Moonie State School

NAPLAN Strategies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Original Copy</th>
<th>Tara Shire State College</th>
<th>2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted copy</td>
<td>Moonie State School</td>
<td>2013</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Moonie State School’s Aim:

To direct the implementation of and outline the expectations for NAPLAN practice tests, use of student achievement data, embedding teaching and learning of skills and strategies and whole school approaches in testing situations within the existing Australian Curriculum. The procedures for NAPLAN preparation and revision each year should not be 'teaching to the test', rather teaching skills and knowledge identified as being core learning which requires further development to ensure student success in the National Assessment Program. This includes familiarising students with a layout and format similar to that found in the tests.

Using Data for Improvement

Teachers are expected to use short (weekly in class tests/work) and medium term (unit assessments and standardised tests eg. PAT) data to inform differentiated teaching and learning in their classes at all times. Additionally, they are required to be familiar with the NAPLAN Agenda for Reading and Numeracy and as such address the identified questions from the previous year's tests. Teachers must also ensure that their spelling and writing programs address deficiencies in Grammar and Punctuation and Spelling which are identified through analysis of data obtained from OneSchool.

Key Aspects of Data use at MSS

- **NAPLAN Agenda** – outlines the 12 questions with significant difference to the national performance in Reading and Numeracy and must be used as the starting point for teachers addressing these strands with their classes and should be noted in planning. Links are provided to QSA pages for teaching strategies for each question.

- **OneSchool** – teachers use the path REPORTS – NAPLAN – NAPLAN STUDENT/CLASS REPORTS – ITEM LEVEL SUMMARY BY CLASS/COHORT: STUDENTS AT TIME OF TEST to generate data to analyse for Spelling and Grammar and Punctuation. Deficiencies in these strands are to be addressed within teacher’s programs and noted in planning.

- **PAT test results** offer more recent data for students and should be utilised to diagnose gaps in student learning to prepare for further standardised and national testing and class/assignment work.

- **Writing Samples** – students should complete a persuasive writing task as early as possible in Term One to provide teachers with baseline data to inform direction and differentiation in their writing programs. Information about nationwide performance in the Writing strand is provided (Appendix A) from ACARA's 2012 Test Reporting Handbook. A summary of the recommendations from this publication is below and should form a starting point for writing instruction.
Summary of recommendations for the Writing Task – 2012 Test Reporting Handbook

- Students should be planning and making notes about what they know about the wider issue, not just the pictures from the stimulus.
- Developing ideas to convey passion, humour etc. and adapting the general 5 paragraph structure and the paragraph’s structure itself to attempt to genuinely persuade – not stick to a formula.
- Improving sentence structure and punctuation particularly conjunctions, sentence boundary punctuation and more sophisticated punctuation marks.
- Linking vocabulary and meaning making by carefully selecting higher level vocabulary without overuse.
- Connecting spelling and meaning particularly contractions and homophones.

Preparing Students for the Writing Strand
Students must be given adequate opportunities to develop their writing skills in the persuasive genre in class time. The most common form of persuasive text written in NAPLAN is the exposition. However, students need not conform to a highly predictable structure and as such need to practice the art of writing for a purpose and the skill of writing and the inherent techniques students require to plan and develop a persuasive text suitable for the NAPLAN test. Teacher feedback both written and informal is crucial at all stages of the writing experience for students as this will provide more achievable steps for them to take in order to improve.

NAPLAN Writing Criteria
Teachers must be familiar with the marking guide for the writing task and in particular the criteria, weighting and how the scores are applied to student writing. Familiarisation with this section will allow greater success in preparing students for the writing strand in the same way that ensuring you fully understand an assessment piece is imperative in teaching units of work.

See the following page for The Marking Guide: Criteria
The Marking Guide: Criteria

Students' writing is assessed using an analytic criterion-referenced marking guide, consisting of a rubric containing ten marking criteria and annotated sample scripts. The ten criteria are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Audience</th>
<th>The writer's capacity to orient, engage and persuade the reader</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Text structure</td>
<td>The organisation of the structural components of a persuasive text (introduction, body and conclusion) into an appropriate and effective text structure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Ideas</td>
<td>The selection, relevance and elaboration of ideas for a persuasive argument</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Persuasive devices</td>
<td>The use of a range of persuasive devices to enhance the writer's position and persuade the reader</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Vocabulary</td>
<td>The range and precision of contextually appropriate language choices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Cohesion</td>
<td>The control of multiple threads and relationships across the text, achieved through the use of referring words, ellipses, text connectives, substitutions and word associations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Paragraphing</td>
<td>The segmenting of text into paragraphs that assists the reader to follow the line of argument</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Sentence structure</td>
<td>The production of grammatically correct, structurally sound and meaningful sentences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Punctuation</td>
<td>The use of correct and appropriate punctuation to aid the reading of the text</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td>The accuracy of spelling and the difficulty of the words used</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following table shows the range of score points for each criterion:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Audience</th>
<th>Text structure</th>
<th>Ideas</th>
<th>Persuasive devices</th>
<th>Vocabulary</th>
<th>Cohesion</th>
<th>Paragraphing</th>
<th>Sentence structure</th>
<th>Punctuation</th>
<th>Spelling</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Principals of Effective Writing Preparation

- Students are given multiple opportunities to write in the key genre (persuasive).
- Teachers offer meaningful and personalised feedback about how the students can improve.
- Students are given opportunities to practise introductions, middle paragraphs and conclusions to allow differentiation for more advanced and struggling writers.
- Students are taught to edit for spelling and punctuation corrections.
- 7 Steps to Writing Success (Appendix C) activities should be utilised to teach students many skills for writing including brainstorming, interesting introductions and conclusions and persuasive techniques.
- Teachers record their persuasive writing activities in their planning.

Utilising Teacher Support Materials

Many resources are provided to assist in preparing students for the Reading, Language Conventions and Numeracy strands of NAPLAN. The following resources should be consulted in planning processes and used where applicable in literacy and numeracy learning environments. *Literacy is a major component (General Capability – Australian Curriculum) of all key learning areas.*

Literacy Support Materials

- NAPLAN Agenda (Reading) links to QSA NAPLAN teaching ideas pages
- OneSchool Item Level Summaries
- NSW NAPLAN Teaching Strategies: Literacy
- QSA NAPLAN, Test Preparations, Literacy

Numeracy Support Materials

- NAPLAN Agenda (Numeracy) links to QSA NAPLAN teaching ideas pages
- OneSchool Item Level Summaries
- NSW NAPLAN Teaching Strategies: Numeracy
## MSS Approaches for NAPLAN Preparations

The following must be enacted by the relevant year level teachers:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Off-Years (2, 4, 6)</th>
<th>NAPLAN Years (3, 5, 7)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reading</strong></td>
<td><strong>Reading</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modelled, shared, guided and independent reading which reinforces decoding and comprehension sills referenced in planning.</td>
<td>Modelled, shared, guided and independent reading which reinforces decoding and comprehension sills referenced in planning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Language Conventions</strong></td>
<td><strong>Language Conventions</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling program to address no-excuse words and editing identified and unidentified errors.</td>
<td>Spelling program to address no-excuse words and editing identified and unidentified errors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Writing</strong></td>
<td><strong>Writing</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persuasive genre incorporated into C2C units of work. 7 Steps to Writing Success utilised as framework for engaging students in writing activities.</td>
<td>Persuasive writing tasks set early in Term One. Samples marked and regular writing activities scheduled to ensure confidence in the genre based on initial piece of writing. Both short activities and whole-text writing based on 7 Steps to Writing Success should occur and feedback be given at regular intervals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Numeracy</strong></td>
<td><strong>Numeracy</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic facts and algorithm knowledge to be consolidated daily. NAPLAN-style problem solving activities to be incorporated into Maths programs regularly <em>at least weekly</em>.</td>
<td>Basic facts and algorithm knowledge to be consolidated daily. NAPLAN-style problem solving activities to be incorporated into Maths programs <em>daily leading up to the test and at least weekly after</em>.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Everyone should learn to cook.

