

2016 VCE English as an Additional Language (EAL) examination report

General comments

The 2016 English as an Additional Language (EAL) examination consisted of three sections: Section A required a response to one text, Section B required a response to a prompt related to a selected Context and Section C required completion of two tasks in response to unseen material.

Assessment was holistic, using the published assessment criteria. Assessors relate student performance directly to these criteria, and their judgments are assisted by the use of a set of descriptors. Teachers and students should be aware of the assessment criteria, the descriptors and the sample examination, which are published on the VCAA website.

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 – Text response

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Average
%	0	0	2	6	13	19	23	19	11	5	1	5.9

Students were required to produce one piece of analytical or expository writing in response to one text. There were two topics for each of the 20 prescribed texts. The descriptors used for assessment relate to knowledge of the text, including consideration of its concepts and construction, the structure and relevance of the response and writing skills – the control of the conventions of written English.

The most popular texts and their percentage average scores are shown in the table below.

Text	% of students	Average score
<i>Medea</i>	20.6	5.8
<i>The Thing Around Your Neck</i>	15.0	5.9
<i>Mabo</i>	12.2	5.3
<i>All About Eve</i>	11.5	6.1
<i>In the Country of Men</i>	8.6	5.9

The highest-scoring responses demonstrated an in-depth understanding of the topics and the texts by crafting meaningful, analytical and relevant discussion in direct response to the chosen topic. These responses also demonstrated a skilful weaving of knowledge of the text into the analysis of the topic. Student writing generally reflected awareness of the construction and interpretation of texts, but the less sophisticated responses focused on the plot. Almost all responses displayed at least some knowledge of the text and an adequate knowledge of essay structure.

High-scoring responses were characterised by a sharp focus on the key words in the topics, selective and considered use of the text, and ideas expressed with strong language skills. Low-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. Students generally showed a good 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. In planning, students need to brainstorm all the key words in the topic, paying particular attention to modifying words and comparatives within the topic. A well-planned response is less likely to slip into retelling the story or adapting a previously written response to fit the topic. Students need to be able to explore how texts are constructed and the effects of the writer's choices.

As in past years the majority of responses were on a small number of texts. The most popular texts included a variety of genres.

The first topic on *Medea* gave students scope to agree or disagree. The responses included a variety of approaches, including attempts to explore how an Athenian audience might respond. Some responses focused on one character but most demonstrated good understanding of the characters' motives and used this in expressing a point of view in response to the topic. The second topic about 'justice' and 'revenge' produced some strong responses that made an explicit link between the two words. Other responses confused justice with sympathy and fairness.

The topics on *The Thing Around Your Neck* allowed students to use any short story, or stories, to develop a response. In the second topic students were also able to argue that men had courage, too. However, some responses comprised a mini synopsis of a number of stories, with only tenuous links to the topic. Responses to the first topic covered a range of stories set in Nigeria and America and the issues or difficulties experienced by characters in both places. The concept of change was well understood and discussed.

In both questions on *Mabo* students were able to apply their understanding of the text rather than just display it. Some responses to question 1 did not see the connection between 'equality' and 'acceptance', and instead suggested that Bonita had to 'accept' Eddie's activism. Others added 'love' to the issues covered in the text and also linked this to Bonita accepting Eddie's activism rather than acceptance of Indigenous people by the community.

In the first topic on *No Sugar* responses used a range of female characters, including non-Aboriginal characters, to demonstrate understanding of the topic and the text. The second topic was not as well handled, with some responses limited to summarising what the Munday/Millimurra families did without linking this to what could be celebrated and why.

The *All About Eve* topics produced a range of responses. The first topic challenged students to draw parallels between Addison and Eve. Responses to the second topic generally agreed that Eve's success was due to 'manipulation' and 'deceit'. Others questioned her 'success', and some argued that it was also due to her determination and talent as an actress. The topic was broad, so students had the opportunity to state their view on the text. Low-scoring responses retold the story of the film in chronological order, recounting the examples of Eve's manipulation and deceit.

Responses to both topics on *Brooklyn* were very general and could have been developed by addressing the specific focus of each topic. In the first topic some responses used the structure of the novel to write about how Eilis's idea of home changes. Some appeared to have difficulty

identifying what constitutes the 'idea of home'. Others were able to explore the importance of home, the meaning of home to Eilis and identify how and why her idea of home changes. In the second topic students tended to focus on Eilis and rarely looked at other characters. Many could explain how America offered freedom but struggled to understand how it was also as limiting as Ireland.

