Moonie State School



NAPLAN Strategies

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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:

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

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

Audience	Text structure	Ideas	Persuasive devices	Vocabulary	Cohesion	Paragraphing	Sentence structure	Punctuation	Spelling
0-6	0-4	0-5	0-4	0-5	0-4	0-3	0-6	0-5	0-6

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:

Off-Years (2, 4, 6)	NAPLAN Years (3, 5, 7)
	NAPLAN Practice Tests: **Late Term One / Early Term Two**
Reading Modelled, shared, guided and independent reading which reinforces decoding and comprehension sills referenced in planning.	**Reading** Modelled, shared, guided and independent reading which reinforces decoding and comprehension sills referenced in planning.
Language Conventions Spelling program to address no-excuse words and editing identified and unidentified errors.	Language Conventions Spelling program to address no-excuse words and editing identified and unidentified errors.
Writing Persuasive genre incorporated into C2C units of work. 7 Steps to Writing Success utilised as framework for engaging students in writing activities.	Writing 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.
Numeracy Basic facts and algorithm knowledge to be consolidated daily. NAPLAN-style problem solving activities to be incorporated into Maths programs regularly ***(at least weekly).***	Numeracy Basic facts and algorithm knowledge to be consolidated daily. NAPLAN-style problem solving activities to be incorporated into Maths programs ***daily leading up to the test and at least weekly after.***

Literacy — Writing test commentary

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.

Images removed at ACARA's request.

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.

Moon, B 2012, "Remembering Rhetoric: Recalling a tradition of explicit instruction in writing", in Gannon, S (ed.) English in Australia, *The Journal of the Australian Association for the teaching of English*, vol. 47, no. 1, pp. 37–52.

Wiley, M 2000, "The popularity of formulaic writing (and why we need to resist it)", *English Journal*, vol.90, no.1, pp. 61–67.

Appendix B

Criteria

1. Audience

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

	Category descriptor	Additional information	Sample scripts
0	• symbols or drawings which have the intention of conveying meaning		PletRi DoLiSal (18)
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 anmals cou'd 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 nessasary 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.

	Category descriptor	Additional information	Sample scripts
0	• no evidence of any structural components of a persuasive text	• symbols or drawings • inappropriate genre, e.g. narrative, description, recount, procedure	PletRi DoLiSal (18)
1	• minimal evidence of persuasive structure - structural components not clearly identifiable OR - one component only, e.g. an introduction or body	• text may be - a statement such as an opinion and/or reason (may be followed by recount or description) - a list of statements or beliefs	Some anmals cou'd die (20) animals getting cewd (22) it cruel to keep animals (24) animals will feel sad (28) any other animal (30) They won't face danger (32) they try to break out (36)
2	• text contains two clearly identifiable structural components OR • all components are present but weak	• introduction or conclusion are clearly differentiated from the body • often presents as a more developed body with underdeveloped introduction and conclusion	I agree and don't agree (38) Some toys and games are educational (40) My idea of a perfect zoo (42)
3	• text contains an introduction, a body and conclusion OR • detailed longer text with two developed components and one weaker component	• structural components are developed • body is developed with reasons and supporting evidence	All animals started off (46) Under Certain Circumstances (54) Food, water and other nessasary supplies (58)
4	• coherent, controlled and complete argument • all components are well developed - introduction with clear position statement AND - body with reasons and detailed supporting evidence AND - conclusion that reinforces the writer's position	• conclusion may reflect on issues raised and/or recommend action	The lion's glorious hair (62) Cages and Zoos (50) If humans can have a voice why can't animals. (66) zoos can have useful purposes (70) things should be regulated (74)

3. Ideas

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

	Category descriptor	Additional information	Sample scripts
0	• no evidence or insufficient evidence	• symbols or drawings	PletRi DoLiSal (18)
1	• Text contains one idea OR • ideas appear unrelated to each other OR • ideas are unrelated to topic on prompt		Some anmals cou'd die (20)
2	• one idea with simple elaboration OR • ideas are few and related but not elaborated OR • many simple ideas that are related but not elaborated		animals getting cewd (22) it cruel to keep animals (24) animals will feel sad (28) any other animal (30)
3	• 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	• may also contain ineffective or unrelated ideas • may be assertions/opinions	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) My idea of a perfect zoo (42) All animals started off (46)
4	• ideas are elaborated and contribute effectively to the writer's position	• 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	Cages and Zoos (50) Under Certain Circumstances (54) Food, water and other nessasary supplies (58) The lion's glorious hair (62)
5	• ideas are generated, selected and crafted to be highly persuasive		If humans can have a voice why can't animals (66) zoos can have useful purposes (70) things should be regulated (74)

4. Persuasive devices

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

	Category descriptor	Additional information	Sample scripts
0	• no evidence or insufficient evidence	• symbols or drawings • writes in wrong genre • copies topic only	**PletRi DoLiSal (18)** **Some anmals cou'd 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)** **zoos 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.

