2024 VCE English as an Additional Language (EAL) external assessment report

General comments

This year was the first examination for the English and English as an Additional Language Study Design, accreditation period for Units 3 and 4 2024–2027.

The examination consisted of three equally weighted sections.

* Section A required students to write an analytical response to a selected text on one of the two topics provided for that text.
* Section B required students to create a text that made meaningful connections to the Framework studied, and that used the title and the stimulus provided to support the generation of ideas.
* Section C required students to analyse the use of argument, language and visuals to persuade an intended audience, using the task material provided.

Overview of student responses:

* The majority of students were able to demonstrate key skills and knowledge in all three sections, which reflected an understanding of the new study design and examination requirements.
* In Section A, plays and films remained popular choices for set texts.
* In Section B, the most popular Frameworks were writing about personal journeys and protest, with the majority of students demonstrating an understanding of the task requirements, including the role of the title and stimulus.
* In Section C, most students demonstrated an ability to access the task material and showed understanding of the arguments presented.

Specific information

This report provides sample student responses. Unless otherwise stated, these are not intended to be exemplary or complete responses.

The annotations attached to the sample student responses draw out some examples of where key skills and knowledge from the study design are used. These annotations are by no means extensive and there are parts of the response that are not identified but still exhibit key skills and knowledge.

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

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

Section A: Analytical response to a text

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| Marks  | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | Average |
| % | 1 | 1 | 3 | 8 | 15 | 20 | 23 | 16 | 8 | 4 | 0.7 | 5.5 |

The five most popular texts were:

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| **Text selection in Section A** | **% of students** | **Average score** |
| *Sunset Boulevard* | 26.1 | 11.5 |
| *Rainbow’s End* | 21.6 | 9.6 |
| *Oedipus the King* | 12.0 | 12.0 |
| *Born a Crime* | 9.4 | 10.7 |
| *High Ground* | 8.4 | 11.4 |

Expected skills and knowledge (Expected Qualities):

* knowledge and understanding of the text, its structure, and the ideas, concerns and values it explores
* development of a clear analysis in response to the topic
* use of evidence from the text to support the analysis
* control of the conventions of the English language to convey meaning.

Responses were scored using the Expected Qualities for the mark range.

High-scoring responses were able to:

* demonstrate relevant knowledge of how the text is structured and an ability to analyse how authors, directors, poets and/or playwrights use specific elements of construction to convey their ideas
* demonstrate an understanding of authorial intent that is relevant to the chosen topic
* respond to all aspects of the topic
* develop a response that addresses the specific task words in the topic such as ‘how’, ‘discuss’, ‘do you agree?’, ‘to what extent?’
* demonstrate confident use of the English language and an ability to write in a formal analytical style.

Low-scoring responses tended to:

* focus on one key word or idea in the topic rather than responding to the whole topic
* misinterpret the topic
* write a response that disregarded the topic chosen
* rely heavily on plot points for evidence
* write in the style of a review rather than an analytical response.

Advice for teachers and students:

* Ensure all key ideas in the topic are addressed in the response.
* Explicitly discuss authorial intent.
* Explore how the text is created to convey meaning; elements of construction could be authorial choices, cinematic, theatrical or poetic devices.
* Avoid reproducing an analytical essay written during the course of the study that disregards the topic chosen.

The following is a high-scoring student response to the High Ground topic: ‘How does Johnson explore different versions of truth in High Ground?’

The response:

* demonstrates thorough knowledge of the film, including references to the director’s construction of the film
* shows a contextual understanding of colonialism relevant to the chosen topic
* includes carefully selected evidence
* addresses the 'how' aspect in the topic
* consists of an organised and sustained piece of writing.