During their preparation, students need to consider how construction, language and authors'/directors' choices add meaning to the text, rather than merely looking at what happened, the themes and the characters. It is important to be familiar with the language used for analysis. Analytical writing can include description, such as facts or information, but its focus is on the relationships between pieces of information. It may include comparing and contrasting, or assessing. Students need to develop writing skills that will enable them to incorporate knowledge of the text into their analysis or exposition. Writing that simply describes/tells what a character did rather than exploring why, how and the effect of the behaviour relevant to the set topic is a limited response. Students need to be familiar with the variety of ways in which topics can be worded and understand the requirements of different task words, such as 'discuss', 'do you agree?', 'to what extent', etc. Thoughtful planning is needed to craft a response that directly addresses the set topic. With collections of stories, students should look for the links and connections between the stories.

Student response – Example 1

The following upper-range response to *Medea* explores the way the audience responds to the play. It presents a point of view on the topic and uses the text selectively to support an analysis of the implications of the topic. Consideration of the construction of the text and the world in which it is set also form part of this response.

'It is Jason, not Medea, who gains the audience's sympathy.' Do you agree?

Euripides' "Medea" explores the themes of revenge and conflict. Through the characters, Euripides demonstrates the troubles of women in Ancient Greece as well as the conflict between emotion and reason. Jason's character in the play could be said to garner the audience's sympathy but the same could also be said of Medea. There are also times in the play however, when neither of the two characters gain the sympathy of the audience but rather the audience's sympathy lies with the other characters who fall victim to Medea and Jason's bickering.

"Jason you are to be pitied" are the words of the Chorus as they take note of his plight. Jason's story in Euripides' play has a heartbreaking end as he loses everything he holds dear to his vengeful wife, Medea. His abandonment of his family "for a princess' bed" can be seen as reasonable at a time when males were often viewed as the superior gender. Jason defends his actions by stating that he was only "looking to [Medea's] future" by marrying the Princess of Corinth. He reasons that he was merely looking after his family. Jason's actions and his reasons for doing so are completely reasonable as he is fulfilling his role as a father by ensure his children's "perfect safety." He cannot be blamed for wanting to keep his children safe from harm. Jason's betrayal of Medea is the result of his wish to ensure that his family could "live comfortably and not go without anything." He gains sympathy from the audience because his hard work and his plans for his family are destroyed by Medea's need for revenge. Jason's role as the archetypal Greek male makes his relatability to the audience of ancient Greek men stronger. He plays the role of family breadwinner and provider like many of his Ancient Greek counterparts. Jason's distraught at what has happened at the end of the play gains him sympathy from the audience as it is made explicitly clear by Euripides that he loved his children tenderly. For all Jason's work to provide a secure life for his family, there is no fruition to any of it and he is a broken man at the end of the play.

Jason's other reason to leave Medea's side for the Princess of Corinth was to ensure that he could "raise [his] sons in a manner worthy of [his] house." Through this, Jason can be seen to

be a responsible father who values and loves his children. He wishes to give them the best possible life that they can have and raise them properly.

Jason is not the sole beneficiary of the audience's sympathy as his wife, Medea, also manages to gain some sympathy from the audience. Euripides makes it clear from the beginning of the play that Medea is a victim of Greek society. "Abandoned" and homeless as well as a "cruel husband's plaything", she is powerless to stop Jason's betrayal of her. Medea's role in the beginning of the play is very much a reflection of the troubles encountered by Ancient Greek women. She is unable to deny Jason his new marriage and cannot bear the thought of divorce as it "brings disgrace on women." Medea's plight could be seen as Euripides highlighting the troubles of Ancient Greek women and opening his audience's eyes to it. Medea gains sympathy from the audience because her great love for Jason is rejected in favour of a princess and the promise of power. Medea's situation is compounded by the fact that she, as a foreigner, is distrusted by locals and consequentially, is isolated from society. She laments that she has nowhere to turn to for help and this further deepens the audience's feelings of sorrow for her plight. Medea's isolation from society mirrors the troubles that foreigners go through in Ancient Greece. Euripides challenges his audience to think about the troubles of both women and foreigners in Ancient Greece demonstrates some issues faced by both parties through the eyes of Medea.

