

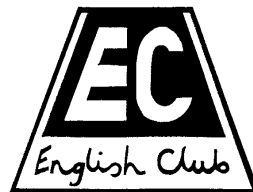
VCE ENGLISH Using Language to Persuade

# EXAMINATION LANGUAGE ANALYSIS TASK

A Supplement

## New Practice Tasks

Robert McGregor



*Essential English  
Curriculum*

*A VCE English eResource from The English Club*

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## New Practice Tasks

Robert McGregor



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**EXAMINATION LANGUAGE ANALYSIS TASK**  
**A Supplement: New Practice Tasks**

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*A Supplement: New Practice Tasks*

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The English Club

PO Box 627, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207

Ph (03) 9646 3820

Fax (03) 9646 3007

E-mail [engclub@netspace.net.au](mailto:engclub@netspace.net.au)

Home Page [www.englishclubonline.net.au](http://www.englishclubonline.net.au)

ABN 52 483 254 963

# EXAMINATION LANGUAGE ANALYSIS TASK

## WHAT YOU HAVE TO DO

### What is the Examination Language Analysis Task?

The Examination Language Analysis Task is a test of your abilities to analyse the use of language in the presentation of a point of view.

This task arises from your study in Unit 3 of a range of texts whose main purpose is to persuade readers and viewers to share a particular point of view. That is, at the end of Unit 3, you are expected to be able to analyse the use of language in texts that present a point of view on an issue debated in the Australian media.

The Examination Language Analysis Task is therefore designed to test your ability to analyse how language is used in a persuasive text, and to present this analysis in a coherent piece of writing.

The Examination Language Analysis Task is found in Section C of the examination paper. It contains:

- 1 Instructions for completing the task: that is, analysis of the language used in one or two texts in the task material.
- 2 A statement or question expressing the issue addressed in the task material.
- 3 Task material on the particular issue, containing one or more texts expressing points of view on the issue.

The Examination Language Analysis Task contributes one third of the marks for the English examination.

The practice language tasks in this booklet are set out in a similar way to the actual task on the examination paper.

## How to Prepare for the Examination Language Task

- 1 Review the material you gathered for the School Assessed Coursework (Unit 3, Outcome 3) You will have collected a selection of Australian media texts presenting points of view on a topical issue which has arisen in the media since 1 September last year.
  - Choose an opinion piece, blog, forum piece, letter or editorial that you did not use for this task.
  - Re-read the text and think about why the writer wrote this piece and how you know this.
  - Think about the tone of the piece. How does the writer sound? What do you think gives the piece this tone of voice? (See pages 5–8 of this booklet.)
  - Highlight or underline examples of language used by the writer that you think help the writer to achieve the purpose for writing the piece. Where appropriate, include the ways in which arguments and evidence are ordered.
  - Think about the kinds of readers that the writer is trying to reach, influence or impress.
  - Explain how you think the selected examples of language work to persuade readers. Overall, can you explain how this use of language is positioning the reader?
- 2 Repeat this work with a different media text from your collection on the issue.
  - Choose a piece in your collection that is written in a different form, and analyse the use of language.
  - Compare the language used in two pieces in your collection. Highlight contrasts in tone, stance, contention, arguments, form, structure, choice of words, persuasive techniques, purposes, intended audiences.
- 3 In the weeks leading up to the examination, use the Language Analysis Tasks in this booklet for intense practice at completing tasks within set time limits.
- 4 Be aware of the assessment criteria for Language analysis, Section C of the examination:
  - understanding of the points of view presented; analysis of the ways of using language to persuade; controlled, effective use of language. (See the VCAA web site)

## Analysing the Use of Language in the Examination

**1 Read the task description and the background information** on the first page of the Section C examination task.

**2 Re-read the text or texts** on the examination paper that you are asked to analyse.

**3 Identify features of the use of language:**

*What is said? ie, viewpoint, contention, stance.*

*How is it said? ie, the general tone of the piece*

- Look for examples of persuasive language used – tone of voice in the text and how this is achieved, persuasive techniques and tactics, and how they work; logical development and appeal.
- Study any visual text accompanying the piece – cartoons, photographs, tables, sketches, maps, diagrams. What is in the frame? Does it help send the message in the text? If so, how? Does it provide a different perspective on the issue?

*Why is it said? How is it intended to work?*

- Think about intention, impact, influence, persuasiveness – ie, how it works, especially how it positions the reader; the combined effect of the written piece and the visual text; overall tone and changes in tone.

**4 Write the analysis:**

- In your opening paragraph, write about the contention and stance of the writer; ie, what the writer is saying. Comment on the overall tone of the text.
  - In the body of your analysis, explain how it is being said, ie, the kinds of language used, how the tone of voice is sustained, and any change of tone. Select examples of language from the piece and use them to explain how they might engage and influence readers or viewers.
  - Build in an analysis of the purpose and effect of the visual text – how it relates to the issue and the writer’s stance, and its effectiveness in persuading the reader.
  - Conclude with some general comments on how the language works on readers – eg, intended effects.
- 5** If you are asked to analyse more than one piece of material, use the same framework – what, how and why. Write a separate analysis of each piece or construct the analysis as one commentary comparing the pieces. Compare and contrast stance, tone and use of language.

A typical task in the examination will be expressed as a question such as the following:  
How is written and visual language used to attempt to persuade readers to share the point of view of the writer of ... (the text that appears on the next page of the exam booklet)?

**Strategy - Investigating a Persuasive Text**

Use the questions below as a strategy for making notes on the kinds of language used in a practice examination text. These questions cover a range of the uses of language to persuade that you will have studied in Units 1, 2 and 3.

Questioning the text in this way will give you a detailed knowledge of the use of language in the text presenting a point of view. This detail will form the body of your analysis, and enable you to make general comments about the use of language.

