stands — that is how you check you have found the right nouns.

Example 2 — scaffolded

A paragraph ends like this: “The team trained before sunrise. They studied video of every rival. They changed their diet.” The next sentence must build on all three. Choose the best noun group to open it, and say why the others fail.

Working	Comment
(a) <i>These habits</i>	Training and diet could be habits, but studying video is a plan, not a habit. The package only half fits.
(b) <i>The team</i>	Names the people, not the idea. The next sentence would have to repeat everything to make sense.
(c) <i>This preparation</i>	Training, study and diet are all ways of getting ready. All three clauses fit inside the one package.

So the paragraph can continue: “**This preparation** turned a mid-table team into a finalist in one season.” The old idea arrives packed; the new idea gets the rest of the sentence.

Example 3 — unscaffolded

Edit this paragraph the way the modelled edit above works. Keep every idea; use at most two sentences; underline the summary nouns you add.

The council cut two bus routes. The council raised fares in the same week. Riders were angry. Riders started a petition.

Model edit: “The council cut two bus routes and raised fares in the same week. These two decisions made riders angry, and that anger became a petition.”

These two decisions packs the cut and the rise; *that anger* packs the riders’ response and hands it to the next clause. Four loose sentences become two connected ones, and nothing is lost.

Example 4 — unscaffolded

Unpack, then judge. Packed sentence: “The committee’s decision to delay the repair surprised residents.”

- (a) **Unpack it into plain clauses.** “The committee decided to delay the repair. Residents were surprised.”
- (b) **What becomes visible?** Who acted. The packed noun hides the actor inside the package — *decision* does not say who decided; the plain clauses show the committee deciding.
- (c) **When is the packed version better?** When the reader already holds the fact and the writer is building on it: “The committee’s decision to delay the repair surprised residents. **This decision** also raised the cost of the work.” Packed, the idea travels; unpacked, it repeats. Two good tools, chosen for the job.

Practice questions

Scaffolded

Q1. Sort these nouns into concrete and abstract: *courage, bottle, silence, crowd, growth, guitar, doubt, screen, patience, rain.*

Q2. Excerpt A: (a) name three summary nouns; (b) choose one of them and say, in a full sentence, exactly what it wraps up.

Q3. Match each opening noun group to its main job (*compress, order* or *evaluate*): (a) “The next step is testing the water.” (b) “This mistake cost the team the match.” (c) “These causes explain last year’s flood.”

Q4. Package each pair of clauses into one noun group that could open the next sentence: (a) “The app crashed twice. It lost my homework file.” (b) “Many students skip breakfast. They arrive tired.” (c) “The club signed a new striker. He scored in his first two games.”

Q5. Fill each gap with a word from the bank (*view, result, prologue, method, claim*): (a) The _____ sets out the world of the novel before chapter one. (b) Her _____ is that the canteen should open earlier; the other _____ is that it costs too much. (c) The _____ of the trial was clear: the water is safe. (d) The _____ section lists each step in order.

Q6. Excerpt B: (a) find two summary nouns and say what each one points to; (b) in one sentence, say why a technical text leans on them.

Un scaffolded

Q7. Rewrite as one sentence using a summary noun: “The council cut two bus routes. The council raised fares in the same week.”

Q8. Edit for packing and connection. Keep every idea; use at most three sentences; underline the summary nouns you add: “The club signed a new striker. The striker scored in the first game. The striker scored in the second game. The fans were happy. The fans started to believe again.”

Q9. Unpack: “The committee’s decision to delay the repair surprised residents.” (a) Write it as plain clauses. (b) Name the thing the packed version had hidden.

Q10. Writing: in two or three sentences, give your view on this question: *Should the school day start an hour later?* Use at least two summary nouns and underline them.

Q11. Viewing: study the paragraph-chain diagram. (a) Name the two summary nouns that hand the idea from paragraph to paragraph. (b) In one sentence, say what would break if paragraph 2 opened with “It is what our petition is about” instead of “This waste is what our petition is about”.

Q12. Speaking and listening: with a partner, run the recap protocol on this topic: *Our town should build a new skate park.* Afterwards, write the two recap sentences you actually said, with the summary nouns underlined.

Q13. Two sides: (a) give the strongest one-sentence case for packing an essay with summary nouns; (b) give the strongest one-sentence case for keeping plain clauses; (c) name one real reader or situation where each side wins.

Q14. Writing: draft the first two paragraphs of a short essay on single-use plastic at your school. Paragraph 2 must open with a summary noun that wraps up paragraph 1. Underline it.

Answers

Q1. Concrete: bottle, crowd, guitar, screen, rain. Abstract: courage, silence, growth, doubt, patience. **Q2.** (a) *one early view, this view, such results, the leading explanation, this explanation* — any three. (b) Example: *such results* wraps up the finding that students who slept after learning a word list recalled more words than students who stayed awake. **Q3.** (a) order; (b) evaluate; (c) compress. **Q4.** (a) *This failure* (or *this problem*); (b) *This pattern* (or *this habit*); (c) *This signing* (or *this start*). **Q5.** (a) prologue; (b) claim, view; (c) result; (d) method. **Q6.** (a) Example: *the measure* points to the timed second fill; *this change* points to mixing compost through the top layer. (b) A technical text leans on summary nouns so each short step can build on the last without repeating it. **Q7.** Example: *These two decisions* angered riders. (Any one sentence whose noun group packs both clauses.) **Q8.** Example: “The club signed a new striker, and he scored in his first two games. This start made the fans happy, and that happiness turned back into belief.” **Q9.** (a) “The committee decided to delay the repair. Residents were surprised.” (b) Who acted — the committee deciding. **Q10.** Answers vary; two summary nouns underlined and used to wrap an idea, not just named. **Q11.** (a) *this waste* (paragraphs 1→2) and *this request* (paragraphs 2→3). (b) *It* has no package to point at — the reader must guess what “it” is, and the link that carries the idea forward is lost. **Q12.** Answers vary; the recap must wrap the partner’s claim and reasons in noun groups. **Q13.** (a) Example: packing lets a reader hold a long argument in a few words, so the essay can build instead of repeat. (b) Example: plain clauses show who did what, so nobody can hide inside a package. (c) Example: packing wins in a formal essay for a teacher who knows the topic; plain clauses win in safety instructions, where a missed package causes a missed step. **Q14.** Answers vary; paragraph 2 opens with a noun group that genuinely wraps paragraph 1.

Fully-worked solutions

Q1. Concrete nouns name things you can meet with your senses: *bottle* (seen, held), *crowd* (seen, heard), *guitar* (heard, held), *screen* (seen), *rain* (felt, seen). Abstract nouns name ideas, qualities, feelings and states: *courage, silence, growth, doubt, patience*. Note *crowd*: you can see and hear a crowd, so it is concrete even though it is a group — the split is about senses, not size.

Q2. (a) Any three of: *one early view, this view, such results, the leading explanation, this explanation*. (b) A full answer names the package and its contents: “*This view* wraps up the claim that the brain simply rests during sleep, and that rest alone explains better recall.” A one-word answer (“the view”) is not a summary of the idea — it is a label with the contents missing.

Q3. (a) *The next step* puts the packages in order → **order**. (b) *This mistake* is not a neutral word for an outcome; calling it a mistake takes a side → **evaluate**. (c) *These causes* packs the earlier explanation of the flood into two words → **compress**.

Q4. (a) Crashing and losing a file are one failure: *this failure* (or *this problem*). (b) Skipping breakfast and arriving tired happen again and again: *this pattern* (or *this habit*). (c) Signing a player and his early goals are one piece of club business: *this signing* (or *this start*). The check is always the same: does every clause in the pair fit inside the package?

Q5. (a) *prologue* — a text-part noun naming the opening section of a novel. (b) *claim, view* — two idea nouns holding two opposed positions. (c) *result* — the finding of the trial. (d) *method* — the idea noun for the way the steps are done. Notice that (a) names a piece of the text while (c) and (d) name ideas: both families do the same wrapping job.

Q6. (a) Any two with their targets, for example: *this first flush* points to the un-timed first fill of the hole; *the result* points to the timed second fill read against the guide’s table; *the fix* points to mixing compost through the top layer. (b) A technical text leans on summary nouns because its steps must stay short and ordered: each step ends by packing itself so the next step knows exactly what to build on.

Q7. Model: “**These two decisions** angered riders in the same week.” The noun group *these two decisions* holds both the cut and the rise, so one sentence can report the riders’ response. A sentence that just joins the clauses with *and* (“The council cut routes and raised fares”) connects but does not package — nothing is left for the next sentence to build on.

Q8. Model: “The club signed a new striker, and he scored in his first two games. **This start** made the fans happy, and **that happiness** turned back into belief.” *This start* packs the signing and the goals; *that happiness* packs the fans’ response and hands it to the final clause. Every idea from the original five sentences is still there.

Q9. (a) “The committee decided to delay the repair. Residents were surprised.” (b) The packed version hides the actor inside *decision* — the plain clauses make visible that **the committee** is who decided. This is the over-packing risk named in Theory: packing is efficient, but it can bury who did what.

Q10. Model response: “The school day should start an hour later. **The evidence** on teenage sleep is clear, and **the current start time** works against it. **A later start** would cost nothing but habit.” Three summary nouns: *the evidence* (compresses the studies), *the current start time* (names the thing argued against), *a later start* (packs the proposal so the final sentence can weigh it). Any answer that uses two or more summary nouns to wrap ideas — not just mention them — meets the question.

Q11. (a) *This waste* hands paragraph 1’s idea to paragraph 2; *this request* hands paragraph 2’s petition to paragraph 3. (b) *It* is a pronoun, not a package: it points at a thing, not at a wrapped idea, so the reader must stop and guess what “it” is. The chain in the diagram breaks at the first arrow, because the opening of paragraph 2 no longer carries the old idea forward by naming it.

Q12. Model recaps: “So your **claim** is that the skate park would give younger kids somewhere safe to go, and your **evidence** is the survey of two hundred students.” / “Your second **reason** is cost: you say **the park** would cost less than fixing the old one.” The move being practised is listening for the other person’s *claim*, *reasons* and *evidence* and naming them back before answering. Marking is on whether the recap truly wraps the partner’s point, not on agreeing with it.

Q13. (a) Strongest case for packing: it lets a reader hold a long argument in a few words, so an essay can spend its sentences building instead of repeating. (b) Strongest case for plain clauses: they show who did what, so no actor can hide inside a package and no reader can lose the chain. (c) Each side’s win: packing wins with a reader who already holds the ideas — a teacher marking an essay, a specialist reading a report; plain clauses win with a reader who must not miss a step — safety instructions, a recipe, an explanation for someone new to the topic. Both cases are put in their strongest form before you choose between them.

Q14. Model opening:

Paragraph 1: Every day the canteen sells drinks in single-use plastic bottles, and every day the bins overflow by lunch. The bottles are used for minutes and kept in the ground for centuries.

Paragraph 2: **This waste** is the easiest problem in the school to fix. A recycling trial would cost little, and the bottles would become a resource instead of a bin-full of proof that we did not try.

This waste wraps all of paragraph 1 — the bottles, the overflow, the minutes-versus-centuries contrast — and turns it into the subject of paragraph 2’s argument. That is the whole skill of this section: the old idea arrives packed, and the new idea gets the sentence.

Symbols in still and moving images, and the use of sound, augmenting meaning

Curriculum trace. Code VC2E9LA07 (strand: Language; sub-strand: Language for expressing and developing ideas). *Students learn to: analyse how symbols in still and moving images and the use of sound augment meaning.* This section draws on elaborations .E01 (“investigating the use of symbols (for example, specific seasons, weather and colours in images, films and picture books) and evaluating their contribution to viewers’ understanding, recognising that visual and verbal symbols have different meanings for different groups and cultures”) and .E03 (“exploring how recurring sounds or music make meaningful connections in text”). In Level 8 (VC2E8LA07) you saw how images and sound can borrow from other texts to layer meaning; here we go further and treat symbol and sound as whole meaning-making systems you can name, read and weigh. Level 10 will build this into evaluating how images and sound shape representation (VC2E10LA07).

Theory

What a symbol is. The Victorian Curriculum uses the term *symbol* but does not define it. This section therefore treats it as follows: a **symbol** is a person, place, thing, colour, season or sound in a text that stands for something beyond its literal self — an idea or feeling — and invites the audience to interpret it. Every question in this section is answerable on that definition alone.

Two ideas sit inside that definition:

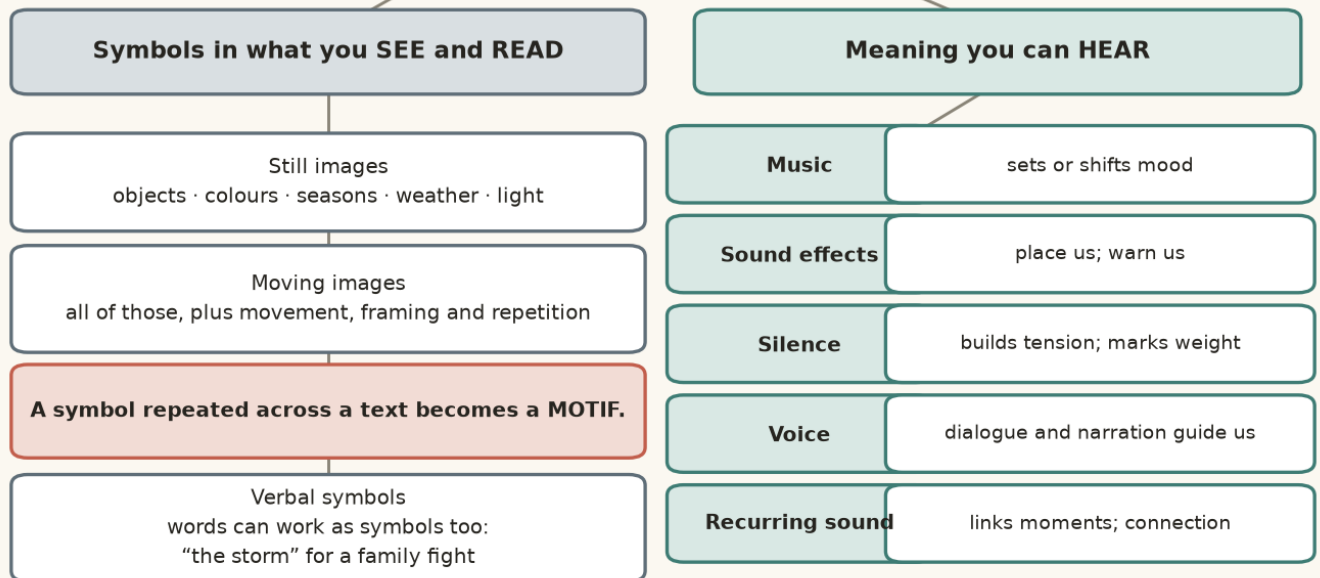
- **Literal first.** Before a yellow kite can stand for hope, it is literally a kite: silk, string, wind. The literal layer never goes away; the symbol is a second layer on top of it.
- **Reading, not looking up.** A symbol’s meaning is not printed on it. A symbol reading is a claim you support with evidence from the text — the kind of claim two readers can test against each other.

Augment. The content description says symbols and sound *augment* meaning. To **augment** is to add to something, to make it larger or stronger. A symbol does not replace the literal story; it adds a layer the audience has to read. A sound choice does the same for the ear.

Where symbols live. Symbols appear in still images, in moving images and in words. In sound texts, meaning is carried by music, effects, silence and the voice — and when a sound returns across a text, it starts doing a symbol’s work.

How still and moving images, and sound, augment meaning

A SYMBOL is a person, place, thing, colour, season or sound in a text that stands for something beyond its literal self — an idea or feeling.



Reading a symbol is an interpretation, not a measurement: state what it stands for, and give your evidence from the text.

Concept map showing that a symbol stands for something beyond its literal self, splitting into symbols you can see and read (still images; moving images, where a repeated symbol becomes a motif; verbal symbols) and meaning you can hear (music, sound effects, silence, voice, recurring sound).

Seasons, weather and colour. Three of the most common symbol systems are seasons, weather and colour. They are common enough that a maker of a film or picture book can use them without explaining them — and a viewer can read them without being told.

Seasons as symbols — common associations in many texts

Spring



new beginnings • growth • hope

common cues: buds, lambs, rain clearing

Summer



freedom • joy • fullness of life

common cues: long light, open doors, the beach

Autumn



change • loss • letting things go

common cues: falling leaves, harvest, shorter days

Winter



endings • stillness • isolation

common cues: bare trees, frost, empty streets

These are common associations, not fixed rules. Always check what the text itself sets up: in a given story, winter might mean peace rather than isolation.

A two-by-two chart of the four seasons with their common symbolic associations: spring with new beginnings, growth and hope; summer with freedom, joy and fullness of life; autumn with change, loss and letting things go; winter with endings, stillness and isolation. A note adds that these are common associations, not fixed rules.

Weather as symbols — what it often stands for

These pairings are common enough that a director can use them without explaining them.

	often stands for	example in a text
Storm 	conflict; feelings that cannot be kept in	<i>"The storm came in like an argument."</i>
Fog 	confusion; not seeing what is true or next	<i>a character lost on the road home</i>
Rain	grief — or washing clean and starting again	<i>rain at a goodbye; rain after a dry spell</i>
Wind	change; forces we cannot control	<i>the wind deciding when the kite can fly</i>
Sunshine 	hope, joy, things going well	<i>sun breaking through on the last page</i>

A chart pairing five weather choices with what they often stand for in texts: storm with conflict and feelings that cannot be kept in; fog with confusion; rain with grief or washing clean and starting again; wind with change and forces we cannot control; sunshine with hope, joy and things going well.

One symbol, many readings. The same symbol does not mean the same thing to every group. Colour is the clearest example: what a colour stands for depends on the culture and history the reader brings.

Colour symbolism — the same colour, different cultural frames

Colour	in many Western contexts	read differently elsewhere	the lesson
 White	weddings, purity, a fresh start	in parts of East Asia, mourning and funerals	<i>one colour, two readings</i>
 Red	danger and warning on signs; love	in China, luck and celebration	<i>context decides</i>
 Yellow	sunshine, caution on signs	in China, once linked to emperors	<i>history loads a colour</i>
 Green	nature, growth; permission	in Ireland, luck and national identity	<i>a place makes it its own</i>

No reading is the one right reading. When you analyse a colour, say which frame you are reading in — the text's own culture, the audience's, or both — and give your evidence.

A table showing that the same colour carries different meanings in different cultural frames: white with weddings and a fresh start in many Western contexts but mourning and funerals in parts of East Asia; red with danger and warning on signs and with love, but with luck and celebration in China; yellow with sunshine and caution, but once linked to emperors in China; green with nature and permission, but with luck and national identity in Ireland. A note adds that no reading is the one right reading.