While Jason and Medea are sympathetic characters at different points in the play, they are also seen to be completely unrelatable and unsympathetic to the audience. Between them, they are both manipulative, disloyal and murderous. Jason's casual betrayal of his family for the Princess of Corinth proves that "loyalty to love ones is not his way" while Medea's passion which is "master of [her] reason" causes her to commit the atrocious act of filicide. These two are completely unsympathetic and succumb to their own self-interest. The audience's sympathy is then transferred to the characters of the Princess of Corinth, Creon as well as Medea and Jason's sons. All these characters can be said to be victims of the war between Medea and Jason. Creon's death by the hands of Medea occurs because his love for his daughter compelled him to banish Medea away from Corinth because he hears that she is "making threats to do some harm." In this situation, Creon is acting reasonably and carefully, placing his daughter's safety over anything else. He gains sympathy from the audience because his attempts to save his daughter from harm backfire badly, leading to his death as well as the death of his daughter. While Creon deserves some sympathy, is often perceived that the children are the actual victims in the play. They are by far, innocent of any crime and have not done any wrong in the play. Medea's decision to murder them shocked the audience. The death of two innocent children as a result of Medea and Jason's argument causes the audience to question who the real victims and villains are. Euripides could also be using this as a springboard to highlight the social conflict that occurs between two parties and the result of the conflict. The killing of the two children can be seen as a statement by Medea destroying all ties to her disloyal husband as well as destroying the next generation of oppressors.

Conflict always exists in society and the actions taken are mostly motivated by self-interest. Euripides 'Medea' can be interpreted as a case study into the human nature and its role in creating conflict. While there are many victims of betrayal and abandonment that deserve sympathy, the very same people could be the cause of someone else's misfortune. As demonstrated by Euripides, the real victims of an argument are not always clear-cut and well-defined but each party deserve some sympathy in their own way.

Student response – Example 2

The following mid-range response maintains a focus on the topic and attempts an analysis of it in a structured piece of writing. It demonstrates adequate control of language, despite a number of errors that frequently occur in EAL writing, and the errors do not inhibit the meaning.

'It is the women in Adichie's stories who show courage.' Discuss.

The Thing Around Your Neck is a collection of 12 short stories. This collection is wrote by Chinamanda Ngozi Adichie. The collection is tell the audiences about lives of the Nigerian and some Immigrant. In this collection, Adichie's stories show the women's courage to the audiences. Those women show the courage of facing the danger and getting a new life by themselves. However, everything is like a double shade blade. There also has some women choose keeping silence and being invisible.

In Nigeria, the gender inequality is a huge issue, when the Nigerian women face that issue most of them are trying to be invisible and keeping silence. Such as those two stories, 'Cell one' and 'Tomorrow Is Too Far'. Two stories have many same things. In 'Cell One', the whole story is talking about the narrator's brother, Hnamabia. For the sister, no one cares about her even through the whole story, the audiences don't know about her name. She just like the glass, suffer the whole thing but doesn't make any sound. Also that happens in 'Tomorrow Is Too Far'. The grandmom always fed Noson first and only he could climb the tree. Also when grandmom fed Noson, she just told the narrator, 'watch and learn, so you will take care of your husband in the future'. For those two narrator, they all choose to keep silence. They doesn't show the courage, they dare to fight for themselves. Therefore, they just become invisible in the end of those two stories.

Where has the oppress, there will be the resistance. When other characters in Adichie's stories, they used their behaviour to show the courage to the audiences. Such as face the danger, not suffer and dodge. In the story 'The Headstrong Historian' when Obienka's two brother are bullying his wife, Nawangbu. Nawangbu chooses to fight with them, she tells those thing to other women first and make a decision. To sent her son to the white people's school, learn the white people's language and law. Therefore she can protect her family, Nawangbu used her behaviour to tell other people. She won't just suffer the inequality treatment. In another story 'A Private Experience' when Chika is hiding in that small shop with an Igbo woman, even that woman told to her don't go out before the government army come. Chika still decides to leave that shop. After that, when she hears the radio is not telling the truth she flied the radio into the wall. These two actions shows the audiences about Chika's courage. Those two stories are telling the audiences, the women have the courage by facing the danger. They won't just suffer and dodge the danger. When the danger appears, they will face it.

Also Adichie's stories show the women's courage for getting the new life by themselves. For example, the character of the story 'The American Embassy'. The character's husband, Ugonna is a reporter who writes the truth of the government. The narrator is trying to get the American visa in the American embassy. However, when the officer is asking for her background information she knows she won't say a word about Ugonna for getting the Isa. This shows the audience the narrator has the courage of getting the new life by herself. Also in the story 'The Arrangers of Marriage'. After Chinoza knows Dave has married with a woman before she decides to listen Nia's advise 'get the green card, and make the money, buy and house and car, get the freedom.' She decides to get the new life without Dave. This is the courage of the two women in Adichie's stories. They show the audiences, they have the courage of getting the new life by themselves.

In the collection, Adichie's stories shows us about the two different manners of women. Some of them use their behaviour to show the audiences about their courage. However, there are also some women choose keeping silence. Two different manners, two different ways for them.

