

2023 VCE English as an Additional Language external assessment report

General comments

The 2023 English as an Additional Language (EAL) examination consisted of three sections. Section A required short-answer responses to two aural texts; Section B required an extended response to one text; and Section C required the completion of two tasks in response to unseen material.

Assessment of the extended responses in Sections B and C was holistic, using the published assessment criteria. Assessors related student performance directly to these criteria, assisted by the use of a set of descriptors. Teachers and students should be aware of the assessment criteria, the descriptors and the past examinations, all of which are published on the English as an Additional Language (EAL) examinations webpage. Assessment of the short-answer responses in Sections A and C is discussed later in this report.

Almost all students completed the three sections of the examination paper. Preparing well for Sections A and C requires developing skills that will be applied to unseen task material. In Section B, although it is necessary to have a close knowledge of the text, students should use only material that is relevant to the question. Students' interpretations and ideas in response to the topic are rewarded by the assessment descriptors. There is no benefit in retelling the story or presenting material that lacks relevance to the set topic and has been gleaned from a study guide or taken from class notes.

Specific information

Note: Student responses reproduced in this report have not been corrected for grammar, spelling or factual information.

This report provides sample answers or an indication of what answers may have included. Unless otherwise stated, these are not intended to be exemplary or complete responses.

The statistics in this report may be subject to rounding resulting in a total more or less than 100 per cent.

Section A – Listening to texts

Students were required to respond to short-answer questions based on their comprehension of two unfamiliar spoken texts. For each text, students were supplied with brief written background information. The first text was a conversation between two colleagues who work together at a podcast company. The conversation was from the start of the first episode of a new podcast called *Apartments Stack Up*. The context of the second text was a hairdressing salon and was a conversation between an experienced hairdresser and a customer who had just arrived for her appointment. Most students made effective use of the note-taking space provided.

The most challenging questions were those around determining attitudes (Questions 1e. and 2e.) and those that required understanding of the subtleties of language (Question 1c. and 1f., Question 2b.). Responses

reflected the learning of key knowledge and skills and exposure to appropriate practice material. The questions were designed to cover a variety of aspects of listening skills, including explicit meaning, indirect language, feelings and attitudes conveyed by the speakers. Careful reading of the question was needed to be clear about what part of the conversation was the focus; for example, 'Sarah's initial attitude'. In addition, correct responses to Question 1f. about 'That is not how I thought the story was going to end!' drew only on the conversation up to that point.

Students demonstrated their understanding of questions through concise and precise answers. Responses that included extraneous incorrect information were not considered correct. Written expression needed to be sufficiently controlled to convey meaning accurately. Confusion between words that sounded similar, such as feel/field, led to responses where the meaning expressed was incorrect. Lack of aural discrimination can result in responses that lack meaning in the context.

In 2024, assessment of listening will be school based under Unit 3, Outcome 1. Past advice about the need for lots of exposure to spoken English, including a range of conversation forms, both formal and informal, is still relevant. Critical listening skills can be developed both in and out of the classroom so students are encouraged to listen to English coverage of anything that interests them – current affairs, news, sports, documentaries and podcasts can all be useful. Students should listen for the added effect of emphasis, pauses, changes in volume, hesitations etc. Understanding the connections between feelings, attitude and tone, opinion and evidence are important listening skills. This understanding may be developed through real-life exercises and interactions between students rather than formal tasks. Collaborative speaking and listening opportunities are built into the new study design with listening to spoken texts and participating in discussions being part of the key knowledge and key skills for Unit 3, Outcome 1.

Question 1a.

Marks	0	1	Average
%	23	77	0.8

Any one of the following:

- sharing a laundry
- getting deliveries
- rubbish disposal.

Question 1b.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	18	25	58	1.4

Any one of the following combination of features and benefits:

- good locations that are close to work
- more affordable, meaning more money to spend in restaurants
- community feel with neighbours who look out for each other.