Do you agree?
Do you disagree?
Perhaps you can think of ideas for both sides.

Write to convince a reader of your opinion.
- Start with an introduction.
  An introduction lets a reader know what you are going to write about.
- Write your opinion on the topic.
  Give reasons for your opinion.
  Explain your reasons.
- Finish with a conclusion.
  A conclusion sums up your reasons so that a reader is convinced of your opinion.

Remember to:
- plan your writing
- use paragraphs to organise your ideas
- write in sentences
- choose your words carefully to convince a reader of your opinion
- pay attention to your spelling and punctuation
- check and edit your writing so it is clear for a reader.

Task Description
In 2012, as in the previous year, students in all four year levels were given the same prompt (reproduced above) containing the topic, related images and instructions for writing. Teachers read the prompt aloud to the students. Students were instructed to write a maximum of three pages "on demand" in response to the prompt. Students were allocated five minutes to plan independently, thirty minutes to write, and five minutes to edit their response. Students were asked to convince (persuade) readers to agree with their opinion on the proposition that Everyone should learn to cook. Students could agree, disagree or argue both sides of the proposition. The prompt gave clear guidelines about the basic structural elements of the writing: an introduction, a body and conclusion. Within this structure, there were no prescribed methods for developing the introduction, body and conclusion. The prompt also provided students with a writing checklist.

Marking
Markers were trained using the national persuasive writing training package. This ensured that markers applied the 10 criteria and their related standards consistently across Australia. The guide is available at www.nap.edu.au/NAPLAN/About_each_domain/Writing/index.html.

Responses
Students were able to respond with ideas related to the topic. Most wrote in a persuasive genre. Texts ranged from personal opinion to argumentative essay. Overall scores for spelling and punctuation in all year levels remained similar to last year.

Students in Year 3 and Year 5 were generally able to state their opinion on the topic and some were able to generate a few reasons for their opinions. Most wrote about three or more images from the prompt. A few more capable Year 3 writers developed their ideas in short paragraphs. Most Year 3 and Year 5 students used a five-
paragraph formula: an introduction, three paragraphs each about a discrete idea, and a final paragraph. Higher performing Year 3 writers introduced their three points in the opening paragraph, wrote a sentence or two about each idea in three paragraphs and restated the opening paragraph to conclude. Students in Year 5 who scored well, were able to add some reasoning or evidence for one or more ideas in their body paragraphs.

Like the Year 3 and Year 5 students, most students in Year 7 and Year 9 also used the images on the prompt as the stimulus for their key points. They were able to develop each key point with some reasoning, evidence or example. More competent Year 7 writers were able to elaborate each idea in support of their argument. The most capable Year 9 writers were able to select ideas for their argument based on their point of view, with little or no reference to prompt images. By developing ideas based on their point of view on the issue, they freed themselves to write more holistically, showing evidence of a personal voice.

Teaching focus

Taking a stance: Students can be taught to read the task, make a clear decision about the topic and take a stance. Too often, students pick ideas based on the images on the stimulus rather than from ideas that support their position. Having a clear position or issue to argue is key to being able to develop an argument. To do this, students may take a simple positive or negative position. Year 7 and Year 9 students could redefine aspects of the stated topic to create an arguable position, e.g. Not all people need to learn to cook; Dangers of cooking: It’s not for everyone; Cooking: the essential ingredient for a happy life; Survival depends on cooking. By taking an arguable position, students can select ideas that support their opinion.

Planning: Students need to consider what they know and believe about the issue and what evidence, reasons or examples they have to verify this view. Planning activities that focus on this will assist students to develop ideas that work toward their position based on evidence, reasons or examples, e.g. What do I believe? How do I know this? Why do I believe this? Year 7 and Year 9 students should move beyond their own view, to consider what others might think about the issue and why. This can then be used to inform how the argument is developed. For example, students may present other views and counter with their own argument, lure in those with an opposing view by giving the appearance of supporting their position then showing them how flawed it is, or compare a negative aspect of their own argument with evidence of the positive from the alternative view. This will allow writers to develop a far more compelling argument with greater depth of the ideas.

Develop ideas: By taking a stance, writers give themselves the opportunity to develop ideas more deeply. The five-paragraph-essay formula was used by almost every student. For Year 3 and Year 5 writers, it provided a simple structure to follow. Higher performing young writers were able to produce short texts with three predictable, discrete pieces of information in the body, each usually written as a sentence about three images on the prompt. Year 7 and Year 9 writers followed the same structure and used the images as the basis of their ideas. Most were unable to develop their ideas beyond one-and-a-half pages of writing.

There was evidence of older students learning adaptations of the basic structures, such as the use of a creative opening paragraph. However, in most cases, the promise of high-quality writing was lost after the first paragraph, as students returned to the three-body paragraph style of the typical five-paragraph formula.

Some students had also learned a formula for writing body paragraphs. This involved writing each body paragraph by stating one of the ideas from the Introduction as a topic sentence, giving a reason or piece of evidence, then restating the idea. The adherence to this tight structure restricted real development of the ideas to support the writer’s position.

To improve the development of ideas, students can be given topics that are relevant to them but which require deep thinking, and provide opportunities for an authentic position to be taken and argued with passion and voice. Models of written arguments that do not use the five-paragraph formula can be used to show students the way professional writers persuade others to a point of view. Over time, teachers could share with students several different models of text structure as well as texts that have a similar text structure but which approach the argument using a different top-level-structures, e.g. a list of arguments, the comparison and contrast of opinions, a demonstration of cause-and-effect relationships relevant to the issue, or identification of perceived problems and possible solutions.

Improving sentence structure and punctuation: Planned and systematic development of students’ understanding of sentence structure is vital for the teaching of writing. Students need to understand not only a range of conjunctions but how they meaningfully support the relationships between ideas. Sentence boundary punctuation — a capital and a full stop — needs to be taught at all year levels. With the introduction of new sentence structures, sentence boundary punctuation needs to be revised. Additional punctuation such as commas, colons, semi-colons and dashes should be introduced as required by the type of writing and level of sophistication of the sentences.
Linking vocabulary and meaning making: It is commendable that students showed evidence of learning higher level vocabulary, particularly adverbs, e.g. undeniably, emphatically, absolutely, passionately, certainly. However, the misuse or overuse of these words did little to improve the quality of the argument. Some students added these after the first draft, often making the text less persuasive than before the addition. Vocabulary scores improve when writers select words with precision to enhance the meaning of the text.

Explicit teaching of vocabulary is an important part of teaching about language. Discussion about vocabulary choice and meaning making should be the focus of vocabulary instruction. The more capable writers use vocabulary in more subtle ways to position readers without letting them know that this is happening.