Section B – Writing in Context

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Average
%	1	1	3	7	14	21	23	17	9	3	1	5.6

Students were required to complete an extended written response that was an expository, persuasive or imaginative piece of writing. They were required to base the writing on the ideas in the prompt and draw directly from the selected text studied in the Context. High-scoring responses reflected development of ideas within the Context and conveyed a strong personal voice. Many of these were in an expository style, exploring the implications of the prompt through thought-provoking and relevant personal stories, often beginning with an interesting anecdote. They were also able to draw together ideas from different sources and use the writing possibilities implied by the key words of the prompts, e.g. 'usually', 'dominated' and even 'can change'. Most students were able to write something meaningful, and showed that they had some understanding of the task requirements.

There was a broad range of writing, including reflective and personal pieces as well as creative pieces. Many creative pieces did not adequately address the prompt and some showed little awareness of the set text. In general, high-scoring students drew clearly on key words from the prompts, supporting their responses with relevant details from the selected text and their own lives. In particular, high-scoring responses focused on the development of ideas more than details of examples. Some low-scoring students' responses tended to be characterised by an attempt to explain the prompt rather than use it as a springboard for a piece of writing. Others had little or no connection to the prompt or the selected text.

The prompts were generally very accessible and students were able to find enough access points and support from the selected texts to address them adequately. Where the potential of the task was engaged there was some very effective writing produced.

The most popular Context was Exploring issues of identity and belonging, and was chosen by 54 per cent of students. Some aspects of the prompt challenged students. 'Recognise' was not well understood, and some struggled with the suggestion in the prompt that our sense of belonging informs our understanding of ourselves. Students appeared to be more used to thinking about why people belong to certain groups than what they can learn from this about themselves. All texts were used by students, the most popular ones being *Invictus* and *Summer of the Seventeenth Doll*.

Encountering conflict was also a popular Context and was chosen by 36 per cent of students. The use of the passive voice challenged some, but the prompt was sufficiently broad that most students were able to form a response using the texts and their own experiences. *A Separation* was a popular text, but students tended to relay stories of the divorce without linking them to why the conflicts were unavoidable.

Only 8 per cent of responses were to Whose Reality? and 2 per cent to The Imaginative Landscape. Both prompts were accessible and drew a range of responses that contained appropriate connections to the texts. The most popular texts for Whose Reality? were *Death of a Salesman* and *Wag the Dog*, which students could draw on effectively in exploring the implications of the prompt. Students were able to use their own personal experiences as well as those of characters in all the set texts to respond to the prompt for The Imaginative Landscape.

Student response – Example 1

The following upper-range response demonstrates how the Section B task draws on very different writing skills from those required for Section A. It is characterised by consideration of the wider implications of ideas from the Context, draws on a range of resources and includes brief personal anecdotes as well as adequate use of the selected text. It is crafted around exploring the ideas of the prompt in a considered way.

‘We understand who we are when we recognise the people we belong with.’

‘Defining or understanding our identity is dependent with the group we belong to. When we recognise the people we belong with we achieve a better comprehension of who we are. Our identity can be refined and renegotiated when we feel a sense of belonging to a group. With the recognition of the group we belong to, our self-perception and self-concept would be fulfilled and consolidated. Nevertheless, individuals could gain the understanding of themselves through maintaining their uniquenesses.

Our identity undergoes variation and refinement when we recognise the group we belong to. With identify the people we belong with, our establish mindset would be challenged and developed, thus we would achieve a better understanding of our identity. From the film “Invictus” directed by Clint Eastwood, it is manifested in Nelson Mandela. Growing at the time of apartheid, he chooses to be a solider fighting against the crucial discrimination upon the blacks because he recognises himself as a member of the black people. When he overturned the apartheid authority, Nelson Mandela takes up the national responsibility and realises his belonging set upon the whole country, South Africa. Therefore, his faith undergoes change from achieving the equality for black people to “forgiveness starts here” and “reconciliation starts here too”, which can be regarded as the refinement occurring in his personal identity. Similiarly, it is exemplified in my personal experience.

When I first arrived at Melbourne Airport I felt isolated and alone in the crowd. However, when I came into my high school, I received the kindness from other girls and the care from my teachers, which made me feel a part of the school community. I was determined to act as a contributing member in the school and compained for the leadership of international students. When I found out the group that I belong to my sense of self is renegotiated from nobody to a part of the school community. It can be seen that when we know the people we belong to, our understandings of ourselves would be altered and improved.