Question 1c.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	35	8	56	1.2

Tim has not been parking in Sarah's carpark. Evidence for this was one of the following:

- Sarah says she knows Tim can't access her carpark.
- Sarah jokes about 'if' Tim had been parking there, suggesting he had not.
- Tim says, 'That could have been a funny story ...', together with the previous response.

Question 1d.

Marks	0	1	Average
%	17	83	0.9

'Loud traffic noise' was the only correct response.

Question 1ei.

Marks	0	1	Average
%	86	14	0.2

The response needed to focus on Sarah's attitude to her neighbours, not her feelings about their parties. One of the following:

- Sarah's initial attitude was that the neighbours were inconsiderate (based on her experience of their noisy parties).
- She didn't like her neighbours because of their noisy parties.

Question 1eii.

Marks	0	1	Average
%	50	50	0.5

One of the following:

- We ended up becoming good friends.
- They even invited me to their parties.
- It (the apartment) became a great place to live.

Question 1f.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	55	35	10	0.6

Any two of the following

- Tim is surprised that Sarah's neighbours were shocked/embarrassed.
- Tim is surprised that Sarah's neighbours were understanding/not upset.
- Tim expected them to be angry when Sarah asked them to be quieter.

Question 2a.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	49	21	30	0.8

Relevant feelings included:

- annoyed
- irritated
- upset
- disappointed
- dissatisfied

Relevant quotes were:

- 'I called the shop and you weren't there.'
- 'I really would have liked an appointment last week.'

Question 2b.

Marks	0	1	Average
%	41	59	0.6

Relevant responses included:

- Kate suggests that her band is famous or so well-known that Min should know about it.
- Kate assumes that Min has heard of her band.

Question 2c.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	42	33	25	0.9

Language examples included:

- 'Well, I have a couple of thoughts about your plan.'
- 'It's my professional advice that you rethink your plan.'
- 'We don't recommend you do both.'

Delivery examples included:

- pauses before 'thoughts'

- hesitation
- emphasis or emphatic tone with specific words
- laughter (implies disagreement in the context).

Question 2d.

Marks	0	1	Average
%	16	84	0.9

One of the following:

- cut it short
- add some colour / streaks of colour
- add some blond or red.

Question 2e.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	31	36	22	9	2	1.2

Relevant responses for Kate's initial attitude included:

- determined
- forceful
- decisive
- demanding
- confident

Supporting quotes were:

- 'I want to look like the model in this picture.'
- 'Yes! Let's get started.'

Relevant responses for Kate's attitude after they agree on a plan included:

- co-operative
- compromising
- resigned
- apologetic (in relation to news about Min's mother)

Supporting quotes were:

- 'You can cut my hair like hers.'
- 'I do like this picture.' (meaningful in context)
- 'I'm sorry to hear about your Mum.' (in relation to news about Min's mother)

Section B – Analytical interpretation of a text

Students were required to write an analytical interpretation of one text. There were two topics for each of the 28 prescribed texts. The descriptors used for assessment related to knowledge of the text, including consideration of its concepts and construction, the structure and relevance of the response, and the writing skills as demonstrated in control of the conventions of written English.

Students who scored highly demonstrated an in-depth understanding of the topic and texts by crafting an analytical interpretation with relevant discussion in direct response to the chosen topic. In these responses, knowledge of the text was skilfully interwoven with analysis of the topic. These responses established relevance in the introduction through a sharp focus on the key words in the topics and maintained it through selective and considered use of the text. Mid-range responses demonstrated varying levels of organisation and relevance to the topic, together with sufficient language skills to convey meaning.

Students generally showed a sound understanding and knowledge of the texts and were familiar with the main ideas raised in the topics. There were few very short or incomprehensible responses. Lower-scoring responses tended to be more descriptive and dominated by detailed retelling of the content of the text rather than selective use of the text. These responses were also characterised by limited understanding of key words in the topics. In planning, students need to brainstorm all the key words and make use of their dictionaries, paying particular attention to modifying words and comparatives. A well-planned response is less likely to slip into retelling the story or adapting a previously written response to fit the topic.