	Category descriptor	Additional information	Sample scripts
0	• symbols or drawings		PletRi DoLiSal (18)
1	• very short script	• few content words	Some anmals cou'd die (20)
2	• mostly simple words • may include two or three precise words or word groups	• single nouns - *water, award, house, reason, news, people, world* • simple noun groups - *a very helpful man, a tin cage, television programs* • single verbs - *like, run, look, need, think, played* • simple verb groups - *did it the proper way, looked around the room* • adjectives and adverbs - *cold, always, really, very, friendly, rich* • simple comparisons - *as much as she can, the best teacher I ever had, one of the fastest*	animals getting cewd (22) it cruel to keep animals (24) animals will feel sad (28) any other animal (30) 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)
3	• four or more precise words or word groups	• single precise words - *citizen, urge, budget, consider, solution, protect, supportive, research* • modal adjectives and adverbs - *ultimate, certain, extreme, possibly, definitely, rarely* • precise word groups - *duty of care, quick-minded person, a positive impact on society* • modal groups - *it would seem that, it is unlikely that* • technical - *habitat, life expectancy, politician, global warming, financial crisis* • nominalisations - *probability, likelihood, shortsightedness* • figurative language, e.g. alliteration, metaphor, simile, personification	My idea of a perfect zoo (42) All animals started off (46) The lion's glorious hair (62)
4	• sustained and consistent use of precise words and word groups that enhance the meaning (may be some inappropriate or inaccurate word choices)		Cages and Zoos (50) Under Certain Circumstances (54) Food, water and other nessasary supplies (58) If humans can have a voice why can't animals (66)
5	• a range of precise and effective words and word groups is used in a fluent and articulate manner *language choice is well matched to style of argument*		zoos can have useful purposes (70) things should be regulated (74)

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.

	Category descriptor	Additional information	Sample scripts
0	• symbols or drawings		PletRi DoLiSal (18)
1	• links are missing or incorrect • short script *often confusing for the reader*		Some anmals cou'd die (20) animals getting cewd (22) animals will feel sad (28)
2	• some correct links between sentences (do not penalise for poor punctuation) • most referring words are accurate OR • longer text with cohesion controlled only in parts *reader may occasionally need to re-read and provide their own links to clarify meaning*	• May use - simple word associations *motorbike rider/stunts, bandaid/ stick* - small selection of simple connectives and conjunctions *and, if, so, when, because, not only ... but also, then, but, or*	it cruel to keep animals (24) any other animal (30) 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)
3	• controlled use of cohesive devices supports reader understanding *meaning is clear on first reading and text flows well in a sustained piece of writing*	• May use - word associations, e.g. synonyms *safe haven/habitat/sanctuary/ enclosure* collocation *black market/mistreatment/unethical* - other connectives *however, although, therefore, additionally, instead, even though, finally, in saying this* • there may be occasional lapses in referring words that track plural nouns, *e.g. animals ... it*	My idea of a perfect zoo (42) All animals started off (46) Cages and Zoos (50) Under Certain Circumstances (54) Food, water and other nessasary supplies (58) The lion's glorious hair (62)
4	• 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*	• consistent use of cohesive devices, e.g. referring words, ellipsis, text connectives, substitutions and word associations that enhance meaning	If humans can have a voice why can't animals (66) zoos can have useful purposes (70) things should be regulated (74)

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.