Connecting spelling and meaning: Many students of all ages and writing ability struggled at some time with the use of contraction apostrophes, particularly with common homophones, such as there/their/they’re and your/you’re.

Explicit teaching and constant revision of contractions and homophones has the potential to dramatically improve some students’ writing scores.

References

Campbell, AH and Latimer, K 2012, Beyond the Five-Paragraph Essay, Stenhouse publishers, Portland, Maine.
## Criteria

### 1. Audience

**Skill focus:** The writer’s capacity to orient, engage and persuade the reader.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Category descriptor</th>
<th>Additional information</th>
<th>Sample scripts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>+ symbols or drawings which have the intention of conveying meaning</td>
<td></td>
<td>PletRi DoLiSa1 (18)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 1     | + response to audience needs is limited  
+ text contains simple written content | + text is very short
OR
+ a longer text (more than one sentence) where meaning is difficult to access
OR
+ copied stimulus material, including prompt topic | Some animals could die (20)
animals getting cewd (22) |
| 2     | + shows basic awareness of audience expectations through attempting to orient the reader  
+ provides some information to support reader understanding | + text may be short but is easily read
+ reader may need to fill gaps in information | it cruel to keep animals (24)
animals will feel sad (28)
any other animal (30) |
| 3     | + orients the reader
  - an internally consistent persuasive text that attempts to support the reader by developing a shared understanding of context | + contains sufficient information for the reader to follow the text fairly easily | They won’t face danger (32)
they try to break out (36)
I agree and don’t agree (38)
Some toys and games are educational (40) |
| 4     | + supports reader understanding  
AND  
+ begins to engage and persuade reader through language choices | + writer’s choices may
  - create an appropriate relationship with reader (e.g. polite, formal, social distance, personal connection)
  - reveal values and attitudes
  - persuade through control of tenor
  - appeal to reason, emotions and/or cultural values
  - subvert expectations (challenge readers’ values)
  - acknowledge wider audience | My idea of a perfect zoo (42)
All animals started off (46)
Cages and Zoos (50) |
| 5     | + supports, engages and persuades the reader through deliberate language choices and persuasive techniques | | Under Certain Circumstances (54)
Food, water and other necessary supplies (58)
The Lion’s glorious hair (62) |
| 6     | + controls writer/reader relationship  
  - establishes strong, credible voice  
  - crafts writing to influence reader by precise and sustained language choices and persuasive techniques  
  - takes readers’ values and expectations into account | | If humans can have a voice why can’t animals. (66)
zoos can have useful purposes (70)
things should be regulated (74) |
### 2. Text structure

**Skill focus:** The organisation of the structural components of a persuasive text (introduction, body and conclusion) into an appropriate and effective text structure.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category descriptor</th>
<th>Additional information</th>
<th>Sample scripts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>• no evidence of any structural components of a persuasive text</td>
<td>• symbols or drawings, inappropriate genre, e.g. narrative, description, recount, procedure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• minimal evidence of persuasive structure</td>
<td>• text may be</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>- structural components not clearly identifiable</td>
<td>- a statement such as an opinion and/or reason (may be followed by recount or description)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>OR</td>
<td>- a list of statements or beliefs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- one component only, e.g. an introduction or body</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>• text contains two clearly identifiable structural components</td>
<td>• introduction or conclusion are clearly differentiated from the body</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>OR</td>
<td>• often presents as a more developed body with underdeveloped introduction and conclusion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• all components are present but weak</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>• text contains an introduction, a body and conclusion</td>
<td>• structural components are developed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>OR</td>
<td>• body is developed with reasons and supporting evidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• detailed longer text with two developed components and one weaker component</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>• coherent, controlled and complete argument</td>
<td>• conclusion may reflect on issues raised and/or recommend action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• all components are well developed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- introduction with clear position statement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>AND</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• body with reasons and detailed supporting evidence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>AND</td>
<td>conclusion that reinforces the writer's position</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. Ideas

Skill focus: The selection, relevance and elaboration of ideas for a persuasive argument.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category descriptor</th>
<th>Additional Information</th>
<th>Sample scripts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>• no evidence or insufficient evidence</td>
<td>• symbols or drawings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Text contains one idea OR • ideas appear unrelated to each other OR • ideas are unrelated to topic on prompt</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>• one idea with simple elaboration OR • ideas are few and related but not elaborated OR • many simple ideas that are related but not elaborated</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>• ideas are supported with some elaboration OR • many unelaborated ideas that relate plausibly to argument (four or more) OR • one idea with more developed elaboration</td>
<td>• may also contain ineffective or unrelated ideas • may be assertions/opinions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>• Ideas are elaborated and contribute effectively to the writer's position</td>
<td>• ideas may include - benefits to the whole group (more than just personal) - reflection on the wider world/universal issues • ideas may be elaborated by, e.g. - a range of issues both for and against the stated position - a refutation of other positions or opinions - explaining cause and effect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>• ideas are generated, selected and crafted to be highly persuasive</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# 4. Persuasive devices

**Skill focus:** The use of a range of persuasive devices to enhance the writer's position and persuade the reader.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category descriptor</th>
<th>Additional Information</th>
<th>Sample scripts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 0                   | • no evidence or insufficient evidence | PletRI DoLISal (18)  
Some animals could die (20) |
| 1                   | • uses a statement or statements of personal opinion  
**OR**  
• uses one or two instances of persuasive devices (may be same type) | opinion may appear confused or contradictory  
• uses only simple devices (*I think ... very, very*)  
• *I reckon ... should ... because* forms one instance of a persuasive device | animals getting cewd (22)  
animals will feel sad (28)  
any other animal (30)  
They won't face danger (32) |
| 2                   | • uses three or more instances of persuasive devices that support the writer's position (at least two types) | may have more devices than required but these are ineffective | It cruel to keep animals (24)  
they try to break out (36)  
I agree and don't agree (38)  
Some toys and games are educational (40)  
My idea of a perfect zoo (42) |
| 3                   | • uses some devices that persuade  
• use is effective but not sustained (may also include some ineffective use) | there are many devices that can be used to persuade a reader  
- effective devices are appropriate to the style of argument and may appeal to one or more of the reader's reason, values or emotions | All animals started off (46)  
Cages and Zoos (50)  
Food, water and other nessasary supplies (58) |
| 4                   | • sustained and effective use of persuasive devices | Under Certain Circumstances (54)  
The lion's glorious hair (62)  
If humans can have a voice why can't animals (66)  
zoo's can have useful purposes (70)  
things should be regulated (74) |