None of these readings is wrong. The meaning of a symbol depends on the **frame** — the culture, place and history a reader brings to it. So a good analysis states its frame: *in this text's own culture*, or *for this audience*, this colour stands for this. Verbal symbols behave the same way: an owl stands for wisdom in some cultures and for bad luck in others. When a text is made in one culture and read in another, both frames are at work at once — and the gap between them is itself part of the meaning.

Moving images: when a symbol repeats. A symbol can appear once and still work. But film has time, and it can bring a symbol back — the same object, colour or sound at later moments. A symbol, image or sound repeated across a text so that its meaning builds is a **motif**. Each return is read against the last: the second time we see the yellow kite, we see it *as the kite from before*.

Three ways meaning repeats and builds

	Symbol	Motif	Recurring sound
What it is	a thing that stands for something beyond itself	a symbol, image or sound repeated across a text	a tune or sound that returns at set moments
How often	can appear just once	repeats; meaning builds with each return	repeats; each return is heard against the last
What it does	adds a layer of meaning the audience must read	ties scenes and ideas together	makes the audience connect the moments
In these texts	the storm in "Kite Weather" = the family fight	the yellow kite across book, poem and film	the whistle tune in panels 3-6

A comparison table of symbol, motif and recurring sound: what each is, how often it appears, what it does, and an example from the texts in this section — the storm in "Kite Weather", the yellow kite across the picture book, poem and film, and the whistle tune in panels 3 to 6 of Wind Season.

Sound as a meaning system. Sound is not decoration; it is a set of choices, each of which can carry meaning.

Five sound choices, and what each can do

choice	what it can do	example
Music	sets or shifts mood; shapes how we feel about a moment	<i>the string tune turns the storm from threat to release</i>
Sound effects	place us in a world; warn us; draw our ear to one detail	<i>ticking clock, far thunder, the whistle clinking on wood</i>
Silence	builds tension; marks a moment's weight	<i>panel 2: all sound stops before the whistle falls</i>
Voice	dialogue and narration guide us; reveal character	<i>a whispered narrator reads differently from a loud one</i>
Recurring sound	links moments; builds connections we make	<i>the whistle tune returning in panels 3, 4, 5 and 6</i>

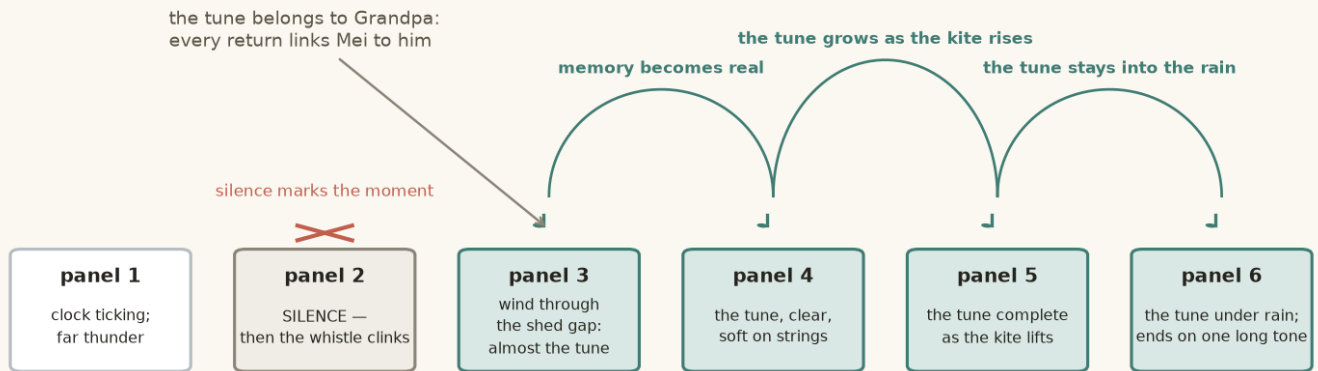
Sound is a choice, not a decoration: for every sound in a text, ask what meaning it adds.

A table of five sound choices — music, sound effects, silence, voice and recurring sound — with what each can do and an example from the short film *Wind Season*, such as silence building tension in panel 2 and the whistle tune linking panels 3, 4, 5 and 6.

Recurring sound makes connections. When a tune or a sound returns, the text asks the audience to connect the moments it appears in. Nothing has to be said in words: the ear does the joining. This is how music can tie a character to a memory, or an early scene to a late one.

Wind Season — where the whistle tune appears, and the links it makes

A recurring sound asks the audience to connect every moment it appears in.

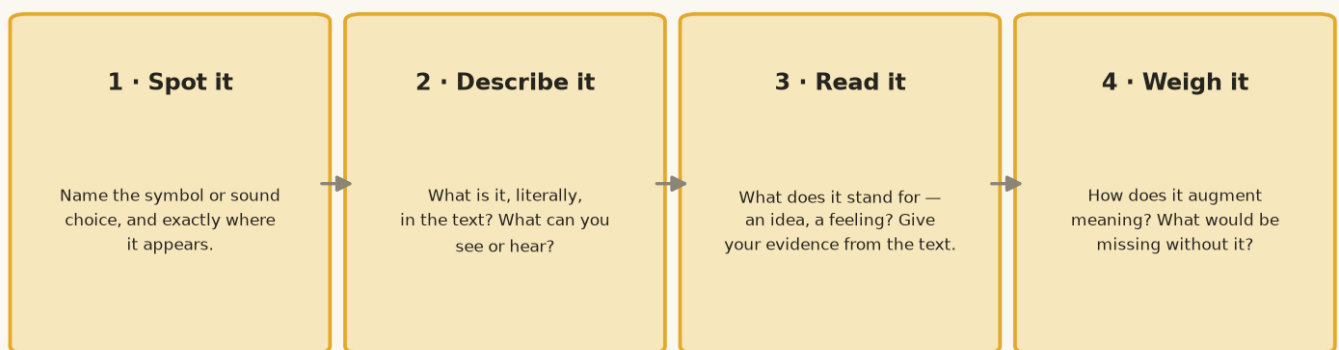


Connections like these are the point of recurring sound: the audience hears the tune return and reads the two moments together — nothing in the dialogue has to say “remember”.

A timeline of the six panels of Wind Season marking what is heard in each: panel 1 a ticking clock and far thunder; panel 2 silence, then the whistle clinking; panels 3 to 6 the whistle tune returning, first as a faint tone in the wind, then clear on strings, then complete as the kite lifts, then continuing under the rain. Arcs above the panels show the connections each return makes, and a note marks that the silence in panel 2 is what makes the moment stand out.

A method you can use. The four steps below work for a colour, a season, a weather choice, a piece of music, a sound effect or a silence.

Analysing a symbol or a sound choice — four steps



Use the same four steps for a colour, a season, a weather choice, a piece of music, a sound effect or a silence — and for recurring sounds, ask what each return connects. Judge every symbol's contribution: what would the text lose without it?

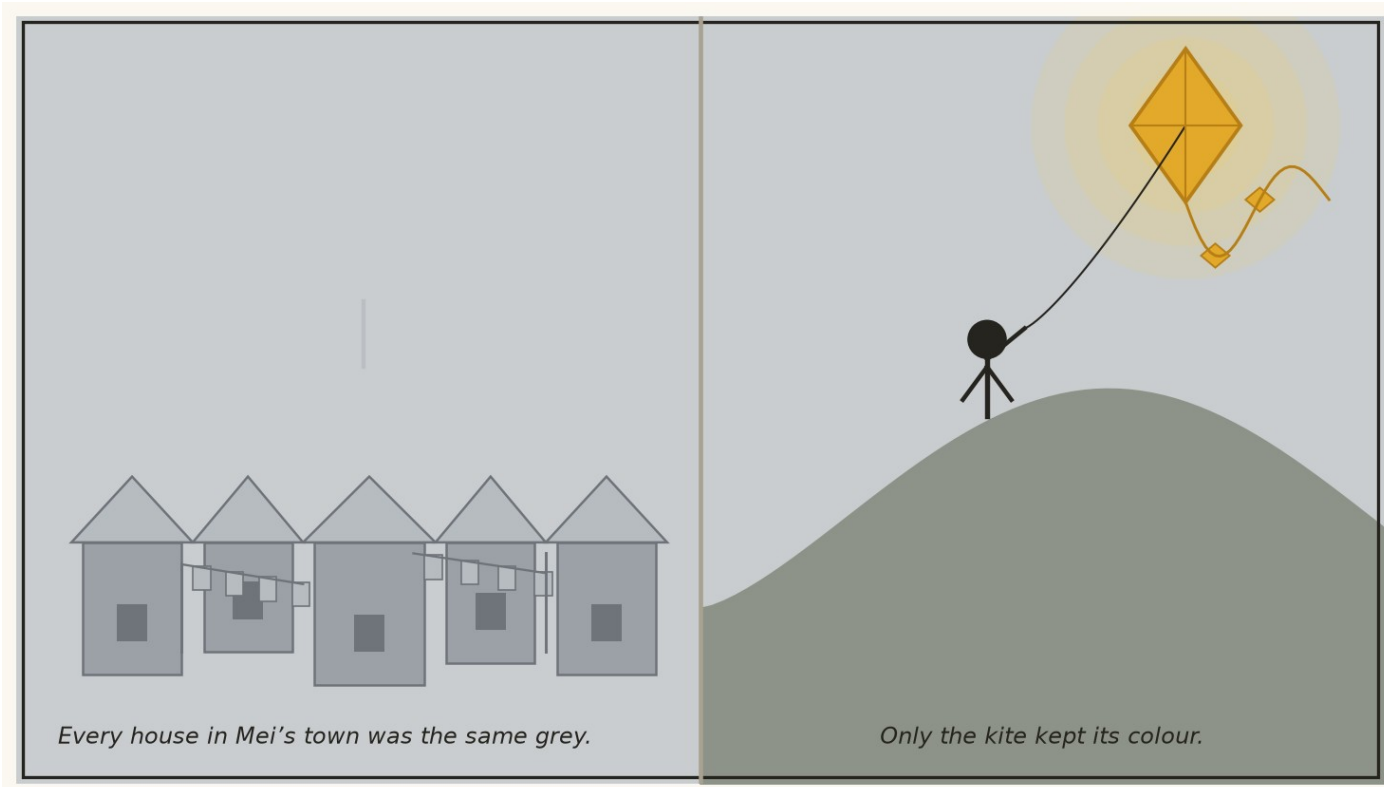
A four-step method for analysing a symbol or a sound choice: 1 spot it — name the symbol or sound choice and exactly where it appears; 2 describe it — what is it, literally, in the text, what can you see or hear; 3 read it — what does it stand for, an idea or a feeling, and what is your evidence from the text; 4 weigh it — how does it augment meaning, what would be missing without it.

The texts for this section

All three texts below were written for this section. They share one small story-world — a grey town, a girl named Mei, her grandfather’s yellow kite — so that you can watch the same symbols move between a picture book, a poem and a film.

Text A — picture book: *The Yellow Kite*. This is the double-page spread as drawn. The book’s text on these pages reads:

Every house in Mei’s town was the same grey. Grey roofs, grey fences, grey washing hanging still in the grey air. Nobody remembered the town being any other way. But every Sunday, Mei climbed the hill behind the last house and let the yellow kite pull at its string. It had been her grandfather’s. “One day,” he told her once, “this town will remember what colour feels like.” The kite strained upward, bright as a small sun, and below it the grey town went on not looking up.



A double-page picture-book spread drawn entirely in grey on the left page — a row of grey houses with limp washing lines and no people — while the right page shows a small figure on a hill flying one bright yellow kite, the only colour on either page. The captions read: “Every house in Mei’s town was the same grey.” and “Only the kite kept its colour.”

Text B — poem: “Kite Weather”.

The kite hangs quiet in the shed, its yellow silk gone grey with dust, while autumn strips the maples bare and bends the fence posts in the gusts.

Grandpa whistled when he flew it — one thin tune against the sky. That tune still sits inside the wind and will not tell me why.

The storm that broke the shed door loose came in last night like an argument: my mother’s voice, my father’s silence, the weather vane spinning, pointing where it went.

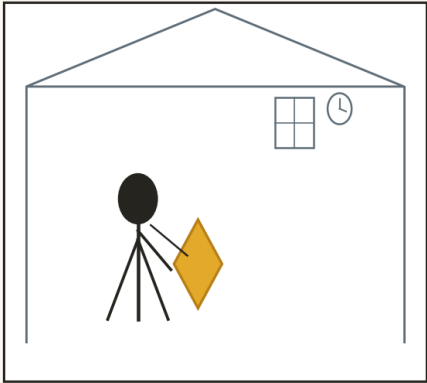
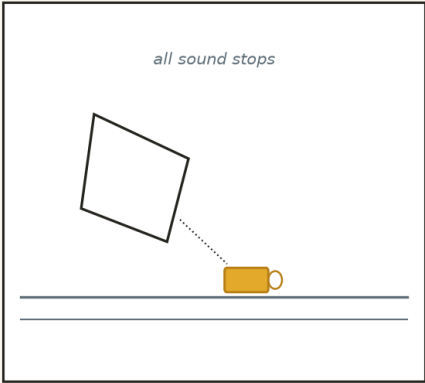
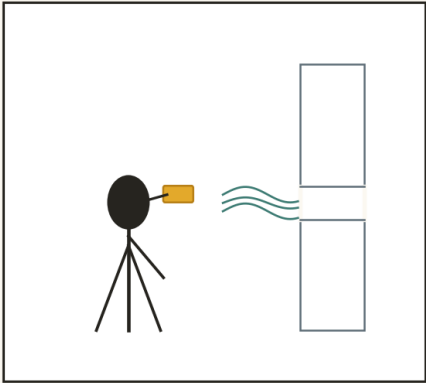
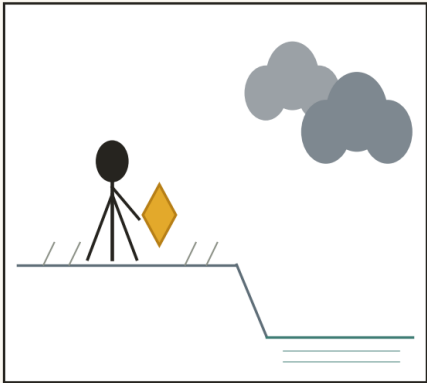
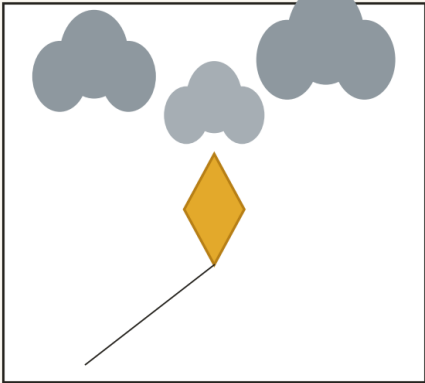
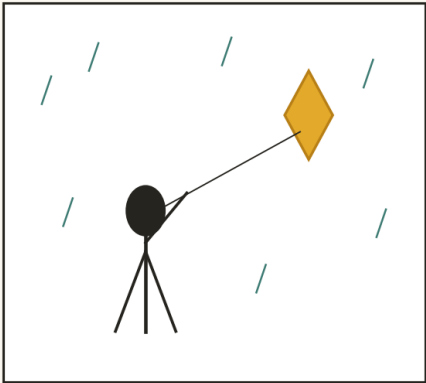
If I mend the silk with tape and string and wait for the wind to change its mind, will summer come back the way it was, with Grandpa whistling close behind?

Text C — short film: *Wind Season*. The storyboard below shows six panels with the sound track written under each.

Panel	What we see	What we hear
1	INT. SHED — LATE	A clock ticking slowly; far-off

Panel	What we see	What we hear
	AFTERNOON. Mei, 14, sews the torn yellow silk of the kite. Light failing.	thunder.
2	CLOSE-UP. The kite bag tips over. A small brass whistle falls out onto the floor.	All sound stops for two beats — then the sharp clink of brass on wood.
3	Mei lifts the whistle to her lips but does not blow. Wind sounds through the gap in the shed wall.	Low wind; a faint whistle tone that may or may not be real.
4	EXT. HEADLAND — MOMENTS LATER. Storm clouds pile up over the sea. Mei walks through dry grass.	Footsteps; thunder closer; the tune now clear, played softly on strings.
5	The kite lifts — one bright yellow shape against the grey sky.	The wind swells; the strings rise with it; the tune complete for the first time.
6	Mei smiles and lets out more string. The first drops of rain fall. She does not run.	The tune continues under the rain; ends on one long whistle tone.

Wind Season — storyboard, scenes 1-6 (original film text for this section)

		
1. INT. SHED — LATE AFTERNOON. Mei, 14, sews the torn yellow silk of the kite. Light failing. SOUND: a clock ticking slowly; far-off thunder.	2. CLOSE-UP. The kite bag tips over. A small brass whistle falls out onto the floorboards. SOUND: all sound stops for two beats — then the sharp clink of brass on wood.	3. Mei lifts the whistle to her lips but does not blow. Wind sounds through the shed gap. SOUND: low wind; a faint whistle tone that may or may not be real.
		
4. EXT. HEADLAND — MOMENTS LATER. Storm clouds pile up over the sea. Mei walks through dry grass. SOUND: footsteps; thunder closer; the tune now clear, played softly on strings.	5. The kite lifts — one bright yellow shape against the grey sky. SOUND: the wind swells; the strings rise with it; the tune complete for the first time.	6. Mei smiles and lets out more string. The first drops of rain fall. She does not run. SOUND: the tune continues under the rain; ends on one long whistle tone.

A six-panel storyboard for the original short film Wind Season: panel 1, Mei sewing the torn yellow kite in the shed while a clock ticks; panel 2, the kite bag tipping over and a brass whistle falling in silence; panel 3, Mei lifting the whistle to her lips while wind sounds through the shed gap; panel 4, Mei walking over the headland under piling

storm clouds; panel 5, the kite lifting, one bright yellow shape against the grey sky; panel 6, rain beginning as Mei lets out more string.

Worked examples

Example 1 — scaffolded

Analyse the *Yellow Kite* spread (Text A) using the four-step method. Work one symbol at a time, and keep the literal layer separate from what it stands for.

Working	Comment
Spot it. Three choices stand out: the grey town, the yellow kite, Mei's place on the hill.	Name what you can see before you claim what it means.
Describe it. Every house, roof, fence and washing line is grey; the lines hang limp. The kite is the only colour on either page, drawn with a glow. Mei stands above the town, apart from it.	Literal first: the grey is total, the yellow is alone, the hill is high.
Read it. The grey stands for a town stuck in one feeling — sameness, and a kind of quiet sadness. The yellow kite stands for what Mei carries: her grandfather, and the idea that the town could feel differently. The hill stands for seeing what the town cannot see.	Each reading has evidence: <i>total</i> grey, <i>only</i> colour, <i>above</i> the town.
Weigh it. Without the colour choice, the page would still show a girl and a kite — but we would not feel that hope is the only colour left in this town. The symbol does the feeling's work before a word is read.	Judge the contribution: what would the spread lose? Here, nearly everything.