- 1 What is the issue?  
What point of view or contention is presented?  
What is the writer's intention?  
In what position does the writer attempt to place the reader? How do you know?  
Why?

- 2 What is the *tone of voice* in a text?  
What tone of voice do you think the text suggests? What gives the text this tone of voice? Does the tone change at any point? If so, why?

Read practice texts aloud in the tone of voice that the pieces suggest to you. Ask others to do the same. Think of some words to describe tone of voice. See the list of words on the above web site, add to them, and make some choices when analysing a text.

Develop a bank of words that describe a variety of tones of voice.

If you can identify the tone in the text, and any changes, this will help you select particular examples of the use of language to persuade.

*See pages 6–8 for some detailed advice on identifying and describing tone.*

- 3 What kind of language is used?
  - In what order are the ideas and arguments presented? Is this important?
  - Where is the most significant information, argument or phrase placed? Why?
  - Which words and phrases are the most significant in discussing the topic or issue? Why? How do they help to establish the tone of the text?
  - What associations or connotations might certain words and phrases bring to a reader's mind? What pictures does this language evoke in your mind? Are they positive/negative, pleasant/unpleasant?
  - Is there a pattern of language in the piece, ie, words and phrases, or images, used at different points to suggest similar ideas or to evoke feelings? If so, give examples.
  - Does the writer use any of the following tactics, and, if so, why?  
logical argument, logical appeal;  
critical, challenging, rhetorical questions; hyperbole; rebuttal;  
figurative language: imagery, similes, metaphors;  
statistics; opinions of experts;  
appeals to common sense, emotions, decency, tradition, patriotism, history,  
authority; a combination of techniques.

*continued*

- 4 What does the visual text (cartoon, photo, sketch, diagram, table etc) add to the message in the text?
- What situation or dilemma does it sum up? How?
  - What symbols or motifs does it convey?
  - What important information does it convey? How does this relate to the writer's point of view?
  - Does it offer a point of view on an issue?
  - Is it funny? Is it gently ironic or satirical? Sarcastic? Bitterly critical? Bitingly satirical? Hilarious? Subversive? Gently mocking?

**In summary**, use some key investigative questions for structuring your analysis, eg:

- What is the issue and what is the writer's point of view?
- What is the tone of the piece? What does this achieve?
- Does the tone change and if so, where and why?
- What examples of language are especially significant? Why?
- What is the role of the visual text in this piece? How do you know?
- What do you think is the intended effect of the use of language in the written piece and the visual text?
- Why might readers be influenced by the language used in this text?
- What other points of view or arguments does the piece challenge? How?



## IDENTIFYING AND DESCRIBING TONE

The tone of any kind of written text is the general, overall impression of the writer's attitude created in the reader's mind. Tone of voice can change within a piece: the writer might sound stressed at the start of the piece but more optimistic towards the end, and vice versa.

Tone is created by what is said, but more by *how* it is said: ie, the writer's choice of language, including sentence and overall structure.

Read through some of the texts in the practice tasks in this collection. Which of the following words might describe the tone of the voice you perceive in each text, and how do you know? Why do you think this tone of voice was adopted?

distressed

authoritative

pompous

optimistic

alarmist

outraged

indignant

sorrowful

measured (or cautiously reasoned, considered, careful, restrained)

### Using a List of Words for Tone

The list on the next page contains many words that you can use to describe the tone of voice in the examination text. Use this list to develop the range of your vocabulary as you work on the practice tasks, as follows:

- Experiment with different words for similar tones of voice that you identify in each text.
- Study the text to determine why you have received this impression of the tone of voice of the writer.
- Think about why you think the particular tone or tones of voice were adopted.
- When writing your analysis, use your impressions of tone as key points, eg, as topic sentences in your paragraphs, and follow up with related examples of the use of language to persuade.

Working in a small group, skim through the list of words and identify words that you think fit the tone of a particular text. Talk about why this might be so.

Develop explanatory sentences explaining why you think the tone is used and how it is achieved further in the piece.

## DESCRIBING TONE: A WORD BANK

When you read the text in each practice task, think about the kind of tone the writer has established.

Then skim through the list below and choose some possibilities for use in your analysis.

Think about why they might be appropriate. Add to this list when you read or hear of other good words for tone.

admiring  
aggrieved  
amused  
anxious  
appalled  
appreciative  
approving  
ardent  
arrogant  
assured  
authoritative  
belligerent  
bitter  
bombastic  
candid  
cautious  
cheerful  
complaining  
conciliatory  
condescending  
confident  
controlled  
conversational  
cynical  
dejected  
despondent  
detached  
disappointed  
disconsolate  
disgusted

dispirited  
earnest  
embittered  
entertaining  
enthusiastic  
exasperated  
facetious  
fervent  
formal  
friendly  
frivolous  
grumbling  
guarded  
hopeful  
humorous  
impassioned  
impersonal  
indifferent  
indignant  
informal  
ironic  
jocular  
light-hearted  
measured  
melodramatic  
moderate  
nostalgic  
objective  
optimistic  
outraged

passionate  
perplexed  
pessimistic  
plaintive  
pompous  
pretentious  
querulous  
quizzical  
reasonable  
regretful  
resentful  
respectful  
restrained  
sad  
sanguine  
sarcastic  
sardonic  
satirical  
sensible  
sensitive  
serious  
sincere  
sober  
solemn  
sorrowful  
tolerant  
vehement  
vicious  
wistful  
witty

## COMPOSING STATEMENTS ABOUT TONE

When composing a statement about tone, you are identifying your general impression of the writer's attitude to the subject of the text and to the audience.