With the recognition of where we belong, our self-image and self-perception would be fulfilled and completed. From the film “Invictus”, it is illustrated in Francois Pienaar, the captain of Sprinboks rugby team. When he is invited to have tea with Nelson Mandela, the president introduces him a poem “Invictus”, written by William Ernest Hanley. From the sentences “I am the master of my fate, I am the captain of soul”, Francois Pienaar realises himself as a symbolised bridge between the white and black South Africans and he belongs to the new rainbow nation, South Africa. With acknowledgement of the people he belongs to, Francois Pienaar perceives himself as a contributing part of national reconciliation instead of the white representative of the white rugby team. Hence, his self-understanding is improved and fulfilled in this process. Likewise, it is demonstrated in my friend..., who is a Chinese girl born in Australia. Although she was educated in English in school, her father asked her to speak Chinese at home. He explained that, “we are Chinese. If you ever speak English at home, we would lose the sense of belonging and connection.’ Due to her father’s education, ... realises that she belongs to her homeland, China, and considers herself as part of China, which defines her identity as a Chinese. Therefore, when we feel a sense of belonging to a group, our self-recognition and understanding would be defined and fulfilled.

However, individuals may understand themselves through maintaining their distinctive uniquenesses. When individuals adherent to their inner cores and differences, they could achieve a better comprehensions of their self-images. It is epitomised in the Pakistani girl, Malala Yousafzai. Although being attacked by the extreme Taliban, she is determined to stand

“one girl among many” and speak out “not for herself, but so those without a voice can be heard.” With an unremitting effort to hold fast to their unique opinions, Mala Yousafzai gains her self-understanding by acting as an inspirational figure of women rights’ movement. Hence, she regards herself as an individual and powerful young girl through her adherence to her values, which is considered as part of her uniqueness. Likewise, it is also crystallised in Stef Hodgson, who is a girl from Melbourne diagnosed with alopecia, which made her hair all fall out at the age of six. After realising how beauty is generated in “what you do” instead of physical appearance, she accepts her baldness dauntlessly and live her “own kind of beauty”. Hence, she gains her understanding of who she truly is when she maintains her own uniqueness. As shown in the examples, our understandings of ourselves could be reflected and achieved by our enthusiastic adherence to our own uniquenesses.

In life, we discover who we are when we realise which group or people we belong to. With the recognition of the people we belong with, our identity and self-perception undergo variations and improvements. When we acknowledge our belongings, our self-concept and sense of self would be fulfilled in the process. Nevertheless, sometimes we gain better understandings of our true self through adherences to our uniquenesses.

Student response – Example 2

This upper mid-range response to the same prompt explores the implications of the prompt via the role of values. The ideas are developed with confident but not always fluent language. The piece conveys the writer’s voice effectively despite the lapses in language control.

On the journey of searching for our identity, we encounter different situations and diverse individuals. How we interact with them can reflect or change our identity. It may decide whether we belong to a particular group, it may manifest our identity. However, it is also important to consider our own core value when attempting to understand who we are.

The group we belong to can certainly reflect who we are. As we take on a sense of belonging to a group, we are also demonstrating our own value. This is shown in the recent discussions about the phenomenon of xenophobia. The discussion is aroused by the recent events including the Brexit vote and the rise of extreme right party AfG in Germany. People have discovered the reasons behind this phenomenon, which is fear of dilution of culture. Those who are xenophobic are often worried that foreigners who have different customs would dilute their own culture, taking away their sense of identity and nationality. By belonging to this group and fear the entering of foreigners, these people have manifested their identity as a person who wants to protect the purity of their country’s culture. Belonging shows us our own mentality and values which where with the group.

In addition, when we recognise the people or culture we do not belong with, it also help us to understand our sense of self. This demonstrates to us values we do not comprehend or connect with. In the memoir, ‘The Mind of a Thief’, Patti Miller goes on a journey in search for her sense of belonging. Miller grows up in Australia but is taught to identify with “Irish, English and European tradition”. With a head of “European mythology of beauty”, she falls in love with Europe’s landscape and lives in France for a period she called “Imaginary Life”. Imaginary because she later understands that the beauty of Europe which she dreams about during childhood reading has no meaningful connection to herself. When she visits Ireland, searching for “sense of recognition” and homecoming, she finds out that it is the home of her ancestors, not hers. She belongs to the landscape she grows up on, the landscape she has a deep connection with, rather than the places in books or stories from her ancestors. By understanding that she does not belong to the homes of her ancestor, she became sure of her identity as an Australian. Excluding the identities that are not part of us, we are able to find ourselves.

However, we do not always have to conform to the group we belong to, we can hold on to our own value. Our own value provides us with individuality that is even able to promote the development of the group we belong to. In “Invictus”, directed by Clint Eastwood, the black and white communities in South Africa don’t mix. It is expected that an individual would either belong

to one or the other. Yet Nelson Mandela believes in uniting the nation. When the Sport Department decides to deband the Springboks team, a symbol of apartheid, Mandela stands against the other Native South Africans and contends that they must forgive each other and stop the cycle of fear. Through this, Mandela has demonstrated his identity as an open minded and wise leader, a member of the “rainbow nation” rather than passively belonging to either group. Holding onto our value can strength our identity and help us understand who we are.