Around 66 per cent of responses were to the six most popular texts: *The 7 Stages of Grieving*, *The Queen*, *Sunset Boulevard*, *Photograph 51*, *The Women of Troy* and *Rainbow's End*. These six texts indicate that plays and films continue to be a popular choice for EAL students. All six texts provided clear opportunities for students to consider how the features of a text type, and the construction of a text, were used by playwrights and directors to convey their ideas.

Text selection in Section B	% of students	Average score
<i>The 7 Stages of Grieving</i>	16.9	10.8
<i>The Queen</i>	15.3	9.7
<i>Sunset Boulevard</i>	11.7	11.5
<i>Photograph 51</i>	8.4	11.0
<i>The Women of Troy</i>	8.2	11.9
<i>Rainbow's End</i>	6.9	11.0

Students who scored highly on the first topic for *The 7 Stages of Grieving* were able to explore how the play 'highlights the importance of family', making insightful use of the play and its theatrical devices in the discussion. The second topic required students to 'depict the many ways in which disempowered people can reclaim their power'. Some students focused their discussion too heavily on exploring the 'disempowered' rather than the ability to 'reclaim the power', which impacted on the relevance of their response.

The first topic on *The Queen* required students to address the idea of 'courage' being necessary 'in order to be effective'. Most students were able to discuss courage while high-scoring students were able to address the idea that 'leaders must demonstrate courage'. Some students struggled to adequately distinguish between the supporting arguments, resulting in responses that repeated similar ideas about courage throughout. The second topic was introduced by a quote from the film and required students to explore the 'ways' in which 'individuals' are able to 'understand the importance of respect'. Responses to this topic seemed to focus primarily on leaders, despite the topic explicitly stating 'individuals'.

A number of responses to the first topic on *Sunset Boulevard* dealt primarily with 'shallow', with limited attention to 'appealing'. High-scoring responses were able to integrate an exploration of film techniques as a part of the depiction of the two ideas. The second topic asked students to explore how the film shows 'seeking fame is dangerous'. A number of responses revolved around the dangers for Norma and Joe, while many responses that examined Betty failed to acknowledge that she is still looking to be recognised as a film writer, misinterpreting her shift in career focus as a disinterest in seeking fame.

The first topic on *Photograph 51* asked students to demonstrate their knowledge of the 'destructive nature of prejudice on both individuals and society'. Students who scored in the high range were able to explore the 'destructive' nature of prejudice on both 'individuals and society', while low-scoring students discussed the idea of 'prejudice' more broadly and mainly focused on the impacts on the individual. The second topic required students to explore the 'challenges of pursuing personal and professional success' and assume a position on the topic with 'do you agree?'. Responses that did not score well focused solely on professional success or provided a superficial exploration of personal success.

Students who scored highly on the first topic for *The Women of Troy* were able to define 'impulsively' well and explore how 'acting impulsively leads to disaster' by referencing characters from both Greece and Troy, as well as providing a consideration of the gods. For the second topic, many responses showed a contextual understanding of the quote used in the topic. Some responses differentiated between a modern audience and the audience of the time, and students who scored highly crafted a response around whether the audience is 'left without hope'.

The first topic on *Rainbow's End* asked students to discuss the 'extent' to which they agreed that 'optimism is justified'. Responses that did not score well focused on examples of optimism without addressing whether it was justified. The second topic called for a discussion of the idea 'that vulnerable people can control their own futures'. High-scoring responses were able to address all aspects of the topic while lower-scoring responses listed the ways in which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander characters are discriminated against in the play.