- In the examination, make a statement early in your written analysis about the tone of the piece you are analysing, and then explain what gives you this general impression. This opens the way for analysis of examples of language that sustain the tone.
- Practise composing statements about tone each time you are analysing the use of language to persuade in a text. Use your word bank of tone words to identify the tone or tones of voice in the text and to compose your statements. Experiment with composing statements about the same piece in different ways.
- Investigate how the statements below are composed and use them as a resource for composing your own comments on the tone of texts in practice tasks.

**Examples of Statements about Tone** *Can you compose statements like these below?*

### ***Simpler Statements***

*The serious tone of the article reflects the deep feelings of the community on the issue.*

*The choice of formal language in the essay helps to generate an authoritative tone.*

*The emotional tone of the piece would engage the sympathy of a wide range of readers.*

*The assured tone of the piece identifies the writer as someone who knows her subject well.*

*The moderate tone of the letter helps to convey a tolerant position on the issue.*

*The querulous tone of the blog evokes disappointment and anger.*

### ***More Complex Statements***

*The writer's measured tone reflects great caution in dealing with a complex issue.*

*The writer displays a derisory tone and mocks alternative views throughout the piece.*

*The article shows how a light-hearted tone can be a most effective way of advancing a strong argument.*

*The use of so many short, blunt sentences establishes the arrogant and bombastic tone of the whole piece.*

*The conciliatory and reasonable tone at the start of the editorial gives way to a much more assertive attitude.*

*The sad, personal anecdotes related by the writer create the distressed tone of voice of someone who has suffered.*

# PRACTICE TASK 1

## SECTION C - Analysis of language use

### Instructions for Section C

Section C requires students to analyse the ways in which language and visual features are used to present a point of view.

Section C is worth one-third of the total assessment for the examination.

Read the opinion piece Searching for My Lost Son and then complete the task below.

Write your analysis in a coherently constructed piece of prose.

### TASK

How is written and visual language used to attempt to persuade readers to share the point of view of the writer of Searching for my Lost Son?

### Background information

This opinion piece was written by a parent of teenagers and published, with the accompanying cartoon, on the Opinion pages of a daily newspaper.

It was written as part of a series of articles, television current affairs programs, and web forums discussing the future of modern youth.

Most teenagers aged 15–19 are unaware of major issues in the world around them, a TruBlu Poll found. The researchers surveyed 220 young people living in the Melbourne suburbs. The results of the survey are shown below.

Survey Question	YES	%	NO	%
Do you read newspapers every day?	43	19.6	177	81.4
Do you carry your mobile phone everywhere you go?	210	95.5	10	4.5
Are you following the current debates in the media?	7	3.2	213	96.8
Do you prefer listening to your Ipod to watching TV current affairs shows?	206	93.6	14	6.4
Do you surf the Internet for more than one hour each day?	183	83.2	37	16.8

TruBlu Associates July 2010

## Searching for My Lost Son

The report of the survey conducted by TruBlu does not surprise me. I had been worried that it was just my son who behaves as if no-one else exists. Technology has entrapped him.

My son leaves home with his music player stuck in his ear and comes home the same way. At school, he sits alone at his own screen, and screened off from interaction with his classmates. At home, he listens to music in the bathroom and at the dinner table. He won't watch current affairs or news programs. He sits with his eyes closed listening to music, or stares transfixed at Internet sites, or texts furiously on his mobile or on social media websites.

Sometimes I think he's catatonic – not fully conscious. I feel like an outsider and I am treated like one if I try to interrupt. There's no sense of compromise offered. My son has found a comfortable place in cyberspace. He's only interested in his blogging, texting and tweeting. Facebook is a friendly refuge from homework worries and family hassles and he appears to be obsessed with video games. He doesn't seem to want to deal with the living and breathing people around him - members of his family.



He's indifferent to any TV show, let alone current affairs. He gets his entertainment from the Internet, his iPod and his mobile. He has basically created a world of his own, divorced by choice from the reality of everyday life. It is impossible to talk to him for any length of time. He always seems anxious to get away, to escape to the keyboard.

The Canberra psychologist Chas Savage puts the problem very well. The Internet is 'infested by those who are exclusively loyal to their own kind and interested only in their own affairs'. I think technology is stunting the minds and feelings of young people like my son. It is cutting them off from dealing with real issues and real people in the real world. It's like putting himself in solitary confinement.

Did you know that researchers at an American university asked 200 students to give up all media for one day and found that after 24 hours many of them suffered withdrawal, craving and anxiety similar to drug and alcohol addiction? They were simply unable to function normally without their media and social links. Some students said that the experience was like going without friends and family.

The irony is that my son seems quite isolated from his family most of the time because of social media. And I know that many of my friends who are parents are also unhappy that their children are spending so much time at the computer. If this is really the situation, many young people are going to have to learn all over again how to interact and get along with real people in real situations.

It's not a surprise then that in the US there are now rehab centres for the treatment of excessive use of the Internet, video gaming and texting. For example, Greenfields Retreat Centre in Iowa specialises in recovering people from 'addiction to the various forms of technology.' A US program called ReSTART (motto: disconnect and find yourself) lists 12 symptoms and signs of technology addiction, and invites parents to use the list to check their children's behaviour.

I worry, too, about the effect of technology on his literacy skills. The standard of literacy in video games and on social media is appallingly low. Kids now write in a new slang that communicates with the few who are so-called friends, so his grasp of standard English language is being eroded by constant tweeting and video gaming. He is missing out on the fundamentals of spelling and punctuation, and correct grammar simply doesn't matter. The idea of reading a book or a newspaper doesn't enter his head. As the Truscan poll shows, more than 80 percent of kids these days do not read newspapers.