Example 2 — scaffolded

Trace one recurring sound through *Wind Season* (Text C) and explain the connections it makes.

Working	Comment
Spot it. The whistle tune: faint in panel 3, clear in panel 4, complete in panel 5, still there under the rain in panel 6.	A recurring sound is only a motif if it returns — list every return.
Describe it. It belongs to Grandpa ("Grandpa whistled when he flew it"). In panel 2, the real brass whistle falls, and all sound stops for two beats.	Note where the sound comes from, and where the film goes quiet.
Read it. The silence in panel 2 marks the whistle as important before we know why. The faint tone in panel 3 connects the wind <i>now</i> to Grandpa <i>then</i> — Mei cannot be sure, and neither can we. By panel 5 the tune is complete as the kite lifts: the memory has become present company.	Each return is heard against the last; the meaning builds.
Weigh it. The tune lets the film connect Grandpa to every later moment without a single line about him. Take the tune away and the storm is just weather; with it, the storm is the day Mei flies her grandfather's kite again.	The connection is made by the audience's ear — that is the point of a recurring sound.

Example 3 — unscaffolded

Write an analytical paragraph on one symbol in the poem "Kite Weather" (Text B). The model below follows the four steps without naming them.

In “Kite Weather”, the storm works as a symbol of the family’s fight. Literally it is weather: it “broke the shed door loose” in the night. The speaker then tells us how to read it, comparing the storm to “an argument” and naming it with her parents — “my mother’s voice, my father’s silence” — so the weather stands for a fight inside the house: loud, damaging, impossible to ignore. The spinning weather vane extends the symbol, because a vane that cannot settle is a family that cannot decide which way to turn. The symbol augments the poem’s meaning by letting the speaker show the fight without describing it; we feel its force through a broken door instead of through reported words. Without the storm, the poem would simply tell us the parents argued; with it, the argument is as large and as uncontrollable as weather.

Why this paragraph works: it keeps the literal layer (“broke the shed door loose”), states what the symbol stands for, quotes its evidence, and ends by weighing the contribution — what the poem would lose without the symbol.

Practice questions

Scaffolded

Q1. (Reading and viewing) Look again at the *Yellow Kite* spread (Text A). The limp washing lines hang still in the grey air. Using the four-step method, explain in two or three sentences what the still lines might stand for, and give your evidence.

Q2. (Reading and viewing) The colour chart shows that one colour can carry different meanings in different cultural frames. Choose one colour from the chart and explain, in your own words, why neither reading of it is wrong. Say what a good analysis should do with that fact.

Q3. (Reading and viewing) In panel 2 of *Wind Season*, all sound stops for two beats before the whistle clinks. Using the sound chart, name the sound choice the film is making and explain what it asks the viewer to notice.

Q4. (Reading) Complete this table for four choices in “Kite Weather”.

Quote	Symbol type (season, weather, object or sound)	What it might stand for
“autumn strips the maples bare”		
“yellow silk gone grey with dust”		
“one thin tune against the sky”		
“the weather vane spinning”		

Q5. (Reading and viewing) The tune timeline shows the whistle tone returning in panels 3, 4, 5 and 6. Explain one connection the tune makes between two of those panels, and say how the meaning builds from the first return to the last.

Q6. (Recall) In your own words, define: (a) symbol; (b) motif; (c) one way a recurring sound makes meaning in a text.

Unscaffolded

Q7. (Writing) The storm appears in “Kite Weather” and again in panel 4 of *Wind Season*. Write an analytical paragraph of 120–180 words comparing how the storm works as a symbol in the two texts. Keep the literal layer, state what it stands for in each text, quote or point to your evidence, and weigh the contribution in each.

Q8. (Writing) You are planning a short film about a student’s first week at a new school. Design one visual symbol (an object, a colour, a season or a weather choice) and one sound choice (music, an effect, a silence or a recurring sound). Complete a planning table like the one in Example 1 — choice, literally, stands for, how it augments meaning — then write two or three sentences justifying your choices for a Year 9 audience.

Q9. (Speaking and listening) In a small group, discuss this question: across the three texts, does the yellow kite stand for memory, for freedom, or for something else? Each person states one reading with its strongest evidence, and the group gives every reading its strongest form before judging it. Report back: where the group agreed, where it did not, and which evidence decided it.

Q10. (Speaking and listening) Panels 2 and 3 of *Wind Season* are being re-edited. Prepare a 60-second pitch of the sound choices you would make for those two panels — music, effects, silence — with one reason per choice. Deliver it to the class; listeners must ask one question each about whether a choice augments meaning.

Checkpoint

This section's work maps to the Reading and Viewing mode sentence of the Level 9 achievement standard: "When reading and viewing, students engage with a range of different types of texts for meaning." Before moving on, you can:

- **name** a symbol in a still image, a moving image or a poem, keeping its literal layer separate from what it stands for;
 - **explain** how a sound choice — music, an effect, a silence or a recurring sound — augments meaning, including the connections a recurring sound makes;
 - **state the frame** of a symbol reading, knowing that the same symbol carries different meanings for different groups and cultures, and support a reading with evidence from the text;
 - **weigh** a symbol's or sound's contribution to a text: say what the text would lose without it.
-

Answers

Q1. The still lines literally hang without moving in still air. They stand for a town in which nothing changes and nothing stirs — a life as unmoving as the washing. Evidence: the lines are “still” while, on the facing page, the kite “strained upward”, so the stillness is set against the kite’s pull.

Q2. Meanings belong to frames, not to the colour itself: white carries weddings in many Western contexts and mourning in parts of East Asia, and each reading is correct inside its own culture. A good analysis therefore states its frame — the text’s culture, the audience’s, or both — and argues from evidence instead of claiming one “right” meaning.

Q3. The choice is silence. By stopping all sound for two beats, the film asks the viewer to notice the whistle falling — to treat that small event as the most important thing in the scene before we are told why it matters.

Q4.

Quote	Symbol type	What it might stand for
“autumn strips the maples bare”	season	change and loss; the year — and Grandpa — ending
“yellow silk gone grey with dust”	object and colour	a memory going unused; grief covering what was bright
“one thin tune against the sky”	sound	Grandpa’s presence, small against everything else
“the weather vane spinning”	weather (wind)	a family unable to settle on a direction

Q5. The tone in panel 3 connects the wind in the shed to Grandpa’s whistling: Mei (and we) hear his tune in the weather. By panel 5 the tune is complete and played on strings as the kite lifts, so the connection has grown from a doubt into a fact the whole score now carries. The meaning builds from *maybe* to *yes*: memory becoming present company.

Q6. (a) A symbol is a person, place, thing, colour, season or sound in a text that stands for something beyond its literal self — an idea or feeling. (b) A motif is a symbol, image or sound repeated across a text so that its meaning builds with each return. (c) A recurring sound makes meaning by asking the audience to connect the moments it appears in — the ear joins what the dialogue never names.

Fully-worked solutions

Q7. Model response. Both texts use the storm as a symbol of trouble in the family, but they let it work differently. In “Kite Weather” the storm is the fight itself: it “came in last night like an argument”, and the speaker names it with her parents — “my mother’s voice, my father’s silence” — so the broken shed door stands for damage done inside the house. In *Wind Season*, panel 4 keeps the storm ahead of Mei rather than behind her: the clouds pile up as she walks out, so the storm stands for the feelings she is carrying *toward* the headland, not a fight already over. In both texts the literal layer stays honest weather — a broken door, piling clouds, closer thunder — so the symbol carries feeling without stating it. The contribution differs: the poem’s storm lets a fight be shown as force, while the film’s storm turns Mei’s walk into a decision made against the sky. Without the storm, the poem would report a quarrel and the film would show a walk; with it, both are as large as weather. (178 words.)

Q8. Model planning table. Accept any design whose four columns line up — the symbol must be literal first, then read, then weighed. One example:

Choice	Literally	Stands for	How it augments meaning
A blue jumper, the only blue in a grey school yard	One student's jumper, a colour no one else wears	being new and different; not yet part of the group	The eye finds the new student in every shot before a line is spoken; the colour does the loneliness work
A recurring bell tone, softened each return	The school bell, heard on day 1, day 3 and day 5	time passing; the school slowly becoming familiar	Each return is heard against the last, so the audience feels the week settling without being told

Justifying sentences. “I chose the blue jumper because a colour can show ‘new’ in one frame, and I weighed it by asking what the film loses without it: the yard would look like a crowd, not like one person apart. The softening bell returns as a motif so the audience makes the connection themselves — the ear marks the days.”

Q9. Protocol and what a strong report includes. Each person gives one reading with evidence — for example: *memory*, because the kite “had been her grandfather’s” and the tune belongs to him; *freedom*, because the kite “strained upward” while the town “went on not looking up”; *hope for the town*, because Grandpa said the town would “remember what colour feels like”. The group states each reading in its strongest form before judging. A strong report names where readings agreed (all three tie the kite to what Mei carries), where they split (is the kite about the past, about Mei, or about the town?), and which evidence decided it — for instance that the final panel gives the kite to the sky *and* the rain, which supports a reading of the kite as change, not only memory.

Q10. What a strong pitch sounds like. “For panel 2 I keep the two beats of silence before the clink, because silence marks weight: the audience leans in and treats the whistle as important before they know why. Over the clink I bring in no music at all — a score here would tell us how to feel before we have earned it. For panel 3 I keep only the low wind and let one faint whistle tone sit inside it, so the audience shares Mei’s doubt about whether the tune is real. My reason in each case is the same: every sound choice augments meaning — the silence marks the moment, and the faint tone starts the connection between the wind now and Grandpa then.” *Listener questions test the same point: does each choice add meaning, or is it decoration?*

Section trace (teacher-facing). VC2E9LA07 — draws on .E01 and .E03. Elaboration .E02 (the use of symbols by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples) is excluded per TOC §2A / CONTENT_POLICY Rule 1; cultural variation in symbol reading is taught through neutral, non-First-Nations cultural groups only (colour frames, the owl example). Checkpoint items map to the Reading and Viewing mode sentence carrying VC2E9LA07 (“When reading and viewing, students engage with a range of different types of texts for meaning”); modes delivered: reading/viewing (Q1–Q5, worked examples), writing (Q7–Q8), speaking and listening (Q9–Q10), per D7. Prerequisite: VC2E8LA07; handoff: VC2E10LA07. All texts (*The Yellow Kite*, “Kite Weather”, *Wind Season*) and all figures are original to this section (SOURCE_USE, D5).

How vocabulary choices contribute to style, mood and tone

A one-word reply can change a whole day. *Fine*. You have probably received it, and you have probably sent it. Its dictionary meaning never changes, yet you can read it as warm or cold, relieved or annoyed — and you can tell the difference without ever seeing the sender's face. That is because a word's meaning is only the start of what it does. The rest of the work — attitude, feeling, character — lives in the choice of words.

This section builds that skill in three parts. First, the two layers every word carries: its basic meaning and the feelings it brings along. Then the three things vocabulary builds in a text: the writer's attitude, the reader's feeling, and the writer's overall fingerprint. Finally, you will practise spotting the exact words that create small, precise shades of meaning — including a sarcastic tone — and explaining how vocabulary makes a text work well. Along the way, you will make these choices yourself, in writing and out loud.

Curriculum focus

Analyse how vocabulary choices contribute to style, mood and tone (VC2E9LA08, Language — Language for expressing and developing ideas)

Draws on

VC2E9LA08.E01 — identifying the words used to create nuanced meaning; for example, identifying the words that create a sarcastic tone in a text ·
VC2E9LA08.E02 — identifying how the vocabulary used in a text contributes to its stylistic effectiveness

Builds on (Level 8)

VC2E8LA08 — the role and use of academic vocabulary

Achievement-standard hook

“When interacting with others, students explore vocabulary of mood and style...” (Speaking and Listening)

Modes in this section

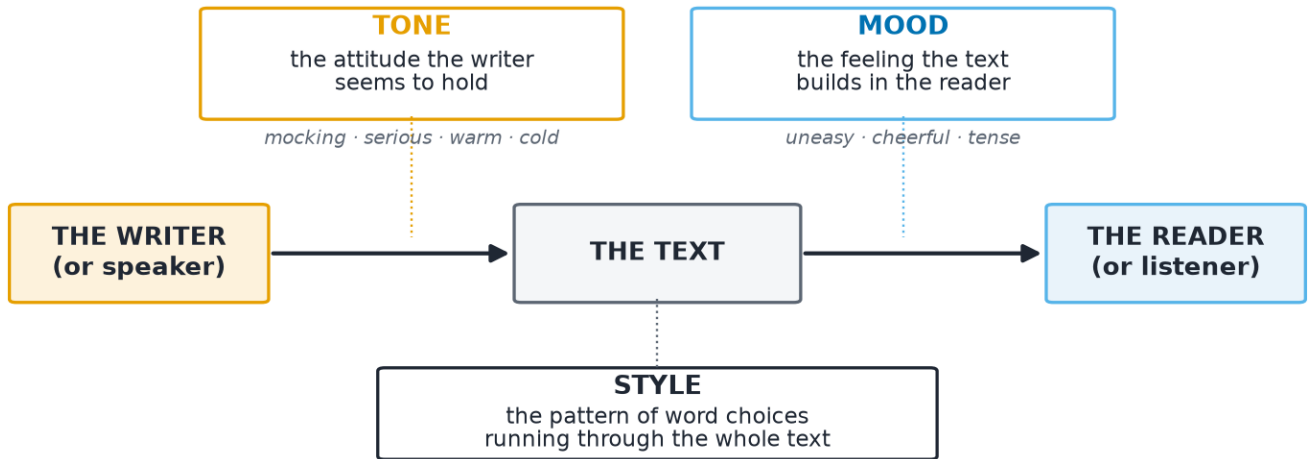
Reading and viewing · Writing · Speaking and listening

What this section means by *style, mood and tone*. The Victorian Curriculum uses these three words in this content description but does not define them, and different writers use them in slightly different ways — some books, for example, treat *mood* and *tone* as almost the same thing. In this section: **tone** is the attitude the writer or speaker seems to hold towards their subject or audience — mocking, serious, warm, cold. **Mood** is the feeling the text builds in the reader or listener — uneasy, cheerful, tense. **Style** is the characteristic way a writer uses language, above all the patterns in their word choices across a text. Every question in this section is answerable on these definitions alone.

Theory

The three terms are easy to mix up, so Figure 1 maps them before we go any further. Tone points from the writer to the text; mood points from the text to the reader; style runs through the whole text at once.

Style, mood and tone: who they belong to



Tone leaves the writer. Mood reaches the reader. Style runs through everything.

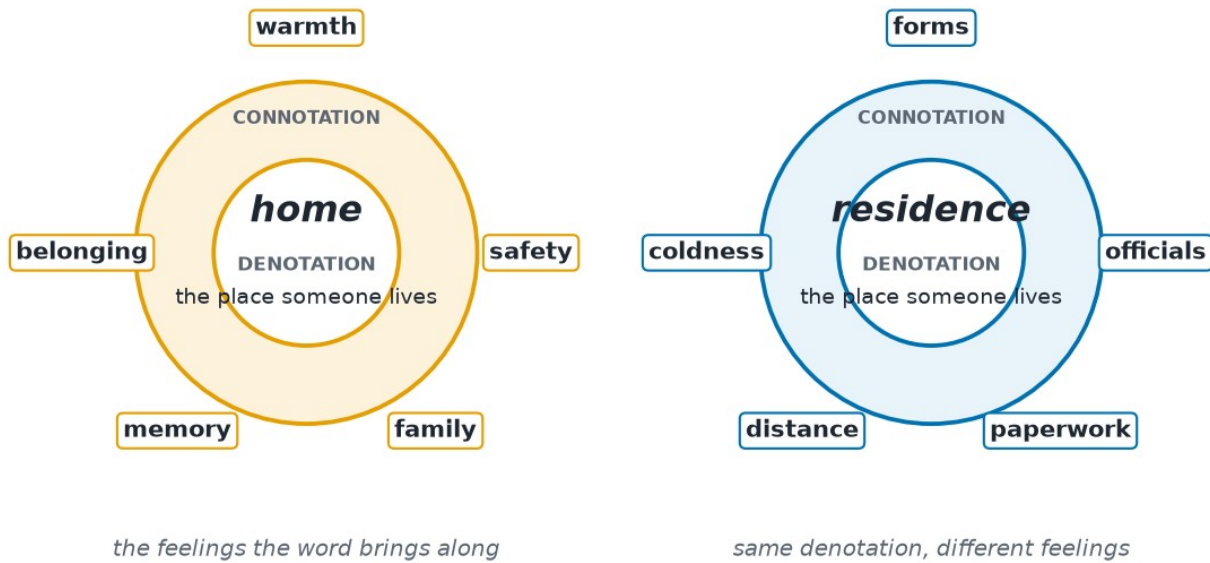
Diagram mapping the three key terms: tone as the writer's attitude, mood as the reader's feeling, and style as the pattern of word choices running through a text

1. Every word carries two layers of meaning

The first layer is the **denotation** — the basic, shared meaning of a word, the kind a dictionary records. The second layer is the **connotation** — the feelings, ideas and memories the word brings along with it. Two words can share a denotation and still feel completely different.

Home and *residence* share a denotation: the place where someone lives. Their connotations are worlds apart. *Home* brings warmth, belonging and safety; *residence* brings forms, officials and distance. If a real-estate ad said "warm family residence", you would feel the difference at once — the denotation is right, but the connotation is cold for the job (Figure 2).

Two layers of word meaning

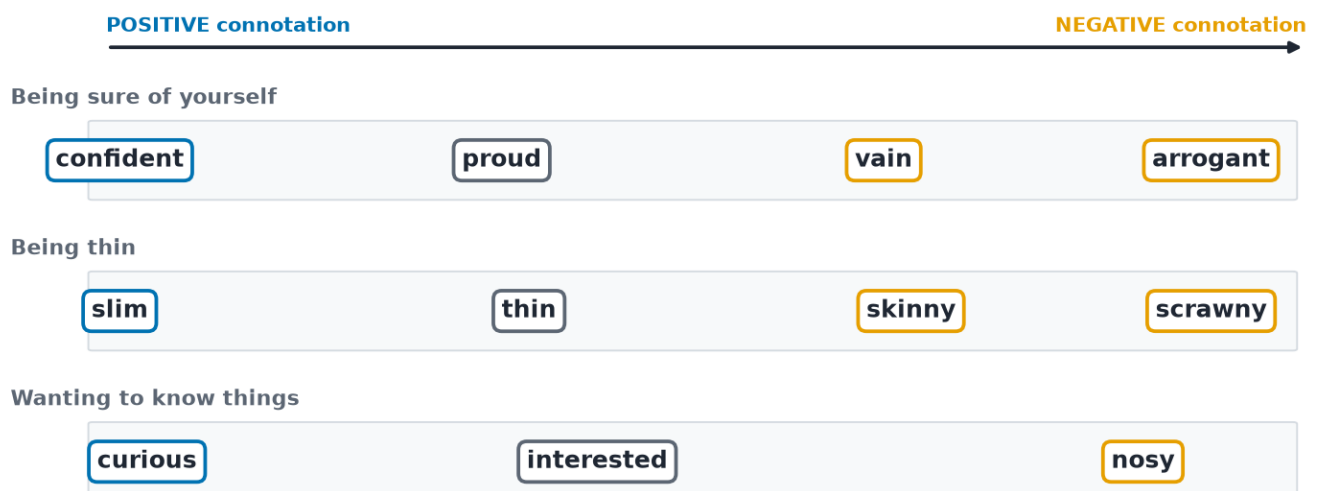


Same denotation. Very different connotations — and the reader feels the difference at once.