The following high-scoring response to the topic 'Enoch and Mailman depict many ways in which disempowered people can reclaim their power' demonstrates an understanding of the implications of the topic. The response makes thoughtful use of the play through connecting discussion about construction and concepts to explore the topic; however, the third paragraph detours from the otherwise sharp focus on the topic, keeping the script at the lower end of the upper range. There is generally good control of language and any occasional weaknesses in expression do not detract from the meaning.

Insisting to "smoke out their spirit" and "get[ting] their story told", the indigenous community actively defy the white supremacists' forcible disempowerment of them, transforming from the vulnerable to the powerful. Illustrated in The 7 Stages of Grieving written by Wesley Enoch and Deborah Mailman, the monodramatic play explore many ways through which the suppressed indigenous community can reclaim their power. By upholding their familial connection and bearing a strong endeavour to preserve their cultural legacy, the Indigenous people are able to transcend from their insidious past of oppression and attain mental strength and a hopeful future where they restore their long-repressed authority. Yet, despite the empowering light that permeates through the play, the playwright nonetheless, pinpoint the ongoing disempowerment stemming from the discriminatory reign which restrains Indigenous community from devolving into the powerless racial inferiors bereft of self-autonomy.

Through Indigenous people's familial connection, the Playwrights convey that they are able to defy the white supremacists' spiritual disempowerment, thus gaining mental strength. In Sobbing, the playwrights intentionally incorporate the positively connoted "passion" and "love" amongst the projection of pessimistic emotion revolving around "grief" and "loss", alluding to Indigenous people' zeal for connection of kinship. Thus they immediately foreground the empowering force of familial accompaniment in motivating Indigenous individuals to remain hopeful amidst predicaments. This is demonstrated through Auntie Grace who finally gains closure after being detached from her biological family after "50 years" in "London". The playwrights intentionally employs a monotonous tone and depict Auntie Grace with the third

person pronouns “she” through the eyes of the woman, signifying her ostracism from the family who cannot reconcile with the atrocities committed by white colonialist and subsequently consider her a betrayer for marrying a white man. Yet, her eager retrieval of the “red earth” symbolic of familial tie into the “suitcase” containing poignant stories of her deceased family member finally allows her to reconnect with her long-lost family, which grants her “catharsis” and “release” from the long-repressed emotions and instilling her the power to carry her Indigenous lineage with confidence and pride. Capitalising on Auntie Grace’s mental relief, the playwrights, in Nana’s story, “flood” the “performing area” with “colour and depict the entire family of “50 people” singing in “bright floral dresses”, highlighting how they treat Nana’s funeral as a rather celebratory event since it reunites family member. The fact that they “drink” and “laugh” despite the “neighbours” ‘s suspicious scrutiny evinces that through familial accompaniment, Indigenous people are able to temporarily forget the White supremacists’ imposition of inferiority upon them, thus flourish with joy. The invigorating imagery of the king fisher soaring high further conveys a sense of optimism, and freedom, reflecting Indigenous people’s powerful mentality to combat white encroachment in each other’s company.

Aside from familial connection, the playwright highlight the disempowered Indigenous community’s aspiration to preserve their cultural legacy arouses a glimmer of hope for a reconciled future in Australian Society, whereby they can reclaim their sovereignty and authoritative power. Whilst the overarching sense of grief dominates the play, the play itself reinstates the voice of Indigenous people and embodies the playwrights hopeful endeavour to preserve their cultural legacy. Interweaving various aspects of Indigenous culture in the play’s presentation, the playwrights expound to the audience the endangered Kamilaroi language; the sacred ceremony of burning “eucalypt leaves”; their traditional art forms of singing and dancing, bringing to the “front and centre” the most intrinsic part of Indigenous culture. The multiple scenes of stories such as “Home Story” in which the Woman unfolds the complex kinship system that differs from the patriarchal norms, reflect their traditional Dreamtime Storytelling. As they overtly share their cultural traditions, they are able to spark collective recognition of their cultural significance, amongst the white community positioning them to see their historical wrongdoing of cultural hegemony. Culminating in the final scene “Walking Across [the] bridges” of connection, the playwrights allude to the mighty creating God in Indigenous Mythology, and metaphorically likens the procession of a “1/4 of a million people” to a “colourful” “rainbow serpent”. As this marks the first public exhibition throughout the entire play, the playwrights, thus, suggest the white community’s embrace of Indigenous culture as an inseparable part of Australian society. This imbues the Woman – who is representative of the entirety of Indigenous community – the power and strength to exclaim that “we can’t go back now”. Her unwavering resolution to navigate through the bleak past, suggesting their firm belief to attain a reconciled society, where they can reclaim their sovereignty as the traditional owners of the “sacred” land and authoritative power.