**NOTES**

About a page of writing is needed to consider sustained use.
### 5. Vocabulary

Skill focus: The range and precision of contextually appropriate language choices.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category descriptor</th>
<th>Additional information</th>
<th>Sample scripts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>symbols or drawings</td>
<td>PletRi DoLiSal (18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>very short script</td>
<td>Some animals could die (20)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• mostly simple words</td>
<td>animals getting cold (22)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• may include two or</td>
<td>it cruel to keep animals (24)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>three precise words</td>
<td>animals will feel sad (28)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>or word groups</td>
<td>any other animal (30)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• single nouns</td>
<td>They won't face danger (32)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- water, award, house</td>
<td>they try to break out (36)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- reason, news, people,</td>
<td>I agree and don't agree (38)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- world</td>
<td>Some toys and games are educational (40)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• single verbs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- like, run, look, need,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- think, played</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• simple verb groups</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- did it the proper way,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- looked around the room</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• adjectives and adverbs</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- cold, always, really,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- very, friendly, rich</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• simple comparisons</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- as much as she can,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- the best teacher I ever had, one of the fastest</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>four or more precise</td>
<td>My idea of a perfect zoo (42)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>words or word groups</td>
<td>All animals started off (46)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• single precise words</td>
<td>The lion's glorious hair (62)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- citizen, urge, budget</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- consider, solution, protect,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- supportive, research</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• modal adjectives and adverbs</td>
<td>Cages and Zoos (50)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• sustained and</td>
<td>Under Certain Circumstances (54)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>consistent use of</td>
<td>Food, water and other necessary supplies (58)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>precise words and word groups that enhance the meaning (may be some inappropriate or inaccurate word choices)</td>
<td>If humans can have a voice why can't animals (66)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• precise word groups</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- duty of care, quick-minded person, a positive impact on society</td>
<td>zos can have useful purposes (70)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• modal groups</td>
<td>things should be regulated (74)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- it would seem that, it is unlikely that</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• technical</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- habitat, life expectancy, politician, global warming, financial crisis</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• nominalisations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- probability, likability, shortsightedness</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• figurative language, e.g. alliteration, metaphor, simile, personification</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NOTES**

- Words are generally classified into two classes:
  - Content words (or lexical items) describe objects and concepts. This class of words consists of nouns, verbs, adverbs, adjectives, noun groups, phrasal verbs and verb groups.
  - Grammatical word classes (or structural words) consist of prepositions, articles, conjunctions, pronouns and interjections.
- About a page of writing is needed to consider sustained use.
6. Cohesion

Skill focus: The control of multiple threads and relationships across the text, achieved through the use of referring words, ellipsis, text connectives, substitutions and word associations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category descriptor</th>
<th>Additional Information</th>
<th>Sample scripta</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>symbols or drawings</td>
<td>PlerIR DoLiSal (18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• links are missing or incorrect</td>
<td>Some animals could die (20)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• short script</td>
<td>animals getting cewd (22)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>often confusing for the reader</em></td>
<td>animals will feel sad (28)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>• some correct links between sentences (do not penalise for poor punctuation)</td>
<td>It cruel to keep animals (24)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• most referring words are accurate OR</td>
<td>any other animal (30)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• longer text with cohesion controlled only in parts</td>
<td>They won't face danger (32)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>reader may occasionally need to re-read and provide their own links to clarify meaning</td>
<td>they try to break out (36)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I agree and don't agree (38)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Some toys and games are educational (40)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>• controlled use of cohesive devices supports reader understanding meaning is clear on first reading and text flows well in a sustained piece of writing</td>
<td>My idea of a perfect zoo (42)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>All animals started off (46)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Cages and Zoos (50)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Under Certain Circumstances (54)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Food, water and other nessasary supplies (58)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The lion's glorious hair (62)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>• May use</td>
<td>If humans can have a voice why can't animals (66)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• word associations, e.g. synonyms safe haven/habitat/sanctuary/enclosure collocation black market/mistreatment/ unethical</td>
<td>zoos can have useful purposes (70)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• other connectives however, although, therefore, additionally, instead, even though, finally, in saying this</td>
<td>things should be regulated (74)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• there may be occasional lapses in referring words that track plural nouns, e.g. animals ... it</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>• a range of cohesive devices is used correctly and deliberately to enhance reading and support underlying relationships an extended, highly cohesive piece of writing showing continuity of ideas and tightly linked sections of text</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• consistent use of cohesive devices, e.g. referring words, ellipsis, text connectives, substitutions and word associations that enhance meaning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NOTES
About a page of writing is needed to consider sustained use.
# 7. Paragraphing

**Skill focus:** The segmenting of text into paragraphs that assists the reader to follow the line of argument.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category descriptor</th>
<th>Additional Information</th>
<th>Sample scripts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>• no correct use of paragraphing</td>
<td>PletRi DoLiSal (18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>• writing is organised into paragraphs that are mainly focused on one idea or set of like ideas to assist the reader to digest chunks of text &lt;br&gt; <strong>contains at least one correct paragraph break</strong></td>
<td>Some animals could die (20) &lt;br&gt; animals getting cowed (22) &lt;br&gt; it cruel to keep animals (24) &lt;br&gt; animals will feel sad (28) &lt;br&gt; any other animal (30) &lt;br&gt; 'They won’t face danger (32) &lt;br&gt; they try to break out (36)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>• all paragraphs are focused on one idea or set of like ideas &lt;br&gt; - at least one paragraph is logically constructed and contains a topic sentence and supporting detail &lt;br&gt; <strong>paragraphs are mostly correct</strong></td>
<td>I agree and don’t agree (38) &lt;br&gt; Some toys and games are educational (40) &lt;br&gt; Under Certain Circumstances (54)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>• paragraphing supports argument &lt;br&gt; <strong>paragraphs are ordered and cumulatively build argument across text</strong></td>
<td>My idea of a perfect zoo (42) &lt;br&gt; All animals started off (46) &lt;br&gt; zoos can have useful purposes (70)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• paragraphs are deliberately structured to pace and direct the reader’s attention &lt;br&gt; • single sentence may be used as a final comment for emphasis</td>
<td>Cages and Zoos (50) &lt;br&gt; Food, water and other necessary supplies (58) &lt;br&gt; The lion’s glorious hair (62) &lt;br&gt; If humans can have a voice why can’t animals (66) &lt;br&gt; things should be regulated (74)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NOTES**

For the purposes of the task, intended paragraphs can be indicated by any of the following conventions:

- indentation of a new line
- space between blocks of text
- student annotations, e.g. P for paragraph or NP for new paragraph, tram lines, square brackets, asterisk
- available space on previous line left unused, followed by new line for paragraph beginning.
# 8. Sentence Structure