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| Student sample | Annotations |
| The 2020 Australian Western film ‘High Ground’, directed by Stephen Johnson, portrays the years of conflict during the Australian Frontier Wars era and decades of unjustified systematical discrimination towards the First Nations individuals. Throughout the film, Johnson depicts how the truth is showcased from the perspective of the colonizes and from the side of ones that are against the brutality towards Indigenous people. Lastly, Johnson illustrates the real truth that reveals itself as the story progresses.Firstly, the director outlines that the colonizes tend to create their own version of truth, typically when it comes to critical and crucial moments. They mainly manipulate the actual truth in order to justify their own actions and to avoid any consequences. To depict this, Johnson portrays the conversation between Eddy and Travis right after the massacre, Eddy replies to Travis’ comment in regards to what to tell to their higher-ups about the incident and says “It was McGuinness.” Here, Eddy manipulates the truth and argues that McGuinness was the officer that started to shoot innocent civilians, even though the film clearly showcases how Eddy was the one that chose violence instead of a normal conversation and fired his rifle. Throughout this scene, the director portrays the manipulation of such an important event by the British colonises simply due to their fear of punishment and losing their reputation. Furthermore, Johnson illustrates the truth from the side of White Culture as the story continues. When Travis hunts a crocodile with the help of two indigenous man, Moran encourages them to take a picture with the crocodile by saying “It is the responsibility of those that make history to record it.” This line has the element of irony to it as we can witness from the mise-en-scene of the movie that how Moran forces the two First Nations people to kneel down whilst Travis is standing up in the middle, making it seem that these two individuals had minimum involvement and a white individual did the job, Johnson symbolises this manipulation of the truth in Moran’s camera lens, the picture is upside down inside his camera which reveals to the viewer that the truth is the exact opposite. The director depicts how the colonizes change the truth and create their own version of it for their own benefit and as a path to escape their harmful needs. As the progression continues, the film-maker showcases how the individuals that are against the discrimination towards Indigenous people view truth from their lens. A truth that tends to have some transparency in it as it contains less bias. To demonstrate this element of the story, Johnson reveals the frustration of Claire when Travis and Eddy arrive to the mission with Gutjuk. A close-up shot of Claire’s face clearly shows her anger and sense of madness as she slaps Travis on his face which follows by her saying “You were supposed to be in charge.” This part of the plot showcases that individuals like Claire know that the Indigenous individuals are not violent and the police offices in charge has done a brutal action, whereas that’s why Gutjuk is in the mission by himself without his family. Travis’ facial expression in this scene also corresponds to Claire’s side of the truth as he is not able to make direct eye contact with her, revealing that the intervention was a failure when he was in charge and that he is ashamed. Johnson highlights the truth in the eyes of Braddock when Eddy and Moran decide to interrogate Gutjuk’s side when he tells Moran “He has nothing to do with this, he is just a mission boy.” Whilst Moran and Eddy look at Gutjuk as a violent individual due to his heritage and relation with Baywara, Braddock has a less discriminatory view due to his Christian beliefs and the fact he knows Gutjuk for twelve years. Therefore, the truth in his perspective is that Gutjuk isn’t involved in violent actions. Jackson sets the plot of the movie in a way to outline how the truth can be different from the eyes of those characters that tend to have a less racist view towards Indigenous people. As the storyline of the film finds its shape, the characters find the real truth behind some events. Truths that have been manipulated for them for years finally reveals itself. These events are the most transparent versions of truth throughout the story. Johnson portrays this element clearly when he shows Gutjuk shooting Travis with his rifle as a retaliation act for Baywara’s murder, right after pulling the trigger, Gutjuk tells Travis “It was you. You killed my family.” Gutjuk’s nervous and low tone decipts the moment that he finally finds out the mystery behind the massacre and the murder of his family, he finds this out as Travis kills Baywara in the same manner that he taught him. Furthermore, Darrpa’s shift of opinion after he finds out that Baywara has attacked another station during their negotiation shows another revealed truth. Darrpa realised that Baywara’s presence in the mob is a threat as he creates troubles and put their lives at risk. Johnson reveals that Baywara is not the same individual as twelve years ago and is not peaceful anymore. The director highlights how some of the truths eventually reveal themselves after a while and will be transparent for everyone. High Ground highlights a miniscule part of years of discrimination and injustice during the post-colonial era. Johnson portrays how easily the truth can be different for various group of individuals throughout the story. | Responds explicitly to set topic.Explores and analyses the dynamics of a text including characters’ motivations and the tensions in relationships.Explores and analyses the impact of text structures and language features on a text and how these elements shape meaning.Demonstrates understanding of the historical context, and the social and cultural values in a text.Explores the complexities of plot and the role of point of view.Uses key evidence from a text to support ideas and analysis. |

Section B: Creating a text

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| Marks  | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | Average |
| % | 1 | 1 | 3 | 9 | 18 | 22 | 22 | 15 | 8 | 2 | 0.2 | 5.4 |

Breakdown of Frameworks students responded to:

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| **Framework chosen** | **% of students** | **Average score** |
| Writing about country | 7.8 | 10.5 |
| Writing about protest | 29.2 | 11.3 |
| Writing about personal journeys | 57.2 | 10.5 |
| Writing about play | 5.3 | 10.8 |

Expected skills and knowledge (Expected Qualities):

* use of relevant idea(s) drawn from one Framework of Ideas, the title provided and at least one piece of stimulus material
* creation of a cohesive text that connects to a clear purpose or purposes
* use of suitable text structure(s) and language features to create a text
* control of the conventions of the English language to convey meaning.

Responses were scored using the Expected Qualities for the mark range.

High-scoring responses were able to:

* use the title provided to inform the presentation of a central idea
* present an idea or ideas generated from the stimulus
* create a text with a clear purpose or purposes
* demonstrate authorial choices about language features and text structures that are appropriate for the purpose(s)
* demonstrate competent control of expression and English language conventions.

Low-scoring responses tended to:

* draw on ideas that were not a part of the Framework studied throughout the year
* make minimal or no reference to the title and not use the stimuli to generate ideas
* create a text without a clear purpose and/or any attempt to demonstrate authorial choices
* focus on recalling events or outlining a plotline.