Despite the many ways through which the disempowered Indigenous people can reclaim their mental strength and authoritative power, the playwrights nonetheless condemn the ongoing discriminatory reign in oppressing into the powerless racial inferior bereft of self-autonomy. In *Invasion Power*, the playwrights, utilising war rhetorics and violence-connoted verbs, depict the sanguinary imagery of White Colonists “wash[ing]” their faces in the “blood” of Indigenous people and “chaining their feet”. The poem, acting as an allegory to the historical arrival of the First Fleet which marks the commencement of long-standing trauma since “the date 1788”, alludes to the phases of Invasion and Genocide during which white invaders commit mass killings and displacement of Indigenous children as well as their imperialism of the “sacred” land. This render the Indigenous people “lie painfully sleepless” over their lost spiritual connection and dispossession of their land, engulfing them in colossal sorrow for their loss of power. Whilst the disempowerment in the form of physical subjugation is most profound in the early stages of Indigenous history, the playwrights, through the non-fragmented narratives of 24 vignettes of *Individual Stories* confront the audience with the vicious “cycle” of incarceration and self-abandonment Indigenous youths are often entangled in due to the perpetuity of systematic racism. In *Story of a brother*, the playwrights personify the “palpable shame” to be “eating [the brother’s] spirit” and “his life”, underscoring the gravity of racial profiling and disadvantaged employability against Indigenous people. The brother’s

resort to alcoholism through which he habitually gets “pissed” and “dependent” on his family for survival signifies his lost self agency to control his life and live with dignity and hope.

Drawing upon the profound narrative of The 7 Stages of Grieving, Enoch and Mailman highlight the many ways Indigenous people can defy the white supremacists’ disempowerment of their mentality and authority. Although through familial connection and their unwavering hope to preserve their cultural legacy underscore the potential for them to remain mentally empowered and regain their sovereignty in a reconciled future Australia, the playwrights nonetheless condemn the ongoing disempowerment of the discriminatory reign in suppressing them to lose self-agency. Overall, the play arouse a cautious glimmer of hope for the disempowered individuals to reclaim power and pride.

Section C – Argument and persuasive language

The task material was a single piece of writing about a proposal to rejuvenate the Narrow Valley region through a music festival that was presented as a letter to residents. It included two relevant images that supported the message of the letter. The first image showed a variety of musical instruments held by pairs of hands reflecting the diversity of students. This image connected with reference in the letter to ‘many types of music’, and ‘a funky festival’. The second was a cartoon depicting both music and gardening contributing to sprouting a new festival. The image encapsulated the letter’s emphasis on the potential for a music festival to ‘fertilise’ the existing garden festival by ‘combining our flowers with our jazz’. This material offered opportunities for students at all levels to demonstrate their skills. The letter presented a clear point of view and used a range of ways to try to persuade others to share this point of view.

Question 1

This question assessed comprehension of the task material through a series of short-answer questions. Precise answers that clearly demonstrated comprehension of the task material and the questions were required. Some incorrect responses resulted from overlooking key words in the question.

Question 1a.