Diagram of the two layers of word meaning, denotation and connotation, shown for the words *home* and *residence*

Most of a writer's real choices happen at the connotation layer. Near-synonyms — words with almost the same denotation — usually differ in connotation, and the difference is often a slide from a positive tilt to a negative one. That slide is **nuance**: a small, precise shade of meaning. Figure 3 puts three sets of near-synonyms on a scale so you can see it.

Near-synonyms on a connotation scale



The basic idea stays put in each row — the feeling slides. That slide is connotation, and choosing it is nuance.

Chart placing three sets of near-synonyms on a scale from positive to negative connotation

Notice what the scale shows. In each row the basic idea stays put — being sure of yourself, being thin, wanting to know things — but the feeling of the word changes, and the change is not random: it is the writer choosing which way to tilt the reader. A character who is *confident* is someone to admire; the same character described as *arrogant* is someone to dislike. Same facts, opposite feelings, one word apart.

2. Tone: the attitude in the words

Tone, remember, is the attitude the writer or speaker seems to hold towards the subject or the audience. Vocabulary is one of the main ways that attitude is delivered:

- **Formal, careful words** (*request, attend, regret*) build a serious or respectful tone.
- **Short, blunt words** (*No. We're done.*) build a cold or abrupt tone.
- **Playful words and exaggeration** build a humorous tone.
- **Saying the opposite of what you mean** builds a sarcastic tone.

That last one deserves its own definition, because the curriculum names it directly. **Irony** is saying something you do not literally mean — often the opposite of what is true. **Sarcasm** is irony aimed at a target: a cutting remark, usually mockery or irritation, delivered by saying the opposite of what is meant, or by using words that clearly do not fit the facts. When someone steps outside into a storm and says “lovely weather”, the words are positive and the tone is not — the gap between the two is exactly where the sarcasm lives.

Sarcasm almost never announces itself. The writer does not say “I am being sarcastic now”; the vocabulary does the work, and the reader’s job is to hear the gap. Example 2 shows you how to name the exact words doing it, which is the skill of VC2E9LA08.E01.

Tone words themselves are worth collecting, because analysis needs them. Figure 4 is a tone bank: four families of tone, with the kinds of word choices that build each one. You will use it in Questions 1 and 11.

A tone bank: four families, and the word choices that build them

WARM Tone labels: welcoming · playful · nostalgic Word choices that build them: • "come in" • "together" • "remember when" • first names and nicknames	SERIOUS Tone labels: formal · urgent · grave Word choices that build them: • "must" • "at once" • "we regret" • full titles
MOCKING Tone labels: sarcastic · teasing · sly Word choices that build them: • "of course" • "how lucky" • "brilliant" • praise that does not fit the facts	GLOOMY Tone labels: melancholy · wistful · dreary Word choices that build them: • "faded" • "empty" • "no longer" • "used to"

Collect these — an analysis needs the tone word as much as the evidence.

Tone bank showing four families of tone — warm, serious, mocking and gloomy — with example tone labels and the word choices that build each family

3. Mood: the feeling the reader carries

Mood is the feeling a text builds in the reader — and it is built by accumulation. One gloomy word does little; ten words whose connotations point the same way surround the reader, and the mood settles in.

Vocabulary that tends to build **uneasy or gloomy** moods: *dim, flicker, silent, empty, cold, creep, shadow, faded, abandoned*. Vocabulary that tends to build **warm or cheerful** moods: *glow, golden, laughter, hum, bright, together, easy*.

Two things matter when a writer builds a mood with vocabulary:

1. **The words must pull in the same direction.** A scene full of *fog, silence and rusted gates* has built an uneasy mood; if a *bouncy castle* rolls into the next sentence, the mood breaks like a spell — unless the break is the point, as in some horror writing.
2. **Small, ordinary words do most of the work.** Mood rarely comes from the biggest word in the sentence. In “Nobody called”, the mood sits in *nobody* — plain, total, final.

Figure 5 shows the same scene — a girl catching the evening bus — written twice, once warm and once uneasy. The skeleton is almost identical; the mood difference is nearly all vocabulary.

One scene, two moods

The skeleton is almost identical — bus, lights, driver, seat. Watch what the vocabulary does.

Version A — a warm, safe mood

The evening bus came around the corner **right on time**. Lights from the shops **glowed warm and yellow**, and the driver **greeted her by name**. She climbed aboard, found her **usual seat**, and **let the day go**.

Version B — a tense, uneasy mood

The evening bus was **late again**. Lights from the shops **flickered, going dark one by one**, and the driver **stared straight ahead**. She climbed aboard, found the **last empty seat**, and **held her bag tighter**.

Neither version names a feeling. The mood is built word by word, and the reader supplies the feeling.

Two versions of the same bus-stop scene side by side, one building a warm mood and one building an uneasy mood, with the mood-building words highlighted

4. Style: the fingerprint of word choices

Style is the characteristic way a writer uses language, and vocabulary is its biggest ingredient. Three vocabulary choices shape style more than any others.

(a) Register. Register is the formality dial you met in Section 1A: slang, colloquial, neutral, formal, very formal. The same news sent at five different settings reads as five different styles (Figure 6) — and each setting says something about the relationship between writer and audience.

Same news, five styles: the register ladder

Very formal	"Please accept this note as notice that I will be absent from tomorrow's training."	↑ MORE FORMAL ↓ MORE CASUAL
Formal	"I'm writing to let you know I'll be unable to attend training tomorrow."	
Neutral	"I won't be at training tomorrow."	
Colloquial	"Can't make training tomorrow, sorry!"	
Slang	"nah i'm out tmrw"	

The news never changes — the vocabulary does, and the style changes with it.

The same message about missing training written at five levels of formality, from slang to very formal

(b) Word families. English gives you several families of words for the same idea: short, everyday words; longer, formal words; and the technical terms of a particular field. Choosing a family is a style choice (Figure 7). Everyday words keep writing plain, direct and close to speech. Formal words make writing sound official and distanced. Technical words are precise for people inside a field and opaque to everyone outside it — the same double edge as the in-group language from Section 1A.

Three word families for the same ideas

Everyday words	Formal words	Technical words
EXAMPLES buy · help · ask · start · sorry	EXAMPLES purchase · assist · request · commence · apologise	EXAMPLES photosynthesis · denominator · offside · denotation
STYLE EFFECT plain, direct, close to speech	STYLE EFFECT official, polite, distanced	STYLE EFFECT precise for insiders, opaque to outsiders
WHERE IT FITS friends, stories, most of what you write	WHERE IT FITS letters, notices, reports	WHERE IT FITS subject work, talking with experts

Same ideas, three families. Picking the family is a style choice — and the reader hears it at once.

Table of three word families — everyday, formal and technical — with example words and the style effect of each family

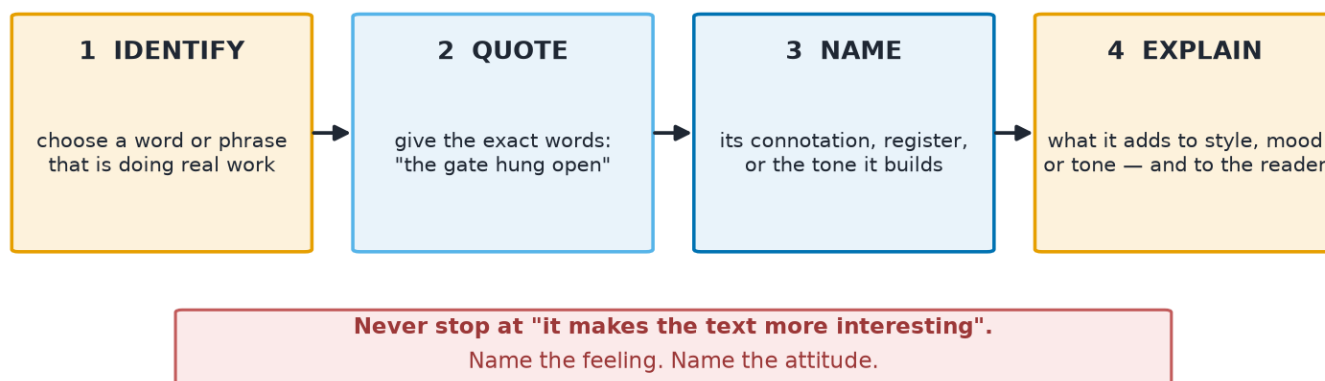
(c) Softening words. A **euphemism** is a mild or indirect word or phrase used in place of a harsh or blunt one: *passed away* instead of *died*, *pre-owned* instead of *used*, *between jobs* instead of *unemployed*. Euphemisms shape both style and tone. They can be kind — softening news that would land like a blow — or they can hide: *pre-owned* is a salesperson's euphemism, and everyone knows it. A good reader asks both questions: what is this softening, and why?

Stylistic effectiveness. This is the idea behind VC2E9LA08.E02. Vocabulary contributes to a text's stylistic effectiveness when the choices fit: the register suits the audience, the words are precise rather than vague, and the connotations all pull in the same direction as the text's purpose. When vocabulary works like that, the writing feels controlled — nothing in it is random, and nothing fights against the point.

5. One scaffold for analysing vocabulary choices

Whenever a question asks how vocabulary contributes to style, mood or tone, the same four moves work (Figure 8):

The four-step scaffold for analysing vocabulary



Flowchart of the four-step analysis scaffold: identify a word choice, quote it, name what it carries, and explain its contribution to style, mood or tone

1. **Identify** — choose a word or short phrase that is doing real work.
2. **Quote** — give the exact words, in quotation marks.
3. **Name** — say what those words carry: their connotation, their register, the tone they build.
4. **Explain** — say what that contributes to the style, mood or tone of the text, and what it does to the reader.

One warning: never stop at “it makes the text more interesting” or “it makes you want to keep reading”. Those phrases could be written about any text ever written, which is exactly why they say nothing. Name the feeling. Name the attitude. That is the whole skill.

Worked examples

Example 1 — scaffolded

Task. Read the passage below, then study the analysis table, which is completed for you. Match each quote to the choice it names and the mood that choice builds.

The house was quiet. Dust lay thick on the hallway table, and the clock on the wall had stopped at twenty past nine. A single cup sat in the sink, half full of cold tea. Out the back, the gate hung open a hand’s width, and the garden had begun to creep in under the fence.

Question: Identify the vocabulary choices that create the mood of this passage, and explain what mood they create.

Quote	Vocabulary choice	What it contributes to the mood
“The house was quiet” / “Dust lay thick”	<i>Quiet</i> and <i>thick</i> say the house has been untouched for a long time	Builds stillness and absence — no one lives here any more.
“the clock on the wall had stopped at twenty past nine”	<i>Stopped</i> , with an exact time named	Freezes the house at one moment, as if ordinary life broke off halfway through something. Adds unease.
“A single cup ... half full of cold tea”	<i>Single</i> , <i>half full</i> , <i>cold</i> — three small words of absence	One cup says loneliness; half-full and cold say whoever left did not finish, and did not come back.
“the gate hung open a hand’s width”	<i>Hung open</i> — not locked, not closed	The house was left in a hurry, or left for good; the reader starts wondering

Quote	Vocabulary choice	What it contributes to the mood
“the garden had begun to creep in under the fence”	<i>Creep</i> — a word for something slow and quiet, usually unwelcome	why. Nature is taking the house back, slowly. The mood tips from sad to faintly eerie.

The point to copy: each row of the analysis names (1) the exact words, (2) what those words carry, and (3) what they add to the mood — not just “the mood is sad”, but *which* feeling each choice builds and *how*.

Example 2 — scaffolded

Task. Figure 9 shows a student’s diary entry about a school picnic. It is full of sarcasm, but the word *sarcastic* never appears. Study the highlighted words and the notes, then read the table below.

A sarcastic diary entry — the words that carry the tone

Wednesday. Wet sports. Wet everything.

Dear diary — today we had the school picnic, and ¹of course the sky opened the moment we sat down. ²‘Character-building,’ Mr Marsh said, handing out wet sandwiches. ³How lucky we are. I have now spent ⁴four hours being rained on for a school that owns a gym. ⁵Wonderful.

How each choice builds the sarcastic tone

- “of course”**
pretends the disaster was planned; mocks the whole day.
- “‘Character-building,’**
borrows the teacher’s excuse in order to refuse it.
- “How lucky we are.”**
says the opposite of what is meant — the heart of the sarcasm.
- “four hours”**
stretches the misery; a wet afternoon becomes a great suffering.
- “Wonderful.”**
one flat word meaning the opposite; pure irritation, ends on a snap.

Nowhere does the writer say “I am annoyed”. Positive words against negative facts — the gap is the sarcasm.

Model text of a sarcastic diary entry about a wet school picnic, with the sarcasm-carrying words highlighted and explained in a side column

Question: Identify the words that create a sarcastic tone in the diary entry, and explain how each one works.

Quote	How it builds the sarcastic tone
“and of course the sky opened”	<i>Of course</i> pretends the disaster was expected and planned — mocking the idea that the day was ever going to go well.
“‘Character-building,’ Mr Marsh said”	The quotation marks borrow the teacher’s excuse and hold it up for inspection. The writer is repeating the words in order to refuse them.
“How lucky we are.”	The heart of the sarcasm: the writer says the opposite of what is meant. Nobody feels lucky; the positive words against the negative facts deliver the mockery.
“I have now spent four hours being rained on”	<i>Four hours</i> stretches the misery — exaggeration turns a wet afternoon into an epic complaint.
“Wonderful.”	One flat, positive word with nothing behind it. Said of something plainly not wonderful, it lands as pure irritation — and ends the entry on a snap.

Notice also what is absent: the writer never says “I was annoyed” or “this was sarcastic”. The attitude arrives entirely through words that do not fit the facts. That gap — positive words, negative situation — is the engine of sarcasm, and naming it is the core of VC2E9LA08.E01.

Example 3 — unscaffolded

Task. Look again at Figure 6, which shows the same news — missing training tomorrow — written at five levels of formality, from slang to very formal.

In five or six sentences, explain how the vocabulary changes as the register rises, and what each setting says about the writer’s relationship with the reader.

Pointers to structure your answer (no scaffold given):

- Start with what stays the same (the news) and what changes (the words).
- Pick one concrete difference between the lowest and highest rung — greeting, full sentences, word family, sign-off.
- Finish with what the formality level says about the relationship each time.

A model opening, to show the shape — finish it yourself:

The news never changes, but the vocabulary climbs the formality ladder one rung at a time. At the bottom, “nah i’m out tmrw”...

Example 4 — unscaffolded

Task. Two advertisements for the same jacket were written for the same shop. Read them both.

Version 1. This jacket is good for cold weather. It keeps you warm and dry. It has big pockets.

Version 2. Built for bitter mornings, the Ridgeline jacket shrugs off wind and rain, and its deep pockets swallow cold hands whole.

Explain how the vocabulary in Version 2 contributes to its stylistic effectiveness. Write five to seven sentences.

Pointers to structure your answer:

- Name the overall difference first: what does Version 2’s vocabulary do that Version 1’s does not?
- Choose two specific words or phrases from Version 2 (for example, *shrugs off*) and say what each one makes the jacket seem like.
- Finish by saying what kind of buyer this style is aimed at, and why the vocabulary suits them.

Practice questions

Scaffolded

Q1. Here are twelve tone labels:

cheerful · formal · sarcastic · dreary · gentle · urgent · teasing · wistful · warm · grave · mocking · melancholy

Copy the table below into your book and sort all twelve labels into the four families. (Figure 4 will help.)

Warm tones

Serious tones

Mocking tones

Gloomy tones

Q2. Each set of words below shares a denotation but not a connotation. Order each set from the most positive connotation to the most negative, and circle the word in the set that feels most neutral.

- (a) vain · confident · proud
- (b) scrawny · slim · thin
- (c) nosy · curious · interested

Q3. Read the passage below.

The phone sat on the kitchen table, dark and face-down. Every few minutes Mara turned it over, checked the screen, and turned it back. The microwave clock blinked 9:41, then 9:41 again. Outside, a dog barked once and gave up. Nobody called.

- (a) In one sentence, name the mood of this passage.
- (b) Identify three vocabulary choices that build that mood. For each one, copy the quote and explain what it adds.
- (c) Change one word or phrase so that the mood tips from anxious to hopeful, and rewrite the sentence it sits in.

Q4. Read this exchange between two friends.

Sam: “So the concert’s cancelled. The bus broke down, the tickets got ‘lost’, and now the band is ‘taking a break’.”

Ash: “Wow. What perfect planning. Remind me never to trust the word ‘smooth’ again.”

- (a) Identify the words that create a sarcastic tone in Ash’s reply.
- (b) State what Ash actually means.
- (c) Rewrite Ash’s reply as a sincere comment, with no sarcasm. What does the sincere version lose?

Q5. Each sentence below contains a euphemism. For each one: identify the euphemism, give the plainer word or phrase it stands for, and say what tone the softening builds.

- (a) “Grandpa passed away last winter.”
- (b) “The car is pre-owned, but it runs like new.”
- (c) “Dad’s between jobs at the moment.”

Unscaffolded

Q6. Write the same scene twice — the walk home from school — in two moods. Version A: warm and safe. Version B: tense and uneasy. Each version should be fifty to seventy words. Underline the words that build the mood in each version. Rules: you may not use the words *scared*, *happy*, *frightened*, *mood* or *atmosphere* — the vocabulary must do the work itself.

Q7. Write a short text of forty to sixty words — a diary entry or a message to a friend — about something small going wrong: burnt toast, rain at a picnic, the internet dropping out. The tone must be sarcastic, built entirely from your word choices. Do not use the word *sarcastic*, and do not state how the writer feels.

Q8. Here is a school notice:

NOTICE: The library will close at 3:00 pm this Friday for repairs. All borrowed items must be returned by Thursday afternoon.

Rewrite the notice as a friendly message from the team captain to the team, keeping all of the information. Then list three vocabulary changes you made and say what each change does to the style and tone.

Q9. Read this announcement, made by a teacher to the class.

The lost-property box has grown a family: three single shoes, a hat of unknown origin, and a lunch container that may be starting its own science project. If you recognise any of these items, please rescue them before Friday, when they will be moved on to the op shop.

Write an analytical paragraph of six to eight sentences answering:

How does the vocabulary of this announcement contribute to its tone?