	Category descriptor	Additional information	Sample scripts
0	• no correct use of paragraphing	• script may be a block of text • may be random breaks • may be a new line for every sentence (where break is not used to separate ideas)	PletRi DoLiSal (18) Some anmals cou'd die (20) animals getting cewd (22) it cruel to keep animals (24) animals will feel sad (28) any other animal (30) They won't face danger (32) they try to break out (36)
1	• 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 *contains at least one correct paragraph break*	• ideas are separated (paragraphs may contain some unrelated ideas) • paragraphs may be used to separate the body from the introduction and/or conclusion (two or three paragraphs)	I agree and don't agree (38) Some toys and games are educational (40) Under Certain Circumstances (54)
2	• all paragraphs are focused on one idea or set of like ideas - at least one paragraph is logically constructed and contains a topic sentence and supporting detail *paragraphs are mostly correct*	• not all topic sentences are successful • body needs at least two paragraphs • may use an extended one-sentence paragraph that contains an elaborated idea	My idea of a perfect zoo (42) All animals started off (46) zoos can have useful purposes (70)
3	• paragraphing supports argument *paragraphs are ordered and cumulatively build argument across text*	• paragraphs are deliberately structured to pace and direct the reader's attention • single sentence may be used as a final comment for emphasis	Cages and Zoos (50) Food, water and other nessasary supplies (58) The lion's glorious hair (62) If humans can have a voice why can't animals (66) things should be regulated (74)

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.

	Category descriptor	Additional information	Sample scripts
0	• no evidence of sentences	• drawings, symbols, a list of words, text fragments	**PletRi DoLiSal (18)**
1	• some correct formation of sentences *some meaning can be construed*	• in general control is very limited • very short script (one sentence) • most sentences contain the same basic structures • may be overuse of the conversational '*and*' or '*then*'	**Some animals cou'd die (20)** **it cruel to keep animals (24)**
2	• correct sentences are mostly simple and/or compound sentences *meaning is predominantly clear*	• a short script that consists only of correct complex sentences (where there are no simple sentences) • text may include complex sentences that use one basic structure (two, if one is a projected clause) • two or more correct sentences required	**animals getting cewd (22)** **animals will feel sad (28)** **any other animal (30)** **They wont face danger (32)**
3	• most simple and compound sentences are correct AND • some complex sentences are correct *meaning is predominantly clear*	• simple sentences may show some extension • experiments with basic structures in complex sentences - requires two or more types (three or more, if one is a projected clause) • four or more correct sentences required	**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)** **Cages and Zoos (50)**
4	• most simple, compound and complex sentences are correct OR • all simple, compound and complex sentences are correct but do not demonstrate variety *meaning is clear*	• more routine use and greater control of elaborating clauses and phrases in simple, compound and complex sentences • allow for an occasional minor error • usually requires a sustained piece of writing	**All animals started off (46)** **Under Certain Circumstances (54)** **Food, water and other nessasary supplies (58)** **If humans can have a voice why can't animals (66)**
5	• sentences are correct (allow for occasional error in more sophisticated structures) • demonstrates variety *meaning is clear and sentences enhance meaning*	• shows control over a range of different structures (quantity, quality and variety) VARIETY • clause types and patterns - verbless, adjectival, adverbial, multiple, non-finite • dependent clause position • length and rhythm • increased elaboration and extension • stylistically appropriate choices	**The lion's glorious hair (62)** **zoos can have useful purposes (70)**
6	• all sentences are correct (allow for occasional slip, e.g. a missing word) *writing contains controlled and well-developed sentences that express precise meaning and are consistently effective*		**things should be regulated (74)**

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.

	Category descriptor	Additional information	Sample scripts
0	• no evidence of correct sentence punctuation	SENTENCE PUNCTUATION INCLUDES • capital letters to begin sentences • full stops, question marks and exclamation marks to end sentences OTHER PUNCTUATION INCLUDES • commas in lists • commas to mark clauses and phrases • apostrophes for contractions • apostrophes for possession • capital letters and commas used within quotation marks • quotation marks for text extracts, highlighted words and words used with ironic emphasis ('sneer' quotes) • brackets and dashes • colons and semicolons • points of ellipsis NOUN CAPITALISATION INCLUDES • first names and surnames • titles: *Mr, Mrs, Miss, Ms* • place names: *Paris, Italy* • institution names: *Valley High* • days of week, months of year • street names: *Ord St* • book and film titles • holidays: *Easter, Ramadan* • historic events: *World War II*	PletRi DoLiSal (18) it cruel to keep animals (24)
1	• correct use of capital letters to start sentences OR full stops to end sentences (at least one correct sentence marker) *punctuation is minimal and of little assistance to the reader*		Some animals cou'd die (20) animals getting cewd (22) animals will feel sad (28)
2	• 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) *provides some markers to assist reading*		They won't face danger (32) All animals started off (46)
3	• 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) OR • accurate sentence punctuation with correct noun capitalisation and no stray capitals, nothing else used (four or more sentences) *provides adequate markers to assist reading*		any other animal (30) they try to break out (36) I agree and don't agree (38) My idea of a perfect zoo (42) Cages and Zoos (50) Under Certain Circumstances (54)
4	• all sentence punctuation correct (no stray capitals) AND • mostly correct use of other punctuation, including noun capitalisation *provides accurate markers to enable smooth and efficient reading*		Some toys and games are educational (40) The lion's glorious hair (62) If humans can have a voice why can't animals. (66) things should be regulated (74)
5	• writing contains accurate use of all applicable punctuation *provides precise markers to pace and control reading of the text*		zoos can have useful purposes (70) Food, water and other nessasary supplies (58)

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.