Advice for teachers and students:

* Avoid using an entirely pre-prepared response, as it is challenging to use the title and stimulus provided in a meaningful way.
* Understand that the role of the stimulus is to generate ideas. There is no need to underline parts where the student feels their writing connects to the stimulus, nor is it necessary to quote the stimulus.
* Plan out the writing with a clear purpose in mind.
* Practise using a range of language features and structures throughout the year.
* Teachers should ensure students have a clear understanding of the Framework. For example, the title ‘Connections’ in Framework 1: Writing about country will draw on the idea of connection in regards to place.
* Mentor texts should be used solely to highlight examples of good writing. It is not necessary to quote or reference the mentor text in a student response.
* Teachers should encourage students to find a style of writing that helps them to create their personal writer’s voice.
* Keep in mind that this is a writing task where the execution is weighted more than the concept.

The following is a high-scoring student response to Framework 3: Writing about personal journeys. In this response, the narrator reflects on their personal growth based on their move to Melbourne and how this experience has shaped who they are now.

The response:

* uses the title ‘Finding My Way’ as a central focus of the writing, with the response centred on how the narrator creates a new life for themselves in Melbourne
* elicits ideas from Stimulus 3 throughout the response (which explore how transformation is created by choices)
* explores ideas within the Framework, as the narrator shares their experience of moving to a new country and having to adapt to a new level of independence
* uses key references to the moon and trams to help establish a clear sense of setting
* creates a confident and cohesive text using a variety of language features, such as extended metaphors, to connect ideas together
* uses a text structure and language features that clearly connect to the purpose to reflect and express
* demonstrates competent control of expression despite a few small grammatical errors.

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| Student sample | Annotations |
| Finding My WayIt was 11 a.m., and I found myself once again staring at the pale moon, still lingering in the horizon. Two years ago, this sight had taken me by surprise. Back in Kuala Lumpur, the moon was a night thing – something familiar in the tropical night sky. But in Melbourne, the moon sometimes hung in the sky even after the sun has long since risen, as if defying the rules I’d grown up with. That first morning, I was so amazed that I snapped countless photos and sent them to my friends in Malaysia. They too, were baffled, joking that maybe I’d moved to a place where time itself worked differently.Now, as I waited for the tram on my last day of high school, I saw that same moon still suspended in the morning light. But this time, I barely blinked. It wasn’t shocking. It wasn’t worth a photo. It had become normal, much like the cold air chilling my legs, a cold that I had grown used to, though, it once felt bone deep and relentless.I glanced down at my outfit: the same top and denim jacket I’d won on my first day of school here, a kind of tribute to the earlier version of myself. Yet, one thing was different: instead of pants, I now wore a skirt. I smiled at the thought of how much this change symbolised. When I first arrived, I clung to what was familiar, layering up against the cold, trying to shield myself from the newness of it all. I wasn’t accustomed to the sharp chill of the Melbourne’s air. Two years later, though, I embraced it. I had learned to feel comfortable in the chilly breeze, just like how I had learned to navigate the tram system, understand the culture, and make this city my own.In many ways, I felt like a young plant uprooted from the tropical warmth of Kuala Lumpur, thrust into Melbourne’s colder, harsher soil. At first, I wasn’t sure if I could find my footing here. Everything was so different – new weather, new people, a new way of living. I wondered if I would be able to grow in such foreign conditions. I wondered if my decision to migrate to Australia was correct.Two year ago, my parents stood by my side as we took a photo outside of my new school. It was a moment of shared excitement, but also a reassurance for me – I wasn’t completely alone. We had found the best angle and they had smiled with pride, as I awkwardly posed in front of the brick façade. They stayed with me for a few months, helping to settle into a new life. My parents has been my safety net, catching me whenever the unfamiliarity of Melbourne felt too overwhelming. However, as months passed, they returned to Malaysia, leaving me to navigate this journey on my own. At first, I felt lost, like a young plant struggling to find root in unfamiliar soil, I couldn’t find my way. The house felt too quiet, the city too vast, and I felt like I was wilting under the pressure of it all. Maybe my choices was wrong, maybe I should go back to Malaysia. This silent thoughts has often been in my mind. But gradually, as time passes, that solitude became something else. I started to tressure my independence, and with each passing day, I felt myself taking root in this city. Melbourne began to feel less like a foreign ground and more like a place where I could thrive.Today, I stood at the exact same spot where that first day photo had been taken. But this time, I was alone. No parents by my side, no one to guide me through the day. I pulled out my phone and took a new photo, capturing the same background, but a different person in front of it. I had changed. Not just in the outfit or in the confidence I now felt, but in the knowledge that I had come this far, relying on my own strength and resilience. My own transformation and growth came from the choices I made, to migrate to Australia, to experience different culture and challenges.The contrast between those two photos, my first day and my last, felt like a visual symbol of everything I had been through. My parents had helped me start this journey, but now, as I took this final step, I did it on my own. Like a plant that found its footing and grown steadily, I had manage to thrive in the unfamiliar soil of Melbourne. Of all kinds of different directions that told me to go, I had found my own way. The last two years had taught me more than I could ever imagined – about adaptation, about independence, and about myself.The little victories piled up – figuring our grocery shopping, doing laundry without flooding the bathroom, cooking meals that weren’t just instant noodles. I had blossomed to someone who was capable, confident, and sure of herself.As the tram approached, I felt a deep sense of gratitude for how far I had come. I wasn’t the same person who marvelled at the moon two years ago, nor was I the girl who nervously clutched her parents’ hands outside of a school. I was someone who built herself a life in a place that once felt foreign, someone who had learned to love the changes and challenges, who transformed from a caterpillar to a beautiful butterfly.Today, I stood tall – fully rooted in this city. Like a plant that had once struggled to adopt to a new climate, I had flourished in Melbourne’s soil. As the tram doors slid open, I took a last look at the moon, still up there in the sky, and smiled. It no longer felt strange. It felt like a reminder of how much I had grown. Melbourne had given me that, and as I stepped onto the tram, I knew that wherever I went next, I would carry that growth with me.  | Uses symbolism of the moon to establish character growth.Employs anaphora to help create flow.Explores the idea of feeling lost using the plant extended metaphor that is established earlier in the piece.Returns to an instance that occurred previously to highlight the character growth because of the journey taken.Offers a reflective summary of personal growth.Returns to the idea of the moon established in the beginning, which helps to create a sense of conclusion. |