Use the four-step scaffold from Figure 8. Quote at least three choices, and name the tone precisely.

Q10. (*Speaking and listening.*) Work with a partner. Without saying which mood you aimed at, read your two versions from Question 6 aloud. Your partner listens, guesses the mood of each version, and names three words that gave it away. Then discuss: did your voice change the effect, or did the vocabulary do it alone? Swap roles. Protocol: listen without interrupting; point to exact words, not “the bit about the weather”.

Q11. (*Speaking and listening.*) In groups of three or four, choose three tone labels from the tone bank (Figure 4). For each one, write and perform a spoken example of two sentences — do not say the tone’s name. The class guesses the tone and names the words that gave it away. After each round, discuss: which kinds of words carried the tone best — the big words or the small ones?

Answers

These are sample answers. For open questions, any response that meets the task is acceptable.

Q1. Warm: cheerful, gentle, warm. Serious: formal, urgent, grave. Mocking: sarcastic, teasing, mocking. Gloomy: dreary, wistful, melancholy.

Q2. (a) confident → proud → vain; most neutral: proud. (b) slim → thin → scrawny; most neutral: thin. (c) curious → interested → nosy; most neutral: interested. (Answers for the neutral pick may vary slightly if well argued; the positive-to-negative order is fixed.)

Q3. (a) Sample: the mood is tense and anxious, with a flat sadness underneath. (b) Any three, well explained. Samples: “dark and face-down” — the phone is lying like something hidden or dreaded, not a tool being used; “blinked 9:41, then 9:41 again” — time is stuck and nothing is arriving, which stretches the waiting; “a dog barked once and gave up” — even the world outside has stopped expecting anything; “Nobody called.” — four plain words, a whole sentence to deliver the disappointment. (c) Sample: “Outside, a dog barked once, and someone laughed.” Accept any single change that genuinely tips the mood, with a sentence rewritten to match.

Q4. (a) “What perfect planning” — positive words aimed at plainly bad organisation; the gap delivers the mockery. “What perfect planning” also echoes the quoted ‘lost’ and ‘taking a break’ in Sam’s line, which Ash is treating as excuses. “Remind me never to trust the word ‘smooth’ again” — the opposite of what is meant wrapped in a joke; nothing was smooth. (b) The planning was terrible, the excuses are not believable, and Ash is annoyed. (c) Sample: “That’s so frustrating — three things going wrong at once is rough.” The sincere version loses the bite and the humour; the feeling is stated instead of performed.

Q5. (a) *Passed away* stands for *died*; the softening builds a gentle, respectful, sad tone — the speaker is handling the news carefully. (b) *Pre-owned* stands for *used* (or *second-hand*); the softening builds a smooth, sales tone — it is there to hide the plain fact and protect the price. (c) *Between jobs* stands for *unemployed*; the softening builds a protective, hopeful tone — it frames the situation as temporary and keeps the person’s dignity intact.

Q6. Answers will vary. Reward two versions that share the same scene, vocabulary that builds one consistent mood in each version, and underlined words that genuinely carry the mood. Penalise any version that breaks its own mood, or that names the feeling instead of building it. A model pair is in the fully-worked solutions.

Q7. Answers will vary. Reward sarcasm built from words that do not fit the facts (saying the opposite of what is meant, exaggerated praise, false enthusiasm) without naming the feeling. A model text is in the fully-worked solutions.

Q8. Answers will vary. Reward a message that keeps all three facts (library closes Friday 3:00 pm, for repairs, items back by Thursday afternoon) and three named changes with effects — for example, “Hey team” instead of “NOTICE” (warm, inside-the-group greeting in place of an official label); “get them back” instead of “must be returned” (everyday word family in place of formal command, friendlier tone); “arvo” or “this Friday” in place of the bare date style (colloquial register that suits a captain talking to teammates). A model rewrite is in the fully-worked solutions.

Q9. See the model paragraph in the fully-worked solutions. A sound answer names the tone precisely (playful, mocking — not just “funny”), quotes at least three choices (“grown a family”, “of unknown origin”, “starting its own science project”, “rescue”), and explains how each one builds the tone instead of listing them.

Q10. Teacher observation. Look for: listening without interrupting; guesses tied to exact words (“the word *greeted* made it sound safe”); discussion that separates voice from vocabulary — a reader can hear the difference even with a flat voice, which is the point of the exercise.

Q11. Teacher observation. Look for: performances whose tone is carried by word choice rather than by acting alone; accurate guesses tied to specific words; discussion that reaches the idea that small, well-chosen words usually carry tone better than big ones.

Fully-worked solutions

Q6 — model scene pair.

Version A — warm and safe. The walk home went the slow way today. Sunlight lay warm on the footpath, and someone’s sprinkler ticked a lazy beat behind a hedge. At the corner, the bakery fan pushed the smell of bread across the street, and my gate clicked shut behind me like the day was done.

Version B — tense and uneasy. The walk home went the long way today. The footpath was empty, and the streetlights blinked on one by one ahead of me. Behind a hedge, something moved and went still. At the corner the bakery was dark and shut, and my gate clicked shut behind me like a mouth.

The two versions share a skeleton — the walk, the hedge, the bakery, the gate — so the difference is almost entirely vocabulary. In Version A, *warm*, *lazy* and the smell of bread build comfort; the gate clicking “like the day was done” says safety and ending. In Version B the same objects turn: *empty*, *blinked on one by one*, *moved and went still*, *dark and shut*; the gate “like a mouth” makes even home sound threatening. Notice that neither version names a feeling. The mood is built word by word, and the reader supplies the feeling.

Q7 — model sarcastic text.

So the internet chose today — the day of the assignment — to take a holiday. Brilliant timing. Ten solid minutes of the loading circle, and then a little note telling me to “try again later”, as if later is a place I can walk to. Thanks, little blinking box. Truly, we are blessed.

The sarcasm lives in words that do not fit the facts: *brilliant timing* for a disaster, *take a holiday* for a breakdown, *truly, we are blessed* for sitting in front of a loading circle. The writer never says “I’m annoyed” — the gap between the positive words and the negative situation delivers the irritation, exactly as in Example 2.

Q8 — model rewrite.

Hey team — quick heads-up: the library’s closing at 3 this Friday for repairs, so if you’ve got anything borrowed, get it back by Thursday arvo. Thanks!

Three vocabulary changes and their effects:

- “Hey team — quick heads-up” replaces “NOTICE”. The greeting builds the captain-to-teammates relationship at once — warm, in-group, spoken — where the original label was official and faceless.
- “Get it back” replaces “must be returned”. The everyday word family swaps a formal command for a friendly request, which keeps the information without the coldness.
- “Thursday arvo” replaces “Thursday afternoon”. The clipped, colloquial word signals that this is one teammate talking to others, not an office talking to students.

Every fact from the notice survived; only the register moved. That is the skill: same content, chosen style.

Q9 — model analytical paragraph.

The announcement builds a playful, mocking tone by treating the lost-property box as if it were alive and the items in it as if they were characters. The box has not literally “grown a family”, but giving it one turns rubbish into a cast of odd relatives, and the joke says the teacher is amused rather than annoyed. The phrase “of unknown origin” borrows the formal style of a police report and aims it at a hat — the mismatch between the grand words and the small object is pure teasing. “Starting its own science project” does the same trick again, praising the old lunch container as if its mould were an achievement. Even the verb “rescue” keeps the joke running, casting the students as heroes saving the items from the op shop. The whole paragraph mocks the mess without blaming anyone — which is why the tone lands as funny rather than sharp.

The paragraph follows the four-step scaffold throughout: each quote (step 2) is followed by the choice it names (step 3 — personification of the box, borrowed formal style, exaggerated praise) and its contribution to the tone (step 4). The final sentence steps back and names the overall effect of the tone on the audience.

Section 2D · English 9 · Curriculum reference: VC2E9LA08 (“analyse how vocabulary choices contribute to style, mood and tone”), drawing on VC2E9LA08.E01 and VC2E9LA08.E02. All texts, passages, messages, notices and blurbs in this section were written for this book.

Punctuation to condense information; referencing and citing for formal and informal purposes

Every essay, review and assignment you write from here on rests on the moves in this section. It has two halves that turn out to be one skill. The first half is **condensing**: using punctuation to pack more information into fewer words, so your writing moves faster and reads as more mature. The second half is **citing**: the punctuation and patterns you use to bring other people's words and ideas into your work honestly — in an essay, and just as much in an online post or a spoken presentation. The two halves meet at the quotation, which is condensing (someone else's exact words, packed into your sentence) and citing (those words credited and findable) at the same time.

Curriculum focus

Understand and use punctuation conventions to condense information and for referencing and citing others for formal and informal purposes (VC2E9LA09, Language — Language for expressing and developing ideas)

Draws on

VC2E9LA09.E01 — when and how to cite in essays, reviews and academic assignments; direct quotation versus reporting sources more generally

Builds on (Level 8)

VC2E8LA09 — punctuation conventions, including semicolons and dashes, extend ideas and support meaning

Achievement-standard hook

"They engage with vocabulary and grammatical knowledge, including the ways that sentence structures are varied for creative effect and how punctuation supports citation and reference." (Reading and Viewing)

Modes in this section

Reading and viewing · Writing · Speaking and listening

What we mean by *citing* and *referencing*. The Victorian Curriculum uses the words *citing* and *referencing* but does not define them, and it does not name a citation style. In this section, to **cite** a source is to point to it in the body of your writing, at the spot where you use it (an **in-text citation**); to **reference** a source is to give its full details in the list at the end of your work (the **reference list**). Many people use the two words as if they meant the same thing; every question in this section is answerable on the definitions above alone.

The named styles you may meet — Harvard, APA (the style set by the American Psychological Association) and MLA (the style set by the Modern Language Association) — are **stipulated** systems: each is defined by its own authority, and the small details (commas, full stops, italics) differ from style to style, with each one correct inside its own system. This book uses one simple author–date pattern so that every answer here is definite. If your school or teacher asks for a named style, follow that style's rules — the moves taught here stay the same.

A note on the sources in this section. Every writer, study, book, film, article and webpage quoted in this section was invented for practice. The citation *moves* are real and used everywhere; the sources are not.

Theory

1. Condensing: one mark does the work of words

At Level 8 you learned that semicolons and dashes can *extend* ideas — adding clauses, trailing extra information. Year 9 turns that skill around. To **condense** information is to pack more meaning into fewer words, and punctuation is the tool that makes it possible: a single mark can do the work of a whole extra sentence.

Figure 1 shows the five condensing moves this section teaches. Each row starts with the long version and ends with the shorter, denser one.

Five marks that condense

Each one does the work of extra words.

Mark	Long version	Condensed version	What it does
, apposition	Ms Alvarez is our librarian. She moved the shelves twice.	Ms Alvarez, our librarian, moved the shelves twice.	Packs a description inside the subject; one sentence does the work of two.
: colon	We changed three things. They were the lighting, the seating and the hours.	We changed three things: the lighting, the seating and the hours.	Promises, then delivers — removes “they were”.
; semicolon	The library closed at five. The homework room stayed open until six.	The library closed at five; the homework room stayed open until six.	Joins two closely related sentences into one.
— dash	The plan was risky and rushed and it was ours. It somehow worked.	The plan — risky, rushed and ours — somehow worked.	Tucks the aside inside the sentence instead of after it.
() brackets	The survey asked 212 students. It found that most read daily.	The survey (212 students) found that most read daily.	Brackets carry the detail; the sentence keeps moving.

Before you add a sentence, ask: could a mark carry it instead?

Condensing removes the scaffolding once the punctuation can carry the load.

Table of five punctuation marks that condense information, showing a long version, a condensed version, and the work each mark does

Why bother condensing at all? Three reasons:

1. **Speed.** Dense writing carries more per sentence, so the reader gets further in the same time.
2. **Flow.** Fewer, fuller sentences read as connected thinking, not as a list of separate points.
3. **Maturity.** Writing that packs its information reads as confident. It says the writer is in control of the material, not just reporting it one line at a time.

Condensing never means squeezing out meaning. It means removing the *scaffolding* — the extra clauses and linking words — once the marks can carry the load instead.

2. The comma that packs: apposition

The quiet powerhouse of condensing is a move called **apposition** (from Latin, “placing next to”). In apposition, a describing noun group is placed straight after the noun it describes and wrapped in commas:

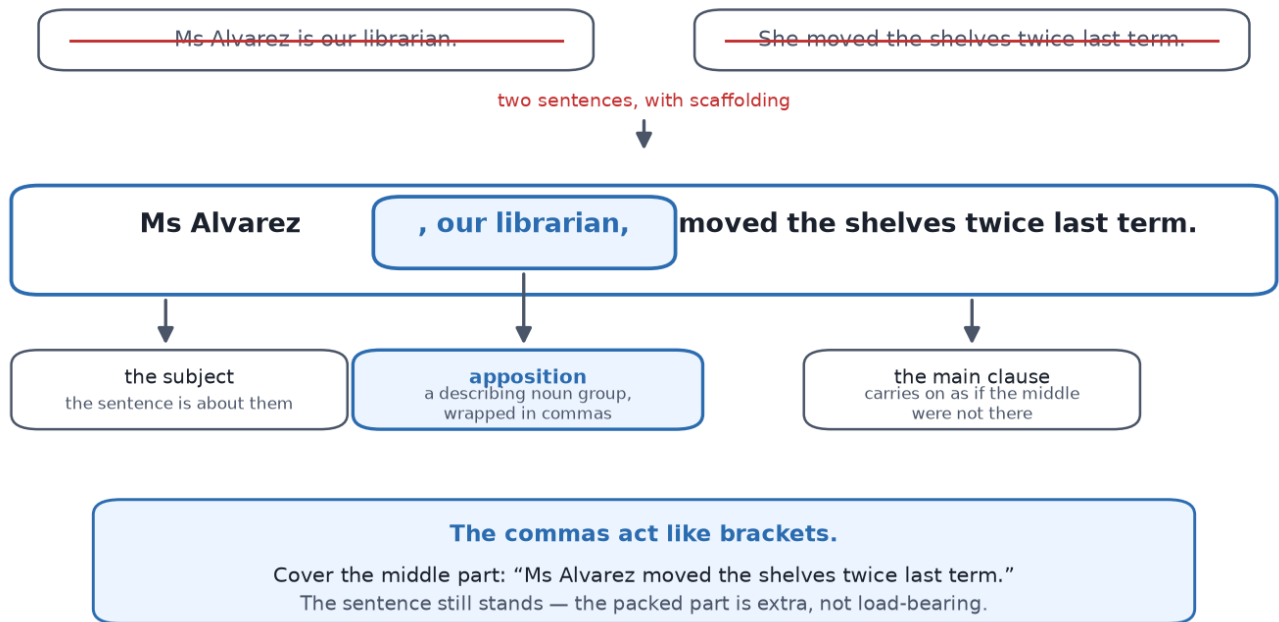
Ms Alvarez, **our librarian**, moved the shelves twice last term.

The two commas act like brackets: everything between them is packed extra information. Without them, the sentence still stands — “Ms Alvarez moved the shelves twice last term” — but with them, one sentence does the work of two:

Ms Alvarez is our librarian. She moved the shelves twice last term.

Figure 2 labels the parts of an apposition sentence.

Apposition: the comma that packs



Labelled sentence showing apposition, with the describing noun group wrapped in commas inside the main clause

Apposition is everywhere in writing you respect: journalism (“Marcus Hale, the prime minister, ...”), sport reporting (“the captain, Jess Merrick, ...”), and analytical writing (“the narrator, who ...”). Three cautions:

- **Keep it short.** Apposition works best with a few words — a role, a title, a quick description. A long one bloats the sentence instead of tightening it.
- **Wrap it fully.** If the extra information sits mid-sentence, it needs a comma *before and after*. The most common apposition error is the one-comma sandwich.
- **Only use it for information the reader needs.** If the extra detail matters later in the paragraph, give it its own sentence instead.

3. Colons and semicolons: the joining marks

Two marks condense by joining what would otherwise be separate sentences.

The colon (:) makes a promise. A full sentence states something, the colon lands, and what follows delivers the promise — a list, an explanation, or the point itself:

Three changes shaped our school year: the new library hours, the homework room, and the peer tutoring program.

The result was simple: everyone read more.

The colon condenses because it replaces phrasing like “which are”, “namely” and “and it was this”. Two rules: a complete sentence must stand *before* the colon, and what follows should genuinely deliver on it.

The semicolon (;) joins two complete sentences that are too closely related to stand apart:

The library closed at five; the homework room stayed open until six.

One sentence where there were two, with the relationship (contrast, here) felt rather than spelled out. The semicolon is also the home of the formal connective:

The survey results were clear; however, the committee asked for a second round.

Since Level 8 you have used semicolons and dashes to *extend* ideas; here they are working the other way — taking two sentences and returning one.

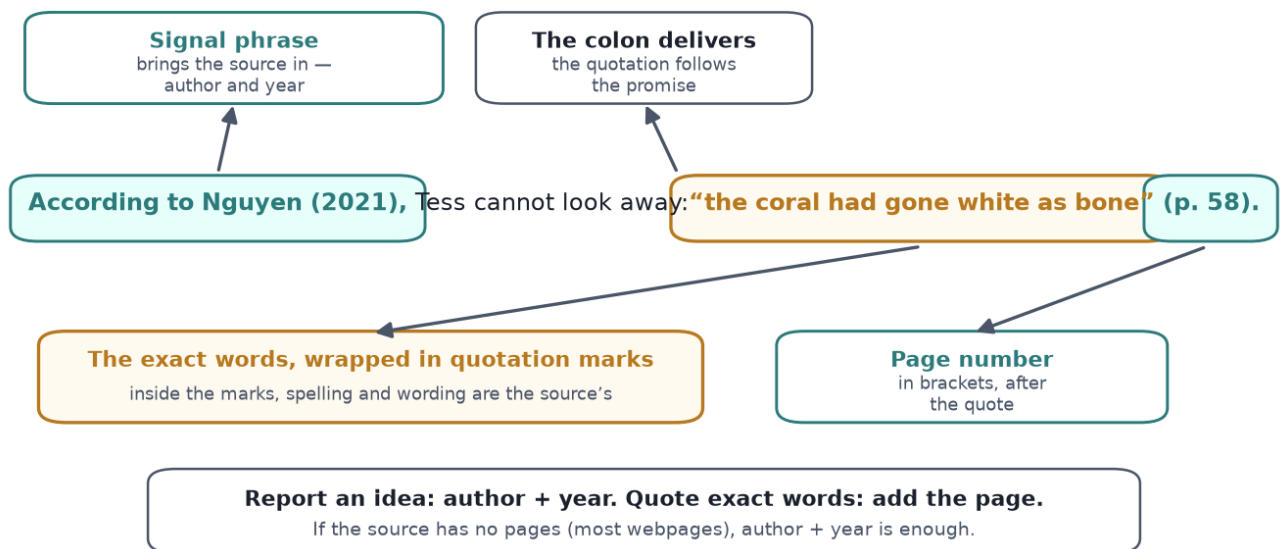
4. The quotation kit: marks that carry other voices

When your writing uses someone else's words, four marks do the carrying. You will meet them all again in the citing half of this section; Figure 3 shows them at work in a single sentence.