It's not very comforting to hear people, including experts, who say 'Don't worry. He'll come good. It's just normal teenage behaviour'. They don't have to live with someone who displays frequent mood swings and bad temper, who seems to lack sleep and is becoming an insomniac. As a parent, I'm already seeing what some doctors are saying: that on average a teenager sends 3,400 electronic messages at bedtime every month. And as a result have mood, behaviour and learning problems during the day. School performance and achievement begin to decline sharply.



Can someone please tell me if my son is likely to snap out of this obsession or will he need rehabilitation? Is he going to be any use to the community if he can't hold a normal conversation? Will he get a job if he only knows how to the language of SMS, blogspeak and tweets? Will he ever be able to relate to people not in his network? Will he be afraid of strangers? Will he learn to trust other people, and to be trusted himself? Is technology destroying human interaction and therefore human values? Will he just be a se lfish, shallow-minded loner?

# PRACTICE TASK 2

## SECTION C - Analysis of language use

### Instructions for Section C

Section C requires students to analyse the ways in which language and visual features are used to present a point of view.

Section C is worth one-third of the total assessment for the examination.

Read the opinion piece *Meanwhile, Back in the Real World* and then complete the task below.

Write your analysis in a coherently constructed piece of prose.

### TASK

How is written and visual language used to attempt to persuade readers to share the point of view of the writer of *Meanwhile, Back in the Real World*?

### Background information

This opinion piece was written by a social psychologist in response to letters and articles by parents about the bad effects of new technology on their children's lives and future. It was published, with the accompanying photographs, on the Opinion pages of a daily newspaper.

It was written as part of a series of articles, television current affairs programs, and web forums discussing the dangers of technology to young people.

Most teenagers aged 15–19 are unaware of major issues in the world around them, a news poll found. The pollsters TruBlu surveyed 220 15–19 year-olds living in the Melbourne suburbs. Parents argued that this research proves that their children were cut off from reality and sadly lacking in general knowledge, a result they claim of an obsession with new technology.

## Meanwhile, Back in the Real World

Dump your iPods, get off the net, throw your mobiles away, and start living in the real world, kids. So say the doomsayers, and, of course, pollsters like TruBlu. The fact is this technology is the real world now for many of today's youth. Most people over 50 are startled by kids talking on mobiles, kids with ears connected to MP3s, kids texting every few minutes and tapping away on tablets. But to say that this technology causes isolation from the real world and lack of general knowledge is ridiculous. Technology such as the Internet deepens and broadens the minds of all those who use it.



The TruBlu poll surveyed 220 people in the suburbs of Melbourne. Which suburbs? This would have made a difference to results. And why just Melbourne? It's impossible to generalise about teenagers from such a small sample.

Of course, teenagers are more interested in listening to music or talking to friends on their mobiles than reading newspapers or watching TV current affairs. This is a clear example of their sociability, not an indication that they prefer dumb isolation. Are many TV current affairs shows really about current affairs or serious issues? Aren't they just a form of infotainment? Avoiding them might just as likely be a sign of taste and intelligence?

Because a teenager has not been following political debates does not mean that he or she is out of touch with reality. Isn't it obvious that the survey was just another attempt to put young people down? The poll was designed to generate a bad picture of teenagers, ie, show their ignorance, as clearly demonstrated by Professor Davies in his recent article.

Can you bear now to leave your mobile at home when you go out? It is a boon for all sorts of reasons - ordering the takeaway; telling family you're held up on the train or in traffic; calling for Dad or Mum or brother to pick you up. Is this social isolation? Is this lack of awareness? Hardly. Mobile phones have brought a sense of personal and social connectedness that makes the world a safer, as well as a more interesting, place for everybody, especially young people.

A comprehensive report of the uses of technology in schools, conducted by the Sydney Morning Herald, found that:

'Today's school students are downloading homework on iTunes, listening to lessons via podcasts, communicating with other students all over the world through social networking sites, and even video conferencing with leaders of business and industry.' (Technology in the Classroom', Kelli Cambourne, Sydney Morning Herald, 19 January 2010)

This is hardly creating social isolation.

An impressive educational development in the last few years is the way in which technology has been integrated into Australian classrooms. Through technology and a wide range of teaching methods, the learning programs of students have been greatly enhanced.



A view of typical classrooms (pictured) shows a learning situation that is using technology within a collaborative classroom discussion, a social situation for meaningful learning, both social and academic, in which students are enthusiastic and active participants.

If you want to ban technology in the classroom, you are not living in the 21st century. Many human beings have an innate fear of change, especially the advent of new technology. In the past, we have feared the printing press, newspapers, credit cards, novels, movies, computers and even television as potential destroyers of our culture, our way of life, our kids' futures. The ancient philosopher Socrates warned against writing because it would 'create forgetfulness in the learners' souls, because they will not use their memories.' In the early 20th century, radio arrived and was accused of destroying reading among children and distracting them from their homework. With television, more recently, the fears went much further, accusing TV of damaging radio, reading, conversation, family life and national culture.



Here are some newspaper headlines in the last decade or two about the damaging effects of computers and the Internet:

**Email hurts IQ more than pot**

**Twitter and Facebook could harm moral values**

**Facebook generation cannot form relationships**

**How Facebook could raise your risk of cancer**

**Is Google making us Stupid?**

**Warning: Brain Overload Creates Lack of Empathy**

(From 'Don't Touch That Dial! A history of media technology scares, from the printing press to Facebook', Vaughan Bell, Slate, 15 February, 2010)

There is no objective, medical evidence to support any of these fears. Plenty of anecdotes, but no hard evidence. Technology is being blamed for problems, some of them imaginary, which have other causes.

Nevertheless, we cannot shut our eyes to the fact that a few young people are so obsessed with using technology that they are self-harming. There are problems for some students needing special attention from teachers and parents when they become obvious in class and at home. But this does not mean restricting or banning technology for all children and all classrooms. The new technologies will be a vital part our children's lives for many more years.