Marks	0	1	Average
%	52	48	0.5

Relevant reasons the students gave for wanting a new music festival included:

- ‘Bring long overdue change to the region’ (may include ‘through a music festival’).
- It’s time for the community to have a live performance from their group.
- It’s time for their followers to have a live performance.
- It will provide a new audience for their performances.

Question 1b.

Marks	0	1	Average
%	10	90	0.9

Relevant evidence such as:

- A 50% decrease in attendance over the past five years.
- Council data shows ‘visitor numbers are dwindling fast’.
- Attendance numbers crashing so low has meant income has fallen dangerously low.

Question 1c.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	60	28	11	0.5

Correct responses included the following:

- The letter writers are attempting to flatter the Gorgeous Gardens organising committee to make them more open to accepting the combined festival.
- The letter writers are praising the past organisers in the hope they'll support the changes.
- The letter writers are trying not to offend or blame the past organisers for the current situation as their support will be needed for successful changes.

Question 1d.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	9	7	84	1.8

A correct response identified a potential problem and the solution the students provided:

- Noise was a potential problem, and the solution was choosing an area for the festival that was away from houses.
- Expense was a potential problem, and the proposed solution was to combine the music festival with the existing garden festival.

Question 1e.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	8	34	58	1.5

Positive impacts the students anticipated included:

- more customers via visitors/tourists for restaurants, hotels etc.
- building relationships between businesses
- increased energy/connection in the community
- increased prosperity for the community.

Question 1f.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	18	47	36	1.2

Any two of the following possible meanings:

- People will have more money from the increased number of visitors.
- The festival will enrich people's lives via music/dance.
- The festival will enrich people's lives with gardening skills.
- The festival will enrich people's lives through enjoyment of local hospitality.

Question 2

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Average
%	3	3	6	10	17	22	18	13	6	1	0.2	4.9

Most responses demonstrated understanding of the context, the proposal for a combined music and garden festival with the dual purpose of offering students live performance opportunities and salvaging a dying garden festival. A small number of responses misunderstood the letter's proposal about combining both events.

Responses that scored highly used a wide variety of language to analyse the writer's concern. They explored how the letter writers conveyed their enthusiasm and optimism with confident statements about their skills and credentials. Most students commented on the way the writers anticipated objections, provided solutions and invited readers to consider the potential benefits to the community as well as the festival's capacity to enrich the lives of everyone. The highest-scoring responses analysed argument use and language in an integrated way. They observed the shifts in the writers' tone and the attempts to win the support of the Gorgeous Gardens Festival Committee. These responses were fluent, organised and able to recognise the many ways by which the writers tried to position readers. Most students attempted to comment on the intended effect, showing understanding of how language is used to position audiences. Responses that did not score well described, rather than analysed, the arguments and the language.

Almost all students wrote about one or both visuals but there was wide variation in how much detail students devoted to them. Responses reflected different interpretations of the visuals. Students were able to link both images with relevant parts of the letter, although some comments were brief and superficial. Responses that scored highly found clear links with the main arguments, especially around the cartoon, which presented an optimistic and light-hearted picture of the outcome of a combined festival. Some responses emphasised the way the first image depicted the diversity of both students and instruments. Responses that did not score well described the visuals without examining the persuasiveness of their links to the text.

Responses that scored highly were well written and demonstrated a strong understanding of the ways in which written and visual language and the use of argument were utilised through effective analysis of the material. Features of these responses included:

- a clear understanding of the context of the letter and the goal it expressed
- ability to integrate analysis of language and argument
- exploration of the implications of specific language choices; for example, 'inclusive, youth-driven, energetic...', 'And *another* festival?', '...dwindling – fast.', 'change in tempo and style!', 'Like music, gardens never fail to nourish the heart and mind.', and the sustained image of the capacity of a music festival to 'fertilise' a garden festival in danger of dying.
- analysis expressed with a range of precise vocabulary to position readers to accept their views. For example, 'to strengthen their arguments they outline a series of positive impacts to the town', 'adopting a passionate tone ...', the use of emotive, positively connoted words to describe the proposed music festival – 'attempt to diminish the impression ...', '... suggesting the win-win situation of such combination', 'a call to action by enthusiastically claiming ...'.
- clear explanations linking the visuals and the words and exploring how the writers' choices positioned the audience.