- **Quotation marks (" ")** wrap the exact words you borrowed. Inside the marks, the words must be *exactly* as the source wrote them — spelling, wording and all.
- **Brackets (())** — also called parentheses — carry the in-text citation: the author, the year, and (for a quotation) the page number.
- **The ellipsis (...)** — three dots — condenses a quotation by removing words you do not need. What remains must still be true to the source's meaning.
- **Square brackets ([])** mark any word you added or changed *inside* someone else's quotation, usually to make it fit your sentence. If the source wrote "they" and you need the reader to know who "they" are, you write "[the students]". The square brackets say: *these words are mine, not the source's*.

Anatomy of a quotation

Four moves in one sentence.



Labelled sentence showing a direct quotation with the signal phrase, quotation marks, exact words, and the in-text citation giving author, year and page number

Figure 4 shows one quotation three ways: in full, condensed with an ellipsis, and adjusted with square brackets.

Condense and adjust — without changing the meaning

The same quotation from Ortega (2024), three ways.

Full	"Across the twelve schools in the survey, the later start did not reduce the total hours of sleep on its own, but it changed the quality of the first hours at school."	Every word, exactly as the source wrote it.
Ellipsis ...	Ortega (2024) reports that "the later start ... changed the quality of the first hours at school".	The dots replace the words you chose not to quote. The meaning is unchanged.
Brackets []	The source says "They doubled within a term". Away from that paragraph, write: "[First-period questions] doubled within a term".	The brackets flag the word YOU added or changed inside someone else's quotation.

The honesty rule

An ellipsis may shorten a quotation; square brackets may clarify it. Neither may change what the source said.

One quotation shown three ways: the full version, a version shortened with an ellipsis, and a version adjusted with square brackets

The rule behind both moves is honesty. An ellipsis may shorten a quotation but must never change its meaning; square brackets may clarify a quotation but must never rewrite the source's claim.

5. Why cite: credit, trail and strength

Academic honesty — doing your own work and openly crediting whatever you borrow — is the habit this section builds. Its opposite has a name: **plagiarism**, which is presenting someone else's words, ideas or work as if they were your own. Plagiarism is not only copying word for word; using someone's idea without saying where it came from is the same breach in a quieter form.

Citing does three jobs at once:

1. **Credit.** Words and ideas belong to the people who made them. A citation says, plainly, "this part is not mine — and that is not a weakness in my writing but a strength."
2. **A trail.** A citation is a path for your reader: from your sentence, to the in-text citation, to the reference list, to the source itself. Figure 5 maps the trail. A reader who wants to check you — or read further — can follow it all the way.
3. **Strength.** A claim with a named source behind it carries more weight than a bare claim. Citing does not hide your voice; it shows your voice is worth hearing *with evidence behind it*.

The citation trail

A reader can follow your evidence all the way to its home.

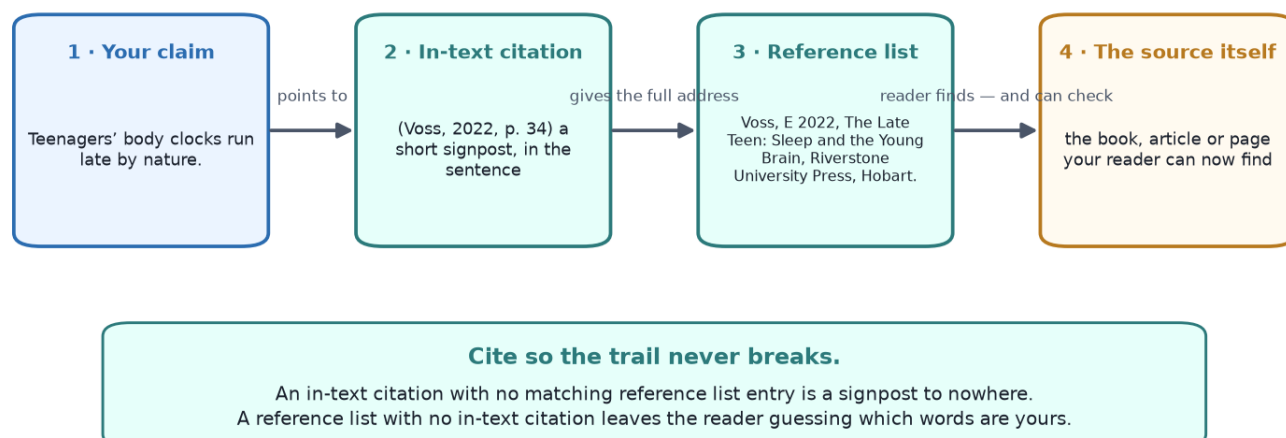


Diagram of the citation trail: from a claim in an essay, to the in-text citation, to the reference list entry, to the source itself

One exception is worth naming: **common knowledge** — facts that almost everyone knows and can check anywhere, like “Canberra is the capital of Australia” — needs no citation. When in doubt, cite. A needless citation costs one line; an uncredited source costs your credibility.

Two sides of the citation rules. The case for strict citing is strong, and so is the complaint about it. Hold both in view before you judge — Question 11 will ask you to reason about exactly this.

The strongest case for it: citing is the backbone of honest work. It gives credit where credit is owed, lets any reader check every claim, and turns an opinion into a supported argument. Every serious piece of writing — in school, in science, in journalism, in law — runs on this habit. A writer who cites well is telling the reader: *you can trust me, because you can check me.*

The strongest case against it, as its critics actually make it: in-text citations clutter the page; naming a source once at the start should be enough. Much of what is cited is close to common knowledge anyway, and a rigid rule can turn into box-ticking — students chasing commas in a style guide while the argument itself stays thin. Too much quotation, one teacher put it, lets other voices crowd out your own.

Both observations are real. The interesting question is not “are citation rules good or bad?” but “when do they serve the reader, and when do they get in the way?”

6. Quote or report: the two ways to use a source

There are exactly two ways to bring a source into your writing.

Direct quotation — you borrow the source’s exact words, wrap them in quotation marks, and cite author, year and page:

Nguyen (2021) marks the moment Tess stops hoping: “the coral had gone white as bone” (p. 58).

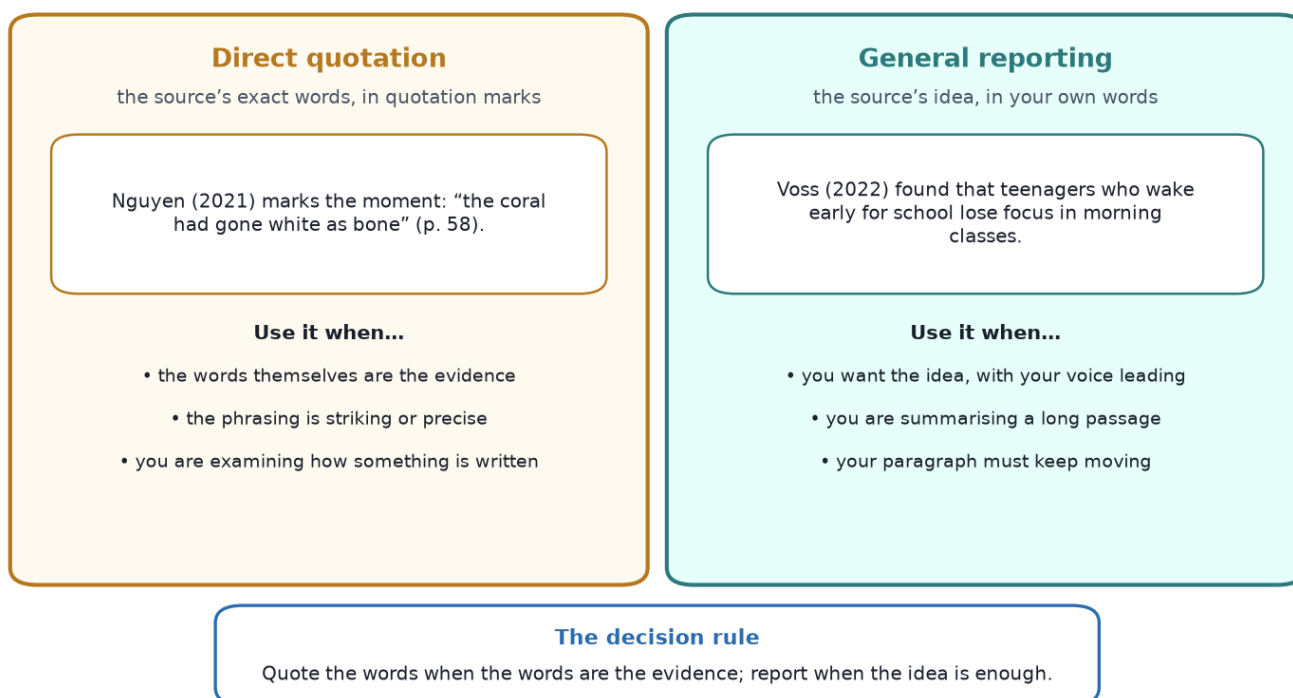
General reporting — also called **paraphrasing** (from Greek, “to say alongside”) — you give the source’s idea in your own words and cite author and year. No quotation marks, no page number:

Voss (2022) found that teenagers who wake early for school lose focus in morning classes.

Figure 6 sets the two side by side with their best uses.

Quote or report?

The two ways to bring a source into your writing.



Two-column comparison of direct quotation and general reporting, listing when to use each and showing an example of each

The decision rule most experienced writers use:

- **Quote** when the *words themselves* are the evidence — when the phrasing is striking, precise, or worth examining (as in a literature essay, where how something is said *is* part of what it means).
- **Report** when you want the *idea* and your own voice leading. Reporting condenses a page into a sentence and keeps you in charge of the paragraph.

Most strong analytical writing is mostly reporting with a few sharp quotations placed where they earn their marks. A paragraph that is all quotation is a collage, not an argument — the sources are talking, and you are not.

The verbs that introduce sources matter too. **Reporting verbs** — *argues, finds, warns, suggests, observes, disputes* — are not decoration: “Voss (2022) *argues*” frames the idea as a position; “Voss (2022) *found*” frames it as a result. Choose the verb that matches how the source speaks. The phrase that brings the source in (“Nguyen (2021) shows ...”, “According to Voss (2022) ...”) is often called the **signal phrase**.

7. The pattern: in-text citations and the reference list

This section uses one simple author–date pattern throughout, so the moves can be learned without style-guide noise.

In-text citation — reporting an idea:

Voss (2022) found that teenagers’ body clocks run late. — *author in your sentence*

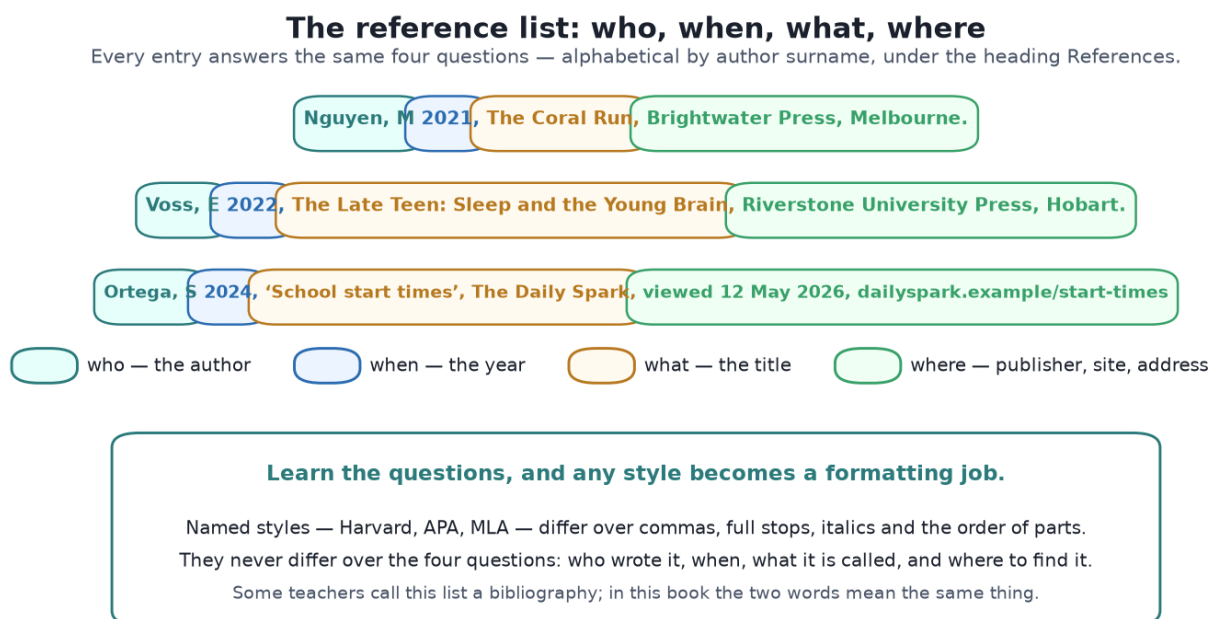
Teenagers’ body clocks run late by nature (Voss, 2022). — *author in brackets*

In-text citation — direct quotation:

“Most teenagers are wired to fall asleep well after eleven” (Voss, 2022, p. 34).

Add the page number only when there is one; webpages and films usually have none.

The **reference list** sits at the end of the work, under the heading *References*, in alphabetical order by author surname. Each entry answers four questions: **who** wrote it, **when**, **what** it is called, and **where** it can be found. Figure 7 shows three entries with their parts labelled.



Model reference list of three entries — a novel, a research book, and a webpage — with each part labelled: author, year, title, and where to find it

Source kind	Pattern	Example from this section
Book	Author, year, <i>title</i> , publisher, city.	Nguyen, M 2021, <i>The Coral Run</i> , Brightwater Press, Melbourne.
Report or book by a researcher	Author, year, <i>title</i> , publisher, city.	Voss, E 2022, <i>The Late Teen: Sleep and the Young Brain</i> , Riverstone University Press, Hobart.
Webpage	Author, year, ‘article title’, <i>site name</i> , viewed day month year, address.	Ortega, S 2024, ‘School start times: what the evidence says’, <i>The Daily Spark</i> , viewed 12 May 2026, www.dailyspark.example/school-start-times

Some teachers call the end list a **bibliography**; in this book the two words mean the same thing. Where styles differ (Harvard, APA, MLA), they differ over the small mechanics — commas, full stops, italics, the order of parts — not over the four questions. Learn the questions, and any style becomes a formatting job.

8. Formal and informal purposes

The CD you are studying names both: citing for **formal** and **informal** purposes. The honesty is identical in both; only the machinery changes.

Formal contexts — essays, reviews, academic assignments — use the full machinery: in-text citations in brackets, exact quotation punctuation, and a reference list at the end, in whatever style your school asks for.

Informal contexts — online posts, social posts, video scripts, radio segments, speeches — use a lighter machinery, because a listening or scrolling audience cannot see brackets and page numbers. Instead you:

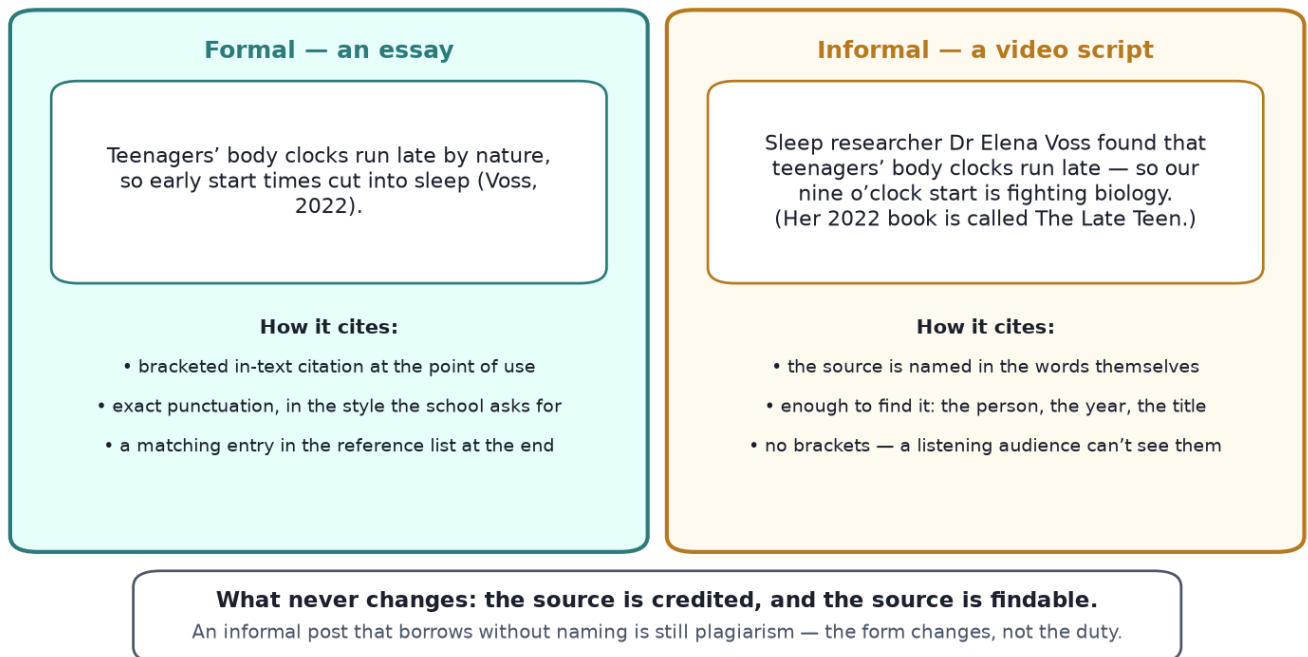
- name the source in your words: “Dr Elena Voss, who researches sleep at Riverstone University, found ...”;
- give enough to find it: the title, the site, the year, or a link;

- keep the credit visible: an informal post that uses someone’s findings without naming them is still plagiarism — the informality changes the *form*, never the *duty*.

Figure 8 shows the same fact cited both ways. Figure 9 is a student online post with its informal citing moves labelled.

Same finding, two outfits

The honesty is identical; only the machinery changes.



The same finding cited two ways: a formal essay sentence with a bracketed in-text citation, beside an informal video script line that names the source in words

Informal citing in the wild

A student online post — no brackets anywhere, and still honest.

Why our mornings feel so hard

Leo · Year 9 · school website

1 Ever felt wide awake at midnight and half asleep in first period? You're not lazy. Sleep researcher Dr Elena Voss from Riverstone University has tracked teenagers' sleep for years, and her 2022 book *The Late Teen* says the teenage body clock runs late — biology, not bad habits.