**Skill Focus:** The production of grammatically correct, structurally sound and meaningful sentences.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category descriptor</th>
<th>Additional Information</th>
<th>Sample Scripts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>no evidence of sentences&lt;br&gt;• drawings, symbols, a list of words, text fragments</td>
<td>PletIR DOLiSAL (18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>some correct formation of sentences&lt;br&gt;<strong>some meaning can be construed</strong>&lt;br&gt;• in general control is very limited&lt;br&gt;• very short script (one sentence)&lt;br&gt;• most sentences contain the same basic structures&lt;br&gt;• may be overuse of the conversational 'and' or 'then'</td>
<td>Some animals could die (20)&lt;br&gt;it cruel to keep animals (24)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>correct sentences are mostly simple and/or compound sentences&lt;br&gt;<strong>meaning is predominantly clear</strong>&lt;br&gt;• a short script that consists only of correct complex sentences (where there are no simple sentences)&lt;br&gt;• text may include complex sentences that use one basic structure (two, if one is a projected clause)&lt;br&gt;• two or more correct sentences required</td>
<td>animals getting crewd (22)&lt;br&gt;animals will feel sad (28)&lt;br&gt;any other animal (30)&lt;br&gt;They won’t face danger (32)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>most simple and compound sentences are correct&lt;br&gt;<strong>meaning is predominantly clear</strong>&lt;br&gt;• simple sentences may show some extension&lt;br&gt;• experiments with basic structures in complex sentences&lt;br&gt;• requires two or more types (three or more, if one is a projected clause)&lt;br&gt;• four or more correct sentences required</td>
<td>they try to break out (36)&lt;br&gt;I agree and don’t agree (38)&lt;br&gt;Some toys and games are educational (40)&lt;br&gt;My idea of a perfect zoo (42)&lt;br&gt;Cages and Zoos (50)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>most simple, compound and complex sentences are correct&lt;br&gt;<strong>meaning is clear</strong>&lt;br&gt;• more routine use and greater control of elaborating clauses and phrases in simple, compound and complex sentences&lt;br&gt;• allow for an occasional minor error&lt;br&gt;• usually requires a sustained piece of writing</td>
<td>All animals started off (46)&lt;br&gt;Under Certain Circumstances (54)&lt;br&gt;Food, water and other neccessary supplies (58)&lt;br&gt;If humans can have a voice why can’t animals (66)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>sentences are correct (allow for occasional error in more sophisticated structures)&lt;br&gt;• demonstrates variety&lt;br&gt;<strong>meaning is clear and sentences enhance meaning</strong>&lt;br&gt;• shows control over a range of different structures (quantity, quality and variety)&lt;br&gt;VARIETY&lt;br&gt;• clause types and patterns&lt;br&gt;• verbless, adjectival, adverbal, multiple, non-finite</td>
<td>The lion’s glorious hair (62)&lt;br&gt;zoos can have useful purposes (70)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>all sentences are correct (allow for occasional slip, e.g. a missing word)&lt;br&gt;<strong>writing contains controlled and well-developed sentences that express precise meaning and are consistently effective</strong>&lt;br&gt;• dependent clause position&lt;br&gt;• length and rhythm&lt;br&gt;• increased elaboration and extension&lt;br&gt;• stylistically appropriate choices</td>
<td>things should be regulated (74)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NOTES**
- Some students do not accurately identify their sentence boundaries with punctuation. In these cases it will be necessary to read the intended sentence. Run-on sentences should not be regarded as successful (overly repeated 'and', 'so' etc).
- Verb control and preposition errors should be considered as sentence errors.
- 'Most' is approximately 80%.
### 9. Punctuation

**Skill focus:** The use of correct and appropriate punctuation to aid reading of the text.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category descriptor</th>
<th>Additional Information</th>
<th>Sample scripts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>• no evidence of correct sentence punctuation</td>
<td>SENTENCE PUNCTUATION INCLUDES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• correct use of capital letters to start sentences OR full stops to end sentences (at least one correct sentence marker)</td>
<td>• capital letters to begin sentences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>punctuation is minimal and of little assistance to the reader</strong></td>
<td>• full stops, question marks and exclamation marks to end sentences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>• some correct use of sentence level punctuation (at least two accurately punctuated sentences - beginning and end) OR • one correctly punctuated sentence AND some other punctuation correct where it is required (refer to list in additional information)</td>
<td>OTHER PUNCTUATION INCLUDES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>provides some markers to assist reading</strong></td>
<td>• commas in lists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• sentence level punctuation mostly correct (minimum of 80% of five sentences punctuated correctly) AND some other correct punctuation (two or more different examples of other punctuation)</td>
<td>• commas to mark clauses and phrases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>provides adequate markers to assist reading</strong></td>
<td>• apostrophes for contractions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• accurate sentence punctuation with correct noun capitalisation and no stray capitals, nothing else used (four or more sentences)</td>
<td>• apostrophes for possession</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>provides accurate markers to enable smooth and efficient reading</strong></td>
<td>• capital letters and commas used within quotation marks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>• all sentence punctuation correct (no stray capitals) AND • mostly correct use of other punctuation, including noun capitalisation</td>
<td>• quotation marks for text extracts, highlighted words and words used with ironic emphasis ('snee' quotes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>provides accurate markers to enable smooth and efficient reading</strong></td>
<td>• brackets and dashes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• writing contains accurate use of all applicable punctuation</td>
<td>• colons and semicolons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>provides precise markers to pace and control reading of the text</strong></td>
<td>• points of ellipsis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### NOTES
- In first draft writing, allowances can be made for the very occasional omission of sentence punctuation at Categories 4 and 5.
- 'Mostly' is approximately 80% but it is not intended that every use of punctuation is calculated rigorously.
- Do not penalise for different heading styles. The following styles are all considered acceptable:
  - only the first letter capitalised (It is cruel to keep animals in cages or zoos)
  - the first letter of all major words capitalised (It Is Cruel To Keep Animals In Cages or Zoos)
  - all words capitalised (It Is Cruel To Keep Animals In Cages Or Zoos)
  - all letters capitalised (IT IS CRUEL TO KEEP ANIMALS IN CAGES OR ZOOS)
- 'Splice' commas used to join two sentences are INCORRECT; e.g. The dog ate my home work, it was hungry. Do not score this as correct sentence punctuation or comma use.
### 10. Spelling

**Skill focus:** The accuracy of spelling and the difficulty of the words used.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category descriptor</th>
<th>Additional information</th>
<th>Sample scripts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>SIMPLE WORDS</td>
<td>PletRa DoLiSa (18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- words with two letters (on, be, it, on, up, my)</td>
<td>Some animals could die (20)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>animals getting cewd (22)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>it cruel to keep animals (24)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>animals will feel sad (28)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- single-syllable words with</td>
<td>any other animal (30)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>They won’t face danger (32)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I agree and don’t agree (38)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>they try to break out (36)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Some toys and games are educational (40)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>COMMON WORDS</td>
<td>My Idea of a perfect zoo (42)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- single-syllable words with</td>
<td>All animals started off (46)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Cages and Zoos (50)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- two two-consonant blends and/or digraphs</td>
<td>Under Certain Circumstances (54)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Food, water and other necessary supplies (58)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The lion’s glorious hair (62)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>If humans can have a voice why can’t animals. (66)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Zoos can have useful purposes (70)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>things should be regulated (74)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>DIFFICULT WORDS</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- uneven stress patterns in multi-syllabic words (chocolate, mineral)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- uncommon vowel patterns (drought, hygiene)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- difficult subject-specific content words (disease, habitat, predator)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- difficult homophones (practice/practise, board/bored)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- suffixes: where base word changes (prefer/preferred, relate/relation)</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>consonant alternation patterns (confident/confidence)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- many three- and four-syllable words (invisible, organise, community)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- multi-syllabic words ending in tion, sion, ture, able/able, entertain, ful, el/al, ely/ally, gle (supervision, furniture, powerful, sentenced, brutally, rectangle)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>CHALLENGING WORDS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- unusual consonant patterns (guarantee)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- longer words with unstressed syllables (responsibility)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- suffixes to words ending in e, c or l (physically, changeable, plasticity)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- foreign words (lieutenant, nonchalant)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
WHAT ARE THE SEVEN STEPS?

Step 1: Plan for Success
How many times have you told your students ‘plan your work’ – and they ignore you? The biggest hurdle is to show thinking is far more important than physically writing. To be original you need to have LOTS of ideas, so brainstorm and practice generating ideas often.

Step 2: Sizzling Starts
Do you get the same old starts, ‘One day… Once upon a time… I think that… In my opinion…’ over and over again? Teach students how to start at the ‘moment of change’ to gain a reader’s interest immediately.

Step 3: Tightening Tension
To persuade (not just set out facts) you have to build up momentum. Start strong, but save your best arguments and persuasive techniques for near the end.