The following is a high-scoring student response to Framework 3: Writing about personal journeys. In this response, the student reflects on their changed beliefs about comparing themselves with others, using their own experiences to explain the consequences of constant competition.

The response:

* uses the title well, as the narrator finds their way to overcome their anxiety about fierce competition by embracing and celebrating individual talent rather than simply comparing one’s ability
* writes within the Framework as the response shares the narrator’s story, exploring the consequence of the key event of performing on stage and having one’s full name announced
* uses the ideas presented in Stimulus 3 without directly quoting parts of the stimulus
* uses descriptive language to create a rich setting and explore the narrator’s thoughts
* focuses the writing on introspection by using one event to encapsulate all the ideas
* uses a text structure and language features that clearly connect to the purpose to reflect and explain
* demonstrates effective control of expression, with minor grammatical errors not detracting from the overall meaning.

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| Student sample | Annotations |
| Finding My WayOne by one, performers glided onto the stage, each a unique brushstroke on the canvas of sound. Their styles, a vibrant tapestry woven with diverse melodies and heartful lyrics. The spotlight danced upon them, illuminating their distinct expressions. While the audience’s applause swelled like a warm tide, embracing every note. It was an annual school talent show, my first Australian experience as an International student. Behind the red curtain, I could hear the host soothing the crowds’ anticipation. His voice a gentle breeze guiding the evening’s flow. My palms clutching the microphone, slick with nervousness, while the host called my full name, a familiar unease settled in.In my culture, being called out by name often signaled failure, a reminder of the constant comparison that shaped my education – where you were only as good as the person ahead of you, and being noticed often meant you had fallen behind. From the moment we first stepped into the bustling halls of primary school, we found ourselves plunged into a whirlwind where achievement were not just celebrated but scrutinized, often weighed against the golden scales of academic accolades and athletic prowess. Hobbies like chess, piano and violin transform from mere pastimes into the lifeblood of sophistication, watched over by the hawk-like gazes of peers and parents alike, each judgement a silent whisper echoing in the back of our minds. In the high-stakes environment, the pressure to excel morphs into a pervasive habit of comparison, like an unyielding tide that pulls us under, leaving us gasping for air. Even though I was away from my home country, oceans apart, that tide still gripped me tight. The melodies that once set me free now felt like chains, holding me back instead of lifting me up. Singing, once a carefree hobby, had become a source of dread, each note weighed down by the fear of being judged and ranked. What used to be an escape now felt like a performance under the constant scrutiny, where my voice was so longer my own, but a measure of how I compared to others. The stage, once a place of joy, now stood as a reminder of the endless competition, dimming the passion that once fueled my songs.“Now let’s welcome Danny from Year 11 to singing…” The host’s introduction brought me back to the reality. My name echoed across the room, pulling me from my thoughts and reminding me of the weight of expectations. A crake on the mirror reflected my clammy hands and nervous expressions, a stark reminder of my insecurities. Anxiety serged like a tidal wave, crashing into my heart as I faced the inevitable participation in the show: what if other contestants were all professionals? What if I forgot the lyrics? What if my chosen song fell flat? I paced nerviously, my heart racing like a wild drum in my chest. Yet, as the vibrant colours of the stage light seeped through the curtains, I stepped onto stage. The first note quivered as a timid leaf trembling in the wind. But in that sea of expectant faces, a smile of a girl in the front seat sparked something within me. I took a deep breath, and gradually, my voice steadied, each line infusing me with confidence. More smiles and nods of appreciation surrounding me transformed my anxiety into exhilaration.By the end of the song, I stood beaming, basking in the warmth of the connections I have forged with the audience. In that moment, I realized that music transcends comparison, it creates a bridge of shared experience and emotions. Just as notes come together to form a harmonious melody, so too do our individualities contributes to a richer human experience. It is neither accolade medals nor rankings determine our worth, but the ability to be ourselves and the connections we make along the way.Reflecting on this journey, not only the physical journey from my home country to Australia now my second home, but also the emotional journey from backstage to the frontstage, I was reminded by a quote from “The Little Prince”: “Maybe there are five thousand roses in the world and you the same flower, but only you are my unique rose.” As long as we embrace our authentic selves, there will always be someone who recognizes and appreciates our unique brilliance. Our worth is not how we measure up with others, but by our own value and the light we share with the world. In a world that often values conformity over individualities, this realization is liberating. In singing, in living and in being, we are all beautifully unique notes in the grand symphony of lives, deserving of love and appreciation just as we are.I stepped off the stage. I heard my name addressed. This time, I smiled.  | Uses descriptive language to create a clear setting of standing backstage.Uses introspection to explore the idea of competition.Short dialogue is employed to remind the reader of the setting established in the opening paragraph.Creates a clear moment of change.Weaves in reflection about the point in which the narrator finds their own way.Writing draws to a conclusion with the change in the narrator’s perception. |