2

3 And it's not just one study. A 2024 article in *The Daily Spark* (search "school start times") pulled together surveys from twelve schools, and the pattern was the same: later starts, better mornings.

4 So next time someone calls you lazy at 8:45 a.m., you've got receipts.

Names the researcher — in words, not brackets.

"Sleep researcher Dr Elena Voss from Riverstone University" says who she is and where she works.

Gives the year and the title.

"Her 2022 book *The Late Teen*" leaves the reader enough to find the book.

Names the article and where it lives.

"A 2024 article in *The Daily Spark* (search 'school start times') is a pointer a scrolling reader can follow.

The credit is still visible.

No in-text citation, no reference list — and still not a single borrowed idea without a name attached.

Informal changes the form of the credit. It never removes it.

Model text of a student online post about sleep, with the informal referencing moves highlighted and named in a side column

Spoken citing is informal citing: in a presentation you say the source out loud ("A 2022 study by Elena Voss tracked four hundred teenagers ..."), and a slide can carry the full details for anyone who wants them. The audience hears the credit either way.

9. Putting it together: the cited analytical paragraph

Everything in this section lands in one shape — the analytical paragraph you will write in every essay from now on: a **claim** in your own voice, evidence brought in by **quotation** or **reporting** with its **citation**, an **explanation** of what the evidence does, and a **link** back to the point of the paragraph. Figure 10 shows a model paragraph colour-coded into those parts; you will write one yourself in Question 9.

A cited analytical paragraph, colour-coded

From the extract in Question 9 — claim, evidence, explanation, link.

In The Coral Run, Nguyen shows that Tess refuses to give up on the reef by making her care for it physical.	Claim — your voice
Tess counts her coral fragments “the way you count savings” (Nguyen, 2021, p. 58),	Quotation + citation
and the comparison does quiet work: savings are something you protect for the future, which is exactly how Tess sees the nursery.	Explanation
When her brother tells her the white branches are gone, Tess wraps them in wet cloth anyway (Nguyen, 2021)	Report + citation
— the action is reported plainly, without drama, and that plainness reads as refusal too.	Explanation
Her closing words, “Not yet” (Nguyen, 2021, p. 58), answer her brother with the smallest possible defiance,	Quotation + citation
and its quietness makes it stronger.	Explanation
Together, these choices show a character whose hope is not announced but practised, one wrapped branch at a time.	Link back to the point



claim



evidence: quote or report + citation



explanation



link

Colour-coded model analytical paragraph showing the claim, a direct quotation with its citation, the explanation, a reported idea with its citation, and the linking sentence

Worked examples

Example 1 — scaffolded

Task. Three pairs of sentences are condensed below, each using a different mark. The table is completed for you; read it line by line and notice what each mark takes over.

Long version	Condensed version	The mark and its job
Ms Alvarez is our librarian. She moved the shelves twice last term.	Ms Alvarez, our librarian, moved the shelves twice last term.	Commas wrapping apposition. The describing noun group “our librarian” is packed into the main sentence; the second sentence disappears.
We changed three things. They were the lighting, the seating and the opening hours.	We changed three things: the lighting, the seating and the opening hours.	Colon. The first clause promises a list; the colon delivers it, removing the clunky “They were”.
The library closed at five. The homework room stayed open until six.	The library closed at five; the homework room stayed open until six.	Semicolon. Two complete, closely related sentences join into one; the contrast is felt without a linking word.

The point to copy: before you add a sentence, ask whether a mark could carry it instead. If the new sentence only describes a noun, promises a list, or repeats a subject, it is probably scaffolding.

Example 2 — scaffolded

Task. You have these raw facts about a source:

- author: Dr Elena Voss · year: 2022 · book: *The Late Teen: Sleep and the Young Brain* · publisher: Riverstone University Press, Hobart · page 34 carries this sentence: “Most teenagers are wired to fall asleep well after eleven.”

The table below builds every form of citation from those facts, one move at a time.

Move	Result	Why
Report the idea in your own words	Voss (2022) found that teenagers’ body clocks run late.	Reporting needs author + year, no quotation marks, no page number.
Quote the exact words	“Most teenagers are wired to fall asleep well after eleven” (Voss, 2022, p. 34).	Quotation marks wrap the exact words; the bracketed citation adds the page.
Shorten the quotation with an ellipsis	“Most teenagers are wired to fall asleep well after eleven ...” (Voss, 2022, p. 34).	Only if the rest of the source’s sentence is not needed — and the meaning is unchanged.
List it at the end	Voss, E 2022, <i>The Late Teen: Sleep and the Young Brain</i> , Riverstone University Press, Hobart.	Reference list entry: who, when, what, where — alphabetical order under <i>References</i> .

Notice the direction of travel: in-text citations are short signposts (author, year, page); the reference list holds the full address. One without the other is a broken trail.

Example 3 — unscaffolded

Task. Here is a short passage from an invented article.

Ortega, S 2024, ‘School start times: what the evidence says’, *The Daily Spark*, viewed 12 May 2026, www.dailyspark.example/school-start-times

“Across the twelve schools in the survey, the later start did not reduce the total hours of sleep on its own. What changed was the quality of the first hours at school: attendance rose, first-period questions doubled, and teachers reported fewer students staring out the window.”

Write two sentences that use this source:

- one **reported** sentence — Ortega’s finding in your own words, with the correct in-text citation;
- one **direct quotation** — choose the phrase worth quoting, punctuate it, and cite it with a page number if there is one (think about whether a webpage has pages).

Pointers (no scaffold given): decide what the finding *is* before you report it; quote only the phrase whose words do the work; check that your quotation marks, brackets and commas are all present.

Practice questions

Scaffolded

Q1. Condense each pair of sentences into one sentence using **apposition**. Keep all the information.

- Mr Chen is our year-level coordinator. He announced the changes on Monday.
- The homework room is a quiet space behind the library. It opens at three.
- Jess Merrick is the captain. She called the team together after the loss.

Q2. Join each pair using a **colon**. You may need to drop a few words (like “they were” or “it was”).

- (a) The camp needed three things. They were tents, torches and patience.
- (b) The decision came down to one fact. The fact was that the bus left at seven.
- (c) Her advice was short. It was this: pack light.

Q3. Join each pair using a **semicolon**. In (c), use the connective *however* after the semicolon.

- (a) The library closed at five. The homework room stayed open until six.
- (b) The draft was finished. The editing had only just begun.
- (c) The survey results were clear. The committee wanted a second round.

Q4. Here is a quotation from Ortega’s article (invented):

“Across the twelve schools in the survey, the later start did not reduce the total hours of sleep on its own, but it changed the quality of the first hours at school.”

- (a) Shorten it with an **ellipsis** so that it fits this sentence: Ortega (2024) reports that “...”
- (b) Another part of Ortega’s article says, simply: “They doubled within a term.” On its own, a reader cannot tell what “They” refers to. Rewrite the quotation, using square brackets, so the reader knows — use information from the passage above.

Q5. For each situation below, decide whether a **direct quotation** or **general reporting** is the better move, and give one reason.

- (a) You are writing an essay on the novel *The Coral Run* and want to show how Nguyen describes the reef.
- (b) You are writing a paragraph about school start times and want to use the finding of Voss’s 2022 study without interrupting your own flow.
- (c) You are reviewing the film *Paper Kites* and one line of dialogue is the funniest moment in the film.
- (d) You are summarising a three-page section of a report for your introduction.

Q6. Build correct in-text citations from these facts:

- (a) A 2021 novel, *The Coral Run*, by M Nguyen; you are quoting page 58: “the coral had gone white as bone”.
- (b) A 2024 webpage article by S Ortega; you are reporting its general finding in your own words.
- (c) A 2022 book by E Voss; you are quoting page 34: “Most teenagers are wired to fall asleep well after eleven”.

Q7. The paragraph below uses a source badly. It was meant to cite Voss (2022) but does not.

Teenagers lose focus in morning classes because their body clocks run late. This was found in a study. The study also says early start times hurt sleep, so schools should start later.

- (a) Find the two places where information is borrowed without a citation.
- (b) Rewrite the paragraph with correct in-text citations — one reported, and decide whether any part deserves quotation marks.
- (c) Name one more thing the finished paragraph would need before it could be handed in.

Q8. (*Speaking and listening.*) In pairs, take turns with the four situations in Q5. For each one: student A states a choice (quote or report) and a reason; student B either builds on it (“and also ...”) or challenges it respectfully (“I’d choose the other, because ...”). Then swap roles for Q5’s remaining situations. Protocol: one voice at a time; challenge the idea, not the person; end each situation by agreeing on the strongest reason either of you heard.

Unscaffolded

Q9. Read this extract from the invented novel *The Coral Run* (Nguyen 2021, p. 58).

Tess knelt at the edge of the nursery pool and counted the fragments she had grown herself, one by one, the way you count savings. Most were still brown and alive. But in the far corner, three branches had gone white as bone, and she could not look away from them. Her brother called from the boat that the tide was turning. “Leave them,” he said. “They’re gone.” Tess wrapped the white branches in wet cloth anyway, the way her mother wrapped bread dough, and carried them to the shade. “Not yet,” she said, to no one in particular.

Write an analytical paragraph of six to eight sentences answering:

How does Nguyen show that Tess refuses to give up on the reef?

Structure it as claim → quotation with citation → explanation → a second piece of evidence (quote or report) → link. A colour-coded model is shown in Figure 10 and printed in full in the solutions.

Q10. The paragraph below carries its information in five short, choppy sentences.

Our school garden is run by students. It produces vegetables for the canteen. The garden was started in 2023. It was started by the environment club. The results have been strong. The canteen now uses the vegetables in two meals each week. Students have also begun composting.

Rewrite it as two or three denser sentences using at least three condensing moves from this section (apposition, colon, semicolon, dash or brackets). Then write one sentence for each move you used, explaining what it let you remove.

Q11. Consider this claim:

“Citing sources clutters up a page. Naming a source once, at the start of a paragraph, should be enough.”

Write a reasoned response. You must:

- give the strongest version of the case *against* strict in-text citation (what its critics actually say);
- give the strongest version of the case *for* it (what its defenders actually say);
- then state your own position — is once-per-paragraph enough, always, sometimes, or never — with reasons and at least one example of what can go wrong.

Use the definitions of *citing* and *referencing* given at the start of this section. You are marked on the quality of your reasoning — defined terms, real examples, honest limits — not on which side you land on. Whichever side you favour, spend equal effort on the other one.

Q12. Write the opening of a formal review (eight to twelve sentences) of the invented film *Paper Kites* (2023, directed by Rosa Delgado). Your review must:

- cite the film itself — reviews name the work’s title, its director and its year;
- bring in one outside source with a full in-text citation (invent one: a review, an interview, or an article — give it an author and a year);
- include at least one direct quotation from your outside source, correctly punctuated;
- end with a reference list containing both sources.

Q13. Rewrite your Q12 review’s key finding as an informal online post of six to eight sentences for the school’s website. Then answer in three or four sentences: what did you change about the citing — and what stayed exactly the same?

Q14. (*Speaking and listening.*) In pairs, prepare a two-minute spoken mini-review of a film, book or game you both know, with oral citations: at least one moment where you name a source out loud (“A review in ... said ...”, “The director told ... that ...”). Protocol: share the speaking evenly; say the source’s name and the year clearly, not just “some article”; the listening class notes one citing move each presenter used well.

Answers

These are sample answers. For open questions, any response that meets the task is acceptable.

Q1. Samples: (a) Mr Chen, our year-level coordinator, announced the changes on Monday. (b) The homework room, a quiet space behind the library, opens at three. (c) Jess Merrick, the captain, called the team together after the loss. Each answer must keep both commas.

Q2. Samples: (a) The camp needed three things: tents, torches and patience. (b) The decision came down to one fact: the bus left at seven. (c) Her advice was short: pack light.

Q3. Samples: (a) The library closed at five; the homework room stayed open until six. (b) The draft was finished; the editing had only just begun. (c) The survey results were clear; however, the committee wanted a second round.

Q4. (a) Sample: Ortega (2024) reports that “the later start ... changed the quality of the first hours at school”. Accept any ellipsis that removes words without changing the source’s meaning. (b) Sample: “[First-period questions] doubled within a term.” Award any version in which the word replacing “They” sits in square brackets and the rest of the quotation matches the source.

Q5. Samples: (a) quote — the words themselves (how Nguyen describes the reef) are the evidence; (b) report — you want the idea and your own flow; a bracketed citation keeps the sentence moving; (c) quote — the funniest line only works in its exact words; (d) report — summarising three pages is what reporting is for; quoting would bloat the introduction.

Q6. (a) “the coral had gone white as bone” (Nguyen, 2021, p. 58). (b) (Ortega, 2024) — no page number for a webpage; the author may equally appear in the sentence. (c) “Most teenagers are wired to fall asleep well after eleven” (Voss, 2022, p. 34).

Q7. (a) The finding about body clocks and the claim about start times and sleep are both borrowed from the study with no credit. (b) Sample: Teenagers lose focus in morning classes because their body clocks run late (Voss, 2022). Voss (2022) also found that early start times cut into sleep, so schools should start later. (c) A reference list entry for Voss’s book at the end of the work.

Q8. Teacher observation. Look for: turns taken without talking over; challenges aimed at the idea (“quoting there would slow the paragraph down”) rather than the person; pairs landing on a shared strongest reason rather than just agreeing.

Q9. See the model paragraph in the fully-worked solutions (and Figure 10). A sound paragraph makes a claim about Tess’s refusal to give up, quotes at least one moment from the extract with (Nguyen, 2021, p. 58), and explains the effect of each piece of evidence.

Q10. See the fully-worked solutions for a model rewrite. Award at least three condensing moves correctly used and one explanation per move.

Q11. Marked on reasoning, not conclusion. See the fully-worked solutions for a model structure.

Q12. Answers will vary. Reward: the film cited by title, director and year; one outside source with a full in-text citation; one correctly punctuated quotation; a reference list with both entries in the pattern shown in Figure 7.

Q13. Answers will vary. The citing should move from brackets to words — the source named in the sentence, a link or title given for the reader to follow. What stays the same: credit is still visible, and the source is still findable.

Q14. Teacher observation. Look for: sources named out loud with author and year; even floor-sharing; listening students identifying one citing move accurately.

Fully-worked solutions

Q1 — reasoning. Apposition asks: which part of the second sentence only *describes* the subject? That describing noun group moves in next to the subject, wrapped in commas, and the leftover sentence is deleted. (a) “our year-level coordinator” describes Mr Chen. (b) “a quiet space behind the library” describes the homework room. (c) “the

captain” describes Jess Merrick. The test of a correct answer: read it with the middle part covered over — the sentence must still make sense.

Q4 — reasoning. An ellipsis replaces exactly the words you are choosing not to quote — no more, no fewer — and what is left must still say what the source said. In (a), the ellipsis removes the middle stretch — the finding about total sleep hours — leaving the one finding the writer wants to use: that the later start changed the quality of the first hours. In (b), square brackets replace the source’s pronoun “They” with the noun group it stands for — first-period questions — so the quotation makes sense away from its original paragraph. Whatever you add or change inside someone else’s quotation goes in [], and the meaning must match the source either way.

Q5 — reasoning. The decision rule does the work. Quote when the words themselves are the evidence (a: the description; c: the joke). Report when the idea is what matters and your voice should lead (b: the finding, mid-flow; d: a long summary). Notice that (c) is the trap: it feels informal, but a film review that never quotes the funny line loses its best evidence.

Q9 — model analytical paragraph (this is the paragraph colour-coded in Figure 10).

In *The Coral Run*, Nguyen shows that Tess refuses to give up on the reef by making her care for it physical. Tess counts her coral fragments “the way you count savings” (Nguyen, 2021, p. 58), and the comparison does quiet work: savings are something you protect for the future, which is exactly how Tess sees the nursery. When her brother tells her the white branches are gone, Tess wraps them in wet cloth anyway (Nguyen, 2021) — the action is reported plainly, without drama, and that plainness reads as refusal too. Her closing words, “Not yet” (Nguyen, 2021, p. 58), answer her brother with the smallest possible defiance, and its quietness makes it stronger. Together, these choices show a character whose hope is not announced but practised, one wrapped branch at a time.

The claim is carried by one quotation and one reported action, each with its citation — and the citations follow the rule from section 7 exactly: the quotation names author, year *and page*, while the report names author and year only. Each piece of evidence is followed by an explanation of what it *does* (turns the reef into savings; turns a plain action into refusal). The final sentence links the evidence back to the question. Notice that the paragraph’s own voice leads throughout: the sources support the argument rather than replacing it.

Q10 — model rewrite.

Our school garden — started in 2023 by the environment club, and run by students — now supplies vegetables for two canteen meals a week; the results have pushed students further, and composting has begun.

Or, in fewer words:

The school garden, a student-run project started by the environment club in 2023, now supplies vegetables for two canteen meals a week; its success has even started a composting habit.

Moves used: apposition packs “run by students” and “started in 2023 by the environment club” into the subject; the semicolon joins two closely related results into one sentence; the dash version shows the same packing with a stronger pause. Each move removes a whole short sentence (“It was started by the environment club”, “The results have been strong”) without losing a fact.

Q11 — model structure.

Against strict in-text citation: A page bristling with brackets can read like a checklist, not an argument. If one source supplies a whole paragraph, naming it once at the start tells the reader everything they need, and repeating “(Voss, 2022)” six times adds noise, not honesty. Much that gets cited is near common knowledge, and a student chasing style-guide commas is a student not working on the argument itself; too much quotation lets other voices crowd out the writer’s own.

For strict in-text citation: The reader deserves to know, sentence by sentence, which words are yours and which are borrowed — that is the difference between an argument and a collage. A citation at the point of use is also a trail: anyone can check your claim against its source in seconds. And the “clutter” is small — one bracket — compared with what it protects: credit for the original writer, and your own credibility.

Position (sample): Once-per-paragraph is sometimes enough but cannot be the rule, because paragraphs usually mix sources and mix your ideas with borrowed ones. The workable version is the one this section teaches: cite at the point of use when the words or the idea are borrowed, name the source once when a whole paragraph draws on one source, and let the reference list carry the full details. The goal is a trail the reader can follow — not brackets for their own sake.

Note that the model takes a position — yours may differ, and a well-reasoned opposite position scores equally. What is marked: defined terms, both sides at full strength, a position with conditions, and honest limits.

Q12 — model opening (one possible version).

Rosa Delgado’s *Paper Kites* (2023) opens with a kite stuck in a power line and never quite comes back down to earth. The film follows Mara, a fourteen-year-old kite-maker, through the summer her town forgets her — and it is funnier than that summary sounds. Delgado said in one interview that she wanted “a film about being overlooked that never feels overlooked itself” (Fernandez, 2023, p. 12), and that line describes the finished film exactly. The jokes land quietly, the town feels real, and the final scene earns its tears. Not every thread is tied off; Fernandez (2023) notes that Delgado cut a whole subplot, and the gap shows. Even so, *Paper Kites* is the warmest film of the year so far, and the rare one worth watching twice.