Step 4: Dynamic Dialogue
Quotations from experts, real words from a flood victim, concise sayings from famous people, even words from the people in your article (‘I thought I was going to die from fear…’) give strength and vibrancy to writing.

Step 5: Show, Don’t Tell
If you were told children were dying from lack of clean water, would you send money? Most likely not. However, if you were shown one small skinny child, squatting by a polluted river, exhausted, hungry, and desperately needing water… would you help?

Step 6: Ban the Boring
The first ideas are usually the worst – as everyone else is thinking of them too. Challenge students to be better than basic, they can be brilliant, not boring.

Step 7: Endings with Impact
First lines and last lines are what people remember the most. ‘In conclusion, I think…’ is writing by numbers. Be powerful in order to persuade.

Step 1: Plan for Success

Top Techniques

A strong piece of writing is always based on great ideas.

However many people rush into writing. They think pushing a pen around is ‘real work’. Wrong. The real work of writing lies in thinking. This means you generate high quality ideas – and thus have something important to say.

Before
Books are better than TV.

I think books are better than TV because they are light and easy to carry and you can travel with them on trains and things. You can read them at any time, and I like the smell of books. Plus TV has too many ads and books don’t.

Here the person has read the topic, and then immediately started writing. The result? All the ideas are crammed into the first paragraph and the writer doesn’t explain any of them. There’s nothing persuasive here because it’s just a list of facts.

Even worse, now the poor writer has to start padding and using weaker ideas to make up the next few paragraphs.

So how do you plan a persuasive piece? Firstly by brainstorming LOTS of ideas. Secondly, you order the ideas into sections (or paragraphs) that form your plan.

After
Part 1: Brainstorming Ideas
Books are better than TV

- Light and portable – on the beach, people in trains, planes, etc.
- Information is permanent – with TV the information is gone.
- Can read again and again.
- Like the smell of books.
- TV leaves you into a set time. Got to be there at 8:30 or else. Too many other things like homework or friends at that time.
- Make great presents – can’t give a TV!
- Can read in bed, under the covers.
- Ads on TV – over 20 minutes in an hour telling you what to buy or how to look beautiful.
- Quiet, everyone can read a different book in a room.

Push past the ‘pain barrier’ in brainstorming to come up with original ideas. The first ideas are easy, but they will be the ideas everyone else thinks of too.
Step 1: Plan for Success

Part 2: Ordering of Ideas
So now you have lots of ideas, which will be the building blocks of your writing. Next, figure out which ideas are strong and which are weak.

Weaker ideas
Some of these might be able to be used in other paragraphs, or even used as a Sizzling Start. Some can just be deleted altogether.

- Like the smell of books.
- Make great presents - can't give a TV!
- Can read in bed, under the covers.
- Quiet. Everyone can read a different book in a room.

Strong ideas
There are four strong points, each of which could sustain a whole paragraph. Four main ideas means four paragraphs in the BODY of the writing. (There is still the introduction and conclusion to come.) You can also add to the plan as you sort it out.

Introduction (Sizzling Start) goes here. (See Step 2.)

Argument 1: Books are light and portable
- On the beach, by the pool, people in trains going to work, planes, etc
- See people reading often.

Argument 2: Information is permanent
- TV, the information is gone in an instant
- Books have indexes
- Can read again and again.

Argument 3: TV locks you into a set time
- Get to be there at 8:30 or else
- Best programs are on when you have to do homework or friends call.

Argument 4: Ads are always on TV
- 20 minutes an hour is usually ads
- Ads always louder than program, too loud
- Ever seen an ad in a book?

Conclusion (Ending with Impact) goes here. (See Step 7)

SEVEN STEPS TO WRITING SUCCESS

Step 1: Plan for Success

Introduction and Conclusion
Next you just write a Sizzling Start and an Ending with Impact. (See Step 2 and Step 7)

Build up to the Best
Finally, when ordering your ideas, keep your strongest argument for near the end. To be more persuasive, you should build up to your best ideas so that you end with impact.

Easy isn't it? You have a plan!

See how it looks on the Seven Steps Story Graph.

SEVEN STEPS TO WRITING SUCCESS

NAPLAN Note:
1. Ideas are the building blocks of great writing. NAPLAN suggests 5 minutes for planning. I contest this, we need MORE time, at least 10 minutes. As an author I probably spend 20% of my writing time generating ideas (brainstorming) and then ordering them into a plan.
2. A powerful plan leaves room for the writer to PERSUADE using such tools as Show Don't Tell (Step 8), metrical questions, Dynamic Dialogue (Step 4) and emotive language.
3. Plus, because the argument has a strong plan, the writer should get excellent points for Ideas (5 marks), cohesion (4 marks), tart structure (4 marks) and of course, paragraphing (3 marks).

It's all set up by a great plan.
Step 1: Plan for Success

Action Activities

Think First, Write Second
Your mission? Convince students that THINKING is the most important part of writing. (Remember approximately 20% of an author's time is spent planning and brainstorming.)

- Share with students how you brainstorm and plan, in your everyday writing.
- Collate quotes from authors on planning. (Thanks Google.)
- Invite authors to your school. Ask them to bring their plans.
- Separate brainstorming and planning from actually writing. Make them two different time slots.
- Plus, one of the best ways to help kids plan is to use the Story Graph. (The most used part of the original Seven Steps teacher manual.)

Project Management - Planning
In groups, get students to brainstorm all the different ways we already use planning in our lives, e.g. trips to Queensland, building a playhouse, designing a website, etc.

The Alpha Mystery
It makes a huge difference if students can understand how their brain works. If you’ve been part of a Seven Steps to Writing Success workshop, you’ll know all about Alpha brain waves and how the logical versus creative brain functions. If not, Google 'Alpha Brain Waves and Creativity' and see what you find.

Knowing it takes a minute or two to get into Alpha, will help students break the habit of grabbing one or two ideas and then start writing. Hopefully they will keep brainstorming until they push through to Alpha and come up with far more original ideas.

Step 2: Sizzling Starts

Top Techniques

First impressions are vital. Meet someone new and within three minutes you already know if they are confident or shy, interesting or boring — and if you want to talk to them more. Story starts are exactly the same. You have about three sentences to reach out to your reader and make an impression.

In persuasive writing you should use the introduction to say which side you wish to argue. However you can be creative:

Before
I think cats are better than dogs because...

After
They slobber on your best outfits, they bark all night and their breath smells exactly like meat left out in the sun for a week. Dogs are pets, I don’t get it. Give me a cat quiet and curled up on my knees, purrrrrrrrr.

Some text books tell you to summarise the arguments you will be making in the introduction and then explain them.

Before
I think books are better than TV because... let me explain.

It’s a bit boring and you are basically using the whole first paragraph to set out the arguments you are going to say anyway. There are more effective ways to persuade.

After
I’m in a fantasy land far away, magical and mysterious. I am a sorceress, a power, a leader of thousands. OK, I admit it. I’m in bed, reading a book. TV just doesn’t cut it.

See how you have immediately got your reader interested and on your side? You are now in control.
Step 2: Sizzling Starts

Action Activities

Five Minute Fast Starts
Here are some new topics for our ever popular Five Minute Fast Starts. The challenge is for students to write five Sizzling Starts in five minutes. (Yes that's right, one minute per start!) Remember the aim is NOT to make it hard work and ask students to write the whole article, just keep it fun, fast and stick to the starts.