	Category descriptor	Additional information	Sample scripts
0	• no conventional spelling	SIMPLE WORDS • words with two letters (*an, be, it, on, up, my*) • single-syllable words with - short vowel sounds (*cat, men, fit, not, fun*) - consonant digraphs (*shop, thin, much, chips*) - consonant blends (*clap, drop, grab, bring, must, help, left*) - double final consonants (*egg, will, less*) - high frequency (*all, day, feet, food, you, park, bird, her, good, for, how, our*) • high frequency short two-syllable words - *into, undo, going* COMMON WORDS • single-syllable words with - two two-consonant blends and/or digraphs (*crack, speech, broom, drift*) - three-consonant blends (*stretch, catch*) • common long vowels (*sail, again, away, mean, light, fly, shiny, broke, only, close, hurt, use, chair*) • multi-syllabic words with even stress patterns (*litter, plastic, between*) • common homophones (*too/two, there/their, write/right, hear/here, brake/break*) • common words with silent letters (*know, wrong, comb*) • single-syllable words ending in ould, ey, ough • suffixes that don't change the base word (*jumped, sadly, adults, happening*) • most rule-driven words: drop e, double letter, change y to i (*having, spitting, heavier, easily*) DIFFICULT WORDS • uneven stress patterns in multi-syllabic words (*chocolate, mineral*) • uncommon vowel patterns (*drought, hygiene*) • difficult subject-specific content words (*disease, habitat, predator*) • difficult homophones (*practice/practise, board/bored*) • suffixes where base word changes (*prefer/preferred, relate/relation*) • consonant alternation patterns (*confident/confidence*) • many three- and four-syllable words (*invisible, organise, community*) • multi-syllabic words ending in tion, sion, ture, ible/able, ent/ant, ful, el/al, elly/ally, gle (*supervision, furniture, powerful, sentinel, brutally, rectangle*) CHALLENGING WORDS • unusual consonant patterns (*guarantee*) • longer words with unstressed syllables (*responsibility*) • suffixes to words ending in e, c or l (*physically, changeable, plasticity*) • foreign words (*lieutenant, nonchalant*)	PletRi DoLiSal (18)
1	• few examples of conventional spelling • Limited evidence (less than 20 words written)		Some anmals cou'd die (20) animals getting cewd (22)
2	• correct spelling of - most simple words - some common words (at least two) *errors evident in common words*		it cruel to keep animals (24) animals will feel sad (28)
3	• correct spelling of - most simple words - most common words (at least 20)		any other animal (30) They won't face danger (32) I agree and don't agree (38)
4	• correct spelling of - simple words - most common words - some difficult words (at least two) *incorrect difficult words do not outnumber correct difficult words*		they try to break out (36) Some toys and games are educational (40)
5	• correct spelling of - simple words - most common words - at least 10 difficult words *incorrect difficult words do not outnumber correct difficult words*		My idea of a perfect zoo (42) All animals started off (46) Cages and Zoos (50) Under Certain Circumstances (54) Food, water and other nessasary supplies (58) The lion's glorious hair (62) If humans can have a voice why can't animals. (66) zoos can have useful purposes (70)
6	• correct spelling of all words AND • at least 10 difficult words and some challenging words OR at least 15 difficult words if no challenging words *allow for a very occasional minor slip (one or two)*		things should be regulated (74)

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

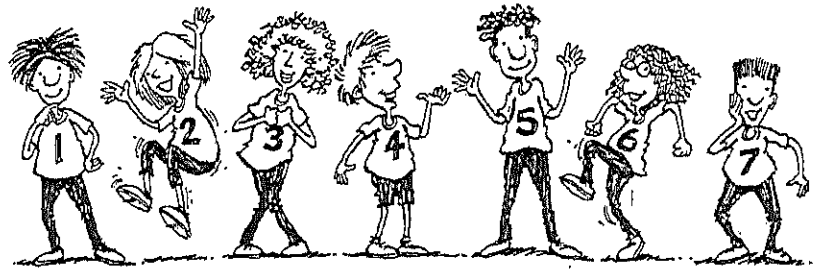
If you were told children were dying from lack of clean water, would you send money? Most likely not. However, if you were shown one small skinny child, squatting by a polluted river, exhausted, hungry, and desperately needing water... would you help?