References

Delgado, R (dir.) 2023, *Paper Kites*, Riverlight Films.

Fernandez, J 2023, ‘Rosa Delgado on making *Paper Kites*’, *Screen Notes*, viewed 12 May 2026, www.screennotes.example/delgado-interview

Notice the two kinds of source: the work being reviewed (cited by director, year, title) and the outside source (cited like any article). The quotation from the interview is short, exact, and doing real work in the paragraph.

Q13 — model online-post version (one possible version).

Seen *Paper Kites* yet? Rosa Delgado’s new film — the one about the girl who makes kites — is the warmest thing I’ve watched all year. Delgado told *Screen Notes* last year that she wanted it to feel real, and it does: the town in it could be ours. The jokes land quietly, and the ending got me, I won’t lie. If you only watch one film this term, make it this one. (Full interview: screennotes.example — search “Delgado on *Paper Kites*”.)

What changed: the bracketed citations became words in the sentence (“Delgado told *Screen Notes* last year”); the reference list became a pointer the reader can follow. What stayed the same: the source is credited in plain sight, and it is still findable. The duty did not change — only the machinery.

Q14 — what a strong presentation contains.

- A clear claim in the first sentence (“We think ... is worth your time because ...”).
 - At least one source named out loud with author (or outlet) and year — not “some review said”.
 - The citing woven into the speaking: “The director told *Screen Notes* in 2023 that ...”, not a mumbled “according to a thing”.
 - Even floor-sharing between the pair, with at least one moment where one presenter builds on the other’s point.
-

Section 2E · English 9 · Curriculum reference: VC2E9LA09 (“understand and use punctuation conventions to condense information and for referencing and citing others for formal and informal purposes”), drawing on VC2E9LA09.E01. All texts, posts, reviews, quotations and sources in this section were written for this book; the cited sources are invented for practice.

C2 — Chapter 2 check-in

This is a school-designed check. It is not a VCAA instrument. Achievement in the Victorian Curriculum is reported against the Level 9 achievement standard, not against a mark on this check.

Instrument C2 · Chapter 2 check-in · Chapter 2 booklet, after Section 2E

English Level 9 (Year 9) · Victorian Curriculum 2.0 · single-level book (no band)

Chapter/topic coverage: Chapter 2 — Language for effect: sentences, nouns, symbols, tone and condensing (Sections 2A–2E)

Codes assessed: VC2E9LA05 · VC2E9LA06 · VC2E9LA07 · VC2E9LA08 · VC2E9LA09

Name: _____ Date: _____

Total marks	20
Section structure	Section A — Sentences for effect (4 marks) · Section B — Abstract and summary nouns (4 marks) · Section C — Symbols in a still frame (4 marks) · Section D — Tone and mood (4 marks) · Section E — Condensing and citation (4 marks)
Guidance time	25 minutes — about 1¼ minutes per item, plus reading time for the supplied texts
Conditions	Class check, not an exam. Closed book. All stimulus texts are supplied in this paper. Runs online (H5P, auto-marked) or on paper.
Permitted materials	Pen or pencil only.
Reading support	Your teacher may read any question or supplied text aloud to you.

Attempt every question. Each question is worth 1 mark. In multiple-choice questions, choose the **one best** answer. In mark-the-words questions, mark the exact words asked for. In matching and drag questions, place every item as instructed. Online, these items run as H5P interactions; on paper, follow the instructions in each question (underline, write, or list your answers in the space given).

Section A — Sentences for effect (4 marks)

Questions 1–4 assess VC2E9LA05. Read the passage, then answer Questions 1–4.

Passage — from an original short story (*original text written for this book*)

The wind arrived before the bell. Hugh, who never once looked up from his notebook, kept writing while the windows rattled in their frames. Because the storm had turned the sky green. The flagpole. And then the rain — all of it at once — and the whole school moved as one toward the doors.

Question 1 (1 mark) — mark the words

Mark (underline) the **sentence fragment** in the passage — the deliberate incomplete sentence that usually lacks a verb.

Question 2 (1 mark) — mark the words

Mark (underline) the **lone dependent clause** in the passage — the clause left standing alone, like a voice caught mid-thought.

Question 3 (1 mark) — multiple choice

What is the main effect of the fragment you marked in Question 1?

- A. It stops the reader on one sharp image, freezing the scene for a beat.
- B. It shows that the flagpole is about to break.
- C. It proves that the narrator cannot be trusted.
- D. It speeds up the action by leaving out the verb.

Question 4 (1 mark) — drag the words (repair clause structure)

Drag the three chunks into order to build one correct sentence with an interrupting clause. On paper, write the letters in order on the line below.

X. who never once looked up

Y. Hugh

Z. kept writing until the rain stopped.

Order: _____ , _____ , _____

Section B — Abstract and summary nouns (4 marks)

Questions 5–8 assess VC2E9LA06.

Question 5 (1 mark) — multiple choice

Which of the following is an **abstract** noun — something you cannot see, hear, touch, taste or smell?

- A. racquet
- B. decision
- C. streetlight
- D. garage

Question 6 (1 mark) — fill in the blank

Complete the sentence with **one** item from the word box.

Word box: *dedication · doubt · silence · haste*

The team trained every morning for a year. That _____ paid off in the final.

Question 7 (1 mark) — matching

Each clause below can be wrapped up in one summary noun. Match each clause with its summary noun. Online, drag each clause to its noun. On paper, write the number of the noun beside each clause.

Clause	Summary noun
(i) The council decided to fund the repairs.	1. the introduction
(ii) Volunteers kept helping, even in the rain.	2. the decision
(iii) The reviewer's first paragraph sets out what the film is about.	3. their dedication

Question 8 (1 mark) — multiple choice

Read: *The proposal was rejected. This outcome surprised no one.* What job is the summary noun **This outcome** mainly doing?

- A. It compresses the whole first sentence into one noun group and connects it to the next sentence.
- B. It evaluates the proposal as a bad idea.
- C. It describes something the reader can see or touch.
- D. It sets a condition for the next sentence.

Section C — Symbols in a still frame (4 marks)

Questions 9–12 assess VC2E9LA07. Read the described still frame, then answer Questions 9–12.

Still frame — described (original text written for this book)

A girl stands at the gate of an orchard in late autumn. The light is low and gold. Behind her, moving boxes are stacked beside a car with its doors open. In her hand she holds one red apple, still with its leaf. The gate swings a little in the wind, but she does not move. If this still had sound, it would hold only the wind and the creak of the gate.

Question 9 (1 mark) — multiple choice

The still is set in **late autumn**, among packed boxes and open car doors. Using the symbol system taught for seasons, what does the season most likely suggest here?

- A. Change and loss
- B. New beginnings
- C. Freedom
- D. Stillness and endings

Question 10 (1 mark) — matching

Match each detail in the still with what it carries. Online, drag each detail to its reading. On paper, write the number of the reading beside each detail.

Detail	Reading
(i) late autumn, with packed boxes	1. The literal layer: the family is packing to leave — the layer that never goes away
(ii) the gate swinging in the wind	2. Season symbol: change and loss
(iii) the stacked moving boxes and open car doors	3. Weather symbol: change is on the move

Question 11 (1 mark) — multiple choice

The description says the still would hold only **the wind and the creak of the gate**. What is the main effect of these sound choices?

- A. They strip the scene down to small, lonely sounds, deepening the mood of leaving.
- B. They build excitement before an event.
- C. They warn the viewer of coming danger.
- D. They show that the girl is happy to be moving.

Question 12 (1 mark) — multiple choice

One viewer knows the girl's family is moving towns; another viewer knows nothing about the story. They read the same still differently. Which concept names the knowledge a viewer brings to a text?

- A. Frame

- B. Motif
- C. Tone
- D. Register

Section D — Tone and mood (4 marks)

Questions 13–16 assess VC2E9LA08. Read both descriptions of the same scene, then answer Questions 13–16.

Text 1 (*original text written for this book*)

The canteen smelled of warm bread. Marlon leaned on the counter, laughing, while the queue chattered like a flock of small birds. Even the rain on the roof sounded friendly.

Text 2 (*original text written for this book*)

The canteen smelled of old dishwater. Marlon leaned on the counter, saying nothing, while the queue shuffled in silence. Even the rain on the roof sounded tired.

Question 13 (1 mark) — multiple choice

Text 2 chooses *old dishwater*, *shuffled in silence* and *sounded tired*. Which tone family do these word choices build?

- A. Warm
- B. Serious
- C. Mocking
- D. Gloomy

Question 14 (1 mark) — matching

Match each word choice with the mood it helps build. Online, drag each word choice to its mood. On paper, write the number of the mood beside each word choice.

Word choice	Mood
(i) “chattered like a flock of small birds”	1. Flat and heavy
(ii) “shuffled in silence”	2. Warm and sheltered
(iii) “the rain on the roof sounded friendly”	3. Lively and busy

Question 15 (1 mark) — fill in the blank

Complete the sentence with **one** item from the word box.

Word box: *everyday · formal · technical*

Texts 1 and 2 use everyday word choices. A report from the principal to parents about the canteen would use a _____ register instead.

Question 16 (1 mark) — multiple choice

Text 1 builds a warm feeling **in the reader**. What is the name for the feeling a text creates in its audience?

- A. Tone
- B. Mood
- C. Style
- D. Register

Section E — Condensing and citation (4 marks)

Questions 17–20 assess VC2E9LA09.

Question 17 (1 mark) — fill in the blank

Choose the punctuation mark that best **condenses** the sentence by introducing the list. Write the word from the box in the gap.

Word box: *comma · colon · semicolon · dash*

The repair crew brought three things _____ hammers, rope and a ladder.

Question 18 (1 mark) — multiple choice

Georgie wants to quote the market organiser’s exact words: *The market raised more than we hoped*. Which sentence quotes them correctly?

- A. Georgie said, “The market raised more than we hoped.”
- B. Georgie said the market raised more than we hoped.
- C. “The market raised more than we hoped” Georgie.
- D. Georgie said, the market raised more than we hoped.

Question 19 (1 mark) — fill in the blank

The book Storm Glass was written by H. Delaney and published in 2021 (an invented source, labelled here for the exercise).

A student uses one of the book’s ideas. Complete the in-text citation — the pointer that tells the reader where the idea came from.

The coastline changes a little every year (_____).

Question 20 (1 mark) — multiple choice

When must a writer use a **quotation** (the source’s words in quotation marks) rather than **reporting** the idea in their own words?

- A. Whenever they mention any source at all.
- B. When they want to use the source’s exact words.
- C. Only when the words come from a book, not from speech.
- D. When they want to summarise the source’s whole argument.

END OF C2 — CHAPTER 2 CHECK-IN

C2 — Chapter 2 check-in · Solutions

Teacher copy. Every item is objectively markable (P1): one mark per item, exact keys below. C2 has no construction items, so no model/exemplar answers (P2) are required here.

Instrument C2 · English Level 9 (Year 9) · Chapter 2 (Sections 2A–2E) Codes assessed: VC2E9LA05 · VC2E9LA06 · VC2E9LA07 · VC2E9LA08 · VC2E9LA09

Objective key (all 20 items)

Q	Section / family	Key	CD
1	A · MW	Mark The flagpole. — the deliberate incomplete sentence; it has no verb	VC2E9LA05
2	A · MW	Mark Because the storm had turned the sky green. — a dependent clause left standing alone	VC2E9LA05
3	A · MC	A — the fragment stops the reader on one sharp image, freezing the scene for a beat	VC2E9LA05
4	A · DT	Full sequence: Y, X, Z — <i>Hugh, who never once looked up, kept writing until the rain stopped.</i>	VC2E9LA05
5	B · MC	B — <i>decision</i> is an idea you cannot see, hear, touch, taste or smell	VC2E9LA06
6	B · CB	dedication (no alternative from the box fits: <i>doubt, silence</i> and <i>haste</i> do not pay off as trained effort)	VC2E9LA06
7	B · MA	(i) → 2 (<i>the decision</i> , idea noun); (ii) → 3 (<i>their dedication</i> , quality/state noun); (iii) → 1 (<i>the introduction</i> , text-part noun)	VC2E9LA06
8	B · MC	A — <i>This outcome</i> compresses the first sentence into one noun group and connects it to the next	VC2E9LA06
9	C · MC	A — autumn carries change and loss in the taught season system	VC2E9LA07
10	C · MA	(i) late autumn → 2 (season symbol: change and loss); (ii) swinging gate in the wind → 3 (weather symbol: change on the move); (iii) boxes	VC2E9LA07

Q	Section / family	Key	CD
		and open doors → 1 (the literal layer, which never goes away)	
11	C · MC	A — small, lonely sounds deepen the mood of leaving	VC2E9LA07
12	C · MC	A — frame: the knowledge (culture, place, history) a viewer brings to a text	VC2E9LA07
13	D · MC	D — gloomy: the diction set sits in the gloomy tone family	VC2E9LA08
14	D · MA	(i) “chattered like a flock of small birds” → 3 (lively and busy); (ii) “shuffled in silence” → 1 (flat and heavy); (iii) “the rain ... sounded friendly” → 2 (warm and sheltered)	VC2E9LA08
15	D · CB	formal (from the taught word families: everyday · formal · technical)	VC2E9LA08
16	D · MC	B — mood: the feeling the text creates in the reader	VC2E9LA08
17	E · CB	colon — the condensing mark that introduces the list	VC2E9LA09
18	E · MC	A — signal phrase + comma + the exact words in quotation marks	VC2E9LA09
19	E · CB	(Delaney, 2021) — author, year: the in-text citation pointer (accept: <i>Delaney 2021</i> without the comma)	VC2E9LA09
20	E · MC	B — quotation marks are for the source’s exact words	VC2E9LA09

Why the keys are right — brief notes

Q1. A sentence fragment is a deliberately incomplete sentence, usually lacking a verb (2A). *The flagpole.* has no verb and no full clause. *Because the storm had turned the sky green* has a subject and verb (it is a dependent clause, Q2), and *And then the rain — all of it at once — and the whole school moved as one toward the doors* contains the verb *moved*, so both are ruled out.

Q2. A lone dependent clause is left standing alone — a voice caught mid-thought (2A). *Because the storm had turned the sky green* cannot stand as a complete sentence on its own grammar; the writer leaves it alone on purpose for effect.

- Q3.** Effect is a response word (2A): the fragment freezes the scene and stops the reader on one sharp image (A). It says nothing about the flagpole breaking (B), nothing about the narrator’s reliability (C), and it slows the reader rather than speeding the action (D).
- Q4.** The only order that builds a grammatical sentence with a correct interrupting clause is Y, X, Z: *Hugh* (subject) + *who never once looked up* (the interrupting clause — it passes the lift-out test) + *kept writing until the rain stopped* (the main clause completed). Any other order leaves the relative clause dangling or the sentence without its subject.
- Q5.** Abstract nouns name what the senses cannot meet (2A’s concrete/abstract split, applied in 2B): a *decision* is an idea. A racquet, a streetlight and a garage can all be seen and touched — concrete.
- Q6.** The summary must wrap a year of training in one abstract noun: *dedication* (a quality/state noun). *Doubt*, *silence* and *haste* do not name what steady training builds, so they cannot be the word that “paid off”.
- Q7.** One pair per taught family of summary nouns (2B): *the decision* is an idea noun wrapping what the council decided; *their dedication* is a quality/state noun wrapping how the volunteers kept helping; *the introduction* is a text-part noun wrapping what the first paragraph does. Each noun packs a whole clause into a noun group.
- Q8.** Summary nouns have three jobs: compress, connect-and-order, evaluate (2B). *This outcome* compresses the entire first sentence and hooks it into the next sentence (A). *Outcome* is a neutral wrap, not an evaluation like *this disaster* (B); it names an idea, not something visible (C); and it sets no condition (D).
- Q9.** The taught season system: spring = new beginnings, summer = freedom, autumn = change and loss, winter = stillness and endings (2C). Late autumn, packed boxes and departure fit **change and loss**.
- Q10.** Symbols stand for something beyond their literal selves, but the literal layer never goes away (2C). The season detail carries change and loss; the wind carries change on the move; and the boxes and open car doors first of all literally mean the family is packing to leave.
- Q11.** Sound choices build mood (2C’s five sound choices: music, effects, silence, voice, recurring sound). Stripping the scene to wind and a creaking gate leaves small, lonely sounds that deepen the mood of leaving (A) — not excitement (B), not a danger warning (C), not happiness (D).
- Q12.** A frame is the knowledge a viewer brings — culture, place, history — and it shapes what a text can mean to them (2C). A motif is a repeated symbol or sound; tone is the writer’s attitude; register is the formality dial. None of those names the viewer’s brought-in knowledge.
- Q13.** The tone bank’s four families are warm, serious, mocking and gloomy (2D). *Old dishwater*, *shuffled in silence* and *sounded tired* accumulate into **gloomy**. There is no affection (warm), no formal weight (serious) and no laughter at anyone (mocking).
- Q14.** Mood is built by accumulation of word choices (2D). Chattering birds build a lively, busy mood; shuffling in silence builds a flat, heavy one; friendly rain builds a warm, sheltered one.
- Q15.** 2D’s word families: everyday, formal, technical. A principal’s report to parents sits up the formality ladder from the everyday voice of Texts 1 and 2: **formal**. It is not technical (no specialist field) and plainly not everyday.
- Q16.** The core 2D distinction: **tone** is the writer’s attitude shown through the text; **mood** is the feeling the text creates in the reader. Style is patterns of word choice across a text; register is the formality dial.
- Q17.** The colon is the condensing mark that introduces what follows — here, a list (2E’s five condensing marks). A comma cannot introduce the list on its own here; a semicolon joins related clauses, not a list; a dash could interrupt but the taught list-introducing mark is the colon.
- Q18.** Quoting correctly needs a signal phrase, correct punctuation and the exact words in quotation marks (2E). A has all three: *Georgie said*, + the quoted words. B reports without quoting; C strands the quotation with no lead-in and broken order; D drops the quotation marks, so the “quote” becomes the writer’s own words.
- Q19.** An in-text citation is a pointer — author and year — that tells the reader where an idea came from (2E): (**Delaney, 2021**). The full reference belongs in the end list; the in-text pointer stays short. *Delaney 2021* without the comma is accepted.

Q20. The quote-vs-report decision rule (2E): use quotation marks when you want the source's exact words; report in your own words when you are conveying the idea. A mention does not force quotation (A); speech can be quoted too (C); and a summary is reporting, not quoting (D).

Coverage map (per-item CD codes)

CD	Items in C2
VC2E9LA05	Q1, Q2, Q3, Q4
VC2E9LA06	Q5, Q6, Q7, Q8
VC2E9LA07	Q9, Q10, Q11, Q12
VC2E9LA08	Q13, Q14, Q15, Q16
VC2E9LA09	Q17, Q18, Q19, Q20

All five CDs named in TOC §7.7 for C2 are evidenced at four marks each (DJB-4: full 4-per-CD coverage). Total: 20 marks.