1. Animals should not be kept in zoos.
2. People should be allowed to beg on the streets.
3. Energy drinks like Mother and Red Bull are dangerous.
4. If women were in charge of the world, wars would end.
5. Santa Claus really does exist.

Form groups and get students to share their starts with their friends. They laugh and learn so much from each other.

Three Word Challenge
Pair students up. Each person writes down three words on a piece of paper, e.g. ‘soup’, ‘racing’ and ‘invisible’.

Then they swap papers. Students each get two minutes to write a Sizzling Start, using the three words.

The last thing he ate was soup, three days ago. The note in front of him asked for food. Yet the man racing down the street, with the expensive Rolex on his wrist didn't even see him. When you are poor and need help, you are invisible.

It doesn’t really matter what you are arguing, as long as you are persuasive. The randomness of the words gets students thinking outside the square – i.e. creatively.

Headline of ads
Send students on a search for headlines that grab them. These are also a type of Sizzling Start. Great titles are very powerful – and thus very persuasive.

Step 3: Tightening Tension

Top Techniques

In persuasive writing, the arguments or ideas should be built up paragraph by paragraph to a powerful crescendo (the tension climax). Immediately after this comes the ending – often a short ‘clinch’ or emotionally charged paragraph that closes the writing.

The strong ‘crescendo’ before the ending is where writers persuade people – and change their ideas forever. Here is a well known example.

Before

in conclusion i think that every person has the right to be free no matter what colour their skin. As readers, we are not convinced. Something is saying in our brain: ‘Oh yeah? Prove it.’

Alternative

Martin Luther King – I have a Dream

When we let freedom ring, when we let it ring from every village and every hamlet, from every state and every city, we will be able to speed up that day when all of God’s children, black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics, will be able to join hands and sing in the words of the old Negro spiritual, free at last! Free at last! Thank God Almighty, we are free at last!

Here's another example.

Before

Finally, plastic bags should be banned because they are not as easily disposed of as some people think. They pollute the land and the sea.

After (Tension/Crescendo technique)

You think plastic bags are harmless? Tell that to the dolphin with the plastic bag wound around its snout, slowly starving to death. You think they’re light, easily thrown out? Over one million bags a week are buried, ditched and dumped in our country. One little bag blowing in the wind couldn’t hurt; could it? One hundred million don’t.

Use the Story Graph to help students plot their Persuasive writing. The ending will have far more impact if it is preceded by a powerful tension paragraph.

SEVEN STEPS TO WRITING SUCCESS

Step 3: Tightening Tension

"Excellent practical teaching ideas that engage all learners."
Deanne Heatherill, Clinton S5

Action Activities

The Nine Day Challenge
Send your students into the world and ask them to find an example of powerful tension scenes which build to a memorable ending in each of these genres. Get them to bring back samples from one genre a day and share them in a group. For older students, look at the persuasive techniques used and discuss their effectiveness.

1. Speeches (e.g. Winston Churchill, keynote at conferences)
2. Poetry (e.g. 'Ozymandias' by Shelley or 'If' by Rudyard Kipling)
3. Plays (e.g. 'Friends, Romans, Countrymen...' Julius Caesar by Shakespeare)
4. Advertising (e.g. The Smith Family)
5. Songs (e.g. Missy Higgins' video clip of 'Steer')
6. Magazine articles
7. Movies (e.g. final scene in 'The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas')
8. Books (narratives can be persuasive e.g. '1984' by George Orwell)
9. Sit coms.

Become an orator
Get students to select a speech and isolate the tension/resoncendo scene. They should practice it, then read it to a group.

The Gettysburg Address
(Abraham Lincoln, 19 November 1863)

It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us — that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion — that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain — that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom — and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.

Step 4: Dynamic Dialogue

Top Techniques

Most people think dialogue is mainly used for the narrative style. However, small sections of short, sharp dialogue can give a huge vibrancy to all writing.

Which has more power?

Before
This face cream can make your skin look ten years younger.

After
'My skin is glowing. I look at least ten years younger.'

Quotations from people add authenticity.

Before
Nursing homes sometimes don't care enough for their patients. They let people lie in bed for days. One patient broke his leg and it was a month before anyone found out.

After
'If I treated my dog this way, the RSPCA would sue me,' said the daughter of one patient who broke his leg and waited over a month for it to be treated.

In real life we learn about people by listening to their words, so in writing it has a huge effect.

Before
It's cold outside. The wind is howling. I curl up on the couch and call for my cat.

After
It's cold outside. The wind is howling. I curl up on the couch and call for my cat. 'Here kitty, kitty, kitty...'
**Step 4: Dynamic Dialogue**

**Action Activities**

*Quotations*

Quotations from famous (or funny) people are also a way to introduce a 'voice' into a piece of writing, e.g. cats versus dogs:

- *Dogs come when they are called. Cats take a message and get back to you.* (Maryivy)
- *Cats are smarter than dogs. You can't get right cats to pull a sled through snow.* (Jeff Valdez)

Next time you set a topic, get students to search the internet for quotations on the idea. Share them in groups, talk and discuss. Then students can brainstorm their own sayings. This is an excellent way to get them to write short and powerful captions.

*Words from the Experts*

'The use of pocket-money is one way to remove pressure children place on their parents to buy, buy, buy,' claims Michael Groarke, a leading parent educator and author.

Convincing right? The expert voice carries huge weight and using their exact words is even more persuasive. Ask students to find examples of an 'expert's words' in:

- Books
- Magazines
- Newspapers

Get them used to the idea of quoting experts as a way to convince.

*Dialogue Dares*

'That's mine! I want it! Mummy, it's not fair!"

That's the start of a persuasive paragraph. Here's the challenge. Students have to use this as their 'creative topic sentence' and continue on. For example:

All over the world, in thousands of languages these words are being yelled by kids. Is fighting between children normal? Probably, is it desirable? No. So how can we show children a better way?

Some more topic sentences:

- 'What a lovely painting Jess. Did you do it all by yourself?'
- 'Shh, not again. Get off my case for once will you. Talk to the hand.'
- 'Darling, the yellow looks lovely on you, it matches your... or face.'
- 'Make sure everything's switched off luv. Gotta make it safe.'

*SIX STEPS TO WRITING SUCCESS*


**Step 5: Show, Don’t Tell**

**Top Techniques**

Kids 'tell' because it is quick and simple. However, it is also unconvincing.

Painting a word picture is probably the simplest and most persuasive technique of all. You only have to look at advertising to see this. Charities such as the Smith Family and the Salvation Army are great examples of Show, Don’t Tell persuasive advertising. No complicated words and no overly complex sentence structures. They just show one child, one situation – and make you see the world through their eyes.

What readers can see in their mind, makes them empathise and connect.

*Before*

Yes, we should help other countries even when we have poverty here because children in places like Ethiopia are dying without water.

*After*

Thirsty! Walk into a shop and pick up a bottle of water. Pay a few dollars, unscrew the top and drink. That's if you're lucky and live in Australia. How take a close look at that small bottle in your hands. If you lived in Ethiopia, that is all the water you have to live on for three days.

*Before*

Come to our tropical rainforest, you'll love the silence and rich green colours.