In summary, both the people we belong with and our own value is important in recognising ourselves. We may use others to reflect our existing identity, we can also hold onto our own beliefs to strength our identity. If external forces act as a mould that gives us shape, then we decides which ingredients to put in.

Section C – Analysis of language use

The task material consisted of two pieces with opinions about how to attract visitors to a town that has been isolated by a recent highway bypass. Both were published in a local newspaper. The first was a weekly column written by the Mayor. The second, published in the following edition, was a letter in reply by the president of the local progress association. The topic, language, length and style of the pieces were appropriate for the tasks and offered opportunities for students at all levels to demonstrate their skills. The written articles contained two differing opinions, clearly expressed.

The visual was a cartoon contributed by the newspaper’s cartoonist. It was accessible and allowed for interpretations that supported or challenged the proposal to build a giant attraction. There was much detail to explore.

Part 1

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Average
%	3	3	7	8	11	14	16	16	14	7	1	5.5

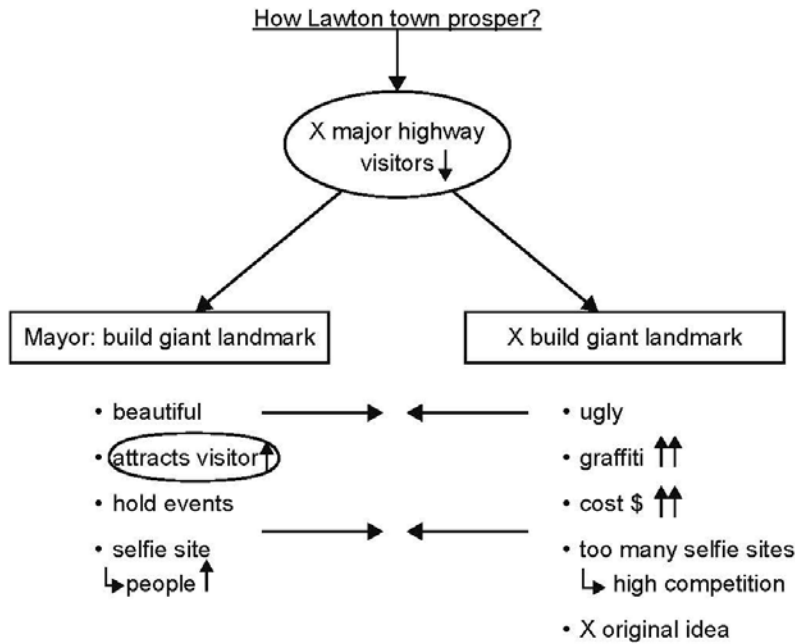
Most students followed the instructions on the examination, which required them to write a note-form summary on both pieces of writing. A few students wrote a note-form summary on one of the pieces only. Students are reminded to read the instructions carefully before attempting the task. The note-form responses demonstrated an awareness of the key ideas in the speech. The central idea was that concerns about the town’s future had arisen because the town had become isolated by a recent highway diversion. The first writer’s position was that the building of a giant attraction would attract travellers back to the town. She sought to gain the readers’ support by praising local talent and detailing the potential benefits that could flow from such a building. The second writer acknowledged the town’s problem, and preferred a culturally based solution. He offered arguments against the building of a giant attraction.

Low-scoring students missed the central idea of the material, writing points for and against the highway instead of the giant attraction. Some tried to include too much information from the articles. Most students attempted a meaningful structure for the notes.