# PRACTICE TASK 3

## SECTION C – Analysis of language use

### Instructions for Section C

Section C requires students to analyse the ways in which language and visual features are used to present a point of view.

Section C is worth one-third of the total assessment for the examination. Read the essay *Messages from a Driver* and then complete the task below. Write your analysis in a coherently constructed piece of prose.

### TASK

How is written and visual language used to attempt to persuade readers to share the point of view of the writer of *Messages from a Driver*?

### Background information

This essay was written by a parent concerned to share her worries about the driving habits of young people in her family. The piece was written as part of a web forum on the issue of texting and driving. The photographs were selected by the writer to show what she claims are regular sights in her locality.

## MESSAGES FROM A DRIVER

Here is a text message to me today from a young adult in our family:

‘Just driving down the beautiful Great Ocean Road. What a great drive for my first time out on the open road! Hope you and Dad are having a great time in NZ.’

Texting has become a daily pastime as people enjoy and exploit the communication immediacy made possible by new technology.

But that message from our young family member made me worried and afraid for her safety. How could she possibly be texting me while driving? And on the Great Ocean Road of all places? The exhilarating feeling of freedom of driving along a picturesque coastline and sociably texting at the same time surely does not mix. Never.

But it’s not just the young ones who are texting while driving: it’s a whole lot more people. The Australian Transport Research Laboratory reports that last year more than 10 billion text messages were sent while the senders were driving. Stand on any street corner and you can watch it happening as cars go by. What’s going on?

Madness.



I remind my adult children of the story of young Albert Bongiorno. He was joyfully riding his bike home from school one day and was hit and killed by a car travelling on the wrong side of the road. The car of a 24-year-old who was text messaging hit him. The driver went to prison for culpable driving. But that didn’t bring young Albert

back, and for his whole life the driver suffers in the knowledge of having killed someone through his own carelessness. Tragic.

Apparently, in the US, in a poll of 2800 adults, 37 percent said they had texted or received texts while driving. About 13 percent of these drivers had surfed the Internet while driving. A large percentage of these people said they knew that texting while driving is dangerous but they did it anyway. Most also said they were likely to answer a text message while driving. US Transport Agency has revealed that driver distraction was a factor in 25 to 50 percent of all car accidents, with 61 percent of young drivers admitting to risky driving habits. Texting figured prominently in this behaviour. Enough said, really. Locally, Telstra surveyed 750 mobile phone users from metropolitan and country areas of NSW, Queensland, Victoria, South Australia and Western Australia and found that 58 percent of motorists aged 17 to 29 would read a text message, or SMS, while driving. Stupidity.

There are great dangers ahead to our children, to families and to the community from the growing habit of texting while driving. Just think about this: another US study



found that texting took a driver's focus away from the road for an average of 4.6 seconds, enough time to travel the length of a football field at 80 km/h. And according to Motoring Analytics (Aust), texting requires drivers to look away from the road and towards the mobile phone screen or keypad and to take their hands off the steering wheel to write or read a message. Can a texting driver avoid the sudden appearance of a small child or a cyclist on the road, or a suddenly stopping car, in front? No way.

It's getting out of hand. A friend of mine travelled into the city by bus the other day and noticed that the driver was texting while driving the bus. Now, he was on the freeway, but my friend says he did not look the road ahead for at least 30 seconds. This made the TV news because he was videoed doing it. And to think that some people texted the TV station and said they were sorry that he might lose his job and not be able to pay his bills. Hard to believe.

There's not much the government can do about this. The real cause of the problem is the natural desire of young people (like all of us) to stay in touch with friends and family. Who can blame young people for wanting to do that? New technology has made that much more possible and immediate, but it's become an addiction. It's powerful peer pressure. The kids feel that they must get in touch with someone straight away or lose the plot of what's happening in their social world. This is a very deep, human urge and so it's a good thing in many ways.

The irony is that the texting can be extremely dangerous, in some situations. Like when driving. I came across a comprehensive report on young people and driving on the Internet, compiled by the Australian Institute of Family Studies. This report found that inexperience was a major contributor to the high crash rate among young drivers, and continued:

'Research suggests that inexperienced drivers tend to underestimate the level of risk associated with certain types of driving behaviour or situations, and overestimate their own level of driving ability or capacity to deal with such situations.

Furthermore, inexperienced drivers tend to have greater difficulties in anticipating and accommodating the behaviour of other road users and in dividing their attention between competing driving tasks than more experienced drivers.’ Sound familiar?

All drivers have competing tasks while driving, even if it is just turning down the heater, or suddenly braking. But we can now add dangerous new competing task: texting while driving. Many reports around the world say that we now have on our hands not just many more inexperienced drivers, but, alarmingly, many more young, inexperienced, distracted drivers. Nightmare territory.

It’s simple logic: if you text while driving, you are distracted from driving, and you are likely to have a crash or seriously injure or kill somebody. By the way, my young adult family member has just texted me to say she pulled off the road to text me that she’s OK. Relieved.



# PRACTICE TASK 4

## SECTION C – Analysis of language use

### Instructions for Section C

Section C requires students to analyse the ways in which language and visual features are used to present a point of view.

Section C is worth one-third of the total assessment for the examination.

Read the article *Invading Celebrities' Privacy* and then complete the task below. Write your analysis in a coherently constructed piece of prose.

### TASK

How is written and visual language used to attempt to persuade readers to share the point of view of the writer of *Invading Celebrities' Privacy*?

### Background information

Recent examples of invasive behaviour of media journalists and photographers in the lives of celebrities have brought severe criticism from community leaders and from the celebrities' own families.

To what extent should media people such as the paparazzi be allowed to invade the privacy of celebrities? The following article appeared in a daily newspaper.