*After*

You feel the silence first, until you listen more and hear the hundreds of birds calling and singing in the valley. Underneath your feet, the leaves rustle and the spicy smell of gum trees and damp earth comes with each step. The deeper into the forest you go, the more the green will fill your soul—dark ferns, a riot of creepers, singing moss, and through it all comes a soft sunshine filtering through leaves to light memories.

Persuasive writing aims to evoke emotions and make people act – and that is why ads are the best way of all to teach students the art of persuasive texts.

*SIX STEPS TO WRITING SUCCESS*

**Step 5: Show, Don’t Tell**

**Action Activities**

**Ads All Around**
Get students to collect persuasive style ads from all sources. This includes:

- Magazines
- Newspapers
- Google Ads
- Anything online
- Junk mail

Form groups and discuss the persuasive techniques. Vote on which ones ‘move’ the reader the most.

**More Ideas For Ads All Around**
1. Make a poster collage of all the different ads you’ve found from above.
2. For older students get them to identify which emotion the ads are trying to invoke, e.g. family appeal, youth appeal, expert appeal, curiosity, humour, safety, love, value for money.
3. Have a competition to see who can find the most persuasive ad each week. (A great way to teach students to look at all the advertising around them and analyse it.)
4. Now get students to create their own ad, using the Show, Don’t Tell technique. They could choose to write and film a TV ad, design a print ad, create a radio ad, etc.

**Advertise your school**
Give students free reign. Take on the role of marketing your school. Get students to design an ad to appear as a full page spread in the local paper. To be most persuasive they should ‘show’ what are the best things about the school to others.

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**Step 6: Ban the Boring**

**Top Techniques**

Planning is one of the key factors to Ban the Boring. When you have LOTS of great ideas – and you have ordered them into paragraphs – then a lot of the ‘waffle’ and padding never even happens. This leaves you free to use a huge range of persuasive techniques.

**Before**
I think snakes are a lot more dangerous than sharks. Sharks, you have to go swimming to get bitten, but snakes are on land. Plus the poison of a snake makes you really sick and some people say that the treatment (antivenom) makes you sick for ages. It’s really important that you avoid snakes and wear shoes. I’ve seen lots of snakes in my life.

**After**
How many sharks have you seen in your life? None? Yet how many times have you heard the cry ‘snake, snake!’ and felt real fear?

In the hot long grass of the Australian paddocks, snakes lurk. Here come the kids, laughing and giggling, here comes a farmer on his way to work, there go the campers looking for water. You can’t see them or hear them, but snakes are there. They don’t mean to kill, but when a careless foot falls too near, the snake rears and attacks. That is when disaster strikes.

The antivenom might save you – hopefully. However, the cure can also cause severe problems. Large amounts of antivenom can cause rashes, arthritis and kidney problems, claims Dr Geoff, a specialist in snake bites...

A quick analysis shows this:
- Planning (Step 1) has separated the ideas so that each one can be dealt with strongly.
- Studying (Step 2) instantly tells which side the reader is on – and grants our attention.
- Dialogue (Step 3) gives more vibrancy (‘snake, snake!’) and also conviction (Dr Geoff’s words).
- Show, Don’t Tell (Step 4) shows us kids, farmers, campers… all people we can identify with.

Don’t settle for bland and boring – be brilliant!

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**Seven Steps to Writing Success**

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**Step 6: Ban the Boring**

**Action Activities**

"Great workable ideas, easy to implement. Good fun ideas that kids will love - working without knowing it."
Roberta Blunden, Knebbs 55

**Lose What They All Use**

There are many "standard" phrases which everyone uses hoping they'll sound convincing.

Unfortunately 100,000 other students are all using the same phrases. With your students, form a list of things that are better avoided. Then encourage students to lose them forever. Here are a few of mine:

- I think... (Oh good, that's a relief.)
- In my opinion... (Err, is anyone else writing this with you?)
- Some people think... (In other words, you have no facts and you heard people say this once.)
- My friends say... (They're not experts either, it sounds immature.)
- It's really, really important... (Really? Really? I'm not persuaded.)
- I've seen... (We've all seen strange stuff, personal experience is not really convincing.)
- In conclusion... (Duh, it's the last paragraph right? The reader can see that. If you have any sort of power in writing, avoid this extremely basic point.)

**Cutting Room and Movies**

'Everyday' does NOT have to be incorporated into writing. For instance, ever noticed how much more exciting life is in movies?

Challenge students to watch TV and make a list called 'Real Life Things That Never Happen in Movies'. The one with the longest, funniest or most original list wins.

Here are some fun examples:

- When someone steals a car, the driver's seat is always in the correct position.
- All women wake up and go to bed wearing make-up.
- Every dog is calm and well trained.
- When eating at a cafe the food is served one minute after ordering it.
- No one has bad breath.
- Laptops don't ever run out of battery.
- If you decide to start dancing in the street, everyone you meet will know the steps.

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**Step 7: Endings with Impact**

**Top Techniques**

An ending which has impact leaves that final convincing impression! Here are three different techniques.

1. **Link to opening**

   Your introduction (Stirring Start) sets up a scenario. Your ending goes back and links to that.

   **Start**
   "Dad," she wailed. "Lucy says there isn't a tooth fairy. But there really is, isn't there?"
   She looks up at you with dark pleading eyes. She's five years old. Do you tell her the real truth or the happy fairy tale?

   **End**
   (After you've argued for truth on important things - but maybe white lies are also necessary)
   "Dad, so what about the Tooth Fairy? She really will come tonight, won't she?"
   You look into her shining eyes and you tell her the "truth".
   "Of course she will, the Tooth Fairy always comes to you, doesn't she?"

2. **Paint a word picture (Show, Don't Tell)**

   **Before**
   Therefore I think big families are better than small families.

   **After**
   At dinner we sit down to steaming plates and lots of food and lots of noise. Dad is teasing Jeremy about his girlfriend. Sarah has just come in from helping her with her homework. We fight a lot, we laugh a lot. We're a big family, but in the end, we're always friends.

3. **Call to action**

   We need to feel we can make a difference. Tell the reader exactly what to do.

   **Before**
   In conclusion children need to grow up safely and you can help.

   **After**
   Can you do just two things? Give up just one ice-cream a week, that's $3. Give that money to a child in Nepal. Give that they may grow.
Step 7: Endings with Impact

Action Activities

Journalism Closers
Get students to pick a magazine or newspaper article they have read this week. In groups of 3-5, ask them to read out the last line of the article and explain why it works.

Quotes from authors
Ask every student to find a quotation from a journalist, author or script writer about endings. They can write them up in coloured texts on a big poster. There should be as many quotes as there are students in the class. The trick is this – the early students get their work up first, later students can’t repeat quotations and have to go back and research more.
- “If I see an ending, I can work backward.” (Arthur Miller)
- “In my end is my beginning.” (T. S. Eliot)

Three Ending Techniques

Link to opening
Challenge students to write the Sizzling Starts and Endings with Impact to these topics:
- Ghosts really do exist.
- Brothers are better than sisters.

Paint a word picture (Show, Don’t Tell)
Write the Conclusion/Ending for these topics:
- Camping versus motels – which is better for holidays?
- Every student should do voluntary work to help others.

Call to action
Create a ‘do something better’ ending for these campaigns.
- Clean up your school.
- Ban exams!

SEVEN STEPS TO WRITING SUCCESS

“Absolutely fantastic... if I had learnt these steps when I was at school I wouldn’t have thought of English lessons as boring.”
Kell Johnson, Dysart 5S