The following is a high-scoring student response to Framework 2: Writing about protest. In this response, the author argues for the need to protest gendered violence whilst exploring key ideas within the Framework, which deal with the value of protest and what it means to protest.

The response:

* responds to the ideas in the title through asking others to resist and persist
* uses a text structure appropriate to the context
* makes language choices that are closely aligned with the purpose to argue the importance of protest as the speaker validates fellow protestors for actively marching to Parliament House
* presents more than just a persuasive speech on an issue, as the text makes clear connections to ideas within the Framework
* uses ideas drawn from Stimulus 2 in a meaningful way
* despite some lapses in expression, the writing mostly demonstrates competent control of the conventions of the English language.

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| Student sample | Annotations |
| Resist and Persist Hello everyone. I’m Sarah Williams, the founder and CEO of advocacy group, What were you wearing. Our group is not-for-profit organisation who fight for the end in sexual violence in Australia. Thank you to all of you, joining today’s rally to fight for the end in domestic violence. Already this year forty four women had lost their lives in the hands of their husbands or partners. Forty four women are not here today. They can no longer celebrate their birthdays, their special occasions. They can no longer spend time with their loved ones. This should not have happened this CANNOT CONTINUE. I am going to fight until all women are feeling safe how men do and I hope you all join me.(angry roar from the crowd applausing)When I was waiting in front of the state library for this rally to start, I noticed it’s mostly women out here fighting for the end in domestic violence. It’s mostly women here adding their voice to be heard by the government that they should do more to stop this scourge, this plague, these ceaseless attacks against women. It’s mostly women that are putting interest to this issue and feeling sad about the lost of those forty four women. Thank you for being out there and supporting the issue with me. We want the government to be putting more interest like us to this issue of domestic violence and they should put more money into supporting and helping out those people who have experiences domestic violence so that they can overcome their traumas and you should be toughening the laws to protect there people so we do not add to that horrible number of forty four. It should STOP here and to stop, education to all men is needed. They need to know from their hearts that hitting, killing, abusing women in any circumstances are NOT okay. These people, struggling with domestic violence are living their lives with bombs that you won’t know when to explode. How would you feel? Would you feel safe? Would you feel protected? Would you be able to continue your life? I would be afraid, my life would be full of fear. Some people here might know this feeling or they experienced it, some people might not. However, regardless of your experience, we all know this inequality to women only results in tragic ends. This CANNOT CONTINUE(crowd erupts with noisy applause)Many people, many men thinks domestic violence is a ‘women’s issue’. However, I am telling you clearly that IT IS NOT. Definitely not. This is a man’s problem and a man’s issue. I see some men out here joining out rally today. Thank you so much for coming out knowing that the number of men would be small, knowing that some people around you might not understand you being out here. But you have shown bravery and I would like to ask you to continue being brave. People who hit women, who kill women, they do not respect women and therefore they do not even listen to women. But they will listen to YOU. Just because you are a man. Now, YOU have the opportunity to be part of ending this terrible domestic violence. Yes, you could hesitate as you might lose your friends in your life. Yes, it could be hard to speak out about the wrongs of domestic violence to your close people. However, the only risk you have for doing that is losing someone in your life, on the other hand, when you ignore, when you do not say anything even though you know women are getting killed, abused, those women could lose their lives. Let’s be someone who can save people from danger, let’s be someone who can speak out the wrongs, let’s be someone who is brave. So we do not need to regret after losing those women. We do not know when domestic violence happen, more, we don’t know how and who it will happen to so we need to be stopping here now. We need to STOP this.(people clapping loudly)We, women and men, are here today for a common cause, to end this terrifying domestic violence. Let’s march to Parliament House so that our voices are heard by the government, all men, all Australians, that domestic violence CANNOT CONTINUE and must STOP. We demand change, we demand action, we demand that all women can and should feel SAFE in this country. Domestic violence must come to the end NOW!(people marching towards Parliament House) | Sets out the context of the speaker and audience.Uses persuasive devices to create a clear tone for the text.Moves beyond arguing a point of view on an issue and explores ideas about protest, showing a clear understanding of the Framework studied.Directs persuasive appeals to the audience to validate their action of standing up.Explores the need for persistence as resistance is challenging.Addresses the risks involved in protesting.Uses a call to action, which helps to connect the authorial choices to the context of the text. |