## Invading Celebrity Privacy

Some paparazzi are landing themselves in big trouble. According to celebrity litigation expert, Penn University's Jamie Nordhaus 'paparazzi' means 'a freelance photographer who takes candid pictures of celebrities for publication'. The term 'paparazzi' originates from a character in the 1959 Italian film *La Dolce Vita*.

The word 'candid' when referring to photographs usually means 'informal' and 'unposed'. Yet, when using this term, journalists and magazine editors seem to think that it also means 'truthful' and 'honest', as it does in other contexts (such as blunt, plain speaking). Editors claim their photographers are only snapping the truth, a kind of moral duty to portray the truth, especially in unguarded moments. Yet, in many cases, the reports were entirely speculative, gossipy and probably biased. Not truth at all.

These days, 'candid' is too weak an adjective to describe what the paparazzi get away with. One might call their behaviour intrusive, outrageous and addictive. They just cannot help themselves. Nor, it seems, can many members of the viewing public.



In our democratic society, we value and protect the rights and freedoms of the individual. In this way, democracy respects the privacy of the individual, and so allows law-abiding citizens to live their lives without fear of being watched, and safe from those who would seek to harm them. We do not tolerate stalkers, yet it seems that that is how so many journalists behave. To deny our high-fliers their right to privacy is therefore an attack on their democratic rights as citizens.

According to investigators, photographers and other media people have found new ways to invade the privacy of celebrities, ways that, for the invaders, are 'thrilling, lucrative, and ... shockingly easy' (Kashmir Hill, *Forbes*). Remember the case of celebrity cricketer, Jason Winter, who was snapped on the beach at Secluded Rocks with an attractive young woman, not his wife.

The writer of a gossip magazine article in which these snaps appeared said they were 'frolicking' and 'cavorting', and other reporters suggested that they may also have been 'cuddling' and 'canoodling.'



Jason Winter complained to the editor of the newspaper that:

- He was not asked if he could be photographed.
- The photograph was taken at a very bad angle, suggesting improper public behaviour.
- The text accompanying the photograph implied that he had ditched his wife (not true).
- No attempt was made by the photographer to discover the identity and occupation of the young woman (who, in fact, turned out to be one of his personal trainers, a specialist in hamstring recovery).
- His personal privacy was not respected.
- The language used in the accompanying article was completely inaccurate and inappropriate.

The editor of the gossip magazine unsympathetically replied that the photographs were taken ‘in the public interest’. That is, the editor is saying to this particular celebrity that he is public property. ‘In the public interest’ does not mean ‘for the benefit of the public’; it means that the public is interested, or should be interested, in the celebrity. And, of course, lurid stories about celebrities sell newspapers and magazines.



Yet whether or not the report accompanying the photographs was a true, unbiased, factual account is open to question.

Remarkably, there was no public outcry about the behaviour of the photographer. So, many readers and TV viewers who saw the snaps must have been fascinated, even titillated, and agreed with the public interest argument of the magazine editor. This response effectively endorsed the right of the paparazzi to invade the privacy of the celebrity cricketer, and perhaps of all celebrities. Many members of the public simply must want to know what is going on in celebrities’ lives. They are addicted to it.

Some other recent examples of invasion of celebrity privacy have been unfair and downright dangerous. Never before in history have we seen the like of intrusions into privacy such as that of the British royal family. We have now seen the rise of the ‘hackerazzi’, a far more dangerous breed than mere photographers.



Recently, Queensland police arrested James Robinson, 35, who had hacked into the email accounts of beautiful young film star Kathy Kline. When interviewed by radio news, Robinson revealed that he was addicted to invading the privacy of the rich and famous. He explained as follows: ‘My curiosity turned into an addiction. I just had to see what’s going on in the lives of people I see on the big screen. I’m glad the police stopped me because I couldn’t stop myself.’

The privacy of celebrities must be better respected. Don’t they have a right as human beings to their own personal space? This is especially needed at the moments of crisis and the moments of celebration that occur in every person’s life, celebrity or not. These are occasions of high emotion, maybe tears and trauma. At these moments, all involved will want, indeed crave, privacy. Surely the private lives of celebrities at home with their friends and family should be sandbagged against paparazzi invasion and the phone hackers.

Generally, many celebrities do not complain about the paparazzi and do not call the police, and many paparazzi behave themselves. Celebrities by and large realise that, at times, ‘public interest’ can outweigh ‘the right to privacy’. And it’s true that if they want to remain celebrities, they must endure being photographed. Their continuing fame depends on it. However, the extent of the invasion is the problem.

The death of Princess Diana as a result of pursuit by the paparazzi gave rise to universal condemnation of media newsgathering techniques, and many governments around the world then toughened their laws protecting privacy rights, especially those of celebrities. Invasions of privacy of celebrities, or ordinary people, now carry severe penalties in many countries. It’s about time.

## References

Jamie E. Nordhaus, ‘Celebrities Right to privacy: how far should the paparazzi be allowed to go?’, [www.asc.upenn.edu](http://www.asc.upenn.edu)  
Kashmir Hill, ‘Scarlett Johansson Hacker 'Addicted' To Invading Celebs' Privacy’, *Forbes* 14/10/11, [www.forbes.com](http://www.forbes.com)



# PRACTICE TASK 5

## SECTION C – Analysis of language use

### Instructions for Section C

Section C requires students to analyse the ways in which language and visual features are used to present a point of view.

Section C is worth one-third of the total assessment for the examination.

Read the article *No Such Thing as Celebrities' Privacy* and then complete the task below.

Write your analysis in a coherently constructed piece of prose.

### TASK

How is written and visual language used to attempt to persuade readers to share the point of view of the writer of *No Such Thing as Celebrities' Privacy*?