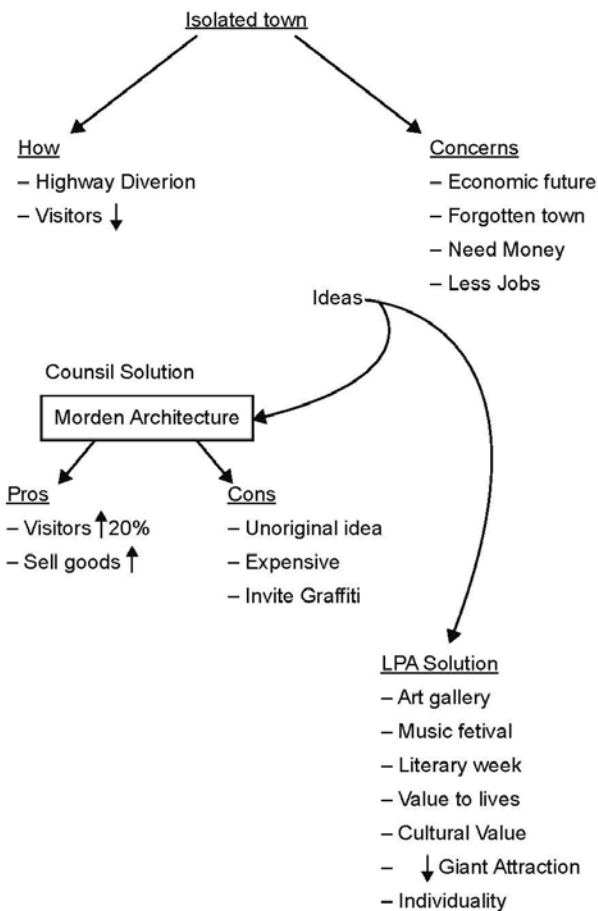
The challenge in this task was to design a structure (for the summary) through which processing of the material could be demonstrated. The summary should have shown how the ideas in the pieces related to each other and to the main contention of the material. Many students grouped ideas well, but some simply listed ideas without processing the information. The highest-scoring pieces demonstrated processing of the material, gave an overall understanding of the writers’ positions and recorded the ideas appropriately using plain English.

The following student responses demonstrate an overall understanding of the material, processing of the information and selection of the key ideas presented in a meaningful form.

Student response – Example 1



Student response – Example 2



Part 2

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Average
%	3	5	8	12	17	19	15	12	6	3	0	4.7

In Part 2 students were able to use any of the task material to explain how language and visual features were used to attempt to persuade. The highest-scoring responses were able to identify the tone and intention of the Mayor. They wrote about how the Mayor tried to get citizens onside by acknowledging the benefits of the new highway before addressing its disadvantages. High-scoring responses used many short quotations and analysed the impact of the language instead of the argument. Such responses often included a detailed analysis of the visual and recognised that there could be a satirical element to the cartoon. Most students were able to identify enough different language techniques to develop an analytical piece of writing. Low-scoring responses lapsed into merely summarising the arguments, rather than analysing the language choices of the writers and the cartoonist. Other weaknesses related to a basic misunderstanding of the material, with some students thinking that the debate was about the construction of a highway.

The visual provoked a range of responses and interpretations. It could be explored both in support of and against the construction of a giant landmark. Higher-scoring students were able to pick up on the irony of an overpowering giant watermelon in the town. A few noted that the town's population had increased by one.

Upper-range responses were well written and demonstrated a strong understanding of the ways in which language and visual features were used through effective analysis of the material. Features of upper-range responses included:

- a clear understanding of the contextual reasons for the writing and the points of view expressed in the pieces
- focus on analysis of language, not argument
- an exploration of the implications of specific language choices; for example, 'ghost town', 'imagine', 'we want'/'we need', 'ugly monstrosity', 'prosperity at any price'
- an ability to use a range of vocabulary
- clear explanations linking visuals to the writer's/writers' words and exploring the intended effect of the visuals.

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

- difficulty describing tone accurately
- limited understanding of the context
- generalised descriptions of persuasive techniques
- little or no reference to visuals or reference not linked to the texts.

Student response – Example 1

The following upper-range response demonstrates strong understanding of the task and the material. It examines a range of ways in which words and the visual can position an audience. In places it is verbose and somewhat repetitive, but it also demonstrates the fluent and effective use of a range of precise language as required for this task.

The recent highway diversion that has isolated the town of Lawton has caused concern about the town's economic future and has triggered debates on how to address this problem. In the editorial published in "The Lawton Times" by Mayor Alexandra Wiley on the 25th of October 2015, she enthusiastically declares that a giant attraction would help boost the town's flagging economy. Her opinions are questioned however by Ian Warwick who logically argues in his opinion piece that there are better ways to help the town's economy to prosper.

Alexandra Wiley opens her piece by stating that the recent construction of the highway has advantages as well as disadvantages. She employs the use of inclusive language such as “our” and “we” in order to establish rapport with her readers. Through this, she attempts to convince the readers that the town’s economy should be a cause of concern for all citizens of Lawton. The readers might be drawn into the issue and this may spark their concern and make them feel that they should assist in helping the town overcome its troubles. Besides that, Wiley also uses emotive language, calling the town a “ghost town”. This is done in order to sway the readers into thinking that a lack of tourist will isolate the town and make them forgotten. Readers are then drawn further into the debate and may come up with their own solutions to the issue. Wiley appeals to her readers’ hip-pocket nerve by stating that they “need [the tourists’] money.” This can strike a chord with the readers and highlights the important of being financially stable in today’s society. Readers might then be concerned about their future financial situations and be moved to support the writer. In her opening paragraph, Wiley attempts to persuade readers that she cares about the future economy of Lawton.