The following is a high-scoring student response to Framework 1: Writing about country. In this response the narrator reflects on their migration to Australia and expresses their connections to land and the nostalgia they feel for the country they left.

The response:

* demonstrates thorough and thoughtful understanding of the framework and the title ‘Connections’
* uses the idea of connections well, despite a few awkward attempts to draw back to the idea, which break the flow of the imagery being developed
* examines the breaking and creating of connections through exploring the loss of one’s home country
* uses the concept of the wind in Stimulus 1 as inspiration, with various descriptions of differing experiences of wind being used throughout
* makes deliberate authorial choices to include vivid descriptions of weather and landscape, creating a clear author’s voice
* demonstrates effective control of written language.

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| Student sample | Annotations |
| ConnectionsIt all started two years ago, when I was forced to rip all my connections and turn my life upside down. I lived a peaceful life in my home country. But everything ends. And my peaceful life ended with a war, that came from nowhere in the middle of my high school education. It was a shock for everyone. It was a tragedy. I had to move from my place to a foreign, unknown and enigmatic land to build my new life, my new connections.Being an alien is never easy. The memories followed me everywhere I could go, the memories of my country that I cherish and keep safely in my mind. The memories, that I return to, when I have nothing to connect to. I remember going to school in the beginning of September when the city is coloured red and yellow, covered with a thick carpet of fallen leaves, with a strong aroma of rain and upcoming winter. The wind is playing around, shaking those trees and howling, to make the waterfall out of colourful dry leaves to make me feel joy. Then comes the snow, in the middle of November, throwing the white piles of snow on the streets, house roofs, forests and wide lands. Little fluffy snowflakes are flying in the frozen air like ballerinas performing their dance and slowly scattering down, when the playful wind gets calm enough to lay all those white particles on the ground. I alway connected to it, as talking to the nature for fun was one of my habits in the past. Summers were worth memorising to, with a heat and the birds’ singing in the morning. Walking in the forest filled with plants and a variety of trees was my most loved activity, as the warm wind touched my face and brought me the smells of flowers, berries and mushrooms. How sweet those memories are, when nothing sweet is left in the reality.I have ripped all the connections. I had to build new, fresh connections, arriving to a new place, the lands of Australia. It didn’t ever connect to me in any way, as I was not familiar with the culture and language of this country. Twenty hours in the plane, noisy and airless, pulled all my enthusiasm and joy out of me, as I had to experience boredom and headaches for hours with all the other travellers, ready to step in to the land of spiders, snakes and koalas. The eyes of the dark night looked down on me, when I came out of the plane, afraid of what I will face next. The cold wind blowed in my face but it was no longer sweet with its own mysterious nature. Stars blinked above, while I drove from the airport in taxi, absorbing the eucalyptus trees, waving their white branches at me, and I could only guess if they were greeting me in a friendly way. No one knows. I didn’t know the language of those wood giants. And I had to connect with it.I changed my home, but my soul and heart were left somewhere else, where I would not return. The migration brought all kinds of difficulties with it. It was challenging settling in the new school, where the classmates couldn’t understand a single word I said and I couldn’t even connect to the educational process at the start. The new culture filled my life with new experience, both positive and shameful, and it took time to get used to understanding it. Wind still follows me everywhere I go, on the beach it get stronger and hits me with the sand particles, sharp as a knife and so uncomfortable to me. But I have to deal with it. I have to connect to it even if it will never be similar to what I had experienced in the major part of my life.Australia is now my new home, but I will never forget my country of birth, with the unique and loved nature, with the people and culture that I still feel connected to. It will stay with me forever, even if life will throw me somewhere far away. However, new connections built in the new place are essential. All the aliens need them to adjust their life in the way they want and adapt to it.  | Creates a tone of melancholy.Connects to the idea of nostalgia and longing for a country.Uses the seasons of the land to emphasise the connection the narrator still has with their homeland.The idea of breaking and making connections is central to the text.Uses the idea presented in Stimulus 1 to inspire writing in a meaningful and seamless way.Uses personification of the environment to create unease in the new land.Explores the necessity of finding connections. |

The following is a high-scoring student response to Framework 4: Writing about play. In this response the student expresses, through a narrative of imagination, the role of play in creation, and ultimately argues for the importance of play.