Mid-range responses showed awareness of the task, but some moved between explaining the material and an attempt to analyse it. Limitations of these responses included:

- difficulty describing tone accurately
- generalised descriptions of persuasive techniques without accurate connection to the task material, attempting more than achieving a supported piece of writing
- little or no reference to the visuals, or a description of the visuals with no link to the text.

The following extract from a high-scoring response demonstrates how the visual supports the language of the text and positions the audience:

The Group commences their letter by establishing their ethos whilst highlighting the unique communal values cherished by the local people. Ardent in tone, the Group employs a string of positively-connotated adjectives, describing their proposal to analyze be an 'inclusive', 'youth-driven', 'energetic music festival' that can bring 'long-overdue change' for the local area, immediately arousing the residents' curiosity and the music lovers' interest in their proposal music festival. Capitalising on this positive light, they then characterise themselves – the creators of the festival – to be full of 'passion, talents' and 'musical abilities' who are capable of 'exploring and mastering many types of music', thus positioning the residents to admire them and see this their proposal to be one with successful prospects. By stating that they are already established musicians with 'thousands of followers' and subsequently disclosing their performance in the narrow Valley region to be their 'first time' performing live, the group intends to make the local community feel privileged and valued. To heighten their positive impression of the music festival, the Group appeals to a wide range of musicians and residents from 'different schools, ages and backgrounds' which is heightened in his attached photographs. The variety of music instruments, including the guitar and drumsticks highlight the diverse options the music festival can offer. The pairs of hands of different skin tones further highlights the community's shared value of solidarity and inclusivity. Henc, the group paves the way for their impending rationale of the need for the music festival, and prime the local resident and musicians to direct their support towards it...

The background information given on the examination paper provides the context for the task material. It is important that students read and understand this information before attempting the task. In using language to persuade, writers or speakers have an 'audience/reader focus' and the analysis needed to reflect this. Most responses showed awareness that the letter was addressed to 'all residents of Narrow Valley, young and old...'. The letter clearly addressed the different composition of this group. For example, 'Our music festival ... regardless of age and abilities, tastes and styles ...'. Introductions should be limited to showing an awareness of the audience, the context and the overall contention of the piece, as demonstrated in the sample below:

The recent issue of whether a music festival should be introduced to Narrow Valley has once again sparked debate within the community. In their passionate letter, published on social media and in the local newspaper, with printed copies displayed in schools and businesses, the group of young musicians who live in Narrow Valley target local residents and contend that the music festival should be introduced for the benefits of the town. In order to reinforce their point of view, two accompany images has been included.

Students needed to be able to distinguish between argument as a structural feature, the support for the argument, and emotional pressure or appeals. Students' analyses need to demonstrate these distinctions. Students should look for linguistic cues to the reasoning of the author. In this year's task material, the writers use their own enthusiasm for music and opportunities to perform, as well as confidence in the abilities of young people, to demonstrate how a combined festival would enrich the whole community.

Students should avoid explanations of the persuasive techniques; for example, 'the use of inclusive language includes everyone'. Students should aim to integrate analysis of argument use, language use and the visuals. Students should expect to find connections between the written task material and any accompanying visuals. For example, the combination of musical symbols and flowers visually demonstrates the potential of a music festival to 'be the fertiliser ... so we can blossom before the garden festival dies off completely...' as described in the text.

It is not possible to analyse everything in the material, so students need to choose the most significant features to comment on in their analysis. They should focus on what the writer or speaker is saying, how they are saying it and why. As part of developing skills in analysis, students need the functional, not descriptive, vocabulary used to analyse the use of argument, language and visuals.