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.



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Step 1: Plan for Success

TOP TIP

Think first, and second, and third - and write last. Great writing always starts with great ideas.

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 locks 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.

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Appendix C

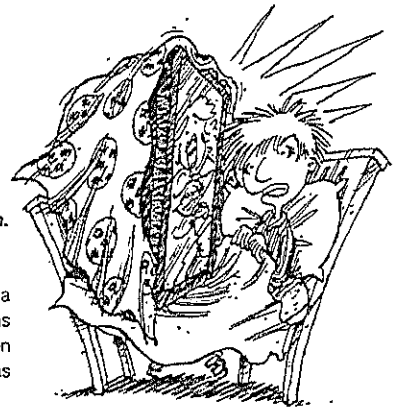
Step 1: Plan for Success

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
- Got 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?

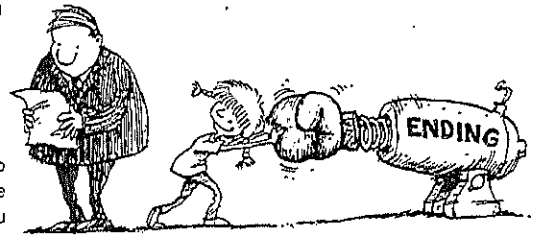
Conclusion (Ending with Impact) goes here. (See Step 7.)

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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.)

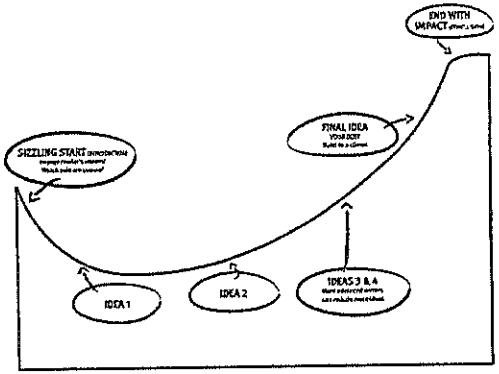


Build up to the Best

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.



MORE HELP:
- **See the full story from this plan. (Part A)**
- **Over 7 worksheets for planning (Part C)**
- **A blank Story Graph for students (Part C)**

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 5), rhetorical 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), text structure (4 marks) and of course, paragraphing (3 marks).

It's all set up by a great plan.

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Step 1: Plan for Success

"I wish I'd learnt all of this before this year's NAPLAN, but now looking forward to next year's. Inspiring, awesome, brilliant, enlightening!"
Michelle Mason, Glenmore SS

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.



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Step 2: Sizzling Starts

TOP TIP
You only have seven seconds to grab your reader's interest. Start with impact. First impressions are vital!

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.

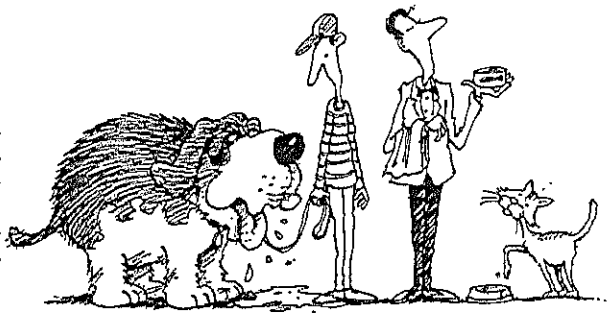
In persuasive writing you should use the introduction to say which side you wish to argue. However you can be creative:

Before

I think cats are better than dogs because...

After

They slobber on your best outfit, they bark all night and their breath smells exactly like meat left out in the sun for a week. Dogs as pets, I don't get it. Give me a cat quiet and curled up on my knee, purrrrlease.



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 1)... 2)... 3)... 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.

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Step 2: Sizzling Starts

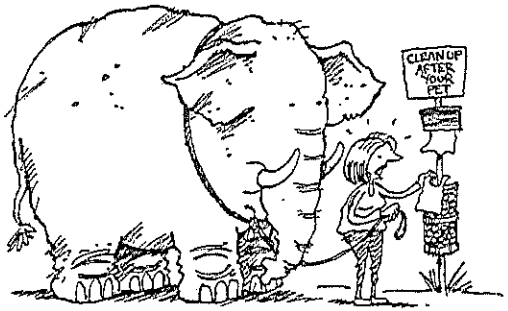
"FANTASTIC. I want to know more – I want to write more – with the kids!"
Greg Fisher, Principal, Heywood Consolidated PS

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.