### Background information

Recent examples of invasive behaviour of media journalists and photographers in the lives of celebrities have brought severe criticism from their families and from community leaders.

To what extent should media people such as the paparazzi be allowed to invade the privacy of celebrities? The following article appeared in a daily newspaper.

## **No such thing as celebrity privacy**

Much has been said and written in past weeks about the so-called invasion of celebrity privacy. This newspaper has a public duty to its readers to provide full coverage of important events in the nation and in our community. Our critics seem to imply that celebrities, rather than inviting media attention as they often do, have some sort of immunity from the public gaze when it suits them. Celebrities have no right to complain about unwanted attention when they and their managers have worked so hard to create it in the first place. To quote visiting US media law professor Judith Warren: ‘If one propels oneself onto the public stage and courts attention, then one has a very weak claim to privacy.’

In our society, the status of celebrities has grown enormously over the years. People are now obsessed with the stars. This newspaper caters to a very real need in the public for the latest news about their idols. If the professional search for this news sometimes turns up photographs of ‘unguarded moments’, or the odd scurrilous text message, celebrities should not complain. If we are to do our job professionally and well, we cannot play by their rules. The public hungers for this news, and we must therefore supply it.

Furthermore, celebrities flower in the glare of publicity. Some people seem to think they are exotic blooms to be protected from the sunlight. Most celebrities love the hothouse atmosphere created by a wall of paparazzi cameras.

Critics of this newspaper point to our reporting of the incident on the beach at Secluded Rocks involving celebrity cricketer Jason Winter and an attractive blonde woman. They have vilified this newspaper’s reporting as intrusive and impugned the motives of journalists who reported on this incident. Many of our journalists have received abusive emails and text messages as a result. This is grossly unfair on decent, hard-working people simply doing their job of reporting the truth.

Any sensible person would agree that the events at Secluded Rocks were of great public interest. Mr Winter is a married man with a lovely wife and three charming children. His presence on the beach with a blonde woman was worth photographing and reporting. He is a world famous celebrity whose life style is of great interest to people all over the planet. In the past, he has been very fond of publicity: in fact, he often invites photographers to events in which he is involved.

Those who criticised this paper for reporting so fully on these events must regard Mr Winter as some kind of shrinking violet who cannot tolerate the light of day. Nothing could be further from the truth.

Another recent report in this newspaper also attracted the ire of some readers and commentators. That was the Candy Rock injury, the singing, dancing show girl with a smashed leg. Candy Rock's complaints about a photographer on the roof of her home are rather curious. Throughout her short career, Candy Rock has brazenly sought the limelight. The offending photographer was just doing his job. The simple truth is that Candy Rock was attempting to hide the truth about her injury. At the hospital, she covered her face and would not speak to the media. Miss Rock is a tall poppy in the contemporary entertainment scene. We have helped her to achieve that status. She should show more gratitude.

We ask why she or her manager did not make a frank and open statement to reporters gathered outside her home. This may well have saved her from shock and embarrassment. Instead she locked herself away from public scrutiny, giving our reporters no alternative but to take more direct measures. It is simple logic, really: the right to privacy must be waived at times and give way to the public's right to know.



There is one simple answer to Miss Rocks desire for a quiet life: she is Candy Rock, celebrity, and therefore public property. If you don't want the limelight, do not seek fame, Miss Rock.

The celebrities' complaints about invasion of privacy stem, they say, from their desire for personal space. As we have too often seen recently, this is simply an excuse for eccentric and sometimes immoral behaviour.

Do celebrities seriously believe that they can live their lives free from the scrutiny and perhaps the judgment of others? We at this newspaper believe we have a public duty to play a leading role in this scrutiny. As the famous poet once said, 'No man is an island.'

Celebrity privacy is a contradiction in terms. Celebrities are not private citizens. Famous people live famously and the public loves to hear about their lifestyles. Public figures such as celebrities do not have the same rights to privacy as ordinary citizens. They are permanently on show and the show must be reported. The reporting of celebrity goings-on is justified, necessary and fair.

Many celebrities, when faced with unfavourable publicity, hastily scramble for the cover of their right to privacy. This is a deception: a trick to divert attention from their misdeeds and personal problems. Perceptive journalists enable readers see through these cons, see through the haze of self-centred obfuscation to the reality of the situation.

What are we saying about our democratic way of life if we do what some people say we should – that is, go soft on reporting the deeds and misdeeds of celebrities? Our democracy depends on the ability of the press to publish events and opinions freely and fairly, and to report events accurately. No right to privacy should impede this important national task. We argue, therefore, that to obey celebrities' right to privacy is to interfere with the democratic process, freedom of speech, and way of life in this country. No plush hothouse petal must distract us from this task.

# PRACTICE TASK 6

## SECTION C – Analysis of language use

### Instructions for Section C

Section C requires students to analyse the ways in which language and visual features are used to present a point of view.

Section C is worth one-third of the total assessment for the examination.

Read both blogs on the issue of Helmets for Cyclists and then complete the task below.

Write your analysis in a coherently constructed piece of prose.

### TASK

How is written and visual language used to attempt to persuade readers to share the point of view of the writers of these blogs?

### Background information

The compulsory wearing of helmets by cyclists has aroused controversy in the local community and in many overseas countries. The blogs below were written as part of an online forum about the issue.

## SAY NO TO HELMETS AND YES TO PERSONAL FREEDOM

(By Callum Hahn, Freedom Cyclist)

*Nothing risked, nothing achieved.* (Old Chinese proverb)

If you like to feel the wind ruffling your hair as you coast down the streets of a city, or charge along the bush trails, don't wear a bike helmet. The compulsory wearing of a helmet while bike riding is a good example of the way the government and do-gooders try to run our lives.