The response:

* demonstrates understanding of the Framework through exploring the need for play
* demonstrates a meaningful connection to the title as the narrative advocates for the importance of creating a time for play
* draws on the idea raised in Stimulus 1 of play being determined by the individual
* explores the character’s emotions through detailing the actions of the character
* creates a clear setting and conflict early in the piece, which suits the word length of an examination task
* experiments with symbolism and descriptive language, showcasing writing skills practised in Unit 3
* demonstrates control of expression and the conventions of the English language, with lapses in control not detracting from the overall quality of the writing.

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| Student sample | Annotations |
| Time to PlayHe sat hunched on a wooden chair, staring at the lump of clay in front of him, bitting down the hangnails dangling over his finger pads.Alex hadn’t sculpted anything meaningful in months. His studio was a graveyard of half-finished pieces, a disjointed marble bust, a contorted wire frame, and clay forms that sagged under their own weight. Nothing came to life in his hands anymore. But the more he pushed, the stiffer his fingers felt, as if they had forgotten how to shape and mould.The silence ate on him.When he was child his parents gave him a bird as a birthday gift. For a week, it sang nonstop, bouncing around in its cage. Then, it stopped. No matter what he did to play with it, it barely made a peep. The last time he heard it sing was when it escaped from its cage.Putting down his tools he decided to leave his studio for the first time in a long time. The city was cold that evening, the sun already sinking behind the steel skeletons of the new high-rises. Alex threw on his jacket.He wandered deeper into the city than he usually went, past the busy streets and out into the old industrial district. Here the buildings were derelict, factories long abandoned, their broken windows framing nothing but dust. He crossed the crumpling overpass and something caught his eye – a small, odd playground tucked between two decaying houses. Intrigued, he moved closer.This playground was unlike any he had seen before. No swings or slides. Instead, there were strange sculptures made of soft, malleable materials, metal twisted into bizarre shapes, pliable stones that seemed to ripple when touched and a stack of woods bent like reeds in the wind. He placed a hand on the warped metal loop, it bent effortlessly beneath his fingers, moving as though it was alive.Alex smiled for the first time in what felt like forever. He pressed harder, moulding the loop into a spiral, then into a coil. But the sensation of shaping something again, even without a goal in mind, filled him with a small thrill. He laughed under his breath, barely recognizing the sound.By the time he stepped back and observe his makeshift sculpture the moon had risen high, casting silver light over the playground. His hands were filthy, but he felt lighter, more at peace.The next morning, Alex returned to his studio with a new energy buzzing inside him. The old, unfinished pieces still cluttered the space, but they didn’t seem to mock him anymore. He sat in front of the clay again, but this time, instead of staring at them with dread, he let his hands wander over its surface freely.The clay responded to his touch, taking on wild, abstract shapes. As he played, he noticed something else happening: his ideas started flowing again. Wild, unexpected ideas broke from the rigid forms he had been trapped in for so long.  | Implies character’s emotional state through description.Creates a setting and conflict.Uses symbolism to explore conflict.Uses descriptive language to create the setting.Explores the value of play.Expresses the importance of play to help deal with challenges. |

Section C: Analysis of argument and language

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| Marks  | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | Average |
| % | 3 | 3 | 6 | 13 | 16 | 20 | 18 | 12 | 6 | 3 | 0.4 | 4.9 |

Expected skills and knowledge (Expected Qualities):

* understanding of contention, argument(s) and point of view
* analysis of the ways in which written and spoken language and visuals are used to present argument(s) and to persuade an intended audience
* use of evidence from the text to support the analysis
* control of the conventions of the English language to convey meaning.

Responses were scored using the Expected Qualities for the mark range.

High-scoring responses were able to:

* demonstrate understanding of the context of the task material, including: the speaker’s role as the chair of the committee; financial predicament of the gym; nature of the facility; target audience of gym members reluctant to allow a confectionary shop to use a part of the building
* show an understanding of the development of argument and how arguments are used to position an audience
* analyse the persuasive intent behind the use of language and visuals and how these features support the overall intent of the arguments
* demonstrate fluent and effective control of the conventions of the English language whilst writing in an analytical style.

Low-scoring responses tended to:

* misunderstand the context, identifying the target audience as local residents
* focus on identifying examples of persuasive devices
* summarise sections of the task material
* describe the visuals rather than analysing the persuasive intent.

Advice for teachers and students:

* Encourage students to annotate the background information to ensure they understand the context of the task material.
* Ensure analysis is framed around arguments, with discussion of how language and visuals support the persuasive intent of the argument.
* Explicitly discuss how the argument is developed throughout the text.
* Practise the skill of explaining how the intended effect is created.