Wiley’s solution to Lawton’s economic crisis is to build a “giant attraction” that rises “to a height of 20 metres and visible to all who travel in town.” She paints an idyllic picture for the audience, asking them to “imagine a spectacular piece of modern architecture.” Through the use of figurative language, Wiley seeks to convince the readers that a landmark attraction in the town is beautiful and grand. This might move readers into agreeing with Wiley that an attraction should be built to help the economy. Not only that, Wiley backs up her contention with the use of statistics. She informs readers that “towns with great attractions receive 20% more visitors.” Through the use of statistics, the writer lends credibility to her argument. Readers might be coaxed into agreeing with the writer because of the fact provided to them. The use of this technique makes the writer’s viewpoint hard to discard and lends weight to her arguments. Furthermore, Wiley employs the use of a visual technique to further assist her in attempting to persuade readers. The picture which contains a great watermelon and plenty of tourists arriving in “Lawton: Home of the Giant Watermelon” provides readers with a representation of how their town’s economy can be saved. Readers may then consider the amount of tourist that would arrive to view an attraction and the money that would go into the economy. They might then be attracted to the idea of an attraction and agree with the writer. Wiley’s use of persuasive techniques attempts to push the audience into seeing the establishment of a giant attraction in a positive light and agree with her solution to save the town’s economy.

In contrast to Alexandra Wiley, Ian Warwick is of the opinion that there are better ways to boost Lawton’s economy. He belittles Wiley’s suggestion by calling it an “unoriginal idea” and states that a great attraction is “an ugly monstrosity”. This attack on Wiley serves to undermine her attempts to shine a positive light on the building of a giant attraction in Lawton. By demeaning Wiley’s suggestions by pointing out facts, Warwick attempts to manipulate readers into agreeing with him. Readers may be urged to see that there are better ways of helping the town’s economy besides building a giant attraction. Warwick maintains his point of view by informing readers that such an attraction would be “expensive to build and expensive to maintain.” This appeals to the reader’s hip pocket nerve and seeks to inform them that a giant attraction would not help the town’s economy but make it worse. Readers might be forced into thinking about the consequences of building a giant attraction and be swayed into agreeing with Warwick. Moreover, Warwick questions his readers by asking why “can’t [they] be different?” This question carries a negative connotation with it. Readers may feel as if a giant attraction is unoriginal and may seek to stand out from the crowd by doing something original. By pointing out the lack of originality in Wiley’s idea, Warwick draws in his readers’ need to be unique and further persuade them into agreeing with him. Warwick’s arguments and rebuttals against Wiley’s suggestions gives readers another perspective on the issue and may assist them in deciding the best course of action to save their town from an economic crisis.

Student response – Example 2

The following mid-range response demonstrates some understanding of how language and visuals are used to persuade. It is an organised and supported response that contains an overall understanding of the material. It adequately conveys meaning and both describes and analyses the visual.

This is a weekly column written by the Mayor, Alexandra Wiley suggests that we should build a giant landmark to attract visitors and make the town prosper again and a letter by Ian Warwick, the president of Lawton Progress Association that is against the idea of creating the giant landmark.

The Mayor claims that giant landmark will attracts more visitors. He first mentions about the complaints that 'It isn't an original idea' and 'can't we think of something else' which means it is not a new idea to have giant landmark. He points out these complaints are useless and not helping the situation. Then he uses statistic that towns with giant landmark "receive 20% more visitors" which means the research shows that this will work and help the town attracts more visitors. It may also make people to photograph them and attracts more people. The inclusive language "we deserve to prosper too" makes the audience thinks that the Mayor is standing on the same side and so audiences are more likely to agree with this idea.

The newspaper's cartoonist also suggests that the town will be alive again if we have a giant landmark. The picture in the newspaper shows how the town will look like if we creates the giant landmark. There is a big beautiful watermelon looking building in the town that will make readers like it. Near the building there are cars and visitors and families shopping around. Readers can already see how prosperous the town will be if they have this giant building. Besides that, the visitors in the car are smiling which creates this happy feeling and impression about this future with the big building. Reader will feel happy to see all these happy things happen so they want to agree with the idea to build this giant landmark.

However, the president of Lawton Progress Association disagrees with the idea of creating giant landmark. He uses emotional language "ugly monstrosity" to make the impression of the giant landmark bad. Then he points out the consequence that will just "invite graffiti" which makes readers worried about the ugly graffiti and the inconvenience to clean them up. He also uses a repetition "expensive to.... expensive" to make readers think about the cost which comes from their pocket. So readers don't want to spend their money on this not effective idea to creates this giant landmark.