In some states of Australia, you're not allowed to ride your bicycle without a helmet. Overseas, things are more relaxed. As a friend explained: 'You can jump on a bike in Amsterdam and cycle through the cobbled streets helmet-less, the wind ruffling your hair.' That's real freedom — and illegal here. Another friend had a similar wonderful experience bike riding helmet-less in Argentina.

Bike riding is a healthy and relatively safe activity, but thousands of people are discouraged from this because of the compulsion to wear a helmet. Helmet laws therefore contribute to increasing ill-health among the population because of lack of physical exercise.

Wearing a helmet is not necessarily a good choice anyway. There is no firm evidence that compulsory helmet wearing has reduced injuries and fatalities among bike riders. A most thorough examination of the effect of Australia's mandatory helmet laws by Dr Dorothy Robinson (published in the *British Medical Journal* in 2005) found that mandatory helmet laws discouraged cycling and produced no obvious reduction in head injuries.

There are only two countries in the world with national all-age mandatory bicycle helmet laws, and Australia is one of them. That must tell us something about our government. Each year, Australian police impose tens of thousands of fines on Australians for not wearing a helmet while bike riding peacefully with no threat to other people or property. This is a disgraceful waste of police resources.

Many countries have laws mandating helmets but most sensibly limit this to children under 16 or so. Attempts to apply the law to everybody generally fail. People want to be free of helmets and they choose to be. Our mandatory helmet laws are the symbol of the overbearing nanny state in which we live. According to the Association of Free Thinkers (Australia), 'helmets are an unnecessary and unjust intrusion into our individual freedom.' Helmet laws take the fun out of life.



We must stop treating citizens like little children needing to be looked after with nanny-like care. Respect our choices and preserve the freedom of our democracy. Let us take the risks that can help us achieve an enjoyable life.

The main risk to bike-riders is not the result of refusing to wear a helmet. It's the erratic behaviour of many motorists. They must be educated to take more care of cyclists. Speed limits should be reduced in some areas where bicycle traffic is heaviest. Harsher penalties should be meted out to dangerous motorists. Bicycle lanes, paths and trails need extension and upgrading. It is more likely that these measures would improve the safety of cyclists and prevent serious injuries and deaths than the wearing of a helmet.

Citizens of Australia should be free to choose not to wear a helmet and to take responsibility for this choice. People will take risks and make choices, good and bad. That's their problem, not the community's. In a democracy, we are free to make bad choices.

### **SAY YES TO HELMETS AND NO TO BRAIN SURGERY**

(By Professor Robert Winthrop, Surgeon, City District Hospital)

***Precaution is better than cure.***

(Cicero)

I am a brain surgeon who spends most of his professional life trying to mend people with brain damage from accidents, many of them bike riders. So every time I see bike riders without helmets I worry for their safety. You know, some people must think that laws are made and applied without good reason, or just to exert some kind of state control.



But let's look at the facts. The number of cyclists killed on Australian roads has halved over the past two decades to about 30 a year, partly due to the compulsory wearing of helmets. However, the number of injuries to cyclists on Australian roads continues to escalate, with a 9 percent rise in 2011. It's likely that these injuries could have been much worse without the wearing of helmets.

There is nothing new or revolutionary about the mandatory wearing of helmets. The evidence was clear many years ago. In the 1980s a study by the Royal College of Australasian Surgeons concluded bicyclist casualties sustained head injuries three times more frequently than motorcyclist casualties. A controlled study of 1710 cyclists throughout the 1980s revealed that there was a 45 percent reduction in the head injuries of bicycle casualties when they were wearing helmets approved by the Standards Australia Association. The College restated this position in a press release in 2009, which, in the face of fierce lobbying by some cyclist groups, urged the state governments to retain mandatory helmet laws.



Furthermore, note the experience of my Canadian colleague, an eminent brain surgeon:

‘As a brain surgeon at the Toronto Western Hospital and University of Toronto, I have helped many bicyclists during my 40 plus year career in Toronto, Ontario, Canada. The worst have had irreparable brain damage, and they are either dead or severely disabled. The best have had only skull fractures and concussions, and they have recovered fully or almost fully. The worst have been unhelmeted.’

(Dr. Charles Tator)

We surgeons say that riding a bike while not wearing a helmet is verging on suicide. The problem is the extent of the damage to the head and brain when helmets are not worn. Recent research for the New South Wales Government reveals that ‘helmets reduce head injury by 60 per cent and brain injuries by 58 per cent in the event of a crash’.

Think of the trauma of the victims of brain injury through bike riding accidents. Think of the lifelong sacrifice and suffering of their families. Think of the powerlessness of brain surgeons to help badly injured cyclists. Think of the lifetime cost to the community of treating and caring for a brain-damaged or comatose bike rider, estimated at \$8 million. Think helmets.

People say how much they enjoy bike riding in countries where helmets are not compulsory. Amsterdam is often quoted, but there are very many more bike riders there than in Melbourne, so car drivers have to be more careful. Many streets are cobbled and so discourage cars speeding, there are car-free areas, and the speed limit is 30 km/hr in the city centre



In Argentina, helmets for bike riders are compulsory so people break the law if they ride without one. Perhaps the Australian visitors who report being free to ride without a helmet in Argentina are not aware of the law. It is a little strange, too, that Australians visiting overseas countries think they are free to do things like going helmet-less on bikes, banned in Australia and very often banned in the country they are visiting.

While the evidence on helmets is not entirely conclusive, I think we should err on the side of caution and resist the push by some cycling groups to have the helmet laws abolished. Erring on the side of caution is not nanny state behavior but the desire to keep citizens safe from harm. Critics of helmets say they offer little protection against accidents and injury. I think a little protection is better than no protection at all.