The following excerpts of high-scoring responses demonstrate the key skills and knowledge needed to successfully engage with the task.

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| Student sample 1 | Annotations |
| The speech presented by Sandy Gestalt contends to inform the gym members of the partner-ship of Our Local Gym and Long Live Lollies and how it is supposedly the only way to save Our Local Gym without negatively impacting the members. After facing difficulties with the funding of the gym due to the funding being cut off which may cause the gym to shut down. The speaker targets members of the gym using a defeated tone which shifts to enthusiastic as the speech progresses.Sandy Gestalt begins her speech directly mentioning how “Our local gym” finds themselves at an “uncomfortable position” however as a “group of people who” who have “worked out together” they know that they can save our local gym. The author’s introductions incites a sense of urgency and fear amongst the attendes, this makes the members of the gym feel as though this speech and proposal is vital in order to stop the gym going, however Gestalt also highlights how together they can save the gym, which encourages the audience to feel a sense of relief as the speaker directly states that even though the situation seems bad, there is a way out and together they can achieve it and save the gym. The speaker also accentuates on the idea that this proposal would not “work out” unless everyone works “together” which compells the audience to follow through and accept her proposal due to them not wanting the gym to close down. | Introductory paragraph shows an understanding of the context and intended audience.Discusses the persuasive intent.Analyses the language used by the author to position an audience to share a point of view. |
| Student sample 2 | Annotations |
| Concerned with the recent removal of the council’s funding for the Our Local Gym, the committee of this fitness centre has called an emergency meeting for members of the gym, where the chair of the Our Local Gym committee Sandy Gestalt presents a speech to members of the gym. Gestalt contends in an optimistic tone that the gym will continue to thrive by establishing partnership with sweets company Long Live Lollies, hence garnering support from members of the gym to help making this partnership successful. Targeting loyal members of the gym who have emotional connection with Our Local Gym, Gestalt encourages them to vote on a proposal to keep the facilities operating as the final solution to the gym’s financial crisis.From the outset, Gestalt distinguishes Our Local Gym from the other commercial gym, establishing a shared sense of pride in the values represented by the facility, thus creating a sense of urgency in resolving the current financial predicament. Through the use of inclusive pronoun “we” to address the staff members and second person pronoun “you” to address the members of the gym, Gestalt emphasises that the thriving of Our Local Gym is a result of collective efforts. In doing so, he demonstrates his appreciation to the contribution made by both the staff members and the loyal gym members, thus evoking a sense of pride in both groups towards their effort in maintaining the vitality of the gym. Such sense of pride is amplified the exclusive pronoun “they” used to address the “larger commercial gym”, which is aimed at distinguishing Our Local Gym from the other gym is heightened by the derogatory characterisation of those “who are drawn to” the “shiny new equipment”, “giant flatscreen TVs” and “extremely loud music”. By listing a series of overly flashy facilities, Gestalt portrays members of commercial gyms as fixated on superficiality instead of building “strength” and “confidence” as what Our Local Gym promotes. In doing so, Gestalt emphasises the significance of maintaining Our Local Gym, as it is the unique gym in the community devoid of such superficial values, thus loyal members of the gym who take pride in the gym’s values are further motivated to protect this facility. Therefore, by establishing the gravity of the potential shut down of Our Local Gym, Gestalt primes his listeners from his upcoming revelation of the solution to the current financial crisis. | Introductory paragraph shows an understanding of the context.Clearly states the contention.Identifies the intended audience.Analyses the argument’s intention.Analyses the language used within the argument to position a target audience.Demonstrates an understanding of the way in which arguments and language complement one another and interact to position the intended audience. |
| Student sample 3 | Annotations |
| After establishing the importance of the gym, Gestalt continues by asserting that there is only one solution to the funding issue, with the intention of encouraging members to share his viewpoint. Gestalt initiates by stating the “bleak options” that the gym has to gain more funding and lists “should we… turned in a carpark”. Gestalt employs the use of the negatively connotated word “bleak” with its associations to hopelessness, to emphasise the unreliability of these options. Thus, this positions member to recognise that these options will not be viable for the gym moving forwards, and are therefore more inclined to hear out Gestalt’s solutions. Upon illustrating the lack of many options, Gestalt continues by offering a solution and utilizing an image, depicting a heart and a chocolate bar that are walking together smiling. Here, the heart is symbolic of the fitness values of the gym, while the chocolate bar represents the sweet company “Long Live Lollies”. The action of the two cartoons having their arm around each other aims to convey a sense of collaboration and unity. As a result, this encourages members of the gym and community to view this proposal with hopeful eyes, as they are positioned to see that this partnership will be beneficial for both parties involved.  | Demonstrates understanding of the intent and logical development of an argument.Analyses the language used by the speaker.Shows knowledge of sequence and structure.Understands the role of visuals to support and enhance argument. |