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Step 3: Tightening Tension

TOP TIP
Save your strongest idea for last to build up to a powerful climax. Use questions, rule of three, short words and sentences to persuade.

Top Techniques

In persuasive writing, the arguments or ideas should be built up paragraph by paragraph to a powerful crescendo (the tension scene). Immediately after this comes the ending – often a short 'clincher' 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 maybe wouldn't, a million does.*



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.

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Step 3: Tightening Tension

"Excellent practical teaching ideas that engage all learners."
Deanne Weatherall, Clinton SS

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, keynotes 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 'Stear')*
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/crescendo scene. They should practise 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.



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Step 4: Dynamic Dialogue

TOP TIP

Real words from real people are incredibly powerful. Use quotations, tips from experts and dialogue to convince.

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 my cat. 'Here kitty, kitty, kitty...'



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Step 4: Dynamic Dialogue

"I now have a framework to use. Actually I have been looking for something like this for years."
Michael Routledge, Principal, Westwood SS

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. (Mary Bly)*
- *Cats are smarter than dogs. You can't get eight 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 used to writing short and powerful taglines.

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 Grose, 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?'
- 'Sheesh, not again. Get off my case for once will you. Talk to the hand.'
- 'Darling, the yellow looks lovely on you. It matches your...er face.'
- 'Make sure everything's switched off luv. Gotta make it safe.'

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Step 5: Show, Don't Tell

TOP TIP
Detail shows us real life. Don't talk about 'lots' or thousands or even millions. Show us one child in need, one dog greeting you at the door or one person being a hero – that will win your readers over.

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.
Now 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, clinging 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.

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Step 5: Show, Don't Tell

"Great to see writing broken up into steps with a clear guide to engage kids to love writing."
Kellie Dobson,
Duaringa SS

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
- Direct mail
- Email blasts
- TV ads
- Photos of posters/billboards

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 TIP

Less is more. There are lots of ideas and words are easy. Take a tip from authors - slash and burn to make your ideas stand out.

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 M, 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.
- Sizzling Start (Step 2) instantly tells which side the reader is on – and grabs our attention.
- Dialogue (Step 4) gives more vibrancy ('snake, snake') and also conviction (Dr Geoff's words).
- Show, Don't Tell (Step 5) shows us kids, farmers, campers... all people we can identify with.

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

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Step 6: Ban the Boring

"Great workable ideas, easy to implement. Good fun ideas that kids will love – working without knowing it."
Roberta Matsen, Koumala SS

Action Activities

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... (Er, 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, 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 pointer.)

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

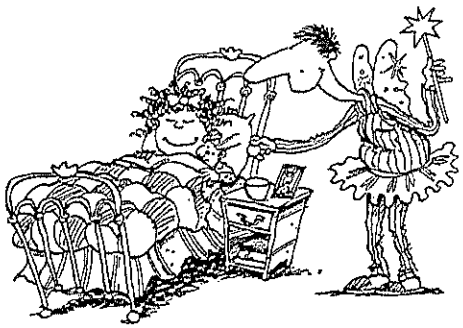
TOP TIP
There are 3 main ways to end with impact. Link to the opening, Show Don't Tell or create a call to action.

Top Techniques

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

1. Link to opening

Your introduction (Sizzling 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 fairytale?

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 conned me into 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.

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Step 7: Endings with Impact

"Absolutely fantastic!... If I had learnt these steps when I was at school I wouldn't have thought of English lessons as boring."
Kelli Johnson, Dysart SS

Action Activities

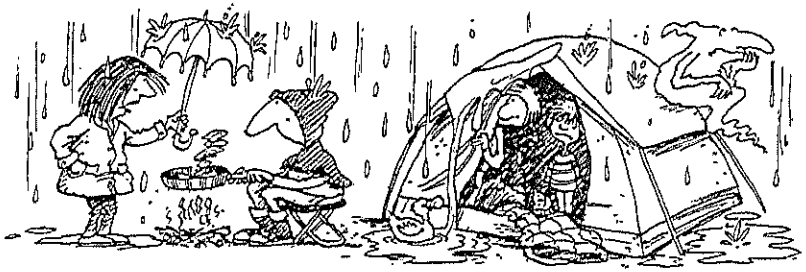
Journalism Closers

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 texta 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!

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